



MGC NEWSLETTER

Christmas, Issue No.26, Dec. 2019



***“Wishing you all a
very Merry
Christmas and
Happy New Year”***

from

THE MGC REGISTER of NEW ZEALAND



MGCC Concours Sunday 8th December 2019

MECC Auckland Christmas Concours



On Saturday 7th December evening the weather forecast was thunder and lightning from 11 o'clock on Sunday through to the end of the day. Exactly the same time as the MG Car Club's annual concours event. Raewyn tried her best to console me but a dark cloud of uncertainty could be seen hovering over my head. I'd received a reasonable response to our invitation emails but with the forecasted thunder-storms looking like a real possibility my expectations of a good turn-out were rapidly diminishing. If we were lucky, we could, maybe, get three or four cars turn up, maybe.

Then for some unknown reason the rain Gods changed their minds and we woke to a sunny Sunday morning and a much more promising day ahead. So, with raised spirits and two gleaming cars Raewyn and I departed Beachlands with our fingers & toes crossed.

And you guys didn't disappoint! what a great turn out, you cannot image how I felt. My sincere thanks to you all for chancing the weather and making the effort to come along. We had **six MGCs** plus **Andy Culpin**



which makes **Seven Owners**.....more than I ever expected. Special thanks to **Nick & Sharon Wilcox** plus **James Smith** for driving up from Taupo and Rotorua also to **Alan Krissansen** (a new MGC owner) and his mate **Graham** for coming along. My thanks also to **Tony Barbarich** who never disappoints with his Tartan Red GT and of course my effervescent wife **Raewyn** for making this a special Christmas event for the **MGC Register**. I must also thank **Patrick Cheffins** for allowing me to take his car to the event in his absence.

Apologies for non-attendance were received from **Ian Grant** (our stalwart leader) because of family illness.



Harvey Heath who was touring down in the very wet South Island and **Ian Finlayson** who was unable to attend due to family commitments plus **John Barrett** from Taupo who, unfortunately, is not very well, we hope you get better very soon John.

I must also mention that Mrs Dunlop managed to clinch third place overall, in the club concours, with her very shiny red GT and Nick Wilcox gained fourth place with only half a point behind her. So, 2 x MGCs in the top four, not a bad result aye!

Photo: **Peter Dunlop, James Smith, Alan Krissansen, Nick Wilcox, Tony Barbarich, Raewyn Dunlop.**

We all had a great day out with lots of time to admire our cars and chew the fat on the "ins and outs" of the fabulous MGC. The rain had held off all day and only started to look threatening as we departed. For

me, the icing on the cake was having the company of such a great bunch of like-minded guys enjoying their cars as much as I do. **Peter Dunlop**

Those present:

Raewyn Dunlop	MGC GT
Peter Dunlop	MGC Roadster (owner Patrick Cheffins)
Tony Barbarich	MGC GT
Nick Wilcox	MGC Roadster
Alan Krissansen	MGC Roadster
James Smith	MGC Roadster
Andy Culpin	MGC GTS replica (owner only)

Photo Gallery



Nick Wilcox



Andy Culpin





We lose three MGCs

In our August newsletter we concluded the *Welcome to New Owners* section with details and pictures of two MGCs that had been sold and another one that may well have changed hands.

The MGC that might have been sold is the yellow GT that was brought to New Zealand from Australia in 2007 and is a highly modified track and road car. So, if you come across **EFT853** on your travels, we would love to welcome the new owner to the register.

But we have had confirmation that the other two that were sold this year are now overseas. As well as that, a recent e-mail has confirmed what we had suspected, that another one that was sold four years ago is also overseas.

Back in early 2013 you might remember the **Barry Hart** saga, the defence lawyer who was in trouble and owned a collection of cars which included the **ex-Dave Romer** white CGT, **JY7979**. The sale of his car



collection was covered on the TV1 evening news bulletin and the CGT was purchased by a Tauranga real estate agent for a very good price. The C was roadworthy and the television coverage showed him driving it out of the auction premises for the trip home. He then sold it in 2014 to another Tauranga resident and about a year later it changed hands again, this time to a gentleman who was, we found out, an MG enthusiast and in a very senior position in an Australasian company. We tried to make contact through the company e-mail several times but never received any replies.

