

NO MEETING AT COLETTA'S THIS MONTH, BUT INSTEAD --

A Merry Little Christmas Party

Saturday, December 16th!!

Wyres & Tyres
December 2023



www.memphisbritishcars.org
British Sports Car Club, LTD
Memphis, TN



North American MGB Register



BSCC Christmas Party

Robin and Lisa Balton have graciously offered to host this year's party on Saturday, December 16th, at their home ([575 S. Yates](#)), beginning at 6:00 PM. BYOB and appetizers, desserts or other side dishes to accompany the ham and turkey dinner.

BSCC Officers 2023

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <i>President</i> | <i>Al Ross</i> |
| <i>Co-Vice Presidents</i> | <i>Chris Irving/ Paul Burdette</i> |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | <i>Jerry Farrar</i> |
| <i>Austin Healey Marque Leader</i> | <i>Jim Hofer</i> |
| <i>Empire Marque Leader</i> | <i>Tom Wilson</i> |
| <i>Jaguar Marque Leader</i> | <i>Dave White</i> |
| <i>MG Marque Leader</i> | <i>Paul Burdette</i> |
| <i>Triumph Marque Leader</i> | <i>Jon Brody</i> |
| <i>Lotus Marque Leader</i> | <i>Chris Irving</i> |
| <i>Club Historian</i> | <i>Carolyn Shepard</i> |
| <i>Webmaster</i> | |
| <i>Newsletter</i> | <i>Bob Watkins</i> |

BSCC Officers 2024

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|------------------------------|--|
| <i>President</i> | <i>Kevin Childers</i> |
| <i>Co-Vice Presidents</i> | <i>Chris Irving/ Paul Burdette</i> |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | <i>Jerry Farrar</i> |
| <i>A-H Marque Leader</i> | <i>Jim Hofer</i> |
| <i>Empire Marque Leader</i> | <i>Tom Wilson</i> |
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Looking forward to more fun, and club events in 2024. As Club President for the last two years, I want to personally thank our club officers and all club members for your support in making many memorable moments. I have enjoyed our meetings and accomplishments. Accomplishments including:



1. Renewing our Club's million- dollar liability insurance umbrella with NAMGB Register. Remember to renew your membership as we need a minimum of 8 members to qualify for insurance.
 2. Coffee mugs for all our members.
 3. Special awards given to several members in recognition of their long-term contributions to our club.
 4. NAMGAR GT-48-June,2023- Special thanks to the Shepards and the many club members that volunteered their time in making this event a success. Almost all club members participated.
 5. Presenters for Monthly meetings—Many interesting presenters and most arranged by club members and our two vice presidents- Paul Burdette and Chris Irving.
 6. Club Drive Events- Poker Runs, drives to historic museums and a November drive to Covington. All a lot of fun and all organized by our club members.
 7. EURO SHOW- September, 2023-Special thanks to Jim and Paul for the most attended show in recent years. The 2022 show was the first post Covid and the 2023 show was a huge success with over 90 cars registered.
 8. Club Events- Annual INDY fish fry at Jim's house, UK trivia night and Super Bowl party hosted by David White.
- LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024, AND HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY. BRING AN APPETIZER, DESERT OR FAVORITE DISH TO ACCOMPANY HAM AND TURKEY- BYOB. DETAILS IN WEB SITE
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR,

Al Ross

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

*Twas the night before Christmas, and upon my garage bench,
Not a tool was a spinning, not even a wrench.
The cars were all parked in their stalls with great care,
In hope that St Nicholas soon would be there.*

*This car guy was nestled all snug in my bed,
While visions of sports cars raced through my head.
And my wife in her overalls and I in my driver's cap,
Had just parked our booties for a long winter's nap.*

*When out on the driveway there arose a valve clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the garage I flew like James Hunt,
But I tripped on a floor jack and had quite a shunt.*

*The moon on the paint of my shiny car's hood,
Had the luster of fresh paint on cars that are good.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a train of cool sports cars with a driver so dear.*

*He was a spirited old racer, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than racers his cars they all came,
And he honked, and blipped throttles, and called them by name!*



*"Now Porsche! Now, Ferrari! Now, Ford and Chevrolet!
On, BMW! On, Bugatti! On Aston Martin from the UK!
Drive Jaguar! Drive McLaren! Drive Lamborghini and Audi too!
Shift Tesla! Shift Morgan! Shift Mercedes and boy how they flew!"*



The smell of spent race fuel lingered thick in the air,
And the marks of burnt rubber on my driveway were there,
So on to the driveway the marques how they flew,
It was a sleigh pulled by cars, driven by St Nicholas too.

