

CHANGING GEAR

May 2004 (2)

National Rally & 25-year celebration Leedons Park 2nd/3rd/4th July



the biggest event in the club's history
please make every effort to attend
more details - see centre pages

the magazine of the NG owners club

THE NG OWNERS CLUB

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**Next issue
to the
printer
16th August**

*"Oh, he's been very sensible about retirement – even gone out to buy a smaller car
now there's just the two of us... Listen! Is that him?"*

Chairman's Letter

The National Rally and 25 year celebration is getting closer.

Over the weekend of 2nd/3rd/4th July at Leedons Park Campsite, Broadway, Worcestershire there will be a celebration of 25 years production of the NG marque combined with the Club's annual National Rally.

Lots of events are organised including a scenic drive, Barn Dance, Concours competition and a falconry demonstration which are all FREE.

Nestling amidst the glorious Cotswolds and Shakespeare country with endless countryside walks, Leedons stands in nearly 40 acres of local parkland, with lawns, gardens and well set-out amenities. The countryside around Leedons is dotted with unspoilt villages like Chipping Campden, Moreton-in-March, Stow-on-the-Wold and Bourton-on-the-Water, all within 30 minutes drive.

This is a weekend for all the family so there will be things for children as well as adults. The campsite has a swimming pool and chil-

dren's adventure playground. There will be three barbecues available for you to cook anything you wish - from burgers to steak or kebabs.

A large marquee will be on site for the whole weekend. Tea, coffee and soft drinks will be freely available.

Findhorn Cars will also be in attendance with the their latest demonstration cars and build advice.

We would like to get as many NGs together as possible, but

don't be put off if you haven't finished building yet or if your car is off the road - just come along and join in the fun. There are excellent camping facilities at



a nominal cost as well as caravans to rent on the site. A list of bed-and-breakfast, small hotels or guest-houses in the vicinity is available on request from Bob Preece.

Leedons is one mile from the centre of Broadway - take the Cheltenham road for 200 yards and turn first right towards Childswickham - Leedons is half-a-mile on your left.

You should have received your personal invitation by now,

which has an RSVP section - please return this as soon as possible so we have an idea of how many people to cater for. We do hope you can come and join us and make the weekend a truly memorable one.

If you are unable to make the rally, I hope that you will enjoy

your summer motoring or build programme. Let us know how you get on; Paul Gray would appreciate any editorial material, pictures or accounts of journeys undertaken for inclusion in future issues of the Club Magazine.

Peter Clark

Editorial

If you might be thinking of attending either the Goodwood Festival of Speed (25-27 June) or the Goodwood Revival (3-5 Sept) this year, you will have to buy your tickets in advance. This will be the first year that entry is by advance ticket only, the event organisers limiting the number of visitors 'to preserve Goodwood's special atmosphere'. The theme this year is 'Young Chargers. Old Masters'. The Festival will celebrate the great dynasties of motorsport as well as the emergence of new technologies that usurped the old order. Around 200 of the world's greatest cars, drivers, bikes & riders from around the globe including everything from Edwardian Racers to Group B rally cars and the latest F1 machinery will be there. Nowhere else in the world can you experience such a rich mixture of motor racing heroes from past and present. Goodwood can be contacted on 01243 755055 or on-line at www.goodwood.co.uk. See you at both events on the Friday?

AES Auto Electric Supplies produce an excellent catalogue for anyone contemplating a bit of re-wiring or adding the odd accessory. The item that caught my eye was a kit to convert existing indicators to hazards all for the grand sum of £13. Having been stranded at the side of a French motorway without the advantage of such a safety aid, I would strongly advise giving this some serious thought (except for SVA cars that will already have hazards fitted!). AES can be contacted on 01584-819552.

The Stoneleigh show over the 2 days 2nd/3rd May was another great success both for the many manufacturers present and the multitude of clubs in attendance. A report on the show is included in the members' letters section.

As you will read in the Findhorn Cars' section, there will be 2 new V8-powered cars built for the Atlas-Sahara Rally planned for the 5th-12th October. Nigel, our intrepid manufacturer, will be driving one of

Atlas-Sahara Rally taster



these cars himself & I am hoping for a full report, with photos, for the December edition of CG. Having looked at the relevant web-site for the rally, I have distilled some of the info therein to give members some of the background to the rally - see the letters pages if you are interested. In fact, there is a possibility of late entry up to the end of August so it may not be too late to enter if you are tempted!

For those who need an additive for unleaded petrol, you might be interested to hear that The Federation of Historic Vehicle Clubs has approved the TetraBoost lead fuel additive and octane booster after undertaking detailed chemical analysis. Apparently, tests showed that TetraBoost provides the same amount of lead as that in BS4040 pump fuel and should provide the same level of protection against valve seat recession. Call 020 8870 9933 or visit www.tetraboost.com for more details.

I have often been amused, and sometimes impressed, by the quirkiness of some aspects of French cars. With this thought in

mind, I enjoyed reading an account of the late Peter Ustinov's life and some of the stories he had penned. One such was about his pre-war Delage which included a warning printed on the engine in French.....*"If you use oil which is too heavy, many bad things will happen to you".....*

On the subject of old cars, have you heard of the new European race series for pre-war sports cars? The series, entitled 'Motor Racing Legends', will be open to a large range of sports cars from the twenties and thirties. The aim is to recreate the heady days of the blower Bentleys v Mercedes-Benz and the Alfa Romeo v Talbot with the endurance racing of Le Mans and the Mille Miglia. The series will comprise up to six rounds at circuits including Donington Park, Spa, Nurburgring etc. Further info from Motor Racing Legends, tel. 01933 624002 or e-mail enquiries to enquiries@motorracinglegends.com.

Still on the subject of racing for those who like the Le Mans formula but prefer to see older cars racing, the Le Mans Classic will be taking place 24th/25th July this year. Cars that will taking part were built between 1923 & 1971, the racing to be held over the traditional 24 hours but starting in shifts split into 1923-39, 1957-61 & 1966-71 grids. Kit Car magazine are organising a trip departing Thurs 22nd July and returning Mon 26th July that in-

cludes ferries, a hotel at Abbeville on the way down, a good campsite & race tickets. There is also a hotel option. Details at www.ayrspeed.com. I am hoping for a report for the August edition of CG.

