# The Midget Chassis David Edgar, Editor

David Edgar, Editor 1454 Chase Terrace El Cajon, CA 92020

# First Class Mail

## TC Motoring Guild MDGET CHASSIS Published by the TC Motoring Guild, Inc.

#### December 2013



GoF West at Carefree
Arizona is where
TCMG members
were carefree to
have fun with the
TCs. Elizabeth Page
tries out a lasso,
Fran Thelander peers
over the back of the
TC and David Edgar
& Gorden Bundy
balance the TC on the
rocking bronco.
More photos on
pages 8 & 9





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#### The MIDGET CHASSIS December 2013

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The Midget Chassis is published eleven times a year but bows out to the full size Classic Chassis occasionally

All contributions: articles, letters, advertisements, and captioned photos for the next issue should be sent to:

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## President's Message

Well we have another GOF West in the bag. Was this ever a good one. Located at the lovely Carefree Resort 30 miles north of

Phoenix at 2500' altitude. The Arizona Roadrunners in conjunction with The MMM Register put together one great event after another. You know its going to be a good day when you walk up to the front door. The rally/tour covered some beautiful country. The car show took up almost the entire downtown area. Sumptuous banquets were provided including a memorable barbecue hosted by the Briskmans at their home/classic car museum and restoration shop. The list of events, displays and tech sessions is a long one. Special thanks to George Kershaw and Doug Pelton for their work on the advisory committee. Next year we are closer to home. The site is The Bahia Resort in San Diego on Mission Bay (pontoons provided).

See you there, Gorden

#### 2013 GoF West Awards Given Out to TCMG Members

MG Model - Doug Pelton - 1st MG Model Display - George Kershaw - 2nd

Humorous Photo – Ernie Page – 1st Gen. Interest Photo - John Youens - 1st MG Crafts – Elizabeth Page –1st Sewn Crafts – Mimi Glass – 2nd

Funkhana (cart sprung) - Pete & Fran Thelander – 1st

Funkhana (cart sprung) - David Edgar & Gorden Bundy - 2nd

Funkhana (coil sprung) - Larry Long navigator – 2nd

Carless Funkana – Ernie & Elizabeth Page – 1st

Rallye – Larry Long, navigator – 2nd

TC Car Display – Gene & Deana Roth – 1st

TC Car Display – Doug & Carol Pelton - 2nd

TC Car Display – John & Nancy Youens (Honorable Mention)

Al Moss High Point Award - Larry Long as navigator shared with Mike Campbell who was the driver.

Mimi Glass also won the 50/50 Raffle of \$550 (and then gave half of that back to boot)

Next to the warehouse is a garage full of British cars. And our co-workers often commute in theirs. We put these cars to work every day.

When new parts are developed, we test them. If a part is returned, we'll bolt it on, analyze it, and work with the manufacturer to make it right.

If we are not happy with a part being on our cars, we wouldn't think of selling it to you. And, just to make certain you are satisfied, we stand behind our parts with the longest warranty in the business.

Call us. We'd love to send you a free catalog.







30th Anniversary DVD

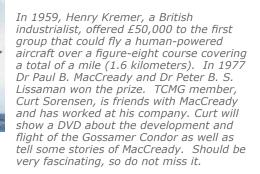
The Flight of the

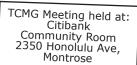
GOSSAMER

### Tuesday, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>

8:00 PM

Flight of the Gossamer Condor





Meeting room entrance is at the rear of the bank – downstairs.

Are you coming to the meeting and have extra room in your car? Contact a fellow TCMG member and offer a ride.



Feature 'Raffle Rantics Item for November will be a pair of etched MG Wine Glasses that can be filled from a Bottle of Pinot Grigio (whose label has a picture of Al Moss' TC from one of his HCTs--Label sure to be Treasured MG Collectible, other MG-TC items, Bits and Such, a Seasonal Plant PLUS Last chance to get Tickets for the Crisp New Ben Franklin Special Holiday Drawing!!

