



THE OCTAGON



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



Since 1957!



Jan. 4 - Planning Meeting

Jan. 19 - Annual Brunch

January 2020

About *The Octagon* and the MG Owners Club

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

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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 1974-1980: Ed Adams, 510-483-6821 AdamsEddie77@yahoo.com
MGB V8 Conversion: Tony Bates, 408-666-6174, avbates@yahoo.com
MGC: Kent Leech, 925-253-9757, kent@kentleech.com
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mgpb36@yahoo.com

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PA/PB Midget 1934-36: Eric Baker, 510-531-7032, mgpb36@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. 2005 rates are: monthly (yearly): full pg. \$25 (\$240), half page \$18 (\$175), third page \$12 (\$120), business card \$8 (\$75).

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

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO *THE OCTAGON*

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

RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

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

MGOC.SF.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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*MGOC Annual Brunch and it's a
Champagne Brunch
Sunday January 19, 2020*



This year the Annual MGOC Brunch will be a *Champagne Brunch* and will be held again at the Historic Moss Beach Distillery in Moss Beach. We have a private room overlooking the Pacific and the *Brunch* is rated #1 in the Bay Area.

Your *Brunch* will include; Fresh baked pastries, cup of seasonal fruit, your choice from 4 entrees; Salmon, Skirt Steak, Pulled Pork Rancheros or California Coastal Omelet, Tea, Coffee, OJ and of course Champagne and Mimosas.

12:00 Noon, Sunday, January 19, 2020
Moss Beach Distillery, 140 Beach Way, CA 94038
\$25/person (MGOC members) and \$45/person (non members) paid in advance

RSVP by January 12, 2020 with your check made out to the MGOC and mail to:
Marla Preston, 7305 Rebas Way, Rohnert Park CA, 94928

707 795 3480, marlapreston@hotmail.com

To pay through PayPal go to the website at: www.mgocsf.org and under Announcements click on "read more" under the Annual Brunch.

From the Editor

Happy New Year! Happy New Decade! May this be a time of growth and peace. I am late getting this issue done (once again). We were away for Christmas and very busy before that.

I have been fighting a sinus infection for the past 8 weeks. That put paid any thoughts of starting my MGA drivetrain transplant. (Excuses, excuses.) I did get a little work done to the PA yesterday, installed the rebuilt rev counter and new speedometer cable. It started right up with only a fuel pump leak. (Fixed by tightening the six screws holding it together.)

I keep forgetting about our planning meeting, early this year and this Saturday. Seems we have challenges to create events that will draw out our aging populace despite the heavy traffic and careless drivers in our crowded Bay Area.

Time to start planning to attend the big events relatively close to us this year. That can be a great way to get to know other enthusiasts and really spend some time with the sport and your MG.

Blessings,

Dan



UMG 400, the 1952 Le Mans TD from which the MGA was evolved. Here it is seen on test with George Phillips at the wheel. Photo from Mike Allison's book, The Magic of the Marque.

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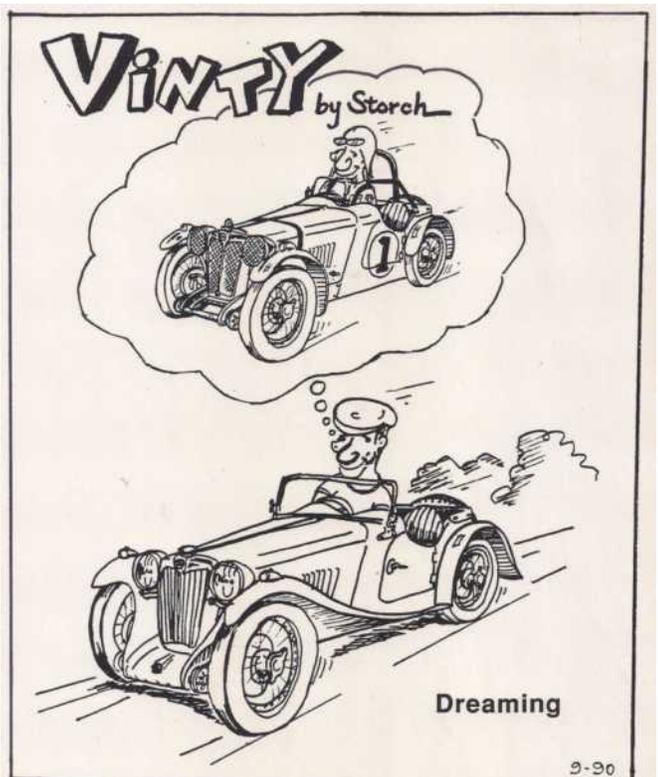
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MGOC Planning Meeting

Saturday, January 4, 10:00 a.m.

Please join us!

We need you 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 4, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.

Location: Marcia Crawford's house at 150 Purdue Ave, Kensington, 94708

Event: At this time we'll be planning the dates and locations for our monthly meetings, tours and events. The club will provide Tea and Coffee and donuts and pastries.



