



MGC NEWSLETTER

Winter Issue - September 2020

COVID-19 Level 2.5 or Level 2



THE MGC REGISTER of NEW ZEALAND



Graeme Fisher's newly acquired 1969 MGC GT



Well, we survived the initial lock-down and under **Level 2** life was, more or less, back to normal. The vast majority of us played by the rules and it seemed to have worked but, as predicted by the experts, a new outbreak could rear its ugly head at any time, and it did. So on Wednesday 12th August it was back to **Level 3** for

Auckland with restricted travel, work and play. Now, once again, we are back down to **Level 2.5** (for Auckland) with the rest of the country remaining at **Level 2**, which is good news even if the **Jafas** amongst us have slightly different rules to play by. I guess this is our new way of life, for a while anyway, so let's make as much as we can out of it and look forward to the summer when, with a bit of luck, we will be out and about once more in our favourite toys. **PHD**

Why I bought LX5396.....Graeme Fisher

Over the years I have owned several MGs including a **PA, TC, TF, Midget, MGA, MGB**. Then a while ago I decided it would be nice to own something a bit different, an **MGC**! Also, I had owned a **Healey 3000**, and I thought the MGC would be a similar driving experience.

Having restored several of my cars, I decided to go for an MGC in good condition for a change, but



it turned out that good condition MGCs which are for sale are very hard to find. **Tony Bushell** then suggested I should have a look at **LX5396** owned by **Graeme Collie**, which had been in storage since 2011.

At first glance it didn't look too bad, just a small project I thought to get it running. So, throwing caution to the wind I bought it and had it transported home. The plan was to do the brakes and suspension, get it running and then get it painted. However, once running it was obvious it had a serious smoking problem, so off came the

head to discover a small hole in one of the pistons. At this point, a full engine rebuild seemed wise and this has now been completed with **350 miles** on the rebuilt engine. It has also had a new petrol tank, new tyres, re-cored radiator, etc, etc!

I am really enjoying driving the C so the project has now become a rolling restoration, with a repaint on hold for the moment while I have some fun with the car and gradually tick items off the "to do" list. It is now quite usable, mechanically sound, and looks OK from about three metres.

The MG Car Club's **Winter Woolies** event on Sunday 26th July was the first club outing since I have owned it and is probably the first club appearance since about 2008. **Graeme Fisher**



Great to have the car back on the road Graeme. The last time I saw it was some time ago at an **MGCC Hampton Downs** track day when **Graeme Collie** was at the helm. **PHD**

Why not have YOUR CAR on the Front Page?

If **YOU** would like **YOUR CAR** on the front page like **Graeme Fisher**, just e-mail me a nice shot and a few words on the car such as when you purchased it, what you've done to it or with it, etc.

and I'll do the rest.

A portrait aspect photo would be good but not essential.

Peter Dunlop, dunlops@hotmail.com



Our International MGC family

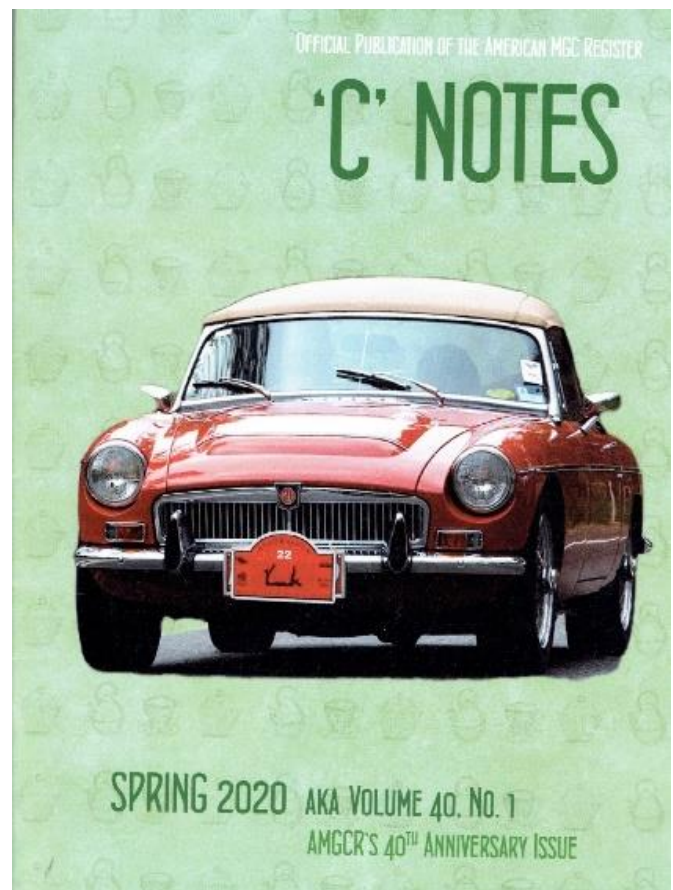
Looking back to late 2010 when Peter and I first met and decided to get together and revive the **MGC Register**, we can take some pride in what we have been able to achieve. We must not overlook the great assistance we received from **Brett Robinson**, who was only too happy to share with us the records he had put together during the 1970s, the 1980s and the 1990s. This information gave us a very strong starting point.

