

# First Aussie B



Aussie MGB #501 is a beautiful car, but no longer in its original colours.

Back in 1989 Bev Robinson decided she wanted to buy an MG to restore. She had never owned an MG before, and never worked on a car, but always had a passion for MGs, as she explains. "As a young person I was always involved with people with MGs. Most of my friends belonged to the MG club in Brisbane in those days. I'm talking about 45 to 50 years ago. But I've always loved MGs, especially the Bs...there's just something about them."

Bev saw three MGBs advertised at a wholesale car dealership in Brisbane and with the help of a mechanically-minded friend bought the best of the three. "I decided on this little red MGB roadster, which was sold to me as a 1965 model. It looked very tired but pretty good for the restoration job that I wanted to do."

Bev's life as an MGB owner didn't get off to an auspicious start, as she continues. "I drove it home and I could smell petrol all the way. I got home, opened up the boot and it was full of fuel!"

Still, she had bought the car to restore and this gave her the resolve to get started on it straight away. She was recommended a chap in Currumbin who restored cars, and when discussing it with him he suggested Bev come and do some of the work. "Of course I jumped at the chance. I do like to

get my hands dirty, so I went down there one or two days a week. I'd go down in my overalls. 8 o'clock in the morning; finish at 5 o'clock at night. We pulled every nut and bolt off; stripped the whole car. I learnt how to sandblast, gurney, use a rattler, spray painting the parts. Yes, I did get my hands very dirty!"

After about two years, the mechanical part of the car was virtually finished and all that remained was to paint the body and re-do the trim. Then the business closed down and Bev took the car to Classic Trimming and Motor Bodies at Southport. "Because they were a pretty big concern I wasn't able to continue on, much to my disappointment, but most of it was done anyway."

The car was finally completed in 1994, but then Bev received a surprise piece of news about it, as she reveals. "We had been getting some parts for it from Brian Darke from Maintaining The Breed at Mudgeeraba. He's a real MG enthusiast and he knows everything you want to know about MGs. We noticed that dates on the windscreen wiper motor were stamped 1962. Looking at dates on other parts, some enquiries were made and Brian said the first one that came off the production line was number 501. We said there's 501 stamped onto this car, so Brian came tearing down and there it was. Unbelievable!"



Bev was unaware of the car's significance.

The original ID plate (shown on p53) is kept under lock and key, and there's a duplicate on the car.

Bev says that had she known of the car's significance when she started, she would have restored it to its original appearance, which was Nurburg White with red interior. "At the time I was restoring the car for my pleasure. My husband bought the number plates for me for when I restore it again. And I'd love to, one day. When I retire from work. I'll take it back to original then, the colour and everything."

At first, Bev was reluctant to drive the B very far, but after being encouraged to drive to Wagga Wagga for the Gathering of The Faithful in 1999, she has since driven to MG Nationals events in Adelaide, Shepparton and this year to Hobart. "Since I restored it, it's done 23,000 miles, but almost nothing in the first five years. Now I love driving it. It's a lovely little car." 

