



THE OCTAGON



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



North American MGB Register



Since 1957!

Roadhouse Run: Dave Marsh at right.
'Head 'em up, move 'em out.'

Shockey photo



'Start 'em early.' Beautiful MGA owned by Naomi & Stephen Born of Berkeley. Restored by Dave Laughlin. A grey top was original for this model. Shockey Photo.

July 2018

About *The Octagon* and the MG Owners Club

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

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CLUB ADVISOR PROGRAM

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

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 MGB 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
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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.

MGOCSE.ORG

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>Marin Headlands Tour</i> July 7.....	3
From the Ed.....	4
<i>North Bay Tour with JAG</i>	5
New Members; Oil Drip Catch Tank.....	6
President's Ponderings.....	7
Vapor Lock Resolution.....	8-10
Our Newest Member - MG Moder.....	11
<i>Roadhouse Run Report</i>	12
Through Central Africa.....	13 - 15
Planning Ahead.....	16
Caption Contest; Ye Olde Ad.....	17
Meeting Minutes	18-19
Classifieds.....	19
<i>Rendezvous</i> Caravan.....	20
<i>Nosh 'n Natter</i> July 7	22



Marin Headlands Tour

Saturday, July 7, 2018

About: Join us and explore the famed Marin Headlands and Tiburon. The day will be filled with history, amazing views, and camaraderie.

Meeting Places time and location:

East Bay: 8:30 a.m. at **Safeway** parking area which is located at 3540 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette, CA 94549. We will leave promptly at 8:45 a.m.

Marin: 9:45 a.m. at **Bed Bath and Beyond** parking area at 2601 Larkspur Landing Circle, Larkspur. We will leave promptly at 10:00 a.m.



Lunch: 12:30 p.m. **Note Change:** Corinthian Yacht Club, Tiburon. Please RSVP by July 2. Great views of the Bay! (A Big Thank You to Robert Bundy!)

Lunch Parking: Main Street Parking Lot, located at 46 Main Street in Tiburon.

Organizer: To reserve your spot and/or if you have any questions, please call John Hunt at 925-330-7849 or e-mail me at: huntsails@comcast.net

Looking forward to seeing you!



From the Editor

June 19, 2018

Greetings. I saw some of you on Saturday for the Roadhouse Run to Davenport. It was beautifully sunny in Sunnyvale but we drove in the fog once we reached the Skyline. Thank you to Dave Marsh. It was interesting and fun.

I did replace the water pump in my MGA. It was "talking to me" as reported by Andy. The aluminum-body pump had over 50,000 miles on it. But it seems the problem may be that the DPO replaced the generator with an alternator but did not get a longer fan belt. I had to take off the alternator to replace the belt and I believe it was putting too much lateral stress on the bearings. I bought a longer belt off the shelf at the auto parts store. And yes, I bought a spare as well.



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OCT09

I installed a new aluminum radiator in the MGA plus a new plastic 7-blade fan. The US-made radiator is thicker and extends back near the fan. I could not fit the fan shroud that I used before but I don't think I shall need it with the more efficient radiator. The fan will be more effective with the radiator very close, too. The car ran a lot cooler though I have yet to drive it on a really hot day.

We are blessed to have a diversity of people in the club and I hope that continues to grow. We live in a time of a sharply divided nation that I hope will not affect our club. Many folks enjoy the hobby and the club as an escape from daily struggles including political discussion. Like other human organizations, it is difficult enough to hold a club together. I read that in England there are four Ferrari clubs that have to be placed far apart at shows because they cannot get along.

I am away to the GOF Central – and NAMMMR meet - next week. I have completed this issue early for that reason. Happy trails!

Dan



05/05/2018



5

New Event!



MGOC and J.A.G. present a
Joint North Bay Drive with MGs and Jaguars
Sunday August 5th

Hosted by Andy & Marla Preston (MG) and by Dorothy Smith (JAG)

This is a joint drive with JAG (Jaguar Associates Group) club of the Bay Area. We will drive some of the fabulous backroads on Marin and Sonoma County finishing up in Occidental for a group lunch.

The joint gathering of MGs and Jaguars will meet at the Marin Jaguar Dealership, 195 Casa Buena Drive, Corte Madera, at 9:00 and after meetings and greeting will depart at 10:00am. We will head off North on 101 and exit at Lucas Valley Rd and head west towards Nicasio. This is a great drive that takes you through pasture lands, groves of Redwoods and past George Lucas's Ranch.

We will continue past Nicasio and past the reservoirs to our first stop at the French Marin Cheese Factory for a rest break, and cheese tasting.

After the break we will head west through the Chilen Valley and through Tomales to our lunch stop at the Union Hotel in Occidental. The drive is spectacular and the views on top of some of the hills are unparalleled. On reaching our destination at the Union Hotel we will enjoy a generous family style lunch.

After lunch, the community of Occidental provides a great opportunity to check out the local antique and craft stores.

The total drive is around 1 hr 45 mins and is split in the middle for the break at the Cheese Factory. All of the roads are country roads and normally quiet except for cyclist so we should be able to stay together as a group.



The cost for MGOC members is \$25 per person paid in advance. (MGOC are subsidizing the lunch by \$10 so the cost for non MGOC members is \$35 per person).

Please RSVP to Marla Preston at: marlapreston@hotmail.com or (707-795-3480) before Aug 1st so we can confirm numbers and send a check to:

Marla Preston (MGOC Treasurer),
7305 Rebas Way, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

New Members!

Martin Alvarez of Moraga with a Brown 1969 MGB that is all original.

Rob Washer of Napa with a 1953 MGTD.

We hope to get more info from Martin and Rob about them and their MGs,

Welcome to the MG Owners Club!

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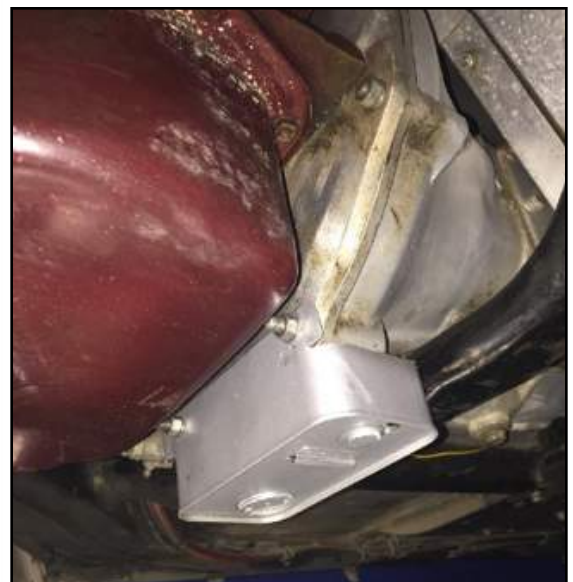


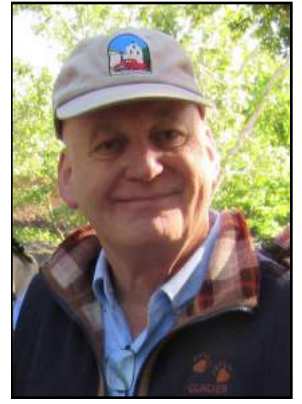
Jerry Bowles sent this pic of his MGA



DIY Oil Catch Pan

T-types and other MGs have primitive rear oil seals that do not work well once the Archimedes scroll is worn. A catch pan collects the oil for occasional draining (and re-use?)





