



MGCC V8 50th NKJ 252P

MGB GT V8 - G-D2D1/2831-G
Build Date – March 18th 1976
Registered – December 1976
Colour – Brooklands Green
Interior – Autumn Leaf
Dealer – Lucas Ltd – Notts
Delivered – Maidstone – Kent
Name - Kermit

Introduction

Kermit was road registered at the end of December 1976, so presumably sat in a showroom for nine months.

No early owner history is known until Harry Hartman acquired the car in 1981 following a carburettor/engine fire not long after having passed its MOT at ~28K miles in Maidstone - Kent.

Harry owned Kermit until 2019. Harry had started a restoration based on a brand new factory bodyshell reputedly the last V8 bodyshell ever made in 1980, but laid unused.

Harry paid £724.50 for the factory bodyshell in 1981

Kermit sat in Harry's Mums garage for over forty years as Harry emigrated to the USA and the restoration stalled.

Kermit would still be there now had the bungalow not been put up for sale.

A photograph of a UK Department of Transport Test Certificate (MOT) for a 1976 MG B. The certificate is on aged, yellowed paper and contains the following details:

- Department of Transport Test Certificate** (in a red oval stamp)
- Serial Number:** GR 536877
- Registration Mark:** NKT 253 P
- Vehicle Testing Station Number:** 29794
- Date of issue:** 24.12.1976
- Date of expiry:** 14.12.1981 (8 years - 0-0)
- Inspector's Name:** NAK ECKHART
- For and on behalf of:** SAUNDERS ROAD, MAIDSTONE, Kent, Maidstone 47711-5000
- Serial Number of Test Certificate:** FT 602890
- Make:** MGB
- Approximate year of manufacture:** 1976
- Recorded mileage:** 28233
- Weight:** 1350 kg
- Power:** 35001
- Warnings:** CHECK carefully that the particulars quoted above are correct. Certificates showing alterations should not be issued or accepted. They may delay the renewal of a licence. WARNING: A test certificate should not be accepted as evidence of the satisfactory mechanical condition of a used vehicle offered for sale.
- Bottom text:** (See Notes inside) and 11 and 12 to 14



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MG Enthusiasts who helped liberate Kermit

Chris Redfern – Ace MG Restorer and personal friend brokered the deal for me and helped gather the parts together as the car was in pieces. I'm not sure how many crates we filled, but it was a lot. Could not have done it without Chris.

Anthony Binnington – Longterm MGB Racer who stored Kermit at his premises for some months prior to me collecting.

Steve Dixon – Millie Miglia MGA race car and Twin Cam owner who financed the deal by purchasing the car from Harry Hartmans UK representative (Harper) before selling onto myself.





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The factory original V8 engine partially dismantled with bits and pieces scattered around prior to crating up.



Kermit on Chris Redferns Trailer – Leaving Harry's Mum's bungalow after forty years.



Back at my place in Dorset where the restoration started again.



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Kermit - Evaluation

Tempting as it was to dive right in I decided on a different approach and identified a number of key questions to be answered

- 1: Is it the real thing?**
- 2: Is it all there?**
- 3: What works been done so far**
- 4: Is the work done any good?**
- 5: Next steps?**

I already knew the numbers matched up. It does have a V8 body number too. Sadly the factory don't appear to have recorded body numbers. Some of the keys matched the Heritage Certificate numbers – as good as it gets.

All the rare V8 parts were there including a pair of almost perfect exhaust manifolds.

Most of the work done already wasn't great. Harry had blown over the unprepped bodyshell with non original Tundra cellulose, I decided to start again.





Goals & Aims

Drive to the Austrian Lakes, Venice & Cinque Terre. Back home via the South of France to repeat a journey made with my first wife in MGB GT – JVA 552P Citron (where are you now?).

End up with a non-concourse but otherwise good solid vehicle capable of regular use.



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Ethos of the Restoration

To create a continental mile-munching GT in the spirit of the factory original such that two people can tour mainland Europe in comfort & style

Must Haves:

Reliability

To be built in wherever possible

Safety

To be enhanced and improved if possible

Reversible

All modifications and upgrades to be easily returned to factory specification if desired



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Planning

The plan was and remains simple:

Remove
Restore
Tag
Bag
Repeat

Must Haves:

This approach enabled me to start making progress immediately as I don't see dismantling as progress, its merely a necessary evil. This approach avoids a big pile of dirty bits all in need of restoration at the same time which kills cash flow and eats space as its all got to go somewhere. This has paid dividends as I'm mostly bolting restored items back on now which is nice.

