V8 NEWSLETTER
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WELCOME TO THE V8 NEWSLETTER

V8 launched in August 1973

The iconic advert for the "new 124mph MGBGTV8" never ceases to underline the announcement of the launch of the MGBGTV8. Although the V8 powered model had mixed reviews from the motoring press, the performance of the car was recognised, not least by a review in the Police Review magazine that saw the V8 as a very good enforcement vehicle. Five years later the V8 Register was formed in October 1978 and the first V8 AGM and Dinner were held in May 1979 over the Club's annual weekend meeting at Silverstone. The members attending the dinner included enthusiasts from Switzerland (Tom Studer) and Germany (Walter Kallenberg) together with John Dupont, Alan Kingwell, Geoff Allen, Jerry Bright, Charles Williams, Howard Gosling, Peter Beadle, Tony Hall, Jim Gibson, Victor Smith and Mike Maude Roxby.

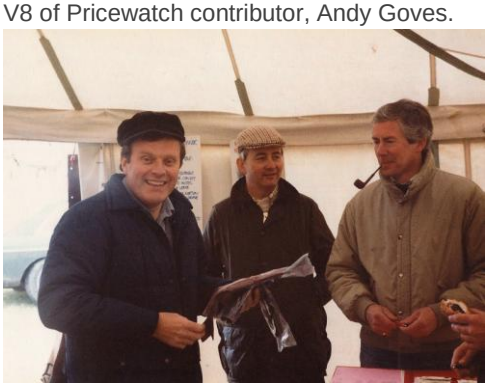
By May 1979 the activities of the V8 Register were well underway with the launch of the V8 Workshop Notes series which has gone on to be a successful series, now in the fourteenth volume.

Enjoying classic V8 power

Launched in August 1973, the V8 powered MGB combined the popular fixed head coupe body style with a powerful three and half litre light alloy V8 engine. The Rover powerplant ran with a reduced compression ratio but an increased torque compared with the similar engines then used in the Rover saloons. The result transformed the MGB, creating a very nimble car with the luxury of multi-cylinder power which is both flexible and economical - features which continue to have a special appeal for V8 enthusiasts today!

On the road the MGBGTV8 has an effortless performance, accelerating rapidly in the higher gears with 125 mph available in both direct and overdrive top. Hills just melt away and the torque gives the car an unfussy manner. The 0 to 60 time of 7.7

V8 of Pricewatch contributor, Andy Goves.


Alan Kingwell, Victor Smith and Mike Maude Roxby in the mid 1980s.

MGBGTV8 in Harvest Gold on Abingdon aerodrome (Mike Taylor)

Above & below:, a concours car previously owned by Howard Guiney.

seconds is still decades later, a time many of today's sports saloons cannot touch. Even when asked to work hard, the exhaust note retains its very pleasingly modest but purposeful burble in keeping with its understated manner.

