

NZ Update Australian Pre-War MG Register Newsletter: March 2018

Denis and Desna Jury

PA 0817 Emerges after a 50-year hibernation...

Most of the local Triple-M owners from the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Auckland were up at sunrise on Nov 26 travelling from Auckland, Hamilton, Morrinsville, and Tauranga on a *not to be missed* jaunt. As a magical summer day dawned the group converged from far and wide at the riverside residence of Greg and Sue Martin for the first “unveiling “of PA 0817 for over 50 years.



Greg's magnificent PA restoration

The restoration of the PA is a new chapter in Greg's life with cars, and the day marked the culmination of two 'all consuming' years attending to the car. Greg's motivation to rebuild the PA comes from a lifetime interest in cars and driving; from his first Triumph GT6. Greg says that his ambition to restore a car in his retirement is a dream fulfilled. As chance happened Denis and Desna Jury were looking to reduce their car numbers as they had procured their L Type and acquiring the P from them was a great opportunity to take on a new project and to keep the car in the family!

The project has satisfied a lot of outcomes for Greg and he has enjoyed deepening and strengthening his knowledge about the MG and its workings – revealing and reaffirming for him, the advancement in engineering that the car represents. The advanced engineering impresses and delights him - the overhead cam, the cross-flow head – he admires and gives great credit to the adventurous and forward-thinking designers, developers and engineers in maximising the power of the car now that he has been inside the rebuild.

Greg says it was fantastic to have a great bunch of people around him for the restoration - older guys and younger guys with enthusiasm to do the work and with a huge interest in the car. With the engine rebuild

he adds that he was particularly lucky to find Gus Lisignoli, well into his 70s, automotive engineer ex-motorcycle racer and previous experience with Triple-M engines... *un meccanico a regola d'arte!*

Gus has a great depth of knowledge and understood what was required, and he was prepared to take the time to use his skills to do a great job. Greg also admired the way he took the opportunity to have his apprentices learn under his guidance about things like line boring and white metalling bearings and setting up a pre-war engine. However, Greg has also wondered at times... *what would those 1930's engineers think*, as he has used CNC and 3D printing technologies. He does enjoy the fact that in this day of mass production he can still deal with a vehicle like the PA himself – the certainty and simplicity of nuts and bolts.



Engineers at work: Gus (above) and John (below)



The wealth of knowledge in the MG community and the accessibility and willingness of people to share and discuss and been a highlight of the last two years. The assistance of (NA owner) John McGarva, Greg's close friend since schooldays, has been immeasurable. John is an engineer with vast skills and experience. The contact with other MMM owners in Hamilton, such as Donald McLeod (who has a PB) was great for measuring and comparing workings (memorably a drop arm which seemed to create a rather *interesting* steering geometry, and finding that the one Greg had was an inch shorter).

Greg has indulged himself in making many of the craft components; he has been patternmaking, model making, crafting the transmission tunnel and fabricating the fume seal brackets (to original specs, and sporting one of Donald McLeod's fabricated fume seals). Other components he has crafted include the rear tail light support, period style light reflector, headlight spider bars, brackets, bespoke period style clips and fog light stone guard. With the help of John McGarva they refurbished the brake cross shaft from a dismantled heap of parts, including manufacturing the actual shaft (beware, the keyways are not where you would intuitively think!)

Greg has a few things left to do to finish such as the interior upholstery panels, remaking a set of floor boards, hood and tonneau, rear carpets and brakes. He has the engine finished and it is running very smoothly. He is very satisfied with the outcomes, especially getting the time-consuming wiring loom functioning and the completion of his perfectly symmetrical dashboard with its instruments refurbished, refaced and redialled.

Greg says it was a proud moment showing the car to others who understood the amount of work completed and who appreciated it. Those gathered were thrilled to see the immaculate car running and almost ready for the road, and Greg was rewarded with lots of positive feedback.



Triple-M visitors from near and far

The visitors had more treats in store – a beautiful morning tea including fresh baking and genuine espressos and then a fantastic slide show tracking Greg’s restoration journey. Following this wonderful morning we all headed off to the Hamilton Classic Car Museum to take a look at the collection including our favourite a 1960 Maserati 3500. And lunch in the American style diner, surrounded by some very quirky memorabilia

The day also brought other rewards, making contact with several previously unknown Triple-M owners, hearing some great stories, and of course the generation of great conversations and memories.