



# 'T' REGISTER NEWS

**THE MAGAZINE OF THE MG CAR CLUB T REGISTER NOW IN ITS 50<sup>TH</sup> YEAR**

**NO. 10 APRIL 2013**



**THE HISTORY OF MIKE MEANWELL'S TA**

**A Message from the Chairman of the MG Car Club 'T' Register - Geoff Matthews**

Spring is, at last, here although in my part of the world it is still quite cold, but here's hoping!

With two or three, if you count the excellent MG Era Day at Brooklands, events in our 50<sup>th</sup> year behind us, attention now begins to focus on the Club's main event, MG Live.

Full details will have been given to you by our scribe, John Ward elsewhere, so suffice to say Annie and I are looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible on our T Register reserved tables at the Gala Dinner on the Saturday night. Make sure you let John know you want to be with us and we should have a great night.

This will be followed by the T Party on 28<sup>th</sup> July and let's try and make sure we hit Graham Brown's target of 50 cars for this special occasion. The amazing offer of free entry for car and driver must make this an event not to miss in this anniversary year.

And not long now and it will soon be time for the Autumn Tour, the refurbishment works at the hotel are all complete and the pictures on their website are splendid and I am sure they will look after us well and we can complete the year's events on a resounding success note.

On the Regalia front I have just taken delivery of my new shirt from Topsigns sporting the 50<sup>th</sup> logo, see picture, I would encourage you to take a look at their website for more details of their super range of embroidered clothing.

<http://www.topsigns.net/clothing/car-club-shop>

Happy T Typing

All the best, Geoff



**TRN APRIL 2013**

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## EDITORIAL

Incredible to believe that this is the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of TRN since its inception in January 2011 following the resurgence of the other publication which caused much confusion and unnecessary dissention among T Types generally.

It was very pleasing to note at the 3 events held so far this year that I have attended the enthusiasm for the MGCC T Register is as strong as ever and with the 50th celebrations well under way adding further proof of its popularity and the added bonus of meeting many new owners at the same time.

So much so that in spite of the weather the attendance at Rebuild was overwhelming and we had a full house of 130 delegates packed in and the gathering of the faithful or GOF as our American cousins label it at Brooklands MG Era Day was a fantastic turnout and well worth being there, the spirit lives on!

A slightly shortened edition this time, not so much copy or articles about, can only assume all you chaps must have been out there busy fettling your cars in preparation for getting to all our great programme of events for the 50<sup>th</sup>.

I am finally getting the TF sorted, sadly I missed out taking it to Brooklands because I have been a little waylaid, or was it ambushed in completing a major refit of my sons GT with him. Delivered it back last weekend, the garage seems much bigger again now.

Not being one in the past to use this column to gripe or groan but cannot help to make comment about the quality of the parts and the services that have been sourced to carry out the works on the GT.

There are companies in business to exclusively supply parts to MG owners and it has been particularly disappointing to see the quality of the products that have been received. It is not good enough to state that

this is what the manufacturers produce and supply, after all we pay top dollar for them, perhaps we should insist they follow the lead of the big supermarkets and 'we buy one, get one free'

As a typical example a new hose set was installed and after only 50 miles the top hose almost split in half, naturally in a very busy thoroughfare at rush hour, steam everywhere. There that's better, but enough of that.

A couple of occasions to savour recently, I received a call from a colleague, you know the sort of thing, what was I doing next Wednesday? Foolishly I said not much and so found myself heading down the country on a 200 mile round trip. His mate had just bought a '54 TF and not being too sure of the handling and driving characteristics of T types would I go along and ride shotgun and take a share of the driving.

Turned out to be quite an adventure, I did get breakfast and tea and cakes later, but due to delays caused by accidents we were on the road much later than planned and being a recent purchase of course the lights were not perfect, the dip switch jammed and naturally when it came on to rain the wipers did not respond! Still the mission was accomplished and the new owner was delighted, all the more important because he is in his 73<sup>rd</sup> year!