Please RSVP to Andy Preston 707 795 3480, andypreston@att.net

Directions from the North or South Bay Area: Take Eastshore Freeway 80 or Highway 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. Pass stores on your right and 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 up three to four houses to find parking.



Right: Britain in the Roaring Twenties.

New Member!

Hello MG club, I am a 15 year old interested in building an MGB as a first car! My father is willing to help me. (I have helped restore my father's 1957 Plymouth Belvedere so I have some experience). I have found a few different cars but was wondering if I could reach out to you guys and maybe gets some tips as to where to find parts, tips and tricks when it comes to building cars and or even cars themselves to purchase and work on!! Can't wait to see how things turn out!!- Andreas Pichardo, andreas.c.p24@gmail.com

Welcome to the MG Owners Club!

Below is an MGOC award from The Stargazers Rally, August 20, 1960. This 2nd Place trophy came from Skip Kelsey's estate sale, if I remember correctly. - Dan

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President's Ponderings



Happy New Year to all MGOC members and I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday season. And many thanks to Elaine and Mike for hosting the Holiday lunch which was a great way to start off the Christmas season; and just one day before they left for a vacation in Maui.

I think that we are very fortunate to live in the Bay Area and able to drive our cars almost every day and especially if the weather is nice. Many of our colleagues in other states put their cars into hibernation in the Autumn and don't get them back out until Spring.

I mention this because Marla and I were able to drive our MGA Coupe on the Annual Boxing Day Run, the day after Christmas on a beautiful dry and sunny day. The drive is hosted every year by our friend Wendell Bain and this was the 22nd year he has done it. WOW! This was originally a Morgan club event but now the ride is open to all cars and attracts all types both new and old, though mainly British. The drive took us over wonderful back roads of Sonoma County and finishing up at a pub for lunch

Over lunch someone asked me what is Boxing Day and how did it start. During my years growing up in Birmingham, England it was explained to me that it is a tradition that dates back to the 1800s and maybe even earlier. On the day after Christmas the wealthy people would package up the left over food and gifts from Christmas Day and put them into **boxes** and give them to their servants or take them to the orphanages and poor houses; and hence the day became known as **Boxing** Day. Another explanation is that it started in the Middle Ages when the churches had Alms Boxes (collection boxes for the poor) and these boxes were opened on Boxing Day and the money distributed to the poor. Either way its great tradition and is celebrated as a National Holiday in the UK, Canada, Australia and other countries that had a strong British influence.

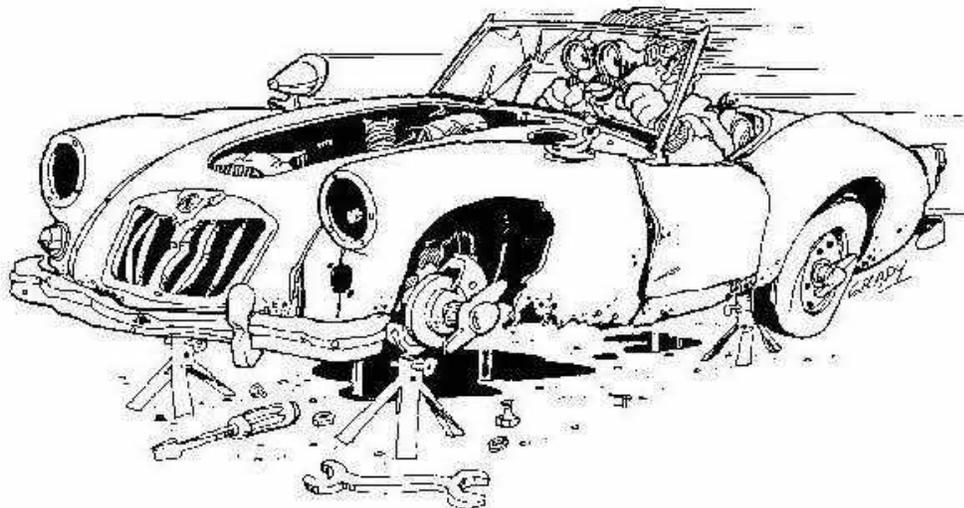
I'm pleased to tell you that MG cars are alive and well. Our son, John, just returned from a vacation in Asia and he couldn't believe the number of MGs he saw in Thailand and even some in Vietnam. Now these aren't old MGs but the new ones made and sold by SAIC in China. (However they are designed in Birmingham, London as well as Shanghai). He was very impressed with the overall design, quality and finish. Who knows one day MGs may return to the US.

We had a full calendar of events for last year so let's see if we can do the same for this year. Our Planning Meeting will be at 10:00 am on Saturday, January 4, 2020 and be held at Marcia Crawford's house at 150 Purdue Ave in Kensington, see the flyer in the Octagon for more information, we'd love to see you there.

Our second event in January will be our Signature Annual Brunch which is a really fun event and where we get to meet and greet new and old friends. This year we will be returning to Historic Moss Beach Distillery for a Champagne Brunch. It will be on Sunday January 19th at 12:00 Noon. We have a private room overlooking the bay. The food is absolutely wonderful and something not to miss. See the flyer for more information.

