



Above: You can watch restoration progress on this behemoth on the web. Photo: Sally Moore.

Left: Could this be the start of a dodgy hat competition? Photo: Roger Boys.

EDITORIAL

THIS MONTH HAS been a bit of a struggle for me to compile these four pages as my reserve of articles has completely dried up. There just has to be lots of stories out there about MGBs that are just waiting to be told, so please give it some thought and then find the time to put your thoughts into words, your register needs you! Bernard has come up trumps as usual this month: his 25th consecutive contribution! The rest has been cobbled together by me from snippets of information received.

I have been busy during the winter trying to hold back the rust on the Boneshaker, my 1964 B roadster. As you will all know by now I am not blessed with mechanical skills but am willing to have a go sometimes. So on a very cold day I got the pressure washer out to clean the mud off from the wheel arches. What a mess I made, but it did expose where the original underseal was coming off and the surface rust was beginning to form. So undaunted by the cold it was back into the garage and the car was lifted up on to four axle stands and the wheels removed. The extent of the problem became apparent, lots of the underseal was breaking away allowing the ingress of water. So I got stuck into removing the loose areas before attacking the rust with a wire brush. The exposed areas were painted with black Hammerite and allowed to dry. Then I took advice as to the best way to protect the area and I was persuaded to use Hammerite Underbody Seal. This is a reasonable easy product to apply and provides a flexible coating

over the whole area. It proved to be very messy and I seemed to come indoors after each session covered in sticky material. We were eventually banned and had to have our cups of tea in the shed, this was due to Paddy (our Westie) getting the underseal on his paws and his back due to him being very inquisitive, once he transferred this to the living room carpet the ban was strictly enforced. The work was eventually completed and we are allowed back indoors, after undergoing close inspection. Both of us are very satisfied with the final effect achieved, time will tell how successful it is.

I thought I had a rust problem until I went to see some pals Sally and Ed who have acquired a 1933 steam powered road roller manufactured by Marshall, Sons & Co. who were a British machinery manufacturer, located at the Britannia Iron Works, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. The steam powered roller was supplied brand new to Norwich Corporation in 1933 and was No 8 in their fleet, it had been built a few years before that and had sat in the factory awaiting a sale. During the war it was extensively used for airfield construction. In the 1950s its working life ended and it was relegated to a scrap yard, fortunately it was not destroyed being rescued by a collector from whom Ed and Sally purchased it earlier this year. Now, this is a big machine and its restoration is a major project. Sally has started a blog (what a horrible expression this is) however it does enable us to follow the progress as it is taking place. Go and

have a look at www.marshallroller.spaces.live.com. Here there is loads of information about the project and if nothing else it will show you how well engineered products made in the 20th century were and the task that these two young people have taken on. The plan is for it to be on display at the Dorset Steam Fair in August this year and then to be the "guest of honour" at their wedding in September. I will keep you posted.

Earlier in the year we ran an article on tyres and tyre sizes for MGB. Following on from this I was contacted by Keith Dudley who told me about his experience with tyres. In his email he mentioned this web site as being a good source of information. Well it surpassed my expectations. It is packed full of excellent information, go and have a look www.carbibles.com. The car maintenance bibles found here relate to all aspects of car maintenance but are focused primarily on suspension, brakes, tyres, wheels, and engines. All I would think would be worth exploring further. Many thanks Keith.

While looking through my reserve of pictures I came across one of a white dog and the 'naggiator' in the hat on Rogers Rough Road and it made me think that we could have a photo competition looking for the "Naff Hat of 2007" seen in an MGB. Email your pictures to me and I will publish the best (or worst?). There will be small prize, a MGB Register Cap.

