



THE OCTAGON



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



Since 1957!



Chally and Doug Flett drove their 1952 MG TD from Lafayette, top down all the way!

At the Brunch
Photo: Andy Preston

February 2022



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 2022

President: **Andy Preston**, andypreston@att.net
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: **Mark McGothigan**, 510-633-1981, markmc3us@yahoo.com
Member-at-Large: **John Hunt**, huntsails@comcast.net
Member-at-Large: **George Steneberg**, 510-525-9125, j2george@pacbell.net

APPOINTEES

Commercial Advertising: **Mike Jacobsen**, 415-333-9699, MikesMuseum@yahoo.com
Corresponding Secretary: **George Steneberg**, j2george@pacbell.net
Historian: **George Steneberg**, 510-525-9125, j2george@pacbell.net
Photographer: **Mindy Hungerman**, 925-997-4410, MindyHungerman@yahoo.com
Registrar: **Steve Kellogg**, 408-355-4125, webmaster@mgocsf.org
T Register Director: **Jim Carlson**, 408-224-3992, mgjim@comcast.net
The Octagon Editor: **Dan Shockey**, 309-696-0803, magnut_dan@hotmail.com
Webmaster: **Steve Kellogg**, 408-335-4125, webmaster@mgocsf.org
Regalia: **Andy Preston**, 707-795-3480, andypreston@att.net

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, mgb36@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, mgb36@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.

MGOCSE.ORG

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

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St. Paddy's Day Tour, Wed. March 16, 2022 To Moylan's Irish Brewery & Pub for Lunch



Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 **Green is the color of the day!**

Organizers: Andy and Marla Preston 707 795 3480

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

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

Tour: This year St. Patrick's Day falls on a Thursday so we're holding the tour one day early. We will be driving the backroads of Marin and Sonoma and finishing up an authentic Irish Pub, Moylan's Brewery and Pub 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 will head out along Lucas Valley Road, past Sky Walker Ranch and through the small hamlet of Nicasio and up to Valley Ford. Our first stop will be at the Valley Ford Creamery for a short break and to enjoy coffee and snacks and to buy some wonderful cheeses.

We will leave Valley Ford, heading southeast through Tomales and Chileno Valley, which is one of the most scenic areas of West Sonoma and Marin especially at this time of year. Our final destination will be Moylan's Brewery & Pub in Novato.

There will only be one check so please bring CASH

Please RSVP: to Andy or Marla Preston at (707) 795-3480 or marlapreston@hotmail.com by March 10th so we can confirm lunch reservations.



From the Editor

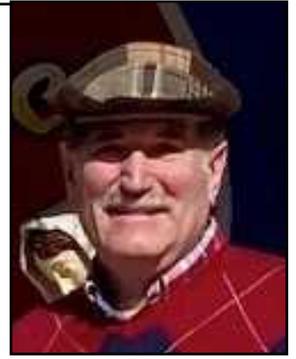
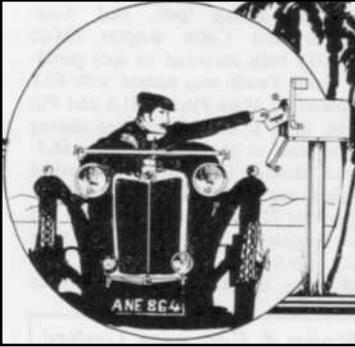
I could wish you Happy New Year again since my wife and her family celebrate Tet, the Lunar (Chinese) New Year. It is like Thanksgiving and Christmas and Easter rolled into one long holiday. Chúc mừng năm mới! Translates 'more large meals for me.'

We had a great Planning Meeting and appear to have a good MG season arranged. We pray that the Covid will not spoil it again. See the calendar and event fliers in this issue. Once again, a great time was had by all at the Annual Brunch. Three MGs arrived – we don't know how many started!

I lay out the newsletter to look decent on screen. I don't really like how it looks when I print a copy. But I don't know that the format matters since it is mostly perused on screen. One long continuous page with no formatting would likely work as well. We tend to be a bit old-fashioned in our MG universe.

However, I have taken an interest in graphic novels ('comics') of late, both for possible business and personal use. It is a way to tell a story that may hold the attention of modern consumers. (Can't always call them 'readers.')

Comic books have grown up. Graphics is a big part of the newsletter and it is wonderful that we can reproduce art so well these days.



Happy trails to you!

Dan

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PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED ENTRY FORM W/ CHECK PAYABLE TO "VALLEY BRITISH AUTO CLUB 2022 ROUNDUP" TO PO BOX 26594, FRESNO CA 93729-6594 OR REGISTER BY PHONE OR EMAIL .COM WITH TAMMY WEBER AT (559) 431-8963 RTWEBER@HOTMAIL.COM

DRIVER FULL NAME		1ST ENTRY - YEAR, MARQUE, MODEL, COLOR	
CO-DRIVER FULL NAME		2ND ENTRY - YEAR, MARQUE, MODEL, COLOR	
STREET ADDRESS		REGISTRATION FOR SUNDAY SHOW	
CITY, STATE, ZIP		\$30.00 FIRST CAR \$	
EMAIL		\$15.00 SECOND CAR \$	
PHONE		\$20.00 MOTORCYCLE \$	
CELL		\$20.00 T SHIRT \$	
CLUB AFFILIATIONS		TOTAL ENCLOSED= \$	
T Shirt Order		SORRY, WE CANNOT REFUND REGISTRATION FEES	
\$20 A Shirt	ORDER BEFORE 02/28/2022	DRIVER'S SIGNATURE	
Male		CO- DRIVER'S SIGNATURE	
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Release & Waiver
By signing below, I/we fully release the Valley British Auto Club, its officers, members, and all other event sponsors from any and all liability for any loss, damage, or other claim on account of injury to persons or property resulting from my/our travel to & from the event. My registered car(s) are covered by suitable liability insurance. Signatures(s) required below.

Day of Show

Registrations \$35.00

Registration cannot be guaranteed after March 25 deadline. Please visit www.valleybritish.org for more information and verify receipt of your entry form.



