

MG and RILEY FARINA REGISTER

NEWSLETTER

MG MARKS UP *Another Advance*

WITH THE

MAGNETTE
Mark IV



*For the enthusiast of the
BMC Farina Riley 4/68, 4/72;
MG Magnette Mk. 3 and Mk. 4*



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MG & RILEY FARINA REGISTER

Mick Holehouse

23 Willaston Avenue, Blacko, Nelson, Lancashire. BB9 6LU.

Telephone: 01282 618802

E. Mail: mick_holehouse@lineone.net

Website <http://www.mgmagnette.com>

Riley Secretary: Andrew Idle

Aire View, 18 New Brighton, Cottingley Cliffe Road,
Bingley, West Yorkshire. BD16 1UR

MG Secretary: John Green

26 The Close, Woolsthorpe Road, Colsterworth,
Grantham, Lincs. NG33 5NY

Historian: Neil Cairns, E. Mail: neil.cairns@virgin.net

Website run by: John Elwood

28 Christmas Tree Circle, Bedford, New Hampshire, 03110, USA

E. Mail: MGMagnette@aol.com

I hope yourself and your families have had an enjoyable Christmas and a memorable Millennium celebration. You will now hopefully have had a chance to catch up on a few jobs on your cars over the winter months and will be busy planning an exciting year 2000. None more so than myself and the other members involved in the trip to Sweden in June. Again I must reiterate that anyone who wants to join us on this memorable adventure is most welcome. Please get in touch with me and be part of a trip, which I am sure we will be talking about for years to come. As Ilya Meyer keeps sounding the battle cry "storm these shores with Farinas", that is exactly what we intend to do. I am personally looking forward to seeing the faces of other passengers and holidaymakers on the Quayside at Newcastle when a fleet of Farinas take up positions ready to board the ship!

The Internet has been flushing a few more unknown cars out of the woodwork, particularly in the USA; I include a car list update in this issue as a few changes came to light after the last list was issued.

On to that other favourite topic of ours at present here in the UK—the ban on leaded fuel, which is not much of a ban when we find out one company has started selling it again. My own feelings are that the Government, Media and Fuel Companies didn't exactly put in a starring performance on this issue, which affected many people, not just classic car owners. People were left in the dark on what was going to happen and we still don't know the full story on LRP fuel. *Thrust* is the petrol company which is selling leaded four-star again.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and I hope to meet as many of you as possible at rallies and events this year.

Mick

RILEY REVIVAL IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

MEHMET NECDET lives in Kumsal, a suburb of Nicosia in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. He is the new owner of a white 1963 Riley 4/72 which he has now set about restoring. He openly admits to being a fan of these magnificent Farina models as he describes them, but the main reason he has for wanting to return this Riley to the road is because it was bought new by his late father!

Cyprus was divided in 1974 following a military operation. Turkey controls the northern part of the Island where Mehmet lives and the southern Greek controlled part of the Island is where the more famous holiday resorts are located and where a few of you may well have holidayed. Some tourists do visit the northern part of the Island and if the brochures he has sent me are anything to go by, a few more should visit as it looks a very beautiful place. The city plan of Nicosia or Lefkosa as it is called in Turkish even features the rear of a Wolseley 15/60 on the front cover. Mehmet also sent me many pictures of abandoned Farinas by the roadside, including a Mark 3 Magnette that is now entered on the car lists.

Anyway, back to the Riley, Mehmet's father bought the car new in 1963 from the BMC dealer of Cyprus. He kept the car until 1978 when it was sold. He couldn't forget his Riley and regretted the decision to sell it until he sadly passed away in 1982. Enter Mehmet in 1999 who traced the car to its second owner's children who had laid the car up in a sorry state. The car's main problems are that the gearbox and dashboard are in a poor state, as is the interior in general. I have sent Mehmet a package of parts and the restoration is now underway. We wish Mehmet the very best of luck and feel sure it will be a very proud moment for him to drive the Riley when it is finished.



