



OCTAGRAM

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MGs of BALTIMORE MD

January 2020

www.mgsofbaltimore.org

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

From El Presidente:

Well it's January already and it's time to pay your **MGOB 2020 club dues again**. Now most of us owe dues this time around, but not everyone does so, in an effort to simplify things I am going to list those that **do not owe** them as follows: **Glenn S. & Barbara Abbott, Neal & Suzanne Becker, Suzie Boltz, Jim Buckmeier, Chas & Pam Burke, Joe Clark, Jack & Joanna Dagilas, Matthew Dinnerman, Cliff Essman, Duff & Barbara Fowler, Sandy & Mike Hickman, Barney & Lydia Michel, Bill & Pam Minor, Chip Norman, Michael Perkins, Marty Schlining, Terry & Cindy Shenberger, Rick Smith, Wendy & Robb Stahl, Denise & Robert Stemler, Alan & Carol Tucker, Tom & Diana Wunk, Sergio & Joy Zarbin.**

Please send your \$20.00 cheque payable to:
MGs of Baltimore, Ltd. Car Club
5237 Glen Arm Rd. East
Glen Arm, MD 21057
Or pay at the monthly club meeting.

The Poplar Hill Christmas Market at Pell Gardens, Chesapeake City, MD was a big hit with those that attended, and the word is we can't wait to do it again next year.

MGOB participated in **The Mayor's 47th Annual Hampden Christmas Parade**. We had 10 cars show up with, believe it or not the majority of them being MG –T Series cars, along with Mr. & Mrs. Clause. Now here's the best part, unbeknownst to the participants until two days later the MGOB contingent won second place from the judges at the review stand on 36th Street hon.

MGOB Annual "After the Holidays" Party will be hosted by Richard & Carole Jefferson on **Saturday, January 4, 2020**, starting at 6:00 p.m. with a **snow date of January 11**. Bring a dish. The Club will provide drinks and assorted munchies. Where:

2520 Overlook Ct.
New Freedom, PA 17349
443-605-8197
mgobjefferson@yahoo.com

Here's what the hosts has to say about the party:

MGOB After Christmas Holidays Party

You're invited to our annual after Christmas Holidays Party on January 4th. We will all be getting together to celebrate the MGOB tradition of seeing how much great food we can put on the table, telling old MGOB tales and planning for the next top-down season. MGOB will be providing the main courses including a Honey Baked Ham, Roast Turkey and Smoked Pork Roast as well as all the drinks.

We ask that each member bring a dish to share with everyone to complete the feast. So, we're looking for appetizers, salads, side dishes and of course desserts.

Extra Fun: We ask that each guest bring a wrapped unmarked white elephant gift. What we're looking for here is something that when you get it as a gift you say; "what the heck is this and who brought it". There should be absolutely no monetary worth to these items, but riches in smiles and laughter. Suggestions include any broken tool from Harbor Freight or how about a money clip containing expired Kohl's cash.

The 23rd Annual Chilly Run will be held on **Sunday, February 9th, 2020** at Steve & Tina Sharpe's house **with a snow date** of Sunday February 16th starting at 2:00 p.m. bring your favorite chili or other dish to enter. The club will provide drinks. Please R.V.S.P. and let them know what you are bringing. Where:

1291 Cambria Road
Westminster, MD 21157
steveesharpe@gmail.com
410-370-0244

We have been approached by the Monumental Brewing Company about participating in a British Invasion Festivities event in the Spring. They are offering us discounted beer to bring our cars. Once I have more info about the event, I'll share it with you.

Finally, MG 2020 the 29th Annual North American MGB Register Convention event website is open for registration. Go to <https://mg2020.regfox.com/mg2020-calgary> Don't miss out on this Mega MG event June 28th – July 1st – Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Safety Fast!

Richard



Parting words from Roger Marshall:

It has been my pleasure to edit/produce the Octagram for many years with one year off while someone else took over the job. I took on this job because I thought maybe it would give me some insight in to the club and how it functions, and it has done that.

I wish we could have used more articles from MGOB members, but they seem hard to come by. I'm not sure why that is but I did notice a lot of clubs have the same problem of getting articles from members. Yes, I read a lot of other newsletters when we set up the EEG, Editors Exchange Group. At one point there were probably 25 or so clubs whose editors became part of that group. The purpose of the group was to allow editors to use articles from other club's newsletters without having to ask permission to use an article. That worked fine for a long time.

I now find myself wanting to give up this publication for personal reasons including age and memory. I have sent email to the members asking if someone would step up and take on the job. It really takes a little time several times during the month, depending on how you approach it.

Note from Editor:

I would like to start off by saying Thank You to Roger for his work on this newsletter. I know he has put in many an hour working on the Octogram for the club. I am pleased to take over the newsletter and hope I do as good of a job as Roger did. I would love to hear from you the members. Richard does get a good number of newsletters from other clubs as well as the MG Driver (publication of NAMGBR). However, there are more publications and articles out there. If you read an article and think "my fellow MG owners would find this interesting", please send it to me and I will add it to the newsletter. I hope you find this issue informative and entertaining. Safety Fast! Kathy Liddick

The 2019 Mayor's Parade

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's Mayor's Parade in Hampden HON! We had an excellent showing of MGs at the event. Even Santa drove his MG for the event which captured the hearts of kids young and old.

For the first time since we have been participating in this parade, we won Second Place. We would have won First Place if Glenn's car had not decided to die before the parade started. Just kidding Glenn.

Santa had some visitors before the Parade started



Santa checking his "sleigh" before taking off





MG News • Sir Michael Edwards 1930~2019
From Practical Classics magazine and The Guardian newspaper
As printed in the MG Driver November/December 2019 issue

Sir Michael Edwards has died, aged 88. Edwards was made Chairman of British Leyland in 1977 – heading up Austin, Morris, Rover, Jaguar and Triumph until 1982. His chairmanship of British Leyland involved well-documented battles against trade union dominance in British industry at the time.

