

# ON THE MARQUE



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NOVEMBER 2018

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The Australian branch of  
**FRONTLINE**  
Developments

# ON THE MARQUE

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FOUNDED 1987

AFFILIATED WITH MG CAR CLUB UK

AFFILIATED WITH CAMS



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The opinions of correspondents, individuals and advertisers in this magazine are not necessarily those of the MG Car Club Hunter Region



## ***MG Car Club Hunter Region sponsored and supported activities***

### **What's On**

#### **November 2018**

- ♦ ***Thursday 1st—Square Riggers Natter 12-2pm @ Café Inu Carrington***
- ♦ ***Sunday 4th—Save the date, Shannons Hunter Classic see page 14***
- ♦ ***Sunday 4th—Ringwood Hill climb***
- ♦ ***Sun 11th — Christmas Toy Run and lunch to Rathmines Bowling Club. see page 13 for more details***
- ♦ ***Sat 10th & Sun 11th—MG Racing VIC @ Sandown***
- ♦ ***Tuesday 13th—Committee Meeting 6.00 at Clubroom  
Club Night 7.30pm at Clubroom***
- ♦ ***Wednesday 14th—Midweek Gathering***
- ♦ ***Sunday 18th—Clubman Run***
- ♦ ***Sunday 18th—Sydney Concours***
- ♦ ***Thursday 22nd—Tuning Run—Meet Maccas Hexham, depart 10am***
- ♦ ***Fri 23rd, Sat 24th, Sun 25th—Supercars in Newcastle***

#### **December 2018**

- ♦ ***Saturday 1st—Historic Registered vehicle annual inspection  
Caltex Maryland—See page 18 for more information***
- ♦ ***Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd—HSRCA meeting @ Sydney Motorsport Park***
- ♦ ***Wednesday 5th—GEAR meeting***
- ♦ ***Thursday 6th—Square Riggers Natter 12-2pm @ Café Inu Carrington***
- ♦ ***Tuesday 11th—Committee Meeting 6.00 at Clubroom  
Club Night 7.30pm at Clubroom***
- ♦ ***Wednesday 12th Midweek Gathering***
- ♦ ***Sunday 16th—Clubman Run—to be confirmed***

The advertisement features a collage of car badges. On the left is a large, detailed MG badge. Below it is a Land Rover badge with a grid pattern. To the right is a Triumph TR2 badge. The text 'Sportscar Spares Australia' is at the top right. Contact information is listed below it. At the bottom right, it says 'Now you can get a quote 24/7 online' and 'Proprietor: Noel Anderson Originally established 1958'.

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sportscarspares@aol.com

Now you can get a quote 24/7 online  
Proprietor: Noel Anderson Originally established 1958

# **Christmas Toy Run**

**Sunday 11th November**

**To Rathmines for Lunch at the Bowling Club**

**Please bring a gift to help with the Salvation Army  
Christmas Appeal**

The new club website is up and running.

Search MGCC HUNTER

The site is temporarily hosted by [www.ratwhacker.com](http://www.ratwhacker.com) so don't worry



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I was fortunate to attend my first ever Hill Climb event at Ringwood and had a great time watching the respective teams challenging the hill and attempting to achieve their respective target time as it was a Regularity meeting.

The spectator area has a large covered viewing location that permits a whole track viewing and protection from rain or too much sun, dependent upon the weather condition. I recommend attendance as a spectator and the Canteen during the lunch break had excellent snack meals hot and cold at attractive low prices.

Our "Team Hunter" contestants attacked the hill with vigour and the Sporting Director report herein has the results (see page 15).

The "What's On" page has included with it the club insignia and reference to the club approved and sponsored events so that those members whom receive the digital copy of the magazine can print that page, store in the MG to show enquiring constabulary that you are indeed on a club event.

An article "What Is In A Name" included in this issue is thought challenging with regards to disciplined use of names and should be worth a read (see page 22).

Included with this issue is an interesting article on the first car memories of one of our club members that should be entertaining reading for us older members (see page 24).

Christmas shopping is just around the corner and the Regalia Officer has some **"Regalia Christmas Bargains" for the November club meeting so check out page 30.**

The master cylinder was fitted to my MGB and my lone attempts to bleed the system were not successful, however assistance with a special bleeding tool and encouragement from Denny has achieved the required result.

I have purchased the required cross member insulation nolathane pads, engine and gearbox rubber mounts and their installation is the next task to achieve.

*Graham  
Editor*



***Safety Fast!!***



Hi again,

October was a busy month if you owned an MG in this area. Other than the usual club events which could keep you busy all the time, Bev and I joined several club members at the 2018 MG TYme run by the MGCC Canberra. You will find a few pictures and an article elsewhere in this magazine. Whilst we were enjoying a beautiful spring weekend down south, it was pouring rain up here in the Hunter. This was an omen.

The club night was a very large affair. We had a guest speaker in Robert Cronin from Speedo and Gauge Services. He's one of the few that are left in the business of repairing old gauges for every type of car up to the late 70's. It was a great night. Hopefully we can get a few more speakers over the coming months. Unfortunately it will just be the usual face from the hill this month.

