

Family MATTERS

After 40 years of track day glory, Angus Gray realised it was time to restore his plucky Midget

This 1971 Midget MkII has been in the family since 1975. My parents both competed in motorsport and it was bought as a daily driver for mum, as well as for competitions. The car went on to win more than 100 awards, while I learned to drive in it and passed my test on my 17th birthday.

Despite being less than a decade old, I remember the Midget needing some welding in 1978! There followed some major modifications in '78-79 and I last used it in 1987 at Silverstone in the MGCC Autotests, as I had moved on to Caterhams. More recently, my nephew Michael used it at the start of his own motorsport career. After very occasional use, the car had effectively gone into barn storage by the late Eighties, but a major restoration didn't begin until July 2018. I thought it would take twelve weeks! I was very lucky to have a corner of a workshop owned by my friend, Aly Hunter. It meant I had all tools to hand and expert advice. Aly agreed to do the welding so in that respect, he should take credit for the complicated work. As for me, I spent around 700 hours of my time. I considered re-shelling and there were many days when I wished I had, but now it's all done, I can say honestly say that 789 AGG is still very much the car bought back in 1975.

Evidence of a hard life

On stripping the car, I found bodes I recall doing myself in the heat of motorsport. There were also bodes that I didn't know about and accidents waiting to happen, such as the tatty wiring loom. There were nicks in wires all over the place!

I was quite thorough with everything. I wasn't going to take the heater box apart for instance, but when I did, I ended up finding it full of grass from the years of taking part in grass autotests! There are mods throughout, from the engine, gearbox and suspension to a dashboard I have built to my own specification. I took the bonnet bulge from the tracing of an MG! The whole thing took longer than planned as I suffered a heart attack but both car and myself are now in fine health! I would like to compete in it again, partly for nostalgia – partly so I can say it's a competition car and not a concours classic. MG Midgets are for driving, after all! ■

ME AND MY RESTO

AS FOUND

When the Midget arrived in the driveway of Angus Gray's family, it was a mere four years-old, as shiny and nearly-new as a Midget can be. However, like so many cars back then, it needed major work by the late Seventies. Since then, three generations of Angus's family have used the car as either a daily driver or track hero. It had begun to look seriously shabby by 2018, when Angus got stuck in.



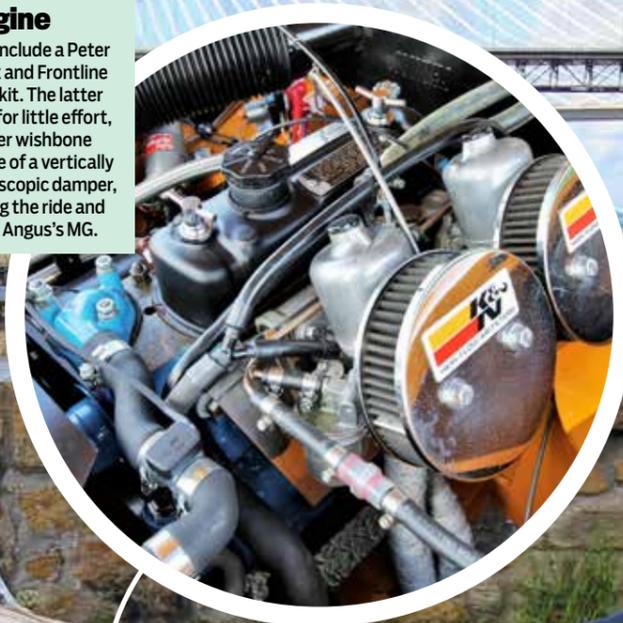
Interior

Angus wasn't keen on the tired dashboard, so he made a new turned aluminium one. To tidy up things and personalise them further, Angus moved the choke and heater controls behind the dash for a clean look.



Engine

Major mods include a Peter May gearbox and Frontline suspension kit. The latter means that, for little effort, a new upper wishbone allows the use of a vertically mounted telescopic damper, transforming the ride and handling of Angus's MG.



TIME TAKEN

(MTHS)
23

EST. COST

(£)
20k

BEST ADVICE

'Change the loom! Despite mine looking perfectly fine, I was shocked to discover a great many fire hazards!'

Practical Classics Restorer of the Year

This car is entered into the Restorer of the Year competition. You can vote for your favourite in a future issue of Practical Classics magazine.