



OCTAGRAM

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MGs of BALTIMORE MD

January 2023

www.mgsofbaltimore.org

From El Presidente

The MGs of Baltimore, Ltd. Car Club took part in the 49th Annual Hampden's Mayor's on **Sunday, December 4th, 2022**. We had 15 cars and about 30 members in attendance. This year's event seemed not as organized as past events, our regular staging location got moved from Falls Rd. to the access road to Poly's athletic fields. I developed engine trouble halfway through the parade and had to be pushed to the curb. I believe the rest of the crew completed the route. In 2021 MGOB won 1st place in our class and 2nd place in 2019. We have not heard anything about how we did. I'd like to thank Ron Gillis for hanging with me until I got my car running and me & Anne Hart were on our way.

The Annual MGOB "After the Holidays" Party will be hosted by Mary and Mike Lutz on Saturday, January 7, 2023, starting at 6:00 p.m. at:

The Federal Armored Car Museum
130 Lakefront Drive
Cockeysville, MD 21030

The club will provide drinks and a main dish(es) we ask you to bring an item to share. Please R.V.S.P to Mike & Mary to let them know you will be attending at mgtlutz@comcast.net or 410-592-8610.

MGOB's 26th Annual "Chilly Run" will be hosted by Richard & Carole Jefferson on **Sunday, February 19th, 2023**, starting at 2:00 p.m. with a **snow date of February 26th**. Bring a dish. The Club will provide drinks and assorted munchies. Please RSVP to mgobjefferson@yahoo.com Where:

2520 Overlook Ct.
New Freedom, PA 17349
443-605-8197

Now for those of you that know long time member Gary Breeback, here's some sad news, Gary's wife, Lini passed away after a lengthy illness in Mid-December.

2023 MGOB Dues are now due. Our annual dues are \$20.00 and covers both the member, spouse, and children under 18. There will be a list of members that **don't owe** published in the Octagram. If your name **is not** on the list, **you owe**. You can pay at the monthly MGOB meeting or by mailing your \$20.00 cheque payable to:

MGs of Baltimore, Ltd. Car Club
5237 Glen Arm Road East
Glen Arm, MD 21057-9456

Safety Fast!
Richard

Articles in this newsletter are compliments of Safety Fast December 2022 & the MGA Register Newsletter November/December 2022.

Membership News

Welcome to our new members:

- Bill Clark with a 1972 Midget
- Andrew Jerdonek with a 1970 MGB
- Tom & Susan Renda with a 1971 MGB-GT, a 1953 MG-TD and numerous British Motorcycles
- Ron Skidmore with a 1962 MGA

The following members need to update their email address.

Don & Kim Hogge
John & Diane Petersen

I would like to say thank you to everyone who has renewed their dues. Currently we have 171 members. As of the publishing of this newsletter 87 members owe dues. When submitting your dues renewal please update your information if necessary.

2023 MGOB Dues

If your name is below, you DO NOT owe dues.

Glenn S. & Barbara Abbott		Richard & Kathy Liddick
Joe & Barb Auer		Steve & Debbie Lingsch
Christopher Bartlett		Bob Lippert
Steve & Linda Berry		Jack & Liz Long
Bill & Cindy Bollinger		Bridget McCarron
Suzie Boltz		Carl & Denise McKinney
Howard & Susan Bonds		Richard C. McShane Jr
Gary Breeback		Dale & Wallis Meeks
Bruce Bubeck		Stephen & Sally Meisel
Jim Buckmeier		Richard & Janet Moure
John Buell		Allan Ness
Tom Burnham		Chip Norman
Bill Clark		Louis Novak
Joe Clark		Alex Ollerman