Since then we have established what must be one of, if not, the best-detailed registers on one make or model anywhere. What we were able to put together from the start of 2011 through to mid-2013 saw me take the register to the next stage by making the trip to England to not only research the factory build records but to also meet up with our UK Register friends. What a very interesting and enjoyable trip that was too, they all made me feel very welcome.

We gradually made contact with more and more New Zealand owners and were somewhat surprised to find a number of our MGCs have been in the same ownership for many years. The response we received when making contact was, quite frankly, very special and a number of owners didn't hesitate to provide copies of their car's original ownership papers and photographs for the register.

In 2017 Joanna and I, Harvey, Peter and Raewyn travelled to the UK for the international **50th Anniversary** celebrations where previous friendships were renewed as well as the opportunity to form new contacts with MGC owners from the **UK, Europe, Australia and North America**. Once back home from that trip, I organised the **Magical Grand Cruising Tour of New Zealand** as I was keen to meet our fellow owners as a 50th anniversary only comes around once.

So, what is this leading too? Writing this piece came about when I received the **Spring 2020** edition of the **North American Register's magazine 'C' Notes**, the cover photograph that of **Mike and Jan Greenwood's** beautiful roadster taken when out on a club run in South Australia. Yes, an Australian MGC on the cover of the North American magazine – international indeed!! **Ian Grant**



An MGC has a New Owner

One of our MGCs has had a change in ownership recently. **1MGC1** will be changing islands as it will move from the south to the north and hopefully will be seen at our northern region events.

When we revived the register back in 2010, this C was in the Hawkes Bay in the custodianship of **Terry Hobbs** and, in making contact with Terry, he told me he and 1MGC1 were regular attendees at **HB Vintage Car Club** events.

A couple of years ago, after twenty years of ownership, Terry let me know that the car was on the market, so we advertised it in our April issue of 2018.

A prospective purchaser appeared and I provided the car's history that we have on the register and it looked like that possibly helped to finalise the sale.

Ken Lawson was the new owner and his nephew, **Grant Fitzpatrick**, collected the car from Terry. Grant is a Ford specialist and carried out some work on the car in preparation for its trip to Otago to Ken. Whilst still in the north in Grant's care, he and his son Michael were part of the MGC group on the first day of the **Magical Grand Cruising Tour** celebrating the **MGC's 50th Anniversary**.

The picture shows the MGC line-up in Matamata before leaving for Taupo with 1MGC1 next to our



register flag. A little while later the car went south to Ken.

Not that long ago I received an unexpected e-mail from a **Mr John Dorking** asking if I knew anything about Ken Lawson's MGC. In response to John's correspondence, I prepared a PowerPoint containing a series of photographs and the car's history. I understand a vehicle exchange was part of the deal and, Covid permitting, John will be heading south to join his brother on the annual **Southern Crawl**, which I understand is a large classic car event, using the MGC, and then bringing it north.

The return to the north of 1MGC1 could bring back a few memories for a couple of former owners in particular. Between 1979 and 1982 the car was owned by **Steve Hawkins**, well known these days as an important member of the committee that organises and runs the **Ellerslie Inter-Marque Concours d'Elegance**. Steve sold it to **Alan Krissansen**, who recently returned to MGC ownership with

his purchase of a red roadster.

Ken has since advised that the car has been sold but would like to stay on our newsletter list and John has joined MGCC Auckland, so we look forward to C-ing him and 1MGC1 on future events.

Welcome John. **Ian Grant**

VOYAGE of DISCOVERY

Yes, even though it is nearly ten years since we revived the MGC Register, there are still discoveries being made.

Back in late February Joanna and I decided to have a few days away so we made tracks to Wellington to attend the **MGCC National Rally**. The special occasion at this event was **MGF25**, the 25th anniversary of the MGF, so we made the trip in the *TF* to be part of the celebrations.

The first event of this national meeting was the Concours, which was held on Sunday at **Southwards Motor Museum** in Paraparaumu. A very nice line-up of MGs, many different models, made up an interesting display to view as well as a not-to-be-missed wander through the museum exhibits. Towards the end of the day I just happened to glance behind where we had the *TF* parked and noticed a white MGC roadster in the carpark. My immediate reaction was "Yes! Found you at last!!"



We have information about this MGC on the register and I knew it was in the Wellington area but had not been able to track it down.

There was a group of people in conversation standing near the car, so I had a look around and then enquired as to who was the owner. **Clive Cullen** introduced himself, said he had heard of me, and we had the chance to chat briefly before we had to head back to Wellington.

On returning home I went through our register

information and, as Clive had given me his contact details, I e-mailed him the information that I had on file.

Our records show just three owners' names, **Graham Pedler**, **Andrew Stefanou** and **Kate Gerrard**. Clive responded to my e-mail with a couple of pictures and the full ownership history and a gem of a history it is too. The car was purchased new in 1968 by **Mark Steele**, a resident of Abingdon, through MG Sales UK and carried the registration plates, **ODF312F**. In 1972 it passed to Graham Pedler in London who subsequently brought the C to New Zealand in November 1973 where it was registered **GZ1918** in Napier. Graham's ownership continued right through until 1988 and when the standard issue MG plates became available, GZ1918 was replaced with **MG1968**. A couple of years later Andrew Stefanou became the car's next custodian. Andrew covered around 5,000 miles before selling it to classic car specialist, **Paul Pannell Motors** in Christchurch in 1989.

