

## MGB V8 Roadster restoration project – Report 14

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Those of you who have been following this MGB rebuild may have noticed the couple of little holes by the left hand passengers side front seat mounting threaded hole. Well, this morning after a clear up I decided to have a go at **repairing the floor** as I was getting bored with stripping off rust and seam sealer with the knotted wire brush in the angle grinder.

Firstly, I cut out the section between the two rust holes to reveal any rust in the box section under the holes.



It is a good job I did as if I had just welded a plate over the top of the holes I would not have seen the **hole in the box section** below that was only held together with bitumen underseal and “tin worm”. The noise of the cutting disc frightened the tin worms and they all let go and fell out with the underseal!



A view from below showing what the underseal was hiding – ‘golden body lightener’!

The next stage was to cut out a cardboard cut out of the size of plate I needed. Nothing difficult with this, just a pencil and a pair of scissors.



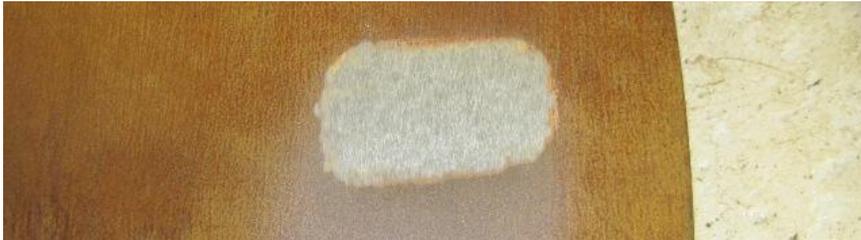
I found I had run out of 18 gauge sheet metal and did not want to use 16 gauge as I find it difficult to cut easily. Anyway, 18 gauge would be fine for this job. I had a look on my daughter's company's scrap heap and found a pair of BMW 2002 doors that were a bit beyond repair.



I find that most of the sheet steel that is easy to buy is fairly hard. Old panels off cars seem to be more malleable and easier to shape. Hence this is a good source of metal to use for welding up holes in bodyshells.

You need to strip the paint and any surface rust before you use the metal. I cleaned the area I was going to use with the mule Skinner before I cut out the section I wanted with the thin cutting disc on the angle grinder.

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After cutting it out I cleaned the other side with the mule Skinner to clean off the paint and surface rust.



Normally I would use some marking out blue on the piece of metal, so that the scribe marks would show up easily. I opened the garage door to go down to my other shed to get the marking out blue – but it was raining, so I got lazy and decided to just scribe round the cardboard template.



After cutting out the scribed shape in the metal plate, I trimmed it to fit and cleaned up the surrounds of the hole with the mule Skinner.



Before grinding or welding make sure that any parts that may get damaged are covered up. I use leather welding aprons. Old woollen blankets are just as good.



Tacking the plate in place with the MIG welder.

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A MIG welder is an important bit of kit nowadays for welding up classic car bodywork. I bought mine when I retired 10-years ago. It was an overhauled unit from Mig Anglia in Southrepps, Norfolk. It has been very reliable. Always buy the best you can afford.



I have a welding headshield that is more or less clear and darkens immediately you start welding. I still tend to be naughty and just close my eyes as I put in the tack welds. When I use the headshield I sometimes seem to put the tacks and welds in the wrong places! Don't do what I do, you may burn your eyelids and at worst if you don't close your eyes you will get arc eye which is very unpleasant indeed. Leather welding gloves are most important, especially if you are doing a lot of continuous welding. I have, in the past, managed to 'sunburn' my hands.



At least he has proper gloves on.



OK – my welding is crap. To stop any distortion I tend to turn the welder up fairly high and fill in the gaps between the tack welds. At least I get good penetration and virtually no distortion. It is more than 20-years since I was working in the Jaymic workshop welding most days. Even with Dugald's MGBGTV8 restoration I shopped it out to Jaymic to do. I was frightened as then I was working in my old wooden shed with my collection of veteran and vintage motorcycles next to the GT and worried that I might set fire to them. Now I have my new shed, a bit more room, and completed a lot of chassis welding on the Arkley SS I am not so

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worried, but there is my 1903 Crestmobile veteran car and Janes 1934 Singer 9 Le-Mans sharing the garage.



Why do I keep changing the grinding, cutting, sanding and wire wheels when I have about four angle grinders to use? Sometimes you just need to think!



Most of the excess weld ground and sanded off. The next stage was to tidy the repair up a bit more and treat it with acid etching primer. No quite invisible mending, but not too bad. When it eventually has a coat of seam sealer over it no one will be wiser. I don't want to put any sealer on it yet as I still have the underside to repair later when I have stripped the underseal off the bottom of the MGB.

You may be pleased to hear that I am not going to bore you with full details of all the other bits I need to weld up as the same process will apply to them. If

something comes up that I think may be useful to others I will include it in my reports.



In the next photo on this page you can see a yellow paint line that goes between the sides of the box section underneath. I will drill a couple of holes for rustproofing the inside of this box section. I did clean out the box section before I welded the plate in, mainly with an air line and a magnet on a stick.



Victor rang me today and I think he has persuaded me to go to Stoneleigh on Sunday. Hopefully I can find a few bits I need to buy. I had a bonus arrived today, from Brooklands Books, my annual royalties for the two books I wrote on BMW 02's of the 60's and 70's. At least it adds a bit to the government pension money I receive and will buy a few more bits for the MGB V8 project.

Any comments, suggestions, abuse, etc. about the reports, please drop me an e-mail to [mikemacartney@btconnet.com](mailto:mikemacartney@btconnet.com)