



THE OCTAGON



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



Since 1957!



St. Patricks Day Tour -
March 15

Fremont Peak Tour -
March 7



Photos: Andy Preston

March 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.

DIRECTORY of MGOC OFFICERS for 2018

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Vice President: Kirk Prentiss, kirkprentiss@gmail.com
Treasurer: Marla Preston, marlapreston@hotmail.com
Secretary: Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, MikesMuseum@yahoo.com

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Member-at-Large: Ken Gittings
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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.
MGB 1962-74: Steve Lilves, 415-924-3173, slilves@sbcglobal.net
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
M.G. Midget: and Overall Auto Technician: Craig Kuenzinger, 925-934-3130, mrcraigk@aol.com
MGA/Coupe/Twin Cam 1955-62: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, j2george@pacbell.net
Z-Magnette Saloon: Eric Baker, 510-531-7032

mgpb36@yahoo.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. Carburetters: Craig Kuenzinger, 925-234-3313, mrcraigk@aol.com

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 & SSTS welcome you to join us on the

*Pre-St. Paddy's Day Tour
Sunday, March 15, 2020*



Photos Dan Shockey, Thuy Nguyen, Kirk Prentiss



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

Date: Sunday, March 15, 2020 **Green is the color of the day.**

Organizers: Andy and Marla Preston 707 795 3480

Meeting Place: Bagel Street Café, 208 Northgate Dr., Northgate One, San Rafael, 94928

Time: Meet at 9:30 for a 10:00 departure

Tour: This year St. Patrick's Day falls on a Tuesday so we're holding the tour on the Sunday before so all our members can join us. We will be driving the backroads of Marin and finishing up an authentic Irish Pub, Moylan's in Novato 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'll be stopping half way through the drive for a rest stop.

The tour finishes at Moylan's, 15 Rowland Blvd, Novato, 94945, so there's easy access to 101. Please bring cash for lunch.

Please RSVP: to Andy or Marla Preston at 707 795 3480 or marlapreston@hotmail.com by March 12th so we can confirm lunch reservations.

We look forward to seeing you, especially new members.



From the Editor

I usually do my column last after the rest of the newsletter is mostly done. I can finally relax and think a bit. It is always a mad panic-stricken rush to throw it together. And I worry about what I left out. I can get rather grumpy, too, during the process. It takes a lot of hours and time away from having the MGs ready to ride. I qualified two entries for the Burnt Spark Plug last year.

I have been slowly working on the brakes for the MGA. My 1500 coupe is very near the change-over point from British pipe thread to the unified thread. Someone mixed the threads on the rear brakes. Somehow he had got it tightened and sealed but once I disconnected the lines (for new cylinders), the threads were stripped and I had to replace the pipe and one connector. Took me a while to determine what was going on after ordering the wrong pipe.

I also started to pull apart the front of Mr. Toad, my P-type. When I wrecked it in 2005, I pounded out the front fenders with two large hammers and brushed on some paint. Of course, it has looked very "toady" since. I hope to get the fenders looking better.

Have you watched the car shows on cable or satellite TV? Some are very interesting and show how to do many things. It is useful to see how the pros do it and how long it takes even them doing bodywork. One guy claimed to spend weeks on just one car getting the metal straight.

The St. Patrick's Day Tour is always popular. I hear the Tom Price Collection Tour was well attended, too, so we are off to a great start.

Dan



More from Bob Bundy:

Dan, Thanks for all the work you do on the Octagon, always look forward to reading it. Will give you a few notes if you think appropriate to include.

I have been active in the Corte Madera community and five years ago when the town was planning a Centennial Celebration I approached Tom Price to see if he would be involved with sponsoring a car show as a special event. He thought it was a great idea and his assistant Paige Casamento worked with me to publicize and set it up along with other local volunteers.

We had the show at Tom's dealership here in Corte Madera with many special cars not seen before at a car show. This was due to Tom reaching out to friends to show cars in private collections as well as bringing several of his cars from his collection. Tom cleared out his lot for the day and we had over 80 cars on display with everyone wanting to do it again next year. However I called it a one and done. Bob Bundy

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MGOC Members Welcome!

