

# The Octagon

The Newsletter of The Classic MG Club of Orlando

Founded 1963

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The Classic MG Club of Orlando

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## President's Thoughts

This year certainly has been one not soon forgotten...seven months of sitting in your house staring at your loved ones, families lost, jobs lost and now the hardest loss to swallow, the loss of Paul Plasschaert. Paul was one of the keystones of our club, our longtime Treasurer and the restorer of two of the finest MGs in the area, but first and foremost he was a really, really nice guy. He will be missed.

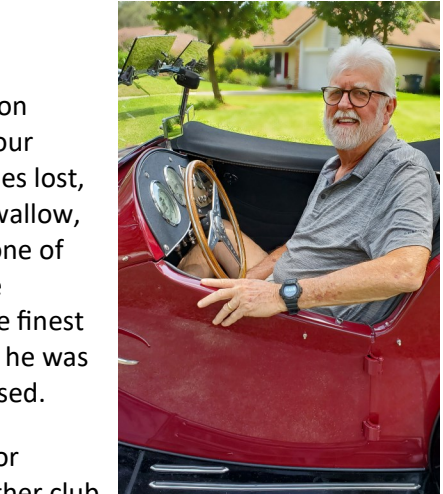
As this newsletter was being finalized for distribution, we received notice of another club member's passing. Choo Choo (Richard) Germano passed away 9/21/20 from a heart attack. A longtime member of both the Jacksonville and Orlando Clubs, Choo Choo has been a fixture hosting events in Fernandina and South Georgia. He was an icon in the Southeast for having a warehouse filled with MGs and restorations of prewar, T's and MGA's. No arrangements have been made at this time for services. Condolences can be sent to the family at:

Holly Germano  
2405 Via Del Ray  
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Two Key members gone in one month is unbelievably sad.

On a more positive note, the CMGC has taken the first steps toward normalizing the GOF situation. With the JAX Club having to cancel their 2021 meet, we have decided that the Classic MG Club of Orlando will start the rotation back up in 2022. We will be putting together a GOF Planning Committee which will meet, probably virtually, with the Jacksonville club to plan 2022 and beyond.

Everyone stay healthy out there,



Mike McCormick



October 2020

Classic MG Club of Orlando

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# Paul Plasschaert

## “Say ‘Hello’ to my MG Friends”

On Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, Pete Rogers was engaged in a phone conversation with his longtime friend Paul Plasschaert. As the conversation was concluding, Paul said to him: “Say hello to my MG friends.”

Early Monday morning, September 7<sup>th</sup>, Paul Plasschaert passed away.

Paul Plasschaert was born in the Netherlands. He immigrated to Canada, where he met his future wife, Ann. Paul completed his education in Canada, earning a degree in professional engineering. He spent most of his career with an engineering firm in Canada. Paul’s reputation in research & development made him well sought after. A company in Orlando learned of his skills, recruited him, and sponsored Paul to immigrate to the United States to do engineering work for them. Paul holds nine patents.



Paul joined the Classic MG Club in 1995 after Tony Roth told Paul that he should own an MG. He purchased an MGTF from Vantage Motorsports and became a skilled restorer. Later he purchased an MGA from club member Dean Sprague. He restored both cars entirely himself, doing all the mechanical, electrical, and paint. Rather than purchase a part he needed, Paul preferred to manufacture it himself. He was skilled at his milling machine and lathe. When the camshaft in the MGA was discovered to be worn, Paul reground the cam on his lathe.

Paul designed and built parts for T-series MGs, including a fuel-level measuring stick and a bonnet support. His mind could visualize a complex object and his hands could bring it to life.

As with many for whom the complex appears simple, the simple is sometimes forgotten. “In celebration of Drive Your British Car Week, a rather large (for us) contingent of MGs toured to the Black Hammock Restaurant for dinner. It all started with happy hour poolside at the Cook’s house. Earlier in the day, Paul Plasschaert was busy fixing the steering in his TF so he could bring it for the tour. What he forgot to do was put gas in it - - - you are ahead of me. Oh well, that adds excitement to a tour.” (*The Octagon newsletter June 2004*) In 2005, the event was held again . . . and, you guessed it, Paul again ran out of gas. This story is still celebrated on the club’s website with a photo showing a suggested solution to the issue.



Paul served as treasurer for over 15 years, ending his service only a couple of months ago. Paul has also served as the club’s first webmaster and as the events chairman. He was a talented graphic artist, designing the logos for the GOF South 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2020. Paul and Ann have been active members, helpful to many in restoring their MGs, and friends to all.

