

Thumbs Up!!



Spring Edition

Official



September 2022

Newsletter



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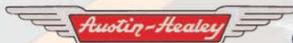
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I would like to thank all those who contributed articles for inclusion in this issue of "Thumbs Up". It makes my job so much easier. I would also like to thank Kevin Loader for always being on hand and supplying me with the great photo collages of the various Johannesburg / Northern Centre's events.

Editor Colin Black

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The Johannesburg Centre of the MG Car Club has been in continuous existence since its formation in May 1969 and is affiliated to the MG Car Club Abingdon- on- Thames England.

The club meet for a monthly "Noggin and Natter" on the first Saturday of every month at the Vintage and Veteran Club Sascoc, Athol Oaklands road, Abbotsford at 14h00.

The Noggin and Natter usually is a "bring and braai" function and support of our hosts bar is encouraged. An event encompassing a run in our prized MG's to a place of interest usually follows the following Sunday (second Sunday of the month).

The banking details are: **MGCC Standard Bank Rosebank Branch code 004305**

Entry forms are available on the club website www.mgcc.co.za or from the secretary/Treasurer. The 2022 membership fees are: R330 for a single applicant. R420 for a family membership, payable by 31st December each year. Remember to include your name when making your deposit.

Indemnity

All members, spouses, partners and participating family and friends are required to sign an indemnity form.

Any views, comments or opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of the MGCC Johannesburg Centre or the committee. Availability, condition and veracity of items advertised for sale are not guaranteed by this club or the committee. Whilst every care is taken in compiling the content including any advertising in the magazine, this Club, committee, officials and representatives assume no responsibility whatsoever for any effects arising therefrom.

Editorial



So I got to thinking about new models the other day after featuring the new MG GT in the winter edition of “Thumbs Up”. As we all know the modern MG is built in China. The factory has to build these new modern vehicles to a standard of quality in order to compete in an extremely closely contested market.

In China alone the new MG’s need to be equal to or better than it’s rivals, the likes of Haval-GWM, Chery, BAIC (pronounced) “Bike” as well as the vehicles produced in India (Mahindra) and South Korea (Hyundai and Kia) etc., and of course there are also the more established brands coming out of the USA and Europe (too many to mention) to compete with.

It is my humble opinion (after visiting and checking out new models recently) especially of Chinese origin that the new MG GT or any of their products for that matter currently marketed and sold in other regions of the world would hold their own against rival Chinese brands in South Africa as I’m sure the quality will be on a par.

Sadly though, MG is absent from competing in the South African market currently and to my thinking leaves a certain void. I believe that there are (probably and with a fair amount of certainty) a die-hard group of motorists out there, that given the opportunity would visit an MG showroom to have a peek at a new MG. I know I would. Given the increasing popularity and corresponding numbers of Chinese built Haval-GWM and Chery vehicles which are making some serious in-roads in the thinking of the buying public and hence the increasing numbers on our road network MG would certainly hold their own.

Who knows, Maybe the famous and sorely missed octagon encompassing the letters M and G will once again grace our increasingly congested and pot-holed roads sometime in the future. At least the returning MG presence would put a dent in the sales of these other Chinese, Indian and Korean brands.

A second positive spin-off would possibly and hopefully be the introduction of new MG owners who could join any one of the MG centres around our beautiful country and swell the dwindling membership numbers thereby **“maintaining the breed”**

Until next time.

Colin

Chairman's Chirp

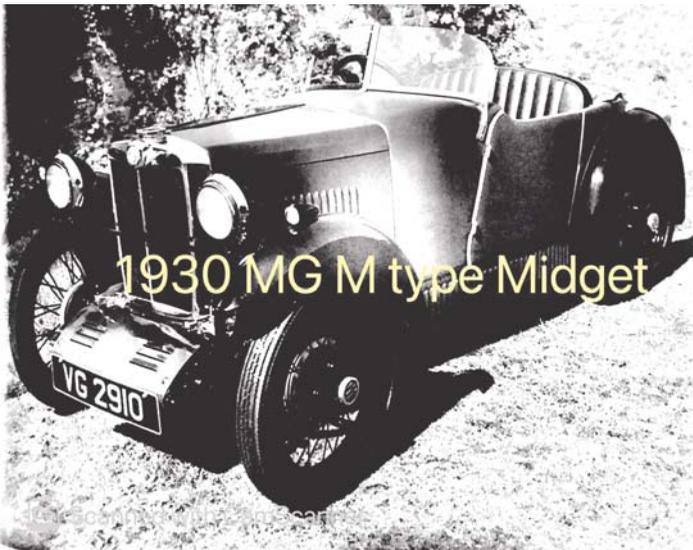


As you may or may not know I started owning an MG relatively late in life. My motivation for owning one was purely aesthetic. I really just love the look of these machines and I love driving my MGB GT around. So as chairman, with no technical or great historical knowledge of MGs to contribute, I asked myself at the start of the year what could I do for the club? I decided that probably the best thing to do was to create opportunities to get the cars out regularly on runs. So this year, I am glad to say, has seen quite a few events that have got our MGs on the road. This included the Northerns Showday. It was a great success and congratulations to Robin and his committee. The highlight had to be the arrival of Rajesh's hand-built masterpiece. Congratulations Rajesh, you produced a beautiful and elegant car. I'm sure the whole club will join me in wishing you many, many happy motoring miles with it. We had many other Johannesburg club cars at the showday and thank you to everyone who turned up to make the event such a great success and well done to our prize winners.

For the rest of the year, I encourage everyone to keep attending the Noggins and runs. To note, there are plans for an October overnight run so please look out and support that. Let me know if you have any ideas for Noggins, run venues or other activities.

Wishing everyone well.

Jonathan Burke



Some Great racing drivers and their MG experiences

Tazio Nuvolari

In 1933 the "flying Mantuan" had a set to with Enzo Ferrari and left the Alfa Romeo team to join Maserati where he was offered more money. He also travelled to Northern Ireland to participate in the Tourist Trophy (TT) where he drove a supercharged MG K3 Magnette. Nuvolari saw the MG for the first time after breakfast, during practice.

The Wilson gear box operating principles were explained to him in gestures, as no one present could speak Italian and English was not understood by him. A few minutes later accompanied by Alec Hounslow - an MG mechanic, Nuvolari set off. By mid-morning after using eight sets of tyres, Nuvolari ended his practice with the knowledge and complete understanding of the MG K3.

After having dominated the entire race someone asked him what his opinion was of the MG's brakes? Nuvolari answered that "I had no idea? As the car was so slow, I had no need to use them"!

The next morning an English newspaper headline read "The Magician and the MG" and from then on, he was referred to as the "wizard"

Phillip Toll "Phil" Hill Jr.

Phil Hill studied business administration at university, but his fascination for motor cars finally found him working as a mechanic, and proud owner of an MG TD which at the time was the prize of every young Californian male.

He drove the car to his first race win at Carrell Speedway. Los Angeles in 1948 and the following year found him in England, studying in the service departments of SU Carburettors, Jaguar and Rolls Royce

Denis Clive "Denny" Hulme

Denny was born on a small dairy farm in the tobacco growing region of Motueka New Zealand. His father Clive bought a small trucking business in the seaside village of Pongakawa, just outside the township of Te Puke. There Denny grew up with the sun, the sea, and the guts of trucks, and in his late teens he was enthralled by a chance drive in an MG TF. He put so much work in the business that his father bought him a new TF as a gift.

When some friends prompted him into showing it off he tried a club hill climb and knocked six seconds off the class record. From that point on there was no turning back.

For 1958 he raced an MGA.

Sir Stirling Crauford Moss

Stirling Moss took the 1500cc flying mile speed record in 1957 at a speed of 245, 6 miles per hour (more than four miles a minute) roughly 394 KPH in an MG code named EX181. The twin cam engine which became available in road legal MGA's shortly afterwards.

(EX 181 is illustrated on the cover -Ed,)

Wanted/For Sale

Colin Black would like to swop an almost new obsolete MG mask (post covid 19) for one good condition rostyle wheel to fit his MGB tourer. (just joking about the mask) but serious about getting a rostyle wheel. Please contact Colin if anyone is able to help.



