

THE OCTAGON

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



MGOC Octagon
If undeliverable please return to:
7230 Silver Lode Lane
San Jose, CA 95120

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Forthcoming Events	3
From the Editor	4
President's Ponderings	5
California Autumn Classic	6
Jimmy's Old Car Picnic	7
MGA Tech Session / Many Hands Make Light Work	8
MG Fall Festival	10-13
MG Fall Festival Photo Essay	14-15
Screwdriver? That's a Drink, Right?	16-17
Business Meeting Minutes	18-19
Classified Ads	20-22



Photo by Andy Preston

Everyday is a joy with an MG

October 2011

About *The Octagon* and MGOC...

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

DIRECTORY OF MGOC OFFICERS FOR 2011

President: Sam Gearhart, 510-530-2267, swg3@comcast.net
Vice President: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, j2george@pacbell.net
Treasurer: Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, MikesMuseum@yahoo.com
Secretary: Kim Kuenzinger, 925-934-3130, kalvey1950@aol.com
Registrar: Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, MikesMuseum@yahoo.com
T Register Director: Jim Carlson, 408-224-3992, mgjim@comcast.net
Corresponding Secretary: George Steneberg, j2george@pacbell.net
Membership Development: Bob Stine, 650-349-5128, rbrtstine@gmail.com

The Octagon Editor: Jeremy Palgon, 510-378-1821, alistaircookie@gmail.com

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

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

Photographer: Jeremy Palgon, 510-378-1821, alistaircookie@gmail.com

CLUB ADVISOR PROGRAM

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

MGB 1962-74: Marty Ray, 831-475-6204, martyray@cruzio.com

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

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

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

MG Midget: Craig Kuenzinger, 925-934-3130, mrcraig@aol.com

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

Z-Magnette Saloon: Eric Baker, 510-531-7032, mgpb36@yahoo.com

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

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

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

S.U. Carburettors: Marty Ray, 831-475-6204, martyray@cruzio.com

Club Meeting Natter & Noggin October 13, 7 pm

The Englander Sports Pub & Restaurant
101 Parrott Street, San Leandro
<http://www.englishpub.com/>
(510) 357-3571

The Englander is an enjoyable place where we have our own cozy room.
The food is good so bring your appetites.

Directions to The Englander:

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

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



Collins
CLASSICS

Repair • Restoration • Parts

by
**Tom Collins
&
Tyrone Revelo**

609 California Drive
Burlingame, CA 94010
(650) 685-4477
collinsclassics@comcast.net

Parts for Sale:

1953 MG TD original front fenders. Bobbed for racing, good condition. Stored indoors for 35 years. \$500 for the pair. Contact Beth at beth@schnurle.com.



Set of MGA seats in ok shape, **MGA windshield frame** with glass that is broken. Contact Member Don Scott at 707-942-0546 or don@napanet.net.

MG Midget Rolling Chassis Body Shell. No VIN. No Title. No engine, transmission, differential, front bumper, or windscreen. Not crashed but rough. Rubber bumper car. Make Offer. Contact Member Nick Becker at 925-932-9778 or becker2226@astound.net.

Wanted:

Pre-1968 MGB roadster. Long-time MG nut seeking early B roadster. My preference is one that is a preserved original or one redone to original specifications; but I will consider most any steel-dash car, depending on its price and its needs. Contact Member Don Scott at 707-942-0546 or don@napanet.net.

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IN THE OCTAGON

Direct all questions about advertising to Mike Jacobsen at 415-333-9699 or MikesMuseum@yahoo.com. 2011 rates are: monthly (yearly): full page \$25 (\$240), half page \$18 (\$175), third page \$12 (\$120), business card \$8 (\$75). All ads expire on January 1, 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*.

MGOC FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Information on the MGOC finances is available upon request from the treasurer.

