

## Kimber House

### Market value

Priceless. Worldwide MG car fans visit the home of the MG Car Club on a regular basis. The building houses the extensive club archive of over 10,000 images, production records, memorabilia and gifts.

### Recommended upgrades

All completed in 1990 when the converted building was formally opened by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.

### Satnav essential check

Cemetery Rd, Abingdon. OX14 1AS. Adjacent to the old MG Car Company's Administration Block.

### Safety

Don't forget your wallet- there's plenty of great gifts to commemorate your visit.

## MGB Roadster

### Market value

Condition 1 - £8000, Condition 2 - £3000,  
Condition 3 - £1500.

### Recommended upgrades

Electric cooling fan, radial tyres, uprated anti-roll bar, electronic ignition, uprated brake pads, K&N filters.

### Essential checks

Faulty overdrive, worn timing chain, kingpin wear.

### Safety

Robust monocoque construction.

## MGTF 115

### Market value

Condition 1 - £6000, Condition 2 - £4000,  
Condition 3 - £2500.

### Popular upgrades

Larger wheels/tyres, uprated springs, uprated brakes, sports exhaust, induction kit.

### Essential checks

Head gasket, worn gear linkage, rear wheel bearings, fuel pump.

### Safety

Airbag, laminated screen, inertia seatbelts, burst-proof locks, NCAP 4\*.



# BIRTHDAY BOYS

Three MGs representing the sporting marque's output celebrate anniversaries in 2012. Martyn Morgan-Jones drives 65 years in one day.

WORDS BY MARTYN MORGAN-JONES PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL WHITSTONE



## MG YB

### Market value

Condition 1 – £7000, Condition 2 – £5000, Condition 3 – £3000, Concours £9000.

### Recommended upgrades

Electric cooling fan, radial tyres, seatbelts, indicators.

### Essential checks

Fuel vaporisation, overheating in slow traffic.

### Safety

Strong chassis.



YB's road manners and lightness of touch impress greatly.

Ever since MG was founded in 1924, its philosophy has been to produce affordable, talented, stylish and, above all, sporting cars. True, the cars have historically been umbilically-linked to mass-produced models and relied on off-the-shelf components. Yet that's only part of the story. It's what MG did with these components that truly defines the marque. This wasn't engineering, it was alchemy. By selecting the best, subtly modifying them, and carefully manipulating the mix, MG turned base metal into automotive gold.

### Sporting Saloon

Over the years, the famous and instantly-recognisable octagon badge has been applied to a diverse array of MGs. Most have been sports cars. Yet, MG has a long and successful tradition of making saloon cars. Indeed, this year marks the 65th anniversary of the delightful 'One and a Quarter' (1250cc) Y-Type saloon. Under development in 1939, the outbreak of war delayed its arrival until 1947. Fortunately, Britain has long had a penchant for modestly-sized saloon cars from premium marques. The

“By selecting the best... MG turned base metal into automotive gold”



YB interior wears its years of faithful service proudly.



## DID YOU KNOW?

All Y-Types were equipped with an integral Smith's 'Jackall' jacking system that raises the whole car using four hydraulic rams.

# GROUP TEST MG Anniversaries



46bhp XPAG engine powers a four-speed gearbox.

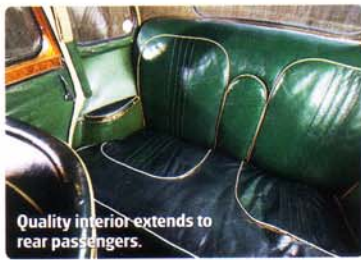


### Owner's view Andy Knott MG YB

The YB is terrific. Without exception, everyone who drives this car falls for it because of its wonderful character and because it's so good to drive. Plus it only ever requires routine maintenance, which is undertaken by the MGCC Y-Type Register. Mechanical parts are readily available. What surprises many people, is that MG made saloon cars, which is why so many flock around the YB at the many shows it attends.



External radiator gauge to keep the driver focused.



Quality interior extends to rear passengers.



YB was best of the Y-Types and offered inexpensive post-war motoring.

Y-Type, with its perfect blend of style, lively performance, refinement, and finely-honed road manners, was well received.

The feature 1952 YB (the improved and updated Y-Type), most generously gifted to the MGCC by the late Tim Pennicott, is a prime example. Based at Kimber House, MDF 630 is an important part of the club's display. However, it isn't some static reminder of MG's past. Thanks to Tim's careful ownership, and the Y-Type Register's expert maintenance, it's in rude health, driven on a regular basis, and attends numerous events each year without fail.

