

MGOC Octagon
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THE OCTAGON

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



Photo by: Bob Trencheny



From the All British Show at Palo Alto

January 2006

About *The Octagon* and MGOC...

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

DIRECTORY of MGOC OFFICERS for 2006

President: Bob Stine, San Mateo, 650-349-5128 rastine@rcn.com

Vice President: Nina Barton, 510 845-7212 ninaba@mindspring.com

Treasurer: Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, MikesMuseum@yahoo.com

Secretary: Dan Shockey, 408-923-3927, MGmogul@earthlink.net

T Register Director: Jim Carlson, 408-257-9976, mgjim@att.net

Activities Director: Randy Grossman, 510-483-3171, r.m.grossman@comcast.net

Corresponding Secretary: George Steneberg, 510-525-9152, j2george@pacbell.net

Membership Development: Bob Stine, 650-349-5128, RAStine@rcn.com

The Octagon Editor: Bob Trencheny, 925 556 9311 Tbobj@aol.com

Commercial Advertising: Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699,

MikesMuseum@yahoo.com

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.

MGB 1962-74: Felix Wong, 510-226-7721 home, me@felixwong.com

MGB 1974-1980: Ed Adams, 510-483-6821

MGB V8 Conversion: Tony Bates, 408-666-6174, Tony@BatesFamily.net

MGC: Kent Leech, 925-253-9757, kent@kentleech.com

M.G. Midget: Kingsley Klarer, 707-226-1955

MGA/Coupe/Twin Cam 1955-62: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125

Z-Magnette Saloon: Marty Ray, 831-247-5863, martyray@cruzio.com

T-types: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, j2george@pacbell.net

Pre-war Midgets-Magnas-Magnettes: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125

PA/PB Midget 1934-36: Eric Baker, 510-531-7032, mgpb36@yahoo.com

S.U. Carburettors: Marty Ray, 831-247-5863, martyray@cruzio.com

Bodywork: Bill Weissberg, 209-835-0428, weissber@slip.net

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*.

Natter & Noggin and Club Meeting

January 12, 2006 (2nd Thurs.), 8 p.m.

The Englander

101 Parrot Street, San Leandro

(510) 357-3571 <http://www.englishpub.com/>

MG2007 Planning Meeting (Starts at Noon)

MGOC Annual Planning Meeting

January 21, 2006 (3rd Sat.) 10:00 a.m.

The Englander

101 Parrot Street, San Leandro

(510) 357-3571 <http://www.englishpub.com/>

From Northbound I-880, take the Washington Ave. exit within San Leandro and turn right on Washington St. Travel 2.2 miles until you see Parrott St. Turn right on Parrott Street. You will see The Englander on your right.

From Southbound I-880, take Davis St. exit and turn left on Davis. Travel 1.3 miles, then turn right on E. 14th St. Travel 0.3 miles, and then right on Parrott St.

South Bay Natter & Noggin January 28, 2006, (last Fri.) 8 p.m.

Join us for an informal gathering in the South Bay. We'll meet in a lamp-light courtyard setting. Not too crowded and with restaurants right there. Look for us at McHart's Pizza if you don't see anyone with their cars.

This is the Marketplace Shopping Center next to Long's Drugs at 19732 Stevens Creek Blvd. It is right across from the Sears at the Vallco Shopping Mall. It is just off I-280 at Wolfe.

Directions: Take the Wolfe Rd. exit from I-2280 and turn west. Turn right on Stevens Creek Blvd. Turn left at first light.

Dan Shockey (408) 923-3927 or Bob Wall (408) 739-2373

Classified Ads

Ads are free to MGOC members and \$6.00 per month for non-members. Please send copy (and check **made payable to MGOC** if a non-member) to MGOC, 601 Greylyn Drive, San Ramon CA, 94583. Members may also email ads to the Editor at Tbobj@aol.com.

For Sale: 1965 Austin Healey Sprite: Red, \$3995 OBO. Fun little car that runs well. New brake lines, new hoses and belts, new speedometer and odometer, and new door hinges. Extensive work done on the electrical and exhaust. Member Karin, ktruedsson@hotmail.com

For Sale: 1974.5 MGB: Rubber bumpers, twin carbs, and no smog tests required. Maroon. Looks and runs well, redone interior. Owned 14 years. Needs minor cosmetics. Non-member David, Oakland, \$4500/offer. (510) 663-7091 eves.

