



The MG Car Club T Register - a short history

The T Register of the UK MG Car Club was one of the earliest Registers in the club to be formed and celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2013. It was formed just when the MGA went out of production and the MGB started to appear, making T Types a sports car that could be had for little money, which was cheap to race, and was the last of the traditional design of MG sports cars. This led to the heyday of T Type racing with many of the most famous names of T Type racers appearing which you may have seen pictured in all the T Type history books, names such as Paddy Willmer, Bill Weston and Ron Gammons.

Early days



The T Register was initially formed as a fairly loose collection of individuals who wanted to bring some standardisation of what racing modifications could be allowed and there was no Chairman or Secretary but there was a Bulletin Editor, an Historian, a Photo Registrar, a racing team organiser and a technical committee - all geared towards racing. The first Bulletin was issued in April 1963 with 75 members signed up - all print in those days of course - and by October 1963 this number had grown to over two hundred. The heyday of this first phase of racing lasted into the 1970s and then went into decline due to increasing costs of racing and of course a steady decline in the number of T Types that could be bought cheaply. The Bulletin continued to be produced 4 times per year until 1980 when the MG Abingdon factory closed and was incorporated into the club's Safety Fast magazine where

of course there is still a monthly report on T Register activities.

As well as the bulletins, there was also a monthly T Type Newsletter sent to mainly marshals and competitors to encouraging them to get along to the meetings and events. There were 33 editions of the Newsletter produced and the print run was only 50 copies - but even that sounds copious enough particularly on the dreaded Gestetner machine.

The Bulletin re-emerged in January 1999 as an 8 page A5 booklet which by November 2003 had become an 18 page magazine but 2004 saw the arrival of a completely new style of publication. This combined both the T Register news and reports, technical articles and comments contained in the quarterly bulletin, and also the monthly Register notes in Safety Fast! This was published bi-monthly and available to subscribers on an annual donation basis, printed in an A5 format and called 'Totally T Type' or TTT. This continued until November 2010 when it changed into a more general 'T Register News' magazine available as a file from the T Register's website. Increased printing costs had forced the T Register to use the Internet for disseminating its information. This lasted until October 2017 but more change was on the way.

Enter the Internet



In January 2016 to the surprise of many T Type owners, the T Register started sending out a monthly emailed Newsletter which contained news from the main MG Car Club, news of interest to Type owners and news of T Register, MG Car Club and other events which we thought would interest them. From the start, it included events from other MG clubs around the world which we thought would not only please overseas readers but also be of interest to UK readers as well. The aim was to foster a world-wide community of T Type owners. The enterprise was quite an undertaking as the first task was to compile a list of members' email addresses - quite a challenge when you realise that most T Type owners are, shall we say, of a certain age. We decided to send the Newsletter to MG Car Club members only as we thought we already provided services and information through other channels to non MGCC members who owned T Types. But it is also sent to all the affiliated worldwide clubs of the MG Car Club and of course many of these clubs now send on the Newsletter to their own members. The best thing about an email Newsletter is of course is that goes straight on to people's computers without them having to download anything so the Newsletter is reaching more T Register members than anything else previous to this. Things are not perfect though: we know of 1,500 MG Car Club members who have an interest in T Types but email addresses for 862 of them; and of those 862, between 60% and 70% actually open the Newsletter. However, if you talk to email marketing people, a 60% open rate is very, very good.

Like other car clubs, we also have a website. Our earlier website was difficult to

update and usable by only one person who understood how it was constructed. We have now moved to using a sub section of the main MG Car Club website which operates using Wordpress. Consequently it is much easier to use and things get updated on there much more fully and often. We have a Facebook page as well and this gets updated 2 or 3 times per week and attracts worldwide hits of anything between 500 and 3,000 hits per post. We do find that posting a video gets more attention than anything else! And incidentally, the video which holds our record of most number of hits is the one Martin Kraft provided us with of the MGCC Switzerland T Register run of August 2016. All our videos, including videos of other events which feature T Types, are also put on our YouTube channel. What we no longer have is an online forum; we found that it was not as popular as some other forums catering for our cars and took a lot of administering; all the queries and posts nowadays are on our Facebook page.