We had nothing to support our thoughts that this

CGT had left New Zealand for Australia until last month when we received an e-mail from **Ken Tame** in Melbourne advising he was now the owner of JY7979 and had found our contact details on our web page. The car is currently going through a complete rebuild and conversion into a Sebring replica. Welcome to MGC ownership Ken and we look forward to C-ing photographs of the finished product.

The blue roadster, **MG6**, that we reported was for sale on the **Dutton Garage** web site had been moved to the sold file. This C is very well known to us as it was owned by the "Father of the NZ MGC Register"

Brett Robinson, from 1973 to 1999, then **Dave Romer** until 2003. A couple of months ago **Barrie Cartmell**, UK MGC Register, sent an e-mail to let us know the UK team had been advised that the car was now in Queensland, registered 1968MGC, and owned by **Neil and Mary-Anne Anderson** who are MGCC UK members. The C was looking very nice when it was for sale so we hope you really enjoy your MGC ownership.

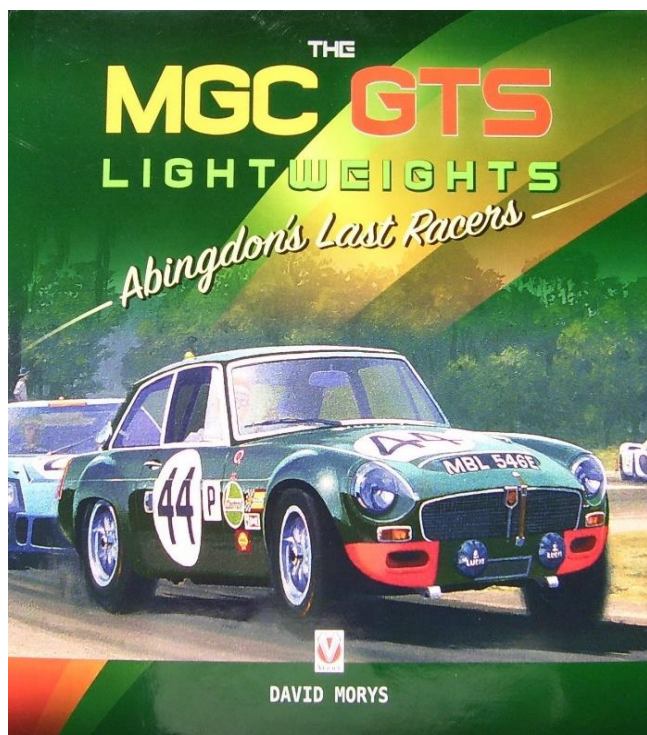
The third MGC that has gone from New Zealand was the white roadster, **SZ47**, which was for sale at **Waimak Classic Cars**. An e-mail came to us through the MGCC Auckland from **David Gannon** who lives in England. In follow-up correspondence David has told us it was actually





his brother who bought the car and he purchased it from him. He is interested to know more about its time in New Zealand as it was originally a UK market car and brought to New Zealand in 1971. Our register shows it had three owners from then until 1994 when it was owned by **Grant Gordon** until he sold it in 2016. **Ian Grant**

The legendary MGC GTS still generating interest



The final 2019 issue of **NZ Classic Driver** had book reviews by **Allan Walton** on the **MGC GTS Lightweights** and **Mr Big Healey**, the official biography of **John Chatham**. The temptation was too great as the pricing and free shipping from The Book Depository forced the credit card from my wallet and I now own both of these publications. **The Lightweights** author, **David Morys**, has had an interest in the MGC since the early days having owned a CGT as well as five other MG models and he has put together a very detailed account about Abingdon's last racers and what a fascinating read it is.

There are 13 chapters and four appendices. The first four chapters cover the development and production of the road cars before getting into the anatomy of the lightweight and the building of the GTS. Following are the chapters on the competitive racing and the lives of the GTS after Sebring. The fifteen pages covering the **John Chatham** cars makes very interesting reading

especially when you have a copy of his autobiography to compliment it.

Photo right: Six original MGC GTS at the MG Car Club Silverstone meeting May 1992.

Further chapters cover Sebring replicas, the Huffaker SCCA (Sports Car Club of America) car, which was very successful competitively, and Rejuvenating the MGC. Appendix 1 contains the original build sheets for MBL, Appendix 2 has all of the entries and results sheets from the 1967



Targa Florio, Appendix 3 has everything from Sebring 1968 and Appendix 4 the 1970 Targa Florio. In the chapter entitled Building the GTS, the author really gives a detailed account of the features and equipment

of MBL and RMO. What was interesting are the differences between these two factory competition cars, some of which are explained in the following article. This is a book I can see myself reading more than once.

