



# 'T' REGISTER NEWS

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

NO. 11 JULY 2013



**'Jezebel'**

**"Why the name?" ask Piers Hubbard**

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

As I write this note Summer has finally arrived and we have been enjoying the best weather we have had since moving to the South West six years ago.

Very good for T Types and I am hoping to see many of you at our "T Party" at Shuttleworth . Thanks to Graham Brown's efforts we have a superb turnout of around 76 cars scheduled to arrive during the day. I am planning to travel up from Cornwall in the "Black Pig" and this is the most adventurous trip I have attempted so here's hoping!

It was great to be at Silverstone this year and especially at the Saturday night dinner and be privileged to share a table with 4 founder members of the Register and listen in as to how it was in those days 50 years ago.

On a more serious note we are now half way through our T Register year and the AGM will be taking place at Rebuild in March next year. We are desperately hoping to hear from some new prospective committee members so please do give me a call and discuss the possibility if you feel the time is right for you to make a contribution to your Register activities. I look forward to hearing from you.

With only one more official T Register event, the Autumn Tour in September we will soon be into dark nights and winter, time to get the tools out and prepare the cars for 2014, where does the time go to?

Anyway, hope to see you soon as our 50<sup>th</sup> year draws to a close and happy T Typing to you all.

All the best, Geoff

**TRN JULY 2013**

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## EDITORIAL

July and summertime weather at last, it seemed a very long winter and the late spring cold snap did not help.

I am preparing these ramblings between getting the TF ready to go to the T Party at Shuttleworth on Sunday; rumour has it that over 70 T Types will be in attendance. There will be a full report and pictures in the September issue of Safety Fast, it being one of our 4 page slots in the year, the others being January and May. I am always pleased to receive any articles or reports for these editions it is an ideal opportunity to spread the word and reach a worldwide audience.

With Shuttleworth over, sadly there is now only one T Register event left for this year, the Autumn Tour to Exmoor and North Devon from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September to Monday 16<sup>th</sup>.

However in the interim some of us are making the long journey north to the MGCC European Event of the Year at Aviemore in August, looking forward to that, having been on 3 previous EEotY tours this will still seem like going abroad in terms of days away and mileage covered.

Already we are thinking ahead and making preparations for next year we now know the date for the Rebuild sessions at Gaydon and the Autumn Tour to Lincolnshire in September.

There will be a Register committee meeting at Abingdon on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2013 where the events of the past year will be evaluated and a draft programme for next year can be promulgated. If anyone has ideas any in regard to activities or venues that you would like us to consider do get in touch and similarly topics of interest are eagerly being sought by Alan Wakefield for the Rebuild Sessions in March.

At long last I seem to have sorted out all the gremlins that have been manifest in the TF since I took it off the road after the Belgian EEotY in September 2011. The first successful run two weeks ago brought back all those memories as to why I have a T Type .....Orgasmic!

However it was touch and go sometimes, I could find no real or logistical reason as to why it would not run properly. Every avenue was explored, experienced car men came from near and far, each offering advice and remedy. Timing and distributor were poured over and checked repeatedly, new plugs, caps, points, meters attached everywhere. Each time a modicum of success until the road test.

Must be the other side, carbs off and on, replace fuel tank filter, clean and check fuel lines, eventually a new fuel pump, new needles, jet bearings, float chamber valves and still all to no avail, the car would not run smoothly when throttle applied. It was as if it was running on 2 cylinders plus 2 halves.

Carbs off again, it has got to be fuel related. Then whilst perusing the forward float chamber on a clean bench cloth, a small chip of shiny aluminium was spotted, where did that come from? A closer inspection under a microscope revealed a hint of thread and on further investigation the discovery that a matching fragment was missing from the float chamber lid where the bolt is housed. Could this be the answer? When more fuel was needed this tiny fragment was being sucked deeper into the outlet to the jet.

Hastily refitting the carbs and following an altercation with new plugs that I will not bore you with the car fired up instantly, a couple of hours of balancing and timing checks and fantastic, the TF was back, now for the open road.

'till the next time.....John Ward

## FRONT COVER

### Life with a TA in 1960

I wasn't going to buy an M.G. but a school friend was selling his TA to buy a later T-series car. I had a look having heard about MG's and at £240 decided that it was worth it, so my first car MG 6165 entered my life. This was in 1958.