On a similar note I had a call for help from Dave Clewley's widow Rachael. Just before David died he had told her that if she was going to take up racing again in his old car she should check out the current feeling in regard to superchargers (his has the renegade Sprintex). I was pleased to pass this on to our racing secretary Jonathan Harmer, I do hope all is resolved and we see Rachael on the grid. After last time's exploits of George Edney racing in the States at 70+, it goes to show the lasting spirit of T racers, come on all you young ones!

Till next time.....John Ward

## FRONT COVER

The picture on the front cover of this month's edition is of the TA belonging to Mike Meanwell who now resides with BAH 861 in deepest Wales.

Many of us would like to know more about our cars past and the people who owned and drove them. Mike has unearthed an extraordinary story on the history of his car and some of the circumstances that led him on to explore and find out more.

**This is but only a potted history of his findings which he promises to expand upon in the future.**

1936 MG TA chassis number TA 0876 engine number 1158 was laid down in Abingdon on 9<sup>th</sup> November and first registered as BAH 861 on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1936 in the county of Norfolk.

The car was a 21<sup>st</sup> birthday present to John William Shillaker born on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1915 in East Ham London E6 where his parents owned and ran Deans Ltd which was a well established and successful hosiery and outfitters of its day.



His parents lived in Woodford Green in Essex which was the family home and when they moved to Bridport in Dorset in 1938, John took over the business at Deans Ltd in East Ham.

That same year John drove the TA to Italy and back via the Alberg pass, no mean feat in those days and a remarkable example of the resilience of the cars and their drivers of early MG's.



With the outbreak of the Second World War, on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939 John joined the Honourable Artillery Company in 'C' Battery of the 12<sup>th</sup> Royal Horse Artillery Regiment, regimental no. 1397734 and then at the height of the blitz offensive on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1940 he was posted to the new 'F' Battery, by this time he was a paid war sergeant.

John's father had died on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1940 but the car had remained in East Ham. However in an air raid on the night of 13<sup>th</sup> October that year, Deans Outfitters got damaged and so too did BAH 861 and the original log book was destroyed.

It was with some regret that it was sold shortly after in December for £45.00 to Mrs. Gernat, a Director of Milton Garages Ltd of East Ham London E6. The car was suitably repaired and used regularly by Mrs. Gernat up to 1942 when it was put in store at the Garage until the end of hostilities in 1945 when it came out of store to be resprayed red and silver to celebrate VE Day.

Sometime soon after, the date is not recorded, the car was put up for sale and bought by Leslie Bruce Bingham of Bedford. During 1947 Leslie was in the Cambridge University Air Squadron based at Fen



Causeway Cambridge and where he had managed to amass a rather large mess bill.

In order to remedy this matter he sold the TA to his brother Robert Sinclair Bingham and the car moved to Bedford.



Robert (Bob) Sinclair Bingham and the TA

The financial situation of elder brother Leslie must have improved somewhat by 1948 because on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July he bought it back from his brother Bob.

Leslie Bingham and BAH 861 moved many times in the ensuing years but eventually it found a home on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1950 in Lowford, Bursledon, Hampshire.

However not long after on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August that year it was sold on again this time to Dudley K Rolls of Hamble in Hampshire who kept the car until it was put into Southampton Car Sales Ltd where on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1954 it was sold to Donald H Trodd who lived in Nursling, Southampton.

It is at this point that the current owner Mike Meanwell comes on to the scene. He purchased BAH 861 for £300 from the above Donald Trodd on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1971 who had kept ownership for 17 years and during which time it had changed livery to British Racing Green.

That year in August Mike drove it up to Scotland on a camping trip only for it to break

down in Stirling having burnt out an exhaust valve as well as cracking the cylinder head.

They were great days then, what did he do? He phoned home of course and a few days later his father came up with a rebuilt cylinder head and duly fitted it, no more major problems after that but then the car was taken off the road in the winter of 1972/3.

Like many T types at this time it languished in the garage for a number of years undergoing spasmodic bursts of rebuild and restoration until 1992 when by now it was 75% rebuilt. Then on 27<sup>th</sup> May that year Mike sold it to Peter Plaskett of Legbourne near Louth in Lincolnshire. Peter kept the car until his death in March 2000 when his son took on the task of moving it on.

