



# *ON THE MARQUE*

The Official Publication of the San Diego MG Club



Cover Photo; Pat Garity's MG Td Competition. Photo by Pat Garity.

### IN THIS ISSUE OF OTM

3/ From the Gavel	14/ Quarantine Projects
4/ From The Editor/ Good Old days	17/ For Sale
5/ Recipe	18/ Regalia
6/ Cecil Kimber	19/ Endnote
11/ Members MG's	
12/ Vegas Baby	

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### **Meetings (Currently on Hold)**

General membership meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. The meeting officially begins at 7:30 P.M. at the Marie Callender's Restaurant, 6950 Alvarado Road, San Diego (adjacent to Interstate 8 just west of 70th Street exit). People start arriving at 6:30 P.M. to enjoy a bite to eat and socializing with other members before the meeting starts. E-Board meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month at Mimi's Café Mira Mesa. Members are welcome to attend and watch your E-Board in action.

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# **From the Gavel**

**By Andy Lincoln**

Greetings, San Diego MG Club. I hope you all are safe and happy at home during the special circumstances of our COVID-19 stay-at-home order. Remember, and I will demonstrate this in my article, that home includes the garage! So this is a fine time to get caught up on the projects you've been meaning to do on your MGs. That could include repairs, upgrades, or just a wash and wax! Paul Konkle's shop and a few of our on-line retailers (Basil Adams, Steve Christensen, LBC Car Co, BPNW, British Wiring, World-Wide Imports) are still open. Since Moss is closed, some of the parts we would normally get in a day or two aren't available, so you might have to make-do-and-mend. That can be fun also.

Although we must practice social distancing, we can call, email, or use social media to keep connected with each other. I recently had a really nice chat with the Professor Pat Garity about how to repair my rear axle.

This is a different time, and a difficult time, but we can make the best of it and still have fun with our MGs. They will fit quite a few groceries, so take them out on your essential journeys!

Safety Fast,

Andy

## **Meetings**

Dear Club Members, with the on-going social distancing and restaurant dine-in closures, we will not be able to have our May business meeting. The San Diego MG Club will follow the advice of our health care and elected leadership to determine when we can again safely meet. In the meantime, we welcome your connection through the Yahoo group email, Facebook group, and good, old-fashioned phone calls. Please feel free to reach out to the club leadership team if you need help with your cars, with parts, etc. and together we can probably help you. Also please remember that our local businesses are open, including shops and companies owned by members: they've been there for us, please be there for them. While Moss is closed, several of the other businesses (LBC, BPNW, OI Pharts Parts, Basil Adams, WorldWide Imports, British Wiring, etc., etc.) are open and helping the LBC community as best they can.

Regards Andy

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## **From the Editor**

Thanks to all whom came forward with content for the newsletter especially Peter Cook( an unusual look at Cecil Kimber's life) with two great articles and of course Andy, Pat etc. Stuck at home doing nothing for some reason seems to have left me with less time than when I was working so sorry this tome is a couple of days later than usual. I have managed to get on to some deferred maintenance to my Bronco but have yet to install the new dizzy, plugs and leads into the "C". In the meantime, stay safe and do not take any chances as I wish to see everyone hale and hearty when we can resume club activities.

Regards

Mark.

## **Oh, The Good Old Days!**

**Words by Maggie Conway**

Whilst pursuing old Newsletters, I ran across an exciting story that occurred before things were nice and neat, that is, between 1988 and earlier this year. Then-Secretary Colleen Scruggs relates the Club's abrupt change in business meeting venue, June 2, 1987: [Story slightly edited for space.]

"I parked directly in front of the building (at California Broiler for dinner before the meeting). I noticed one of our members frantically making phone calls; as I passed him, he said, 'The place is closed.' When my husband showed up, the three of us tried to figure out why they closed down without a word to our Club. As we waited, more and more bewildered members arrived! What a great turnout we had!

"After lengthy discussion, a call was made to the Princess of Wales Pub (Little Italy), and they welcomed us with open arms! We toured down there together! Adventure! The evening was not lost after all! The Princess of Wales owners invited us back. The food was great, and so was the beer!"





# Recipe

## Guinness Cake. A Quarantine Special.

### Ingredients

8 oz of butter  
1 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups of dark brown sugar  
4 eggs, lightly beaten.  
2 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups of flour  
2 teaspoons of allspice  
8 ounces of raisins  
8 ounces of sultanas (golden raisins)  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of candied fruit peel  
4 ounces of chopped walnuts  
6  $\frac{1}{2}$  fluid ounces of Guinness + 6 full bottles.

### Method

Preheat the oven to 325 deg F. Drink bottle of Guinness while waiting for oven to preheat.

Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs. Sift the flour and allspice and gradually fold in them into the butter, sugar and egg mixture. Add the raisins, candied peel and walnuts. Mix well and stir in 4 tablespoons of Guinness. Drink a bottle of Guinness to celebrate achievement.

Pour the mixture into a greased 7-inch round cake pan that is at least 3 inches high. Bake in the oven for one hour at 325 deg F then reduce the heat to 300 deg F and continue to bake for 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Celebrate getting the cake in the oven while tripping over the cat at your feet by drinking another bottle of Guinness, throw empty bottle at cat. Remove the cake from the oven and allow to cool. Drink another bottle of Guinness while waiting and apologize to the cat. Take cake out of the cake pan and turn it upside down. Prick the base of the cake in many places with a skewer and spoon in about 8 tablespoons of Guinness. Drink another bottle of Guinness because you can. Keep the cake upside down in an airtight container for 1 week before eating. Collapse onto the sofa with the cat and drink last bottle of Guinness. During the week pour more Guinness over it (cake not cat) from time to time until all 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounces have been used up.

Serve the cake right side up.

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# **Cecil Kimber's Record Collection**

**Words and Photos by Peter Cook**

**MGCC – Overseas Director.**

Visitors to Kimber House who climb the stairs to the offices above may sometimes notice a large, old, and somewhat tattered red folder. The folder is heavy and contains some twelve 78 rpm records. The inscription at the bottom shows the folder was supplied by Chas. Taphouse of Oxford. The folder was given to the club some time ago by one of CK's relatives. The title above is probably misleading, I think it may be reasonably asserted that CK had more than one folder, and more than twelve records amounting to thirteen tracks.

Taphouse and Russell Acott were the two main outlets for recorded and sheet music in Oxford. Those of a certain age will remember that although short of funds, wherever there was a record shop it was possible to visit and listen to records for free. In Oxford both shops allowed potential customers to listen to a maximum of three records in booths. I soon discovered that if it was an especially cold day that requesting three jazz tracks prolonged the use of the warm booths but raised quizzical eyebrows among the counter staff. The shop rule was a maximum of three people per booth. So popular was this arrangement that one often had to queue for a booth, especially on a Saturday. Having exhausted the patience of the staff and listened to records for which there were no funds to purchase, all would leave sheepishly to descend upon the other shop. Russell Acott's was based in the High Street, Oxford, Taphouse in Magdalen Street – both central locations. Modern trends in recorded music and the decline in demand for sheet music from the early 1980s were an enormous challenge for established music retailers. Acott's has survived after moving premises to outside the city and specialising in musical instruments. Taphouse was unable to meet the challenge and was wound up in 1986.



The records in CKs collection are all 78s – most single-sided (photo CK2). Until the early 1950s, records were made from a shellac compound using the secreted resin from the female *lac bug* cultivated in India and Thailand. While shellac had good insulating properties and was immune to damp, it was heavy. The other serious limitation was the length of sound which could be placed on a disc, much classical music was at a disadvantage, but popular and music-hall recordings were ideal for this low fidelity format. Also popular were short operatic pieces where the inability to fully capture the orchestral backing was compensated for by the singer being heard more clearly and loudly. Both Caruso – who first recorded in 1902 – Chaliapin, and the Australian soprano Dame Nellie Melba's recordings boosted sales of both records and home playing equipment. To give an idea of the limitation of length, Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony which is about 35 minutes long, was available in the 1930s – but on eight separate discs! To find room for Wagner's *Ring Cycle* would have required an extra room, probably. The high fidelity 33 rpm long player introduced in 1948 for the first time enabled many classical compositions to be played from one disc.

Some of CKs recordings date from the acoustic era., when the process to capture the sound for a master disc was entirely physical. Some discs date from 1925 when electronic recording started with Western Electric's new hybrid system. Although the process was still essentially acoustic in that a master die pressed a groove onto shellac, microphones and some electronic manipulation was possible before the sound was committed to the dies. This was the birth of the 'sound engineer' and of different styles of musical presentation – crooning and the big band sound for example. Discs started to replace cylinders by 1900, and because discs needed less storage space as well as other advantages, the 78 disc was the dominant medium by the end of the First World War. The later vinyl 45s and LPs were post-WWII developments.

With the hybrid recording system came an almost reverse process – the record player or gramophone. The electrical speaker was the approximate reverse of the microphone. Fidelity was much improved. We know that CK was paid a good salary by his employer, William Morris, so there is a very good chance that CK had bought one of the expensive, modern radiograms available in the 1930s and which would have given fairly decent fidelity.