And then, all a revving, I heard in the garage
The distinct double clutch of a red Viper Dodge.
As I poked in my head, he was turning around,
And in to my garage did St Nicholas pull up with a bound.

He was dressed like a racer, from his head to his foot,
And his race suit was tarnished with oil and black diesel soot.
A bundle of car parts he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a mechanic opening up his tool sack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! His dimples how quaint!
His cheeks were like chrome and his nose like metallic paint!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as a headlight's glow.

The exhaust from his tail pipes drifted through the night's air
And he shut down the engines with a quick blip and a care.
His smiling face looked out, of his Bell helmet all round,
He shook when he laughed, like a V12 making sound!

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old racer
And I laughed when I saw him, like a barn find car chaser.
A wink of his eyes like the sparkle of chrome stars,
And I knew that this old jolly fellow really loved cars.
He spoke not a word, and delivered his treats,
He filled the glove boxes, the trunks and bucket seats.
And laying his wrench aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, in to his car he arose!

The cars they all fired up with a glorious roar,
And away they all drove right out my garage door.
How he yelled with excitement, as he drove out of sight,
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"



©CLEMENT CLARKE

Thanks to Clement Clarke Moore and CarsYeah.com for their Christmas inspiration!



THE ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS STORY: THE BIRTH OF THE ELISE PROTO ONE

(ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THELOTUSFORUMS.COM DECEMBER 17TH, 2020)

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.....

- except at Hethel, on the 24 December 1994, where in one small workshop a handful of engineers were working extremely hard to achieve a significant milestone before the factory closed for the Christmas break. The target, which was primarily motivational and psychological, was to complete the build of the first prototype of the Lotus Elise – aka Proto One – and drive it around the famous Hethel test track.



The first chassis had arrived from the supplier in Denmark a month before. This was before

manufacturing of the extruded and bonded chassis started in the UK and became Lotus Lightweight Structures, our sub-division based in Worcester. Like all 'technology proofs' at Lotus, the chassis had been put on display at Hethel for half a day so that staff could view it. Weighing only 68kg – as the production chassis does – it was viewed like a spaceship had landed, with engineers, technicians, sales people and management all gathered around. People couldn't resist stroking, tapping and caressing the smooth silver anodized structure. A few immediately identified it as being not just innovative for Lotus but revolutionary for the industry. The chatter continued for days afterwards.

Over the following weeks, the Project M111 team worked long hours to build the car and get it running by Christmas Eve. At 6pm, when everyone should have been at home with their families, there were still about 50 items that needed to be done to do to get the car running. It seemed like an impossible task, but the question was posed amongst the team – was there anything that couldn't be completed by midnight? There wasn't, so the team pushed on.

Richard Rackham, Vehicle Architect for the Lotus Elise at the time and now Head of Vehicle Concepts, remembers: "The excitement had been building through the day, lots of people were guessing how much the running car would weigh and we had a little sweepstake going. The enthusiasm of the technicians, I've never known anything like it. We were all getting stuck in as we wanted this thing to roll. And at the time we even thought that it didn't look half-bad – because love is blind – but looking at Proto One now, it was hideous!"