During the club night, the committee snuck out and inspected the park over the road from MGHQ in preparation for our annual Concours. It was sodden under foot and there was very little chance of it being usable. Don't worry, it kept pouring so we did the only thing we could, we pulled the pin... early. We're getting very good at this as I think this is the 4<sup>th</sup> Concours in 3 years we've lost due to rain. There is a suggestion that we take the Concours on the road to communities that need rain. It's only half a joke.

Don't worry we have an alternate date for the Concours... no we don't. It clashed with the Shannon's Hunter Classic that we are running. We won't need the backup date as we're in a drought. That's what we're raising money for at the Classic. A drought elsewhere. Speaking of the Classic, PLEASE, we need all hands on deck to assist with set out and marshalling on the day. Please come and do your bit.

Rain Saturday for the Concours but fine the very next day for the MG Hill Climb at Ringwood. I borrowed Bev's Midget, Gary Piper was in his ever developing rubber nose B and John Stuart pedalled his long suffering BGT up the hill for the day. Asho was entered but was a no show (I'm sure he had a good reason) and was sadly missed. The track was dry (I didn't have to put my roof on at all) and due to the

lack of entries we ended up getting 9 runs each. Gary will hopefully have an article elsewhere on how we did.

That brings us to the club being invited to take part in a Lambton historic celebration. 100 years ago some women from Lambton buried a time capsule in Lambton Park. It's been dug up and was opened after a procession (that the club had some of the older cars in) then a new time capsule was buried.

It's nice to be part of the life of the community. One question that has been raised several times (every year) is why we don't just move the Concours to a hard surface elsewhere. The simple explanation (from my point of view) is that the location in Lambton Park is an integral part of the Lambton community and a beautiful (if sometimes boggy) site directly in front of our picturesque club rooms. Yes we might get to hold the Concours, but at what loss?

I've been spending plenty of time in the shed working on John's TF and I'm still enjoying it. I think I can see a light in the end of the tunnel, I just hope it's not a train. Whist I have grease under the fingernails, long time club member Gary Boote asked for my help to install a 5 speed gearbox in his wife's ex, now daughters Midget. The old gearbox needed a visit to a dentist and the best solution was a conversion. There's bound to be an article in that too somewhere in the future.

Mmm, that just leaves the 'square riggers' lunch, midweek run, clubman run and occasional sporting event and the tuning run, I'd better clean the MG ready. Don't say there's nothing to take your MG too.  
Jonesy

## ***Tuning Runs***

Departure is 10am sharp from McDonalds Hexham, but check the WHATS ON in the magazine each month just in case a special run has been planned



For more information call  
Austin Blanch 0434 143 242

**There will be a break in Tuning Runs for December and January**

During last month's long week end, a number of the North Arm Club members who have dual membership with the Taree Historic Motor Club attended the Great Eastland Hub Rally. This is an annual rally that rotates between six principal historic car clubs taking turns to organise the rally. (Taree, Port Macquarie, Tamworth, Armidale, Coffs Harbour and Great Lakes).

Other clubs are welcome to join the annual event by invitation.

Two of our North Arm members received awards for the presentation of their cars in a category determined by the age of the car.

Don Phillips with his 1937 SA MG won the sub 1940 category and also "Most Desired Car" of the meet. Brenda & John Fletcher's 1971 MGB roadster won the Runner Up trophy for 1970 – 79 category.

At the dinner presentation night a screened video was shown, that was made in 1985, showing the cars that were participating in the "Council of Heritage Motor Clubs Easter Rally" held at Port Macquarie. The majority of the cars participating at that time ranged from the mid 1920's to 1940's. There were some excellent presented examples of that era of motor vehicles. Wooden spoked wheels, Open tourers, Dicky Seat soft tops and hard tops 30's and 40's.

A fine showing of the Elliot Ness range of tin lid square rigs with all steel wheels.

Austin and Morris, Model "A" Ford, Buick, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Dodge, De Soto, Essex, Graham Page, Packard, Vauxhall, Wiley's Knight, all represented. Many of these cars I knew by sight, as most of these cars were still on our roads in the early 50's when I was a boy.

At this years Hub rally cars of this vintage were just half a dozen and the most represented era was the 1960's to 1980's.

On viewing the video I wondered where are those cars today? I guess most of the owners then are now very old or no longer with us.

So what of the cars, are they now in some back yard shed slowly rotting because the younger generation have no interest in them and their cruising speeds prohibits their use on today's highway?

The same is happening with vintage cars in today's Classic Motor Clubs, the older cars are giving way to more modern cars, that are easier to drive and can perform at higher speeds. It's sad that we are losing contact with those cars, that now can only be seen in museums and not in operational performance on roads. They sit where ever, in

silence, only us surviving older generation know what mischief was experienced when driving one of those old timers.

No computer controlled operation or soft suspension, air conditioned automatic rides, in the good old days you wore a Warm Coat in winter, a Rain Coat in the wet and you had to double shuffle to change gear. Our classic cars are now are under threat as auto engineering is entering into another change with driverless automatic computer control.