1960 MGA coupe fitted with a 1622cc engine. Ground up restoration. Price negotiable. Contact Alex Couling 083 653 8875.



1958 MGA for Sale. Owner relocating. Asking in the region of R375K. Contact Richard on 082 650 2079 for further details.



Man & The Motor Car: a lasting love affair

“They were strolling along the high road easily, when far behind them they heard a faint warning hum, like the drone of a distant bee. Glancing back, they saw a small cloud of dust, with a dark centre of energy, advancing on them at incredible speed, while from out of the dust a faint ‘poop-poop!’ wailed like an uneasy animal in pain. Hardly regarding it, they turned to resume their conversation, when in an instant (as it seemed) the peaceful scene was changed, and with a blast of wind and a whirl of sound that made them jump for the nearest ditch, it was on them! The ‘Poop-poop’ rang with a brazen shout in their ears, they had a moment’s glimpse of an interior of glittering plate glass and rich morocco, and the magnificent motor-car, immense, breath-snatching, passionate, and with its pilot tense and hugging his wheel, possessed all earth and air for the fraction of a second, flung an enveloping cloud of dust that blinded and enwrapped them utterly, and then dwindled to a speck in the far distance, changed back into a droning bee once more

“Toad sat straight down in the middle of the dusty road, his legs stretched out before him, and stared fixedly in the direction of the disappearing motor-car. He breathed short, his face wore a placid satisfied expression, and at intervals he faintly murmured “Poop-poop!’ . . . “Glorious, stirring sight!’ murmured Toad, never offering to move. ‘The poetry of motion! The *real* way to travel! The *only* way to travel! Here to-day - in next week to-morrow! Villages skipped, towns and cities jumped-always somebody else’s horizon! O bliss! O poop-poop! O my! O my!”

The desire to reach out and stroke the smooth and gleaming flanks; the shiver of coming delight when the loved one is first heard, far away over the empty landscape, a high and plaintive wail; the smell - oh! the smell - of final intimacy. Some people feel this way about steam locomotives, but the railway engine is a distant creature, with a haughty snort and a habit of going its own permanent way.

Few of us could (or would want to) keep a locomotive in a shed in the garden. But the kindly, docile motor car is there, part of the home, part of the family, always willing to take us into her enveloping womb and carry us into another world. More than a wife, much more than a mistress, the motor car combines passion with domesticity. In seconds, her voice can rise from a murmur to a mighty roar: panting for air, pistons pounding, rumbling and shuddering, hardly under control . . . who can resist her charms?

And yet, after a hundred years, the motor car is dying. Slowly starving, filthy in her habits, weakened beyond recovery by over-population, doomed like a dinosaur to extinction. Soon the motor car will be nothing but a museum piece, impotence on four wheels. But the memories linger on.

The names, first. How can these simple sounds evoke such pictures in the mind? MG, Frazer-Nash, Alfa Romeo, Morgan, Bugatti, Jaguar - are these the words of romance?

Could any man in his senses be moved by the names of Rolls and Royce, de Dion and Bouton . . . *Oldsmobile*? Yet still the words come crowding in: roadster, drophead coupe, supercharger, differential, Citroen, Duesenberg, Weymann fabric all-weather body, twin overhead camshaft, Le Mans, Brooklands - ah, Brooklands . . .

The noise. The mutter of the Speed Six Bentley; the chitty-chitty and the bang-bang that heralded the intrepid Count Zborowski; the whir of the electric Brougham and the twinkle of the chain-drive Trojan; and the tortured wail of the JPS in full flight. And the more homely sounds. Cold mornings, with the stuttering shriek of the ineffectual starter motor, and the insidious splutter of that cobweb of discharge over a misted distributor cap.

Not to mention the smells. National Benzole. And Castrol. And piled tyres hot under a sunny glass roof, at the back of a garage somewhere along the Great West Road. And leather, which went the way of all flesh.

For this is the story of our century, this is the story of our love. The motor car, fickle and wayward, a lethal weapon what will turn in the hands of its owner and kill him - the motor car is ours. Many have died in her service, not just the pioneers and the racing drivers but anonymous millions of men and women and children, and still her fascination is unweakened. A muddled inefficient tangle of wood and metal, plastic and wire, on four wheels motionless in the traffic jam of the world, and oh! how we love her.

With the acknowledgments to Brian Innes' article from "the World of Automobiles"

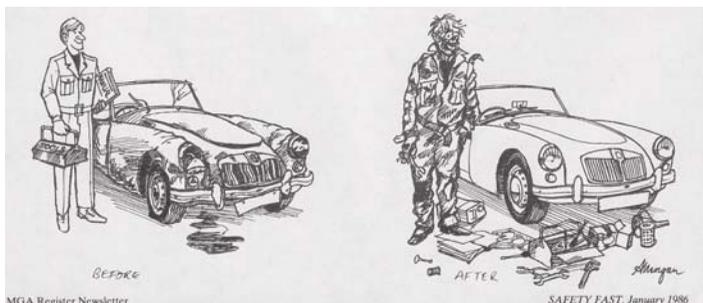
And a little humour.....

Whilst watching the cricket the other night my wife and I were discussing life and death.

I told her, "Just so you know, I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and relying on fluids from a bottle.

If that ever happens, just pull the plug. She promptly got up unplugged the TV and threw out all my beer.

Some days I hate being married to a smart women.



MGA Register Newsletter

SAFETY FAST, January 1986

The Wide World of Car Camaraderie, Part 2

Memories are the signposts of our lives.2

by Bob Vitrikas

The Ewings returned safely home to Johannesburg in 1971, but their appetite was whetted for more MG trips to come. Some, but not all, follow on trips included:

-1980: Norm took 36 South African MG enthusiasts on the Jack Armstrong organised "Tour of Britain" which included the historic (1928-36) 13.5 mile Ards race circuit which was run on public roads in Northern Ireland, not the best timing for a tour of the turbulent and dangerous Irish countryside! The "Tour of Britain" was preceded by a trip to Holland to celebrate the Dutch MG Club's 25th anniversary.

- 1982: Norm again organised an around the world tour called "The Great MG World Trek". During a stop in Florida, over 400 MG enthusiasts from as far away as Washington and California joined the World Trekkers to celebrate the occasion!

-1984: A trip to the U.S. where international racing great, Count Giovanni "Johnny" Lurani was the Guest of Honour at a New England MG T Register Gathering of the Faithful. Lurani drove and won races with Alfa Romeo, Maserati, MG, Austin-Healey and Porsche. He drove the treacherous Mille Miglia race 11 times posting three class wins: first in an MG K3 in 1933, an Austin-Healey in 1948 and in a Porsche in 1952. In 1987 Norm stayed with

Johnny at his home in St. Moritz, Switzerland while organising Jean Kimber Cook's 1988 World Tour to commemorate her father's 100th birthday. Her father, Cecil Kimber, is celebrated as the "Father of the MG".

-1986: Norm participated in the New England T Register Ocean-to-Ocean Tourist Trophy tour, celebrating 50 years of the MG T series. A group of 50 MGs drove from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back again in just 18 days!

Here's a fun story about how the OOTTT tour got its name. During discussions in 1984 among T-Register stalwarts Dick Knudson, Hank Rippert and Norm about the idea of a coast-to-coast tour, Norm suggested they name it the Ocean-to-Ocean after an ultra marathon (the two-oceans) in Cape Town by the same name. The T Register tacked on "T Tourist Trophy" and it was done! Norm insisted that if he was to come it needed to cross from Atlantic to Pacific and back again so he could fly home.

And so it was and Norm flew back from South Africa with two of his mates and co-drove Gary Hite's TC after Gary's passenger, terrified at having to drive a right hand drive car, packed his bags and left the starting line hotel at 5am .



Jane, Norm, Sarah and Pat enjoy a stop at Niagara Falls during the 1982 world tour.



Dick and Ann Knudson in their beloved 1948 MG TC on another road adventure in England.

- After the OOTTT, 92 overseas guests attended the 1986 MG Indaba (national MG gathering) to celebrate the Centenary of Johannesburg. Guests included American Formula 1 World Driving Champion Phil Hill and family, MG Competitions department veteran Henry Stone and his wife Winnie, MG publicity manager and BMC's export director George Tuck and his wife Susan, and 48 intrepid New England MG T Register Members.

- At the banquet Phil Hill and George Tuck gave beautiful speeches. These were followed by a presentation by American Walt Genter. Walt was deaf so his daughter and Bernie Stellman assisted in the presentation of a beautiful SU Carb table lamp, which Walt had made on behalf of the American delegation, as a thank you gift to Norm for his efforts on behalf of the New England MG T Register. The audience were in tears at this touching moment of MG MaGic. After the banquet,



Bernie, Walt and daughter present gift to Norm

Norm's OOTTT co-driver Gary Hite and Robert Goldman (owner of Moss Motors) stayed with Norm and Pat. Gary liked it so much he stayed for three months!