Now the plot thickens, Mike then bought back his old TA through contact with Jess Plaskett, Peter's second wife whom he had married upon the death of his first. So Mike went up to Louth on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2000 to collect the car only to discover that the car was now not drivable and was really in quite a sorry state.

With some trepidation he hauled it back on a trailer with the thought in mind no doubt to begin another long process of restoration.

However not long after this the car was involved in a bad accident, the rebuild took nearly 2 years to complete, Martin Cawte of The Barn Abingdon Sports Cars Ltd carrying out most of the work.

We then move on with Mike continuing to research its history and as result in September of 2010 he drove the TA to Wales and then down to Dorset to meet up with Caroline Barker who was the daughter of John Shillaker who had died in 2007, the very first owner of BAH 861. She went with him in the TA down to Bigbury on Sea where he is buried and took a photo of the car and the church next to her father's grave.

Mike says that all the history of the car before the war was not known to him until 2009 although he had all the old log books which were returned to him in 1978 from the DVLA. It was mainly due to a lady called Janet Greaves of West Ham London that he happened to contact through correspondence that he managed to trace all the early information and history.

Although he did not get to meet John Shillaker who died in 2007 he did manage to meet one of his 4 sisters in 2009 and he went in the TA, she was in her nineties but recognised the car with no problem.



**And as it is today, 75 years on.....**

Mike now lives in Tregaron in Wales, he says the car is original with the exception of an XPAG and has a TC type gearbox.

The next high for the car (pun intended) is to prepare for a return to the Alberg Pass last visited in 1938 with its original owner, we wish him luck and maybe look forward to an account of the trip.

## RECENT EVENTS

### THE 33<sup>RD</sup> T REGISTER REBUILD SEMINARS AT THE HERITAGE MOTOR CENTRE AT GAYDON ON SATURDAY MARCH 23<sup>RD</sup> 2013

In spite of the weather and the coldest March on record since 1962, the snow did not put off the T-Types who had booked and only a handful of the 130 delegates did not make it. Incredible to believe that last year at this same time there were about a dozen T's displayed in the car park all having been driven there with the hoods down.

Everyone agreed afterwards that it was well worth the effort, an absolute joy to listen to the repertoire and take in the information and experience of some of the best in the business, it did not disappoint.

Following registration and a welcoming hot drink and a bacon roll, the delegates made their way to the lecture rooms for the opening seminars. The programme of speakers and their topics had been well publicised in advance, therefore there was no need for deliberation and the seats quickly filled in the respective rooms.

A little more high tech this year, as well as projector screens and computer presentations and there was a video camera at most of the sessions causing more than a little amusement in the process.

The morning sessions started with Barrie Jones our TF Registrar providing us with wealth of facts and information and the build factors that went into TF production in the 50's together with his much valued list of hints and tips that keep our cars in good shape and on the road.

Rambling Ron Drake in lecture room 2 described for us in great detail his barn find of a TD, it was more than a barn find, having been there for so many years it was actually a part of the structural support of the barn and much careful planning and attention was needed to extricate it before the roof caved in and buried it. He went on to tell us of the painstaking work in restoration over many years and the numerous modifications that he has incorporated into the car over the years to enhance the enjoyment and safety aspects of driving a 'T' in today's times.



Rambling Ron and his 'barn find' picture just discernible on the big screen.

After the tea and coffee break with biscuits of course, we indulged in the second session of lectures. Steve Baker and Son gave us an insight into the advanced performance world of the T Racers and in particular the fitting and specification of superchargers both old and the many new versions that are now available on the market. Heat always was and is a continuing problem with superchargers and it will be interesting to see what the outcome of the new fuel specifications will be as a consequence, it being well recognised that such fuels have a higher burn rate

Meanwhile Mike Collingbourn and his son James took us through a demonstration of producing a sample panel in the fit out kit that they supply, giving us a thorough

understanding of the importance of the adhesives, the attention to detail, the quality of the materials and the fabric that has made Collingbourn the yardstick for the services they have provided for many years. All the pieces in a kit supplied and fitted by them are cut out by hand and still the only piece of mechanisation in the factory is the sewing machine.