Paul and Ann have been great parents to their two children, daughter Adrea who lives at home due to her disabilities, and son Jeff who is a cardiac rehab specialist at Shands Hospital in Gainesville. Jeff plans to continue participation in the Classic MG Club with his father’s MGs. Ann will continue being an active member of the club, driving the cars, and plans to keep the MGs in Orlando.



A few personal stories from his friends:

Mike Gendereau (of Vantage Motorsports) advertised an MGTF in the June 1995 issue of *The Octagon*. Paul purchased the TF in July and immediately became an active member. To attest Paul and Ann's enthusiasm for the Club, they hosted the Christmas party in December of that year. It never stopped. (*John Camichos*)

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Paul loved for his brother to come to Orlando to visit him. His brother has huge hands that cover a full sheet of sandpaper. He could make quick work of sanding bodywork for those perfect paint jobs that adorn Paul's MGs. (*Pete Rogers*)

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About a month after I bought my TF and joined the club, I discovered that the "bowl" that holds the points, condenser, and cap was not firmly connected to the rest of my distributor. This caused the engine to run terribly. Bad news. The problem is regarded as unrepairable. A replacement distributor rarely comes available on eBay. Will Bowden told me that Paul could fix the problem and he immediately called Paul to schedule a time for me to meet with him.

Now, Paul didn't know me from a sack of potatoes. Yet on a miserably cold February day, he welcomed me to his home and his wonderful shop to start his 30-minute repair process. He carefully peened the bowl to the rest of the distributor with a drift. On the last tap of the hammer, the drift slipped and damaged the shaft. I watched in amazement as he disassembled the distributor and chucked the shaft in his machinist lathe. He spent over three hours turning the shaft, creating special bushes, and reassembling. We were both nearly frozen, but the unrepairable distributor was perfect. (*Lonnie Cook*)

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Paul Plasschaert was such a wonderful member of our club. Although he was not afraid to speak up, he would often listen quietly. It was wonderful to hear him express ideas given his Dutch via a Canada accent!

Paul was generous with his time and talent. He designed and constructed parts for many cars. There are a number of us that he helped. His meticulous nature is reflected in his beautiful cars. His TF was beautiful, but I am sorry we never got to see him driving around in his MGA which he lovingly restored.

Paul was a good man as well. He shared duties with Ann taking care of their daughter, Adrea, who has special needs. I fondly remember him bringing her to some of the MG events. He and Ann had to take turns taking vacations because of their duties. Paul never complained about anything he had to do.

When Paul retired, Ann threw a retirement party for him at their house. Paul and Ann's house has often been the location of warm parties. Paul volunteered many times for the parade of lights which has been our December meeting. He did an excellent job scoping out some of the best lights in his area of town.

Paul also volunteered to coordinate overnights. Paul always coordinated the club visit to Hollerbach's Willow Tree Cafe. I often wondered whether the food reminded him of the old country, Holland. Al and I will miss Paul as a good friend. (*Kathy & Al Cook*)



*George Butz Photo*



*Camile Flankey Photo*



## **September Meeting Notes**

*Submitted by Carol McCormick*

The meeting started at 7pm.

### **Attendees:**

Mike and Carol McCormick, Al and Kathy Cook, Scott Buie, Dodie Beach, Jim McSweeney, Richard Payne, Patrick Raley, Glen Moore, Oscar Petree, John Avallone

### **Old Business:**

Treasurer's Report--Dodie announced an increase of 6 cents in interest and an expenditure for a sympathy dish garden to Ann, Adrea and Jeff Plasschaert.

Ann sent the following Thank You message to the Classic MG Club via Mike McCormick's email.

*"Thank you for your condolences, and thank you to the Club for the gorgeous plant arrangement that arrived Wednesday afternoon. Not only are the plants gorgeous, but the roses interspersed give a lovely fragrance. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.*

*Ann, Jeff and Adrea"*

Jim said we will meet at 11am at the St. Johns River Steak and Seafood Restaurant in Sanford on Saturday, Sept 19<sup>th</sup> for our September event.

Kathy and Al reported that as of now, 6 couples will be attending the October overnighter at Tuckaway Shores in Indialantic, Florida on Oct.23-25. Please make reservations with the hotel if you would like to go and notify Kathy. Hotel details are in the Octagon.

Glen Moore is our contact person for our NAMGAR membership.

We need a contact person for the NAMGBR. Dodie has been that person, but Jim suggested John Spadaro might like that job as he has been a longtime member. Mike will call John and ask him.

### **New Business:**

Send your stories and memories to Glen Moore by Sept 22nd so he can put together an article honoring Paul Plasschaert.

The 2021 GOF South in Gainesville has been cancelled. It appears our club will probably organize and host the 2022 GOF South, hopefully at the Mission Inn. Mike will contact the Jacksonville Club to coordinate a joint Future GOF Planning meeting as suggested by the Jacksonville Club.