Led by the consummate MG T enthusiast, author and co-founder of the New England MG T Register, Dick Knudson, the T Register was really on a roll, in 1988 putting on the Kimber Alaska Challenge departing from Syracuse, New York going to Alaska and concluding north of the Arctic Circle. In 1990 the T register took 89 MGs on a three week Circuit of Britain tour followed by long distance tours in 1991 (Canadian Maritime provinces), 1993 (Skyline Drive/Blue Ridge Parkway) and 1996 (Newfoundland). Impressive!

- 1988: Norm made two trips to the US; the first to present a paper on pre-war MG advertising for the first Kimber Festival in Rhode Island celebrating the "father of MG" Cecil Kimber. These annual celebrations have been held ever since. Later that year Norm was off and running taking 28 South African MG enthusiasts on another around the world trek, also celebrating the Kimber Centenary, among many, many MG stops, the group stayed in Washington DC where the MG Centre hosted our South African guests for a grand tour of our nation's capital. Then they were off to John Twist's Summer Party in Michigan. The trek ended in Switzerland where pre-eminent MG enthusiasts hosted the group in glorious Swiss fashion!



Norm presenting the 1988 Kimber Centenary World Trek Plaque to Bob Vitrikas commemorating the South Africans stay in Washington DC. "we were much younger then"

The South African Airways flight home was piloted by an MG club member who flew the group over the night lights of Madrid, then swung around the western bulge of the African continent to avoid flying over the countries where South African planes were not welcome to fly. Being an MG enthusiast, he welcomed the MG contingent, one at a time into the cockpit!

The 2 June 1939 MG EX-135 record attempt at Dessau Germany autobahn. Goldie Gardner is behind the wheel and the designer, Syd Enever is in white overalls on the far right. The 1.1 liter MG set the flying start 1 km record at 204.3 mph



- **1988:** Norm on behalf of the MG Car Clubs of South Africa, invited me to participate in their bi-annual national MG meet. I was joined by Cecil Kimber's daughter Jean Kimber Cook and George Tuck, MG's publicity manager in the 1930's. Coincidentally, George lived in South Africa. Watch this space for more information on my epic trip of a lifetime to South Africa!

- **1994:** Norm and MG racer Bob Olthof were among the honoured guests that attended the MG '94 international gathering in Washington, DC, organised by the MG Car Club Washington DC Centre. It was Norm's enthusiasm, energy, imagination and organising skills that inspired the DC Centre to go all out on the MG'94 event. In similar fashion, Bob Olthof was the Guest of Honor at NAMGAR GT-27, held in July 2002 in Charlottesville, Virginia.

- **1995:** Norm took 26 South African MG enthusiasts to Australia via Singapore for the Perth National Meet where they were joined by a U.S. New England (MGT Register group) led by Dick Knudson. The trip included trips to Adelaide, Canberra, Sydney and Caloundra seeing four rare (only 33 built) MG K3's and one replica.

- **1996:** Guests of honor at the South Africa Indaba that year were celebrated U.S. aviation artist Jim Dietz and his wife Patti, MG design chief Don Hayter and his wife Mary, and the then President of the MG Car Club, Bill Wallis and his wife June.

- **1997:** Norm was lent British racer "Gentleman Jack" Sears' MRX 42 to drive in the French Rallye du Lac after the MG Silverstone gathering.

- **1998:** Norm and daughter Sarah flew to Germany to celebrate MG legend and business woman Rita Woodhouse's 100th birthday. Norm was seated at the head table with Rita, the Bishop of Cologne, and the writer of the Oktoberfest songs. Not to be outdone, Sarah sat with the owner of the Klosters (Switzerland) hotel who kept the table in stitches telling tales of British racers Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt's high jinx. She was invited to Charles and Dianna's wedding by virtue of her having saved Charles when he fell into a crevasse skiing. At the conclusion of the party 100 balloons were released with pictures of Rita in tennis garb, evening dress, and of course MG Norm snagged five balloons for his MG friends. It was one hell of a party!

- **2000:** After hosting U.S. Formula 1 world driving champion Phil and Alma Hill and World Land Speed Record holder (714 MPH!) Andy Green at the Magaliesberg Indaba and a tour of Kruger Park, Norm, Pat and Sarah flew to Germany to celebrate MG enthusiast Rita Woodhouse's 102nd birthday! Following World War I, Rita helped her ex-patriot husband Jack build a successful British motorcycle agency in Cologne, Germany. When Cecil Kimber offered them an MG agency, Rita urged Jack to accept the offer, and together they established one of the most successful overseas MG dealerships. J.A. Woodhouse Imports offered a full line of MG, Morris, Wolseley and Riley automobiles. Surprisingly, in the heyday of Nazi power, Germany became a hotbed of MG enthusiasm. Jack organized MG speed record attempts on the newly constructed German autobahns! Six days before WWII broke out, Jack went to Berlin to convince Hitler to allow him to lead a British team of motor cyclists out of Germany, and Hitler agreed! Jack and Rita made it out of Germany just four days before war broke out!

After the war, Nuffield Export Director George Tuck, convinced them to return to Germany and re-open their MG Agency. This they did with great success, selling MGs to American servicemen who were part of the Post-War Army of Occupation, thus jump starting the American's love affair with the MG and British cars in general. South Africa, Germany, England, the U.S., it's a wonderful world of MG enthusiasm isn't it!

- **2001:** Norm led a group of 28 SA MG enthusiasts to Europe at the invitation of the French MG club as thanks for SA hosting them in 1999. Norm then took Johannesburg Chair and MG racer Nick Parrot to Minnesota where they were hosted by OOTTT co-driver and TC owner Gary Hite and his wife Perri. Norm also took the opportunity to give the "MG Passport to Friendship" slide show.

- **2003:** Norm took six friends to Silverstone where he was officially (and deservedly) made an MG Car Club Honorary Life Member at Silverstone. For the second time!

- **2007:** Led 28 SA MG enthusiasts to the Brisbane Aussie Natmeet, then drove north to the Glasshouse Mountains, then south by train to Sydney where Norm gave an "MG Passport to Friendship" slide show.

Then it was off to Silverstone where Norm was asked to look after the group from Argentina. Norm explained that he was not English but we (SA) also called the Malvinas...the Falklands. With that as an introduction, Norm volunteered that he thought Argentina would beat France in the opening game of the rugby world cup. When Argentina won he was their friend for life! Ironically 2007 was the 25th Anniversary of the Argentine-British Falklands war. Ahem, nicely played Norm!

Norm on the right in his splendid Scottish formal dress with Rita Woodhouse between him and his lovely wife Pat and Rita's friend Vera Woods.





Invoice from J.A. Woodhouse to COL McManaway for a 1953 MG TD and a flyer I found in my Dad's memorabilia collection from his time in Germany, 1949-52. I will go out on a limb here and speculate dad picked up the flyer at the Post Exchange where J.A. Woodhouse sold Morris and M.G. motor cars. Sorry to report that dad did not purchase an M.G. but he did enjoy driving my MGA when it was in his care

- **2008:** Norm's black MGB, "Bumble," which he lent to me during my SA visit in 1990, was stolen. Turning lemons into lemonade, he used the payout to fund a trip to Antarctica. On their way going and coming, Norm and Pat stopped in Buenos Aires where local Argentine MG member Teddy Piatti, who Norm met at Silverstone the year before, took them around to see all the Fangio haunts and Eva Peron's grave. Later in the year Norm took Pat (half price) on the Queen Mary 2 to New York to stay with MG T Register friends the Knudsons and Lecksteins. Then the Ewing's booked on the Queen Mary 2 for another half price cruise the following year to Russia!

- **2009:** Norm and Pat flew to UK to do the Speckled Hen Run in a modern MG ZTT supplied by the MGCC before staying with Mike and Anne Alison who took the Ewing's down to Southampton and saw them onto the Queen Victoria to St Petersburg.

- **2010:** Norm took the youngest Johannesburg MG committee member to the huge MG meet at Silverstone and a grand tour of England and Scotland, as he wanted to do Neptune's Staircase on the Caledonian Canal and collect J2 body bits. Norm stayed with modern MG racer, and parts supplier Ron and Valery Gammons. While at Silverstone, Norm had promised kindred spirit Roy Locock that he would meet him on his journey down Africa in Namibia. Remember Roy? In 2008-2009 he was the first person to circumnavigate the globe in an MG in one go.