T Register activities



The T Register has a regular schedule of events in the UK which we operate from Spring to Autumn. In early Spring we have a Rebuild seminar held at the British Motor Museum with guest expert speakers on technical and historical subjects. It attracts worldwide visitors who are visiting the UK and attendance is usually about 90 people. We have an attendance at the Brooklands Museum MG Era Day in early April, a continental Spring Tour usually to Belgium or northern France, we have a stand at MG Live at Silverstone of course, and we usually attend a number of well-known UK classic car events in the summer - at Bicester Heritage's Flywheel event for

example. In addition to this, we have an annual T Party gathering where we attract around 50 T Types - this year it will be held at the MG Car Club's Donington Park race meeting in July. Our season finishes with a long-weekend Autumn Tour to a scenic area of the UK. T Type numbers on our Spring and Autumn Tours are limited to the capacity of the hotels we use but are usually fully booked up in advance and attract about 50 cars.

We still organise T Type racing. Sadly with the rise in prices for T Types they are no longer seen as a cheap entry to racing and preparing a T Type for racing can easily cost £30,000. We do have a race series of 4 races at MG Car Club race meetings and a pool of 14 cars. They always race at MG Live and provide one of the best spectacles at the meeting.

One of the most used parts of T Register activities is the work of the Registrars. We have four Registrars - for TABC cars, for TDs, for TFs and for T Type Specials.



Tom Wilson the history of TC production expert from Indiana, USA, greets Kenji Matsuoka from the Kobe MG Car Club, Japan at the 2017 Rebuild Seminar



They hold the largest number of records of still-existing T Types which we make available on line; at the moment that stands at over 17,000 cars. The Registrars also provide technical help for owners and in one case we have extra help and information in the form of Roger Furneaux whom many T Type owners will recognise as the 'Mad Metric' provider of those weird XPAG engine bolts with metric threads and Whitworth heads! Our Registrars are quite famous: the TF Registrar Barry Jones has written quite a few books and gets invited to speak at overseas MG events; our TABC - and Specials - Registrar is Stewart Penfound who has recently received an award for his book on the history of Harry

Lester's racing of the T Type Specials he created.

We also provide other services: we have an Historian who keeps copious records of T Types he finds in the news, online, from auction sites and from posts in forums on the Internet. It's a painstaking task. We also have one person whose job it is to liaise with the UK car licensing authority to recover original car registration numbers where a car has lain dormant for many years and is suddenly being restored, and to assure the licensing authority that a T Type that is being reimported back to the UK from overseas (there are many of these) is really a T Type and shouldn't conform to modern car construction regulations. That's quite a task!

T Register online records

We have provided access online to the original factory build records of all T Type models since the early 2000s. They have become the worldwide go-to reference for the build data of the cars. We also provide online access to the Register of known T Types collected by our Registrars; this now comprises of over 17,000 T Types.

In 2020 all these records were moved to a new hosting system within the MG Car Club website and a new Notes field was added to the Factory Records to give additional data for the cars .

Our latest challenge has been to ensure that our records and records keeping conform to the General Data Protection Regulation which came into force in May 2020 and which is affecting many of the aspects of our activities.

Links

MGCC T Register website	http://www.mgcc.co.uk/t-register/
MGCC T Register Events	http://www.mgcc.co.uk/t-register/2018-events/
MGCC T Register contacts (including Registrars)	http://www.mgcc.co.uk/t-register/contacts/
MGCC T Register online records	http://www.mgcc.co.uk/t-register/registers/
MGCC T Register Facebook page	https://www.facebook.com/mgtregister/
MGCC T Register YouTube channel	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGRcRM-4Usutl1OrJ-QS0yg
MGCC T Register racing information	http://www.mgcc.co.uk/t-register/t-register-competition/
Captain Castor	http://www.mgcc.co.uk/t-register/captain-castor-all-issues/