President's Ponderings

I'm always pleasantly surprised at how reliable our little MGs can be. I attend many car events and shows and there are always lots of MGs around that have been driven there from far away. I also drive mine on lots of daily trips and my neighbors always comment that "you made it back okay". Although in their defense there have been some occasions when we have come back piggy-backing a flat bed. I need to remember that back in the day my daily driver was an MG or other British car and they were driven every day in the cold and rainy British weather and so they were reliable then and so should be now. But now they are 50 years old.

At the last club meeting I asked Mike Jacobsen who is on his round trip to Richmond VA and then onto Gettysburg PA for the NAMGAR GT43 and NAMGBR 2018 meets how do you do prepare your car for a 7000 mile trip. Mike said "that you perform all the regular maintenance in the shop manual". Yes it's that simple and you also carry lots of spare parts that you can swap out at the side of the road and of course tools. I also asked Mike when do you stop worrying about all the little noises and get more comfortable and he responded "after the first tank of gas"!

BTW Mike just checked in and both he (driving his MGA) and Jennifer Orum (driving her MGB) made it to Richmond VA and are now on their way to Gettysburg and he didn't report and problems but we'll wait for his complete report next month. Well done to both of them!

Talking of regular maintenance I installed a new water pump in my MGA Coupe. It's a fairly straight forward job for anyone who wants to try it and I think that Dan our esteemed Editor should change the water pump in his MGA sooner rather than later. It was singing a high tune at MGSbtB meaning that the bearings are past their best. My old water pump was alloy with a plastic impellor (not factory) so I replaced it with a cast iron one similar to the original one. I think that the engine is running cooler now with the new pump.

Thanks to Dave Marsh for organizing the Davenport run which was very successful, thanks Dave.

Our next outing is on July 7 to the Marin Headland and Nike missile site being lead by John Hunt. This should be a spectacular tour finishing up at the Corinthian Yacht club in Tiburon for lunch with magnificent views of the bay. See details in this issue for more info.

And then on Sunday August 5 we have our joint tour with the local JAG club which should be a lot of fun. So there are lots of things for you to do in the coming months with your cars.

Take Care and drive safely,

Andy and Max

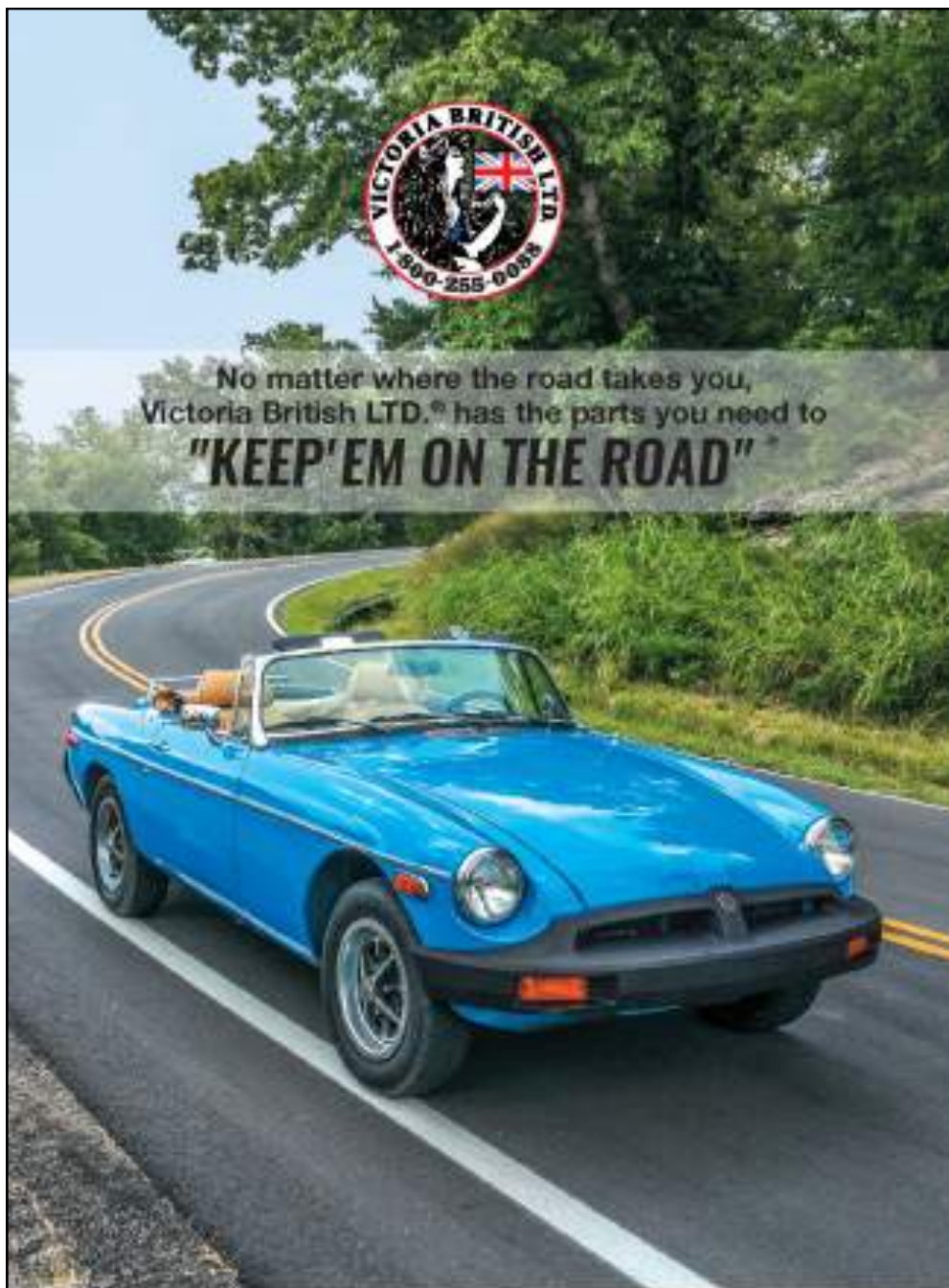




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Vapor Lock Resolution

Just back from a 5,500K (kilometer) drive to the MG Nationals in Tasmania in my Coupe with 1950cc fast road engine. Ran brilliantly on highways, but as soon as city traffic/lights/road works etc. the temperature rises to 200, and rough running takes over. Never stalls, but engine runs like it is starving for fuel until open road speeds again. Once temperature drops back down to 170, all is OK. My immediate thought is fuel vaporization. As I have air conditioning (which I try not to use because of the drop in engine revs), there is a condenser in front of the radiator that may block the path of air being drawn through the radiator. The condenser has twin electric fans that only come on when the a/c is switch on, so I am thinking of putting a by pass switch in the bring them on when in the above-mentioned traffic conditions.