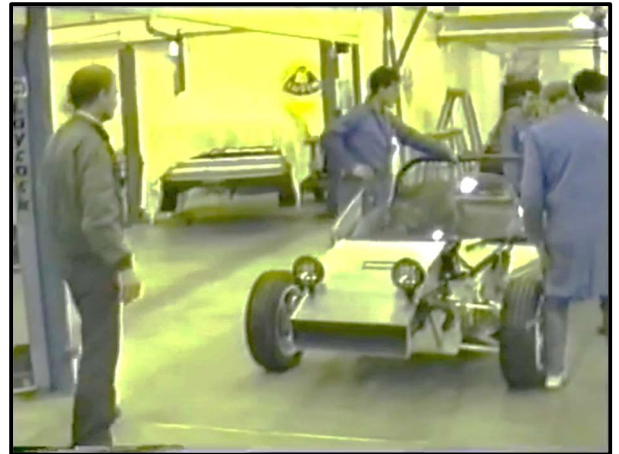


The car was essentially a rolling Elise chassis with Lotus Seven-style mudguards, a rudimentary windscreen, two seats and a pair of frog-eye headlights standing proud at the front. It was certainly not clad in the Elise's clam-shell bodywork that has now become iconic, nor did it have any disguise, but it was technically very attractive.

It was well into the evening when the list of jobs was complete. Richard Rackham and Tony Shute, Project Manager for Project M111, put on their crash helmets and headed out into the dark and on to the Lotus test track. "It was icy, but a brilliant moonlit night; it was one of those magic moments," reflects Rackham. First impressions were that it was very quick, because of the torque of the engine and the obvious lack of weight. And, of course, as it was a Lotus, the steering response was excellent.

Little evidence exists of that Christmas Eve, save for some grainy VHS video-cam footage. The only shots of the car driving on the test track – it was very dark after all – were captured on the Lotus CCTV cameras. Two security officers in the Lotus Gate House tracked the car running its laps, firstly for safety but also such was the level of enthusiasm for the new car across the business.

The car returned to the workshop and most of the team went to the pub for a celebration drink. They knew a significant milestone had been accomplished on the last working day of 1994, but also that there was a huge amount of work to do before delivery to the first customers 18 months later.



Almost exactly 26 years after that Christmas Eve, Richard Rackham recalls: "It was an amazing period, a real learning experience of what could be done, in a short time with the right team. We were only around 11 months into the project and already had a running prototype.

A huge achievement for any company, but this was with a totally new vehicle construction technology. So not only were we developing a new car, we were in parallel conducting pioneering R&D into a technology that is now omnipresent in the automotive industry. And we were testing for the first time on a frosty Christmas Eve."





Santa Claus training for his ride through Memphis

From: larry norton <ljnrx748@gmail.com>
Subject: MG2024 registration website is live

All,

Please see the link below to the website for registration for our annual MG convention in Katy, TX.

Please share with all your club members so they have first access to our host hotel. There are three hotels within walking distance of the host property.

Thank you for supporting the club. Safety Fast,

Larry
Norton

Chairman,

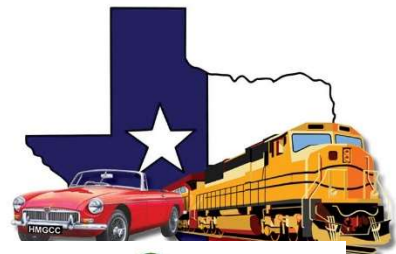
North American MGB Register

404-386-1151

chairman@namgbr.net

MG2024 April 22-24, 2024 Katy, TX [MG2024 Katy TX - NAMGBR](#)

800-NAMGBR-1 or <https://.namgbr.org>





MG2024

WHEN APRIL 21ST – 24TH, 2024

WHERE
Katy, Texas

FEATURING: NASA tour, George Ranch, Welcome Social, Hemi Hideout, Partners Tea, San Filipe Museum, guided and self-guided tours and much more.

