



MGC NEWSLETTER

Winter Issue No.33, June 2022

MGC Register of New Zealand



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Works Entered MGC GTs, Mabel and Romeo at the 1968,
84hr Marathon de la Route, Nurburgring, Germany



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NB: No calls after 9 pm, please.



Register website

Go to: www.mgclub.org.nz

Click on "Information"

Then click on the word "Registers"

Then click on "MGC Register" and you are there!

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the MGCC, the MGC Register or its Editor. Readers should exercise their own judgement when considering technical or other matters, information and advice.

Next MGC Newsletter closing date: Sunday 11th September 2022

Articles and photos always appreciated

Please email articles and photos to editor@mgclub.org.nz

Cover photo : Grant and Debbie Doull's Triple 45DCOE installation
carried out by previous owner Allen Stephens

Editorial

The Newsletter content has suffered over the past couple of years as events were cancelled at very short notice and write ups and photos dried up too. If you have a story you wish to share with other members please feel free to send it to the editor@mgclub.org.nz and I'll include in future Newsletters

Covid has a lot to answer for in our household, due to the cancellation of the MGCC National Rally, and us not attending the Millie Miglia Trip, Anne saw this Labrador pup for sale. It was in Gisborne. So we lost two days travelling and returning with the Pup. So please meet Jack.

He will be a regular attendee on future MG Trips. After Hunua we need to be more organised with a bowl and water for Jack.

Anne, Steve and Jack

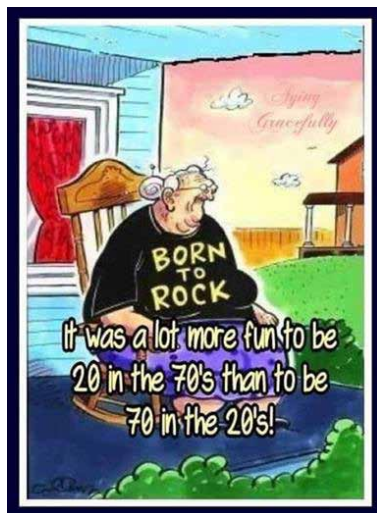


Anne and Steve Jones



Jack at 4 months

Jack has made himself well at home now and our two cats are not happy!



MGB60 Anniversary 25th September 2022

The 60th anniversary of the MGB will be celebrated on Sunday 25th September. This is also the day that the UK will be holding their event.

This is not just for the MGB but will include all of the model variants, the MGB roadster, MGBGT, MGC roadster, MGCGT, MGBGTV8 (including Costello V8 and Brayshaw V8) and the MGRV8.

The goal is to have more than 100 cars on show, hopefully to include a car for every year of the MGB production and have a series of aligned displays of the MGC, MGBV8s and MGRV8s as well as some race/rally cars to show all of the various models and the versatility of the MGB.

The NZ Classic Driver magazine is on board to do an article promoting the event and prior to that Darryl Bretherton of MGCC Auckland will be looking for some cars for the photo shoot.

Our best display of MGCs was at Hampton Downs on the 9th March in 2014 when we had ten cars lined up, so here is our opportunity to blow that figure well and truly away with a really impressive line-up of Abingdons' Grand Tourer. If you haven't seen the two videos from that day, just go to YouTube and search with MGCs at Hampton Downs. In attendance were Tony Barbarich (ED3683), John Barrett (MGCC), Patrick Cheffins (GGL61), Peter Dunlop (KOOLMG), Graham Guy (MG2960), Ian Grant (69C), Harvey Heath (MGC3L), Angela Pethig (MG6) James Smith (69MGC) and Nick Wilcox (IMGCI).

Please let me know if you are intending to be there and I will co-ordinate our MGC Register attendance with the club. Wouldn't it be nice to C at least 20 of our beautiful cars on show. Further information will be e-mailed to you nearer the date.

Ian Grant.

Photo shows five MGCs at MGB50 – Peter Dunlop (Raewyn behind the camera), Patrick Cheffins, Valerie & James Smith, Tony & Maureen Barbarich and Ian Grant.



Shirley Finlayson

Sadly, since our last newsletter in December, word has come through that long-time MGC owner Shirley Finlayson passed away in March.

Ian and Shirley owned their ex-UK market roadster for over 20 years and Ian, along with late-son James, did a lot of work on the car in bringing it up to a road-going standard.

Since returning the C to the road in 2006, Ian and Shirley enjoyed 10,000 miles of MGC motoring until earlier last year when Shirley's health forced her into full-time care and Ian moved off their Waikato farm into a retirement village.

Ian decided then to put their roadster on the market and it sold very quickly with its latest modification being electric power steering and it is now owned by Alastair Aldridge.

Ian, Shirley and James had attended our register runs, the last one in November 2018 when Ian and Shirley joined us for the first day of Magical Grand Cruising Tour (see photo).

