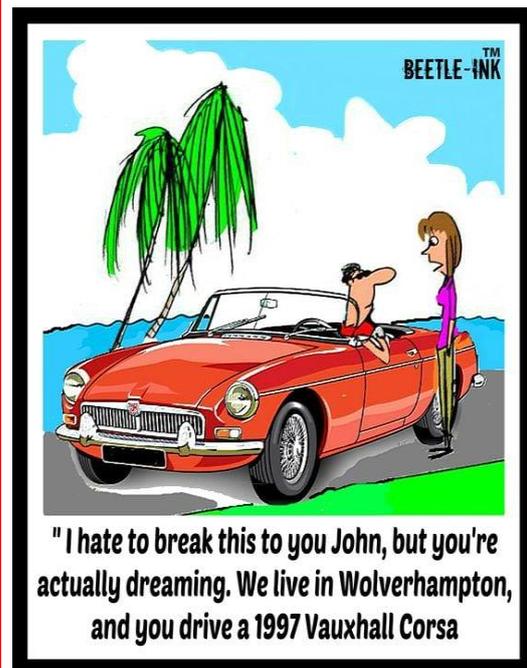


**OCTOBER
2020
EDITION**



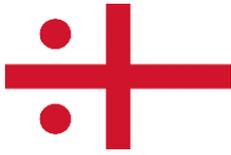
This Month:
Committee reports
Non-club runs
Upcoming events & a show you
might be able to do!
News snippets
AOB
Spice up your life
History of an MGF
MGB - a spot of bother
Friends reunited



**Sixty-five years ago in
October, the MGA was
launched. Hallelujah!**



ENJOY YOUR MG MORE WITH TVMGO



Secretary's Report



In this good old mixture of British weather which attends the last of our September days, where something of an Indian Summer has seen the sun's lazy rays reflecting on a rich mix of golden leaves and giving a most splendid light, I have been filling my time with a range of activities. Most pressing has been a need to get fit enough to join a friend for his 70th birthday 70-mile cycle ride from Barnstaple to Plymouth. With the realisation that the route, on careful measurement, was actually nearer 75 miles incorporating just over 4000ft of climbing, my focus was somewhat sharpened and every other day would see me cycling up some benighted hill or other to build the stamina up.

On these lonely forays into our glorious Dartmoor, the steady turning of pedals allows considerable time for thought, and on one such outing I was rueing the lack of classic car shows. As presaged last month, I quite enjoy daydreaming of alternative cars, whether they be MGs or other (generally British) sports cars. I have written before of being shaken from my cycling reverie by the sight of an immaculate MGB on a Dartmoor hill and you can imagine my delight at being passed by a cracking Healey 100, followed by an equally lovely MGR V8.

On my next outing an Iris Blue MGA being driven by an elegant lady straight out of a 1950's poster caught my eye just outside Tavistock and two days later, perhaps the highlight of them all, a three-car posse of Morgan, XK 120 and, lastly, a sublime D Type with pilot sporting both flying helmet and goggles. One is very close to traffic on a road bike, and the tarmac thundered as these fine machines blasted by, the low sunshine glancing off their graceful curves. I quite forgot to be puffed and road sore for these glorious moments and reflected that if I had stayed on my couch at home, I would have missed a very fine classic car show of my own.

And so to business. You have all seen the committee minutes, and I have had very positive feedback on the selection of our next meeting venue, the Moorland Hotel at Wotter. I am also grateful for your responses to my suggestion of a Zoom meeting and possible quiz. Quite understandably the appetite for a quiz was somewhat less than for the club meeting itself. I will have a look at what we can do here and will email you with a plan.

In terms of club activity, I will repeat the last MGOC guidance from our regional secretary, Tim Hipwell:

Government Guidelines. Limits on the number of people you can see socially are changing. From Monday 14 September, when meeting friends and family you do not live with you must not meet in a group of more than 6, indoors or outdoors. It will be against the law to meet people you do not live with in a group larger than 6 (unless you are meeting as a household or support bubble). The police will have the powers to enforce these legal limits, including to issue fines (fixed penalty notice) of £100, doubling for further breaches up to a maximum of £3,200.

MGOC Guidance – from Tim Hipwell, Regional Secretary. In view of the above it is now not possible to organise any face to face meeting / event under the MGOC banner and any event you may have had planned in the near future will have to be cancelled. Hopefully, these restrictions will be lifted soon but it is my personal opinion that sadly we will not be able to organise any face to face meetings for some time. Do please keep your Zoom/online/virtual club meetings going - I know they are appreciated by your members.

So, in the light of this it is clear that the MGOC would not be happy to have activity under an MGOC banner. There is nothing of course to prevent private arrangements of up to 6 people going for a drive and observing Government guidelines, and many members are doing this in an entirely safe manner, often using routes from previous club outings. This looks like the template for activity until the end of the year at least and is most certainly better than nothing.

Keep safe, and I look forward to seeing you as soon as we can,

Warmest Regards

Simon

Should you need to contact our club secretary, for example to send in club subscriptions, first call or email.

01822 852843

clubsecretarytvmgoc@gmail.com



Notes from your Chairman



Hello everyone,

I am hoping you are all well and managing to enjoy yourselves despite these annoying but required Covid-19 government guidelines.