James is now taking a more active role in the company which is currently undergoing a change of premises and a programme of expansion which will to see us through all our requirements for many years to come.

Lunch next and a splendid cafeteria with attentive staff providing a choice and varied selection of hot dishes, puddings and beverages after which a chance to take advantage of a stroll around all the fantastic machinery that is housed in the museum including of course "Old Number One" together with most of the record breaking cars of the period which made the MG name famous.

Old No.1, how it all started.....



In the afternoon sessions, if Steve Baker had tried to woo us with thoughts of more power and performance by the fitting of a supercharger, then George Edney in sharp contrast convinced us that it was all about cylinder heads and tuning of the XPAG that would give us all the satisfaction and testosterone buzz that we yearned for and coming from the oldest boy racer in town, and still competing, gives us food for thought in this connection. George went through all the rudiments of balanced cranks, boring, head skimming, springs and of course the importance of tuning and timing.



George Edney being wired for sound by the Rebuild Organiser Alan Wakefield

The final sessions gave us a fascinating insight with infinite detail on the intricacies of the steering mechanism on the early T types before the switch to rack and pinion. Eric Worpe presented a typically well researched presentation with precise drawings and illustrations on the infamous early T type 'will of its own' steering habit which should have gone a long way to explaining to many drivers the root cause of this characteristic.

By complete contrast the boys and girls from the Manchester University Research Project Team ably supported by Paul Ireland gave an excellent and well turned out presentation on the results and findings so far on the effect of changes in fuel content on our old engines. The up to date report on their work can be readily obtained from various magazines and on the MGCC website.

A thoroughly enjoyable day all round and as the Chairman of the T Register Geoff Matthews concluded many congratulations to the organiser Alan Wakefield who unstintingly worked to put together this excellent show and the administrative support of a past rebuild organiser Peter Cole.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

For those who did not get to Rebuild or who would wish to obtain copies of the presentations whether in hard copy form or in video or CD versions, work is in hand to produce same for a modest fee, details later in Safety Fast or on the T Register website

### **THE MG ERA DAY AT BROOKLANDS MOTOR MUSEUM SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2013**

Sunshine at last, jazz on the balcony, octagonal T Type parking, concours and hill test runs all made up a great day at Brooklands where as special guests in recognition of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the T Types were there in force.





**Stern to stern, the T Register Octagonal Display at Brooklands MG Era Day**



.....the Luffield sponsored T Type specials were also well represented.



What the judges saw in awarding the TA Tickford belonging to Patrick Gardner with the **“Best in Show Award”**

Patrick has only owned the car since 2012 and kindly acknowledges and takes no credit for the condition of the car as the total rebuild was carried out over a period of 25 years by its previous owner for 50 years, John Hunt who sadly passed away in that year.

Patrick was pleased to inform John's widow and sent her a photo of the presentation, and who was very gratified that the work of her late husband had been recognised in this way.

This 1939 MGTA Tickford. Registration No.FGJ 63, Chassis number TA 3010 was first registered in February 1939. These rare Drophead Coupe bodies were built by coachbuilders Salmons & Sons Ltd of Newport Pagnall, now part of the Aston Martin Lagonda Group



Your editor and scribe with the guy on the right who made these last two events such a great success with his tireless efforts and meticulous planning.....**Alan Wakefield**



TA,TB,TC Registrar Stewart Penfound in his Lester Special goes 'over the top' on the Brooklands Test Hill





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# T REGISTER 50 YEARS 2013

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

### **SILVERSTONE *live* 2013**

#### **SATURDAY & SUNDAY JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup> & 16<sup>TH</sup>**

**The highlight of the T Register 50<sup>th</sup> commemorative year; Silverstone 2013.**

It is impossible to believe that the MGCC has been holding their International MG meeting at Silverstone since 1950 which was 5 years earlier than the last T type rolled off the production line at Abingdon and that it was another 13 years on that the Register was formed.

