

I guess you will all remember my opening line from the last four-page submission. In case you don't it was "Hello is there anyone out there reading this?" I asked because I was anticipating some feedback after the last four-page entry in February, following the article by David De Saxe on the spare parts that drivers carried in the boot of their cars. Well there are people out there reading our efforts because I got loads of feedback during the month which was great, many thanks to all of you who made the effort. Also lots of people came up with a solution to Alan Moore's problem concerning the lack of noise made by the indicators. Thanks again for all of those. The most comprehensive one was from Terry Whiffin and is published. Even I fitted this suggestion to the Boneshaker and made it work, proving, I believe, that anyone of you can fit it. In addition we have contributions from Keith Saunders on the MGB Weekend, George Wilder with a couple of articles covering the competition cars, and the great 'unloved!' Bernard as usual provides us with his Chairman's comments, thanks to you all.

Joe Gates from South Africa took time to send me his list of items carried in his boot when he embarks on long distance travel. I was planning publish this list but it would fill three pages, as it is very comprehensive. Should you require a copy please email me and I will send it on. The list includes an alternator, fuel pump, exhaust bandage, tyre leavers and puncture repair kit. This comprehensive list prompted me to go back to Joe to find out more about the type of trips he undertakes in South Africa. Joe owns a number of MG cars including a 1949 MG TC, a 1957 MGA and the MGB. It would seem to be quite common for him to set out to travel on extensive journeys in any one of these. The MGB was used to attend the recent MG Indaba, which the Internet dictionary defines as 'a council at which indigenous peoples of southern Africa meet to discuss some important questions'. This, I feel, is a great description of our MG gatherings. These events are held every other year and are located throughout South Africa. Part of the email described one of these journeys and I believe gives a good indication of the trip. 'On one occasion the distance the MGB travelled would have been about 1,500

kilometres (930 miles) - Johannesburg to Cape Town. The condition of most of our roads is fine - the Johannesburg to Cape Town trip perhaps 15% on dual carriage tarmac and the balance on dual lane tarmac. So no dust or ruts, and the ability to see into the distance due largely to flat terrain coupled with good overtaking opportunities and reasonably light traffic with good distances between vehicles, thus making dual lane tarmac not too much a problem, as overtaking is not difficult. Roads in SA are rapidly being converted to toll roads on the major routes, the concessionaries are obliged to ensure proper road maintenance which makes them safer. For the return trip though we brought the B back to Johannesburg following a more indirect route through the Karoo - an arid area of the country (perhaps not unlike the Australian outback) inhabited mainly by communities farming sheep, ostriches and wild game. With farmed areas watered via windmills the roads here were more of a challenge.' Sounds to me as if the spares carried might just act as great insurance, although Joe assures me he has not needed to use too many.

An MGB owner called me from Holland and told me that he had fitted a second fuel pump to his MGB enabling him to switch to the second pump in the event of a failure. Unfortunately when I spoke to him I was confined to bed with a problem with my back and therefore was unable to take any details. If you have completed this modification please put your approach to fitting it in an email and I will pass it on to the readership. Having experienced a failure of this component I know the problems this can cause. I do carry a spare pump so at least a local garage can replace the pump if necessary, but to be able to flick a switch does seem to be an attractive alternative.

Talking technical, I have heard that there

are numerous problems being experienced with the quality of standard ignition components fitted recently, leading to an increase in kerbside breakdowns. To overcome this, a great number of people have changed to the electronic-type ignition systems to avoid this inconvenience. I would like to hear of your experience, what type did you fit, was it a simple procedure, were there any problems, how has the system performed, are they easy to convert back and should any spare parts be carried? A pal of mine had a breakdown in France attributed to the system he had fitted, it was beyond the local mechanics in the village so he had to be transported home! The Boneshaker had in 1999 an Aldon Ignitor Electronic Ignition system fitted which has performed well. This is the optical system, which fits inside the distributor, what are the differences and advantages between the various alternatives? Over to you folks.