All the classical recordings dealt with here are available on YouTube, most of the non-classical are also available either on YouTube or elsewhere. While the precise recording may not be available, the singer's voice with a different recording can usually be found.

### **Cecil Kimber's Records – caveats.**

The collection may be divided into popular and light classic. As with many attempts to write an account based on sparse information (in this instance just the discs), what is absent may tell us something as well as what is present. What is absent in the CK record collection is jazz and music hall. Both mediums were greatly popular between the wars but regarded as suspect in solidly middle-class homes.

Plenty of jazz recordings were available. The Dixieland Jazz Band with Louis Armstrong on trumpet first recorded before WWI, many others followed in the 1920s and 1930s. However, jazz linked to a number of disreputable associations in the minds of many middle-class people: it was racially liberal, was best enjoyed live in darkened night clubs where men and women mixed more freely, and where alcohol and drugs may have been available. It also encouraged 'wild' dancing. It was a world away from the concert hall and a symphonic orchestra. For many parents of teenage children early rock 'n roll posed similar threats to their off-springs' (apparent) innocence.

The second absence is that of music-hall singers and performers. These were extremely popular songs and the recordings corresponded to those which many had seen performed live in the often-raucous atmosphere of the music halls. The songs often mocked the upper and middle classes, dwelt on sentimental aspects of working-class life, and frequently used *double entendres* and sexual innuendo. Recording artists spanning CK's adult lifetime included such names as Albert Chevalier, *My Old Dutch* (a song about an elderly couple separated when forced into a workhouse), George Formby, *When I'm Cleaning Windows* (voyeurism), Ella Shields, *Burlington Bertie from Bow* (an aristocratic idler), and the most popular of all, Marie Lloyd with *A Little Bit of What You Fancy Does You Good* (sex), and *She Sits Among the Cabbages and Peas* (pees!).

### **The records**

Taking the first group – light classical – we start with Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* (1842). It was popularised when Queen Victoria's daughter, Princess Victoria chose it for her wedding when she married Prince Frederick IV of Prussia in 1856. CK's choice of this piece is unsurprising. In the German early romantic tradition it has a memorable and pleasing melody. Taken from Mendelssohn's music for *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the piece accompanied Christian and secular marriage services across the globe, but latterly is heard less at weddings as modern trends for more bespoke ceremonies have gained pace. While CK's domestic life has been described as 'difficult' and his daughter stated that "... emotionally my parents were poles apart", for most the *Wedding March* brings back happy memories.



The next three discs in CK's collection are connected: Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite*: – *Death of Aase*, *Morning Mood*, *Anitra's Dance*, and *Dance in the Hall of the Mountain King*. All four pieces were and remain very popular, especially among those who like their classical music to have a melody and to conform to the traditions of European romantic composition. All are also an ideal length for the limitations of the post-1925 78s.



Eduard Greig wrote the Peer Gynt Suite for fellow Norwegian, playwright Henrik Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt*, premiered in 1876. *Aase*, *Anitra's Dance*, *Dance in the Hall of the Mountain King*, and *Morning Mood* are short pieces taken from a composition which is about ninety minutes long and originally consisted of 26 parts. *Aase* is Peer's mother and the music is meant to comfort her as she approaches death. For a long time *The Death of Aase* was the most popular of the 26 pieces in the *Suite*; less so today. It is both sombre and melodic, and is somewhat minimalist for the era. It has been said that in many respects *Aase* is the forerunner of Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* composed in 1939.

*Morning Mood* from the same suite reflects the part in the play when Peer has been stranded in the Moroccan desert by his 'friends', and wakes up at dawn only to find that he is surrounded by a group of aggressive monkeys which he has to fend off with a stick. At four minutes long, the piece is unusual in that the climax occurs early on, reflecting the sunrise and subsequent activity. The main melody alternates between flute and oboe. It remains very popular.

*Anitra's Dance* follows *Morning Mood* in that Peer has fended off the monkeys and meets a Bedouin chief in the hot Moroccan desert. He is very taken with the chief's daughter Anitra who dances enticingly for him. The instruction for the orchestra on the score is *Tempo di Mazurka*. *Dance in the Hall of the Mountain King* is both widely known and has achieved iconic status due to its use in films, and its rearrangement for - oddly - heavy metal bands. Peer stands in the large hall in front of the king and is surrounded by gnomes, trolls, and goblins. However, as with many artistic ventures, Greig's over-subtle intentions may well have been missed by many audiences. Greig wrote of his own composition:

"I have written something that so reeks of cowpats, ultra-Norwegianism ... that I can't bear to hear it, though I hope that the irony will make itself felt".