If you are looking for a day out in the Midlands, it might be worth a trip to Coventry, the British motor industry's birthplace. The transport museum has just reopened after an expenditure of £7.5 million to move it from a side-street to a grandstand position in the Millennium Square. This museum purports to house the world's biggest collection of British cars, motorbikes & bicycles. To give some perspective, the new museum is about twice the size of the Heritage centre at Gaydon. If you missed seeing Richard Noble's jet-powered land speed record car at Goodwood after the 1997 record-winning run (763 mph), the car can be found in a special part of the museum together with a realistic simulator that puts you in the cockpit during driver Andy Green's supersonic record-breaking run. Sounds well worth a visit. For more details telephone 024 7683 2425.

Lots of great events to look forward to in the next few months, starting for some of us with the NG trip to Brittany. There are now a total of 11 cars embarking on the trip early in June - many thanks to Mike Bond for all his efforts in making the trip a reality.

And now for the major event of the year - at least in NG terms! The combined National Rally & 25-year celebration promises to be a great event in the history of the club and your committee hope that as many members as possible will make the effort to support this important event. If you can't make the whole weekend, just turn up for a day, I'm sure that you will find it an enjoyable experience. You should have received a personal invite by now and I would ask you to please make sure that you have sent a reply to memsec Bob so that your committee can make final arrangements based on realistic numbers of attendees. Looking forward to seeing you there.

I would like to end this editorial by making a plea for someone to step forward and take over editing the magazine from the end of this year. My time in harness will have been 5 years and it is time for 'new blood' to take over with a fresh burst of enthusiasm for the job. I can assure any budding editors that the task is most rewarding & not difficult for anyone who is already familiar with using a PC. Please feel free to phone me if you would like to find out more, the earlier the better since I am prepared to produce the August & December issues before signing off at the end of the year.

Enjoy the early summer - see you at Leedons Park, Ed

Secretary's Notes

By the time you read this latest magazine you will have received your invitation to the National Rally. We would appreciate prompt replies and hope you will be able to attend.

Manda and I look forward to meeting you all again. It should be a most enjoyable weekend, so the more people that come, the more memorable it will be.

I do have a list of B&Bs for anyone who requires accommodation.

This edition of the club mag should inform you of what's in store for the Fri/Sat/Sunday but if you have any questions about the weekend please give me a call on 020 8393 4661.

May 23rd

Cheshire Kit & Classic Car Show

Capestone Hall, Macclesfield, Cheshire

This meeting is organised by the Rochdale Owners Club who can be contacted on

01332 690680 for more information, or our own Jen Aitken on 01422 378838 who will be running the NGOC group there.

June 8th

London to Brighton Kit Car Run

This event is organised by Greenwood Exhibitions who can be con-

tacted on 01527 871150 for more information. The run starts at the Brooklands Museum in Weybridge Surrey and wends its way through the country roads of Surrey and Sussex. A stopping point is made at Michelham Priory, which is a Tudor mansion set on an island surrounded by 7 acres of tranquil gardens.

The route ends on the Brighton seafront of Madeira Drive, which will be closed to normal traffic for the day. Traders will be in attendance under the arches of Madeira Drive and motoring journalists provide a commentary for the participants and around 20,000 spectators.

If you are interested in this day out then give Greenwood Exhibitions a call. The cover picture on the Feb issue of ChangiNGear was from last year's event.

June 12/13

Le mans 24 Hour Race

I have just put this in for information of the date of this weekend,

June 19/20

The National Kit Car Festival

Newark & Notts Showground, Newark-on-Trent, Notts.

Telephone Newark Promotions on 01526 320721 for information on this meeting.

July 2/3/4

25th BIRTHDAY OF NGs

See centre pages of this magazine.

July 16/17/18

Running Board Rally, Henley-on-Thames

I mentioned this meeting in the last magazine. I have not had any information as yet on this event but if it goes the same as years past then it will be a pleasant 2 days by the River Thames. Give me a call nearer the date if you wish to attend when I should have more info.

August 14/15

The Great Northern Kit Car Show

The Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, Yorkshire.

Once again Jen Aitken will take charge of our club presence at this venue so give her a call if you have any questions about it, or telephone the organisers, European Show Promotions, on 01233 713878.

August 28/29

Popham Aero/Autojumble & Classic Vehicle Show

Earlier than previous years, this show has become so popular that the organisers have had to introduce a charge of £5 per car to cover additional insurance costs. Entry is also now by prior arrangement only. Although this show is now a 2-day event, the main day for NGOC members will be the Sunday. Please contact John Coker for an entry form.
Bob

Monthly evening pub meet: every 3rd Wednesday, 7.30pm
The Talbot Hotel, Ripley, Surrey (Bob Preece 020 8393 4661).

Monthly lunch-time pub meet: every 2nd Sunday, 12.30pm
Smarden Belle, Smarden, Kent (John Jewsbury 01622 890992).

Essex area: phone Peter St. John-Howe 01787 224576.

New Forest & District monthly lunch-time pub meet: every 1st Sunday, 12 noon (phone Keith Baker 02380 864310 for current venue).

Monthly lunch-time pub meet: date depends upon interest shown, 12 noon at The Six Bells, Warborough, off A423 Oxford/Wallingford (Bob Morrison)

East Anglia area: evening runs in the Bury St Edmunds area - 1st Tuesday monthly from April-Sept (Chris Wilson 01449 672527).