Here's a fascinating insight into Sir Michael's somewhat controversial time at BL in an excerpt from the brilliant AROnline page:

'When Margaret Thatcher swept into power in 1979, she made it clear to Edwards that she was extra-keen to return BL to the private sector as soon as possible. Her feeling was that the government should no longer continue to fund the car company: it had already cost the taxpayer £2bn to this point in time and the economy could not realistically continue to fund the company at such a rate. Declassified documents that emerged in 2013 reveal just how close the company came to closure at the end of 1979 – with the Honda deal and Sir Michael Edwards' future plans ensuring the government chose to keep the company open, despite front bench opposition.

Edwards possessed enough acumen to convince Thatcher that, if privatization was the ultimate goal, then BL should not be carved-up piecemeal as he figured that without MG, Jaguar, and Rover, the high image parts of the company, there would be the 'Unsaleable rump' of Austin-Morris, as he called it, left over.'

Famously, he arrived at BL with a tiny team that included both his communications director from Chloride, John Mackay, and a psychologist who was to put BL top management through his tests. Communication and the empowerment of management were Edwards' priorities.

When he started at BL in November 1977 workers at the Liverpool Speke factory were coming out on strike, in the latest of a series of disputes that were breaking out two or three times a day. Funds were running out. By February, Edwards, never short of personal courage, was putting a recovery plan that would involve more than 12,000 redundancies to a meeting of 700 BL union representatives.

Later that year Edwards closed Speke – supposedly the first of the group's factories to be shut in Britain in 10 years. It set a pattern. Rapid assessment; a clear and public challenge to the unions to accept the plans or the company would founder;

communication over the heads of the unions to workers, using leafleting and the media; and a rationing of the media's access to Edwards to allow only a brief clear message to be delivered – often through the open window of his car as he halted momentarily on a car-park ramp. It was a powerful and early demonstration of the art of spin.

Edwards never had any doubt he was playing on the national stage. “Every minor dispute is carried out in full public glare; BL is the anvil on which every one of society's ills is beaten out.”

In parallel, Edwards applied his Chloride principles to management – moving swiftly to halve the size of the board, decentralize, and return power to line management. He wrote to managers: “Act firmly and you will be backed. Repercussions? Yes of course there will be, but I give you my word you will not be let down.”

Individual brand loyalties were resurrected – “large/specialist vehicle operations” became Jaguar once again. Edwards was worried by the lack of new models and amazed at the absence of profit and loss figures on individual marques. He refused to back existing plans for BL's crucial new small car. Instead, he upgraded the specification, fought for funds for new plant at Longbridge, near Birmingham, and deliberately sacked the formidable Derek “Red Robbo” Robinson, the most powerful convener, a year before the car was due so that its production would not be disrupted. It was a close-run thing, but with only lukewarm backing from some national union officials, Robinson failed to find support from his members.

It was a turning point; the Metro was launched in 1980 to acclaim and without disruption. And in a key strategic move, Edwards started a collaboration with Honda to get new medium-sized car models quickly. He even discussed a takeover of BL by General Motors, and merger with Vauxhall, but management there failed to convince their American bosses.

In five years, Edwards halved the workforce; factories closed included the MG plant, where cars were losing nearly £1,000 apiece. With investment and redundancy costs, the company never made a profit.

In the end it exasperated Thatcher, who had become prime minister in 1979. For her, Edwards was no longer the hero but the man who endlessly asked for more money and resisted her urgings to sell off parts of the company. He left at the end of his contract in 1982, making it clear that it was time for other challenges, and he wanted to earn some proper money.

His own assessment was that nobody had expected him to save the whole company. “If you analyze the chunks of what I took on, a lot is profitable and not linked with BL in people's minds today. I saw this as 40 different businesses and the more that could be saved the better.” The survival of Jaguar, Land Rover and the new Mini under different ownership were to bear him out, but the decline of the mass car business, which he had slowed, was inexorable. For the time being, Edwards had saved BL.

He had also ignited a sea change in British management, providing managers, outside BL too, with a long-lost confidence that they could successfully take initiatives and carry workforces with them. It could easily lurch into macho management, but overall it led to a revival in British business.

Edwards' subsequent business career was lucrative but less obviously successful as he became the "nearly man" in a number of high profile if short-lived interventions. He was briefly the chairman of Mercury, an unsuccessful fixed-line phone company, and in 1984 became chairman of the British-owned computer company ICL. which was promptly taken over by the telecom company STC.

He turned instead to the reorganization of another failing motor industry group, the Tyre company Dunlop, only for it to be snapped up by BTR. Next stop was back to his South African roots with Minorco (1984-93), a mining company that narrowly failed to take over Consolidated Goldfields in a bitter and high-profile battle.

Subsequently, Edwards continued with other business interests in the UK and South Africa while maintaining his sporting enthusiasms, particularly squash, as president of the Squash Rackets Association (1991-95). He was knighted in 1979.

Skinner Union Carburetors work great if they're tuned properly. No matter how pretty and shiny they are...tuning is the key.



Balancing Carbs with an Air Flow Meter

Are you looking for something for the holiday wish list? You might want to consider the newer style air 'Synchro meter' flow meter for balancing the SU carbs. It has a numbered scale for direct reading of the air flow. Best of all, it's fun, fast and easy to use. *[Photo to the left is a comparison of the Synchro meter to the Uni-Syn.]*



There are different approaches for synchronizing SU carbs. My MG Midget Driver's Handbook suggests using a short length of rubber tubing. As stated, "Correct synchronization can be checked by listening at each carburetor air intake in turn through a length of rubber tube and noticing if the noise produced by the incoming air is the same in both." Good luck with that! I wasn't able to hear much difference when I first tried this on my MG Midget sometime in the 1980s. I can't imagine that my hearing has improved. It wasn't long before I purchased a Uni-Syn with the side bubble meter. The Uni-Syn has a flat, rubber gasket that is placed in front of the throat of the carb. Positioning it can be tricky. If you do not have it positioned just right over the SU carb, you will get false readings. By comparison, the Synchrometer has a cone shaped fitting that fits directly into the throat of SU carb. The rubber cone seals completely, insuring that all the flow is through the meter. Not only that, but for those that are interested you get a reading of the flow rate in kg/h! The kilogram per hour seems like unusual units for volumes of air. However, it does provide easy to read numbers on the 0-30 scale of the flow meter. Since we think in English units, 1 kg/h is equal to about 2 cubic feet per minute (CFM). A perfect English version would have a scale from 0-15 in CFM.