As fossil fuels run out the internal combustion engine is also on skid row. Electric power is being **reintroduced** but as it stands, its not the complete answer. Time for recharging is an issue and limited travel distance is an issue. Other experiments are with module exchange hydrogen units and may be Peter Brock's Black Box will be reintroduced with a green light power for drive and red for stop. Then there could be the jet-sons bubble car, no wheels but has the power of flight, or will our future mode of travel be by beam, you walk into a lift press the button of your destination and your transported through the air like star dust to your location. Future travel is beyond me, so I guess I'll sit in a chair on my porch and watch the changes. I'll not worry and will be happy to travel as long as I can in my MG, it could end up in a museum along with other current classic cars but I will not be around to see it.

Epilogue: The first electric car was invented in 1832 by Robert Anderson a non-rechargeable primary cell was the power source. It was not until the 1870's that electric driven buck boards became practical. However, it took until 1884 when British inventor Thomas Parker produced suitable numbers of units for sale to the public. The rechargeable lead acid battery was introduced by French Physicist, Gatton Plante on 30th October 1909.

Have Wheels Will Travel

## **Reminder of Midweek Gathering**

*Meet at the venue for a 12 noon lunch*

**14th November— Lake Macquarie Yacht Club**

*Don't forget to phone Kay Bowden to reserve a seat! 49514125*

## **Public Relations Officer Report     Ian Ashton (Asho)**

Please continue to watch out for "What's On" in the magazine and print the page out to carry it with you when taking your Historical registered car for a run. If you notice the club insignia is now included so that you can show to the constabulary should they stop you and need some documentation to prove you are on a club sponsored run.

Alas yet another cancelled M.G. Concours due to wet weather...what do we have to do ? !...all your committee can really do is apologise and hope the 2019 Concours Day is fine and sunny and possibly consider altering the date a little.

Our annual Christmas Toy Run is on Sunday 11th November leaving the Club at 10 am and arriving at Rathmines Bowling Club at about 11.30 for the toy handover to Captain Shirley from the Salvation Army followed by lunch in the Bowling Club.

So please support the Christmas Toy Run and bring along an unwrapped toy for a boy or a girl. If you can't make it on the day simply give your toy to a fellow member beforehand.

Although at the time of writing my report the Shannons Hunter Classic had not been held, as you read your November Magazine it would have. I'm fairly confident to say that it was a success and the funds raised helped our wonderful Farmers in need...thank you to everyone who helped make the day a great success.

Please remember to support our magazine sponsors as much as possible...many of them have been sponsors of your Club for many years and there's no better way to show your appreciation than to support them in return.

In readiness for the New Year, your committee will be meeting to discuss and confirm dates of activities for 2019.

So please if you have any suggestions for Clubman runs or activities generally please let me or a committee member know. Member input always helps your committee better deliver what you want.

If you know someone who could be an appropriate monthly meeting guest speaker, please let me know.

Similarly, if you know someone who has an M.G. or any type of sports car invite them along to a monthly meeting...who knows they may want to join a great social group of sports car enthusiasts !

Cheers for now.....**Asho the pro with a mo**

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Since last mag "Team Hunter" members have competed in two sporting events.

Ian Ashton competed in the **Spring Festival at Wakefield Park** which was run by the HSRCA.

A total of 84 cars entered the event including sports sedans, sports racing, MG Muster, historic & classic vehicles.

From my point of view as a spectator it was a great weekend & well worth the trip to Goulburn. Hopefully I will be a competitor in the 2019 event. For me the highlights of the meeting were the sports sedans, group S sports cars & watching the two big 5 Litre Chev powered Sports Cars of seventies vintage run around at close to outright lap record times.

Asho competed in the regularity events which had a total of 25 competitors including 6 MG's. There were 4 regularity events over the weekend which included a 31 minute "enduro" event.

Asho drove well all weekend & was having a good dice each event with Peter Rose from Sydney MG club in another MGB. Asho gained a fourth placing in the last event & his "Rusty Nuts" Team were placed third in the team regularity event.

"Team Hunter" members Steve Jones, John Stewart, & myself competed in the **all MG & all clubman Hillclimb event at Ringwood Park Motorsport complex.**

Entries were disappointing to say the least with only nineteen cars entered & this is the last time we will see the event run in this format. There is some talk at the moment that it may be run as an event open to all sports cars.

Regardless of the low number of competitors it was a great days hill climbing & thanks to Newcastle club for putting the event on & doing a great job of running it as usual. Thanks also to Hunter members who helped run the event, Denny Bowden chief steward, Andrew Gowans flag Marshall, & Mark Janus who helped out & acted as starter during the afternoon.

