



MGC NEWSLETTER

Spring Issue No.31, Sept 2021

COVID Delta Variant

Levels 2 & 4



The MGC Register of New Zealand



Patrick Cheffins gleaming roadster now owned by **Mark Treharne** of Waiheke Island.

Editor's Report

Haere Mai. Well, I certainly didn't expect Auckland's Level 4 "lockdown" to go on for so long and am very envious of all non-Jaffas. Most of us had just got used to living normal lives again and everything seemed under control. How wrong we were. Anyway let's look on the bright side, life goes on, spring is here and MGCs are being bought and sold with six cars changing hands in recent times including three since our last newsletter. It's great to see the interest in MGC ownership growing with cars moving on quickly during these unsettled times. We have some great articles in this issue and I thank all of you who have put pen to paper. Great stuff guys, please keep sending them in. The next big event for us is the combined **MGC Register Run and Mighty MGs Run** on **Sunday 28th November** organised by **Ian Grant**. Please log this date in your diaries now and check out the details in this issue.

**Unite
against
COVID-19**



Newsletter Editor wanted

Could this be you?.....we are looking for someone to take over as **Newsletter Editor**. If you think you'd like to have a go please let us know. We have produced 31 issues over the last 10 years and believe it's time for someone to take a fresh look at the layout and content. So why not put your hand up and have a go? I will help you if you wish, our newsletter is well-read, circulated worldwide and fun to produce. Give me a call (M)0210 2688652 or (H) 09 5364410. **Peter Dunlop**

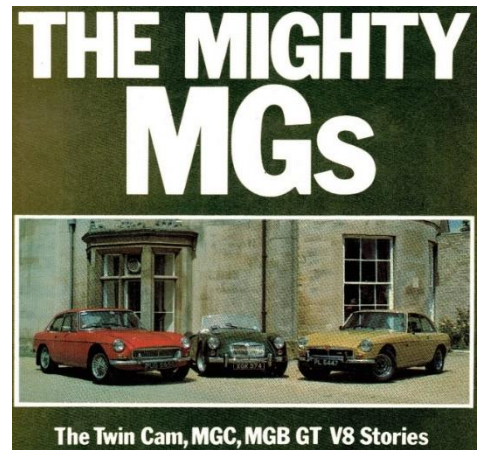
The combined MGC Register Run and The Mighty MGs Run, Sunday 28th November

Covid-19 has been very successful at disrupting our lives and thus the enjoyment we get from using our MGCs.

Hoping that we will be back to some resemblance of normality in the not-to-distant future, we will attempt to have a register run on Sunday 28th November. I have some ideas for an interesting day out and will be working on this over the next few weeks. As we won't have another newsletter out before the event, I will

keep you all informed by e-mail as to what we will be doing, so pop that into your diary as we would like to C a really good turnout of our beautiful cars.

This will be the fourth time we have had "The Mighty MGs Run" following those held in 2015, 2016 and 2018. The title comes from the book, *The Mighty MGs* by noted motoring scribe Graham Robson, and covers the stories of the MGA Twin Cam, the MGC and the MGBGT V8. As the book was written in 1982, the other mighty MG since then is the RV8, so these cars are included as well. But we are not restricting the day's outing to just these models as all MG owners are most welcome to participate. More details to come and would love to C you there. **Ian Grant**



Another MGC "Good Sort"

Our very own roving reporter and provider of endless jokes, **John Vevers**, has been selected as our special **"Lockdown Good Sort"**. Even after being caught up in the recent West Auckland floods he still found time to sort out some excellent funnies to keep us smiling during these unsettled times. Thank you John, you are truly a **"Good Sort"** and much appreciated by all those who have the pleasure of knowing you. Most funnies in our **Joke Gallery** were provided by John.

More cars find new homes

There is currently a soaring interest in owning an MGC with cars regularly on the market. It's difficult to know exactly why this is happening now but it may be due to rising values, an ageing ownership, unspent budgets due to Covid restrictions or just a change in circumstances. I don't know but guess it could be any or all of the aforementioned. As owners, we understand the magnetic attraction of these cars and their driving appeal.

Patrick Cheffins' roadster moves on

Patrick's 1969 BRG roadster that he imported into NZ in 2011 has moved on. After 16 years of ownership, a growing family and other commitments, it was time to sell. **Mark Treharne** of **Waiheke Island**, who has owned several MGCs in the UK before moving to NZ, snapped it up.

Well done, Mark a good choice. It may surprise you that it's not unusual for a previous owner to go back in time and buy another C. We wish you happy motoring and hope to see you and the car out and about as soon as life gets back to normal.



Barry Hoffman's white GT also has a new owner

We don't know too much about the sale of this ex-**Lew Henry** GT except that it has been sold and is now with its new owner. Hopefully, we will be able to update you very soon with more information.

Raewyn Dunlop's GT waiting to go south

It will be a sad day for Mrs D when her much-admired red GT disappears down to **Christchurch**. Everything is on hold at the moment due to **Level 4** travel restrictions but we can confirm that the car will be transported south as soon as possible.



Own this very special piece of MGC history!

The first works GTS "MABEL" is for sale

On hearing the news I contacted **Henry Camisasca** in Southern California to see how the sale of **MBL546E** "Mabel" was going. This is his reply:

Hello Peter,

*Mabel is currently for sale through **Hall & Hall** in the UK, however, the car is still with me here in Southern California in near perfect condition. It would certainly be at home in **New Zealand** where it seems to get more of the attention she deserves. Folks who have inquired probably think I am asking too much for this full factory-built lightweight, but truth be known I have put way more into Mabel than the asking price. If an investment was my only interest, I should have brought an Austin Healey 100S at the time and would have tripled my investment. Thanks for checking in and best to the NZ C club and you.*

Henry Camisasca



You'll need fairly deep pockets to own this exceptional piece of **BMC** works racing history but am sure it will be well worth it. Why not make contact with **Hall & Hall** and bring **Mabel** here to live in stunning **New Zealand**, she will be most welcome! **Peter Dunlop**

