

1980 Aston Martin-MG B Roadster Lot Entry: 19



Specification

Lot Number: 19	Estimate: (£) 14,000 - 18,000	Auction Sales 05/12/2012
Reg Number:		DOL341V
Chassis Number:		GVADJ1AG510877
Engine Number:		34648
Cc:		1798
Body Colour:		Silver Sand
Trim Colour:		Black
MOT ExpiryDate:		June 2013



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Some 80 percent of MGB production was exported to the United States, so when the exchange rate worked against the pound, the car became unprofitable; as was the case at the end of the 1970s. A new version had been developed featuring the British Leyland (BL) O-Series engine in place of the venerable B-Series unit but, under the circumstances, that alone was not going to save the car or the MG brand from extinction. Outside intervention was the only hope, and this appeared in the shape of a consortium headed by the then Chairman of Aston Martin, Alan Curtis - other members included David Wickens of BCA, Peter Cadbury, Lord George Brown and the Norwest construction group.

As part of proving to BL's caretaker CEO Michael Edwardes they had a viable plan, the consortium set themselves the task of creating a sample car in six days flat. The first requirement was to purchase an MGB for Aston Martin to modify, and 'DOL 341V' was duly acquired from the Sales and Marketing department of BL Cars - this was a Russet Brown, right-hand drive, home market Roadster that had been registered on February 13th 1980. The redesign was entrusted to William Towns, who had penned the Aston Martin DBS and its derivatives, as well as the Aston Martin Lagonda.

The unique specification included: MGB GT windscreen/surround; GT side windows; Tickford sports seats; Astrali 13-inch steering wheel; Tickford hood, Black side mouldings; modified front bumper and spoiler; new chrome grille; special rear panel with integral fog and reversing lights; 14-inch Wolfrace wheels. The prototype's bodywork was finished in BL Silver Sand Metallic and the completed car proudly unveiled to the press in June 1980. Sadly for those involved, and the thousands around the world who had been praying for a successful outcome, the BL board was unmoved by the proposal, leading directly to the end of MGB production and the closure of MG's famous Abingdon assembly plant.

'DOL 341V' remained in storage at Newport Pagnell until sold to a private owner in July 1984. It was then acquired by a long-standing MG enthusiast in August 1997. This fascinating part of British motor industry history is now available for sale complete with: original handbook, Heritage Certificate and fresh MOT. Having covered just 6,800 miles from new and described by the vendor as being in "very good" order with regard to its engine, gearbox, bodywork, paintwork and interior trim, the prototype would make a fascinating addition to any private or museum collection.

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Image