I found the Synchrometer to be particularly convenient for use with my K&N filters. After removal of the filter with the single center screw, the Synchrometer can be placed directly on the SU without removal of the air filter base plate. This is something that I could not accomplish with the older Uni-Syn device.

ARTICLE BY BRUCE HAMPER — THE ST. LOUIS MGMTRO GAZETTE

Ethanol Update

*Article by: Allan Lawrence
Printed in Classical Gas November/December 2019 Issue*

The website <http://www.pure-gas.org>, discovered by Les Garbutt, lists gas stations in Canada and the US that sell ethanol-free gas.

This website seems to comply with my general comments in a previous article and is definitely handy for members planning a long trip. As I wrote before, Ethanol is an alcohol which attracts water. It is like mixing scotch and water – it cannot be separated once mixed. The biggest issue for us collectors is the scouring effect inside the fuel tank and fuel system. It can lift rust and block filters. Most of us have cleaned or replaced most of our fuel system at some time, so if you have, I think you've little to worry about. It also dries out most elastomers (rubber seals) but our old cars have little of this to be concerned about.

Here in BC, all the “majors” do not blend ethanol with their premium gas. Chevron, Petro Canada, Esso and Shell. Initially it was a BC legislated requirement but is now federal. I would assume it is the same across Canada as this has been a significant cost to absorb and the oil companies do not spend money unnecessarily. It cost millions of dollars to comply, building new facilities, operations and maintenance.

Ethanol burns cleaner than gasoline and this is the reason for the legislation. The overall mandate is 5% blending and has not changed as far as I know. Failure to meet this minimum results in heavy fines. When our engineering office designed and built these facilities our blending design parameters were to allow up to 10% in the equipment specifications. Regular gas is generally over dosed – say 7%’ish to make up the overall average. This is done for a few reasons.

More remote areas may not have blending facilities. Mid-grade is actually a blend of regular and premium so 7% may end up more like 3 or 4%. Regular outsells premium by a very large margin. The overall balance must hit the 5% minimum. This blending is done at the distribution terminals where the delivery trucks are loaded and not at the gas stations.

In BC we only have two refineries – Vancouver and Prince George - everything else comes down the pipeline, by rail or truck from Alberta (including the crude feed for Parkland refinery in Burnaby). A good fuel for us in Vancouver and the Fraser Valley is Chevron (from Parkland refinery). Biodiesel is an even more complicated issue!

My advice this time of year – if you are going to lay up your car in the winter either have your tank as low as possible or full to avoid damp air space. Gasoline has a shelf life of about 3 months, but I have never had a problem going through the winter. This is good practice regardless of gasoline grade.

The Brown and Cream

*Poem provided by: Mike Price, Ottawa MG Club
Printed in Classical Gas November/December 2019 Issue*

Bill Morris was the one who gave
Cecil Kimber his big start
He improved the Morris Cowley
and to all displayed his art

He raked the screen
And polished ports
And springs and steering lowered to
Bullnose gave a sexy look with
Scoops from boats he borrowed

The mg super sports he made
Raworth and 14/40
Old Number One could do a ton
V-Front Saloon was nice and sporty

But Cecil felt that he should make a
chassis of his own
So, 18/80 came along
And Midget soon was born

Then followed half the alphabet
With Magnas and Magnettes
'Till Leonard Lord became the boss
And chopped the line to bits

The Ta then became the car
Soon followed by TB
When war was done
And peace was won
It returned as the TC

TD, TF and MGA
Were followed by the B
And little Midget based on Sprite
as well as MGC

The B V8
Arrived too late
In midst of petrol crisis
A victim of our foreign wars
Which would someday bring us ISIS

But there was an earlier version
Known as the Morris Isis
Whose motor powered 18/80
Instead of worldwide crisis

What about saloons you say?
Indeed there were a few
VA, SA and WA
Magnettes and Magnas too

Old Cecil loved to mix and match
The choice was quite confusing
Then Leonard swung his great big axe
For money they were losing

As was the case
When British Leyland
Did hatchet our poor B
TR7 was the car they choose
To everlasting infamy

But they could not
Erase MG
It simply will not die
Sir Michael did not reckon with
The likes of you and I

Then came along the MGF
Though distant from our shores
And Rovers then became MG's
So the legend still endures

Now china makes our sacred marque
It keeps afloat
Like noah's ark

"And why is this?"
I hear you ask
the reason is quite plain
The MG is a car – that's true
But what's behind the name?

A spirit and a love of cars
That require participation
Remember this when you breakdown
You're in the MG nation.

The Saga of My 1930 MG M-Type Restoration

Article by: Paul Summer
Printed in the St. Louis MG Metro Gazette

The saga of my 1930 MG M-Type began when I noticed that a M-Type was being auctioned on the Bring a Trailer (BaT) website, which I look at periodically for fun. The car “looked great”; spending most of its life in the UK and sold to its current owner in British Columbia, Canada just 5 years ago. What attracted me to the car was its relative rarity, with production only between 1929-1932, only 3,235 were built and having an amazing 27 BHP. (WOW!!).

When I spoke to the owner, prior to bidding, he indicated that the car had been garaged since purchase and all the car's features were working properly. The owner also had the car's lifelong history, including all past owners and registrations in the UK. This info always adds value when purchasing a vintage auto. However, along with many pictures sent to me, the owner also sent several videos of the car. One of those videos showed that the car was smoking from the tailpipe more than normal. When I queried the owner, he indicated that his mechanic had suggested that the car might need a carburetor adjustment and/or possibly new piston rings.



I had purchased three of my cars after finding them on internet sites, but never without traveling to first inspect them prior to purchase (in Los Angeles for the MGA, South Carolina for my Model A and Des Moines for my TC) but had never purchased a car on the internet without a visual inspection. In this case, the only option I had was to bid or no-bid, because the auction was occurring the next day.... so, I took the chance and bid.