As the topic is classical music, it is worth bearing in mind that as with all communities, the classical music world - both players and audiences - have their idiosyncratic conventions, including humour. For some reason I have never understood, just as rock music has its jokes about drummers and base players, so the classical world has jokes about viola players:

Q. Why are viola players like teenagers?

A. They come in late, and have usually lost the key.

CK's next disc for consideration is the *Miseréré* from *Il Traviatore* sung by Miss Alvena Yarrow and Mister Ernest Pike. Neither name will mean much to anybody who reads this, and for a good reason. Until the mid-1920s recording artists would use a multitude of names in order to surreptitiously break their contracts (probably the only advantage inherent in the poor sound reproduction), or, for reputational reasons, to record in *genres* they did not wish to be associated with. Eleanor Jones-Hudson (1874-1946) a.k.a. Alvena Yarrow was a Welsh soprano who used a total of 16 names throughout her career. Ernest Pike (1871-1936), his real name, used a total of 19 pseudonyms. Peter Dawson, the noted Australian baritone used 30 names as a singer, and another 9 as a composer. There is no parallel to this in today's music communities.



The *Miseréré* occurs in the final act of Verdi's opera, entitled *Punishment*. This is classic operatic pathos: the hero is in prison and 'Leonora attempts to free him by begging di Luna for mercy and offers herself in place of her lover, but secretly swallows poison from her ring in order to die before di Luna can possess her'. This is pretty well the gloomiest disc in the whole collection.

This is one of the earliest recordings in CK's record folder. It was recorded in 1905 using a full acoustic system and may have been manufactured much later, but if recorded acoustically no amount of manipulation will alter the limitations of the original recording. A superb recording of this piece by Maria Callas is available on Youtube.



The next of CK's records is J.S. Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in C Minor* (CK8). This is part of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, a collection of preludes and fugues in all twenty-four major and minor keys. Bach wrote them for the experienced keyboard player, hence they are technically challenging in that all fingers of both hands are kept busy as essentially the fugue is a melody overlaid with a variation of the same melody. For the listener Bach's fugues can be contemplative, so, unsurprisingly, they are frequently played in churches before a service or as a concert. Although the clavier is stated, at the time it was a generic name for any keyboard instrument, including the organ. CK's version is piano. This particular piece has always been popular.



The next of CK's records is *Incidental Music from Monsieur Beaucaire (Intermezzo & Leit Motif)* by André Massager. Premiered in Birmingham in 1919 this three-act comic opera is based upon a novel of 1900. Much of the music is in waltz-time, so that may explain some of its popularity. There is a good chance that CK actually saw this opera, perhaps in Oxford at the New Theatre (which like New College in Oxford is not very 'new'). The basic plot is set in Bath, and involves the King of France's son posing as a barber and therefore being misunderstood by everyone until – as much comical drama does – he is revealed in the final few minutes to be of French nobility. The plot involves cheating at cards, love rivalry, and duels. Generally the French characters are clever and attractive; the English characters are fools and cheats. It is no surprise therefore that the opera is rarely performed in the UK, but remains a staple of opera in France.



The final of CK's records in the light classical category is Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, referred to as No. 8, or sometimes No. 7 (CK10). The *Unfinished* has only two movements, whereas four was then the norm. There is much speculation as to why Schubert abandoned his symphony. A musical explanation is that the *meter* or regularity of beats is the same for the two movements, and for the planned third movement. Three movements in the same *meter* would normally rule it out as a symphony. Rather like a novelist getting half-way through his book and realising that the plot has serious holes in it and a complete re-write is needed, better to abandon and start something else. Another explanation given is that Schubert was first diagnosed with syphilis while composing the *Unfinished*, but as he went on to compose much else this seems unreliable. Perhaps it remains popular precisely because it is not a symphony but has two similar movements which are both melodic and contain low-level syncopation.



We now move to CK's non-classical records. The first two can be dealt with together as they are both Wurlitzer pieces by the same organist, Jessie Crawford (CK11&12). *Russian Lullaby* was composed by Irving Berlin and *At Sundown* by Walter Donaldson. Jessie Crawford (1895-1962) was abandoned to an orphanage in California at 12 months, but managed to teach himself to play the cornet and eventually the organ. Initially a cinema organist in the silent film era, he gravitated to recording and concerts as the 'talkies' came in from 1926. His first instrument was the Wurlitzer, enormously popular, in part because of its versatility compared to conventional organs and pianos, but it was a spectacle in its own right – usually rising from the floor in front of the cinema curtains. It was also technically 'modern'. Most large cinemas had a Wurlitzer or an imitation until after WWII. Crawford's repertoire was considerable, and many of his recordings may be heard on: <http://theatreorgans.com/southerncross/Radiogram/ListeningRoom/thelisteningroom-crawfords.htm>