The first problem arose on leaving a cinema with a girl friend late one evening and finding that the car would not start. I had not realised that I was running on the reserve tank and that I had used it all. It was no trouble to push the car to the garage fifty yards away and be filled up at 11pm, open and manned at that hour. This must have started a chain re-action because the car then became unreliable probably due to muck being dragged into the fuel line. It was so unreliable that it was nicknamed 'Jezebel'. It took several weeks to iron out the problems.

Later I took the same girl to the Middlesex 7's but on leaving – a dead car. I telephoned the recovery service from a local telephone box, no cell phones in those days. When he arrived he taught me about electric fuel pumps by opening the bonnet and tapping the pump to set it going. The same girl was with me going out to dinner near Richmond (Surrey) when we met a bank of fog by the Hawker aircraft factory on the Kingston to Richmond road. The road dipped and then climbed to the right, I climbed to the left and up the kerb. Visibility was about ten yards; we had real fog in those days. So much so that the bus I was following home went into a cul-de-sac by mistake. The following morning I found petrol all over the floor of the garage. The jolting over the kerb had pushed the two fuel pipes into the tank. This meant a new fuel tank from a local metal works; there were few spare parts in those days.

That year I was still auditing and one in Cambridge over ran which necessitated me and a colleague to return after a weekend but

there was no accommodation left. I agreed to drive there and we were to stay at Duxford, they were still night flying Javelins there in those days. I picked up my colleague at the foot of London Bridge and returned him there the following evening without any problems. However, on reaching the traffic lights at red half way up Brixton Hill and stopping, I realised that the off-side rear tyre was punctured. On jacking the car up it rolled backwards off the jack. This told me that the hand brake only worked on that wheel; there were no MOT tests in those days. I had to drive round the corner on the flat tyre onto level ground.

I joined the M.G. Car Club in 1961 and went on an Owner Drivers Car Maintenance Course at the local Primary School – evening classes of course. I thought that I ought to learn more about the idiosyncrasies of these cars.

It was on Boxing Day that year that the snow came and I and a new girl friend were due to lunch with an Uncle in Send at the other end of Surrey which is via the Hog's Back from Croydon and we did not have gritters in those days. The narrow tyres bit through the snow giving us little trouble although the cross wind meant that we drove at forty five degrees or so it felt. We took the long way back and then found the front number plate was bent back under the car.

A few weeks later I went to collect some crockery from my sister but as I turned across the road to reverse up their drive the car lurched and settled to one side. It was recovered to a local garage as the off side spring had parted company with the axle. They did not want to know and requested that I remove the car.

By dint of jacking up the car to force the two parts together I lashed them in place and gently drove home, downhill all the way but the one in five slope to the garage defeated the lashing.

I had to remove the plugs and, with my parents helping to push, wound it to the top of the drive with the crank handle. A friend agreed to help with the repairs and met me at Marble Arch to take me to an Aladdin's Cave of old spare parts in Elnathan Mews. We chose the best axle we could find, there were several from which to choose, and returned home in his Austin 7 to replace the damaged one, in this we were helped by a passer-by who happened to own a TA. Had Brown met Gammons then?

That summer we went on tour through the Lake District to Glasgow and then south through the Lake District to York, Lincoln and home. The only problem was near Ayr when a clang from the left rear announced that a bolt from the plate on the spring had gone on leave.

By now I had proposed, in the car of course, and had got married and my in-laws had now moved to the New Forest We went to visit them on one Friday evening. As we climbed out of Guildford up the Hog's Back the engine cut out. As we know by now I could cope with this. So out we get, open bonnet, tap pump, shut bonnet, back into car and away. We had still to reach the top of the hill when it happened for the third time. So it was the second most important item in the tool kit that was needed not deeming it bad enough for the first, the recovery crew.

The second item? A piece of string. We nearly always drove with the hood down – and still do. So, with the string tied to the pump terminal lead, back passing a small screwdriver which was making a gap under the bonnet, then over the windscreen and held by my wife, we were off again. Each time the engine cut I nudged my wife who jerked the string which started the pump and we were away often without stopping.