FREMONT PEAK TOUR

Saturday March 7th

Tour Organizers: Rod & Sue Schweiger

Meeting Place: Black Bear Diner
174 W. Calaveras Blvd
Milpitas, CA 95035

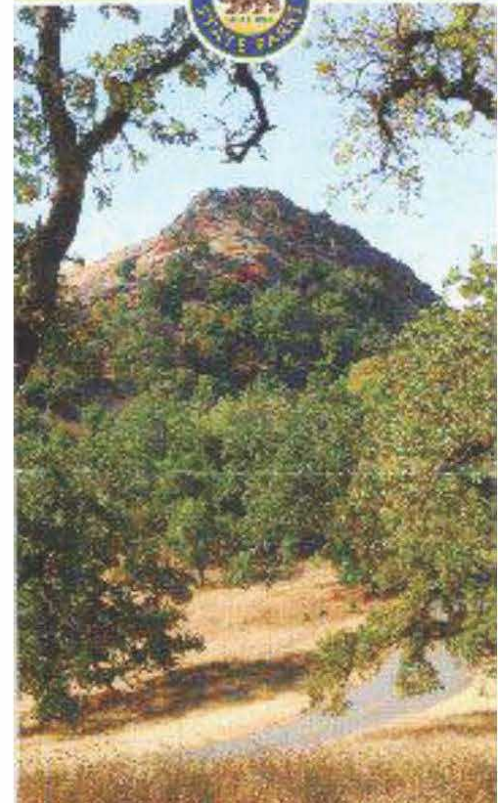
Departure Time: 9:00

Please RSVP: Rod Schweiger at: rodschweiger@gmail.com
RSVP by March 1st!

Admission: \$5.00

This tour will take us “almost” to the top of the peak. Good walkers can go to the final point. On a clear day you’ll likely see the Pacific Ocean, Monterey Bay and Hollister. Lunch will be determined by the number of RSVPs. Details to follow on lunch plans!

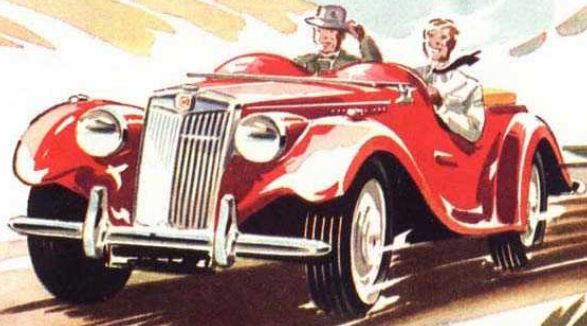
(NOTE: If there is inclement weather the tour will be postponed to Saturday March 14th)



DON'T FORGET YOUR BINOCULARS!



Flier by Kirk Prentiss



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Welcome New Member!

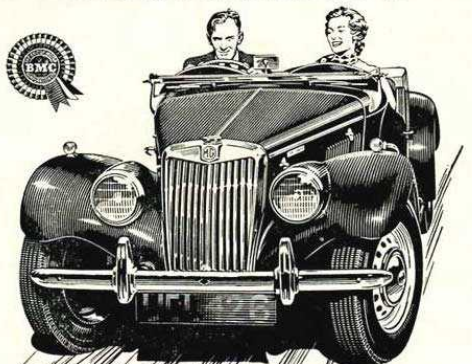
I've never owned an MG, the closest I came to owning one was the MGB-GT that my girlfriend had in high school. Very cool and unique looking car. (Another one of my high school friends had a Triumph GT6+, also a very cool car!) Some of the cars in my life include: '64 Chevy Greenbriar, '63 Cadillac Limo, '66 VW Bug, '65 Valiant Slant 6, '72 Chevy Impala, '66 Mustang six, '70s Renault LeCar, '85 Toyota MR2, '99 BMW 540i, and most recently an '05 C230 Kompressor, among others. I have stories about each to share over time.

My dad was a radio man in WW2 and worked as a TV/Radio repairman for Sears for the bulk of his career. He was a handyman, and so I grew up being very hands on, tinkering with and taking apart toys, trains, bicycles, minibikes, go-karts, and of course, cars. I stayed hands on with cars through college, took a break during the bulk of my professional career, and came back to DIY in the last several years as I move towards retirement, thus my recent interest in some of these older cars that I will appreciate learning more about.

The MG that caught my eye is the 1955 TF-1500 - modern enough engineering while retaining the classic look. And it's actually small enough to fit in the second bay in our garage! I look forward to learning more about them.

Thanks. John Kowtko

the *enthusiast's* car





President's Ponderings

THANK YOU and that's a big thank you to Bob Bundy for organizing the spectacular tour of the Tom Price Car Collection and then a beautiful drive out to Pt. Reyes Station for lunch. It's very rare that an opportunity like this comes along so when Bob mentioned he was working on this tour I was the first one to sign up. I've been to both the Lemay Car Museum in Tacoma, WA and the Peterson Museum in L.A. but Tom has some cars that aren't even there and you're not separated by ropes but can get up close to each car. It was a Truly Wonderful experience.

Now back to reality and my cars. As I've said before I spend 4 times as much time working on my E-type Jag as on my 4 MGs put together and this time it was fault. I did something really dumb.