She is very much missed by Ian and her family. R.I.P. Shirley.

Ian Grant



Doug Lawry

Sadly, since our last newsletter in December, word came through that long-time MGC owner Doug Lawry passed away late last year.

The discovery of Doug's ownership is another of those "in the right place at the right time gold nugget stories".

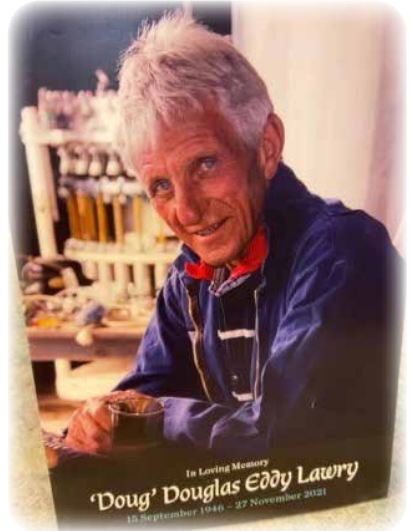
While on the Magical Grand Cruising Tour in November 2018, when enjoying the Sunday outing with the MGCC Canterbury folk, I had the opportunity to have a very informative chat with Stuart Munro who, like myself, had spent part of his early working career in the BMC environment. Stuart was very keen to have a look at my register information and while doing this, asked if I knew of Doug Lawry's MGC in Christchurch. This name was new to me so I needed to know more.

The tour's timetable didn't allow time to try to contact Doug while in Christchurch but on returning home I found a contact number and made the call. A very interesting hour-long conversation ensued which revealed Doug's C was on the register, last known to us as being in the South Auckland area. At some stage it went to Christchurch and Doug bought it there back in 2002.

He was quite a character, the life of the party, had run a very successful whisky distillery and he thoroughly enjoyed driving his C roadster.

He is very much missed by wife Lesley and his family. R.I.P. Doug.

Pan Grant



MGCs Down Under

All of the work has finally come to fruition with the publishing of the Ian Hobbs-driven project, "MGCs Down Under".

This is the write-up on the new book by MGC owner, Richard Mixture, as it recently appeared in the MGCC South Australia magazine, "MG Motoring".

That nice young fella, our register co-ordinator Ian, has finally got his book printed, "MGCs Down Under". It's a wonderful book detailing many experiences from MGC owners here in Australia and in New Zealand, that's why it's called "MGCs Down Under".

The foreword or "Front End", as he has called it, is written by Tim Hodgkinson, owner of the prototype MGC, FRX692C, in the UK.

There's an "Introduction" followed by "A Brief History of a Brief Time". While there are a couple of paragraphs on the English MGC development, the Australian connection details the six-cylinder Blue Streak engine developed by BMC Australia in Zetland NSW, for the Austin Freeway and the Wolseley 24/80. It was tested in an MGB for its suitability for the MGC. Ian has also spoken with one of the Zetland employees who packed the engines to go to Abingdon. He also had first-hand experience driving a Blue Streak MGB in Victoria and describes the road test.

Ian has travelled to New Zealand, Queensland, Victoria and all the way to Prospect, South Australia to interview nine owners and tells their stories of restoration and modification. The two New Zealand cars cover a well-maintained roadster and an English-imported GT and the struggle with the NZ authorities and subsequent restoration. The Queensland cars, again a roadster and a GT, the roadster is one of the oldest MGCs in Australia (#0365) and the GT, which is still with its original owner. The GT has a Downton upgraded engine, is insulated and air conditioned, and has electric power steering and independent rear suspension. It is an amazing car to drive.

Four Victorian cars are featured. A roadster and a GT have been beautifully restored and are prize-winning MGCs. Two other roadsters have owners with racing backgrounds who decided to supercharge their MGCs, all of the details are there. Finally, a South Australian owner decided to buy an MGCGT because it was something different. During his wanderings on the internet, he discovered the Sebring MGC racing cars, so decided to restore his GT with triple-Webers, flared guards and five-link rear suspension. They are all amazing examples of MGCs down under.

The next two chapters describe technical details. Firstly, Bruce Ibbotson from

MGCs Down Under

Brisbane has owned his GT from new and wasn't impressed with what he had bought, so he set about modifying his MGC to what he thought BMC should have released to the public in 1967. One of the first things he bought was a Downton-modified head with triple SU carburettors, a twin exhaust and extractors. He details lightening the car's flywheel, valve guides, front suspension, IRS (independent rear suspension), shock absorbers and the list goes on.

Following this chapter, South Australia's very own Richard Mixture, yes that's me, features with many articles that have been published in our MGCC "MG Motoring" magazine. Articles on maintenance and modifications are illustrated on subjects such as steering, engine cooling, cabin cooling and overdrive. There's even an article on garage tools describing what really happens when you use hacksaws, electric hand-drills and why you need to include tweezers and a telephone in your garage.

