



**MG NORTHERN CENTRE** *founded February 1978*

MAY 2025

# UMGAZI Mag

CONTACT US



MG Car Club - Northern Centre



c/o Umgazi & 26th Street, Menlo Park, Pretoria



FNB, cheque, 62 363 284 359



## Committee

Chairman: Bernard Mostert  
Secretary: Richard Grover  
Membership: Robin Clarke  
Regalia: Jaco van Vuuren & Michael Mole  
Social media: Shaun Freeman  
Events Secretary: Frik van Sittert  
Valuations: Cameron McLeod & Stephen Grover  
Committee member: Dirk du Plessis

*Happy  
Birthday!*

3 June - Roy Sherwood  
17 June - Jacqui du Plessis  
25 June - Leen Freeman

## What is happening?

1. Noggin – 2 June Chat on instrumentation
2. Club Night – 13 June
3. Club show day – 29 June

# Chairman's Note



## Greetings to all Northern Centre Members

In May, we continued our tradition of giving back to those less fortunate. We enjoyed a heartwarming day out at the Phyllis Robertson Home, where we were able to share time, conversation, and a good old-fashioned braai with the residents—something they don't often get to experience.

Our monthly noggin took a different twist with a movie night, where Ezra shared some DVDs of past MG events. It was a lovely evening, with members reminiscing about memorable moments spent in their beloved cars.

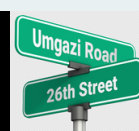
This is a reminder that our **Club Show Day is coming up on Sunday, 29 June**. The date was adjusted due to other commitments from some of the committee members. We'd love to see a great turnout—bring your polished MGs and take part in the ever-popular boot sale, one of our favourite annual activities.

On a lighter note, some recent banter in our WhatsApp group questioned the actual founding year of MG, especially in light of certain claims made by the current custodians of the marque. To help clear up the confusion, we've included an article by Norman, written some time ago, which provides great insight into MG's origins. The more we know about the true history of our cars, the better equipped we are to keep the record straight.

Last, but certainly not least, please remember our planned Indaba in 2026. Our neighbors across the Jukskei will host the event. This is a lovely opportunity to meet fellow enthusiasts from around the country.

Looking forward to seeing you at one of our events this month.

**Octagonally yours,**  
Bernard





# NOGGIN - "MOVIE" NIGHT

The noggin in May saw us going down memory lane... Ezra shared some footage of events that he attended with his MG. A lovely turnout where everyone reminisce when they had a head full of hair or the colour platinum blonde was referring to the "old folk".





# Club Night



We used the lovely weather of May to have a Boerie braai. Avril and Richard did the catering for us. Here are some pictures of the evening. Very nice turn out and good to see some familiar faces that we haven't seen a while.



**NEXT CLUB  
NIGHT  
13 JUNE  
2025**



# visit to Phyllis Robertson Home

By: Marelize Mostert

On Sunday, 25 May, our club reached out to Phyllis Robertson House, a residential home for adults with physical disabilities. Our connection with the home began many years ago when the son of one of our members became a resident there.

Thanks to the generous donations from our members, we were able to sponsor boerie rolls, snacks, and cold drinks for lunch. While some got the food ready and others tended the braai—under the watchful supervision of one of the residents—the rest of us hoped that the braai would hold together long enough to cook all 120 pieces of wors!

Judging by the eager faces queuing for seconds, the day was a definite success. In addition to the meal, we were also able to donate much-needed toiletries for the storeroom. (Many of the residents don't have family who can visit regularly and rely heavily on donations for daily essentials.)

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who opened their hearts with donations, and especially to those who helped prepare and serve over 100 meals. The patience and empathy shown by our members as they listened to residents' stories was truly heart-warming. It proves once again that we are not just car enthusiasts, but a caring and committed club community.



**REMEMBER NEXT  
EVENT - 29 JUNE  
CLUB SHOW DAY**

[WWW.MGNC.CO.ZA](http://WWW.MGNC.CO.ZA)





# Why **we** should regard / Why **should** **we** regard 1923 as the Centenary of MG

By: Norman Ewing

Those of us who have been MG enthusiasts for more than fifty years, have been blessed to know, in many cases intimately, not just those who wrote about MG history, but those who made it. Thus stealing a march on those less fortunate.

In the words of Dick Knudson, **we were at the source.**

It is therefore up to us to document honestly, what we have been told by those no longer with us, and although Cec passed away in 1976, he told those of us who met him, the exact same story.