CLOVIS BRITISH AUTO ROUNDUP

2022 Schedule of Activities

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

10:00am Meet at Best Western Clovis Cole Hotel
415 N. Clovis Ave. & 4th St
for group rally through the Sierra Foothills.
10:00am "No Host" Rally Lunch at Bobby Salazar's
434 Clovis Ave. & 4th St.
across the street from Best Western Clovis is Cole Hotel

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

9:00am - 10:00am Please arrive for registration & parking assignments at Bullard Ave. & Woodworth Ave.
10:00am - 2:00pm Car viewing, Antiques Fair & Old Town Clovis exploring, Hand crank contest.
2:00pm - 3:00pm Oil Spot Contest and awards presentations
3:00pm Close of Show for 2022. See you next year!



What is the Burnt Spark Plug Award?

By Andy Preston

The MGOC BURNT SPARK PLUG AWARD was created by Ken Gittings back in 1979; yes over 42 years ago. Ken had the idea to make and present the award on an annual basis to a member who had experienced 'Hard Luck' or had an unfortunate experience while driving their MG. Many of these incidents would leave the member stranded and wondering how to get home. Over the years Ken has carefully researched and chosen the member who he thought experienced the worst of luck. Some years there was no-one and some years many to choose from.

Several members have been presented with the award more than once which shows how much they drive their cars or maybe they're just plain unlucky. Even Ken's name appears twice.

Ken has taken great pride in having the award engraved every year at his own expense and presenting it to the ill-fated recipient.

Unfortunately Ken is experiencing some health issues and was unable to present the award this year at the Annual Brunch and asked me to do it for him. This year's lucky winner was Steve Kellogg who now has the esteemed record of being the first three-time winner. Steve had to abandon his MGB in Medford, OR, due to rear axle issues.

In recognition for everything that Ken has done for the club the award has been renamed the: **'KEN GITTINGS BURNT SPARK PLUG AWARD'**

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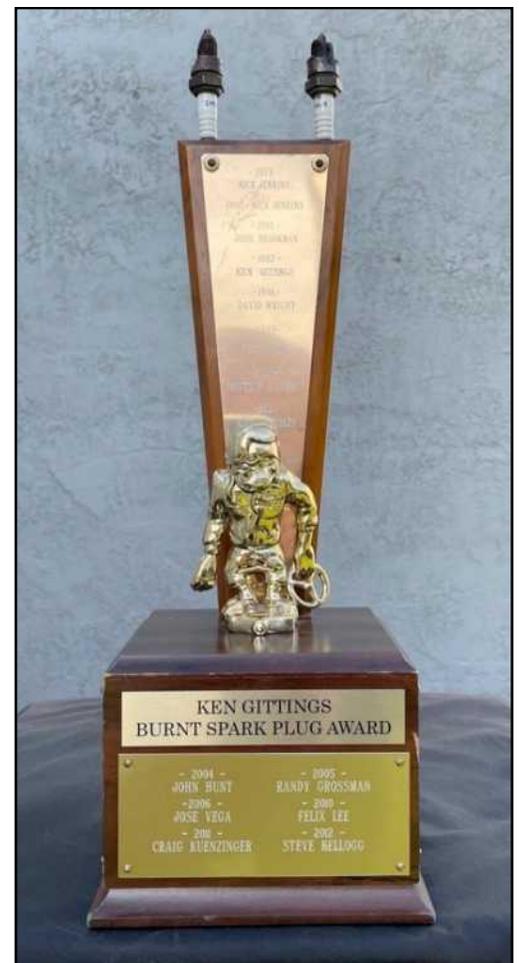
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President's Ponderings



Off to a good start

I changed the planning meeting to Zoom and that turned out to be a smart thing to do. We had far more people join us than normal and it was good to see Jennifer Orum again from Vancouver (B.C.). BTW, Jennifer has joined us on many adventures in the past and plans to continue in the future. We have a fairly complete calendar of events but can always use more; so if you think of anything, just let me know. I was anticipating that the pandemic would be winding down by now but just when you think it's over, up pops another variant. So we will need to follow CDC guidelines and make sure that everyone is vaccinated. It's the only way we're going to beat this thing.

Annual Brunch

The Annual Brunch was fabulous and everyone had a good time. Many members came from far afield; Rick & Mary Anguiano from Tracy, Steve & Vicky from Pebble Beach and Don & Anne Scott from Calistoga. It was great to see everyone including some newer members. Marla was able to refund money to people who cancelled even after she had placed the final food order. Marla said that Beverly, her contact at Moss Beach Distillery, was great to deal with and very understanding due to the unusual circumstances. Beverly also had us seated in their largest dining room overlooking the Pacific that normally seats 60 people and ensured that the tables were well spaced. It felt very comfortable and far better than most restaurants. Thank you Beverly!

Welcome John Hunt

I'm pleased to welcome John Hunt to the Board to replace Ken Gittings who retired at the end of the year. John has been a long time member and has organized many drives in the past and plans to organize more in the future. In fact he has already signed up to organize a couple of tours this year. Well done, John!

GOF West 2022

It may seem a long way off but it's time to start planning to attend the 'Gathering of the Faithful' for this year. It's in Buellton and we'll be having a convoy from MGO and SSTS drive down to the event. If you haven't attended one of these before, they're great fun. Mike Jacobsen attended his first one last year when it was in Oregon and has already signed up for this one. Many of us have also signed up so you'll know lots of people there. The event is from June 27 to July 1 and it's just down the road. For more info go to their website at:

<https://gofwest.org/gof-west-2022>.

While we're enjoying this wonderful weather get your car on the road and have fun. Remember any day is drive

your MG day.

Andy



Photo from the Michigan Rowdies hopefully warm by their wood stoves.

Left: Art by Kirk Prentiss



'Hot Hatch' of 1930!

The MG Midget Salonette - or 'Sportsman's Coupe'

One of the rarest MGs is the tiny coupe introduced in October of 1929. (A good year to launch a new car?) It was based on the first MG Midget, the M-type that was itself based on the Morris Minor, Morris' competitor to the popular Austin Seven. MG founder Cecil Kimber was promoting a line of rather antiquated larger cars in a crowded market. However two of his key men saw the new Minor in the Morris factory and thought it would make a great MG, a sporting car for the common man. Kimber was persuaded to give this a try - and the rest is history. Without the M-type Midget, MG would have been swept away and forgotten by 1932.

Based on the success of the Midget, MG decided to also make a closed coupe on the same chassis.

