



Welcome to the MGB Register Newsletter

By the time you get the opportunity to read this, we will have taken part in a couple of MG events with the Boneshaker ('64 MGB) and be looking forward to the many others that we have booked for this year. Spring is a great time as we have all the summer to look forward to. One of the jobs we had to do in the winter was to plan the route for the MGB Register Spring Run. We were forced, well Nicky said, "If you think I am driving all that way in the Boneshaker in this cold etc." and I got the message quickly, to do it in the BMW and thoroughly enjoyed our day, being very impressed with the setting of Dyrham House near Bath. The route was on a great set of MG roads so we made sure we were able to use the car on the day. Hopefully you also took part, if not, read the write-up here to see what you missed.

The rest of the space has been filled with contributions from David Broadhurst, who tells us how he fulfilled his dream of getting a Webesto roof fitted to his MGB GT. Bernard Rengger tells us about a neat get-you-home idea that he has adopted. We lifted a technical tip from the forum posted by Ian Fozzard and John Watson, and our Chairman fills the remaining space, so thanks to you all. Don't forget there is always space for your MGB story!

One of the great things about owning an old car, especially an MG, is the super friends that you can make. One of these for me has been David de Saxe. I have met and spoken with him at numerous events over the years and he has always been very supportive since I took over writing this four-page spread, contributing numerous articles over the years. If I was ever short of copy, an email to David and the page was full. Who will forget the controversy and all the feedback that was created when we put together the list of spares to carry in the boot of your car? It was a real surprise when he contacted me recently and told me that you are never too old to love MGs but there comes a time when you simply can't get into one anymore! Hence he announced that he was going to have to sell the fabulous MGB GT that he owns. This is a great opportunity for someone to take over one of the very best cars available, as it is a completely original 1969 version in fine mechanical and structural order with a genuine mileage of under 50k. It's an

excellent buy at under £7000. Shame its Tartan Red or it would be in my garage! Contact David on desaxe@btinternet.com if you would like it, but don't delay.



One of the best MGB GTs. Photo: David de Saxe

George Wilder made me smile when he emailed me this: "A friend of mine was sending an email about his MGB GT recently when the spell checker queried it. It offered the alternative of Maggot – no prize for guessing the name that the car now has!"

The Register organised a brilliant day out in early March when 45 of us were invited to visit the iconic British aircraft, the Vulcan, at its base at Lyneham in Wiltshire. XH558 is the last flying example of this spectacular aircraft and unfortunately our visit, which was organised by John Watson, will be the last one that will take place at this venue before the whole operation moves to a new base in Doncaster.

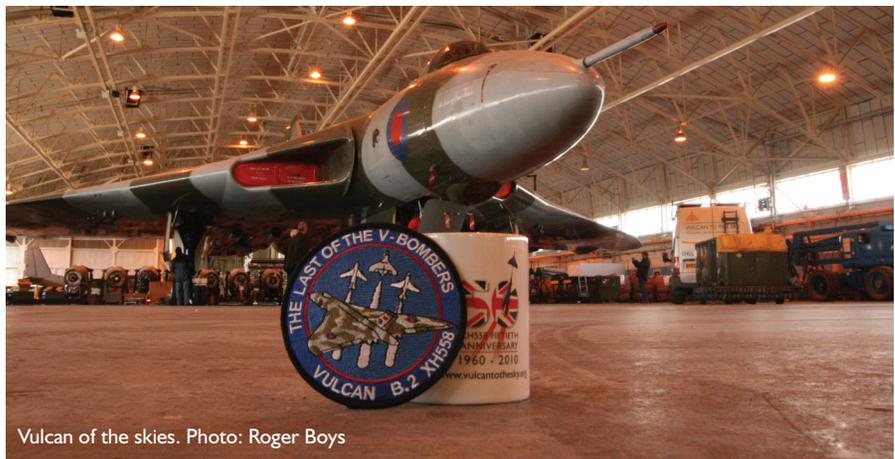
We were divided into three separate parties of 15, meeting up in a pub before being escorted into the base by our guide Toni Hunter. On arrival, after having a short safety briefing, we were given a fascinating 10-minute overview of the plane's history before being allowed to explore at our leisure. The aircraft appears to be enormous and again very small. The airframe dominated the hangar with the huge delta wing looking menacing as it cast

deep shadows onto the ground. Then we took the opportunity to explore the cockpit which, in complete contrast, is tiny. How it is possible to squeeze a five-man crew into such a small space defies belief. Particularly when they undertook the famous flight down to The Falklands which lasted 15 hours. If you get an opportunity to go and see it do so, it will make you very proud.