When I received the car, I was pleased with the exterior and cabin quality. However, when I started the engine, I'm sure I set off all the smoke detectors in all the houses in my subdivision. According to Bob Horzmann, when I drove the car to the GOF event, I probably also reduced the air quality of half of Chesterfield.

I decided to take the car to the guys at Brooklands Restoration to assess the problem. They had experience with pre-war British cars. Well.... Needless to say, there were several issues with the engine, which required a total rebuild.

Most of the parts had to be ordered from England and the block required a complete machine shop restoration.

Finally, the parts are all in and the block is back in the shop. The guys at Brooklands are now starting reassembly.

So, the moral of this story is: UNLESS YOU HAVE VERY DEEP POCKETS, YOU ARE TAKING A BIG CHANCE PURCHASING A VINTAGE CAR WITHOUT A HANDS-ON INSPECTION BY A QUALIFIED PERSON. YOU MIGHT GET LUCKY AND PURCHASE A WINNER...BUT ODDS ARE AGAINST YOU.

Midget Mumbling

By Steve Olson

Published in the Kansas City MG Post Volume 38, Issue 12

Back when our MGs were designed, people didn't try to eat and drink while they drove. So, there were no cup holders. There is just no place to put your cold beverage where it will be available and where it won't spill. I have seen many creative answers for MGBs, but none of them adapt easily to a Midget. So, years ago, I created a crude center arm rest and put a cup holder on the end. The unit isn't attached to the car and it can be flipped around to put the cup holder on the front or the rear. The one I made is not pretty, but it sure is nice to have a place to rest your arm on long drives. But the cup holder is not ideal. When it is at the rear, the drink is nearly impossible to reach while driving. And when it is at the front, anything more than a can sticks up too high and gets in the way of reaching for the shifter. And if you spill your Big Gulp, you will be ankle deep in diet soda. For years, I have used this carefully and so far, have not had any major disasters. But I always wanted something better. And now I think I have created it.

Based on my design of the GPS holder I made a while back, I created a cup holder that hangs over the top of the dash that doesn't attach permanently or require any cutting, drilling, or welding. I shaped some metal sheet to slip into the groove between the dash pad and the metal dash underneath. I think it should hold even the weight of a large beverage easily. And it cost very little and was simple to make. I assume the same basic idea can be adapted to other British cars.

I needed some metal sheet, so I bought an 8" x 18" .025 aluminum sheet at the hardware store for about \$10. This would easily make three or four beverage holders. Using tin snips, I cut a piece about 3" x 12" and then bent it over at a 90° using just a vice and my fingers. That will hook under the dash pad. Then I gently bent the strip over the top of the dash, so it conformed to the curve. On my car, the top of the dash extends beyond the rest of the dash, so I bent the bottom of the downward hanging metal back to rest against the lower dash and turned up another 90° to make a pad to rest against the dash. Next, I took an old plastic cup holder made to hang over a car's window sill. These are available at dollar stores if you don't already have one laying around like I did. I cut off the hook part. Then I drilled a couple holes in the plastic and on through the aluminum and attached with a couple pop rivets. You could use nuts and bolts if you don't have a pop riveter. A quick spray of satin black paint made it all look better. As a final touch, I put a dab of black silicone goo on the undersides that will sit on the dash just to cushion the fit a bit. Once that dried, I was ready to travel in style.

I could have done a neater job and perhaps tapered the shape of the metal or done a nicer job of painting. But I can always make another if this one works like I think it will. I don't plan to patent this invention, so feel free to make your own copy. Except for waiting for the paint to dry, this only took me half an hour to make.





My Love Affair

Article and images provided by Michael Perkins

Published in the MG Driver November/December 2019

It was a warm October day in Kingston, Massachusetts, back in 1987. A normal day like any other starting with a little cool crisp air warming up to t-shirt weather. Leaves starting to turn for fall. I was a sophomore in high school dreaming of Chevelles and Mustangs. I had over the summer looked at a 1967 Firebird that was really nice with nothing crazy done to it. The owner was not interested in selling it. My father came home and asked if I wanted to go for a ride with him. We drove south down Route 3A in Plymouth passing main downtown area and just before Plymouth Plantation when he stopped turned around and headed north.

He said, "Hey! Well look at that!" and there was this small hatchback sports car between some trees on the right side of the road. At first glance it looked classic with wire wheels and chrome bumpers. I was interested, but not drooling all over the interior of our car. He pulled over and told me it reminded him of the 1965 Volkswagen beetle convertible he had in high school. Nothing more was said about that black little car.

A few weeks later my dad and mom went out to run errands in her car. Her car pulls in the driveway with just her in it? Ok so where is my dad? Then that same little black car turns the corner of our street and drives right into the driveway with my dad sitting behind the wheel. There it was my first car. It was titled as a 1969 MGB/GT. I had no idea what it really was or the story that will span to this present day. The accidents, seeding tickets, obsession, heart breaks, and reunion.

The car came with paperwork, a manual, some loose parts, and the "infamous" Victoria British catalog and that was it. The owners had installed some funky yellow/orange fog lights. The steering wheel was tiny and there was a wood shift knob on the shift lever that must have been 3-inches tall. Interior was clean and the paint on the exterior was shiny. It was missing one half of the rear bumper. Hey, no problem we can find one to finish the exterior. My neighbor had some old license plates from the UK when he was stationed there in the 70's and had seen the MG and gave me one of the plates to add on the front.

I started off excited and told all my friends and kids at school. Some were not convinced but when my father drove by my school bus stop in the car on his way to work that changed everything. Word spread that I will have a car when I get my license. It was fun washing, waxing, covering the car up, and just looking everything over from bumper to bumper. With the parts catalog in hand, I looked things over and well it turned out my car was a mutt. It had the 1973-74 grille with the surround from a 1970-72 MGB. The rear hatch had some international flag bar on it. I thought it was some special edition. The rear bumper was from a 1970 split bumper model. The interior had the right front seats, but the rest was a mess. The center console was from a 1972-74 MGB. The rear seat was from an earlier car and it was dyed to cover the white piping. The rear-view mirror was also from a newer car. Under the bonnet was a 1.8-liter engine that had a side draft weber and tubular header. Some big red twin air horns and spin on oil filter.