For Sale: 1972 MGB: New BRG paint, 50 mi on new performance engine, new distributor, radiator, front end, rack & pinion, rotors, wiring harness, battery, tires, rebuilt master and slave clutch cylinders, rebuilt brake master cylinder, alternator, rear brake shoes and cylinders, dash, Astrali steering wheel. Needs interior carpet, seat covers, panels, soft top (has frame). Photos on request. Member Rob Stagmier stagmier@hotmail.com (925) 451-2610

For Sale: 1936 MG PB. All there. Good body with much work done. Correct PB engine and PB transmission (need rebuilt). \$11,500. Pete Thelander, (714) 892-0703 pthelander@earthlink.net (seen at the swap meet in Fullerton)

For Sale: Bugeye Sprite: Excellent project. Super rust-free car. No body damage. All there. \$2,500. Craig Cody, (805) 886-3920. (Seen at the swap meet in Fullerton)

For Sale: 1974 MGB: Silver with Red interior and taupe colored soft-top, Overdrive, Cloth seats with headrests; Pioneer tape player. 152K miles with more than \$7K invested in the car over last five years. dkamins@sbcglobal.net or (415) 706-5646

Wanted: Short block for a 70-74 MGB in rebuildable condition. Member James Brown. JamesCBrown@sbcglobal.net, (408) 893-8986

Wanted: Aluminum hood for an MGB. Good condition. Member Ken Gittings (510) 791-8445

Wanted: 1600 MGA Coupe, decent condition suitable for restoration. Member Andy Preston, andypreston@sbcglobal.net (707) 795-3480

Wanted: MGB wire wheel rear axle, for 1968 and later. Member Andy Preston, andypreston@sbcglobal.net (707) 795-3480

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 20th of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. The editor's address is: Bob Trencheny, 601 Greylyn Drive, San Ramon CA 94583. Or, you may email contributions to Tbobj@aol.com.

RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

Have you helped recruit any new members lately? Bob Stine (650-349-5128) is in charge of new member recruitment and can send you flyers. The club roster is available from Mike Jacobsen upon request.

Forthcoming Events

MGOC in bold, SSTs: Sorry Safari Touring Society, ARR: Abingdon Rough Riders

Jan 7 — Rallye Academy, www.therallyeclub.org

Jan. 21 — **MGOC planning meeting, MG2007 planning meeting**, see page 23

Feb 4 — Thd Rallye Club Turns 25 — www.therallyeclub.org

Feb 11 — **MGOC Annual Dinner**, see pages 12-13

March 11 tentative — **Pierce Manifolds Tour**, Gilroy

April 29-30 — Vintage Auto Racing Assoc. — British Extravaganza at Buttonwillow

May 5-7: Grand Am Sports Car Series, Laguna Seca

May 7 — Hillsborough Concours www.hsf.org/events_concours/carshow2006/

May — **MGs by the Bay**, Date TBD

May 21 — Annual All British Show at Dixon www.ubscc.org/dixon.htm

June 2-4 — MG Vintage Racing at Halletts, OK

May 27 — June 4 — British Car Week www.britishcarweek.org

June 9-11 — *Open Roads 2006*, Lake Tahoe www.goldengatehealeys.com

June 21-26 — All-Register **MG2006** in Gatlinburg, TN. www.MG2006.com

June 25 — Palo Alto Concours — Loveable British Cars! www.paconcours.com

July 28-30: Champ Car Grand Prix of San Jose

Aug. 18-20: Monterey Historic Races, featuring Cooper & Laguna Seca

Aug 25-27: IRL Indy Grand Prix at Infineon (Sears Point)

Oct 8-10 — *High Country Tour* in Sedona, AZ RacerMoss@mac.com

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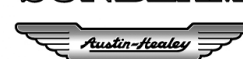
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The Goodwood Revival

by Mike L. Drew

Many of you are probably familiar with the Goodwood Festival of Speed, the car and motorcycle festival held on the grounds of Lord March's estate in the south of England. The Goodwood Revival is an entirely different animal, however.

The facility has a storied history dating back to WWII, where Lord March (widely known as Freddie) donated a portion of his sizable estate to be used as an aerodrome to defend the homeland. A grass strip housed several RAF squadrons, and Spitfires were launched to defend London during the Battle of Britain and beyond.

While the runways themselves were grass, a paved road circled the field, and shortly after the war it was suggested that this pavement would make for a fine motor racing circuit. Lord March had been an apprentice at Bentley Motors and had been a works driver for MG, so he was amenable to the idea, and the first race was held in 1948. (The winner of that race was a young Stirling Moss, driving a 500cc single-seater.)

The circuit saw continuous use, with the only modification being the introduction of a rather formidable chicane on the front straight in an effort to keep speeds under control. Rather than attempting to describe the track itself, I'll let Stirling Moss do it for me: <http://www.silhoutet.com/motorsport/tracks/goodwood.html>

The track saw its final race in 1966, as the speeds had simply become too great for the track to safely support. It was formally retired, and lay in disuse until Freddie March's grandson decided to reopen it for a revival.