1967 MGC GTS, AD052/1060, registration MBL546E (advertisement wording)

Group 6, ex-Targa Florio, Nürburgring and Sebring. A very rare and unique opportunity, one of only two factory-built lightweight MGC GTS to come out of the Abingdon MG "works" department before its closure in 1970. MBL546E, known affectionately as "Mabel", raced successfully from 1967 through 1969 in four major long-distance events with no DNFs. Still has the original works supplied drive-train, including engine block, alloy head, intake manifold, Weber carbs, gearbox and rear diff. A pretty rare occurrence for a vintage race car of her age to still have the original driveline down to the small part details. The 2968cc Austin in-line 6-cylinder engine achieving 202hp @ 6000rpm with gas flowed and polished aluminium head, intake manifold sporting triple 45 DCOE Weber carburettors and Downton exhaust manifold. Standard steel floor panel with lightweight alloy framing and skin panels. Girling brake discs all round with modified MGC suspension and steering rack. Minilight magnesium alloys or Triple-lace wires with K/O centres. ZF limited-slip differential with close-ratio, straight-cut gears. 24-gallon fuel tank with 4" quick release fuel cap. A huge, documented history with receipts, factory build sheets and has featured in many magazine publications. A "ground-up" rotisserie restoration by Symbolic Motor Cars, La Jolla, CA, in 2008-2009 and finally completed in 2012. Racing results in period: -



- 1967 - Targa Florio was driven by Paddy Hopkirk and Timo Makinen, finished 9th overall, 3rd in class; 1968 - 12 Hours of Sebring driven by Paddy Hopkirk and Andrew Hedges, finished 10th overall, 1st in class; 1968 - 84 Hours of Nürburgring driven by Tony Fall and Julien Vernaev, finished 6th overall; 1969 - 12 Hours of

Sebring driven by Craig Hill and Bill Brack, finished 34th overall, 6th in class. A beautifully illustrated book by David Morys "The MCGTS Lightweights: Abingdon's Last Racers" gives a fascinating insight into the production, career and restoration of the MCGTS lightweights.

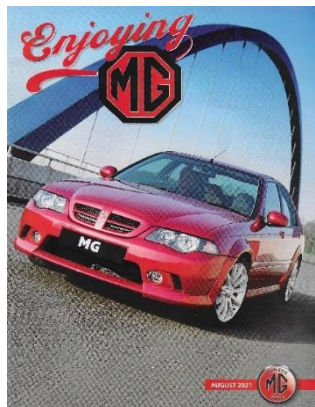
Please contact **HALL and HALL, Graham Hill Way, Bourne, Lincs, PE10 9PJ, England.**

E-mail: info@hallandhall.net, phone: 01778 392562, fax: 01778 392561.

A disappointing MGC story from the UK

This article was seen in the August 2021 **MG Owners' Club** magazine that recently arrived in our post box. Not what you would expect from a C owner but of course it's not the cars fault that he's a crook.

Unluckily for him, he had seriously "*hacked off*" his girlfriend and as we all know "*Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned*".....read on:



End of the affair

A dishonest MG owner bought a scruffy MGC and stood it next to his pal's MGC which was beautiful. He swopped the registration plates over and took various photographs of the nice MGC but with the wrong plates. He then sent the photos to the MGOC with his Agreed Valuation and a few weeks later he reported the car stolen. The club's insurer paid the claim promptly and our owner broke his MGC for spares, which he quickly sold.

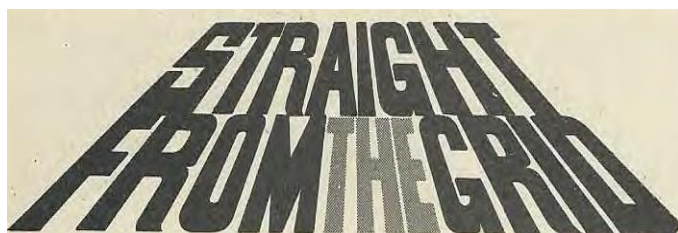
A few months later the MG owner's former girlfriend called the club and told us that her now ex-boyfriend had cheated on her with another woman. As revenge, she was reporting his swindle. We notified the insurer, who sent two representatives to doorstep the thief. He had no choice other than to repay the insurer. I asked if he would be charged, and the insurer said that the police had been notified; whether he was prosecuted has not been revealed.



"Enjoying MG" front cover & article, courtesy of MG Owners' Club, UK.



This special **Autocar London Show** issue, sent in by our roving reporter **John Vevers**, is something very special and so very 1960s. It includes a lot of good stuff and a couple of revealing snippets that caught my eye, especially the first from **Eoin Young** shown below.



By EOIN YOUNG

There is a hint of the soon to be released **MCGTS** lightweight in Eoin Young's page ***Straight from the Grid*** entitled "***My Speculation***". What a great column, he certainly had his ear to the ground in October 1967.

The first works GTS "**Mabel**" made her maiden outing the following year, winning her class in the 1968 Sebring 12-hour event driven by **Paddy Hopkirk** and **Andrew Hedges**.

I am sure that some of you may have met or even knew Eoin who was a well-known and much respected Kiwi motoring journalist and personality. Eoin spent forty years working in the UK and Europe

MY SPECULATION as to what the BMC 3-litre long-distance racing prototype for next year would look like appears, to judge from unquotable comments from BMH people, to be rather far from what is actually being screwed together. Perhaps we can look for a more conventional front-engined machine (the new Austin-Healey?) with efforts being made to win the GT classification with a car that could be customer material rather than a way-out, un-driveable, unsaleable prototype. You wouldn't have thought so many people could have become so steamed up over a bit of speculation, but presumably with so much smoke being raised there must be a fire in there somewhere!

starting with the fledgling **Bruce McLaren** operation. I was lucky enough to meet him with the **McLaren Trust** at **Hampton Downs** during the launch of his new book "**Classic Racers**". Eoin passed away in his hometown of Christchurch on 5th September 2014.

