

# Member Featured Car of the Month January 2010 John Barton's '54' MGTF

By John Barton

My MGTF was built in October of 1953 and was titled in 1954. It was probably shipped to Europe to a service man since the speedometer registers in Kilometers and is left hand drive. I purchased the car in 1994 from the second or third owner. The car, last driven in 1971, had been stored on jack stands and covered since then. The tires (the original Dunlop "Gold Seal" bias ply, live rubber with no cracks, dry rot or checking) were also covered and on pallets. The canvas top and tonneau cover are also original. The car had been repainted and the paint was so thick it was cracking or checking. Squirrels had made homes in the upholstery and exhaust system.



After adding fluids, I determined that the engine was free. Before I could drive the car home, it was necessary to reinstall the brake shoes, which had been installed backwards. After a new battery was installed, the engine started right off, with no leaks or knocks. The rebuilt engine and transmission were OK.

Also, after taking many pre-restoration photographs, the car was stripped. And, many labeled food jars later (for parts, nuts, bolts, etc.); the car was ready for painting piece by piece—(no masking). The paint is a flexible, non-cracking paint.

Every electrical connection in and under the car was polished with fine sand paper "di electric" silicone grease was applied, so I have no problems with flickering lights or amp meter or any Lucas problems. This includes the starter, generator, voltage regulator, etc. The electric clock had to be sent to Great Britain, since no one here had the parts or know how with which to make the repairs. The electric clock must be disconnected during storage to avoid running the battery



down.

The entire fuel system was cleaned, carbs rebuilt and the entire brake system had the same treatment. All the rubber was replaced including the fan belt, water pump, hoses and rubber beading between sheet metal parts.

The fact that each piece was prepped and painted separately and reassembled with extreme care to avoid scratching the paint; paid off at professional judging. The car was awarded 98 out of 100 points. The black and yellow factory replacement spark plug wires counted off.

Restoration of my 54 MT TF was a four year project. The car drives quite well with no leaks and is a joy to drive. My riding companion, my dog Molly, loves it as well!

