



## Welcome to the MGB Newsletter

The months seem to fly by when you are having fun. It seems only a couple of days ago when I sat at this keyboard to entertain you with my words. Silverstone has come and gone and I met up with lots of you while doing my parking duties, I hope you were one of the people who greeted me with a smile, as some even in MGs don't!

Nicky & I, accompanied by Paddy, have taken part in lots of road runs so far this year and would like to extend a big thank you to all of the people who work so hard to put these events on for us.

This month we have a very exciting project to announce for you; it's the first in an annual series of MGB Lectures, read

on to find out more. John has provided his Chairman Thoughts. Bernard Reggnar tells us a cautionary tale and Hugh Boddington offers a solution to Bernard's problem. To round off our four pages I tell you about one of my favourite drives. Something for everyone I hope.

Roger

## MGB Chairman's Notes August 2010

Hopefully you have been enjoying the good weather driving your Bs. Mine is a rolling body shell at the moment, with the engine and gearbox with me at home, I am changing all the gaskets on the original 5-bearing engine, which was re-built back in 1991 by Geoff Allen, he of V8 fame, since then it has covered just under 40,000 miles with very little oil or water being used. One important thing I did back in 1991 was to have all the moving parts balanced, I am sure this has helped with the smooth, free running of this engine.

One problem I have had is removing the cylinder head from the block, after many hours of WD40 being squirted down the bolt holes it has parted; I will clean the bolts off and ensure they are well covered in copaslip prior to refitting the head.

While the B is in bits, my TF Stepspeed has been my sole transport, although one trip to Summit Motors at Maidenhead had to be made for the following to be fitted, a replacement cam belt, water pump and a coolant change, while this happened I also had some B&G stainless-steel water pipes fitted.

I am writing these notes just as the July *SF!* has arrived. Did you make it to the world's largest MG show, *MGLive!?* If not then you missed an excellent weekend. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the MGB Register volunteers, and others, who helped from Wednesday prior to the event, through to Sunday evening, when it all had to be cleared away. Without volunteers this event would not exist.

We had a number of MGB owners visit the Register stand with many of you checking with Chris Wilkins, our new Registrar, if their cars were on file. This month's picture is me presenting a canvas print as thanks to Anthony Binnington, who loaned us his 1962 MGB racer for the weekend. Why not have a large print of your MGB; they are available from the MGB shop on our website?

Henry Cole informs me we still have a space on the September Weekend away in Dorset, please contact Henry on [henrycole@sky.com](mailto:henrycole@sky.com) you will be made very welcome. Other MGB Register events coming up are the visit to the Coventry Motor Museum on Sunday October 3 and a few days later on Thursday 7th we have a very special event, this is the lecture by Andy Green on the Bloodhound SCC project, more details

are elsewhere in *SF!*, please book early. Later on Saturday October 23 we have our annual maintenance day at Bicester, Frontline Developments will be presenting their MGB Suspension modifications, and we will also be explaining the problems that can come from a faulty wiring harness.

Full details and entry forms are available from [www.mgb-register.org](http://www.mgb-register.org)

Enjoy your cars.

John Watson (07770 575 236)



World Land Speed record holder Andy Green



John Watson (right) present Anthony Binnington with a canvas at MGLive!

## Favourite MGB road route

Following the excellent article included in a previous MGB four-page spread written by Eddie Buckley concerning his road trip to Mallaig, his memories prompted me to consider some of the great drives we have completed. One route sprung immediately to mind. Nicky & I first completed this drive in the Boneshaker six years ago when we took part on our first Snowdon Run from Llandudno in North Wales. Since then we have followed the same route home each year. Last year, however, there was a twist in the tail to add some unwanted excitement!

In 2009, when we finished the Snowdon Run with a group of friends in August, Nicky & I decided to stay on for an extra day while our pals set off home. We suggested to them this scenic route and they followed it, reporting later how much they also had enjoyed it. So it was this route we set out to follow the following day.

Unfortunately, when we came to leave the hotel in Betws-y-Coed, we had a car problem; it would not start when we were ready to leave. This despite the fact that it had been running prior to us having a hearty breakfast, all we got when the key was turned was a click, nothing else. You will all know my expertise with a spanner, I did try, I rocked the car backwards and forwards in case the starter motor was stuck. I checked the battery connection, not an easy operation when the car was fully loaded including Paddy the Westie and all his paraphernalia. This effort had little effect as the car still refused to start. So we had to revert to the second item in the toolbox and ring the AA. They quoted the standard 40 minutes delay, but we were amazed to see the famous yellow van pull into the hotel almost as soon as I put the phone down, apparently the driver was having a cup of tea in the lay-by 100 yards from the hotel. He heard the click and then wanted to check the battery again with his meter so out came Paddy and his bits for the second time and the meter confirmed that the battery was sound. He then wanted to test it under load so reached forward and turned the key and, as if by magic, the B started. Not once but ten times on the trot. He pronounced that all was well and suggested that we went to the local garage in Betws-y-Coed to fill the tank prior to our journey, he would follow to confirm we were OK, this we did and



MGB on the shore road at Lake Vyrnwy. Photo: Roger Boys

all was well. So we set off, then she who must be obeyed said in a way that only ladies can "just don't turn the engine off till we get home". Being a mere male this plan was agreed to. Now for the route, get out your map of North Wales as it's worth investigating.