It was with a lot of sadness that Alison and I recently heard of the passing of one of our former members. Quite a few of you will still remember Bridget Baker with fondness. She, along with her husband Hugh, was very active with Tamar Valley MGOC until about four years ago.

Bridget was Club Treasurer for a few years and did a sterling job.

Some of the Tamar Valley contingent who were on the Jersey Rally attending a fancy dress evening some years ago, will never forget seeing Bridget and Hugh dressed as Pandas. Their costumes were amazing, and Bridget was certainly very skilled with a needle and thread.

Our heartfelt thoughts and condolences go out to Hugh at this very sad time.

I am pleased to bring you a bit of welcome news. Your committee recently managed a meeting which was held within government guidelines. One of the agenda items was to decide on a new venue for club meetings. After discussing all the possible options, we have unanimously decided on holding our club meetings at **The Moorland Hotel, Wotter, near Plympton, PL7 5HP.**

This venue was actually our club's meeting place prior to moving to the Moorland Garden Hotel and the owner is pleased to welcome us back. I look forward to seeing our MGs gracing the car park once again, whenever that will be! Please make a note of the new venue and take your choice of the various routes available to get there.

Currently I am chasing down a fault with our MGB after it started playing up at the National Cream Tea Day picnic we enjoyed back in June. I have only recently started to investigate but an intermittent fault is quite frustrating. Just as you think it is sorted, it rears its head again. I am attempting one thing at a time so I can determine the actual culprit.

We managed to find the time to do Howard and Jan's picnic run, along with the Babe Magnet (*does he mean me or my car? – ed*) for company the other day. It wasn't the warmest of days for a picnic but very enjoyable and lovely to spend time with Howard and Jan. I thought I had lost my peaked

cap as it flew off my head on the A30. Imagine our surprise as a few seconds later it landed between us due to the backdraft.

Yet another run out the other Sunday in the company of Janis and Steve saw us enjoying a really sunny day for some top down motoring. We ended up on Bodmin Moor at Trevallicks Farm Shop Café. We were very close to Caradon Hill and the views were wonderful from the outdoor seating area. Never been there? Try it, you will not be disappointed. The run home via Rilla Mill, Bray Shop, Horsebridge, Milton Abbot and Denham Bridge was so good and our car ran like a dream.

With restrictions still preventing Tamar Valley from resuming its normal activities, I can only urge you to get your pride and joy out for a good run. The Autumn Equinox has now passed and the weather for the time being is feeling a bit...autumnal. Hopefully we still have some good days to come this autumn before winter beckons.

Looking forward to the day when we can all meet up again in our cars and get our car club functioning properly once again. I am hoping that you and your families can continue to remain safe and well.

My very best regards to you all,

Alan



Event Secretary - keeping it wheel



Dear all,

Oh gawd! Yet again I've written far more here than I intended. Sorry, but I have something to say that's relevant to the club and each and every one of us. Firstly, this newsletter does not include the usual kind of reports from our recent visit to Wales or the picnic run as these were not club organised events but private ones. However, those who didn't take part may be interested to hear how we fared on our outings during these challenging times.

I had discovered that Llanerchindda Farm were resuming operations and had a few days available due to a cancellation. I passed this information on to members so that they could make a private booking if they wished and by the very next day, no less, our Red Dragon Run, as I called it, was on!



A consideration we all had to make was to assess the level of Covid risk we might encounter (luckily, this was at the beginning of September and so before the second wave kicked off). Those who have been before know the farm is very isolated in the Welsh mountains, so we were unlikely to encounter crowds of strangers. We also trusted owner Martin and his twin sons Andrew and Mark to deep clean everything, and to arrange the meal-time seating in a safe and responsible way.

In the event we seven couples and our friend Douglas, who drives a Morgan (he's previously owned a number of MGs so he's not all that bad, and he's helping Roy with his MGA restoration project), had our own section of the dining area and were seated on tables of four, away from the few other guests. After dinner we had an area to ourselves and played the usual games, such as dingbats and Janis's music and TV quiz. With a tippie or two, all had a jolly good time.



Roy and Sonia leading Janis and Steve like sheep.

Out and about, we didn't come into contact with many people, hardly any in fact, and Wales did not then have a mandatory mask-wearing policy, though most people covered up indoors. Pretty much the only time we went inside was to pay for fuel.

The runs were up to the usual excellent Llanerchindda standard and the landscape in the Cambrian Mountains and Brecon Beacons is utterly fantastic. The roads were virtually deserted. Generally the weather was fine, though we did have one very wet day that tested our car hoods to the limit!



This picture is a slight cheat. Charlie took a close-up of Jan and me driving up here and I had a wide-angle view of the exact same landscape, so I have combined the two. It really was like this though!

At the end of our four-night stay, everyone had had a fantastic time and we were both relieved and delighted to have been able to get away on holiday again.

Speaking for myself, I found the change of scenery and return to normality, even for just a few days, was incredibly uplifting and life affirming. Frankly, I bloomin' well needed the change – we all did!

Thanks to all the lovely people who came along and made the trip so happy and memorable. Oh, and the cars were happy too!