Web Discussion

For all those that cry timing and carb tuning, these have been checked out and are perfect. I have noticed that the heat shield is not insulated. Maybe this would help.

Gary Lock, Queensland, Australia

Gary, I'm assuming you still have a mechanical fan behind the coolant rad. Go electric on this rad. At crawling speeds the mechanical fan won't move enough air. I had a plastic fan on one of my "B's", it was better than the steel effort but sounded like Concorde on after burners. Mechanical fans move less air just when you need more moved. And get some heat shielding for the float chambers and fuel lines.

Allan Reeling, Shropshire, UK

I can also strongly recommend the fitting of twin 9" electric fans in front of the radiator and ditching the engine powered fan. My twin fans are made by Davies-Graig in Australia and are pretty good quality. They fit the MGAs radiator like they were fitted as original equipment and are really effective at controlling the coolant temperature.

Another option is to fit a plastic fan, the NTG fan I fitted seems to be very ruggedly made and I saw an instant engine temperature drop of 10 degrees when I fitted it. I only changed it for electric fans because it was a bit noisy and it was using up to 6bhp of engine power.

My twin-fan set-up works fine in the hot summers in Europe, I found that even with temperatures of up to 100 degrees F, the gauge never went far above 195 and I never got fuel vaporization problems.

Colyn Firth, South Yorkshire, UK

Hi Steve & Colyn, as mentioned earlier the problem we are experiencing is not overheating. My car runs between 190 & 200 degrees, rather it is when you are stopped in traffic with no airflow around the carburetors there is a build up of hot

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air from the exhaust manifold around the carbies with a "Dutch oven effect". The ethanol-based fuels in Australia vaporize at around 70 deg.C so this results in carbie and fuel line vaporization. The bilge fan circulates cool air around the carbies and fuel lines when stopped and prevents the fuel vaporization from occurring. If the car is running at a normal temperature fitting electric fans or 7 blade fans will have minimal effect.

I Hazeldine, New South Wales, Australia

Gary, I hope that fitting a bilge fan does solve your fuel vaporization problem. On the cooling front, I would give some serious thought to fitting the twin electric fans to replace the engine fan and re-positioning the air-con condenser below the radiator duct panel.

I got the idea for the Davies-Craig twin-fans from your fellow Aussie, Neal Ferguson and so it is a well proven set up for your Oz climate.

Davies-Craig has recently introduced a digital thermostatic switch for the fans, which has a very narrow 5-degree range. I plan to use one to make the fans switch on at just over 200 degrees and off at just over 195.

My engine temperature rarely gets above 195 when the car is moving and so, in practical terms, this means that my fans only ever switch on when the car is stood in traffic.

If I switch the fans on permanently, the engine temp drops to around 165 and stays there, which shows that the twin-fans have more than enough cooling capacity for the MGA. This basically means that you could use the fans thermostat to set the engines operating temperature range to whatever you are happy with.

I have attached a picture of the twin-fan set up with the original Revotec thermostatic switch in the top hose. **Colyn**

I had the same problem as Gary with a "stock" 1622cc with all the "usual" cooling tricks, including an electric pusher fan in addition to the standard mechanical fan.

Once I added the bilge pump in the carb ducting the problem went away. It's also useful for startups after turning off the engine in hot weather. Heat soaking the engine compartment causes vapor lock and rough running, but the bilge fan turned on a bit before restarting lessens that condition significantly.

Ken Doris, Beaufort, South Carolina

Colyn's Twin Fans on an MGA Radiator (Below)



Bilge Pump Example (above)

This issue has come up numerous times in the past. I've set thermocouples throughout the engine compartment and recorded 250F at the fuel pump and feed line on the firewall. The pump at that location is trying to pull fuel via a vacuum, uphill and a bubble of vapor forming (especially shortly after shutoff) will just continue expanding. These pumps don't pump vapor and can take quite some time to re-prime under these conditions. The rubber hose insulation is one defense. I've used wiring loom as it comes split and installs quickly and looks professional.

Keeping the tank topped will help. Relocating the pump down in back will easily feed the fuel to the pump so it can be pushed forward up to the engine.

The previous owner (in southern CA) had two fuel lines, one to feed fuel and the other to return it to the tank so it continually circulated cool fuel and had very little resistance for delivery to the carbs. Relocating the fuel line to the left side of the car will avoid the exhaust pipes-muffler-manifold scorching heat. Pouring cool water on the fuel line under the pump can get one up and running quickly.

I've also broken the fuel line loose on the pump discharge and turned the key on a let it pump vapor & fuel into a rag to re-prime in seconds. **JIM N, Michigan**

There are several very long-time T-Type owners in our local groups, and some are even original owners. It's fair to say they all agree about modern fuels causing more vapor lock issues than the old formulations did.

I have plenty of experience driving T-Types in very hot climates. During that time I've learned that while the car is in motion, most vapor lock issues happen at or near the fuel pump. This is where the "grapefruit trick" stems from, and why some people install a pusher fuel pump in the rear of the car. The TC/TD pump has a hard time sucking fuel uphill when it's beginning to vaporize in the lines or pump, and then you begin to hear the ominous rapid clicking of a starving SU pump.

I agree with Tom that vapor lock should not be happening at highway speeds. The radiator in these cars is enormous compared to the cylinder capacity.

In very slow traffic on very hot days, the carbs do often begin to suffer and may require a bit of choke to retain a good mixture. I suspect that not only is it the heat soaked carbs but the much hotter than normal air entering the engine. My MGA suffers this, with its tiny engine bay and lack of adequate airflow. One TC owner I know installed a cool air intake and claims it made a significant difference in performance in numerous ways.

Upon shutdown is usually when the fuel begins to rapidly disappear from the float bowls and the carbs heat up to the point that they will require choke for 30 seconds or so to smooth out again. For this reason, when the ambient temperature reaches triple digits F it's a good idea to open the bonnet before walking away. **Steve Simmons, California**

My TC vapor locks up on very hot days while it is running (unless I have the bonnet side off). Pulling the choke fixes the problem. I have always believed that pulling the choke allowed more fuel flow (which acts as cooling) and perhaps room for the vapour in the jet to escape.