"Team Hunter" finished 3rd in the regularity event, with John Stuart proving to be the best regularity driver of the three as each of his runs were very close to his nominated time. Fastest times for "Team Hunter" members were;

**Steve Jones MG Midget 72.60**

**Gary Piper MGB 72.85**

**John Stuart MGBGT 74.19.**

Fastest time for the day & new record

**Kevin Akers MGCCN Carroll Clubman** 58.41,

**Darren Hodgson MGCCN** set a new record for modern **MGTF** 64.31

Team Regularity event results

**1st-Team MG Everest,**

**2nd-Team MGCCN 1 ,**

**3rd-Team Hunter,**

**4th-Team MCN Clubman.**

Matt Blanch has entered the Group S event which will be run as a back up category for the Bathurst 12 hour race in February 2019.

Last year Matt set a new class record with an MGB, I look forward to watching him run again at the event.

Remember drive them don't hide them

Cheers Gary

**"Team Hunter"** member John Stuart at speed on the hill climb





Starting line for Hill Climb — **"Team Hunter"** Steve Jones waiting for start



**"Team Hunter"** member Steve Jones at speed on the hill climb  
**All hill climb photographs supplied by courtesy of Jacob Motum.**

## Captain's Corner

**Alan Andoni**

The end of another year is rushing towards us and MG Hunter is as busy as ever.

Last Saturday was a community event for Lambton Park where the oldest known WW1 time capsule in Australia was opened for all to see. The newspapers of the era were fascinating. Three marching bands, period costumes, lots of speeches and good weather all contributed to a wonderful experience.

Our club was asked to provide a range of cars for both the march past and a static display. We had eleven cars showcasing every decade from the 1940's to the 1990's. The club members greatest question was how do other organisations plan great events with perfect weather when we plan equally great days when it's guaranteed to bucket down?!?

The following day we had our monthly Clubman Run. It rained! Cold 'n windy as well!! Luckily we had a plan B. Seven cars turned up for a great drive to Morpeth where we had morning tea in a great little cafe. A lovely drive to Branxton was followed by a long lunch at the pub. Over flowing car parks was a good indication of good pub food. We weren't disappointed. Lousy weather, great day.

The last Thursday of the month is always the Tuning Run. Longer runs with destination decided on the day. It's one of my favourite runs of the month. We leave Hexham MacDonalDs at 10am. Hope to see you there.

Sunday November 4th is the Shannon's Hunter classic at McDonald Jones Stadium. This is a major fund raising event to assist drought affected farmers. We hope to see 500+ cars there. Please come along with your cars and support both your club and a most worthy cause.

Sunday November 11th is our annual Toy Run. This is another of the community activities that MG Hunter supports. Please meet at the clubhouse at 10 am for a drive to Rathmines where we will gift toys to the Salvation Army so that needy kids can have a better Christmas. We also have a quiet Christmas lunch together before the mayhem of the holiday season attacks. If you are unable to attend on the day may I ask that you still donate a toy. Please ring me or any other committee member and we will come and collect at a time of your convenience.

Enjoy your MGs. Hope to see you soon.

Alan Andoni, Club Captain

### **HISTORIC PLATES REGO CHECKS**

**Saturday 1st December,**

**9.30am 'til 10.30am @ Caltex Maryland  
Minmi Road, Maryland**

**Bring your rego papers and \$5**

**For more information call Denny Bowden  
4951 4125 or 0402 476 631**

Bev and I had the pleasure of attending our first MG TYme in early October. Ray and Sharon Tolcher were taking their TC and offered us their TD. I'm usually a hot radiator event man but this was an offer too good to pass up (I've never sat behind the steering wheel in a TD before).

Ray didn't want to drive the TC down so it was decided we'd tow both cars. I did some measuring and found that the TD wouldn't fit in my trailer. The radiator is too tall and the car a fraction too long. I borrowed a trailer but I don't have electric brakes on the Calais tow car. Back to the drawing board. Now if I back the TD into my trailer, I beat the height problem and if I take out the removable panel in the tailgate (designed for an MGB's butt to hang out) then the TD can happily sit and watch the world in reverse. Problem solved. It turned out to be fortuitous as the TD's roof was down (and I don't know how to put it up) and there was torrential rain for the first half of the trip. Whilst it kept raining in Newy all weekend, it was B.E.A.Utiful down in Canberra.

A trailer tyre blow out on the M1 had me concerned for a while as I contemplated changing a driver's side tyre a metre from traffic doing 110kph. There was a contra flow/emergency service turn-around in the middle of the road but how to get there? Suddenly the traffic disappeared and a safe manoeuvre and tyre change carried out.



There was a reasonable representation from our club and the 'Spruce Street Chapter' provided ½ the Hunter registered members. Elliot and Maryann Burns drove their YT down and so did Norm and Lynden Richardson in their TC from Portland (that's out Lithgow way). I'm

sure I saw Rob Dunsterville at one stage.

We got there early so we could enjoy a day of sightseeing and wine tasting with an old work college of mine from NBN News out Murrumbateman neck of the woods. We may be from the centre of wine making in Oz and have some of the best around, but they make some damn fine wine down Canberra way. It's well worth adding a day or two to your trip to check them out.