I had noticed that the E-type was starting to leak more and more oil from the rear main seal than normal. This isn't all that unusual because the rear main seal is made of rope, and it's just like the skipping rope you had as a kid. And to make it even worse the Jaguar engineers decided to cut it in half so you have 2 half seals, one above and one below the crankshaft. Well you can easily understand why they leak. Back in the day they didn't care and some of them even leaked from new. I recently saw a photo of the storage area for Jags before they went off to the dealers and the parking area was covered in oil stains.

Well, mine was getting worse and leaking at 2oz (12 teaspoons) in 100 miles. (I made a small drip pan that I fastened to the bottom of the engine to catch and measure all the oil). Oil was even coming out of the dipstick hole and it should never do that! Something was wrong.

I looked at my records to see what I had recently done on the car. About 7 months earlier I removed the air filter canister, air box and metal tubing to the crankcase ventilation system to repaint them prior to a car show. I had placed tape over the end of the ventilation tubing prior to painting and forgot to remove it when I put it back on the engine thereby blocking the crankcase ventilation system. So the engine had no way to relieve the crankcase pressure that builds up in the engine so was pushing oil out of the rear main seal and other places. I had driven over 900 miles like this; not very smart of me and hopefully hadn't damaged all the seals and gaskets.

After I removed the tape from the end of the vent tube, I'm pleased to say that the leak has returned to normal which is less than 1/8oz (about 1/2 teaspoon) over 125 miles. I can live with that.

Our next event is the Pre-St. Paddy's Day tour hosted by Marla and me on Mar 15; we hope to see you there.

Remember to drive you MG as much as you can, and make everyday an MG day.

Andy

These Cars Have No Problem Getting Past 250,000 Miles - Is Yours on the List?

Ad Articles Skill

MGOC Minutes – Saturday Feb 15, 2020

Nations, El Cerrito

Call to Order: Andy Preston at: 10:11.

Attending: Rick Anguiano, Marcia Crawford, Ken Gittings, Mike Jacobsen, Mark McGothigan, Kirk Prentiss, Andy & Marla Preston, and George Steneberg.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Dec 7, 2019: *Motion:* Mike, *Second:* Kirk, passed.

REPORTS

President's Report: Andy Preston: Thanks to the Board for attending and the main focus of today's meeting in preparing for MGs by the Bay.

Vice President's Report: Kirk Prentiss: Nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report: Marla Preston:

Account	February 2020	December 2019
Checking	9,547.17	17,709.01
Savings	9,589.07	3,589.07
Total	19,136.24	21,298.08

Since our last Treasurer's report we have paid for printing and mailing costs of two issues of the *Octagon*, and paid to subsidize our annual brunch. The change in balances reflects moving money from checking to savings.

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

Registrar's Report: Steve Kellogg: Absent, report via email:

142	Regular Members
41	Regular Family Members
183	Total Regular and Family Members
14	Corresponding Members
4	Corresponding Family Members
18	Total Corresponding and Family
201	Total Members

Six new members have joined so far this year.

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

Regalia Report: Andy Preston: Nothing to report.

The Octagon Report: Dan Shockey: Absent.

Website Report: Steve Kellogg: Absent report by email; working with Corporate Casuals on regalia.

<https://shop.corporatecasuals.com/mgoc/shop/home>

PAST EVENTS: The Annual Brunch was "The Best Yet" according to many members who attended. We had a "Sell Out" crowd of 52 members.

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

Sat Feb 22 Tom Price Car Collection, Tom Bundy
Sun Mar 15 St. Paddy's Day Tour, Andy Preston

Apr TBD Model Railway, Pt. Richmond, Mike Jacobsen – Possibly postponed due to the RR club's operating schedule

Sat Apr 18 SSTS & Metropolitan tour, Judy Guidry

May 31-Jun 4 NAMGAR GT-45, Colorado Springs (*only 1200 miles and 20 hours*)

Jun 28-Jul 1 NAMGBR MG2020, Calgary, Alberta, Canada (*only 1300 miles and 22 hours*)

Jun 29-Jul 3 GOF West, Welches, OR (*only 610 miles and 11 hours*)

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS

MGs by the Bay overview:

Location	Bon Air Shopping Ctr, Greenbrae, CA 94904
Date	Saturday June 13, 2020
Time	Set up 7:30am, Gates open 8:30am, Awards 1:30pm (change from last year)
Insurance	Mike Jacobsen to obtain from NAMGAR
Flyer	Dan Shockey
Registration	Mike Jacobsen & Andy Preston
Entry Form	Mike Jacobsen
Cost	\$25 pre-registration, \$30 at gate, \$10 each additional car
Publicity	Contact previous attendees from last three years, send flyer and entry form Contact local car clubs
Field Layout	Same as last year
Awards	Andy Preston
Dash Plaques	None
Tee Shirts	Ken Gittings
Website	Steve Kellogg

Discussion Item: MGOC sponsorship of a student for a trade school, specializing in British cars. \$2000 per year. Discussion included funding an apprenticeship at a British car-oriented repair shop or donating a car as a project for a local automotive shop class. NAMGAR is working on a similar program, so we may wait to see what they develop and compare/contrast it with our ideas. Marcia will check with local high schools and community colleges to see which ones still have auto shop classes.

