



MG MGA with several "lives"?

Richard Withington has memories of an MG he enjoyed in earlier years.

In my youth my driving experiences were mainly with Ford cars, starting with a 100E van and graduating to a 1200cc Ford Anglia 105E - the family business was the Ford dealership in town. However, I was drawn to the plight of an MGA 1600 Mk2 Coupe which found itself resting in a local storage yard having been recovered after an accident. Apparently, the car had been driven through the town of Grantham, before the A1 bypass, and pursued by the police due to a lighting defect. It was eventually caught and found having been rolled over into a field about 10 miles South! The driver was brought to book, an early conviction as the new

breathalyser had just been introduced. (1967). As a result, the car, in Dove Grey with red upholstery, lay in the storage area pending the insurance settlement.

By this time my father, a motor engineer, had become an insurance assessor, and as a result I was able to buy the salvage when the vehicle was 'written off'. After many months of work, with three new wings, a second-hand boot lid and much panel beating to restore the roof shape, it was resprayed in old English white. Mechanically it needed a new stub axle, replaced rear axle, many sundry bits.

I subsequently abandoned my Fords and used the car for several years and about 30,000 miles. During this time I also acquired my MG TC. But as parts became more difficult for both cars, a job move and daily commute of 70 miles, demanded a change to a more modern vehicle. The MGA had to go in exchange for a Midget and I did not expect to see the MGA again. I could not afford both cars, so the TC won.

Following a visit to the Donington collection some years later I was amazed to see the car in the car park and exchanged notes with the new owner, what were the chances of that?

But yet further, a few years later again, whilst marshalling at Rockingham, what should emerge but the very same car onto the grid, albeit with an MGB engine. Talking to the next owner apparently it had been kept in a barn for some years, used by a learner driver, and then became a 'racer'.

From a recent GOV.UK check, sadly it seems the car has run out of lives, the registration plate 1204 WF now adorns a 'Chelsea tractor', poetically a Ford Ranger, so it seems unlikely we will cross paths again, unless you know where it is?