Bob R L Schapel, South Australia, Australia

My TD has had the problem here in hot Florida ever since dad bought it in the 70s. IMHO, it is a combination problem. I think the first area effected is the bottom of the float bowl, passage to the jet and the area around the jet itself. This is closest to the exhaust manifold and very hot- try holding your hand there after a hard drive on a hot day! In my case, the problem begins the instant you start the car, and requires choke to keep it revving and running. This area has non-pressurized fuel, regardless of the pump location or type (downstream of the float needle is not pressurized), and a lot of metal area to soak heat and vaporize a tiny volume of fuel.

If it was only an intake/bubble in line issue, the car would run fine for a bit until the float chambers are empty, which is not the case. Of course keeping the entire fuel line temp cooler along the way will prevent bubbles, and cooler fuel will cool the passageway/jet area more quickly than hot would. No doubt the modern fuels worsen things. Two things minimized

this on my car - jet hot coating the exhaust manifold and intake/carb fiber spacers off of a Sprite or something.

George Butz III, Florida

Insulating components is no help to heat saturation after a run, then parking for 5-15 minutes. Everything is heart soaked, including your insulation and heat shields. A properly tuned XPAG does not suffer vapor lock while running. No need to modify your cars, just pull the choke, the engine fires right up. By the time you leave the parking lot you can push the choke off and press on. Regards, **Tom Peterson, Illinois**

My solution which seems to have worked, is to take a length of rubber fuel hose, split it down the middle and wrap the metal fuel line from the tank under the car to the pump. This homemade insulation seems to have eliminated the issue. Just throwing this out as one man's experience as part of the discussion. Easy to do and completely reversible. **John Quilter, Oregon**

This whole subject was discussed at the recent MGCC T Register Rebuild event and was lead by Paul Ireland who did the research and lab investigation into modern petrol and the XPAG engine at Manchester University.

There are a number of interrelated factors involved and it does seem that one of them is that modern petrol is more volatile at low temperature. That and the fact that heat seems to be coming back up the inlet and into the SU.

It's a complicated subject and the T Register are thinking of producing a DVD of Paul's talks complete with his slides and audience questions, but it may not be available until the Autumn.

In the meantime, if you want a humorous take on the proceedings, have a look at <http://www.mgcc.co.uk/t-register/captain-castor/captain-castor-issue-no25/>

David Wardell, Buckinghamshire, UK



From the Triple-M Register Forum:

This image appeared on TV last night. I can't trace it but looks like a late swept-wing J2. It was a E.R documentary called *24 Hours* in *A and E*. - Robin H., U.K.

I think that it is safe to assume that the car is not fitted with a Bonora quick release radiator filler cap! Colin B. Or a midge mascot (ouch!!) John. Or that they had only just stopped after a run.

Poor old bonnet, lucky old radiator say I! Chris

Our Newest MGOc Member – Max (M.G.) Moder

Hi, my name is Max Moder and I think I'm the youngest member to attend MGs by the Bay at the age of 5 weeks and here's a photo of me with some of my MG girlfriends and my Mom (Ari Moder) and Gran (Marla Preston).

From left to right Amy Prentiss, my mom, my Gran and Marcia Crawford holding me.

And here's a photo of me in my driving suit checking out the driving position in my Granddad's MG TF but I'm a little too short to touch the pedals just yet.






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Davenport Tour Report

By Dave Marsh

Ten MGs and a couple of non-MGs ventured through the Santa Cruz Mountains to Davenport for lunch. Many were tour regulars but there were some new faces as well. Just before we departed Sunnyvale MGOC member Marja Van De Hendy, who lives along the tour route, reported that, without notice, construction on Bear Creek road was starting and heavy equipment to do the work was blocking the road. Since we were planning to drive on Bear Creek Road we re-routed around the construction and the tour proceeded without further delay - unless you count the fog and drizzle in the Boulder Creek area.



The route included both well-traveled and lightly-travelled roads. Most roads were fairly straight and in good condition but we encountered a few spots where the damage from last winter's rain had not yet been repaired. Welcome to the Santa Cruz Mountains! Following a good lunch at the Davenport Roadhouse most attendees also visited the Lundberg Studios blown glass showroom/store. All members in

attendance were suffering from SAS (short arm syndrome) and could not reach deep enough into their pockets to find the money to buy any of the beautiful glassworks being offered. Despite the fog and the unexplained simultaneous attack of SAS, everyone seemed to enjoy the tour and the lunch.



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Through Central Africa

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From *The Autocar*

by John May

Author and 250 lbs of baggage plus spares

WHEN we arrived at Lobito, Angola (Portuguese West Africa), we were told by all the motor people that it was impossible for us to cross Angola in our M.G. Midget. We had previously been told by the Angola Automobile Club at Luanda that we would have to truck the car from a place called General Machado to the frontier, a distance of about 450 miles, because there were 200 miles of desert sand which only specially fitted lorries with high clearance could cross, and about 200 miles of grass land where no road or track was visible at that time of the year.

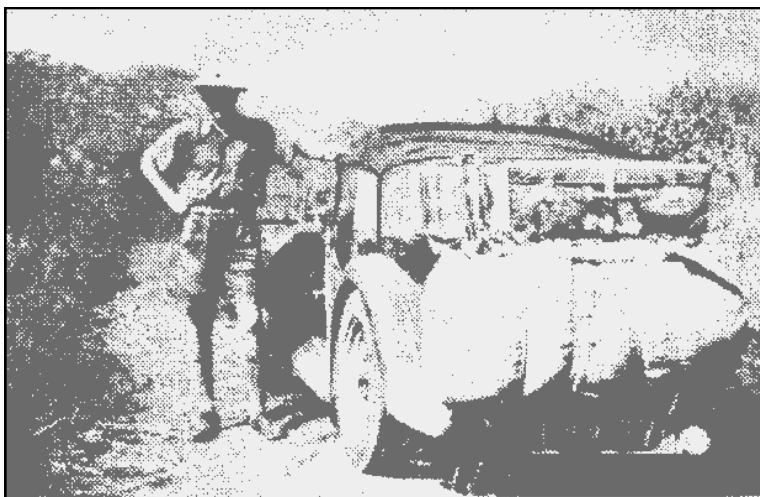
Then, in the Belgian Congo, people said that our clearance was too low, for most of the roads had a middle strip of grass—there were two tracks for car wheels and these were worn by rain until the middle strip became too high sometimes even for lorries with an eighteen-inch clearance. Finally, in Northern Rhodesia there were corrugations, ruts and potholes a foot deep, and the car, if it did succeed in getting through, would be shaken to pieces.