The boot had an original Pirelli tire on a painted wire wheel and a hammer for the eared knock off. On the odometer was approximately 26,XXX miles and after looking the car over for being 18 years old and not driven much but had a rough time with people changing things out.

I went to driver's education and got my license and while during that time learned to drive my dad's 1985 K-5 Blazer that was a 3-speed manual. I hated it, but eventually got the hang of it. With license in hand starring at the MG I said screw it and walked out with the keys and started it up and went to back out of the driveway and boom.....stalled. I tried again and boom...stalled. Some of the kids in the neighborhood came over and we pushed it out on the road. I got in and started the car up and with the help of a slight decline I managed to drive it in first gear. I turned around and went to the two cul-de-sacs at the end of the street and practiced starting and stopping. Wow it was fun, but I had three more gears. I then drove past my house and down to the main road at the end of the street. I pulled out and drove off! I was gone for two hours and filled it up with gas for the first time. I loved paying only \$.78 a gallon. I learned about the overdrive that was in the car with the 3rd and 4th gear engagement. It was my favorite function!

A few weeks later I knew a childhood friend from third grade on William "Bill" McElliott had a red MGB in his driveway, so I went to visit him. I pulled in his driveway and we knew who the other was. We looked each other's cars over and he had more experience than me and he pointed out some stuff I had noticed, but that international flag bar did me in. I said well it's a special edition and he smiled and said, "Yeah, ahhh, no." He said in 1967 MG had a special edition and also in 1980 with a limited edition in the US. Man, I felt like an ass. He had a nice red with black stripes 1972 MGB. Had the dark navy interior. When he opened the bonnet there was a down draft weber and the engine bay was harvest gold. Like numerous others his went through a color change. We talked for hours and that became a long friendship.

The car got the right radio console, ditched the arm rest, put a stock shift lever in and removed the icky flag bar. I decided to visit Bill one day during the summer of 1988 and as I was pulling to his driveway a 1978 Bonneville Parisian hit the car in the passenger door area and my head hit the glass on the driver's side while missing a huge oak tree. My first accident and at my friend's house whom his father is a personal injury lawyer. The police came and ask questions. The driver said I didn't have my directional on and the policemen went into the car and turned the ignition and the right blinker was on still plus he put his foot on the brake pedal and the rear brake lights still lit up. Yeah, the guy wasn't paying attention! The insurance claim was for \$5,000 in damage. During the winter of 1988 and 1989 we went and bought fenders, rear quarters, and rockers: inner, outer, castle, jack supports, floors, chrome moldings, and other trim bits. While the car was being repaired, I went to Anderson's junk yard in Kingston and bought a set of SU carbs, 1969 steering wheel, oil cooler hoses, misc. interior bits for about \$40. The yard had about 30 MGB/GTs throughout in various states from a very, very early pull hand Iris Blue MGB. Over the next 10 years they were a great source for parts!

In the spring of 1989, the MG was finished still in black with all new metal. I drove the car to and from school. All over the south shore of Massachusetts. Even up to Maine and upstate New York a few times. I attended my first car show with Bill in his red MGB. I ended up with a trophy for 2nd place in class MGB/GT. There we met Todd Kishbach another MG owner. Between the two of them it was car and project after another!

My senior year of High School was fun in that MG. I used it to run a neighbor of mine to and from school and football and track practices with me. I picked up and dropped off my prom date for the senior prom. I got my first speeding ticket with a schoolmate walking on the side of the road watching. It was Officer Griffiths. It was \$75 that cost me a few weeks of cutting grass. At this point I had the right grille and the other half of the split bumper. The carpet was replaced with a cheap kit but did the job. New tires and we changed the cylinder head and carbs to SUs. The header was removed, and a stock manifold installed. The front kingpins were rebuilt and new brakes all around. The car was really dependable, and all the weird bugs were gone!

After graduation I drove everywhere! First long road trip was Carlisle Import Car Show in Pennsylvania getting 30mpg! I had my first kiss and more in that car. It was my freedom to taste life with no worries! I drove the car to Massasoit Community College until I wanted to replace the engine with a rebuilt one during the winter of 1991. The reason was during a midnight cruise down Main Street in Plymouth a spring from the clutch disc came out and was bouncing around in the bell housing and made such a horrendous sound. I figured it was a clutch related problem. The engine was installed, and I was back to commuting to college.

Over the next few years, I drove the car as a daily driver. Trips to Bangor, Maine, and Upstate New York were regular runs. At one point I had an issue with the headlight switch. While I was fixing some wires, I noticed some blue paint under the dash. There it was all over under the dash from door to door. It was originally Mineral Blue. I figured during the next tear down I would go back to the original color. In 1992 that happened when some bubbling was showing up on the door and rear quarter. A complete tear down to a roller was performed.

New door skins and front valance was procured. I did all the body work and paint prep. The auto body shop Pristine Auto in Plympton did some work on a Triumph TR7 a year earlier for my brother's first car which lasted less than 50 miles and was totaled! They mixed up the paint and let me with help spray it. The car with four layers of Mineral Blue and five layers of clear coat. Once it was cured, I started with 600, 1000, and finally 2200 wet sand paper. It was about a full week of sanding and about two hours of buffing. I had some issues, but small in detail.

Once the paint was complete, I had a great neighbor that let me keep the car inside and reassemble it during the winter. I bought NOS body moldings, windshield trim, door handles, badges, rear and front marker lights, directionals, bumpers, side marker reflectors, and a rare AMCO center console. The engine was detailed, and the rear axle rebuilt. The leaf springs were modified out of two sets. A set of new vinyl seat covers from England were the final perfect touch! After three months the car was completed for my 21st birthday which is when my father signed it over to me. I drove the car to East Grand Lake in Maine. The overdrive gave me a little bit of a problem disengaging in 3rd so it had to come out for a rebuild.

Now we all have our moments in life that one small problem creates a decision we all regret! Mine was a distributor failing while on my way to work in January of 1994. I was upset and couldn't figure out what was wrong. After two restorations and thousands and thousands spent, I gave up. In May of 1994 a local parts dealer bought the car and I watched it get trailered off. I was left with a rare Astral Blue automatic 1978 Triumph TR8 for the next project.