We leave Betws-y-Coed on the A5 heading towards Llangollen, after a few miles signs to the right indicate an unclassified road to a tiny village called Ysbyty Ifan where we are able to pick up the B4407 which follows the River Conway as it meanders down the valley providing some excellent views of the river and the hills beyond. Soon there is a meeting of roads and we look for the B4391 going to the left. This road starts the climb up into the hills providing some spectacular views in all directions; at the point where this quiet road meets up with the A4212 it is possible on a clear day to see the Snowdon Mountain range. This hardly used A class road continues through some beautiful wild countryside eventually

leading us to the interesting market town of Bala which sits at the northern end of Llyn Tegid (Lake Bala). It's here that we normally stop for coffee, but due to the problems this year it was a quick comfort break for us and a gallop round the car park for Paddy with the engine left running! Then we take the A494 through the wide high street of Bala, and follow this road along the length of the Lake looking at the various water sports that were taking place. At the end of the Lake we take a sharp left onto an unclassified road into a village which the Naggiator has a problem pronouncing and I am not surprised – it's called Llanuwchllyn. It's here that we keep a wary eye open for the steam railway called Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid (Bala Lake Railway), which offers a delightful nine-mile return journey alongside Lake Bala (Llyn Tegid), through the beautiful Snowdonia National Park. Every time we have driven along the far side of the Lake we have managed to catch a glimpse of the little train puffing madly as it pulls its load of carriages along.



Graham Bignell admiring the view of Snowdon. Photo: Roger Boys

Normally I stop to take photographs, but not this year! At the far end of the Lake some tricky navigation is required to find the mountain road that we need to take. The B4391 is easy to find but concentration is needed to locate the narrow road, going to the tiny village of Rhos-y-Gwaliau this road will then take us up over the mountain to Lake Vyrnwy. What a road this is, single track for most of the way taking us up in a most spectacular fashion through some wild county with areas of heavy forestry and then clear views with deep valleys to one side then high rock walls. Some reversing is always necessary as other motorists are encountered. I am reasonable at going backwards but with "for goodness sake don't stall it" ringing in my ears does little to help the confidence. About half way we crest a hill and drop down to a bridge over a small sparkling river tumbling over rocks with plenty of space to park. The road then climbs steeply up the far side. It was here that we had suggested to our pals that they had their picnic and, to our amazement, pinned to the wooden post on the bridge was a note to confirm that they had made it the previous day. Sadly we could not stop for long, but Paddy got a short walk and a swim while Nicky sat in the driving seat making sure the engine did not conk out.

Lunch was taken rather more quickly than the leisurely feast of previous years. On then for the last few miles to the most stunning manmade lake in Wales in our view. Lake Vyrnwy stands 900 feet above sea level and the valley was originally dammed to provide fresh drinking water for the city of Liverpool. It was begun in 1881 eventually being finished in 1910 taking a further two years to fill and it stands as a tribute to the skills of the engineers of the time. There is a splendid 11-mile perimeter road, which provided some stunning views of the area. As we join the perimeter road we turn right because we enjoy the ride over the dam at the far end of the Lake. One year the day was so good that we drove all the way round rather than just the half required to get us on the way home.

When we took part in the brilliantly organised Mid Wales Owners' Club run, called the Dragon's Run, in 2010 we thought that we were going to follow this route in reverse; however, the run took us round Lake Vyrnwy going in a northerly direction, but this time turned left on the first available turning climbing to a the most wonderful viewpoint which provided stunning views over to Snowdon and beyond. This would make the route a great day out with a circular route taking

you back to Betws-y-Coed, just get your map out and the route is easy to find. There is no doubt in my mind that it was designed with MGs in mind!

However, for us we have a further 200 miles ahead of us to Newbury, our home, so at the dam we stop for a couple of minutes to turn the satellite navigation system on, this plots our route to Montgomery and eventually home via Gloucester. At this time the Naggator normally can relax and allow Doris the voice of the system to take over. However, this year, due to the problems of the B, relaxation was not possible.