Cecil Cousins was the oldest employee of MG, older than Cecil Kimber, who only joined the Morris Garages in 1921, whilst Cec joined at the age of 17 in 1920. When he was asked in the seventies, being invited to the USA for a New England GOF, – which car was the FIRST MG? – he replied without hesitation that the six Raworth bodied cars with which he was personally involved, collecting the bodies from Charles Raworth in Oxford and assembling them on Morris Cowley chassis. These which he personally altered at the Pusey Lane mews... were the FIRST MGs!

Over the years there have arguments as to which was the first, and this decided by some who were not even born when the cars were built, but by virtue of their great technical knowledge, able to proclaim years later, that the first MG only appeared in 1924.

Really?

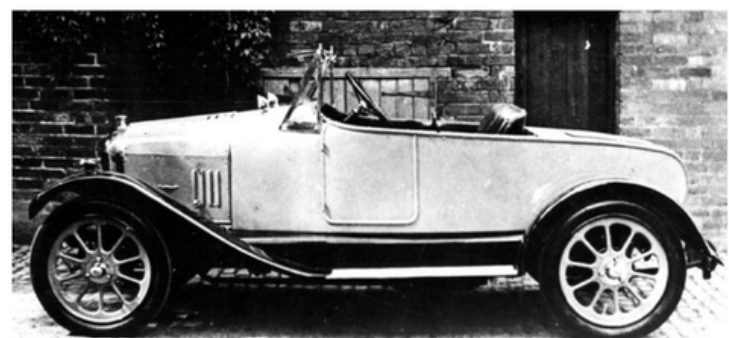
In 1987 Dick Knudson, knowing that I had found and been befriended by George\* and Susan Tuck, asked me to produce a piece for the Kimber Centenary on pre-war advertising, which he knew full well, because of my involvement in print and advertising, was my passion.

The Tucks – my source, lived a thousand miles away, and trying to do all this over the phone was really difficult.

So when Susan invited me to come and stay for a week with my questions and a tape recorder, I was over the moon.

I began by discussing the so called gold medal won in 1923 by Old Number One, pointing out that it was only built in 1925, and that in fact, Cecil Kimber and Russell Chiesman had competed in a 1923 Morris Chummy of the period in the London to Land's End, and yes although it was grey... it was not Old Number One! He had a look of utter disbelief when I then showed that it was registered in 1925, on 27th March to be precise. Wilson McComb wrote in his first book that it may have been done for publicity reasons—but judging from George's reaction, it was not. Something else to be considered here, is when George Tuck was given the job as Ted Colegrove's assistant, it was probably Ted who got it wrong. Maybe just a typo.


Over the years, both Wilson McComb and Dick Knudson unearthed a great amount of unknown MG history. Wilson had tracked the first of the Raworth's which had been sold from the repurposed Queen's Hotel which Morris had converted into the Queen Street showroom, and from where Cecil Kimber himself had sold to Oliver Arkell the first Raworth, proving that although referred to in ads as The MG Super Sports Morris, ( the ad which I have only recently seen, carries the MG logo). It was yellow, the colour of good butter, with black wings, and was appropriately named "Oliver's Beetle".



Adverts for these M.G.s first appeared in December 1923, in which the model was named 'The M.G. Super Sports Morris' – featuring the MG Octagon, as shown.



THE 1151. November 28th, 1923.



**The MG Super Sports Morris**

Real Speed  
Real Comfort  
Distinguished Appearance  
Beautiful Proportions  
Superlative Coachwork

**£350** 11.9 h.p.

Write us now for details of this new model or better still call in at our showrooms and inspect one.

**The Morris Garages,**  
Queen Street Showrooms,  
**Oxford.**

Phone 942. Wire "Auto."

Printed for the University Newspapers, Ltd., by THE HOLLYWELL PRESS, Ltd., Oxford, and published at 9 Alfred Street, High Street, Oxford. November 28th, 1923.

CLIENT'S COPY: OFFICIAL ORDER FORM.

*My first car  
I believe it was the  
first MG as the first  
had not been  
and was later  
to be £350.  
1923.*

**The Morris Garages,**  
Queen Street Showrooms,  
Oxford.

Please supply me on the terms specified on the back hereof with:-

PARTICULARS.		PRICE.
		£ s. d.
1	Special Morris Cowley Sports. as seen.	300 0 0

DELIVERY DESIRED DELIVERY AT TOTAL ORDER RECEIVED BY CHECKED BY

In consideration of your having accepted the above order, I have paid you herewith cheque (value) £ ( ) pounds ( ) shillings) as deposit, and the balance I (we) agree to pay on delivery.

