

Pan American Highway in Classic MGs

Planning this monumental trip has been an exciting experience for us all! More so because everyone is contributing towards the many facets that require attention, making us feel like a cohesive team.

Basically, the group consists of one MGA (RIP), five MGB's and two MGBGT's. Except for the Herlihys, the group travelled together through Africa in 2012 from Cape Town to Cairo and on to Longbridge, UK over a 3 month period, so one could say that we know each other reasonably well – which is always a blessing considering what else can go wrong on these long-distance adventures in classic MGs.



Above - RIP arrives home after the rebuild

Below - Dave applies the newest stickers to RIP for this adventure



Our Pan American Highway adventure has been 2 years in the planning. The 8 MGs are lashed down in two containers. Now it's time to complete our preparations. We all remember the stress we suffered through Africa as a result of a few of the MGs breaking down multiple times a day and not one of us want to have a repeat on this journey through South America and Central America to the USA and Canada over a 4 month period starting 5 January 2015.

To give you some idea how seriously we are taking this 33000km adventure, most of us have removed our motors to replace clutches and service our gearboxes

and fettle our cylinder heads. We have also rebuilt brake master cylinders, professionally cleaned radiators, replaced most shock absorbers, fitted all-terrain tyres, fitted two-way radios and given our MGs a thorough tune up and an oil and grease service.

In addition to the preparation of our MGs, we have had to organise shipping to Santiago, Chile, shipping from Columbia to Panama across the Darien Gap and shipping home from Vancouver. Then there is the issue of a carnet for the cars,



vehicle insurance, personal insurance, vaccinations, attending first aid courses, flights, visas, managing agents in each country who are responsible for booking our hotels and adventures en route and the other myriad of tasks that have to be performed before we can even set off on this adventure.

A brief outline of our trip is as follows:

We collect our MGs in Santiago and head south through Chile until we reach the 1000's of islands at Puerto Montt, at which time we island-hop through national Parks until we are forced to cross over the Andes into Argentina. We have been warned that we will confront cold, gale force winds as we continue south through Terra del Fuego and cross the Magellan Straits to Ushuaia, the southern-most city of the world. After a well earned rest, we do a U Turn and head northwards along the eastern side of the Andes, through more National Parks and past glaciers to Mendoza, the wine region of Argentina and on to Bolivia and Lake Titicaca, at an altitude of around 4000m. From here, we visit Machu Picchu and the Nasca Lines before continuing northwards again through Peru and Ecuador to Cartagena, Columbia.

The Pan American Highway is broken by a 50 mile stretch of swamp land in northern Columbia, so we will have to ship our MGs across the Panama Canal to Panama and continue northwards through such Central American countries as Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize and Mexico before entering the USA and heading via the Grand Canyon and Pikes Peak hill-climb near Denver to Mount Rushmore and the Boeing Museum at Seattle, arriving in Vancouver, Canada tired but hopefully, HAPPY! Wow!

Some of the Adventurers are talking about continuing up to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska while others are planning on storing their MGs in the Vancouver area until the spring of 2016, when they intend returning and driving along the Trans Canada Highway to MG2016 at Louisville and on to Ottawa and Halifax, before returning along the Blue Ridge Parkway, Texas and the western section of Route 66 to LA and home – but that's another story for another year.

Dave Godwin on behalf of the MG Adventurers.