That same year it became Kate Gerrard's daily transport and a while later Clive and Kate became husband and wife, so the car has been in that ownership circle ever since. There are a few MGCs out there that have not passed through too many hands in their 50+ years and this is one of them.

Welcome to the register **Clive** and we hope you continue to enjoy your MGC ownership and thank you for sharing your information with us. **Ian Grant**

Who's 90 Years old and still going strong?

No, it's not me! it's our favourite car club, of course, the **MG Car Club**. The first club meeting took place on 12 October 1930, at the Roebuck Hotel near Stevenage in the UK, with over thirty MG cars and their owners coming together. This was the same time that the **MG Car company** had adopted a new sales slogan, "**Safety Fast**" as the two words seemed to embody the marque's appeal. The



first sporting event also took place that year and at the inaugural club dinner **Cecil Kimber** was the guest speaker; pledging to donate 50 guineas to the club funds. As the MG production increased, the club continued to grow and the structure of Regional Centres came into being, extending membership of the

club across the country. By April 1933, the membership had topped 500 and both a Trials team and a Relay Race team had been formed, the latter taking part in the **BRDC 500** race at Brooklands in September 1933, finishing in second place. In the 1960s, there was a growth in overseas membership as reported in the "**The Motor**" stating that The MG Car Club recently enrolled its 5,000th home member plus some 4,000 overseas members". *Info. courtesy of Wikipedia.*

Today, the MGCC has a world-wide membership of over 40,000. New Zealand has approx. 800 with around 500 residing in the Auckland area. **PHD**

Registrations & Warrants of Fitness

The following is a reminder as received from fellow **MGC owner and Austin 3-Litre guru, John Vevers**, who works at the **NZ Transport Agency**, regarding registrations, Warrants of



Fitness and other documentation. In April the NZ Transport Agency announced temporary extensions for expiring vehicle and licensing documentation. This was to help people continue to drive and use vehicles legally while **Covid-19** restrictions were in place. Since then the agency has

been working closely with the **Ministry of Transport** to establish a renewal date for these documents. The government has now confirmed all Warrants of Fitness, Certificates of Fitness, driver licences, endorsements, vehicle licences (registrations), and other certifications must be renewed by **11:59pm on Saturday 10th October 2020**.

The agency has been very impressed with the number of renewals already completed and would like to acknowledge the teams who have been fielding calls and e-mails, working on policy and providing operational support to its external service providers. The agency's message to everyone is to renew now rather than wait until October with waiting times expected to increase significantly as that renewal date gets closer, so it is in everyone's interest to sort out documents as soon as possible. It is also important to ensure vehicles remain safe to drive and the best way to achieve this is to encourage people to get their CoFs (Certificates of Fitness) and WoFs (Warrants of Fitness) secured at their earliest convenience.

The land transport temporary extended documents that **must be renewed by Saturday 10th October are:**

- CoFs and WoFs that expired between 1st January and 10th October 2020.
- Other vehicle certifications which expired between 1st January and 10th October 2020, including entry certificates, alternative fuel inspection certificates, authorisations of vehicles

with conditions, and heavy vehicle specialist certifications of towing connections and log bolster attachments.

- Vehicle licences (registrations) that expired between 1st January and 10th October 2020.
- Driver licences that expired between 1st January and 10th October 2020.
- Endorsements (including drivers of small and large passenger services and dangerous goods endorsements held by some truck drivers) that expired between 1st January and 10th October 2020.
- Any document with an expiry date after Saturday 10th October 2020 will expire on its stated date.



There is updated information on the agency's website about the temporary extensions and revised FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions).

The message is simple – renew now and beat the rush. Make sure you can continue to legally drive and use your vehicle after Saturday 10th October.

Many thanks **John** for the update. **Ian Grant**



That's got to be a fail John, you can't see the rear lights!

*The Intriguing Story of **JY7979's** Transformation*

This **Snowberry White GT** rolled off the assembly line in Abingdon on the **25th of March 1969** after it's build started a month earlier on the 28th of February having been fitted with overdrive, a heater, painted wire wheels, a cigar lighter, heated rear window and seat belts as its factory extras. It was in storage for a while as the factory records show it was dispatched to the **BMC Home Sales Division** at Longbridge, Birmingham on the 4th of July. Its UK ownership is unknown, but the car was first registered in New Zealand just before Christmas in 1980 and was based in Auckland. The odometer reading wasn't recorded when first registered as **JY7979**.



It stayed in the same owner's hands for nearly eight years before being purchased by MGCC Auckland's MGC guru **Dave Romer**, who lived in the Bay of Plenty at that time, the car having covered just over 76,000 miles from new.