The quality interior, with its plentiful wood and leather, is a visual feast. Tim had been planning an interior restoration, but sadly died before he could tackle this. Nevertheless, there is something rather special about the age-patinated and much sat-upon seats. They give the car such a time-defining honesty. And the smell... is intoxicating.

As is the driving experience. Under the expert guidance of *Safety Fast* magazine editor, Andy Knott, who has taken MDF 630 under his wing, driving was simplicity itself and an absolute pleasure. The visibility is excellent, controls worked with a precision that belies the car's pre-war origins; the 46bhp XPAG engine pulls strongly and is mated to an easy-to-manage four-speed gearbox. The only thing that nearly caught me out were the brakes. They worked well, but only when girded into action by a very firm push on the pedal.

What truly impressed were the chassis' competence and the precise and accurate steering. Admittedly, MDF 630 boasts modern radial tyres, but they only complement an already-capable chassis. Thanks to its good design and Issigonis-inspired rack and pinion steering and independent front suspension, it's surprisingly adept, even on poorly surfaced B roads.

### Time-honoured

Understandably, given the MGB's enduring appeal and the fact that it's celebrating its 50th birthday, a tremendous amount of media attention is being focused on this motoring icon. Stylish, affordable, easy to look after, and very sporting; the MGB ticked all of the traditional MG boxes and was a milestone model. With its unitary >

# GROUP TEST MG Anniversaries



Easy to drive, easy to own. Impossible not to enjoy on open country roads.



## Owner's view Tony Merrydale

1969 MGB Roadster

Our 1969 Mk2 Roadster is the first car we bought when my wife and I set up 'The Open Road' classic car hire company. It proved so popular and reliable we've kept it ever since. It's been hired by TV companies and even starred in a wedding proposal video. The MGB is a feelgood car and everyone who hires it has nothing but praise for its looks and how it drives.

construction, it was a step forward technically, too.

Thanks to the MGB's many charms and talents, and unparalleled spares and club support, it remains the 'sensible' choice of classic sports car, which is why Warwickshire-based classic car hire company, 'The Open Road', has had one on its hire fleet since 1997.

SNV 650G, with its understated charm, driving appeal, and rugged reliability, has proved to be a real asset. Tony Merrydale, the company's owner, keeps his fleet running smoothly thanks to a trusted local garage and quality parts, as he explains: "We employ the services of Warringtons of Warwick. Not only do they do excellent work, they have a real connection with classics. Marque expert Brown and Gammons

supplies our spares. In its 15 years of hire use, the MGB's timing chain, alternator, and overdrive have been replaced, although it only usually requires routine servicing. That said; it's currently on its fourth clutch. This can be attributed to the varied driving styles of the many people who hire the car."

Even though the MGB is an extremely durable proposition, to ensure reliability and enhance the driving experience, Tony has overseen a number of changes, namely; radiator expansion tank, braided brake hoses, EBC Green Stuff pads, electronic ignition, K&N air filters, and upgraded front anti-roll bar. "None of the changes have been too drastic, but they've been worthwhile. We also make sure they are well integrated", reveals Tony. "In 2003 we fitted Minilite



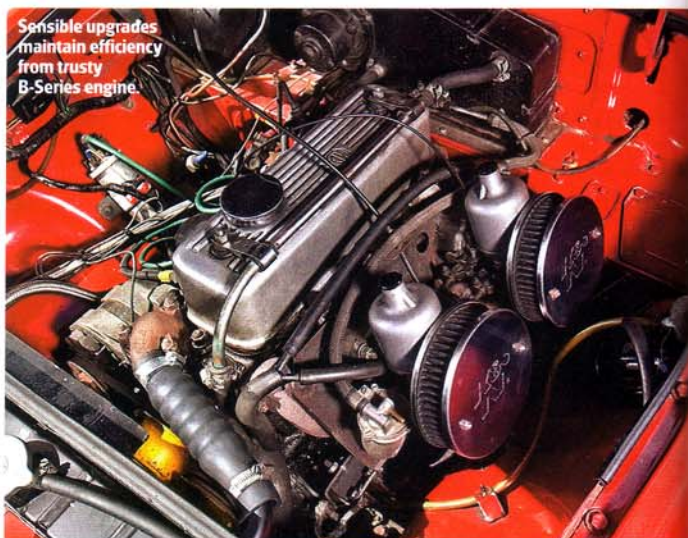
Big enough for a weekend away.



This MGB thrives on regular servicing and use.



Comfy, cossetting and sporty.



Sensible upgrades maintain efficiency from trusty B-Series engine.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Project EX234, conceived in the mid-1960s and running on Hydrolastic suspension, could have replaced the MGB and the Midget but was shelved.