WEBSITE SCHEDULED TO OPEN FIRST OF DECEMBER

**CELEBRATING
100 YEARS OF
MG**



**HOTELS
MUST BE
BOOKED
THRU
WEBSITE
FOR BEST
RATE**

**CAR SHOW
IS FREE TO
PUBLIC**

**COME EARLY
AND STAY
LATE**

**Close to Katy Mills
shopping and many
local restaurants**

A Cold Dark Night on the Moors: An English Christmas Ghost Story by Joe Carroll

Looking back, it must have been Christmas 1946. I had studied engineering at Sheffield during the war and after graduating decided to take employment in this city of engineers. Although I was from the south, my mother was a Yorkshire lass and, as often as I could, I visited her sister and family in the village of Skelpton, about two and a half hours travel by car. My father had given me his old M type MG Midget after he "fettled" it for me. With petrol available again, it was a most welcome gift. On the rolling roads of the moors it was difficult for the MG's tiny engine to maintain an average of forty mph but I loved that car. I had left Sheffield right after work, just a day before Christmas. The late afternoon was grey and chilly. As darkness came the weather became colder with freezing rain which occasionally changed to sleet. Of course the car had no heater, but with warm clothes and the top up it was liveable. I stopped numerous times to clean off the windscreen, and at one stop I used an old trick of Dad's - I undid the bonnet catches and lifted each wing of the bonnet and placed a matchbox under each wing right in front of the windscreen. The weight of the bonnet held the matchboxes in place, allowing warm air from the engine to warm up the freezing tiny windscreen.

I was having problems with landmarks in the sleety darkness and the headlights were only so so, the car having a very basic electrical system. I set the moveable third brush in the dynamo to maximum and crossed my fingers. As I began to get back into the car, I saw someone approaching. It was a man in Royal Air Force apparel; in fact, he had insulated aircrew clothing and boots. In what I thought was an American accent he said "Not the nicest weather to be out in." I concurred and in an honest moment I told him I was heading for Skelpton but with no visible landmarks and most of the signposts still removed for the war. I was lost. With an engaging smile he said "My base is just down the road a bit, I'll show you the way and I'm sure the boys will put you up for the night, it's not worth carrying on."

Conversation wasn't easy in the noisy little car but eventually he directed me into a lighted area at the entrance to the base. Getting out of the car he held up the barrier for me and I drove through to a well-lit Quonset hut he had indicated to me. As I closed the car door I turned to thank my savior but he was gone. I thought perhaps he had gone to another hut. As I opened the door of the Quonset, I stepped into a warm mixture of cigarette smoke and food. Two men seated at one of the tables playing cards looked up, surprised. I explained I was lost and one of them said, "I think you need warming up!". I was about to accept but I suddenly remembered that I had better drain the block on the MG before it froze. "No problem", said the smoker, "come with me". I followed him to a workshop where we put my car and he then produced a round squat safety kerosene car heater. He lit the wick, closed the gauze safety cover, and slid the heater under sump of the MG. "She'll be fine all night" he said. As we left the workshop, I asked him where the airman who guided me in had gone.

“What airman?” he replied. I told him about the new friend I had met on the road. “Well,” he said, “first of all he's not a yank, he is a Canadian and his name is Gary. Let's get back to the kitchen”. Once inside the kitchen my helper said to his partner, preparing a meal for me on the stove, “He's seen Gary.” The cook seemed startled and said, “Give the young feller a scotch”. I can't recall what was on my plate, it must have been delicious, but I was shaken by the story they told me. It seemed the base was home to Lancaster bombers during the war. In 1943 or 44, I can't remember which, Gary Miller was a Lancaster pilot. What I do remember was his age, he was just twenty-three, not a lot older than me. Returning late to the base from a raid over Germany, their plane was running low on fuel and badly shot up. Approaching where Gary and his navigator figured the runway should be, when the runway lights came on the damaged instruments had them off course and the engines were misfiring from lack of fuel. Gary stayed at his post and ordered his crew to bail out. They obeyed and watched the stricken Lancaster lose height and crash off the runway. Gary died in the cockpit.

