OCTAGRAM

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MGs of BALTIMORE MD

February 2021 www.mgsofbaltimore.org

From: El Presidente

Well, I've signed up for a Covid-19 shot when they available for people in my age group (most of us) which should be soon for those of us in Baltimore County. The Baltimore County Health Dept. has a notification list at www.baltimorecountymd.gov/vaccineregistry Hopefully, we will have widespread vaccinations by May, and we can start getting back to a semi-normal car show season before too long.

Speaking about events, Eric Salminen, MGOB's Rallye Master has started work on The 32nd Annual "Get the Dust Off" Rallye which is set for Sunday, May 2nd, 2021. Please see the flier for more information.

We have once again been approached to participate in the Monumental Brewing Company's "British Invasion Festival" on Sunday, May 23rd, 2021 from Noon until 4 p.m. at their brewery/pub located at 1 N. Haven St. Baltimore, MD 21224. If you remember this event was originally scheduled for last year, but like so many things it was cancelled due to Covid-19. I am waiting for more info, but if it's like last year's plan there will be a car show with prizes for the top three cars, live British Invasion music, food is available next door. Checkout their website at http://www.monumentcitybrewing.com/ I hope to have a promotional poster and additional information soon. By the way, members that bring a British car will receive a wristband for discounted beer. Stay tuned for more info.

MG International 2021 Atlantic City registrations are growing, and we are past the 100 mark. To register go to: https://ac2021.regfox.com/mg-international-2021 This All-Register event will be held June 14th -17, 2021 at Harrah's Resort & Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ. There are lots of fun things planned, a car show, winery tours, bus trips to Cape May and Philadelphia and the Simone museum and much, much more. Checkout the website and see for yourself. Also, if you can't make the festivities you can still order event regalia and have it shipped to you by going to: https://mgint.itemorder.com/sale Shipping charges will apply.

TRAC's "Brits By the Bay" will have yet another new location this year. The event is planned for Sunday, June 27, 2021 at DeJon Vineyards in Hydes, MD from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for more info go to www.tracltd.org

MGOB Club dues for 2021 are now due. There is a list of members that **don't** owe dues on the next page.

Safety Fast!
Richard

Membership Update

Below is the list of people who **DO NOT** currently owe dues. If your name is not on the list below then you owe dues. Dues are $20/year and cheques should be made payable and sent to MGs of Baltimore; 5237 Glen Arm Road; Glen Arm, MD 21057 or you may pay at the February meeting.

First Name	Last Name
Glenn S. & Barbara	Abbott
Shane & Megan	Absher
Roger & Susan	Amato
Joe & Barb	Auer
R.E. (Bob) & Joey	Bates
Dennis & Carol	Blevins
Bill & Cindy	Bollinger
Suzie	Boltz
Howard & Susan	Bonds
Gary	Breeback
Jim	Buckmeier
John & Carol	Buettner
Tom	Carroll
John & Carole	Chizik
Joe	Clark
Clint & Beth	Davis
Anthony & Jackie	DeBella
Johan & Britney	DeVicq
Doug	Diem
Matthew	Dinnerman
Don & Ruth	Dube
Michael & Vicki	Egliskis
Cliff	Essman
Christopher	Fritz
Randy & Sharon	Fryer
Don & Melody	Gallagher
Rick & Cynthia	George
Ron	Gillis

First Name	Last Name
Doug & Anne	Hart
Chris & Diane	Horant
Bob	Keefer
Randell & Sheila	Kegg
Victor & Jackie	Knox
Matthew	Kutz
Richard & Kathy	Liddick
Steve & Debbie	Lingsch
Bob	Lippert
Jack & Liz	Long
Rick & Patsy	MacInnes
Richard C.	McShane Jr.
Dale & Wallis	Meeks
Barney & Lydia	Michel
Glenn & June	Monrad
Richard & Janet	Moure
Chip	Norman
Alex	Ollerman
Ken & Sharon	Olszewski
David	Orbock
Tom	Orisich
Drew & Linda	Paren
Cheryl & Eric	Reitz
William	Riley
Eric & Mary	Salminen
Marty	Schlining
Steve & Tina	Sharpe
Rick	Smith

Dale & Claudia	Glatfelter
George	Gorayeb
Robert	Guienot
Bill & Bonnie	Hallock
Craig E. & Lesley	Harriman

Harry & Mariann	Snow
Wendy & Robb	Stahl
Alan & Carol	Tucker
Ed & Gloria	Wenderoth
Sergio & Joy	Zarbin

We would like to welcome Don & Ruth Dube to the club. They have a 1976 MGB.

We can’t wait to see these cars at some upcoming events.

I'd Do It Again in a Second
By: Doug McCoach

Since this has project has taken almost one year to complete, we decided to run all four chapters in this newsletter.

Chapter 1 The Event

First off, let me just say, I'd do it all over again in a hot second. The opportunity to celebrate my nephews wedding with a road trip to Lake Placid, NY; and feature the MGA in a wedding pic cameo was not to be missed.

Some would say, doubters mostly, that this was not such a great idea. 1100 miles over a 4-day weekend in a 64-year-old car; with expected rain, ice, and snow in the Adirondack mountains. The logistics would be daunting, Spare parts, Dresses, Winter gear, and gifts to pack. We spent the 3 preceding months with shakedown cruises and tuning, giving the gremlins a chance to surface and be addressed. Mark Raspi did a great job getting the car dialed in.

Finally, the departure day arrived, top down and with my co-pilot we headed north, jumping onto Rt 14 to cut through central PA.; stopping at Skaneateles, NY for lunch overlooking the lake; and arriving without event in Lake Placid – 15 hours later; in time for a brisk last call around the fire pit.

The wedding was fabulous, the bride beautiful, the setting majestic and the weather perfect throughout the event. (images 1,2) By coincidence Hemmings was sponsoring a classic car rally through the region that weekend following the route of historic rallies from the mid-fifties. Wherever we went, we encountered friends in a great collection of awesome vehicles. Circumstances for us however would take a turn for the worse after the newlyweds were sent off.

