

## MGB V8 Roadster restoration project

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015

Busy morning. Dog to vet for X-ray because she has dodgy right-hand rear suspension. Me back to hospital for check-up after my visit last week. Arrived back to find a message that Freewheel had finished the welding of the rear stainless steel exhaust tailpipes. Parts also arrived to repair the blast cabinet and I fitted the new air valve before lunch.



It would be great if the M12 x 1.25mm tap arrived in the post today so I can thread the oxygen sensor in the lathe before I take the parts down to Freewheel to TIG weld the collars on. I don't want to have the collars welded on first before tapping the thread as it will be difficult to hold the tap wrench square. Also the upper part of the downpipe will get in the way of the tap wrench. I have just thought of another tip.

**TIP:** When tapping a hole with a thread, if you can hold the part you are going to tap in a lathe chuck or a pillar drill vice, you can fit the tap into the chuck at the back of the lathe bed or the drill chuck. You should then have the tap at right angles to the metal you are trying to tap. Start threading the metal by rotating the chuck by hand to start the thread cutting process. You may need to use the chuck key to get enough pressure. The tap can then be taken out of the lathe chuck, of pillar drill chuck, still in the part you are threading; tapping can be completed in a bench vice. You then know that your thread is at right angles.

The above is a bit difficult to describe, so I will take some photos when I thread the oxygen sensor collars.



At last I have made a decision and decided to run the battery cable and the electrical cables to the rear of the car inside the car. These hole punches are very useful for cutting holes in sheet metal.

I will use this one to cut the holes for the cable grommets in the body and the plastic battery box.



You drill a hole, that the bolt of the cutter will go through, then put the bolt with one half of the cutter on one side and the other side of the cutter and nut on the other side. Tighten up the nut with a spanner or socket and 'Bob's your Uncle' you have a neat hole for your rubber grommet and cables.



These cutters are quite expensive new. I put a search on e-bay some time ago for some of different sizes and picked up a number of them, all new, for next to nothing. They are also useful for making holes for aerials. I have got one that makes square holes but have never found a use for that one. Finding the correct size rubber grommet can be a problem sometimes. It wants to be tight on both the hole and the cable,

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First rubber grommet for the wires to the rear in place.



The cable for the lights, fuel pump etc. in place through the rubber grommet.



Hole cut through the side of the sheet metal where the battery is located.



The way I marked the position of this hole was to fit the plastic battery box, put in the battery and measure the approximate position of where I wanted the hole.

Drilling the hole for the cutter was a real pain – the drill and drill bit were too long. I could have gone and borrowed a right angle drive from Howard that fits in a drill. Being lazy and Howard living about four miles away I found a short 3mm diameter drill and stuffed it up the drill chuck as far as it would go. I still had to hold the drill at a bit of an angle, but at least it made a hole. Once I had got a hole to start I could use a bigger drill and then the drill I needed for the clearance hole for the cutter bolt. A hole was cut as before.



To find the position for the hole in the plastic battery box, I fitted the battery box in place and scribed through the holes in the metal to the plastic box from underneath the car. Took the battery box back out and cut the hole in the plastic with the same sheet metal cutter. I have just thought – I think these cutters maybe called 'Tank Cutters', but I may be wrong.

### Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

When I got up at 6am this morning it was nice and sunny, now at 9:30am it has dulled up and looks as if it may rain later. At 10am I am booked in for a haircut. Jane said I could not go down to Abingdon to do the presentation looking like a mad professor. Not only have I got to have a haircut, I have also been instructed to trim my beard – nag nag, nag nag! Gad - I want a roll-up. Anyway – what's wrong with the mad professor look? Feeling a bit light headed this afternoon; is it the lack of nicotine or the loss of all the hair?

This morning I managed to finish off all the holes I wanted through the body and the battery box for the battery live and battery earth. Unfortunately I ran out of rubber grommets to fit in the body for the cables to go through. Some of you may be thinking "Why is he bothering to fit all this stuff when he is going to take it all apart again to prepare and paint the bodyshell?" Well I will explain. By fitting all the 'stuff' before painting, you at least know if parts fit properly and that all the parts are in the right places. In addition, all the holes that you drill will get a coat of paint and some extra protection.

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When you cut and drill holes in a bodyshell after it has been painted you have the chance of messing up the new paintwork, or finding that the holes you have cut are in the wrong place, at least if you get it wrong now you can weld them up again without damaging any new paint. OK, it's a pain in the bum fitting stuff twice but I hope I have plenty of time, and if I finish the car too soon I might have to do some household chores or even gardening!