# GROUP TEST MG Anniversaries



Although it works for its keep, this MG still has its essential B character.



TF's well-appointed interior is comfortable and ergonomic.



### Owner's view Tracy Sullivan MG TF115

I bought my TF three and a half years ago and joined the MGCC shortly after. It's easy to live with, pretty reliable, and wonderful fun. The best bit about owning it apart from how it drives, is how it looks, especially the colour, and the great reaction it gets from passers-by. I'm actually looking for another one... not that I'd sell this one though.

replica wheels, which are easier to balance. We pride ourselves on our cars' appearance so we had the MGB resprayed in 2009 and the chromework was either replaced or refurbished. In fact, the more it gets used, the better it becomes. It's a lovely car to drive."

I agree. The interior is wonderfully accommodating and period perfect. SNV 650G is not just user-friendly either. It's a great driver's car, with the well-maintained B-series engine providing a wonderful soundtrack and decent turn of speed. The gearchange is sublime. With minimal movement between gears and marvellous precision, it puts 'moderns' to shame and the overdrive is a real boon. This terrifically tactile car is a delight to drive. Taut, rattle-free, peppy, with a nicely-honed chassis, and full of character, I can appreciate why the 'B' has become an 'A-lister'.

### Up-to-date

Introduced some ten years ago, the MGTF still divides opinion. Some rate it as a proper sports car, worthy of the MG moniker. Others rate it less highly. I'm firmly with the supporters. The MGTF is undoubtedly a sports car. The revisions over the MGF included better aerodynamics, projector headlamps, and coil springs and dampers, resulting in a sharper-suited, sharper-handling MG.

0000 TCS, a TF115, belongs to Tracy Sullivan. One of the last made, it's finished in desirable Sunspot Yellow, a stunning pearlescent colour. This isn't Tracy's first MG either, and it's become a shared

“My MG Midget was great but the TF115 is superb. It's my baby...”



# GROUP TEST MG Anniversaries

## DID YOU KNOW?

In 2003, the MGTF was judged the 'World's Most Beautiful Cabriolet'.



passion, as she explains; "I had a Midget about 20 years ago. The Midget was great, but the TF is superb. My partner Darren, who's a Skoda Master Technician, services the TF for me. He didn't like the car at first, but has since become a convert. He's even bought a TF160. I get to drive it occasionally, but the TF115 is my baby."

To say that Tracy is fond of her TF, and lavishes attention on it, would be an understatement. A keen MGCC member, and a regular at the various meets/events, she has a good understanding of the TF and knows how to improve it. Accordingly, the engine inhales through a larger throttle body and exhales via a free-flow exhaust. To improve the sports chassis, XPower coil springs have been fitted, as have uprated brakes, which sit neatly behind the recently fitted 11-spoke shadow-chrome 16in

This TF has a few tricks up its sleeve, further enhancing its poised handling and agility.



### TECH SPEC

#### 1952 MG YB Saloon

#### 1969 MGB Roadster

#### 2005 MG TF Convertible

	1952 MG YB Saloon	1969 MGB Roadster	2005 MG TF Convertible
■ <b>ENGINE</b>	1250cc	1798cc	1588cc
■ <b>POWER</b>	46bhp@4800rpm	95bhp@5500rpm	115bhp@5700rpm
■ <b>TORQUE</b>	64 ft-lbs@2600rpm	110 ft-lbs@3000rpm	107 ft-lbs@4700rpm
■ <b>TRANSMISSION</b>	Four-speed manual with synchromesh on second, third and top	Four-speed manual with overdrive on third and top	Five-speed manual
■ <b>BRAKES</b>	9in drums all round	10.75in discs on front, 10in drums on rear	240mm ventilated discs on front, 240mm solid discs (servo-assisted)
■ <b>FRONT SUSPENSION</b>	Independent with coil springs and lever arm dampers	Independent with, coil springs, lever arm dampers, anti-roll bar	Independent with double wishbones, coil springs, gas-filled telescopic dampers and anti-roll bar
■ <b>REAR SUSPENSION</b>	Live rear axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs and lever arm dampers	Live rear axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs and lever arm dampers	Multi-link, coil springs, telescopic gas-filled dampers and anti-roll bar
■ <b>WHEELS &amp; TYRES</b>	4 x 15in steels, 5.50/15	4 x 14in steels, 165/80/14	6 x 15in alloys, 185/55/15 on front, 205/50/15 on rear
■ <b>DIMENSIONS</b>	Length 14ft 5 3/4in (4.42m), width 5ft 3 1/2in (1.61m)	Length 12ft 9 1/4in (3.89m), width 4ft 11 7/8in (1.52m)	Length 12ft 11 1/4in (3.94m), width 5ft 4in (1.63m)
■ <b>WEIGHT</b>	2324lbs (1056kg)	2030 lbs (921kg)	2414 lbs (1095kg)
■ <b>PRODUCTION</b>	1952-1953	1962-1979	2002-2005



There's an engine in there. Not as DIY-friendly as the MGB.