Two weeks later, September 13 was supposed to be the day of our People & Places run, but of course this had to be postponed until next year. Instead I wanted to try and do some kind of event on this day. Although club runs are not permitted, outdoor gatherings of friends were, within limits.

Some months ago, Jan and I had devised a simple route to a place on the moor suitable for a picnic. In the last newsletter I invited anyone in the club who wanted a copy to email me so that they could do the picnic run sometime. If they chose to attempt it on the 13th they might or might not have company as this was very definitely not a club sponsored event, just an invitation for a few friends to meet up as and when they liked.

This particular Sunday was the day *before* new guidelines and laws aiming to restrict the spread of coronavirus came into play by reducing gatherings to just six people.



The sun shone as we met on Roborough Down, each of our nine cars glinting in the warming light and showing every sign of being well looked after during lockdown. It was especially great to see Tim and Kim on their first outing with us.

Read later about Tim's impressive efforts to cure their lovely yellow MGB's niggles.

Best of all though, and what the day was really all about, was meeting friends we hadn't seen for many months. Having to keep a slight distance apart did not cool the warmth of greetings.

Much nattering ensued which had to be interrupted to get everyone started! I suggested that we should not form a convoy and that we only meet up again at the picnic spot. This was at Prewley Moor, Sourton, near where the A386 meets the A30.



It is quiet and away from the main road and has fantastic views from North Dartmoor right across to Bodmin Moor in the distance. No-one bothered us in this remote spot, and we bothered no-one else.

Richard's dash-cam shot as he and Kathryn arrived at our picnic spot

On the way we had been joined once more by our Moggy-driving friend Douglas who also brought along Graham, a friend of his who drives an MGA. We blokes raised bonnets to compare setups and discuss mechanical problems and fixes while the ladies, left to their own devices and seated in a circle of folding chairs, no doubt continued the vital discourse about Graham's powerful 130bhp Oselli engine, the merits of various types of electronic ignition, and which fuel is best suited to avoid vapour lock. Girl talk, eh? Happy days.

Tummies rumbling, out came hampers and flasks, and the al fresco feast began. I fell off my chair twice and Simon just the once, prompting Clive to email me afterwards saying:

"Hi Howard, Just a quick note to say thank you for organising a great day out. It was really nice to see everyone and I really enjoyed your chairbaticts!! (Simon tried but couldn't match you)!! 😂😂😂👍"

I'm so glad to have amused you, Clive! My falls from grace were caused by sods (in the grass).

Helped by smashing weather, this gathering of friends was a great success, and is something we *really* should do again. It was a shot in the arm we all needed during these troubled times. Some of us stayed together until 4:30 in the afternoon, chewing the fat and enjoying the scenery.

After we all finally departed, Jan and I stopped for a comfort break at nearby Services where I spotted a lovely blue A35 at the far end of the car park.



Although I had never seen this car before, I did know someone who owned one. Could it be...surely not?

As I approached, to my amazement my hunch was right. It was our friend Beth, with whom we had visited Northern Spain last October.

I have written before about this amazing woman who refuses to let age or infirmity clip her wings. While fate conspires to drain her glass half empty, she has life on tap to keep it topped up.

Being elderly and living alone has been exceedingly difficult for her this year. Beth is in the high-risk group for catching coronavirus, but in her usual style she has worked out ways of getting on with things. She also owns an MGA Coupe called Mavis, but Sybil, her A35, is more practical. The Austin's passenger seat is removed to make her wheelchair easier to stow, and Beth has a couple of adaptations to help her drive. On her weekly "Sunday Sortie" she takes off on solo trips, determined to enjoy what life has to offer. That day she had visited Cotehele, a 125-mile round trip from her home in Exminster. If her fortitude isn't an inspiration to us all then I don't know what would be.

So far, so good, but what next for our club? Can we continue with picnic runs and suchlike? As Event Secretary it is for me to provide information about events you might want to take part in and that requires me to keep tabs on what is and is not possible or advisable or even legal.

These are strange and difficult times, and now, with this virulent second wave, the risk of catching coronavirus isn't fading. The infection numbers in our region are relatively low, but they are rising. We must be constantly on guard. Stark graphs reveal the dramatic and dangerous upturn in the numbers of coronavirus infections across all age groups. Oh, and Trump has been trumped by it.

So this sets the scene to address the question as to what we as individuals can or cannot do in our cars (as club runs and large group meetings are out for the foreseeable future) and I'd like to use Beth as an example. There are lessons for all of us from her philosophy not to let adversity and fear be the end of life as we know it. We can't hunker down hermit-like forever. The balancing act is how to be as active as possible, but in a considered, careful and lawful way, as we did in Wales, as we did on our picnic run, and as Beth does.

Driving a car is a high-risk activity in itself, yet we do it daily, sometimes for hours at a time without giving a second thought to the potential dangers. Whilst tragic accidents do happen, most motorists will undertake decades of driving hundreds of thousands of miles with barely a prang. This is because sensible people know the rules of the road and stick to them. The dangers of driving around at speed in a ton or so of metal are understood and managed. And the relevance of this is...? Well, you don't need me to extrapolate how this analogy can apply to living alongside a deadly virus.