Team Boys has taken part in a number of events so far this year and has thoroughly enjoyed them. Worthy of particular mention is the epic trip for us to Scotland. We joined the Caledonian Centre at Cumbernauld and had a great trip up to Pitlochry in the company of 57 various types of MGs who had travelled from all over the country. We spent three days in their company and were made very welcome. Then we set out on our own to explore the west coast of Scotland, basing ourselves in Inveraray. It was fantastic, the sun was out each day, and views, wildlife, roads and people were all tremendous. We of course now believe that the sun always shines in Scotland despite so many friends trying to convince us that this is not the case. Paddy, the Westie, met up with some of his ancestors while we were exploring the Crinan Canal, one of which was not happy to see him, this resulted in a bit of a dust up which was quickly resolved by removing him from the scene! We covered about 2,000 miles and spent almost £400 on petrol but it was great fun and therefore worth it. Next year the trip goes to the Isle of Skye will we be there? - possibly!

It would be impossible to finish this article without a single mention of Silverstone. There was considerable excitement in the MGB parking area when a red MGB Roadster fitted with a Jaguar V12 engine, automatic gearbox and Jaguar rear axle



Joe Gates ready for Indaba trip. Photo: Joe Gates

burbled in. The owner and builder of the car is Ola Johansson (on the right in the picture) accompanied by his pal Kent Linqvist, they had travelled over from Sweden. I have been in touch with them and hope that we will be able to publish more information about the car soon. It looked tremendous and was a credit to the engineering skills of Ola.

I have heard a whisper that next year's MGB Register weekend will be based in Darlington for September 2009, so make a date in next year's diary, you do not want to miss out as it will be well worth attending.

Enjoy your B.
Roger



Wow! How did a V12 get in there? Photo: Neil Hyatt

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Let me start with a couple of congratulations, firstly to **Bryan Mutch** who won the **Don Bishop Trophy** for being the highest placed MGB in the California Cup, MGBs may not be able to beat Midgets in autotests but they can still win a major trophy, secondly to **John Watson** who was presented with the **Member of the Year Trophy** at Silverstone for his work in connection with the Star Car and general support of Kimber House staff.

I will not dwell on Silverstone other than to say how disappointed the Committee were that in spite of my and Janine Pratt's appeals for volunteers to spend a couple of hours helping out on the Register car park, we only had one volunteer and that was an 11-year-old MGB fan who put the rest of you to shame, were you all so busy that you could not spare the time? If you want to continue to enjoy events then it really is necessary for you to get involved from time to time in the organisation.

Turning to future events, coming up on August 10 is the MGB Summer Gathering at Duxford, email or phone me for more details on 01858 43 1271, followed on September 8 by our MGB's-on-track session at Castle Combe. On November 8 we are holding another MGB Focus Day again at the Bicester Motor Sport Centre when this year we will be discovering how to strip an MGB door, re-skin it and then rebuild the door. We will also have a session on MIG welding for the home mechanic. Prices have been held at 2007 levels and places are limited so hurry up and book by phoning Janine Pratt on 01 264 335080 or emailing her (janine.pratt@btinternet.com).

The Committee will shortly be turning its thoughts to its 2009 activities and one thing we will have to take a view on is the soaring price of petrol, do we carry on regardless or do we plan for smaller more local events organised in conjunction with Centres? If you have any views on this subject please email me on renggerbj@tiscali.co.uk or write to me at Conifers, 18A Main Street, Sutton Bassett, Leics, LE 16 8HP

One other topic we will be starting to think about is 2012, no not the London Olympics but the 50th Anniversary of the launch of our favourite sports car. This will be a big milestone in the history of the MGB and your Committee will be considering how to celebrate it. To give this the full attention it deserves we may well be considering setting up a sub-Committee and would like to involve Register members from outside the Committee as well as Committee members, so if you would like to be involved, watch this space.

Finally keep your articles and photos flowing to Roger Boys (rogerb@newbury.net) as without your input our four-page spreads would be rather empty.