### **Upcoming 2020 Events**

**Nov 4-8 Classic 24 Hours at Daytona vintage car races** Mike suggested this was a fun event that might be of interest to our members. Scott Buie has already made a hotel reservation for that weekend.

**Nov 22 Flankey Picnic** Cancelled due to COVID

**Dec ? Christmas Party, Richard and Nancy Payne**

**Dec ? Tour of Lights** We need a volunteer coordinator.

It was suggested that we might do a tribute drive-by at Paul's house. It was also suggested that we might contact Dubsdread about an outdoor dinner after the Tour. Scott Buie knows the owner of Dubsdread and could be a liaison.

**Dec 21 ? Winter Park Tuba Festival 2020** Marcia Geraci suggested that we plan on attending this outdoor event rather than the Tibby's dinner previously posted. If held, the festival will probably be around December 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Adjournment**

### **Our Monthly CMGC Zoom Meeting Is**

***Thursday, October 15, at 7 pm***

**The lobby will be open at 6:30 for**

**• Meaningless Banter • General Tire Kicking • General MG Merriment**

All members are invited, and it is VERY simple to attend. Simply click this link to join the meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84605630763?pwd=TEtVNDdwNDgvOEMxZXBMZlUveDNMdz09>

• Join With Computer Audio • Enter Name (Click "OK") • Start Video

## **New Members**

**Len and Christina Geiger**, Jacksonville. 1973 MGB, Blaze Red. They enjoy driving the backroads around Central Florida and plan on joining club drives and other events.

**Editor's Note:** The editor's task in creating the newsletter is to take information provided that should be communicated to club members and place it on the pages of the newsletter, formatted to fit, be attractive and readable, and to have some form of good grammar and proper spelling. Your editor has struggled with the correct spelling of the word **canceled**, a word that is being used much too often these days. Research into correct spelling states that using one "l" is the correct way to spell canceled - in America. The British, who spell color as colour, spell it with doubled letter "l" - **cancelled**. Since we are an organization honoring the British MG marque, we will take the British spelling of this word, as we already use rallye vs. rally.





# St. Johns Seafood at Sanford Luncheon

September 19th

*Carol McCormick*



Our MG group thoroughly enjoyed the good fellowship, great food and beautiful views of Lake Monroe on the screened porch of the St Johns River Steak and Seafood in Sanford. We very much enjoyed meeting new MG and FB member Charlie Novell and his friends in person.



# MG Calendar of Events

**Note** - Exposure to COVID-19 is an inherent risk wherever people meet. Please weigh carefully your personal risk before deciding to participate in our functions. CMGC expects all to adhere to CDC guidelines and take appropriate precautions. You alone are responsible for your health.

Stay healthy, for everyone's sake!

## October

- 10/23-25 Tuckaway Overnighter, Indialantic, Kathy and Al Cook  
10/? (Optional event - Lift Day, Pete Rogers' house, Tavares) *Cancelled*  
10/31 *Cruising the Hill*, Holly Hill, An All Classic Car Event, raising funds for school supplies  
Holly Hill City Hall, US1 and LPGA Blvd, 10am - 2 pm, info: tc72chevy@aol.com

## November

- 11/4-8 Classic 24 Hours, Daytona International Speedway, HSR  
11/22 Flankey Picnic, Camille and Kerry Flankey *Cancelled*  
11/? Destination Duran's, Dan and Judy Duran *Cancelled*

## December

- 12/? MG Christmas Party, Richard and Nancy Payne  
12/? Tour of Lights  
12/? (Optional event - Tuba Festival at Winter Park, Marcia Geraci)

## January

- 1/23 Lake Apopka Wildlife Audio Drive, Mike and Carol McCormick

## February

- 2/20 Palatka Overnighter, TBA

## March

- 3/4-7 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, Cars & Coffee 3/6, Show 3/7  
3/20 St. Patrick's Day Planning Meeting, Lithia, Kathy and Al Cook

## April

- 4/17-21 GOF South Mk 55, Gainesville, Florida, MG Classics of Jacksonville *Cancelled*