For now, there is nothing to stop you organising your own six-person picnic trips or excursions to gardens and suchlike – while they are allowed to open – until our club can resume get-togethers as before. Watch the weather forecast and get out there!

As you may have read in the last newsletter, I seem to be having a run of bad luck with my car, including problems with poor quality parts. Recently heading home from a drive over Dartmoor the brakes began to feel spongy. They progressively got worse until by the time I got to Crownhill the brake pedal reached the floor with no effect whatsoever. I managed to limp back home in low gear and using the handbrake, which was highly challenging and not to be recommended. You don't realise quite how many hills there are until your brakes fail!

Sure enough, I had lost all the fluid from a rear offside brake cylinder. After having minor brake problems last October in Spain due to the rear cylinder slowly weeping fluid, the car had been treated to an overhaul of the complete braking system with new parts ordered from MGOC Spares. As these were still in warranty, I called them and without quibble they are sending me new cylinders and brake shoes.

It was the least they could do. After all these parts should last for many years, not months!

Happy MGing!

Howard

TVMGOC EVENTS 2020



Upcoming events

The latest laws and guidelines rule out anything but private trips out and about in our classics with no more than six people taking part.

Just to state what is probably obvious, the October Tulip Trophy run and our November Sunday Lunch runs are cancelled. Alan & Alison and John & B. have these routes ready to go so they will have to be something to look forward to at a later date.

As explained by Simon, we cannot organise any club events or meetings for the foreseeable future. The MGCC have issued similar advice to their own clubs adding, *“Those that are running events do so with significant burden of responsibility, risk assessments and COVID-safe infrastructure in place, such as Track and Trace, temperature testing on arrival and sanitising stations.”*

NEC Show

Readers of the newsletters will know that I have been keeping a wary eye on the planned November classic car show at the NEC as a state-of-play indicator. It has now been cancelled.

A huge amount of effort, planning and money had gone into this indoor event with many health protocols adopted. It is a great shame it has all come to nothing, but even contemplating such a show in this year's circumstances was surely a case of wishful rather than wise thinking.

A way forward for shows?

In mid-September, 8000 car fans visited the 'Classic Car Drive In Weekend' at Bicester Heritage Business Park. This was an entirely outdoor event designed around stringent social distancing requirements with health checks on entry, spectator booths lining the demonstration track, and wide throughfares. Movie fans could watch films from their cars in a drive-in theatre. Marshalls patrolled the event to ensure guidelines were being followed. Feedback from visitors and exhibitors alike praised the organisation and enforcement measures. One visitor spotted, *“eight guys sitting together. The security guards were on to them in seconds.”*

It just goes to show that some types of events are possible whilst still complying with government guidelines and laws. Let's hope that local show organisers were taking note. Time will tell.

A local show you might be able to attend

I accidentally came across news of this show (that I'd never heard of) that took place last month: **Re:Fuel** is the Southwest's biggest "Cars & Coffee" venue – the home for anything with wheels to come and chill out at the weekends. We're currently open to the public on the third Sunday of every month (but will soon be more often) – and it doesn't matter what you drive, everyone is welcome.

Re:Fuel is hosted by Mansell Raceway, Dunkeswell – just a 10 minute drive from Honiton, east of Exeter. The postcode is EX14 4AH and entry costs £5. It takes place on the third Sunday of every month and the next dates are 18th October, 15th November, 20th December, though all are at risk of being cancelled if rules change.

The organisers also say: *As part of surviving the storm, we're having to pre-ticket admission to comply with the government's "Test & Trace" programme and split into morning and afternoon sessions with limited numbers of vehicles per session. There are also various other "special measures" around venue hygiene and the use of face masks – all the latest updates can be found on our Facebook page. Please bear with us, work with us as we introduce the necessary special measures, and we will continue to do our best to continue to serve the Southwest automotive community and provide your petrolhead Narnia home-from-home.*

Their website is here: <https://www.re-fuel.co.uk/>

Drive It Day 2021

Next year the FBHVC's annual drive fest will be on April 25. The Federation have a new website to promote runs, shows and meets as part of the nationwide initiative which will be raising money for Childline.

Our club should probably plan to do something for DID. A run might be possible, though what the rules will be next spring on the number of people who can mingle - the government really needs to exactly define that term – outdoors can only be guessed at. See: Driveitday.co.uk



News snippets



Worldwide classic survey needs your support

The future of classic car ownership is being examined and assessed. The advocate group Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens (FIVA) supported by the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) is asking classic car owners worldwide to take part in a survey that aims to generate crucial social-economic data on the usage patterns and mileage covered by old vehicles and the money spent on them. FIVA say the findings "...serve as a basis for arguments and help in discussions with political decision-makers and are therefore of considerable importance."

This survey is conducted every six years and helps understand the impact of events such as Covid-19 on our hobby and the supporting industry. The survey closes on 31 October. To take part click the Union Jack icon here: <https://fiva.org/en/fiva-survey/>

Insurance claims fall, but premiums don't follow.

As cars stood idle during lockdown, the number of car accidents and consequent insurance claims fell sharply, by 48% in fact, creating a £1bn or more windfall for insurance companies. However, what is the likelihood this saving will be reflected in our premiums? Well, it depends.