During the eight years it was with Dave he enjoyed 13,000 miles and shipped the car to the UK to take part in the MGC's 25th anniversary in 1992. Dave moved it on in 1996 to another very well-known MGCC Auckland member, **Ian Bradley**, and in 2007 **Barry Hart** added it to his collection of cars. JY7979 became very well known in 2012 as Mr. Hart had got himself into trouble with the Law Society, being struck off as well as having other issues that required the sale of a

number of his assets, including his cars. The C created quite a lot of interest when it was offered for sale at **Turner's Auctions**, along with the other cars in the Hart collection. It was in presentable condition, having had an internal makeover at some stage as the interior trim was now red in the same original pattern, this had been changed from the original black, which was the standard trim colour on all 1969 MGCs, with the exception of a very small number of GTs that had a trim colour called Mushroom. There was such interest in the auction, which was held on a Saturday, that a report on it appeared in national television's 6pm news hour. That footage showed its new owner driving it

away to enjoy the 2.5-hour drive to his home in the Bay of Plenty after paying a knock-down figure of \$9,500.00, a real bargain!



Within two years the car had changed hands again, this time to an owner in the same area and during his ownership, some tidying up of the bodywork was done. It was sold in 2015 to its next owner who was very much involved in a large trans-Tasman business, so there was a feeling that it was possible the car could go to Australia. And so it proved when I received an e-mail last year from **Ken Tame** in **Melbourne** stating he now owned JY7979 and asking if I had any information about the car while it was in New Zealand.

I passed the information on our register on to Ken and he, in turn, has sent some photographs and an update on the car which certainly does not look like we knew it when it was in NZ. **Ian Grant**

Ken Tame takes up the story.....

In the late 1960s my first sports car was a half-decent secondhand **MGB** that over time was vastly improved mechanically and in appearance. The '70s came and so did marriage, house, family, etc., so the MGB went.

Fast forward to the early 2000s and having accumulated some funds I was able to reignite my passion for owning a sports car again. The first was a **1959 Austin Healey 3000** followed by a **1966 Ford Mustang GT Fastback**, a **1996 993 Porsche Turbo**, a **1963 Jaguar E-Type Series 1 FHC**, a **Bolwell Nagari**, a **1973 Porsche 2.7 RS (replica)**, a full restoration on a **1959 Austin Healey 3000 Sebring (replica)** and in amongst all of them somewhere a **1934 Ford Flat Head Roadster Hot Rod**.

Whilst travelling through Europe in 2013 for an International Healey meeting, I was lucky enough to see a magnificent collection of rare cars owned by **Arthur Carter**.

One of the cars that really caught my attention was an **MGC Sebring (replica) – VVK 9H**. (see above). This car was built by **Doug Smith** at **MG Motorsport** for **Colin Percy**, who at one stage



owned one of the only two original MGC Sebrings built by BMC. Then in 2015 whilst in the South Island of New Zealand for another Healey meeting, I called into the Highlands Motorsport Park in Cromwell and in the museum, a car that again really caught my attention was an **MGC Sebring (replica)** that I believe belonged to the **Dippie brothers** (photo left). I later learnt this vehicle had been built in Melbourne as a joint exercise between the **MG Workshop** and the **Healey Factory**. In 2016 I decided to create my own MGC Sebring, so a car was sourced locally which turned out had just been imported from New Zealand – **JY7979**.



In early 2017 after stripping, blasting, cleaning and some minor bodywork had been completed at the Healey Factory, it was then down to seeking as much detail about the Sebring before deciding the direction we would go with the build. Parts then started to be sourced. Then in August/September 2017 whilst in the USA at the **Pebble Beach/Monterey Speed Week** I met up with **John Chatham**

(ex-racer of the famous **Healey – DD300**) and when mentioning I wanted to talk to him about one of his cars he assumed it was DD300 as he had earlier been admiring our Healeys we had brought over from Australia. What I wanted to glean from John, which I did over the next hour or so, was information about the parts etc. he had acquired from BMC when they cancelled the “C” program as well as information on the MGC car he built that was fitted with the only surviving BMC all-alloy engine. The result of these discussions was to change the direction for the build of my car.

THE PURISTS WILL NOW HATE ME!

It's 2018 and work on the car really got underway. Besides sourcing new front ball joint suspension units, larger sway bar, wheels and body panels, we removed the engine, gearbox and complete rear end to be replaced by an all-alloy engine, **Tremec** gearbox and an independent rear suspension sourced from **Hoyles Suspension** in England. The new engine was to be located as far back in the engine bay as possible (as per John Chatham's car) so this required some radical thinking and engineering.



The stunning transformation of JY7979

The Healey Factory got into chopping and building the vehicle to accommodate the required alterations and turn the body into a Sebring replica.

The final paint and assembly was completed at the Healey Factory in April 2020 and then it underwent a fairly extensive testing period before being signed off as completed. My involvement in all this – anything that wasn't too technical – e.g., stripping, cleaning, rubbing, sanding, assembling and providing my thoughts on what it should look like when completed.

Final Specification

Al-Alloy 4.4Litre DMD (Healey Factory) engine fitted with triple Weber 45DCOE carburettors	
Transmission	Tremec 5-Speed
Differential	Ford Granada 3.64 Quaife Limited Slip
Suspension	Front - larger front sway bar, ball joint replacement for king pin setup Rear - Hoyles Independent
Brakes	Front - 6-pot Wilwood ventilated discs Rear - Ford Granada solid discs
Wheels	8 x 15 Minilites
Tyres	Front - 225 x 60 x 15, Rear - 235 x 60 x 15
Weight	1120kgs - 49% front to 51% rear.

MGC Status in New Zealand, August 2020

Ian just loves wearing his Register Historian hat and has spent many hours keeping the register list up to date. So, we thought it was high time you saw the results of those endeavours and have included a "snapshot" of where we are today.