Secondly, there is a very short report (author unknown) on the **Silverstone Circuit** track test of the new **Automatic MGC**, shown here as the **MQC** and **S MPH** instead of 5. A very uninspiring, non-proof-read, article reflecting the general dislike of the car by the motoring press, although much better than the initial launch reports. From the wording, I can only assume the works had finally got the tyre pressures right.....good for them!



What is wrong with the number 5 cylinder ? ***from Mike Greenwood, South Australia***

I have owned our MGC, **AMG069**, since 2000 and have attended many MG events both interstate and locally under the auspices of the **MG Car Club of SA** covering over 40,000 miles. After the MG National Meeting



here in Adelaide, I listened to the sound of the MGC and it was not the happy, throaty burble we knew so well. When I pulled each of the first four plug leads the engine misfired with each plug, but when I pulled number 5 lead off there was no faltering at all. Bummer! Number 6 also misfired so I knew that we had a problem, **ENGINE OUT!**

Taking the engine out of an MGC is totally different to doing the same number on an MGB. I can assure you, as part of the sump sits over the front cross-member, you cannot get the sump off to check the bottom end of the engine unless you take the engine out. I always take a lot of photographs before taking any parts from the engine; it will be quite a time before you get to put everything back. Also, clean and bag all items possible.

I was very fortunate to have a mate help me to take the engine/gearbox out. The next part of the process was to partially dismantle the engine itself to try and find out why the number 5 cylinder was not functioning correctly. So off came the rocker cover and all the head nuts to release the head from the block, quite a challenge as it needs to be raised evenly and being heavy, it really is a two-person job. However, I rigged up a couple of welded chains at each end and used the engine lifter hydraulics to do the job. (photo: **Peter, Ian and Mike Greenwood** in Auckland in December 2014.)

Now I could look at all six cylinders with the pistons visible. There appeared to be no real reason why #5 was any different, but I was fortunate that Baz (Bob Bazzica) very kindly agreed to drive up to Strathalbyn to our place and inspect the block. Baz took very little time to explain that not all the pistons movement in their respective cylinders were identical, the tolerance between the cylinder circumference and the piston in this engine as standard was 3000th of an inch and this was the case in all but #5 where the tolerance was



double, i.e. 6000th of an inch. So, the piston had far too much clearance, no wonder there was no compression!! The actual bores in all cylinder sleeves were surprisingly good showing hardly any sort of wear which was encouraging given that I knew I was up for major costs in the purchase of new pistons and rings and a gasket set for top & bottom.



There was a certain amount of time needed to go online to purchase all the parts needed in doing the rebuild while the engine was (a) out of the car and (b) broken down to the basic moving parts. The pistons in the engine once dropped out of the block were already oversized so the engine had obviously been out before. So now onto the internet to search for the necessary pistons and rings, bearings and timing chain and tensioner. MGC parts are not as easy to source as is the case of its little brother the MGB, but after a lot of time, I was able to get these. I then sent the cylinder head away to get it crack tested and set for unleaded fuel with new valves and seals. Then came the laborious job of cleaning the block and all the engine parts, you will need lots of kerosene and

a decent sized cleaning bath, everything must be as clean as you can get it. Preparation is everything here just like any painting job.

With the help of my friend Brian Campbell, the first step in putting the engine back together is the start with turning the block up so the bottom end is on top to allow you to position the crankshaft, this is very heavy but the first and most important step in rebuilding the engine. All parts, when one looks at the bottom end of the engine, are marked and must be replaced from where they came from. These days there are aids to check that the gap between the newly positioned bearing caps and the face of the crankshaft is correct. It is important to start putting the bearing caps back first and then tighten the caps one at a time starting with one in the centre and working your way to both the front and the rear, use lots of new engine rebuilding oil testing that the crankshaft tolerance is acceptable and that the crank can be turned easily at all stages. Care must be taken when adding the spacers as these stop the crankshaft from any lateral movement. Also carefully insert the rear oil seal over the crankshaft end.

Next, we put the camshaft into the block and we decided to replace the timing chain and the tensioner while the engine was down to this stage. Quite a delicate job but makes the final tune a lot easier. Then in went the new pistons with their five rings per piston, one needs a good torque wrench to ensure all engine parts are at the correct amount of tightness. All settings are in the MGC Workshop Manual. Fortunately, Brian was able to refurbish the oil pump and we were able to temporarily refit the sump, turn the block up the other way to start adding the pushrods and the cam followers and replace the engine side covers. Now I needed to get the cylinder head back from the engineer in Mt Barker after it was checked for cracks and had the new valves and seals fitted so unleaded fuel could be used, 98 of course!



On went the new head gasket. The C engine has a total of 14 head studs and I ran the dye down each one to clean the threads before we put the head back on and started to tighten the head bolts. All of the bolts are tightened to the correct torques and the ancillaries on the head and the block were refitted before putting oil into the rebuilt engine.

Once all of the assembling had been done, I had a friend come over and we repainted the engine. What a moment after some three months of toil waiting for parts and general day-to-day living, I could see the end was in sight. After mating the gearbox to the newly painted engine I had three friends come around to help me put the engine back into **AMG069**, which took us about three hours with the engine lifter and the adjustable chain gear to eventually have this huge lump of green steel resting comfortably on its engine and gearbox mounts. After this, it was my task to refit every item I had dismantled some six months before.

Finally, it was complete and I came to the day when Brian and I were happy enough to try starting the new engine and wow!! The sound of that lovely engine came out of the exhaust pipe!! What a great moment in time after all the effort when I made an entry in the logbook before taking AMG069 out on the road!! Incidentally, AMG not only stands for A MG and 069 as its year of manufacture, but AMG are also my initials!

