

THE
LOUISIANA CENTRE
MG CAR CLUB

PRESENTS

THE

9TH ANNUAL

E. E. REYNOLDS MEMORIAL RALLYE

LOCATION: LAKESIDE SHOPPING CENTER, METAIRIE

DATE: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1986

TIME: DRIVERS' MEETING 1:00

FIRST CAR OUT 1:30

FEE: CLUBMEMBERS \$5.00

NON-MEMBERS \$7.00

Note: The rallye departs Metairie and returns across the Causeway. The toll is \$1.00 each way.

FROM THE PRESIDNET

The next two meetings are the most important meetings of the year. They will be for the nomination and election of officers for the coming year. Although there were many good nominations at the last meeting I urge you to ask yourself who would make the best officers for the coming year. If you feel that you would like one of the jobs, please nominate yourself. We would be glad to have you and I am sure you will get a second to your nomination. Equally as important is the election of our officers in November. There are no absentee ballots, we do not vote by mail, so may I urge each and everyone of you to attend the next two meetings.

Jim Van Sickle

MG MG

BEGIN HERE

Dear Sir or Madam:

Here are the answers to all your questions.

It is not that I am a rude sort of cuss, but only that I am so sick of answering the same queries again and again and again.

I am glad you ask them, of course. The fact that you can find enough energy in this lackadaisical civilization of ours to grind down the window of that funny looking tin box you call your automobile, and lean out (well, you stick your chin over the window-sill anyway) to ask questions is encouraging. You, at least, must feel however faintly, that a car can be something besides a rolling arm-chair, and that is a happy idea.

The fact that most of the time I cannot understand you, despite being a native American just like you, does not prevent my knowing through bitter experience, just what are all the things you want to know. By the way, I cannot understand you because instead of clearly saying (politely albeit firmly):

"Please Sir, what is the make of your automobile?"

You invariably mumble something like:

"Heybud. Whuzzit?" or: "Howfass'llitgo, hey Mac?"

Well, to get back to business, the question you usually ask first is:

"Wotteryer callit, huh?" or: "D'jer mak'er yerself Jack?" And the answer is:

"This is an M.G. car. Both engine and chassis were made by the same factory which is the M.G. Car Co."

If I don't solve a lot of new riddles that will now trouble you, I shall be due for another barrage of questions. Principal among them will be:

"What does 'M.G.' stand for?"

Well, M.G. doesn't stand for anything now-a-days. M.G. is a name like A.C. is a name for a well-known brand of spark plugs. Lots of foreign cars have letters for names.

Yes, it is a foreign car, and it is made in England.

Yes, England is near Europe.

Now, of course you will want to know how many cylinders the engine has and how fast it goes:

It is a ^{four}_{six} cylinder engine with overhead valves

driven thru rocker arms. It has two carburetors to give better distribution of fuel. The motor turns over very rapidly attaining about 5,000 r.p.m. with great ease in the gears, and giving a maximum road speed of at least 80 m.p.h. (ninety on your speedometer). It runs about 30 miles on a gallon of gas.

At this point you will say with feeling: (over)

PLEASE TURN OVER

"I wouldn't want to drive it any eighty!"

The proper comeback to that should be:

"Don't worry, my friend, I wouldn't let you try"

But I shall only close by saying:

"De gustibus non est disputandum, my dear Sir or Madam".

ADDENDA

Every now and then an original soul asks a new question. Here are a few assorted answers to help fill in any gaps:

1) No, it does NOT burn fuel-oil.

2) No, it is not a crime to drive a car from the wrong side.

3) Yes, it is what foreigners call a sports-car. It is designed to go from here to there faster than you can, and what is more important, a lot more safely.

4) It costs about fifteen hundred dollars delivered in Long Island City, N. Y., and if you want to buy one you can get it from G. C. Rand, Inc. I won't give you the address or you will think this is an ad.