Roy Locock, in his trusty "Bridget the Midget."

- **2011:** Health problems meant that Norm would instead fly, instead of drive, to Cape Town and cadge a lift in a friend Bruce Henderson's Midget to go up the Garden Route with Roy!

- **2012:** As the Indaba clashed with the MGB 50th anniversary celebration at Blenheim Palace, MGB designer Don and Mary Hayter could not come to SA as hoped. In the spirit of international MG friendship, they thoughtfully sent Norm a special Blenheim meet rally plate number 2012.

- **2014:** Norm collected and looked after Swiss MG enthusiast Philippe Douchet's French group, escorting them to Knysna SA and beyond. Then Norm agreed to go to Le Touquet, France to help with the European Tour of the Year...so off he went once again to France. Phillipe is the consummate MG enthusiast, owning over 60 examples of the marque! I recall him telling me the story of how he smuggled an MG K3 out from behind the Iron Curtain one piece at a time. It took seven years!



Phillipe in his beautifully restored K3.

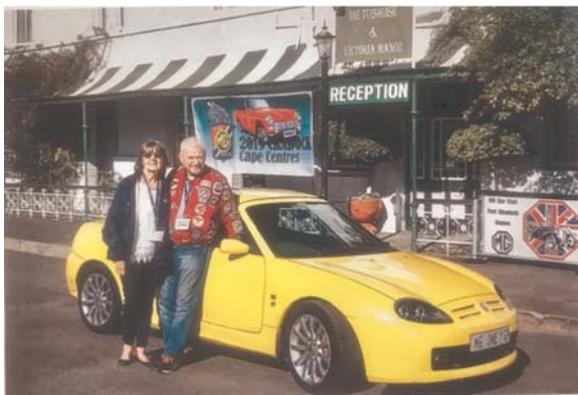
- **2015:** Norm returned to France to tie up loose ends, finalize European Tour of the Year routes, attend the Dutch MG meet, collect an MG P type from northern England and take an MG EX 182 Le Mans replica to Silverstone. Whew! Afterward he took the EX 182 replica to Vichy where the French version of the Goodwood Revival is held. There it beat an Austin-Healey at the vintage race. The driver of the Healey was in disbelief and demanded to see the 1500 cc engine. Norm asked EX 182 owner and his Swiss friend Phillipe Douchet, "Did you tell him it had an aluminum body?" "Why would I tell him that?" Phillipe demanded! Clever those Swiss,eh?

- **2016:** Pat retired again, finally, and took Norm to Australia on the Queen Elizabeth 2 to belatedly celebrate his 75th what a gal! Sailing from Cape Town, the first port of call was Port Elizabeth, then Reunion, Mauritius, and Perth where they partied with friends Mike Sherrell, the Pyles and Bushes. Then it was on to Adelaide for more fun and frolicking where they enjoyed reunions with Aussie MG friends who came to SA Indabas in 86, 88, 90 and 92. Final stop in Australia was Sydney where they were welcomed by Arnald De Castro who gave them a five star tour of the city, took them home for tea and then put Norm and Pat on the plane to Abu Dhabi and home. Then it was off to Geneva to pick up Jack Sears' MRX 42, meet up with a SA group of ten, collect their MGs from Philippe Douchet as promised and drive through France to Le Touquet on the north coast. It was a fantastic international MG event with over 100 pre-war and competition cars present! Close to 700 were fed each day by a one star Michelin chef!

- **2017:** Norm and Pat flew to London and bussed up to Baldock where MG racer and parts supplier Ron Gammons hosted them at Silverstone and gave them a ride in their Leopard Moth airplane. Ron and Valery Gammons organized a private dinner with previous MG Chairmen, John Day and his wife Janet, the Sillcocks, and

the Quarringtons, to meet Norm and Pat. Ever the consummate host, Ron then handed Norm and Pat a TF 5000 to drive up to Norm's sister's home in Scotland, collect final J2 bits and attend the MG event in Silverstone. Unfortunately on the way home Norm got very sick. Ever the resourceful nurse, Pat found the only available ICU bed that Sunday night and Norm got the treatment he needed. Pat has been there for Norm forever!

Norm wrote recently that "Now with Covid over, and having my own treadmill and bike, I should be around for a good few more years!" I sure hope so, and can't wait to hear about your future adventures Norm. I can only imagine! Norm's love of MGs has fueled his travels around the globe to MG events and made MG friends too numerous to count! We owe a great deal of thanks to enthusiasts like Norm and Dick Knudson for showing us the way to enjoy our British cars no matter.



2019:
Norm and Pat with their mid-engine 2003 MG TF 160 with an 1800 cc engine. Norm is wearing his Ocean-to-Ocean T Register jacket which is now proudly festooned with patches from many other memorable road trips.



Stormin' Norman at the helm of his TF!



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Past Events

PE Indaba May 2022

Ladies visit to SANCCOB at Cape Recife, Gqeberha Saturday 21st May 2022

SANCCOB stands for 'SA Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds'. There are two branches, one in Cape Town and the other at Cape Recife, which conveniently is 300 m from the gate of the Pine Lodge Resort where the 2022 Indaba was being held.

The visit to SANCOBB was organized for those ladies who didn't want to go early to the Councours events being held at the nearby SAAF museum.

It was a most interesting and enlightening morning on the rehabilitation of seabirds namely the African Penguins which are just the cutest little birds. The centre is run by volunteers and is funded by donations and the Lotto. There is no government funding at all. The decimation of the natural habitats of the penguins means that in 15 years there could be no breeding penguins in the wild, which is a travesty.

In the Gqeberha bay there are several islands on which the penguins live and breed, but overfishing of their feeding grounds and 'bunkering' (the refuelling of ships at sea) has had a dreadful effect on the breeding patterns. SANCCOB won a moratorium to stop bunkering at night, but the oil spills still result in birds dying or being brought into the centre for cleaning and rehabilitation.

Baby penguins are fed only by their parents and should the parents not return to feed the babies, they either die or are fortunately saved by volunteers who go out to the islands to check on the colonies. The morning we were there we watched a group of penguins getting their breakfast of sardines and the lady feeding them had given them each a name and knew who had eaten and who hadn't which was quite something, given that one penguin looks very much like another. Before being released back to the islands, the baby penguins have to be able to swim for 20 minutes. Each day they attend 'Penguin Swim School' and it looked like they were having a wonderful time splashing around in the water.

Our morning ended with a delicious treat of tea and scones with jam and cream and lots of conversation of course. I am sure no-one came away from our morning without being touched by the faithful work that these volunteers do to save an endangered species and we wish SANCCOB many more years of faithful service to the saving of seabirds on the SA coasts.

Jenny Loader.



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Noggin & Natter VVC Clubhouse

2 July

Once again the Jo'burg Centre members gathered for the monthly noggin and were treated to a talk on why the MGB is the car to buy. The pro's (there were no cons) were stated to an appreciative audience by Bruce Dixon. John Meiring incidentally decided to not in the slightest way challenge the hard facts which were so professionally explained. (editors comment - this talk was particulaely appropriate as it is of course the 60th Anniversary of the MGB (1962-2022).

Thanks to John Buttress for marketing the proposed run to Beestekraal as he was a previous visitor some years earlier. The now traditional "Braai" & Social was then held in the hurriedly cleaned up braai area. Thanks John (Meiring) for the cleaning of the area from fallen fruit/berries/ leaves from the huge tree which towers overhead.



Bruce Dixon making a point why one should definately purchase an MGB

Carol, Robyn and Anneke attentively listening to the sales pitch !



Bruce and John shaking hands in full agreement that the MGB is indeed the car to buy.

Lunch run to Beestekraal Stasie Restaurant

10 July

An MG ZR, two MGB Rubber Bumper Roadsters, an MGB GT, a Midget and a Peugeot 404 Automatique braved a cool (not cold) late July morning and made their way to Beestekraal some 40km's past Britz towards Thabazimbi for a scrumptious lunch or all day breakfast (if you preferred).

The proud owners of the cars were seated just off the old railway station platform on the tracks for a social and jovial lunch.

Beestekraal is a venue which has oodles of character. One could even have a photograph taken looking out of the rear window of a sawn (in half) Auto Union if you so desired.

A nice out of town country restaurant and a great day out driving a classic MG!

Editor's comment: Jenny Loader's article follows:

Run to Beestekraal Stasie

10 July

Who can remember when the club last had a run out to Beestekraal Stasie beyond Brits?