This was no small challenge, creating an attractive and sporting coupe on such a tiny "baby" car. MG worked hard with body supplier Carbodies to create the style. Five prototypes were built before Kimber decided on the definitive format.

MG enthusiasts today tend to consider this car (if they know of it) as the "GTi" or "Mini Cooper" of its day. Perhaps it was that to some but the factory promoted it to the lady driver, using such words as "dainty" and "a fast tender to a large car." Literature depicted the coupe piloted by two women. Though of course, open MGs were to become popular sports racing cars for numerous 'lady' drivers.

There was never a pretense to this as anything other than a two-seater, but behind the bucket seats there is an upholstered bench - perfect for the (small) family dog, as

a baggage platform, or for a small child. Without the backrest, there is useful space there in addition to that of the modest boot (trunk). Handy pockets at the rear plus those in the foot wells provide the lady driver plenty of room.

To keep the tiny coupe from seeming claustrophobic, MG incorporated a delightful glass-paneled sliding roof and a rear vent that gives further airflow.

Top: The standard M Midget offered this weather gear

Above: A period photo

Right: A restored coupe "at speed"



The first M-types used Minor chassis supplied from the Morris works. The springs were flattened, the steering column raked, the pedals altered and the gear lever re-cranked, but other than fitting better shocks, the running gear was unchanged. For 1930, the M got a revised all-cable brake system. A larger cast-aluminum sump was fitted as the car became more MG and less Morris. An uprated SU carb and a more efficient camshaft boosted power from 20bhp to 27bhp, but you still had a Minor underneath the MG's smart coachwork. MG created its own chassis for models following the M.

The feature that really distinguished the Minor and MG was the overhead-camshaft engine. Part of what Morris inherited when it bought Wolseley in 1927, the general design of the 847cc four cylinder was based on the



Hispano-Suiza aero-engines that the company had built during WWI. This was when inexpensive cars had low-performance flat-head engines.

The Coupe was nearly 200 pounds heavier than the two-seater, but achieved 61 mph against the open car's 63mph. An Austin Seven would just about hit 50mph so the M-type was fast enough for its time. (Performance was increasing rapidly – the 1933 MG J2 famously reached 80mph!)

Does the Sportsman's Coupe successfully combine sportiness with its looks? Driving the coupe provides the answer: this MG is a genuine little sports car.

In all, 3235 M Midgets were made, the last in 1932. Of these, only 530 were Sportsman's Coupes. The cheaply-made coupe bodies did not hold up well and enthusiasts preferred the open cars. Thus in 2022, only 6 of these coupes are known

to still exist though some have been converted to open models.

Overall, of the 11,000 overhead cam MGs built 1929 to 1935, over 4000 have survived. This is a truly remarkable number given the war, scrap drives and the annual road-worthy testing required in the UK since about 1960 when these were very low-value old cars.

by Dan Shockey

Top: The 'hatch' – room for a small suitcase or two

Above: Luxury interior of a restored coupe

Right: The sliding sunroof and 'cathedral' skylights



Carbodies of Coventry

By Dan Shockey, Info from an article by Bill Munro in the 2002 *Triple-M Yearbook*

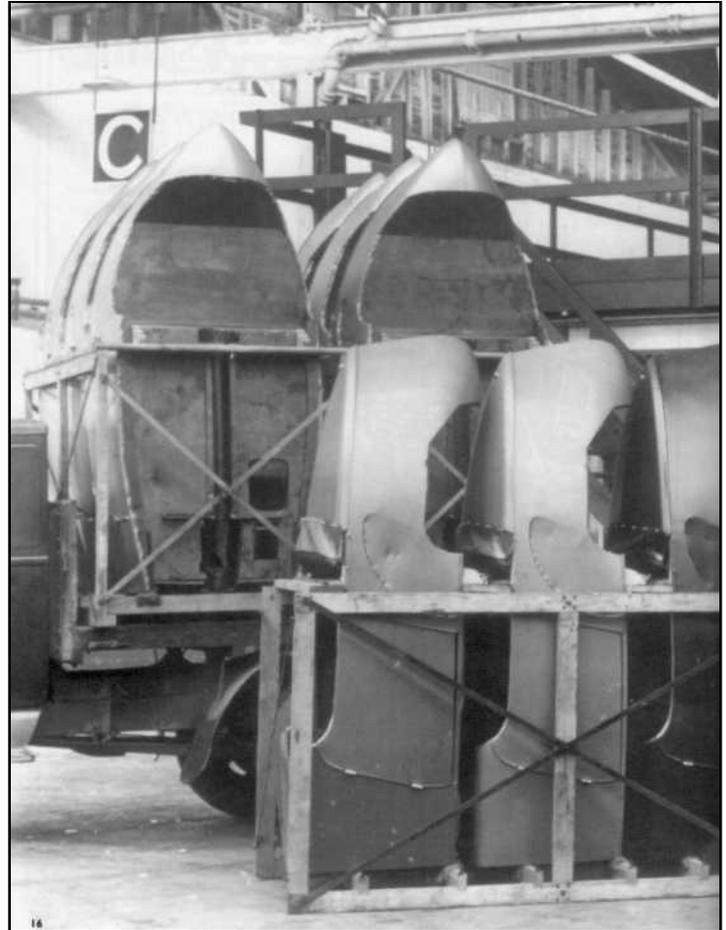
During the 1920s and 1930s, MG purchased its bodies from a company called Carbodies, led by its sole owner, Bobby Jones. Bobby started out in the late 19th century building bodies for horse-drawn coaches. These coach designs were generally scaled to the need, even to match horse sizes. With the often low production volumes, car manufacturers purchased standard bodies individualized with different bonnets, grille and fenders.

The M type Midget roadster was rather famous for being supplied three to a crate, painted and trimmed, at the cost each of 6BP (British Pounds) and change. These were made of wood, glue and canvas but workers' pay was very low at the time. The M sold for only 185BP so the bodies needed to be 'cheap and cheerful.' The M roadster was the smallest body made by Carbodies and the volume of production for MG resulted in Carbodies' first major facility.

The M Sportsman's Coupe was just such a 'customized-standard' body. It was derived from Carbodies' 4-door 'Pacific' saloon (sedan.) This had shorter doors than the 2-door standard body. Carbodies and MG removed the middle section of this 4-door body to create the tiny 'salonette' design. By the way, 'coupe' is a French adjective meaning 'cut' and that well describes the cut-down sedan shape.