Take care and drive safely,

Andy



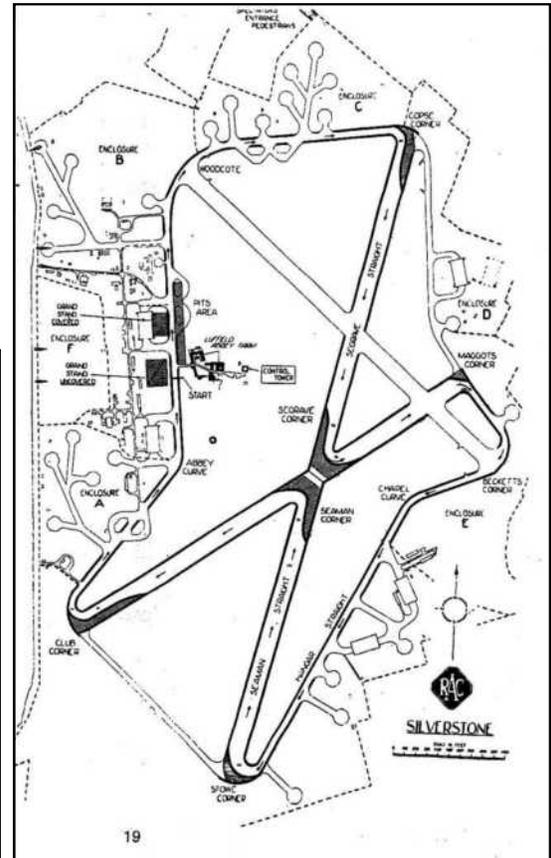




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Silverstone Race Course

This early map shows how the airport runways and taxiways were used to create an interesting if rather flat road race course.

Silverstone is the site of the annual **MG Live!** event and other vintage and current races.

Eric Baker in his MG PB at top left. The P was restored by early MG specialist Tom Medcraft in Ohio.

Rick A's A – A New Member's Story

Hello. My name is Richard Anguiano.

This car was originally purchased by my beloved Aunt Rosie. She was the matriarch of my mother's family the oldest sister, the go-getter. She took me in when I was out of the house at 17 and helped me get through college. She took me down to Disneyland and make sure I got a job there. The woman was a saint! She taught me that I have class and told me that I would have it even if it killed me. When I was 16 she taught me how to drive in this 1961 MGA that she had bought brand new in 1960. This was the first car I ever drove. As the years went on and I lived with her for a while, I did all the maintenance on the car that I could for her: oil changes , spark plugs, tune-ups , tire rotation and so forth. I even helped her strip it down and prepared for the paint shop. Originally the car was Dove Gray with a red interior. She had the interior changed over to Black, and the car changed to Old English White. It was about this time but she told me someday this car would be mine. That was about 1977.

I got my wife and we were married in 1980. About that time, my aunt could not maintain the MGA any longer and asked if I wish to buy it from her. My new bride and I had only been married for two years and as young couples often do are struggling just to make ends meet. We did not have the money to purchase it and with a heavy heart I told her, "I'm sorry auntie we won't be able to buy it from you". She then sold the car to a brother-in-law. Tom purchased the car from my aunt for \$2,000 back in 1982. Tom drove the car for about a year and had really no experience with British sports cars so he parked it in his garage at his house up by Dodger Stadium. The MGA sat in this garage 35 years. Oh, it had a fresh paint job when it went into the garage. You may know what it's like to pick up a vehicle that's been sitting, kind of a barn find. The car looked still in pristine condition but oxidation and time took its toll.



After Tom passed away he left the car and a lot of other things to his son, Tom Jr. Some 25 years ago I had mentioned to my Aunt that I would be interested in getting the MG back should ever become available. As I was coming home from a graduation in Arizona, a text message flashed across my phone asking if I was still interested in the MGA. I pulled the truck over and in a heart beat responded absolutely, I can only think of one MGA that I would be interested in.

I had previously owned a 76 and a 79 MGB. I was into the British sports cars and the love of them but I never thought I would have the opportunity to own my aunt's MGA. Before I even gotten home I'd already brokered the deal to buy back the MGA regardless of any condition in may have been in, sight unseen. I was prepared to pay as much as \$12,000 at the time but I was fortunate to get it for a considerable amount less. Four days later I was down in LA picking it up. It is now sitting in my garage is undergoing restoration and I have fulfilled the promise my aunt made that this car would one day be mine.

This car holds more sentimental value to me than anything else. It is a beauty and she is gorgeous. My hopes and aspirations are to have it running by February 2020.

I hope I didn't bore anybody with the story. I am not a writer, but every time I look at this car it reminds me of my aunt and all the places that she took me in it.

We shared a room as I was growing up at my parents house and later on we shared an apartment while I was going through college and working at Disneyland. Now I share of such great memories and the love still for my hand and I am honored to be able to album have a piece of a legend that lives on in my heart.

Thank you for reading and allowing me to share story of my aunt's MGA.

