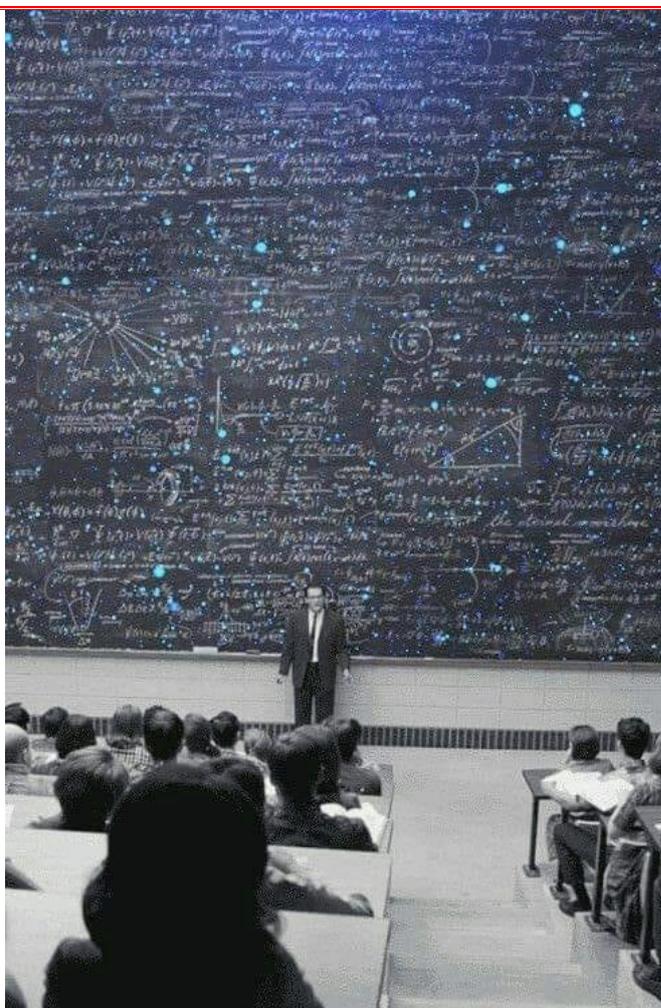


**November
2020
EDITION**



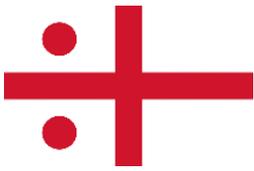
Formula for stopping MGs from leaking oil

This Month:
Committee reports
Upcoming events 2019
News snippets
Don Hayter 1926-2020
MGA brake adjustment problems
Re:Fuel gathering
Photo gallery – Mods & sods
MG Flight Deck Engineering

Puzzler:
What have two 5p coins and a couple of cable ties got in common?
The answer is later in the newsletter.



ENJOY YOUR MG MORE WITH TVMGOC



Secretary's Report



Dear all,

I write in optimistic terms this month, not least because I am rather fed up with the mindless misery pedalled by the media and I want to focus on the positive. We are moving toward our first club-wide 'Zoom' meeting and while I know that such things have limited interactive value it will be good to see the club together in some way at least. On a personal note my first MOT with the MGR proved less traumatic than it might – new flexible brake hoses being the only requirement. The engine produced a factory fresh performance which was a pleasing endorsement of the many hours of engine maintenance conducted so far. The brake parts even came off easily which is heartening given the front suspension rebuild I have in mind. Once this weather improves as predicted, I have high hopes of putting a few more miles on in the sunshine.

As you will read elsewhere, there are indeed things happening in the car world and the Re:Fuel monthly cars and coffee gathering attended by Gavin this month looks good.



Nigel's MG Midget



Leigh and Esme's MGBGT

We are also delighted to welcome new members this month. The first is Nigel who has a late model Midget in green. He has worked hard on the engine, hydraulics and suspension and the paint comes next – but his car looks splendid against the backdrop of Maker Church. The next are Leigh and Esme with their Ice Blue Metallic MGBGT. Leigh has just completed a full engine rebuild, bored out to 1860cc, duplex timing chain, ported and polished, 715 road cam, Weber DCOE amongst many other enhancements.

In closing I must reflect on the passing of an MG 'great', Don Hayter. A modest man, he always downplayed the pivotal role he had in the development of the MGB in support of Syd Enever. Classic Car Weekly quoted these words:

From 1959, it was quite a thing to have worked first on all quarter-scale models, then prototypes and development exercises, to actually seeing finished, painted cars in various colours filling the production lines and export car parks.

My feeling was that the MGB might have run on in production for maybe a couple of years with some panel facelifts because of American support. A completely new-style body, and chassis and suspension design programme was needed.

The MG RV8 contained the latest form of the Rover V8 fuel-injected engine and updated suspension. It was, in fact, just what we at MG Abingdon, had hoped to produce one day. The car was a great success, particularly with the Japanese market.

Don Hayter 1926-2020

From 1959 to 1995 – that’s quite a run for a late 50s design, and testament to both Syd and Don’s ingenuity at a time when British sports cars led the world.