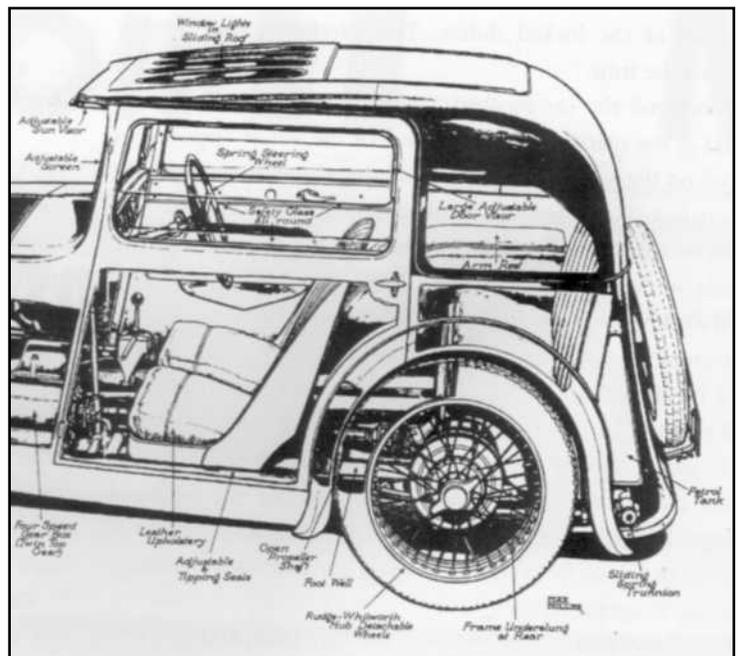
Later a slightly larger version of the M coupe body was created for MG's F-type Magna and the D- and J-type Midgets and similar designs were developed by Carbodies for other MGs. The final body made for MG was the Airline Coupe, admired today but one that did not sell well with only 50 produced (mostly P-types). The Hillman Minx Sports later used an updated M-type coupe body from Carbodies.

William Morris became a partner with the Budd company of the United States to build pressed steel bodies. The Pressed Steel Company (in conjunction with next-door Morris Bodies Branch) built all standard MG bodies after 1933, including the T-types, MGA, MGB and later Midgets.



M-type Midget roadster bodies. Cost would be higher today.

Below: The D, F and J coupes had a straight back that allowed more room for back seat passengers.





2022 MGOC Planning Meeting

(MGOC events in Bold) Called to Order: 10:12am

Attending: Bob Bundy, Marcia Crawford, Ken Gittings, Andy Hunt, John Hunt, Mike Jacobsen, Steve Kellogg, Mark McGohtigan, Jennifer Orum, Kirk & Amy Prentiss, Andy & Marla Preston, Dan Shockey, George Steneberg, Marja van den Hende. (Mike Jacobsen reporting)

January 23	Brunch Moss Beach Distillery	Marla Preston
February	Oakland Air Museum	Mark McGohtigan & Kirk Prentiss
March 16	St. Paddy's Day Tour to Moylan's Pub in Novato, Andy & Marla	
April 29	Marin Drive, stop China Camp, lunch at Corinthian Yacht Club	Bob Bundy, Ed DeMayo, Matry Rayman, on Friday!
April or May	Peninsula Tour	
May 22	Dixon British Car Show & Swap Meet	
June 6-10	NAMGAR GT-47 Colorado Springs, CO	
June 19-23	NAMGBR MG2022 Peterborough, ON	
June	Tour to Black Star BBQ in Pt Richmond	John Hunt
June 27-July 1	50th GOF West Buellton	
	Stay in Monterey June 26 & caravan down CA 1 on June 27	
July 16	MGs by the Bay (date needs confirms with Bon Air)	
August 16-21	Monterey Car Week: Little Car Show, Concours de Lemons	
August 6	Annual Picnic	Marcia Crawford & George Steneberg
September	Caravan to cricket match	John Hunt
October 1	Sears Point CSRG w/ MG car corral & parade laps	
Oct. 14-16	MGOC Back to the Beach, Carmel	Steve & Vickie Kellogg
November	Sonoma Tour	Andy & Marla Preston
December 10	Annual Holiday Tea	Marcia Crawford & George Steneberg
Jan. 17, 2023	Planning Meeting	Mike Jacobsen & Elaine Chan
Adjourned: 11:23am		



65th Anniversary Logo
proposed by Mike Jacobsen.



Analysis of the Airflow Around the MGA Roadster

By J.J. Cornish, III
October 1963

Aerophysics Dept, Mississippi State Univ.

Ed. Note: The MGA was considered a big improvement over the T series MGs yet still had serious aerodynamic problems. I believe the following is pertinent to all small sports cars. The text has been cut in the interest of brevity. Most of the figures do not reproduce well. The complete article is available. — Dan)

The problems of designing a vehicle whose contours offer the minimum resistance to the passage through the air has long been recognized by the builders of airplanes and other flying machines. Because the air resistance increases as the cube of the velocity, vehicles that travel at high speeds must be designed to produce as low a drag as possible. The art and science of "streamlined" shapes has also been considered by manufacturers of automobiles. Many attempts have been singularly unsuccessful. "Eyeball aerodynamics" is restricted to an illusion of higher speed and often produce unnecessary disturbances to the airflow.

There are aerodynamic problems other than drag reduction that result in annoying characteristics. The "drumming" or resonance that occurs at certain speeds, the inflow of exhaust gasses or dust into the vehicle, poor engine or passenger ventilation, and high noise level are all factors that detract from the pleasure and utility of the automobile.

It was primarily toward these problems that a study was conducted by the Aerodynamics Department. The purpose is to define the general airflow around the MGA and to isolate those undesirable characteristics.

Apparatus and Experimental Techniques

Because of the severe buffet and reversed flow in the open cockpit at almost all speeds, the study was conducted with the "top down." Flow over the immediate surface was visualized by means of 3-inch tufts of nylon attached to the car. The flow patterns were used to justify a correlation between the full-scale car and a scale model that could be studied in a smoke tunnel.