Unlike vintage races as we know them (i.e. the Monterey Historic Races), which are modern, glitzy events which just happen to feature old cars (with varying racing provenance), the revival was from the outset designed to be a nostalgic affair, spiritually more akin to a Renaissance Faire. To that end, strict rules were laid down to help restore a properly nostalgic feel to the event.

Simply put, anything manufactured after 1966 is banned from view. This includes clothing, and therefore *all* participants, and spectators, are required to be dressed in period attire if they are to be allowed into the confines of the circuit proper. No modern vehicles are allowed to be in view either; modern cars are parked in fields blocked by large hedges. The original grandstands, pits and marshaling stands have all been restored, and the result is a very convincing approximation of what the track looked like in its heyday.

(Cont. pg 20)



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Continued from page 20

Occupying the center of the track were a half-dozen WWII fighter planes, which had flown in for the event. They were surrounded by ground crews, medical personnel, and anti-aircraft batteries, all in period uniforms of course.

As the cars took to the track, I was struck by the incredible intimacy the track offered. Unlike modern facilities with layer upon layer of fencing and barriers to keep the lawyers happy, Goodwood offers a happy alternative consisting of a simple waist-high fence. The track is surrounded by a three-foot-high embankment with a tire wall, and that's it. In many cases the fencing was only ten or fifteen feet away from the track surface itself, and due to our slightly elevated position, the viewing was spectacular.

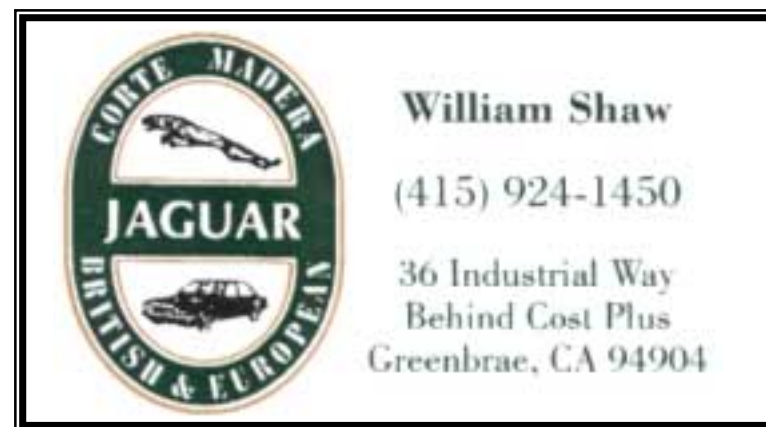
Although at first blush the track appears to be completely flat, in fact it has gentle undulations which produce several blind crests, adding immensely to the challenge of getting around safely. Most troubling is the aforementioned chicane on the front straight, which is constructed out of brick walls that are a good three feet thick, rendering it highly resistant to giving way to a speeding automobile.

Hordes of noted racing drivers were on-hand to participate, and many of them performed yeoman duty by hopping out of one car and immediately strapping into another one, to compete in the next race.

While many of the drivers are the stuff of legend (Stirling Moss, Bobby Rahal, Alain De Cadenet, Derek Bell, Brian Redmon, etc.), others are heroes of the modern day such as Johnny Herbert, Damon Hill, Emanuele Pirro, et. al. There were also some celebrity drivers, such as Pink Floyd drummer and noted car collector Nick Mason, and actor/comedian Rowan Atkinson (Mister Bean, Black Adder).

The Saloon car race was interesting, for it consisted of cars that I have never seen raced in the USA before—like Jaguar Mk 1 3.8, as well as ridiculously small (yet fast) Austin A30 and A35. And Rowan Atkinson was teamed with Stirling Moss in Rowan's immense Jaguar Mk VII. Picture a Jaguar sedan the same size and shape as a period Bentley.

The 1950's F1 race was wonderful to watch, especially the Maserati 250F which represents the high-water mark in the front-engine Formula car aesthetic.



William Shaw
 (415) 924-1450
 36 Industrial Way
 Behind Cost Plus
 Greenbrae, CA 94904

The Goodwood Revival

Continued from page 4

Thanks to a bit of a rummaging through a friend's closet, and a quick run to the secondhand shops in his village, I was able to acquire the requisite attire of a tweed jacket, tie and flat cap.

Arriving at the track was like walking through a time portal, as we were instantly transported back to the 1960s. Everywhere were men in jackets, ties and caps, while women sported elaborate and formal hats and furs. The sun shone brightly through the low scattered clouds, and the land was emerald green as far as the eye could see.