We woke to torrential rain and ice the morning of our return trip. As readers will understand, in an MGA roadster, weather tightness is at best a concept and never an absolute. It's always good to have functional door seals, a well fitted top and a spool of wool felt to stuff in random cracks. Hint: Scotch brand adhesive backed clear plastic cabinet bumpers do a great job of discreetly reducing side curtain chatter.
The first 5 hours of our return were challenging, but gradually as we descended from the High Peaks region, the weather improved, and by the time we were in central New York we were cruising. Oil pressure as always at 60# and temperature rock steady at 185 degrees.

Until, 23 hours and 850 miles into the trip, or 250 miles from home; pulling away from a traffic signal north of Elmira, a mysterious Bang and then a steady drop in oil pressure. What the…. Stop the car, check the oil. Bone dry. The next 7 hours were a haze of: Refill the oil, watch the oil pressure recover, drive cautiously as the pressure gradually drops, repeat. After 5 stops and the addition of 3 gallons of oil we finally rolled into the garage. Safe, but with some real questions about what had happened and how to proceed.

Chapter 2 Discovery & Diagnosis

On the Saturday after Thanksgiving, the forensics began. Here's what we knew. Temperature and Oil levels had been stable prior to the event, with of course, a little oil under the parked car and an occasional whiff from the exhaust. As we limped home there was ample white smoke from the tailpipe, my sweep car was coated with oil mist, and now everything in the engine bay had a coating of oil.

Here's what we needed to understand. Most fundamentally, besides out the tailpipe, where did 3 gallons of oil go? All evidence pointed to the head gasket. But once we were in there, what collateral issues might need to be addressed, head warping, block integrity? What other refurbishment would make sense with the car up on blocks, Water Pump, Fanbelt, Main Bearings? And how much of this stuff was actually within my capacity to perform in my garage with my limited experience.

And this is where the real value of an organization like MGOB comes forth. With an email to Richard L., a few calls and emails later, Randy Kegg was kind enough to volunteer his time and tools to assist a club member in need. Recognizing this as a learning opportunity, he proposed a special Saturday morning tech session; I just needed to provide coffee and donuts. (image 3)

What we would find was not pretty. We popped the valve cover and pulled the plugs. This provided us the opportunity to pressure check each cylinder. It also provided a lot of time for random musings.
Cylinder 1 – 145 psi. I had bought this car 10 years ago and put 10,000 miles on the car, ALWAYS driving hard.
Cylinder 2 – 80 psi. I understood prior owners had refurbished the motor, including replacing the cam shaft and porting and polishing the manifold.
Cylinder 3 – 130psi. This car has always been well received at the Rocks show. It's beautiful and needs to stay on the road.
Cylinder 4 – 150psi. What kind of resources is it going to take to get this thing fixed?

Ok, now we are confronted with known unknowns (Thanks, Secretary Rumsfeld). Something is going on with Cylinder 2 and 3; what was it? Randy set up his arthroscopic camera to get a visual of each piston head.
Cylinder 1 – bit of carbon,
Cylinder 2 – also some carbon, but also some interesting chipping on the piston head rim
Cylinder 3 – yes, carbon, and also another chipped piston (image 4)
Cylinder 4 – equally carbonized but otherwise sound.

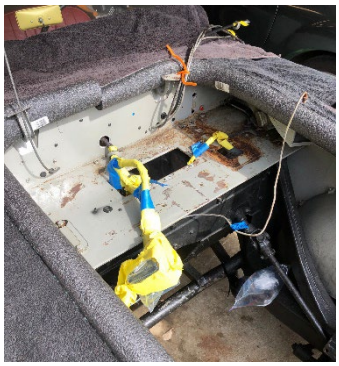
Armed with this working knowledge, if not a definitive answer, the path forward was clear. Pull the head, inspect the gasket and pistons. And determine the course of treatment. Further exploration confirms the gasket blew out between cylinder 2/3 directly under the exhaust manifold. As far as our other questions. Yes, the water pump bearing was shot and needed replacement. No, the head didn't appear to be warped. We know that we need to replace Pistons 2/3. It seems like we should do them all. We see some scoring on the cylinder wall of #2. So, we probably are re-

boring the cylinders and replacing the rings. And that's the bright red line. I don't have these tools, so this is going to have to go out.

Chapter 3 - Plan your work….

Boy, Did that sound optimistic in January,…. and then the world stopped.

I remain optimistic, and I pray that the impact of the Pandemic is minimal on you and your families. Its early May and unusually chilly. As I write this, the Sun Paper tally is 57 days since "The End of Sports as we know it; and its week 8 of Maryland's stay at home order. Unemployment is @14.7% - a level unseen since the great depression. Drive your MGA day would have been a week ago. That DID NOT happen. Parts should have been ordered for the car from Moss. That DID NOT happen because Moss closed their distribution centers. The pace of our lives has slowed dramatically; this includes the overhaul project. But it's provided time to consider the approach to this really important job, and as a result, the MGA project has taken on a different complexion.



We are only stewards of these machines, hoping that someone else in the world finds them interesting enough to want to carry them forward. In this case, with the cost of repairs, the phrase "Paying it forward" takes on new meaning. Now, that I've been presented with an opportunity to secure the future of this car, priorities need to be established to guide how to invest time and money into the repairs. After much consideration, here are the principals I identified to guide the decision-making:

1. The project is best described as an engine rebuild and engine bay refresh.

2. We should take this opportunity to repair, rebuild, or as a last resort replace all mechanicals and system components requiring engine and transmission removal, because we are only doing this once.

3. The car should remain stock with no changes that fundamentally alter the design of the vehicle. Wherever possible we should look to optimize the mechanical operations of the vehicle including balancing the motor internals, porting and ceramic coating the manifold.

4. With the engine out, we should prep and paint the engine bay, and refurbish the wiring harness.

5. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, this endeavor will only be as successful as the commitment of the individuals participating in it.

Disassembly and inspection revealed the following: Beyond boring the cylinders and replacing pistons and rings, the Block is sound, the camshaft needs replacing but generally the head is in good shape. The transmission is showing age-appropriate wear. The Plan then is as follows:

- Motor - Magna flux block & head. Bore and hone cylinders, Harmonic Balancing for moving parts, Replace pistons, rings, bearings, camshaft, valves, seals & gaskets.