Signed Jo. A. Arkell. Address Redlands Court, Highworth.

Printed with the sanction of the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers' Association of Great Britain.


Wilson not only found Mr. Arkell, but also the cheque stub proving that although Oliver had told Kimber on the 11th August 1923 he would take the yellow car, in preference to the Morris Chummy he had intended to purchase, being told it was 300 pounds by Kimber, had paid the deposit three days later.

The car was registered FC 5855 on the 16th August, and should therefore be regarded as the first private MG sale. Arkell was later told that it should have cost 350 pounds as adverts would later show, proving it was the first private sale.

I had the tape recorder going the whole time when I stayed with Sue and George Tuck. One evening at dinner, I told George about my argument with Wilson McComb about the first MG advert. Wilson showed me an ad with an MG logo in an octagon which was in his book. I told him my MG ad was produced two weeks earlier, and had exactly the same picture of Rene Kimber sitting in an 11.9 hp with the caption "on the famous IMSHI chassis!" Adding that if you said IMSHI quickly, it sounded like MG! He said that was 'preposterous'... but George on the other hand, threw his hands in the air and laughing declared "I'd say you've hit the nail on the head"... and Susan agreed. Not only that, but then she remembered that before they arrived on the scene, Cecil Kimber had apparently made much of the car after its most historic trip down through Europe, displaying it around showrooms in the Morris Garages in Oxford.

So what was IMSHI you ask. A journalist by the name of John Proileau approached Lord Northcliffe, owner of the Daily Mail, with an idea to describe a motoring journey through war torn Europe, down to Marrakesh and the sun, in word and pictures. Thus he would become one of the world's first motoring journalists. The agreement was, that the make of the car, could not be revealed, and so the word IMSHI, Arabic for 'get a move on' that camel drivers used with beatings, was adopted. The book was called "The Adventures of IMSHI" and it was the best free advertising Morris ever received, for when IMSHI's identity was eventually revealed, sales went through the roof. Kimber was most impressed, and such a success was it for Proileau, that he became Lord Northcliffe's private secretary, diarist and photographer on his great world tour.

**THE ADVENTURES OF IMSHI**  
A Two-Seater in Search of the Sun



BY  
**JOHN PROILEAU**

WITH MAPS AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

"The Adventures of IMSHI," which is a book which must appeal with more than ordinary force to the motorist of modest means.

It is full of practical information on every subject of importance to that great company of British light car owners who will see in their first lesson the motorist's career who can carry them pleasantly, safely and not too expensively to beautiful places which they had never till now hoped to visit, and perhaps for a holiday and comfortable journey.

Very careful reports illustrated by sketch maps, an account of the roads, between Cairo and Tunis, between the Holy City of the East and the Mediterranean, between the Channel and the Channel, are included together with much valuable information on such vital matters as petrol supplies, hotels, repair shops and general notes. Anyone wishing not to follow in Mr. John Proileau's wheel-tracks need hardly himself with neither guide-book nor map. He need only take "The Adventures of IMSHI."

Perhaps the greatest attraction of the book lies in the fact that, for the first time, the great motoring public of Great Britain and America is provided with first-hand guidance of the character and magic of cheap motor touring in the Countries of the Sun, and of the ease and comfort in which such adventures may be undertaken.

**ONE GUINEA NET**



If the truth be known, Wilson and I were BOTH WRONG! For thanks to technology, I have now discovered through my good friend Dave Lawley that the dealership, advertising sales and servicing of cars other than just Morris cars, had MG octagons on the surrounding borders in 1921. Thus making nonsense of the statements by Ted Lee and George Tuck, that they drew a logo that existed before they did. Morris Garages only becoming MG Car Company Ltd. in 1928. George was definitely instructed to redraw it, with the correct proportions and spacing, at least compared to what came before, as it has to be the most messed about logo ever devised for a car, some earlier attempts being closer to hexagons than octagons!

It was Wilson however, who really rescued Old Number One, the car that Cec described as a “one-off bastard” which was hardly the way many passionate MG enthusiasts, imbued with the romance of the MG marque saw it. In 1986, when Phil Hill came to stay, I asked him what had got him into motor racing, he said simply “Combat”. As a young boy, Barre Lyndon’s books had a profound effect on a pre and post war generation worldwide, fascinated by motor sport. Barre was a great friend of Kimber’s, and the story of Kimber’s FIRST sports car, and the problems of getting it to the start of that years Land’s End, broken chassis and all, are really graphically described!