I was struck by the attention to detail—the Royal Auto Club was present with service vehicles dating to the 1930s, and even the food vendors were dispensing their ice cream or fish-and-chips from 50-year-old trucks. A small campground was occupied by Airstream Trailers, pulled by old Cadillac wagons and even a Bentley. A walk through the paddock revealed a most splendid collection of motorcars. They encompassed the full range of the track's operational period, including single-seat pre- and post-war Grand Prix cars, delightful sports-racers, improbable saloons, and the premier sports cars and prototype racers of the 1960s.

There were no modern support vehicles in sight, although there were quite a few WWII-era Army jeeps around, all driven by appropriately uniformed persons. The mechanics working on the cars were all wearing plain white uniforms, and many were working with vintage tools. A smattering of period road cars could be found scattered about, including some spectacular Ferraris (i.e. 1958 250 Testa Rossa) which had simply been driven to the event by spectators.

Continued on page 21



MG Magnette in Sedan Race and Vintage Cop

Attention!!

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President's Ponderings

The attack on Christmas controversy notwithstanding, Merry Christmas to you all. I hope you each had a nice time with family and friends. This year was very strange for Joanne (my wife) and me. For the first time in our nineteen years together we spent Christmas Eve home alone. My kids moved to other states years ago; but Joanne's son still lived in the area and her aunt, who lives in Pacifica has always hosted Christmas Eve at her house. My parents lived in San Jose, so we'd have Christmas Eve with Joanne's family and Christmas Day with mine. Last year, Joanne's aunt decided, was the last to gather at her home. Most of the families had moved out of the area and it was time to adjust. My father passed away in May and my mother's dementia prevented her from even recognizing her birthday on December 15th. So we took the dog and spent the evening of December 24th driving to various houses in the area with exceptional light displays. It was really very nice. In San Carlos we joined the parade of cars idling down two full blocks of houses with astounding displays of lights and Christmas characters. A live Santa was even walking in the area. This neighborhood really got into the spirit of the season.

Take advantage of MG down time

Since this isn't exactly top down weather I assume many of you have MGs safely snuggled in your garages. While this may not be a good time to travel in our fun cars, it's a perfect opportunity to do some of the repairs and maintenance that we don't want to take the time for during prime driving season. If you'd like some help or advice with those projects, or have ideas for technical educational gatherings, let us know. We'd be happy to set up some tech sessions and help each other prepare for **next** spring.

Thanks

Many thanks to Bob Trencheny for the fine job he's doing since taking the reins of the Octagon. I know it's a lot of work and we all appreciate it.

MGOC Annual Dinner

February 11th is the date for our MGOC Annual dinner. This year's event will take place at Gulliver's in Burlingame. (See the advertisement elsewhere in this issue.) Each year we alternate between the East Bay and the SF Peninsula. I have eaten at Gulliver's many times and the food has always been very good. The setting is Old England and the Serving Wenches make sure you enjoy your culinary delights. We look forward to seeing you there.

Bob Stine

President, MGOC

rastine@rcn.com



From da Ed

December, 2005

In a previous life I traveled to Russia and had an opportunity to spend a few days with a handful of Russian (Soviet?) air force officers. I was part of a multi-national treaty inspection team responsible for confirming the Russian government had destroyed hundreds of aircraft as outlined in the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty. It was a wonderful and enlightening trip. Because I don't speak Russian I spent many hours working with Russian and English interpreters. Much of the trip involved traveling by bus

and plane to military bases and back and forth to Moscow. The Russians had their own treaty inspectors who were responsible for keeping an eye on us and our eyes off of other interesting things.

Each time we departed a place one of the Russian inspectors would call out *Poyehali!* After several iterations of this I finally asked the Russian interpreter what that was all about. He explained that the officer calling out *Poyehali!* was with the air force and that *Poyehali!* was a famous quote from Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space. As the count-down reached zero and his space craft lifted off Gagarin responded with *Poyehali!* Once the interpreter translated for me it was obvious the air force officer was happy to be leaving and getting underway.

Poyehali! translates to *Let's Ride!*

Poyehali!

Bob



MG

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selections include prime rib, lamb, and salmon. This appears to be a great dinner and we will have desserts, too. Promote in the January *Octagon*. The cost was set at \$40 per person. The club will provide one bottle of wine per four attendees. The club will subsidize \$15 to \$17 per person. We will feature the Valentine's Day connection. Motion made and accepted to make the subsidy and accept the dinner arrangements. Thank you, Bob!

Pierce Manifolds Tour: Mike Pierce suggested the date of Feb. 11 which is the annual dinner. We will seek a different date.

