



# WELCOME TO THE V8 NEWSLETTER



[www.v8register.net/more.htm](http://www.v8register.net/more.htm)

## High priced V8s sold in 2019

In May this year an exceptional fully restored **early V8 in Damask** sold at the **Historics auction at Brooklands** £33,600 including buyer's commission and VAT. It was described in the auction listing as a "recent nut and bolt restoration of a genuine Factory built MGBGT V8". Historics, is reported as saying "this was a classic case of quality is king. It's a truly exceptional car, the skills lavished to maintain utter authenticity during restoration have paid dividends through a sale price that has shattered its estimate" in the auction brochure. That estimate was a surprisingly low £13,000 to £18,000.

One enthusiast commented "it's a pity that given the high level of restoration undertaken on this car to "maintain authenticity" a number of aspects were not original - for example the random placing of the nearside wing badges, non original offside wing badges, and leather seats, trim and steering wheel". But puritanical views on originality are no longer assumed as underlying exceptional V8 prices as we have seen a growing attraction for tastefully upgraded V8s has become an established feature of the market with the development of two parallel markets for Condition 1 cars – original and

## MGBGT V8 sold at NEC auction

Ahead of Silverstone Auctions' sale at the NEC Classic Car Show in November, their auction listing highlighted an MGBGT V8 in Tundra as "an incredibly original V8 that has covered only 4,425 miles". The listing mentioned an estimate of £30,000 to £35,000 and that "in May 2014 it was purchased by its most recent owner who has a penchant for totally original, low mileage classics and added it to his collection storing it correctly and using it only occasionally. Although in lovely original condition, a little fettling and detailing to the engine bay would bring the car to the next level and, given that top examples of this model are now making substantially more than the estimate suggested here, this low-mileage, well-historied, four-owner V8 should amply reward the remedial tidying-up now required." The car was sold at the auction with a lower than expected hammer price of £28,000 which with the buyer's premium of 12.5% but not including VAT would be £31,500. The sale of this V8 listed as in exceptional condition followed several MGBGT V8 auction sales at record prices during 2019.

Richard Hudson-Evans, the auction guru with Classic Car Weekly, commenting on the high prices

achieved at auction says "it's what happens at the top end of the market when two or more people decide that they want a car - the money is irrelevant, they are prepared to pay whatever it takes for it". The consequent cost for an owner of a high priced classic with a low or modest mileage is that if they then enjoy the car clocking up two to three thousand miles a year, the reduction in value from the additional mileage can be a substantial increase in the annual costs of the car.

For a report on the NEC auction see our "More" webpage at



"Remedial tidying-up now required" in the engine bay





upgraded examples.

In October **another exceptional MGBGTV8 in Damask was sold at an SWVA auction** for a total of £35,524 including buyer's commission and VAT, again shattering its estimate in the auction brochure - a surprisingly low £18,000 to £19,900. With 49,666 miles it was another early Factory built V8 first registered at the end of August 1973, the month when the model was launched.

This V8 has been registered with the V8 Database for many years and from the set of good quality photos included with the auction listing an assessment of the bodywork, original trim, engine bay and Dunlop composite wheels indicated it was in a very good condition with original cord trim seats, original carpets (Blue as used on early cars) and with only minor modifications. The badging was not misplaced as we often see where V8s have been restored.

A copy of the production records shows this early production MGBGTV8 was built on 15th June 1973 and despatched from the MG Plant to Mann-Egerton in High Wycombe on 23rd July 1973 as dealership stock ahead of the launch of the model on 17th August 1973. The car has a detailed maintenance and history file which mentions the first owner was a member of the Kenlowe (cooling fans) family.

In 2018 a **stunning early MGBGTV8 in Teal Blue** was advertised for sale at £40,000 and sold. It was truly an exceptional car carefully maintained and in concours condition.

## Updated MGV8 market review and price guide

Our six monthly updated MGV8 market reviews and price guides were released in early November 2019.

