

## The Confusing Years

(1967-'69)

Once again we are grateful to Tom Aczel, who has supplied us with the following detailed analysis of the period 1967-'69. During the subject three years, the MGB underwent considerable changes (some more significant than others). Unfortunately, these changes did not mirror what was happening in the UK. To compound the issue,

- lack of recorded data detailing when the changes were introduced;
- the possible unreliability in the little information that has survived;
- the delay in revised parts and models being introduced in Australia;
- the changeover from assembly at Pressed Metal Corporation to the main BMC site at Zetland;

all play a part in the difficulty in making definitive statements.

***Should you detect any errors or omissions, please contact us so that we can rectify it.***

### 1967

Mk I cars (YGHN3) were still being assembled at Pressed Metal Corporation, Enfield, NSW.

- Headlight toggle switch replaced by push/pull knob, relocated to the previous windscreen washer button location. Windscreen washer button moved to the site of the previous headlight toggle switch.
- Reversing lights fitted during the second half of the year (*date still unknown?*).
- Differential changed from earlier "Banjo" type rear axle to later (and much heavier) Salisbury "Tube" type rear axle/differential. This also probably occurred in the second half of the year (*but we can't confirm exactly when at this stage*).
- Overdrive gearboxes (with "D" type Laycock De Normanville overdrive) became available on some cars in late 1967. These cars were still designated YGHN3.
- Straight, slightly more rearward located gearlever in overdrive cars, as opposed to the cranked, more forward gearlever on non-overdrive cars. Vacuum inhibitor switch and relay fitted to nearside firewall on these overdrive cars (just beside the heater, where fitted).

### 1968

YGHN3 series continued (until August).

- Assembly is moved to BMC (Australia) facility at Zetland (aka Waterloo) early in 1968 from PMC, Enfield.
- Virtually all of these last YGHN3 cars were fitted with overdrive
- Zetland car bodies now passed through the 'Roto-Dip' primer process. These cars are detectable by having a dark brown undercoat/primer (as opposed to the pink primer seen on the Enfield-assembled cars). (This probably also, at the very least, partly explains why many more Mk II cars appear to have survived than Mk I cars).

- August sees the introduction of the first Mk II MGB series. These cars were designated YGHN4.
- Only 258 cars produced in this series before the introduction of the YGHN5 series.
- Multiple changes for YGHN4, including:
  - Wide transmission tunnel
  - Full synchromesh gearbox
  - Straight gear lever (with or without overdrive) with round knob exiting transmission tunnel 2" further rearward.
  - Negative earth, alternator electrics.
  - Pre-engaged starter motor.
  - Virtually all cars fitted with overdrive
  - Change from winged 'knock-off' wheel nuts to 'octagonal' ones.
- The front indicator/parking light units were reversed from previous practice to now have the amber indicator section outboard of the clear parking light lens. This orientation continued until 1970 when the grille was changed for the recessed black item in the MGBL cars.
- The colours introduced with the late Mk I cars in 1968 such as 'Special Burgundy' and 'Indigo Blue' were carried over into the YGHN4 series Mk II cars.
- More robust "LH" series Laycock De Normanville overdrive, replacing the previous D-Type.
- Previous vacuum inhibitor circuitry to disallow disengagement of overdrive on a trailing throttle no longer required.
- "Overdrive" badge on boot lid for (MOST) cars fitted with this option.
- "Mk II" badge fitted below nearside boot lid trailing edge (NB One YGHN4 car, fitted with overdrive and a known history (from 'NEW') never had the overdrive badge on the boot lid).
- Late September sees the introduction of the YGHN5 series cars.
- Car numbering sequence continued rather than reverting to '501' (as was usually the case). (Perhaps this was due to the relatively few changes? eg
  - discontinuation of the previous PCV valve for crankcase ventilation
  - introduction of ventilated SU carburettors.
  - change to reclining seats with altered trim pattern to replace the Mk I style seats that had been carried over from the YGHN3 cars to the YGHN4 cars.

## 1969

YGHN5 series continued.

- Front mudguards modified during the year, moving the indicator/parking light units in closer to the grille

NB: Whilst not recorded in contemporary publications at the time, this was done in the UK because of legislation introduced in some European markets that the parking (side) light's centre point should line up with the centre point of the headlights. Whilst the modified mudguards were introduced for the Australian-assembled MGB as these panels came on line, the indicator/parking light units remained reversed compared to the Abingdon-built product, till the introduction of the YHN9 models with their recessed black grilles.

Official press release announcing the introduction of the Mk II surprisingly not issued until February 1969, despite the Mk II now having been in production for 6 months! The **press release** lists amongst other details:

- manual, overdrive PLUS automatic.
- all synchromesh on manuals
- alternator 15AC
- gear ratios altered
- remote control gearshift
- Borg Warner type 35 automatic gearbox (specially adapted)
- 6 position automatic position selector allowing manual clutchless changes as well as fully automatic.
- anti-burst door locks.
- recessed, sliding, interior door handles
- soft plastic window winders

There is also the following special mention in the **press release** – “Features on previous model but phased in just before the Mk II (as ‘normal model improvements’)

*(The **Press Release**, not circulated till February 1969 lists a number of “new” features, many of which were introduced long before this date. This type of misinformation clearly illustrates the difficulties in establishing accurate time lines for changes decades later.):*

- reversing lights *(these were already introduced back in 1967!)*
- radial ply tyres *(there exists some doubt as to this claim)*
- stronger anti-roll bar *(there also exists doubt as to this claim. It is believed that the same 5/8” diameter unit existed throughout the production)*
- oil cooler *(the oil cooler was standard for the Australian cars from the beginning!)*
- laminated windscreen *(there exists some doubt here)*
- headlamp flasher

Tom Aczel

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