The other publication, which overlaps with the lightweights, is the **John Chatham** biography, Mr Big Healey, and this will be my summer reading. When I received this book, I couldn't resist the temptation to go straight to the chapter that covers his MGC connection. The factory at Abingdon had built six lightweight body shells, completing the assembly of MBL and RMO, and when the Competitions Department was closed down John was offered the remaining four shells and all of the spares. £1500 secured all of this kit and he then built four GTS cars for racing. It is in this chapter that those two superb photographs of the line-up of the cars and the six lightweights on the track appear.

Ian Grant



Photo: Peter, Harvey and Ian, MG Live Silverstone June 2017

MG Lightweights exterior differences

In the book, **The MGCGTS Lightweights**, **David Morys** goes into a lot of detail in the chapter covering the building of MBL and RMO. There are quite a number of internal differences between the two cars but I will cover just a few of the external ones as can be seen in the accompanying photographs.



On the roof above the driver MBL has a red lamp which is straight out of the parts bin as it looks like the stop/tail lamp off an MGA and other BMC vehicles as well. RMO on the other hand has an amber lamp. These two colours correspond with the colour of the front lower panel on the two cars, MBL's being red and RMO's is yellow. When both cars were on the track during daylight, the different colours

making it easy for the pit crews to identify the cars. Similarly, when night fell, those two roof lamps did the same job.

Both cars have a parts bin chrome number plate lamp fixed on their right side, MBL's is on the door while RMO's is aft of the door's closing edge and is on the rear guard. These lamps illuminated the cars' racing numbers at night.

MBL competed in the 1967 Targa Florio in the over 2-litre class with an MGB bonnet and a 4-cylinder "B" series engine that was bored out to 2004cc. The car arrived in Italy in its fine red



paintwork only to find the organisers insisting all cars ran in their national colours so it had to be changed to green. To this day MBL is green on the outside and red internally. The scrutineers failed to notice the revised metalwork and the torsion bar suspension as they thought it was an MGB. As the MGC was not yet in production MBL was not officially an MGC so the C badge had been left off the

tailgate and the car was badged as an MG GT with the MG logo between those letters. The C badge was never reinstated even when the car assumed its rightful identity and remains so today. RMO, on the other hand does have MGC GT on the tailgate.

Other photographs in this newsletter show the front of the two cars, one thing in particular standing out. MBL carries an MG badge on its grille but RMO does not. During testing it was found there was considerable movement in the alloy body of RMO which resulted in the bonnet failing to

stay shut. The problem was



solved by changing the bonnet from standard production rear-hinging to a front hinged arrangement but when opening the bonnet with this configuration, it caught the grille badge which had to be removed and hence, no grille badge on RMO. Interestingly though, there are some pictures in the book of RMO with its grille badge prior to the fitting of the front-hinging bonnet.

Ian Grant



Photo: Henry and Georgeann Camisasca, Mabel's current owners, at Sebring, Florida.

Still wondering how to find our 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.....enjoy!



Regalia for sale

Thank you to everyone who purchased 50th anniversary regalia as produced by the **UK MGC Register**. They did a fantastic job in providing a great range to choose from and there are still some items available from the UK, so it's not too late if you would like something to mark the milestone. Just contact me for further details. **Ian Grant**



It's amazing what still turns UP !



50 years have passed since our MGCs came off the assembly line in Abingdon but even now we still get some surprises after all these years.

In October I received an e-mail from our very good friend **Ian Hobbs**, who looks after the MGC Register in **South Australia**, forwarding an e-mail he had received from **David McNabb**, a 40-year resident of Adelaide who had joined MGCC Canterbury in the late-1960s but then made Australia his home.

What was attached to that e-mail was something I never thought I would ever see again. So, let's go back to 1972 to start the story.

Get the Castrol engine protector

For your 

★ G.T.X.—the oil the world's toughest rally conditions can't break.

★ G.T.X.—the most massive protection Castrol have ever put into a motor oil.

★ Insist on G.T.X. protection no matter what car you drive.

