

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FOR 1986

NOVEMBER

- NOV 9 - - - - - E. REYNOLDS MEMORIAL RALLYE
- DEC 2 - - - - - GENERAL MEETING
- DEC 13 - - - - - Christmas Party

OUR NEXT GENERAL MEETING WILL BE DECEMBER ~~13th~~ 2nd

AT 8:00 PM. THE MEETING PLACE WILL BE

SHONEY'S  
 3410 WILLIAMS BLVD  
 KENNER

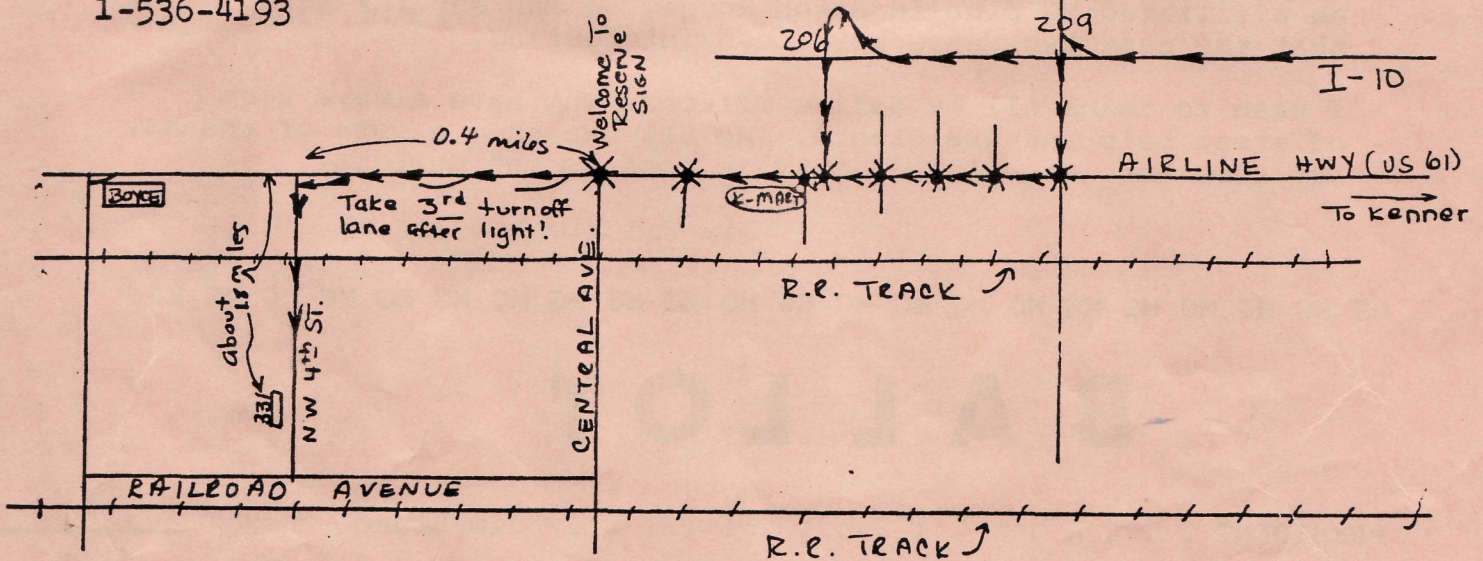
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE, SO PLEASE COME.

MG MG

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Snubbs & Peggy Bienvenu  
 1-536-4193

Take either Laplace Exit 209  
 or Belle Terre Exit 206



The Club will hold its annual Christmas Party on Saturday, December 13th at 7:00 pm at the home of Peggy and Snubbs Bienvenu, 331 NW 4th Street in Reserve. The Club will provide set-ups, so bring your own liquor (and designated driver). You are also asked to bring your favorite holiday party food. If you plan to attend, please contact Peggy Bienvenu at home or let her know at the meeting what dish you plan to bring. Plan to attend as a great time is always had by all. Also, we will announce officers for 1987 (gosh '87 already) and the winner of the Most Improved Car. Jim Van Sickel has already volunteered for Least Improved but he's in a tight race.

THE LOUISIANA CENTRE OF THE MG CAR CLUB

NEWSLETTER

OFFICERS FOR 1986

PRESIDENT .....Jim Van Sickle  
(H) 394-0484  
(W) 523-3931

VICE PRESIDENT .....Jack Kennedy  
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(W) 246-0905

SECRETARY-TREASURER .....Mike Cenac  
(H) 469-1882  
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MEMBER-AT-LARGE .....Willard Senn  
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NEWSLETTER EDITOR..... Bob Hughes  
(H) 831-7713  
(W) 888-7790

MG MG

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This will be my last letter to you as your president. Although I did not accomplish all the things that I wished, such as the New Orleans sports car council and the establishment of an affiliated MG club in Baton Rouge, I can say for sure that the past two years have been interesting.

I wish to thank all my fellow officers who have always been of great help and assistance. We all owe them a vote of thanks, but remember, the club is only as good as the members.

Jim Van Sickle

MG MG

**B A L L O T**

PRESIDENT . . . . . Jim Bruno \_\_\_\_\_

VICE-PRESIDENT . . . . . Snubbs Bienvenu \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY-TREASURER . . . . . Michael Cenac \_\_\_\_\_

NEWSLETTER EDITOR . . . . . Bob Hughes \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER-AT-LARGE . . . . . Kathy/John Winter \_\_\_\_\_

# MG TODAY

## A line-up of sporty saloons worthy of the Marque, concludes Brian Palmer

**T**HE MG name is almost a household word. Correction it is a household word. MG is synonymous with the sports car just as Hoover replaced the word vacuum cleaner in the English language. And that's a powerful promotional tool for any company to have; an asset if ever there was one.

