

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project – Report 44

Sorry to keep you in 'suspenders' since the last report in the saga of the MGB V8, and the week that Dugald was up to North Norfolk to help me. By the way, the reason we could not find the spirit level was that Michael had hung his shirt on it! Anyway – to recap. *We all sat down to a very nice lunch that may have lasted all afternoon – if the phone hadn't rung!*

It was a young lad ,Liam, from the village, whose friend Ben had broken down in the Mazda 6 estate that he had purchased from Angus, one of the Saga Louts.. Could I go and tow them back to Aldborough? As I had drunk a bottle of Old Hooky and half a bottle of Speckled Hen, I asked Jane if she wouldn't mind driving, luckily she agreed and Jane, Michael and I went out to tow the car back to the village. John said he would go back to the Black Boys. Apparently, Dugald looked a bit forlorn, so John suggested that Dugald should change out of his overalls and join him for a drink at the Black Boys. After towing the Mazda to Wrights & Sons, our local garage, I tow started the Mazda and decided it had a broken dual mass flywheel – that's going to be expensive, The repairs were going to be virtually the price Ben had paid for the car! Jane dropped me off at the Black Boys. While I was away being towed, John had been feeding Dugald with pints of Courage Best and trying to get Dugald to buy the local village shop, that is about to close, if a buyer can't be found. It was very amusing as Dugald was getting worse for wear and more and more interested in the shop. In the fifty two years I have known Dugald I can't ever remember ever seeing him this bad. In the end John rang Jane and asked her to collect us even though Dugald had offered to carry me if I got too out of breath.

Friday 24th July 2015

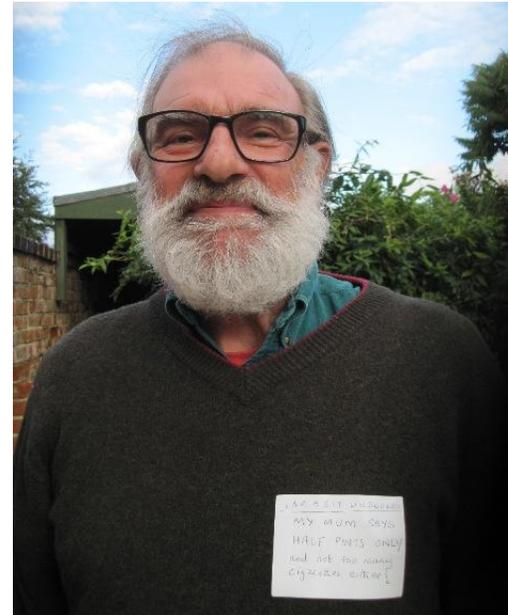
Although I have been busy this week, I don't seem to have achieved much on the MG, When I was restoring Dugald's MGBGTV8 I seemed to work nearly seven days a week on the project for 11-months and did not lose my enthusiasm. This yellow one has got to a stage that there seems to be loads to do. I seem to have lost my enthusiasm, without anybody to work with to give me motivation I seem to need at present. I go into the garage and all I seem to do is have a fiddle, get nowhere, and give up. I had a nice motivating email from Dugald this morning with a suggestion that I write a list of the things to do on the car. I think this is a good idea, but will it depress me even further? Perhaps I will give it a go and then I can tick off the items as they get done.

Wednesday 29th July 2015

I have been having a rough time with the depression this year. By depression, I mean a debilitating illness; no enthusiasm, not wanting to leave the house, not wanting to talk to people, extremely tired even after a night's sleep, difficulty in putting words and sentences together, slurred speech, going to sleep hoping I will either wake up feeling OK or not wake up at all. If I try to do anything it is like walking through treacle. Jane made an appointment for me with the Doctor first thing on Tuesday morning. The Doctor said that there was a possibility that as you get older you do not need so much antidepressant medication, and suggested I cut down the dose very, very slowly and see how I feel in a couple of months time. This year has been the worst for my depression in eight years. Today I have managed to spend some time on the computer starting to compile a list of parts

needed and work to do on the MG, as Dugald had suggested. I should have done this anyway before I even started working on the car. When the list is completed I hope it does not depress me even further!

Although I haven't been to the pub, or had a drink since last Thursday, Robert has



persuaded me to go and meet with the Saga Louts tonight for about an hour. Jane has made me a label to wear saying "MY MUM SAYS - feed with half pints only and don't let him smoke too much".