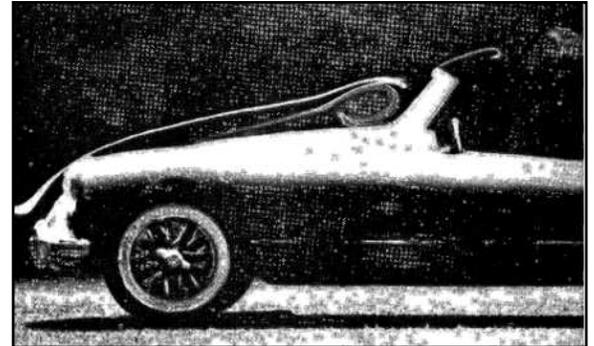
Full-scale visualization of the flow at the rear behind the car was accomplished by releasing a white powder while underway and by running over stripes of powder on the roadway.

The flow over the hood and at the base of the windshield was of particular interest. A flexible plastic tape consisting of 20 tubes was taped to the hood. The ends of the tubes were passed into the cockpit to a bank of U-tube manometers to measure pressure. Essentially the same system was used to measure at various stations along the hood.

Results and Analysis

The airflow over the MGA is characterized by the separated wake caused by the windshield. The region of reversed flow behind the windshield constitutes the largest aerodynamic disturbance in the flow field. It is also the most annoying feature of the automobile. The reversed flow within the wake of the windshield flows back into the cockpit, over the rear deck and trunk lid and results in considerable buffeting of the passengers even at moderate speeds.

Perhaps the most interesting area of separated or reversed flow occurs ahead of the windshield. Due to the presence of the relatively steep windshield, the air is slowed down. The resulting boundary layer causes a strong vortex to be developed at the base of the windshield. This vortex causes air near the base of the windshield to actually flow forward.



Above: Smoke test on model MGA

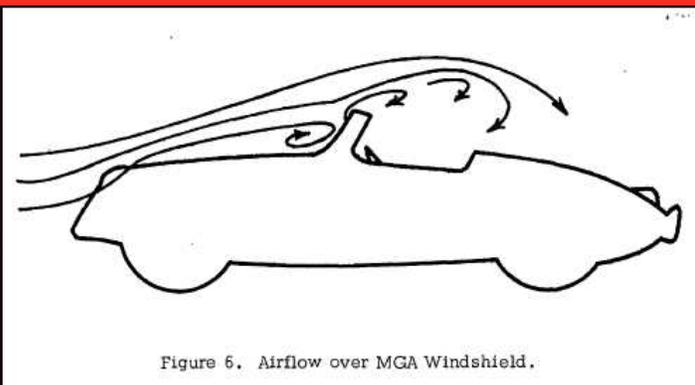


Figure 6. Airflow over MGA Windshield.

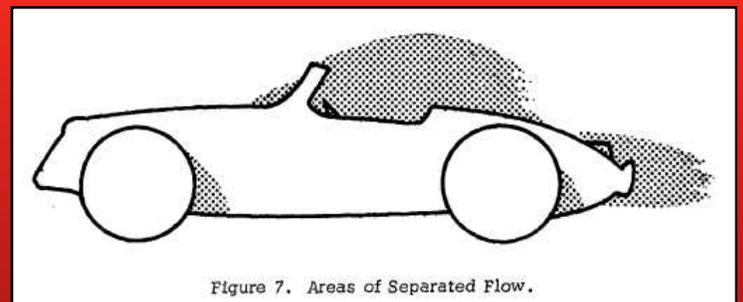


Figure 7. Areas of Separated Flow.

Another region of interest is the flow beneath the automobile. The relatively high velocity air flowing beneath the car causes the air flowing along the sides of the car to be sucked under the car.

As a first point of interest, in following the flow of air across the automobile, the flow into the radiator grill was examined. The strips in the grill cause the incoming flow to be deflected inward toward the radiator. This deflection, however, makes the air flow across rather than into the duct that is supposed to supply air to the carburetors (*and the fresh air intake for the cockpit - Ed.*). Only negligible air flows into these ducts.

The air which passes into the engine compartment through the radiator flows over the engine and then out the open bottom into the low pressure which exists there under the car.

Notice, in particular, the peaks in velocity distribution caused by the bumper and the MG emblem at the upper part of the grill. The velocity gradually decreases as the windshield is approached, giving rise to an adverse pressure gradient along most of the hood.

If outlet vents are installed to allow an escape for hot air inside the engine compartment, they should be placed where the pressure inside is higher than outside. The presently installed vents on the MGA are in a region where a higher pressure exists outside the hood. As a result, air flows into rather than out of these vents and further reduces the fresh air supplied to the carbs.

The strong vortex at the base of the windscreen can be seen in Figure 6. The presence of this reversed flow causes an annoying accumulation of large raindrops when driving through even moderate rain showers.

Another problem that results from this vortex is the extreme instability of the flow in this region to cross-flows. When driving in a crosswind, the stagnation area is shifted to the downwind side. This causes the pressure across the base of the windshield to vary according to the wind direction. Windshield washer jets in this condition flow fluid onto the hood instead of the windshield, causing unsightly stains on the hood.

Having passed over the cockpit, the flow then turns downward and impinges on the rear of the car at about the center of the trunk lid. Part of the stream flows on down the back of the trunk and into the wake behind the car. A considerable amount, however, is drawn forward into the low-pressure region existing in the cockpit. The velocity of this flow is rather high and results in an extreme buffeting within the cockpit. It is also drawn into the cockpit over the tops of the doors. Such flow is, no doubt, a characteristic of most open roadsters.

Despite its strength, this vortex does not affect the air well down in the cockpit. The air beneath the instrument panel and near the floor remains almost absolutely quiescent. Temperatures developed in this

region after protracted driving become uncomfortably high. Fresh air cannot enter to carry away heat from the engine and transmission.

Finally the airflow streams converge at a point approximately 5 feet behind the rear bumper. The extremely turbulent nature of this wake can be seen in the large cloud of powder and dust.

As a conclusion to the present study, modifications are being designed to eliminate or alleviate these aerodynamic problems. (*I wonder what those were? - Ed.*)

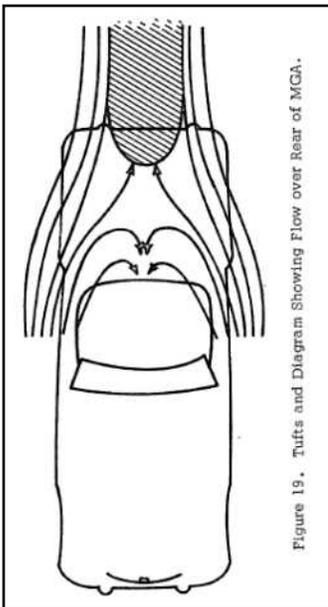


Figure 19. Tufts and Diagram Showing Flow over Rear of MGA.

