



# THE OCTAGON

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



North American MGB Register



*Since 1957!*



Gracie lets new  
member Rob Johnson  
drive her MGA

## March 2019

**St. Pat's Day  
Tour March 17!**

## About *The Octagon* and the MG Owners Club

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

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### CLUB ADVISOR PROGRAM

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

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 MGB V8 Conversion: Tony Bates, 408-666-6174, [avbates@yahoo.com](mailto:avbates@yahoo.com)  
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### COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IN *THE OCTAGON*

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

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

### MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO *THE OCTAGON*

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

### RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

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

### MGOCSE.ORG

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

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***St. Paddy's Day Tour***  
***Sunday March 17, 2019***  
***The MGOC & SSTS welcome you to join us***



Photos: Pam Shukait from last year's tour

***This is a Rain or Shine tour so if raining please feel free to drive a modern car.***

**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2019 **Green is the color of the day.**

**Organizers:** Andy and Marla Preston 707-795-3480

**Meeting Place:** Bagel Street Café, 208 Northgate One, San Rafael

**Time:** Meet at 10:00 for a 10:30 departure



**Tour:** This year St. Patrick's Day falls on a Sunday so we're holding the tour on the actual day so we'll have to be aware of cyclists who also love these backroads. We will be driving the backroads of Marin and Sonoma and finishing up at the Historic Irish-Italian venue of Dinucci's in Valley Ford for lunch. The tour starts at the Bagel Street Café, in San Rafael so it's an easy meeting point from the East or South Bay.

We will head out along Lucas Valley Road, past Sky Walker Ranch and through the small hamlet of Nicasio. Our first stop will be at the Marin Cheese Factory where we will take a short break and enjoy coffee, snacks and of course sample some wonderful cheeses.

We will leave the Cheese Factory, heading Northwest through Chileno Valley, which one of the most scenic areas of West Sonoma and Marin especially at this time of year. We will join Hwy1 in Marshall and then follow the Tomales Bay shoreline north and then through Tomales and into Valley Ford from the west side. We will be able to order from the open menu but please bring cash for the check.

**Please RSVP:** to Andy or Marla Preston at 707-795-3480 or [marlapreston@hotmail.com](mailto:marlapreston@hotmail.com) by March 12<sup>th</sup> so we can confirm lunch reservations.

## From the Editor

My fellow Enthusiasts,

Feb. 25, 2019

Greetings. I hope you feel some spring in the air – and in your step – as the season is upon us. Time to get that MG out of hibernation. We had several MGs at the Mozart Museum Saturday. It was fun to see some members we haven't seen for a while. Come to events even without your MG. We miss you!

We wonder about doing more mid-week tours. Not everyone can come then but it may expand the options available to those who can. The Sorry Safari has a Thursday tour to the Delta in April. Give it a try and let us know what you think about it. May have to squeeze it in between the morning and afternoon commute times. Though the Delta is counter-commute for most Bay folks.

Have you thought about longer events this year? The GOF is far for many this year (Arizona) but we (the MGOC) have a long weekend event in September on the Monterey Peninsula. The Sorry Safari will also do a Sierra Tour, probably in October. Plan an overnight stay to make a tour more enjoyable. It is a long drive for me to Sonoma County and back but if we spread it over two days, it is more fun and less tiring. You may be able to drive to the event on Saturday or Sunday morning and return on Sunday or Monday morning, avoiding the hard traffic both ways.

Happy Spring!



**Dan**

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APR09

### Nigel Shiftright Memory Time

Someone mentioned the jolly little village of "Ketchup-on-Fries, England" on the T ABC list, and I had to relate the following Nigel Shiftright story from deep in the ARR's past:

The Abingdon Rough Riders TC club was having a meet at a member's house. Mrs-not-to-be-named was a bit of a social climber and had a guest book for people visiting her mansion. Phil Frank, late beloved creator of Nigel, wrote in the guest book, "Nigel Shiftright, Catsup-on-Fries, England." The unnamed hostess, checking the guest book, exclaimed "Ooh, there's someone here from England!"

Nobody had the heart to tell her."

I believe this account can be attributed to Allan Chalmers.

### Calendar Note MGOC Picnic

I put the wrong date for the club picnic in August. Please correct your calendars now!

**Correct date: Saturday, August 24**

**Doesn't the cover photo remind you of Randy Grossman?**



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## 90 Years of the MG Midget

Dan Shockey

The MG clubs around the world have begun to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of the first MG Midget, The M type made MG a success and defined a new class of inexpensive sports car for the common people. The club in Australia celebrated the anniversary in 2018 since the M type was introduced at the London show in October, 1928. The UK clubs are celebrating in 2019 since the first production occurred in 1929.

Commemorative grille badges are available. I ordered one from the club in Australia (at left). The cost was 66 Australian dollars.



**We are still working on details for the event at Sears Point**  
**When: Saturday April 13 - Track opens at 8am**

**What: All-MG Club Corral in Paddock**

**Parade Laps (slow) at noon: No helmets required**

**Details: Dan Shockey, [magnut\\_dan@hotmail.com](mailto:magnut_dan@hotmail.com),**

# Member Notes

Thanks for the invitation but I have a photo shoot today. Also, I sold my MGB about a month ago. - **Bob Stine**

We are planning on driving to the NAMGAR GT in Dubuque, though we haven't figured out the schedule yet. I am planning on arriving a day early, just in case they need help with registrations or something. We've usually gone straight out to the GT but taken extra days to come back, so we can do some sightseeing. - **Mike Jacobsen**

Dubuque is not too far from us. Just down the river from us about sixty miles. The sad fact is that I have planned a trip with a friend from Freeport to travel across Germany by rail during the last two weeks of July. So unfortunately I will not be able to come to the event. Best wishes for a fun event. - **Amanda Spielman**

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Trying to stay dry... 12.5+ inches since last Friday! The SCBMC drive was Sunday ... if the weather was better I might try to get out, but the TF is not too much fun in this cold /wet and then to clean the underside after driving Mt Madonna Road (mud ... which will NOT be fun after all the rain!)