- Transmission - Replace layby, 1st gear, and reverse gear assemblies, rings and seals.
- Engine Bay - Clean and repaint, Refurbish Wiring Harness, Master cylinder, Wiper Motor, and Heater box

Generally, costs are distributed as follows:

- Machining - $1,000
- Motor Rebuild - $2,500
- Transmission Rebuild- $2,000.00
- Everything Else - $ 1,500
- Gifts for Supportive Spouse and Friends - Priceless

So that's the plan. We pulled the motor in Mid-February. I just finished spaying the heater deck, and the Pistons & Rings have just arrived from Great Britain. I continue to be optimistic that the car will be running like new in time for the 2020 MG's on the Rocks "Social Distancing Edition" this September.

Chapter 4, Work Your Plan

Almost a year to the day, Sir Sterling runs again! While it was sad to miss the September Rocks show, in the bigger scheme of things it was a better choice not to rush the project. For those of you who might have missed the first 3 chapters of this saga, on October 29, 2019, on the return leg of an 1100-mile road trip for an Adirondack wedding, the head gasket blew, dumping all the oil 250 miles from home. Subsequent forensic investigations (lead by MGOB's own Randy Kegg) revealed a blown head gasket and determined that two of the original piston heads were chipped and had scored the cylinder walls. Emergency Surgery would be required to repair the car. Pulling the motor to repair the block set in motion a cascading variety of choices and decisions. After much consideration, I identified a series of principals to guide the decision-making:

1. The project is best described as an engine / transmission rebuild and engine bay refresh.

2. We should take this opportunity to repair, rebuild, and replace mechanicals and system components accessible while the engine and transmission are removed, because we are only doing this once.

3. The car should remain stock with no changes that fundamentally alter the design of the vehicle. Wherever possible we should look to optimize the mechanical operations of the vehicle.

4. With the engine out, we should prep and paint the engine bay, and refurbish the wiring harness.

The principals guiding the effort were: Repair first, rebuild as necessary, replace as a last resort.

What did we do?

Transmission - New 1st, 2nd, reverse gears and layby shaft, bearings, gaskets, seals, and clutch pressure plate. One of the nice surprises was to find many original assembly notes and markings existing on the transmission bell and engine block.

Motor - The block was magnafluxed to identify any weaknesses; and the head was found to be in good shape. Cylinders have been bored to .060, the manifold ports were polished before applying a ceramic coated; and all moving parts have been balanced. New pistons and rings, camshaft

and lifters, valves, timing chain, gaskets and seals, water pump, heater valve, control cables, hoses and clamps, and motor mounts were installed.

Engine bay - The engine bay and deck were resprayed at home with color matched Single Stage Polyurethane. All peripheral componentry was rebuilt including master cylinder, wiper motor and heater. the wiring harness was patched and re-wrapped. In an attempt to cool the cockpit, we've had the manifold ceramic coated and installed Hush-mat inside the firewall.

What did it cost?
All in – about $8,500 distributed as follows:
Machining $750
Parts for motor and transmission $3,000
Engine and Transmission rebuild $1,400
Labor $2,900
Hush-mat, Painting, and Ceramic Coating $500

Did we accomplish our goals?
The functioning of the motor and transmission is vastly improved. The motor runs stronger, smoother, cooler, and quieter. The integrity of the car has been maintained. It still runs and drives with all of the characteristics of the original – just better. Plus – the heater functions!

What did we learn?

1. The most valuable lessons for me had to do with attitude. From the first, I viewed this event not a problem, but as an opportunity for stewardship to position this car for the long-term. The project presented the opportunity to learn more about the engineering and design of the car, as well as techniques necessary to maintain any British car.

2. During the Covid Pandemic everything has become more difficult and take longer. This is certainly true with the repairs. Not to mention the very real consideration that the entire group of participants – mechanics, machinists, even the owner – was in the highest risk age group and could very well not have survived to finish the project - morbid I know, but these ideas crossed my mind over the last 7 months of pandemic. This project took a looong time. Way longer than I ever could have imagined; and at various times I was depressed and verging on impatient. It became clear that a healthier approach was not to obsess about each passing day. That wouldn't speed up the process, all it would do was wind me up tighter and potentially drive my mechanic nuts potentially adding to the cost. So periodically I needed to take a deep breath and remind myself that this is a hobby, and not subject to the same rigors of a professional gig.

3. I gained a new appreciation for the incredibly robust engineering of the original B series design, as well as the ability of this motor to be adapted with new parts and components.

4. I'd do it all over again in a second – without question.

Epilogue

Not long after the return of the car, in a series of shakedown drives of increasing length; the center freeze plug ruptured and the coolant was dumped. Other than the indignity of a tow, no harm was done, but it seems that this is an acknowledged issue for rebuilt B series motors.

Finding the silver lining on this was tough, but here are my observations:

1. We would like to do more to get the operating temperature down. The shakedown drives established the motor was running hot, leading us to replace the thermostat.

2. The replacement of tappets and the enlargement of the cylinders has likely changed the compression rating, so we have replaced the lifters, allowing additional adjustment of the Rocker Arms to allow further tuning of the motor.

After almost 15 months, Sir Sterling will emerge from this a safer, stronger, and more reliable car. We look forward to the resumption of tours, escapes, parades, MBOB meetings, and ice cream runs in a post pandemic world.

We can’t wait to see Sir Sterling at the Dust Off in May.

In the News! - Moss Motors Acquires Victoria British

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

After more than 30 years, Victoria British Ltd., a division of Long Motor Corporation, has decided to pass the baton to Moss Motors Ltd. to carry on the tradition of supplying car parts and accessories for British car owners around the world.

President of Victoria British, Becky Hanrahan said, "It was not a decision that we made lightly. We were Victoria British before we were LMC Truck, but we know we have not been giving the British market the attention it deserves. We feel our customers would be better served by a company whose primary focus is the British car market."

Victoria British has for many years been a key resource for British sports car owners and their mission to "Keep'em On The Road®". The Moss Motors acquisition of Victoria British is aimed at maintaining the same spirit of supporting the British sports car industry and community.

"As a long-standing name in the British sports car community, we recognize the rich history of Victoria British and will do our best to carry on their legacy," said Ed Moss, President, Moss Motors. "It's an exciting chapter for Moss Motors and we look forward to bringing together the best traditions of both companies to continue serving the industry by supporting car owners, restoration businesses and British sports car enthusiasts alike."