Marc Daemen		Ken & Sharon Olszeewski
Anthony & Jackie DeBella		Tom Orisich
James Dilisio		Drew & Linda Parren
Don & Ruth Dube		Rich Pollan
James & Bonnie Durr		Bill Redding
John & Patricia Ellis		Robert & Dana Reisse
Duff & Barbara Fowler		Cheryl & Eric Reitz
Steve & Lisa Frazer		Tom & Susan Renda
Randy & Sharon Fryer		William Riley
Ron Gillis		Seth & Amy Rochette
Charles Givre		Eric & Mary Salminen
Dale & Claudia Glatfelter		Mike & Kathleen Schenking
Bill & Bonnie Hallock		Marty Schlining
Paul Hanley		Steve & Tina Sharpe
Doug & Anne Hart		Ned & Pattie Shields
Craig Harriman		Bert & Sandy Shirey
Roy Haughwout		Neil Shovlin
Larry & Barbara Heaps		Ron Skidmore
Bill Henry		Rick Smith
Chris & Diane Horant		Mark Spaulding
Kamil & Rajiha Ismail		Jack & Sheila Stern
Richard & Carole Jefferson		Terry Steyer
Andrew Jerdonek		Tom Sweeney
Mike & Jan Keadle		Tracy Trobridge & Bill Fiege
Sheila Kegg		Alan & Carol Tucker
Andrew & Dina Kulp		Loren Mark Walker
Tom Lalley		Steve & Valerie Williams
George & Donna LaRocco		Sergio & Joy Zarbin



When I came to MG Design in 1956, the MGA 1500 was in production. Chief Engineer Syd Enever and Chief Body Engineer Jim O'Neill were planning new shapes to replace it, including a coupé version. Several quarter scale models based on the MGA chassis were made but to achieve a more modern and increased passenger and luggage capacity, the decision was taken to go to monocoque all steel construction. The new integrated structure needed to be stiff enough in tourer form, so design and research work produced combined inner and outer sill sections and a deep centre tunnel. A new seating layout for pedals and steering wheel relative to the proposed engine and front suspension layout located the front bulkhead. Increased seat travel located the heelboard, behind which we were required to retain the batteries which in turn effectively located the rear axle.

The target was to achieve 50/50 weight distribution. Having decided to retain and further develop the MGA front suspension, the track was settled at 41/2 inches and wheelbase 91 inches. The final quarter scale model EX 214 was approved and I detailed a body line draft from which a full size wooden model of the tourer body was made in the Bodies Branch Experimental at Quinton Rd, Coventry. Chassis Engineering were laying out the associated understructure mountings for the engine location, suspension mountings, cooling and exhaust systems.

The first metal prototype was made, but still retained alloy bonnet, door and trunk lid panels to reduce weight. Approval was given by George Harriman and the directors and an ADO 23 number was allocated when finance for tooling was made available so production drawings could be issued.

Development were programmed to carry out all the necessary brake, handling, performance and tyre test with the, new to MG, 1798cc B Series engine. The rear suspension was also completely new with trailing arms and coil spring axle control

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MGB

By Don Hayter

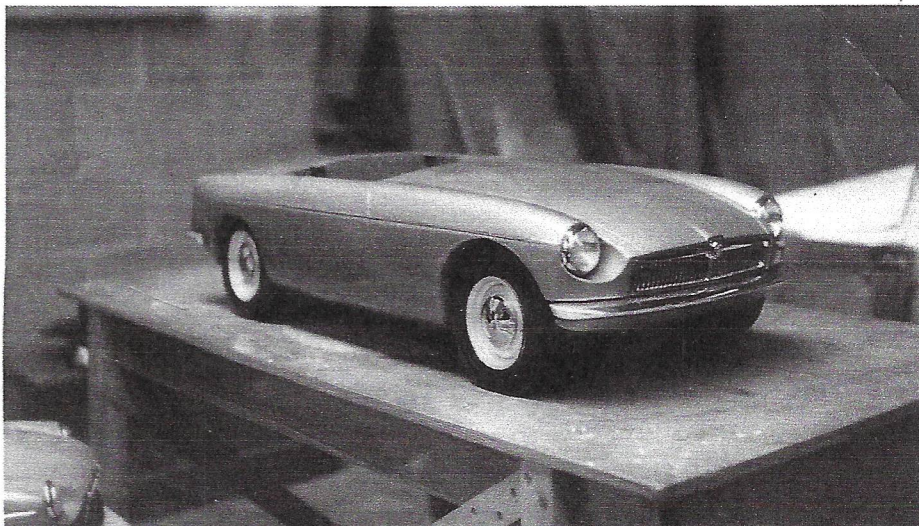


with Panhard rod location. This had been designed to give a softer more controlled ride with bigger travel. Testing showed that a rear end steer effect from the transverse Panhard rod was evident and neither Tom Haig, our specialist tester, or Syd Enever would approve it.