South Wales (Cardiff) pub meet: first Monday monthly starting 1st April (Brian North 02920 341671)

Events Calendar 2004

* events to be attended by Findhorn Cars (provisional)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Organiser</u>
May 23	Cheshire Kit & Classic Car Show Capestone Hall, Maccelesfield, Cheshire	Jen Aitken
June 5-12	NGs trip to Brittany (departing from Portsmouth)	Mike Bond 01895 252255
June 8	London to Brighton Kit Car Run	Greenwood Exhibi- tions 01296 631181
June 12-13	Le Mans 24 hrs	For info
June 19-20	Newark Kit Car Show	TBD
June 25-27	Goodwood Festival of Speed	For info
July 2,3,4	*Celebrating 25 years of NG Cars (National Rally & Findhorn Cars Open Day)	Bob Preece
July 16-18	Running-Board Rally, Henley-on- Thames	Bob Preece
July 22-26	Le Mans Classic (www.ayrspeed.com)	Kit Car magazine
Aug 14-15	Harrogate Kit Car Show	Jen Aitken
Aug 28/29	Popham Aero/Autojumble classic vehicle rally & fly-in (club day 29th)	John Coker
Sept 3-5	Goodwood Revival	For info
Sept 4-5	Donnington Kit Car Show	Jen Aitken
Nov 7	London to Brighton Veteran Cars	Roy de Boise
Nov 20-21	*Exeter Kit Car Show	European Promotions 01233 713878

News from Findhorn Cars

Our news is dominated by working hard to build two completely new cars for the Atlas Sahara rally in October. One will be a TS with a less powerful V8 and the other will be a TCII with a more powerful V8.

Both cars will have extra length, the TS in the cockpit and the TCII in the engine bay, and extra width. This is inspired by my size, but is I believe something that has badly needed doing for a while now. Both cars will have impact-energy-absorbing front ends.

One of the cars will have an automatic gearbox and both will have limited-slip differentials. The front suspension will be standard MGB. The rear suspension will be by leaf springs, but the location function will be a triangulated four-link system. The plan is to fit disc brakes. Hopefully this will be a big improvement over the conventional suspension, but time will tell.

Another thing is that I am going deaf already, so I won't be

aiding this process with my car by having side-pipes exhausting in front of the wheel. It will have more civilised tail pipes as per John Hoyle's V8TF.

The result of all this work has been that other development has been sidelined, but these larger cars will form a really good basis to go forward on.

Our red car has finally passed SVA, not before the bonnet edges required thickening and various other niggling problems. After Stoneleigh the demonstrator TF and TC will go through SVA (fingers crossed).

We have experienced e-mail and website difficulties, for which I apologise to all our friends. The long time off-line resulted from a motorcycle tragedy in our computer supplier. We have the A272 near us which is a wonderful road to drive, but the bikers know about it with tragic consequences. It gives me qualms to be building very fast cars, with their potential for tragedy if mis-used. You may know that I do patent work for a child safety seat manufacturer. These factors combine to convince me that we have to do more for the safety of our cars. You will see more roll-over hoops, full-harness seat belts, ISOFIX child seats etc. in our cars

TCV8 demo car
Stoneleigh





Findhorn Cars at Stoneleigh

louvres in aluminium inserts. If that gets to the traditionalists in the readership, please feel free to get on the keyboard to office@ngcars.co.uk.

Back to the Sahara cars, this is going to be very much a family effort. Younger son

as the months go by. It will be a question of Ss: Size, Simplicity, Safety, Suspension.

One thing which may raise eyebrows is that I am thinking of going away from aluminium bonnets. They have been a huge hassle to get right and now our supplier is bust. So I am thinking grp, with

George will be building them through the summer with a team of mates. He and his elder brother will drive one of the cars. Monica and I will drive the other. Hopefully we will have something far enough on for people to see at the 25th anniversary jamboree!!

Nigel Brooks



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Members' Letters & Articles

From: Chris Wilson

East Anglia Update

This is to remind members who live within reasonable reach of mid-Suffolk, that my local MG club organizes mini runs during the summer months on the first Tuesday of each month. They start at 7.00pm, usually cover 20/30 miles following a route sheet, finishing with a meal at a surprise Public House. There is no cost involved (apart from the meal!) and you are most welcome to join in with us.

Last year's Boadicea Run attracted its usual 100 or so cars and the proceeds were donated to the M.S Society. This years event takes place on Sunday 16th May and will follow a familiar format except that we are offering two routes - one 70/80 miles and the other around 120 miles. The price is £20 per car (2 people) and includes a buffet lunch at an interesting stop.

Details from me on 01449 672527. Unfortunately I will not be there this year as it clashes with my 3-week tour of France and Northern Italy. Will I be taking an open top sports car? Although it does sound inviting, with 2500 miles in prospect, Diane thinks the diesel with climate control would be sensible - and more room for duty free!

Chris

Sorry folks, went to press too late to let you know of this one. Thanks anyway Chris for the info. PS you can buy a plug-in 12-volt ice box that fits in the NG boot & is more than capable of keeping your wine cool on a long run & the climate control comes free, Ed

From: Paul Gray

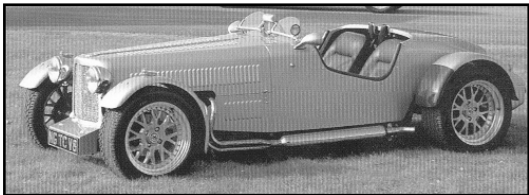
Stoneleigh 2nd May 2004.

Another excellent turnout of cars demonstrated the attractions of this show for

Findhorn Cars Limited

Hill Hampton, East Meon,
Petersfield, Hampshire
GU32 1QN

tel : 01730 823647
fax: 01730 823580
web: www.ngcars.co.uk
e-mail: info@ngcars.co.uk



All NG parts supplied
from chassis to brake pads



NGOC members. The organisers were expecting upwards of 6,000 kit cars and I doubt they were disappointed.

The weather on the first day of this 2-day show turned out to be much better than forecast, a vital ingredient for wandering around the extensive club displays throughout the huge showground.

For those who haven't yet ventured to the Stoneleigh Kit Car Show, it really is the mecca for kit car enthusiasts with visitors from all over the UK and Europe arriving in large numbers.

For those currently building their cars, or contemplating a rebuild, this show is the ideal place to go shopping. Most of the major kit car accessory manufacturers are in attendance with quite a few tool suppliers to tempt those of us who feel that there is always room for that extra tool in our workshop.

It was great to see an excellent display by our manufacturer, Findhorn Cars. The stand was 'manned' by Nigel and Monica, ably assisted by Peter from Devon Autogas (I'm still waiting for that article on taking your TF to America last year, Peter!).