You should join the Santa Cruz group; No dues, but they ask you attend 3 drives. They are a good group, but I think my TF is the oldest/toughest to drive -mostly Healeys, Jags, Triumphs, a few MGBs etc., as I think you saw at Roaring Camp last year. They have a 2-day outing in May or June which I have not (yet) attended - usually south Monterey area on back roads.

I have been doing a little of this, a little of that, on the Metropolitan. Had two of the Met Club members down from Antioch a few Saturdays back to assist with stuff. They were pleased with what was done, but 1 step forward, 2 back. I need to finish a few dash/steering wheel/horn items - Greg took the horn assy with him to insert the direction indicator switch, which apparently is a bear. Then perhaps we can try to fire it up...

I was hoping to work on the interior a little during the wet, but it's been too cold in my garage. Yesterday temps peaked at 45F ...brrr - **Marja v.d.H.**

*Continued on page 18*





## President's Ponderings



### Chapter 2 - The Washing Machine Repair Man (*cont. from last month*)

The doorbell rang and a man was standing there with a heavy black canvas bag full of tools and machine parts, I assumed. "Hi. I'm Jose, from Appliance Repair." "Great," I said "come on in," and I showed Jose into the small laundry room which I had cleaned out and removed the dryer to give him more room to work.

"I did the diagnostic routine," I said "and came up with codes E1-F7." Jose looked at me and said, "Where did you see them, there's no display window on the machine?" I told him I went online and found the routine that shows the lights flashing in a certain sequence and you can look up the codes. "Google" he said, "Google good. I'll check with my boss." Hmmm, I thought and said, "I'm sure you know far more about the diagnostics routines than I do," and told him I'd be in the other room.

It was very quiet and all I could hear was Jose talking to his boss. So, 15 minutes later I checked on Jose and he hadn't done anything yet and was pushing the buttons and watching the lights turn on and off. "What's wrong again?" he said. I told him for the second time that the machine doesn't go from the rinse cycle to the spin cycle and just times out without spinning. "I'll check with my boss again" Jose said and then called his boss for the third time. "I'd like to see what happens myself," he said "do you have anything that needs washing?" I went into the garage and collected a bunch of clean towels and threw them into the machine. I started the machine while Jose was talking to his boss again.

20 minutes later the machine stopped at the end of the rinse cycle and wouldn't go to spin cycle. "There," I said, "it's just like I told you, it won't spin, unless you stop the machine and select the spin setting on the dial." By this time, Marla had joined me and showed Jose how she stops the machine and manually selects the spin cycle. The machine started spinning and lights started flashing and the motor started making lots of strange noises. "That doesn't sound good," Jose said. "I know that's why we called you!"

Jose looked at his watch and said "I have another appointment to go to and have to leave now." "What about the washing machine," I said. Jose replied, "I've gotta now," and he picked up his heavy canvas bag, opened the front door and said, "I won't charge you for my time," and he was gone.

I looked at Marla and said, "Let's go to Lowes and buy a new washing machine."

In retrospect and in defense of Jose this was a relatively new machine and one that he probably wasn't familiar with. And just like today's modern cars you need special diagnostic tools just to find out what's wrong and obviously Jose did not have that tool in his heavy black canvas bag.

Take care, drive safely and see you on the St. Paddy's Day tour, no special tools required. **Andy**

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Unisyn Carburetor Synchronizer: \$12

BSF/Whitworth Tools: 1/2" drive Sockets: \$60; 3/8" drive Sockets: \$30; 22 BA & Whitworth wrenches: \$85

British 7 Taps & 5 Dies, BA & Whitworth: - \$90

Grinder/Polisher w/stand, finishing and polishing stainless steel and aluminum. \$100

Compression gauge, w/ quick disconnect hose and fitted for MG spark plug. \$8

Email Member Don Davis, [fstcobra@hotmail.com](mailto:fstcobra@hotmail.com)



# Mozart Museum Tour

Andy Preston

The words I heard a lot were: unbelievable, incredible, overwhelming, amazing! I used “overwhelming” to describe my own feelings as we toured around John Mozart’s amazing car collection. It truly is a Museum of special cars from the past. Understandably for security reasons, no photography was allowed inside the Museum and so unfortunately, we don’t have any photos to share of these magnificent cars.