We began to feel sorry we had undertaken the trip without a specially constructed lorry. Our M.G., a 1937 TA model, had no special fittings. Apart from a general overhaul, nothing at all had been added, not even an undersump steel plate, but we had low pressure tyres (Dunlop Fort 16 by 6in.), without which our journey through sand and over rocky roads would have been hopeless, and two luggage grids, one in front.

We carried a heavy load: a suitcase full of cooking utensils, another suitcase full of groceries, an attaché-case containing medicines and bandages, for we were going through fever and lion infested country, a tent, which, with accessories, weighed over 40 lb., two kitbags with clothes, towels, etc., for a two to three months' journey, and a large bag containing sleeping bags, six blankets, and coats. It would be freezing cold at night when we crossed the high mountains. Altogether this equipment represented about 250 lb. of extra weight, apart from spare parts, which included two axle shafts and hubs, a petrol pump, an ignition coil, and a number of other smaller items.

I was laid low at Lobito by a severe attack of fever, but Dr. Tucker, of the Canadian Mission, stuffed me full of quinine and we were able to leave at dawn on May 23rd.

We were unfortunate almost at once. Five miles out of the town, at the foot of the first range of mountains, the road had been washed away by recent rains and only rocks and boulders were left in place of the track. So bad was it that I had to get out and guide the car while my wife drove, for the light was still dim and the sun had not yet risen; a thin drizzle made visibility worse. After a mile



or so the road became impassable; there were boulders a foot high and more, strewn over the road with a lavish hand. We had to drive over bare veld, through grass five feet high, one of us walking ahead in case there were deep holes in the ground. At last we came to a better road and ascended the mountains along a steep winding way, climbing nearly six thousand feet in about fifty miles. Once we had to stop up a steep incline to cool our engine, having covered most of the first fifty miles on second gear at an average of about eight miles an hour. We slung our kitbags from their places on the mudguards over the front luggage grid and had our lunch. So bumpy was the road that our Thermos flask, with hot coffee in it, was broken.

After lunch we made our next thirty miles in two and a half hours. We were now passing through what is known as "The Thirsty Country." There were no streams, no cattle, no natives, hardly any living thing, except at a small trading place called Bokoio, where a white man had a shop.

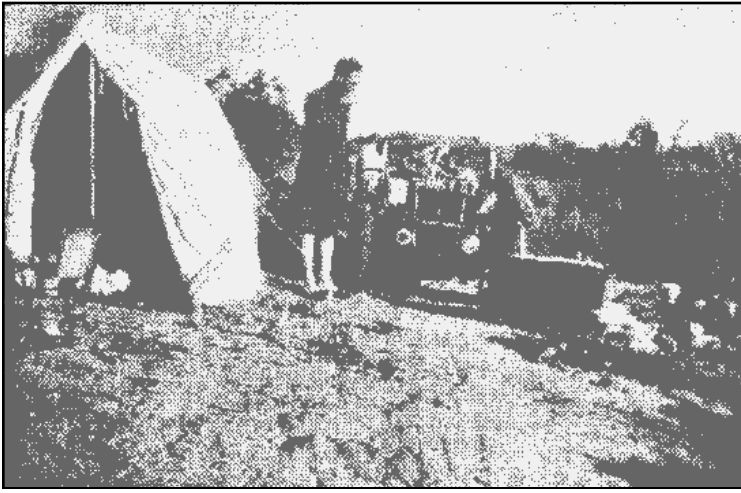
Eventually we came to an almost dried-up stream, and, upon reversing a few yards into the shade of a tree, were horrified to see one of the leaves of a front spring lying in the road, after feeling what we thought was a bump in a rut. I saw that the clips had come loose. All the bolts except one had been broken by rocks; the sixth one was bent and the nut gone. I straightened the one remaining bolt,

and put in three spare ill-fitting bolts. Then I took nuts from other parts of the car and screwed them into place.

It was getting dark when this job was finished and we pitched our tent, had some food and went to sleep. We were on the edge of the lion country, but though we occasionally heard a roar, we were not troubled by any animals. In the early part of the evening mosquitoes buzzed about a lot. Towards morning it grew very cold, and when I got up I had to wear a coat when making a fire.

The next day we covered about 100 miles—our speedo-

The author was born in Rhodesia and educated in Edinburgh and London. He is a journalist and a war correspondent, and wrote "I Am Black," a best-selling novel dealing with African natives. He travelled through Central Africa to study native problems, and on reaching South Africa he enlisted. Shortly before leaving London on April 18th, Mr. May visited *The Autocar* offices. He started via Calais, Bordeaux, Biarritz and Madrid, to Lisbon, where the car was shipped to Lobito, Portuguese West Africa. The M.G. was a 1937 TA model, obtained shortly beforehand, and, apart from bigger-section tyres, it had no special fittings. The author was told in North Rhodesia and the Congo that his was the only small car ever to have crossed from Lobito to Elisabethville, and the first M.G. ever in the Congo; also that it was the first car to cover the last 300 miles in Angola since the previous rainy season.



The Adventures of Suzie II

Left: A camp in "The Thirsty Country"

light. We decided to travel after nightfall, so that we could do the sandy stretches after midnight and towards dawn; the heat would not be so oppressive and severe on the engine and the dew would bind the sand and help us to get through.

We saw my wife off on the mail train at 10 p.m., and after getting petrol through the kind offices of a Portuguese gentleman who had a sisal factory nearby, we set off on our hazardous trip. Scott had a gun and was on the look-out for lions, while I drove. There were stretches of good road, where I hit up the speed—40 m.p.h. and more, our head lights being excellent—but there were parts where we had to crawl. At several spots there was no road at all; only poles stuck into the ground with a notice telling us to keep to the left of them. The grass was ten feet high, the ground bumpy, and every now and again a mist drenched us. It grew bitterly cold and I was almost frozen. We had no coats—they were in the train—and wore shorts and thin shirts. The hood was down, for we had to keep a look-out for lions, and we had to make up speed on good stretches, as we had a sneaking hope that we might beat the train to Vila Luso if luck was with us.

Ahead of the Train

There was something of the devil in the car that night. Perhaps it was the bitterly cold air that braced her for a supreme effort; perhaps she also had entered into the spirit of the adventure. Suzie II, as we call our little Midget, had never been lion hunting in Angola before; but she behaved magnificently and by one o'clock we had overtaken the mail train. We had, however, to stop for something to eat, as we were still frozen, and the train got ahead of us again. Often we came near the railway, sometimes we crossed it, at other times went a few miles away from it.

Scott took the wheel and I his gun. He is one of the finest drivers I have ever met and he took the deep sand with great skill, often approaching the sandy stretches at 40 m.p.h. and changing down with precision. Four times we were stuck, the engine stopping dead in bottom gear. But we revved it up to 3,000 and one of us pushed and we got on our way. There was no sign or sound of the train and we had one more sandy stretch to do, and a bad one, for it was a long incline uphill. But we managed it, and got to Vila Luso before the train, having done the 180 miles in five and a half hours running time, a magnificent performance due entirely to Scott's handling of the little Midget. We had travelled nearly a thousand miles in exactly a week over the most atrocious roads imaginable.