Both companies will be posting news and reaching out to customers, suppliers, and other contacts regarding the details of the transition.

Victoria British LTD. was founded in 1981 and is a manufacturer and retailer specializing in British sports car parts and accessories for MG, Triumph, Austin Healey and Sunbeam. www.victoriabritish.com

Moss Motors Ltd was founded in 1948 is a multi-national warehouse distributor, manufacturer and retailer of performance, restoration and replacement parts for vintage British and specialty market vehicles www.mossmotors.com/victoria-british

History of the MG Marque - The MG 14/40 and 14/80 Models
by Karen Border, TRF Publications

INSTALLMENT 5. THE M-TYPE MG MIDGET, THE C-TYPE and D-TYPE

This installment continues the History of the MG today with the MG M-type, which was also known as the MG Midget. Midgets were manufactured from 1929 to 1932, and over 3,235 models were produced. The M-type shared factory production with the MG 14/40 and 18/80. In 1927, William Morris had purchased the Wolseley car manufacturer when they went bankrupt. Wolseley had developed an 847-cc engine and Kimber realized that it could be used to make a smaller sports car. The Midget was displayed at the 1928 London Motor Show and it was a success because at a cost of £175, it was one of the first sports cars to be affordable. The Midget was half the price of the 14/40 and the 18/80 was more expensive than the 14/40. At least fifty percent of MG sales were Midgets. The 18/80 made up one third of the sales, and it was decided to discontinue the 14/40.

The Midget was first manufactured at the Edmund Road works in Cowley, Oxford, and after January 1930 production was moved to a factory in Abingdon. It was at Abingdon that the "Safety Fast" motto was adopted. The staff included Hubert Charles for design, Cecil Cousins and Reg Jackson, and with Gordon Phillips and Syd Enever in development. John Thornley, their accountant, began the M.G. Car Club, which is still a club today.

The Midget was a 2-door car with the updated four-cylinder, overhead camshaft Wolseley engine. It had a single SU carburettor and was rated at 20 bph and had a three-speed non-synchromesh gearbox. Kimber started with the 1928 Morris Minor chassis and modified it with a lowered suspension that included half-elliptic springs and Hartford friction disk shock absorbers. The car was a rear wheel drive and had rigid front and rear axles. Bolt-on wire wheels completed the drive train.

The brake system was updated in 1930 by using a cable system for the handbrake, which replaced the rod brake system. A modified camshaft gave the engine 27 bph. A four-speed gearbox was an option. In 1932, a longer wheelbase enabled the car to have two additional seats, and a supercharged version was available which could reach a top speed of 80 mph.

The first Midgets had fabric covered plywood bodies on an ash frame with a boat shaped stern. The hood and the cowl were steel, and it featured the distinctive MG radiator. By 1931, the cars had metal bodies which were mostly manufactured by Carbodies, although a few were manufactured by Jarvis. The Midget was available in open two-seat or closed two-door "Sportsmans" coupés. A commercial van was also available.

In addition to building cars, Kimber created a small competition department to offer tuning services to race customers. Kimber modified the M-type to compete in races and it proved to be a successful race car. Private and factory-backed race teams drove the Midget in races. A Midget won a gold medal in the 1929 Land's End Trial, and in 1930, five cars entered in the Brooklands "Double Twelve" endurance race took the team prize. Two Midgets were entered in the 1930 LeMans but they did not finish.

The success of the Brooklands race allowed Kimber to build a limited run of Double-Twelve race cars which were bought by race drivers. The win also enabled Kimber to develop the C-

type Midget. The C-type was derived from the record speed-breaking prototype EX 120. From 1931 to 1932, MG produced 44 C-type Midgets. In 1931, the C-type won both the race and the team prize in the Brooklands Double Twelve race. A supercharged C-type won the Tourist Trophy race also in 1931.

MG also produced 250 four-seater, MG D-type Midgets from 1931-32. It had the same engine as the M-type and the chassis of the C-type. The D-type was only capable of a top speed of 60 mph as the body was too heavy for the small 847cc Wolseley engine. The D-type was sometimes referred to as the 8/33 but that designation was not accurate as the car did not achieve 8 hp or 33 power output. The design changes included rear springs which were mounted in sliding trunnions instead of shackles, the radiator was mounted on the front engine mounts rather than the chassis, and it had 8- inch brake drums which were cable operated.

—Editor's Note: Neville Wardle gave me some more information about the horsepower rating on the D-type. Thank you, Neville, for your wonderful edit!

Regarding the remark about the horsepower rating for the D type MG. The 8-horsepower rating was for tax purposes and is established by using a formula devised by the Royal Automobile Club (RAC). The RAC formula simply takes the cylinder bore (in inches), square, times the number of cylinders and then divided by a constant, 2.5.

The constant reflected common engine characteristics of the day such as the maximum piston speed that engines achieved.

The D type rating is (2.244 x 2.244) x 4/2.5 which comes out to 8.056, so 8hp for tax purposes.

McComb lists the actual horsepower as 27.5 bhp at 4,500 rpm. A bit shy of 33, but it wouldn't have been the first or last time that horsepower ratings were embellished a bit.
So, the 8/33 designation was at least half-right!

Neville Wardle Branford, CT

At the same time, MG offered a 6-cylinder 1271 cc F-type model, the Magna, that was identical outwardly to the D- type, but it outsold the D-type because it had more power.

For the next installment, I will write about the "Magic Midget", EX120 and EX127 and the speed trials. To see a couple of photos of the M-type Midget, please visit our History of the MG Marque page on our website. This page includes the full story from the beginning and will be continued as time permits. In addition, if you want more in-depth reading, please use the links I have included as my sources for information. They are all great to read and feature many photographs.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MG_M-type https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MG_D-type
https://www.mgownersclub.co.uk/mg-guides/pre-war/mg-ctype-midget
https://www.mgownersclub.co.uk/mg-guides/pre-war/mg-dtype-midget Great Marques M.G., by Chris Harvey, 1983
MG Past & Present, by Rivers Fletcher, 1985
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https://www.hemmings.com/blog/article/the-car-with-the-racing-pedigree-mg-midget/

My MGC

By Jim Danielson

The MGC was produced from 1967 through 1969. very few were made in 1967 with a majority in 1969, with a total of about 9,000. About half were roadsters and half GTs. There were 556 automatics exported to the U.S.