ENGINE DIFFERENCES

The Engines that were fitted to our MG's and Rileys back in 1959 differed quite a bit from those which went in the Austin A55 Mk 2
—reports **Neil Cairns**.

The MG and Riley 1489 BMC 'B' series engine was painted 'MG Red' and was to the specification of the higher tune of the MG and Riley sports cars. Whilst the 'BMC Green' 15AMW units were cooking engines with soft camshafts and bearings. The 15RA, 15RB and 15GE had the following items that differed:

AUSTIN/MORRIS/WOLSELEY

Split skirt pistons
thick piston ring type
White metal coated crankshaft bearings
5;45;45;5 cam timing
1.1875" dia exhaust valve
single valve springs
1.375" dia inlet valve
48G241 cylinder head
25D4 40822 distributor
50 psi oil system pressure
one SU HS2 1.25" carb
combined inlet and exhaust manifold

combustion chamber 39.2cc
rear axle ratio 4.55 to 1
paper element air filter
max rpm 4800
max bhp 55
max torque 82 lb/ft
mph per 1000 rpm 15.6

MG/RILEY

Solid skirt pistons
thin piston rings
Lead-Indium coated bearings
5;45;40;10 cam timing
1.286" dia exhaust valve
double valve springs
1.5" dia inlet valve
12H1670 cylinder head (big ports)

25D4 40823A distributor
75 psi oil system pressure
twin SU HD4 1.5" carbs
alloy twin-carb inlet manifold
cast iron exhaust manifold
combustion chamber 38.2cc
rear axle ratio 4.3 to 1
oil bath export air filter
max rpm 4350
max bhp 68
max torque 83 lb/ft
mph per 1000 rpm 16.6

Basically the MG/Riley 1489cc engine was from the MGA 1500, with slight adjustment to the camshaft timing. That in the A55 Mk 2 was identical to that from the A55, but gaining an SU carburettor and losing the Zenith. This list refers to the 1959 model of the Farina MG/Riley. The camshaft timing was found to be still too 'perky' for the car, so it was changed to "Tdc;50;35;15" after engine number 8067, retarding both inlet and exhaust another five degrees.

Note the MG and Riley have solid skirt pistons with the thinner piston rings of the MG sports cars. Such pistons are stronger and the thinner rings are better at sealing at higher rpm. When the Mk 4 Magnette and Riley 4/72 arrived, the head was the same as the A60, but that was only because the A60 gained the better MG head with bigger valves. The A60 and others shared the lead-indium bearings as the motorways were now in use causing higher cruising speeds.

So, the MG/Riley 1489cc engine is *not the same unit* as fitted to the Austin A55 Mk 2 and its bed fellows.

ORIGINS OF RILEY

Keith Hutchinson produces a booklet charting the history of the Riley Marque. If this booklet, called *The Origins of Riley* interests you, please contact Keith about making a copy up for you.

Contact Keith at

30 Mayfield Road, St. Annes on Sea, Lancs, FY8 2DP.
Telephone: 01253 728332

* * * * *

A NOTE FROM THE MG SECRETARY

Please keep us up to date with your MG details, or any other MG Farinas you may know of.
If you sell your car, please inform the new owner about the Register.

Also if any cars are scrapped, please let us know.
Photographs are always appreciated.

John Green

* * * * *

FILM STAR MG

Sid Murphy of Fazakerley in Liverpool owns a 1959 MG Magnette, MVS657.

The light blue Magnette he found was once a film star appearing in a film called *'The Beat Goes On'*.

Anyone seen this film?

Well, if anyone does, watch out for Sid's MG.



Abandoned MG Magnette Mk 3 in Nicosia, Cyprus. Photo sent by Mehmet Necdet.