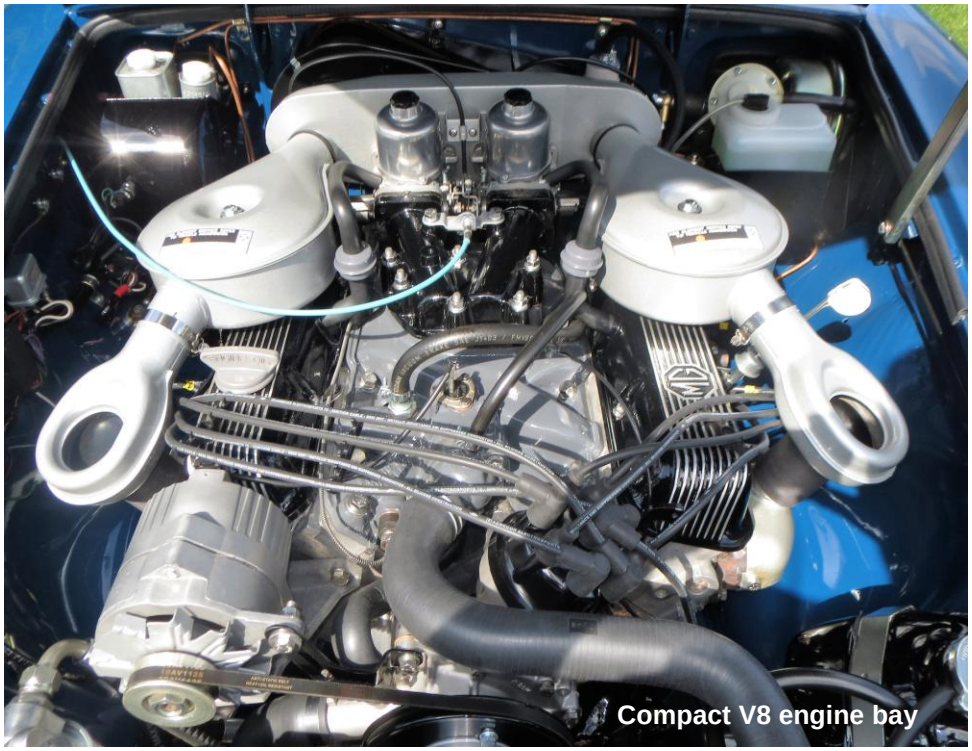
The V8 engine, although from an old Buick design from the early fifties, contains hydraulic cam followers which give the MGBGTV8 a quietness that compliments the smooth power. Under the bonnet, the lightweight aluminium V8 engine seems much bigger than the original four cylinder steel engine but is only just a little heavier when the engine ancillaries are included. The lightweight benefits are good front to rear weight distribution and an appreciable increase in the power to weight ratio, even from the detuned 137 bhp V8 power unit.

A surprising feature of the MGBGTV8 is the fuel economy. Even driven on the open road with a sense of fun the enthusiast can enjoy with V8 power, it is quite easy to achieve between 27 and 31 miles to the gallon. The overdrive unit gives the MGBGTV8 long legs with around 29 mph per 1,000 rpm or 3,000 rpm at 90 mph. The convenient overdrive facility is available on top gear at the flick of a stalk switch on the steering column and on many of the earlier chrome bumpered examples of the model, it is available on third gear as well.

The MGBGTV8 is however not without its poor features - excessive wind noise at speed and a choppy ride at slow speeds from the stiffer rear springs which are needed to cope with the higher power output. The gearbox has to be treated with consideration when punching the additional power through to the road wheels.

At its launch in 1973, the MGBGTV8 was welcomed as a powerful example of the MG marque but generally regarded as arriving several years late in a popular but ageing bodyshell and suspension package, then over ten years old. The MGBGTV8 is very much an MG combining the famous marque's Safety Fast! features - speed and performance with predictable and forgiving handling characteristics. At the time of the launch, the specification of servo assisted brakes, tinted glass, distinctive light alloy wheels, fine cord covered adjustable seats, two speed wipers and an overdrive as standard made it a refined sports car for 1973 and good value at its launch price of £2,294. In so many ways the MGBGTV8 has been an undiscovered classic sportscar but since 2010 prices have risen substantially.

It remains a sports car that a small band of enthusiasts enjoy a great deal and see as very good value today in every sense.



Compact V8 engine bay

Options if your Dunlop composites need refurbishing

The original wheels fitted to the MGBGTV8 model were a 14” composite wheel with an alloy centre with characteristic features mated to a chromed steel rim. Over time the recess, where the inner edge of the steel rim is attached to the alloy centre, can attract rust and if it’s not controlled that corrosion can develop to an extent the wheels are in a sad state and need refurbishment. Until a couple of years ago several experienced and reputable wheel restorers offered a refurbishment service for Dunlop composites but unfortunately ceased offering that service because of their concerns over being able to maintain their necessary refurbishment standards. So what options are there today for an enthusiast with Dunlop composites in need of refurbishment? Here Victor Smith looks at the current situation and what is available.

What are the issues with refurbishing Dunlop composites?