BUSINESS RESOLVED ONLINE SINCE LAST MEETING: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Rick described how his car would release smoke when the headlights were switched on, and asked for suggestions. Several source & remedies were suggested, and with that he was later able to find the short.

NEXT MEETING: March 15, in the restaurant after the St. Paddy's Day tour's lunch.

Meeting adjourned at: 11:10

Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen



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Dixon Fairgrounds May 17, 2020

Entry Details: *FREE admission to the public*

Vehicle (car or motorcycle)

Show Pre-Entry: \$30.00

(Or \$40.00 day of event for each vehicle)

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Swap Meet Space:

Private Parties - **\$25.00** Pre-entry

(Or **\$30** day of the event)

Business vendors - **\$40.00**

Food vendors - **\$40.00**

Swap meet includes new & used parts

Everyone will enjoy:

- Food and drinks on site
- A variety of vehicle club displays
- Large selection of raffle items to win. Tickets available for purchase at the UBSCC club booth.

For more information or to download forms or register on-line, go to: WWW.UBSCC.ORG

or call: (916) 215-2940 or (916) 425-1687

Vendors and participants set up at 7:00 AM. Gates open to the public at 8:00 AM.

Final entry and registration: 10:00 AM. Awards presentation: 1:30 PM.

The Real Gremlins of WWII

By Brent Swancer, Mysterious Universe

"Gremlins" were based upon allegedly real entities which, during the Second World War and even before, plagued pilots and aircraft crew with all manner of mischief as they battled in the skies during one of the bloodiest eras of human history. Here among the seemingly never-ending smoke, bomb blasts, strafing anti-aircraft fire, buzzing enemy aircraft, and death, the crews of various aircraft from all sides were faced with a new enemy; bizarre impish beasts that were said to infest aircraft and seemed to want nothing more but to create havoc and bring them down from the clouds.

The origin of the modern term "gremlin" is often said to derive from the Old English word *greme*, which means to vex or annoy. It refers to a type of mischievous gnome-like imp or demon, typically said to be around a foot tall, which probably has its roots in the old folklore of goblins and fairies. The original early representation of these creatures was that of skilled craftsmen with a proficiency with machinery, and they were once credited by some with helping mankind along with our technology, such as in the creation of the steam engine. Yet for all of the benevolent early folklore, it was their penchant for mischief and mayhem that they would become most known for.

The modern version of the gremlin as a malicious, trouble making hell raiser has its origins with British airmen, some of whom believed that there were miniature imps, gnomes, or fairies which seemed to show an intense interest in aviation and caused aircraft or navigational malfunctions. One of the first mentions of the creatures can be traced back to an early reference to them in the early 1900s in a British newspaper called the *Spectator*:

"The old Royal Naval Air Service in 1917 and the newly constituted Royal Air Force in 1918 appear to have detected the existence of a horde of mysterious and malicious sprites whose whole purpose in life was...to bring about as many as possible of the inexplicable mishaps which trouble an airman's life."

The existence of such weird entities became popularized starting in 1923, when a British pilot crashed his plane into the sea and later reported that the accident had been caused by tiny creatures which had followed him aboard his plane and proceeded to create havoc aboard the aircraft, sabotaging the engine, messing around with the flight controls, and ultimately causing it to crash. It wasn't long before other British pilots also began to complain of being harassed by similar miniature troll-like creatures with a mastery of technology and machinery, which caused engine failures, electrical malfunctions, communications shutdowns, bad landings, freak accidents, and pretty much anything else that could possibly ever go wrong with an aircraft.