There are many differences between MGBs and MGCs and some of these are shown with pictures of battery boxes, seats, UK heads and North American anti-pollution heads.

In the next chapter there's a brief description from South Australian John Craven, and his amazing research on which countries MGCs were exported to around the globe. This is followed by a description of how MGCs came down under to Australia, Papua and New Zealand. Chassis numbers are listed and a couple of myths are busted. Tables list the cars and where they are now.

There is a description of the Australian MGC Register followed by a list of known MGCs in Australia. Our own Mike Greenwood had a report on his trip to New Zealand and the friendly owners he met across the ditch. This leads to a description of the New Zealand Register with a list of their known MGCs. There's a wonderful report on the **M**agical **G**rand **C**ruising tour from north to south to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launch of the MGC in the UK.

If there's a "Front End" at the beginning of this book, you must have a "Rear End" written by none other than Richard Mixture, oh that's me. Yes, this 208-page tome will surely nourish your MGC appetite more than the local church newsletter. It even finishes with a rear-end photo of the author in a most unusual position at Mallala – oversteer!

One last thing, and most important of all, is a New Zealand connection. A Kiwi designer laid out this book which is why the presentation is so beautiful. Do you want to know his name? It's South Australia's own, Mr TD McNabb, what a creative hero, he has done an amazing job.

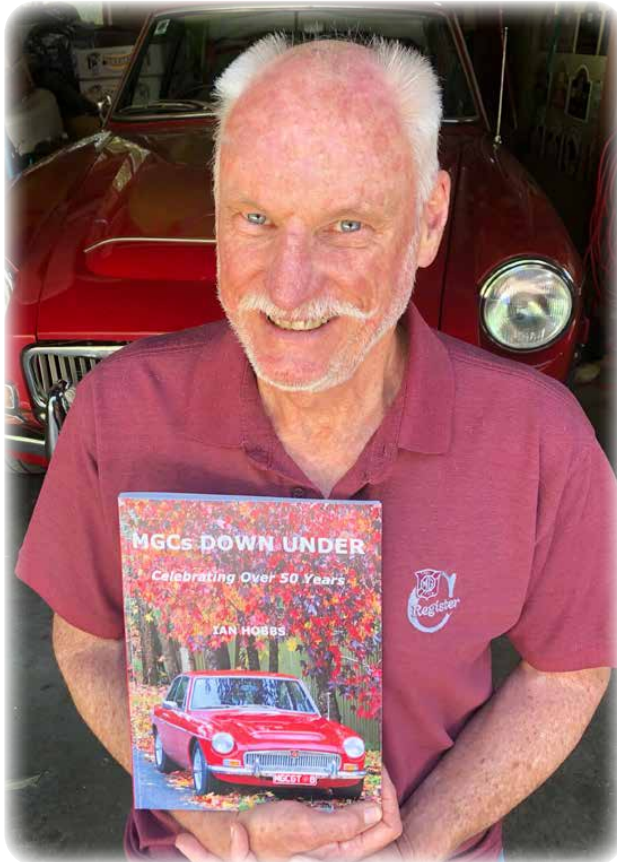
MGCs Down Under

The soft-cover book is \$AUD79 and the hard-cover, of which there are only 100 copies, is \$AUD100.

Remember ladies and gentlemen, keep 'em tuned.

Richard Mixture, MGC Register Australia.

NB:- Mr Dave (TD) McNabb was a member of MGCC Canterbury for a number of years before moving to South Australia around 40 years ago.



Ian Hobbs

MGC Owners Hunua Run

MGC owners enjoy the MGCC Hunua Run, Auckland, Sunday 3rd April 2022

This was a great run out and a missed opportunity for me, Peter Dunlop, to meet two new MGC owners, Grant and Debbie Doull and Marti Anderson with husband Arden Miller plus Doug and Laura Schirripa, who are back in NZ once more from Southern California. My sincere apologies to you all and I hope you enjoyed your day out with the club.

Steve Jones, our register editor was in attendance and has compiled the following report.

The weather was perfect for the country run organized by Paul Walbran. The route taking in Ramarama, Ararimu, Mangatawhiri, Paparimu, and the Hunua Ranges, then on to Clevedon, finishing at Omana Beach in Maraetai for a picnic lunch. It was great to see old and new faces and old and new cars. Paul was helping out as always when Marti Anderson's MGC GT developed alternator problems which were solved with the aid of tools borrowed from our home in Maraetai. A great day out and an excellent attendance of 22 cars including Dave and Kath Hewitt's beautifully restored MG TA Highlander.

MGCs and owners attending:

Grant and Debbie Doull

Marti Anderson & Arden Miller

Doug and Laura Schirripa

1968 Mineral Blue MGC GT

1968 British Racing Green MGC GT

1968 Sandy Beige MGC GT

Peter Dunlop



Interesting Information

We are so lucky to be constantly kept up-to-speed by our good Aussie pal and **MGC** aficionado **Bruce Ibbotson**. Bruce forwarded his following conversation with **Doug Smith of MG Motorsport** in the UK which you will see is frank and to the point. These emails are inspiring and well worth reading.