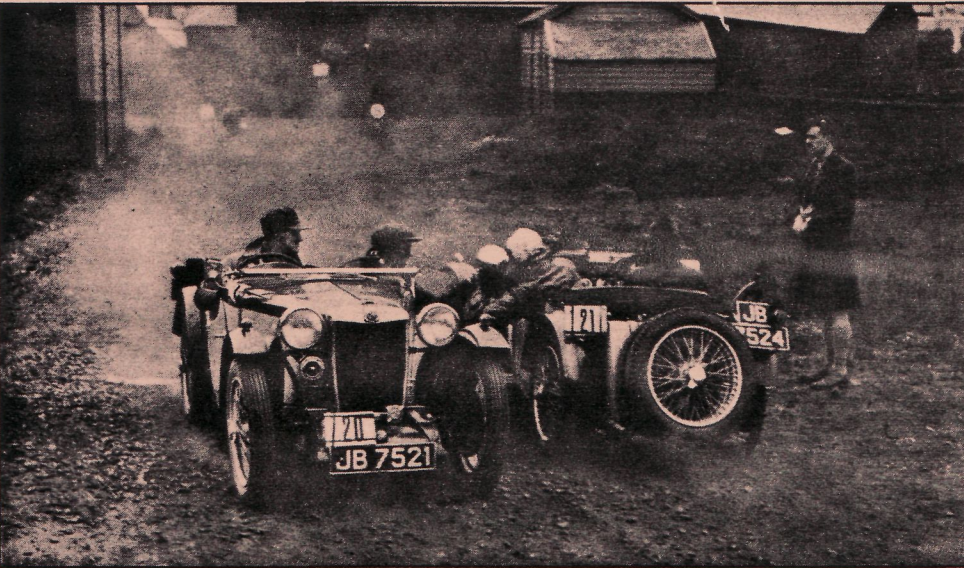
5) No, of course I knew you would refuse to accept initials for a name so here are some names to fit M.G. Take your choice:

- 1) Maurice Ginsberg.
- 2) Monkey Glands.
- 3) Mighty Good.



"Safety Fast!"

Printed for the convenience of members by The American Branch of the M.G. Car Club.

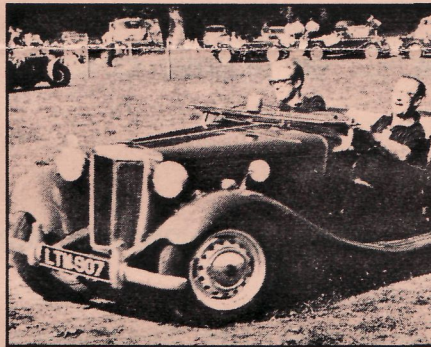


Above, two of the 'Cream Cracker' supercharged PB Midgets. Maurice Toulmin, on the left, is passengered by John Thornley, then service manager



Left, MG founder Cecil Kimber (left) with WR Morris

Below, John Thornley accompanies his son Peter in a TD Midget at an MG Car Club gymkhana at Beaulieu



again: I have conducted works conferences, with the unions, lying flat on my back on my office floor because it was the only way to relieve the pain. Eventually I asked the guts man to sort it out. He found I had, in effect, grown another appendix, so he tied it off. Two days later I coughed and blew it open, got peritonitis again. Then things got *really* complicated and they had to open me from top to bottom. The whole thing lasted about eighteen months and I don't know that, with MG, I never really worked again.

T&CC It might be considered a tragedy that your ill-health coincided with the period leading up to the Leyland takeover — when MG sorely needed a champion to counter Donald Stokes's bias towards Triumph ...

THORNLEY I... Well, yes... I think you're absolutely right... I was so

numbered, really, so bemused, out of touch — I doubt that I realised the seriousness of the situation ...

But I couldn't have done anything. The chips were down. I think I knew Abingdon's days were numbered from the time when I had the MGB body tooling bill from Pressed Steel. I knew then that BMC would never tool us another metal sports car. So I started looking into plastics, as you know, but my illness put a stop to that.