Happy MGB motoring.
Bernard Rengger



Tom, age 11, learning a trade with enthusiasm!
Photo: David Dunlop.



MGBs at Silverstone. Photo: Neil Hyatt.

John Watson MGB Committee member is MGCC Member of the Year for 2008

John has been a major stalwart of the Club for a number of years, and founder and organiser of the Speckled Hen Run for a long time, he is always willing to help out in any way that he can. It was John who originally helped me to date the Boneshaker. This story depicts his enthusiasm!

On the first May Bank Holiday the Club received a call from a Swedish film company who wished to film an MGB in Oxford (or a TV quiz programme that it was making. The message was passed to John, can you help? Immediately John is on the phone to the lady in question offering to help out. Arrangements are made to meet up in Oxford with his MGB polished and fettled ready for a starring role. Hollywood or Bollywood here I come!

It turned out the crew consisted of two guys with a massive camera who simply wanted to depict the MGB in a suitable setting enabling the contestants, at a later date, to guess the location from the clues presented. The quiz is to be shown later this year on Swedish TV so hopefully all you MGCC members in Sweden should now at least know one answer.

The fame was to come later at Silverstone with the MGCC Member of the Year award being presented to John in recognition of all the hard work he has put in to supporting the Club. Congratulations John.

Roger



Star of screen and Member of the Year, John Watson.

MGB REGISTER WEEKEND

The early May Day Bank Holiday weekend featured yet another of Colin & Doreen Lanning's extravaganzas when some 30 cars and their crews assembled at Barnstaple to sample the high moorland roads of both Dartmoor and Exmoor. Based at the North Devon Hotel on the outskirts of Barnstaple, the Register banner was erected in the hotel car park leaving the local populace in no doubt that the MG Car Club was in town.

Keith Truscott's Saturday Run saw the cars set out on a 10-mile route that quickly reached the Dartmoor National Park with excellent views towards Plymouth and Cornwall. At Princetown the route passed Dartmoor Prison, which was constructed between 1806 and 1809 to imprison POWs from the Napoleonic War. Today it operates as HM Prison Dartmoor. The prison museum attracted the attention of some of our crews, fortunately all being released without charges being pressed! The route moved on and passed the home of the Dartmoor Pixies before reaching Widecombe in the Moor, the home of Widecombe Fair and the legendary characters of 'Uncle Tom Cobley and all'. Some 64 miles into the run, only our bolder members decided to take the option of climbing to the top of the rocks at Haytor. Heading back towards North Devon the route crossed the old World War II drome at Winkleigh, home during 1944 to a Royal Canadian Air Force night fighter squadron equipped with De Havilland Mosquitos, the wooden wonder.

The Sunday Run planned by the other Keith was greeted with slight drizzle as the crews set out on the 'Exmoor Cols' a 100-mile outing to the valleys and high moors of Exmoor. Village names such as Winsford and Exford brought back memories of the

nocturnal sounds of the works Cooper S cars on the Exmoor special stages of the RAC Rallies of the 1960s. The route reached the lower slopes of Dunkery Beacon (1,700ft) before dropping steeply to pass Cloutsham Farm on a steep descent, on a loose surfaced single track, complete with hairpins before crossing a shallow ford. Next came Porlock Hill, famous for its steep ascent and a popular hill on the MCC Lands End Trial during the pre-war period. A short deviation from the main route enabled members to visit Oare Church where Lorna Doone, the heroine of R D Blackmore's novel, was shot during her wedding ceremony to Jan Ridd. What goes up must come down, and this was underlined within a few miles with the steep and lengthy descent of Countisbury Hill to the picturesque village of Lynmouth, thankfully now fully rebuilt after the flood disaster of the early 1950s. While some members sampled the funicular railway between Lynmouth and Lynton, others pressed on to visit the Arlington Court, a National Trust property that plays host to the National Carriage Museum, before returning to Barnstaple.

The weekend culminated in a gala dinner with presentations and a draw that raised some £216 for our charity 'Wish Upon a Star'. The evening concluded with a retirement presentation of a cut glass whisky decanter and glasses to Colin Lanning for his services to the Register over many years.