Keep safe

Simon

Should you need to contact our club secretary, for example to send in club subscriptions, first call or email.
01822 852843 clubsecretaryvmgoc@gmail.com



Notes from your Chairman



Hello everyone,

As we slip further into autumn, any thoughts of getting out for a drive in our MGs become a bit more problematic. The weather has certainly deteriorated and getting out a gleaming MG from the garage just to get it wet and plastered with mud and road grime doesn’t really appeal.

Hopefully we will have a spell of dry weather soon so that we can scratch that MG itch.

Further tightening up of the present Covid-19 restrictions in the southwest region, may possibly make going out for drives a bit more restrictive, particularly with fellow members.

I understand from Simon (our club secretary), that even though our club activities are currently on hold, we are still managing to attract new members to our ranks. It will be fantastic to be able to meet them in person and to demonstrate what a great club they have joined.

In the meantime, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to Nigel with his green Midget 1500 and to Leigh and Esme with their MGBGT.

Last month I told you that I was chasing down an intermittent fault on our MGB. I think I have now got it sorted after finally changing the coil and numerous test runs.

Borrowing a compression tester from Tim was interesting and the results will probably see me pulling the cylinder head over the winter months and checking for a leaking exhaust valve on my Number 2 cylinder.

Recently, I have had the opportunity to get my hands dirty whilst working on Howard’s MGA and also being able to help in a small way with Roy’s MGA restoration. I must admit I enjoyed being able to spend a bit of time playing with their MGAs and it was also a good excuse to get out from under Alison’s feet and have a bit of boys’ time too.

The recent half term holiday has seen Alison and me enjoying a visit from our daughter, son in law and our two granddaughters. This has made a total of six indoors. However, a flying visit from our son and his girlfriend at the same time would have broken the rules. So, Alison and I found ourselves sitting on the drive in our Volvo for about an hour, so that we stayed within the government guidelines during their visit. How honest was that?

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,

Only in The Guardian might you find a columnist speculating if life as a tortoise might have its attractions. Why? Well, they hibernate - tortoises, not columnists - around this time of year, and if we humans could do similarly then it could be a way of bypassing a month of lockdown and a winter of Covid-19 and flu hell. A daft idea, but nevertheless it got me thinking.

As an MG owner there might be one advantage of shutting down for the next six months or so. Having spent hours cleaning and polishing my chrome wire wheels to protect the shiny bits from the damp months to come, hibernation would mean I couldn't be tempted to take them out for a spin in the wet. However, that's rather against my MG philosophy of "use it or lose it". Only muddy or salted roads inhibit me taking the A out for the occasional wintery spin. Over the next few months, it might have spells of little use, but it's not going to be forgotten about until the spring. Where's the fun in that?

Classic cars aside, there are a number of other reasons why hibernation doesn't hold any attraction. Firstly, I don't want to miss our number three granddaughter's 6th birthday party this month, *if* we are allowed to travel then.

November is also the time to make Christmas puddings and cakes, though sadly there's no point in me making an extra MG themed fruit cake for our club's Christmas raffle this year as I usually do, 'cuz there ain't gonna be one.

I've already made my puddings – all four of them pre-steamed for 8 hours using my late mum's wonderful, rich, dark recipe. They really are the best!



Then there's Christmas itself. Our whole family are being extra Covid careful. Hopefully the belated lockdown will improve the infection rate downwards to allow us to get together for the festive season.

Jan and I tentatively booked a ski holiday in February. We hoped to join one of our daughters and her family in Meribel (sadly that's where Michael Schumacher had his accident on 2013, just the week before we last visited there too. Though news is scant, it's not looking good for him, even after all this time). However, it's looking very doubtful we will be able to go next year.

The point of all this is that there is still much to look forward to during the winter months as long as we keep going Covid-carefully. It's time to take up a new hobby, develop a new skill or read those books you've been promising yourself for year's you'd get round to one day. And there's no excuse for not sorting your MG out and tackling that fix/mod/improvement. Consequently, the tortoise is welcome to its hibernation, but for us life is for living, not sleeping through.

Most important of all, I am preparing a Colour Supplement Christmas Special, so if that's not worth looking forward to then I don't know what is. It'll be a cracker!
(Christmas cracker, geddit? Oh, please yourself!)

Near the end of the newsletter are the entries to our caption competition, the picture for which showed a group of lads on their home-made trolleys (AKA soap boxes). I thought you might like to see my own trolley. I guess I was about 9 or 10 and I'm pictured here in our back garden in Great Barr, in the Black Country. Yes, this handsome young cowboy riding shotgun is me sat in my covered wagon.



A couple of generations before Red Bull soap box racing was invented for TV, there were trolley competitions in my area that included speed and agility trials and also what you might call trolley fancy dress. This family effort from dad and me in charge of carpentry, and mum sewing the wagon cover out of an old bed sheet, was our entry. I think we won ten bob!

The front sign says, 'Have trolley will travel', a riff on the popular TV series *Have gun will travel* described as being "The adventures of a gentleman gunfighter for hire".

On the side it says *Waggons Roll!*

I cut quite a dash careering down hills in this with no brakes – none of this health and safety malarkey in those days! At least that's how I remember feeling, and time can't diminish that.

Pass me the spittoon...Yee ha - Ting!

Happy MGing!