Some companies, such as Admiral, offered its customers a partial refund of £25, and LH offered refunds of between £20 and £50. But a survey of 1000 customers said four in ten were still paying the same as pre lockdown, and 12% said their premiums have increased! Many feel that if you are driving less you should pay less, but only 8% said that the reduction in cost was in proportion to their reduction in car usage. The Guardian suggest motorists should contact their insurer to say you are driving less, shop around when renewing and make sure quotes reflect your lower mileage and other changes and consider increasing your excess if you can afford it.

Ethanol

If there are any members who *really* want to get down with the scientific details and implications of the introduction of E10 fuel and its potential effects on older engines, here is something that could satisfy those cravings. Paul Ireland, a TF owner, has written a whole book on the subject entitled *Classic Engines and Modern Fuel*. He has also produced a paper on the subject entitled *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. You can find it here:

https://classicenginesmodernfuel.org.uk/E10/Default.aspx?DYN_MENU_MainMenu=1000001

It is a confusing and speculative topic. On one hand the DoT says E10 may cause blocked fuel filters, damaged fuel pumps, degradation of flexible hoses and corroded carburettors. However, Ireland suggests that carburettor engines might even run better on ethanol fuel as it reduces "cyclic variability" that can cause cylinder pressures to scatter (*Eh!?-ed.*) and misfires.

I can't help but wonder if Ireland's article and book might be an easier bedtime read than Wolf Hall. Do let me know. On second thoughts...

Satellite speedo

A friend of mine finds the swinging needle on his MGA's speedometer an unreliable indicator of his true speed. With so many cameras on our roads ready to snap if you stray over the permitted speed limit, even the usually wary can easily be caught out. See below.

Some satnav units display a very accurate speed measurement, speed/distance switchable to kpm, different trip meters, live traffic information and a Bluetooth hands-free phone speaker.



However, my pal wanted a permanent dash-mounted solution that also displayed kpm, and so he has bought a satellite speedometer like this one. He plans to cut a hole in the central radio grille to mount it, which I think is not ideal, though on an MGA this is at least a good position to see it.

If you too think one of these could be a useful thing to have, a search on Amazon throws up a variety of units in different styles, sizes and prices. This one, a more expensive type, would not look terribly out of place in a classic MG and costs £65.

Am I allowed a 10% leeway of the speed limit?

We mustn't get complacent with our perceived knowledge of the Highway Code and other motoring regulations, so this is worth a reminder. The RAC say in the eyes of the law, you're liable for a speeding fine as soon as you exceed the limit. So, if you're doing 31mph in a 30 limit or 71mph on a motorway, you're breaking the law.

Guidance from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) does recommend giving drivers a so-called '10% plus 2' leeway, to aid police officers in using 'discretion', however, it is well worth remembering this is only a recommendation, not the law, and some Police Forces have announced that they make no allowance.

Most speed cameras have to be manually set to trigger at a speed, however it is unconfirmed whether they are set 10% above the limit so it's not worth gambling and assuming they have.

When you are caught speeding by a mobile camera, it is also up to the police officer's discretion whether to penalise you. They can choose to take the NPCC's guidance, but do not have to because - as stated above - 1 mile an hour over is still breaking the law.

MGC breaks auction record

This 1968 MGC Roadster sold at auction for £31,251 which is thought to be a record.

Even though accompanied by very little history, and with a new odometer so that the car's mileage cannot be accurately determined, the auctioneer said, "The car is now in unbelievable condition – very close to concours. I've gone through it and refreshed parts where necessary – everything is excellent."



♪ *Spice up your life* ♪

Who Do You Think You Are? She thought she was Ginger Spice – she of the Union Jack dress. Now she's known as Geri Horner [nee Halliwell] who is married to the boss of Red Bull Racing, Christian Horner. She is a car nut - an MGB nut, to boot.



Apparently when she was a little girl, her father was a car dealer. She remembers those days fondly; at that time, she had a favourite toy red sports car.



When she received her first Spice Girls pay cheque, she bought a bright red 1967 MGB Roadster NBL 825E for £15,000.

In 1998 she left the Spice Girls and wanted to shake off her past. Her MGB was sold [for £8500] with other Spice Girls memorabilia, the proceeds going to charity, something she later regretted. Presumably she regretted disposing of the car, not giving to charity.

After asking *If You Wanna Be My Lover*, Geri later married Christian, and so *2 Become 1*.



In 2016 he searched out that very car, which luckily was still with the 1998 auction buyer, and he bought it. Christian then presented it to Geri for her birthday. (Get ready - you know what's coming...)

So, *I'll tell you what she wants, what she really, really wants. She wanna, she wanna, she wanna...her MGB back.* (Sorry!)



*Baby You Can Drive My Car,
Beep beep, beep beep, yeah!*

Gerri also bought Ringo Starr's Radford Mini for over £100k! Was that *Too Much*?

In 1966 each member of The Beatles was given a Mini by their manager Brian Epstein, customized by luxury coachbuilder Harold Radford & Co. The Radford Mini was their bespoke version of the "Mini de Ville" and they were as popular with rock stars as they were with housewives and plumbers. Ringo asked that his Mini be able to accommodate a full drum kit in the rear, so it has a folding rear seat and a rear hatch that opens upwards to allow for easy loading and unloading.