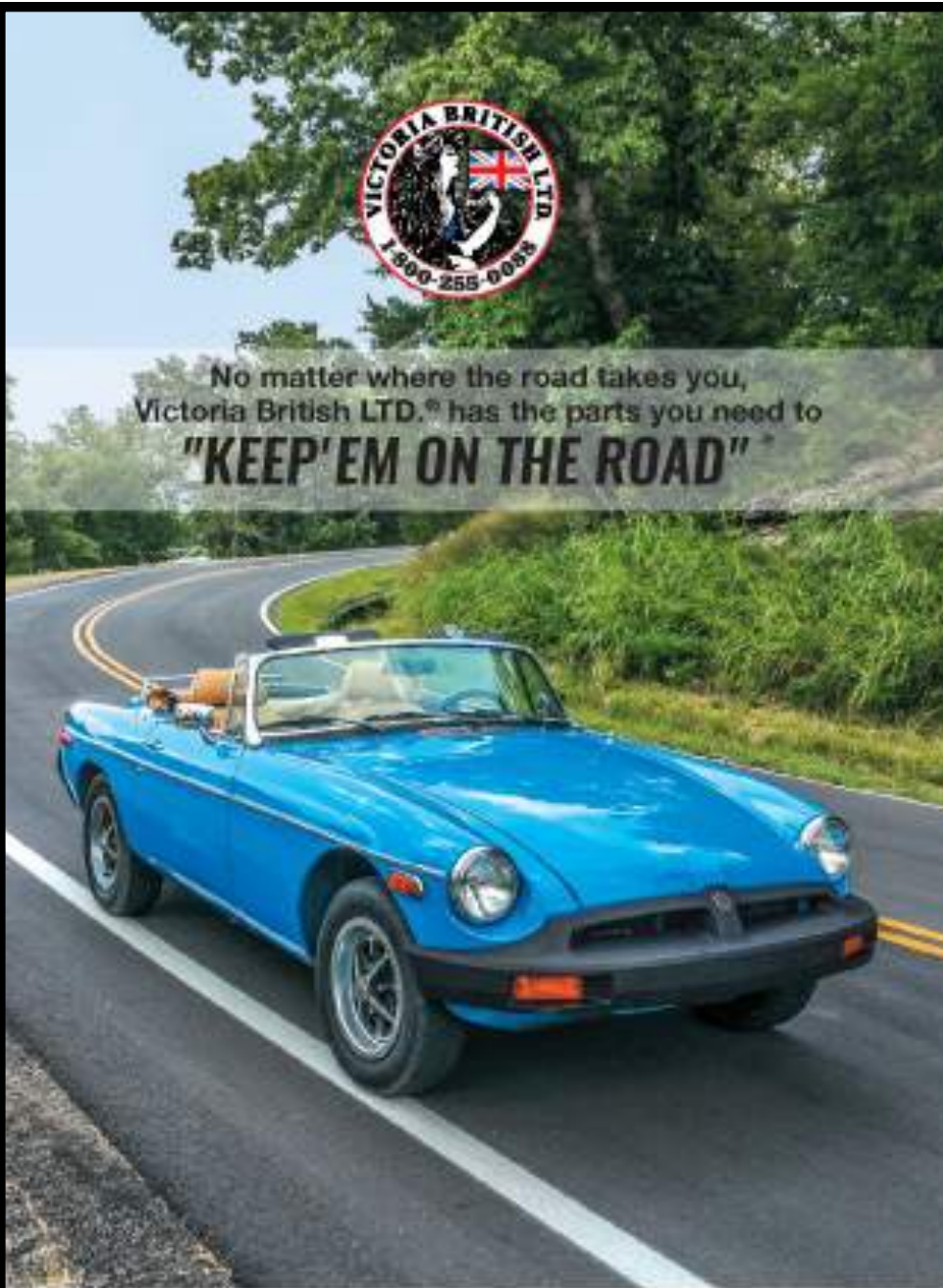
First of all, many thanks to John Mozart for inviting us and thanks to Mike Jacobsen for coordinating with Elaine Sanders (John’s assistant) and putting all this together. It was one of the largest turn outs we’ve ever had with over 70 people attending. I was able to catch up with some members that I haven’t seen in many years which was also a plus

for me.

I had the opportunity to talk to John Mozart for a short while about his collection and John prefers original, un-restored cars if possible with special coach built bodies. You could appreciate the subtle differences in the coachwork of his Packard and Rolls Royce automobiles that were built back in the day by skilled craftsman unlike today’s cars.

My favorite car though was a spectacular 1938 Bugatti Type 57SC Corsica Roadster sporting a custom body built in England. I was mesmerized by the beauty of this stunning, mobile art-form finished in ebony black paint with a depth so deep you thought you could immerse your hand in. I was not the only one because in 1998, this particular car won “Best of Show” at the Pebble Beach Concours. Get the idea!

After we had finished admiring John’s cars, it was back to reality and off to lunch. Mike had chosen “The Tied House” brew pub in Mountain View for our dining delight. It was great and could probably accommodate 100 or more people. The staff were very efficient and the food came up quickly considering the size of our group. I had the Irish Burger (so did Dan) and it was one of the best burgers I’ve ever had. It must have been the combination of the fried onion rings and Jameson whiskey BBQ sauce. Delicious!



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# Mozart Tour Pics

by Dan Shockey





## New Member Max Heim

I purchased a 1966 MGB roadster GHN3L76149 back in 1988. It was kind of an accident. I had gone to look at a surprisingly cheap Tartan Red B with one of my “car buddies” who was looking for a fun summer car. He put \$100 down on it and was planning to complete the purchase the next day. But that night he called me up to say he wasn’t going to go through with it, as he was realizing he needed the money for a planned ski trip to Banff with his fiancé. He suggested I grab it since he had already put \$100 into the price. So I did, and for a total investment of \$600 I had a running, shiny, complete MGB. With rod knock.



Over the course of several years I dropped in a used Gold Seal motor, replaced the transmission with a 4-synco OD unit, and took the car on many long trips, including our honeymoon to Yosemite, a road trip to Portland, two California Melees and other vintage rally events.

But the unkind attentions of modern traffic, constant sun exposure from being parked outdoors, and the inexorable ravages of demon rust (previously concealed under the shiny “resale red” paint job) left me wishing for a more attractive vehicle, but I couldn’t see how to affordably rejuvenate this one. Then in 2014 the mastermind of the California Melee (The Shoog) emailed me about an MGB he had acquired, purportedly a relatively-low-mile 1967 shell, stored indoors for decades. It was missing the left front wing and the front valance, and the interior was rough, but it was very solid, so for \$800 I brought it home, along with a Parish hardtop.