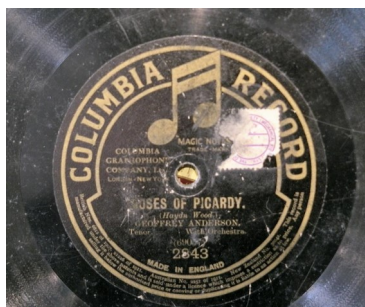


At least one cinema in Oxford had a Wurlitzer where CK may have heard some of Crawford's compositions and treatments, but Crawford also toured extensively, especially in the UK in the 1930s. He enjoyed sell-out concerts at the Leicester Square Empire. Embracing the modern, Crawford switched to the new Hammond organ in the 1930s. The Wurlitzer is one of those music forms which had a popularity somewhat baffling to today's music audiences.

CK's next record *Smoke Clouds* sung by Basil Lloyd is pretty obscure. Nothing has been found about the singer, but the song was composed by Herman Darewski. Darewski, originally from Minsk where his father was a musician settled in London and became both composer and conductor of light music. Two of his other songs are 'Ours is a Nice 'Ouse Ours Is' and the WWI song 'Sister Suzie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers' – both best sung sober I'd guess. *Smoke Clouds* was written for a review entitled *Topsy Turvy* (1915) which ran for eighty-eight performances at the Leicester Square Empire. CK may have seen the review either in London or on tour in Oxford.



CK's penultimate record is *Roses of Picardy* sung by Geoffrey Anderson, recorded in



1918 (CK14). Composer Hayden Wood got the idea for the tune after familiarising himself with the Somme battlefields. Fred Weatherly provided the lyrics and had in mind a particular D'Oyly Carte soprano to record it, although most recordings were by tenors. The first recording was in 1916, so CK's record is one of the early ones. The song is essentially about yearning and loss; the fleeting encounter between a soldier and a French woman in the chaos of war which comes to nothing. No trace of Geoffrey Anderson (if that was his name) has been found. The song was very popular among British soldiers and has subsequently been recorded hundreds of times and in many languages. After its release the song sold 50,000 copies of sheet music each month. It was often used after 1918 as an aid to treating shell-shock. One of the most recent recording of the song is by the British

tenor Alfie Boe, who recorded it to be used in *Downton Abbey* in 2013.

We come to the last of CK's record collection, Harry Lauder's *The Wedding of Sandy McNab* recorded in 1909. Sir Harry Lauder (1870-1950) was a Scottish singer and comedian in the vaudeville tradition. He started his working life as a coal miner. Winston Churchill described him as "Scotland's greatest ambassador". He was knighted in 1919 for services to the war effort. Lauder cultivated a stage presence of the ever-jovial Scotsman with his kilt, sporran, tam o'shanter, and cromach (stick). Bagpipes were absent. Perhaps he was aware of the following:

Q. What makes a true gentleman?

A. A man who CAN play the bagpipes, but refrains from doing so.

Lauder's three best selling songs are *I Love a Lassie*, *Roamin' in the Gloamin'*, and, after his only son was killed on the Somme, (*Keep right on to*) *The End of the Road*



Lauder became enormously popular throughout the English-speaking world. While many of his songs were humorous, unlike many music hall entertainers his songs were never smutty. *The Wedding of Sandy McNab* is about a man who appears to have been destined for bachelorhood, has managed to be 'hooked' by a perhaps naïve young woman, and recounts some of the wedding reception. Some words from the narrated part of the song follow:

"Somebody objected to McNab sitting with his arms around the bride's neck ... the next thing I saw, McNab was sitting with his arms around the neck of a bottle" ... (and the best man refuses to make a speech saying) "Mum's the word. Stick to a pal when he's down".

Speculation of course, but one could wonder, on the basis of what we do know about CK's domestic life, whether a song about an inauspicious marriage was more than three minutes of humour for the n who founded MG.

As I stated at the start of this article, there is a good chance that we have a snapshot of Cecil Kimber's musical tastes rather than anything like the full picture. The red folder at the top of the Kimber House stairs may well be just one of many which were in the Kimber household. On the basis of the twelve discs, all we can say is that they likely reflect the tastes of a respectable middle-class household of the era. It is good though that someone connected to the Kimber family did think of the MGCC when deciding what to do with a collection which is now almost unplayable. I suspect though that the reason they have been on a table on the upper landing for some time, is due to our very able archivist Peter Neal being unable to find an appropriate spot in among the factory records, repair manuals, badges and the like. Also, as far as I am aware, Kimber House has no equipment capable of playing these discs.



## Members and their Mg's

TJ Moran has been busy on his MGA working on the seats for his MGA.