HISTORY OF MG MGF 1.8i VVC 'MarGie'

W172 BOE/H9 JWN

In my own words - as told to John N.

Here I am and brand new, first Registered on 11th April 2000 and placed into the care of Keeper No 1 who happens to be an MG of Hook, Hampshire. It seems I'm a company car so I'm dashing around all over the place, life is hectic. In August 2001 I have to go all the way to Coventry for my 1st Service, it seems I was supplied by a Coventry Dealer. In March 2001 Keeper No 2 KJ takes over and I spend the next two and a half years in East Sussex. Everything going nicely until I upset KJ, I don't know how, but he PX s me for I know not what.



In October 2003 Keeper No 3 JLC takes over from the dealer and I continue to swan around East Sussex quite happily. Everything going swimmingly until in June 2006 at 32,675 miles I upset JLC by blowing my head gasket and this costs her a few hundred quid and that really upsets her and she trades me back in to the dealer for something else. Spiteful I call it. I spend a few months with the dealer until in Oct 2006 Keeper No 4 VS takes over and I spend some time in Kent. VS apparently stands for Verna Starbucks but I don't think there is any coffee connection. However, VS and I don't seem to get on that well and after 6 months she trades me in.

I spend a short time in the dealership until June 2007 when Keeper No 5 AW of Whitstable takes over and I stay in Kent for 4 more years until in June 2011 Keeper No6 TL of Dover takes over. We don't seem to get on and I only stay with him for 3 months until Keeper No7 JK of Sale takes over and I go all the way up north. JK and I don't have a happy time what with MOT, 8th Service, and a new water pump all in 4 months and I find myself in a dealer's showroom again, where I sit bored out of my mind while a not very successful salesman takes from October 2011 until in August 2013, a whole 22 months later, he finally manages to get Keeper No 8 SN of Leeds to fall in love with me and she takes me away. We seem to get along well until she moves to Torquay and decides to sell me to GW cars of Torquay, from whom in November 2015 my current owner JWN of Ivybridge becomes Keeper No 9.

I could tell we were going to get on when we went straight to the Tyre shop and got a new set of TOYO tyres to replace the mixed bag of black round ones that I had picked up over the years. Then in December '15 he gets my suspected noisy tappets looked into, but that turns out to be the VVC units which he later that month gets replaced with used but quieter ones from a donor car. In May '16 we get the suspension pumped up to get the ride height corrected because I kept scraping my undersides, very painful. In August '16 we have an MOT and the water pipes replaced with SS ones from the donor car. November '16 sees me in dock for a general bodywork once over and I must say a nice job was done too. Life is now pretty cushy, this chap is an enthusiast and I only get to go out for club runs or shows and hardly ever in the rain. Have been getting through the MOTs without incident until August '19 with only a few minor niggles, like in February '18 the water temperature sensor went haywire and in January '19 the Clutch Slave Cylinder gave up and had to be replaced, then I developed an oil leak from the camshaft cover joint and that had to be replaced. The August '19 MOT made an advisory, as had all previous MOTs, of the Headlight dip beam pattern being unsatisfactory, so knowing of difficulty in getting replacement units he decided to set about getting them replaced so as to avoid the possibility of having to do it in a rush in the event of an MOT failure next time around. So in Sept '19 I got nice New Shiny Headlights in spite of the fact that I hardly ever

go out in the dark. After 4 years of trying to cure various rattles and wondering why the ride down the lanes/byways on these club runs we seem to go on monthly was so b----y hard, he finally decided in October '19 to have my Hydragas units replaced with some that actually have gas in them, a transformation ride-wise. My teeth don't rattle over every little bump now, all the little rattles he was trying to find seemed to have gone away and I seem to run quieter and smoother when cruising. I didn't realise how hard I had got. As at August 2020 we have been having an interesting year. In June he decided to get rid of his other car and make me his daily driver. All well and good until in July I developed a funny rattle in the exhaust. This turned out to be a US catalytic converter which required replacement. August brought the good old MOT, no worries on the headlamp front but a few other items required attention including a brake light switch and a suspension ball joint. The rear tyres were pass but only just, so were replaced.

It's been an expensive time for the old boy. In Sept '20 we went on a little holiday to Wales, a good blast up the motorway cleared the tubes beautifully and the old chap had a great time, I behaved impeccably - I didn't want a ride on an AA wagon at any price! I found myself as the youngest there with the oldest driver but still we had a great time. I've been with the old B----- for 5 years now and he's spent just over £800 a year on me, not including tax and insurance, and he sold his other car and kept me so it must be love. Then again, the sale got him another 5 years at £800 a year.

Regards to all and best wishes,

W172 BOE



Having made the decision to once again open my home to one of British Leyland's finest, I can only agree with the general consensus that I 'had it coming anyway'.

Still unsure as to how I managed to get a 'B' again, we (not my 'chosen pronoun' there, just an attempt to spread the blame with Kim) now have a bright yellow '79 parked in the drive with its grille open ready to shovel the cash into.