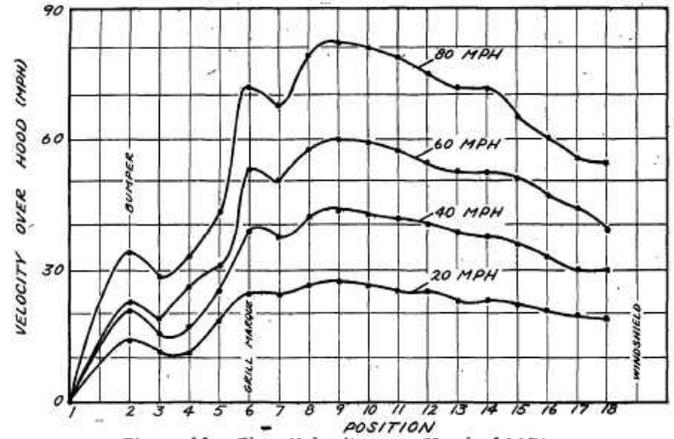


Figure 10. Flow Velocity over Hood of MGA.

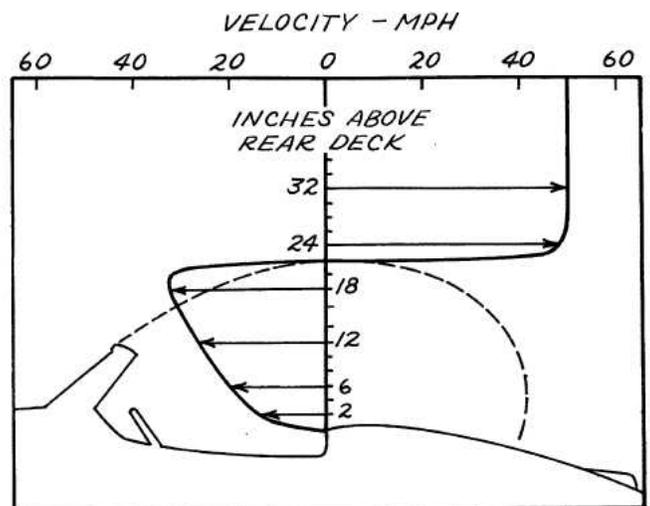


Figure 20. Velocity of Reversed Flow Behind Cockpit.
30-35mph reverse flow at 55 mph speed!

Remembering the TD

By Leon Mandel, *Autoweek*, March 6, 2000

My friend Tom Cotter, the only man I know under 50 who is besotted with British cars as I am, wonders if I will address the MG T Register annual meeting. I did my time in TDs and TFs of vintages '50, '54 and '55, and I have a lot of seriously ambivalent things to say about them.

I met my first MG TD at the New York dealer, J.S. Inskip. Well, I met my *affianced*: I had flirted with others well before. Built and imported from 1949 until 1953, the TD – meant to gather American dollars – was squarer, squatter-seeming, softer-riding and easier-steering than the prewar-based TC, which, because of its tall, narrow spindly wheels, was a nightmare to steer straight. I wanted a TC, but it took me a while to save the money, and by that time, TCs had been replaced by a car more suited to colonial tastes.

Anyway, there it was, black with a red interior and wholly, completely intoxicating. The automotive surroundings in the early years of the '50s were populated by dull, six-cylinder Chevys, envelope-bodied Fords, Monster Buicks, weird-looking Studebakers, and turtelian Hudsons. To drive a TD at a time when consumer conformity was inundating America, was to stand out like a wallaby at the Westminster Dog Show.

Which was exactly why so many people chose to do it. It was the very same contrarian instinct that made VW so popular in years to come with an only slightly less daring constituency. (*I would argue it was not the same, that VW became so large a minority, that it was itself conformity.* – Ed.)

What did the TD buyer get for his delivered \$1795 price? In strict mechanical terms, an ancient, obsolete, outdated cluster of parts including a 1248-cc engine, independent front suspension from the Y-type sedan and rack-and-pinion steering. (*The steering at least was advanced for its time.* – Ed.)

Which is about like saying what you get when you go out with a supermodel is arms and legs and a highly-styled hairdo. It was the experience that counted: sitting deep in the leather seat with your elbow braced on the cut-down door and convinced you were driving the equivalent of a Spad (*WWI fighter plane*). The big, plastic steering wheel was close. If you were wise, you kept a cocked eye on the double arc flat fascia that housed two large instruments, speedo and tach, which in the early cars worked chronometrically – that is to say, in jerky increments. There was a fuel gauge, an oil pressure gauge (very important) and a temp gauge. The wipers worked off an electric motor mounted atop the windshield, which could fold flat. Weather-protection was courtesy of side curtains and manual canvas top, the common technology of the time.

The TD had a stump-puller rear end and a four-speed gearbox with no synchros on first. Brakes were drums and almost adequate. You could accelerate with slow traffic and hold a steady 70 on the highway.

Some people, including me, actually raced them. They were terrifying on a racetrack: not very fast and desperately tippy. Even so, when a shoal of TDs got out together in the SCCA G production class, they provided wonderful fun – and even began some spectacular careers.

As a car, the TD was not much: as an experience, it was glorious. In the context of today's cars, TDs are terribly primitive and only fun to drive on brilliantly sunny days in the summer. Unless, of course, you can think of yourself driving along in 1950, head high, scarf flying, ready at a moment's notice to wave to an oncoming fellow MG driver – a chosen member of a wonderful clan, an adventurer. (*i would differ from the author here as well. TDs are glorious and great fun in any weather.* – Ed.)