Tech Sessions: We have had interest in new tech session for the winter months. One or two will be T-series engine rebuilding. Other suggestions welcome.

MGs By The Bay: The officers and members present want to go back to the San Leandro Marina again this year. David Wright volunteered to assist Randy Grossman in setting things up this year.

OLD BUSINESS

NAMGBR MG 2007: Meeting minutes for Nov. 5 available. Next meeting will be before the Holiday Tea at Noon, Dec. 11.

Support for New Orleans MG Club: John Hunt made contact with the club. (Several MGs were damaged by the flood waters. All but one owner's cars were insured.) We discussed offering a pizza night on us. We voted to spend up to \$200 and send a club grille badge they could use as a door prize. Randy volunteered to coordinate with John Hunt in make the offer to the New Orleans club.

Dash Plaques: Mike said that we can get a 14% discount on these for our *MGs by the Bay* event by ordering early. We decided to just put May, 2006, and MGs by the Bay on them and get them ordered soon.

Officer Election: We voted to accept the slate as published in The Octagon. In addition, Randy Grossman volunteered to continue as Activities Director. (This is a nominated position.) Thank you to Bob Stine for taking the reins as Club President.

(NO NEW BUSINESS)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. The next business meeting is to be held Jan. 12, 2006, at the Englander.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Shockey, MGOC Secretary

Jim Griffin & Son
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1261 SAN MATEO AVE., SAN BRUNO, CA 94066

Minutes of the MGOC Business Meeting, Dec. 8, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 p.m. by President David Wright. Also present were: Dan Shockey, Eric Baker, Bob Trencheny, Mike Jacobsen, Randy Grossman, George Steneberg and Bob Stine.

November Minutes accepted as printed.

Treasurer's Report: Club account balances are very healthy. A separate checking account for MG2007 not yet opened. Postage rates go up in January.

Registrar's Report: Renewals still coming in (from July!) We now have 259 total paid members. Eric Baker offered to call all lapsing members.

Secretary's Report: No action.

Regalia Report: 50th anniversary special regalia. Need someone to develop the design. Randy will ask Melissa if she has any time to work on it.

Octagon Report: (Bob Trencheny) We are ironing out the bumps in the publication process. Mike Jacobsen's regular printer machine was unavailable for the December issue which affected the photo quality in the printed copies. Mike sent renewal letters to advertisers. We have gotten one check back so far. Bob suggested that members post photos of their MGs to frapper.com. Ten members have done so.

Club Web Site: Bob Trencheny mentioned that his son Rob is interested in taking over the club web site. (See MG 2007 minutes. We suggested that Rob do the MG 2007 site first.)

PAST CLUB EVENTS

Pigeon Soup Expedition: Randy reported a great turn-out and a wonderful drive.

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

Holiday Tea: Come one; come all. We authorized expenses of up to \$200 for food and drink.

MGOC 2006 Planning Meeting: We set a date of Saturday, January 21. We may be able to do the next MG 2007 meeting the same day. The site was set provisionally at George Steneberg's home.

Annual Dinner: Bob Stine has set up the event at Gulliver's in Milbrae (just south of SFO.) Gulliver's has a British atmosphere. The date is Feb. 11, 2006. Dinner

Martin Hveem Automobile Restorations	
Tel: 415 529-6450 Fax: 415 529-6452 1520 Schwab Street Red Bluff, CA 96080 martinhveem@earthlink.net	Classic & Antique Restoration Service Repair

Letter to the Editor

Nov 5, 2005

I was up in Rancho Cordova getting a Land Rover dipstick for my V8 MGB project and was asked if I wanted to buy a couple of complete '79 MGB roadsters for \$600 each. I told the guy I wasn't interested but that I would forward it to the MGOC for a heads up. The business is:

Specialized British Recycling

Attn: Carl C. — Operations Manager

11315 Dismantle Court

Rancho Cordova, CA 95742

www.britishrecycling.com

I purchased my tube-type MGB rear end from them last year and they're a good group of guys to deal with. Please pass the word along on these two Bs.

Thanks!

Patrick Kaye, Member, MGOC

Letters to the editor are always welcome. Ed.

New Member

Karl Knapp of Palo Alto joined. Karl learned about the MGOC at the All-British meet in Palo Alto last September, and has owned his MGA for less than a year.

Welcome!

	
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Talks to Restart Austin Healey

Dec 20, 2005

A group of ex-MG Rover managers are in talks to buy the rights to make the former Longbridge company's supercar as part of its plans to revive the famous Austin Healey badge.