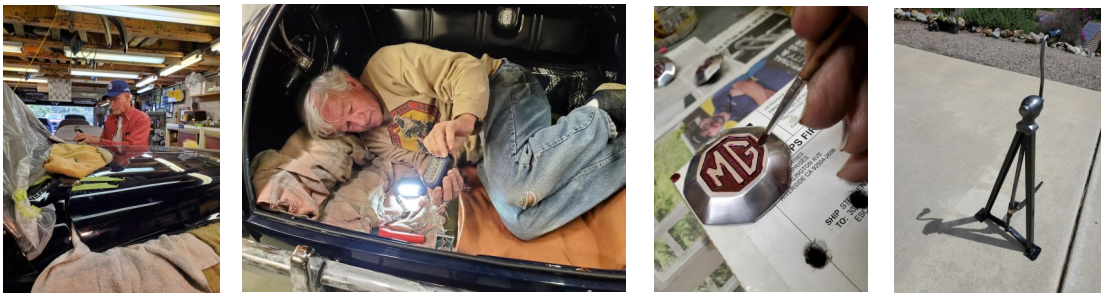


TJ has done such a beautiful work on his other MG's I cannot wait to see the finished result on his MGA.

Miles Warren with the help of Robert Nobles has made some progress on his MGC



Steve Kirby has been working on Millicent Rose and yes it looks like a body will fit in the boot.



Aligning the bonnet

Going to extremes to adjust the boot latch.

Important stuff.

A nice clean jack.



With the help of Paul Konkle and Robert Nobles from British Auto Repair James MacIndoe's MGA Coupe is all tickety boo again.

## Vegas Baby

### Words and Photos By Andy Lincoln

In early January 2020, when COVID-19 was a news story and seemed unlikely to touch our lives, I hatched a cunning plan. I was scheduled to visit Nellis AFB for a business meeting on a Monday morning, and I knew that I wanted to drive one of my MGs to Calgary in late June for MG2020. I'd driven both of my cars to Los Angeles before, but not really gone further afield than that (in spite of winning the high mileage award two years running! Haha). Also, my favorite brother-in-law within driving distance, Keith, was living in Henderson NV while my sister Paula was working in Denver and Texas and rarely able to get back to Nevada. So, I thought, Keith was unsupervised, I was unencumbered, and therefore I could have an Adventure. I would drive my blue 65 MGB (Blue Jay) to Henderson, have a few libations with Keith, go to Nellis, then drive to Los Angeles for another business trip, and then back home for the weekend. What could be simpler and more enjoyable than that? I picked the blue 65 MGB rather than the red 67 MGB/GT because I reckoned it was the more reliable of the two cars. I think you may see where this is going...

My Sunday drive out to Las Vegas was both wonderful and bitterly cold. In the spirit of Adventure, I had not really checked the temperature in the mountain passes, and to my surprise, my UK sourced red MG jacket was just not really up to the task of 75 mph motoring, without a convertible top, above the snow line, in the evening. By the end, I had on two wooly hats, gloves, a fleece, the red jacket, a half tonneau, the heat full blast, and a blanket on my legs. I did warm up after about an hour at Keith's house. The car ran flawlessly in 4<sup>th</sup> overdrive at about 75 mph most of the way. I received quite a few thumbs up from those I passed or who passed me. So far, it was a great adventure!



The next morning, I drove to Nellis in a suit and tie, and decided to buy gas before going on base. The first inkling that something was wrong was when my shoes were slipping on the heel mat, and then were wet when I got out of the car?! Hmmm, the rear half of my dual brake master cylinder was low, and its contents were apparently on the floor mat. That is not good... And brake fluid (DOT 5 Silicon) wasn't in my stash. Well, I cleaned my shoes, the mat, and filled the tank while thinking furiously all the rest of the way to the visitor center. The meeting was fine, no drama, and I did not have to confess my M/C incontinence to my colleagues or the customer. I managed to buy some DOT 5 brake fluid before driving back to Henderson. After consultation with Paul Konkle, I decided that it would be do-able but not advisable to mix it up on the freeway back to San Diego with 1/2 of a Master Cylinder. Fortunately, Keith saw the funny side of this predicament, and more to the point, realized that he would STILL be unsupervised the next weekend if I left the car in his garage and came back to fix it. I rented a car and used it to get home, go to Los Angeles and then back to Las Vegas the next weekend. I thought carefully about what I needed, ordering all the parts from Paul. I put together an expanded tool kit, including a floor jack, axle stands, spare nuts & bolts, etc. I was sure that it would all fit in the boot of the MGB when I was done. If not, there was always the passenger seat! Leaving San Diego at 5 am, I was working on the car by 10:30 am. I quickly found there was some black sludge in both halves of the reservoir, so I think it was wise not to chance a long drive home when the front brakes could also fail. I'm sure I could change the M/C faster next time, but I'd forgotten a few of the tricks in the 5+ years this one had lasted. I finally had to unbolt the pedal box so that I could get the M/C fittings undone. Fortunately, I did not have to rebleed the clutch, a pig of a job. It took all day, finishing at 5 pm. Just in time for a celebratory drive when it seemed that the overdrive wouldn't. But it was late. I was cold, hungry, and thirsty and Keith had patiently helped me most of the day. Time for a trip to a brew pub with food, in Keith's Range Rover that had a top and heat.