Ray spent a lot of time fiddling with the TC to get it running properly. As Ray played, I did a quick call to the 'brains trust' whilst they were sitting having a beer at Raymond Terrace Bowlo to see if I could sort Ray's problem and my suspicions were confirmed. Maybe I'm not as dumb as they say. 30 seconds later the TC it was running. The TD ran perfectly all weekend.

For the Saturday morning run to the War Memorial, Sharon piped up with the fact that the last time she'd been sitting in the TC was 11 years ago as they drove away from their wedding.



The poppy fields outside the War Memorial are spectacular and sadly I was more moved by these knitted and crocheted flowers (supposedly one for each digger that died in WW1 I heard) than the magnificent display at Floriade.

The Canberra club had a shuttle (a very rare MGZTT V8 station wagon) running people back and forth all day for those



wishing to view Floriade whilst others wandered the halls of the War Memorial. The MGs proved very popular with the public with a great display in the car park.

Saturday night was a nice dinner at the Rydges with Chris Goddard from the War Memorial giving an interesting talk. Bev and I snuck away before desert (to protect our waist line) to visit some other MG friends for a birthday party.

Sunday was another sun day in Canberra (whilst it bucketed down in Sydney and Newcastle) and we were to head for the local 'old bus depot' markets for the start of a country drive to Gundaroo for lunch.

Ray and Sharon took an early exit to try and get home before dark. Yep, still raining in Sydney. Bev didn't like the idea of getting the Calais and trailer out of the parking lot where it had been parked before the hordes arrived so she had her first drive of a TD (mine was a day or two before). Unfortunately the seats weren't as well designed as could be. She needed to be closer to the pedals than me so we slid the seat forward. Hmm, only the squab moves, not the back. A lot of good that is. Luckily she didn't need to wear her coat so it was stuffed behind her back. A look later on and we discovered that the back does move forward but that is done separately. Us modern MG owners are just spoilt.

A great weekend and well worth the effort if you want a more relaxed and social MG event. The next MG TYme will be in 2020 down Canberra way.



**Bev in the driver's seat of TD**



**Old bus depot Markets car parking**

## TYme Photos



**Gundaroo lunch**



**MG's at the War Memorial car park**



**View from trailer of TD**



**War Memorial car display**

### **Club Regalia is available at Club Nights**

**See Wendy Croker for all your regalia needs**

Shirts, Hats, Jackets, Umbrellas, Badges, Cooler Bags, not to mention our MGCC Hunter Region wine from Tamburlaine!

## **What's in a name?**

It is interesting looking at our language and how it evolves. Listening to how kids at times murder how things are said, and meanings of words, sayings and titles change over time and leave us older members of society scratching our collective heads about what's being expressed. Have I been transported somewhere in my sleep to a place that does not speak English? Some of this is to be perceived as trendy. Sometimes they've heard others using a term and think it's cool. For us old folk, it really grates at times.

This is the same for our club. I've been hanging around since the very first day, in fact was a member of the MG Car Club Newcastle for several years prior to the formation of this club. All of the MG marque clubs in the world that are affiliated to the original club in the UK are all called MG Car Clubs. The geographical location of that club is the second part of the name. Therefore we are the MG Car Club Hunter Region. Maybe in a casual chat you might refer to us as something else but our official title always starts and finishes MG Car Club Hunter Region. Always has been and always will be.

The MG Car Club (this taken in all MG Car Clubs around the world) was formed to 'maintain the breed' and the marque MG. Occasionally we improve (hopefully sympathetically) on what the factory did because they were always looking at the bottom line. Look at top concours cars and they are so much better than the factory ever produced. Maybe they should lose points for originality because they never came from the factory looking that good. Even some of the more outlandish things that people do to their MGs, if you tilt your head to the left and squint... well maybe... if they really love them, who are we to bring them down? Just smile and move on.

We are a one 'marque' club, therefore if you find yourself between MGs or have an affinity for these lovely little cars (unless you own an MG SA or WA [no, not the states], because no one would call them small) and enjoy being around them but don't own an MG then you drive a 'non marque' car. That is, not the

marque that the car club is.

Once a year the MG Car Clubs of Australia hold a National Meeting. Last year was Tasmania, next is Queensland. Many car clubs and motoring groups have big national events every year. I can remember many years back being in Canberra for our MG National Meeting and the 'Summer Nats' were on at the same time in the ACT. It was great as the constabulary were so busy watching out for hooners, we could do no wrong. With their burnout competition, dyno shootouts, wet t-shirt competition (no t-shirt competitions... and no boys entered), loud music and thumping exhausts (oops, that might have been my B) this was the Nats at their best. The attendees love their Nats or Nationals.

I get very confused when I hear of our National Meeting referred to as the Nats or Nationals. I can remember seeing Miss MG (very politically incorrect now) selling raffle tickets to raise funds but never in a wet crop top t-shirt and very short shorts. That is the Nats or Nationals, never ever to be confused with the Natmeet. Yes, if the MG National Meeting needs to be shortened for casual conversation, it's a Natmeet. If you want to go to the Nats they're on in Canberra at the start of January and you probably won't take your wife or daughter but definitely won't see too many Mg's.