**MGBGTV8s:** the market has become more active with Condition 1 chrome bumper prices continuing a recovery

from May 2018 with the number on offer up by a third compared with November 2018. The premium for Condition 1 chrome over rubber bumpered V8s appears to be around 13% although far fewer rubber bumper cars have been seen on offer than chrome models. The sustained growth in prices seen over the 3 year period May 2014 to May 2017, with demand from a combination of enthusiasts seeking V8s and from "alternative investment activity" seen more generally in the classic car market, had lifted Condition 1 chrome bumper prices to a peak of around £21,330 in the six months to May 2017. Prices then fell back in both the six months to November 2017 and May 2018 by around 8.5% to £19,520. However since May 2018 Condition 1 chrome bumper prices have seen a sustained recovery over the last three six month periods reaching £21,752 by November 2019, which is just above the peak seen in May 2017.

**MG RV8s:** since a period of sustained price growth with Condition 1 RV8s peaking at around £20,000 in the 6 months to November 2017, Condition 1 RV8 prices have seen a slightly erratic path, effectively flat lining for 24 months. But an interesting feature over the six months to November 2019 is prices for Woodcote Green and Other Colours have converged at around £19,500 as the premium for Other Colours continues to reduce from 9% in November 2018 to zero in November 2019. It suggests buyers seem more concerned about condition and mileage as the cars become older rather than what many view as the earlier simplistic disdain for Woodcote Green because 79% of production was finished in that colour.

Low mileages, for example around 20,000 to 30,000 miles, continue to be a feature of the RV8 market with many RV8s reimported from Japan arriving with low mileages. The effect on the UK

market is higher mileage RV8s tend to be seen as less attractive which in many ways is odd as 60,000 miles and more is not high for a 25 year old classic car.

See the full updated market reviews via a link on the "More" webpage.

## News from Retronics

Andy Winters at Retronics, an innovative auto electronics company formed by two classic car enthusiasts with over 40 years of experience in electronics, has been in touch with details of new or improved products in their range of useful devices for classic cars:

### All new Version 2 RWTM windscreen timer module

Many classic cars have windscreen wipers that are either on or off, so driving in drizzle or moderate rainfall means constantly reaching for that wiper switch. Retronics has solved that problem with an economical and simple to install wiper timer module or RWTM.

Andy Winters at Retronics says "our RWTM is a simple to install module which gives you multiple sweep intervals for your classic vehicle's one speed (or dual coil two speed) wiper motor without removing or replacing any original parts. With only four wires to connect, a retro style control switch and an easy to hide control box, the RWTM gives you control over variable delay wiper sweeps in intervals of 2, 3, 4, 8 or 16 seconds. Your wiper motor's original function is unaffected. The RWTM works on positive and negative earth vehicles and comes with full instructions and everything you need to connect it to your vehicle".

As an update Andy reports "the all new Version 2 of the RWTM is now available and is a device that connects differently to the vehicle and is a very different unit inside the box. It circumvents some occasional issues we have found with vehicles with more complex wiring. Next on our hit list is what we think will be an industry first - the RWTM (NSP) - a Wiper Timer Module for Non Self-Parking wipers".

### Hazard light kit

Retronics are also launching their own hazard lights kit (the RHLM) which uses their own PCB technology for complete reliability and accuracy. An upgrade that improves the reliability of lights alerting fellow road users of a car hazard has to be a wise investment. Press coverage will be appearing over the coming weeks.

Further information on these Retronics upgrades will be released via our "More" webpage as it becomes available.





### A day with PRU

Keith Belcher had a call from a long time petrol-head friend in 2016 asking his opinion on an MGBGT V8 that had appeared for sale on the V8 Register website. Keith replied he had seen it at MGLive! 2016 and felt it was probably the best he had ever seen. It was Howard Guiney's multi award winning concours Factory V8 Teal Blue 0528. The next day his friend called and said "I have provisionally bought it. You know your MGs, would you go and check it over?" Keith agreed to go and inspect the car and drive it back from Northumberland. He recalls the day.