There were two demo cars on the Findhorn stand, the delightful brg TF and the newly-completed TCV8. A close look at the TC showed that the Rover V8 had been fitted with a fuel injection system to meet Nigel's aim for a 'turn the key and go' ability for the new car.

Behind the scenes, Findhorn have a comprehensive programme of development in progress across the range, including the development and build of two V8-powered cars for the Kit Car Rally to the Atlas mountains later this year.

One of the great attractions of the Stoneleigh show is that

there are always some innovative ideas on public display for the first time. This years' show was no exception, the diversity being as interesting as usual. For example, we were very impressed with the Veranti body-kit for the Toyota MR2 which was extremely well thought out and put together.

At the other end of the scale, the Citroen Specials Club display is always worth a visit. The sheer individuality of some of the cars is very refreshing. In this instance, however, our attention was caught by a home-made caravan made from very thin plywood (necessary if your tow-car only has a 600cc engine) with a forward section that hinged upwards to reveal a mini stable-door, mini-cooker and 2-seater settee. Even more unusual was the towing arrangement where

the tow hitch had been built into the centre of the roll-over bar with the caravan draw-bar extending over the rear of the car in an S-shape - almost in the style of an articulated lorry!

Once again, we all owe Bob and Manda Preece a big vote of thanks for providing the tent and copious supplies of free tea and coffee to members on the club site.

As usual for this show, NGOC members arrived from all over the UK with a number staying for 2 days because of the sheer impossibility of seeing everything on offer in a single day!

For those booking accommodation for next year's show the dates are Sunday 1st and Monday 2nd May 2005 - don't miss it!
Paul



From: Jeff Stretch

Axle Antics

Back in 1988 when I bought my donor MGB I considered one of the plus points was that it had wire-wheels. What I didn't realize was that a steel wheel axle with wire-wheel adaptors gives almost an extra inch in track.

The new wheels I chose were 15-inch, 60-spoke type as used on the Healey 3000 and TR4. I chose the larger diameter to give a more period look and the 60 spokes to keep the additional unsprung weight to a minimum.

What I didn't appreciate was that they had an extra 5mm inset compared to the standard 14-inch wheel of the

MGB. The combination of wheels and standard wire-wheel axle resulted in rather a narrow track especially when compared with cars having a steel wheel axle fitted with MGC wheels, which later became the norm.

Although I would have much preferred the wider track for both the aesthetics and stability there was no cheap or easy way out, so I have just lived with the situation. Eighteen months or so ago a steel-wheel axle came my way. On investigation I found that the standard wire-wheel hub has half-an-inch more outset than the steel-wheel adaptor hub, so the combination of the wider steel wheel axle and my

original standard wire-wheel hubs would give almost two inches extra track; now that really seemed worthwhile!

The only mods necessary were realignment of the copper brake pipe to accommodate the extra width between the brake back-plates and an adjustment to the hand-brake cable. Although the axle is a heavy lump I was able to remove and fit it on my own. First operation was to get the car on axle-stands located on the chassis under the front shackle mountings and remove wheels etc. I then removed a number of bolts from the rear wings to enable the rear valance to be withdrawn. With the trolley-jack under the diff I disconnected the flexible brake-pipe, hand-brake cable, prop-shaft and panhard rod, undid the U-bolt nuts, removed the Spax shocks and took out the rear shackles allowing the springs to drop, lowered the axle and wheeled it out on the jack over the springs.

Refitting was a reversal of the above procedure but I did find it easier to undo the upper mounting brackets for the Spax and replace them after the lower mountings had been fitted under the U-bolts. Once back on her wheels the extra track was obvious and to my eyes a great improvement. On the road the roll was reduced and she felt much more stable. But I was rather disappointed to find that the diff was noisy. I changed the oil to EPI 40

which improved things a little but with the hood up it was really obtrusive still. However I put up with the noise all last summer occasionally resorting to cotton wool in my ears, much to Susan's amusement. As I have an aversion to spending unnecessary money and had two axles I felt I should be able to make one good one out of the two! The only difference in the two axles is in the width of the axle casings and consequently the length of the half shafts. After removal of the half shafts I found that the difference was thirteen-sixteenths of an inch.

I reasoned that if I made up two spacers of this width to go between the ends of the wire wheel axle and the bearing retainers the steel-wheel half-shafts could be accommodated. Having made the spacers they had to be located. The wheel bearings protrude one-eighth of an inch from the end of the axle housing. To get this same dimension from the outer face of the spacers I disassembled the old wheel-bearings and using the outer races, having softened them somewhat, faced them down one sixteenth of an inch. This gave location to the spacers and the correct protrusion of the bearings when fitted. Each spacer was then drilled through in four positions using the bearing retainer as a jig.

The spacers, properly located, were temporarily clamped up to the end faces, using one-inch

longer bolts, and finally welded to the axle. My old wire-wheel axle now had the same overall dimension as the steel-wheel axle!

While the half-shafts were out I replaced the fibre thrust-washers behind the half-shaft pinions and the concave bronze thrust-washers behind the small diff pinions. With new bearings fitted to the half-shafts they were pulled into the axle.

The bearing retainers and brake plates were then fitted and bolted to the axle using the one-inch longer bolts. Next step was to fit the splined hubs which were torqued up with the aid of a piece of scaffold tube and the bathroom scales to ascertain the correct force. (i.e. 180ft lbs = 601bs @ 3ft rad). With the split pins fitted to the hub nuts and the brake-drums assembled the axle was ready for fitting to the car. The NG now, at long last, has a wide track rear axle that is also quiet in operation!

Jeff

From: Mike Heath

Bingley Show Report

On Sunday 14th March the Northern Section visited the the Kit Car show at Bingley Hall, Stafford. Attending this show, being quite early in the season, is always a risky business in terms of inclement weather. Despite a strong wind and heavy squalls we

NGTA



**National Rally 2/3/4 July
2004
&
Celebrating 25 years of NG**

meet Findhorn Cars
&
see the new demo
cars

barn dance
Saturday eve

fantastic venue at
Leedons Park near Broadway

superb facilities for campers
& day visitors

gas bar-b-q's provided — bring your own meat
& booze (salad & bread provided Sat eve)

Falconry display (Sunday)

games room for teenagers

fort & play area for
children

NGTD



see you there!

