



Column

View across the MG-Fence

Special bodies for MGs – was that necessary?

Here we see at the front of a very special MG. To top it up, parked under southern skies.



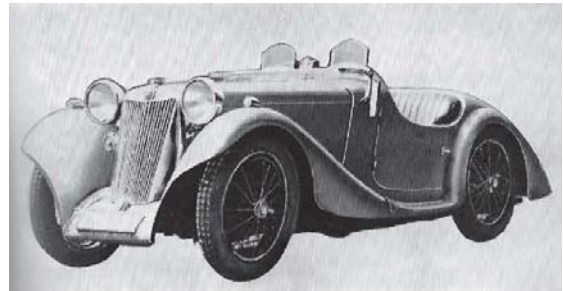
When you take a closer look, you can see that this must be a very unusual vehicle that is sitting there in the hilly surroundings of upper Italy. It is a Pietro Frua tailored prototype – an example of an upcoming model from Abingdon. Nevertheless, many friends of the marque were feeling relieved when a few years later the MGB hit the market with a “more MG like” appearance and not so Mediterranean.

However, custom built – or special bodies have been offered as long as the marque exists. Here are some examples.



Type F1 by Abbey Coachworks Ltd, London

A F-Type six-cylinder Magna is actually different – rather than a two-seater with a never-ending bonnet, or as four-seater tourer. Probably Abbey built this odd looking coupé on special request. And then painted it in a two tone finish and added false pram fittings.



P-Type Midget by Carrosserie Hänni, Zurich

The Zurich importer J.H. Keller is responsible for the fact that MG was already known in our area in the 1930s. Apparently, a roadster from the factory was too little modern at the time, and it had to have elegantly curved fenders, a rear-inclined radiator and an elegantly clad rear like Fiat or Alfa Romeo.



Elegant Sports Tourer by Reinbolt & Christé, Basel, approx. 1938

The coachbuilder from Basel became the actual court supplier of J. H. Keller for the spacious SA and WA cars. In those crisis



years, customs rates were much lower if only the rolling chassis was imported and the coach building was left to a local firm. In terms of elegance, Reinbolt & Christe bodies were unsurpassed in the larger MG and Jaguar models.



TA Drop Head Coupé by Park Ward, 1936

One would rather expect bodies for Rolls-Royces or Bentleys from this noble coachbuilder. This elegant body of a 1.5 litre MG is proof that he also worked with more modest chassis.



Reinbolt & Christe Y-Type Convertible, 1948

Many friends of the marque were disappointed that the MG Y initially was only available as a (even though elegant) little saloon. It again was Reinbolt & Christé of Basel who converted the car into a 2-door convertible. Much to the delight of Ernst Kengelbacher...



Y-Type as Beutler Convertible...

Beutler Bros of Thun were very active in the forties and fifties. So it is hardly surprising that a Beutler bodied YA appeared as well (the horrible white mudguards were not original and have since been painted in a matching colour).



...and as Carrosserie Worblaufen Car

Fritz Ramseier at Worblaufen created this neat body for the MG YA. Yes – even without suicide doors ...



Carrozzeria Panoramica by Zagato

What is more astonishing, however, is this ultramodern Coupé from Zagato near Terrazzano-di-Rho near Milan. Similar bodies with side windows extending into the roof could be found on small Fiat cars as well - but for MG customers this was a rather unusual sight.



TD von Carrosserie Ghia, Aigle (Switzerland)

Obviously, in the early 1950s, some MG-TD customers found the time to give the popular sports car a more modern look. Ghia-Aigle, for example, built these highly sophisticated, familiar visitors to MG events, according to the talented designer Giovanni Michelotti.



There must be another Ghia-Aigle MG

In October 1980, I saw this car at an auction in the Basler Exhibition Center. It also had a Ghia-Aigle body and a hard top. Maybe one of the readers knows more about this mysterious twin?!



Last but not least the prototype by Frua!

I wrote an extensive report about the Italian Designer and coachbuilder Frua for the car magazine "Auto Exclusive". The picture above shows this "Italian MGB Predecessor". The inset shows the right hand drive steering wheel and the Frua designed instruments.

Max Stoop

(4 photos M. Stoop, 1 photo F. Hediger, 7 Works Pictures)

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