I later found out it was actually a 1966,



GHN3L97421. I finished stripping the parts off the shell and had it trucked to Union Jack in San Martin for a bare metal straightening and a coat of British Racing Green. When it returned (over two years later) I set it up in my carport side by side with “Old Red” and began a lengthy process of removing parts from the red car, cleaning, polishing, refurbishing and painting them, and installing them on the green car. I swapped the entire suspension, since “Red”

Donor MGB at right





was a wire wheel car and “Green” had steel wheels. I had the instrument panel powder-coated, and indulged in a new leather seat kit and new interior panels and floor mats, but for the most part I retained the best of the old components. My goal was not to create a new-looking car, it was just to make a driver that looked attractive and didn’t annoy me with obvious shortcomings.

Early on in this process, I named the project “Uroboros” after the mythical snake that eats its own tail, an ancient symbol of renewal and rebirth. This seemed appropriate as I was dismantling one car in order to create a new one. The green car was finally on the road and registered in August 2018. Naturally, I am still tweaking various aspects, but it is a reliable daily driver at this point.

I have a journal of the restoration on the MGB Experience website, where my user name is “mvheim”. Here are some photos of it in action. My copilot here is the same fellow who was responsible for my purchase of the red car back in ’88. The 3rd picture is at the time of purchase. I am also including photos of the red car, from 1991 and 2009, when it was looking a little sad. Yes, it always had that 1973 grill on it — there was a lot of prior body damage under that paint.

I didn’t join before because I didn’t want to have to apologize for the poor appearance of my car. Not that I think you would have been snobbish about it — it was my own ego I was concerned about. Now I think I have a specimen worthy of the grand traditions of MG, as it were.

#### **Photos from the author**





## New Member Rob Johnson

Thanks for the welcome. I'm excited to be in this group and enjoy my car though I had my first re-introduction to the world of classics on Saturday when my fuel pump died whilst out on a run and then the heavens opened leading to a full soaking! The fun of classics!

Here's a few lines for the MGOC newsletter:

Rob Johnson – 44 year old British Expat living in California for 14 years. Always

had a love for sports cars (and Star Wars) – I sold my 1971 MGB Roadster when I moved to the US and started a 10 year love affair with Porsches before finally trading in my 911 C4S Cab for an 2009 Aston Martin V8 Vantage Roadster which is a sublime car. It also re-ignited my love affair for British cars again so, with a recent move from Marin to Sonoma county, a bigger garage created a chance to buy my dream MG – the MGA.

After a search lasting a few months, I settled on a 1961 MGA 1600 roadster in black with red leather. The car is a 10ft car but I'm working my way through it, repairing various bits and buying new chrome ahead of a full respray next year. I love the simplicity of classics, their beauty and the joy driving one brings along with the smiles of people who enjoy seeing it also – especially when my dog, Gracie, is on the passenger seat with her “doggles” on! (See photo on the front page.)

Regards, Rob



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## Denise McCluggage – A great writer as well as an enthusiast

Article from *Auto Week*

"My car to get me around in the ski country was of all things an MG- TC. Red. I had a ski rack devised that carried one pair of metal skis, then a new idea, attached to the passenger's side front fender and the rear corner of the tiny running board..I traveled alone. The Brits were not much for creature comforts like warmth so I had a heater of sorts installed. It was like a feeble dog breathing fitfully on my ankles.

Coming off a ski hill to drive off into the gathering darkness I donned one of those tent-like parkas with a fur-lined hood left over from the 10th Mountain Division's WWII activities and a second pair of gloves.

A loose roller skate with pretenses of being a sports car was an uncommon sight on any road but in the up- country it would have been cause for open-mouthed gawking. Except up-country folk didn't do that. They had corners of eyes for such unseemly scrutinizing. I got a lot of eye-corner.

But often I was far out of anyone's ken on forsaken roads bandaged in white and collecting more. Maybe I passed the occasional orange rectangle of a farm house window spilling in an elongated image on the crusty surface outside, but mostly it was a trackless path just one snow-plow blade wide that I followed through (I hoped) the semi-wilderness of the Adirondacks.

All these decades later I can replay on my retinal screen the TC's headlights, two distinct little beams, probing into the flurries coming straight at me like a swarm of luminous gnats. That's all there was in the shaken glass ball in which I drove.

When I want the calmness of suspended time, and even suspended gravity, I can allow another image to play across my memory. I reach the lakeside cabin in which I was to stay, the lake recognizable in its masquerade as an expanse of a flat field, some cross-country ski tracks still vaguely visible on its surface. The snow was now floating slowly as if in heavy liquid, each flake turning slowly as if to let me see that it was truly different from its neighbor. Count the sides. See? Six.

As I unfolded out of the TC a haloed light glowed a welcome by the cabin door. Then the snow, almost furry in its fatness, suddenly became motionless and the TC and I, and the lighted cabin door, began moving upward through this mime of a snow flurry. As I rose I collected snow on my shoulders. It melted into tears on my cheeks. I was mesmerized by this magically inverted world for I don't know how long because I think clocks were winding a different way, too. Then the snow simply stopped. I wrestled my bag out of the car, clicked the TC into ticking darkness and went in to bed. Dreams, on nights like this, swirled with snowy roads as well."