Howard

Send submissions to eventsecretarytvmgoc@gmail.com or mediatvmgoc@gmail.com

	<h2>Upcoming events</h2> <p>The most up to date and detailed information on all 2020 events can be found and downloaded on the Event Diary Page and the Entry Forms page. See: www.tvmgoc.org.uk</p>
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The only local event I know of is the Re:Fuel "cars and coffee" at Dunkerswell airfield near Honiton. It takes place on the third Sunday of every month, so the next one is on 15th November then 20th December.

Now this is not a show as such, simply a gathering of classic car enthusiasts. Gavin went to the October event and has kindly produced a report for us which you can read later in this newsletter. If anyone fancies going to the November meet – you have to pay £5 to book either the morning or afternoon session - please let me know and perhaps a few of us might buddy up and have a picnic lunch or something before going to the afternoon session.

Re:Fuel is now featured on our website on the Entry forms/details tab. Look here to see if future meetings have to be cancelled: <https://www.re-fuel.co.uk/visit-us/when/>



Don Hayter 1926-2020

The man who was instrumental in the design of the MGB recently passed away aged 94.

Don Hayter played a major part in designing the MGB. Don worked for The MG Car Company as their Chief Body Draughtsman from 1956, after a spell at Aston Martin.

He arrived at Abingdon during the early years of MGA production and began work on the Twin Cam, designing, among other things, the exhaust access panels, before being given the



EX205 prototype



EX 214 prototype

task of readying the MGA Coupé's body for full-scale production. His greatest achievement, however, was the MGB. Hayter worked on EX205/1, a fastback sitting on an MGA chassis, before tackling the monocoque EX214/1, which included a number of elements that would appear on the production B. Following two prototypes, the EX205 and EX214, the MGB was given the go-ahead.

It was then Don's job to make the car buildable and to finalise the distinctive windscreen and hood, not to mention the dashboard design. Following the success of the MGB, Don worked on other projects such as the SSV-1 safety car, the shell of the MGC GT racer, and in 1973 he was appointed Chief Engineer.

His book, *Don Hayter's MGB Story - The birth of the MGB in MG's Abingdon Design & Development Office*, is available on Amazon.

Many, many tributes for Don came in from MG fans from literally all over the world. They were posted in, amongst others, the MGB Register Facebook group. One chap said, "Thank you Don for giving me something to enjoy when it works and something to do when it doesn't!" That's a bit of a two-edged compliment, but someone else wrote, "He put MGB into my DNA."

Most proud owners also shared photos of their MGBs, as did our very own Clive who said, "RIP Don Hayter, God bless."



Clive's shiny roadster as posted on Facebook in tribute to Don Hayter.

London to Brighton Veteran Run safety call

Needless to say this famous Royal Automobile Club run is cancelled. In 2019 a man died in an accident with a heavy goods vehicle when he accidentally took a wrong turn while driving a slow 1903 Knox Porcupine and ended up on the M23. Now the motoring journalist Quentin Wilson has called for a safety review of the whole LtoB operation before next year. There may be lessons to be learned from how this particular run is organised.

All the runs we TVMGOC members do, whether organised by ourselves or by other clubs, come with detailed route plans. Jan and I did the LtoB Classic and Sports Car run three years ago – this is not organised by the RAC Club - and were given a proper route book to follow.

PARTICIPANT ROUTE GUIDE

This year it is particularly important that all participants take note of the route map. There have been significant changes made this year that need to be taken into consideration when planning your journey.

This year, cars will not assemble along the Serpentine, Hyde Park. Instead a rolling start will be implemented along The Mall, St James's Park. Furthermore, we will not be providing rest stops at Honda Gatwick or Crawley High Street, although the route does still pass through Crawley. Further details will be provided within your Participant Pack.

This route guide provides veteran car drivers with a clear and concise map highlighting the approximate times a driver can expect to travel through various towns and villages.

Facilities and services that can be found along the route have been noted for your convenience.

Please be advised that tender vehicles are asked to take an alternative route to that which the veterans take to prevent congestion for the veteran cars.

START THE MALL 8.55-8.50am

BRITXTON 7.09-9.45am

A23

STREATHAM COMMON

A236

CROYDON 7.39-11.00am

For the Veteran run, participants are asked to familiarise themselves with the route in advance from a pdf file. This is a snapshot of the first part of what would have been this year's route. One can only hope that navigators are given more detailed information on the day!

But prompted by last year's fatal accident, Quentin Wilson says this, "I think bigger signage (is needed) with a distinct colour for international competitors...with as few hills as possible. Going up steep hills is bad enough in a veteran, but going down with leather or cable brakes, you see your life flash before you." He also calls for more stewards and back-up vehicles.

This year on November 1st a Virtual Veteran Car Run will be held, which suggests would-be competitors take their car out for a socially-distanced spin in their locality and later share pictures online. See: veterancarrun.org

Though directed at potential LtoB entrants, this advice given in the current circumstances from RAC organisers is of relevance to any veteran or classic car owner; "Please don't be tempted to drive along the route or congregate with other veteran cars that could encourage gatherings, and please only take part where it's safe to do so."

