



5,000-MILE MGC GT

Stephen Hardwick

My car was bought new in 1970 but not by me. In fact, it was bought by my father when I was only 12 years old. I do remember Dad test driving a Triumph GT6 coupé and an Alpha Romeo Spider convertible before he finally chose the MG. His decision was probably based on the value for money that the MG offered and it was one of the cars left over at a dealers after production had finished, so I imagine they were keen to make a sale.

The MG was always a second 'fun' car as Dad had a company car for everyday use which I think was a Ford Cortina Mk2 at that time. Dad used the car for the first year and we mostly went to motorsport events at nearby Cadwell Park. As a young lad, I remember the smell of the leather, the purr of that lovely six-cylinder engine and the cassette soundtrack playing out Dad's favourites. These included Herb Alpert & his Tijuana Brass playing South of the Border, Del Shannon (Runaway), Bill Hayley (Rock around the Clock) etc. Not very modern for 1970, I now realise, but it was the music Dad loved.

One of the nicest memories I have of Dad and the MG is of going to a big motorbike race at Cadwell. As we drew up to the admission gate, an official noticed a 'Gold Seal Racing Team' sticker that we had in the

window and assumed we were associated with one of the race teams. He ushered us left as everyone else went right. Dad, who was always on the lookout for a freebie, thought we were now in for some free parking, maybe even free admission so gladly obliged and off we set down a track towards the pits. One official after another 'tipped his fore-lock' and we rolled into the pits now looking a bit out of place amongst all those racing bikes, trailers, and makeshift pits under their gazebos. The final official also thought we looked out of place and therefore decided that we must be the course marshal so immediately ushered us through the final gateway; onto the circuit. We drove round wondering what to do and eventually parked in the ground in the centre of the circuit which is a hill on one side of a small valley. We sat there alone looking across at several thousand fellow spectators settling down for the day on the opposite side of the valley! We had a great day but it did take about an hour longer to get off the circuit after the final race.



My friend Trevor and I with the car. I'm on the driver's side and I do recall it was a bit of a squeeze for whoever sat in the back