Cheers,



#### Bill Sopkins & TC at Palos Verdes Show

I recently showed my '48 TC at the 21st Palos Verdes Concourse de Elegance a the Trump National Golf Club in Palos Verdes. This was my 4th show there. The show drew hundreds of cars and they gave me a write-up in the magazine *Peninsula People*. At the show was David Simon who stated that my TC was one of the nicest he has seen. That was nice coming from a guy who knows a bit about cars.

Also every third Sunday they have a British Car gathering at Golden Cove in Palos Verdes overlooking the ocean. All British cars are welcome. The last meet. David Simon was there with a drop head Bentley.



Bill Sopkins



## 800-821-8511

TCMG Annual End of Year Meeting/Party

WHEN Sunday, Dec. 8, 2013 at 6:30 pm

WHAT Our Year End Party and Annual Meeting with Toy Drive and Auction

Come enjoy fellowship with your fellow TCMG'rs and support our auction and toy drive.

Lucy McCanne is our Event Coordinator and can be reached at 323-463-9869 if you have any questions.

Valet Parking - \$7/vehicle

**Dinners are \$40 each** (reservations must be received by Nov. 25 2013) and include salad, entrée, dessert, tax & gratuity. Note: price was \$30 for those that reserved and paid early as noted in previous newsletter.

Your menu choices are:

- Filet Mignon
- Grilled Swordfish
- Mushroom Ravioli in truffle sauce

Make dinner reservations by making check out to **TCMG** and mailing to:

> Joyce Edgar 1454 Chase Terrace El Cajon, CA 92020

List entrée and names of who is attending.

The Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel is right next door if you wish a room.

www.slhotel.com

12825 Ventura Blvd. Studio City, CA 91604

No rooms have been set aside for us.

WHERE

**EVENTS CENTER** Caribou Room 12933 Ventura Blvd Studio City, CA 91604

#### TCMG Holiday Toy Drive

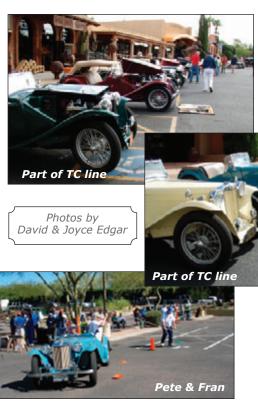
This year, toys will go to the YWCA San Gabriel Valley WINGS Shelter for families seeking refuge from domestic violence and new directions toward sustainable living.

It would be nice to focus our giving on older children and teens. Some suggestions to guide your choosing are **board games** such as Monopoly, Scrabble; jigsaw puzzles of nature, picturesque or historical places (of interest to adults and older children): **DVD**s of family-type movies; etc. Please choose gifts that do not require batteries and are non-violent in nature. Please bring toy donations UNWRAPPED.

#### **TCMG Auction** with Art Ludwick as Auctioneer

Bring something fun for the auction. Proceeds help keep our dinner cost reasonable.





#### There with TCs

John & Nancy Youens Pete & Fran Thelander Gene & Deana Roth Doug & Carol Pelton Ernie & Elizabeth Page Gordon & Mimi Glass David & Joyce Edgar



Doug Pelton

#### Those sans TCs

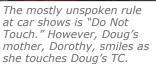
Mel & Toni Appell Gorden Bundy & June W. Allan Chalmers George & Kevin Kershaw Larry & Barbara Long (with MG PA) Lucy & David McCanne Willie Williams



Sherman & Daveen Kaplan Steve & Linda Simmons

1934 MG NA









#### Dearth of a Salesman

by Bill Stone

By the time I was discharged from the military, in March of 1956, I was driving a

MGTD and had become an unreconcilable sports car freak. I returned to Glendale and resumed the job at Sears that I had "enjoyed" prior to my years in the Air Force. It took about one day on the job for me to realize that there just had to be a less mind-numbing way to spend my time.

I got my life in far finer order by swapping the TD for a TC, and then set about to swap jobs too.