So you see THAT is the romance of MG, and why so many people believe it to be the first MG.

Kimber gave a copy of ‘Combat’ to Wilf Mathews, inscribed in green ink... To Wilf, My first passenger in my first MG...from Kim, Christmas 1933. Was that what he really meant, or his first real MG sports car?

Kimber sold Old Number One to his friend Harry Turner not long after the 1925 event, for 300 pounds. It was then sold on the 10th November, 1930 to Ronald Davidson for the princely sum of fifty pounds. Kimber expressed little interest in the car when offered, and when he thought about it over a year later, it had gone. Sold to a Manchester auctioneer. After being used by a butcher and a pig farmer, it was then found in a Manchester scrap yard by an Abingdon employee in 1932. MG records then showing that in December of that year, it was involved in an accident being driven by the late Douglas Cleese of ‘Autocar’.

It was stored at Cowley during the war, and for a time at Cockshoot’s the Manchester MG dealership after which it was ‘rebuilt’ at Cowley, by apprentices and painted dark red. Following which the Nuffield Organisation had it re-registered for publicity purposes as FMO 842 advising the authorities that it had not been previously registered!— Enter Wilson McComb... who discovered in 1959 that the original registration number FC 7900 was available as it became void on not being used for five years. However when the application was made by John Thornley, for the reinstatement of the original registration, this was opposed as the result of representations by the Bullnose Morris Club!

THE OXFORD TIMES, FRIDAY, MAY 4, 1925



Morris Sunbeam Dodge Bros. Humber


CONCENTRATION on the sale and service of just *four* makes of Motor Cars has undoubtedly made us the largest automobile distributors in the three counties.


¶ We *know* that nothing finer is made in their respective classes.

¶ We have become specialists in servicing these four makes.

**The Morris Garages, Oxford.**

MAY 1924 175 The MORRIS Owner



**This  Super Sports Morris**  
will climb the famous Porlock Hill  
at 25 miles per hour

THE gradient of this noted acclivity is one in five and the Treasury Rating of the car is only 11.9 h.p. It will be seen therefore that the inherent possibilities of the famous Morris engine can be brought out by those who know how

The result is an exceptionally fast touring motor car capable of 60 miles an hour on the flat, and wonderful acceleration. The modified steering and springing gives a glued-to-the-road effect producing finger-light steering at high road speeds.

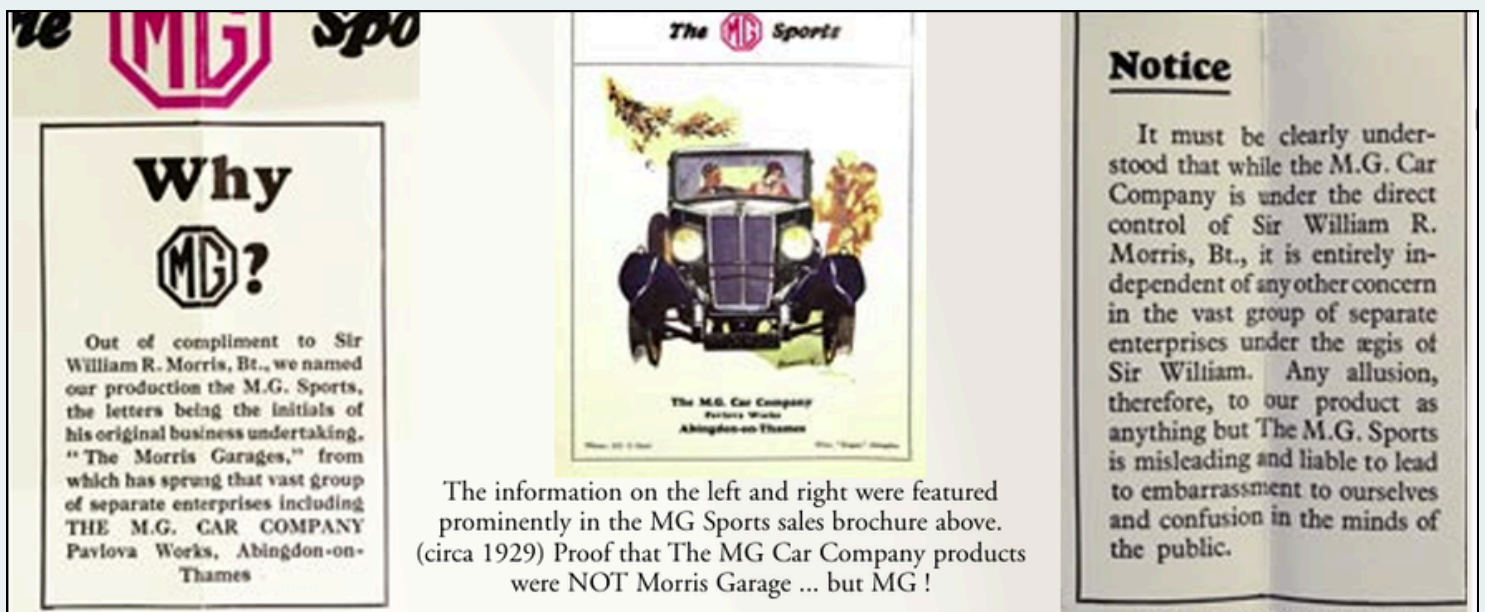
Mounted on this out-of-the-ordinary chassis is the most delightful two-seater body imaginable. Beautifully comfortable, with adjustable seat and single dickey the finish is of the highest class and the style irreproachable.

