



Photo screengrabbed by a scammer from an [online advert](#)

Fraudster selling MGBGTV8 parts or the whole car!

Two members posted "spares wanted" adverts on the V8 Website and were contacted by a person offering the parts they needed saying he was breaking an MGBGTV8 owned by his deceased father. The exchanges that followed gradually revealed a fraudster seemed to be at work! It's worth seeing the exchanges one of those members (Angus Munro) had with the seller as it illustrates how this type of story unfolds. It also provides a useful alert for fellow members who might meet a similar case.

Angus Munro posted a "wanted" advert for a chromed cap for an indicator stalk on his MGBGTV8 on 14th June 2018 and the following day he received an email saying "I am from USA, just want to know if you are still interested in 1973 MGBGTV8 parts you requested for, please shoot me an email if you are still interested. Have a nice day". Angus sent a reply asking him whether he had the chromed cap for the indicator stalk he wanted and if so what was his price. Later that day Angus reported he had received a reply "from the chap in America. He is just about to break a complete Factory GTV8 and has sent me a picture of it. (see above) From the picture the car doesn't look too bad, certainly complete and certainly worth saving. Miles better than the two recovered from the ACA auction earlier in 2018". Later that day Angus received a little more information about the car in the US. Apparently the seller's father bought the car in Britain and shipped it to the USA. The father died **some years ago** and the car has stood in a garage since then. Angus added "I have pictures and there is no doubt in my mind that it is a chrome bumper Factory car, lobster claws and all with chassis number: **GD4D1-1463G** and engine number: **1303**".

Another member had also posted a "wanted" advert on the V8 Spares webpage for an MGBGTV8 steering wheel and reported that by email he had "been approached by a man called David Blau in the USA offering me parts from a V8 he is breaking. The email looks legitimate, although the language used is strange. I am developing a bad feeling. He is already talking about US\$170 dollars for a steering wheel and US\$55 dollars for shipping to my address in the UK. After two emails he still hasn't sent a photo of its condition, only one picture of "his V8" he's breaking. I have read your notes on fraudulent vendors but I'm wondering whether this sounds legitimate? Has anybody else come across this seller?" The V8 Webmaster, Victor Smith, responded promptly suggesting "it would be a good idea if you liaise with Angus Munro and added, David Blau, or another person with the surname Blau, are not registered on the V8 Database with anMGBGTV8".

On checking a copy of the MG Factory production records for the MGBGTV8 the chap in the USA claimed he had, Victor Smith found it was listed as:

Bracken 1463 and originally fitted with engine **48601370** and not **48601303**. From the V8 Database he found there are two

registrations of 1463 from the late 1980s which show the car had engine number **48601370** at that time.

Mirage 1394 was originally fitted with **48601303** but there is no registration of that car on the V8 Database.

So there is clearly some confusion over the information the chap in the USA has provided identifying the V8 he has for sale.

Angus Munro then added he had opened a dialogue with the American chap "to purchase the entire car on behalf of a chum here in the UK who would like one to restore. So far I have received a VIN and engine number. The VIN appears faulty as it should have the prefix **GD2D1** but is quoted as **GD4D1** so I have also asked for copies of documentation, without result as yet. It would appear from the photographs I have received from the US chap, especially the photo of the engine bay, that the car was blue. The only blue for the chrome bumper V8 was Teal Blue I think. He has quoted a price of US\$5,500 plus US\$805 shipping with all documentation supplied to reimport the car. That totals to £4,750 which would be a good buy if it were real.

I recall some years ago an MGC was offered for sale in Ireland. When the buyer arrived to collect the car it was found there was no car or address. It also turned out that three people had transferred a deposit for it. With that story in my memory I am not sure about the reality of transferring a lot of money to a stranger in America. It could be real but I do hear alarm bells too. Further, I can't really understand why it would be attractive to break the car. The GTV8 was never exported to the USA and the number that might have been subsequently imported there would be very low, making the attraction of the parts rather limited I would have thought. Finally, and this might be a bit unfair, the story is that it was his father's car and his father died some years ago with the car being left in a garage. The thought occurred that the father must have been an enthusiast, shall we say an Anglophile. His son however can hardly string two words together. Shocking grammar and spelling. I may be wrong of course but thus far into the adventure I need a bit of convincing".

Angus Munro then provided a short update saying he would "continue tracking this V8, now with a view to confirming it to be a scam with the intention of warning others. Today I asked the US chap for the documents pertaining and have received a copy of the document you see below. It appears to be for another entirely different car, engine, VIN and even colour".

What did the document Angus received show?