Keith Saunders



Colin Lanning contemplates the Register Weekend at Barnstaple. Photo: K Saunders.



MGB Register weekend participants with the banner proudly flying overhead.



Jan & Nigel Pratt from Andover descend the notorious Countisbury Hill. Photo: N. Hodgkinson.

DVLA Records of BMC Competitions MG MGB Registrations

On a recent wet afternoon I spent an idle hour using the DVLA Vehicle Enquiry service on its website. I tried to discover if any of the registrations used by the BMC Competition Department on MGBs were still around on MGs.

This was just an exercise on the registrations which are still on an MG car - the limitations of the service are such that it doesn't give the vehicle type - it only gives details of the recorded first registration, the colour and the current tax status for those that have licensing records. Nor can you find out if the registration has been transferred to another type of vehicle. For those without a record the service says phone a '0870' number for further enquiries - no thanks. The DVLA may have further information. The table below lists those that are in the public domain plus some notes from generally available literature.

'Not Licensed' means a V5 logbook exists at least but the car has not been licensed since SORN started.

George Wilder

Registration	Date of registration	Status	Body	Colour	Notes
6 DBL	17.07.92	Taxed	R	Red	Sold off after 63 Sebng in USA
7 DBL		No record	R		Written off in May 64 Scottish Rally Morley Brothers
8 DBL	01.02.63	SORN	R	Red	At least three different shells used this registration
BMOS41B		No Record	R		
BRX853B		No Record	R		In 65 ex-works car according to Knowles
BRX854B	13.00.64	Taxed	R	Red	
BRX855B	18.08.64	SORN	R	Red	In 'Works MGs' always driven by Poole and Enever
1 DRX 255C	02.02.65	Not licensed	R	Red	Known to be m the UK
DRX 256C		No Record	R		Sold off after 65 Sebng in USA
1 GRX 307D	01.01.66	Not Licensed	R	Red	Known to be in the UK
HBL I29D		No Record	R		Sold off after 66 Sebng m USA. Known to be still in USA
JBL491D		No Record	R		
LBL591E	28.11.90	Taxed	GT	Red	Steel Bodied (two versions exist both using original shells used on this registration one m UK one in USA)
MBL546E	01.05.67	Not Licensed	GT	Green	Lightweight
MBL547E		No Record	R		Written off in 67 Targa Flono Hedges and Poole
RMO 699F	22.11.86	Taxed	GT	Green	Lightweight
2 GLL	13.08.63	Taxed	R	Black	Ex-development car Poole and Enever

The MGB GT - Britain's unloved sports car?

This article was prompted by stumbling across a website in Europe with a picture claiming to be that of the 250,000th MG MGB GT. It is not; it is one of a series of pictures taken at the factory of the 250,000th MG MGB, which just happened to be a GT. As we all know there were only about 125,000 GTs built. The owner of this site is obviously very proud of his GT but is this a picture we find in Britain today?

I currently live in a small north Essex village of about 2,000 people yet I find the area littered with unloved and unwanted MGB GTs. In this village I currently know of seven GTs in various states of disrepair, some dumped in fields others under hedges left just to rot away, yet I know of only one Roadster in a similar condition and that is being repaired - perhaps the Roadsters all rotted away beforehand? In the next village, which has a small scrap yard, there are at least two or three GTs awaiting the torch. Whilst searching for a new house, every village seems to throw up at least one disused GT in a front garden and there is even a V8, which has been parked in the open and not moved for three years to my knowledge. The local town has a 72 GT Automatic

dumped in a car park under threat of crushing - now crushed - it had not been taxed for over two years according to the DVLA records, so no doubt the owner did not want to come forward for fear of having to pay a fine for not declaring SORN and the backdated tax they would also demand. That will be another tax exempt vehicle destroyed.