**National Rally 2/3/4
July 2004
&
Celebrating 25 years
of NG**

meet Findhorn Cars
&
see the new demo
cars

Concours event

marquee open all week-end with lights, tables
(bring your own chairs) free tea & coffee

for alternative accommodation
contact Bob Preece

heated outdoor swimming pool

shop & take-away on site

Cotswolds treasure hunt

many local attractions

see you there!



NGTC



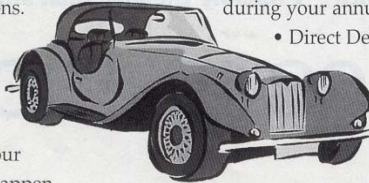
NGTF

Backford Classic Replica Insurance.

Beware of imitations.

Our Running Board scheme provides specialist cover for these beautiful cars. We do it better and cheaper. Just look at these benefits:

- Very competitive quotations.
- Flat rate premiums so your no claims bonus is secure.
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ventured forth, meeting at the Roberts residence in time for a coffee before a 10.00am departure. The ladies had decided to sit this show out and remained with Liz Roberts in the dry whilst we five went to the show in three cars. Richard travelled with Dennis in his TF, Steve was alone in his Griffin (which is FOR SALE) and Eric and I in the Henley.

We made good time and were directed to a very soggy grassed area by a rather soggy but good humoured marshal. There were fewer kit cars in the car park than usual but there was a good crowd of people in the main hall.

Two kits caught my attention. The first was a 2+2 roadster similar in size and shape to the Royale. The body is constructed of ash and alu-

minium and uses the Scimitar as donor. I queried the choice of donor and was informed that Scimitars are in plentiful supply! The other kit featured a monocoque body (Lotus 7 style) constructed entirely from aluminium. I am sorry that I failed to note the details of either manufacturer. No doubt the show will be more fully reported in the magazines.

Sadly the Griffin failed to attract a buyer and we made the return to the Roberts' residence in the three cars. The ladies were not at home when we arrived but before a mobile phone could be produced they duly arrived from the shops. They had been busy whilst we were away and produced a very welcome hot meal of shepherd's pie with all

the trimmings in a very short space of time. The party had by now grown to ten and a very convivial atmosphere ensued. Plans were discussed for the coming season.

Thanks to Liz and Dennis for their hospitality and to the rest of the party for their company and friendship.

Mike

From: Paul Gray

Aero/Autojumble, Popham

3rd May - this event was not advertised in CG because we were unaware of its existence until the last minute. However, son Tom and I managed to gain entry, our TF being almost the only NG amongst hundreds of other, mainly classic, cars.

This event is run by the Basingstoke Classic Car Club and applications for entry have to be made through their organiser. I mention this because John Coker, our Popham events organiser, will be making arrangements for a club site for the autumn version of this event, an outing that has understandably gained hugely in popularity over the last 3 years or so.

Last September we had an excellent turnout of NGs and, with John's Tiger Moth, we had all the angles covered.

A point worth noting is that the autumn show has this year been brought forward to August and is to

be changed to a 2-day event over the weekend 28th/29th August.

We have opted for the Sunday for the main club attendance but will probably try to arrange a club site for the whole weekend to enable members to visit on either or both days (in my case, both days!).

John tells me that the insurance bill for such events necessitated a small entry fee of £5 per car which is all that is required for 2 days - great value.

Since pre-booking is required, please contact John Coker for an entry form ASAP and send it to the organisers with your cheque. John will sort out a club area for us.

Back to the 3rd May - the day dawned cloudy with a forecast of heavy rain by lunchtime - not an encouraging start.

However, the NG was in serious need of a shake-down trip on its new tyres prior to the MOT test booked for a few days later.

Hood down, we set off and started to get wet after only a few miles. Tom had driven to our house on his motor-cycle and had sensibly kept all his waterproof gear on for the trip in the NG (probably should have kept the helmet as well).

We knew we were going the right way when we passed a gaggle of Austin Sevens travelling at what appeared to be dangerously low speed along a fast section of dual-carriageway.

As we approached Popham,

several open-topped cars had stopped under a bridge to erect their hoods and it crossed our minds to do the same. As we were fairly close to Popham we decided to wait until parked on the airfield. We hadn't reckoned on queuing to gain entry and eventually arrived very wet indeed.

The day turned out to be a wash-out as far as aircraft movements were concerned. The viz was poor and not one aircraft arrived during the few hours that we braved the cold and rain. Having said that, we couldn't believe how many hardy souls had turned up in some very nice cars.

Our favourite of the day was an AC that had competed in the Monte Carlo rally in it's heyday. It was in superb condition and it was a shame to see it's owner sitting inside looking miserable in the appalling weather. The jumble stalls were as fascinating as ever although some of the prices seemed exorbitant. For example, a WW2 leather flying helmet that had almost disintegrated was on sale for £170. The organisation, however, was excellent with plenty of food and drink stalls and decent loos. The exit route became a bit of a mud bath and the poor old NG will be in need of a serious clean underneath when we have dried out again. Let's hope for better weather for the next event at the end of August.

Paul

From: Chris Wilson

NO CAR - NO COMMENT

Since parting with my NG I've been at a loss to know what I could amuse you all with next. I am actually rebuilding an MGB using a new shell and a sad looking GT so I do still remember what it is like to have sore, shiny finger-tips.

I am also very much into deciding whether to swallow the postage on that must have tomorrow item or squandering a tank-full of petrol. Of course, I realise that the expense that I have embarked upon with this project will exceed it's eventual value by a factor of 3 or 4, and that's putting in my labour at the present going rate for a redundant sandwich maker of around thirty bob an hour. So I have no illusions; I'm doing it for fun and satisfaction and to keep me away from the decorating.

On the question of value however, I do have a good idea what my eventual project will be worth - there are still thousands of Bs around. There are dealers which specialize in them and they pass through the classic car auctions regularly; but not so the NG. So how should we value our cars?

