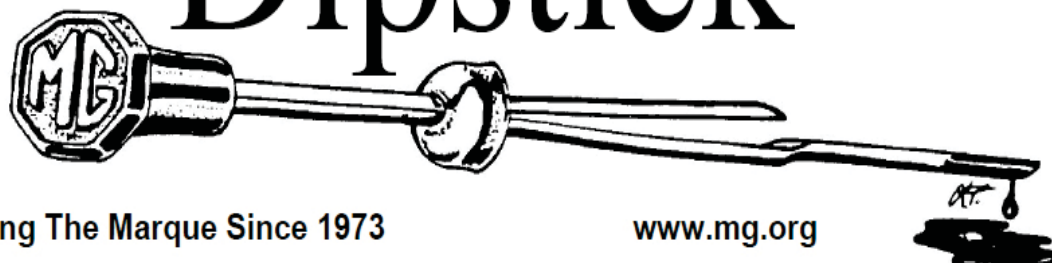




The Dipstick



Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

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Marque Time



Is your MG reliable? Someone once said that MG stands for “Might Go” and not really Morris Garages as we have been led to believe. An even snarkier (is that a word?) comment was made by a person who suggested that the MG logo is shaped like a stop sign for good reason. He must have driven a Triumph.

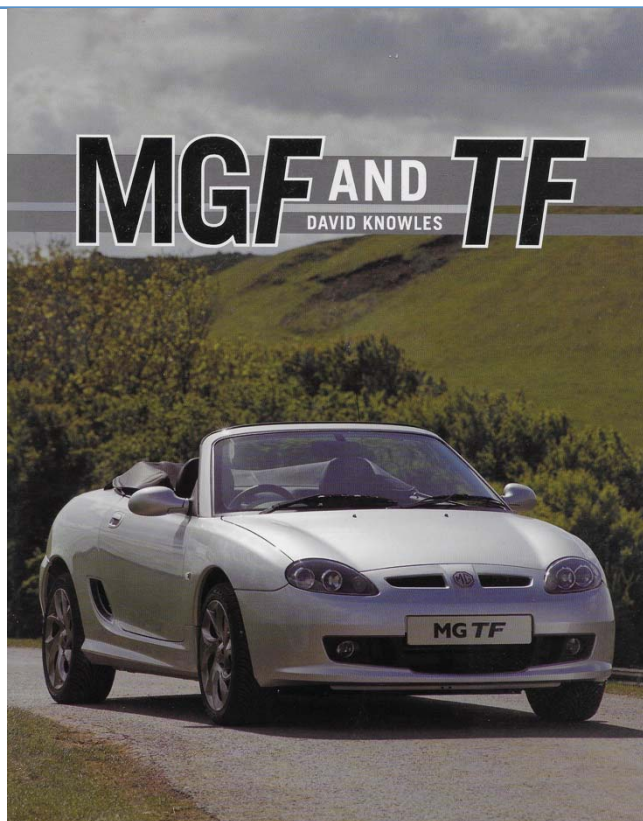
My own experiences have shown my MGB to have been quite reliable. In addition to the various drives, including Alan and Beckey’s Spring Tours and Tad’s Famous Fall Drives into North Carolina and Maryland, I have also taken mine to upstate New York 3 times, which is an 1100 mile round trip. Aside from an occasional flat tire, I have been able to make each trip without being towed. Not bad for a car that was made in the same year that The Beatles released *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* and *The Carol Burnett Show* premiered on CBS.

No matter what your own experience might be, I think that we are all ready to get back out in 2021. The strain of being cooped up for so long is starting to get to me. So I went to see a psychiatrist. He told me I was crazy, so I said I wanted a second opinion. He said “*Okay, you’re ugly too.*”

Yes, I may have used that one before, but it still had a few miles on the tread.

But I’ll stop now. Until next month...

Safety Fast,
Robert



Book Review - MGF AND TF

by David Knowles

reviewed by Mike Haag

The front cover of the August 2020 issue of *Classic & Sports Car* magazine proclaimed that the MGF was the classic car world's biggest bargain. They go on to say "MG's last sports car has the potential to be a great classic – and has been overlooked for so long that there are plenty of bargains to be found and fun to be had". Maybe for the rest of the classic car world but unfortunately, not quite yet for us. Granted, the MGF officially went on sale in September 1995, but looking for these very early models recently revealed none for sale. The 1996 models, now legal to import, and later models in the future are much more prevalent. If you are interested in buying one of these "modern" MGs or just want to learn more about them, I recommend reading the book *MGF AND TF* by author David Knowles. Sure, there is a lot of information about the MGF one can find on the internet, but this book provides a very thorough discussion on the creation, development, and production of this new sports car. In addition to the many photos and much detailed background information, the book also provides a history of the MG brand from after Abingdon until the fateful day in 2005 when MG Rover went bust and its later acquisition by the Chinese.