Mike Greenwood, Strathalbyn, South Australia

Ross Butler: 1940 – 2021

It is with much sadness that we report the passing of one of our MGC owners, **Ross Butler**, who resided in Christchurch. **Ross**, along with his **brother Chris**, who travelled from Western Australia, made up part of the tour group for the **Magical Grand Cruising **Tour**, celebrating the **MGC's 50th** anniversary back in **November 2018**. Ross called me earlier last month to advise he was not in the best of health and was looking to sell his CGT, so could we advertise it in our next newsletter.**



Late last month I gave Ross a call to finalise what was to go in the advertisement, but my call to his mobile went into voicemail, as did my call to his landline. After a few days, I had not received a response. Fearing the worst, I sent Chris an e-mail and received a same-day reply with the news that Ross had succumbed to his illness. Both he and Chris were great company on the South Island tour having driven up from Christchurch to join me in Blenheim on the same day I made the ferry crossing between the islands. Ross was a member of the **Vintage Car Club** and, as well as the CGT, he also had a very tidy left-hand drive **MGTD** which I got to see when they brought the two cars along to the Sunday event when **MGCC Canterbury** hosted the tour group. Ross, thanks so much for your company and the laughs we had on the tour – **R.I.P.**

Ian Grant



The 2018 tour group:

left to right: **Ian Grant, Ross & Shona Osborne, Jack Shuttleworth, Ross' brother Chris, Shirl BurrIDGE, Jenny Shuttleworth, Ross Butler, Maureen & Doug Stanaway.** (photo – Jock BurrIDGE).

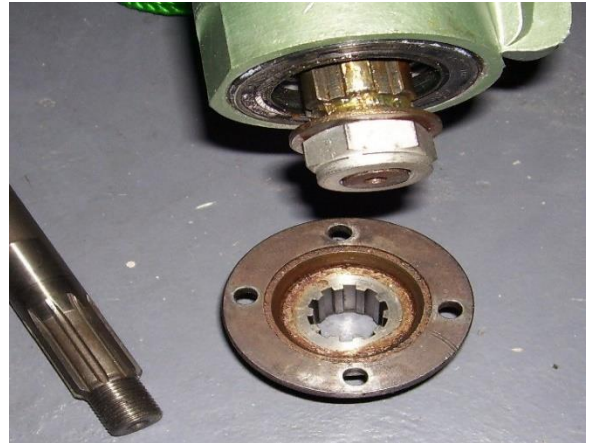
Ian Grant's engine rebuild update

The work continues. As of early this month, the engine is still at the machine shop, the lockdown has not helped the situation, but it has given me plenty of time to get several other jobs done. The engine bay was pretty tidy but it has now had a good clean to get rid of any road dirt especially from the road works we encountered on the anniversary tour in the South Island. With the power unit out, access to those hard-to-reach places is so much easier. All of the old dark green paint has been stripped from the gearbox, which was then cleaned. I then applied a coat of VHT paint which I left to cure for a few days before applying the first coat of the light green topcoat, which is as close as I could get to the original

factory paint. This was then left for a few days before I applied a full second coat. I am very pleased with the result. When the engine is reassembled and ready to go, I have the ok from John at the reconditioners to have a little space in his shop to paint the engine which will get the same treatment as the gearbox. As it is ten months since the engine came out and being aware that it can be detrimental to have parts sitting around for too long, I have the radiator lying on the bench full of a water/antifreeze combination with both hose outlets covered in plastic and sealed with rubber bands to combat any rust. Similarly, I flushed out the heater matrix with a water/vinegar solution and have that sealed as well, also full with

water/antifreeze. Even though the coolant that came out of the system when I drained the radiator looked pretty good (it had done around 3,000 miles) a close inspection of the heater tap revealed it had quite a lot of dry sludge inside the tap, very similar to what happens to our arteries when they narrow and stents need to be inserted. A good soaking in a water/vinegar solution enabled me to give it a thorough cleaning. The original paint on the radiator cowl and bridge panel is showing its age so both of these have been fully stripped and repainted. The rubbers on both of these panels have seen better days, in fact, they are so hard I have broken them getting them off. When I converted my MGB to overdrive back in 1977 I was pleasantly surprised to find the two wires for the dashboard switch taped up to the main harness behind the instruments and I had the same result with the C. I have a gooseneck switch for the dashboard along with the chrome bezel that goes around the switch and a new wiring harness that is required to go between the main harness and the gearbox, this harness contains the wiring for both the overdrive and the reverse lights. One of the things that **James Smith** found when refitting his power unit after his overdrive conversion, was that the gearbox flange that connects to the driveshaft didn't fit. The MGB flange is a smaller diameter plus the non-overdrive flanges on both MGBs and MGCs have a finer spline set than the annulus shaft on the overdrive unit. **In the photograph** are the non-overdrive main shaft, non-overdrive flange

and the annulus shaft in the overdrive unit showing its different spline configuration. Ian Priestley's conversions included the MGB flange and James took both flanges to a precision engineer in Rotorua who cut both flanges faces off and welded the larger MGC face to the MGB flange. He made a very nice job of it and it fitted well. I have since taken mine to a precision engineer here in town who is happy to do the job but it has been held up by the lockdown. James also found the speedometer gearing has made his under-read so I am doing some research on this and will report



on the findings, hopefully in our December newsletter. All being well, the power unit will be back in and we will be out of lockdown, so I hope to have 69C on *The Mighty MGs Run* at the end of November. I hope so as I haven't driven the old girl since March last year. **Ian Grant**

10 Years Ago,Newsletter Issue 2, June 2011

It was ten years ago that **Ian Grant** bit the bullet bought his dream car and since that time has never looked back.....read on:

Ian Grant buys Fernyhough Museum MGC Roadster

My pal and fellow **MGC** register supporter has just bought the **MGC** roadster from the well-known John **Fernyhough Classic Car Museum** in Auckland. The car is a NZ "new" 1969 tartan red roadster with 52,000 miles on the clock. It has been in the museum since June 1998 and is in very good all-round condition. Ian first saw the car in the mid-1970s when he was working at the Otahuhu BMC dealership of **Robert Stevens Ltd.** The car will undergo a full mechanical inspection and service plus a cut and polish to the bodywork before being presented to the waiting world.