Gremlins were said to engage in sucking the gas out of tanks through hoses, jamming radio frequencies, mucking up landing gear, blowing dust or sand into fuel pipes or sensitive electrical equipment, cutting wires, removing bolts or screws, tinkering with dials, knobs or switches, jostling controls, slashing wings or tires, poking or pinching gunners or pilots, banging incessantly on the fuselage, breaking windows, and a wide variety of other prankish acts. There were even pilots who claimed that the creatures had telepathic powers and could create realistic illusions in a victim's mind, such as the appearance of the ground or a mountain emerging suddenly from the clouds. They were also sometimes reported to be seen sitting out upon the nose of the plane or the wings of aircraft in midflight tampering with the wings or even the engines. On occasion the gremlins were said to shout, giggle, whisper, growl, or otherwise make noise to distract aircraft crews, in particular gunners as they were lining up their sights on an enemy and pilots when performing maneuvers for which total concentration was a necessity. Such reports spread quickly through the ranks and by the end of the 1920s it seemed like any pilot who had ever had an aircraft problem of any kind had seen the things, and they were commonly reported throughout the Royal Air Force by pilots stationed in such far flung places as Malta, the Middle East, and India.

One of the most famous alleged gremlin accounts from this period was made by none other than the renowned American aviator Charles Lindbergh as he was engaged in his historic nonstop solo flight over the Atlantic from New York to Paris in May of 1927. Lindbergh had been flying his



single-engine single-seat plane Spirit of St. Louis from the Roosevelt Field in Garden City, NY, to Le Bourget Field in Paris, France, which was to be an epic 3,600 mile (5,800 km), 33 and a half hour flight and the first ever of its kind. In the 9th hour of being airborne, Lindbergh reported that he had suddenly felt somewhat detached from reality and found himself surrounded by several vaporous, strange looking beings within the cramped confines of his tiny cabin, which spoke to him and demonstrated incredibly complex knowledge of navigation and flight equipment. In this case rather than cause mischief, Lindbergh said that the gremlins actually kept him alert and reassured him that he would remain safe on his journey. Lindbergh kept this bizarre experience to himself until the account was published in his 1953 book *The Spirit of St. Louis*.

The actual physical descriptions of gremlins varied wildly. In some cases they were described as being little elfish beings similar to humans, wearing bright red or green double-breasted frock coats, old fashioned hats with feathers, and pointed shoes. The skin color could be green, gold, pink, or red. Others gave the entities a more sinister appearance, saying that they looked animalistic, with hairy bodies, large, pointed ears, deep red or even glowing eyes, and horns. Still other reports speak of gremlins as having hairless grey skin, being vaguely reptilian in appearance, and having enormous mouths filled with pointy teeth. There were cases that said they looked like jackrabbits, bull terriers, or some combination of both. In some cases they were merely wispy entities seemingly composed of mist or smoke. Some accounts mention webbed hands and feet, fins, or bat-like wings. Size descriptions also varied considerably anywhere between a mere 6 inches tall all the way up to three feet in height. In some cases, they were said to have large feet with suction cups or even leather shoes with hooks, both of which enabled them to walk about on the outside of aircraft or to hang upside down. In all reports, through whatever means, gremlins were known to be able to adhere to the outer fuselage of planes and to withstand incredible temperature extremes, high altitudes, and violent winds.

Gremlins and their bothersome antics were reported throughout the 1920s and 30s, but perhaps the period of the most intense alleged gremlin activity was during the fierce fighting of World War II. Reports of gremlins were especially prolific among the UK's RAF (Royal Air Force) units, especially the high-altitude Photographic Reconnaissance Units (PRU), which flew perilous missions in unarmed, unarmored Spitfires and Mosquitoes at great heights on photographic missions over enemy territory. It was during these harrowing missions, when pilots operated in bitter, biting cold as heat was redirected to the cameras to keep them warm, that the little monster tricksters were regularly seen and blamed for all manner of otherwise inexplicable technical troubles and woes. In some cases, mechanical problems would arise only to mysteriously right themselves again as soon as the planes landed.

The Battle of Britain, an enormous air campaign waged against the United Kingdom by the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) during the summer and autumn of 1940 saw many cases of reported gremlin activity, so much so in fact that the British Air Ministry serious attempts to investigate the phenomenon. The Ministry even went as far as to have a service manual written up by a "Gremlorist," Pilot Officer Percy Prune, which was an official document consisting of a list of the creatures' exploits, how to placate or distract them, and various ways to avoid accidents due to their presence, such as not displaying bravado, arrogance or over confidence, which was thought to attract the creatures. There were also posters that warned of the malicious little monsters, as well as bulletins.

At first this seemed to be a phenomenon unique to the Royal Air Force and it was often whispered among airmen that the gremlins were in league with the enemy, but it later



became apparent that enemy aircraft were also suffering from the creatures' tomfoolery and that they took no sides, taking equal glee in harassing both British and enemy aircraft alike. When the American Allies came to British shores, they too began to experience the strange phenomenon. American pilots and airmen typically described seeing strange creatures out on the wings of the aircraft, where they would fiddle around with the aileron, which is the hinged flight control surface on the wing that allows it to roll or bank. So persistent were the stories of gremlins fiddling and tampering with the aileron of American aircraft that the Americans often referred to the creatures as *Yehudis*, after a famous violinist of the time, because they were always fiddling.