GB Sports, run by former Powertrain head Fraser Welford-Winton, is thought to be close to agreeing terms to buy the assets of MG Sport and Racing. The division, which is also based at Longbridge, was involved in the production of the MG XPower SV, before it crashed with debts of £48 million along with the rest of Rover in April.

GB Sports has been in talks with MG Rover's administrators Price Waterhouse Coopers for several months. Yesterday PWC said it was hopeful of a conclusion to the negotiations early in the New Year. Rob Hunt, joint administrator of MG Rover and partner at PWC, said: We have been having conversations for quite some time. This has been going on for many months. Offers have been made, but there is still a bit to go on it. The offers relate to some cars at the site, the ability to make the cars, a separate part of the Longbridge site. We are hopeful of something being sorted out in the New Year. Mr Hunt would not be drawn on sums being offered, but *The Birmingham Post* believes GB Sports is offering less than £5 million for the company which collapsed with assets of £5.8 million.

But doubts remain whether GB Sports can even generate the funds to buy Sport and Racing from the administrators, in addition to the money needed to relaunch the company. One industry expert said: I have heard GB Sports is struggling to get the money together to make cars. There have been three versions of this car, and none have been successful, so you have to wonder if they can make it a success this time.

GB Sports and Rover's new owner Nanjing signed a memorandum of understanding three weeks ago which set out the terms for the licensing the Austin Healey brand from the Chinese. The license agreement is part of the wider joint venture plan, which is still under discussion. GB Sports did not return calls last night.

(Source: Birmingham Post)

(An earlier release from this same group was that they were abandoning the Healey idea in favor of a redesigned MG.)



Useful Tools:

Clench Wrenches

by Mike Jacobsen

OK, I admit that these wrenches look a bit like something you'd see advertised on late night TV. It fits metric hardware! It fits SAE fasteners! It even fits Whitworth nuts & bolts! claims the barker, who then urges you to act now while operators are standing by. This time, though, the claims are true.

The wrenches do fit any sort of hardware within their range. I have two, one rated for $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{7}{16}$ (7 mm to 11 mm) and one rated for $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{11}{16}$ (10 mm to 18 mm). Being basically lazy, instantly adjustable wrenches appeal to me, and these do fit very well, better than any others that I've tried. But their main claim to fame is that they also fit rounded-off or otherwise damaged nuts and bolts well.

If you have enough clearance for a regular open-end wrench, a Clench Wrench will fit. They only work in one direction due to the design of their adjustable jaw, so you need to make sure that the wrench is right side up for the direction you need to turn. Once that's decided, use the thumb lever to open the wrench's jaw and then place the wrench over the fastener. Let the spring-loaded jaw snap back into place, and gently turn the wrench until it has a grip on three sides of the fastener. Once the jaws are in place you apply force and use it like a regular wrench. You can also use the wrench with a ratchet action. Since the adjustable jaw is spring-loaded, you can pull the wrench back and the jaws will move around the fastener without turning it. You can't do this once the fastener is loose, but you don't care once it's loose.

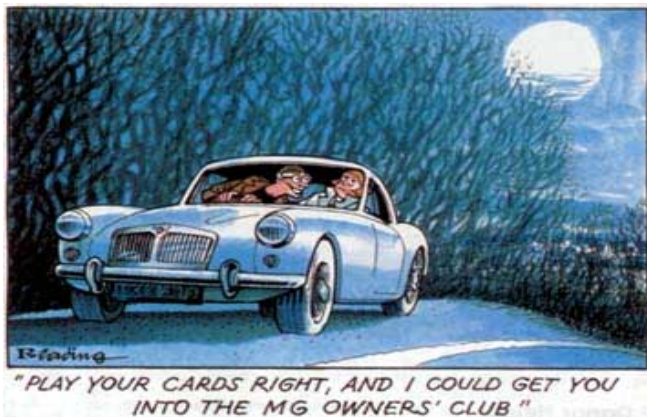
I've only found Clench Wrenches at Sears. They carry the Craftsman logo and have Craftsman part numbers (42306 for the smaller of my two and 42308 for the larger). They cost from \$10 to \$20, and there are larger sizes than what I've listed here. I don't use mine often. They're pretty much limited to damaged hardware and the odd Whitworth item, but on those occasions they're worthwhile because they're so easy to use.



MGOC Officers Elected

At the meeting on December 8th, MGOC officers for 2006 were elected. The new and returning officers are: Bob Stine, President; Nina Barton, Vice President; Dan Shockey, Secretary; and Mike Jacobsen, Treasurer. All of the elected positions were uncontested and all of the new officers have served the club in previous years.

Congratulations and thank you all!