Sump removal is definitely

“Much more than meets the eye”

The well-known **MGC** promotional catchphrase ***“Much more than meets the eye”*** can certainly apply to sump removal. The following pages are taken from **Ian Hobbs** soon to be released book ***“MGCs Down Under”***. This may well explain why some of us say ***“impossible”*** and others say, ***“easy as, Bro”***.

Peter & Raewyn Dunlop have taken the engines out of their **1968** GTs four times now and are sure that removing the sump with the engine in place is impossible. Even the conventional removal of the engine and gearbox from a C is a struggle due to the very tight clearances on the tunnel. While **Alan Krissansen's** article in our last newsletter showed he had taken the sump off his '69 roadster with the engine still in the car relatively easily. **Ian Hobbs** new book may reveal the answer:

1001 easy steps to removing an MGC sump

That nice young 'C' Register co-ordinator Ian has had some interesting correspondence from that nice old Queenslander Bruce, about removing the sump on a 'C'.

For anyone who has removed a sump on an MGB or 'A' it's a relatively easy operation but the 'C' is a little more problematic. As most people who have removed the sump from a 'C' will attest, you remove all the bolts and prise the sump off the crankcase to withdraw it and suddenly realise that the sump is too long to get past the suspension sub-frame at one end and the fly wheel housing at the other. You then begin to wiggle and twist and turn and squirm and push and shove, and then with sore knuckles, go and put the kettle on while you read the manual.

Bruce always uses the three step approach to removing the sump: 1. Carefully remove the bonnet from the car and safely place it to one side; 2. Carefully remove the car from the engine and gearbox and safely place it on the other side; 3. Remove the engine and gearbox carefully from the sump and hey presto, there's the sump! It's a good idea to remove the oil first as it makes cleaning up a little easier.

Now, the correspondence from these nice gentlemen goes as follows:

Hi Ian,

I have been tidying up and ... found a detailed dossier from you of all the things you have done to your car by date order.

The thing that STOOD OUT, like dogs dangling bits, was that you changed the timing cover gasket, timing case seal and sump gasket without removing the huge, heavy engine from the chassis.

IS THIS TRUE????

I had a good look and thought it could not be achieved.

I await your answer with much interest as my timing cover seal leak is getting worse.

*Cheers,
Bruce.*

Oh wise MGC GURU.

Read the bloody manual – I did!!! Page 01.B9.

Cheers, MGC Smartarse

Hi Ian,

*I have marked this page with a "Bull S**t" sign as I also believed that I could remove the sump, but when I investigated this I found that IF I could just get it to clear the bellhousing there was no way I could scrape off the sump gasket.*

The fact that you have been able to achieve this says I might be able to change the oil seal without removing the huge hunk.

Did you need to lift the engine off its mounts?

*Cheers,
Bruce.*

Hi Bruce

Can't find the bull?

In regard to the sump it was a long time ago when I had to repair a hole in it - I think about 10 years ago? Of course I tried to remove it with the engine in place but could not, by about 5 mm. I lifted the engine up off of its mounts until the bellhousing hit the firewall and the sump came off easily. I think I had to remove the radiator, fan and maybe the front cover as well. I did read the manual and eventually did what it said. I think it says to lift the engine. I'll need to have another read, maybe over lunch.

Cheers Ian

Hi yet again,

I looked up my notes in my workshop manual and read that after following the manual and with the engine raised and with the bellhousing hard up against the tunnel and the head touching the firewall, I could only lower the sump halfway down the flywheel.

I could not see any way to clear the flywheel or bellhousing with the front of the sump hard against the cross member. Other MGC re-builders confirmed that they could only lower the sump to get the timing cover off but not remove the sump from the car.

You must have a slightly different tunnel??

Maybe there is some technique to do this in-car but I didn't find it and you are definitely the first person to achieve this that I know of.

Interesting isn't it. Guess the nappy can stay and be changed at every oil change.

*Cheers,
Bruce.*

Hi Ian,

I know how you achieved this, I think.



The MGC sump has to be extracted around the suspension cross member that's welded to the chassis

If the exhaust system and alternator are removed as well as the radiator assembly and the rear engine mount cross member plus the prop shaft are removed then the engine can be lifted and moved forward to allow the angle of the engine to be increased and therefore clearance for the front of the sump above the front cross member.

This is only a small step from removing the engine and gearbox, but it would allow the sump and timing cover to be removed.

I think this is what you had to do to fix the hole in the sump.

*Cheers,
Bruce.*

Hi Bruce

Firstly I didn't undo the rear engine mount cross member nor the prop shaft. We must have different cars. Maybe there is a difference between the early cars and the late ones?

Cheers Ian

Hi Ian,

You may well be right, it would only take a minor change in the tunnel to allow the bell housing to rise enough. Maybe they changed the bellhousing, as mine has a pronounced rib

along the top which hits the top of the tunnel. This tunnel is used on the Mk II MGBs which scored the MGC gearbox. Who knows! My workshop manual simply says raise the engine after disconnecting the front engine mounts and removing the radiator. But it won't allow the sump to be removed in the May production 1968 MGC.

It seems there were quite a lot of little differences in the 1969 cars which we never knew about and the factory never told anybody about.

You never stop learning about these cars, there is always something to discover.

*Cheers,
Bruce.*

You're right Bruce, one never stops learning, but does one ever get any wiser? It would seem that we are none the wiser on this issue. But there might be someone out there who is much wiser than us – if so, please let us know.