The MGC was hurried into production to replace the Austin Healey 3000. More pre-production time would have resulted in a slightly different and better car enhancing its popularity at the time. Contemporary writers often refer to MGC owners as a "cult". It's the only time I've been called a cult member.

I have more than one. The car most often seen at club events is a highly modified black 1969 roadster. A three-year restoration was finished in June of 2006.

The last 130 or so unsold cars were purchased from the factory by MG dealer University Motors-London and badged as "University Motors Special". They underwent some dramatic changes. My car wears a University Motors Special badge, but while incorporating most of the changes, is not one of the original University Motors Specials.

The 'C' started as a stock 145 hp overdrive. Here is a list of the changes:

Triple carbs
Racing intake and exhaust manifolds
Reground cam
Lightened flywheel (20 lbs.)
Steel wheel hubs (all U.S. factory imports had wire wheels)
Air conditioning
Power steering
Racing steering rack (faster, shorter turning)
Electric fans (2)
Electronic ignition
Aluminum radiator
Altered dashboard
GPS speedometer
Customized interior

The backside of the hood near the cowl is noticeable raised when closed. Yes, the hood is secure. All of the additions in the engine compartment generated so much heat, the car would overheat when going slow – parades, highway traffic stops. Raising the rear of the hood a half-inch letting the heat out solved the issue.

The factory guaranteed the MGC would go 120 mph. I have documentation of 122 mph. It is a great highway cruiser. It is loafing at 80 mph. it now has over 80,000 miles since restoration. It is truly one of a kind.

My MGC

Triple SU Carburetors

Reservoir for power steering pump

MGC Bonnet liner

Midget Mumblings
Head Games

By Steve Olson

While researching another question, I re-discovered some information I had nearly forgotten. Not all Midget 1500 heads were created equal. By the 1970s, emission laws were forcing changes to the car's engine. One change that sapped some performance was lower compression to reduce oxides of nitrogen. But even after U.S. market cars had been forced down to 7.5:1 compression, there was one lucky year that passed emissions tests with 9.0:1. The Original Sprite & Midget book says that year was 1977. I don't claim to know more than this very well researched book by expert Terry Horler, but my experience is different. The engine in my car has the higher compression head and so does my spare engine. Both came from 1976 Midgets with less than 40,000 miles, so were likely original. I think 1976 was that lucky year. Triumph Spitfires and black bumper Midgets share the same engines and thus the same heads. I have a spare head that came to me from some swap meet I think, and it is the low compression version. So which head is on your car? To find out, just look for a stamped number on the top of the head outside the rocker cover. There are cast numbers and letters, but you are looking for a number stamped on a flat surface near the #3 cylinder intake. I had to scrape off layers of grease and paint and the stamping was still not that clear, but I could read it. Per the book, here is what you are looking for:

TKC 1155	Home market	1974-79	9.0:1
TKC 1409	North America (less California)	1974-76	7.5:1
TKC 2748	North America (less California)	1977	9.0:1
TKC 3239	North America (less California)	from 1977	7.5:1
TKC 1409	California	1975-78	7.5:1
TKC 1410	California	1978-79	7.5:1

I modified the engine I have in my car several years ago to get a bit more out of it. I bored it 0.060 inch so it is now 1550 CC. I used flat top pistons instead of the stock dished ones. That change usually increases compression from 7.5 to about 9.0. Since I was already at 9.0, that puts me about 10.5:1. I also had the head planed a bit to insure it was dead flat, but that probably was not enough to make a significant difference. Of course I upgraded to a cam that is about stock spec for a pre-emission engine. I also installed twin HS4 carbs from a home market Midget. I still burn cheap 87 octane pump gas, so to avoid pinging, I keep the ignition advance a couple degrees less than what is said to be the optimum 32 degrees before top dead center at 4000 RPM with vacuum advance disconnected. If I build another engine I may go with just a bit less compression.

Our cars are old and many have passed through several owners, so the head on yours may not be the one that it had when it left the factory. You probably need to run the lower compression if your state requires emission testing and is strict about it. In 1976, only California Midgets had catalytic converters, so my car never had one. Today, many cars have somehow lost their converters and air pumps and vacuum retard distributors and very mild cams and now run stronger, but probably pollute a bit more. Which head is on your 1500 Midget?

Photo: courtesy Stuart Seager

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES, Berkshire

'And laughter, learnt of friends;
and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an
English heaven . . .'—*Rupert Brooke*

The MG K3

As published in the Octagon the Newsletter of the Northern California Centre of the MG Car Club newsletter January 2021

Andrew Fock delves into the history of one of the most famous MGs, the K3 from The PreWar MG Register of Australia

While the huge sales of the MGA and MGB in the 1950s and 60s made the name MG synonymous with British sports cars, there is one model of MG above all others that made the marque a legend, the K3 Magnette.

The success of the M-type Midget in 1929 had come as somewhat of a surprise to Cecil Kimber and MG, but had inadvertently not only saved the company from almost certain collapse with the onset of the Great Depression, but had actually allowed Kimber to expand to the old Pavlova Leather works in Abingdon with an loan of £100,000 from William Morris.
Morris had bought Wolseley Motors in 1927. Along with the sale came a newly developed family of engines. The smallest of these had gone into the Minor and the Midget. The next engine up was a small six cylinder of 1271cc. In its standard form, with duralumin cod rods (limiting the maximum engine speed to 4100 rpm), and Wolseley valve timing it produced about 35 b.h.p. Morris took this, placed it in a lengthened Minor chassis and called it the Wolseley Hornet.

With a 60% increase in horsepower over the Minor, the car performed well and sold well. Kimber once wrote, if you made a car 10% better you could sell it for 40% more. The Minor/Midget had proven this theory very well and the Midgets were highly profitable for MG. The arrival of the Hornet must have had them wondering if they could repeat the trick with the new six-cylinder motor.