The current status is:

• Total listed:	72 (43 GTs & 29 roadsters)
• Thought or known to be in NZ:	62 (36 GTs & 26 roadsters)
• NZ new:	30 (20 GTs & 10 roadsters)
• GTs confirmed in NZ:	30
• Roadsters confirmed in NZ;	23
• GTs no longer in NZ:	4 (all now in Australia)
• Roadsters no longer in NZ:	3 (1 in England, 2 in Australia)
• GTs known of but not yet found:	7
• Roadsters known of but not yet found	3
• Known to have been destroyed	2 (both GTs)
• Destroyed but not identified	1 (GT)

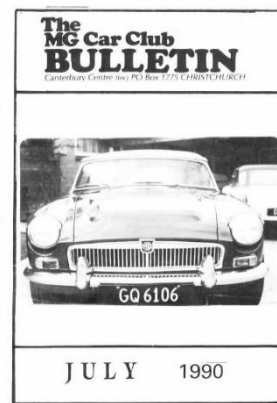


Ian asks -

Can you help us find those **missing ten** MGCs that we know are out there?

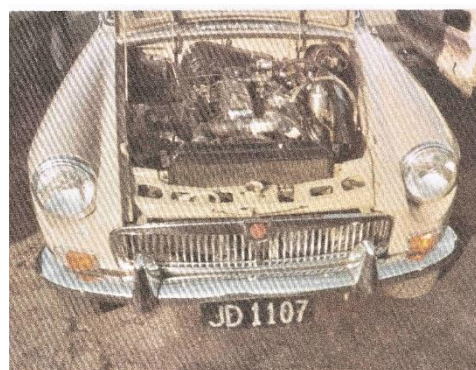
1) Starting with the three **roadsters**, **GM2797** was blue in the late-1970s when it was owned by **Richard Roe** (my chiropractor at that time), the former husband of top New Zealand athlete, Alison Roe. This C left the factory in British Racing Green and was first registered in NZ in 1973 and was last seen in the early 1980s on **Charlie Conway's Chequered Flag** sales yard. GM2797 does not appear on the national motor vehicle database.

2) We have a number of photographs on file of the green, NZ-new **GQ6106**, some from the 1970s when it was in **Dunedin** and it made the cover of the MGCC Canterbury magazine in July 1990. It was owned by **Laurie Steere (MG Service Centre)** and former MGCC **Canterbury** committee man **Phil Claude**, way back then. GQ6106 does not appear on the national motor vehicle database.



3) **IA6518** was imported to NZ in 1976 and was believed to have been owned by **Glenn Watt** in the **Wellington** area. Our records show it was originally Snowberry White but had a colour change to red. According to the national database records it was on a restoration licence in 1994 but it changed owners in September 2001 and its registration was cancelled that same month, so it looks like it may have been purchased while still a project car.

4) **YLDI** is the current registration of a red **GT**, formerly **JD1107** in Sandy Beige on steel wheels. Our records show it was in the **Pukekohe area (South Auckland)** for a time and we are led to believe it may be in **Manawatu**, around **Palmerston North**. The national records show this GT came to NZ in 1979, was re-registered with an NZ VIN in September 1997 and the YLDI plates were fitted during the following month. The assumption from this information is the car is on the road, so keep an eye out for it.



5) **HD1460** is the registration number of a green **GT** and was owned by **MGCC Auckland** member **Geoff Roud** at some stage. The national records show its registration was cancelled in February 1990.

6) We have no idea what the registration numbers were for **GCD1 2206G**, a Primrose Yellow **GT** and **GCD1 4121G**, a Snowberry White **GT**. Both of these GTs were NZ-new with 2206G listed in the factory records as Personal Export Delivery in May 1968. Other than the information I researched from the factory records, we know nothing about these two GTs.

7) We know **HI7105** exists because we have a photograph of it from the early records and it was in the hands of **Gary Nicholas** in **Rotorua** during the early 1980s. The last update we have is that its registration was cancelled in July 1992.



8) **NY9048** was originally exported to **Los Angeles** at the end of July 1969. Since then it has been through a right-hand drive conversion and was the feature car in the **NZ Classic Car** magazine's April 2009 issue. It also featured in a further publication in an article previewing the **Drive NZ Classic** tour of the country which was held in October 2009. Reference was made in that article to it having been recently purchased by **Australian** classic car enthusiast **Boyd Kolozs**. The national records show its registration was cancelled in January 2012, just cancelled with no indication it has been permanently removed from New Zealand but, perhaps it has?



9) Finally, **EFT853**. This yellow highly modified **GT** came to NZ in November 2007 from Australia and, we are led to believe, is an MGC bodyshell with a V8 power unit and 5-speed transmission. It has been offered for sale on TradeMe on three separate occasions and we don't know where it is at present.



Any information, old or new, that you may have on the above MGCs may just help me find these cars and would be very much appreciated.

Please email me at thegrants@actrix.co.nz Ian Grant

The latest MGs have arrived in New Zealand

I saw this **MG ZS** at \$23K plus on-roads, in the **Botany Mall** recently courtesy of **Ebbett Pukekohe** and was wondering if any of you have driven one or maybe own one?