Cartoon from the MGOC of England

MG2007 and MGOC 50th Anniversary Logo Contest

The club is still looking for someone to design logos for both MG2007 and the MGOC 50th Anniversary. The MG2007 logo will be used on everything from the web site to regalia to t-shirts to awards. The MG2007 committee is looking for a graphic designer to put together the logo. The club would like to include Bay Area landmarks like the Golden Gate Bridge or the vineyards of the Sonoma Valley. If you know a graphic artist who wants an opportunity to help out the club please contact the *Octagon* editor at Tbobj@aol.com. If we receive multiple designs, the graphic artist who provides the winning design will receive regalia with the logo.

Our 50th Anniversary is in 2007. A logo with the club dates 1957-2007, 50th Anniversary and incorporating the existing MGOC logo as seen on the cover of the *Octagon* would be ideal. Please contact the *Octagon* editor at Tbobj@aol.com. If we receive multiple designs, the graphic artist who provides the winning design will receive regalia with the logo.



A rare bench-seat MGA spotted by Dan Shockey at Portland All-British Show

Drive Extra from the San Jose Mercury News

Q. I am a 25 year old graduate student, and am interested in purchasing an older two-door convertible car that is fun to drive, reliable and relatively inexpensive to maintain and repair. I am looking to spend between \$5000 and \$6000.

My question is: Can you recommend a couple of makes and models that might meet my requirements? I really like MGs but I read somewhere that they need frequent maintenance. I appreciate any advice you can offer.

Tom & Ray Magliozzi

Click & Clack

A. Ray: Well my brother has an old MG. And I can attest to the fact that it never requires any maintenance — only emergency repairs. He's too busy rebuilding the engine, retrieving wheels that have fallen off, and putting out stubborn engine fires to worry about maintenance.

Tom: Actually if the MG is the type of car you are looking for — a small, two seat British sports car — then you should set your sights on a Mazda Miata. That basically does everything a classic British sports car does, except leak oil.

Ray: And it's a car that I'll start for you every day. If you go back to the mid-1990s you can find a Miata in your price range.

Bob: What do Click & Clack know???? (Ed.)

Thanks to alert SJ Merc reader and MGOC member Stuart Locke for this item.

DRIP PAN

News and Articles from the Peninsula T Register

Peninsula Vintage MG Owners Club?

Submitted by Stuart Locke; Reprinted from the New England MG T Register *Sacred Octagon*, April, 1967

From Jim Fleming: I've been driving T-series MGs since 1957 and will probably continue as long as I live. The TC bug bit me in the early 50s and I now own my 6th and 7th MGs. I have organized a rather casual T-series club here, The Peninsula Vintage MG Owners Club. We have about 35 members (10 very active). The enclosed picture is of an outing we had in Woodside, Calif. recently. Excuse the overexposure — it's this February sunshine in Calif.

Some guys just can't resist rubbing it in, can they? (Editorial comment)

Anyone know anything about this group? Any relationship to the Peninsula T Register or to the MG Owners Club? The name seems to tie our groups together well ahead of the fact. Jim Fleming now lives in Arizona.

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Big News from Felix

The big news for me was I quit my job, sold the house, and became a hobo. Yes, a hobo! A recap of the Great American Road Trip is here:
<http://felixwong.com/news/2005/12/great-american-road-trip/>

Other highlights included jumping out of a perfectly good airplane with Cherie on my 30th b-day and finally beating the best marathon time of George W. Bush.

I suppose other good news is that I am no longer homeless, having moved out to Fort Collins, CO. So if you are ever in the area, you should drop me a line and I'd be happy to show you around the area, take you hiking, rock climbing, or to live music.

I have views of a lake, the Horsetooth and Rocky Mountains. Compared to some places in CA it is also really cheap!

Well, au revoir for now.

— Felix Wong, Longtime MGOC member

We will miss you, Felix!

Continued from page 11

He has watched as Nanjing packs up much of the plant to ship it to China, but remains defiantly optimistic that they will keep their promise to build some cars in Birmingham. It is difficult to find anyone else who believes that Rover will rise again. Peter Pritchard is angry about what he and the whole region lost — and he blames Rover's managers. They strung us along, he says. It was gross mismanagement. The final verdict on the whole affair should come in the report by the inspectors appointed by the DTI.

Story from BBC NEWS: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/>

Open Roads 2006

The Golden Gate Austin Healey Club invites you to *Open Roads 2006* a Spring weekend for owners and enthusiasts of British cars of all makes at beautiful Lake Tahoe.

When: Friday June 9 to Sunday June 11, 2006*

Where: Horizon Casino and Resort in Stateline NV (Lake Tahoe South Shore).