Peter Satori, Inc., was a large imported car dealer/distributor in Pasadena, with a small secondary dealership in Glendale. I marched into the Glendale store and somehow convinced the manager that in spite of my age and inexperience he should give me a chance as a salesman. I was to receive a draw of \$300 a month against commission, but was warned that if I only made draw I wouldn't be there long.

I was the only "kid" there and compared to all the jaded salesmen I was laughably eager, and incredibly dumb. And they were quick to assign me to work on the days and nights that had been proven to be the least likely to produce sales. Like who buys a car at eight o'clock on a Tuesday evening?

And the thing is, I was not then, nor have I ever been, a salesman type. There is no way I could succeed at any sort of sales job. But to be sniffing around all those great sports cars.... that overcame my trepidation.

The brand new MGA had just been introduced and we received our **10** first two of them. They were

somewhat underwhelming (MG's march to oblivion had begun) and people were not particularly falling all over themselves to buy them. I think I had been a car salesman for all of about a week when a man walked in and asked for me. He said that he had talked to me a couple of days earlier about the MG A, and wanted to take a test drive. I had no recollection of the guy, but I was all for taking a spin in the A, so off we went. He lived nearby and asked if we could take it to his house to show his wife. "Sure." Once there, he wanted to take wifey for a spin, and since there were only two seats, that left me standing in his driveway. They were gone a little longer than I expected, during which time it crossed my mind that maybe the guy and his wife didn't really live there, and were gone forever with the MG, and I would be left standing in some stranger's driveway with egg on my face. Maybe I was every bit as dumb as the old salesmen thought. Maybe this was to be the last day of an illustrious, week-long career in car sales.

Just in time to prevent my going into a full-blown panic attack, they did return. I jumped in the car and we drove back to the dealership while he told me he wanted the car. I hadn't the foggiest how to write up the sale. When I walked into the manager's office he started to chew me out for having been gone so long, but when I mentioned that the A was sold at full price, no trade in, and cash sale, he was as dumbfounded as I! He helped me write the thing up, and the guy happily drove off.

It couldn't have been much more than a week later, and I was alone at the dealership on the dreaded Tuesday night, when a scruffy looking old guy walked in. He looked thoroughly disreputable. wearing a grimy suit, wild hair, and needing a shave. We had a terrible old

Jaguar Mk 5 sitting in the used car lot and it had attracted him. I showed it to him, and he wisely wasn't that impressed with it. We wandered back into the showroom, just talking, and I jokingly said to him, "Now, that brand new Jag sedan there; that's what you ought to buy." Somehow, within fifteen minutes, he decided he had to have it. Although I couldn't believe he was serious or could afford it, when I caught my breath I told him we couldn't deliver it until morning, but (lying through my teeth) since that was such a hot model he should leave a deposit as it was the only one in stock. He pulled \$4,000 in small bills out of his pocket, and asked if that was enough.



Bill Stone (I) in 1957 with friends

By the next morning, when the car had been prepped, the deal written up, and the Jag driven off by its still scruffy, but happy new owner, I had become something of a boy wonder in the manager's eyes. And all the old, experienced, jaded car salesmen hated my guts.

Those jaded salesmen were guilty of doing quick, intuitive judgements on whether a prospect was really interested, or could really afford a car, and if they decided he wasn't, wouldn't waste their time on him. Dumb and innocent me just loved all those great cars so much that I was always eager to show them off, whether or not the customer seemed qualified. I sold a new Austin Healey 100 to a young lady who had been passed off to me by a salesman who figured his time would be better spent drinking coffee in the back room. Of course after I made the sale he wanted some of the commission. The manager told me to tell him to go to hell, which

We also sold Mercedes cars. At that time perhaps the most wonderful car in existence was the Mercedes 300SL. The still-famous "gull wing" model, which cost somewhere around \$10,000. The likes of me were not allowed near one of those, but we did wind up with a used one, which I was permitted to touch. I was constantly looking for excuses to take people out for drives in the thing, not so much to make a sale, but as an excuse to drive it myself. Again, much to my surprise, all that eagerness wound up unexpectedly selling it.