By this time, MG had moved on from the limitations of the Minor chassis. Record breaking and racing experience with EX127 and the C-types had seen the development of the underslung ladder frame chassis that was to be with MG till the demise of the TC some 20 years later. So, not unsurprisingly, the new engine, suitably disguised, was placed in a lengthened D-type Midget chassis. To save on costs the same track was used, allowing the use of common running gear. The engine was mated to a manual ENV 4-speed gear box similar to that used in the C-types, but unlike the C-types the rear engine mount was still on the engine and not via a cross tube through the bell housing. Bodies were initially four-seat tourers and small coupés but when the J-type was introduced, the body from the J2 was used to produce a very stylish two- seater known as the F2. The F2 was sold at a £60 premium over the J2 and given that it did not have any more power and was heavier, Kimber's adage was again proved, it really is all in the marketing!

The problem with the F engine was that it was not really suitable for development. Despite changing to C-type conrods and improving the valve timing, it suffered from poor breathing, cooling and inadequate oil flow. So, in 1931 MG somehow managed to convince William Morris to allow them to develop a completely new six-cylinder engine.

While the F-type engine was the starting point, the new engine utilised all the lessons that had been learned during the record breaking and racing to date and had no parts in common. The four main bearing arrangement was maintained but with much larger journals (now all white metal) and a full flow oil filtration system. The head was cross flow and followed the J-type but with a much larger diameter camshaft and positively massive porting. In fact, the whole engine was over engineered, this and the reduction in capacity to 1086cc while retaining the 12hp rating (i.e. only the stroke is reduced) indicate that the whole exercise revolved around racing. The hints of this

are everywhere on the engine, from the plinth to hold a magneto on the side of the block to the oil take off on the nearside of the head to feed a supercharger.

The engine was to be used in two car lines, the K- and the L-types. The first was called the Magnette as the capacity of the new engine fell between the Midget (small) and the Magna (large). However, the Magnette chassis was actually substantially heavier and larger than the Magna that proceeded it with a track of 4'0", a wheelbase of either 9'0" or 7'10" and a much deeper, heavier, cross braced chassis. Brakes were 13" drums of Elektron (magnesium alloy) with a cast iron insert dovetailed in.

At the time, the annual car tax was based on the RAC rating and was a considerable amount. If we consider that the average wage was about £150 per annum and the annual tax on a Magna was £12 this give some idea as to why small capacity cars with long strokes were so popular. Supercharging a small engine was a potential way to compete with cars in an altogether more expensive bracket without incurring an increase in the road tax.

The close association between George Eyston, who was one of the owners of Powerplus Superchargers, and MG could easily explain how they justified the reduction in capacity with the increase in weight if they planned to have the K-types supercharged.

However, as would transpire, the Powerplus supercharger would not be the solution to this problem due to its unreliability and propensity to oil up plugs. The other novel feature of the K-type was the introduction of the Wilson ENV 75 Preselector gearbox. This gearbox, a forerunner of the modern automatic gearbox, allowed for instantaneous gear changes without the need for synchronisation.

Disappointingly, whereas the J-type has seen a substantial improvement in horsepower over the M, the new K-type (partially due to the reduction in capacity) was only marginally improved over the F, managing some 41 hp when normally aspirated.

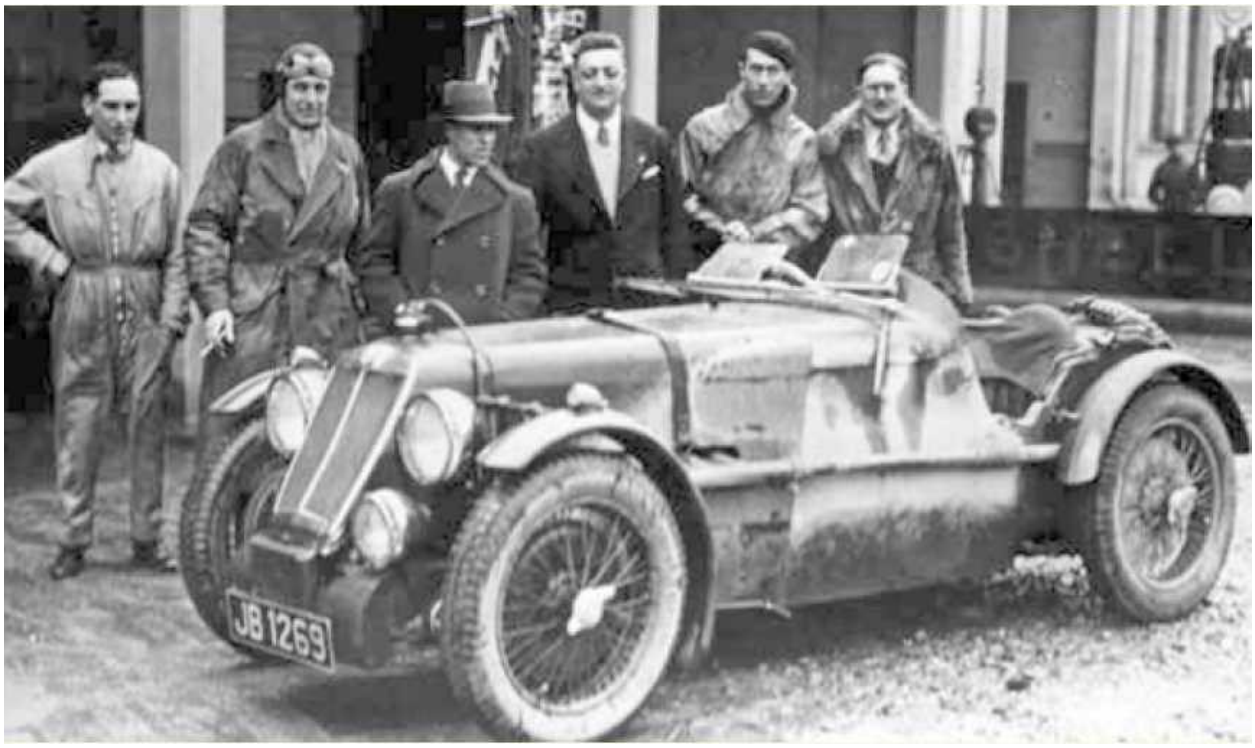
However, there was something big in the wings. In 1932, when the K-type engine was being developed, there was much lamenting in the press about the lack of suitable English racing cars to take on the "Continental Challenge" and uphold the flag. The last serious contenders had been Bentley, which had gone into receivership in 1930. Kimber was approached by George Eyston and Lord Howe, along with several of the Bentley Boys, to help them take on the Italians in what was one of the most prestigious races of the time, the 1000-mile Mille Miglia. For Kimber, this was a marketing opportunity not to be missed.