Right: From *Enjoying MG* magazine, 2009



Keep Planning for 2022



SPRING

Feb. TBD: Oakland Air Museum Tour, Mark McGothigan/Kirk Prentiss

Wed, Mar. 16: St. Patrick's Day Tour, Marla & Andy Preston

March 22: Clovis Brit Car Round Up

Fri, Apr. 29: Marin Drive, Bundy/DeMayo/Rayman

May 22: Dixon All British Meet



Chally and Doug Flett

SUMMER

June 6-10: NAMGAR GT in Colorado Springs

June 19-23: NAMGBR MG2022 in Peterborough, Ontario, Toronto-Ottawa, Canada

June 27 - July 1: GOF West, Buellton near Solvang. 50th Anniversary. (2023 will be in Stockton.)

July 11-15: GOF Central & NAMMMR Annual Meet, La Crosse, Wisconsin

Mike Jacobsen's MGA turned to 40,000 at the start of the Marin Tour in November. 340,000 per Mike!

Pub Night! Feb. 18 - *Virus permitting!*

On The Road Again - Morgan Hill

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G4

Our next Pub Night of the season will be Friday, February 18th. Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship. (6pm to 9pm)

Please bring some wine or beer to share and we will provide snacks. Please confirm the event on our web site.

Thanks, Rachel



Annual Brunch 2022

by Andy Preston

Moss Beach Distillery is the perfect location for our Annual Brunch and this time we enjoyed a beautiful sunny day and we had their front room overlooking the ocean to ourselves. All of the tables were by the windows and the views are truly spectacular. The staff was wonderful and we were ushered in before anyone else. Food and drink was fast and everyone was served at the same time which was great. The group was smaller than previous years and allowed us to follow the CDC guidelines and we had a wonderful time. In fact many said it was the best one yet.

Three of our members drove MGs which was great to see; Kirk and Amy were in their trusty Magnette, Eric also in his Magnette but the 'MG Driving Spirit Award' goes to Doug and Chally Flett who drove their 1952 MG TD from Lafayette, top down all the way!

Steve Kellogg was the winner of the **Burnt Spark Plug Award** which has now been renamed in recognition of its creator Ken Gittings. So, Steve was the first to be awarded the much-coveted **Ken Gittings BSPA!** Steve related his experiences driving back from GOF West, Mt. Hood Oregon last summer. His trials and tribulations are documented in previous issues of the Octagon. But briefly the rear axle on his 1973 MGB started making howling sounds that got louder and louder due to a lack of lubrication. He had to leave the car in Medford at Kirk's Mom's house and later had it transported back to Pebble by some charming Russian gentleman. (I think that's how Steve described him.)

Many thanks go out to Marla for organizing this event and handling all the challenges.

Fun to see everyone dressed up. A dapper Eric Baker above. Left: Andy presents the KGBSPA to Steve Kellogg



Fun to see everyone dressed up. A dapper Eric Baker above. Left: Andy presents the KGBSPA to Steve Kellogg





A beautiful ocean view. Socially distanced this year. Right: Steve graciously accepts the BSPA honors.

Member Notes!

Happy New Year from Barbara Tapp:

May 2022 bring you lots of happiness and adventure. I chuckled when I saw Georgia's photo at the end of the Octagon. They are on hiatus until Feb 4 when they will reopen. I have found a nice 1966 MGB GT in Canada, would like to buy it but it's risky not driving it first. Always looking....

All the best, cheers,

From Andy Preston re: A/C in E-type:

Hi Dan, I'm been talking to my local British car shop owner Mark who I've known for years and he has agreed to let me use his shop with his help. I'll strip out all the interior and remove the bonnet, radiator, exhaust, carb and manifold and then have the car trailered to his shop that is only 2 miles away. We'll then remove the engine/gearbox and install the new one. Sounds simple doesn't it? We'll see,

Thanks from Marty Rayman:

Just took a quick peek & can't wait to sit down & enjoy this issue of the *Octagon*. Thanks so much Dan!

Finally finished it and another great issue. Cheers,

Remembering from Don Davis:

You have done it again, and produced an outstanding issue. I especially enjoy the older articles and the one on Ken Miles. I was a senior in high school in 1953 and a pal and I drove down to Carmel, cooked our dinner in the hills off Highway 1 and threw down our sleeping bags for the night. We were up early for the Pebble Beach Road races, watching from behind the hay bales, and I remember Ken Miles' 1952 MG R1 - we didn't know what it was but it certainly competed nicely against the Porsches and Oscas.

Notes from Mike Jacobsen:

Attached are my notes from the planning meeting. Please take a look and send me any corrections and additions. I'm sure I must have missed things - my audio kept cutting out.

Notice from Webmaster Steve Kellogg:

Let me know when the dates are committed and encourage organizers to write up a description or flyer for each event and I'll post it to the website.

PS. Any thought to re ordering decals or the desire for them? Rallye Productions has them for less than a buck a piece.

<https://www.rallyeproductions.com/decal-stickers>

Free MG Magazines from Rod Williams:

Do you or anyone you know have any interest in a collection of MG magazines from the '80s? I have "Abington Classics" from 1981 through 1986 and "Enjoying MG" from 1985 through 1990. All are bound and slip-cased. Seems a shame to just chuck them in recycling. Any takers? Petaluma (415) 309-3407

The empty space in my garage from selling the Sprite has been 'temporarily' taken up with my son's Lotus Elise. He and his wife moved to Denver a couple of months back and until just this week, he didn't have indoor parking. So, dad to the rescue. I can't say this is a car I'm dying to own. In true Lotus fashion, it's held together with chewing gum and a prayer. But, for now, it is fun to drive. All the best,

Good news from Pres Andy:

Hi everyone. I am pleased to advise you that John Hunt has agreed to fill the Member At Large position vacated by Ken at the end of last year. Please join me in welcoming John to the Board of Directors. Thanks,

Echo from Mike Jacobsen:

Welcome, John. Don't worry about getting the MGOC tattoo before the Brunch. You can do that later.

Wisdom from Dan's Father:

Some wisdom from my 97-year-old father. He has been active in many organizations, personal and professional, in his lifetime. For your encouragement! "The best job in any organization is that of 'Past President.'" - Joe Shockey

Agreement from Andy:

Dan, your father is very wise and I agree with him. Perhaps I should follow his advice.

GOF West from Mike J.:

I have registered for the GoF West. We have registration #21. I plan on going to the NAMGAR GT in Colorado Springs, too.

New Members!

Welcome Ray Davis of Castro Valley with a 1953 MG TD and a 1979 MG Midget.