Electric B

Both the MGOC and MGCC and other motoring publications have been enthusing about a new electric MGB roadster. It does look impressive, inside and out. If a wishful-thinking mileage of 160 miles per charge for a price of £90,000+ floats your boat, then read all about it here: <https://rbwevcars.com/models-rbw-roadster-gt/>
Too much for too little?



Bit Parts

Sales figures for sales of classic car parts during the pandemic have soared by up to 45% according to FBHVC. This must be because many of us have had quite a lot of time on our hands of late, to the benefit of many MGs and other cherished classics. Every cloud...

The FBHVC recently held its annual conference. As well as reporting on the negative impact Covid-19 has had on museums and motoring events, they also looked to the future. Here is how CCW reported the debate:

'We really need to focus on the environment'

Making sure that older vehicles can stay on Britain's roads amid moves to cut the nation's carbon emissions is one of the biggest challenges facing Britain's classic movement.

Peter Spours, the FBHVC's first environment director, said that there was an increasing focus on the environmental impact of older vehicles, and that his ambition was to see historic vehicle use become a carbon-neutral activity.

He said: 'The world is changing very quickly and the importance of environmental protection is becoming very clear – we simply cannot ignore these calls.'

'To date, we would accept that we've used our internal combustion-engined vehicles as a right, with certain derogations to allow us to do that, but we're probably moving towards a world where their use will be by public consent, and we need to

steer public opinion towards the use of our historic vehicles on the road by positioning them as a historically important and valuable to members of the public.'

Peter added that future challenges included a possible move by the government to bring the end of petrol and diesel car sales forward to 2030 – which he believes will mean 20 years from now less widespread support for vehicles with internal combustion

engines – and a need for the historic vehicle movement in the UK to reduce its carbon footprint, with the Federation now talking to carbon offset organisations to help achieve the latter.

Chairman, David Whale, added: 'We have seen an increasing focus on the environment, and if we're going to keep our vehicles on the road for next 10, 15, 20 years, we really need do need to focus on it.'

Above it is correctly noted that it is ICE car (internal combustion engines) *sales* that are likely to be banned in the next decade. Elsewhere it is sometimes reported that ICE cars will be *banned* from the roads in 2030. This is not currently the case.



The sound of silence



A few newsletters back we had a caption competition to come up with suggestions for how electric cars should be made to sound, as legislation comes in to stop vehicles being completely silent. BTW, I won suggesting the theme from *Jaws*! Now Audi has revealed what noise its new E-Tron will artificially make. I rather like it as it sounds as sci-fi as the car's name. Hear for yourself in a video here:

<https://www.audi.com/en/experience-audi/mobility-and-trends/e-mobility/sound-of-e-mobility.html>

Braking Bad

(Fear not! This is not about the American neo-Western crime drama TV series of the same name.)



What have two 5p coins and a couple of cable ties got in common? The answer is that both were used to make up deficiencies in the adjustment of my rear drum brakes. Not good. In the five years of my ownership, I've personally not had the need to dismantle the rear brakes on my MGA until a recent loss of hydraulic fluid demanded attention. I'm outlining the issue here, as a bodge repair attempted to fix a problem – a problem not unique to my car yet is perhaps not widely known.

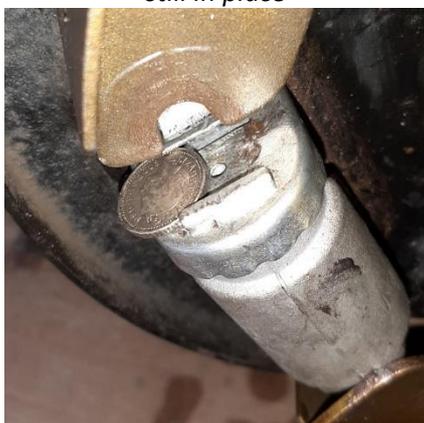
I've previously written about poor quality advice and workmanship I keep coming across in my attempts to keep my MGA in as good mechanical condition as possible. Then last month I wrote that I'd had a brake cylinder leak and had to limp home using just low gears and the handbrake. Consequently, two new brake cylinders and sets of shoes, as the hydraulic leak had ruined the first ones, were sent to me under warranty – the original parts were less than a year old – from MGOC. Club chairman Alan kindly came round to help me fit them and afterwards bleed the brakes. Well, that was the plan until we took the drums off.

To help fully understand what follows, let's zoom forward to a later discovery. It seems that modern brake shoes sold for MGAs, and very likely other classic MGs with drums, have linings that are not as thick as they used to be, a fact acknowledged by MGOC Spares and by Moss and, as you will see, widely known in America. Consequently, whilst the pad profile matches that of the drum, because the pads are relatively thin, the range of brake adjustment may not be enough. Now the scene is set, back to the plot.