Summer is on its way here in the UK, enjoy your MG.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS



MGs in the spring time. Photo: Roger Boys

WRITING THESE NOTES at the end of March I have just returned from the register AGM that took place at Abingdon. Sadly only one member, Jacky Breed turned up on the day, the committee members made her very welcome. I was already aware that two of the committee would be standing down, Dr Malcolm Lawrence who has served on the committee for many years both as Vice Chairman and as Historian and John Venables who has been writing the Registers notes in *Safety Fast!* For the past few years. I would like to thank both of them for their efforts on behalf of the Register. One other known change is that Henry Cole who has been central to the redevelopment of the Register's database will be handing over during the next

few months to David Askew; until this hand over is finalized please keep sending your register queries to Henry. Finally to complete the changes Janine Pratt will from next month, (June) be our *Safety Fast!* scribe. The sum total of these changes is that our Register Committee is now two people under strength. If you would like to play an active part in the running of your Register then please phone me on 01858 431271 or email on renggerbj@tiscali.co.uk and I will be happy to explain to you what is involved, I can assure you it's not really too onerous. There is a further request that I would like to make of you all, we need assistance at Silver stone on Saturday 23rd June and Sunday 24th June with car parking duties. If you would like to volunteer for an hour or so on either or both days please get it touch.

Next months *Safety Fast!* will feature a six page special on the MGB with a short and very personal history written by Don Hayter, ex Chief Engineer of the MG Car Company and sections covering Model Development Buying an MGB and using an MGB for pleasure. We would like to follow this up with short pieces covering:

- Auto testing in my MGB
- Taking my MGB to a track day
- Off roading / Rallying my MGB
- Racing / Sprinting in my MGB
- Long distance touring in my MGB
- Preparing and entering my MGB for Concourse
- Using my MGB as an everyday car
- Restoring my MGB

Plus any other topic you can think of which involves you and an MGB and will pass the censor!

This is where you come in, the committee would like these sections to be written by owners about their cars, so if you are prepared to write about 800 words and send these together with a picture of you and your car to Roger Boys (email would be great but don't be put off if you don't have it as we can work with other forms of input), we will guarantee to use your story. We aim to run this series of articles in future editions of our quarterly newsletter and will do so as long as we get input, so it really is down to you as owners and Register members.

Happy MGB Motoring
Bernard Rengger

HISTORY DISCOVERED

DURING THE WINTER Henry Cole received a request for information concerning an MGB with the registration number KYH 38D. On checking the register the car was located, but Henry was unable to disclose the name of the owner as this would be contrary to the rules of the register. He did however suggest that he would contact the registered owner and if he was agreeable pass on the email address of the new owner. This was done and the two were put in touch with each other and a most interesting story unfolded.

The previous owner who was making the enquiry about the car was Peter Sandes of Winchester who was absolutely delighted to know the car was still in existence and in regular use. Peter had it a comparatively short time and has owned many interesting cars since bat KYH 38D left a lasting impression on him, and he always regretted selling it at the time. It seemed to have had a quite exceptional engine that he never touched and on the M4 or French autoroute could see 115 mph on the clock given enough time - those were the days!

The history of the car was that Peter purchased it from a flatmate in London about



Is this the end in 1980? Photo: Peter Sandes

1975 when he lived in Chelsea. It had suffered a huge rear nearside shunt caused by a truck one night whilst it was parked in the Finborough Road: the damage was such that the insurance company classified it as a write-off. It was agreed that Peter would pay the garage storage charges in Fulham - all of £75 incurred by his flatmate who in return then handed over the car. Peter was now the proud owner of a damaged MGB. A garage owned by John Welch, the rally driver

in Church Crookham, Hampshire agreed to attempt to repair the damage. Over time they managed to straighten out the accident damage extremely well and gave the car a full respray in its original black - all for £200. Times have changed!

The car was apparently built in 1963 and was exported partially assembled to get around import taxes into Singapore, where Peter believed a BMC area director initially owned it. He believes this to be true as one night he was driving around Chelsea in the pouring rain, when he was accosted by a very smart lady with a double-barrelled name - Carnngton something he recalls, who said that most of her courting had been done in Singapore when her husband had owned the car. The family returned to England in 1966 and they brought it back with them. This explains why the car built in 1963 and fitted with pull handles carries a 1966 registration number.

When Peter had the car it had a black soft top, tonneau cover and a Bermuda hard top. Seats were black leather, push button radiomobile radio, pressed steel wheels with bolt on dummy spinners and smart corrugated stainless steel sills. It had overdrive and obviously the early 3

MGB NEWSLETTER

ROGER BOYS 01635 253699
rogerb@newbury.net www.mgb-register.org



Left The MGB as it is today, fully rebuilt and painted Old English White.