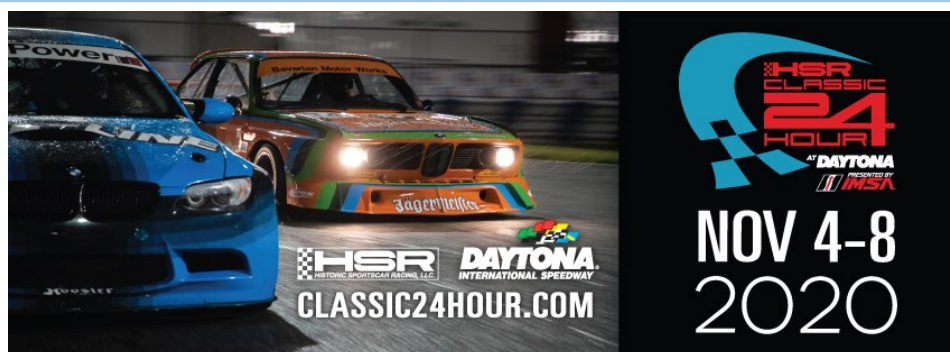
## Tuckaway Overnighter

October 23 - 25  
Indialantic, Florida  
Brevard County

Hotel - 321-723-3355  
Direct - 321-676-4532  
[Tuckawayshores.com](http://Tuckawayshores.com)



For more information, and to rsvp, contact Kathy Cook at 407-963-5349  
or by email at [kathy.cookucf@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.cookucf@gmail.com)



## Flankey Picnic

Sunday, November 22, 2020

*Cancelled*



The Flankey Picnic in Apopka has been a CMGC tradition for decades. Fellowship, great food, beautiful MGs, and a special camaraderie is shared. The 2019 picnic debuted a change - a chili cook-off replaced the fried chicken and a large variety of side dishes provided by the participants.

The chili format was a hit.

Unfortunately, the 2020 picnic is another casualty of Covid-19. May 2021 hold better opportunities for a gathering at the Flankey's.



## John Camichos TD 1802 Classic MG Club

*Glen Moore*

In the 1930's, MG had a three-car race team known as "The Three Musketeers." The Classic MG Club began with its own Three Musketeers, Will Bowden, Blair Engle, and John Camichos. John and his T-Series owning friends discussed the need for a formal MG club in 1962 and held the first meeting in 1963 to organize The Classic MG Club. The bylaws stated that all MGs powered by Morris engines were welcome. Newer MGs powered by the Austin B series engines were not considered "classic."

John Camichos became interested in sports cars in 1955. He attended the 1955 12 Hours of Sebring and became even more obsessed with owning a sports car. A red 1950 MGTD at the nearby dealer, Schmidt Motors, caught his eye because of the whitewall tires. He looked at the car and decided that \$800 was too much money for a six-year-old car with 8,000 miles. He kept looking for an MGTD and traveled to many parts of the state in search of the perfect car to fit his budget. Most he found were in poor condition, had high mileage, and the owners were all asking much higher prices than the car he looked at near his home. He lamented missing the opportunity of buying that red MGTD.

In July 1956, John saw a classified ad in the newspaper for a 1950 MGTD. It was located not far from where his wife, Jean, worked. He called and asked her to look at it on the way home. "It's the car with the white-walls!" she reported when she arrived home. They went to look at the car and found it was, indeed, the same TD, now with 12,000 miles. A young man had purchased the car from Schmidt Motors and was ready to leave for college, needing money more than a car. The young man said he wanted \$800; John couldn't get his checkbook out fast enough.

MGTD 1802 was built on May 25, 1950. It was originally purchased by a man who spent the winters in Florida and needed a car for his wife. It was only driven for a few months in the winter, then prepared for



John Camichos driving TD 1802 in 1956  
*Jean Camichos photo taken with a Kodak Brownie Camera*



John Camichos driving TD 1802 in 2016  
*Lonnie Cook photo*





*Brian Collins photo*

storage by the local dealer. The second owner kept the car for only 3 months. The third owner was the college student. On July 19, 1956, John and Jean Camichos adopted TD 1802 and began a life-long relationship.

The purchase of TD 1802 changed the trajectory of John and Jean's lives. They became sports car owners, and more specifically, MG owners. This brought new opportunities for activities in the MG community and many new friends. They still drive that very same car, easily identifiable by the golf ball affixed to the

radiator cap, mounted there by the 3<sup>rd</sup> owner.

They have been active in the Classic MG Club for its entire history, as both participants and leaders. John and Jean have led many overnight drives for the club, including the 2019 drive to Avon Park and the historic Jacaranda Hotel. They have attended every one of the Gathering of the Faithful South MG celebrations. John is interested in history and has saved every club newsletter and GOF program. John is the repository of club history, in his head through memories and in his file cabinets.

When asked how long he has been married, John's mind calculates how long he has owned his MGTD and adds a year. He married Jean a year before the MG was purchased. Current answer: 65 years.



John and Jean Camichos - *Lonnie Cook photo*

# JOHN CAMICHOS

## The Early Years of CMGC

John Camichos' passion for MGs is intense. That passion guided the Classic MG Club to the national recognition that we enjoy today.