Many many reasons then why we should all be there to join in the celebrations. All the usual attractions of course, fully described in Safety Fast together with the booking form.

As far as the T Register is concerned a number of special events are planned from the Saturday through to Sunday lunchtime.

Firstly there will be a special display in the Main Marquee as well as the T Register member's stand where you can buy regalia and souvenirs and maybe some items of clothing sporting our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo.

In the Live action arena we shall feature a display of T Types through the ages with interviews and commentary by the 'man of knowledge', motor correspondent and writer Mr Graham Robson.

Shortly following this, a grand cavalcade of 'T's doing the Silverstone circuit rounds, make sure you register and get in on the act!

In the late afternoon there will be the usual Noggin & Natter session adjacent to the racing paddock with Keith Hodder and a number of Specials on display. A little more of a spread this year to mark our anniversary, you never know you could get a chicken drumstick and a piece of cake.

Then just about time to wash up and get your best togs or frock on and join the 'in crowd' at the MGCC Gala Dinner in the Jimmie Brown Suite at 7.30 **The T Register 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** celebration in recognition of our formation way back in 1963 will be held in conjunction with the above.

We have invited some very special guests to join us at this dinner and have pre-booked and reserved T Register 'parking' on tables of 10 available at a price of £35 per person. Tickets will have to be ordered and paid for through the MGCC, the booking forms have been included in the last 2 months editions of Safety Fast or you can book on line through the Silverstone Live website. All those who wish to join us on this momentous occasion, please advise the Editor John Ward, contact details at the end of this edition, and a list of names and a table plan can be prepared in advance, this will also enable us to book the requisite number of tables.

Of course there will be racing on the 2 days, the T Racers will be performing out on the track and the sprint has been restored so a number of Luffield Championship sponsored cars will be in action.

Register parking will naturally be available and this year the sun will shine continually for the 2 days, I do hope so or it will definitely be the last time my co pilot "camps at Silverstone"

### **PRE-WAR PRESCOTT**

#### **SATURDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2013**

Once again this year the T Register is privileged to be invited to the prestigious Pre-War Prescott meeting where Post War T Types are welcome too, all for £10.00 per car. Contact our man Brian Rainbow at [brian@brianrainbow.free-online.co.uk](mailto:brian@brianrainbow.free-online.co.uk)



## THE 2013 T REGISTER

### 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY T PARTY

**Sunday July 28th**

As previously advised it is planned that the T Register once more returns to the Shuttleworth Aircraft Collection Museum on a "Wings and Wheels" flying day.

The Shuttleworth Collection is at the Old Warden Airfield 2 miles west of the A1 where it bypasses Biggleswade approximately 30 miles north of junction 23 on the M25.

The post code for satnavs (how does one have these things in a T Type without a cigar lighter?) is SG18 9EP and for those that are travelling a long way there is a good selection of accommodation addresses on their website [www.shuttleworth.org/shuttleworth-collection](http://www.shuttleworth.org/shuttleworth-collection)

The really good news is that we have received confirmation from the Shuttleworth Museum Marketing Team details of a special offer for **All pre 1960 MGs that attend our 50th Anniversary T Party**. The car and the driver will be **FREE** and an on board passenger will only be charged £12.00, however all drivers and visitors will need to be pre-booked. The normal entrance fee for the day is £19.00 per person so this represents a good saving and a great gesture by the Museum. This hopefully should now easily attract the 50 cars we would like to have at this 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.

There will be unrestricted access to all the hangers and the collection and in addition there is a vibrant Visitor Centre, regalia and memorabilia shop together with excellent permanent catering facilities, all in all a thoroughly grand day out - not to be missed.

It will be a full day starting at 9.00am continuing through to around 6.30pm depending on flying conditions.

If you have not already done so and would now like to be there, contact Graham Brown on 01234 358729 or email [graham.sue358@btinternet.com](mailto:graham.sue358@btinternet.com) he will send you a booking form.

If applying for driver and car only they are happy to accept an email response along with the booking form marked for the attention of Sandra Creevy to;- [marketevents@shuttleworth.org](mailto:marketevents@shuttleworth.org)

If passenger payment is involved, please either telephone 01767 627924 and use a credit card OR send a cheque to The Shuttleworth Collection, Old Warden Park, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 9EP and mark for the attention of Sandra Creevey, Marketing Events.