The first point to accept I suppose is that it has a value to you, the owner, and another value to a potential buyer. Your value, quite understandably will take into account those sore, shiny fingertips,

the arm and leg it cost and the two years of your life it took. Unfortunately, buyers will look at it for what it is. It is after all, a fibreglass kit car, built by an amateur in his garage, using parts designed 40 years ago. It may be painted in Rolls Royce metallic burgundy and have chrome wire wheels and look very, very pretty but lets not forget it's origins. 'Let's go for a test drive' the buyer might say 'but where are the doors?' You explain that it wasn't recommended that you cut doors into the body as it could reduce strength and rigidity. So he hops over the side into the snug, inviting cockpit, crunching his knees on the underside of the dash. "Ah", you say, "you look like you're over five foot eight, maybe it's not for you". So shall we say that half your potential market won't fit in?

What about the other half? Well they will compare your car with what is available for a similar price, and here I'm just looking at a few fresh air alternatives. What about a 1989 MR2: 0-60 in 7.3 secs, 137bhp, 40 mpg, immac. cond. £1500. A bit modern perhaps? How about a 1965 Morgan 4/4 needing a little TLC for £4400? Perhaps we could look to the MGTD of around 1951 costing about £15000, it does have those lovely flowing wings.

How would you value your NG against an equally immaculate MGB of a similar registration? Accepting its vulnerability to rust if

not cared for, it is roomier, less draughty, more economic and probably more marketable. A very nice example could be had for £6-£7000. Is it therefore worth more or less than your NG? It does sound like a sensible starting point until you throw in the cost of a new turn-key car. Then you could be in for a disappointment.

I think you would have to consider that as very long-term ownership. You would have to wait a long time to get back what you think it is worth or accept a heavy penalty for a quick exit; rather like an Equitable Insurance Policy.

This applies to any new car purchase of course. If you are in that situation, just put it in your Will and forget about it.

This is just a bit of fun really, your car is worth what the buyer will pay and we do have rarity on our side. If anyone has some ideas on this subject we would all like to hear them. Go on, stick your head above the parapet.

Chris

Thanks Chris - I'm sure somebody will want to make an impassioned defence for kit cars! Personally, I have always taken the view that building a kit car and then selling within a short time would result in making a sure-fire financial loss. However, if you keep the car for a number of years, the 2nd-hand value will remain fairly static and hence

the overall depreciation in the longer term, when compared with a 'normal' car, can be quite reasonable. What do other members think?
Ed

From: Jeff Stretch

Here comes my head over the parapet Chris!

You seem very concerned about value, or do you mean money, Chris? Building an NG is not primarily about money. All right at the end of the day it costs 'X' pounds and you probably won't get this back but as you say this also applies to your MGB. Your B will also be, to quote you, "built by an amateur in his garage using parts designed 40 years ago" So where's the difference?

Yes the NG has a fibreglass body but so do many classics i.e. Daimler SP250, Lotus Elan, Gordon Keeble, Reliant Scimitar etc.

Incidentally, I've not yet heard of an NG being scrapped due to rust! Until recent times sports cars were built purely for driving sensation not for convenience and comfort. But if you do require doors in an NG there is no problem. All that is required is some localised reinforcement of the body, which is quite easily done, to retain the rigidity. People don't crunch their knees on the dash when doors have been fitted!

Of the alternative cars you mention few of them have the style and appeal that the NG has for me. The Morgan's wooden rear wheel arches and body frame rot away, it doesn't have any front suspension to speak of and it isn't as well finished as a properly built NG. The MG TD and TF were both nice looking cars but with engines of only 1250cc and 1500cc they can't live with the performance of an 1800cc NG let alone a 3.5 litre. MGB's are too ordinary, heavy and dare I say it, comfortable! The NG is about building to one's entire satisfaction a car that gives the appearance and sensations of an open sports car of the late 30's to mid 40's but with modern performance and reliability included. The NG's MGB origins contribute to making it a true British sports car in it's own right! I would suggest that the car, together with the exceptional friendliness and camaraderie of the NG Owners Club, make owning an NG something one can't put a price on.

These are my feelings after 13 years experience of thoroughly enjoyable NG motoring. Whether I would go down the same route in the current climate is perhaps debatable. Oh Chris, if I do have to put a value on my NG, I spent about £6.5K when building and consider today's value to be £6K, £500 depreciation in 13 years can't be bad when most modern cars are practically worthless at a similar age.

Jeff

From: Paul Gray

Guild of Motor Endurance

Atlas-Sahara 5-12 Oct 2004

After hearing that Findhorn Cars are preparing a 2-car entry to this exciting event I thought that a little research into the background might be interesting for members. The following description of the event has been gleaned from information published on the organiser's web-site. If it looks too good to miss you may still be able to take part as a late-entry - see contact details later.

This 8-day tour of Morocco will not only include the expected tortuous mountain routes synonymous with endurance, and the allowance such roads make on any schedule, it will also take competitors through the dramatic landscapes on the challenging route separating the Atlas mountains and the Sahara desert. Here, Arabian nights will be spent under the stars in Berber tents.

Morocco is a land of extremes and full of bewildering experiences, the Atlas-Sahara will be taking in many of them. From the breathtaking altitude roads to the barren silence of the desert; the heat; dust; long shadows in the sand; palm trees and gorges. The vibrant colours and smells; spices, overloaded donkeys and camels, and it's nomadic friendly people. Having mint

tea with kilim sellers, dishes of couscous and tajine, negotiating in dirham for a silver hand of Fatima while looking for a passage control in a medieval medina. These together with the pace of endurance in a sportscar are the ingredients for a 2004 Tuareg expedition. If you own a sports car and need an adventure, reserve your entry: 5-12 October.

The 8-day 2,000 miles Atlas-Sahara route will be in the North African country of Morocco. The official start will be from the Port of Nador on the Northern coast of Morocco. Signing on, and the scrutineering of cars, will take place at the Port of Almeria in Southern Spain. Competitors and cars will then board the overnight ferry to Morocco.