The tout ensemble is one of the finest productions we have ever turned out from our famous Queen Street Showrooms. For a car of such distinction the price, £350, is extraordinarily modest.

May we send you further particulars?

**The Morris Garages**  
Head Office & Showrooms Queen Street  
**Oxford**  
Phone 942 Wire “Auto”





However this seems to have been 'sorted', for it then sailed across on a Queen to the New York Auto Show in 1962 to be displayed at the launch of the MGB. After all this it was restored yet again, no longer even vaguely resembling the grey, rough and ready special that Kimber had driven in 1925, now painted again a brighter red. For many years it remained in the care of Syd Beer in his little Houghton Museum. From where it was to finally reside at Gaydon. In 1975 it again crossed 'the pond', this time along with Goldie Gardner's EX 175 at the request of the New England MG T Register, along with Cec Cousins and Alec Houndslow to celebrate a Golden Jubilee. You now have all the facts. So was the first MG the car built by Cousins and sold by Kimber? Or the one Cousins built and was driven to a gold by Kimber? I know which one gets my vote.

#### Post script:

In 1990 on Jean Kimber's second visit to South Africa, whilst sitting in my little Cream Cracker Cottage library she found my copy of "The Adventures of Imshi" which had been found in a library sale in Simon's Town, by good friend Brian Hogg the year before, and knowing of my desperate search had very kindly given it to me! Long before the days of Amazon.

"What was Imshi, and why was it so important to my father?" she asked. So I told her it was an Arab word, and the story about what I thought was the first MG ad. "So why did you not mention that at the Kimber Festival?" I explained that it was because I did not know enough to be sure about the influence of the word. Getting the book had changed all that. "Do you know that for years, I have been saying that dad long maintained that MG does not stand for Morris Garages, it stands for itself". "Now I understand why he was so adamant!"



From left to right, Wilfred Hobbs, Cecil Kimber and William Morris.

# The M.G. Octagon a history in itself!

Chris Keevill – Editor, The Early M.G. Society [www.earlymgsociety.co.uk](http://www.earlymgsociety.co.uk)

The M.G. octagon first appeared in an advert in The Oxford Times of March 2nd 1923 and was subsequently used in virtually every M.G. advert thereafter.

The octagon logo is understood to have been designed by Ted Lee, Cost Accountant at The Morris Garages. The two-letter acronym soon became M.G.'s logo.

The M.G. Car Company was formed in March 1928 and yet, almost unbelievably, the M.G. octagon had never been registered as a trademark! The first application for the image as a trademark was made a month later in April 1928.

Even then, the 'date of claimed first use' was erroneous. The date given on the application was 1st May 1924, (probably taken from the earliest advert to hand), whereas the octagon was first used in March 1923.

These errors are responsible for some folk to think that M.G. started in 1924, or even in 1928, when the trademark was claimed.

Further confusion over the 1975 Jubilee MGBs.

When in 1975, under British Leyland management, M.G. was desperate to shift stocks of MGB GTs, a model named 'Jubilee' was introduced. The management team thought that the production of M.G.s began in 1925 – so 1975 was the 50th anniversary. Sadly, they were two years too late, but the error convinced the uninitiated to believe that 1925 was the start date of the marque.