We saw Scott on to his train at Vila Luso on his way back to Monte Esperanca after a two-day rest at the Boma Mission near Vila Luso, and then started for the frontier at about ten o'clock at night. Our speedometer drive, which a young Scotsman by the name of Tom Wilson at the Boma mission had mended, was again broken.

We travelled right through the night. For about two hundred miles there was no road at all. We were probably lost, but we went on and on through grass fourteen feet

meter cable was snapped in two by a rock which hit it, our mudguards were dented by stones which flew up from the wheels, our silencer was knocked flat and there were ominous chips in the sump. I had done much motoring in Africa, but these were the worst roads I had ever been on.

That night we slept at a place called Liumbale, in an empty barn of some sort. A chicken cost us sixpence, and eggs a ha'penny each. In the morning we woke refreshed, but had a shock when we realised that we had slept under a hornet's nest!

From now on we went off the usual road, which had become a little better, and we visited the British and American missions at Bailundu, Dondi and Chilonda. The work in education and health services done by these missions deserves the highest praise; they are run by fine men and women and deserve all the support they can get. This is not the place to write of their services to the poverty-stricken native population.

Eventually we reached a mission called Monte Esperanca, a little to the north of General Machado, from where we were advised to truck our car to the frontier. We had, with our digressions, motored more than seven hundred miles; the spring slips still held fast. We were very tired. The heat was exacting and the strain of the driving on the bad roads very severe.

50-Mile Lift on the Radiator

At one part of our journey we had given a native and a European a lift for about fifty miles to get petrol—we did not have enough petrol to give them any—and with the bumpy roads the strain on our car (four large people with lots of baggage) must have been great. The native, by the way, had to ride on the radiator all that way. A cushion protected him from the heat!

At Monte Esperanca we rested two days. From this point onwards the road, we were told, was impassable on account of sand. We had crossed mountains six thousand feet up. Now, to go on, we would touch the southern end of the Mussulumba desert. The betting against us by the Ford motor people in Lobito was a hundred to one. We did not take the bet.

The missionary at Monte Esperanca was a young man called Cyril Scott, one of the best of men. I persuaded him to come with me to Vila Luso, 180 miles away, where he had friends. He knew the road well, having gone shooting for lions in that region. I then persuaded my wife to go by train and take our luggage, so that we could travel

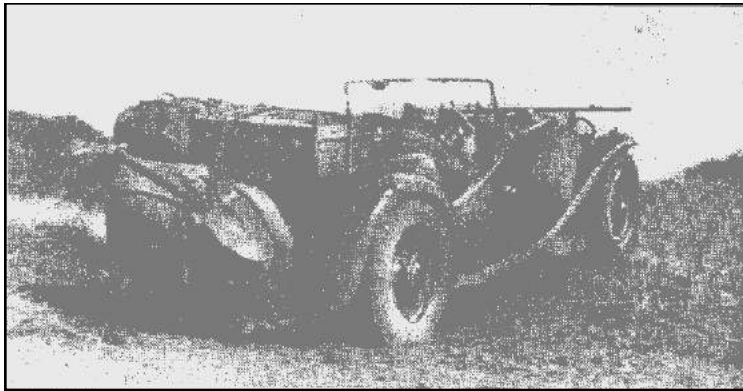
Through Central Africa

high. For the second time on our trip the radiator boiled over. When we stopped we saw that under the bonnet and in front of the radiator there was just one mass of grass seeds. Not a breath of air could get through to the engine.

Eventually we found a road, but this became bad again; our petrol was getting low even though the tank carried thirteen and a half gallons. At about nine we came to a native village, and at eleven-thirty we reached Luao, on the frontier. We had succeeded in beating the worst road in the world.

A New Terror

In the Congo, after two hundred miles of excellent road, a new terror struck us. The centre piece in the road was too high for us and we had to travel about 150 miles with



A hidden ant-hill in the "road" might rip a hole in the sump, at best give it a sorry jar.

one wheel on the centre ridge and one wheel off the road altogether. This made the going bumpy, and all the time we had to watch for the ant-hill, hard as concrete, or the rock or rut that might be hidden in the grass. It was a hidden rock or ant-hill that might rip a hole in the sump when we crossed grass country that was a nightmare to us in Angola; now it was fear for our springs as we crossed the Congo that drove our hearts to our throats. At last we reached Elisabethville and breathed easily. We were less than two hundred miles from Ndola, and British territory, and the English language, and better roads.

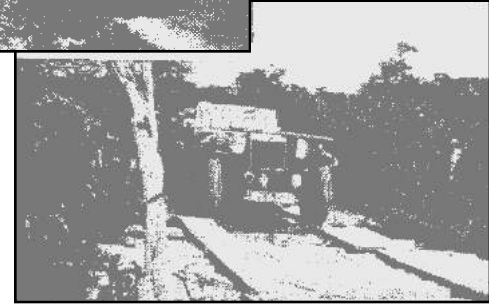
But fifty miles from Elisabethville, in a careless moment, I took my eye off the road, for we had just passed a cobra seven feet long, and a rock hit the sump and made a hole in it the size of two fists. My spirit oozed out with the oil that poured out on to the road. The oil pressure gauge read 0.

We decided to take a chance. It was 130 miles to Ndola and we would drive on. We cooled the engine, took off the valve cover, poured oil over the rocker gear and drove on, stopping now and again to cool the engine and pour more oil over it, fearful of a seizure. It grew dark, and



(Left) For 150 miles in the Congo a central hump meant driving with two wheels off the track.

(Right) Often bridges were no more than planks resting on strips loosely held together.



we were stopped by the Northern Rhodesian military police. We spent the night at their camp and in the morning they advised us to make for Mufulira, twelve miles away, where there was a good garage. There a plate was riveted to the sump and the spaces between the plate and the sump were soldered up. We had travelled about 100 miles with a smashed and empty sump.

Next day, when we started off down south, we trembled for the engine, but it was undamaged. The road was still bad and full of ruts, but there were places where we could do our fifty miles an hour, and the engine hummed healthily and cheerfully despite the heat and the leaking sump. We were losing oil at the rate of five pints a day, but we went on.

2,600 Miles in Two-and-a-Half Weeks

We camped one night on the banks of the Kafue River, and a hippo snorted only twenty yards from us. In the morning we continued and reached the Victoria Falls on June 11th, two and a half weeks after leaving Lobito, having driven more than 2,600 miles.

The engine was as good as ever. Nothing had a mechanical defect of any kind, except for the items described—the sump, the speedometer drive, which was now repaired, and four clip bolts on our left front spring instead of six. We were on our last lap to Johannesburg, nearly 1,000 miles away.