I delved into Kevin's photo archives for the dates. The first time we went was 2nd August 2009 which was Day One of the club's 40th Anniversary Tour. The second time was Heritage Day, 24th September 2011 when the club participated in a 'Fun Fund Raiser' for the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation. It was a well-attended day out as the photo shows, with a lot of laughs when we didn't succeed in the odd tasks set for the participants.

The 'Pipi Plek' is still in the same place, across the railway line, but sadly the line is no longer in use as SA Rail is not....

Back to Sunday's run and we opted to use the Midget which hadn't been out for a long time. Our convoy of cars; MGs and a Peugeot 404 from the McCleod's stable had a good run out even though the roads were busy, in both directions. Brits is definitely an agricultural town with a surprising number of 'Self Storage' facilities. Beestekraal Stasie has grown a bit since we were last there, with a 'Husband Day Care Centre' also known as the pub and a couple of other shops to look at. Around our lunch table there were good conversations & food after which we all left with plenty of time to get home for either the tennis or the Austrian GP.

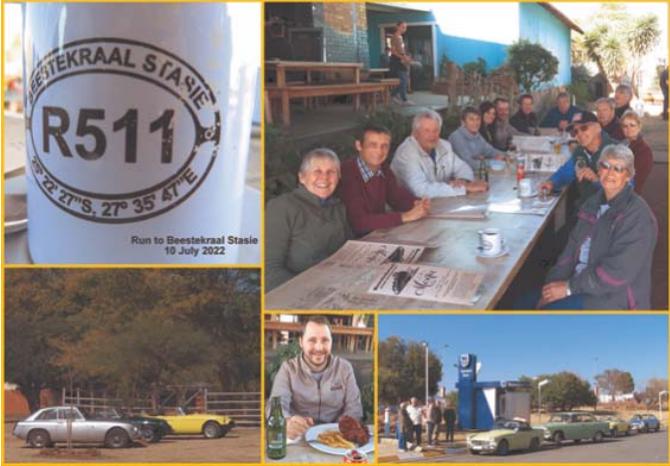
(Two photos for the 10th July run)

Thank-you Jonathan for organizing a good day out, the Midget certainly benefitted from the long run too.



*Second visit
24 September 2011*

*Members enjoying lunch
on the unused railway
track*



Pub and shops



Noggin & Natter

6 August

The August Noggin somehow turned into purely a social gathering of the usual Jo'burg clan. A big word of thanks to Gordon for setting up the scheduled movies on early racing. Alas! everyone was intent on braaing and chatting no one watched any movies!

It is becoming a monthly chore to sweep up the fallen debris from the huge tree which was planted many years ago in exactly the wrong place. Of course, as usual some nice MGs graced the parking lot of the VVc clubhouse.



Combined Centres Showday

21 August

The MG Car Club Northern Centre and the MG Car Club Johannesburg Centre presented the long awaited and anticipated Showday (Post Covid) which was held in fantastic early spring weather at the Pretoria Old Motor Club (POMC) facilities in Meyerspark Pretoria.

Any MG driver entering the venue paid a very reasonable R100 and were handed a programme, dash plaque and a Baseball cap festooned with Northern and Jo'burg clubs badges.

The days activities included:

Concourse d'Etat where entries were judged on condition, cleanliness and authenticity / originality of the MG.

Tops only where entries are judged on condition and cleanliness of the exterior/interior of the MG.

Concourse d'Elegance where entries are judged in a drive past showing period dress by the driver/passengers.

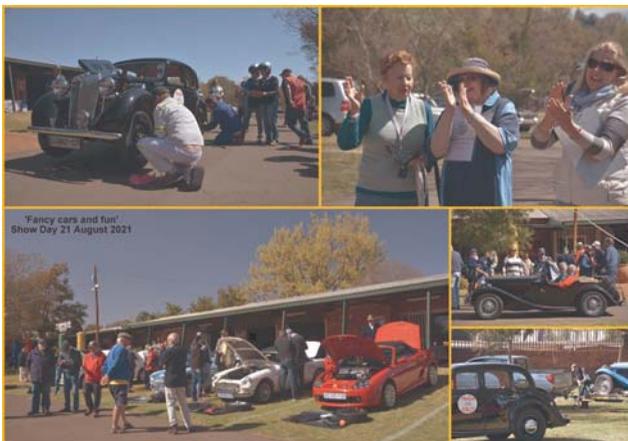
Concourse d'Comique where entries are required to provide hilarious laughter also following a drive past.

A great turnout arrived being in the region of approximately 90 - 100 MGs. Coffee/tea/pancakes were available as well as a Food Truck selling a selection of usual fast food items. A pub was available for the more thirsty folk!

A PA system was playing nice music throughout the day.

All things considered this showday was a massive success and I would like to thank the Northern Centre for putting on a sublime show. Well Done!

It must also be mentioned that Jo'burg played their part in assisting with judging on the day (Jonathan and yours trully). Thanks also to all our members who came along and supported and enjoyed the event.



The winners in the various categories were:

Concourse d'Etat

1st Zia Wort

2nd Joint winners - Andy Lawrence and Glen Wort

Tops Only

1st Jan Greyling MGA

2nd Colin Black MGB

3rd Alex Couling MGA

Concourse d'Elegance

1st Bernard Mostert MG Magnette

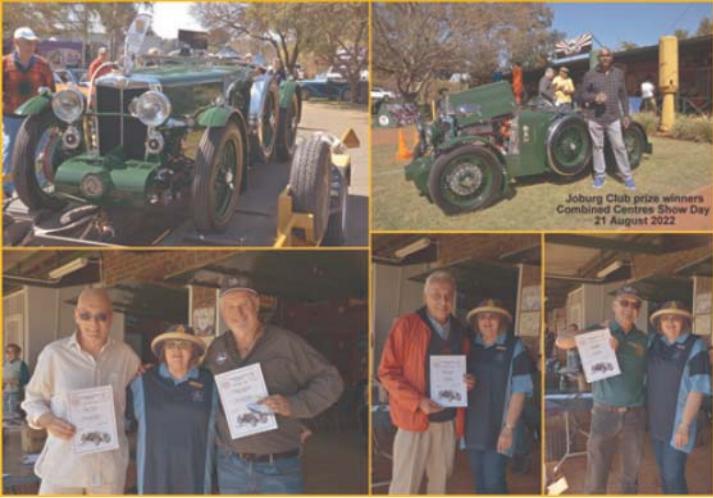
Concourse d'Comique

1st Avril Grover MG Type Y

Car of the Day

Rajesh Thulsie Hand built MG Special





Future Events

Future events take the form of a monthly “Noggin & Natter” held at the VVC on the 1st Saturday of each month. This is followed by a run normally to a place of interest on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

Northern Centre is inviting us in celebrating 60 years of the MGB at Fouriesburg Country Inn on 14 - 16 October 2022.

MGB 60th anniversary weekend

14 to 16 October 2022

The MGB was launched to the British public at the Earls Court motor show in September 1962 and this year marks its 60th birthday. To celebrate the Northern's Centre has organised a weekend trip to the Fouriesberg Country Inn, in the Free State, from 14 to 16 October.

The trip is not limited to MGB's and all are welcome to enjoy a great weekend with fellow enthusiasts. The cost for accommodation, including breakfast and dinner is R2,600.00 per person, sharing. To secure your spot a R1,500.00 deposit, paid into the Northern's Centre account, is required by 25 September. The balance, is payable direct to the Hotel on departure.

Outings will be arranged to Clarens and Golden Gate National Park. Saturday night will be Spit braai and a Jol.

Further details with regard to travelling arrangements on Friday will be communicated. Book your spot now with the Northern's Centre Exco or on the WhatsApp group.



Horse Power, where did it originate.