Photo: Gareth Hill.

'LIKE YOU, WE GET TREMENDOUS PLEASURE FROM KYH 38D. THOUGH I CANNOT CLAIM ANYWHERE NEAR THE 100+MPH (HONEST!).'

bearing crankshaft engine and door pull hands. It went incredibly well and Peter drove it in the summer of 1975 down to the South of France to St. Tropez and Monte Carlo. When he got married in 1977 and moved to Scotland the car was sold in perfect condition to his best man, Tim Haines, who then sold it on rapidly to his cousin, Charlie Maxwell, who was serving in the Army. In 1980 Peter got a call from him to say that the car was in a lockup at Catterick Garrison and if he wanted it he could have it for free. If he did not want it instructions would be given to Charlie's soldiers to blow it up on the firing range!! On finding the car again Peter discovered that it was in a very sorry state, the dreaded rust had set in making a mess of the front wings and other areas. The car would not start and in the time that Peter had available on that Sunday afternoon, he was unable to get it to run properly and was therefore unable to drive the car back to north of the border. He was very disappointed and somewhat demoralized but determined to save the car he found a young subaltern in the deserted Officers' Mess and asked as a favour would he attempt to give it to a local garage, as he was sure that it could be saved, and get it put back on the road. Before Peter left Catterick his wife took a picture of him with the car (previous page), having scrawled on the dirty bonnet paintwork the message "is this the end?" Obviously not!

The current owner, Gareth Hill from Tewkesbury was delighted to receive the fascinating information, which certainly threw light on a few things that he had wondered about but which he had never quite got round to trying to explain, for example why a '1966' car has pull handles and a early 1963 chassis number! The information has spurred him on to apply for a Heritage Certificate, now eagerly awaited, which should help to confirm the Singapore export part of the story

Gareth wrote to Peter to bring the story up to date and sent a copy to me as I had suggested the history might make an interesting feature in *Safety Fast!*. He said "To return the favour and to bring you up to date, we bought the car in 2001 from a couple in Maidenhead, Dawn and Chris Jones, who sold it to us exactly three years to the day after they had acquired it from a C R. Hargreaves in the Warrington area. The car had undergone extensive restoration work in the early nineties. When we acquired it still had the pack-away hood, there was no sign of tonneau (though it has one now) nor a hard top and it had been converted to wire wheels with three eared spinners. The steering wheel had also been changed to a wooden rimmed Mota-lita version. Somewhere along the line the engine had also been changed to a 5-bearing unit, though the gearbox is still three-synchro. The seats are still black leather with

white piping, and it has stainless steel oversills, but these are no longer corrugated - I think these were probably fitted during the nineties restoration. The previous owner had installed a radio cassette, which we have now replaced with a radio/CD player. The car is now a total contrast in colour having been sprayed Old English White, rather than the original black. There is some evidence of the original colour if you look hard enough, such as the bulkhead behind the dashboard. I have replaced the original number plates, which were badly discoloured with pressed aluminium ones but retained the old ones on the wall in garage. Since we have had the car it has proved incredibly reliable (famous last words!). Apart from routine servicing costs, the only expenses we have incurred is the conversion to a single 12 volt battery; a new stainless steel exhaust system; a pair of suspension dampers; a new brake light switch and clutch seal kit. Like you we get tremendous pleasure from owning KHY 38D, although I cannot claim to have had it up to anywhere near the 100+ MPH (honest!)."

I wonder if this article will stir any other memories of this car. Did you ever own it? Have you worked on it? I guess both owners would be interested in knowing more of its history. If you have any information an email to me would be great

Roger Boys.

REGISTERS, REGISTRARS AND OTHER STRANGE BEINGS!



Left: Don Bishop - the first MGB Registrar at Silverstone.

Far left: The Register Weekend, Isle of Wight. May 2002/

IT IS NOW TIME to say goodbye after nearly 4 years of having the privilege of being MGB Register Registrar. I have enjoyed my stint but it is time to hand over to David Askew who will be well known to many of you. David is a long time member of the MGCC and is just the right person to take the Register forward!