And really, the product became appalling when the full effect of the US regulations took hold: the things that went wrong — the auto choke pouring neat fuel onto the exhaust — I got all this feedback from Peter [Thornley's son, then working for a leading MG distributor in the USA] who was still trying to service the bloody things. They were hideous-looking by that time, anyway.

T&CC Are you saying it was an inevitable decision, to shut down Abingdon?

THORNLEY As seen from the middle, it was *absolutely* the right thing. There was no room for little offshoots like that, and we happened to come in the first batch. Really, Lord made a cock-up of it in the first place. Wolseley and Riley ought to have gone straight out the window, he should never have had any truck with Healey — he should have rationalised to a degree, immediately. Austin, Morris and MG would have been quite enough to keep BMC going.

T&CC The retail dealers would have gone mad if that had been done.

THORNLEY So you present them with a *fait accompli*, that's all. They'll do what you tell 'em. Look at the way they messed us up with the Midget. The Frogeye Sprite — the Buzzbox, as we called it at Abingdon — was the ultimate minimum sports car. Then when we put everything on it to make the MG version and get a substantial price differential, the idiot Austin distributors moaned that they couldn't sell *their* version. So we had to tart up the Sprite as well, and the bottom very nearly fell out of the market.

T&CC You accept the post-Abingdon MG models of today, do you?

THORNLEY Yes, surely — this is where MG came in, in 1923/4, isn't it? And it's early days yet. The EX-E indicates a line of thought — at least I *hope* they learn something from it, or it remains a bullshit wagon.

Overall, BL is in such a financial mess that it can't afford to fool around with real sports cars. So forget them for the time being and be grateful for what you've got. This is the best we can expect in the circumstances — and I'm mighty glad it really is such a good best, with some of them: they really are such thundering good motor-cars and they go like a bloody flash. The later they are, the better, so they're learning all the time.

T&CC And the 6R4 rally car?

THORNLEY Oh yes, I'd have been delighted with such a thing in my own time. I don't know that I'd be very interested in competing in today's rallies, though. I mean, Formula One has become an absolute nonsense, with vehicles that bear no resemblance to anything on the road, or anything that ever *could* be used on the road. And I'm afraid rally cars, cars like the 6R4, are going the same way.

The immediate problem is to pull BL back to financial viability, before you begin to think what to do with MG. After all, MGs will never be the quantity-production vehicle that will put BL on the right side of the hill, so we must be grateful that they still think of MG at all. If I were boss-man, I'm afraid I wouldn't be thinking of MG. ☹

THE LOUISIANA CENTRE OF THE MG CAR CLUB

NEWSLETTER

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Just a few tips on running th upcoming TSD rallye. Don't be afraid! A TSD rallye is much easier to run than most of the other rallies that we have sponsored. You should not worry about getting lost. All milage is given to you with pictures(we call them tulips) of what is expected of you at each action point.

Stay calm - there is some math involved. But, if you bring a calculator you've got it made. My best advice is - if you bring a calculator, try to have one that has a memory and a memory recall. It will make computing your correct milage very easy. You should also bring along the following: A clipboard, pencils, scratch paper and a WATCH.

Try to come earlier than the given registration time if you have any questions for the Rallye Master. And be sure that you ask all the questions that you might have about a TSD rallye before you begin. Have your gas tank full and be sure that you make the necessary comfort stops before begining the rallye. In this type of rallye there will not be much time to take "pit stops".

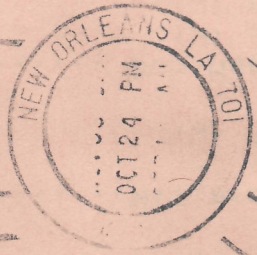
Remember - just take it easy, stay on course and have a good time. Try to make it to the end so that you can enjoy the rest of the afternoon with us.

AZETTE 



ORRIS 

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October 1984