I think that the only reason that Robert really wants to take me out is so that he can get out of going to a dogs' birthday party. Yes, you read it correctly. Angus is having a 100th birthday party for one of his Labradors! It seems we are all 'fruit cakes' in North Norfolk. I hope the guests enjoy the Pedigree Chum sandwiches, marrow bone jellies and cat flavored ice cream!

Friday 31st July 2015

First day for a week that I have felt capable of doing anything – garage, here I come! I spent about three hours in the garage. By that time it was lunch time I was knackered, so after lunch I had a nap for a couple of hours. I did manage to have a sort out of some of the MG stuff and have a tidy up. It felt such a long time since I had been in the garage that I expected the garage to be full of cobwebs! I looked through the list I had made over the last few days of items to be done before the bodyshell was fitted on the bodyshell spit.



One of the items was to adjust the doors so that they opened and closed nicely. As you can see from the photo above the door is slightly down from the rear wing

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project – Report 44

panel. The reason for this is that the striker plate had been adjusted too far down and too far out. Luckily the fixing screws on both the lock and the striker had not been butchered. Not like the door hinge screws that I showed in an earlier report.



I forgot to say that the reason for making the doors fit well before taking the doors off the car is that I wanted them to fit well before I fitted a brace to the door aperture, so that the bodyshell would not move when it came to fitting the bodyshell on the spit.



Both the striker and the lock were cleaned up with some WD40 to help the fixing screws come out and clean off the years of grease and muck that accumulated on them.



All went well with the adjustment, but you had to pull on both of the doors more than you should to get them to open. I suspected the mechanism in the door lock and tried locking it when the door was open, by pushing a large Phillips screwdriver blade against the lock part. It would lock OK but when you pushed the release button on the outer door handle the lock would not release easily. The lock mechanism looked very dirty and so I soaked it with WD40 and wiped off as much as I could of the accumulated grease and dirt. It then worked a lot better – but not perfect. When the doors are stripped, I shall clean the locks in the degreaser tank and if necessary, soak them in cleaning thinners to get rid of any old thick grease inside the mechanism. After that, dry them with the compressed air line and oil them with light oil.

The photo at the bottom of the last column is of the area I want to fix the brace across the front of the door opening. I was hoping there would be a couple of threaded bolt holes I could use, but no luck. I will have to weld the 1" box section in place at the front and grind the welds off when I want to remove it.

The next photo shows the hood frame mounting. I will use this to mount the door aperture brace at the back (B-post). While I was checking the thread size I noticed that one of the holes on the left hand side had the nut missing from the back of it. Somehow I will need to weld a captured nut to the other side on the panel. My thoughts are to weld a nut to a plate, drill a 1/4" hole between the existing holes and use this hole to weld through to the plate. The plate can also be welded in a similar manner on the other side of the hole – I'll sleep on it, and make my decision later. I may also fix an 'X' brace between the two door aperture braces.

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project – Report 44



The mounting point for the hood frame which will do for fixing the door aperture brace on the 'B' post.

I thought I would add some of my list to the report to show the work needed. I have not included all the work – just the:

WORK TO DO – on the MGB before the bodyshell is fixed to the “SPIT”

1. Clear up workshop and make sure there is enough room to store all the parts taken off.
2. Tidy up parts already off the car and box up until required. List approximately what is in the box and attach it to the boxes.
3. Move parts washer up to top garage.
4. Remove temporary bonnet.
5. Refit the heater and check that I can fit the heater valves.
6. Exhaust mountings to make for the rear of the two exhaust silencers.
7. Need to move the bracket on the handbrake compensator and weld new bracket onto the diff casing to avoid the LH rear exhaust pipe.
8. Bracket needs to be made for mounting the exhaust silencer at the bottom of the battery box.
9. Check how much clearance there is between the sump and the crossmember, steering rack and the engine front cover, rack and oil pump.
10. Remove exhaust system.
11. Remove gearbox crossmember.
12. Remove engine and gearbox.
13. Remove propshaft.
14. Remove front wings.
15. Remove steering rack.
16. Make alloy plate to use to brace steering rack mountings. Bolt to mountings and tack the other two side plates for the steering rack in place. This is to make sure the mounting plates do not move during welding.
17. Adjust doors to fit properly.
18. Brace door apertures.
19. Strip out the doors and label parts LH or RH.
20. Remove doors,
21. Remove boot lid.