I left the next morning (Sunday, a week after I had originally set out) to drive home. Hmm, the overdrive still would not when the car was cold. After about 30 miles, it suddenly came on (and off, by the switch) and I had something new to think about on the drive home. I got about 1/3 of the way home when I switched out of overdrive up a grade and then was without it all the rest of the way home. Of course, it is not really advisable to drive for hours at 4,000 or 4,500 RPM, but I have to say the exhaust sounds really nice at those engine speeds. My engineering mind had me convinced that it was electrical by the time I got home. I did get some advice that it was probably oil pressure. I ordered a new solenoid coil, and I am pleased to say that it was the coil!



And now, with COVID-19, I probably will not get to drive an MG to Calgary in June. But I had an Adventure, and I know that MG is the hobby of car repair in unusual and exotic locations!



This last photo is from 2015, when I had first gotten the car back on the road. I had a habit of knocking the Peco exhaust off the header until DualTone muffler got busy with their welder.



## My Quarantine Projects

Words and Photos By Andy Lincoln

With all the stay-at-home orders, I decided to take advantage of some of my off-work hours to attend to several of the projects that I had planned for a year or more. It really ended up being a lot of fun and a lot of work. One of the more interesting aspects of this is that, with Moss closed, I had to repair a couple of things that normally I might replace or have done for me.

First, in February, Mark Shelley posted that he'd fitted the touring tank to his MGC and very kindly offered me his old standard size tank. My 67 MGB/GT "Cardinal" had apparently been jacked by the petrol tank at some point and the fuel gauge was useless as a result. I went to Marshall's to get a few spare captive nut clips and drove the car till it was just about empty. I then ran the remaining fuel through the pump until some spare gas cans. It wasn't too bad removing & replacing the tank, and I was able to move the float from Mark's tank with the sender from my old tank and verify that it ohm'd out properly. The GT had originally been sold in France before going to Tennessee and then Northern California. At some point, the tank had been replaced by something that was just made wrong in the filler inlet. To 'fix' the funny angles, the previous mechanic had cut the filler neck and used some extra hose. Wes Sisson offered a spare filler neck and brought it over! We had a good chat and he got the chance to test drive his recent repairs. Thanks to both Mark and Wes.



Next, the GT started having charging problems. I ended up taking a spare generator (for the GT), a spare alternator (for the 65 MGB), and some voltage regulators to a reputable shop in San Diego. The alternator and generator both looked beautiful when they came back but they said they could not adjust or fix the regulators. I looked the regulators over carefully, saw a broken connection on one and filed the points on the other. It worked great after that, but soon the 'new' generator started squealing. I took it back and they could not find anything wrong with it, though they replaced the rear bushing just in case. When I got it home, I realized that the fan & pulley were about 1/8" or 3/16" too far forward, so the belt from generator to water pump was cock-eyed. When I took the pulley off, I found that that the fan/pulley to bearing spacer was about 1/8" too wide. It was (suspiciously) the same as a spare I had from an old alternator (see pics below). Maybe they mixed something up in reassembly? Anyway, we were supposed to stay at home, so I fitted the spacer off another generator, and it has been fine ever since.



Since I was stuck at home and it was kind of expensive to get the generator rebuilt, I decided to try to rebuild my spare generator myself. The thing is, I do not have a lathe and you sort of need that to turn the commutator before replacing brushes. Steve Kirby later very kindly offered to let me use his lathe, but I found a work around. With a small Phillips head bit in a drill, and the front plate in a vise, by pressing extremely hard, I could get the armature to spin without wobbling. I then used 320, 600, and 800 grit wet-or-dry to turn and then polish the commutator. With new brushes, it worked as well as the professionally rebuilt one. Until it had to give up its bearing spacer to fix the problem described above.