Best Regards
Ric



Leonard Lord – Was he really the villain he is portrayed?

by Geoff Broadhead, from the *Bulletin*, MMM Register, UK

Introduction:

The MG Car Company changed ownership in July 1935 having, up until then, been William Morris' personal business. William Morris (by now Lord Nuffield) sold MG Car Company to Morris Motors Ltd (which later became the Nuffield Corporation), a company which he also controlled. The Company was managed by Leonard Lord.

During a visit to Abingdon not long after the acquisition, and having toured the racing and development department, Leonard Lord created "MG folklore", by instructing: "*Well that bloody lot can go for a start*". I guess amongst MG enthusiasts Lord's name would forever feature high on any shortlist of the most disliked persons in the history of MG Cars. According to "MG folklore" Leonard Lord ended the golden era for MG.

Whilst he can certainly be "credited" with terminated the Triple-M era for MG, is the "folklore" criticism of Lord fair and objective, or is it simply an emotive over-reaction from MG enthusiasts? I think emotion has over-ruled common sense, and the emotive misconception has simply been perpetuated over the intervening decades, without being properly challenged.

Last year I began to document the history of 1935 R-type, RA 0253 and I inundated Bob Milton (the R-type Registrar) with my questions. I learned a lot from Bob, mostly about R-type development, but some of the information from Bob reinforced my suspicions about where the real blame should rest.

Leonard Lord was not the villain that Triple-M enthusiasts have portrayed him out to be in "MG Folklore" for all of eight intervening decades – the real 'villain' was someone else: and MG enthusiasts may not like my suggestion of who the real villain was!

The Facts;

If we stick to the facts and try to keep emotion out of the story, then we know:

- William Morris was a successful industrialist: such people are motivated by one thing - money (and profits). He very much liked things done his way – and he liked to be in control. Although a very wealthy philanthropist by this stage, he was also extremely frugal with his own lifestyle.
- It was well known that William Morris had reservations about motor racing. Indeed, he is reported to have said: *“there isn’t a motor firm that has supported racing that hasn’t had the Receiver in”*.
- The MG Car Co annual sales had been steadily falling since 1932.
- * Martyn Nutland, in ***'The Age of Aquarius'*** commented: *“..and MG’s figures are disastrous. Between 1930 and 1934 they had shown a total trading surplus of just £419. By September 1935 they had broken all their records by losing an incredible £28,156 with sales at a five-year low. ”* *“In 1930 racing had cost just over £1,000, in 1931 it had consumed nearly five, was back to £2,700 in 1932 but at the all-time high of £5,863 in 1933 while at the time of MG’s acquisition by Morris Motors on 1 July 1935, it was already rushing again towards £5,000. In addition, the development costs for the R-type single-seater racing car were being concealed in the everyday accounting”*
- To put these costs into perspective, in 1934 only 8 Q-type race cars were produced which sold for £550 each, the entire production run generating only £4,400 revenue (and probably very little profit).
- The Q-type (1934) sales were so few that it may well have reinforced William Morris' opinion that MG was wasting time and money (his profit!) in trying to develop racing cars.
- In 1935 the R-type project had taken things much further in the racing direction. The R-type was a purpose-built racecar, the first such car produced by MG. Previous MG racecars had all been developed from production cars.
- When the R-types were built, Eyston formed a race team from the first three R-types off the production line. These cars were entered by Eyston and, until liaising with Bob Milton recently, I had no idea that Eyston never actually owned these three R-types. They were really 'Works' cars fronted by Eyston.
- I suspect that after the Q-type sales, William Morris must have had serious reservations about the development and production of the R-type and the general direction that Cecil Kimber was taking MG. Where is the profit? Did William Morris know about the R-type development – concealing these costs in general accounting confirms he had not signed off on the project; otherwise why conceal the costs?
- As William Morris looked at his MG Car Company, he saw a business that was struggling to achieve sales/profit targets and in fact it may have been losing money; the R-type development costs were concealed from him and, did William Morris ever agree to sponsoring a works race team? I'm sure he didn't agree. I suspect that this is why we, like William Morris, were deceived into believing Eyston owned 'his' team of three R-types. The only reason for this deception was to try to avoid William Morris being aware of the extent of MG Car Company's commitment to racing, and the real ownership of the three R-types. Had Morris known about the arrangement and agreed to it, then the cars would have been entered as MG team cars.
- Cecil Kimber was becoming increasingly independent, and some say arrogant. It is alleged that Morris was by now becoming very frustrated by Kimber and his own inability to control him.
- No doubt reinforcing William Morris concerns at this time must have been letters sent by Cecil Kimber to AIACR (Association Internationale des Automobiles Clubs Reconnus – now known as the FIA) and to The Times newspaper regarding proposed future Grand Prix formula for the 1937/38 and 1939 race seasons. That Kimber wanted to influence the new Grand Prix formula can only have been for one reason. I imagine that, for William Morris who must have at least seen Cecil Kimber's letter to The Times if not to the AIACR, these thoughts must have reinforced his determination to reign in Kimber. Remember that the success of the Morris motor cars had made Morris enormously wealthy, but he maintained a very simple lifestyle, preferring to put his wealth to work to benefit others. Not the exactly the traits of a person who would wish to invest in Grand Prix racing!

