

In 1969, Dad got into restoring Singer Le Mans cars from the 1930s and as he acquired more cars and spares, he built more workshops to accommodate them. This meant the MG got pushed further back into the workshop and became inaccessible behind all the Singer spares. It does appear that Dad taxed the MG in 1977 and may have used it briefly, but I don't recall him ever using it then. I didn't live at home at that time so perhaps it got a few runs but knowing what was in the workshops, I doubt Dad could have got it out. This lovely car, with just 5,000 miles on the clock, was then put up on bricks and sheeted over with duvets to protect it. The photos show the car in storage with a wooden frame around it to allow Singer spares to be stored on top of it. And that's where it stood for 49 years until earlier this year, some 6 years after Dad had died, when I decided to get the car out and send it off to the MGOC Workshop team for recommissioning.

The call finally came from the MGOC and it was time to jump on a train to Swavesey to pick up the MGC. It did feel strange as this is a car that has been in my family from new, even if most of the time it was up on bricks in my dad's workshop. I had last ridden in it when I was 12 years old and I have very fond memories of how I felt riding around in the car during the 1970s. Of course, I had never driven this car, (or any other MGC for that matter), so while I knew it would look stunning after having all the work done, I had no idea what the driving experience would be like. I remember it being a silky smooth engine to listen to, but would it still sound as nice after not running for almost 50 years? Also, would all those contemporary reviews about poor performance and heavy steering mean that the present day reality wouldn't live up to all that nostalgia?

I did feel quite nervous turning up in Swavesey. I guess there was a fear of being disappointed and although I didn't need to buy the car in the first place, it was a considerable investment to get it back into running order. I needn't have worried. The finished car was revealed and it looked stunning. Ian gave me a thorough briefing on all the work that had been done, and I heard most of it, but couldn't take my eyes off this lovely car that I was picking up. When the time came to drive it, my first impression was just how heavy the clutch felt; not a good start but I reasoned that I had been quite ill for a few months and

that had taken its toll on my strength. I soon got used to the clutch and the smile on my face just got wider and wider. The steering didn't feel heavy at all and it proved a lovely car to drive, although I did get a little sad that I didn't get the chance to share this experience with my Dad.

I had about an hour-and-a-half drive home and the A1 was horrendously busy. Preservation of myself and the MG got the better of me and I headed off across some quieter country roads to avoid the traffic. By now it was raining and in the gloom and spray I hit a pheasant for the first time in years. I was gutted and imagined picking the remains out of the radiator and crying over the dints in the aluminium bonnet; just under an hour into my watch and I had done some damage. Unbelievably, when I checked it out, there was no evidence at all of hitting the bird and zero damage, so the latest MGC adventure ended well after all.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to Ian and the team at the MGOC Workshop for their advice and workmanship throughout the recommissioning of my 'new' car. I haven't driven it much yet in our incredibly wet autumn and winter but I do look forward to getting out once the spring weather arrives.

However, the couple of runs I have had in the car still bring back those memories from the 70s, bringing back the lovely smells of the interior and it's great to drive too. I can't wait to get out in it again. 🐦

*This series of photos shows the car sat in my dad's workshop. It was there, unused, for 49 years*



*Driving the car for the first time put a huge smile on my face*

*The car was finally out of storage and ready for loading onto the Club trailer for transport to Swavesey*