Since taking up the opportunity of ownership, most of the issues I've come across have been amenable to reason, degreaser and a little of the previously mentioned cash.

But one problem had annoyed since purchase and wasn't getting better. Under load, predominantly up hills, there was little power. This was worsened by making the apparently schoolboy error of putting the right foot down more. There was a flat spot in the power curve that took up the entire second half of the throttle travel, further right foot causing only misfiring and woe.

Having been out of this MG game for a few decades, my first thought was that the vacuum advance was causing over-advance, or secondly, that the carbs were out of tune or balance.

Getting the carbs tuned professionally proved easier than I thought - Adrian at Barton's in Crapstone keeps an old lag on (he looks fairly young to me) for just this kind of task. Voila! It ran better, just not up hills.

Timing was easy, with two timing lights coming from Janis and Alan. Sadly, Simon Williams' light had gone the way of all flesh and just smelled odd each time the trigger was pulled, but thanks to all for the help. An odd result I noted was that as I replaced the vacuum advance tubing, the mark shot off

to dance around the bottom of the pulley wheel. If I were half as bright as I thought I was, I would have pursued this further. Again, running was smoother after this, with hills remaining the issue.

Next to check was the compression, as I could simply have a tired old engine to deal with. A test kit was cheaper than getting it done: simple and a lot more satisfying. The results were at or within 5psi of manufactured specification for all cylinders so I'm a) very pleased and b) guessing the rings have been changed at some time - the head is a relatively new lead-free replacement.

I called in more and better opinions at this point.

Simon Williams said, 'Fuel, Tim. It's a B, it's always fuel, probably the pump. Under load, a fixed fuel supply with increased air is giving a lean mixture. Check the fuel pump and, beyond that, a winter spent rebuilding the carbs could be fun.'

Alan's approach based upon experience was to be a bit more generous in the timing, aiming for effect rather than any numerical setting. He also advised checking the fuel delivery for the same reason as Simon.

So, along with ideas from various web forums I made up a plan which incorporated Alan's along with Simon's. New points, set correctly, improved things; opening them wider, more so.

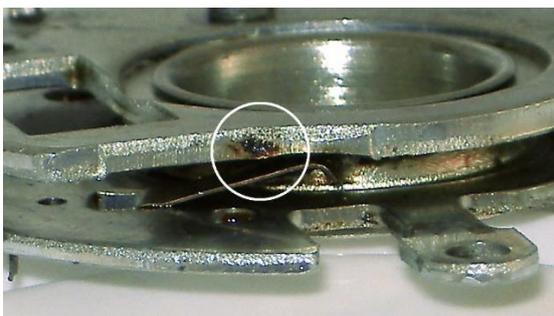
The fuel pump pressure was checked with a jury-rigged manometer made from a water bottle, some tubing and a long piece of cable conduit, flow being checked with the kitchen measuring jug and stopwatch method. The pump was both sub-flow and sub-pressure and so that was changed to a highly rated Hardi one, an SU sadly being too expensive. Again, a little improvement but still no cure.

I was then side-tracked by the sudden need for a new brake master cylinder, rear shoes and clutch slave cylinder. Who'd have thought it?

I then found an offer for a new sport coil, electronic distributor and timing gun that 'they were just giving away.' So I started.

Changing the coil made a big difference. Much smoother and no misfire, though I still had the flat spot that took up the 2nd half of throttle travel and an odd surge when backing off on the accelerator. I felt though I was on the right track. So, I changed the distributor.

Popping the old distributor there was a distinct 'Clunk!' and subsequently shaking it wildly - as one does - I found both lateral and horizontal play in the shaft, so the bushes were shot - remember the dancing pulley wheel mark? But taking it apart - as one also does, I also found that internal arcing had appeared to have worn a dip in the vacuum advance plate. Under load, the vacuum advance contact moved along the plate to this dip where no contact was being made, thus forming a fourth potential spark point in the system - points, rotor to cap, plugs and now advance plate contact.



Spark burn on the distributor base plate - the gap formed between the brass contact and the eroded plate, by arcing and/or vibration.

This may be a genuine part of the Lucas design to have sparks flying around under the condenser, as I say I've been out of this for a while, but I think probably not, as backing off on the throttle would reduce the vacuum and move the plate to a position of good contact again giving the surge I noted earlier. I've never come across this before, or even thought of it.

With the new distributor in and timed only to the book so far, the B now flies uphill as she should, and downhill as I probably shouldn't. Glad I changed the brakes... and kept the vinyl seats!

So, my flat spot turned out to be a tiny curved spot of about 1mm - who'd have known? And it was all sorted by the simple expedient of hours of 'fun', handfuls of Swarfega, and shovelfuls of cash.

That grille's looking just a little smug to my mind.

So to Simon, Janis and Alan, many thanks for your input, and if anyone wants to borrow the compression kit, contact me if you don't already have one. It's quite fun and (if the numbers are good) useful to have a record. I hopefully won't need it again.

Tim A.

Friends Reunited

Finding something to do during these days of numerous constraints is getting harder. So one evening I tried something very different to distract me from the Telly: old photos.