The Real Villain:

I suspect William Morris always had a 'soft spot' - if industrialists do have such feelings - for Cecil Kimber. He liked him but, by 1935 knew he could not control him; The MG Car Company was no longer focused on profits but, increasingly, upon success in motorsport. Making things worse for Kimber was his “ballooning ego” (to quote The Independent), *“which increasingly irked William Morris”*.

I'm afraid the real villain is, I believe, Cecil Kimber himself! Cecil Kimber simply overplayed his hand. Kimber was obviously a clever salesman (and such individuals are often perceived by others as both forceful and arrogant). Indeed, without the single-mindedness such individuals possess perhaps nothing would ever be achieved. I think it was this mix of his determination and arrogance plus his long-standing, good relationship with William Morris which enabled, or encouraged, Kimber to gradually act in an increasingly autonomous manner. As a result, The MG Car Company direction and William Morris' objectives for establishing The MG Car Company were increasingly moving in opposing directions. To William Morris, Kimber was becoming uncontrollable, and he knew he had to reign him in some way.

Morris' solution to his problem was to sell MG Cars to Morris Motors. Under such a re-structure, Kimber would report to Leonard Lord the CEO of Morris Motors. Kimber's autonomy would then be controlled in a way that William Morris felt unable to do, or was reluctant to do himself.

Consider the sale of The MG Car Company to Morris Motors from another perspective; William Morris had sold what had been his personal business to Morris Motors, a Company controlled by Morris. The CEO of Morris Motors would be mad to immediately rush in and re-structure the MG business and its direction/focus unless he had been instructed to do so. Lord was no fool. That would have been insulting to William Morris. My belief is Lord was told by William Morris to reign in Kimber and ensure that he focused on his profit line, not motor racing.

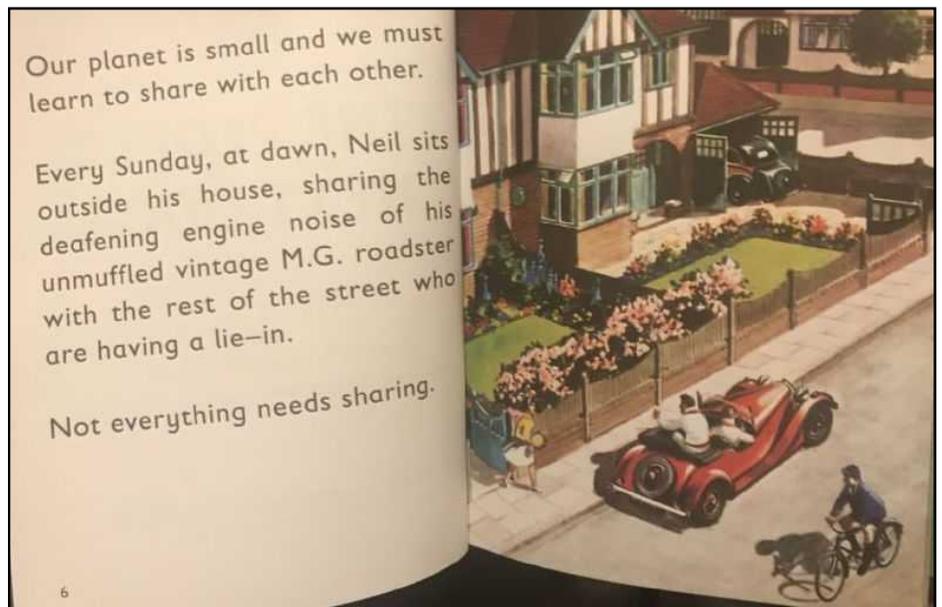
The fact that Cecil Kimber was kept on after the acquisition by Morris Motors is another indication that William Morris had a soft spot for Kimber and, no doubt, he told Lord – you reign him in but you do not get rid of him.

Conclusion:

Kimber was driven by creating the MG marque. It seems possible that Cecil Kimber may have been influenced by comments made by W.O. Bentley, who it was reported in an article by Martyn Wise (in 'Enjoying MG') "*W.O. Bentley was clear in his reasons for supporting motor racing - gaining publicity, generating sales and establishing the Bentley marque*" Unfortunately Kimber allowed his enthusiasm to override commercial sense.

Leonard Lord is not the bad guy that MG historians have painted him out to be: the real 'villain' was, I am afraid to say, Cecil Kimber who overplayed his hand, and thought his close association with William Morris allowed him more autonomy to build 'his' marque than was the case. The course that MG Cars was on, under Kimber, was unsustainable to William Morris and, most possibly, unsustainable financially. "The Sports Car" of August 1935 issued a statement which is reproduced in 'Maintaining the Breed'. It says: "*Lord Nuffield (as William Morris was now known) has said there are to be no more MG racing cars....*" Note that it was not Leonard Lord who said there will be no more racing cars. Clearly Leonard Lord was carrying out his Chairman's instructions.

Geoff Broadhead



From the ***Ladybird Book of the People Next Door***

MG 2020!