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OCTAGON

Your stories, photos, tips, questions, and anything MGOC-related are always welcome in *The Octagon*. Please make your contributions by the 20th of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. Please email all contributions to mgowners@gmail.com or send them to: MGOC, 7230 Silver Lode Lane, San Jose, CA 95120.

RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

Have you helped recruit any new members lately? Bob Stine is in charge of new member recruitment and can send you flyers. The Club roster is available to members from Mike Jacobsen upon request.

MGOC.ORG

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

Forthcoming Events

MGOC Events in bold

Oct. 15 – **Jimmy's Old Car Picnic**, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

Oct. 16 – **California Autumn Classic**, Morgan Hill

Nov. 12 – **MGA Tech Session**, San Francisco, Mike Jacobsen



Photo by Ken Gittings

FREE Parts & Accessories Catalogs

Choose From These Catalogs:

- Austin Healey
- MGA
- MGB & MGC
- AH Sprite & MG Midget
- Sunbeam Alpine & Tiger
- TR2 TR3 TR4 TR4A TR250
- TR6
- TR7 & TR8
- Spitfire & GT6

Order Toll Free
7 Days A Week
1-800-255-0088








Order Catalogs & Parts Online at
www.VictoriaBritish.com

From the Editor...

What to write when you don't know what to write?

I have often begun my articles with a quote, and many of those quotes have come from the popular poetry medium of our age: songs. This time I begin with a song quote of sorts, but not one that can be easily transcribed. As I sat down to compile *The Octagon* this month I could not get the lyric sound of the opening line of Simon and Garfunkel's "America" out of my head. Now you may think the opening line is: Let us be lovers, we'll marry our fortunes together. That is admittedly a great line, but the very first sound you hear on the classic version is Paul Simon humming "hmmmmm, hmmmmm, hmmmmm". It is this soothing, musing sound that I have found inescapable.

Why have I dwelled on this? Apart from the apparent implacability of the tune, I think the sound of Simon's humming intro sets a tone - a tone of comfort tinged with unease, a sense that we are alright but unsure of what's to come. And this common and yet unusual sound captures precisely how I feel these days.

I am comfortable, but uneasy. I'm OK, and yet there is the foreboding sense that great change is on the horizon. And as with all change, there is a bit of anxiety when wondering what will be.

I feel this way about my daily life, about the future of America, and yes, about the Club. Who among us doesn't these days?

This club has had the same stalwart leadership for some time now. They are exceedingly competent and committed. But we cannot rely on this same group indefinitely, because they too grow weary.

Kim Kuenzinger, who stepped up in our time of need, is ready to depart her post at the end of the year. So we're looking for a new secretary (see page 8). Others are ready to hand off their duties too, should someone be interested.

As for me, one of the closing lyrics of "America" resonates: I'm empty and aching and I don't know why.

Jeremy Palgon

MG	
TC-TD-TF-MGA-MGB-C-Midget	
SHOCK ABSORBERS:	Front Rear
MGTC.....	185.00 185.00
MGTD & TF.....	185.00 85.00
MGA, MGB, MGC, Midget.....	102.00 75.00
HEAVY DUTY UPGRADE.....	10.00 10.00
SHOCK LINK (New or Rebuilt)	\$call
BRAKES: sleeved and rebuilt	
MGB, Midget caliper.....	\$85.00
MGA, MGC caliper.....	\$155.00
MGA, Midget twin master 1968-87.....	\$225.00
MGB, Midget master 1968-80.....	\$125.00-145.00
MGB brake booster servo.....	\$175.00
MGC booster servo.....	\$445.00
Cylinders sleeved only, brass or SS.....	\$50-\$95
Kingpin swivel axle rebushed.....	\$60-\$90
Front end A-arm (Midget).....	\$95.00
CARBURETORS: COMPLETE REBUILDING	
Disassembly, cleaning, bodies rebushed, new std. size throttle shafts, jets, needles, float valves, gaskets. FLOW BENCH TEST.....\$375-\$415/pair	
CARB BODIES REBUSHED	
and new throttle shafts.....	\$85 each
Prices shown are for Exchange or Yours Rebuilt. Core charges apply if items are ordered prior to (and are refunded after) our receiving old units.	
Free catalog. www.applehydraulics.com	
APPLE HYDRAULICS	
1610 Middle Road, Calverton, NY 11933	
631-369-9515, FAX: 631-369-9516	
Toll Free 800-882-7753	
VISA, MC, DISCOVER, PAYPAL, COD	
OCT09	