Over the next 10 years I asked about what happened to the MGB/ GT. The dealer traded it for a 1951 Land Rover Series I and the new owner put it into his warehouse. That's all I knew. No more details but the car was some place safe and not sitting outside rotting or crashed! It was in 2007 that I was going through the auctions on eBay and I ran across a listing for a 1969 MGB/GT. It looked like my old car and the VIN was listed and there she was in Brooks, Maine! I contacted the seller and they were hesitant on any direct communications and wanted to sell the car through the auction. When the auction was over, I made another attempt to buy the car, but never heard back. The feeling of regret kicked in again the car slipped away!

On April 13, 2019, I found the printed-out eBay auction and using the seller ID decided to find the car. In about two hours it turned out the ID was a name. When I searched the name an email address came up which was already in my contacts for my email. There was also a phone number. I called the number after sending an email about a 1969 MGB/GT that was for sale on eBay in 2007. The phone was answered by a representative of the contact I had. It turned out that the email I had was correct and for the owner of the car. She passed the info on to the car's owner. Within a half hour I got a reply saying yes, they still have the MG. I asked if it was for sale and included my cell phone number. Another half hour went by and my phone rang with a number from Maine. I answered and it was the owner of the MG. He asked how I found him and why I was asking about the MG? I explained I was looking for a particular 1969 MGB/ GT. He then asked why this one and not just any other. I told him the VIN and said that it was the first car I ever owned. He told me to hold on for a few minutes and came back on and asked my name and where I used to live. I told him and then I rattled off the VIN out of memory. He said that yes, it is the car. He also had the title that was never turned in because he was a dealer and used his dealer tags to drive the car. Technically, since he never turned in the title per Massachusetts, I never sold the car and has owned it since 1993!

Weeks went by and finally we negotiated a price. It was fair and since I knew the car inside and out, I had no issues with its condition. So, I was told that he got the car from the individual that traded the Land Rover to my parts dealer friend. He then sold it to the current owner in a package deal. The current owner liked the car and kept it for himself driving it to 60,000 miles. (When I sold it, the odometer was only 58,600 miles.) I made arrangement to have the car shipped to Ellicott City in Maryland. On Sunday May 19, 2019, twenty-five years later to the month I now had the first car I ever owned.

My two daughters, Olivia, 14, and Keira, 11, love the car and Keira wants to drive it to High School! I was extremely happy when she was showing such enthusiasm! I told her we will be working on the car and I will teach her everything I know. I managed to take a real thorough look and noticed some things that were changed. The 60-spoke wire wheels were replaced by 72-spoke painted wire wheels with new Michelin XZX tires back in 1995. Unfortunately, the tires are dry rot. The front seats and back seat were replaced by really nice earlier model leather seats with light blue piping. A falcon stainless steel exhaust was installed. A new distributor and some miscellaneous hoses. I personally wish the 1969-only front and rear seats were left in place due to the uniqueness of the car. My plans are to change all the fluids, new tires, carpet, and exterior mirrors and hit the road!

A week later after Memorial weekend my wife informed me that she wanted a divorce. We agreed and part of the settlement was I will get my Chevy Pickup Truck and the 1969 MGB GT. Fate stepped in again to keep me from losing the car a second time. I

did lose one thing that hurt more than the regret of selling it the first time and it was that I will not be able to share as much of the experience of working on the car with my youngest daughter as I promised her. I had the car picked up and brought to a friend's shop in Jarrettsville about 40 minutes away. I can work on it anytime and I plan on having it on the road by September.

Photos of Mike Perkins 69 MGBGT



The Curse of Being Born Middle Class

Article by Bob Shaw, Her Majesty's Royal Nebraska Patrol

The Barrett-Jackson Auto Auctions are not good for my sense of wellbeing. I know that this is not how one would begin a message of joy of the hobby, and that I am not expressing a positive message of satisfaction in my lot in life. I readily admit that I enjoy watching wonderful exotic automobiles being paraded across the stage in front of many eager bidders. There is no denying the drama in a bidding war between two heavy hitters going after the same rare piece of automobilia. Ego meets alcohol, cubic dollars exchange hands, and a historic automobile made of unobtainium finds a new home. So, why my gloomy attitude?

I did not have the good fortune to be born the scion of a wonderful old established family with great wealth. My work involved more than managing a family trust, or some similar occupation I understand one of great wealth would pursue. Additionally, I worked in education, a profession that is high in service and personal satisfaction, although not particularly lucrative. I am not destined to have that beautiful C-Type or D-Type Jaguar come into my possession. This is my lot in life.

However, I was raised on a farm in South Central Nebraska. While not born to great wealth, I did learn to work with things. I also learned the value of a good craftsman, and understanding that a good mechanic or carpenter were of equal importance with a good medical doctor or dentist in keeping a farming operation healthy and functioning. One cannot plant a crop without a good tractor that is running well, just as a farmer who is ill cannot run that tractor. If the operation is to be successful, all parts must be kept in good working order.

Even more important, on a farm one learns to do much work for themselves. Frequently, when I was growing up and I wanted something, Dad would point to the ship and say, "Go build yourself one."

It was good advice then, and it is good advice now. If I cannot afford an exotic, why not build what I can afford? I am aware one can obtain a kit car that looks like a Jaguar C or D-type, or like any Cobra one can name. There are assemble it yourself Ford GT40 kits as well. But a kit is not really what I wanted.

However, an early MGB Works Race and Rally car was something to be reckoned with. While not the fastest car in the race, they were quite durable. So, in long races they continued on while other makes – with bigger names and more speed – succumbed to the grueling conditions that led to their failure. Attrition was a real part of their success or failure. In the tradition of the tortoise and the hare, the MGB frequently prevailed over faster competition. Barrett-Jackson notwithstanding, I would build my own.