Ray is active in the Sorry Safari Touring Society. (Our 'sister' club in the East Bay that many of us also belong to – can't get enough!)



Ray has a large highway/street sign collection – not from his misspent youth but from castoffs from the city. He recently got the Midget going again. The problem was the air pump for the smog system. Apparently those differ from the MGB ones and are hard to find. Let us know if you have one tucked away. He will need it – or a borrowed one – to pass smog next time.



And from New Member Mike Fields of Oakland with a BRG 1971 MGB Roadster:

"Thank you for the welcome. I recently purchased a 1971 MGB. This is my first classic car and I have no previous experience with British cars. I've always wanted a two-seat convertible and I had decided on a Fiat 124 Spider awhile back. Then about six months ago I saw a TV show that featured several classic British cars and I just had to have one. I believe the color is New Racing Green with Autumn Leaf interior. It was previously restored but it's due for an update. I initially planned to V8 swap it but I've since discovered it has the original engine so I've decided to slowly restore it to original while upgrading a few things in the interest of reliability. I look forward to meeting you and the other members of the club and learning more about MGs. Thanks, Mike."



From the CSRG:

We will be including car corrals at 2022 events & this email is to advise you of that, let you know the dates & see what clubs are interested in attending.

The CSRG Board has yet to determine the fee schedule, but we should have the cost established by early February.

Here are the 2022 event dates :

April 1-3: David Love Vintage Races at Sonoma Raceway

May 21-22: Laps for Laguna---a Benefit for the Laguna Seca Raceway Foundation

Sept. 30-Oct. 2: 19th Annual Charity Challenge at Sonoma Raceway

Nov. 4-6: 55th Season Finale and Awards Dinner, Thunderhill Raceway Park
CSRG, www.csrg racing.org



Classified Ads

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

Wanted: MGA steel wheels, Or 15" Mini-lite style wheels. Member Mark Darley. markdarley@mac.com (Posted 01/22)

1967 MGB/GT Special: BRG. 5-Speed, supercharged (Moss), with Miata seats & power windows. Mini-lite style wheels.. Enthusiast's car. Black license plate: "A 67 BGT" Runs strong. \$15,000. Member Ken Gittings, 510-791-8445 (Posted 02/22)

1959 MGA Coupe: Restored, New green paint & cream interior, Panasport wheels, front disc brakes, 5 main MGB motor, weber, more. \$22k on Craigslist. Located in Santa Rosa

1951 MG TD Mk II: Owned for 30 years. Last ran 20 years ago but starting to burn oil. The body is straight. It has a new top. \$15,000. And...

1967 MGB GT: Modified for vintage racing by Nick Martin. Fuel cell, overdrive, new tires, modified suspension and brakes. With a second engine & second overdrive. Needs paint.\$2,000. Contact: jnlhunter@gmail.com (Posted 2/22)

Estate MGBs: 1973 MGB/GT and 1974 MGB Tourer. Rough, non-running condition. Have titles and keys. In Hayward. Pam Delaney 425-346-1828 (Posted 12/21)

MG TA Tickford: Member Bill Hiland is selling his very special coach-built MG. Fewer than 40 are believed to still exist. 'Cream Crackers' paint scheme. Morgan Hill. \$75k. (409) 314-2675, bill.otrc@gmail.com (Re-posted 1/22)

MG TD for sale: 32,000 original miles with new paint and interior. It's red. Purchased new by Carole's uncle who let Carole drive it to University. We drove it 1000 miles recently with no problems. Member Walter, (408) 768-0214 (Re-posted 12/21)

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

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

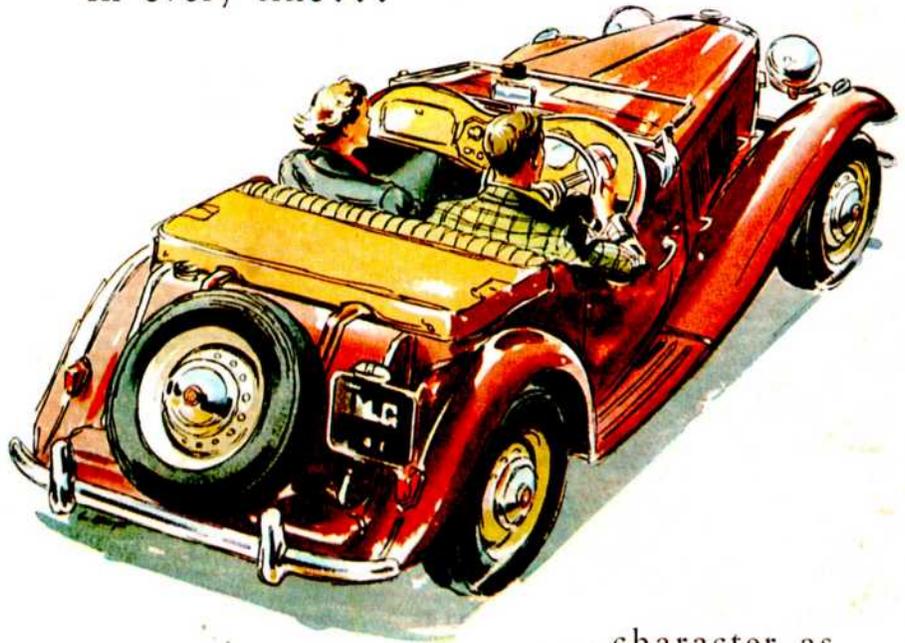




Riverside Raceway, 1959
from Bob Luebbert

Character

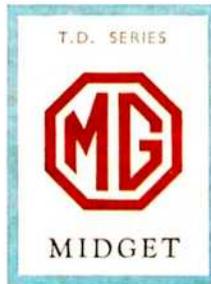
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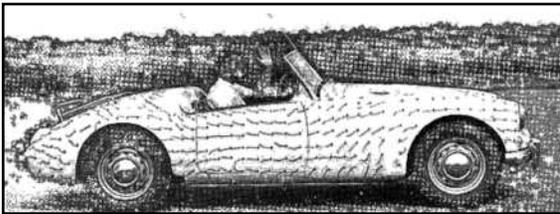
<http://www.namgar.com>, or contact registrar@namgar.com.



North American MGB Register



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



MGA being driven covered with tufts of wool for airflow analysis. See page 12.



Photo: Barbara Tapp