MG TCs, TDs, and TFs became the vehicle of choice for bon vivant young men in the 1950s. They were unlike any American car on the road. John was swept up in the movement and bought his 1950 TD in 1956 for his daily driver.



*John in 1956, soon after purchasing TF1802  
Photo: Jean Camichos*

By the early 60s, MGAs, MGBs, and Midgets were starting to overshadow the classic MG square riggers. Will Bowden approached John to form a club for T-Series MG owners. In 1963, John, Will, and Blair Engle set the club's course for success.

John documented the growth of the CMGC by saving EVERY ISSUE of the club's newsletter. Newsletters are sorted by year in plastic sleeves and carefully filed in large 3-ring binders. They are a treasure.

Each issue of those early newsletters was filled with tech tips, announcements and reports of engine rebuilds, new paint jobs, autocrosses, gymkhanas, rallyes, shows, and picnics created by various sports car clubs in the area. All clubs participated in the events. Most owners were in their 20s and 30s with young families. Sports car events were family events

Using John's newsletter library, I traced his first few years of service to the club. The most important thing that I discovered is that he has not wavered in his commitment to serve for fifty-seven years.



He was the club's second President, the Treasurer, Events Director, Rallye Master, and contact for the New England T Register. He designed the club's first patch. He was the Film Chairman. He handled the club's first Concours d' Elegance.

GOF-South has John's influence all over it. He was GOF Chairman multiple times. He was the first person that I called for advice when I was Chairman of GOF-South 2018. I'm sure he has received similar calls from every GOF Chairman before me.

John was, and still is, the Rallye Master. He laid out the club's first rallye for Sunday, Sept 29, 1963, with swimming and a picnic to follow. He gets a twinkle in his eye when he explains the crafty routes and directions that he created for his rallyes to befuddle drivers and navigators.



In his business life, John often drove back roads between sales calls so that he could learn new routes for his rallies. He still creates routes for our overnight trips to small towns and quaint hotels. He and Glen Moore created two beautiful rallies for GOF-South 2020, which were canceled because of the pandemic. Can't wait to drive them.

John and Jean excelled at rallying. They won the Seminole Sports Car Club's "Hare and Hounds" Rallye in 1964, just a week after listening to a talk on rallying at a club meeting. They have won awards in just about every rallye in which they participated since.

For John, it all starts with the car. He is meticulous in the mechanical and cosmetic care of his TD. Every part and tool has an honored place in his garage. The journal in his glovebox lists every task done on the car since he purchased it, the date, and the cost, including gas and oil.

His attention pays off. Have you tried to keep up with his hot cam, balanced engine, 5-speed gearbox, and lead foot? Still one of the best running MGs in the club. Members seek his advice.

TD1802 is always under cover. It looks almost exactly as it did when he purchased it in 1956. You will seldom find a speck of dust. The car has been winning awards ever since he bought it.

Will Bowden described the car's condition at GOF South 1969: "P.J. Camichos must be commended for his fine 1<sup>st</sup> place car. It was difficult to find anything wrong in any of the categories." A 1970 report of the Wakulla GOF South showed how strongly John protects his TD: "We wound down a dirt road and created a dust storm and upset John Camichos whose car was immaculate in readiness for the competition at the gathering." Even though TD1802 was dusty from the trip, John won the "Whitworth Award" for having the best running MG at GOF.



*First CMGC Concours d' Elegance, May 9, 1965  
L-to-R: TD1802, Deane Cady, Jean Camichos, Ellen  
Bowden Tidwell (back to camera), Carla Bowden, Lisa  
Camichos (stroller), John Camichos  
Photo: Bill Wohlfart*



*Flankey Picnic 2018  
Photo: Lonnie Cook*

Thank you, John and Jean, for your friendship, support, and leadership. You are a beacon for each of us to follow.