I even sold an Aston Martin which put me in particularly fine stead with the manager who happened to be the president of the Aston Martin Owners Club.

But it wasn't all just the fancy cars. We sold DKW's. No one remembers the DKW today. It was a German twostroke, front-drive sedan made by Auto Union (think "Audi") that rivaled, and was arguably better than, the VW bug. I loved the car but the other salesmen hated it. "Not enough commission." And the mechanics hated it. "Not enough to repair on it." I was always taking people out for demo DKW drives for the fun of it, and accidentally sold a fair number of them.

And it just kept going like that. I wound up working there for about four months, but quit to go back to college. The manager begged me to stay, and I'll admit I was tempted. I made almost \$1,000 commission in each of the four months. Which was a whole lot of money for a green, twenty two year old kid in 1956. It's difficult to believe but I looked it up: in 2013 dollars that would be something like \$8000 a month!

(Continued on following page) 11

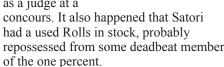
### Dearth of a Salesman continued from page 11

But I knew I'd been living on pure, unadulterated, blind luck, and that sooner or later I'd have to stop playing at it and become a real salesman. And I recognized that I'd have been an abject failure at that.

Among other cars, Satori was the distributor for Rolls Royce. We mere peasants were not allowed to even sit in a Rolls, and any potential buyer for one was handled only by Mr. Satori himself. Not only did he not trust the likes of me with "wealthy clients", he certainly

didn't want to pay the commission on such a sale to anyone else.

It came to pass that Lucius Beebe, a thenfamous, historianwritercharactercelebrity, who had bought a Rolls from Satori, was going to be in town to function as a judge at a



I'm not exactly up on Rolls models of today, but then there were two, the Silver Dawn and the Silver Wraith. The Dawn was the economy model, which only cost about the equivalent of 100,000 in today's dollars. The Wraith was the big, serious-money model. God only knows what it cost. The used one available was a Silver Wraith, and here's how I got involved:

It seems that if you're filthy rich or have super-great credit, and you own a Rolls, you can ask just about any favor of the Rolls dealer, and get away with it.

Beebe, as I said, was coming to town, and wanted wheels. Rolls wheels. And, beyond that, he wanted a driver for the thing. He had but to ask.

Since no one else in the organization wanted to play at being a driver flunky, it was decided that Stone, being the new kid around the place, would do just fine. I was checked out in the Rolls, which entailed instructions like, "Yes it has a four-speed tranny, but unless you're in a hurry, you only need use second and fourth. It makes for a smoother ride for your passengers. And you may prefer to have the ride setting at about

three-fourths firm for normal streets, but if you come to a pot hole, or railroad tracks, pull that setting down to full soft." Most of the remainder of my instructions centered around the fact that if there was a scratch or smudge anywhere on the Rolls when I returned it, I should prepare to meet my maker.



Bill Stone's TC in 1958 prepar maker.

I picked up the Rolls at the Pasadena office, and drove from there to the Beverly Hills Hotel to fetch my distinguished passenger. That was lucky, as I was able to get accustomed to driving the beast before he was in it. I learned a few things: 1] it is impossible to drive a Rolls Royce Silver Wraith with anything but a somber, serious look on your face; perhaps something like driving a hearse. It might have been fun to ride in back, giggling, and flipping the bird at Mercedes drivers, but driving the thing is a dead serious proposition. 2] At least for me, who did not wish to die. I was horrified if any other car got closer than ten feet from me. And 3] Being accustomed to spindly, rattly, noisy, smelly MG's, I found it distinctly odd

to drive something that was so perfectly balanced and sound-insulated that you could never tell if the engine was running except by letting out the clutch to see if it goes.