As a small hatchback, the MGB GT is now very dated with performance and fuel consumption below most 1.3/1.4-litre hatchbacks. With poor security in terms of its uncovered luggage space and by today's standards a poor locking system, which makes it a less practical everyday car. Children have to be strapped down in

the back - quite difficult to do in any MG MGB - which stops them being used as a second car for many.

Then of course there is the cost of trying to keep the rust at bay. It could of course go the way of many fixed sports cars before it - used as spares for the open version until we realise there are none left. At least they are not using them for banger racing - least I hope not with all that rust!

What puzzles me is these cars all had owners who at one time loved the car. Many of the abandoned cars have stickers from the various clubs and events attended in the past yet have just been left. Is it that the owners are a sentimental lot who cannot bear to get rid of the last traces of another life - are they really going to put them back on the road - I fear not? Or have they just been left to become forgotten and unloved on the way to the great motorway in the sky?

I have just heard that a local classic car restorer is planning to convert an old GT into a van - to carry his tools to breakdowns, etc. Says he will do it well with panels to replace the rear side windows, chrome trim removed, etc. How the mighty are fallen!

George Wilder



Lost but worth saving. Photo: George Wilder.

More Auto Chat - John Ford

Problem: Delayed up-shift to third gear.

First check that the oil level is correct.

Without getting too technical on the functions within the valve block assembly, the delay of the second to third up-shift could merely be rectified by re-adjustment of the downshift cable. The correct method of adjustment is by using pressure test equipment, but without this it can still be achieved by a small manual adjustment each time to the cable to check the change speeds.

The cable is connected to the throttle linkage, with the other end connected to the downshift valve in the valve block via mechanical cam, and the position of the cam will alter the speed at which the gearbox changes gear (i.e., 1-2 up-shift 2-3 up-shift with 'D' selected). The table below gives the correct change speeds that should be achieved, and can be adjusted by means of the downshift cable.

You can either check the change speeds with light 'throttle or 'full' throttle, it depends how brave you are.

Note: Do not drive the car with the downshift cable disconnected, as this will cause damage to the friction components inside the gearbox due to the reduction in oil pressure.

If the adjustment does not improve the situation, then it is probably the governor valve sticking which is a more involved job requiring a partial dismantle of the gearbox.

Source: MGB Workshop Manual/Service School Notes

Driving Conditions	Up-shifts
'D' Selected	1-2 change 2-3 change
Minimum Throttle	8-12mph 13-17mph
Full Throttle	22-29mph 35-46mph

A Louder Audible Warning for Indicators for MGBs

The MGB never had the loudest ticking flasher unit, particularly at higher speeds either in the Roadster or the GT and some without the hearing sensitivity of a bat might find themselves inadvertently leaving the indicator signals on when they shouldn't. You can add a buzzer to give more of an audible warning; purchase a 12v DC buzzer and simply connect its two wires to the two terminals on the flasher unit. Some electronic 'buzzers' are polarity conscious and will have red and black wires, in this case, for negative earth cars (later MGBs), connect the red wire from the buzzer to the green on the flasher unit and the black to the light-green/brown wire on the flasher unit. If you use 'piggy-back' spade connectors on the wires from the buzzer you can connect and remove it simply by unplugging spades, no cutting or soldering of wires. For the earlier positive earth cars simply connect the buzzer the other way round.

When you first operate the indicators you won't hear anything - don't panic! It is only when the lights go 'out' on the first click of the flasher that the buzzer will sound (i.e. it operates in anti-phase to the lights). If you find the buzzer too loud you can always wrap a couple of turns of insulating tape around it or turn the radio up!
Terry Whiffin

Nice one Terry. This has proved to work, as Alan Moore has successfully fitted it. On the Boneshaker it was a bit different as the flasher unit has three wires rather than four on more recent cars. However by connecting the buzzer to the mauve and green wire and then to earth (negative earth car) it worked successfully. I also fitted a switch into the circuit along with a fuse as my Nicky found it too loud when the roof was up!

All the components were purchased from Maplin (www.maplin.co.uk) for under £10. Part number - 12v Buzzer FK82. Pushlock switch N91AR Inline fuse RC71.
Roger