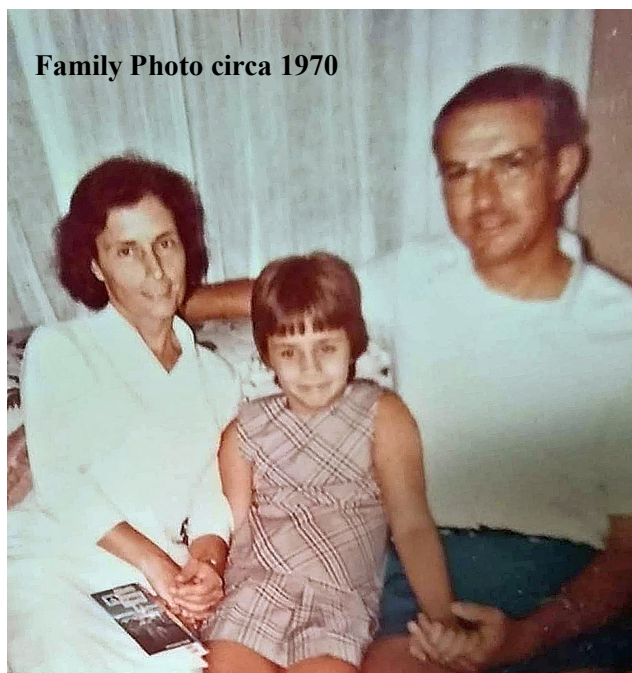
*Lonnie Cook TF7211*

## My Father, John Camichos

by Lisa Camichos

Growing up as the only biological child of John and Jean Camichos, my friends always asked “what’s it like being an only child?” My answer: “I have no idea because I have a brother. His name is TD 1802 Camichos.”

“Don’t Touch That!” “Don’t put your fingerprints on the paint job.” “No, you cannot sit in the car without me.” Those were the three sentences I associated with the shiny, red car that lived in our carport in Orlando, Florida. As a small child, I thought everybody’s dad disappeared under their car on Saturdays. For a time I was convinced that my dad actually became a car on Saturdays - that his torso had turned into the MG. I would be playing outside, and all I could see were my dad’s legs sticking out from underneath the TD. White overalls on, words I did not understand but was told I could not repeat emanating from somewhere underneath the beautiful candy-apple red paint, and shiny chrome fixtures. At the end of the day, he would emerge - not a hair out of place, not a drop of oil on his white coveralls (A trait I did NOT inherit). He would meticulously put his tools back in the toolbox - each one living in its own special place, and trust me, if one tool was out of place he knew. He knew!

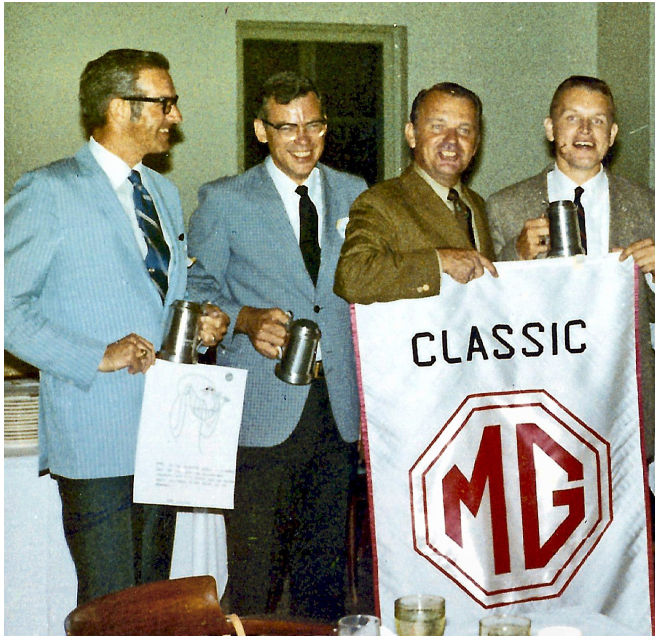


Because the TD was only driven on special occasions, I grew up thinking everyone had a special occasion car. When I realized this was not the case, those special occasions became even more special. Some of my favorite memories are the trips to the Bowden House. Will and my dad would be outside talking cars, and working on their MGs while I played with my friend Jennifer and her sisters. Will had more car parts in his garage than I had ever seen, and both he and my dad knew what each was for, and what T-Type they were associated with. At the end of a long day we would drive back home, taking quiet back roads through orange groves, and cow pastures. The top down. My dad in his driving cap, my mom with a scarf over her hair, and me in the back seat picking the bugs out of my teeth.

Trips to New Smyrna beach were another special occasion for a drive in the MG. Uncle Tom (Wager) and Aunt Jan had a beach house that was the site of the annual BOCH festival. No classical music here, just Beer, Oysters and Chili, and a bunch of MG owners out-doing each other with stories of how hard it was to remove such-and-such part from their TD, and put it back together.

The GOFs are the annual meeting of the MG Car Club. I only remember two - Jekyll Island, and Wakulla Springs. What do I remember most about the GOF was not the event itself, but the drive to the event. It was like being in a parade where the last float carried the beer. A long line of MGs with their proud owners behind the wheels, driving through the countryside of Florida. My dad was not allowed to be the lead car because he drove really fast, and who can stop for beer