I thought it would be fitting to close my period in office with a reminder of what the Register is about. I have based this on some musings of Don Bishop the first Registrar. Don is still very fondly remembered and was a great musier!

"Why should I bother to join a Register, *free* or otherwise?" In general terms our Registers are basically lists of cars of "our" particular model which have come to our notice mainly by having at some time been in the hands of a Club member who has taken the trouble to tell us something about it. We cannot say how the others look at it but the MGB Register's view is that the owners/members may come and go but the car stays on the Register ad-infinitum. This is how a particular car's history builds up. The initial information comes from the first member to tell us all about it. The MGB Register was set up in 1979 at which time we had literally no archive material to go on. As the register has increased over the years it has become the Club's MGB archive. The whole Register system is archive oriented, added to which all the Club's Register Committee offer for example *free* advice of a technical nature, organise events within the Club's framework and generally try to look after the interests of members who possess one or more of "our cars." This strikes us as being a good enough reason in itself to take the trouble to complete a register Application form - a copy of which is enclosed in every New Member Pack. Don't you agree?

The most comprehensive listings of MG cars lie in the BMIHT library at Gaydon. They hold the production records of the cars and for a small fee, they will search out the records (once

they have been told a car's chassis/VIN number) and provide a certificate detailing numbers, specification, date of manufacture and perhaps even destination when it left the factory. What happens to the car after that is a mystery to us until a member owns up to having it. This is where the Club's archive record of that car begins. *Over* the years the MGB Register has come by some factory information which we have accepted gratefully but again the flow of information stops at the factory gates.

So how does any particular MG find its way onto the appropriate Register? Firstly the owner must already be a member of the MGCC even if the membership is but a day old. Register membership is *free* to members but not available to non-members. This is a general club rule. Each register will receive a copy of a new member's Club application according to what model he admits to owning.

Now from here on in we can only say how the new member is treated by the MGB Register/Registrar. There are three basic pieces of car information we like to have before we put the car on the Register.

- Chassis number
- Engine Number
- Registration (licence plate) number

Of these the most important is the chassis as the definitive and least likely of the three to change over the years. If two of the three are present we will take the car onto the Register and hope our pleadings for the third will get a response - not often the case regrettably! So we do two checks (chassis and licence plate numbers) to see if the car is already on the Register. If it is we change the owner details. The Register number stays the same. If there is no sign of the car we allocate the next new Register number and complete the new record

Here it might be informative to say that the MGB Register is has been computerised for many years with Don buying the first PC in 1989. Over the years the system has been

upgraded and in 2003 all the records were transferred into MS-Access. Improvements to the system are ongoing.

Back to the plot! Once having completed the basic entry form this is printed out so that the new member has a copy of what we are holding on computer. Then address and Membership card labels are printed along with Regalia and Committee Member contact lists and a letter of welcome.

Our letter sets out to reinforce what the Registers are all about, telling the new member what services we offer, that our records are kept on computer (inviting him or her to tell us if they are not happy about this aspect) and finishing with brief details of any forthcoming Register event. If the car has appeared previously we make a mention that we already have it on record. If we are short of any of the details we ask for the missing ones to be furnished if possible.

Well that's told you how it happens in the MGB Register. Registrar-wise. From the archival material we hold, we are pleased to have been able to help Club Office when members (and in some cases non- members - in the hope that they'll see the light and join the Club) have needed to know e.g. crucial production dates, colours, engine types, trim - you name it, we try to help. Conversely, we rely on you the members for the nitty-gritty about your MGBs, so please don't ever think we're not interested. Information is to us the stuff of life

I hope that the foregoing helps to give an insight into what the Registers are all about generally and how the MGB Registrar works in particular. One more thing - Register and Centre Committees, we're all volunteers, paid-up members like yourselves, except for our few faithful staff in Club Office

If you feel like getting involved, look on the "contacts" page in *Safety Fast!* Or visit our website at www.mgb-register.org

I look forward to seeing you at all the events that I intend to get to now that I am *retired*!

Henry Cole