LONG ARM OF THE (Farina) LAW

In recent years the loaning of cars to Police Forces by local businesses has proliferated in the UK. In the area I live, there are quite a few Vauxhall Corsas with signs on the driver and passenger doors that read "Camden Motors Supports Bedfordshire Police" and "Camden Motors Aids the Special Constabulary in Bedfordshire". The word 'Bedfordshire' is printed largest and obviously it is an advert for one of the biggest car leasing firms in the UK, let alone Bedfordshire. Whilst these cars are *not* used for Panda patrol work, they are in regular use by beat officers, crime prevention officers, school liaison officers and the Special Constabulary. All these officers wear full police uniform when on duty. The local CID at present does not wish to advertise its presence!!! With the 'working together' of police, local authorities, social workers and local businesses, the proliferation of police cars with adverts on the sides can only grow. No money changes hands, the car is provided free of charge and in return, an excellent advert is seen on the streets for the company. No doubt your part of the country has similar arrangements.

But wait, this appears to be a modern thing to do. Something that would only happen in the 1990's. Well, no that is not true. Back in the early 1950's, one Lord Nuffield (William Morris) who had a pretty big factory in Oxford would lend two or three cars to the City of Oxford Police. An MG 'YB' saloon was used as a radio car for some years, as were Morris 12hp saloons as patrol cars. There were no adverts on the sides of these cars, just a small police sign on the radiator grille, repeated on the boot lid by the number plate, both signs unlit. Morris became part of BMC in 1953, but the association between the large Cowley car factory and the city was not ended. An Austin A55 Cambridge's (built at Longbridge) appeared on the City Police Force strength in the mid 50's. After all, what better advert can you have than the local Police using your cars.

In 1959 the city had a by-pass and motorists had become an easy target for extra revenue for the Crown. Speeding motorists were easy to net once you had set up your equipment. By 1961, a Riley 4/68, registration 127GFC, driven by PC Knight-Archer of the 'Traffic Department', along with his Sergeant was often seen with the car parked up by the verge, boot open, and a huge complex 'PETA' (Portable Electronic Traffic Analyser) working away. The officer controlling the radar would be in short-wave radio contact with another officer further down the road, whose job it was to stop the offending car. The unsuspecting would be 'reported' for speeding. The PETA was a radar speed trap. Another Riley 4/68 was used, registration number

522SWL, both loaned by BMC. Motorists flashing down the Oxford by-pass in the summer of 1961 were in for a shock; their fines boosting the coffers of the government of the day. No Constabulary made any money from such fines (the government subtracted the fines total from the exchequer grant to the local authority).

The Oxford City Police fleet did not end there; also amongst the cars were no less than four MG Mk 3 Magnettes. Their registration numbers were 2704VW, 2705VW, 2706VW and 2707VW—all were black needless to say. The Riley 522SWL was still in use in 1963 and was a backdrop to a photo issued to the local press for the then new police woman's uniforms. The Riley is wearing wheel hub caps and stainless steel wheel trims, so it may have been a 4/72.

The MG Mk 3's were not popular for 'following' cars used in crime. Their road holding was not too good. Here, the big Wolseley 6/99 or later 6/110 was the ideal transport, soon to be ousted by the Jaguar Mk 2. So, loaning cars to police forces for free advertising is nothing new.

The Farina really did make the news in 1963, when the Great Train Robbers netted millions of used pound notes at Bridego Bridge near Linslade. The cars used by Buckingham Constabulary were A60 Austin Cambridges for the CID and Austin Countryman's for the Scenes of Crime officers (SOCO). Many national newspapers carried the photo of these cars parked outside the tiny Linslade police station. Many papers got it wrong as well, stating it was Leighton Buzzard police station, which is actually in Bedfordshire.

NEIL CAIRNS



"He says it is a restored MG Special Division car, what do you think?"

EVENTS DIARY

COOC Yorkshire BMC gathering 2000.

Sewerby Hall and Gardens,
Bridlington, East Yorkshire.

Sunday, 14th May.

10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Free entry, plaques, prizes and auto-jumble, etc.

For more details contact

Steve Turner after 6.00 p.m. on 01937 834050.

No entry forms needed, just turn up on the day.