Hopefully in the near future we will start seeing some MGGT's, RX5's, 3's, 6's, ZS's, GS's etc in our club. We will welcome them as they have the name that we hold so dearly. Some felt that MG ceased to exist when we lost overhead cam and cable brakes. Then it was when they no longer had chassis, then when they weren't built in Abingdon. The list goes on evolving and hopefully there will be a new car available for many decades to come with the name MG. That alone is something to celebrate.

Hopefully they will join an MG Car Club and go to MG National Meetings (or Natmeets) and our weekend passion will continue with many more generations enjoying them.

Don't be confused, don't be misled, maintain the breed (and the language).

## My Motoring Early Days And An MG Love Affair To Remember

By Maurie Prior

I am prompted by Robert Gibson's excellent articles, which I have enjoyed enormously, to spur me on, to write about my early motoring days. Thank you Robert for the excellent subject matter, and my congratulations for the well written series.

Whilst this story is not about MG's particularly, they came into the frame from time to time and figured prominently, in late 1958.

I hope my story might jog some memories, of a lot of the older members, to recall just what it was like to get your very first car during the latter part of the fifties and early sixties.

I am a little older than Robert Gibson, and my story starts in about March 1957, when I was nearly 17, and as well as being a determined know-it-all, I desperately wanted to buy a car.....any car, as long as I could drive it to places.

I was an apprentice carpenter and joiner, and didn't earn much, but I was grateful for the job.

Even though I could drive, I didn't have a driver's licence at that time, but that didn't stop me from driving my older brother's Anglia Ute a rare little thing, when he gave me the opportunity. I don't know why I didn't have a licence when I turned 17 as it was commonplace to get one, when of age, but I didn't and so I was taking huge risks by not having a licence. I didn't care about it then but silly, I now reflect, however that was me in 1957.

About the same time, a number of the older lads around Belmont had acquired MG's.

Barry Evans had a red TC with small rims and big tyres, Bobby Nicholls had a red TF, John Clarence had a black TF, and John Cavanagh with a red TD. This last MG had a small octagonal sign on the back bumper, and in the space it read "Mista Gear!" It could have been interpreted several ways, but it was funny cool at the time.

Images from Flickr



Around the Newcastle area, lots of well-off young blokes had MG's. Greg Amos and Bruce Middleby, both had black MGA's, Rod Moffat had a white MGA, I think.

Any one of these MG's were out of my reach financially, so I was insanely jealous and depressed in equal measure!

My best friend at the time was a fellow called John Laverick, of the Carrington Slipways family, and being two years older, he had a little more money than me. He had managed to buy a 1937 Ford V8 sedan in which we cavorted around Newcastle doing what teenage boys did back then. Girls were in the picture, but they didn't rate above us spending most Saturday arvo's washing and polishing for the big Saturday night out, which involved a couple of girls we knew casually, with the offer of a trip to the drive-in at Lambton. (There was another drive-in at Gateshead and I cannot remember if it was open at that time, but I remember going there as well, but not so much as the one at Lambton)

Sometime in April, 1957, I was determined to buy a car, and spent many hours terrorising the car yards around Newcastle, trudging from car yard to car yard, along what was then the Pacific Highway through Adamstown, then to the yards near the old nine-ways at Broadmeadow, Cottons Car Sales, then Tom Paskin's in Tudor Street, Hamilton, and then Bill Fortingtons, T. R. Bennett's, and Frank Kennedy's in Maitland Road Islington, and Kevin Seymour's original West Mayfield yard, and Jack Gate's Apex Autos in Central Mayfield, and wherever a used car yard existed.

There were plenty of them about in those days, and I visited them all, numerous times in the faint hope of a miracle!

Because of having not much money, I would go straight to the back of the car yards to inspect the bombs that were not front row examples, and in most cases, they were worn out old things that had been trade-ins and waiting for young fools like me or the Wreckers yards. I can recall, even with the amassed wisdom of a 17 year old, that some of these cars were so worn out that they depressed me, especially since they were all I could afford, even if I had the money.

Being so desperate to own a car, I worked out a way to get myself some wheels. Having previously paid off a KBC drill set that came in a metal case, which had cost me over twenty pounds, I took it on the bus with me into Hamilton from Marks Point, where I lived at the time, to the pawn shop in Beaumont Street, where I was offered 7 pounds for my drill set.

Undaunted and armed with the seven pounds, and three pounds I had saved, my venture capital of ten pounds was going to buy me a car that day, by hook or by crook. After wandering towards T R Bennett's (and past the

usual glares from the salesmen who were sick to death of me ) I wandered out to the back of the yard being prepared to be disappointed yet again, but perhaps it was my lucky day, and I got talking to a yardie, (a car cleaner and odd jobs man) who told me he had a car for sale privately. He wanted 40 pounds for it, and if I gave him a ten pounds deposit, I could buy it on hire purchase (A third deposit was the legally required amount in those days!).