One American Boeing B17 pilot during WWII known only as L.W. had a rather bizarre and harrowing experience with gremlins typical of these encounters while engaged in a combat mission. The man reported that as he was taking the enormous plane higher he could hear a strange sound coming from the engine and instruments on the panel in front of him started going haywire. When the confused pilot looked outside to his right he saw an freakish "entity" outside of the plane's window latched onto the plane that was described as 3 feet tall, with abnormally long arms, grey hairless skin, deep red eyes, a gaping mouth full of teeth, and pointed ears with tufts of black hair at the ends like "owl ears," just staring in at him from the wind and bitter cold beyond the glass. When the frightened pilot looked to the nose of the aircraft he was astonished to see yet another one of the creatures apparently dancing about out there and pounding away haphazardly at the fuselage. The pilot thought at first that he was perhaps hallucinating or experiencing disorientation, but he reported that he felt sharp and in control of his senses. The pilot said that the strange creatures appeared to be laughing maniacally, and that they gleefully cavorted about outside of his plane pulling on whatever they could get their clawed hands on, banging on the aircraft with all of their might, and obviously trying their best to bring the plane down. After a bit of maneuvering the pilot managed to shake the critters off of his plane, although he would later say he had no idea if they had fallen to their deaths or merely jumped to another plane. L.W. was apprehensive about telling anyone about the frightening ordeal, but when he told a gunner friend of his about it, the gunner reported having had a similar experience just a few days before.

Reports of gremlins and their knack for hiding aboard planes to sabotage them persisted throughout WWII, from all sides and nations involved in the conflict, more often than not by experienced pilots and aircraft crew that were sober, level-headed and rational. What could have been at the heart of these accounts? What were all of these people seeing or experiencing? It is often pointed out that the lack of adequate pressurization of aircraft back in those days most likely led to hallucinations. There could also have been some element of "passing the buck" or deflecting blame for human error by blaming accidents on these fantastical creatures. This could have helped build morale among the men, as it would have been more constructive to blame the gremlins for aircraft mishaps rather than accuse members of their own squadron.

Yet those who claim to have seen gremlins or to have been the victims of their attacks insist that they were no figment of the imagination and were in fact very real. Survivors of the war who have lived to tell the tale have no doubt in their minds that gremlins were a very real threat and that they were no mere folklore or spooky legend, adamantly refusing that all cases can be explained away by mere hallucinations or human error. Nevertheless, these sorts of reports largely fizzled out in the wake of the war's end, and by the 1950s there was very little talk of gremlins among airmen, perhaps largely due to the fact that the military began to strictly discourage rumors or talk of the creatures, calling it unprofessional and morale inhibiting behavior. Most mention of gremlins nowadays is made half-jokingly, when an aircraft experiences trouble or if machinery breaks down or malfunctions for no apparent reason.

Whether they were real or not, gremlins were indeed very real to many of the brave men who served to risk their lives for their countries high in the treacherous skies of the Second World War. Perhaps next time you are flying in a plane that experiences a sudden technical difficulty or uncommon turbulence, you may just want to look under your seat or peer out of the window just to be sure. You just may see some gremlins peering right back.

Brent Swancer is an author and crypto expert living in Japan.

I am convinced that these gremlins are still active and jumped to English cars once the war ended, possibly due to the close association with RAF personnel. I can personally attest to their activities with my own MG and Triumph sports cars. - Dan

Tom Price Collection - Tour Report

On November 22nd Tom Price opened up "his garage" for the MG Owners Club and arranged to have Shawn Thomas there to walk us through your fabulous collection. Tom is the senior partner in the Price-Simms Family Dealerships for high end autos (including **McLaren**) in the Bay Area. Members were "blown away" by the number of historically significant racecars in this unique corral as well as the quality of the restorations on them. Seeing a prewar Alta hill climb racecar with dual rear wheels was certainly unusual. We also were treated to an early Aston Martin DB2 racecar as well as a Ferarri 250 GT and a Testa Rosa previously raced by David Love. We all enjoyed learning about the racing history of the cars that Tom Price and Shawn Thomas have raced in the various historic races around the world. It was a museum quality presentation.

What also impressed everyone was the slot-car model of Monte Carlo on the upper level. The detail was amazing with everyone speculating on how long it took to put the model together. Thanks again for opening up, we had a great drive out to the Station House Cafe in Point Reyes. Much too nice a day for February, when I was concerned that rain might impact attendance.

By Tour Leader & MGOC member Bob Bundy



Photos: Marty Rayman





Bob Bundy - Our Leader!