We covered the rest of the distance without incident, reaching a very high speed on the excellent road from Warmbaths to Pretoria. We had travelled from Calais to Lisbon and from Lobito to Johannesburg—5,100 miles, in 18 days of motoring; our petrol consumption was 31.9 m.p.g., and we never added a teaspoon of oil except when the sump was holed.

Keep Planning for 2018 ...

SUMMER



Marin Headlands Tour, Nike Missile Site, John Hunt, MGOC, Sat. 7/7

SSTS Tune & Spoon Tour & Potluck, 7/21

Joint Tour with Jag Club, MGOC, 8/5, Andy P.

Club T MG Rendezvous, Bend, OR, 8/9-12, SSTS caravan

Little Car Show, Pacific Grove, (under 1500cc), 8/22

MGOC Annual Picnic at Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland, Marcia and George, MGOC, 8/25

SUMMER - FALL



Scottish Games MG Corral, Amy & Kirk Prentiss, 9/1-2

New Tour, MGOC, John Bertolotti, Sat, 9/7

CSRG vintage races, Sears Point, 10/6-7

GOF West, South Lake Tahoe, Sept. 10-15. Register now
GOFwest.org

Gizdich Ranch Tour (Pies), Watsonville, Dave Marsh, 9/29

British Fall Classic Morgan Hill, Bill Hiland, 10/13-14

July Centerfold!

Tom Doyle's 1976 MGB
"By the Bay" between Emeryville
and the Berkeley Marina.

Tom says to get you and your MG
photographed at Lake Tahoe in
September at GOF West!



Caption Contest



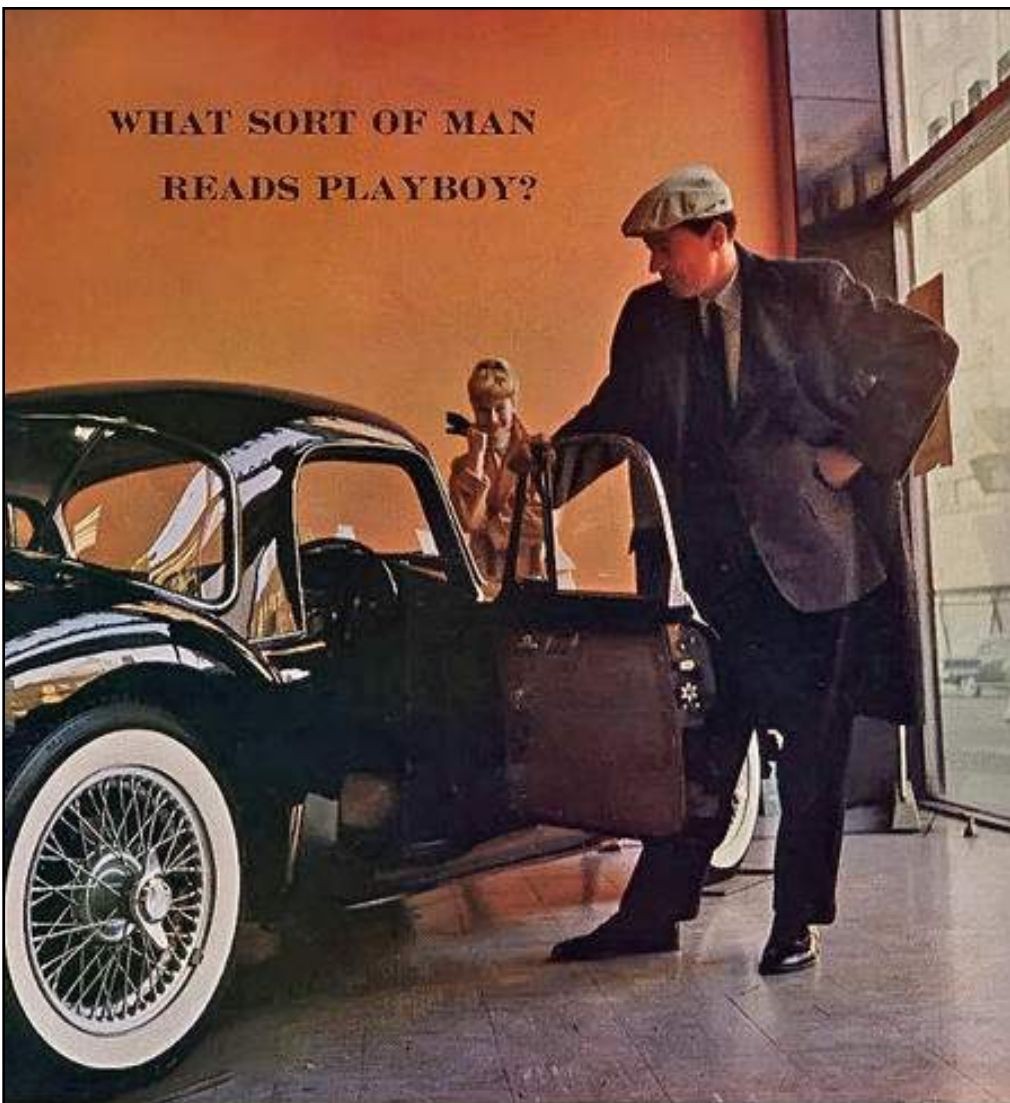
"Cut the apex of that turn a little too tight!" - Don Davis

"The pace notes said "bump" but WOW, did we ever catch some air!" - Dan Neu

"Monsieur DeRiguer's Magnificent Balancing Circus! TahDAH!" - Kirk Prentiss

"NO Dear! I said, 'Turn Left, Right here!!!!!!!!!!!!!!'" - Bill Hiland

"The sign said, 'No Parking on the Road'." - Eric Baker



"The best thing about my new car is how it fits into a parking space."

"Ah... pole position, er ah ... 'wall position' - Jim Carlson

"Ooohhh. Was I supposed to go left?" - Steve Kellogg

"OK, I raised the seat. Can you see better now?" - Naomi Rayman

"Stay right there, Hon. I'll hop out and get the door for you." - Dan Shockey



1947 TC for Sale \$16,000

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MBJGLJ@gmail.com

Club T member in Oregon

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MGOC Minutes – June 2, 2018

Nation's Giant Burgers, El Cerrito

Call to Order: Andy Preston at: 10:03

Attending: Marcia Crawford, Ken Gittings, John Hunt, Mike Jacobsen, Kirk & Amy Prentiss, Andy Preston, George Steneberg

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: May 5, 2018: Motion: Kirk, Second: Marcia

REPORTS

President's Report: Andy Preston: MGsbTB was a great success, thanks to all who helped out; especially Mike, Elaine, George, Marcia, Marla, the Germanos, and Kirk the official photographer of the day and the Royal Wedding. Tom Doyle, co-chair of this year's GOF West, said that MGsbTB is a nice event because it's intimate.