If so we would like to hear from you.



Is your MGC engine colour correct?

Have you ever wondered if your engine colour is actually, the correct shade of **Metallic Green**, as it left the factory? This long-running subject continues to generate much bonnet opening and head-scratching. As far as I know, all MGC engines arrived in batches from the **BMC Longbridge** factory painted black. They were then painted MGC metallic green ready for fitting and this is where my theory kicks in. **Ted Wiggins** an **Abingdon** paint shop worker, and dyed-in-the-wool smoker, was responsible for engine painting (seen here with his much loved 1965 **Triumph** and wife **Edith**). This involved both the mixing and application and was a long time before any clever computer colour-matching technology was available. So the all important colour mixing was down to the highly tuned skills of the mixer. In Ted's case, there was an additional factor in determining the final colour, **FAG ASH**. Indeed, we now know that the final shade was directly related to the amount of grey ash that had descended,

unnoticed, into the mix. This resulted in each engine batch being finished with their own unique shade of Metallic Green. This theory is



confirmed by the many different engine colours you will see at MGC events and that your engine is, in fact, almost certainly correct and so is mine. Having said that we all know that **Healey** engines are definitely a different colour, or are they? **PHD**

The American MGC Register 40th ANNIVERSARY

The American MGC Register was founded in 1980 by **Tom Boscarino**, to enable owners of the MGC to be in contact with and in support of each other. This purpose was accomplished through his regular newsletter '**C' Notes**, window decals, regalia and an annual meeting. So, it's an important year for our friends in the United States, but Covid-19 has disrupted planned celebrations.



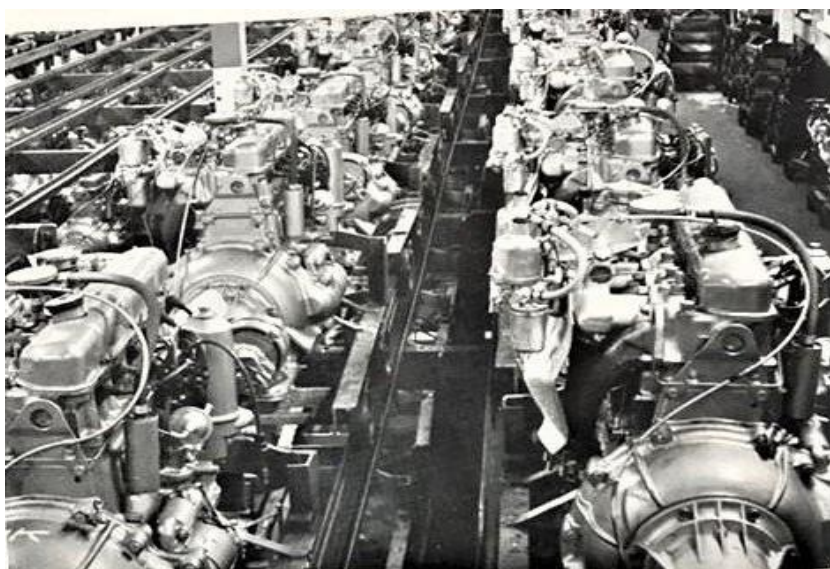
Firstly, the **40th Anniversary** was to have been celebrated in **Pensacola, Florida** and a lot of work had already been done with the **Panhandle British Car Association** in preparation for the planned four-day event from the 15th to 18th of April which included "**Brits on the Bay**", an all-British car show. But it wasn't to be as the AMGCR and the PBCA were given no choice – they were ordered to stop all group events of more than fifty people because of coronavirus. The organisers had to undo all of the good work they had put together which was no small task in itself considering the size of the event. Looking ahead from April, an alternative was set down for late June in **Lexington, Ohio**, from the 25th

to the 28th. New plans were drawn up but again, with Covid-19 still very much rampant, this event had to be cancelled too. So, try again, and this time the plan is to hold the 40th anniversary in the cool mountains of **Dillard, Georgia**, for the **Peachtree MG Registry's "Southeast British Car Festival"** on the 17th to 20th September. The **NZ MGC Register** wish you all the best with this, here's hoping it's third time lucky. **Ian Grant**

MGC engine production line

This is the first time I've seen a photo of the "C" series engine production line at the **BMC Longbridge Plant** in Birmingham. This site became British Leyland Longbridge in 1968 so it may be BL and not BMC. Our thanks to **John Vevers** for this special picture and his endless supply of funnies.

Ian Grant has studied the photo and responds as follows: "*The photo would appear to be from 1968 as the engines have the PCV valve on top which was not fitted to 1969 model cars. Also, the engine in the right foreground certainly looks like it has automatic transmission but I would suggest for local or export market, excluding the USA, as the inlet manifold is of the square profile whereas the North American market units were curved*".....well spotted Ian! **PHD**



The MG Experience.....what did you do with your MGC today?

Every now and then I follow the “**MG Experience**” website conversations on MGCs and this one regarding the fitting of “**Throttle Bodies**” caught my eye:

Kevin Whitehead of Crowthorne in the **UK** is a longstanding owner of a 1968, mineral blue, roadster. This car has been much modified



over the years, but it was the fitting of “**throttle bodies**” instead of traditional carburation that caught my eye. So, I ask **Kevin** if he would be kind enough to pen a few words on his car and here they are!