We thank you both for sharing your much respected experience and technical data with us Kiwis.

From: "Bruce Ibbotson"

To: "Peter Dunlop"

Hi Peter,

Doug is a very open friendly person especially to MGC owners.

He has given me very good advice for many years and I buy parts from him from time to time. Fast Rack, uprated Torsion bars, Pistons, seals etc.

I can ask him for permission but I don't think he would mind as he is as keen as we are to see these cars reach their potential.

Downton gave the estimated 115 flywheel BHP long before they closed down, [I have the letter somewhere] as their letter shows 123.7 BHP on the factory Dyno with relatively open exhausts says that in car with those poorly designed exhaust manifolds would lose more power. Doug's 112 flywheel bhp (on a good day) is probably correct.

I never ever believed the **Marketing Bullshit** about 145 bhp, it was simply the claimed power of the old engine which probably never made 145 bhp at the flywheel in car.

Feel free to use the Downton letter, owners need to know the facts.

Motoring Journo's of the day would believe anything they were told. The 149 BHP Stage 2 Downton was so much better than the 145 bhp figure and they never worked out that the 145 bhp could not possibly have been a correct power output for the "Boat Anchor".

The demo car given to the Press had 24 psi in the tyres and no Journo queried this (or checked the pressures) while condemning the handling. I cannot imagine just how terrible my GT would feel on 24 psi all round, it would be almost undrivable. I use 36 psi front & 32.5 psi rear.

I wonder what the true figure was for the MGB engine [most books say either 94 or 95 bhp] if BMC claimed 145 for the dud new 3 litre engine.

Cheers, **Bruce**.

From: Doug Smith

To: Bruce Ibbotson

Interesting Information

Subject: RE:Article on page 66 of the November Edition of **MG Enthusiast**.

Hi Bruce, Hope you are keeping well.

I did not write the article! I did help with some information however. Unfortunately the factory had no funds to develop the C (they should have thought of this earlier!) according to my last chat with **Don Hayter**. He said that he had left that to us! There are many things wrong with a standard MGC and over time I think we have addressed most to make an excellent **Grand Touring Car**.

We know a good MGC will give around **112 bhp at the flywheel** on a good day, but of course that is not what owners want to hear. We have spent a lot of time improving the engine (oil flow, oil drain, cylinder head, coolant flow etc) & suspension of the MGC without making any obvious visual changes. With both our latest MGCs with **triple Weber carbs** we can balance a plastic lighter on the rocker cover **at tick-over without tremor**.

We actually make a **steel flywheel for road use at 6 kg**. This has no vices, and really improves the engine response (our lightened standard cast iron flywheels come out to 10 kg, which is as far as we can go safely).

Incidentally, we do not need the independent rear suspension as we can get a better ride without adulterating our classic MGCs. This is important to most owners in the UK as the IRS reduces the value. I recently sold my Sebring to Belgium. This particular car and the Roadster I have for sale actually ride as well as my 3 year old 330D Touring M Sport BMW! Potholes – lots of them here – are no problem. **Just a question of the right springing and, most important, shock absorbers**. It was also the first MGC I have driven which will cruise comfortably at a steady **120mph** with minimal effort and giving a sense of security, also braking very well with the standard set up.

We have used **County pistons** in MGCs for over 30 years with no problems. The MGC will run up to 11:1 CR on **98Oct Shell V Power** without problems, with max advance around 38 deg. BTDC and 14deg BTDC at tick-over (850rpm). However, as these cars are all for road use we usually only give a cleaning skim to head & block, so compression ratios are not important, being 8.5 09.5:1.

Look forward to hearing from you

Best wishes, **Doug, MG Motorsport**

PS: For tyre pressures we use 32psi front and 26psi rear, the latter on Bruce's car probably works ok at 32psi because of the IRS.

MGB Historic FIA Racer for Sale



New Build MGC Roadster for Sale



01442 832019

mail@mgmotorsport.com

Parts, Sales & Service for MGA,B & C

Harvey's Technical Tip, Changing the Front Brake Pads

Changing front brake pads is a job most MG drivers can undertake without too many problems.

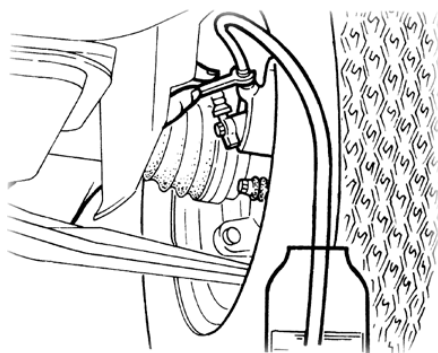
Besides lifting the front of the vehicle and supporting on appropriate stands, the front wheels should be removed,now a quick thought as to where I start?