So I arrived at the BH Hotel, parked right in front of the door, popped into the lobby to have Mr. Beebe summoned, and led him out to the car. I went to open the rear door for him, but he said that no, he'd ride in front. We oh-so silently drove over to the concours, which was at a restaurant on Western called the Blarney Castle. As I was proceeding down Western, perhaps a half block from the restaurant, some factorums came running out into the street, removed some sawhorses and waved me to a parking spot at the curb. I have always wondered what would have happened if some innocently uninvolved gazillionaire had been driving in his Rolls just a few moments ahead of me. Would he have just run over the guys, or would he have parked there wondering why?

Beebe pops out of the Rolls to much ado from a small crowd, and he motions for me to come with him. In short order, Beebe and I were hanging out with Alan Ladd and Commander Whitehead, who were the other judges. (Whitehead was one of the earliest "celebrities for no reason," his claim to fame being that he, being a professional Englishman, had done some TV commercials for Schweps Tonic Water.) The three of them seemed to be old chums, and commenced their how you-been repartee, while I just stood there like the dumb bunny I was. We were surrounded by a throng of admirers, and I could almost hear them

whispering things to each other like, "I recognize Alan Ladd, and Commander Whitehead, and Lucius Beebe. But who's the skinny kid?"

I broke away from them when they started their judging duties, and wandered the show to drool over all the sexy cars for myself.

There's no punch line here. After the show, I drove Beebe back to the hotel, and took the Rolls home. It was too late to return it to the dealership, so I parked it in the carport of my apartment for the night. I was really tempted to take it to Bob's Big Boy drive-in for a hamburger - that would've been a hoot - but was terrified I'd spill ketchup on the seats.

Another Rolls story: Many years later, when I was very loosely involved with Road and Track Magazine, I occasionally got to play with cars they had for testing. One evening I had taken out a Maserati. I don't recall what model it was. It was a small, mid-engined coupe that was, of course, Italian racing red, and acted like it had a thousand horsepower.

I was moseying along Pacific Coast Highway in Newport Beach, on my way out to dinner, and got stopped at a traffic light. I was sitting there watching the revs, keeping the ornery Maserati running, when I realized that there was a great hulking presence next to me. I looked over to see a Rolls Royce Silver Wraith. And peering at me from the back seat, noses pasted to the glass, were a couple of people with obvious looks on their faces. They were envying me!



### Bill Stone

Not a part of Bill's story but here is a TC poised to take on some Vipers at the 2003 GoF West.

#### **October TCMG Meeting Minutes**



Pete introduces Bill & Renee Livingstone (Elizabeth Page's sister and husband) from Australia



In additions to the photos that tell the story of much of the meeting, nominations for the 2014 Executive Council were made. Seven were nominated.

Curt Sorensen Ron Simon Steve Simmons David & Lucy McCanne (one position) Joyce Edgar David Edgar Gorden Bundy\*

\*note that Gorden Bundy would automatically serve on the council as the ex-officio so based on that Gorden later declined the nomination.

Fran Thelander volunteered to mail out and count the ballot returns.







Photos by Lucy McCanne & David Edgar



Mike & Sharon in costume



David & Lucy McCanne









Anita calls out the Halloween Bingo symbols as everyone else mark their cards waiting for a win.



Annabel





Curt & Jan Sorensen



George and Curt



More on October meeting on page 17

Mike & Gorden



#### 40th ANNUAL VINTAGE MG CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ALL MG PARTS EXCHANGE Southern Californ



Sunday, Nov. 24th, 2013. 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Largest U.S. All



#### **Parts Exchange**

Location: Great Park of Irvine, Farmer's Market area 6990 Marine Way, Irvine, CA 92618 (the west side of the Farmer's Market area)

Near 5/405 interchange. Exit Sand Canyon Ave. off the 5 freeway. Head North. Turn onto Marine Way.