Where's the car I asked, and he took me around the corner and there she was a 1928 Model A Ford, FORDOR Tourer, with painted wire spoked wheels, a hand painted dark green body and black mudguards, and a black, taut hood and side-curtains.!

I fell in love immediately, (well I would have fallen in love with any car that I could have secured with just ten pounds



Photo from BING search and Shannons

He said I could have it later that day, and after hanging around Hamilton and Islington for many hours, I went back and we did the deal on the Model A's bonnet and by the side of the road.

It was madness, and given that he was a bit simple, he managed to produce a hire purchase agreement and I signed it, gave him my ten pounds, and that was that. I can't remember what the repayments were to be, but the fact that I was under age, and that it was an illegal document didn't occur to me, and as it proved later, that I was stupid, and he was indeed, very simple.

Un-insured, un-licenced, unknowing, indifferent, reckless and stupid, that was me, as I drove it all the way from Islington to Marks Point. This car had four wheel mechanical brakes, which were almost ineffectual, and dangerous, but I didn't care. At least it was better than the Chevrolets of that same era as they only had two wheel mechanical brakes, and were even harder to pull up!

It's funny, but there was such little traffic then and even lesser seen coppers.

I made it home, and my father, who was a decent man, was in a world of his own and he wasn't even aware that I didn't have a licence, or how I came to buy this old thing. I honestly cannot remember him expressing anything, no surprise, no admonishments for being so impetuous, just not all that with it, I felt.

No matter, I had a car, a motor car!

Like Toad of Toad Hall, my eyes were spinning, and my heart raced and I was off to anywhere that old dear would take me. It was so out of tune, the retarded side valve 4 pot, made the exhaust pipe glow red under the actual, loose fitting wooden floor boards!

One of the scruffy scoundrels around Marks Point was a dab hand at car innards, and next day he tuned her for me.

It was a funny old thing, but it ran a lot better after the tune up.

The fuel tank was built into the firewall between the engine and the dashboard, and the fuel level was viewed by a glass eye built into the dashboard! It had two levers on the steering column, one for the spark advance and the other one was a manual throttle.

The start button, that powered the electric starter motor, was on the floor next to the clutch. It also came with an actual crank handle should the starter motor not work!

There were keys then that connected the power from the battery to the ignition circuit, however a fuel on/off switch was under the dash.

I did some silly sign writing on the old thing, with suggestions like "don't laugh Madam, your daughter may be inside!" and a few other inane remarks. God, I was silly then.

It seemed like an eternity, but it was inevitable, and in only a matter of a month or so of driving perilously about the Belmont, Swansea, Gateshead area, I had my first bingle.

It happened after The Belmont Apex Club had organized a charity navigation run, and with my mate John, and a couple of girls we knew at the time, with a blanked out odometer that didn't work anyway, we took off. Later that afternoon, at the finish line at Arcadia Vale, in simply showing off, I managed to skid into the side of a competitors parked up Vanguard sedan.

Many apologies followed, and foolish reminders to self that the old Model A Ford had next to no brakes.

I won a pretend prize at the presentation with a voucher for brake repairs!

I was also handed a scribbled invitation to meet the damaged Vanguard owner at the local panel beaters next day to pay for the damage.

Ouch, 27 pounds ten shillings and sixpence, and sheepishly, I had to admit that I didn't have the money, so could I pay it off? (I was earning 4 pounds and five shillings those days equivalent to \$8.50 nowadays).

Damage agreements settled, the payments for the hire purchase debt on the Model A had to be postponed (meaning on the never never) and as a result, after a lot of enjoyment hooning up and down Hunter Street Newcastle, and the thrills of taking a girl to the drive in etc, the simple man repossessed the car!

***To be continued in next issue of the magazine (editor)***

# FOR SALE

## **SPECIAL LICENCE PLATES**

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**1997 MGF** Manual, 53000 klms, Outstanding condition, service history. Senior (75) selling due to limited use, Like this great MG to go to an MG enthusiast. Only way to appreciate is to see. Price guide \$9500 Call Lewis Hutchison 0410642970 (Daleys Point NSW)



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## **Wanted: MG PA engine or parts.**

If you have or know where P Type engine number 1705AP is, I'd love to reunite it with the rest of the car. If not, I need to find many parts to make an engine out of what I have. I'm looking for a front pulley assembly, external pipework, oil filter assembly, block side covers & water branches. Contact Elliot Burns on 0478 415405 or 49574921

## **1997 MGF**

1.8i, rego April 2019, 5 speed manual, air-con, SRS air bag, alarm system, runs well, \$5800 negotiable.  
Ph. Phil on 0428313555



**Wanted: MGBGT V8 Speedometer.** The face needs to be in good condition.

Will just buy the face or the whole speedo if needed.  
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Robert Cronin 0424142629

Ads submitted will appear for 3 editions of On the Marquee  
If you want your ad to run longer or the item is sold, please notify the Editor