Near Cadnam I spotted the first garage that appeared to be open; this at 9:30 p.m. I called in "Can I help you?" he asked, "I doubt it as I need a fuel pump for the TA" I said. "No problem" he said "I have two on the shelf; my son has a Y-type" Job done. Could one do that now?

A trip to the 1963 MGCC meeting at Silverstone was the first of many, I haven't missed one since. Cruising on the M1 at an indicated 70 m.p.h. was no problem but I do remember the problems some had by the tyre marks going straight over the roundabout where the M1 ended and the A45 went off.

The last major work I did on that car was to re-paint it in Parchment over B.R.G. using brushes and Valspar with no brush marks, in a garage with no electricity fifty yards from the flat. I sold it in the summer of 1965, as a two seater would not take a child with all the accoutrements. We then bought a Y-type which was also part of the T Register back in those days.



Piers Hubbard

July 2013

## RECENT EVENTS

### THE MG SILVERSTONE INTERNATIONAL WEEKEND 2013.

Such a great weekend, the weather was nearly kind to us on the Saturday after the wind and rain of the Friday night and Sunday saw a fine if not windy day, none of which daunted the spirits and performance of the crowds or the competitors. There has been full coverage and reports of the main event in Safety Fast so let us stick to T Register matters and the continuing celebration of the 50th Year.

Saturday morning did not look settled with plenty of ominous dark clouds on the horizon but in spite of this by the time we reported for car parking duties just after 9.00 there were already half a dozen T's and a steady stream of arrivals shortly thereafter.



A number of the early arrivals on the Saturday morning with those ominous clouds



It was good to see so many visitors from across the water be it East or West including a devoted group of antipodeans who will be here for the coming weeks at various MG events and of course the regular visitors from Europe who make it an annual event.

You can "paint your wagon" this colour in the States!



But then what about 'buttercup' a newcomer from the UK to brighten up the scene?



The inevitable happened shortly thereafter and a ten minute deluge made everyone scurry and wrestle with the hoods and sidescreens but thankfully that was the last rain we had on the Saturday.

By 11.00 there were over 50 cars in our allotted parking area and we had to keep stealing a space or two from the turning bay of the classic Bristol buses who had by now decided that the easiest way round was to drive straight through the assembled 'T's, that is until we found another barrier to put in place!

The next task was to seek out a dozen or so owners and their cars for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary T Register parade in the Arena for display and to be interviewed by the much revered motor head and auto journalist Graham Robson. Eventually an eclectic bunch was called together and paraded in front of the assembled crowds around the arena.



Graham discusses race tactics for a race prepared TC and look, they do not all have to be in BRG or MG Red!



Bill Silcock MGCC Chairman talks to Graham Robson about the passion and esteem held for MG's and in particular the T Types, his own TD Mark 11 parked just behind him.



We find out that this TD, all the way from Victoria Australia, is in fact the original bronze colour when it went there in the fifties.



David Wardell's super TF 1500 one of the last to leave the factory on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1955



A beautiful Tickford graces the line-up.

It is now gone 1 o'clock, most of the T Types who are coming must be here by now, the sun is well over the yardarm, time for a well earned sit down and a couple of pints, very pleased to note that the MG Plaza Bar is stocking a very palatable local brew.

The next happening was the Natter in the late afternoon over with the racing boys in the paddock, adjacent to another excellent display of XPAG Specials organized again by Keith Hodder who unfortunately was not able to join us this year. Plenty of wine and beer available together with a splendid array of nibbles, quiches, biscuits and of course a T Register 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cake, a piece for everyone we trust.



The Cake.....



Committee men and organisers, David Darrell; Regalia, Alan Wakefield; Rebuild Organiser and Peter Cole who coordinated and put together this natter for us.



The spread.....

And Annie Matthews doing the honours





Now suddenly it has gone 6 o'clock and just like the white rabbit we could be late for a very important date. Only time for a quick shower and change and to be off to the Jimmy Brown Suite for the most important occasion of this celebratory year, the Silverstone Dinner, now correctly restored as a formal gathering with waiter service in the confines of the paddock entertainment suites.

We need not have worried about being late, as always with so much chat and gossip to catch up with, the Master of Ceremony had to use all his tact and experience to get us to the allocated tables by 8.00 pm, way after the scheduled 7.30.