This visit to the Vulcan confirmed in the minds of your Committee the suggestion that this great British engineering achievement should be the subject of our second MGB Register Lecture, which is due to take place on Thursday October 6 in Abingdon. The Vulcan Trust are keen to complete the presentation for you and we are about to confirm all the details with them. We promise to advise you all, as soon as the loose ends have been tied up, via the website and in this magazine. The format will be the same as the successful evening we promoted last year when we featured the Bloodhound Project. In the meantime, please make a date in your diary and begin to spread the word and ensure that you keep the date free, as it promises to be a fascinating night.

One last thought, who is building the official MGB Register Rocker Box Racer to take on all comers at MGLive! this summer? I am currently enjoying building the winning racer for my local Natter. If you would like to take up this challenge and try to beat the Newbury masterpiece along with all of the other competitors taking part this summer at Silverstone, get in touch with our Chairman, John Watson. We have to have an entry, don't we?

Enjoy your MGB,
Roger



Vulcan of the skies. Photo: Roger Boys

MGB Spring Run April 10 2011

Wow, what a day we selected for our first big event of the year – here in the UK we experienced wall-to-wall sunshine with temperatures breaking 20°C or 70F in old money, in April! Not only was it warm, there was not a cloud in the sky all day. Could this be an omen for a great summer to come or was this it! Over 90 cars pitched up for the start at Millets Farm near Abingdon at 8.30am, we even had people ringing up on the day before, asking to join the event; we did our best to accommodate all comers.

Then it was off to the 13th-century Great Coxwell Barn, a magnificent structure cared for by the National Trust. Here we were allowed to park on the grass in an area not normally available. After a quick view of this lovely old building it was on again through the Cotswold Water Park, where there are 147 lakes formed by the extraction of sand and gravel. The route then took in some of the more interesting narrow roads of the Cotswolds passing through numerous pretty villages. Twenty miles in, there was an opportunity to take a more direct route to the finish location via the A46. Some selected this option, but the majority continued and were well rewarded for the effort as the



Spectacular view of the MGs at Dyrham Park. Photo: Roger Boys

road seemed to go up a farm track which eventually passed through one of the most spectacular valleys in the Cotswolds. As the route continues it starts to climb up to the higher ground near Nymphsfield emerging at the car park at Coaley Peak, where there

are some of the finest views in the south of England looking over the sweep of the river Severn and onwards towards the mountains of Wales. Some picnicked here while others proceeded to undertake the last section immediately. Here the route



Ian Deverall and Terr Whiffen parked at Dyrham Park. Photo: Roger Boys



Graham Dix leaving Gt Coxwell Barn. Photo: Roger Boys

again found one of those hidden valleys through the village of Owlpen, "the epitome of the English village", as described by HRH The Prince of Wales. Then the challenge of tackling the 1 in 4 climb up to the top of Rushmire Hill before sweeping down to Wotton under Edge then up again past the Somerset Monument towering above Chipping Sodbury Common before joining the A46 and on to Dyrham Park. The last surprise of the 75 miles was the spectacular drive down the old hillclimb course, which provides a fantastic view of Dyrham Park's house and church along with the views of the deer park and beyond. We parked up and chatted to our fellow travellers before setting off to view the house and gardens and enjoy tea and cake in the cafe. The MGs made a wonderful sight with the sun glistening on paintwork and chrome with the house in the background. Why can't every day be like this?

Roger

MGB Register Chairman's Report, April 2011

Did you see the April 1 joke about the MGB with the rubber-band bumper on the MGCC website? This was Nigel Pratt's entry for the best decorated bumper competition at our Register weekend last September. April 1 was, unfortunately, the funeral of Nigel's father Colin. Nigel thinks his father would have appreciated the joke. Colin was an enthusiastic supporter of our Register and he will be sadly missed. Our condolences go to Lis, Nigel and Janine.

Last month we had our MGB AGM at Kimber House. Neil gave some details in April's *SFI!*, with a picture showing those who attended published in 'Out and About'. A full report and the minutes are available on the news page of www.mgb-register.org as are previous copies of *Safety Fast!* monthly and quarterly news reports.

Our new web man, Steve has been working overtime enabling you to see if your car has its picture on the Register site. So far we have over 1,500 photos of registered MGBs shown.

Another area the MG Car Club and especially the Register finds it is involved in is working with the DVLA to help owners retain registration numbers etc. This year so far we have helped three MGB owners get their cars back on the road. We have also saved a 1967 Roadster from possible death

by ensuring it will be restored and used, much to the delight of the owner's widow.