1978 MGB Roadster. Maroon with beige interior. Vehicle has less than 43,000 original miles. 1800cc engine with Stromberg carburetor and 4-speed manual with electronic overdrive. Soft-top with two tonneau. AM/FM/CD stereo with removable face, remote control and MP3 interface. Luggage rack, new tires, many extras. Currently registered in California. Asking \$8,200. Contact Member Tom Doyle at 520-220-6228 or at wtdoyle@cox.net.



1946 MGTC. Red with black interior and black top (currently being installed). Side curtains all in very good condition and the car is mechanically excellent. The engine starts up quickly and runs very smoothly. I brought the car back to life six years ago, cleaned out the gas tank and fuel lines, cleaned the electrical contacts, rebuilt the hydraulics, including two new brass-lined brake cylinders, new interior, cleaned and rebuilt the carburetors, replaced the steering box with a rebuilt one, replaced the drop arm, adjusted toe-in to the proper value, replaced the u-joints on the driveshaft, and many other small things that I no longer recall. I had JB Wire Wheels true and paint the wheels and replace a couple of tires. The paint is fine from 15 feet away, but it could use a new paint job. It drives like a TC, which means that it is a rough ride and it goes more or less straight as long as the driver is paying attention. It is quite nice to drive at 50 mph, but not much fun on the freeway. Asking \$20,000. Contact Member Jesse Bregman at 831-427-1644 or jbregman@mac.com.

1973 MGB GT. Nearly completed restoration of a very nice example. I redid the mechanicals, had body and paint done professionally, colour is as original, upholstery is dark blue cloth as originally fitted, has two nearly new six volt batteries, has correct rubber mats and has original carpeting. I have a professionally rebuilt OD gearbox which is not installed, redone by Jerry Redmon of Napa Valley Auto Restorations. The car does need minor completion - some interior pieces need installing, needs some tidying up. Car has the original blue CA plates and it is currently registered. \$4,500. Contact Member Don Scott at 707-942-0546 or don@napanet.net.

1961 MGA Coupe, 1600 cc engine, 5 speed gearbox. California car, completely restored by third (and present) owner in 2002, rust free, body straight, no accidents, 7,800 miles since rebuild. Original body panels, new front spoiler below bumper. All good original chrome, new rubber gaskets for body and glass. Painted "Paprika Red" (Jaguar color). Asking \$25,000. Contact Member Viggo Riddersholm at 650-341-9064 or vriddersholm@yahoo.com, or Gordon Craig at lismoregordon@sbcglobal.net.

Classified Ads

Ads are free to MGOC members and \$6.00 per month for non-members. Please send copy (and check **made payable to MGOC** if a non-member) to MGOC, 7230 Silver Lode Lane, San Jose, CA 95120. Members may also email ads to the editor at mgowners@gmail.com.

Cars for Sale:

1966 Sprite MKIII. Same owner last eleven years, fully sorted and dependable every day driver. 10K miles since full mechanical rebuild, 1275cc motor, 5-speed Datsun gearbox, too much to list, email me for full details, great car, \$8K or BO. Contact Member Rod Schweiger at rodschweiger@gmail.com or 650-296-1108.



1972 MGB GT. I purchased this car in 2003 from the nephew of the original owners, who were in the Fremont area. The original owners had the engine re-done in 2002 and the nephew repainted the car bright red (the original color) prior to my buying it. Currently has 36,000 miles on the re-done engine. In 2003 I had electrical system re-wired. Original owners had car stored for 13 years. Interior is in good condition, back hatch area is worn, but seats have always been covered and are in great shape. Asking \$6,500 but will entertain offers and can email pictures. I am in the Concord/Martinez area. Contact Janet at mardow99@sbcglobal.net.