A last minute reversion to a modified semi-elliptic spring system meant adding an inch or so to the rear chassis and body length. Revised panel lines were designed, drawn and issued for new production details and a new prototype started. Intense activity followed, and the decision had been made to produce the whole body at Swindon Pressed Steel factory providing for the unpainted shell to be transported to Coventry Bodies for painting, body, seats and trim assembly. A new automated paint plant was installed at Quinton Rd specially for this. Painted bodies, fitted with a new design of all alloy windscreen frame and accompanying roof to provide a weather proof package, were shipped to Abingdon and processed through modified lines on the top deck in A Building and lowered onto the main production track, still being manually operated – unchanged in system since 1929! Hence the cry “Push ‘em up” when one section was faster than another behind. In those early days, production planning for colours, trim and specification was done by the Chief Engineer in conjunction with John Thornley – Plant Director, the Works Manager and Sales at Longbridge. Leonia USA, Sales and Admin provided requirements for the left-hand drive cars, including specials like white wall tyres and varying hood colours. Cars for special finish went to the MG Show Shop – under Tim Binnington for road test approval and by the car magazines and sales display at Motor Shows in the UK and abroad.

Production rose rapidly with good acceptance in all markets and engineering received the Steering Wheel award, from the Canadian distributors, for the best new sports car in 1962.

Competitions obtained cars from production for assessment and rally use and their first testing was done in the dreadful winter of 1963. This generated



Original EX 214 – MGB quarter scale model taken in development – first view of MGB shape.



Rear view of original Farina prototype

the first exercise with Pressed Steel to obtain alloy wing panels and doors to reduce weight, which meant re-setting presses at the weekends. Winter testing did not give enough experience of racing conditions, particularly on long airfield type corners, so when entered for the spring Sebring USA event, the engines suffered oil surge and pressure loss to fail. Not good! Rapid engine design to modify and increase sump baffles solved the problem so that all early cars were changed to this condition.

The next major change was to the redesigned five main bearing B series engines with the relocated starter position. Design had already considered the addition of a coupe version, and a visit to the Italian Car Show in 1965 by John Thornley and Enever and discussion with Farina resulted in the design of a GT based on an MG outline and package. A prototype evolved, based on a tourer body sent from Abingdon, and included a full size body plan of the first MG hatchback. This was immediately approved by the directors and details drawn for production by Swindon in October 1965.

Proposals for a more powerful version were limited to power units available in the BMC group, so when Sir Alec Issigonis was designing a new three-litre six-cylinder engine for a new Austin saloon, Enever managed to get a look at the scheme. His opinion was to use a possible shorter stroke version in the MGB. In the event, Issigonis refused any changes so the MGC was designed, but needed new chassis and front suspension with torsion bar springing

and engine mountings. All this using the MGB basic body shell with only a modified bonnet and larger wheels.

By 1969 exhaust emission changes were being legislated in America and the first of the safety related changes caused by the Ralph Nader Movement were on the table. Initially road holding tests and tyre problems affected the high and heavier American cars much more than the lower European models. But



Sabrina was fitted with the bumpers to be 5mph barrier compliance



First production B GT, Sabrina, with the energy absorbing bumpers.