The raw material, a 1963 MGB was in my possession. It had the required factory hard top. But it came with a Datsun engine and transmission. This is no matter, as I found a 5-main engine (stronger, thus preferred to my way of thinking) and a full synchro overdrive MGB transmission, which is preferred for the same reason as the engine. With a bit of boring, a healthy cam, larger carburetors, and a flow job on the head, the MGB engine is a healthy and durable performer. Dad's advice still stands – if I want it, there is the shop – go build it.

Thanks, Dad.

2020 Convention Information

Courtesy of the Vancouver Classical Gas Newsletter

GOF WEST JUNE 29 - JULY 3

The 48th Annual GoF West will take place on the shoulders of Mount Hood in Oregon, hosted by the Club T-MG of Portland. GoF (Gatherings of the Faithful) are open to all MG models of any year, not just T-Series and other early MGs. The 2020 event will feature a car show, a funkhana, a gimmick rally, technical sessions, an auction and non-car activities such as a croquet tournament and lawn bowling. The host hotel is the Mt. Hood Oregon Resort in Welches. Registration is now open.

See: <https://gofwest.org/gof-west-2020>

CLUB - T



NAMGAR
North American MGA Register

NAMGAR GT-45

The North American MGA Register's "Get Together" (GT) for 2020 will be held in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The host Club is the MG Car Club – Rocky Mountain Centre, and the event takes place from June 1st to June 5th. Event Chairman, Jim Goodwin, indicates that they have a full program of events, including drives and tech sessions.

The host hotel is the Marriott in Colorado Springs, which has just completed a US\$15 million re-vamp. The GT-45 Registration Form will be available around the end of November, and participants must register for the event before booking a hotel room.

The highlight of the drives will be an opportunity to drive to 14,000 feet at the top of Pikes Peak, the base of which is about 10 miles from the host hotel. This will be a challenge for MGs, since at this altitude the air is very thin, and the power loss will be about 25%.

MGA drivers will also be able to drive onto the Royal Gorge Bridge in Cañon City for a possible mass photograph and visit the US Air Force Academy.

There will be a chuck wagon western style dinner and show at the Flying W Ranch, while the GT banquet will be at the Marriott Hotel. The car show will also be held in the grounds of the hotel.





MG 2020 Update

By: Andy Hardie

Published in the MG Driver November/December 2019 Issue

By the time you read this, the Great White North may well be living up to its name, though we up here, hope not. The AGM will also be in the books, so I hope some of you took the opportunity to come check things out ahead of the summer convention, planning for which is well under way.

The **Deerfoot Inn and Casino** will be the host hotel for the event. As with conventions of the recent past, the room block will only be available to those who are registered for the convention, so don't expect to be able to book your rooms just yet. The organizing committee is working hard to have the 2020 convention web site up and running by the coming holiday season, so that you can register for the event and book your rooms. The hotel offers ample parking for large rigs, should you be planning to trailer to Calgary.

The Calgary MG Car Club, with the help of NAMGBR execs, and in particular Tony Burgess, are crafting a convention which will include elements familiar to regular attendees, along with events and activities showcasing the unique environment in which it will be held. Regular convention elements planned, include:

John Twist Rolling Tech Session, Rocker Cover Races, Inside Tech Sessions, and Car Show & Banquet.

The committee is working on several self-guided drives in the stunning **Rocky Mountain Foothills** of Western Alberta only minutes from the hotel and we are planning for a limited number of guided drives to specific sites/destinations, which will require registration and may include a fee to participate. Non-automotive themed activities are also planned, but I don't want to reveal too much at this point. For now, know that they will be unique, and exciting (the ladies will love them, and some of the men may also be tempted to buy in.)

The City of Calgary is a vibrant city, recently voted the 5th most livable city IN THE WORLD, and offers over 500 MILES of paved walking/cycling pathways, museums, art galleries, a world class zoo (currently home to visiting Chinese Pandas), and the unique "Plus 15" (+15) network (covered pedestrian bridges) which interconnect over 80 buildings in the downtown core. There is great shopping, food and entertainment in the core, and regardless of weather, these +15's give you the option of remaining inside if you choose. The pedestrianized 8th Avenue downtown, and the wonderful **"River Walk"** along the Bow River in the core, offer experiences seldom found in a major city. We are planning to offer opportunities to explore the core with the benefit of a guide, but if you wish to venture out alone, there are various tours offered by independent vendors.

Heritage Park, a short drive from the hotel, showcases early Alberta history in a village of turn of the century buildings, and offers early settler "urban" experiences including an operating steam train and sternwheeler, so there is lots to keep you busy, and entertained without leaving town.

Banff, and our Mountain National Parks are tantalizingly close to Calgary though, and the committee is working to include guided bus tours from the hotel to these world class destinations on Monday and Tuesday of the convention. The best way to enjoy these sights, is in the comfort of a tour bus guided by a knowledgeable driver/tour guide. No navigation or parking hassles to contend with while someone with local knowledge and insights shares the best information available.

All of the details will be fleshed out in the coming months of course, but here's a rough outline of what the four days will look like:

Sunday 6/28 – Registration, welcome reception at Deerfoot Inn

Monday 6/29 – Tech sessions, drives, bus tours, guided walking tour(s) and an evening off site BBQ (or similar)

Tuesday 6/30 – Tech sessions, drives, bus tours, guided walking tour(s) local offsite dining options will be provided in your registration package.

Wednesday 7/1 – Car Show, Rocker Cover Races and Awards Banquet

Thursday – Farewells OOOORRRR... Stay over for Stampede. Typically, Sneak-a-Peek night, Thursday offers free admission to the Stampede Grounds to check out the midway and all the trade/craft displays. The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede is billed as "The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth" and ranks as one of the top rodeos on the calendar in pro rodeo. The Calgary Stampede Parade winds through the downtown core on Friday following our convention. The exhibition and rodeo take place over ten days within the Stampede Grounds east of the downtown core. Check out the Calgary Stampede website for a full run down of what to expect if you are unfamiliar with this event. This event is to the rodeo calendar, what our event is to MG folks, Formula 1, the Indy 500 or NASCAR is to a racing driver.

URL's you might find useful, especially if you plan to arrive early or stay following MG 2020.