Classic 1973 Jaguar XJ12 Series 1 Sedan. 5.3 V12 engine. All original! The only year of the chrome bumpered XJ12 model. 66,000 original miles. Silver with beautiful original black leather interior. Sunroof and Nardi wood steering wheel. Always a California car from new. No rust! Same owner for the last 35 years. Always garaged. Looks and drives great! \$8,900. Contact Member Ron Simi at 925-765-5807.



President's Ponderings...

Fall is now in the air, and rain has started falling; so it would seem we are at the tail end of our driving season.

In keeping with the fall theme, many of us attended the MG Fall Festival in Petaluma this past weekend. We had approximately 40 cars in the car show, and had drivers from all over California – from as near as Rohnert Park to as far away as San Diego. The weather stayed nice through the entire weekend, and helped make a success of our long-planned event.

We opened with the hospitality suite on Thursday night (thanks again to George and tireless Marcia). We started Friday with the car show, and ended up that night with a nice drive through wine country to the Union Hotel in Occidental for dinner. After a delicious and hearty Italian meal, we meandered back to the Sheraton. On Saturday morning, Andy Preston led a fun drive through area backroads to the Infineon Speedway in Sonoma for the CSRG Charity Challenge. With extra cars from the Lotus, Austin Healey, and other clubs, more than 50 cars took to the race track on Saturday at noon for about 10 parade laps. The only complaint I heard about the parade laps was that people got bugs in their teeth from grinning so much as they made their way around the route. It was a wonderful experience.

Saturday night we held the awards banquet. We presented the awards from the car show on Friday, heard about upcoming events, and just had a wonderful evening. In short, a great time was had by all. To those of you who missed the Fall Festival: I'm really sorry, because you missed a great weekend.

As witnessed by the recent weather, the rainy season is now upon us so opportunities will be fewer. So we are winding down our driving season. But there are a few more events left: the Cal Autumn Classic is coming up and we are still trying to arrange a short drive or two.

As we wind down the season and start to think about winterizing our cars, I'd like to thank all of you who participated in planning, directing, or participating in our events over the past year. It's been a great year, and we've had some wonderful drives and a lot of fun with our MGs.

I hope to see you at the rest of the events this year, and Happy Halloween!

Regards,
Sam Gearhart





California Autumn Classic October 15 & 16

Returning to Morgan Hill again this year, the 19th annual California Autumn Classic brings back the nostalgic fun of relaxed, friendly sports car club events of the 1950s and '60s. All classic British sports cars (2-seaters and their jumpseat derivatives) are invited to participate. There will be 26 silver trophies for all marques. All event profits will be donated to Children and Animal Charities.

The event will be held on the main downtown street of Morgan Hill, just ten minutes south of San Jose off Highway 101. There are many restaurants to choose from for lunch and many quaint shops to enjoy.

The weekend starts off with an afternoon backroads tour on Saturday at noon. After returning, everyone is invited to gather for a welcoming dinner in Morgan Hill. The car show opens at 9:00 am on Sunday morning, with awards at 2:00 pm.

Event organizer Bill Meade has requested that the MGOC provide five members to be judges at the show. If you are going to the show and would like to help judge the cars, please contact Bill at the show booth after you arrive. You won't have to judge your own car!

Registration: Day of the show registration at the Sunday Concours is \$60. If you haven't registered for the Saturday Tour or Dinner yet and would like to join in, please contact Bill Meade at 831-722-3253.

Dues Are Now Past Due

If you've forgotten to send in your membership dues for this year, this is your last chance to renew.

Please send a check for \$20 made out to MGOC to:
320 B Monterey Blvd, SF, CA 94131.

Don't miss any editions of *The Octagon*, renew today.