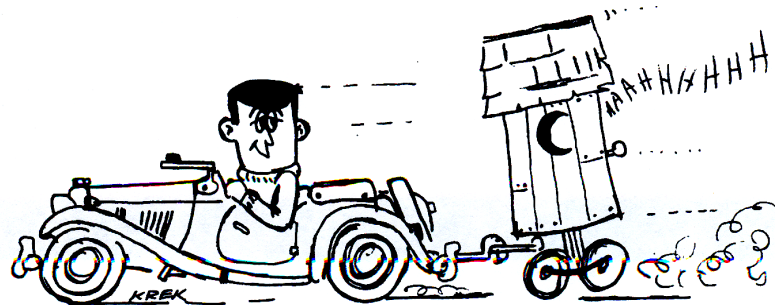
John Camichos (left) accepts the Whitworth Award at the 1970 GOF South Mk IV in Wakulla Springs. To right - unknown, Tom Wager, and Bron Prokuski, GOF Chair.

every 2 miles if you're driving fast? So, they stuck him in the middle of the pack. Now, whether this is what really happened, I do not know. This is simply what I remember.

As I got older the itch to drive the MG would occasionally get the best of me, but fear prevented that from happening, except once. Now, I tell you this story, and I have never told this story, especially to my dad. (If you do not hear from me after this is published, send help!) Sometime in the early 1980s my parents went to Alaska. I was assistant coach for the Luther High School Volleyball team, and I decided to drive the MG to practice. It should have been fun, but even writing about it now I am sweating. But, there you have it, I drove it. Two years ago my dad said to me, "Lisa, I think it is time I go for a drive with you in the MG, so I can show you the quirks and nuances about the car." (Little did he know!!!!) That was a very difficult statement for me to hear because it signals the passing-of-the-torch, of which I am

not sure I am ready. I am not ready for the MG to become my car because I am still that little girl who looks upon the TD with awe and reference. But, when I do drive it, it will be fast, and I will not be sweating!

About a decade ago Uncle Tom passed away. I was on my way home from an outing when my dad called. The first thing I thought of was the photograph that hangs in my parents kitchen. Tom and my dad in tuxedos, smiling for the camera. A few weeks after Tom passed my dad shared with me a dream he had: he had seen Tom, and Tom told him he was doing fine, and that he would see my dad soon. I remember the look in my dad's eyes when he told me about the dream. I realized then and there what these people mean to him. This is so much more than a car club - these are friends. With the passing of Will Bowden, Tony Roth, and most recently Blair Engle, I think that the significance of the initials GOF take on a new meaning for these gentlemen - not simply a Gathering of the Faithful, but Good, Old, Friends.



Camichos enroute to the GOF in Tallahassee.



# OLD SPECKLED HEN

*Glen Moore*

At a GOF South or other MG event, you have probably seen a beer branded Old Speckled Hen. It is an MG beer. Why is there an MG beer? Why is it called Old Speckled Hen?

In 1929, the demand for MGs outpaced the capabilities of the manufacturing facilities in Oxford, England. In closeby Abingdon-on-Thames, a leather manufacturing business was closing down, leaving a large commercial building available. A short move down the road and Abingdon became the home of the MG Car Company.

Fast forward to 1979. The MG factory has brought worldwide notoriety to the small community of Abingdon. The MG factory was the largest employer in Abingdon. The community and the MG factory felt that a 50<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebration was in order. A large list of people, including dealers, suppliers, and MG enthusiasts from around the world, were invited to a weekend-long festival of events.

An Abingdon brewer, Morland & Co., felt that they should join in and contribute to the event by brewing a special beer for the occasion. But, what to call this new brew? Discussion finally led to a 1927 MG that stayed at the factory to be used for local runs rather than being sold. It was an MG Feather-Light Saloon with a fabric-covered body. Yes, MG manufactured closed top 4-door sedans or saloons.

This particular car was unique in the fact that the fabric chosen was black with gold speckles. As it would drive around Abingdon the locals would say "there goes the Owld Speckl'd Un." Well, spoken enough times and one hears Old Speckled Hen. The car was loved and recognized throughout Abingdon, so why not celebrate this car that served the MG factory on the MG factory's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary?



Before we go on with the story about a special beer, you may be thinking about why cars were manufactured with fabric bodies. There are multiple reasons, one of which is that fabric construction was the technology of the day. Airplanes were built from ash frames covered in fabric. So, this construction technique brought light-weight aeronautical technology to automotive manufacturing.

The 50<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebration was a success. People from around the world came to the small community of Abingdon and celebrated the history and success of the MG Car Company. The Old Speckled Hen beer was a hit during the event. A special label was designed to recognize the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary – a rectangular label in Crackers & Cream colors.

It was a grand event for the MG Car Company, the Abingdon community, and Morland & Co.