From Nador the route crosses the Rif mountains to an overnight stop in the old Imperial Capital of Fes. From Fes day-2 will take competitors through the Moyen Atlas and over the Haut Atlas towards the Tafilalt, and the end of the road southwards. After a night's bivouac in Berber tents the route sweeps round to the west and into the Draa valley. Over the next days the Anti Atlas dominate the dramatic road west towards where the Sahara eventually meets the Atlantic. From the coast the route climbs again, this time via Tafraoute, followed by the sinuous route over the southern end of the Haut Atlas and Tizi-n-Test. Reaching Marrakech



allows time to explore the lively Djemaa el-Fna Square and the medina. From the hotel in Marrakech the route heads north via Khenifra to the overnight stop in the old Moorish city of Meknes. The final day takes a detour via Roman Volubilis and the holy city of Moulay Idriss. From here only the road over the Rif separates competitors from the Finish, and the sea resort of Al Hoceima. The following day there is plenty of time to cover the short distance to the overnight ferry from Nador.

The route will be mostly asphalt.

The regions being used will mean the trial route will include some unsurfaced sections of road.

Eligible cars include sportscars and three wheelers, non-production sportscars built as a one off, historic low volume sportscars and specials, sportscars supplied by a manufacturer in component form for self-assembly, period sportscars and replicas & sportscars supplied by a manufacturer.

Vehicle Requirements include mandatory seatbelts, warning

triangle, fire extinguisher, first aid kit and tow rope. A rollover bar is recommended, also crash helmets for crews in open cars.

Entrants of very low cars should consider ways of increasing the ground clearance and the fitting of a sump guard. An efficient cooling system, able to cope with the high temperatures, will be required. A quantity of bottled water will be needed when crossing southern Morocco.

Each entrant is responsible for presenting a well-prepared roadworthy vehicle at the start. Competitors should be suitably competent to maintain their car throughout the event. Scrutineering roadworthy checks may be carried out en route at unspecified times to determine the working order of lights; brake lights; indicators; horn etc. Warning triangle deployment may also be checked.

All cars must have a road fund licence, certificate of roadworthiness, (i.e. MOT for UK) and insurance, including a Green Card.

To compensate for speed differentials, lower capacity cars will be is-



sued with earlier start numbers. There will be five classes divided by engine size. Within each capacity class, daily starting times of an improving car will move forward.

The standard entry fee is £775 per person. The late entry fee is £850 per person. The entry fee includes 8 nights bed/breakfast in hotels and bivouac in Berber tents (overnight bivouac include meals). Hotels based on two sharing a room. Rally plates/numbers; event organisation; Road Book; souvenirs; awards and presentation dinner.

The overnight return ferry from Almeria to Nador is not included in the entry fee. The prices for 2004 have not been confirmed to date. The return price in 2003, for two people and a car (in a cabin



with shower/WC), was £270.

The entry will have a maximum of 36 cars. The standard entry list was opened on 1st January 2004 and closed on 30th April 2004. Late entries will be those received between 1st May and the final closing date for entries on 31st August 2004.

A Road Book giving navigational instructions will be given to each entrant at the start of the





event. The route instructions will be straightforward with Tulip diagrams and distances shown in kilometres. A distance measuring trip meter will be required, the type with an average speed read-out is permitted. Brantz trip meters are available at discount for competitors.

Assistance or backup vehicles are not permitted. Crews and teams are required to be self-sufficient throughout the event. Every effort will be made by marshals to follow the route, and where time allows give assistance. However, it cannot be guaranteed that all parts of the route will be covered and competitors should make every effort to extricate themselves from any difficulties encountered.

Assistance from team members and fellow competitors is permitted and encouraged. Local services should be called upon for help. Having a car repaired for a day and then catching the trial up for the next re-start is permissible. The Atlas-Sahara is primarily about

building or preparing a car capable of completing a demanding long distance route. It is also just as important for crews to be similarly prepared.

If anyone is interested enough to want more info, you can contact The Guild of Motor Endurance by tel/fax: 01386 861400 or via their website www.atlas-sahara.com.

Finally, thought I'd pass on a tip to Nigel from Chris Shanahan (posted on the rally's web-site) "You need only two tools: WD-40 and duct tape. If it doesn't move and it should, use WD-40. If it moves and shouldn't, use the duct tape".

Paul

From: Chris Humphreys

My TF build (part 4)

For those of you who have been following my story via these pages, you may remember that, at the start of 2004, I was just about to see if my NG would actually start. Bear in mind that the engine had been sitting (although I had turned it over by hand) for over 2 years and that the carburettors were only adjusted to their default assembled setting.

After double checking everything, I added some petrol, switched on the ignition and waited for the

clicking of the fuel pump to subside. Then, with choke out and to my utmost amazement and delight, my NG fired first time with very little cranking (the sound clip on my web site is genuine!). Not only that, but everything seemed to work first time: oil pressure, rev. counter, charging voltage. Just the idling speed was too fast but that was quickly fixed.

I allowed the engine to warm up until the cooling fan cut in and out and thus also checked the temperature gauge was working. Another milestone had been reached!

Now I think most of us like the Lucas style flick switches even though they won't pass SVA (I'll worry about that later). However, the ones I had been supplied with did not all line up in the "off" position. The cure for this was to replace the 3 Lucas imitations with proper Lucas ones to match those for the lights and wipers.

There continues to have been a lot of things to do to keep me busy

drilling for small nuts and bolts), side former cushions, lift-the-dot studs (one of which sheered off demanding it be drilled out and the hole filled) and lighting.

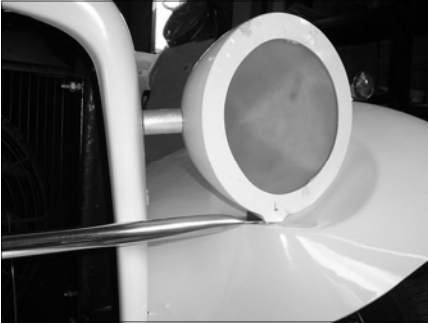
[I wanted to avoid having any rear lights hanging down so I have chosen to use the pods in the rear wings. I decided that, partly for strength and partly because I am new to fibreglass work, I would fit these from inside the wing having cut a figure of eight to take them. I was pleased with the result and satisfied with my efforts at fibreglass! The pods enable me to fit indicators and tail/stop lights on the wings and no. plate, reflectors, fog and reverse lights on the rear valance. However, I shall probably have to rig up an SVA friendly fog lamp!