There were 3 tables reserved for the T Register with 24 members and guests suitably ensconced. Top table and place of honour was given to our 4 founding members present Ron Gammons, Paddy Willmer, Andrew Roberts and Peter Ross, who had come over from the States, and who were joined by MGCC Chairman Bill Silcock and wife Sally, the T Register Secretary, together with our Chairman Geoff Matthews and wife Annie.



A relaxed Mr. President Mike Lugg with Paul Ireland the instigator of the Fuel/Combustion Research Programme at Manchester University

After a splendid dinner the evening continued with the speeches, a welcoming address to our overseas visitors, congratulatory words on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the T Register and introduction of our founders present, charity raffle and prize giving and so quickly the evening was over albeit now well gone 11pm.

Just time to catch the last performance of the ABBA tribute band and thence to hit the sack.....tomorrow is another day



Sunday morning still a little weary from the night before but at our station on the gate to check in the early arrivals. No more rain overnight and the clouds are not so menacing and we are promised abatement in the wind strength.

Normally not quite so busy on Sunday in the T Register car park but nonetheless a steady stream of cars arriving and today we are wise to the Bristol buses and have a barrier in place early.

The main event to day for us is the GP Circuit Tour which we are sharing with the SVW Register it being 77 years since the first SA was built in 1936.

A dozen or so T Types eventually found their way to the circuit entrance over the bridge and patiently awaited their turn to go onto the circuit not helped by a spin and turn in the last race creating mayhem and depositing debris on the track.





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# T REGISTER 50 YEARS 2013

## FUTURE 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.

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

The organisers Annie and Geoff Matthews are now putting the finishing touches to the routes and itinerary so all should be well advanced and prepared for our annual get together on the Autumn Tour in September.

### ADVANCE NOTICES 2014 and all that.....

### T REGISTER REBUILD SEMINARS 2014

Once again we will be returning to the British Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon in Warwickshire on **Saturday March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014** so a date for your diary for next year already.

### THE 2014 T REGISTER AUTUMN TOUR

As previously advised the 2014 Autumn Tour 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 dates 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 costs and options 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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## THE AERO LOTUS 6 - RYO 9

A few years ago if you were lucky enough to be at MG Silverstone that year, and took time to visit the ever-interesting XPAG Specials display put together by Keith Hodder, you would have spotted a slightly unusual looking open 2 seater, resplendent in oxidised aluminium, and you would have been forgiven for thinking it was a car that had been rescued from a barn somewhere after a hard life on the road or race track. Nothing could be further from the truth; however, as when it arrived for the weekend, it had covered precisely 50 miles under its own power since it was completed, back in 1955.

The story of its origins is fascinating. When current owner Jack Taylor bought it about 15 years ago from the original owner Dr John Kenyon, it came with a thick file containing details of every aspect of its design and build. Dr Kenyon, who was a surgeon and lived in SW London, had thoughts of building a sports car based on the Lotus 6 chassis available from Colin Chapman's fledgling Lotus engineering company, but he didn't like the rather Spartan cycle-winged body on offer, so designed his own, with enclosed wheels.

He got his brother to make proper drawings from his sketches, both for the body and for the de Dion rear axle layout and these have survived. His first design was for a fastback hardtop body, but quotes from the body makers were way outside his budget, so it ended up as an open car. The bill of sale for the chassis, signed by Chapman over a 2d stamp, was in the file, together with the invoice for the body.

There are handwritten notes comparing engines available at the time, showing power outputs, consumption etc and engines considered included Ford 100E, Triumph, Climax and MG, the latter being chosen probably because it was cheap, readily available and easy to tune. Included in the file

is a receipt from Harry Lester for one of his lightweight flywheels.

RYO 9 was completed and on the road by October 1955, but after Dr Kenyon had tried it out; he found he didn't much like it, so, after only 50 miles, put it away in his garage. Before he started on the project he estimated it would cost around £350; the total in the end came to eight hundred, and there is a pencilled note at the bottom of the list which says "£80 from mother". His running cost come out at £16 per mile....

Dr Kenyon moved to Shepperton in 1960, and RYO 9 went with him. It was stored in a wooden shed, one of three placed in a semi-circle, with their doors facing inwards. The other two contained his collection of 12 in. gauge steam locomotives and rolling stock (which he built himself) and the semi-circle contained the turntable for the railway track he built in his garden.