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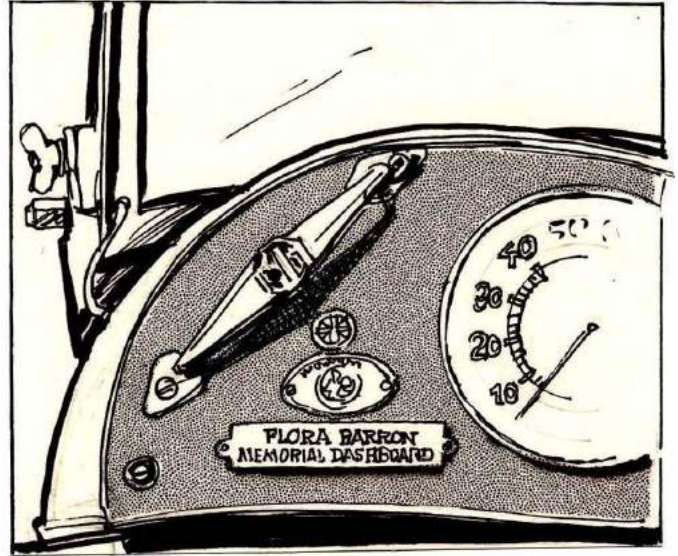
# THE FLORA BARRON MEMORIAL DASHBOARD

By Phil Frank

*Reprinted from the Rough Rider Review, perhaps 20 years ago*

When curious TC owners and curious passers-by look over TC1889, their attention is inevitably drawn to the little brass plaque nestled onto the dashboard just below the passenger's handhold. It reads simply, "FLORA BARRON MEMORIAL DASHBOARD." For the benefit of the curious, here is the story:

TC1889 was acquired by me years ago from an ad in the Chronicle for a disassembled 1946 MG. Best Offer. It was as disassembled as could be without being called a pile of parts. The car had suffered the particular humiliation late in its first incarnation of being left outside top down for three (count 'em, 3) winters. The car was badly vandalized. The piece de resistance of the invading vandal hordes was the dash panel. It appeared to be a team effort. All the gauge glasses had been broken, the needles carefully twisted off and a nice covering of aluminum paint laid over as a finishing touch. Thanks to the weather exposure, the veneer had completely warped off the base wood. It was the sorriest looking part of the restoration challenge. I hung it high on the wall and winced every time I caught a glimpse of it.



As part of my career choice of commercial artist, I draw the "Farley" comic strip for the Chronicle. Previously the strip was syndicated for ten years. Drawing a comic strip which has interesting characters and on-going story lines tends to attract loyal readers. Your daily cartoon becomes an important part of their lives. Something they look forward too, characters they identify with, jokes that cause them to howl or groan. They become very close to their favorite strips and in turn to the creators. So it is not uncommon to receive a dozen letters a week from total strangers telling you of their wonderfully intimate relationship with your characters. They send photographs of themselves, their pets, postcards from vacations, holiday greetings, and occasionally gifts. Enter Flora Barron.

In my humble pile of fan mail at the Chronicle one week was a slightly bulky envelope. The story line in the strip the week before had been about Farley's relationship with Irene the meter maid and a Mrs. Nussbaum who was trying to get Farley and Irene's relationship off the ground. In the envelope were some tiny items and a note. There was a minuscule crocheted stocking cap (one inch across) with a feather attached for Mrs. Nussbaum. A pair of crocheted lace pantaloons for Irene to wear to get Farley's attention. A beautiful flowered straw bonnet for Irene to wear to Easter services with Farley. The attached note describing who the gifts were for was signed FLORA BARRON.

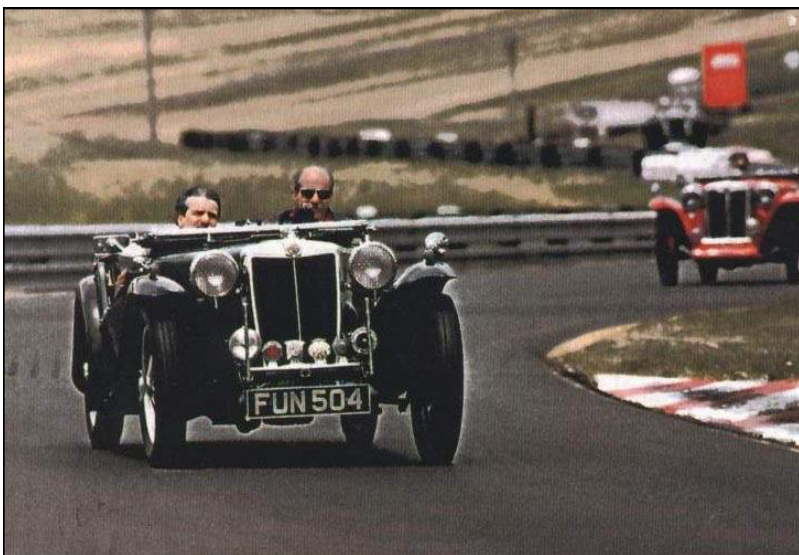
The next week a note arrived with a tiny necklace of bells for Bruce the Raven to wear so that Farley and Irene could have some privacy. The next week found a lucky two dollar bill. The following week, when the story line was about Geraldine, my homeless bag lady, the gift awaiting me at the Chronicle was a five pound bar of surplus cheese. The following week found a ring box with a note attached. It said simply "Your inheritance from the bag lady." Inside the box was a gorgeous amethyst Victorian gold ring. The receipt attached was from the Brooks Hall antiques show. Price \$325. At this point I became a bit concerned so I looked up Flora Barron in the phone book and called her. I introduced myself, indicating how much I had been enjoying her gifts and expressing my concern at the same time that she shouldn't be spending money on the gifts as she had done with the ring. She poo-pooed the concern and said she was having fun. I asked if we could get together the next week for lunch. She was extremely suspicious of my motives. At 86 years of age she had adopted a bit of caution about strangers. She



agreed reluctantly, told me to watch my mail and hung up. The next day at the Chronicle was an unscratched lottery ticket. It was a \$2 winner so I sent it back to her. When we met for lunch the following week she brought two more tickets.