# Indaba - 2026

The 2026 MGCC Indaba is a three-day event to be hosted by the Johannesburg Centre of the MG Car Club of South Africa and will be held at the Fairway Hotel, Randburg, Johannesburg between the 21st of September and the 24th of September 2026.

**Day 1** the 21st of September from 12.00pm onwards is the arrival and registration of participants in the Chapel Hall immediately on your right as you drive into the hotel complex. Meet and greet during the afternoon followed by a typical South African braai and welcome in the evening.

**Day 2** the 22nd of September, is a day for driving tests, show day and rocker box racing all happening at the hotel. Depending on the entry option chosen breakfast is included, and a finger lunch and a buffet dinner are included for all participants.

**Day 3** the 23rd of September we will have an adventure drive out through the Cradle of Humankind area, visiting the Maropeng Centre, lunch at Hartbeespoort Dam area with an early return to Randburg for a Gala Dinner and Prizegiving. Breakfast is an option as per entry and the Gala Dinner and accommodation is included for all participants. The dinner will encompass a Prizegiving, music and dance and a theme!

**Day 4** the 24th of September. Goodbyes after breakfast. Breakfast is included for all participants.

With the event being based in Johannesburg, we will offer two entry fee options.

**Entry Fee Option 1** will cost R12 950.00 per couple for the three/four days above and includes all accommodation, functions, and all meals except the lunch on day 3, which will be for your own account.

**Entry Fee Option 2** will cost R8 500.00 per couple for the three/four days above and includes accommodation on the third day, all functions, and meals except for the lunch on Day 3 and only includes the breakfast on day 4. Participants will make their own arrangements for accommodation and breakfast on days 2 and 3.

Single Entry fees are available as per the Entry Form. The entry form is available from Anita de Castro at [anita.decastro15@gmail.com](mailto:anita.decastro15@gmail.com)

Your entry form and an Indemnity form will require signatures at the registration on the 21st of September and a detail timetable will be provided.

Regards,  
Roger Pearce



# Events - 2025

MONTH	Noggin	Club Night	Monthly Run	Note
January	-	17th	19th - SAMCA	
February	3rd	14th - Price Giving	1st - Zwartkops	
March	3rd	14th	30th - Gymkhana	
April	7th	11th	13th - Rietvlei	6th - Angela's Picnic Riversands Farm
May	5th	16th	25th - Phyllis Robertson	
June	2nd	13th	29th - Club Show day	8th - British car day POMC
July	7th	18th	13th - Combined Show Day	
August	4th	15th	22 to 24 - Weekend away	3rd - Cars in the park POMC
September	1st	12th	21st - Piston Ring	
October	6th	10th	19th - Jacaranda run	
November	3rd	14th	23rd - TBC	
December	1st	6th - Christmas Party	-	






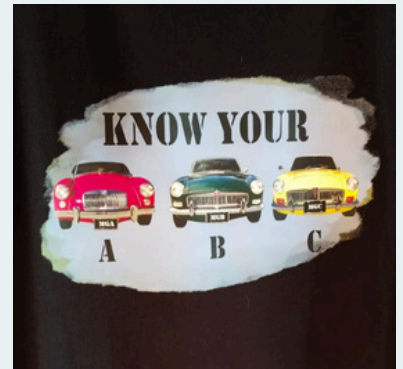


DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Golf shirt - white & grey - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00
Golf shirt, grey & black - ladies, short sleeves 	R 130.00
Lounge shirt - silver - men - short sleeves 	R 180.00
Vogue blouse - grey - ladies - long sleeves 	R 150.00
Golf shirt - grey striped with black collar - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00
Golf shirt - blue with white collar - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00
Golf shirt - blue with white trimmed collar and sleeves - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00

DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Cap - grey - show day 2022 - with Jhb Centre logo 	R 40.00
Cap - grey & black 	R 60.00

DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Socks - navy blue with logo 	R 90.00
Socks - black with logos 	R 90.00
Socks - white with logos 	R 90.00

DESCRIPTION	PRICE
MG Badge (100 yr Centennial) 	R 450.00
MG Keyring (60 yr celebration 1962-2022) 	R 40.00
MG rad cap loosener 	R 20.00



### T-Shirt

R280 - size guide, see here below

Size	Body width (in cm)	Body length (in cm)
S	50	70
M	53	72
L	56	74
XL	59	76
2XL	62	78
3XL	68	80

# CLUB REGALIA



Contact: Jaco - 082 823 2681

# FOR SALE

## MG B GT 1980

Drive well and mechanically sound.

Contact Chris Luus on 071 887 9981 for details