By turning the wheel to the side you are working on gives you access to the front of the brake caliper and the pad locating pins which are easily removed. The pads or what is left of them are extracted by pulling them straight out of the caliper. The next part is to push the piston back into the caliper as far as it will go to give clearance for the new pad.

This is where my Technical Tip starts:

As the caliper pistons are pushed back they displace fluid back into the master cylinder. I would normally make room in the cylinder reservoir by sucking a little fluid out to ensure the reservoir did not overflow. However, on an MGC this causes all sorts of problems and mess which is not easily sorted.

I just want to say that if the fluid has been in the system for as long as the front pads the fluid will be contaminated by moisture which brake fluid absorbs



out of the air. This air is drawn into the reservoir as the fluid heats up and cools down and is a natural process of the fluid, assuming you are using DOT 3 or 4, as it is hygroscopic. This moisture is also heavier than the fluid so will naturally and quickly transfer to the lowest part of the brake system which is at the rear wheel cylinders or the front callipers. If you just push the piston back into the calliper, you have just pushed all the contaminants

back into the hydraulic system which is **BAD NEWS!!**

This is very important if your MG has had an Anti-locking Brake System or ABS fitted. If your MGC has this system then you are very lucky. The first item back from the callipers is the ABS system which includes the actuating pump with all its valves controlled by a computer. You can imagine what will happen if there is water in this component.

Harvey's Technical Tip, Changing the Front Brake Pads

Other than water contaminants there is little to deteriorate the brake fluid other than particles of rubber from the piston seals. The other alternative is to change the brake fluid to later DOT 5 fluid which is not hygroscopic but can still have particles from other brake components even though they may be minute. This change of fluid type is good but must be done carefully as the two types of brake fluid hate each other and cause a sticky glue when mixed. The system really needs to be stripped and cleaned

The **FIX** is easy and can save a lot of mess in the master cylinder reservoir. So when you push the pistons back into the calliper, first open the bleed nipple wide and connect your bleed container by a hose to the bleed nipple. As the piston goes back all the 'nasties' in the fluid are then transferred into your container and the fluid will only need to be topped up at the reservoir, as normal. Do not forget to pump up the brake pedal when you have finished changing the pads, as the first stroke of the master cylinder will have no resistance and will only be pushing your new pads up against the disc. There have been a few instances when the vehicle has been taken straight out on the road and the first brake application causes some very white knuckles! Dispose of your dirty brake fluid responsibly as it does not like being put down the drain.

Happy Braking!



Four C Owners get back on the Water

February saw our intrepid MGC mariners once again on the water for this year's Lake Rototiti Classic and Wooden Boat Parade. This year was slightly different, due to Covid restrictions, with a smaller fleet and no large picnic gathering. The weather was less than perfect but a great day out was enjoyed by all.

Those attending:

Peter & Raewyn Dunlop, MGC GT

Derrick Smith and Malcolm Dryden, MGC Roadster,

Nick and Sharon Wilcox, MGC roadster and MGC GT race car.

Graeme Fisher, MGC GT

Alan and Maria Thorn, MGTF

Mike De Wit and Carina MGTA

Plus John and Brenda Hancock

Peter Dunlop



Peter and Raewyn enjoy the weather



Harvey Heath buys a 1969 Blue Roadster

It all started when Harvey received a phone call from Bob Mannix asking if he could refurbish the kingpins on his roadster which had been off the road since 2009. During the conversation,, Bob mentioned that he didn't really want to spend any more money on the car and that he and his wife, Anne didn't use it anymore. It also needed some serious repairs. This started Harvey thinking that it may be a good project as it would keep him occupied and out of mischief.



Harvey had already planned a visit to see his son and family in the Coromandel so decided to take the long route, via Tauranga and see the car. During the visit, Bob mentioned that he would rather just sell it as it was and so with a bit of two-ing and fro-ing, a mutually agreeable figure was arrived at and the car was Harvey's.

Great stuff Harvey, we are all delighted to hear your news and congratulations on adding, what will become another stunning Mineral Blue C!



Safety  *fast!*

The Buzz by Norm Harvey, MGCC Auckland Centre Secretary

The names **Lucas and Girling** are well known to the British car community. Lucas was the main supplier of electrical components to the British motor industry and Girling was a major supplier of brakes and suspension component. Both being dominant brands for some decades. Since 2015 both companies have been owned by the German ZF group and are in the process of making a strong move into the classic motoring world. Product ranges are being expanded, original tooling and drawings are being used and most parts are now UK made, production being based at the ZF factory in Wales. Packaging and presentation is being refreshed under the Lucas and Girling **“Authentic Classic Range”**.

The range of items currently available appears to be focused on Jaguar, Land Rover and Triumph motorcycles. There may well be parts that were also used on MGs and hopefully the brand will grow to include a good range of electrical parts for our classic MG's.