Over lunch I was able to find out from Ms. Flora Barron (she'd never married) that she crocheted dolls clothing in her Ellis Street apartment. Couldn't keep up with the demands for her talents, taught folk dancing at the Ellis Street Senior Center, had been secretary to Mr. Dollar of Dollar Steamship Lines during the war. Before that she had summer jobs at Yosemite, commuting about the valley on a bicycle. At the end of our lunch she produced two lottery tickets. We sat there in the Hungry Bear Chinese restaurant on Ellis Street scratching our lottery tickets. Mine came up 3 KINGS. It was a \$500 winner. I was delighted to split the winnings but Flora insisted I spend the money on the "old car" I was working on. She snatched the ticket away from me and told me she'd cash it and that I should meet her at noon the next Friday in front of the Hungry Bear. When I arrived the next week at the appointed hour, there was Flora. We greeted and she carefully scanned up and down Ellis Street, commenting that, "One can't be too careful these days." She then reached up her sleeve and removed a small brown bag. From inside the brown bag she removed a plastic wrapper. Inside the plastic wrapper were five one hundred dollar bills. It looked for all the world that a drug buy was going down. She pressed them into my hand and told me to be sure I spent it on the "old car" and tottered off to her folk dancing lesson.

I called Mike O'Connor, ordered my destroyed gauges and got a price on rebuilding the tach and speedometer. I then ordered an African teak dash from the peninsula dash maker and added up the costs: \$492. The balance of eight dollars went to having the plate made, "THE FLORA BARRON MEMORIAL DASHBOARD," and that's the story.



Phil in FUN504, with his Road & Track cartoon partner Joe Troise.

Below: I think the plaque has fallen off...



# Keep Planning for 2019 ...



Men love tools! Great deals from member Don Davis. See page 7.



## SPRING

Pub Night, Friday, March 8, On the Road Again  
 MGOC Club Meeting, Sat., March 9, Nations  
 St. Patrick's Day Tour, Sun. March 17, Sonoma Valley  
 MGOC Club Meeting, Sat. April 6, Nations  
 Pub Night, Friday, April 12, On the Road Again  
 CSGR Vintage Races, Club Paddock, Sat., April 13  
 SSTs Delta Tour, Thurs., April 18, MGOC welcome



## SUMMER

Pacific Coast Dream Machines, April 28  
 Dixon All British Meet, Sunday, May 19, Caravan  
 Elkhorn Slough Tour, Sat., June 1, Dave Marsh  
 Stuffing Party, El Cerrito, Friday, June 7  
 MGs by the Bay, Greenbrae, Saturday, June 8  
 MGOC Cobra Museum, Winery BBQ, Sun., July 21

## Pub Nights! March 8 & April 12

### On The Road Again - Morgan Hill

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G4

Our next Pub Night of the season will be Friday, March 8th. Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship.

Please bring some wine or beer to share and we will provide snacks.

By Bill & Mary Hiland





# MGOC Minutes – Saturday Feb 9, 2019

## *Nation's, El Cerrito*

**Call to Order:** Andy Preston at: 10:03

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

**Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Dec 16, 2018: *Motion:* Mike, *Second:* Marcia

### REPORTS

**President's Report:** Andy Preston: Good to be back at Nation's for another gourmet breakfast. I'm looking forward to another great year for the club with lots of activities.

**Vice President's Report:** Kirk Prentiss: Birthday yesterday; survived the Annual Brunch.

**Treasurers Report:** Marla Preston:

| Account  | February 2019 | December 2018 |
|----------|---------------|---------------|
| Checking | 15,563.86     | 15,772.39     |
| Savings  | 3,588.15      | 3,652.97      |
| Total    | 19,152.01     | 19,425.36     |

Since the last Treasurer's Report we have paid for *Octagon* printing and mailing costs, paid to subsidize the Annual Brunch, and received several payments for this year's commercial ads.

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

**Registrar's Report:** Steve Kellogg: Absent, report by email:

|            |                                  |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| 148        | Regular Members                  |
| 49         | Regular Family Members           |
| 197        | Total Regular and Family Members |
| 11         | Corresponding Members            |
| 4          | Corresponding Family Members     |
| 15         | Total Corresponding and Family   |
| <b>212</b> | <b>Total Members</b>             |

**Corresponding Secretary's Report:** George Steneberg: Nothing to report.

**Regalia Report:** Nothing to report.

**The Octagon Report:** Dan Shockey: Noted that he needs to correct Annual Picnic date. There was a discussion of the text size used in the newsletter. Den felt it was large, but was asked to leave it as is in regards of the older members.

**Website Report:** Steve Kellogg: Absent.

**PAST EVENTS:** Thanks to John & Sharon Hunt for hosting the Spud Joint Crab tour in Bodega Bay and the weather was great. Thanks to Elaine for hosting the Planning meeting in January and

thanks to Marla for Annual Brunch at a new venue, Moss Beach Distillery, which was great.

**UPCOMING EVENTS** (MGOC sponsored events are in **bold text**)

**Feb 23, 2019**      **MGOC Mozart Museum Tour, Mountain View, Mike Jacobsen**

**Mar 9, 2019**      **MGOC Club/Board Meeting, Nation's**

**Mar 17, 2019**      **MGOC St. Patrick's Day Tour, Sonoma, Andy & Marla Preston** – Already have several people signed up and Dan Livingood driving down from Oregon.

**Apr 13, 2019**      **CSRG Vintage Races, Sears Pt. MGOC Club Paddock, Dan Shockey** – A track tour may not be available. Dan will check. There was a discussion on whether or not we should hold the event if there's no track tour included. No decision was made.