Talyllyn Railway Tom Rolt Rally and COOC Welsh Rally.

Wharf Station, Tywyn, Gwynedd, Wales.

Saturday, 27th and Sunday, 28th May.

Entry £3 per car, which includes
free travel on the Railway.

Lunch on Saturday for all entrants,
treasure hunt, plaques and prizes.

Entry forms and further details from

Steve Turner after 6.00 p.m. on 01937 834050.

7th Original BMC/BL Rally and Spares Day.

Ferry Meadows, Nene Park, Peterborough.

Sunday, 6th August.

Incorporating the COOC National Rally.

Entry forms from

Mick and Barbara Clarke,

22 The Grove, Grantham, Lincs, NG31 7PU.

RENEWALS

Renewal Forms have been supplied with this issue.
If your subscription is due, please fill in the form and
return it promptly to Mick at the address given.

CHANGES TO CAR LISTS

RILEY

R. Beardmore deceased late 1980's listed as owning three cars.

New car chassis 2253 TNK811. *Owner: J. Mills, Redruth, Cornwall, England.*

New car chassis 7975 SSK648. *Owner: J. Mills, Redruth, Cornwall, England.*

Incorrect chassis number: 3845 should read 3645. *H. Johanson, Sweden.*

Scrapped in 1989: chassis number 23144 RUU130E.

New car chassis 14601 green ZH32421. *Owner: G. Siegrist, Zurich, Switzerland.*

New car chassis 12095 beige. *Hamilton, New Zealand.*

New car chassis 15025 blue CB7087. *Hamilton, New Zealand.*

New owner: H. Ellis, Northallerton, England. Chassis 23349 KAF690E.

New owner: S. Carrara, Wandsworth, London. Chassis 19967 EGH802C.

New car chassis 1796. *Owner: T. Bennett, Canberra, Australia.*

New car chassis 3515 white. *Owner: F. McKinney, Kansas, USA.*

Scrapped in 1996: chassis 24267 BXF981G.

New owner: N. Lazenby, Morden, Surrey, England. Chassis 24699 YAN569G.

New car LFBV385F 4/72 maroon. *Thirsk, N. Yorkshire, England.*

Chassis 24921 CGC329H no longer owned by H. Ashby.

New owner: P. Kenny, Manchester, England. Chassis 21938 HDB493D.

New owner: N. Eyres, Heanor, Derbyshire, England. Chassis 15009 BW5048

Silhouette.

MG

New car chassis 11691 green. *Owner: F. McKinney, Kansas, USA.*

New car chassis 7158 black. *Owner: F. McKinney, Kansas, USA.*

New car owned by W. Johnstone, Scotland. No more details known.

New owner: I. McCallum, Barrie, Ontario, Canada. Chassis 4466.

New owner: S. N. Askham, Raunds, England. Chassis 24901 BJF711B.

New car chassis 30872 FFB281F. *Owner: S. Johns, Wadebridge, Cornwall, England.*

New car LAP758E Mk4 grey. No more details known.

New owner R. Orander, Rayleigh, N.C., USA. Chassis 2241.

New car JPB100C Mk4 brown. *Owner: D. Taylor, Hadleigh, Essex, England.*

Incorrect chassis number: 21212 should read 20222 8204HJ.

Chassis 17127 reg. RG7598. Previous reg. AO3295.

Chassis 21059 not owned by P. Weekes.

TRUSCOTT BATES BMC SPARES

We are Devon based Truscott Bates BMC Spares specialising in new and second-hand spares for the Austin Cambridge models, along with the Wolseley 16/60 and MG Magnette Mk 3 and 4 range. We also have a selection of Austin Westminster and Wolseley 6/99 and 6/110 parts.

Please give us a call if you are looking for something. If we can't help, we may know someone who can. Please ask for our FREE Sales List.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Telephone/Fax: 01803 526267 or 01626 351007.

Mobile numbers: 07718 355603 or 07977 543227.

We are available 9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. weekdays and Saturday mornings.