## CHRISTMAS REGALIA SPECIALS

**MG Apron in black or blue - \$5.00** perfect gift for the cook in the family.

**MG Hunter Region Maroon baseball cap (one size fits all) - \$15.00**

**White Panama hat and maroon band with club logo - \$25.00** perfect for the coming sunny weather

**Maroon MG Hunter Region windscreen sashes - \$18.00** just the thing for club group displays.

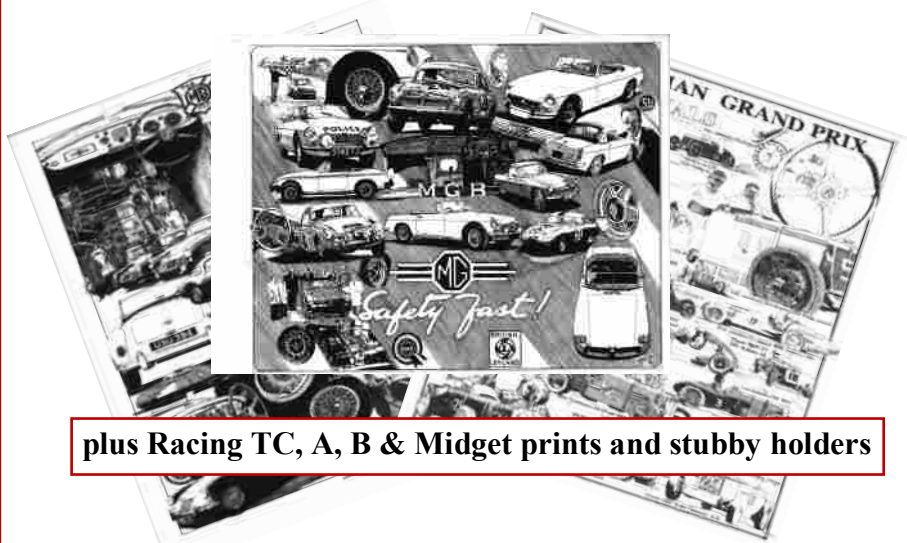
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# **MG Car Club Hunter Region**

## **Minutes of Committee Meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

### **Meeting Opened 6:08 pm**

**Present:** Stephen Jones, Denny Bowden, Frans Henskens, Greg Jenkins, Ian Ashton, Alan Andoni, Gary Piper, Wendy Croker, Jeff Lauff, Graham Haywood

**Apologies:** Nil

**In attendance:** Brian Madden

**Minutes:** Accepted, Moved Alan Andoni seconded Gary Piper

### **Business Arising:**

Yet to have meeting between Alan Andoni & Denny Bowden re changes to point score system.

### **Reports:**

#### ***President:***

Nil.

#### ***Vice President:***

Apology for not yet attending to the J van..

#### ***Treasurer:***

#### ***Secretary***

Approval received from NCC for use of Lambton Park on 13 October. Arrangements for Concours to be discussed. NCC invoices have been paid.

Absence overseas for November (and possible December) meetings. Correspondence received: announcement of Dungog Historic Motor Club Classic Car Show to be held Clarence Town Bowling Club, corner Prince & Durham Streets Clarence Town in 4<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

#### ***Club Captain:***

Available for trophy meeting next week, then will be away again.

Toy Run coming up 11<sup>th</sup> November – note change to avoid clash on 18<sup>th</sup>. Visited Hunter Performing Arts, Lambton, & Waratah High Schools about assisting or performing at the Shannons Car Show, but they all declined because the Department of Education already has alternate events raising money for drought relief.

#### ***Sporting Director:***

Concours appears to be in doubt because of current condition of the

park and expected rain.

Hill Climb: disappointing that there have been only 8 MGs and 4 Clubman's registered. There is still the possibility of late entries. Suggests event may have to be cancelled next year.

**Public relations:**

Re raffles: suggest that we should upgrade the prizes.

Suggestion that someone in the Club contribute an article in The Local community publication.

All progressing well re upcoming Shannons event.

**Committee Member:**

Nil.

**Regalia**

Will have a Christmas Sale next meeting.

**Magazine Editor**

4 members did not receive their magazine via E-mail as server rejected the addresses.

**General Business:**

Club member Dan Hickie passed away 30<sup>th</sup> September. Card and email have been sent to Mary Hickie.

Steve Jones will talk to Julie Tipper re replacement photocopier.

Certificates for Concours will be printed tomorrow.

Suggestion that we add chassis number or VIN to membership form.

Club has been asked to provide about 10 cars for a display ~9:30 a.m. at Lambton Park on 20<sup>th</sup> October. Denny Bowden is organising.

Denny Bowden would like notes re historic car registration inspection to be included in the next issue of *On the Marque*. Inspections will be held Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

**Meeting Closed 7:11 p.m.**

**Next Meeting**

6 p.m. Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

**Club Regalia is available at Club Nights**

See Wendy Croker for all your regalia needs

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Thank you to those who have contributed to this edition of "On the Marque"  
Please submit your contributions via email to [ghaywood6@bigpond.com](mailto:ghaywood6@bigpond.com)  
It is great to have input from members as well as committee members!

**Deadline for the December edition will be  
Thursday 22nd November 2018**



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