Prices: Registration fee for the weekend is \$45. This covers two adults and one British car. Additional adults are \$20 each; additional cars are \$20 each. Rates are \$95 per night (single or double); \$105 (triple occupancy) and \$115 (four). Taxes are not included. Registrants must have a registration number issued by the Golden Gate Austin Healey Club to obtain this special rate. There will be additional charges of \$48 per adult for the Awards Banquet, and an autocross fee of \$30. There is no registration charge for children under 15; children's price for the dinner is \$30.

Activities: Check-in and reception on Friday, June 9. On Saturday there will be a day of auto-crossing and tours around Lake Tahoe on roads that seems to have been designed specifically for British cars. On Saturday night there will be an awards dinner, followed Sunday morning by a car show and departure. Other events may be announced.

Registration Form:

http://www.goldengatehealeys.com/Tahoe_2006_Registraton_form.pdf



The Year That MG Rover Collapsed

By Rory Cellan-Jones, BBC News business correspondent

Christmas 2004 — and MG Rover is looking forward to better times.

It is about to sign a £1 billion deal with a Chinese car company, Shanghai Automotive, and it is promising to launch several new models in 2005. Christmas 2005 — and yes, Rover is in the hands of a Chinese firm. But it is Nanjing Automobil which bought the company from the administrators after its collapse in April, and the prospect of new models emerging from Longbridge now looks remote. So should we have seen it coming?

Well, ever since the Phoenix Four bought Rover from BMW in 2000 for a symbolic £10, there had been plenty of voices warning that it was all going to end in tears. In a global market with too much capacity, could a small British-owned firm without any financial muscle really aspire to produce cars for the mass market?

By the beginning of this year, Rover's failure to produce inspiring new models meant it had become a niche carmaker by default. Sales were falling so quickly that Rover now had less than 3% of the UK market. But the management and the workforce still had faith that Shanghai Automotive would come to the rescue.

Shattered hopes

I still thought it was going to happen, one former Rover executive says. Shanghai had paid over some money, and they'd just sent a big team over to Longbridge. Adrian Ross, the union convenor at Longbridge, was also convinced that everything would turn out fine: We were told it was full steam ahead, the Chinese were about to sign, he says. After all, we already had a couple of hundred people out in Shanghai working on the project. But not everyone was quite so confident. Peter Pritchard, a Rover dealer in Walsall, had reason to be worried — he was owed a lot of money. We were having a hell of a job getting payments from Rover that we had been promised, he says. At the same time, they were putting us under a lot of pressure to order cars that we could not sell.

In the spring, Mr. Pritchard was among a group of Rover dealers invited to Longbridge to be shown models of new vehicles and to hear about the bright future about to arrive with the Chinese deal. A senior director told us we must show confidence by ordering vehicles. I told him I'd lost faith in the company. Adrian Ross's faith only began to crumble at the end of March, when he heard that the accountants Ernst and Young were warning the Chinese about the dire state of Rover's finances. Then on 7 April came the concrete evidence that the cash had run out: We were told there was a shortage of parts and that production was being halted temporarily. But the suppliers had not been paid and the lines at Longbridge would not be starting again.

Job losses

That night, I was inside the plant as the government announced that Rover was calling in the receivers — or the administrators, as the Department of Trade and Industry hurriedly corrected itself. Night-shift workers gathered round our satellite truck to ask what was going to happen. Eight months on, we now know what the cost is. The Rover Task Force says that 9,000 people at the company and its suppliers lost their jobs. But over half of the Longbridge workforce has found new jobs and many of the rest are retraining. Adrian Ross is one of the few still left at Longbridge, helping the new Chinese owners with their plans.

Blimey!

It's nearly time for the MGOC Annual Dinner!

Join us at



Gulliver's

1699 Old Bayshore Highway
Burlingame

Phone number of restaurant: 650-692-6060



February 11, 2006

No-host cocktails at 7:00
Dinner at 8:00

Dinner includes:

Appetizers, salad, dessert, coffee or tea, and choice of the following entrées:

- Roast Prime Rib of Beef
- Rack of Lamb
- Broiled Fresh Salmon with Lemon Butter
- Vegetarian Pasta

MGOC will provide two bottles of wine for each table

Please RSVP Bob Stine, 650-349-5128 no later than February 9th

For more information about Gulliver's, check their web site
www.gulliverssf.com

Yes, I'll be there!

Name: _____ Guest(s): _____

Entrée: _____

Total enclosed (\$40.00 per person): \$ _____

Mail to:

Bob Stine
3215 Llano St.
San Mateo, CA 94403-2009

Celebrate Valentine's Day with the MGOC!