Over time corrosion at the steel rim/alloy centre interface and necessary refurbishment work will reduce the thickness of the steel rim and of the alloy centre and as this is where the re-riveting takes place during reassembly of the wheels. There are concerns that the reduction in the thickness of these parts can result in weakening the wheel. The strength of a wheel on a sports car capable of speeds of well in excess of 100mph is clearly important – and remember at 100mph they are rotating at about 1,400 rpm and are subject to huge forces when braking, accelerating and cornering. So the wheel’s integrity is paramount.

The full refurbishment of a Dunlop composite wheel requires the alloy centre to be split from the steel rim with the removal of the rivets. It’s particularly important that the exact mating position of each wheel is recorded by marking both parts so that when reassembly is carried out the wheel can be mated in exactly the same position. Once the two parts of the wheel are split then the corrosion on the chromed steel rim has to be removed. Depending on the severity of the corrosion that may have resulted in some of the steel being damaged and together with the process of rust removal, a reduction in the thickness of the steel rim in the area of the mating surface may result. Similarly with the alloy centre interface, corrosion can leave damage on the alloy centre’s mating surface and any necessary grinding down of the alloy mating surface to achieve a good mating of the two restored interfaces can reduce the thickness of the alloy in that area. A real concern for specialist wheel refurbishers is whether the resulting thickness of each part will be sufficient for riveting during the reassembly of the wheel. In the past the refurbishers have cautioned that a repeat refurbishment of these wheels is unlikely to be acceptable for these concerns over the thickness of the metal in that area.

The riveting of the steel rim to the alloy centre needs to be of the highest quality, because if the rivets do not “clamp” the parts together firmly there will be relative movement called fretting, which will exacerbate the wearing away of any insulation coatings (anodising or paint) that might be applied. This will then allow water in and the risk of corrosion.

Usually the steel rims were sent off to a rechroming specialist who has the necessary skills to prepare the rims and rechrome them to a high standard. The alloy centres usually need cleaning down and repainting with a black paint.

MWS have stopped refurbishing Dunlop composites

A few years ago the specialist wheel refurbisher, Motor Wheel Services at Langley in Berkshire, decided to cease providing a full refurbishment service for Dunlop composites. To avoid the consequences of corrosion damage to the steel rims leading to a reduced thickness of metal at the mating face with the alloy centre, they had refurbished some wheels with new chromed steel rims, but they found there was a great deal of skilled labour needed to get a satisfactory fit during reassembly of the wheels and consequently they were expensive, sometimes around £500 to £600 a wheel. But there were still concerns that the alloy at the interface might not be sufficient to provide a strong and durable joint and hence concerns over product liability. There were also some issues with balancing refurbished wheels with new steel rims. So MWS did not continue refurbishing wheels using new steel rims and as we know they subsequently decided to cease refurbishing them using the customer's original steel rim and alloy centre. Other specialist s have also ceased offering a refurbishment service involving splitting Dunlop composites.

What are your options if you have corrosion on Dunlop composites?

Taking **preventative measures to avoid rusting** of the chromed rims are a vital first step to try and avoid, or at least minimise, corrosion of the steel rims. Keeping them clean of road film, using regular but careful polishing of the chromed areas will help keep any rust from forming. Also by spraying the chromed areas with WD40 helps too. Nic Houslip says "this spray (Water Dispersant #40) was developed for the US space agency NASA and works because it has a greater affinity for metal than water which means it can, and does, displace any water and allows the oil in the mix to form a waterproof coating on the metal"

At least one specialist continues to offer a refurbishment service where there is only limited surface rusting. It does not involve splitting the alloy centres from the chromed steel rim in the way they had previously done for a comprehensive refurbishment of these wheels, but just careful polishing to remove the surface rust. This option could be a useful option if the early development of corrosion is spotted in time.