GET READY FOR THE... BIGGEST MG CAR EVENT ON THE CONTINENT! JUNE 28th - JULY 1st 2020

The Calgary MG Car Club is excited to host the North American MGB Register's 2020 annual Convention. Workshops, social events, scenic drives & an automobile show on Canada Day in Calgary's beautiful Stanley Park will see Western Canadian hospitality at its finest.

For visitors to Calgary, immediately after the Convention the world-famous Calgary Stampede begins its ten-day run, with agri-fair, rodeo, live music & midway. The City has world class art galleries, Heritage Park showcases pioneer history, & the Calgary Zoo has a pair of pandas.

Our Convention hotel is The Deerfoot Inn & Casino: we encourage attendees to arrive early & stay late! Only an hour west of the City are the magnificent Rockies: Banff, Lake Louise, Jasper & the Columbia Icefields are all thrilling drives with breathtaking vistas. The Prairies to the east also offer The Badlands, Tyrell Museum of Paleontology, and just south is the Bomber Command Museum of Canada. Mark your calendars for the experience of a lifetime: MG 2020.

MGOC member Tom Doyle has registered for NAMGBR 2020 in Calgary, Alberta Canada from 28 June to 1 July 2020 and is looking for others to caravan up north with. He will be bringing his Demask Red 1969 MGC/GT to the show. If interested in joining him you can contact him at wtdoyleii@gmail.com or on his cell at 520-220-6228.



Below: Don Davis's J3, after restoration



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Trials in England

By Dan Shockey

A popular sport that MGs excelled at in the 1930s and 1940s (and later) was that of "Reliability Trials" or "Trials." It seems odd to us today that folks should attempt to climb hills over rough tracks suitable only for off-road motorcycles or 4-wheel-drive jeeps. The test hills were often very muddy or had loose rock and large rock outcrops, but if they were too easy to master, organizers would add stop and restarts at the steepest part. Normally a passenger rode along but worked as hard as the driver. Known as "bouncers," the passenger would jump up and down trying to help gain traction. They are often seen hanging well out of the car. Courses often included driving through deep water, the "water splash," if not as part of the test then required to get to these rough track tests.

With their light weight, strong small motors, good gearboxes and factory support, MG was very successful. Soon they developed teams of three cars to attempt to win team prizes as well as fastest times. Two famous MG teams were the "Cream Crackers" and the "Three Musketeers." M-types, Js and Ps were the most common but also the larger 6-cylinder cars did well. The Cream Crackers, J2s then PAs and PBs, were so-called after their colors of brown and cream looking like a popular snack food of the era. The Musketeers were 6-cylinder N-types named Athos, Porthos and Aramis, NA models then later NEs.

These trials were surprisingly popular with spectators as well, though photos show them bundled up in coats and oilskins and sitting in the mud along the course. They often helped push



cars that got stuck along with a local farmer and his horse or tractor.

What do you think, can we stage one here sometime? I tried to get interest when I lived in Oregon where there was plenty of suitable ground. I found one guy interested but most folks didn't want to take their restored babies on gravel roads let alone mud and rocks.

There has been interest in recent years to rediscover the old trials hills. Many are now paved or inaccessible due to property owners or changes.

J.H. Client, MG PA; A. Cairns, Scottish Rally, 1934; Barnstaple Trial



Nice place for a picnic!

Brighton-Beer Trail,
1924

C.J. Simon in action

Delingpole and his PB



Trials could be hazardous to man (and woman) and machine.

Events were often held in coldest winter. Dress warm! Hoods (tops) rarely up.

Keep Planning for 2020 ...



WINTER

MGOC Planning Meeting, January 4, 2020

Pub Night, On the Road Again, Jan. 17, Bill Hiland

MGOC Annual 'Champagne' Brunch, Moss Beach

Distillery, Sunday, Jan. 19, 2020



2020!

NAMGAR GT, Colorado Springs, June 1-5 , combined with the NAMMMR national meet, Caravan?

MG2020, NAMGBR Annual Meet, June 28 - July 1, Calgary, Canada

GOF West, June 29 - July 2, Welches, OR, MGOC caravan, Plan to drive with us!

Pub Night! Jan. 17

On The Road Again - Morgan Hill

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G4

Our next Pub Night of the season will be Friday, January 17th, then on February 28th. 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



Out: M.P.G. In: Kilowatt-Hours **Classic Cars Get an Electric Jolt.**

A California company has developed a “crate motor” to convert gasoline cars to electric engines.

By Lawrence Ulrich, for the New York Times, Dec. 12, 2019

CHATSWORTH, Calif. — A vintage Fiat 124 Spider — so pretty you could pinch its little orange cheeks — accelerates up a canyon road in the San Fernando Valley. But there’s something strange about this Pininfarina-designed Italian roadster. First, it feels downright peppy as it chugs uphill. And there’s actually no “chugging,” but rather a spacey, high-pitched whir.

Inside this 1982 Fiat is a modern battery-powered drive system designed by Electric GT, a California company that has created a “crate motor.” Electric GT’s version of the crate motor, a term long associated with hot-rod gasoline engines sold in crates by automakers, allows professional restorers or even enterprising home mechanics to convert vintage gasoline cars to run on electricity.