The current owner, Jack Taylor, heard of the car by chance, from a delivery driver who called at his home and mentioned in passing that a friend of his wife's did some cleaning for a chap who had an old Lotus and it might be for sale. Jack already had a Lotus 7, so didn't waste any time following it up. Because the car had never been seen, it wasn't even on the Lotus Register, a rare find indeed. Because the first design was for a fastback, Dr Kenyon called it the Lotus Aero, and the name has stuck.

Jack bought the car back in 1990, but had the engine rebuilt by George Edney, and with George's help sorted the timing at Silverstone, then spent much of the weekend driving round the perimeter road. By that Sunday evening he had probably doubled the car's total mileage since new! Since that time Jack has polished the aluminium body and now regularly competes in the MGCC Luffield Speed Championship

Stewart Penfound

T Register Specials Registrar



On the Brooklands Test Hill at the MG Era Day on April 13<sup>th</sup> where it was a part of the Specials Display at the T Register 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary meeting.

## A kind of Technical Article

### Notes on rebuilding a TD by an ageing Old Delinquent Part 4

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

Apologies to my avid readers and followers on face book, twitter and other electronic communications but this winter has been awful. My time has been taken up by mole hunting. With the river and water table rising

the varmints migrated into our lawn making it look like the Somme on a bad day.

However the TD has not been neglected in spite of diversions such as a 3 litre Lagonda which has front wings 12 foot long.

Just before Christmas I took all the removable panels to Dave whose highly skilled men chemically removed the paint, carefully blasted and painted them (to prevent rusting). I had thought that the panels were in good order BUT large holes appeared where the headlamp brackets bolt into the front wings, along the rolled edges of the same wings.

So these with other bits I took to Bert who is a friend of a friend. His workshop is small; one TD front wing takes up most of the available space so the parts had to be taken to him over time. Dave is a metal basher; not your ordinary bender of metal but a well skilled one having straightened and rebuilt all sorts of cars over the past half century. (Allards are among the worst cars to restore and even Bentleys are not built square).

He let in new metal where necessary and shaped it, removed dents, some of which I was not aware of and generally sorted the tin work out. With the car up together he spent a couple of hours in my workshop bashing here, bashing there to make items fit.

It all looked so simple but like all skilled men he made the difficult look easy. One rear wing was not fitting well under the tub (and probably never had) but a deft tap from Bert and lo and behold it fitted.

All this bashing led one to think how good do these panels need to be. Every flaw can be removed but would the car be usable, was it so perfect even when new? Once in days of yore I was told that the most useful tool on the production lines (at Jaguar and presumably MG) was a large hammer.

The painters have been around to assess the cost and one has come up with a price of circa £5000. Undoubtedly the finish for this kind of money will be outstanding but is it really necessary, would one take it shopping let alone trialling or even going on a Register weekend where the organisers choose lanes so narrow that the car is scratched on both side by the hedges. In a total rebuild how far should one go? Cost is a factor; the more spent the more thorough the job. Our criteria is that the car must last another 30/40 years without coming apart and when it is next rebuilt, one's grandson(s) will say *the old b\*\*\*\*r did a good job.*

This naturally leads into the car's history. I got it because the owner had hit a Citroen on a French road and was establishing his new business (a BMW franchise) and no longer wanted it. He had meticulously rebuilt the car having spent one whole night balancing the con rods and pistons. When the engine was stripped for the first time in 30 plus years it was found that none of the bearings had picked up and everything came apart with ease. The body was the same with two exceptions – the bolts that secure the wheel carrier which are exposed to all the dirt and salt.

We are fortunate in living where we do. Our hamlet of 300 plus souls has circa 50 old cars from Bugattis to MGs (15/18 of which 5 are T types and 6 MGBs. The rest are MMM) and the aforementioned Lagonda. I have not included a plethora of single seaters belonging to one inhabitant nor the Formula 1 cars which a trader has for sale. In the neighbouring parish is apparently the first Porsche ever made which sits alongside (so I am told) 2 Hispano Suizas.

Thus to hand, are many willing hands and advice.

So in conclusion if you are contemplating rebuilding move to an area which has many

enthusiasts and resources or DONT; hand the thing to a restorer and learn how to rob banks in order to pay him.



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