Visit www.lucasclassic.com



MGCC V8 Register News

We are pleased to include the MGCC V8 Register news bulletin in this issue and look forward to receiving their regular updates.

The New Zealand V8 Register began in July 2015 with the gathering of information on any V8 powered MG. This includes the factory produced BGT, Costello and other conversions, ZT260, RV8, race cars and XPower SV. The Register contains information on 130 cars known to be in New Zealand at this time, including 29 factory BGT V8s, 57 RV8s, 6 ZT260s, 3 Brayshaw V8s, 33 V8 conversions and a Costello conversion. The Register can be viewed on the MGCC Auckland website www.mgclub.org.nz under 'Information'.

The MG V8 story really started when English engineer Ken Costello began putting the Rover 3500cc motor into MGB roadster and GT cars. This turned out to be such a great conversion, increasing the power of a standard 1800cc car by 40% or more with no detriment to the handling, that Abingdon engineers asked the question, "Why can't we do that?" The answer of course was that they could, and so in 1973 the first factory built MGBGT V8 rolled off the assembly line. The new model received good reviews from the motoring press and was seen as a true GT car as it still is today. In 1992 the MGR V8 was put into production, being an updated MGB in roadster form only, having the 3900cc Rover fuel injected motor and five speed gearbox making it a very potent sports car. The ZT and ZT-T cars were next, sporting the Ford Mustang V8 power plant, creating a thoroughly modern high performance MG, and finally, the XPower SV based on the Qvale Mangusta which was based on the De Tomaso Bigua, a true MG supercar.

Many home garage or professional conversions have also been completed mainly to the MGB and MGBGT, giving new life to the four cylinder cars and making for effortless highway cruising at low revs and acceleration that is still impressive today.

The 50th anniversary of the BGT V8 is coming up next year and will plan for a celebration event, covid permitting, more on this closer to the time.

The value of the 4 cylinder mgbs appears to be increasing judging from Trademe sales, this also means that V8 values should be increasing steadily. Although it is hard to gauge here, as not many come up for sale. However an RV8 was recently on Trademe for 72K asking price. I think maybe this was a tad optimistic, but RV8s are fetching



MGCC V8 Register News

good prices. This means of course that maintaining or restoring a V8 is more viable for a long term gain and will help keep the fleet in good shape.

Always difficult with a fifty year old car.

Enjoy your V8s this summer, get them out on the road and soak up the looks and comments from the general public.

Cheers, Col Minton.

P.S. Don't be late, buy a V8.



The MGC Register of New Zealand Founding Members 1989

The earliest comprehensive record of MGCs in New Zealand dates from around 1984 when Brett Robinson of Hamilton started to record details of club members' cars and others seen on the road. Martyn Dunn worked with Brett at this time providing information from his extensive database of New Zealand MGs. Ian Grant of the Auckland Centre has also been of great help in updating the existing data. Brett's first "mail-out" on 12th September 1988 was quickly followed by "Newsletter One" issued on 19th December 1988.

The above "Founding Members List" are those owners who took part in establishing the register. The inaugural Register meeting took place in Hamilton on 15 January 1989 and was attended by the register stalwarts, Brett Robinson, John and Brenda Vevers, Lew and Irene Henry and Dave Romer. Apologies for absence were received from Bob McMurray, Roger Dalziell and Bob Dunlop.



The MGC Register of New Zealand

Founding Members 1989

This was the start of the register as we know it today with the majority of initial information having been collect by Brett. We believe there was a similar effort made by Steven Marshall (MG3) in Wellington at about the same time or possibly as early as 1975. Steven's records were then passed onto Jamie Williams in 1976 when Steven moved to the South Island. Peter Dunlop assisted by Ian Grant resurrected the register in 2010 after a long discussion at the MG Car Club's Kimber's Breakfast event. Ian took over from Peter and now runs the show which continues to go from strength to strength. The current register data shows we have **seventy-two** MGCs currently residing in NZ.

The following MGC owners, past and present, are recognised as "Founding Members" of the MGC Register. John Vevers, our roving reporter and supplier of never-ending jokes, is the only founding member still in regular contact with the register.