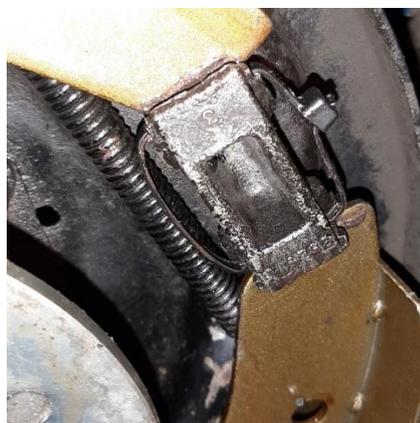


Rear drums with the adjuster cam (circled) still in place

Most of you will be aware that brake shoes and therefore their effectiveness can be adjusted by turning a screw cam – also known as a mask - that raises the shoes up to make closer and tighter contact with the inside drum surface. We discovered that in order to raise the shoes high enough a 5p coin had been loosely placed under each cam. On the other side, where the metal prongs on the shoes sit into what's called an abutment, these had been padded out with a cable tie. Yes, the functioning of my rear brakes depended entirely on being packed out with two coins and bits of plastic!



The cam removed revealing the loose 5p coin used as padding



Cable tie padding out the non-adjustable abutments

Coin and cable ties removed, Alan and I changed the brake cylinder for a new one and that's when we discovered that without the packing there simply wasn't enough height adjustment on the cams to get the drums to lock up due to the new but thinner shoes. There was a small amount of wear on the abutments which is why the cable ties had been used to pad them out. Of course, a couple of bits of plastic could never be up to the task long-term. Consequently, with no padding, the shoes could not be adjusted properly, and after a few thousand miles causing the pads to wear a bit, the problem would be made even worse.

First, though, we had to give the new brake cylinder a try, and so with fresh fluid poured into the completely empty brake/clutch master cylinder under the bonnet, we set about bleeding the hydraulics. This usually straightforward task proved impossible - we simply could not get the brakes to maintain pressure no matter how much I pumped the pedal. Clearly there was an air leak somewhere. After much time-consuming head scratching and phone calls to our friend Douglas and to the MGOC Technical help-line, it was concluded that when the master cylinder ran dry the internal seals had become distorted or unseated, possibly compounded by it being old and corroded with scored cylinder barrels. It certainly looked ancient and likely to be the original 58-year-old part.

Before ordering a new master cylinder, the advice from MGOC was that there was one thing I could try – pumping the brakes hard 100 times might get the seals to revert to their correct position. 300! pumps later and I was on the phone ordering a new one.

I had also ordered two new abutments – only NTG Services had some in stock - and both these and the new master cylinder were easy to replace. We also had various shiny new springs, nuts, washers etc.

As I write this, the doorbell rings for me to take delivery of two new brake drums as well. Why? Well, Alan suspected that at some time in its long history my car's rear drums had been skimmed.



New & old drums

Using a 10" steel rule and some feeler gauges he became surer of this, as by measurement they were very slightly too big. This would mean the thin brake shoes needed to be set even higher.

By now it was clear that to have any chance of the brakes working properly it was going to take yet more new parts. In exchange for another £100, two new drums were winging their way to me.



Now let us turn to the adjuster cams. Because of all of the above issues the cams simply were not able to be set high enough, which is why a 5p coin had been shoved under each one and the cable ties on the abutments. We were reluctant to repeat this bodge and so, as we waited for parts to arrive, Alan did some homework and came up with a video and a page from the wonderful MGA Guru website that addresses this exact issue. Both recognised years ago that brake adjustment is a problem due to thinner modern pads and both suggest the same solution. They are well worth a look.

First see the John Twist video here which clearly illustrates the problem and a fix of the adjuster cam/mask: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2-0Vqje1LM>

MGA Guru also recognised the same problem and fix: <https://mgaguru.com/mgtech/brakes/bt102.htm>



3/16" plate welded to the cam bases sized to fit into the slot on top of the brake cylinder

Consequently, I asked Roy, whose welding work on his MGA project is stunning, to weld some plate to the bottom of my cams. (Shh..don't tell Roy, but John Twist said he'd charge \$100 for doing this!)

Back in my garage the cams fitted perfectly and their raised height and new abutments on the other side gave us enough adjustment of the shoes to be able to lock up the wheels. We then backed them off a click or two and the job's a good'un.

So, thanks to Alan and Roy and my wallet, I now have fully functioning brakes once more.

In all, as well as the cam modification, I needed a new brake cylinder, new master cylinder, new abutments, new brake shoes, new rear drums, fresh hydraulic fluid all because of thin brake shoe pads and a leaky one-year-old brake cylinder. If anyone knows of a source of thicker brake pads then I'd very much like to know 'cause those sold by MGO Spares, NTG and Moss pads just don't quite cut it no more!

Still, it's not all bad. To offset all the money I've spent, at least I'm up by 10p!

Howard

PS Whilst on the subject, I know a joke that's relevant. Fasten your seat belt 'cos here we go:

My name is Howard and I'm an addict.

I'm hooked on drinking brake fluid.

I thought I'd be able to stop whenever I wanted.



Re:Fuel is hosted by Mansell Raceway, Dunkeswell – just a 10 minute drive from Honiton. They say: *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. Good, fun, relaxed atmosphere with loads of interesting vehicles and their passionate petrolhead owners. £5 for a day out talking cars and eating good quality, good value food – whats not to like?*

TVMGOC member Gavin went last month in his MGC, and here’s what he made of it:



The 80-mile run up from Cornwall was sunny and dry initially and then greyed over, and the roads were a little damp.