Old Business

None to report

New Business

Nominating Committee for 2012 Officers: In accordance with the MGOC By-Laws, this issue has been postponed until October.

MGOC Members "Day-Tour" to Infineon for Track Time: Those not participating in the Fall Festival may still enjoy the track time at Infineon on that Saturday. A group drive to the track has not been planned, but members are encouraged to attend this opportunity to drive a great raceway.

Annual Awards Banquet: The Annual Awards Banquet last year at Hs. Lordships in Berkeley was such a success, the board decided to return to the venue and hold the Banquet there again in January 2012. Several board members expressed a desire to have the MGOC subsidize the event. The secretary volunteered to contact Hs. Lordships to discuss options and report back to the board.

NAMGBR Officer Proxy Form: It is election time for NAMGBR officers. A motion was passed to give our proxy to NAMGBR Vice Chairperson, Kim de Bourbon to vote for the NAMGBR recommended candidates. The ballot was completed and sent to NAMGBR.

Next Meeting and Natter: 7:00 pm on Thursday, October 13, 2011 at The Englander Sports Pub, 100 Parrott Street, San Leandro.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Submitted by Kim Kuenzinger.



**CLASSIC AUTO RESTORATION & REPAIR
BRITISH PARTS DISTRIBUTOR**

WWW.UNIONJACK.COM
13555 Depot St. PO Box 551 San Martin, CA 95046
408 686-1101 Fax 683-2447

MGOC Business Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2011

President Sam Gearhart called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Also attending were: Ken Gittings, Mike Jacobsen, Kim & Craig Kuenzinger, Bob & Edie Shaheen, George Steneberg, Bob Stine, and David Wright.

A motion was passed to accept the corrected August minutes as published in *The Octagon*.

Treasurer's Report: The saving and checking balances are healthy. Money has been received for Fall Festival registrations. Expenses are for the renewal of the MGCC membership (MG Car Club of England) and Fall Festival costs. These costs include plaques, regalia, hospitality, signage, etc.

Registrar's Report: We are up to 294 members currently! A few membership renewals are due and a renewal reminder is in *The Octagon*.

Secretary's Report: The corrected minutes were approved.

Corresponding Secretary's Report: Nothing significant to report.

Regalia: David Wright received a grille badge order and expressed a desire to work with Sam and Mike coordinating mailing and distribution in the future.

The Octagon: The September *Octagon* has been published. To make sure the minutes are correct prior to being published, the minutes will be distributed, amended and approved by the Board and meeting attendees before publication. A motion was passed to do so.

Web site: The link to the Fall Festival has been dropped. This will be investigated.

Past Events

Annual Picnic: The picnic was a huge success and lots of fun. Samantha Lee's summary in *The Octagon* was read aloud at the meeting and greatly appreciated.

Fall Festival Planning Meetings: Planning is going well and in the final stages for the Fall Festival. We have 27 registrants and 29 cars participating so far. The hotel graciously extended the special reduced rate for the event rate through September 9.

Upcoming Events

Final Fall Festival Planning Meeting: September 24, 2011. All final registration details and equipment loading will happen at this meeting. Sam is having signs made to route participants through the hotel to the Hospitality Suite and Registration. George and Marcia will make a final trip to the hotel to be sure all details are in place for hospitality suite. Craig will reach out to other British Clubs to invite additional potential attendees.

Upcoming Pigeon Point Lighthouse Tour: When the date becomes available, it will be published in *The Octagon* (likely November 12).

Jimmy's 23rd Annual OLD CAR PICNIC



SAN FRANCISCO

Saturday, October 15

Jimmy's Annual Old Car Picnic started in 1988 when classic car-loving friends got together in Golden Gate Park. It has since grown into the largest and longest-running show of its kind in San Francisco and includes cars, trucks, and motorcycles of all types (as well as a good number of oddballs).