My own car restoration has been delayed due to various reasons, but is now sprayed and the jigsaw of putting it back together is in place. The biggest job was converting new BMH push button doors to the early pull handle type. Here is a picture of Iris Blue EBW45B

As some of you may know, 2012 will

be the 50th Anniversary of our beloved MGBs and your Register Committee, together with the MGOC, are planning several events to take place next year. If you feel you have any ideas you would like us to consider, please send them to the link on www.mgb50.com

Happy MGBing
John Watson



Sprayed at last. Photo: John Watson

Fitting a Webesto Sunroof to an MGB GT

Frankly I was never that fussed about convertibles. I know that is heresy to all you owners of Tourers/Roadsters, but I find the wind buffet tiring over a distance and when the hood is up, unless very well fitted and taut, the banshee howling is horrific. However, I do like a sunroof. I have owned five cars previously with sunroofs (two fabric) and have really enjoyed the feeling of spaciousness they give. Then, when it turns a bit inclement, rain, snow, fog, night and so on, it is so easy to roll it shut and be snug, like pulling on ones favourite old heavy cardigan. My MGB GT doesn't have a sunroof; that is to say it didn't until this last month when I threw caution and part of a maturing insurance policy to the wind and had one fitted.

This is not as easy these days as it used to be. My previous MGB GT LE which I enjoyed for 10 years had a sunroof. I bought it from the MGOC off the shelf and my mechanic friend Neil fitted it in two days after he took an angle grinder to the roof of my car. (I hasten to add that he had done the same to his own previously, so he knew what to do.) The sunroof I had bought was a Britax one which consisted of essentially a steel box which dropped into the previously cut hole and the assembled framework and fabric top then went in. All very straightforward. These are no longer available. Those that are not currently fitted in cars are guarded jealously for fitting to cars that may, at some future date, be rebuilt.

The alternative fabric sunroof is the Tudor Webesto sunroof which is an altogether different thing. It is supplied by a company in Blackheath in London, R and S Coachbuilds, and is only to special order. The frame that is at the heart of it is made from ash and its manufacture and the assembly of the kit of parts takes about a month. You then need a specialist vehicle trimmer, someone who can do upholstery and hoods, to fit it to the vehicle. R and S can advise on this. The one that I used was Autotrim in Ivybridge in Devon. I talked to them beforehand and found out that they had, indeed, retrimmed and repaired many Webesto sunroofs, but had never fitted one from scratch. Cutting to the chase, the kit of parts duly turned up, I delivered



Well worth the effort. Photo: David Broadbent

my MG and caught the train home and Ian at Autotrim set about the job with much comment and guidance from Pete in London who, working independently, fits these roofs supplied by R and S and has been doing so for years. It was, apparently, straightforward except that the hundreds of bits and pieces were not specific to the MG. Each piece had to be cut or shaped to fit. Components had to be hand riveted together. The job took a week and I was given a running report part way through. The end result is beautiful. Not only do I have a quality folding roof, but the roof lining has been completely replaced with a suspended one. The old lining had been glued in place on a pad of tar. I was and am very impressed with the workmanship displayed by Autotrim. Everything is very stiff and tight at the moment, as in all the best new unions, but that will ease with use. I am told by Ian that the quality of parts used and the fabric top is very high and should last years.

The roof cost £650 plus £30 for interior trim plus £20 to post direct to Autotrim. The fitting cost £650 for five days+ in the workshop. The dreaded VAT is on top, of course. Ten years ago the Britax roof cost £300+ and fitting another £200 so prices haven't moved that much.

R and S Coachbuilds can be contacted on 0208 8584312 and ask for Shirley (see also www.tudorwebesto.co.uk). Autotrim in Ivybridge, Devon are on 01752 893368.

Naturally I had the roof open all the way home, about 80 miles. The afternoon was mild and fairly sunny in Cornwall. I revelled in it. Like on my previous MGB GT the fabric sunroof folded back turns a

good car into something sublime. The car sounds different, the breeze ruffling what is left of my hair. That was a wonderful drive home and a great way to spend some of an insurance policy. Well, what else would you do with it, put it in the bank?

David Broadhurst



Quality parts. Photo: David Broadbent

Technical Tip

I've just fitted a new SU fuel pump to my BGT and found a difference in fittings that the supplier apparently is unaware of (I've checked with SU themselves and they have confirmed that the information below is correct).

The original SU pump has two banjo bolt unions, each fitted with two fibre washers – one each side – to ensure no leaks. The new SU pump has an additional machined groove in the pump body where the banjo fits, and this has a fitted 'O' ring. A fibre washer is NOT needed on this side of the banjo union, but a fibre washer should be fitted on the other, outer side of the banjo. This is quite a significant change and if not assembled correctly may lead to fuel leaks at the pump.

Any views on this (especially contradictory ones) are welcome.

Ian Fozzard