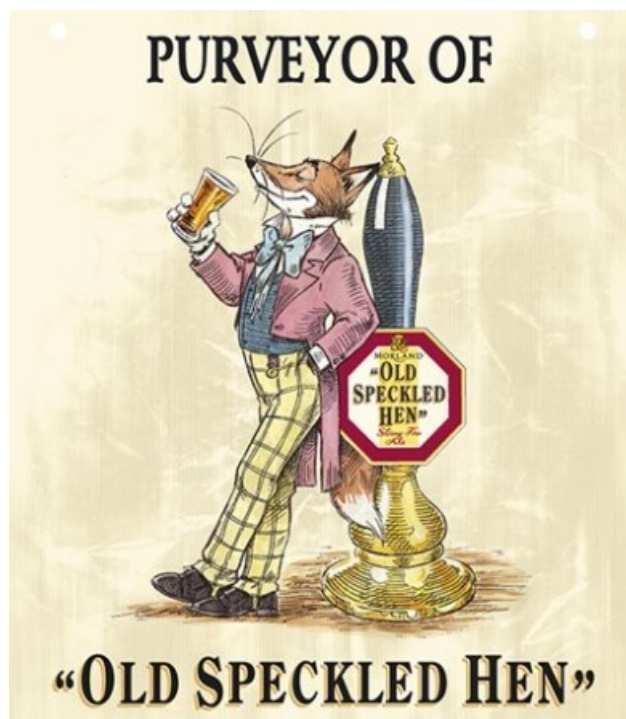
Now, the rest of the story.

On the following Monday, November 30, 1979, British Leyland, the British car manufacturing conglomerate that owned MG, announced that they were ending the manufacture of MGs and closing the factory in Abingdon. To go from a weekend of celebration, excitement, and fun, to learning the very next day that you are losing a beloved member of the community must have been a difficult time for everyone.

MGs are no longer built in Abingdon. However, the brewing of Old Speckled Hen continues. In fact, with so much success that an entire line of related beers is now part of the offerings – Old Crafty Hen, Old Golden Hen, and Old Hoppy Hen. The new label, of course, is in the shape of The Octagon.

There is no better way to celebrate the history of the marque when gathered with friends than to raise a glass of Old Speckled Hen.

Cheers!





# MG Marketplace

## 1953 MGTD

Pete Rogers has a beautifully newly restored 53 TD. Everyone knows Pete is a perfectionist and really does a beautiful job on his cars. Restored with all new, tires to top. Special Red exterior with a tan interior. All the extras installed are estimated at \$2500 in costs. Drives very well and the engine is especially strong. It has been rebuilt to a higher horsepower. Car is offered at BEST OFFER. Call Pete at 352-406-1948 or email: [pfrslot@gmail.com](mailto:pfrslot@gmail.com).



## 1954 MGTD

British Racing Green, wire wheels, rebuilt engine, new tires, excellent condition. Ted Boiman [tedboi44@gmail.com](mailto:tedboi44@gmail.com) Phone 941-276-7506



## 1975 MGB 50th Anniversary Addition

I have owned the car for 10 years and taken meticulous care of it (Garaged at all times). Muddy Water Yellow Exterior/ Black Interior and carpet throughout including the trunk. Beautifully restored inside and out. No rust, purchased in Tucson, AZ and has always been in Palm Beach Gardens, FL. Weber Carburetor, leaf springs added (sits up nicely) . New tires, battery and radiator. Has all leather tonneau covers in good condition. Has a clear title and all receipts. Everything works perfectly and it truly runs great at 20 MPH or at 80 MPH (has overdrive). \$13,900 Jim 561/459-0311 [jttprocon@gmail.com](mailto:jttprocon@gmail.com)



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**North American MGB Register**



*fighting hunger. feeding hope.*

Second Harvest Food Bank is the official charity of the Classic MG Club. Many people in Central Florida go to bed hungry every night. The layoffs due to Covid-19 have greatly increased the number of people who are food insecure. As a club, and as individuals, we can make a major difference in our neighbors' lives.

Second Harvest is an efficiently-run charity with 97% of contributions going directly to help local people in need. Every \$25 donation can provide 100 meals for struggling families and kids.

Donate Online: [www.tinyurl.com/GOF-FoodBank](http://www.tinyurl.com/GOF-FoodBank)

By Mail: Checks payable to Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, 411 Mercy Dr., Orlando, FL 32808

The MG Community is special throughout the world. Thank you for any support that you can give to the Food Bank and to your MG friends who may need help and a kind word.



We will end the newsletter with a photo of the back end of an MG, your editor's MGTC.

This image was made at the 2017 GOF South on one of the drives. The road ended at the shore of the Crystal River. The sign, "Road Ends Here," must have been installed because some people mistakenly believed the river was just a puddle they could drive through.

Contribute a photo of the back of your MG in a scenic location, along with a description. It will be considered for the ending shot for future newsletters.