For a \$40 donation, which includes admission and other goodies, participants can park on Speedway Meadow's lawn. The money raised benefits the SF Recreation & Park Department's Adaptive Recreation Programs for the developmentally disabled.

All people with good attitudes, who appreciate all different kinds of cars, are welcome. Jimmy's Picnic is about having fun, checking out the cars, and enjoying the day! All this – and helping out folks with disabilities too!

Bring your family! Bring your camera! Bring a picnic lunch or BBQ! Rat rods, lowriders, perfectly restored cars, historic vehicles, clunkers and beaters, motorcycles, race cars, fire trucks, cars that only go out on Sundays, all kinds of customs, steamboats, and more are welcome!

As a true native San Franciscan event, Jimmy's Picnic welcomes everyone with a good attitude! (But please leave your mini-motorcycles at home!) The show starts at 7:00 am and ends at 4:00 pm. Please remember to bring cash, as no other form of payment is accepted.

Please note: Our permit is very strict and does not allow vendors or amplified music. It also specifies cars must be pre-1980.

All vehicles must enter Speedway Meadow heading East on JFK Drive. You may enter Golden Gate Park (and turn onto JFK) from either 30th Ave. (from Fulton St.) or from the Great Highway at Ocean Beach.

Contact: jimmypicnic@gmail.com

More Information: <http://www.jimmypicnic.com>

MGA Tech Session

Saturday, November 12

San Francisco

Mike Jacobsen needs to replace the rack boots and master cylinder in his MGA. Come watch, or even help, and we'll turn this into a Tech Session.

What: A chance to observe rack boots being changed on an MGA (very similar procedure to TD, TF, Magnette, MGB, and Spridget models).

Changing the master cylinder will happen if there's time and we feel like it.

Why: Because the rubber bits have perished.

How: If you want to help, wear grubbies.

When and Where: 10 am on Saturday, November 12 at [320 Monterey Blvd, San Francisco](#) in the garage. The cross street is Congo.

No RSVP necessary: but call Mike at 415-333-9699 if you need more information.

Note: Parking can be scarce in this neighborhood. You may need to drive up the hill on Congo, park on a side street, and walk back to the apartment building garage.

Many Hands Make Light Work

By Kim Kuenzinger, Outgoing Secretary

Yes, we know this old saying well! Many of us heard this time honored advice in our youth. Our parents diligently taught us that teamwork pays off. This is what we need to keep our club functioning well.

For many years, the many have been enjoying the efforts of the few. Now is the time for more MGOC members to not only share the fun, but the work as well. After all, that is what *teamwork* is!

The nominations for the MGOC Officers are right around the corner, and we're looking for some volunteers. Presently, we're looking for a secretary for the upcoming year.

Do you enjoy witty conversation?

Are you a decent listener? Can you write and type?

Would you like to be in the loop on the latest developments in the Club?

Would you enjoy a regular monthly pub night?

Do you want to know what a "pocket pencil" is?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you could be our next secretary. So step up to the plate and see what is going on with MGOC. Consider becoming one of the hands that make the workload a little less heavy for everyone else.

Randy looked at me as if I had just stepped in recycled dog food. I looked back at him with a "What?!" look. He pushed past me, marched over to the side wall of the shop and pulled a can of oil off the rack, then marched back to the MGB. He plunged a funnel contraption into the can, unscrewed a big, black cap off the top of the engine and then inserted the can upside-down into the hole on the top of the engine. I was mesmerized by his mechanical abilities!

Randy then said we had to check the gap in the spark plugs. He unscrewed the first plug and gave it to me, as he then started to unscrew another plug. I held the plug up to the overhead light and saw that there was light; so I told Randy all was A-OK, there was a gap. Randy bopped his head on the boot as he popped his head up in reaction to my comment. He uttered something about me doing something to myself reproductively that seemed rather impossible, but he was quite emphatic in his response. I just figured he probably hadn't had breakfast that morning.