Riley Estate?



This Conversion to a 1965 Austin Cambridge Estate was carried out in 1994 by Mr. Sainty in the Derby area. The registration is AFC359C.

Does anyone know if the Conversion has survived?

I remember the same thing being done to create a Wolseley Estate a few years ago, which was seen at various COOC Rallies.

Classifieds

CARS FOR SALE

Riley 4/72 auto, 1965, MOT and taxed. In good condition inside and out, good chrome. Two-tone green, many new parts fitted, e.g. exhaust, brakes, dynamo. Unleaded head conversion. £1700 ono.

Contact Sean Carrara on 0181 871 0836. Wandsworth, London.

MG Magnette Mk 4, 1964, MOT April 2000, 48000 miles, green and white. New grille and stainless steel exhaust, waxoyled, excellent grey leather interior. £1150. Kevin Williams, Matlock 01629 580181

MG Magnette Mk 4, 1965. For restoration, lovely interior, partly dismantled, spares available, along with a Wolseley 16/60 donor car. Offers please to save this car. David Taylor 01473 658799. Hadleigh, Essex.

Morris Oxford, 1966. In Mick's local scrapyards awaiting its fate. Far too good to break. Contact Mick for details, or the yard direct on 01282 812400. Chris Watson & Sons, Salterforth, Nr. Colne, Lancashire.

PARTS FOR SALE

Barry Willetts of Swinton, Manchester has two low mileage engines and gearboxes with documentation for sale. They are 1622cc and from a Wolseley and an A60. Telephone: 0161 794 8958.

David Greaves of Middlesbrough has a reconditioned gearbox available, along with a rear axle. Telephone or Fax on 01642 812104.

PARTS WANTED

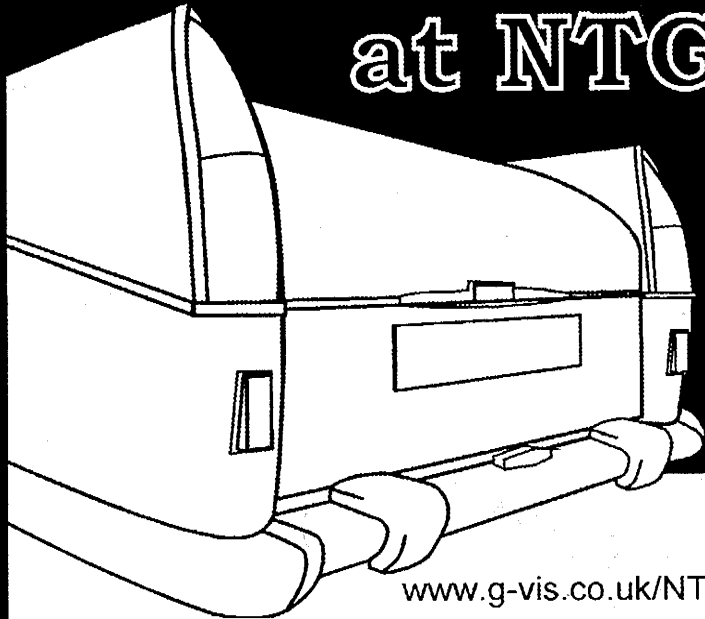
Bob Metzner of 6 West Hill, Uttoxeter, Staffs, ST14 8BN is rebuilding a Mk 3 Magnette. He is looking for a set of interior door trims and seats for it in red. He is also looking for the chrome doglegs on the rear doors (Part Nos. BDH1510 and 1511. Telephone: 01889 565867.

SERVICES

Alan Bird is a Metal Polisher in Runcorn who can organise your rechroming for you. All metals worked on, including our troublesome Mazak items. Telephone: 01928 564254.

FARINA

at NTG



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NTG Motor Services Ltd
282 - 284 Bramford Road
Ipswich Suffolk IP1 4AY, UK
Telephone 01473 741170
Facsimile 01473 743133
E. Mail: ntg.ltd@virgin.net