Re:Fuel is operating under COVID rules and held a morning session and an afternoon session, which I attended. There were about 100 cars (there had been more in the morning session). Entry per car was £5 and in addition to two food trucks the karting track (Mansell Raceway!) restaurant and toilets were open. They are managing to hold an event once a month at the moment. The range of vehicles was very large.



There was a very nice Celebration model XJS convertible in a stunning red. The owner had just bought it and driven it from Sussex when the engine stopped. It then spent two weeks at a Jaguar specialist before it was fixed by fitting the correct brand of spark plugs! Apparently early OBDII ports don't tell you much. He also admitted that it was a handful on Devon lanes. This was of great interest as my retirement car was going to be either an XJS or an MGC with an XJS leading the race until a good friend asked me how I was going to manage on the Cornish lanes.

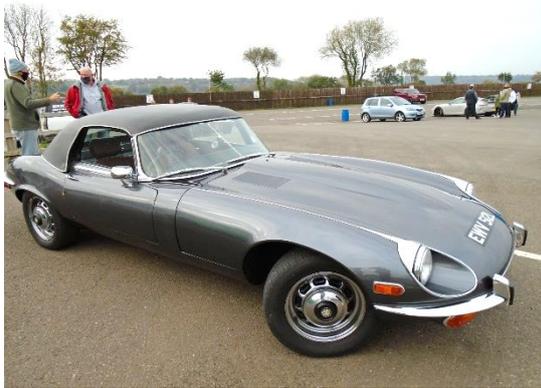


The blacked out TR6 looked to be a monster. Unfortunately, I didn't get to speak to the owner. The Ash theme in modern Morgans now stretches from the chassis to the instrument panel as seen in the "20-plate" (i.e. this year's) model.





I did manage to speak to the owner of the MGA. It might look scruffy but he has put 100,000 miles on it and toured extensively in Europe whilst towing a camper trailer/caravan. He is a member (secretary?) of the Crash Box Club that organises the event at Powderham Castle. Watling Tow Bars had made his custom tow bar (tow hitch) and I am thinking of getting them to make one for my MGC GT. He suffered from overheating whilst towing on long inclines. He solved it by using an MGB overflow tank and using a fixed and a pressure-release radiator cap as per the MGC. He has not suffered overheating since.



Towards the end of the afternoon session the sun started to come out and heralded a beautifully sunny drive back across the north of Dartmoor. All-in-all a pleasant day out and an approximation to normality. Going up with a few others would have improved the day.

I found something out about my MGC today. If I am cruising in fourth gear at 3,000 to 3,500 rpm and I boot it, the wide-open throttle makes the triple 45mm Dellortos positively bellow and the car leaps forward impressively. Obviously, I had been babying it and relying on the torque for overtaking on motorways/dual carriageways. I note that I have clocked up 2,500 miles since acquiring the car in January, despite the lockdown.
Best regards.

Gavin



Colour blind

We all know that in this country some MG owners can be really anal about original car colours, to the point of being disparaging about anything they feel isn't 'period correct'.

To me this is a bit ironic. Jan and I once took part in an MGCC MGA Register run. Before the start, all the white cars parked up together in a row. There must have been about ten of us. At the time ours was painted Ford Diamond White (goodness knows why!) so clearly that was 'wrong', but all the others were 'Old English White', yet no two cars were the same shade.

Even as a novice MG owner back then (I still am) I knew better than to question this amongst a load of MGCC purists and ask which one was 'right' - I'm naive but not daft! But ever since, at various car gatherings I have taken keen notice of MG colours and variations of shade are not restricted to OEM.

Being a member of various MGA & MG Facebook groups, it's interesting to note that this obsession with colour originality is very much a British thing. Elsewhere in the world, particularly in America, South Africa, Australia (our MGA ended up in Nigeria), many owners feel that it's their car and they can paint it any darned colour they like! I have seen some stunning MGAs that are certainly not as BMC supplied.

British Racing Green looks fabulous on an MGA, especially with a gorgeous tan interior, but my personal favourite is metallic silver. The sinuous curves of the bodywork look great, as though carved by Michelangelo from a solid block of metal (OK, I'm stretching a metaphor now, but a white marble MGA would be too heavy). But apart from freedom of expression to paint their cars exactly as they see fit, I have come across a reason why some foreign owners don't see 'originality' as being particularly relevant to them.



I'm reading *Call It MGA*, the definitive bible about this car. You are probably aware that the vast majority of MGAs were sold abroad under the government's 'Export or Die' programme, as explained in previous newsletters. Cars sent abroad went out as CKD (Completely Knocked Down) kits, or KD (partially Knocked Down). This was due to the need for local input by receiving countries to minimise import duties. In Australia, such items as tyres and seats were provided locally.

But what I didn't know, is that the bodies were painted only in primer and so foreign owners could have their new car painted any colour they chose. This perhaps explains why there is less obsession abroad with sticking to original MG or BMC colours, and frankly, why not?



In addition, three MGAs - two 1600s and a twin cam - were exported to Cuba just before the Castro Revolution. These were unique in that the body shells were provided painted and finished as there were no suitable spray facilities available on the island at that time. I wonder where these cars are now and if they are among the couple still known to exist in Cuba today, like this one?