As he ripped the plug out of my hand and slipped a skinny piece of metal between two tiny pieces of metal on the end of the plug I happened to mention to Randy that his valve covers were rather dirty. I credit my wrestling prowess with giving me quick reactions as I ducked just in time to avoid being hit in the head with a spark plug! Boy, Randy was rather testy that day!

Randy said he wanted to check his ignition; so he instructed me to get in the driver's seat and to turn on the ignition when he told me to. I clarified that he wanted me to turn the key to "on" and he just exhaled a rather rude, "yeah." I immediately got into the seat.

Randy was dicking about under the boot twisting a wrench this way, turning a bolt that way. It looked like he had his hand on the spark plug with the spark plug wire next to his hand. Since we had just fixed the gap I thought now would be the perfect time to turn the key. I asked first, to make sure. I could have sworn Randy said, "Go!" He insisted later he said "No!" I didn't see what the big deal was. It's only six volts. And I swear Randy banged his hand somewhere in the engine compartment to get it so red. Oh well.

We were continuing to tune up the car, me helping immensely when the shop teacher, Mr. Collier, called out that it was clean up time. As Mr. Collier walked past us I mentioned to him that I did an overwhelming job in helping Randy tune up his MGB. Mr. Collier looked at me then over at Randy who was about 14 shades of purple by this point, then nodded his head and said, "Go clean your valve covers, Lucas."

It was another fantastic day of demonstrating my mechanical prowess. After all, a screwdriver is a drink, right?

About the Author

Jim Lucas is an English and Creative Writing Teacher in Santa Cruz. He currently is vying for the cleanest valve covers in the MGOC.

Screwdriver?

That's a Drink, Right?

By Jim Lucas

In the early 1970s I was attending San Jose State on a wrestling scholarship, and had dreams of making the US Olympic team. Being a couple of years away from graduation, I had other dreams as well: becoming a famous rock star, the next Ernest Hemingway, and a famous surfer. As I trekked along in my '64 VW bug I even had a Walter Mitty-esque dream of becoming a Formula 1 driver!

Between wrestling matches, music gigs, and surfing (with a couple of classes thrown in there someplace), I raced Series E in SCCA functions (mostly at Sears Point). I had the mechanical abilities of a puddle of water but could zip around the track at a pretty good pace. When I came into the pits I would mimic the sound I heard and point to where it was coming from. Onlookers would stare in disbelief, but the mechanic and I got along famously.

My mechanical attributes were honed in high school with a closet full of shop rags: making the valve covers on my high school wheels, a '64 Ford Ranchero, gleam! Harking back to those high school days, one of my buddies, Randy, also happened to be in my auto shop class. Randy had an MGB and selected me to be his "shop partner", and we set about to tune up his B.

As Randy pulled the MGB into the designated shop bay, he popped the boot and told me to prop it up. I did so willingly. As I gazed into the engine compartment, I asked Randy what the Old Spice bottle thingamajigs were. He looked at me incredulously and informed me that those were the carburetors. He told me to check the oil; so I immediately got down on my hands and knees, ever so copiously avoiding any grime that might collect on my shop overalls, and looked under the car. I reported that I saw no oil. There was a loud scream that disguised a vulgarity that fortunately our shop teacher didn't hear.

"The dip stick, Lucas! Check the oil with the DIP STICK!"

I obliged his request searching frantically throughout the engine compartment for a stick, but no such luck. Randy pushed me aside, pulled a dirty rag from his pocket and slipped a long, sleek strip of metal out from the side of the engine.

"Oh, man. Down a quart," Randy exclaimed.

"Right here? Aren't you afraid of getting busted by Mr. Collier," I chimed. I mean, *really*, drinking on campus would be a risk I wasn't ready to take.

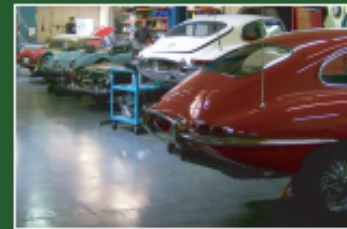
On the Road Again

Service and Restore All British Cars

*Austin Healey
Jaguar
MG Specialists
Triumph
Bentley
Lotus*



Come Visit our Showroom of Classic British Cars.