Peter Dunlop

Brett Robinson	1968 Roadster MG6 (ex DO9947)
Dave Romer	1969 GT JY7979, 1968 Roadster NS7610 (later MGCV6) 1968 GT MG2960 and 1968 Roadster MG6
Lew Henry	1968 GT MG206 (ex EC4621)
John Vevers	1968 Roadster DI8329 (later NO1MGC)
Roger Dalziell	1968 Roadster EE1709 (later IMGCI)
Bob Dunlop	1968 GT MG1990 (ex DC309 ex FM1098)
Bob McMurray	1969 GT MG2912 (ex EB7922) Plus:
Robert McIntyre	1968 GT MG2960
Steven Marshall	1968 Roadster MG3 (ex ET7943)
Paul Massey	1970 GT MGC3L (ex FZ3557)
Donald McMorland	1969 GT ES6803 (later 6CGT)
Colin Pawson	1968 Roadster HS3932 (later 1MGC1)
Graeme Walsh	1968 GT MGC GT (ex FE1350)
Bill Wilde	1968 GT EC6184 (later MGCC)

A Tale of a Tyre

When I bought my roadster from the John Fernyhough collection back in 2011, I found the car was on German-made Michelin 185/65 R15 tyres. With the windscreen registration label showing 1998 and the WOF sticker 2003, I had some concerns as to how long had it been since the car was driven and what was the condition of the tyres. The tyres looked good and the walls still had flexibility so I took it easy for a while just letting the tyres bed in and getting used to being operational.

These tyres have been perfect for the C as they have given the car a beautiful ride and I have been very happy with the 12,000 miles I have covered including that great drive to the South Island on the 50th anniversary tour.

I took the car off the road on its 51st birthday, 6th March 2020, as the oil consumption issue needed to be resolved. Still off the road at the start of this year, during one evening of the New Year weekend there was a loud bang and, as there was a strong breeze blowing, it sounded like a door had slammed shut. A walk around our property and a look through the garage revealed nothing.

A couple of days later I lifted the car cover on the C and found the left-rear tyre flat. I had found the source of that bang as the tube had exploded and shredded the tyre (see photo).

I was very fortunate that this happened in the garage and not out on the open road. So, what is the age of this tyre?

Some searching on the internet found the following:

It is a requirement that all tyre makers print the manufacture date on each tyre. This is known as the DOT date. DOT stands for Department of Transportation and tyres with this designation have been made to the correct manufacturing standards.

On the sidewall of the tyre, locate the number that starts with DOT. It can be up to 12 digits long. The last three or four numbers are the date code.

The two numbers at the beginning of the date code are the week of the year the tyre was made. This number will range from 01 to 52, e.g. the manufacture code of 237 means the tyre was made in the 23rd week of the year, because “23” represents the week.

Next we need the year. If there are three numbers in the date code, the tyre was manufactured before the year 2000. If the code is 237, the tyre was manufactured in 1997 because the “7” represents the last numeral of that year. If there are four numbers in the date code, the last two numbers are the

A Tale of a Tyre

year of manufacture since the year 2000. A tyre with the date code 3109 was manufactured in the 31st week of the year 2009 because “09” represents that year.

The damage to my tyre has also revealed numerous cracks in the rubber in the tread pattern, so the true age is really showing. All of my tyres have a three-digit code, so they were manufactured before the year 2000. I found the last number is a “4”, so they were made in 1994, well past their use-by date. Michelin suggests replacing tyres every ten years, some manufacturers state seven years. One MGC roadster will be getting a new set of footwear before dancing on the tarmac again. How are your tyres, worth having a look at?

Ian Grant



A Brief Story of MGC Seats

When the MGB was introduced in 1962, there were a number of trim colour combinations depending on the body colour.

Available were black leather with white piping, black with blue, red with white, red with black, blue with blue and black with red (Peter Dunlop's GT photo). The pleating was in a vertical pattern.

These colour choices continued through MGB production up to and including the 1968 model year cars which was also the first year of the MGC.

Visually, both the seats as fitted to the MGB and the MGC looked the same, but there was one major difference – that being the lower seat frame.

Why the difference? It is all to do with the front suspension. The MGB's front suspension is a coil spring/lever arm shock absorber type whereas the MGC has torsion bars, the rear mounting point of these is under the floor of the passenger compartment. In order to accommodate these mounting points the floor had to be raised. So, in order to keep the seating position the same height in both models, a shallower lower frame is part of the MGC seat makeup.

This became apparent to me on my trip to the UK in 2013 when I hired a 1968 MGC roadster from Vintage Classics. At some stage the car's original seats had been discarded and replaced with the seats from a 1970-71 MGB, complete with head restraints (yellow roadster photo). As soon as I sat behind the wheel I noticed the slightly higher seating position.

The seats as fitting from 1962 to 1968 had two, solid, vertical struts in the squab giving back support. It was during the mid-1960s that American activist Ralph Nader came to prominence with the publication of his bestselling book "Unsafe at Any Speed", a highly influential critique of the safety record of American automobile manufacturers and vehicle safety regulations then began to be implemented.

The pressure went on the British motor industry to adopt some of the safety standards that were necessary if cars were to be exported for the North American market. One of the changes made to the 1969 models of both MGB and MGC to meet these safety regulations was the introduction of head restraints, or to give them the incorrect terminology, headrests (this gives them a completely different meaning).

The factory also decided at this point to abolish the seat colour options, so all 1969 model year cars had black leather with matching piping and horizontal pleating irrespective of the bodywork paint colour. There were a very small

A Brief Story of MGC Seats

number of GTs that had a seat colour called Mushroom, but these were very rare.