The front headlamps caused me some consternation as the headlamp bowls have a fitting flange which would point the beam to the heavens! After some fairly careful angular measuring, I made up two pairs of wedge-shaped spacers to hold the bowls in their correct posi-



- running board strips (shaping and



tion (front face vertical).

Another modification I decided to make was to replace the MGB handbrake with a Midget one. Now the B handbrake mounts on the right of its bracket but the Midget one mounts on the left and I had already cut the holes in the transmission tunnel. Also the spindle is longer on the Midget one and the ratchet is different - what could I do? My web site has the details but I'm pleased to report that I now have a lovely chrome Midget handbrake.

The front wings on the TF, as you are probably aware, are somewhat wobbly and several builders have added their own support brackets. I have come up with a new variation on an old theme which requires no welding or glassing in. For full details please see my web site but each bracket consists of a u-shaped bar fixed to the upper bump stop bolts and another bar connects this to the rearmost bolt on the torpeda indicator light. A bonus is that I now have a convenient place to attach the wiring for the front lights.

It was, at last, time to move the car under its own steam. Would that new clutch (which had been in place over 2 years and not operated) disengage or was it stuck to the fly-wheel as so often happens? To find out, I just had to bleed the clutch... and then bleed it again... and again... I've discovered that the clutch needs a really good thrust to purge the air from it. Once successfully bled, the clutch did work fine!

What I did not expect was that the car would not start! After some perseverance, it did chug into half-life but the plug test showed only two cylinders firing - the front ones. Yes, the rear float chamber needle valve had stuck. So after a quick fiddle, we were back in action - this time firing on all fours.

The next milestone had been reached and, as I backed out into the alleyway and drove up and down a couple of times (very slowly as I only had a handbrake to stop me), the big grin on my face said it all!

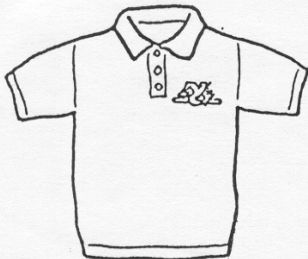
Chris

For further details see Chris' web site at www.ngkitcar.co.uk, Ed



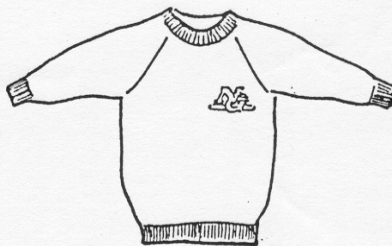
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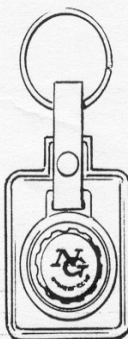
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MGB/NG Electrics - £1.50 (B.C. Baggerly)

Spraying your own car - £1.50 (P. Fellows)

Compilation of Hints & Tips for Marina-based NGs (63 pages) - £5.00

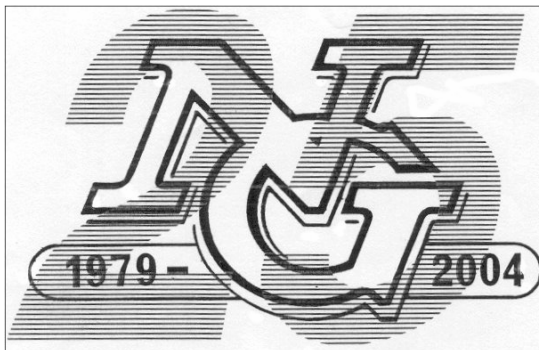
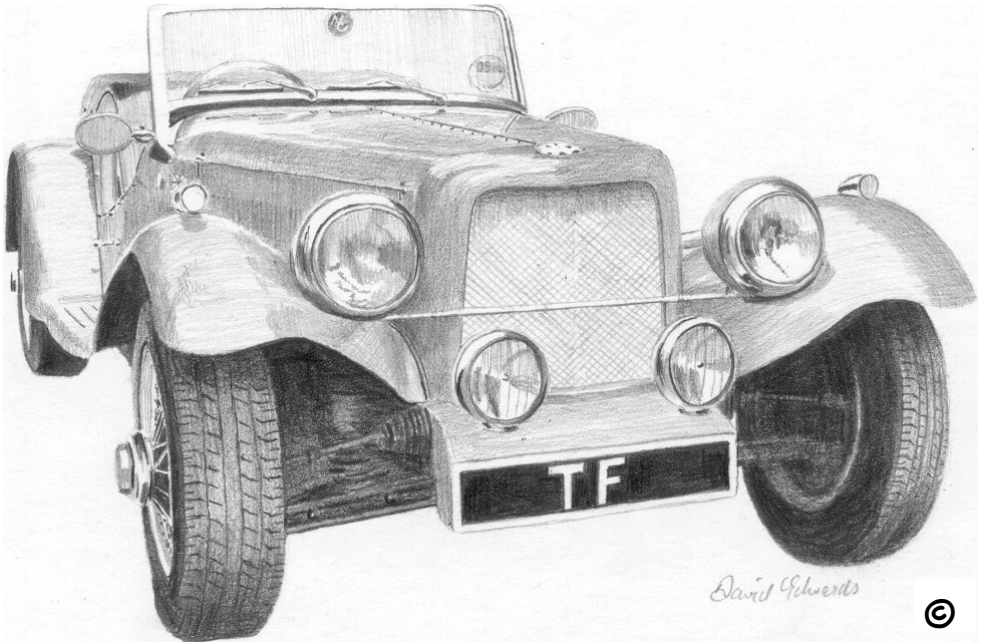
Fitting Doors to TD/TF models - £1.50 (Mel Clark)

Lockable Boot for TD/TF models - £1.50 (Brian McCarthy & Chris Wilson)

Printed by PRINTWISE, Basingstoke, Hampshire. Tel/Fax: 01256 332202

Distributed by Peter & Margaret Elliott

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the magazine of the NG owners club