Meeting the owner Howard Guiney at Morpeth station Keith soon realised he suffered from recurring severe knee pain which had prompted the sale of his pride and joy. Talking over his restoration and seeing the paperwork it was clear Howard had undertaken an incredible project involving a meticulous restoration. He had spent many hours sourcing new old stock items for the car including those priceless exhaust manifolds; and the correct badging including the curved rear V8 badge. Such was his attention to detail. The inspection and test drive followed.

Keith recalls "Howard pushed the car out and beamed with pride as he popped the bonnet to reveal that spectacular engine bay. For a moment I was back in an MG showroom in 1973. No over restored polished bling here, just that ultra-clean Buick derived V8 in standard tune +20 thou over bore with new internals and new old stock cast iron exhaust manifolds. A check of oil and fluids and a hand on the radiator to make sure it was cold, then a little choke and it sprang into life at the first touch of the starter and settled to a fast

even tick over.

With an enjoyable 20 odd mile test drive over I was satisfied with the performance, the only thing of note was a blown N/S indicator warning lamp. All the inspection checks came next: the magnet in the cloth, feeling here and there, lifting the carpets and the rest, ticking off the items on my checklist. All done, a call to the buyer and a wait for the funds transfer to take place. We shook hands and I started the best part of the whole day as I set off to return home - I was driving perhaps the most original carefully built V8 around today. It was just like driving a new 1973 V8.

Once away from the rush hour in Newcastle, I headed out onto the A1 and started to really test its legs. At speed the car was absolutely stable, the corners were dispensed with aplomb and the suspension was almost totally devoid of the usual harshness. The gearbox was slick and positive, very

quiet and the overdrive in 3rd and 4th slipped in and out instantly. At 70 mph the temperature reduced to around seven thirty on the gauge and stayed rock steady. The oil pressure was 25 psi at idle and above 40 at over 1,200 rpm. The exhaust note was almost subdued, but "to die for" with a gentle burble at tick over, an unmistakable dull growl on acceleration and at speed it quietened down to a comfortable hum. A perfect long distance grand tourer.

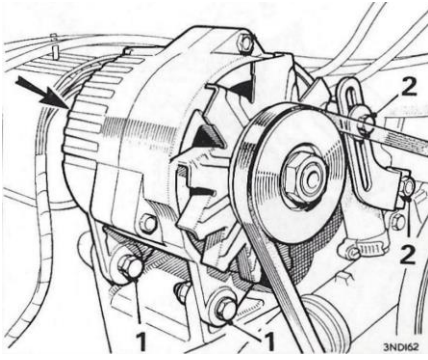
With the light fading I turned on the H4 Lucas headlights which easily lit the way on the sweeping bends of the natural habitat of this rare breed. I was Rossano Brazzi in "The Italian Job" alps humming to myself "On days like these". On reaching my friends drive I switched off and was surprised at the lack of the usual "tick, tick" of an exhaust system cooling. But then I thought PRU has new manifolds and they were fitted correctly by people who know what they are doing, no metal tension.

By any conservative estimate this restoration cost in excess of £40,000 and that is not including Howard's own labour doing much of the fitting up and sourcing and collecting rare parts. The rebuild started in March 2013 and was completed in August 2014. The restoration work was carried out by Halls, the well regarded MG specialist in Lincolnshire, and Howard completed the work in August 2014. He then won concours classes at the Club's MGLive! events in 2015 and 2016 and elsewhere."

Keith recalls the "V8 was advertised on the V8 Website in August 2016 at £31,750 and was purchased within nine days. The mileage shown then was 39,000 (believed genuine). It was advertised for sale in August 2018 for £40,000 and sold not long after for an undisclosed sum".







### MGBGT V8 replacement alternators

What are your options if your alternator on an MGBGT V8 is faulty or needs replacing? This is a question that is increasingly raised by fellow members. Peter Beadle, former parts manager with University Motors in Epsom at the time the model was launched and then in production and later with Moss, recalls "the AC DELCO was shorter in the body than the Lucas ACR alternator, which was then the standard unit used for the BL range of cars, and was used because MG had originally hoped to sell the V8 in the USA where AC DELCO was a US product. The AC DELCO was fitted to TR6s supplied to the US market but not fitted to home market TR6s".