When we got home I turned off the engine and yes, you guessed, it started first time! However, the man who knows at Manor Garage, Wantage, diagnosed that the solenoid was at fault. This is a further example of the poor quality of parts being supplied for use with our cars, as this component had been replaced just a year ago. I was also instructed on how to overcome the problem by shorting out the two contacts with a screwdriver... simple when you know how! I now wonder how it has been possible to have driven the Boneshaker for 67,000 miles and not know this!

Roger.

## Fuel pumps – a cautionary tale

I restored my 1967 MGB GT 20 years ago and every year since then have carried out routine maintenance covering oil and filter changes, greasing everything I can find to grease and checking such things as points and plugs. We use the car regularly and recently attended the MGB Register weekend in County Durham, before we left home I carried out the normal checks, kicked the tyres and checked oil levels, the journey north was uneventful and we also enjoyed the first day's run to High Falls.

The Sunday run took us further north beyond Hadrian's Wall to within 30 or so miles of the Scottish border, all went well and after a very enjoyable day we set off on the 50-mile journey back to the hotel. This was enjoyable for the first 20 miles and then just as we were joining the A69 Trunk Road I pressed the accelerator but no response and we came to a stop. My wife looked over at me with the 'what's wrong?' look and the helpful comment "I thought you said you checked everything before we left home". Suspecting an electrical problem I removed a spark plug to check for spark, there was one but fairly weak so I decided to change the coil and condenser for the spare I carry, sure enough a better spark so I replaced the plug, the engine started and we were off. However, after about three miles the same problem re-occurred, after checking the spark I decided to check the fuel supply, no fuel. Several years ago I relocated my fuel pump to the space behind the rear seats in the GT so lifting the spare wheel cover I could give the fuel

pump a good clout with a hammer, the pump immediately started clicking and we were on our way again. However, my joy was short lived as, after a couple of miles or so, we again came to a gentle stop, by this time I had been joined by two other MG friends. I got out of the car lifted the spare wheel cover, administered the remedial blow with the hammer and we were off again, this process was repeated several times until finally no matter how hard I hit the fuel pump or how sternly I spoke it would not restart.

Fortunately Roger Cooper has a tow bar on his GT and I was carrying a rope (more correctly the main sheet of my sailing boat), unfortunately this final stop was half way up a fairly steep hill and after connecting the tow rope Roger set off to pull my car. From my position Roger's car appeared to shudder violently and to get further way, I was concerned that either I had pulled the back off his car or the front off mine; however, eventually my car started to move, the delay being caused by the elasticity in the main sheet which was never intended to act as a tow rope. After a few adventures and at one time nearly chopping the legs off a pedestrian who tried to cross the road between our two cars we arrived back at the hotel.

Next morning I got out my spanners and changed the fuel pump for my spare, everything seemed OK, but after a quick trip round the car park the car again came to a gentle stop with a silent fuel pump, guessing that the spare, which had not



been used, or tested for 15 years may be sticking I applied a few drops of WD40 to the replacement pump which immediately restarted and we could set off home. Judy, my wife, was still very uncertain that I had solved the problem so after I had filled up with petrol we covered the 195 miles to my house non-stop down the A1 in 195 minutes, no problems and we averaged over 35mpg.

Next day, I took the old fuel pump apart to see what had gone wrong, to my surprise the points although badly pitted were not totally worn away but were sufficiently worn such that the stop on the upper points was hitting the body of the pump before the points actually closed. I bent the stop with a pair of pliers and when connected up the fuel pump immediately started and ran perfectly. I have, however, now completely overhauled both pumps with new points and made a mental note to check the fuel pump again in 2014. The lesson from this must be that the old saying 'if it ain't broke – don't fix it' should certainly not be followed if you run an MGB.

Bernard Rengger

## Dual fuel pumps

Interesting how events follow one another, firstly I got the article from Bernard telling us all about the problems caused by the failure of his fuel pump. Then, as if by magic, came an email from Hugh Boddington, which may have alleviated Bernard's problem. It told me about the twin fuel pumps that have been fitted to Hugh's MGB. There were some pictures included showing the position of the new pump.

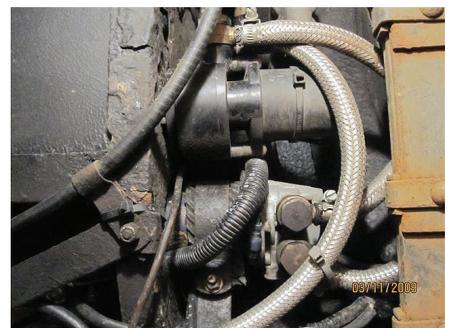
Hugh indicated that the job was not difficult providing you are able to get under the car safely; a pit or a ramp would be the best approach. The second pump is

fitted with a T-junction in the main fuel line allowing each pump to be fitted in series. A three-way switch is located on the dashboard allowing either pump No 1 to be used or with a flick of the switch bring pump No 2 into play and turning off No 1. The third position on the switch means that neither pump is working, which of course means that if the car is stolen it will only run for a short distance before running out of fuel.