<https://deerfootinn.com/>
<https://www.heritagepark.ca/>
<https://www.visitcalgary.com/>
<https://www.calgaryzoo.com/>
WWW.MG2020.ORG

Tools Available for Club Members to Borrow

Contact Randy Kegg

- Engine Stand (2)
- Engine lift with tilt device (2)
- Whitworth wrenches & sockets
- Whitworth thread file
- MGB Kingpin Reamer
- Sandblaster (Suction from a bucket type)
- Rostyle Wheel Paint Mask (MGB)
- Midget King pin reamer
- SU Carb throttle shaft reamer for MG T, A, B carbs
- SU Carb throttle shaft reamer
- Midget carbs
- Torque Wrench Click Type 0-150 ft lbs
- Standard 12" socket set
- Hub Puller
- Compression tester
- Harmonic balancer puller
- Camshaft Degree Wheel with TDC finder.
- Timing light
- Dwell/Tach Meter
- Differential flange removal tool
- Brake line bender - tubing cutter, bubble type flaring tools
- Slide hammer for bushings, bearing caps and axle extraction tool
- Lift-A-Dot Upholstery Punch tool
- SU Carb Synchronizer
- Pickle Fork for Tie Rod Ends
- Mob Clutch Alignment tool
- Front Suspension Toe-In adj tool
- Rear Hub Sockets for MGA and early and late MGB.
- Cylinder Leak Down tester

OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

President	Richard Liddick	410-817-6862	rgl2mgbgt@aol.com
1 st Vice President	Ken Olszewski	410-893-1661	kenmgob@comcast.net
2 nd Vice President	Mike Lutz	410-592-8610	mglutz@comcast.net
Treasurer	Randy Kegg	410-592-3733	randell_kegg@msn.com
Secretary	Tracy Trobridge	410-489-7444	tracy21794@yahoo.com
Newsletter	Kathy Liddick	410-817-6862	themgbabe@comcast.net
Membership	Kathy Liddick	410-817-6862	themgbabe@comcast.net
Rallye Master	Eric Salminen	443-463-3071	mgobrallymaster@gmail.com
MGs on the Rocks	OPEN		
Tool Meister	Randy Kegg	410-592-3733	randell_kegg@msn.com
Web Master	Richard Liddick	410-817-6862	rgl2mgbgt@aol.com
Regalia	Cheryl Reitz	410-336-2584	creitz@dap.com

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Submit any changes to:

Kathy Liddick
5237 Glen Arm Road
Glen Arm, MD 21057
themgbabe@comcast.net

MGs of Baltimore Affiliations

North American MGB Register
North American MGA Register
American MGB Association
MG Car Club UK

DISCLAIMER

The OCTAGRAM is published monthly by the MGs of Baltimore car club. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Club, Club officers, or the newsletter staff. Technical information is believed to be accurate. However, any repairs or mechanical advice is attempted at the readers own risk. The Club, officers, or staff will not be responsible for any misinterpreted or incorrect technical information.

Articles appearing herein may be used by other car clubs or organization in their own newsletters, providing appropriate credit and recognition of the source is given.

CALENDAR

JANUARY 2020

4th After Xmas Party at Jeffersons.

7th MGOB monthly meeting

FEBRUARY

4th MGOB monthly meeting

9th Chili Run at the Sharpes

MARCH

3rd MGOB monthly meeting

APRIL

7th MGOB monthly meeting

26th Britain on the Green, Gunston Hall, Lorton, VA

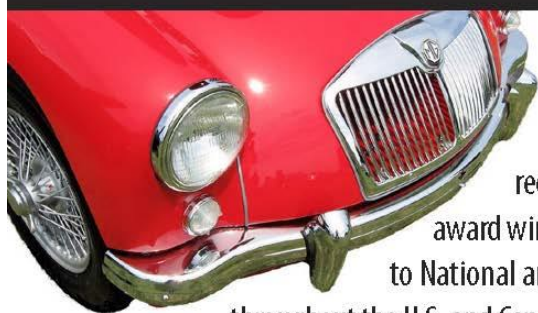
www.britainonthegreen.com

MAY

3rd Get the Dust of Rallye – more information to follow

5th MGOB monthly meeting

Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!



Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Magnette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of *MGA!*, our full-color, award winning magazine, invitations to National and Regional Get-Togethers throughout the U.S. and Canada, plus a knowledge base and support group second to none. All this for just \$37.50 per year (North America), or \$52.50 (International). **Get more information at <http://www.namgar.com>, or contact registrar@namgar.com.**



The only **MEMBER-RUN** organization for MGB, MGC, Midget, 1100/1300 and Post Abingdon Car owners.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$30 (\$45 overseas)

- **Dash plaque • Membership card • Window decal**
- **Six bi-monthly issues of *The MG Driver*, a 68-page informative magazine.**
- **Annual national convention – a four-day MG party!**

North American MGB Register

PO BOX 876 • Downers Grove, IL 60515-0876

Toll-free phone: 800-NAMGBR-1
www.namgbr.org

The MGs of Baltimore, Ltd. Car club was established in 1977. The club represents over 150 members in the Metro Baltimore area. As the name implies, the club centers its activities around the preservation and enjoyment of the cars that bear the classic MG marque. The club is affiliated with the following national organizations: The North American MGA Register, The North American MGB Register, and The American MGB association. Internationally, the club is affiliated with the MG Car Club and The MG Owners Club. The club's activities include sponsorship of the nationally known "MGs on the Rocks" car show, a series of challenging (and FUN) historic car rallies, as well as numerous fun gatherings all through the year.

The club membership meets at 7:30 PM the first Tuesday of every month at Johnny Dee's Lounge. Johnny Dee's is located at 1705 Amuskai Rd; Baltimore, Md, just off of Loch Raven Blvd at Joan Ave. From I-695 Take the Loch Raven Blvd. Exit south. Go about 1 mile, turn left onto Joan Ave. Park in the upper lot. For more info go to their website at www.JohnnyDeesLounge.com Come early and have diner. We start arriving between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m. The meetings are about sharing experiences, taking care of club business and normally include a monthly tech session provided by our MG "technical guru" Randy Kegg. More than just MGs. Many members of MGOB are owners of the other classic British marques and all are welcomed to join the club.