22. Remove fuel tank.
23. Cut off excess metal not required for rear valence.
24. Remove rear axle complete with springs.
25. Remove front suspension and brake parts in parts and clean, paint strip (if required), blast, etch prime and mark up as to LH or RH.
26. Remove front crossmember.
27. Decide on how to lift bodyshell on to spit.
28. Make and fit brackets to fit front of bodyshell spit.
29. Make and fit brackets to rear of bodyshell spit.
30. Make enough room to move engine lift to front and rear of shell to enable bodyshell to be lifted to the height of spit and be bolted on.
31. Check bodyshell will rotate through 90 degrees, both ways.

If I become unorganised again you can email me to nag me to complete the list before I start on other jobs on the MG! Thank you Dugald for getting me a bit more organised during a low point in the restoration.

Saturday 1st August 2015

My daughter has bought a programmable distributor for a BMW 2002 and I have offered to help her fit it to her 1972 2002 touring today. You can programme two sets of ignition curves and can change from one to the other at a flick of a switch. They were originally designed for dual fuel vehicles, where you can change from petrol to LPG. This then optimises the ignition timing for both types of fuels.



I have emailed the company to see if they make them for the V8 Rover engines. I'll let you know how we get on fitting it to the 2002. It looks, on the face of it, a good bit of kit. It may also be useful on modified engines to optimise the ignition timing on a rolling road.

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project – Report 44

Sunday 2nd August 2015

You won't believe how much nicer it feels for me, being well again, and waking up with some enthusiasm.

Fitting the new electronic distributor into the BMW 2002 touring was a 'piece of cake'. Pete (Fay's husband) had already programmed in the standard ignition advance data and vacuum advance data into the new distributor. All you needed to do was turn the engine to TDC (top dead centre) on number one cylinder, by pushing the car in top gear, check the rotor arm in the distributor was pointing to number one spark plug lead. Remove the old distributor; push in the new distributor so that the rotor points to number one spark plug lead. A little Vaseline helps around the rubber 'O' ring that acts as an oil seal. Cut the wires to length and solder on suitable terminals. Connect all the wires apart from the black wire to coil.



Turn on the ignition, rotate the distributor until the little green light inside the distributor comes on. This was a little difficult to see, probably due to the bright sunshine.



Ignition advance shown on the screen in real time with the engine running. Turn off the ignition; connect the black wire to the coil. Start the engine. This was no problem at all – it started first go. Pete then connected the laptop to the USB

port on the distributor. Started the engine and the dials came up on the screen. The degrees advance, or retard, vacuum retard or advance could be altered while the engine was running, from the computer key board as if by magic!



Pete with his BMW 2002 firing order T-shirt on - in case he forgets!

I am looking forward to have a go with the laptop while Fay or Pete are driving the car. I have had a reply from the distributor company in Holland and they can supply their distributors for the MGB V8 models. I will ask Fay to find out prices and see if she is willing to stock them for both the V8, RV8 and 1800cc MGB.s Jane and I are now off to the 'Bus Drivers BBQ' – let me explain. In our village we have a community bus that has set routes to local market towns. The bus collects passengers on the way from outlying villages (it does actually take them back as well!). The bus is driven by volunteers and Jane is one of those volunteers. We had a good time and the weather was beautiful. When I got back I had drunk too much beer and eaten too much food to contemplate any work on the MG.

Monday 3rd August 2015

Woke early to the sound of Pea Viners trundling across a large field nearby. These peas go to one of the frozen pea companies. Later on the villagers will be around the edge of the field, with their bags, picking the pea pods that got missed. It's very pleasant living where we do. I am sitting here in my office looking out on a large field of wheat that looks as if it is getting towards the time it will get combined. On the downside, the size of the fields nowadays means the equipment and tractors get larger and take up the whole width of the road. In the eighteen years we have lived at the barn we have lost about one metre from our land from tractors and big trucks eating away at the bank at the side of the road, making it wider. It is Pete's day working at Jaymic today and he came in the kitchen for his cup of coffee at just after 8:30am before starting work at 9am. He took the 2002 for a drive yesterday afternoon and said the cars driveability and acceleration had improved.

The only problem that I could see is because the kits were basically for LHD cars the USB lead from the distributor to the laptop computer is too short to reach the passenger's seat to enable alteration to the advance curves whilst the car is driving along the road. I am sure the company will sort this problem out.

As usual; any comments, motivation, help, suggestions, abuse or encouragement to -mikemacartney@btconnect.com