### THE BORDERS TOUR TO NORTH YORKS AND PEEBLES

The North Yorks tour will be based for 2 days at Grant and Barbara's hostelry at Leyburn on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Then on to Peebles for another 2 day stay before some of us head much further north to the EEotY at Aviemore. Any late enquiries for cancellations etc. contact the organisers Bill and Sally Silcock on 01525 750468 or [treg.sec@virginmedia.com](mailto:treg.sec@virginmedia.com)

### THE AUTUMN TOUR NORTH DEVON & EXMOOR 13th TO 16th AUGUST

The organisers Annie and Geoff Matthews are now very much involved in the planning of routes and the itinerary for this tour around North Devon and Exmoor. If you still wish to join in this annual T Register get together contact them now on 01840 214972 or email [anniematthews@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:anniematthews@yahoo.co.uk) in order to check on cancellations and availability.

## ADVANCE NOTICE

### THE 2014 T REGISTER AUTUMN TOUR

Although the 2013 Autumn Tour to Exmoor is still some way off, as we all know the planning, organisation and booking for these popular tours has to be considered well in advance particularly in the choice of hotels.

We are pleased to advise you that the 2014 event will be staged in Lincolnshire, based in the delightful location of Woodhall Spa on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds some 14 miles south of the majestic cathedral city of Lincoln. **The date for your diary will be Friday September 5<sup>th</sup> to Monday the 8<sup>th</sup> 2014.**

This part of unspoilt Britain was the home of the Second World War bomber squadrons so a little clue as to the likely nature of suitable places to visit but not forgetting the ladies there are some delightful market towns tucked away nearby and the rolling Lincolnshire Wolds still provide delightful driving with only an occasional tractor and trailer to zoom by and overtake!

We have secured bookings at both of the large traditional hotels situated in the town which are only around the corner from each other which gives options for the length of stay that you may require.

The Petwood Hotel have allocated us 35 rooms for the three nights and the nearby Golf Hotel can accommodate us with 20 rooms for the two nights of the Friday and Saturday for those who wish to travel on after the Sunday run. The Saturday Gala dinner will be held at the Petwood Hotel for all of us and the Friday night dinner being taken at the respective hotels.

Further details to be announced in due course but if you think this tour is for you, contact John Ward, details at the end of this edition to register your interest.



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We haven't stopped here though. We currently have many projects on the go so watch out for more parts coming soon.

We are currently very excited about our biggest and most ambitious project to date - an XPEG block which we hope to have finished in April. For more details and up-to-date prices and availability please do not hesitate to phone our spares department. We can also offer a full fitting service in our award winning workshop.

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## COMPETITION NEWS

### **An update and report from the T Register Competitions Secretary Jonathan Harmer**

2013 is beginning to settle down into what I hope will prove to be a popular programme for competitors.

But first a brief look back at 2012 – the Iconic Series has been enjoyed by those who participated however without everyone joining in for the key events, it has meant sharing grids with others rather than having our own race – the economics of this have been pointed out many times so I won't bore you again.

Having said that, the Peter Best guys were most welcoming and their current group of drivers and us fitted in well together. We were with them at Brands Hatch and Oulton Park and at Silverstone we were in with Fiscar. Finally the season culminated fantastically with the brilliant 1 – 2 team win at the Snetterton four hour relay.

T Types and Specials also took part in other events for example with Julius Thurgood and overseas events such as Vernasca in Italy, Etratat and Coupe Florio Hill Climbs in France. The hill climbers distinguished themselves in the Luffield Championship under the watchful eye of Tony Smith. In short we got around and made our presence felt although not to the extent that we would have liked.

Finally those who came to the T Racer's Dinner in conjunction with the Peter Best Racers had a great evening where again they were very welcoming and helpful. However the turnout was frankly not good and discussions are ongoing as to what everybody wants. One suggestion is to have a T Competitors/T Register Dinner in the autumn but all suggestions welcome.

