



Nearly a pre-production MGBGT V8

Reading the April 2020 issue of Safety Fast! Martin Robinson nearly choked on his glass of vin rouge as he thought he had read that his MGBGT V8 was the first pre-production car: A photo of a V8 in Damask Red with Blenheim Palace behind mentioned the car was GD2D1 **1103G** which went through Paint Finishing on 10th January 1973 and has a note on the Factory production control records that it was produced as a "RHD Pre-Production UK Photographic Demonstrator". Martin read it as "1103G". The car is believed to be in Canada now. Martin's response was "although we are up North in Northumberland it isn't quite Canada! However, on checking our chassis plate and the build sheet I realise that ours is GD2D1 **1103G** and that the article was about GD2D1 **103G** - I should have known better! Obviously relieved! But it was also a good opportunity to dig out the history of our V8!"

History of Damask 1103

"Our V8" was built between 12-17th December 1973 and dispatched to Wadhams Ltd in London on 21st January 1974 and & first registered on 15th Feb 1974 as **THM 445M** with first owner registered 6th March 1974 as WB Wright & Sons Ltd, who are still registered as farmers at Oaklands Farm, Whaplode Fen, Spalding Lincolnshire.

We are the 13th owners and took her over officially on 10th Dec 2014. She has been re-registered twice before our time, and now wears registration **XGF 246M** although the windows are still etched THM 445M! She had a comprehensive body rebuild in 1989 - we have the photos and you wouldn't believe the rust - well maybe you would! In the 1990s she had a RV8 cross member, suspension and brakes upgrade and a Ron Hopkinson rear antiroll bar and Konis fitted. They are all still fitted to the car.

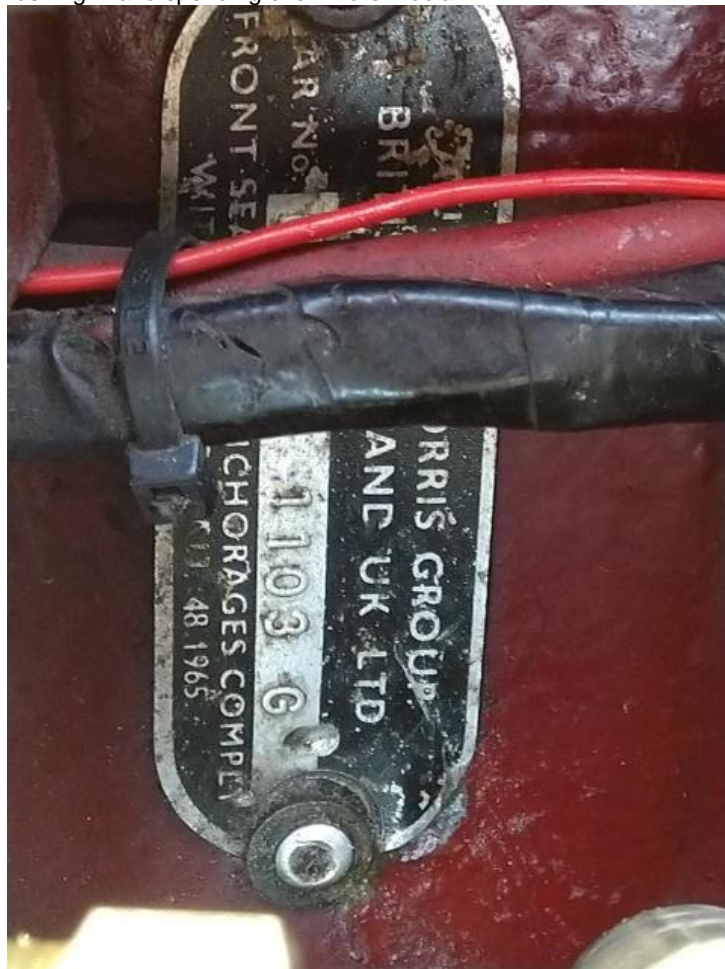
She probably also had a top end engine rebuild then and a more comprehensive one probably, at a later date. She had another comprehensive engine rebuild carried out for us by Steve Hall two years ago - the bottom end was fine so had new mains and big ends with arp bolts and new rings. She had had a +20 thou rebore with HC pistons at some stage plus we fitted SD1 heads and a new Viper Hurricane cam/valve train etc., but the worn one appeared to be the same.

She's beautifully smooth but still burns a bit of oil - probably because of the cam/valve lift. We really should get her on a rolling road with somebody who understands these SU carbs as she's

running a bit rich with K&N filters, but there is a paucity of these rolling roads in Geordieland. She had a front end body titivate and respray last year, and we treated her to a Frontline front valance and spoiler at the same time, which is a bit more subtle than the Special Tuning one. I asked the bodyshop guy to leave off the front bumper as I rather like that "bumperless" look which we had on our previous FIA Rally MGB which is now in France. We are still pleased with the outcome although the "titivate" cost rather deeper in the purse than I had at first anticipated!

She is still fine and came out of the garage for the first time yesterday, but I haven't been allowed out from "house arrest" so just had to stick to the usual, wash and brush up, crawl around, paint touch up, Waxoyl touch up, wheels off, brakes visual check etc etc. I'll change the oil and filter plus the front pads before we're allowed out again.

I had hoped to do a track day last year and then the Tyne Tees Centre one at Croft this year just to check the slightly "floaty" rear end feeling when "pressing on" on a deserted Northumberland C road one evening last summer! But this isn't really an issue in our normal driving. She has had recent polybushes and the rear Konis seemed fine - but may not now be so I just wanted to check before rushing in and spending even more moolah!



I attach photos of "our" Damask 1103G and the chassis plate.

It's a marvellous car - just hope we survive to get more use from her in the future".

All the Very Best

Martin & Sue Robinson (Northumberland)