Apr 18, 2019      SSTS Delta Tour

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

### NEW BUSINESS

**MGs by the Bay:** Bon Air requires double the usual insurance coverage, which is also double the insurance available to us. Andy has an inquiry in to Bon Air asking if they can lower their required insurance amount. If not, the show will return to The Livery in Danville, hopefully on June 9.

**Member at Large:** Craig Kuenzinger has been one of the Members at Large, but has been unable to attend meetings or events for two years. The Board will seek a new Member at Large.

**Book of the Month:** *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens. Recommended by the Prestons.

**BUSINESS RESOLVED ONLINE SINCE LAST MEETING:** None

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Marla believes that Reese Witherspoon owns an MGB and wishes to contact her about a complimentary MGOC membership. Marla will investigate.

PBS fans should watch *Midsummer Murders* to see an MGA.

**NEXT MEETING:** Will be at Nation's Delectable Delights, El Cerrito on Saturday March 9.

Meeting adjourned at: 10:45

Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen

## From Page 6

Wow. Great to hear from all of you. I'm Michael Gallagher, Dave's father. I bought the car by mail, sight unseen, in 1968 when I was 17 years old, for \$700 USD, including the shipping from England. Shortly thereafter I joined the Triple M Register and lived in New York City. The car was entirely original, and while a friend and I worked on it, I never really drove it after 1969. Dave's taken over the project and we're both delighted that the car remains in our family, after 50 years! - **Michael J. Gallagher, Columbus, OH**

I've been meaning to pull together a comprehensive history of the car. Once I do I can share it with anyone interested as well. Unfortunately if they are specifically interested in the UK registration / license plate, so far I have basically no information from the time period between the first owner as listed on the delivery card, F.J. Bacon, and when my dad received it in New York. - **Dave Gallagher**

MGB Commercial- America's Largest Selling Imported Sports Car. Watch at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7b0yRkQYSnc> - **Don in Napa**

I am still working on trying to get a date pinned down for the T Register Tour & Picnic. I think the basic plan will be to visit a couple of wineries and try to pick one where we can stay for a while and have a picnic lunch. I talked to Bill Hiland and he offered that we could stop by his shop on our way to the winery. - **Jim Carlson**

Brooklyn bike photo at right: It's an art piece to me. I've been photographing it *in situ* for about five years now! - **Marty Rahman**



## Randolph Grossman

**From the San Francisco Chronicle, Feb. 19, 2019, Submitted by Marcia Crawford**

Randolph (Randy) Morgan Grossman, 70, of Tucson, Arizona, died on New Years Day, January 1, 2019. Born in Muskegon, Michigan, on April 14, 1948, he was the son of the late Herman and Rosalind Grossman and is survived by his wife, Melissa Johnson, his two children, Sarah Grossman and Jacob Grossman, and two grandchildren. In Randy's own words, "My wonderful son and daughter have been a constant source of joy and amazement."

Randy attended the University of Michigan from 1968 to 1985, earning a BA in Psychology, an MPH in Health Planning and Administration, and a Ph.D. in Urban Technology and Environmental Planning.

Randy was a manager at HFS Consultants, a California health care consulting firm providing research and planning for hospitals, senior housing, and long-term care facilities. After retirement, he helped form Health Tech Capital, an angel investing team to help fund health care startups. His passion for innovations led Randy to invest in a three-wheel electric car.

Besides adoration for Melissa and his role as grandpa, Randy loved sports, fishing, travel, jazz, fine wine and food, and cars, often combining those pleasures. He was a passionate Michigan sports fan, constantly wearing the Michigan colors, and was greeted all over the world with, "Go Blue!"

During his life he owned some 35 cars, from Porsches to Corvettes. He entered his 1962 MGA Mk. II in concours competitions and enjoyed participating in the MG Owners Club, where he was known as the "Captain of Fun." He and his wife were able to combine his passion for cars and travel on a trip to Great Britain, where they toured the countryside in an MGB, sporting, with characteristic humor, a sign reading, "YANK DRIVER, BE PATIENT, THANK YOU."

Randy's life will be celebrated at a party on Sunday, March 10, at his home in Tucson. All friends and family are welcome to attend.



## 1959 MGA 1600 Roadster MkI 1/18 Die Cast Model

Finished in an eye-catching red paint scheme, this 1/18 scale, die cast model of a 1959 MGA 1600 Roadster MK I — replicating the cool roadster Elvis owned & drove in *Blue Hawaii* — features authentic vintage badging, gleaming chrome-plated accents, real rubber tires, and collectible display box. 8½" long. So if you missed buying a large scale MGA before, there is a special one now available. Matchbox did a nice diorama, too.



## Classified Ads

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

5 Wire Wheels: Original from my '67 MGB-GT. These are 14x4.5x60 spokes and all tires have been removed. In Los Gatos. \$250 OBO. Member Larry G., [LSGITT@yahoo.com](mailto:LSGITT@yahoo.com) (Posted 2/19)



1976 MGB: Orange/Black Roadster with 4-cyl 1798cc Engine (95hp). 33,000 miles. New Retro Radio. All maintenance records. Won the Premier Class twice at MG-by-the-Bay. 12 awards from other regional car shows. Featured in the SF Chronicle and other national car magazines since. Condition between 1 and 2. Tom Doyle at 520-220-6228, [wtdoyleii@gmail.com](mailto:wtdoyleii@gmail.com) Asking \$15,000. Purchased an MGC! (Reposted 1/19)

British Car Tools & Fasteners: Don Davis info on page 7. (Posted 3/19)



MGB Radiator: New from Moss 3 years ago and as far as I know it is as good as new. It has a booster fan attached to it and the radiator has been modified to include a drain cock. Make Offer. Dave Marsh, h) 650-964-2341, c) 650-823-9938; email: [marshes1@yahoo.com](mailto:marshes1@yahoo.com) (Posted 1/19)