What exactly does the term horsepower mean or describe? Now I know that our more knowledgeable members will perhaps laugh derisively at this question, but I readily admit that although I knew that the term describes a measurement of our car's potential "Oomph", I knew not how it was derived or calculated. That was, till I read a brief description in a motoring column penned by one Matt Prior. I found his words more than interesting and immediately set about, via the mighty Google, canvassing the thoughts of the Wikipedia intelligentsia. So now, as a freshly minted guru, I am able, to show off and share some pearls of lockdown wisdom with you. It turns out, (pun unintended) that in the UK, (mainly Wales) real horses were used as the motive force to drive the pumps used to keep water levels at a more, or less manageable level in the coal pits. It seems that old Dobbin would be harnessed to a wheel and walk around endlessly, turning a gear which provided power to the pumps. James Watt, a Scottish engineer was producing steam engines for among other things, driving pumps at this time and, in order to market them to the canny mine bosses, he needed to draw comparisons with the work effort of the pit ponies. Hence, he coined the expression, HORSE POWER. It seems like a good thing that he did not opt for the more obvious pony power, as that may, on reflection, have sounded a bit effete when the boys at the bar were bragging about their car's performance. Anyway, Watt determined that a decent horse could turn a mill wheel 144 times in an hour (or 2.4 times a minute). The wheel was 12 feet (3.7m) in radius; therefore, the horse travelled $2.4 \times 2 \times 12$ feet in one minute. Watt also judged that the horse could pull with a force of 180 pounds. Watt then defined and calculated the horsepower as 32,572 ft·lbf/min, which was rounded to an even 33,000 ft·lbf/min.

Various figures were being put forward at the time, but Watt found by experimentation in 1782 that a brewery horse could in fact produce his claimed 32,500 foot-pounds per minute power output. It is not recorded how many different horses were tried before the desired number was achieved. In any case, James Watt standardized that figure at 33,000 foot-pounds per minute the next year and that became the accepted figure. Why did he opt for a brewery horse? Well, a common legend states that the unit was created when one of Watt's first customers, a brewer, specifically demanded an engine that would match a real horses performance.

The crafty brewer then chose the strongest horse he could find and driving it to the limit, established the bench mark that Watt needed to achieve in order to attain parity with his pump. Watt, while aware of the skulduggery, accepted the challenge and built a machine that, actually was even stronger than the figure achieved by the brewer, and it was the output of that machine which became the horsepower we know today.

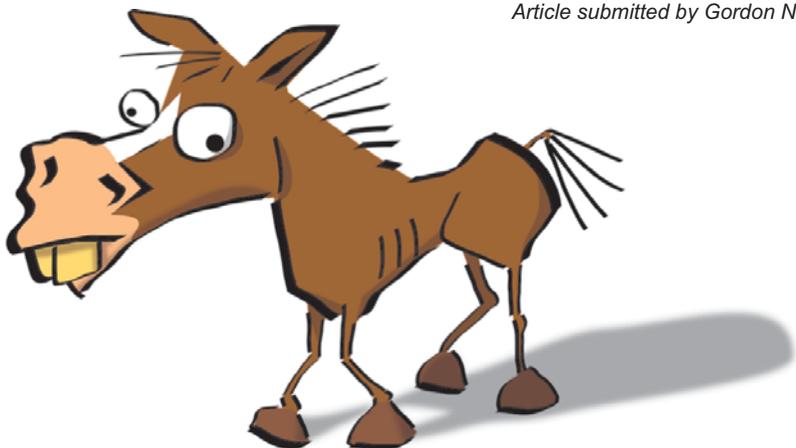
How accurate was the figure that Watt came up with in 1782? Well, it is interesting to note that over 200 years later, in 1993, a R. D. Stevenson and R. J. Wassersug

and calculations of peak and sustained work rates of a horse. Using accurate measurements made at the 1929 IOWA STATE FAIR, they reported that the peak horse-power over a few seconds has been measured to be as high as 14.9 hp, but interestingly, they also observed that for sustained activity, a work rate of about 1 hp per horse is consistent with agricultural devices from both the 19th and 20th centuries. This showed both that horses have not become weaker, and Watt was absolutely right. Now the most bewildering horsepower idea as far as I am concerned, is that of the RAC HP Rating. All pre-war vehicles manufactured in Britain have an RAC horsepower rating, which was linked to the Vehicle Excise Duty or VED, aka Road Tax or Car Tax. When the horsepower tax was introduced on 1 January 1910 a formula, known as the RAC Rating, was used to calculate the horsepower. It turns out that the formula was based on applied theory and derived from basic principles rather than from the results of a bench test. It made three basic assumptions which are: a mean effective cylinder pressure of 90 psi; a mechanical efficiency of 75% and a mean piston speed of 1000 ft/min. $hp = (D \times n) / 2.5$ where D = the diameter of the cylinder in inches and n = the number of cylinders. HORSE POWER by Fred Phillips. The tax payable was: 0 to 6.5hp (£2.10) and all the way up to a maximum of 60hp (£22.05).

This tax encouraged an interest in light cars and effectively limited large engines to luxury cars but, was ideal for a car like the Austin Seven. By 1930, engine developments meant that the effective cylinder pressure was up to 125 psi, and piston speed had doubled. Also, some performance engines were making much more power than the 60 hp upper limit.

Some manufacturers, such as Rolls Royce, Rover and Wolseley, started to use a double rating system and designated a car as e.g. 10/25, where the 10 was RAC horsepower and 25 was indicated real horsepower. The RAC Rating was used until 1947 at which time the government replaced it by a flat rate of £10 per year for all cars and the rather strange RAC system fell away. So now at last, I know why a Rolls Royce 20/25 is what it is. I think.

Article submitted by Gordon Noble



An MGA, before the MGA?

An intriguing rarity from the mid-fifties emerged at a sale in Buxton. The lot was described as a 1954 Peel P1000, but because the P1000 appears only ever to have been a bolt-on GRP body for small Fords and Morrisies, it might be fair to call it an MGTF with a Peel body. Peel later found minor fame as the makers of the tiny P50, often called the world's smallest production car, but Cyril Cannell's Isle of Man - based firm began as makers of sporting bodywork. First came the MK 1 of 1952 or 1953, a simple tapering roadster shape soon replaced by the P1000. It was advertised (in a surviving magazine small ad from 1956) as " A beautifully moulded complete Glassfibre Bolt- on body that bolts directly to Ford 8HP, Morris 8HP and other 7 ft. 6inch wheelbase chassis".

The similarity with the MGA's shape (introduced in 1955) is striking and is accentuated by what looks like a part-stripped MGA grille on this example. Which, in fact came first? A tiny number of P1000s seem to have been made and few survive. The auction company described it as previously dry-stored for over 40 years and stated that the sports body sits atop an MG TF chassis that retains its original 1250 cc XPAG engine. Body and chassis may have come together recently, judging from some fresh-looking ply paneling in the boot and shiny fixings, but as a project there's plenty left to do. It sold for 7650 pound sterling, cheap enough to afford a fine finish on this mysterious Brit.

Article submitted by Randal Everson



Peel P1000

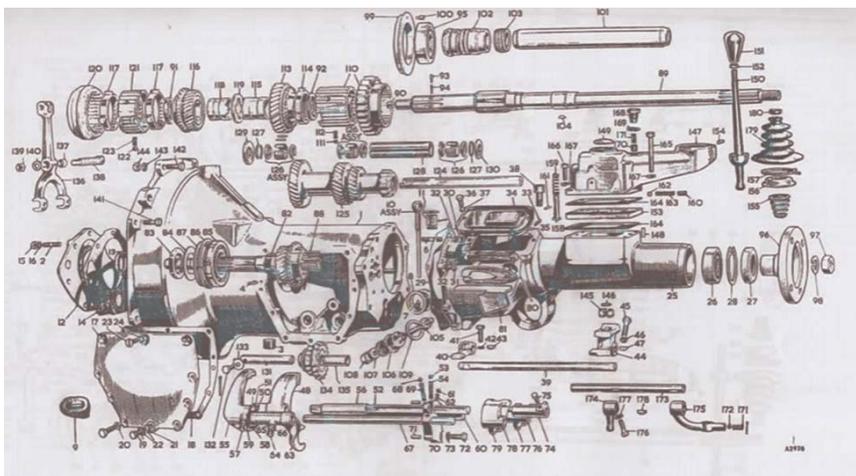
MGA and 3 synchro MGB **Gearbox Notes -** **Standard and close Ratio**

Bo Giersing

The following notes have been prepared based on my experience with many MGAs which I have owned over the past more than 50 years. I am a self-taught enthusiast, not a trained mechanic – any additional comments from specialists would be welcome.