Mark Jones, NAMGBR Post Abingdon Registrar, also reviewed this book in the Nov/Dec 2016 issue of *MG Driver*. I purchased my copy a few months ago on Amazon for \$18 used but in brand new condition. Well worth it if you want to learn more about this car and period in MG history.

As an aside, at one of the past NAMGBR conventions I won a poster of a red MGF Super Sports alongside an MG K3 Magnette on a race track somewhere and had no idea about the background of the picture. In the book I learned that this picture was taken at Donington Park as part of a promotional photo shoot and the MGF Super Sport was being driven by David Woodhouse, the lead engineer for the MGF. I have since had the poster framed and it is now hanging in my garage "art gallery".

Activities Report

Here's wishing everyone a happy and safe holiday... because there's not much going on in terms of MG activities. Mike Haag and officers have been diligently working on the calendar for 2021, with most things "TBA" due to the shifting Covid-19 restrictions. Finding venues that won't be already at maximum head count before we show up is tough, and the winter temps necessitate finding locations that have indoor accommodations. A couple of breweries are possibilities for meetings, and announcements will be made as we get closer to the date.

The botanical gardens had lights for Holiday Lights Drive, but apparently few people ventured out to see them on the 15th. Richard Hildreth emailed that he went to Franco's for the drive, but did not see any other MGs there. I've had anecdotal communication from people making MG day trips or errand runs, and that's about the sum of what's going on. The next potential major event would be the TRAACA swap meet in March, but that's still uncertain.

This is a good time of year to do a little preventative maintenance if you have the opportunity. Making sure the rear brakes are properly adjusted is important because that insures that your parking handbrake will actuate and hold the vehicle on a slope. There's a great John Twist video on rear brakes that can be had by Googling "MGB (or whatever model you have) rear brake adjustment". The adjustment can be done with the wheel on the car and will make sure you're ready when you get back on the road. The vaccine and warmer weather will be here before you know it! Safety Fast!

Bruce Easley

TMGC Calendar As of Jan 2021

Local TMGC events for 2021 are TBA at this time due to the Covid-19 situation.

Jan 5 (Tue) – Meeting cancelled

Feb 3 (Wed) – Meeting TBA

Mar 2 (Tue) – Meeting TBA

Mar ? (Sat) – TRAACA Swap Meet, tentative

Apr 7 (Wed) – Meeting TBA

Apr ? – Spring Tech Session (TBA)

Apr 24 - (tentative) Williamsburg Club Car Show

Apr 30 - May 2 – Mini-GOF
Founders' Inn, Virginia Beach

Apr 30 – May 2 – TMGC Spring Tour (TBA)

May ?? (Sat) – Drive your MGA Day

May 4 (Tue) – Tentative meeting, hosted by Cynthia & Andy, 545 Mayflower Road, Norfolk, VA

May 26 (Wed) – Peninsula Dessert Drive (tentative)

May 27 (Thu) – Southside Dessert Drive (tentative)



From the Watson's:
Solve this JUMBLE:

E P U B M R P R C O

(Two words)

(answer on last page)



Credits to "Jumble" by David L. Hoyt and
Jeff Knurek

TMGC Officers and Committees

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Vice President
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Historian
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Vacant
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Mark and Kathy Davidoski
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Mike Haag
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MGB LE Bronze Metallic

Article and images provided By Chuck Hassler

My originally Black North American specification 1980 MGB Limited Edition (LE), VIN 508549, has been converted to show as a British Bronze Metallic MGB LE. Here's a little history that led to the decision to proceed with the conversion.

The last 1000 MGB cars (approximately) were produced as Limited Editions for "Home Market Only", not for export. The production run was split between 421 MGB roadsters and 579 MGB GT coupes. The roadsters all came in Bronze Metallic paint with gold side stripes while the GT coupes had Pewter Metallic paint with silver side stripes. Painted wire wheels were fitted to 208 roadsters, and 213 roadsters were fitted with the same GKN alloy wheels that were fitted to all Home Market Pewter Metallic MGB GT cars and to the 6,682 Black North American market MGB LE roadsters.

The interiors were largely the same as normal production cars except the roadster seat covers were orange and brown deck chair nylon fabric, and the GT seat covers were silver and black deck chair nylon fabric. The roadster steering wheel badge, nose badge, and alloy wheel hubcaps were red back-ground with silver letters. However, the boot badge was black background with silver letters. The Pewter Metallic GT cars had black background with silver letters for all badging. The British cars were, of course, right hand drive.

Except for pictures, I had not seen a Home Market Bronze Metallic MGB LE. My black LE was in great need of a respray, which prompted me to consider converting the black LE to Home Market LE colors. Naturally, there was some hesitation to proceed with this color change. However, Tidewater MG Car Club members in Virginia, who had seen Bronze Metallic LE roadsters in Great Britain, said that the Bronze Metallic color was stunning. They encouraged me to proceed with the project.