Then I realized it was time to address the fact that my year-old fix for leaking rear hub seals on the 67 GT was not entirely successful. I was getting some weeping on the passenger side. I had noticed the Moss seal went in a little too easily the last time, and I was concerned that perhaps the axle 'cap' was worn, or the seal was undersize. So, I had bought both Moss and NAPA seals a while back. When I got it apart, it was clear that the seal was leaking from the center (Inner Diameter, ID) around the oil seal collar. The collar had some witness marks around the circumference from old seals and a couple of scratches that could have caused a minor leak. With Moss being shut, the oil seal collar is unavailable right now. I decided to polish out the marks, by hand (see, I do not have a lathe), even though I could have driven 30 minutes each way to Steve's house to use his lathe. Within about an hour, I had polished out the wear marks and scratches in a way that was even all around. I was lucky that this leak was so slight that my brake shoes and drums had not been contaminated, so I just had to put everything back together again. I also found that the NAPA seals have their lip about 0.090" more 'outboard' than the Moss seals, so I'm hoping that this "belts and braces" approach will keep that hub leak-free.





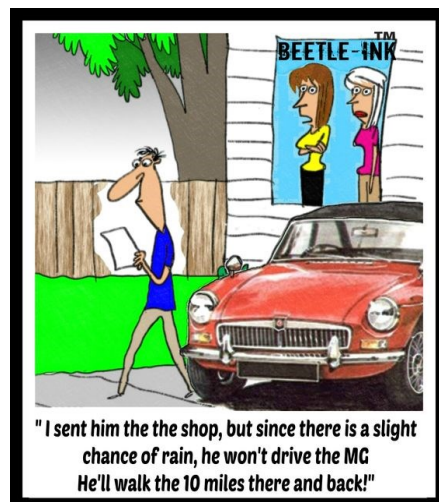
And then, I decided that it was time to fix the New-Old-Stock (NOS) Les Leston Steering Wheel to the 67 MGB/GT. I have never really liked the Nardi that came on the car and was able to find the NOS LL wheel and fitting kit about 2 years ago. Along the way, I would fit a new steering U-Joint using a spare I gotten from a friend and rebuilt some time ago. It all went well; except I did not realize that the splines on the spare U-Joint were thoroughly bugged until I was most of the way through. I eventually had to take apart the spare U-joint and rebuild the one that came off the car. Then I aligned the rack to the column with a homemade alignment tool, put it all back together, and put on the new wheel. I am off by a spline, so I'll have to fix that sometime soon.



And then finally, the 65 MGB has always worn vent windows from a 68-80 car, even though I had been able to replace the doors with the correct early style. I found, bought, and rebuilt early vent windows (with the curved handle) last year but was too busy to swap them out. I did that today, though it really ended up taking most of the day to get them swapped out and aligned.



My cars are a lot of work, a labor of love, I suppose. And a great distraction from all the craziness in the news these days. It has been fun doing these projects, but I am tired today!



Thanks Lou Galper.



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# For Sale

## 1978 MG Midget

Purchased it new from Kearny Mesa British. The roll bar was already installed at the time and it was never removed. One of the mechanics (Neil Anthony) at the dealership advised me to join the MG Club as soon as my warranty expired. So I and this car have been members of the MG Club since 1980. We have enjoyed our time together. It has been garaged since it arrived and has only 57,897 miles. It has been cared for and serviced over the years by wonderful MG Club members and thanks to them it is still happily on the road. Everything on this car is original including the paint. Only tires have been changed. The top is relatively new. Rubber bumpers are in great shape. Window rubber could use replacing. This little car is too much fun not to be driven on a regular basis and that unfortunately is getting to be more and more of a challenge for me. So if you are interested in a closer look I can be contacted by email at [2SLively@gmail.com](mailto:2SLively@gmail.com) The asking price is **\$8,900**. I will entertain offers but I feel this is a fair price given it's history and condition.

Many Thanks

Sharleen Lively





## Regalia

T-shirt	\$10-00
L/S & 3/4	\$15-00
Polo	\$20-00
Jacket	\$50-00
Cap	\$20-00
Lanyard	\$5-00
Licence Frame	\$15-00
Patch	\$5-00
Pin	\$5-00
Car Badge	\$30-00

Available at Club Meetings or contact Jim Timlin.





## **New Members**

Please welcome our new members for April: Jared and Erin English, who are the proud owners on a 1976 MGB! Sadly, we won't get to meet them in person until things begin to open up.

## **Endnote**

Thanks again to Peter Cook from the MGCC for an interesting, different and fun article about Cecil Kimber and to Andy Lincoln for his two articles. I did shamelessly poach our Facebook page for some content to fill a few holes so apologies for not asking ahead of time. The photo below is of Dave Allens new MGB nicely decorated by his wife by the lovely Norma. Do not forget to get out your cameras and photograph your MG projects and activities during shelter at home and send them in to decorate the Newsletter.