Late in 1932, two short wheelbase prototype cars were prepared. A Powerplus No.9 Supercharger running at 2/3 engine speed was mounted up front between the front dumbirons producing about 12 lbs of boost and giving about 100 bhp at the flywheel.

The first prototype, K3751 was built with a 7'6" chassis, the new K-type running gear, standard K-type radiator and a modified C type body. It was completed in October of 1932 and was promptly sent off to test with FM Montgomery on the Monte Carlo Rally. The second prototype, K3752, with the later standard 7'10" chassis was in the process of being built up when the decision was made to enter the Mille Migila, which would be conducted in April of 1933. K3752 was hastily completed by the 3rd of January of 1933 and Reg "Jacko" Jackson drove it fresh from the Experimental workshop at Abingdon to Newhaven on the coast to be shipped to France where he would meet with Earl Howe and his mechanic Percy Thomas in his Alfa Romeo and Mercédès to travel to Italy where they would meet the rest of the team on January 10th.

At this time, K3752 still did not quite look like the classic K3 that we expect today. It featured the standard MG humped scuttle and a standard radiator in a sloping cowl. Much of the final body form that we associate with K3s today would be developed from the lessons learned from the arduous adventure of travelling across France to Italy and then on the Mille Migila course all in the middle of a European winter.

Barré Lyndon recounted the adventure in his 1934 book “Circuit Dust”. The route took them to Molsheim where they met with Ettore Bugatti and then on to Lucerne where Howe took over the car and got it up to 98 mph. After several adventures, they eventually reached Milan after battling heavy snow and ice. There they met with Captain Eyston, Count Lurani , Bernard Rubin and Sir Henry Birkin. The appalling weather had not given the car much opportunity to open up more than briefly, but the conditions had shown that the body needed some improvement to stop rain, snow and mud entering the cockpit.



K3752 outside Scuderia Ferrari, Modena. L to R. Eugenio Siena, Lord Howe, Tazio Nuvolari, Enzo Ferrari, Giovanni Lurani Cernuschi and George Eyston

In the team cars this would consist of dispensing with the individual humps and running a rain gutter along the scuttle to stop rain from collecting on the body and then rolling over the scuttle onto the occupants.

Attempts to run over the course during the next few days were scuppered by heavy snow in the passes between Bologna and Florence and so an alternate route had to be sought. Already, the issue of the blower oiling up the plugs had begun to rear its head. They had also determined that the car needed a stronger front axle, better steering lock and better oil cooling for the long climbs though the mountains. All agreed that the cowl over the radiator needed to go and a bigger radiator was needed.

The Italians were very excited about the English challenge and offered significant support. On their arrival in Rome they were received by both the King of Italy and Mussolini. On the way back to

Brescia they stopped at Modena where they met with Tazio Nuvolari, Enzo Ferrari and Eugenio Siena. Alfa Romeo had apparently asked Scuderia Ferrari to help Earl Howe and his team as the Earl was a very good customer. Ferrari later arranged for the actual team be put up at the Hotel Del Duomo in Brescia. When the team arrived there for scrutineering, they found all the linen to be monogrammed with MG! A good omen as it seemed.

After several more adventures, K3752 returned home via Monaco where they had joined up with K3751 which had just completed the Mote Carlo Rally. After watching the Mont des Mules hillclimb on the 29th of February in which K3751 won its class, the cars and the team returned to England. With six weeks required to ship the team cars to Italy for the actual race this left only a little over six weeks to build the new team cars incorporating all the lessons learned from the two prototypes.

K3752 was rebodied as per the team cars with the new pattern radiator shell derived from a spare cutdown 18/80 radiators. It would return to Italy for the actual race being used as a spare, driven by A Denly and kept the depot at Siena.

In a tale that reads like a “boy’s own adventure”, the team of K3s, K3001, K3002 and K3003 would go on to win the 1100cc class beating the Maseratis and Fiats, taking the team prize and becoming part of MG folklore. The oiling up of the plugs proved to be a huge issue during the race and the unreliability of the Powerplus superchargers would eventually result in the replacement with Marshall Roots type blowers in the 1934 K3s.

K3s would dominate light car racing in the UK for the next two years until superchargers were banned. Several would find their way down-under including the ex-Birkin-Rubin team car, K3002 that was imported by Lanes in 1933 for the Australian GP.

Above and below: George Eyston & Count Lurani during the Mille Miglia reconnoitre in K3752, January 1933.

The Need for Speed?
by: Richard Jefferson

Well, it seems I've had a lot of time on my hands lately. Of course, with all this time I've been doing some observing of mankind and thinking. (You know nothing good will come of that.) My latest observation and thoughts of course center around the American public and to be specific the American driver. (Yes. I know I could certainly look at other strange manifestations of the American public but face it when you look for weird-you'll find it. Anyway, we're all about cars, oh and T-shirts).

My current observation is a paradox that centers around drivers going from stop sign to stop sign and the coming automotive trends. May I suggest that you find a place where you can observe a stretch of road between two clearly visible stop signs, and along with a cold beverage, watch the American driver at work. Since you can see the two stop signs the distance isn't too far- maybe less than ¼ mile.

What you will observe is an American trait powered by technology. What you will observe is a certain American trait. Use all your senses to observe the driver/car. Use especially your ears; what do you hear? What I have observed is behavior that simulates the actions at the local dragstrip.

The driver scoots away from the stop sign driver by pressing the gas pedal to the floor. (Or at least harder than required for this short trip.) Why? Well of course Americans want everything fast and nothing seems fast enough. My pizza is late, I want it for free. Make a vaccine for the current plague -can't be fast enough!

Here's part of the paradox: Driving like this cost more and makes more pollution, but I want to get there fast, and gas is cheap. Now you can see the paradox. Now let examine technologies impact on our driver.

Remember the first Corvette (1953). It was built as a sports car and had a two-speed automatic transmission. I've seen new cars with 10 speed automatics or even the truly terrible CVT transmission. Today's modern transmissions are geared toward two things.