#### Fitting alternative replacement alternators

A frequent question is "if I fit a replacement alternator, possibly larger both in size and in terms of its generating output, will I need to source different brackets?" Peter Beadle says "there are two brackets - the lower bracket or cradle (part number 602369) is used to stop the alternator hitting the front of the offside rocker cover and an adjusting bracket (part number BHH997) is used to adjust the tension of the alternator drive belt. Most larger replacement alternators will fit under the bonnet of an MGBGT V8 as clearance is not an issue". Peter adds "the part number 602369 is the original part number".

#### Specialist repairs of AC DELCO alternators

Often a fault with an alternator can be repaired by a specialist. See our note on three specialists who can service an AC DELCO via a link on our "More" webpage..

#### Upgraded 75amp alternator for a V8

Colin Goodey decided to go for an upgraded 75 amp alternator which delivers about 10% more power at tick over which in real terms meant that the cooling fans on his car were spinning at over 200 rpm higher than with the standard AC DELCO (45 amp) unit. In real terms, on the road, he noted "I have

noticed that the fans now cool the engine sufficiently well enough so they cycle rather than being permanently on. The unit I chose was brand new and looks very similar to the old Lucas 18ACR unit and to my mind it is totally in keeping with the MGBGT V8's engine bay. It is also a perfect fit without any need for any alteration to the fixings and has the standard 3 pin euro plug as the AC DELCO unit, so is totally plug-and-play".

See a full illustrated article via a link on the "More" webpage.

### Season specials

Clive Wheatley has launched his season specials on his website with useful replacement parts that include V8 and RV8 rocker covers, a new RV8 expansion tank, V8 top and bottom silicon cooling hoses, V8 alternator cradle and EZ PAS kits all at attractive prices at <https://www.mgv8parts.com/>

The V8 Register has also launched some attractive seasonal offers. See our "More" page for details.



### Reprint of an RV8 book

With continuing interest from RV8 owners wanting to get a copy of the book MG RV8 - The RV8 Manufacturing Story, the V8 Register has commissioned another reprint which is on offer now at a discounted rate for fellow members.

The 113 page book provides a detailed factual description of the RV8 manufacturing process together with an outline of the staff involved. The content is based on material in the Club's archives, interviews with the management and production staff involved with the RV8 production and ensures that this fascinating detail of RV8 history is not lost to posterity. The book begins with an interesting outline of the formation of the 16 strong production team involved in RV8 manufacture and their duties. It then covers the manufacturing process from

body shell build, painting, to vehicle assembly. Further chapters describe the assembly facility layout, build documentation and vehicle production dates. A later chapter on anecdotes told to the authors by the various production team members adds further human interest to the story. The book contains many quality photos of the production process and staff.

Visit the "More" webpage for a book review and a link to the online V8 Shop.



### V8 Curry at Knowle

Arrangements are being made for our annual V8 Curry on Saturday 8th February, the evening before the Stoneleigh show, at the Lloyds Indian Restaurant in Knowle which is a few miles to the west of Stoneleigh and just east of the M40. It's proved a popular venue for our annual V8 Curry held in February intended to coincide with the annual Stoneleigh Spares show weekend.

We were able to go snap on the arrangements for the V8 Curry night following our receiving confirmation from the event organisers of the annual MG-Triumph Spares Show at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire, Live Promotions, that the date for 2020 at Stoneleigh is Sunday 9th February.

Further information on the restaurant and the Stoneleigh show is available via links on our "More" webpage.

### Early RV8 at the NEC

An early RV8 in Oxford Blue (VIN 0024) was on display on the Club's stand at the end of season NEC Classic Car Show in November. It drew many visitors to the stand to look over the Connolly leather seats and Elm Burr trim which give the model such a luxury appearance and feel.

The car had been carefully restored by Brown & Gammons and was then sold to an RV8 enthusiast, Marion Quarrington, who says it "was built on 2nd April 1993, registered as K70 MGR on 14th May 1993 and sold to Rover Group Company Sales at Canley in Coventry where it was a press and dealer demonstration car. The car then passed through three female and two male owners".