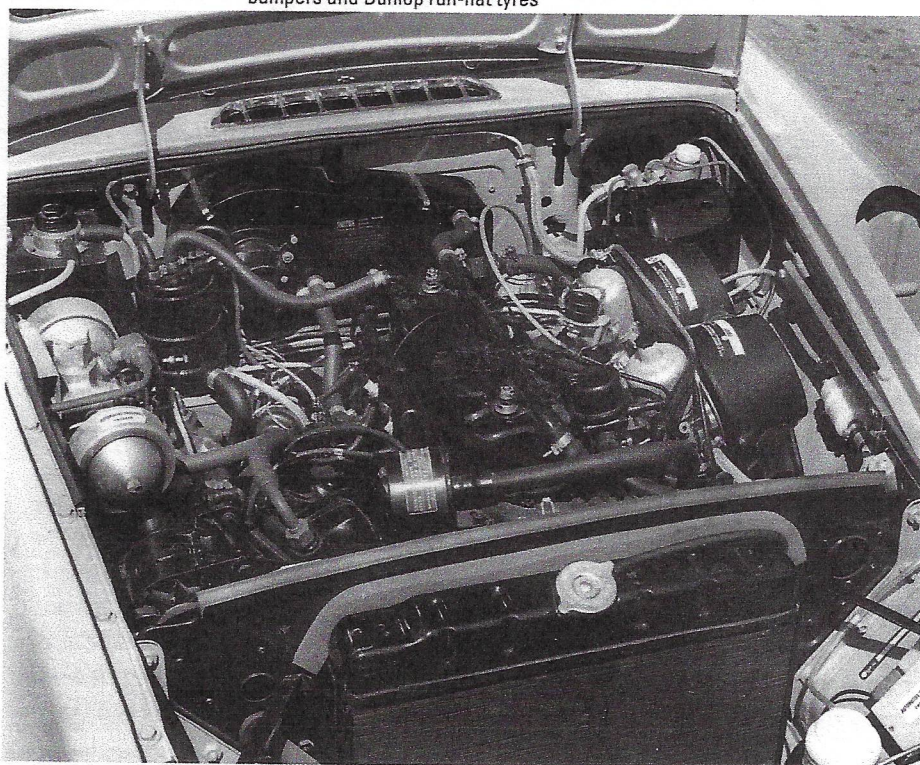
Safety systems vehicle 1 (SSV 1) ready for the Transpo '72 at Dulles Airport, Washington DC



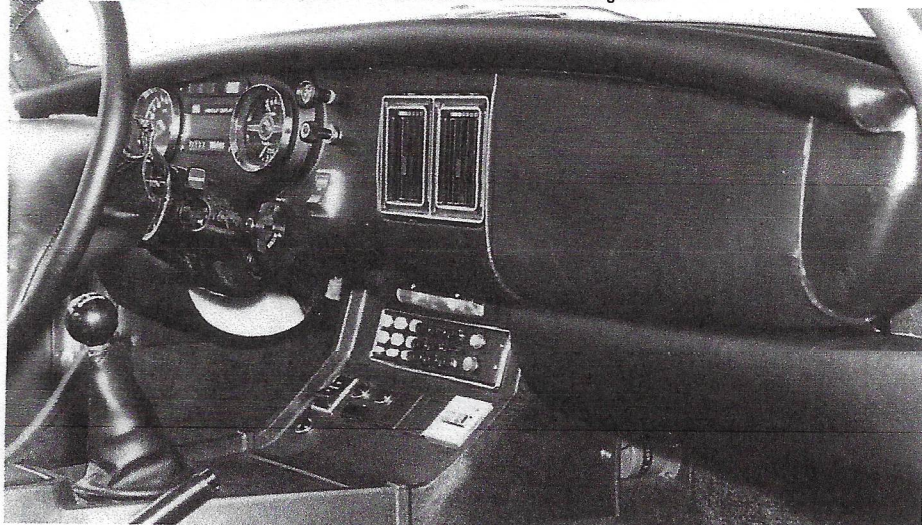
SSV1, with its panoramic mirror, low-soft round nose pedestrian protection bumpers and Dunlop run-flat tyres

when crash testing, first a 5mph dead stop with no lighting or engine damage problems and later 30mph barrier tests meant considerable redesign. In addition, the pendulum test, at bumper heights of 16-20 inches based on American cars, was too high for the MGB and Midget. This involved new bumpers and slightly raising the cars, with more capability of energy absorption – hence the rubber bumper cars of 1975 onwards.