- First, they are geared to upshift rapidly thereby lowering RPMs and thereby use less gas. (Got to meet those phony baloney fuel standards for the fleet so we can sell more monstrous sized profitable trucks) This transmission response happens with a reasonable pressing of the accelerator pedal.

- Second, when the transmission is stimulated with a more aggressive pressing of the accelerator pedal, the transmission responds by keeping the car in its maximum power band to create maximum torque and acceleration. See another paradox.

Taking the driver out of the equation, here are some examples of how technology has fed this American thirst for speed:

60's Muscle/2020 Mild

- 1969 GTO Judge: 0-60mph 6.4 seconds manual transmission V8 389ci
- 2020 Honda Civic SI: 0-60mph 6.7 seconds auto transmission 4 Cylinder 1498cc
- 2020 Honda Ridgeline: 0-60mph 6.9 seconds auto transmission V6 3471cc

MG

- 1969 AH Sprite: 0-60 mph 14.6 seconds manual transmission 1275 CC
- 1965 MGB: 0-60 mph 12.9 seconds manual transmission 1800cc

Corvette

- 1953 Corvette: 0-60 mph 11.2 seconds 2 speed automatic 235 ci V6 (Blue Flame)
- 2020 Corvette: 0-60 mph 2.9 seconds 8 speed automaticsV8 6378 cc (6.2 liter)

How did the American driver ever get into this paradox? It's the sales pitch! Can you imagine a car advertisement that doesn't prominently mention high performance as the expected standard?

Our next paradox pits this racetrack "*get there fast*" mentality coupled with the best maximum 0-60 technology versus the current EV zeitgeist and of course the Holy Grail ***"Autonomous Driving"***

EV's are cleaner for the environment. Maybe? I can with certainty tell you they are sold to the public for something they value even more than the environment --- *speed*. Ever talk to an EV guy that didn't brag about the speed? EV engine equals maximum torque immediately. Now pair it with our super slick transmission and you've got the proper American speed cocktail.

Here comes the paradox. The other reason the EV trend is so hot of course is ***Autonomous Driving***. I'll just get in my car tell it where to go and I get there. (Mostly I just let Carole drive when I'm lazy and get the same result) Now we'll get in our new *Jetson Mobile* and say, "drive me to X". How will this car react? Did you know there are speed limit signs on the road? You can expect your shiny new *Whizbang Supercar* will obey them by design/programming. Can you imagine the hair on fire "*get there **now***" attitude of an American Driver in a car that's actually doing **55!!!** We may have to face, it's only Star Trek Scotty that could please Americans. (Noted there may be environmental protest for Scotty's use of a nuclear type fuel and the excess people particle debris he spreads about the universe.)

If we want to solve some of this stop sign to stop sign activity, I offer this simple solution. Just add a clutch pedal. Shifting gears is naturally a pause in acceleration and gives the driver time to ponder; should I pound through gears 1 through 3 or even 4th to get to that next stop sign faster or will getting to second and saving the work of a shift be just as pleasing. Not everyone is going to go for this, but most will work on this thinking exercise at each shift. There is one problem with the solution. It seems the generations behind us elder statesmen have forgotten the use of a clutch as well as cursive writing and the choosing of good music. With the current trend of the video classroom, how will we ever teach proper clutch use. (Good heel-toe shifting of course is out of the question.)

Enough of this contemplating others, I'd rather contemplate a back-road drive in a top down 4 speed. Occasionally I will get a need to get from stop sign to stop sign. The B will respond with a crisp shift and a pleasing exhaust note.

Safety Fast

Tools Available for Club Members
Contact Randy Kegg to Borrow

- 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

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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.

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY
2nd Club Meeting

MARCH
2nd Club Meeting

APRIL
6th Club Meeting

MAY
2nd Get the Dust Off Rally
4th Club Meeting

MGs of Baltimore Affiliations

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

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Submit any changes to:
Kathy Liddick
5237 Glen Arm Road
Glen Arm, MD 21057
themgbabe@comcast.net

Washington D.C. Region SCCA
The MGs of Baltimore, Ltd.

Present the 32nd Running of the

GET THE DUST OFF RALLYE

Sunday, May 2, 2021

First car off at 11:31 a.m.

Dedicated to the memory of Richard W. Murphy

$30 per car to April 21st - $35 per car afterwards

To register complete the entry form below and mail it with a check payable to "MGs of Baltimore, Ltd."

SEND TO: Eric Salminen, 12321 Jerusalem Road, Kingsville, MD 21087 (mgobrallymaster@gmail.com)

This will be a GTA (Game, Tour, Adventure) style rally of approximately 60 competitive miles. No unpaved sections. **All vehicles welcome**. Classes will be provided for Historic up to 1981 and modern 1982 and later.

START & FINISH: Dejon Vineyards, 5300 Hydes Rd., Hydes, MD. **www.dejonvineyard.com**. Bring along your picnic basket lunch and tailgating supplies. Food truck will be available on site. Wine tasting will be provided for entrants (MGOB hand stamp required).

REGISTRATION: Opens at 10:30 am. Drivers' meeting at 11:15. Please plan to arrive early.

Contact Rallymaster Eric Salminen at (443-463-3071) or mgobrallymaster@gmail.com for additional rally information

All vehicles must have no more than 2 people in the car. *If a minor (less than 18 years old) is to participate you must contact us in advance to secure a minor release form which requires the signature of both parents.* ***Due to Covid-19 we require all participants have masks and to wear them if proper social distancing cannot be maintained.***

Driver: _____ **Navigator: _____**

Address: _____ **Address: _____**

City/St/Zip_____ **City/St/Zip _____**

Phone: _____ **Phone: _____**

e-mail: _____ **e-mail: _____**

SCCA region:_____ Member#_____ SCCA region _____ Member #_____

Vehicle information: Make: _____ Model: _____ Year: _____ Color: _____

Member: MGOB? ____ TRAC? ____ SCCA/Branded Rally? ____ Other: _____

Class: Select one _____Historic _____Modern

I hereby warrant that the entered vehicle is on the road legally, is being used by the entrant with the owner's permission and is covered by liability insurance of not less than $20,000/$40,000/$15,000 or the minimum requirements in the state of registry, whichever is higher.

Driver Signature: _____ Navigator Signature: _____