The engine protector

W885

After completing my first two years in the workforce with the Onehunga BMC dealers, **Moncrieff Motors**, I had been approached to join the team at **Robert Stevens Ltd**, the much larger BMC organisation in Otahuhu, where I was one of the fourteen members of the parts department. Working in the despatch department involved operating one of the two delivery vans and on one of my usual morning runs I had called in to **Dominion Motors** in Newmarket to pick up our order, then off up Khyber Pass to **Seabrook Fowlds** in Symonds Street. As I stopped at a set of traffic lights towards the top end of Khyber Pass, I glanced over to my left and parked in the corner of the front row of **John Hay Motors** was a rather nice British Racing Green MGC roadster. When the lights changed, I swung into the side street next to the dealer and parked. This roadster, **EB3780** (pictured left) had all the bits - black hardtop, boot rack, chrome wire wheels and overdrive with the odo showing just a few clicks over 20,000 miles. One of the salesmen came out and we had a chat. My recollection of that conversation was that the car came into New Zealand new for a family member of someone reasonably high

up in the **Dominion Motors** organisation. I saw the C every day for the next week or so on my van trips and about ten days later the car was no longer on the yard.

I bought my first MG, an MGB, in 1974 from **Sports Car World** and it was here in 1977 that I once again saw EB3780. It had been very well used since I last saw it as the odo was now up in the high 70,000s and, sadly, was looking like it needed some TLC. Not long afterwards on another visit to **Sports Car World** I found out that the car had gone south to Dunedin.

We now move the clock forward to late-2010 when Peter and I revived the MGC Register. In the original register information provided by **Brett Robinson**, EB3780 appeared on a couple of lists but with no further information. In amongst the photographs Brett shared with us was a picture of a green roadster with a black hardtop and chrome wires which was up on axle stands and had the registration IP7027. The only information against **IP7027** (pictured) was **Southwards**, Paraparaumu. So, if the C was on axle stands, was it on display in the museum? I had visited the museum in 2003 and the C was not there then.



One evening in early-2011 when I had nothing better to do, I tried possible personalised plate combinations on Carjam and **68MGC** pictured below with Ian's **69C** revealed a green roadster. There was reference to another registration number against this car, YU9752, but not the two mentioned earlier. I purchased the ownership report which showed the car was put back on the road in 2000. I was pretty sure this roadster was EB3780 but still needed more information to be absolutely sure.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained, so I wrote to the curator of Southwards Museum. A week later I received a reply and **Stan Bellamore** confirmed the roadster had been on display as it was owned by his son John, who had been away for a number of years working in Australia, so this was the best way to store it.

After completing the phone call with Stan, I then thought of the other questions I should have asked. So, the next day I rang him back and asked how long John had owned the car. This question proved to be a gold nugget as Stan replied, "Hold the line, John's here, I'll put you through to him". John bought the MGC in 1979 with the odo showing 80,027 miles and owned it through to 2000 when it was sold to its next owner in the Wellington area. John covered less than 4,000 miles in that 21 years of ownership and during our conversation he said he still had the invoice from when he bought it. The next day an e-mail arrived from John with scanned copies of the invoice and the window card from the **Auto Stable** in Dunedin. These documents had both the engine and chassis numbers that matched a green roadster that was shown on the Export to NZ list received from the UK MGC Register. My study of the factory build records revealed three British Racing Green roadsters were exported new to New Zealand, this one being the only one with a factory hard top and boot rack. So, I think we had all the proof we needed to confirm this roadster was EB3780.



So, what was so special about **David McNabb's** e-mail? Back in the late-1960s/early-1970s Castrol ran a series of advertisements that appeared on the back cover of the MGCC Canterbury magazine featuring

different MGs. The advertisement, included at the beginning of this article, has an MGC with those original **EB3780** plates.....a real surprise when I opened his e-mail!