Vice President's Report: Kirk Prentiss: No report, but a recommendation that anyone with an interest in Indy cars should attend the Indy 500 at least once.

Treasurer's Report: Marla Preston: Absent, report in agenda:

Account	June 2018	May 2018
Checking	14,160.68	13,689.28
Savings	3,457.33	3,457.33
Total	17,618.01	17,146.61

Since the last Treasurer's Report we have paid for *Octagon* printing and mailing charges, had some new memberships and dues paid, and hosted MGs by the Bay.

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

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

- 176 Regular Members
- 58 Regular Family Members
- 234 Total Regular and Family Members
- 9 Corresponding Members
- 2 Corresponding Family Members
- 11 Total Corresponding and Family

245 Total Members

I will be sending out a blast to members that will owe for 2018-19 dues this month and want to pay

via the Web and PayPal. In addition, I will also send out mailers in the middle of the month to the rest that still owe via USPS as I have done the past several years, unless anyone objects.

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

Regalia Report: We sold a lot of regalia at MGsbTB. Marcia will give the remaining dash plaques to Mike.

The Octagon Report: Dan Shockey: Absent, report by email: "I will be out of state when the July issue is due out so will need all articles by mid-June."

Website Report: Steve Kellogg: Absent, report by email: "Website is running well with up-to-date events being showcased on the home page."

PAST EVENTS

MGsbTB was great but attendance down this year from last.

UPCOMING EVENTS (MGOC sponsored events are in bold text)

Sat June 16, Lundberg Studios and Davenport Road House, Dave Marsh

June 13-17, NAMGAR GT-43

June 17-22, NAMGBR MG2018

Sat July 7, Marin Headlands, John Hunt – Lunch to follow at Corinthian Yacht Club in Tiburon

Sun Aug 5, Joint tour with JAG club to Union Hotel in Occidental, Andy & Marla Preston

Sat Aug 25, Annual Picnic Tilden Park, George & Marcia. Club will provide water, ice tea, and lemonade.

Aug 20-26, Monterey Car Week, Bill Hiland, with the new Rule Britannia show for British cars on Tuesday at the Laguna Seca golf course.

Sept 1-2, Scottish Games, Kirk & Amy Prentiss

Sept 10-14 GOF West, South Lake Tahoe, Tom Doyle

Sat Sept 29, Gizdich Ranch Tour, Dave Marsh

Oct 12-14, Sea-Air-Ah Tour, Keith & Pam Shukait

Continued next page

OLD BUSINESS

MGsbtB 2018 25th Anniversary Debrief

- Good attendance for little publicity
- Broken award replaced and sent by award vendor
- We are finally out of all tees!
- Should we continue to host the show? A discussion for the coming year.
- Andy will check on using Dixon's MG mailing list.

NEW BUSINESS

Driving Across Country

Andy asked Mike how do you prepare the car for a 7,000 mile journey. Mike said that you perform all the regular maintenance in the shop manual.

Bylaws Updates

Andy has been working on Bylaws updates. Among his proposed changes are for Board meeting to be quarterly, and General meetings monthly, usually at an event during the month. This is still a work in progress.

BUSINESS RESOLVED ONLINE SINCE LAST MEETING

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alameda's Park Street car show is October 13 this year.

NEXT MEETING

TBD, maybe at the Marin Headlands tour on 7/7/18.

Meeting adjourned at: 10:50

Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen



Classified Ads

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

Parts for Sale MGB: 1 3/4" SU carbs w/ manifold, 1 1/2" SUs, water pump for a B series, starter motors, crankshafts, heater motor, trunk luggage rack, differential (1:3.9), rear light covers, bullet mirrors, assorted cylinder heads. E Type Jag: dashboard, instrument label strip (new). Valve spring compressor. 510 653-3831 for appointment. Priced to move! Member David Wright, Oakland Rockridge area (Posted 5/18)

1979 Midget: (Photo below.) 44k original miles, sold by the original owner. Body is straight. Engine and induction (carb and manifolds) are original. CA registration is current and it passed smog last October. Top is replacement NOS type and window is very clear. Interior worn. Nice car that runs. Ken Smyth (408 748-1306), ken_smyth@sbcglobal.net (Posted 5/18)

MG-TD - Moss Motors Red Interior. Leather seat kit, panel & trim kit. New in the box. Make offer. Also used tan color tonneau cover. 209-723-7465. Non-Member Roy, Merced, rcdettling@att.net (posted 5/18)

MGA parts: Front frame extension, 5 Hoods (bonnets), 2 Trunk lids (boots), 4.88 rear end, Driveshaft for 1500 cc motor, Gas tank, Oil cooler, Fiberglass racing valance, Misc. "trinkets". Call Tom Morgan at 650-740-4116 for details. (Re-posted 6/18)

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

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



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August 9-12, 2018

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Bend, Oregon

Caravan RSVP: Don Cowgill: 925-449-4013, dfcowgill@yahoo.com
Tour cell: 925-202-7596 (Maris)

Art & Flier from Kirk Prentiss, *The Wind Machine*



RENDEZVOUS EVENTS

Thursday, August 9:

Registration, Hospitality

Friday, August 10:

Funkahana, Rally

Saturday, August 11:

Car Show, Tour, Banquet: Awards

Presentation, Auction, Raffle

Sunday, August 12:

Winner's circle, Farewell

LODGING

Call the Resort at **1-800-347-9092** to reserve

A variety of Rooms and Condos are available at various rates depending on the type of room.

Reservations must be booked by **June 29, 2018** using the group name **Club T MG** to receive special discounted rates.

Report from the NAMGAR GT

Howdy all,

Tonight was the awards banquet for GT-43, the NAMGAR show. I won longest distance traveled in an MGA or Magnette, Jennifer & her MGB got longest distance overall in an English car, plus Dave McCann was presented with the annual Renkenberger "spirit" award, which they don't even present every year.

But the big news is that on behalf of the MGOC, I accepted the "Chapter of the Year" award: So the MGOC did pretty well, since only three members were here and we all won something.

We're leaving for the NAMGBR show in Gettysburg tomorrow, stopping at Monticello on the way. I've always wanted to see Monticello. It's hot and humid here, and when it rains, it pours. I've had to take the carpet out of my car so it could dry!

Mike Jacobsen



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San Francisco, CA 94131-3141



MGOC

Nosh 'n 'Natter

Saturday, July 7

Date: Sat, July 7

At Lunch; Informal Update

Place: Corinthian Yacht Club

Tiburon; Marin Headlands Tour

Flier page 3

More Info: Andy Preston

andypreston@att.net

We look forward to seeing you!

