

CLASSIC DRIVER

40th Anniversary of MGB



Next month marks the 40th anniversary of the MGB. It was in September 1962 that BMC (British Motor Corporation) launched their replacement for the MGA sports car. The MGB was larger and more comfortable to suit the British sports car driver, but at a basic price of £690, plus £259 purchase tax, it was not the affordable car we think of today...

Two months later, however, purchase tax fell from 45 to 25 per cent, making way for an inexpensive British sports car. It was the era of the Austin-Healey 3000, E-Type Jaguar and Lotus Elan: all costing considerably more than the new MGB. Not only was the "B" affordable to buy, it also offered an excellent combination of a top speed of 103mph and overall fuel consumption of 28mpg. Competition at the time came mainly from the Rootes factory with the Sunbeam Alpine, which was neither so fast nor so economical; and the Triumph TR4 – which was quicker, but thirstier.

Nobody could have envisaged, in 1962, that half a million MGBs would be produced in a lifespan totalling 18 years. Inevitably the MGB evolved into a classic in its own right; and it also became the most popular British car to be sold in America.

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