Now I don't mean trawling through the thousands you have in your PC files or indeed those that may have been carefully displayed in numerous albums on your shelves. I refer to those languishing in boxes in the loft, garage etc. which have not seen the light of day since well before digital cameras. You know the ones, those you sent away to Kodak or Fuji for developing and were a bit disappointing when they returned.

Wading through at least two dust-covered, cobweb-bedecked boxes was very therapeutic and pleasurable. One such example is shown here (naturally), the day I was reunited with my first MG, a 1936 TA.

As some of you know, I bought it for a cool £90 of my Dad's money when a student in 1961 and sold it in 1964.

38 years later, thanks to the developing technology (and, I have to say, an email to the editor of *Safety Fast*) I found it again in Coventry. Its then owner had bought it as a box of bits, without an engine, but nevertheless undertook the amazing restoration, sadly with a TC engine.



Such was the quality of the work lavished on the car, I simply could not believe (despite the correct number plate) that this was the 'banger' I had once owned. After a never-to-be-forgotten drive around the block, I was finally convinced by a familiar, wee bit of rust I remembered from all those years ago, behind the lens of the rev. counter.

It is now nearly 20 years since this picture was taken. I wonder where old EZ is now?

John H.



Thank you for relieving yourselves with these entries
(Yes, I regret posting this one! ed.)

<i>"I always wanted to visit Looe."</i>	John I
<i>Is this a passing place?</i>	John I
<i>"They said I could use the van at my own convenience."</i>	John I
<i>Waiting to pass at the traffic lights.</i>	Howard
<i>"I'm delivering a load of stools..." (sorry again!)</i>	Howard
<i>There's an odd smell coming from the front of the van.</i>	Howard
<i>Relax whilst driving</i>	Richard M
<i>Going feet first</i>	Richard M
<i>Never be caught short whilst on the move.</i>	Richard M
<i>We travel with everything but the kitchen sink.</i>	Richard M
<i>The delivery isn't done until the paperwork is completed.</i>	Janis
<i>The seat in this van is really crap.</i>	Janis
<i>The new model of trans*it</i>	Janis
<i>Goods in Trans*it</i>	Janis
<i>Who says men can't multitask?</i>	Janis
<i>"Shut the B----y door."</i>	John N
<i>"When I find that bloke Banksy, I shall floor him."</i>	John H
<i>"I'm so busy, I'm working on the job!!"</i>	Margaret C
<i>White Van Man - always on the go</i>	Andrew L
<i>Bedford introduce Commode van to replace Commer van.</i>	Andrew L
<i>Flushed with success from navigating the evening rush hour, the passenger could now sit back and carry on at his own convenience sorting out any urgent paperwork.</i>	Alan
<i>The prime example of any Boy Scout "Be prepared".</i>	Keat
<i>If I had 2 of these vans I would be called Two loos La Truck</i>	Neil
<i>"Sorry - I can't help these legs, I was just painted this way!"</i>	Douglas
<i>The latest model was fitted with all mod cons.</i>	Jan P

And the winner of last month's competition chosen by Simon is John I. Well done!
He gets to choose next month's winner...PTO

Two pictures for the price of one this month, which are bound to bring many happy boyhood memories flooding back. (I don't think that's being sexist as I don't recall any girls in my area riding these.)

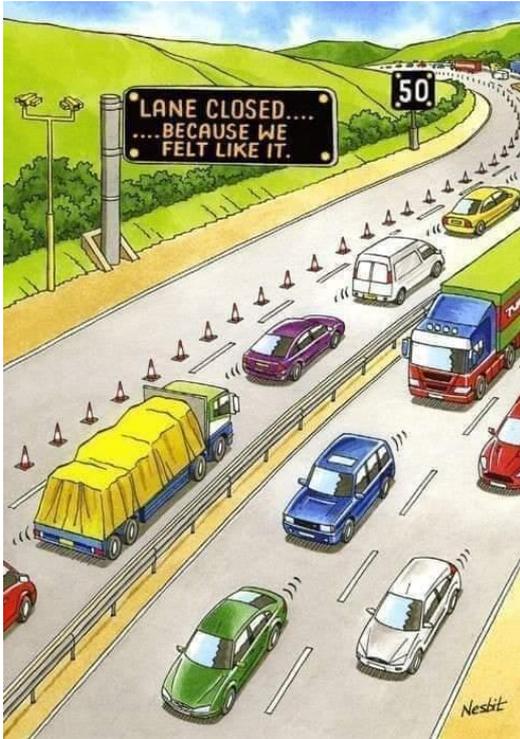
What did you call yours? Us lads in the Black Country (not racist either!) called them trolleys, but elsewhere they were known as bogies, jiggers, go carts, soap box, gravity racers, steerys, oracles and even Dilly Gliders.

Originals were made from old planks and the wooden boxes soap was delivered in. Pram wheels were like gold dust and their use led to a national shortage (and annoyed sisters)! But the pictures need a caption. Submissions for one or both by email before the 23rd of the month please to: mediatvmgoc@gmail.com





And finally...



Turns out it was a marble in the ashtray 😂😂



I was so worried the mechanic would rip me off just because I'm a woman. Imagine my relief when he said I only needed indicator fluid.



They have installed speed humps in our road. They are absolutely useless and just don't work. If anything, they slow you down!