The MGA gearbox is considered to be a good gearbox, easy to use and repair, and a vast improvement over the previous gearbox fitted to the TD and TF – but not as good as the TC gearbox. It used the same basic construction as the gearboxes fitted to the medium range BMC saloons, with the same ratios – interchangeable gears. However, the MGA gearbox suffered from several weaknesses:

1. Poor ratios – particularly the low ratios on 1st and 2nd and the big gap to 3rd. You are in 2nd gear before you leave your driveway.
2. Weak 2nd gear synchro – generally worn out after about 40000 miles – partly due to the big gap in the 3rd to 2nd ratios. I never change from 3rd to 2nd gear without double declutching.
3. Weak and small diameter layshaft, the laygear is support by 3 needle roller bearings, only one bearing on the 1st gear side, which wears out about the same time as the 2nd gear synchro. This causes the small diameter straight cut non-synchro 1st gear to wear and become noisy (ruining the laygear). This problem is accentuated on the close ratio gearbox because of the higher ratio first gear (used for longer periods with more power).



The close ratio gear set consists of a first motion (input) gear, laygear and 2nd and 3rd gears. The standard 1st gear is maintained and the higher ratio is achieved by the larger input gear which causes the laygear (and 1st gear) to rotate faster. This causes the single layshaft bearing on the 1st gear side to wear even faster. The much higher ratio non-synchro 1st gear on the laygear is further damaged by drivers trying to select 1st while moving and not double declutching correctly. Close ratio laygears are often destroyed by damaged 1st gears. Close ratio gears used with a standard 4.3 axle requires a lot of clutch slip when starting on an incline, and with a Twin Cam higher revs - hence close ratio gears were often combined with a 4.55 axle (reduced cruising speed). My general preference for road use is close ratio with a 4.3 axle or standard ratios with a 3.9 axle.

My solution to the above problems are:

1. Poor ratios - fit a close ratio gear set (helical sets are now virtually unobtainable). Straight cut sets are very noisy and expensive. Alternatively, fit a 3.9 axle. (I have not considered fitting a 5 speed gearbox, rather buy a car with 5 speed gears)
2. Always double declutch when changing from 3rd to 2nd to save the synchro
3. Renew the layshaft (and 2nd synchro) every 40000 miles. An easy job once the gearbox is out of the car, see below. Alternatively, find a laygear from a 3 synchro MGB which was only fitted to cars built between March 1967 and November 1967 (rare), after which the 4 synchro box was introduced, which is fitted with a larger diameter layshaft supported by 4 bearings, 2 on each side. The MGA casing must then be bored to suit the larger diameter layshaft. This also applies to the even rarer close ratio gears for the 3 synchro MGB. I managed to find a new close ratio upgraded 4 bearing laygear on ebay some years ago and this is now fitted to my Twin Cam coupe YM2 554 - a perfect gearbox. I fitted my first close ratio gear set to my MGA 1600, purchased from Derrington's in London back in 1968.

Gearbox overhaul :

Carrying out a complete overhaul on an MGA gearbox (or 3 synchro MGB) can be quite a mission for those who have not done it before. However, it is rarely necessary to do a complete overhaul unless the gearbox is completely shot (noisy and dirty oil). It is generally only the 2nd gear synchro, layshaft and oil seals which require replacement. (if the gearbox otherwise works well and silently and has clean oil). These can be replaced without dismantling the whole gearbox with needle rollers, thrust washers, balls and springs falling out everywhere. This is what I have done many times successfully, completed within a morning.

1. Go out and buy a layshaft, 2nd gear synchro, oil seals and gasket set.
2. Remove the front cover and replace the oil seal.
3. While holding the gearbox vertically front end up, carefully pull out the layshaft (careful not to disturb the position of the laygear) and immediately drop in the new layshaft. If the old layshaft is not too badly worn on the 1st gear side, the laygear bearings are generally OK.

4. Refit the front cover. All this takes only a few minutes.
5. Remove the speedo drive (modified socket needed)
6. Remove the selector cover and restrictor
7. Remove the rear flange and rear casing.
8. Remove the side cover.
9. Remove the gear selector block in unit with the selector rods and brass selector forks - no need to remove the selector rods from the block (springs and balls will jump out) .
10. Using a long drift from within the inside through the side cover, tap out the rear bearing holder and bearing, being careful not to move the main shaft while doing this. Have an assistant.
11. The first gear assembly can then be drawn out rearwards together with the 2nd gear synchro. It may be easier to also remove the reverse gear and shaft beforehand - very easy.
12. Assemble in the reverse order. It should be noted than the first motion shaft, main shaft and the laygear, together with all the needle rollers, balls, springs and thrust washers remain in place throughout.

It is always easier when you have done it a few times!



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THE MGA THAT LOVES **ADVENTURE**

by Ezra Martins

Firstly, a short history about how this MGA came to live with me. Norman Ewing got to hear about a totally dismantled 1600 that was lying in a backyard. He called me about it and the next morning I was there with a farm truck. I paid the Italian man his asking price of R1600.00 for the heap of metal that looked like scrap. We loaded everything and then back on the farm it became clear that the process of rebuilding would take time, probably years. Eventually it was done, and this MGA became my absolute favourite MG. It provided me with so much fun and excitement on local trips, regularity rallies, even racing at Zwartkops and of course the Amsterdam to Moscow rally. And later, the Mille Millas in Uruguay, the Historic Monte Carlo and the Winter Challenge to Barcelona. The bond that I have with this MGA grew stronger after each adventure, and now, each time I drive it.

I read somewhere about the Amsterdam/Moscow event and wanted to give it a go. The late Clive Alexander got to hear about my plans and expressed his wish to be the navigator. He proved to be great fun as a travelling companion and also, he possessed incredible ingenuity and the ability to solve the mechanical problems that we experienced.

The MGA was shipped to Rotterdam but our own travel arrangements were not that simple. Remember, it was 1991 and visas for the Soviet Union and the other east block countries were difficult to obtain. Our travel agent, a lady of Polish origin, had good contacts and succeeded with all of it.

Clive and I arrived in Amsterdam and immediately made our way to the Rotterdam container depot to pick up the MGA. We found it with a puncture and flat tyre before even moving one meter. We fitted the spare and went to spend a few lovely days with Betty and Gerhard de Groot.

With the puncture repaired and the MGA fully loaded we made our way to the starting point in Amsterdam. On the rear carrier were our two tents. It was camping everywhere except Russia, where we stayed in tourist Hotels. Clive's tent was small and barely accommodated him. Mine resembled an igloo and I had an inflatable mattress and also electric lighting from the car battery. I was quite comfortable. More than 100 classic cars participated. We teamed up with an MG group. There was another MGA, a TC and a Y type. We stuck together throughout the whole rally.

The cars were flagged off by the Soviet ambassador to the Netherlands accompanied by the lovely sounds from one of those colourful Dutch street organs. Now the 8000km trip began and heading east. The route would take us through Germany and Poland to Russia and Moscow. The return route would be more south and would be through the Ukraine, Hungary, Austria and Germany back to Amsterdam.

The first night stop was in Germany. Alas!, on day one we could not even reach that stop. The MGA was loaded onto the sweep vehicle of the Wegenwacht, the Dutch equivalent of the AA and taken to the camp site. It was quite embarrassing. However, we had a new coil, that was the problem and the A was running sweetly again.

The rally then proceeded to Bremen and Berlin. From there the route took us to Gdansk and down to Warsaw. This was a wonderful visit. Especially when all the cars gathered on Victory Square where Wech Walesa liberated his country from communism. We were grandly entertained with fine eats and drinks by the city authorities in the City Hall on the square.

After lunch, we headed for the Soviet border. There we found long lines of vehicles waiting to pass through. But, we were waved on and got through relatively quickly. I found it amazing that all those people who could have been waiting for days, showed no animosity towards us because of our privileged passing through. All went well with the MGA up to just before Minsk. The car suddenly had no traction.

The engine ran perfectly but the A came to a standstill. It revved up in gear, but could not move. We discovered that the splines on the hub and inside the right rear wheel were gone. Both surfaces were as smooth as a baby's bum. We were only a hundred meters from our overnight hotel. Across the road there was a car repair shop. Clive immediately devised a solution. I opened a job card with the repair shop, but nothing happened. Eventually they closed for the day. Two young mechanics in black overalls walked over to us. Clive showed them the hub and the wheel and explained his plan to them in English. Of course, there was no common language of communication possible, but straight common sense prevailed.

Clive wanted to drive the wheel by utilising the nuts on the brake drum. His plan was to weld something like large nuts inside the wheel so that they could lock around at least two brake drum nuts. The Russians understood and measured with a vernier exactly where they should weld the nuts in order to lock around the nuts on the drum. The knock on was also worn, and they made a thin spacer to deal with that. We fitted the wheel and the knock on and hammered it very tight. Now we had drive again on the rear wheels. We gave the two mechanics 20 dollars each. They were over the moon with that. This was probably equivalent to their monthly salary. We drove around and repeatedly hammered the knock on tighter.