Later, some 9,000 MGB CKD kits were built in Australia between 1963 and 1972 until the government decreed that locally built cars had to have 85% local content. The MGB kits had just 45%.

Howard



Gallery

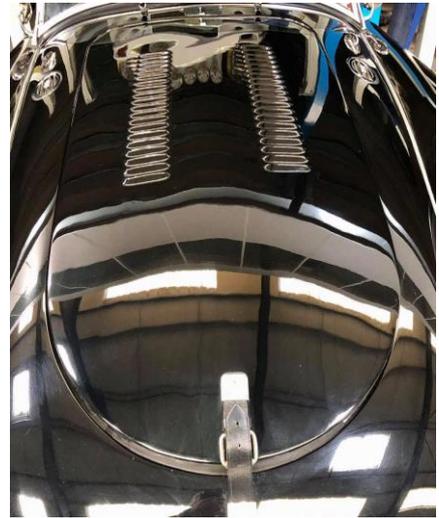
Mods and sods



A custom-bodied 1977 MGB with a GM 60-degree V6 engine.



TD 1953 with Swiss Ghia Aigle body



Car mods are seldom an improvement over the original design, but this twin-cam surely proves to be the exception.



Trying too hard?

Although many Italians are enthusiastic Anglophiles, it's hard to imagine anyone going to great expense to combine an English body with a Latin chassis. But the reverse union makes sense, as this utterly spectacular 1954 Jaguar XK120 Supersonic proves. The body was made by Ghia in its Turin workshops and featured many of the signature details carried through the Supersonic line.

At the **Concours of Elegance at Hampton Court** a month or so ago was a rare gathering of very rare MGs - SVs and SV-Rs powered by 5.0 litre Ford Mustang engines. Only around 84 of these were built in total in Italy at the Qvale factory from 2003 to 2005 (last one registered in 2009).

This company and their design had a quite a history. Qvale built the Mangusta which was the name of the car on which the SV was based, which itself was originally a De Tomaso Biguà, which then became a De Tomaso Mangusta, and then the Qvale Mangusta when De Tomaso left the partnership.

MG planned to re-enter the American market with this car as it had already passed federal regulations. It wasn't a success at home, and they ran out of money. But here's a question – although these SVs were 'finished' at Longbridge, does that qualify them to be 'real' MGs?

At the time of their release, MG Rover had problems stretching from long before, but these cars certainly contributed to the company's demise, or at best the SV did nothing to delay it. The car's mixed parentage caused all sorts of expensive headaches, not least the fact that the production process required each car to visit *six* different companies, one of which was in Italy. Although allegedly available in a range of power outputs up to 1000bhp courtesy of nitrous oxide injection, most were standard cars, powered by that off-the-peg 320bhp Ford V8. MG had high hopes to sell these in America, but the Twin Towers disaster had wide ranging and unforeseeable consequences, one of which bought MGs hopes crashing to earth.

www.carandclassic.co.uk have one for sale for £50k though others have sold for less. Have fun getting replacement body panels for one of these!



Two classics spotted in Waitrose.

The smart yellow MGZ had a TVMGO recruitment leaflet popped under its windscreen. In contrast, the Deux Chevaux workhorse of a van (pun intended) has the most wonderful patina and is deserving of *not* being repainted!

Here's a rare car spotted in a Mutley back street.
It's a Honda Beat.

These rear wheel drive, mid-engined two-seat roadsters were produced from 1991 to 1996 and were the last cars to be approved by Soichiro Honda himself before he died in 1991.

The design originated from Pininfarina, who then sold the plan to Honda. The total number of cars produced was around 33,600.

It is petite, probably about the size of an MG midget, and this 1971/72 registration plate is much older than the car itself.



MG Flight Deck Engineering

I'm usually very leery when submitting anything vaguely technical for the Newsletter. It is usually an instant switch off for some readers, and for the more technically minded, an opportunity to mutter, 'rubbish'. However, this modest tome has a rather amusing and unlikely twist at the end.

For many months now the temperature gauge on the ZA Magnette has refused to work and like many classic car owners, I'm obsessive about over-heating.

Initially, I put it down to the sender, a brass, lip-stick lookalike unit, threaded into the engine block adjacent to the water pump. I last replaced this particular 'widget' on one of the many Club visits to St Helier during their annual MG Rally (Happy Days!). It cost me a mere £4 from a tabletop sale and worked well throughout the ensuing years.

Sadly, following an excellent Sunday Lunch (remember those?) at Lanhydrock Golf Club last year, the temperature gauge breathed its last. Following an in-depth, expensive, diagnostic test at Tamar Classics, St Ives, the gauge was pronounced 'jiggered' (their word not mine)

So, a quick bit of navigation on eBay revealed a replacement available in New England, USA for a cool \$100. Not wishing to risk it, I phoned a friend, Peter, whose sole mission in life is to source rare MG Magnette spares. "No problem, John, I have one those on my shelves, it will cost you £10 plus p&p," came the positive reply.



This rare item arrived a few days later, wrapped in impossible-to-undo packaging.

In my 'thank you' email back to Peter, I could not resist the urge to quip, "Looking at it you must have cannibalised it from the cockpit of a Lancaster bomber!"