In the middle of these safety change programmes, the US Government and the National Highway Safety Association had organised an exhibition to show joint proposals with Europe for improved vehicle systems. MG Design were allocated the task of providing as many safety features as possible in a small car – our GT being available. Triumph were now part of the group and their 2000 saloon was to be also used. The MGB GT Safety Systems Vehicle contained ride levelling and roll suspension with anti-brake lock control from Lockheed. Dunlop provided the Denovo run-flat tyres developed for production at the time. I went to Italy to get the latest airbag deployment system in a tourer and this was set up in the GT with a modified soft fascia panel which also had a head up projected speedo reading display on the windscreen. The body was foam filled in the sills, and wing parts with additional door stiffening to reduce intrusion in side impacts. Soft low bumpers to absorb energy were made as a proposal to hit pedestrians below the knee and tip them over the bonnet instead of hitting



SSV1 under bonnet – showing suspension control and roll/ride levelling units



SSV1 Airbag and knee protection mounting collapsing column – impact sensor – under knee roll and British Leyland Automatic start 'Test' unit



SSV1 at British Leyland/Triumph preview show at Handley Studio Centre ready for the Transpo '72 show. Don Hayter demonstrates the automatically applied seat belt.

above, breaking the leg and then running over them! Wide angle rear vision was a USA proposal to meet six lane highway conditions – which the normal GT could not meet – so a roof mounted periscope mirror system was fitted. An automatically applied safety belt system was also tried and a two level brake stop light system to differentiate between normal check braking and an emergency stop. The Triumph designed British Leyland Automatic Safety Test, which checked the driver's reaction capability before ignition could be activated, was our drink/drive provision.

Dulles Airport Transpo 1972 brought all these European and American safety cars together, culminating, eventually, after negotiation, in the introduction of many systems in the cars of today.

The MG Development of crash testing the B and Midget at MIRA led to the design and build of an Abingdon crash facility so that compliance, support and performance for the American market could be maintained. The great shame was that because the American market volume was so much greater, the British and European market cars had to use the same body

specification for cost reasons. Only the emissions versions could be separated. The progressively stiffer emissions standards, particularly in California, had reduced the MGB to 74bhp with the catalysts, so a new power unit with an engine management system was needed. The V8 version had promise but power unit supply problems made the production short lived. The new O-Series programme with fuel injection

was complete and all testing ready by 1980 for checking to production standards, but not approved. Company politics, including Triumph pressure to push the TR7 abroad, finally brought MG closure and final production of the MGB.

The last special edition tourers to, at least, give the American market some changes were the final production at Abingdon after 50 years.



MGB being inspected after the 30mph crash test

Cam Timing for Basic Stock MGA and MGB Engines

Submitted by Bruce Mann, Written by Rob Medynski of British Vacuum Unit New Hampshire.

Over the years I have helped many customers with running problems after they had replaced the timing chain, cam, or timing gears. Anyone who ever had an MGA or MGB "B" series engine apart is familiar with the difficulty aligning the timing marks on the cam timing gears.

The proper way to check the cam timing is to use a degree wheel before the engine is assembled and installed in the car. If you're just replacing the timing cover seal and timing chain, a quick way is to check the cam timing is to check the valve movement to the TDC mark on the crank. As the exhaust valve is just about to close, the intake valve is just opening. This equal distance is valve overlap.

If you carefully check that both valves are at equal distance, the exhaust valve is just about to close and intake valve just started to open the crank should be at TDC.

If you're off a tooth, the TDC mark will most likely be 10 or more degrees before or after the TDC mark on the crank pulley.

A quick trick before you remove the timing chain and gears is to mark the upper timing gear towards the top of the gear next to an outer chain link and mark the crank gear towards the lower part next to the outer chain link, then count how many outer chain links are between the two marks include the outer link on the gear mark.

This usually assures the timing is where the factory had set the timing before you pulled the timing gears off.

Once I'm confident the timing is correct, either by degree or by checking the valve overlap, and assuming the engine is in the car, I often carefully remove the timing gears and install a 4-degree offset key on the cam. Advancing the cam shifts the torque and power down 1000 RPMs, but limits the high RPMs. In other words, if the power range was 2000 to 5500 RPMs with the 4-degree advanced cam, the power range will now be around 1000 to 4500 RPMs. This can increase the overall performance, especially if you have a 5-speed or changed the rear gears for highway speeds and don't usually run the engine up to the red line. Another benefit is advancing the cam 4

degrees reduces combustion chamber heat that transfers to the oil cooling the pistons. Reduced oil temperature maintains oil viscosity giving better bearing protection.