We also said goodbye to two long term T Racers, Richard Green and David Bishop – let's hope the cars continue to race in the UK and don't end up overseas. One should also not forget the great social side that we

enjoyed and while I can only speak for the circuit racers, this was usually based around the Pilot Motor Sport emporium with an excellent barbeque – thanks Alex for the paella and a good deal of banter.

So far the 2013 programme is as follows:

1. Brands Hatch on the weekend 4/5 May where we will be racing with Fiscar – as you all know their cars are not only lovely but our period so no excuses!
2. MG Live on the weekend of 15/16 June where we will again be with Fiscar – note this will be on the Saturday as in previous years which will tie in very well with the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the T Register and the Natter in the late afternoon.
3. 21<sup>st</sup> July MG Cadwell
4. 10<sup>th</sup> August Bentley Drivers Club - we have not been for a number of years but a great meeting with a wonderful selection of cars
5. 6<sup>th</sup> October Snetterton the BMH Four Hour Relay – no doubt the handicappers will have something to say but always a fun event and enjoyed by everyone who takes part.

George Edney phoned me the other day to say that Julius Thurgood is running a race suitable for us at the Spring VSCC meeting on April 20/21. This is good opportunity for us at a great meeting, for more information please contact George on 07710471864. This is similar to the races that some of you went to at Mallory and Donnington. Mainly MG's plus others. 15 minute practice and half hour race for £275.00.

A number of us went to Etratat and Coupe Florio Hill Climbs in France these take place on the 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> August and the 30<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> August. They are great fun to do with an excellent social life, interesting cars and the very French way of doing things. Contact me for details.



At Silverstone MG Live there will be tables at the Dinner for the T Register to celebrate the 50th Anniversary with no doubt a lot of familiar faces from the past and present. Tell the Editor John Ward that you will be attending to get on the reserved tables.

### Technical items from the Drivers Meeting

Stub Axles – while there is no need for certification I cannot emphasise strongly enough the importance of checking stub axles regularly given the forces they are subjected to. It is yours and others safety that is at stake.

Tyres – it was agreed at the Drivers Meeting that in 2014 we would move to Dunlop Historic Race Tyres. Given that all the main historic race series are on Dunlops it seems sensible to bring us into line and make us more acceptable to other race organisers. Change is never welcome but we need to think of the future.

Superchargers – while this is a very controversial subject and non period and period are banned under T Register regulations it was agreed that for the time being there would be no restriction on the Eaton type superchargers. This reflects on the fact that half of the core of the grid are running superchargers. Sprintex however is not included and a watchful eye will be kept. We are all very mindful that we do need to try and control costs, have reliability and all things being equal, have competitive close racing. We also need to not discourage new entrants – all in all a somewhat difficult balancing act.

### **A kind of Technical Article**

#### **Notes on rebuilding a TD by an ageing Old Delinquent Part 3**

*This is an occasional series of which this is the third – amazingly*

Firstly I must apologise to my avid readership (Sid & Doris Bonkers of Penge, formerly of Willesden) who have besieged the editor of this journal for more articles.

The reason for the delay has been the weather which being so awful who could spend time underneath an MG if they anticipated the odd ray of sun.

The new tub arrived looking very smart and was deposited in a spare garage on a pile of pallets – this to avoid bending down which now that one is over 40 it is not as easy as it was. I fitted the door catches and locks and the firewall. Some say that the fire wall should not be fitted until the body is on the chassis. This would mean slotting the firewall down between the tub and the forward stay supports. Some say that the latter should not be fitted until the tub is in place. This I didn't do because prior to the body arriving I fitted the radiator and filled it up with water and antifreeze to inhibit any rust inside the water jacket.

So one sunny Saturday morning neighbours duly arrived at the appointed hour and the four of us lifted the tub onto the chassis with no fuss. It is a great advantage to live in a village where every other chap (or so it seems) has old cars. Two of the gentlemen who helped, muster among themselves, a 4 litre V\* MGB, an E type and various other MGs.