Any hesitation on my part was overcome when I located and purchased a new, still in Rover packaging, set of orange and brown deck chair nylon seat covers in Australia. The seller said that this was “probably the last new set of these seat covers on the planet”. The engine bay, interior, and trunk were completely stripped bare and the paint conversion began. The conversion, interrupted by a move from Virginia to Colorado, took almost two years. My Virginia friends were correct; Bronze Metallic is a stunning color.

Moss Motors deserves recognition for providing the gold side stripes, red and silver badging, and most important, for rebuilding the orange and brown nylon seat covers. The foam between the seat cover fabric layers had melted after sitting on a shelf for 25 years in the Australian heat. Jenny, the Moss Motors upholstery manager, personally rebuilt the seat covers. Great service that is much appreciated!

The Bronze Metallic LE creates a lot of interest at car shows, and that was the purpose of the color conversion. MG enthusiasts appreciate the opportunity to see a color combination not imported to North America. There was, however, one negative comment at a car show. Two young boys, about ten years old, walked by and one of them said “Dude, that’s a beautiful car, but you gotta ditch those seat covers”.

Now, if I could just find the garage space to convert a 74 1/2 North American rubber bumper MGB GT to the Pewter Metallic color...



More on MG Collectibles

By Terry Bond

This month we will continue looking at MG Collectibles. Although the focus is on our LBC (Little British Cars), I'm sure you realize that no matter what kind of car(s) you consider your favorite, there are a lot of collectible items out there to enjoy and help bring your hobby in out of the garage. These items cross over into so many areas, and this part in my MG series will focus on "objects of art."

First on the list is what I refer to as "wall hangers." These are the numerous posters, prints, signs, and items you can hang on the wall. Whether you professionally mat and frame them doesn't matter, although admittedly, a nice frame does enhance many of them.

Prints, even those in limited edition, have been around a long time. This wonderful print of an MG TC perfectly matches Richard Hall's Red car and fits nicely into his collection. It is signed and numbered and is very well done.



One of our favorites is a signed, numbered print by Kevin Walsh, a noted British illustrator whose work has been featured on greeting cards, posters and even mouse –pads! He is perhaps better known for his wonderful illustrations of early aircraft, but his automobile prints are exquisite and filled with great objects and wonderful detail. Having one that is autographed by the artist is a great addition to Susan's collection and has pride of place in our living room.



High on our want list is “The MG Girl” used on the cover of Autocar Magazine in 1932. This portrait of a pretty lady driving an early MG was done by famed artist F. Gordon Crosby, whose racing scenes are well known. Even a magazine cover would please us, but the original and perhaps some individually produced lithographs must still be out there somewhere.



Next is a rather interesting piece of art – it is a lithograph showing legendary artist F. Gordon Crosby sketching an MG in a garage, filled with great stuff-old oil cans, tools, etc. Computer imagery was used by noted filmmaker David Shelburne to create this scene. Many of the objects inserted into the work are actually photo-shopped artfully into the scene so they blend in with the right perspective, shading, coloring, etc. These prints have been sold in the last few years, advertised in MG Club publications. The one Susan has is numbered 16 in the series. The sense of actually being in the garage watching someone work on their car is amazing and worthy of hanging in a prime location to be enjoyed by all.



Another real prize in Susan's collection is this signed, numbered collage showing “old Number One,” the first MG, and the last MG produced in 1980. In addition to the artist signature, it was signed specifically for Susan by Don Hayter, designer of the MGBGT, who we met at a large National MG Club event in Gatlinburg, TN several years ago. I can still sense the emotion he must have felt seeing hundreds of his cars on display – cars that were never intended to last or be collected and cherished to the extent they are today.



Another category of art has to be sculpture. There are a few great MG related sculptures known to exist, and one of the most popular, and perhaps easiest to find, is this great metal piece called "Taking the Curve." These were produced in a limited edition in cast pewter by the Franklin Mint in 1978 as a commemorative piece for the Sports Car Club of America. They have not been reproduced but are not difficult to find at \$125 or less. Just inspect carefully for signs of damage such as a broken windshield frame or missing knock-off hub caps. They are clearly marked on the bottom and the sculptor's signature is prominently displayed.



A much rarer but similar sculpture was done in bronze by sculptor Chris Davis sometime in the early 1970s. Only 100 were produced and we are fortunate to have number two in the edition. They are very difficult to find as it appeals to not only MG lovers but automobilia collectors in general.

What is surely a one-off is this wonderful contemporary ceramic piece Susan acquired at Hershey a couple of years ago. It is a sculpture of someone working on their MG (happens all the time I hear). Obviously hand crafted, it is nicely glazed and a really cute piece of artwork, although it is unsigned.



Art takes on many forms and is done in all media. Collectibles of all kinds can help decorate your home and garage, so whether it is exquisitely hand-crafted models, bronze sculpture, framed artwork, signs, banners, tools or equipment, anything related to your car can enhance your enjoyment of this great hobby, and, it doesn't need to be old to be great and enjoyed.

Happy Collecting! Terry



January meeting cancelled due to the Covid-19 situation!

Look for updates on the club website. For now, have a...



Jumble answer: "Bumper Crop"



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