Overall advanced cam timing improves cooling, torque, mileage, and performance under 4500 RPMs where most of us drive our cars.

Rule of thumb is only advance or retard a cam 4 degrees from straight up cam timing. Most cam timing before the 1970s is what we call straight up cam timing.

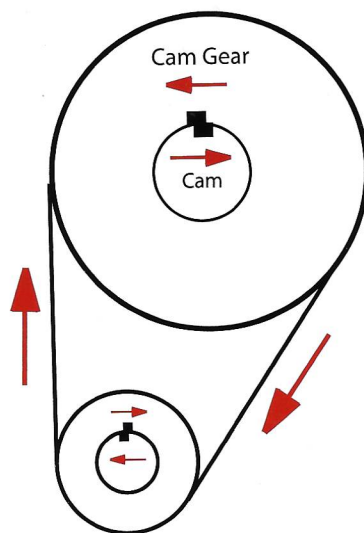
By early 1970s most engines are 4 degrees retarded. These engines can be advanced 4 degrees to straight up cam timing to have the performance of the 1960s; and another 4 degrees to be set to what we call 4 degrees advanced for the extra low end performance.

If you're installing a new cam, check with the manufacturer if it has built in advanced cam timing.

The spec card supplied with the new cam indicates the RPM range and can often be advanced 4 degrees to improve low end performance for your driving habits. •

Advance Cam with Offset Cam or Crank Key

MGA engines are straight up cam timing and can only be moved 4 degrees advanced or retarded. MGB engines are straight up to 1971. 1972-1980 18V engines are 4 degrees retarded and can be moved up to 8 degrees advanced.



First Option

Install offset cam key so cam is ahead of rotation "advanced." Moss and other suppliers sell offset cam keys, usually sold by 2,4,6, and 8 degrees.

Second Option

Install offset crank key so crank gear is ahead of crank "rotation" advanced. Note: Chevy small block 4 degree offset key is the correct width, but needs length, height, and depth trimmed to fit. First Option is best!



We invite you to join the largest club in the area dedicated to British car enthusiasts.

Your membership benefits include:

- ***You get invited to all club events. Including these three great parties:***
 - ***The after Christmas celebration***
 - ***The “Chilly Run”***
 - ***The summer pool party***
- ***You get the club’s newsletter***
- ***You get access to the club’s extensive tool chest***
- ***Our monthly meeting is held at very nice restaurant and each meeting includes a tech session. Johnny Dees Lounge 1705 Amuskai Rd Loch Raven, MD (First Tuesday of the month)***
- ***We also host an annual tech session Saturday hosted by the club’s tech guru.***
- ***MGOB sponsors the annual “Get the Dust-Off Rallye” the first Sunday in May.***
- ***You can join us at MG’s on the Rocks. This is the oldest continuously running British car show in the world! Celebrating our 42 year in 2021!***

All this for \$20 per year!

Visit us on the web: MGsofBaltimore.org or Find us on Facebook

Please complete the form on the next page and mail it with a cheque made payable to MGOB to:

**Kathy Liddick
5237 Glen Arm Road
Glen Arm, MD 21057**



MGs of Baltimore Ltd. Membership Registration

Please fill out the registration form.

You'll want to enjoy all the benefits of membership as listed on the previous page!

Your Name (MGing is a family activity, Please include those of family members)	
Address	
City/State/Zip	
Contact Number	
e-mail Address	
MG's or Other British Cars Owned	
Areas of interest: Technical, Rallyes, Social, Restoration	

Dues for MGOB are a blazing \$20 Bucks a year. (January through December)

Mail your check made out to: MG's of Baltimore Ltd.

To: Kathy Liddick: 5237 Glen Arm Road, Glen Arm, MD 21057



**NORTH AMERICAN
MGA REGISTER**

Tools Available for Club Members Contact Eric Salminen 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

OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

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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.

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

JANUARY

3rd

Club Meeting

7th

After the Holidays Party (Federal Armored Car Museum)

FEBRUARY

7th

Club Meeting

19th

"Chilly Run" – Home of the Jeffersons

MARCH

7th

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



North American MGB Register

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

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.