In order to allow for the fitting of the head restraints, the vertical struts in the squab were high-strength hollow tubes (see photo). This was standard in all cars irrespective as to whether it was a North American market car or otherwise. I found a pair of head restraints in the UK courtesy of Brian Hutchison who had imported a couple of North American cars, one for parts and the other as his project car. As my seats were in need of an overhaul, I purchased new seat foams for the 1969 model seats from Moss Motors in the UK and had Matamata Motor Trimmers make up the leather kits to suit. The head restraints came with the original plastic bushes and finishing sleeves to go around the stems of the restraints but these had become brittle, so our technical guru Harvey Heath made new ones (red roadster photo).

These seats were in production for just the one year, 1969. Assembly of the MGC came to an end in September of that year and the MGB then had a major makeover for 1970 with its many changes including the seats.

Ian Grant



MGC Owners, We Have Buyers

Over the last couple of years a number of our MGCs have changed ownership for varying reasons. Although the government has now announced measures to move us away from fossil fuels, there is still a definite interest in classic cars and it is a very large industry worldwide.

That being the case I have contact details for a couple of people who are very interested in becoming MGC owners and enjoying the driving experience our grand tourers can provide. We would be very sorry to lose you as a member of our MGC family, but if you are contemplating parting with your C, be it a GT or a roadster, just let me know and I can provide a prospective purchaser's contact details.

Ian Grant

MGC Thermostat Swan Neck Housing

Our never resting "roving reporter" John Vevers has once again come up with pure gold in the form of a new MGC THERMOSTAT "Swan Neck" HOUSING. These can be purchased from **Classic Driving Developments of the UK**.

NEW MGC THERMOSTAT HOUSING



How is your MGC's Thermostat Housing Swan Neck? Battered? Corroded? Welded? Leaking?

As a result of our ongoing commitment to engineered improvements for classic cars. We are proud to introduce a direct replacement, Cast Aluminium Alloy Thermostat Housing or 'Swan Neck' for MGCs.

- Looks like the original
- More corrosion resistant
- Made in the UK from tough LM 25 TF Alloy
- Price indication: GBP £135.00 (each) plus packing and freight

Contact: Phone: +44(0)7812 766789

Email: info@classicdrivingdevelopment.co.uk

Location: Unit 5 - 3 Orchard Farm Nursery, Lower Tysoe, Warwickshire, CV35 0BU, UK

Air Cleaner Parts Wanted

One of our owners is looking for some parts for an air cleaner installation. In the diagram from my parts catalogue the three air cleaner assemblies shown are: #1 – Austin 3-Litre; #12 – MGC; #26 – MGC for North America.

Referencing the diagram the parts required are:

#16 – tube nuts to hold the air cleaner assembly to the adaptor plates, two required;

#31 – adaptor plate, front;

#32 – adaptor plate, rear;

(Interesting to note here that there is no adaptor plate reference for the MGC air cleaner, just the Austin 3-Litre and the North American market MGC)

#20 – bolts for holding the mounting plates to the carburettors, four required;

#13 – air cleaner elements, two required;

#19 / #33 – front mounting plate, (#19 is the earlier stepped version, #33 is the later flatter type, the change point being at engine number 29G / 3201;

#18 – rear mounting plate.

The other option is a complete assembly which our owner will certainly consider.

If anyone can assist with this, just drop me a line and we will progress it further.

Ian Grant

Parts Wanted

Wanted: - I have recently purchased an MGC GT and am looking for a REAR SEAT SQUAB for either the MGC GT or MGB GT.

If you have one or know of one that is for sale please contact me on:

Mobile: 0274744671 or Email: standing72@gmail.com

Many thanks, Graham Standing



Parts for Sale

MGC Water Pump. I have a number of repair kits in stock and can offer EXCHANGE WATER PUMPS with new bearings and seals fitted for the princely sum of \$70.00 plus post and packaging.

For more information please contact:

Home: 09 8342552; Mobile: 021

1721033;

E-mail: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com

I can offer a service of fitting, eaming and setting up the king pin end float.

There are a number of options available:

1) You can send me your stub axle assembly and I will refurbish it and send it back to you ready for fitting onto your car.

2) You supply all, or some of the parts, and I will assemble your stub axle correctly and return to you for fitting on your car.

3) You bring your car to me and I will do the complete job including removal, refurbishing and refitting. I have a full selection of shims and bushes and king-pins in stock.

COST Option \$80.00 per side labour, plus parts, packaging and delivery (courier or postage). Please call me, **Harvey Heath** for further information on the above options, the work you require and the total price.

Home: 09 8342552; Mobile: 021 1721033 E-mail: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com



MG Live Silverstone 2013,
Auckland MG Car Club members
with "Romeo"



Music Hooters