*Remember ladies and gentlemen, keep 'em tuned,
Rich*

***MGC instructions from Richard Mixture,
June 2010***

A very classy GTS replica arrives in NZ

It was good to see another GTS replica arriving in NZ and this time from the UK. This very attractive car was spotted in Mount Eden Road, Auckland by **Michael Wood** of the MGCC who kindly sent his photo to Ian and me. This is intriguing in many ways as the car is on NZ roads with a 1967 or 1968 UK rego **THN777F** and a **French** country plate (we now know that the car was registered in both countries). The original works GTSs have the rego year suffix "**E**" for **Mabel** (Jan '67 to July '67) and "**F**" for **Romeo** (Aug '67 to July '68). **John Chatham's** GTS **VHY5H** had the suffix "**H**" indicating a registration period of Aug '69 to July '70. So I asked my brother to check out the UK vehicle registrations (DVLA) and see when it was first registered. The result is **1990**. In the UK you can buy a personalised registration for your car as long as its suffix letter is for the same year of manufacture or older. In this case, there is an added bonus as it made the car look as if it could be a genuine GTS, maybe the last **John Chatham** car that was completed as a racer on a genuine body shell and with an aluminium alloy engine. I saw this car race at **Lydden Hill**, Kent in the '70s. His book says it eventually went to **France** so could this be the reason for the French country plate, but alas it's not. More information has come to light since the car was first spotted as we now know that it has gone through compliance (congratulations on that achievement) and has the rego **THN777**. Am sure Ian will find the owner very soon! The comprehensive sales description is worth reading as it contains the full build specification. It was also nice to learn that the UK racing driver **Barry Siddery-Smith** and MGC Register technical guru **Vic Young**, were involved. **Peter Dunlop**



"A very warm "welcome" to the car and owner, great to have you both here in NZ".



Sussex Sports Cars
Classic Car Sales
& Restoration

MGCGT, regoTHN777F, chassis # GCD1 2131G (wording as per advertisement)

Built in early 1990 by **Clive Robinson**, ex-chief engineer of **Lola T70** fame, as a replica Sebring race car on an "as new" MGCGT **Brown and Gammons** supplied bodyshell with fibreglass front wings, bonnet, tailgate, rear wheel arch extensions and alloy door skins. A full roll cage is fitted together with full harness seat belts, competition bucket seats and fire extinguisher. A full race engine was originally installed running on triple **Dellorto 48s** producing **255bhp**. Close-ratio all synchromesh straight-cut **Quaife gearbox** with overdrive and a **Quaife ATB limited-slip diff**. Rear Panhard rod fitted. Aluminium fuel tank. Vented front discs mated with callipers from a Jaguar V12. Legendary MG racer **Barry Siddery-Smith** raced the car at **Donnington Park** in 1994. Circa 2002/2003 engine rebuilt for current owner by **Vic Young** to fast road spec – 220bhp retaining full race internals but using a milder camshaft while retaining triple Dellorto carburettors.

The car GCD1 2131G was originally Mineral Blue and on the Abingdon production line from 22nd to 24th April 1968 before being despatched on the 26th to **Doves of Darlington, County Durham**.

Targa Rotorua Rally, May 2021

Back in May, the two-day tarmac **Targa Rotorua Rally** was held. **Special Stage 12** finished in Matai Road, just a couple of hundred metres from the Matai Road / Station Road intersection. As I live in Station Road, just inside the western town boundary of **Matamata**, I made the four-kilometre drive west in the **TF** to the intersection where I parked up to watch the cars come through after completing the stage. My brother Chris, who has been involved in rally administration for many years, was watching the progress of the competitors on his computer at home at Point Wells, north of Auckland. He and I exchanged many texts with stage time

updates from him, and me sending him the numbers of the cars as they came through my observation point. At one point on the stage, a competitor disappeared and I was able to let him know all was well when that particular entrant finally came past me. From where I was it was a touring stage to the service park at **Hobbiton** before the competitors set off on the rally's penultimate stage.

One of the quickest teams in the tarmac rally scene in this country is the **Martin Dippie / Jona Grant** combination in their **Porsche 991 GT3RS**. Martin and his brother **Allan** own a car collection in Dunedin and those of us who were on the 50th anniversary tour were very well looked after by Allan when he gave us a memorable tour of the collection. Included in this impressive line-up of vehicles is the Australian-built **replica** of the factory racing **MGCGTS, RMO**.



After watching quite a number of the competitors go through, I made my way to Hobbiton and took the opportunity to meet Martin and had a chat with him for a few minutes. Out of that conversation came an update on Allan's tractor collection, the scale of which is very, very impressive. Chris had sent me a text with Martin's stage time which was the second quickest at an **average speed of 131kph**. One of the roads used in that stage is Morgan Road, which I have driven a number of times, and even though its posted speed limit is 100kph, 80kph is more than quick enough for me with its narrowness, twists and turns, crests



and dips, so a 131kph average speed on that stage is absolutely mental and they must have been literally flying off a couple of the crests on that road. Fun stuff!!

photos: Porsche 991 GT3Rs at the Hobbiton service park and Allan Dippie's GTS. **Ian Grant**

A Trans-Tasman tale from Murray Kirkus

It was around mid-1982 when a friend offered to sell me his MGC. At the time I was no stranger to the MG marque having already owned a 1970 B roadster, three BGTs, a TF 1250 and, at that time, was driving a 1976 B roadster. I'd not owned the '76 roadster for long, however when the chance to obtain something as rare as the C was offered common sense prevailed and, with the deal completed, I was, fortunately, able to sell the B soon afterwards. I was residing in Hastings and used the C for everyday transport, making several trips to Wellington and Auckland over the following year or so.

Photo: **MGC, EE1709** at Awhitu, Manukau Heads, mid-1983. It was sold when I moved to Australia for work.

Of course, this all occurred almost 40 years ago and memories are somewhat hazy, but I cannot recall experiencing any mechanical problems with the car.

Following relocation to Auckland the C was relegated to car number two and as a consequence received much less use. About that time I planned to refurbish it and replace many of the rubber components which were showing signs



of age. I made a list of the required parts with intentions to send off an order to a UK supplier, however, an unexpected change in circumstance saw that idea abandoned and the car sold to a friend. Not long afterwards I crossed the "ditch" for employment and any thought of owning another MG was set aside.