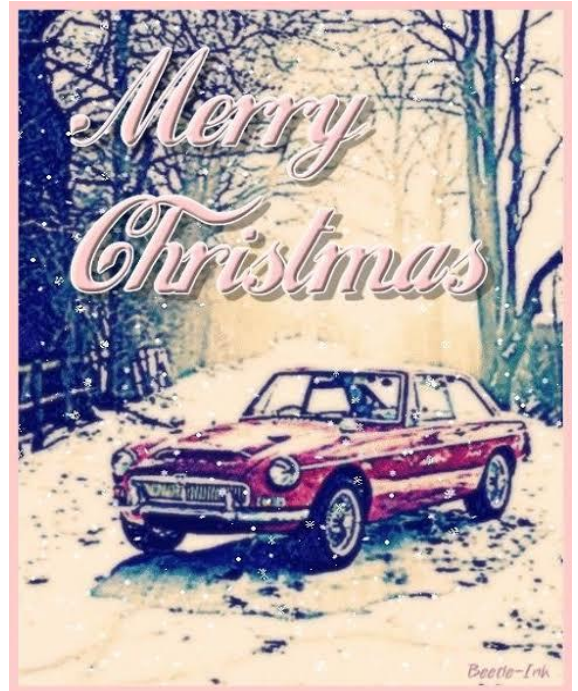
This C has now been in the ownership of **Doug and Maureen Stanaway** since 2001. They were great company on the **Magical Grand Cruising** tour last November, participating in the Southern Loop from Cromwell to Invercargill, then through The Catlins and onto Dunedin. The photo (see previous page) taken during our lunch stop at Kaka Point in The Catlins is of the former **EB3780**, now **68MGC** and my red roadster **69C**.

Ian Grant

And Finally, we wish you all a

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

Ian Grant



Register Contact Details

Secretary & Historian: Ian Grant, Home: 07 8886429, Mobile: 027 6787923
e-mail: thegrants@actrix.co.nz

Technical Adviser: Harvey Heath, Home: 09 8342552, Mobile: 021 1721033
e-mail: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com

Past Secretary & Editor: Peter Dunlop MBE, Home: 09 5364410, Mobile 021 02788652
e-mail: dunlops@hotmail.com

***MG Car Club (Auckland Centre) Inc. P. O. Box 90456,
Victoria Street West,
Auckland 1142,
New Zealand. www.mgclub.org.nz***

Your MGC Register Team



Peter & Raewyn, Ian, Jane & Harvey at Chateau Impney, June 2017

NB: No calls after 9pm please

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

Parts for Sale

Harvey Heath's Rebuilt MGC Water Pump Supply



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

For more information please contact:

Home: 09 8342552, Mobile: 021 1721033

Email: harvey.w.heath@gmail.com

Overseas Spare Parts Supply

You may like to make a note of this items which is featured in the current **MG Owners Club** magazine.

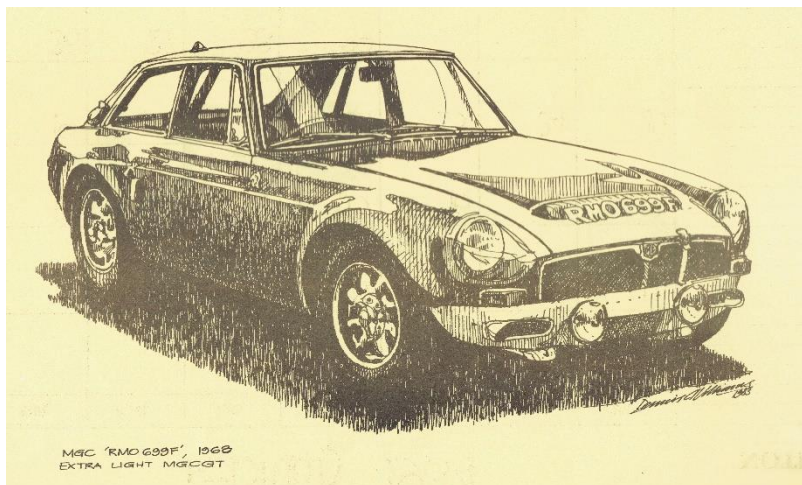
Previously unavailable MGOC Spares are pleased to offer MGC owners replacement six bladed plastic cooling fans under part number 13H3635 as specified for all UK MGCs & GTs, priced at only **£89.95**; offered alongside the eight bladed steel cooling fan as specified for export models stocked under part number 13H4988 priced at **£108.95**. To order telephone MGOC Spares on 01954 230928 or visit www.mgocspares.co.uk





Photo Gallery

Back in days of old, MGCC Auckland produced an annual calendar featuring the superb artwork of **Den "The Pen" Williams**. This is what we had on our walls in 1984. Den must have worked from an early photograph of ROMEO as the bonnet shown is rear hinged.



Romeo at Chateau Impney for the UK 50th Anniversary, June 2017 (with front hinging bonnet)



Six original MGC GTs at the MG Car Club, Silverstone meeting May 1992



RMO leads **MBL** with the four John Chatham lightweights following



Safety  *fast*