Above by Andy Preston

Photos: John Hunt



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Incredible Monte Carlo Slot Car Layout!

Photos by Andy Preston



I graduated from the University of Tennessee Medical School in 1970 and bought my 1970 MGB as a graduation present to myself. I then drove it to San Francisco to start my internship at Kaiser Hospital. I have always driven my MG that has never been stored or restored. The Bay Area is the perfect environment for a convertible. My soft top remains in perfect condition as it has been stored in my attic for over thirty years.

- Bob Bundy

You would have loved the slot cars. OMG! Bob Bundy put together an excellent adventure.

-Marty Rayman



Keep Planning for 2020 ...



WINTER - SPRING

Fremont Peak Tour, MGOC welcome, March 7

St. Patrick's Day Tour, Marla & Andy Preston, Sunday,
March 15

Pub Night, On the Road Again, Mar. 27, Bill Hiland

Model Railroad Museum, Pt. Richmond, Mike Jacobsen
April TBD



SUMMER MEETS

Dixon Brit Show & Swap Meet, Sunday, May 17

NAMGAR GT46, Colorado Springs, June 1-5 , combined
with the NAMMMR national meet, MGOCCaravan

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

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



Pics by Andy Preston

Pub Night! Mar. 27

On The Road Again - Morgan Hill

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G4

Our next Pub Night of the season will be Friday, March 27th. Also plan on April 24. 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



More from the
Michigan Rowdies
- a great club

Front Shock Notes by Dave Quinn

Bruce Woodson had an article in the September/October 2019 issue of MGA! on shocks. I had these notes already done for the most part when that came out, so I thought I would add a few more remarks on the subject. A front shock arm seal leaked last fall and I decided I would replace both shocks. I ordered a set but on arrival discovered the arms so badly machined I returned them. I ordered a set from a different vendor and installed them in May. Within two months and 3,000 miles both leaked. Options are limited. I researched the invaluable information found at Barney Gaylord's website MGAguru.com and summarized it below as I tried to gain more insight.

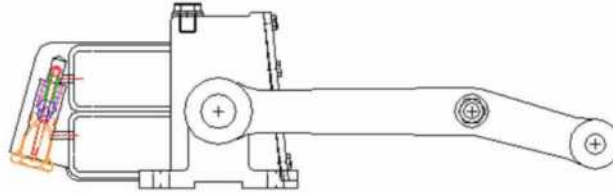
Front shocks are horizontal with the top piston chamber above the shaft. Thus a leak at the shaft seal will quickly drop the oil level enough to kill the damping action. Rear shocks have the piston chambers vertical at the bottom and the shaft on top. They seldom leak; in fact many are 50 years old and have never been touched.

Reportedly front shocks hold 5-ounces when filled from empty. You need at least 4 ounces to get the air out for good damping action over the full stroke. The shocks start losing damping action if down more than 1-ounce and almost all damping is gone if down 2-ounces. The shocks have an internal spring-loaded valve to change the stiffness. It can reportedly change tension a small amount by either adjusting the nut for upward (bump) action or adjusting shims for downward (rebound) action. Front shock arm swing is 6". It travels from a low of 2-5/8" to a high of 8-5/8".

It has been my experience that front shocks either work or they don't. If working, I don't touch them. There is no reason to inspect them and risk getting dirt into the piston chamber. If you must top them up hydraulic jack oil is reportedly your best choice. It has antifoaming agents and the proper viscosity.

According to Peter Caldwell of World

Wide "You really do not need and should not fill them absolutely full. In fact, there is a bit of a boss in the fill hole to help prevent that. As the oil heats in use there needs to be room for expansion and not running out the shaft seals or packings.



From the uppermost edge of the piston bore to the inside edge of the casting is 5/8". The boss is half that distance deep. If

you fill to the bottom of the boss, that leaves a 5/16" air gap for expansion." "The oil level only needs to cover the upper piston bore when the shock is installed, and in reality could actually be a bit lower than that as the poppet valve in the piston is centered in the piston."

When it comes to replacing the front shock seals yourself you need a strong press to remove and replace the shaft and if the shaft is grooved or pitted it may need machining. Getting rebuilds from a specialist is the best answer. Over the years I have tried Moss Motors, Apple Hydraulics, and World Wide Auto Parts with mixed results. I want the best ride possible on Michigan's crappy roads. That means a firm ride that is not a detriment to ride comfort. It would seem to me the main goal of front shocks is to put a limit on suspension travel when on harsh roads rather than slow speed handling where a sway bar could provide better maneuvering. But most importantly I want shocks that will last!

Peter Caldwell of World Wide indicates there is a shortage of front shock cores for the MGA.