H2352845
 Vehicle Registration Document
 GEORFFREY ARNOLD SEATON
 REGISTRATION CLASS: PRIVATE
 MAKE: MG
 MODEL/YEAR: MGB GTV8 COUPE
 COLOR: BLACK
 PETROL
 ENGINE NO: 48602309
 DATE OF REGISTRATION: 16/06/76
 DATE OF ISSUE: 07/12/80

V5C document screengrabbed from an online [NEWS article](#)

The document sent to Angus by the chap in the USA was traced as a copy of a V5C on the V8 Website for another car showing:

Registered keeper: Geoff Seaton with the address blanked out.
Car No/VIN: GD2D1 2896G and engine number 2309.

On seeing the copy of the document, the V8 Webmaster recalled a [NEWS item](#) posted to the V8 Website in April 2018 based on a report provided by Victor Rodrigues who had seen this car at an event in Switzerland in March 2018 and yet it is claimed, by the US chap to be in the USA, that it is now as part of his late father's property! That NEWS item included a copy of the V5C and added some background on the late Geoff Seaton who had been a V8 enthusiast in the early years of the V8 Register. It **looked as if the V5C document supplied by the US chap had probably been obtained as a screengrab from that NEWS webpage** on the V8 Website.

Angus Munro followed up by saying he would be “asking for a copy of the Absolute Title which will be either in his father’s name, or his. As an inherited automobile he would have to register it in his name within his State of residence. Eventually I shall ask him for his bank details and address”.

Then **Angus Munro** reported receipt of an ownership document from the US chap which looked like a “cut and paste” job:

Fake title document for the MGBGTV8 offered for sale in the USA

On inspecting the document, headed “Vehicle Certificate of Ownership (Title)”, with Harold MacDonall shown as both the legal and registered owner, some key data does look like a “cut and paste” job which is hardly credible. Angus noted he felt “**what I see does look like strips of typed paper stuck over a title document.** To be certain I have sent the copy to customercare@dol.wa.gov asking them for an opinion or possible confirmation. The document does have a number on it that should be useable when tracking a history”.

But there was more, the bank account details for the payment were also provided showing the account the US chap wanted Angus to transfer the funds to an account with Chase Bank, East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816 USA. **Angus Munro** reported “I was invited to send over £2,000 as a deposit. It’s great. I think that’s a wonderful and generous idea, don’t you?” The US chap had emailed Angus saying “can you pay part payment of 2000 pounds now . . . so that I will ship the car to you in UK, pending till when you be able to pay back the balance in future when you have the money. I can do that for you because I know you love the car”. Angus thought the US fellow must have thought it was a generous offer but it was near hilarious!

Angus got replies from the referees, both written in exactly the same style and language –for example: “You can go ahead and buy now . . . for delivery to your doorstep”.

The matter came to an end when **Angus Munro** reported he had received “an answer from the records department of The State of Washington saying “Thank you for contacting us. I have reviewed the record for the title number. Unfortunately, it does not match the same year and make vehicle noted on the document that you attached. **This document would not be authentic.** You may also contact our fraud department if you would like at fraud@dol.wa.gov Have a good day. Donna, Customer Relations Email Team, WA Department of Licensing”.

Angus concluded it was “no great surprise there” but he then ended communication with the fraudster.

Summary highlighting the signs of an attempted fraud

The key items of information that came to light during contacts with the US chap suggesting he was an unreliable seller were:

- **Statement from the US chap that the MGBGTV8 owned by his late father is Bracken 1463** – a chrome bumper model.
- **Photo of a Teal Blue MGBGTV8 supplied by the US chap who claimed it is the car owned by his late father.** The photo (and three more) appears to be a screengrab from an online advert for a Teal Blue chrome bumper car seen listed for auction in July 2017 by Berlineta Auctions. See our Pricewatch [news item](#) on the car which has the UK registration [PRV 21N](#).
- **Photo of a Vehicle Registration Document supplied by the US chap who claimed it was the MGBGTV8 owned by his late father.** It appears to be a screengrab from a [NEWS](#) item on the V8 Website in March 2018 reporting the car had been seen at an event in Switzerland. In addition the document shows the car is **Black 2896** – a rubber bumper model, not chrome bumper and with Black bodywork, not Teal Blue or Bracken.
- **Photo of a US Vehicle Certificate of Ownership (Title) for an MGBGTV8 (GD2D1-1463G) signed by Harold MacDonall as the legal owner releasing the car in December 1987 presumably to the US chap’s late father.** The document appears to be a crude cut and paste job. The reply Angus received from the Washington State Department of Licensing said “I have reviewed the record for the title number. Unfortunately, it does not match the same year and make vehicle noted on the document that you attached. **This document would not be authentic.** You may also contact our fraud department if you would like at fraud@dol.wa.gov “

Angus feels the experience has been an example of a type of fraud often seen these days. The attempt was amateur with screengrab photos from online MGBGTV8 adverts and NEWS items posted in recent months on the V8 Website. So the conclusion is take very great care buying cars or spares online and be alert for attempted frauds.