Kevin wrote:

*I bought the car in 2003, having promised myself one for many years, I'm an Abingdon boy and have family connections with the factory, (Mum's Dad, George Morris, worked at the **MG factory** for 50 years starting at Morris Garages in 1918, my other Grandad worked at the **Pavlova Leather Works** and an Uncle at the **Brewery**) – so I'm a real local boy with everything Abingdon in my DNA.*

Frontline Developments of Abingdon-on-Thames had previously fitted **DCOE Heritage Throttle Bodies** made by **Jenvey Dynamics Ltd** of Shropshire to MGBs. These units have a passing resemblance to the Weber DCOE carburettor and use the **OMEX ECU** control systems. Frontline confirmed that they could do the same to my MGC, hence the current project. The work included fitting a trigger to a bespoke flywheel, a bigger fuel tank, high

torque starter motor, new alloy engine back-plate from **Shaun Holmes Racing** (a well-known MGC racer in the UK – my engine already had their alloy side plates), coil packs, etc, and finally an Australian **David Craig** electric water pump managed through the ECU rather than the DC control system. The original idea of the pump was to omit the mechanical one fitted to the car – sadly the engine builder was not prepared to warrant the rebuilt unit without one so it was retained with the DC unit stepping in as required at low and high revs to remove the risk of cavitation or lack of flow.



*Experience to date has been limited. There are a few snags, which will be sorted over the next week or so, but I am really impressed with the rock steady idle at **750rpm**, the engine was run-in on a testbed and produces **circa 190bhp** with **160–170 ft-lb** of torque.*

Kevin Whitehead.

NB: Further info on this project will be included in our next newsletter.

Barry Brown's Car Sales, Christchurch

Back in the day, **Barry Brown's** was the in place to get that fancy sports car and what a line up he had in 1972 when this photo was taken. The three sports cars on the left are extremely collectable today and probably **worth in excess \$800,000 dollars** with the early E Type Jag potentially selling for \$500,000 plus in concours condition. As you would imagine, the 1972 value is a totally different story, maybe as little as \$5,000 for the three? What's your guess? I may be completely wrong but I



came close to buying an immaculate **1965 E Type** drophead for **\$1300** in about 1973 but had second thoughts and bought a **1966 Lotus Elan** for the same money.

This photo clearly shows that if you wanted something flash, Barry Brown was your man. Cars bought and sold, trade-ins welcomed, and no doubt finance arranged plus a host of eye-catching motors available to drive away. The three-car line-up that drew my attention included the head-turning **1962, 3.8 red E Type Fastback Coupe** which, according to **CARJAM**, was on the road in August last year. Alongside is a **1968 Mineral Blue MGCGT** and a very desirable **1959 Chevrolet Corvette**, something for any man who wanted to be noticed.

The **MGCGT** is, as you would expect, well known to our leader **Ian Grant**. The rego **DY787** on GCD1 2354G was the original plate for this NZ-new car. The first owner being a **Charles Pateman** residing in **Blenheim, South Island**. Ian has a lot more info on this car's history (see article below). **PHD**

It's Amazing What Still Pops Up

As suggested by the title of this piece, here we are 52 years after the MGC came off the assembly line in Abingdon and we are still finding golden nuggets.

The picture of **Barry Brown's Car Sales** in **Christchurch** (see above article) arrived in my inbox earlier this year and I copied it into the picture area of my computer and cropped it so I could get a much better look at the registration plate on the **MGC**. As I expected it was **DY767** (GCD1 2354G), a car we have on the register as one of the batch of GTs that were exported to New Zealand with

consecutive chassis numbers even though they came off the assembly line over a period of three or four months.

That was an interesting piece of very welcome MGC history - ***but wait, there's more.....***

Back in December I received an e-mail from a **Mr David McNabb** in **Adelaide, South Australia** who got my contact details from **Ian Hobbs**, the **SA MGC Register** secretary. David was a member of



MGCC Canterbury and moved to Australia around 1980. During the 1970s David was very much involved in Canterbury activities and made the trip to Auckland with a group in 1978 for **Octagon Week**. He left his TD at home because a very good friend of his in the club had just had his licence removed from his wallet by the authorities and was relegated for that event to being the navigator in another member's MGB. This friend, **Graham Taylor**, offered David his blue MGCGT for the trip to Auckland, so it was a bit hard to turn down. A blue CGT? Yes, it was the same one on Barry Brown's sales yard in that photograph.

A second golden nugget, - ***but wait, there's more.....***

In April another unexpected e-mail arrived in my inbox, this time from a **Mr Bruce Paine**. Before even reading the contents, this name rang a bell – someone on our register perhaps? I opened the e-mail and it all became clear as Bruce owned GCD1 2354G from 1986 to 2001 before putting it up for sale where it was purchased by an Australian and was shipped across the Tasman to **Victoria**.

Bruce and I exchanged further e-mails then the fourth golden nugget arrived – in going through some of his papers Bruce found he still had the car's original ownership papers which he scanned and sent to me. Although the despatch date of the car from the factory was in July 1968, the papers show it wasn't actually registered in New Zealand until the 29th of January 1969 with the odometer showing 3,118 miles. So, was it used as an MGC demonstrator for a few months?