The battery box in place with the holes for the cables cut through both the battery box and the sheet metal. I may need to obtain or make a longer battery earth lead. It may be just long enough. I ran out of energy to do anymore today and had a little sleep this afternoon after my Cromer Crab lunch, which was very tasty and a treat.



These are the finished stainless steel rear tailpipes for the MG. Jane collected them from Freewheel, yesterday, when she picked up Darcy, (the dog) up from the vets. From the X-rays it looks as if Darcy needs an operation on the right hand rear suspension leg. Oh dear – this sounds if it may be expensive. Having always had mongrels in the past, that have been cheap to run with very few vet bills, we have never bothered with pet insurance. A bit late to take it out now!

Darcy is a cross of a German Shepherd mother and a Mastiff father.



Jane also collected the air intake pipe that I forgot last week when I dropped the exhausts off for final TIG welding. I tried it in place, it does not fit right yet so a bit more work needs to be done with the hole to get it at the correct angle so the filter will fit. Tonight is Saga Louts night so I better think about getting ready.

### Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015

They were playing cricket on the green outside the pub last night. The Aldborough Wednesday night cricket team won by 6 runs. I can't get my head around cricket; I never know which team is which as they all wear white! Must have had too many pints as I can't remember the conversations we had. We were there for over two and a half hours so we must have rabbit'ed on about some interesting topics. The sandwiches turned up, I had one, and then popped over to another table to have a chat with Sue, when I came back the rest of the Saga Louts had finished the plate off. Served me right I suppose for going off flirting!

Friends are coming to dog and house sit this weekend, while Jane and I are down at Abingdon for the MGCC V8 Register Technical Day on Saturday, they arrive after lunch today, Jane is driving the community bus this morning, so I have got to do a bit of housework. Yet more time not working on the MGB. It seems I am always writing about excuses in these reports. I would like to get the hole for the air filter tube finished today. At least that would be another job ticked off the list. I also hope the tap turns up for threading the oxygen sensor collars. I better go and get on before the governor gets back and finds nothing done in the house.

### Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015

No work on the MG since Thursday. Jane and I travelled down to Abingdon for the MGCC V8 Register Technical Day on the Friday and stayed two nights in a really nice pub called the Coach and Horses, Chiselhampton, NX44 7UX. Everything

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including the beer, food, rooms was excellent and the full English breakfasts were the best I have ever had. I can't recommend it highly enough if you are staying in that area. It only took about a quarter of an hour to drive to and from the MG Car Club headquarters. 01865 890255 [enquiries@coachhorsesinn.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@coachhorsesinn.co.uk)

My talk on restoration seemed to go OK, but in my nervousness I did manage to murder a mouse! (Not the cheese eating type) and the packing up smoking went for a burton. I shall have to start giving up again this week. I met a number of members who have been following my reports. Nobody threw rotten eggs or tomatoes during the talk. In all it was a great weekend. A couple of members asked me some questions that I said I would try and find out about and put the information in my reports. I had left my famous note book in the car and did not write them down – hence I cannot remember what they were apart from one which was “will the ‘paint treatment’ that they offer for new and second hand cars work on his MGBGV8”. He has problems with bird muck making marks on his car. Have any readers had any experience of these treatments? When we bought our Vauxhall Zafira we had this paint treatment and it seems to wash OK and bird muck does not stain the paint work, but this is the only experience that I have. All was well with the barn and dog while we were away apart from the drain under the road and down to the stream has blocked again – must phone ‘Drains R Us’ again before we flood and the barn floats away!

The tap for the oxygen sensors arrived over the weekend so I can get on with that and take the downpipes down to Freewheel to be TIG welded.

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015**



Tapping the thread for the oxygen sensor collars in the lathe. The tap in the drill chuck is locked and does not turn. The chuck in the lathe is rotated to start the thread cutting in the oxygen sensor collar. I rotate the lathe chuck by means of the chuck key.

You turn the chuck in a clockwise direction and then back again a bit to cut off the swarf. Use some cutting and tapping lubricant.



Once the thread has started I fit the tap wrench to the tap and fit a rotating point in to hold the tap square with the collar and finish the thread by hand.



The same method can be used with a bench drill or pedestal drill. From now on I will try and send my reports into Victor every Thursday. As usual, any comments, motivation, help, suggestions or abuse to - [mikemacartney@btconnect.com](mailto:mikemacartney@btconnect.com)