Fast forward almost a decade and, having returned to New Zealand to work, I purchased another MG, this time 1972 Blaze BGT. However, my return home was temporary and again I was left with no option but to sell the MG before heading overseas once more. This time relocation was permanent, however, for practical reasons ownership of

another MG sports car was out of the question until about five years ago when I took the plunge and became the owner of a 1970 Australian built B roadster. By this time, getting a bit long in the tooth, I believed this could be my final MG however last year I had an opportunity to again get my hands on an MGC, another 1968 model, which by this time had become a much more sought-after car than they were when I bought the first one in 1982.

This latest C did not come without problems. After registering a change of ownership with the Queensland Road Transport Authority documentation was received indicating I'd bought a green, five-seat 1968 MG sedan and not a white C convertible as expected. This anomaly took some time to rectify and not before it was discovered that years earlier, during an ownership change, the body number had been substituted for the Vehicle Identification Number. In the meantime, the car was off the road due to the possibility of it being impounded for displaying incorrect number plates, or worse.

Since purchasing the C I've managed to obtain a



few details about its earlier history, although there is still much

which remains undiscovered. Armed with the VIN Barrie Cartmell was able to ascertain the car rolled off the production line on the 21st of June 1968 and after delivery to University Motors was exported in November the same year without having been registered in the UK. Barrie advises that it



"eventually ended up in Australia" however I've no idea if it went directly there or perhaps spent time in another country first. Photo: interior of **MGC, EB37** (that EB37 plate used to be on Murray's Hillman Hunter in NZ).

I received with the car an owner's handbook which I suspect is the car's original. A name entered on the first page is Michael J Scott next to the date 29 August 1968. I'm assuming Mr Scott was the car's first owner. The registration plate on the handbook cover has been altered to read AEF693 - this may have been its first Australian, possibly Queensland registration identity. I've since ascertained that in 1988 it was registered in Queensland, owned by Mr K Potter and registered 359NUY, later it wore the plate MGC67, however I know nothing else about the car. If it did come to Australia as a new car then it may be the third new MGC exported to the country and unaccounted for as alluded to in MGCC newsletters #14 and #15.

Of course, if anyone reading this can shed additional light on the car's past I'll be delighted to receive the details.

Murray Kirkus

Tom Boscarino's induction into the British Sportscar Hall of Fame



Back in our **August 2019 Newsletter**, we reported that the Spring 2019 edition of 'C' Notes, the official publication of the American MGC Register, announced **Tom Boscarino** had been elected posthumously for induction to the **British Sports Car Hall of Fame**.

The ceremony was to have taken place some time ago but Covid-19 interfered and caused this to be postponed. Finally, Tom's honour was bestowed on him on the 5th of June during the **AMGCRA (American MGC Register Association)** 41st anniversary event in Petersburg, Virginia. More than forty of his friends, members of AMGCRA, were in the Hall of Fame with Tom's wife Arlene and son Tom for the

warm and beautiful ceremony. Tom passed away in 2016, a year before the MGC's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Tom's wife **Arlene** wrote the following piece which we reproduce with the kind permission of the AMGCRA: **Tom Boscarino** was a man with many interests and hobbies. He enjoyed researching ancestors and photography. He collected coins, stamps, model MG cars and numerous other items and he saved everything. I even found in his desk the little slip of paper I gave him with my telephone number on the night we met in 1968.

In 1975 he told me he wanted to pursue a new hobby. He wanted to restore one of those cute little MGs from the '50s with the donut wheel at the back. Little did I realise to what this would lead. I could not believe my eyes when he pulled up in front of the house towing this rolling chassis filled with doors, fenders and pieces of I don't know what. But he started from the bottom up, even engaging me to help move the chassis out from the garage into the yard so he could sandblast. He wanted this car to be original, like new, and he researched and searched for all the right parts. He did all the mechanical work. It turned out to be a beautiful and prize-winning car. That 1953 beautiful, red **MGTD** was only the beginning of many projects to come.

Tom restored two **MGTDs** and two **MGYTs**. In the late-1970s he acquired his beloved 1968 Sandy Beige **MGC**. There was limited production of this six-cylinder sports car made in 1967-1969. Unlike the **New England MG 'T' Register** and the **North American MGB Register**, there was not much technical information, owner support and parts availability. So, in 1980, Tom started the **American MGC Register**. It was a one-man operation, gathering technical articles, tips and information, typing, editing, copying, collating and mailing. It was the beginning of MGC meets across the United States, Canada, and even to the United Kingdom for the 25th anniversary of the MGC, and also the beginning of many wonderful and lasting friendships.

For many years, Tom was an active member of the New England MG 'T' Register and the American MGB Register. He was a key organizer and founder of the **North American Council of MG Registers**. This multi-

council was organised to coordinate activities and host events every five years. Tom was the registrar and treasurer of the first event in 1996 which took place at the **Indianapolis Motor Speedway**. There were over 1,500 MGs and 3,000 attendees.

In 2002, Tom was presented with the MG Drivers' Club's **Cecil Kimber Enthusiast Award** for his chairmanship of the American MGC Register and his role in "**International MG Indy '96**". The North American MGB Register presented him with the **John Thornley MG Spirit Trophy**. Tom was a leading voice in the American MG community.

After twenty years as chairman of the American MGC Register, Tom stepped down, but not without leaving it in the hands of two very capable members. Keith Sanders took the reins for several years and in 2012 Richard Stephenson stepped in and the AMGCRA has been continuing in the tradition of its founder. I know Tom would be proud that his legacy continues. **Arlene Boscarino**



and finallyHOONING!

Hooning is nothing new, this form of "boy racer styled" driving has been in existence for years. In fact, I'm sure it existed long before a young man named **Cecil Kimber** created a two-seater bodied special turning it into the "so-called" every man's sports car. **New Zealand** is not, of course, the exclusive domain of hoons, they exist all over the world including the streets of **London**.

Let me take you back to the **1960s** when London was just the place to sharpen the hooning skills of twin brothers **Michael** and **Peter Dunlop** (photo 1992).



