

Me and my motor

Businessman
Michael Oliver tells
the story of his
favourite car, an
MG TF 1500



My father bought me this car for my 21st birthday and my love affair with the car began. It was one of the last TFs with the 1500cc engine, (usually a 1250cc engine).

I did much courting around the lanes of Cheshire in the vehicle and I was serving my engineering apprenticeship at the time with David Browns.

I won a technical states scholarship, but not having a second language (Welsh) meant I couldn't study engineering at Liverpool University so I took the next best route gained entry to a Higher National Diploma 'sandwich' course in both mechanical and production engineering at Liverpool Technical College, working for six months and in college for six months.

During the time I spent in Liverpool, the MG carried me up and down to my digs in Childwall and during the time that I worked for David Browns, serving my apprenticeship, I took the car many times over many icy roads to Meltham Mills and to their factories in Huddersfield.

My father formed an association with EMI Electronics, the company was called David Brown EMI Electronics and I also spent six months of my life traveling between Hale in Cheshire and Hayes in Middlesex learning about

military and machine tool electronic control systems.

As soon as I got my Higher National Diploma I decided to kick England into touch for more exciting adventures in North America where I got a job as a machine tool designer in Pennsylvania.

I sold my MG for £200 two days before I bought a one-way ticket for £78 to sail on a Cunard liner, called Sylvania, from Liverpool to New York.

I returned to the UK after four years and started to search through the car collectors' clubs and other contacts to find FCB 791, my beloved TF 1500 and the only link I had to my father who died very young at the age of 49. With no luck, I was forced to give up my search, assuming that the car had been scrapped or exported, until one day with my grandson Adam, I walked around the back of Beaumaris Yacht Club in Anglesey and discovered a green TF 1500 with the registration FCB 791, in poor condition.

After many years of cajoling the owner to sell, I eventually made an offer he couldn't refuse - three times the mint condition value.

I lovingly restored the car and currently I have the prettiest and arguably one of the best TF MG 1500s in the world in my collection at Knutsford, which also includes Ferraris, Rolls Royces, Bentleys and the world's fastest car, a Bugatti Veyron. ■



Also in the garage

Michael Oliver founded Oliver Valves over 30 years ago in garage beside his home in Hale. Since then his company has grown into one of the biggest in its field in the world. Now based in Knutsford, Michael's three companies and six factories export to 50 countries and their valves are used by multi-national companies such as Shell, Exxon, British Gas and Chevron.



Your driving passion

If your car is your pride and joy or you ride the motorbike of your dreams, tell us what you love about it and don't forget to include a photograph. Whether you drive a vintage vehicle or a modern marvel, share your car stories and motoring memories with us at letters@cheshirelife.co.uk or post them to Cheshire Life, 3 Tustin Court, Port Way, Preston, PR2 2YQ.