Enclosed Trailer for Rent: Enclosed car trailer for rent (16' x 8'). Trailer has integrated braking system and lights, 12 volt Electric Winch. Reasonable rates. Eric Baker (510) 517-2165



**We list ads for 3 months. Advise if you want them extended. For additional ads, see prior issues of The Octagon. Prior issues of The Octagon and other classified ads may be found on our web site.**

# Mr. Toad Hits the Road

With help from a VW Bug

by Dan Shockey

I wanted to attend a New Years Day breakfast and drive. I hadn't had a chance to test Mr. Toad, my 1935 P-type MG, after quite a bit of work. It overheated the last time I drove it so I was reluctant to make a long drive - 60 miles is a good long drive in it - without a good test. I compromised by doing the test drive on New Years Day instead.

I installed a new distributor in the P after finding the advance in the original one wasn't functioning. An after-market Bosch VW Bug unit is a near drop-in replacement. I bought a Chinese clone from Amazon for \$25 complete. (The MMM MG and VW Bug distributors rotate the opposite direction from other MGs and most cars.) I also tuned up the MG with new plugs and checked the valve timing as best I could. I found various minor problems with the carbs and settings. How did it run so well before?

The engine had always sounded rather "agricultural" to me. I attributed that to the worn valve rockers. When I rebuilt the motor, I was unemployed and didn't want to buy new hardened rockers. I got a few used ones from Terry Sanders. (Thanks again, Terry, for all your support.) I had many happy hours hand grinding the rockers with a diamond file, trying to approximate the correct profile.

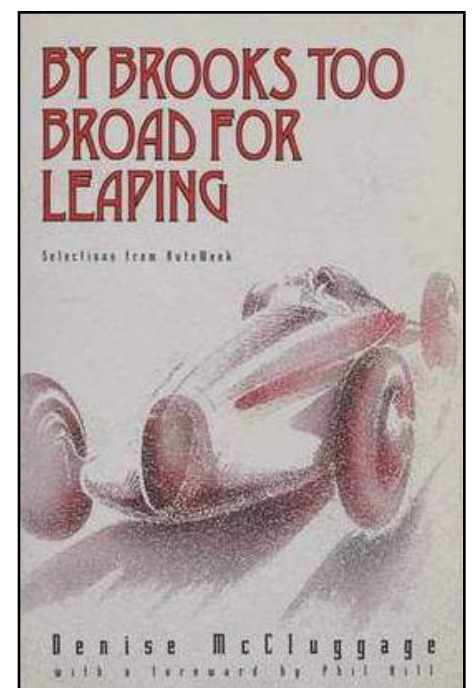
I was surprised at how well the engine ran this cold day in January. And it didn't sound bad. It started well and rev'd up to 6000 rpm and beyond with no problem. Distributor advance is a wonderful thing. The overheating seemed fixed on this cold day though it overheated in the driveway when I got home. (It never did that before so I wonder if the timing is now too advanced at idle.) The brakes worked well, too, when the stoplight changed and I decided to test them. Loud tire squeal - the wheels locked - but it stopped quickly.

I have debated how best to tow the P since I no longer have a tow vehicle and sold the 8-foot trailer I used before. Last month I found a VW Bug tow bar that seemed might work. If I flat tow it, then there is no tongue weight and lower tow weight so I could tow it with my Ford or Thuy's CRV, or even an MGB. And I can avoid using risky ramps. I had to cut and bend the tow bar to attach to the front axle. I think it will work well but I haven't tried it yet. My narrow tow dolly - home-made for the MMM cars - is my backup.

I used to tow Mr. Toad and other MGs with an old heavy home-made VW Bug tow bar but it was a pain to use and required me to crawl under the car with U-bolts. I don't crawl under cars so well anymore. I towed it to the GOF West at Napa with the tow bar. That was the one that Bill Tantau organized and my first GOF experience. Dad came out and we drove the P on the Sears Point track with the group.

I plan to have Mr. Toad at an event or two this new year. Thank you for all the help and encouragement that I get from club members.

**Denise McCluggage book available.**





## MGs by the Bay – Again!

**Saturday, June 8, 2019**

Your President and officers have taken *MGs by the Bay* back to the Bay, with a new venue at the Bon Air Center in Greenbrae. This spot has a lot to offer with shops and restaurants and a convenient junction of headland and Bay, and of 101 and 580. We can do it on a Saturday there and have selected June 8 for the 2019 all-MG show.

We also decided to invite another club to attend the show, the Nash Metropolitan club. Metros share engines with MGs. It will likely be only a few cars but we think it will add a fun new element to the event. Marja van den Hende bridges these two car worlds. Her Metro is nearly back on the road, I hear, following a full restoration begun by Marja's husband Rick.

We will hold our packet stuffing "party" on Friday morning. Details to follow!



Bon Air is Greenbrae's gathering place for shopping, dining, playing and relaxing. Choose from 50 specialty merchants, family-friendly restaurants and essential services conveniently located in the heart of Marin. For 65-years and counting, Bon Air's welcoming outdoor spaces and spectacular Mt. Tam views have provided a sense of place for special events and the community.

### 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](mailto:registrar@namgar.com).



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



**MGOC Meeting**  
*Nosh 'n 'Natter*  
**Saturday, March 9, April 6**



**Date: Saturday, March 9, April 6**

**9am: Breakfast**

**10am: Meeting**

**Nation's Giant Hamburgers**

**6060 Central Ave., El Cerrito**

**510-528-8888**

**More Info: Andy Preston**

**[andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)**

***We look forward to seeing you!***