“A lot of guys go out in a classic car that’s 40 or 50 years old, but it’s a one-way trip — they get a ride home with AAA,” said Eric Hutchison, who founded Electric GT in 2014 with a partner, Brock Winberg. “This is for enthusiasts who love their cars but want something reliable that’s good for a weekend drive.”

As for the Fiat I’m driving, the electric conversion has sharply boosted its own power and acceleration, from the original’s 10-second ooze from zero to 60 miles an hour to roughly seven sprightly seconds. The system is designed exclusively for manual-transmission cars, including the Fiat that I happily toggle through its five speeds while finessing a clutch pedal.

With 120 electric horsepower and 173 pound-feet of torque below its hood, and 25 kilowatt-hours’ worth of batteries stuffed into its trunk area, the Fiat delivers roughly 75 to 85 miles of driving range, enough for a sunny weekend cruise before it’s time to plug back in.

The self-contained “black box” unit, including electric motors and computer controls, packages neatly below a car’s hood. Charmingly, the crate motors even resemble the gasoline engine they’re replacing, with components that recall traditional V-shaped cylinder banks and orange sparkplug wires.

Electric GT repurposes its battery packs from low-mileage Teslas, components that might otherwise end up in landfills. Those batteries mainly fit into space previously occupied by a gasoline tank, protected from crash damage by the rear bumper and metal chassis. The company estimates that with a basic set of tools, an engine hoist and a 110-page service manual, even a reasonably skilled car hobbyist will need just 40 to 50 hours to convert a car. Plug-and-play components are designed for safety and simplicity, including special connectors that prevent installers from accidentally mixing up positive and negative electrical leads.

With system prices starting at \$32,500 and topping \$80,000 for stronger, longer-range units. “It’s hard to call it a rational price point,” he said, “but these are people who can have any car they want. They’re looking for something unique. No one at the country club will have a vehicle like it.”

Thought you might care to share this article with folks: (MGOC member Marja VDH)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/12/business/electric-car-conversions.html>

Yeah, never happen here Dan! I have a neighbor who converted a X19 to electric drive years ago. I'm thinking this might be the future though... we'll see!

MGOC Member Tom Tallone

Right: In center, Tom at the tour past Big Sur, 2019, by Thuy Nguyen



MGOC Minutes – Saturday Dec 7, 2019

Elaine Chan's house 115 Pinehurst Way, SF

Call to Order: Andy Preston at: 12:57

Attending: Elaine Chan, Marcia Crawford, Ken Gittings, Mike Jacobsen, Mark McGothigan, Kirk & Amy Prentiss, Barbara Tapp, Andy & Marla Preston, Dan Shockey, George Steneberg

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: May 6 and Aug 24, 2019: *Motion:* Andy, *Second:* Kirk

REPORTS

President's Report: Andy Preston: It's been a couple of months since we had a meeting but all has been going well with the club. Thanks to Elaine for opening her house again for the Holiday Tea.

Vice President's Report: Kirk Prentiss: Another year finished, with many events. Come to the Planning meeting to set up next year's events.

Treasurers Report: Marla Preston:

Account	December 2019	August 2019
Checking	17,709.01	18,331.03
Savings	3,589.07	3,563.69
Total	21,298.08	21,894.72

Since our last Treasurer's report we have paid for printing and mailing costs of five issues of the *Octagon*, helped with hosting the Pebble Beach weekend, and costs of the Annual Picnic.

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

Registrar's Report: Steve Kellogg: absent report by email:

135	Regular Members
44	Regular Family Members
179	Total Regular and Family Members
14	Corresponding Members
4	Corresponding Family Members
18	Total Corresponding and Family
197	Total Members

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

Regalia Report: Andy Preston: Nothing to report

The Octagon Report: Dan Shockey: Still looking for articles.

Website Report: Steve Kellogg: Absent, report by email: *Still checking on the new regalia site and should have something by the new year.*

PAST EVENTS: Thanks to Mike Jacobsen for organizing the Western Railway Museum tour, which was great and far more impressive than I thought. The Sonoma Tour was cancelled due to the fires.

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

Sat Dec 7 - Holiday Tea, San Francisco, Elaine Chan

Sat Jan 4, 2020 - Planning meeting, Marcia and George

Sun Jan 19, 2020 - Champagne Brunch, Moss Beach Distillery

May 31–Jun4 - NAMGAR Colorado Springs (*only 1200 miles and 20 hours*)

Jun 28–Jul 1 - NAMGBR Calgary, Alberta, Canada (*only 1300 miles and 22 hours*)

Jun 29–Jul 3 - GOF West, Mt Hood, Oregon (*only 630 miles and 11 hours*)

OLD BUSINESS

Member at Large: Mark McGothigan has agreed to become the newest Member at Large, taking over from Craig Kuenzinger.

NEW BUSINESS: Nominees were: President – Andy Preston, VP – Kirk Prentiss, Secretary – Mike Jacobsen, Treasurer – Marla Preston. No ballots were received, but the slate was approved by vote at the meeting.