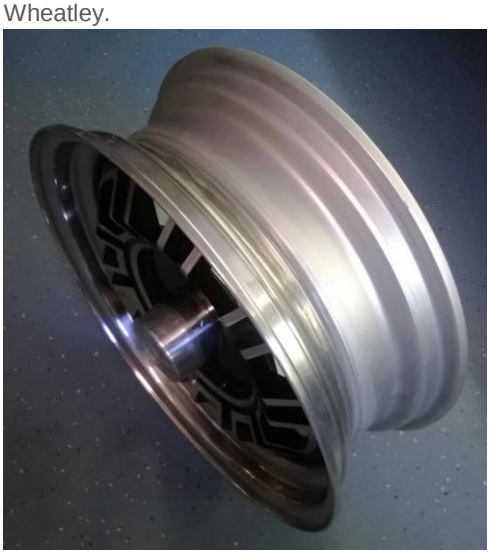
Advertising for a set of used Dunlop composite wheels in good condition is a good option. Adverts on the "Spares Wanted" webpage on the V8 Website have produced results in the past as a number of current and former V8 owners have had a set or individual wheels available that they wanted to offer for sale, but it's fair to say that with the leading specialists ceasing to offer a refurbishment service for Dunlop composites, the number of wheels seen advertised for sale has fallen significantly and they have been replaced with "wanted" adverts.

A **set of new all-alloy Dunlop composite lookalike wheels** is increasingly seen as a practical and affordable option. **I**n mid-2014 the leading MGV8 parts and service provider, Clive Wheatley, sourced a supply of new all-alloy wheels that look very close to the original steel and alloy composite wheel. At the time Clive was working with a specialist wheel manufacturer in the West Midlands to produce a good quality lookalike wheel, the specialist refurbishers were still offering a service for original 14" Dunlop composites. So Clive Wheatley's new supply of all-alloy wheels were made in a 15" size and aimed principally at the MGV8 Conversions market because the 15" size was attractive as they enabled a larger front brake calliper to be fitted and the Hoyle front and rear suspension upgrades too.

The all-alloy lookalike wheels are nano coated to provide protection from the potentially damaging effects of a film of road spray, particularly on the alloy rims. As with many other alloy wheels, the manufacturer recommends washing the wheels when they are coated with a film of road spray. Most V8 enthusiasts with the original Dunlop composite wheels would do that in any case, but with alloys it's particularly desirable they are not left with a coating of road film.

However fitting 15" wheels will need a different tyre size choice, but fortunately there is a good choice of tyres. With 175 or 185/65 R15 tyres the rolling circumference is a little less than with the original 175 80 R14 tyre, so at 65mph on the speedo the actual speed is a little lower at 62.2 and 63.6mph respectively. We have a guide note on the V8 Website on tyres for 15" wheels and the marginal effect on the speedometer reading.

New all-alloy replacement 15" V8 lookalike wheel with a polished rim supplied by Clive Wheatley.



Clive's 15" lookalike wheels have been available for a couple of years and have been selling well, but since the specialist refurbishers have ceased offering their service, some owners of original Factory MGBGTV8s who have been unable to get their original 14" Dunlop composites refurbished, have opted to buy the 15" all-alloy lookalikes.

The idea of arranging a supply of 14" all-alloy lookalikes has been considered by Clive Wheatley but he has found the original brake calliper used on the Factory MGBGTV8 unfortunately cannot fit within the 14" all-alloy wheel. In addition the front end costs of creating the alloy centres and the minimum stocking levels do require a very substantial initial investment which would go alongside his remaining major investment in the earlier 15" lookalikes.

Replacing badly corroded Dunlop composites with a set of 14" Minilite wheels is an option as they are a classic wheel for cars of the sixties and seventies and are much liked by many MGV8 enthusiasts.

V8 Derbyshire Tour 2018

The next V8 Tour in the popular series will be in Derbyshire from Sunday 2nd to Thursday 6th September based at the New Bath Hotel and Spa at Matlock Bath. The event will include touring the beautiful scenic routes around the Derbyshire dales. There will be a tour of the Peak District National Park, visiting both Derbyshire White Peak and Dark Peak. Bookings are now full but there is a reserve list. Further information at: www.v8register.net/more.htm

V8 Rolling Road Day

On Saturday 8th September we have a day of rolling road sessions at Aldon in the West Midlands including a fuelling setup check, timing adjustment check and at least two power plots. Spectators will be very welcome. Full details are available on our "More" webpage.