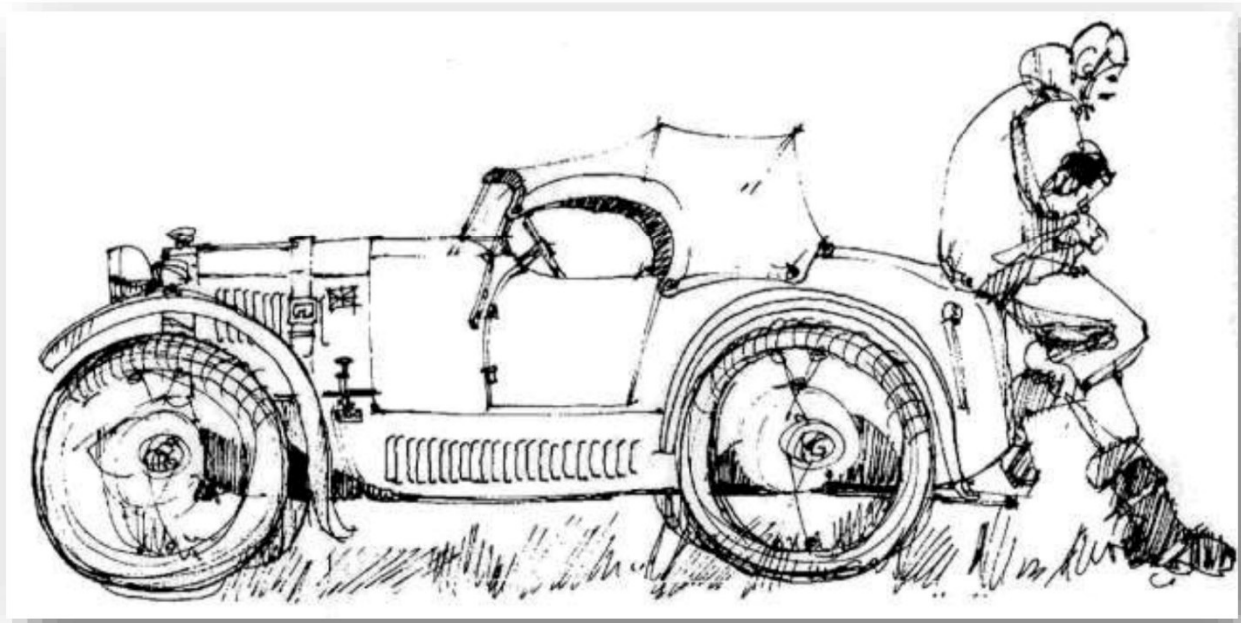
My two companions said they were posted to the base only recently, and although they were told of the ghost of the young pilot, they had never seen it. The pair were to mothball the base which had been closed a year ago, with the help of local labor. It was a while before I fell asleep that night. I awoke to a bright sunny morning, the sleet was melting and dripping off the window frames. After breakfast we got out the Ordnance Survey maps and my hosts showed how to get back onto the Skelpton road.

My uncle and Aunt's home was the usual happy, riotous place I had come to know. After the youngsters were put to bed the three of us sat in the cozy kitchen and I told them about my encounter with Gary. My uncle said “Aye lad, there's bin all kind of ghosts on t'moors. There's bin wars fought since before the Romans come”. With my trusty little MG I often drove the narrow roads and at least once a year I would go to the outcrop about a hundred feet from the runway. The locals never disturbed the remains of the wreckage, however they did erect a cairn to Gary Miller's memory. On one of my visits to the site I ran into the farmer who grazed his sheep there. He said, “I see thee up here once int' while, thee might like to know there's a pub in Skipton on Swale were forces lads liked to go.