Dave Quinn

Note on the slot car layout at Tom Price's. Mike Jacobsen believes this may have roots with the MGOC, or at least the NorCal MGA Club now a part of the MGOC. J.R. Boye's brother Jason created a monster slot car track he called, "Le Monzaco" as it combined Monaco and Le Mans. Anyone know if this is the same layout? - Dan

An Interesting Hybrid T A Rose by Any Other Name

By Dan Shockey

I had the opportunity to visit MG enthusiast Pete Thelander in Orange County over the Christmas holidays. Pete is well known for his extremely rare MG NE racecar that was built for prestigious Ulster Tourist Trophy race in 1934, to be driven by best-ever racer Tazio Nuvolari. Pete has an amazing collection of MG memorabilia but fewer MGs now than in the past. Pete and his wife Fran have done the newsletter for the Vintage MG Club for 30 years. (Andy tells me I have only 26 more years to go.)

Pete's work background is aeronautical engineering. He worked on NASA booster rockets for most of his career. (What stunning opportunities engineers have had. Pete and I graduated from the same engineering college.) One car that Pete has gotten out from his past to put back on the road is the TF that he purchased in Europe back in the 1960s. At the time, Pete had an interest common to many young men of the era, putting more performance in their T Series MGs. Car magazines often featured efforts to add supercharger, install a flathead Ford V-8 or a Volvo drivetrain. (Andy Preston's TF enjoys such a potent conversion.)

One car that the junkyards were full of back then was the innovative Chevy Corvair. Pete had the idea to replace the troublesome TF transmission and rear axle, add independent rear suspension and much more power by installing a Corvair transaxle with its sturdy independent rear axles. The Corvair used a standard front-drive transmission attached to the front of the differential unit. Since the engine mounted on the back, the transmission mounted (backwards) on the front and could be driven by a front driveshaft. The transaxle looks a little odd with the empty bellhousing at the back. And the shifter tube must run forward like a VW Bug (or a Corvair, of course.)



Pete says the rugged GM 4-speed tranny, differential, large axles and much larger rear brakes do not add weight compared to the MG units. To power this potent combination, Pete chose the "Iron Duke" Chevy II, 2.5 liter 4 cylinder engine. This engine looks surprisingly like the MG XPEG except that the spark plugs and exhaust are on the wrong side. There are lots of hot-up parts for this popular motor, used in dirt track Midgets and later the Fiero.

Pete built the TF rather crudely 50 years ago. Pete has pulled it out again and is working to make improvements to get the Hybrid T back on the road soon. When I was there, he was finishing the design for the rear floor and side curtain storage.

Photos by the author.

Diff and gearbox at left. Note shift tube above.

More from the
Michigan Rowdies
- a great club

MG For The Future? - Andy Hoffman

Hi Rowdies,

Joanne and I are here in London and we stopped in at the MG dealer at 48 Piccadilly. Check it out - in the front is a sushi bar called the MG Roadster Cafe; in the back are MGs for sale. Also

check out this image of an MG concept car. Sadly, no version was on display on the showroom floor.

Best, Andy and Joanne



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)

Two 1976 MGBs: Sell as package. Clean titles. The red passed smog and has been stored indoors. Both were running vehicles when parked. Roll bar. Owner has passed. Ask \$2000. Located in Linden, CA. (209) 981-5424 (Posted 03/20)

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 MGOCFSF.org

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**RALLYE GLENWOOD SPRINGS
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Caravan to GT-45 - Colorado Springs

The North American MGA Register will hold their annual GT this year in Colorado Springs. This promises to be an exciting event with sign-ups already well ahead of expectations. The North American MMM Register will join in this year. That is the national club for the overhead cam MGs of the 1930s.

Mike Jacobsen is planning to lead an adventurous caravan to the event, taking the "loneliest highway" – US50 – over to Colorado. Should be a spectacular drive with good comrades. Dan Shockey and wife Thuy plan to join in. We will take 2 or 2½ days to get there, depending on the preferences of the participants.

For those wanting to extend the benefits of the trip, on the weekend flowing the event, June 12-14, the Rocky Mountain MG Club will again sponsor the Glenwood Rallye. This is the 68th edition of this time-speed-distance event, the longest-running event of this type in North America.

We will have spares and support for the caravan. Please consider joining in the fun and adventure.





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from member Don in Napa

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North American MGB Register



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MGOC Meeting
Nosh 'n 'Natter
Sunday, March 15

*You might spot a real
leprechaun and his carriage
on the Tour!*



Date: Sunday, Feb. 15

Following lunch

Pre-St. Patrick's Day Tour

More Info: Andy Preston

andypreston@att.net

We look forward to seeing you!

Photos: Kirk Prentiss