Deep boot perfect for golf clubs and luggage.



Twin pipes finish off the aftermarket free-flow exhaust.

### Rust Buster

#### MG YB

■ Suspension fixings and rear hangers.

#### MGB Roadster

■ Suspension fixings and rear hangers.  
■ Sills.  
■ Inner front wings.

#### MGTF 115

■ No specific issues.



Larger wheels and tuned suspension differ from standard.



Keeping the K-series cool.



Engine mid-ships means this lot sits up front.

## Contacts

■ **MG Car Club**  
www.mgcc.co.uk

■ **MG Owners' Club**  
www.mgownersclub.co.uk

■ **MG YB**  
■ **MG Octagon Car Club**  
www.mgocctagonclub.com

■ **MG Y-Type Register**  
www.mgcyregister.com

■ **NTG Motor Services**  
www.mgbits.com

■ **MGB**  
■ **Brown & Gammons**  
www.ukmgparts.com

■ **Moss Europe**  
www.moss-europe.co.uk

■ **MG TF**  
■ **Martin Smith**  
www.usedmgtfspares.co.uk

■ **MGF & TF Bits**  
www.mgftfbits.co.uk

■ **Pocket Motors**  
www.pocket-motors.co.uk

## THE VERDICT

### MG YB

Performance	1 2 3 4 5
Handling	1 2 3 4 5
DIY maintenance	1 2 3 4 5
Practicality	1 2 3 4 5
Economy	1 2 3 4 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>20/25</b>

### MGB Roadster

Performance	1 2 3 4 5
Handling	1 2 3 4 5
DIY maintenance	1 2 3 4 5
Practicality	1 2 3 4 5
Economy	1 2 3 4 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>19/25</b>

### MG TF115

Performance	1 2 3 4 5
Handling	1 2 3 4 5
DIY maintenance	1 2 3 4 5
Practicality	1 2 3 4 5
Economy	1 2 3 4 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>18/25</b>

Without doubt the MG TF is a future classic, particularly the limited edition models. This car has much to recommend it. The chassis modifications on this car were a bonus, although I've been advised the TF is tyre-sensitive so seek advice before making changes. I wasn't convinced by the free-flow exhaust however – too vocal for my liking. Nonetheless, I thoroughly enjoyed this car.

Many happy hours driving various 'B's' meant SNV 650G wouldn't hold new surprises. But it did. I was impressed at just how good it felt and it got me thinking about buying one... so I hope my wife isn't reading this. The modifications – subtle and sensible, make it even better. I would revert to the original tyres though. The MGB likes a taller sidewall and relatively narrow footprint. Otherwise, it's perfect.

The YB was a new and refreshing experience for me. Something of an eye-opener, too. There are so many positives about this car; it deserves a feature on its own. Was I smitten? Absolutely. This is why it just pips the other two and is my drive home choice. **CMV**

“The TF115 is a terrific all-round package, eats up B-roads... a proper MG, in fact”

wheels. Keen on her creature comforts, Tracy has made over the interior. It boasts a number of attractive detail touches and bespoke leather trim, changes that have made the previously plain interior anything but.

I'm over 6 feet tall, but fitted in easily. The TF is quite practical and very accommodating, which is to be expected from a modern car of course. With its good visibility, well-placed controls, power steering, and servo-assisted all-round disc brakes, it's an easy car to drive. Easy, but very rewarding. The lowered springs, the progressively rated variety, imbue the TF with great body control and poise and the brakes were something else. Tremendously

powerful, perfectly balanced, and with just the right pedal feel, they were terrific.

Which is rather comforting, seeing as this is a pretty rapid car; the already-lively K-series engine undoubtedly benefitting from the bolt-on modifications. I was less enamoured with the gearchange. It's not a bad change; it just lacked the precision and feel of the MGB. Even so, the TF115 is a terrific all-round package, eats up B-roads, and has the all-important grin factor. A proper MG, in fact.

### Big thanks to

MG Car Club 01235 555 552  
www.mgcc.co.uk  
The Open Road 0845 070 5142  
www.theopenroad.co.uk