The next day we continued to Smolensk and Moscow with no problems. We checked in at our hotel alongside the Moscow ring road. We had a lot of rain during the past days and opened up the next morning to dry the interior of our car.

We arrived on July 25 and had time to look around until the 28th. At night most of us were in the hotel bar for a good time. Also, there were always some attractive Russian girls. They would join us at our tables and we treated them on some Russian champagne. That was as far as it went, but Clive had other ideas. One night he told me that he is going with the girl at our table to her apartment. I tried to warn him not to make waves here in Russia. He would not listen and left with

her. Finally I went to bed. We shared a room and I was waiting anxiously for his return. It became very late and my concern was growing by the minute. Eventually, very late, there was a loud knock on the door. I opened up and Clive entered with another man. It was his taxi driver. He asked me to pay the man because he had no money left. I was so happy to see Clive that I paid the man immediately. Then told Clive to go and sleep, and that he could tell me in the morning if it was worth while.

Norman gave me a beautifully printed certificate and greetings from South Africa for Michael Gorbachev. The printing style was exactly like the MG logo with the M and the G in the special octagonal way. We drove to Red Square and noticed a lot of Russian military types emerging from the Kremlin gates and getting into their typical Russian cars. Gorbachev was on vacation at the Black Sea and these types were conspiring against him. This became clear later. Well, I took the certificate to the guards at the Kremlin gate and attempted to request them to arrange for Gorbachev to receive this into his hands. All that I got from them were blank stares. But, they took it from me nevertheless. Little did we know then that all hell would break loose there a few days later when the old guard threw Gorbachev out and later Yeltsin would throw them out again. But when that happened, we were far away from there.

The MGA ran beautifully when we left Moscow. When entering the Ukraine, we ran into fuel shortages. The Soviets were punishing the Ukraine for threatening to break away. Most petrol stations were dry, but we pushed on and could buy some at black market prices. We had just enough petrol to reach our hotel in Kiev. That afternoon on the way, we experienced a strange feeling when driving past Chernobyl, where that horrible nuclear accident happened.

At the hotel we were told not to worry, because they have plenty of petrol. The next morning we had to pay at the hotel reception for petrol and once again at inflated prices. In the back yard of the hotel inside a garden shed was a petrol pump. We filled up and headed for Uzshgorod, the final stop in the Soviet Union. The hotel was a top luxury place, but had no water. The toilet had not been flushed for days. People brushed their teeth in the parking lot the next morning using Russian champagne.

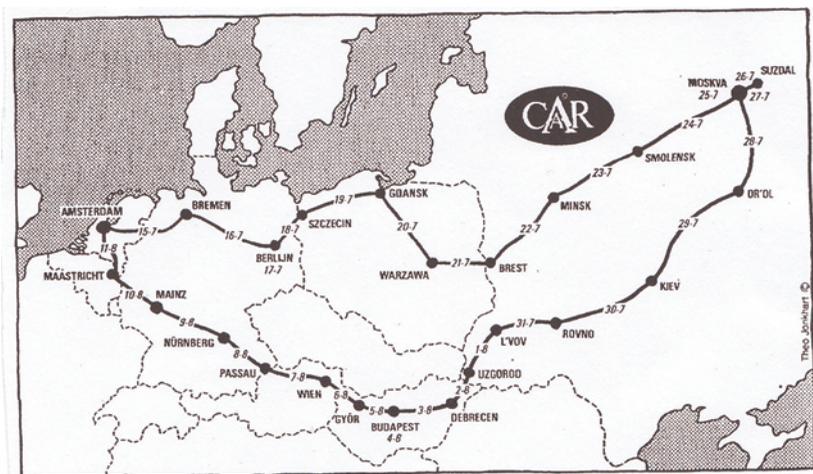
We then headed for Hungary. Suddenly it felt so good to be back in the West. On the way to Budapest via Debrecen we passed the Hungaroring, their Grand Prix circuit. We suddenly had brake problems with the MGA. The brake pads were down to the metal. At Budapest, we camped at a very nice sports complex. The telephone communication was good and I could call Gerhard de Groot in Holland to courier new brake pads to Gyor where we would be two days later. The pads would be delivered to the organisers' hotel.

We enjoyed our stay at that very beautiful city. At Gyor, Wil de Hek, the chief organiser, when handing me our parcel with the pads, complimented us for taking care of our problems ourselves and not like some of the other participants who made

their problems the problem of the organisers.

From Gyor the MGA once again in good shape, we made for Austria and beautiful Vienna for our night stop. Then, without any drama, we drove through Germany to Maastricht. We spent a few hours there and enjoyed the so called "decadence" of the West at the numerous side walk cafes.

Now, at last, ahead was only the final leg back to Amsterdam and the finish.



Route map of the adventure



The late Clive Alexander and Ezra Martins posing with their MGA.

EU votes to ban new fuel cars by 2035: MG is ready

The European Parliament has officially approved the proposal to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in the European Union from 2035. By that time, new cars may only be admitted on the road with a zero-emission drive train. What does this mean for MG Motor? Nothing! We are ready and even ahead of the European plans. The European Union (EU) aims to be climate neutral by 2050. As part of this target, the 'Fit for 55' plan was presented in 2021 with an interim CO2 reduction target of at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

With approximately 250 million cars on the road in Europe, the automotive industry plays an important role in reducing CO2 emissions. That is why the European Parliament has now also decided to ban the sale of new passenger cars with an internal combustion engine (ICE) from 2035. A very interesting and promising ambition that will have a huge impact on the industry.

MG proves it's possible

In the run-up to the voting round, extensive lobbies have been held to postpone the ban on new passenger cars with an ICE. Critics argue that zero-emission vehicles are still far too expensive to implement these plans across the EU. Practical EVs with enough space for the family, advanced technology and safety, comfort and a reassuring range won't be affordable for the general public in Europe.

But in reality, that's not the case. Since the launch of the MG ZS EV in October 2019, the brand has proven that electric driving can indeed be affordable. MG's first vehicle in mainland Europe made an indelible impression as the first truly affordable all-electric SUV in the B-segment. Revived by its Chinese parent company, the iconic British car brand entered the highly competitive car market with the clear goal of disrupting the European EV market with attractive, safe and high-quality EVs that meet all the needs of modern families and businesses. And above all, at a fair price.

First affordable EV brand

Following the launch of the popular MG ZS EV, the versatile EHS Plug-in Hybrid, the advanced and luxurious MG Marvel R Electric and the practical MG5 Electric – the world's first all-electric estate car – MG has built a solid reputation as the first affordable electric car brand in Europe.

Just three years after the start of sales in mainland Europe, more than 530 MG sales and service locations are already operational in sixteen countries. Sales tripled in 2021, while MG recently reached a new milestone with 1 million cars sold overseas since 2007. The success of the brand is partly due to the fact that MG presents itself as the smart choice in terms of price, equipment and technology, without compromising on quality and safety. In addition, MG is more visible, and the brand awareness continues to increase.

MG4 Electric sets new standards

And we're just getting started. There's a lot more to come! This autumn already, when the all-new MG4 Electric makes its European debut. This newcomer with leading technology, an appealing design and a huge level of driving fun is MG's first five-door hatchback for the European C-segment. The MG4 Electric is the first of an entirely new generation of electric cars based on the all-new MSP (Modular Scalable Platform), developed by MG's parent company SAIC Motor.

With the MG4 Electric that is expected to arrive at the MG dealers in the fourth quarter of this year, MG will prove once again that electric driving can indeed be affordable. Ban on new cars with an ICE? We are ready and even ahead of the European plans.

MG is ready for the future

Besides, you will see the production costs (per kWh) of EV batteries continue to fall in the coming years. According to BloombergNEF, costs will come down by more than 50% in 2030 compared to 2020. This also means electric cars will be cheaper to produce than ICE cars by then. Furthermore, the 'Fit for 55' plan lays down the financing and construction of at least 3.5 million additional charging points until 2030. The accelerated expansion of the European charging infrastructure is absolutely necessary for a smooth and accelerated transition from fossil to electric.

Whatever the future will bring us, we at MG are ready for it. We have only just started, but we have come a long way. We keep focussing on electric cars and related technology and are committed to making electric mobility even more accessible to European motorists in the near future.

With acknowledgements to S.A.I.C.

