

Ennever / Enever

family history & ancestry



Albert Sydney (Syd) Enever, designer of the MGA & MGB motor cars

[Syd Enever](#) will be remembered as the inspiration behind two of Britain's greatest sports cars, the MGA and the MGB. He joined Morris Garages (MG) as an errand boy in 1921, with the help of his headmaster, at the age of fifteen and retired in 1971 as their chief engineer having seen his second major project, the MGB, sell more than half a million cars.

Biographical information about Syd is limited and partially unverified but he was born Albert Sydney Enever in Colden Common, near Winchester, Hampshire on the 25th March 1906, the son of Francis Albert Sydney Enever and Maud Matilda nee Harper. His parents had married in 1895 and he was their fifth child. His father was born Francis Albert Sydney Taylor and later became known by the name of his natural father as Francis Albert Sydney Taylor Enever. Syd died in Oxfordshire in 1993, aged 87 and we don't know whether his father's unusual initials held any special meaning for him.

About a year after joining Morris Garages he was promoted and moved to another of the firm's local garages. In 1927 he was assigned to the experimental department at Abingdon and in 1938 he was appointed chief planning engineer and in 1954 was promoted to Chief Engineer. He held that position until he retired seventeen years later.

Syd designed the body of the MG car that competed in the Le Mans 24 hour race in 1951 or 1952 and while some experts have called it a re-bodied MG TD others maintain this was the fore-runner of the production car, the MGA. This car was designated EX-172.

Development continued through the early 1950s with the EX-175, the MGA prototype and resulting in the "EX-179" which was the legendary MG that broke dozens of land speed records in the 1950s, many of which still stand today (2004). It was built on a modified copy of the EX-175 chassis. Notable in the picture (left) are from second from the left, Terry Mitchell, chassis and suspension engineer; Syd Enever, MG's Chief Designer and father of the MGA; and Alec Hounslow, head of the Competition Department.

British Pathé have news film of the car which was exhibited at the Festival of Britain in 1951 before it was transported to the Utah salt flats for another record attempt. It features Lieutenant Colonel A.T. Goldie Gardner M.C., the driver and Syd Enever himself. Syd can be seen opposite Goldie when they are revving the engine and again on the left after his name is mentioned, followed by a brief close-up. The film can be seen [here](#). They also have film of Syd working with Stirling Moss at Abingdon before Moss broke a series of speed records in 1957, also on the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah, at speeds in excess of 240mph. Syd is wearing a suit, has wavy hair and is seen climbing into the car before Moss arrives. Click [here](#) to see this film on the British Pathé site.

The MGA was officially launched at the Frankfurt Motor Show of 1955 and was replaced by the MGB when production ceased in July 1962. Through that time, BMC sold 101,081 MGAs, the vast majority of which were exported with only 5869 cars sold on the home market, the highest export percentage of any British car.

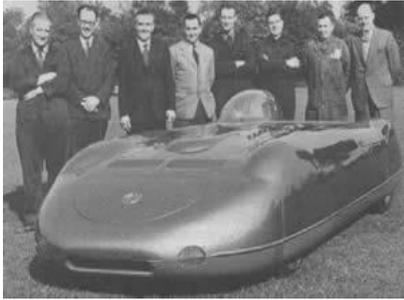
A grand total of over 510,000 tourers and GTs then made the MGB the world's top selling sports car of its era, the first to reach half a million and the top British sports car of all time. Anyone who has loved their MGA or MGB owes much to Syd Enever who was responsible for engineering them both.

Syd's love of cars was passed onto his son, [Roger](#), who was one of six drivers who broke seven international production car records in 1967 by driving a BMC 1800 over 15,000 miles in seven days around the Monza circuit, near Milan, at an average speed of 92.8mph. Syd's nephew, [Guy Cyril Howitt](#), also kept the family tradition alive being a motor engineer in Australia, where he emigrated to with his family in the 1950s.



The 500,000th MGB (Syd Enever is standing on the right of the car)

UMG 400, MG's entry to the Le Mans 24 hour race in 1951/2



EX-179 was the legendary MG that broke dozens of land speed records in the 1950s



MGA



MGB roadster



1968 MGB roadster with 'Enever' plate.
Owned by Linton Atkinson

<http://www.enever.com/histories/history17858.php>