Bodywork

Mike Rolls - 1



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Mike Rolls - 2



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Mike Rolls - 3



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Mike Rolls - 4



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Engine Block back from the machine shop



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Engine – Setting up timing and checking bearing clearances



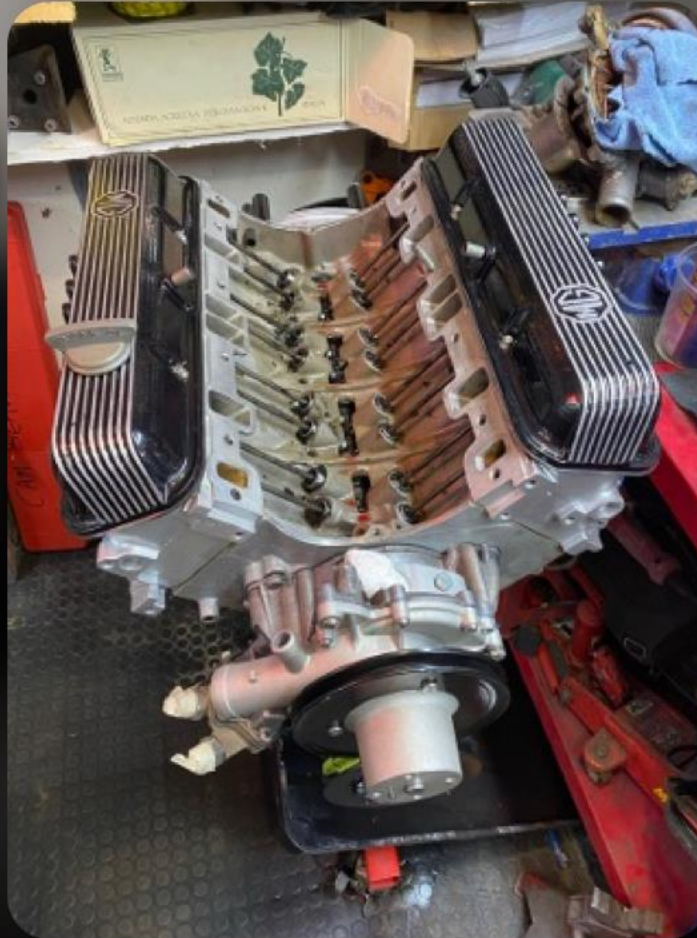
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Engine - Cleaning up “Big” Valves and “Ported” Heads



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Engine – Crank in, New Camshaft & Bearings, Rockers Covers Powder Coated



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Engine – Reassembled for first time since 1981



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Upgrades Purists Look Away Now

- Long Range Fuel Tank
- Big Valve Cylinder Heads came with the car – I have a pair of SD1 heads to go on if the period Stage 3 heads prove no good
- LED bulbs all round
- High Level Rear Brake light
- Three Speed Heater Fan
- Clive Wheatley 15" Alloy Wheels
- Daylight Running Lights
- Spade Fuse Box



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Upgrades Continued 2

- Upgraded Oil Pump, Duplex Timing Chain, Drilled V at front of engine to aid oil return to sump
- Grit Blasted and Epoxy Powder coated nearly all bolt on painted items
- Stainless Steel fittings and fixings used in all non load bearing areas
- Glassfibre Headlining shell
- Dynamat sound and vibration reducer
- Rust proofing all internal and underside areas



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Upgrades - 4

- Shock absorbers revalved and heavier (Penrite No.2) oil used to stiffen ride
- Front Anti-Rollbar heavier version fitted
- Front subframe steering rack mounts triangulated with stiffening plates
- Panhard Rod fitted to rear axle
- Engine steady bar
- Upgraded engine mounts (CW)
- Trunnions fitted with Roller Bearings and Castor Wedges installed to lighten steering
- Rivnuts – anywhere there was originally a hole drilled in the body and a nut & bolt used, this has been replaced with a stainless steel Rivnut.



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Upgrades 5

- Otter Switch replaced with bespoke VW sourced item
- Headlights and horns relay controlled
- Heater pipe under inlet manifold replaced with stainless steel version

I'm sure there will be further upgrades before I'm finished. Despite a long list, much is simply about improving what's already there to reduce corrosion, extend life and improve safety or reliability wherever possible, yet retain the look and feel of the GT V8.



Outside Help

Mike Rolls – Bodywork & Paint

Past Parts – Hydraulics

Andy Jennings – Miscellaenous Secondhand Parts

Alistair Shaw – NOS OEM Parts

Clive Wheatley – Specialised MGB V8 parts

Andy McCleod – Headlining and front quarter light reconditioning

Powerlite – High Torque/low energy starter motor

Torque Resto Parts – Specialist electrics – Spade Fuse Box

Classic Car LEDs – Specialist bulbs



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Budget

£12K for car – a lot, but where are you going to locate another <30K mile BGT V8 “barn find?” Its proved to be not as bad as it looks as the body required zero welding.

£8K for painting top/bottom/inside and out. It also included a Heritage bonnet and tailgate as the ones on the car weren't up to the standard of the rest of the bodyshell – in for a penny!

£10K – guesstimate what I've spent on the rest. A fair chunk of that was on the engine and also the wheels and associated specialist bits from Clive.

~5K Still to spend I think, possibly less as all the big stuffs done



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Work in Progress To Do

- Refit Suspension & Brakes
- Refit Wiring harness and other services
- Refit Engine & Gearbox
- Refit Side glass & Door Furniture
- Refit Interior



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Thank
You!



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