Michael had an **Austin Healey 100** aptly named **Monster**. This 2-litre four, three-speed classic was purchased for the princely sum of £150 and I owned an Old English White 1500cc **MGA** priced at £130. The **A** was my first real sports car, after a **Super Two Ford Special**, and I loved it unconditionally, even if it wasn't exactly in showroom condition, sporting large sheets of aluminium pop-riveted to both front guards and subsequently painted in Jaguar midnight blue. The Healey's body panels were better but mechanically the cars were very similar with oil leaking from most gaskets. The Healey also had, loose or



broken wire spokes in the back wheels, a broken rear leaf spring, knackered front shocks and a seriously worn steering box, all of which added to the challenge of driving at speed. London roads on a Sunday morning were generally quiet and thought, by both brothers, to be perfect for a bit of hooning. Firstly the cars were washed, plugs cleaned, tyres kicked, oil dipped and anything about to fall off refastened. There were also Rules, these events were more than just aimlessly hooning about, it was serious stuff.

Rules: (1) Each driver must drive as fast as possible at all times. (2) If one driver is delayed by traffic lights or similarly unavoidable inconvenience, the other must wait until that driver was alongside (door to door) before returning to racing speeds. **Route:** Depart **Twickenhall Rugby** ground and head up the **Chertsey Road** (A3) to London. This took you over the **River Thames** at Twickenham and again at **Chiswick** and on to the **Great West Road**. Then up and over the **Hammersmith** flyover, along the **Cromwell Road** passing the **Natural History Museum**, the **V&A** and **Harrods**. At **Hyde Park Corner** we took a right down **Constitution Hill** to **Buckingham Palace**, left up **The Mall**, under **Admiralty Arch**, around **Trafalgar Square**, and then without stopping, foot hard down for home. Luckily, most of this 22-mile (35km) round trip was on dual carriage-ways enabling frequent overtaking. This was serious stuff with any holding back seen as unsporting and severely frowned on.



Needless to say, we would arrive back home with hands shaking and hearts beating so fast it was difficult to sit still for Sunday lunch, lovingly prepared by our unsuspecting mother.....Happy Days! **Peter Dunlop**

Drive safely and enjoy, C-ing is believing...

Ian Grant & Peter Dunlop



Register Website

Go to: www.mgclub.org.nz

Click on "Information",

Then click on the word "Registers",

Then click on "MGC Register" and you are there!

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Your MGC Register Team

left to right, Peter & Raewyn, Ian, Jane & Harvey

NB: No calls after 9 pm, 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.

Cars for Sale

Jock Burridge's MGCGT

1968 MGCGT, New Zealand-new, White

Asking price: \$42,000

Please contact Jock Burridge on (mob) 027 2860897.



General Information:

Another MGC has come on the market due to its owner reducing his vehicle collection. This particular MGCGT came off the assembly line on 2nd May 1968 and was despatched to New Zealand two weeks later. It was one of twenty GTs that were new to this country and was the only one of the thirty NZ-new cars that had an automatic transmission. The car had several owners including dealers up until 1994 where it remained in the same ownership until the current owner purchased it in 2018. During that long 24-year ownership the car was subjected to a major makeover, carried out by The Surgery in Wellington, covering 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 the major makeover. The current owner has had some work done recently including a re-padded roof lining, carpets and under-bonnet fuel lines. The current odometer reading is just over 173,000 miles. This was one of the MGCs that was on the 50th-anniversary tour around the South Island and performed faultlessly and is located in the top half of the South Island.

“Harvey Heath’s Spares Emporium”

Harvey's rebuilt MGC water pumps

I have a number of repair kits in stock and can offer **EXCHANGE WATER PUMPS**



with new bearings and seals fitted for the princely sum of **\$70.00** plus post and packaging.

For more information please contact:

Home: 09 8342552; Mobile: 021 1721033;

E-mail: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com

Harvey's MGC king pin service

I can now offer a service of fitting, reaming and setting up the king pin end float.

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 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: \$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 required and the total price.

home: 09 8342552; mobile: 021 1721033

e-mail: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com



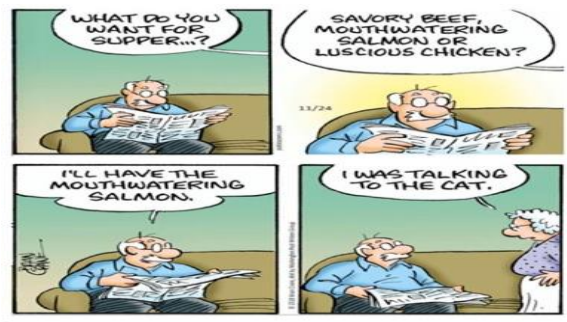
Joke Gallery

We have Winston Churchill and John Vevers to thank for these gems:

"Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak".

"Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street...with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy".

"Behind every successful man is his woman. Behind the fall of a successful man is usually another woman".



Two guys grow up together, but after college one moves to **New York** and the other to **Washington**. They agree to meet every ten years in Florida to play golf and catch up.

At age **32** they meet, finish their round of golf and head for lunch.

"Where you wanna go?" **"Hooters"** "Why Hooters?"

"They have those servers with the big boobs, the tight shorts and the gorgeous legs."

"You're on."

At age **42**, they meet and play golf again

"Where you wanna go for lunch?" **"Hooters"** "Again? Why?"

"They have cold beer, big-screen TVs, and side action on the games." "OK."

At age **52** they meet and play again.

"So where you wanna go for lunch?" **"Hooters"** "Why?"

"The food is pretty good and there's plenty of parking." "OK."

At age **62** they meet again. After a round of golf, one says, "Where you wanna go?"

"Hooters" "Why?" "Wings are half price and the food isn't too spicy."

"Good choice."

At age **72** they meet again. Once again, after a round of golf, one says,

"Where shall we go for lunch?" **"Hooters"** "Why?"

"They have six handicapped parking spaces right by the door and they have senior discounts."

"Great choice."

At age **82** they meet and play again. "Where should we go for lunch?" **"Hooters"**

"Why?" "Because we've never been there before."

"Okay, let's give it a try."