BUSINESS RESOLVED ONLINE SINCE LAST MEETING: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Andy: We have sent NAMGBR the information needed to remain a chapter for 2020.

Mike: We have sent NAMGAR the information needed to remain a chapter for 2020.

NEXT MEETING: At the Planning meeting: 10AM on January 4 at 150 Purdue Ave, Kensington, 94708.

Meeting adjourned at: 1:30, including an intermission while everyone helped Ken up the stairs.

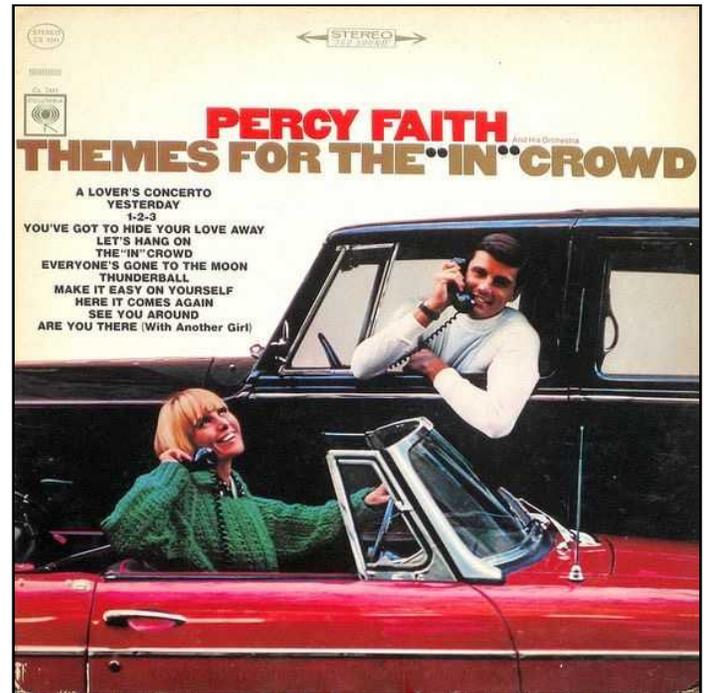
Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen



Pics from Member Don in Napa

Left: The lady and all those flowers are blocking the view of the lovely MGB.

Below: This appears a fun record cover to look for. Are those car phones?



Classified Ads

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

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

Wanted: MGB to Restore: Member Andreas is a 15-year-old looking to take over your project. Will pick up. Andreas Pichardo, andreas.c.p24@gmail.com (Posted 01/20)

Wanted: Two spare knock-off wheels for a 1969 MGC/GT – must match and be in good to fair condition as I plan to put snow tires on them. (Tom has knock-off Mini-lite style wheels but may be interested in 15" wire wheels, too.)

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

Blue CA Plates: I have two pairs of plates if you want to put them on your MGB or Midget. These are original for 1969 through 1980 cars. In August 2016, California extended the [year-of-manufacture](#) license plate program to include vehicles through the 1980 model year. Offer. Dan Shockey, (309) 696-0803 (Posted 01/20)

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



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



CARS AT KAFFEEHAUS

San Mateo's Cars and Coffee Event

Every second Sunday of the month: January 12th,
February 9th, March 8th, April 12th, May 10th, June 14th,
July 12th, August 9th, September 13th, October 11th,
November 8th and December 13th

Bring your car, truck or motorcycle and mingle with other auto enthusiasts

Parking is available in the US Bank parking lot (corner of E. 3rd Avenue and San Mateo Drive) or on the street

Please no burnouts or side show activity. Respect the space so we do not lose this event

Any questions please contact us at carsatkaffeehaus@gmail.com

7 – 10 AM EVERY
2ND SUNDAY OF THE
MONTH

ALL MAKES AND
MODELS WELCOME

ENJOY A CUP OF
COFFEE WHILE
LOOKING AT THE
CARS

DROP BY EVEN IF
YOU DON'T HAVE A
CAR TO SHOW

SEARCH FOR US ON
FACEBOOK:
[@CARSSANMATEO](https://www.facebook.com/CARSSANMATEO)

KAFFEEHAUS

92 E. 3rd Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94401

<http://mykaffeehaus.com>

Holiday Tea, 2019!

Elaine Chan and Mike Jacobsen again hosted our annual Christmas tea party at Elaine's wonderful home in San Francisco. Kirk and Amy came in their Dickens Fair costumes since they were going there after the Tea. I wish I had known to wear my Dickens Fair costume (see ed column) or perhaps a US Navy uniform since it was Pearl Harbor Day. I noted to party-ers that you can tell the male from the female in kilts by the males have shorter shirts and longer beards. (Insert dirty look from Amy.) Kirk also stole the show with his special blue tea (below).

We had a good group and a lot of fun and great food. We also collected many toys for the toy drive.

Dan Shockey

Photos: Barbara Tapp



Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!



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




North American MGB Register



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



the **ROARING
TWENTIES**



Planning Meeting
'Nosh 'n Natter'

**Date: Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020,
12:30pm**

George & Marcia's, See page 5

More Info: Andy Preston
andypreston@att.net

We look forward to seeing you!