He subsequently wrote back to say that I was nearly right. Apparently, in the 1950s Jaeger/Smiths, the manufacturer, had accumulated a glut of aero cockpit instrumentation, produced throughout WWII. The then motor industry e.g. Wolseley, Riley, MG, Rover, etc, took advantage of this.

As far as he was aware, historically, these simple, mass-produced double gauges, were fitted to an Anson, a cheap, all-purpose, twin engine aircraft. In fact the story does not quite end there. My Uncle flew Ansons during the war, from the relative safety of Nova Scotia, training all manner of RAF pilots in Radio procedures.

With provenance like that, I eagerly set to and fitted the instrument. It worked perfectly, although I felt it would probably work better at over 1000ft!

John H.



Pic 1



Pic 2

	Received entries	From
Pic 1	<i>Kids practising 6-person rule in 50s.</i>	Andrew L
Pic 2	<i>Ok. 6 kids, but no Social Distancing.</i>	Andrew L
Pic 2	<i>Climate Change Grand Prix</i>	Andrew L
Pic 2	<i>Skoda Test circuit</i>	Andrew L
Pic 2	<i>It's not a car unless it has wire wheels.</i>	Andrew L
	<i>Knock, knock. Who's there? Noah. Noah, who? Noah to make this go faster?</i>	Howard
	<i>My first soap box racer had square wheels, but it was a terrible roll model.</i>	Howard
Pic 1	<i>"What do you mean we should be wearing masks? This is the Covid Express and I've got 4 back seat riders and a sat nav beside me!"</i>	Richard M
	<i>Sally and Keith write: I can remember that my 'trolley' was called a Jaffa Jaguar as it used an orange box for a seat and I did not fancy a Holden to rhyme with my name. I eventually sold it to a friend for 5/-.</i>	
Pic 1	<i>An early people carrier prototype.</i>	Sally & Keith
Pic 2	<i>....and for the first time with an Innovative rear power unit</i>	Sally & Keith
	<i>Think these were Skoda prototypes for SUV and four-seater cars.</i>	Roger G.
	<i>With the rule of 6 being strictly enforced by the Police in the first heat, Mrs Bates ensured that no competition was possible for her winning Dilly Glider at the Bash Street Downhill GP.</i>	Simon

And the winner chosen by John I. is Andrew L. Well done! He will choose next month's winner.

Here's next month's picture that need a caption.
Your entries by email before the 23rd of the month please to:
mediatvmgoc@gmail.com





And finally...



HOW'S THIS FOR A TOOL BOX?

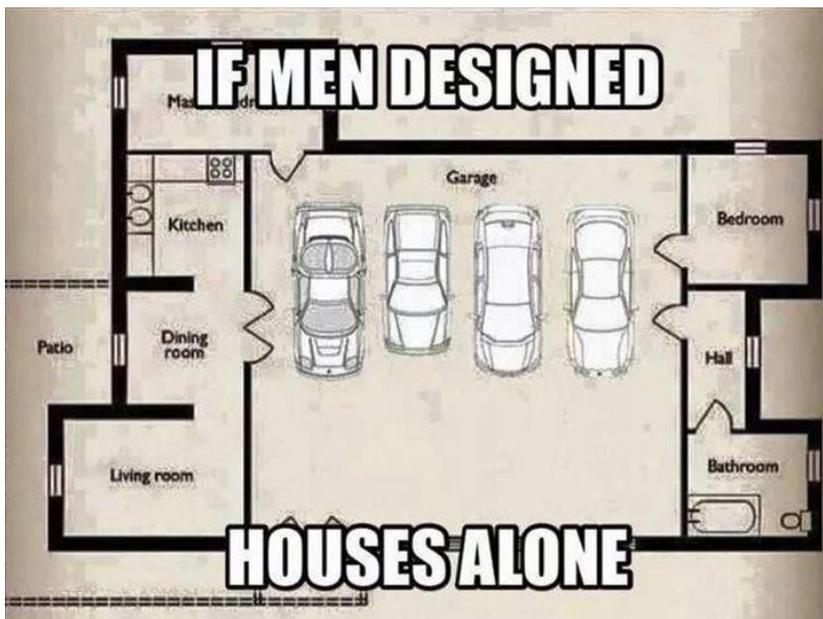


A SPANNER IN THE WORKS



Which car should go first?

THEY DIDN'T KNOW EITHER.



IF MEN DESIGNED

HOUSES ALONE

QUESTION TO ALL MEN
If you had to choose between
a wonderful wife or a really nice car
which would you pick?*

PETROL	DIESEL
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Thief tastes bitter failure

AUCKLAND: The offender has yet to be found but the punishment admirably fitted the crime, police believe.

An elderly couple camping in a mobile home at an East Coast camping ground were awakened by a noise outside.

Thinking nothing of it, they went back to sleep.

The next morning it was apparent a potential petrol thief had tried to take their fuel.

But as the police magazine *Ten One* reported, the thief got more than he or she bargained for.

On the ground by one of the mobile home's tanks was a pool of vomit and a syphon hose.

Also lying on the ground was not the cap from the fuel tank, but the cap from the mobile home's sewage holding tank.

**Sorry ladies! Love you really xxx*