So why do Austin Rover, current MG title holders, not make a sports car? The answer is that they do; several in fact. Not the open, wind-in-the-hair sort, I grant you, with only a pram-type hood to keep out the rain, but modern, fast, and good handling saloons that do the job as well as or even better. It took a foreign manufacturer to bury the old and bring in the new approach with their Golf GTi, a successful formula that brought fun back into motoring and has been endlessly copied since.

And, you know, in being nostalgic about MG's past heritage we are often guilty of being selective in our recollections. Right from the earliest days of the marque saloons bearing the sacred octagon were produced and have sold in good numbers. The post-war Magnettes ZA and ZB being a case in point. A great deal of fuss was made at the time because they dared to adopt a model name of one of the marque's most successful sports racing cars from pre-war days. Now they are highly regarded Classics in their own right.

What of today's range? It consists of Metro, Maestro and Montego derivatives but these are quite distinct models not the badge engineered confections of old. The Metro started it all, back in 1982, and since that time the MG has enjoyed a popular following. Not surprising really because, as Austin Rover proudly trumpeted at the launch, the 72bhp MG Metro zipped up to 60mph in 10.9 seconds and exceeded the

magic Ton (just) making it faster overall than the Mini Cooper S — a firecracker if ever there was one.

The great attraction of the MG Metro is its ready performance allied to razor sharp steering and a great deal of character in an age when this supplanted by anonymous computer-designed virtue. I've had first hand experience of an MG Metro, and if its detractors knock it for being old fashioned, for having a poor ride and for having a steering wheel angle more akin to a bus, I say Tosh! Taken overall, I find the ride as good as many of its more recent competitors and not all owners of small cars are themselves only 5ft 2in tall — at least I can drive a Metro comfortably. It could do with a five-speed gearbox and a more refined engine would do wonders for it but there have been a lot of changes that are more than just cosmetic.

### *Aerodynamic*

That new more aerodynamic nose hides the fact that the grille can now be removed with a couple of screws to allow easier servicing access. The new headlamps are considerably more powerful than before. Inside a new fuller instrument display is immediately noticeable with the minor controls, once relegated to knee height brought up to edge the instrument binnacle. The heater control is likewise raised to a similar position opposite. If there's a gripe born out of continued experience it is that the rear heater switch is almost hidden down by the steering column. It should be swapped with the rear guard lamps switch where, hopefully, most people will forget about it.

Now the Maestro has had a less than happy adolescence. The basic Metro is thoroughly worthy but a little lack-lustre,

perhaps? Not so the MG Maestro 2-litre EFi. Trouble is, too many potential buyers will remember Austin Rover's first disastrous foray with the 1,600cc R-type engine allied to those troublesome Weber carburettors. Reliability was not a strong point.

However the latest manifestation is totally different and is worthy of serious consideration. Dressed up in its colour-coded addenda, it looks the part and has the performance and road manners to back up the promise. There's only a cat's whisker of a difference in performance between it and the industry benchmark Golf but a cool £1,220 lies between them on price.

I've only managed a brief drive on the launch with the latest MG Maestro but it was enough to convince me that AR have a powerful contender with strong performance right across the spectrum. The ride and handling was always a



Maestro strongpoint and is well up with the leaders in its class. The low profile tyres cling to the tarmac but you are not jolted out of your seat over rough going which is often the price you pay these days when family cars are turned into pseudo-rally contenders. The MG EFi is a car that you feel you could turn in a day's spirited motoring without booking an appointment next day with an osteopath.

The Montego is another AR product facing a lot of tough competition and when the attractive MG appeared it im-


pressed with its comfort and high equipment specification. The performance was good overall, even if it lost out in the meaningless 0-60mph dash, but was never going to hit the

### *Trump card*


headlines. The Montego Turbo changed all that. With a top speed of 127mph and zero/60 barrier broken in 7.2 seconds, this MG can mix it with the BMWs and SAABs of this world and win. At £10,598 it offers exceptional value too.

However, this MG does display a slightly split personality. As a fast, quiet, refined straight road cruiser it is without peer in its class. Only on cross country high speed runs does the problem of putting 150bhp and 169lb ft through the front wheels become apparent. Apply that under turbo boost on a greasy surface and you'll probably stay where you are with the wheels spinning furiously.

Overtake too spiritedly in narrow confines and you find the car feels less stable than you would like. Part of the reason is the relatively light power steering which does make for a delightfully fluid-feeling car at lower speeds, especially as the MG Montego has good chassis balance and grip. But combined with strong torque steer characteristics under power it does take some getting used to and in the wrong hands could be dangerous. With a shade more development this MG could be a trump card in the range — as it is it is still highly competent.

The time may still not be right for an open sports car and, indeed, may never again be right for MG but that does not mean that the MG name has no place in today's marketplace. Given continued encouragement tomorrow's MG could be all that the marque's pioneers ever dreamed of and more. 

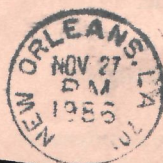
November 1986

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