Distributors & Specialty Parts:

**Moss Motors
ARP Performance Fasteners
Glasurit Paints
Dayton Wire Wheels
Pierce Manifolds**

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G-4

Morgan Hill, CA 95037

Phone: 408.782.1100

Fax: 408.779.0938

bhiland@ontheroadagainclassics.com

www.ontheroadagainclassics.com



MG Fall Festival

By Don Scott

I visited the MG Fall Festival at the Sheraton Hotel in Petaluma. As usual, I was driving a Japanese vehicle: my Mazda pickup, as I had errands to run to get building supplies to prepare for the rainstorms coming next week. If everyone drove a Japanese car to these events, the shows would not quite work.

There were some beautiful cars there. My favourite was the red 1962 MGA MK II roadster that belongs to Chrisula Asimos. She bought the car new! What a vibrant and lively woman she is. I can't imagine what she must have been like back in '62 when she bought that car. The MGA is pretty much original other than a repaint years ago. She said the worst mechanical issue was a blown head gasket on the Bay Bridge years ago, which led to her having the engine partially rebuilt. The original grey top and side curtains with grey vinyl are still on the car. The seats, though worn, are also original. The car's engine bay shows the patina of the nearly 50 years of its life. Chrisula was kind enough to pose in front of her MGA for the photo of the exterior of her car. She was also kind enough to laugh at my joke: an MG gal was walking briskly among the cars announcing that a pair of bifocals had been found and she was seeking their owner. I commented to Chrisula that the bifocals could belong to anyone at the car show.



Photo by Don Scott

Andy Preston had two of his four MGs at the show. His red MGA coupe is gorgeous and is a real work of art. He did most all the work on the car himself. His cars are so impressive, and his enthusiasm for MGs has inspired me at times when I think of other hobbies to pursue. Great guy, he is.



Preparing to depart (above), and on the tour (below)



In the paddock at Infineon (below)



MG Fall Festival Photo Essay

By Ken Gittings



At the car show



Queuing up for the tour to Infineon Raceway



Photo by Don Scott

There were more TFs than TDs, which defies logic considering how few TFs were made and how few remain. There was a cream coloured TF that was stunning. The owner had just had the car restored, and the detailing was phenomenal. Even the lining of the little tool box in front of the firewall was there, and intact. It had a valve cover that I had not seen before, with a complex filler on the rear. I learned that it was a TC item which was sought by later T-series owners as it was such an art piece. The owner started up the engine and said it had been rebuilt and balanced. It sure ran well. I must say, this car gave me an inferiority complex as I own a similar car with the same colour scheme. Until I saw this TF, I thought mine was as nice as they got.



Photo by Don Scott

One of the more unusual MGs at the show was a “tubbed” MGA roadster powered by a massive chromed and blown V8. I noticed that the car’s grille was from a ‘62 MK II and the taillights from a 1600. No originality concours prize for him!



Photo by Ken Gittings

I saw Jim Legg of Napa, who sold me an MGB radio years ago. He drove his MGB that tows a trailer made of a severed MGB’s hindquarters.



Photo by Ken Gittings

The other odd car was an MGB GT that had been converted to a roadster-pickup truck. The owner had done a lot of beautiful woodwork to it, and I was impressed how pretty the car looked. The owner’s wife told me that her husband had started with a parts car that ran so well he couldn’t just discard it; so he made it into a custom. She placed their little pet dog in its special doggy seat for me to include in my photograph of the car.



Photo by Don Scott

There was a dearth of MG sedans. The only one I saw was an MG 1100. It was very well preserved, and wore its original tartan red paint. I always thought only MGBs were tartan red. This has got to be one of a handful of 1100s left in the world.



Photo by Ken Gittings