ADMISSION:

General: \$ 5.00

Vendors: \$20.00 (initial space)

\$10.00 each added space

For More information, call: John Seim 949-786-5697

kingseim@earthlink.net

**Bob Christian** 714-998-7281

boppinbob@sbcglobal.net

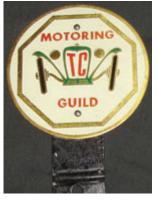
#### A History of TCMG Badges



1st known badge and seen on the TCs of Mason, Sargent and Stone so far.

of these three badges plus five





Steve Simmons has been doing more variations that take us to the present extensive research on the history of badge. Very fascinating. If you can fill in any blanks with information, better our TCMG car badges. The three shown here are the first three (that photos, or actual badges, he would be most we know about anyway). He has a appreciative. very nice webpage on our TCMG site Check out the web page at: explaining facts and the history

temotoringguild.org/history/badge-history



More From **October** Meeting



One of the highlights of the October meeting was the raffle prize donated by Doug Pelton & From the Frame Up. While George Kershaw held it, Mike Goodman enjoyed reading the explanation of the kit and everyone got a very good chuckle out of it.

#### **Lucas Replacement Wiring** Harness Smoke kit, P/N 530433,

along with the very rare Churchill Tool 18G548BS adapter tube and metering valve. These kits were supplied surreptitiously to Lucas factory technicians as a trouble-shooting and repair aid for the rectification of chronic electrical problems on a plethora of British cars

The smoke is metered, through the fuse box, into the circuit which has released its original smoke until the leak is located and repaired. The affected circuit is then rectified and the replacement smoke re-introduced. An advantage over the cheap repro smoke kits currently available is the exceptionally rare Churchill metering valve and fuse box adapter. It enables the intrepid and highly skilled British Car Technician to meter the precise amount of genuine Lucas smoke required by the circuit. Unlike the cheap, far-eastern replacement DIY

smoke offered by the "usual suppliers", this kit includes a filter to ensure that all the smoke is of consistent size. It has been our experience in our shop that the reproduction Taiwanese smoke is often "lumpy", which will cause excessive resistance in our finely-engineered British harnesses and components. This is often the cause of failure in the repro electrical parts currently available, causing much consternation and misplaced cursing of the big three suppliers.

These kits have long been the secret weapon of the "Ultimate Authorities" in the trade, and this may be the last one available



Thanks

#### Binford's TC For Sale

#### 1948 TC 6973 XPAG 7797 Pewter / Red

A lovely old girl that still gives a run for our money when we do get her out for a short jaunt.

We would love to find a loving, driving home for her and hope you will share this news with interested parties.

She was completely restored in 1980 by Glen Binford and friends (:->) She has always been garaged and covered and comes complete with Whitworth tools, luggage rack, leather suitcase and antique picnic box (also leather) with implements.

For additional information or to strike up a conversation, call me at 360-652-0363 or email me at pamg4@wavecable.com

Thank you, Pamela Binford-Grudin





Note: TClinics now available

on-line at no cost. tcmotoringguild.org

#### Club Regalia

<b>ICMG Car Badge</b> A
<b>TCMG Car Vintage Badge</b> B $\dots \dots \$30$ ( $\$35$ if mailed) members only
<b>TCMG Cloth Patch</b>
<b>TCMG Lapel Pin</b>
<b>TCMG Lapel Vintage Pin</b> \$3 (\$5 if mailed) members only
MG TC Pin & MG Car Club Pin (inquire)
"MGTC Specifications" -What is and what isn't stock on the MG-TC?
A "must" for restorers \$3 members, \$5 non-members, Postage \$2
<b>MG TC Color Specs</b> \$2 members, \$3 non-members, Postage \$2



REGALIA CHAIR

Linda Simmons linda@mgnuts.com

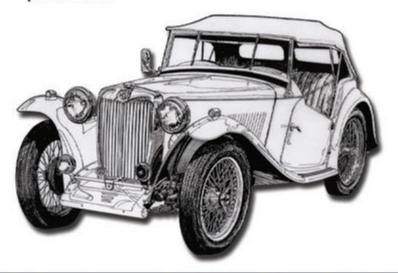
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Prices beyond our control subject to change U.S. postage is quoted in prices (international postage is extra)



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