In this rural retreat it has been suggested that there is over 40 Vintage and similar cars lurking in barns and motor houses. We number under 350 people. Another oddity is that just north of the parish lives the man who controls the world's largest maker of cars.

Back to the TD. At first it seemed that the tub fitted the chassis like a glove. It didn't nor does it. It took a while to get the two vertical bolts at the rear to align with the holes in the chassis and only after a judicious use of the drill. Then I found that the tub sat well on the chassis on the right hand side but on the left there was a gap of an eighth or so. Tightening the bolt solved that issue taking care that the door gap didn't change.

A few more bolts to firmly fix the fire wall to the tub and it was ready for the first trial fit of the tank and wings. The tank proved a problem particularly without another TD to compare. The issue was that the spare wheel carrier touched (fouled?) the fuel tank. Examination showed that this was not a new



phenomena and checking all the TDs on the Cotswold run evidenced that the clearance between the tank and the wheel carrier is minimal or not existent. Then or perhaps prior to this was the locating of the four holes for the carrier to fit to the tub. Get these wrong and you have big problems.

Then the wing and running boards. The first fit was made and left, for weeks. Examination showed that the fit was poor, so off with the lot, a large drink, walk the dogs and wait, and wait and wait. Why, to summon reserves to start what becomes a long and precise fitting and refitting until I was satisfied that the fit was good. Only after removing one rear wing six or was it seven times was I happy. The procedure was to fit one wing complete with the plastic insert which then throws out the alignment of some of the bolt holes.

Filing one and refitting to check and eventually they all fit. One problem is to get the wing up under the tub but checking with other TDs shows that many have a poor fit in this area. It could be solved by drilling and screwing in the appropriate places. Another vexation is getting the bottom of the rear wing to align with the vertical hole in the chassis to which it attaches without fouling the rear of the spring and leaving sufficient room for the rear pan. It is a matter of patience, attention to detail and perseverance. No quick fits here.

With the rear wing in place the front wing and running board are attached. When satisfied it is time to mark out for the three holes that take the three long bolts which hold the running board to the tub. Take care! It is too easy to assume that the fit is AOK when in fact the running board is pressing on the rear wing even with the rubber bung in place. Occasionally one sees a TD where the running board fits tight up against the rear wing. Wrong! There is a gap to allow the passage of water. I found that the tub seemed to be about an eighth too short because the front wing made a bad fit on the front cross member just behind the shock absorbers. Tin snips soon solved that matter.

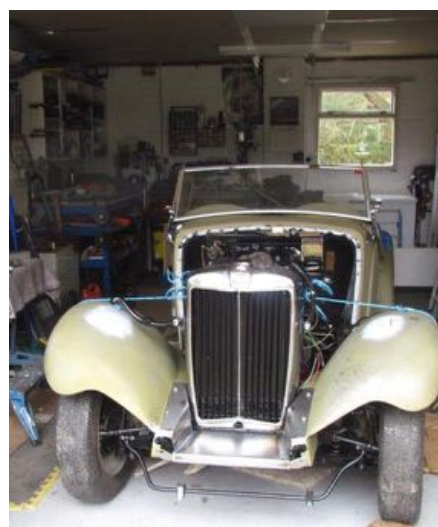
After many hours/days lying on ones back cursing because the bolt will not go into the hole it and hold up the wing with one hand it is pleasing to stand back and believe that the fit is good.

Many of these tasks need another pair of hands. She who must be obeyed is the obvious helper but sadly when you need help she is unavailable. However 'er indoors' did actually provide excellent help.

The rear end of the near side front wing was badly corroded so off to the blacksmiths to get suitable steel off cut to make a new piece. This was easier than I had anticipated and I now need to borrow a MiG welder. Fortunately another inhabitant of this backwater has one. The offside front wing is split at the front and one running board is rusted at a joint and so needs welding.

Whilst in the throes of these works I viewed as many others did the restoration of an MGB GT on Channel 5. They said it cost about £2500 to transform a rust bucket into a "superb" machine. Perhaps I should telephone them to get the TD finished. (I am told that they used two cars for this farrago). Who do the producers think they are kidding with such rubbish?

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