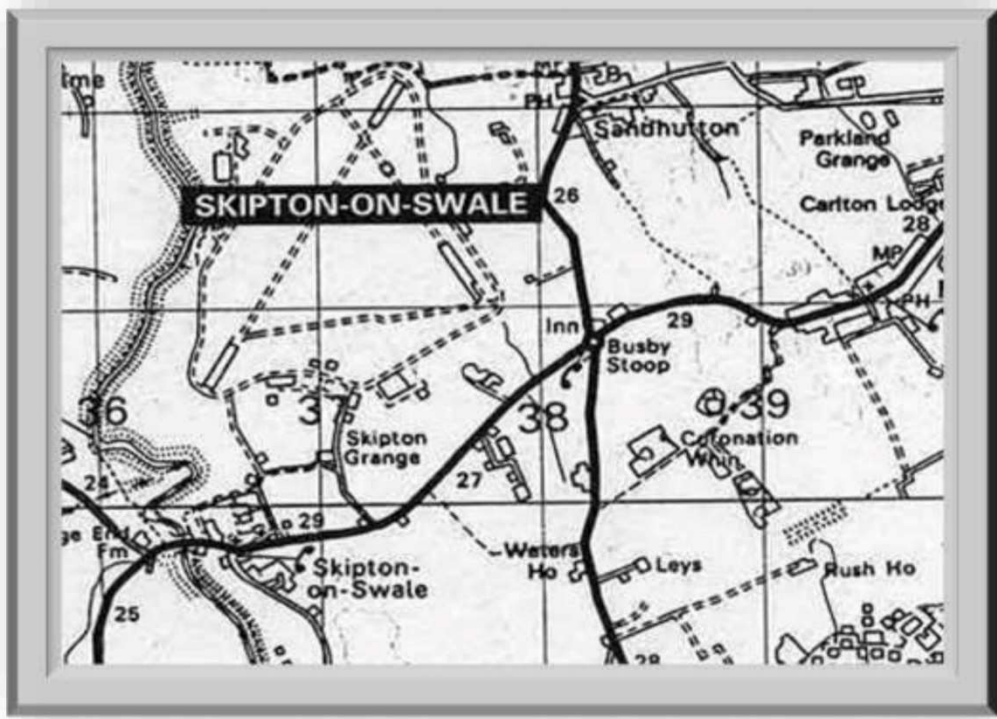
Inside there's a glass mirror ont' wall. Along with other forces lad's names scratched ont' mirror thee'll find Gary's”. I found the pub, still there, and I was looking for the mirror. A young barman said, pointing, “If you are looking for the mirror, it's around the corner.” I looked at all the names and there it was “Gary Miller”. Returning to the bar the barman presented me with a fresh-pulled pint. I reached for my money, but an older man behind the bar said. “Nay, man, it's on the house for them that remember.”

The Last Word: This story is fiction, but if you ever get to Skipton on Swale, there is a pub with servicemen's names scratched on a mirror. And as far as I know, if someone is moved by it, the publican still pulls a free pint for them!

Note 1: With permission from Joe Carroll, who wrote the story many years ago for the Canadian Classis MG Club. The artist and origin of the illustration of the ghost leaning on the 'boot' of the M-Type are unknown.



Note 2: The former RAF base Skipton On Swale can still be recognized on Google Maps if set to Satellite View.



Submitted by Reinout Vogt

Reprinted from the December 2023
PeachtreeMG Registry newsletter

Lost & Found

Someone left a black umbrella at the November meeting at Coletta's. Bob Watkins has it. 901-896-4059

--More Christmas

Sarah, a new young bride calls her mother in tears. She sobs, 'Richard doesn't appreciate what I do for him.'

'Now, now,' her mother comforted, 'I am sure it was all just a misunderstanding.'

'No, mother, you don't understand. I bought a frozen turkey roll and he yelled and screamed at me about the price.'

'Well, the nerve of that lousy cheapskate,' says her mum. 'Those turkey rolls are only a few dollars.'

'No, mother, it wasn't the price of the turkey. It was the airplane ticket.'

"Airplane ticket...." What did you need an airplane ticket for?'

'Well mother, when I went to fix it, I looked at the directions on the package and it said: "Prepare from a frozen state," so I flew to Alaska.'

Grandpa's Christmas Story

Grandpa decided that shopping for Christmas presents had become too difficult. All his grandchildren had everything they needed, so he decided to send them each a check.

On each card he wrote:

"Happy Christmas"

from Grandpa

P.S. 'Buy your own present!'

Conclusion:

Now, while Grandpa enjoyed the family festivities, he thought that his grandchildren were just slightly distant. It preyed on his mind into the New Year. Then one day he was sorting out his study and under a pile of magazines, he found a little pile of checks for his grandchildren. He had completely forgotten to put them in with the Christmas cards.

CHRISTMAS PARTY—THIS SATURDAY —6 PM

BYOB & APPETIZERS—675 S. YATES

Remember—don't go to Colettas this month