Its first owner was **Mr Charles Pateman**, c/- the **Grosvenor Hotel** in **Blenheim**. A second Blenheim owner took the car through to 23,774 miles where it was then at **Barry Brown Car Sales Ltd** in Colombo Street in Christchurch from the 17th of February 1972 until moving to **Carthy Motors Ltd** in St Asaph Street, Christchurch on the 31st of May with a further 1,000 miles on the odometer. So, with this information we have been able to put a positive time frame on the date of that car yard photograph.

Carthy Motors put another 2,500 miles on it before it was sold to Graham Taylor on the 5th of October.

In 1973 the standard issue, black and silver **GT** series plates became available and Graham removed DY767 and fitted **GT3000** – GT for both Graham Taylor and Gran Turismo and 3000 for 3-litre.

I can quite clearly remember seeing the car at the MGCC meeting in Taupo back in 1975 when Graham drove up from Christchurch with the Canterbury group (photo above right).

GT3000 has lived in a number of places, from Blenheim to Christchurch to Timaru to Bluff, then back to Timaru and finally in Auckland before heading to Australia. We saw it advertised for sale in Australia four or five years ago (photo above left), not running as it needed cylinder head work, so what has happened to it since we don't know. Perhaps our Australian colleagues might know something and provide another golden nugget. **Ian Grant**



and Finally

***Drive safely, enjoy your MGC and
remember C-ing is believing***



Ian Grant

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Your MGC Register Team



Left to Right.....Peter & Raewyn, Ian, Jane & Harvey

NB: No calls after 9pm please

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the MGCC, the MGC Register or its Editor. Readers should exercise their own judgement when considering technical or other matters, information and advice.

Parts for Sale

Harvey Heath's rebuilt MGC Water Pump supply

I have a number of repair kits in stock and can offer EXCHANGE WATER PUMPS with new bearings and seal seals fitted for the princely sum of **\$70.00** plus post and packing.

For more information please contact:
Home: 09 8342552, Mobile: 021 1721033
Email: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com



Harvey Heath's MGC King Pin service

I can now offer a service of fitting, reaming and setting up the king pin end float to anybody who requires it.

There are a number of options available:

You can send me your stub axle assembly and I will refurbish it and send it back to you ready for fitting onto your car.

You supply all, or some of the parts, and I will assemble your stub axle assembly correctly and return to you for fitting on your car.

You bring your car to me and I will do the complete job including removal, refurbishing and refitting.

I have a full selection of shims and bushes and king pins in stock.

COST Option (1) \$80.00 per side labour, plus parts, packaging and delivery (courier or postage).



Please call me for further information on the above options, the work you require and the total price for the job.

Harvey Heath

Home: 09 8342552, Mobile: 021 1721033,

Email: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com

Cars for Sale



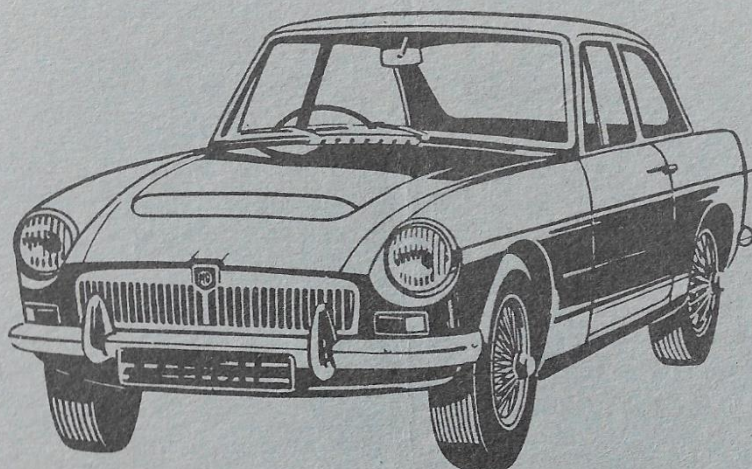
1968, New Zealand new, White, MGC GT

Asking price: \$40,000.

For further details, please contact **Jock Burrridge** on (mob) 027 2860897.

General information:

Another MGC has come on the market due to its owner reducing his vehicle collection. This particular MGC GT came off the assembly line on the **2nd of May 1968** and was despatched to New Zealand two weeks later. It was one of the twenty GTs that were new to this country and was the only one of the thirty **NZ-new** cars that had automatic transmission. The car had a number of owners including dealers up until 1994 where it remained in the same ownership until the current owner purchased it in 2018. During that long-term 24-year ownership the car was subjected to a major makeover, both body and mechanical, including the replacing of the automatic transmission with an **overdrive gearbox** that was purchased from England. The personalised plates, **6C GT**, were fitted in 1996 and are included in the sale. Originally finished in Sandy Beige with red leather trim, the car looks very smart in white with its red interior and is in **very tidy condition** having covered a little over **40,000 miles** since that **major makeover**. The current owner has had some work done very recently including a re-padded hood lining, carpets, under-bonnet fuel lines and **Warrant of Fitness**, which was secured **last month** with the odo reading **173,049 miles**. This was one of the MGCs that was on the 50th anniversary tour around the South Island and performed faultlessly. This MGC is located in the top half of the South Island.



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Dominion Motors advert in the MGCC Auckland Bulletin