Hugh is a well-disciplined driver and uses pump No 1 in the mornings and pump No 2 in the afternoons therefore

ensuring that both are used regularly. Many thanks for sharing the information Hugh.

Roger.





### Chain reaction – how the sale of a V8 was linked to much more

Don Gilham in Norfolk relates how he came to buy an MGB GT V8 (Black 0974) from Stuart Mumby – a complicated tale involving a number of other MG enthusiasts and sales of MGs too.

At the beginning of May I bought a lovely mineral blue 1967 MGB GT on sight without a test drive, but I found the car a little underpowered so after a month I put it up for sale. Chris Bone phoned on Tuesday last week (June 8) asking if it was still for sale. As we talked, I told him I was looking for a V8, and his reply “oh I’ve just sold mine” led to what happened next.

Chris duly arrived the next day and poked and prodded and looked and fettled, and decided to buy the MGB GT, so we shook hands on a deal – that’s another story but not for the here and now. As he knew I was after a V8 he was kind enough to access his email from my computer to show me details of a black MGB GT V8 owned by Stuart Mumby that he had seen at MGLive! at Silverstone the previous weekend. Stuart hails from Shiptonthorpe in East Yorkshire.

By the time Chris got home (an hour’s journey back to Swaffham), I had phoned Stuart and bought his beautiful Black V8. Also, Chris had told Stuart of a very nice TF 160 that was for sale in Norwich and lo and behold Stuart made the trip from Yorkshire to Norwich and bought the TF 160 on the following Saturday (June 12). There was then a lot of umming and ahing about how to get which car to whom, as

Chris still had to hand over his MGB GT V8 (Teal Blue 0704) that he had just sold to Harry Eddison up in Holt in Norfolk. This was done on the Wednesday (June 16) when I met Chris near Holt, and after some imbibing in a lovely pub (The King’s Head at Letheringsett – highly recommended) we took Chris’s V8 to Harry – who, incidentally, has the most beautiful MGA Coupé – and then Chris and I returned to my house in Broome, from where Chris beeted home in his new 67 MGB GT.

Nope, it’s not finished yet. We were still umming and ahing about how to get my new V8 from Stuart in East Yorkshire to Norfolk, and Chris very kindly offered to drive me up to Yorkshire. But no need as Stuart Mumby had to pick up his TF 160 from Norwich, so he kindly offered to bring the V8 down to me in Broome the next day (June 17). Chris came over in his newly polished MGB GT and the three of us went to Norwich so Stuart could collect his TF 160.

There you have it – four MGs rotated in less than two weeks, two of them being MGB GT V8s (Teal Blue 0704 and Black 0974) and a lovely time was had by all except for Chris whose speedometer attacked him on the way home!

And finally two footnotes: Black 0974 was owned for many years by Dave Wellings, who carried out a comprehensive restoration of the V8 but finally decided to sell up and get a Morgan, and Harry Eddison is a

former V8 enthusiast, who used to own Flamenco Red 2550 now owned by Nick Ashmore, who recently decided to get a V8 again. Of course Harry has been welcomed back with enthusiasm! We hope to meet up at the V8 Gathering at the MGCC’s race meeting at Snetterton in October – for details see the online Rolling V8 Calendar.

### Enjoying an RV8 in Switzerland

Swiss MG enthusiasts like Victor Rodrigues and Tom Studer have always been keen on MG V8s and so is Michael Bernhard, from the Lake Geneva region. He reports his RV8 Woodcote Green 1169 has now covered just under 20,000 km and is still going well. He says, “I am busy negotiating an EZ Electrical Power Steering on the RV8 in such a way that if I get it homologated here in Switzerland for the Swiss importer, I will have earned the device. Almost there!

I had to change the petrol pump which had a severe leak – I believe I must have lost more petrol on the road than in the engine for some time. Now the car runs so smoothly, it is incredible and I do an average of between 8 and 10 litres per 100 km depending on whether it is in town, along rural roads or on motorways. The pump and both filters were found after a single phone call in a morning here in Switzerland by my small local repair shop. I also refurbished the rear drum brakes. When we removed the drums, the brake mechanisms looked brand new – even the springs are still with their red paint. New master cylinders (also found here locally the same morning) and new linings were replaced in a day and now the car is fit for many more miles.

My car has inspired at least three people in Switzerland to import RV8s as I drive it around this part of the country. RV8s seem to have become ‘common property’ here in Switzerland.”

