

# The Way We Were - our TD love story

By Mike Johnson



Lunch time on Cape Town's own Daytona Beach - 1964



Bloubergstrand, Cape Town - 1974

**F**ROM childhood Dinky toy days it was my desire to own an MG. Although there were many other makes, the name MG seemed to be the car synonymous with the term 'sports car'.

In December 1963, at the end of my first year as a poorly paid apprentice, I managed to have saved some money and assisted by my mother with a reluctant loan, I bought my red TD for R320 (then about £160). A joyous moment and that first drive home from Tamboerskloof in a howling south easter is today clearly embedded in my mind.

The price of the car soon faded but the loan share had to be repaid and in the coming months there were times when I could not afford petrol, which was as I recall about R3.60 (£1.80) to fill the tank. Nevertheless, I was driving my dream and enjoying every moment behind the wheel or

under the bonnet. It was particularly sporty driving with the windscreen down and too poor for the luxury of aero-screens which perhaps explains my hairless crown today.

At the time of buying the MG a sweet, 12 year old girl named Frances lived across the road from me. Some five years later she started taking a rather keen interest in both the MG and its owner. Thus began the 'romantic period' and the TD, now sprayed racing green became known as 'Cosy' for obvious reasons!

On 6th February 1971, 50% ownership of my TD was unwittingly relinquished to the 'girl across the road' at our wedding ceremony. Later that evening our 'Cosy' took us for a short honeymoon to Stellenbosch.

As time moved on the TD saw only occasional use due to my marine career, purchase of our home

and a growing family naturally took precedence. Dear old 'Cosy' showed her displeasure at this neglect and eventually refused to budge from the garage due to major defects. Sadly, this is where she then reclined for the

next 33 years, but thankfully was not sold, as so often happens.

Eventually restoration began in earnest in 2007/8. After so many idle years and living near the salty air seaside the car was indeed in a sorry state. Those who have tackled a complete restoration know the frustration and disappointment experienced during the course of the project. However, perseverance pays and the end result is an incredible sense of job satisfaction, achievement and pride.

Having owned our now Clipper blue TD for 55 years and after so many years off the road we are once again, at every opportunity, enjoying the soothing exhaust burble taking us back to our younger years.

Who says a 'love triangle' will not stand the test of time?



The way we were - the 3 newlyweds - 1971

**Nothing too big or too small!**

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The way we are now - still the three newlyweds - 2019

