



Nearly there now with the rebuild of Damask 0450

Barrie Jones has been beavering away since April 2008 rebuilding an MGBGT V8 which was in a sorry state when he bought it through eBay. Soon after he got it home to Cornwall he set about the rebuild and began sending in his series of rebuild reports with his photos recording the work. They have been published on the V8 website and have proved fascinating for many fellow members. His 21st report was headed "nearly there" because, with all the rusty parts cut out and repaired, the bare body shell was mounted on a spit specially constructed on an old trailer chassis and then the car was sent off to be sandblasted at a local workshop before painting.

Barrie's report said - some new metal has been added, but only enough to preserve the shape of the bodyshell. The next stage is to trailer the shell to a local engineer who has sand blasting equipment. The spit will allow the bodyshell to be rotated, so that every crevice can be reached. Upon its return, the bare metal will have to be protected within 24 hours, otherwise it will quickly develop a coat of rust. All the box sections will receive a liberal dose of 2-pack primer internally, and a coat of weld-through primer will be used on the outside.

After that, all the body panels will be welded into position. This should be quite a quick process, because we have already done a trial fit with temporary fasteners as used in the aircraft industry. On reading the latest report and looking at the photo, you may think the project seems to have gone

back several months – you may think that some of the body panels we have seen going on the car over the last six reports or so, look as though they have been removed to facilitate the sand blasting.

Barrie responded to this query saying "Yes, all the panels that have previously been fitted were either welded into place for structural rigidity (for example the nearside rear chassis member and the boot floor), or they were trial fitted by drilling holes and using aircraft quality temporary fasteners. These are like re-usable spring-loaded pop-rivets. I will do a separate article on them as an addition to these reports later."

The two terms Barrie uses for the paint - "two-pack" and "weld-through" primer - might need some explanation for some of our readers who are not so familiar with them. Also some members may have heard that you need to be very careful with two-pack paint. Barrie responded saying "in a previous article I highlighted the use of a brown two-pack primer. Yes, it is nasty stuff and you must not breathe the fumes. They contain Iso-cyanates, a close relative of Cyanide so I use a carbon canister air mask with removable activated filter elements, and I don't stay in the area after using the stuff. A positive pressure full-face mask would be even better."

With the copy of Report 21 on the V8 website, we have a note describing the differences between cellulose and two-pack automotive paints, a health safety caution with two-pack paint and a link to a useful tutorial on spray painting.

An active Spring for MGBV8 sales?

The number of sales of MGBV8s and RV8s over the last two months as we emerge from Winter suggests a continued strong demand from the Eurozone. Registrations over the last 9 months from new members in Germany, Holland, Ireland and Denmark underline that for Euro buyers, classic cars are around 25% to 30% cheaper in the UK than 18 months ago.

Helpline for V8 buyers

Following the launch of the useful help pages on the "Buying or Selling and MGBV8" website, the feedback from new members is they have found the model guides, checklists and price guides very useful. The new Helpline for V8 Buyers inspired by John Bolt has had many calls and in several cases volunteers like Ian Quarrington have helped prospective buyers by demonstrating their V8s and providing help. You can access the Helpline via a link on the V8 website homepage.

V8 Picnic in the Park

Ken Clayton is arranging a visit to Calke Abbey and Park, a National Trust property, with an informal picnic followed by a tour of the house and gardens on Sunday 18th April 2010. Calke is near Ticknall in Derbyshire. For further booking details see the online Rolling V8 Calendar and for bookings contact Ken on 07973 899056.

V8 Gathering at Hazeley Heath

The next popular lunchtime meeting at the Shoulder of Mutton will be on Sunday 16th May from noon with a bar lunch available. Hazeley Heath is north of Hook in Hampshire and south of Reading. You can get further details and a location map via links on the Rolling V8 Calendar on the V8 website, or call Bryan Ditchman on 0118 932 6346.

Classics in the Walled Garden

Ian Quarrington and John Bolt enjoy this popular, relaxed and enjoyable event organized by classic car enthusiast Peter Madden. It is held in the walled garden on the Luton Hoo estate on Wednesday 30th June 2010 from 4pm. For further details see the online Rolling V8 Calendar and for bookings contact John Bolt on 01296 435050.

V8 Cambridgeshire Tour 2010

The next V8 Tour is over the long weekend Friday 10th to Monday 13th September with a programme of visits to Fenland attractions and a Cambridge college. The base is the Holiday Inn at Cambridge. Further details of the event, booking arrangements and location maps are available on the Rolling V8 Calendar on the V8 website or you can contact David Allen on 01778 343235.

V8

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RV8 Elm burr gearknob auction

Terry Starkey says "when I first thought about a burr elm gearknob for my RV8 in 2006, I never dreamt I would be celebrating making the 100th gearknob! It's been a most satisfactory experience, thanks to all the contacts and friends I've made all over the World and it truly illustrates that wonderful MG strapline, 'the marque of friendship.' Along with my fellow Norwich Burlers, I decided that the 100th gearknob should be very special and so it is - thanks to the skill and generosity of the men who made it.

The 1mm thick, polished stainless steel, laser cut MG logo on top of the gearknob was made by former RV8 owner Alan Smith of AA Sheet Metal in Norwich. The remarkably skilled Aubrey Hanner, maker of all 100 gearknobs, carefully and precisely set the logo into the top of the gearknob to create an almost 3D effect. Friend and colleague, Nick Wale, who developed and made all 100 inserts, has stamped the base of this one with the number 100. I am grateful to everyone for giving their time free in the making this special gearknob.

So we have decided to auction it with the proceeds going to a good charity. I hope we'll raise a tidy sum which will be donated to Macmillan Cancer Support. Why this charity? Well five years ago a close friend of mine I had known for many years, Ian Smith, died from stomach cancer. He was cared for by kind and caring nurses who truly understood his plight and I was deeply touched by their kindness. Macmillan Cancer Support does the same for thousands of people so they deserve our support.

An online auction will be launched on the V8 website in early April so please, dig deep and bid for this unique and beautifully made piece of MG RV8 history. I hope the lucky buyer will think of the good he or she will have done every time they changes gear! I have a reserve price of £100."

You can bid online, simply register by completing an online registration form on the V8 website providing the essential contact information. You will then get an automatic response with your personal bidding code which you will need to use to make bids on the V8 Bulletin Board.
www.v8register.net/rv8gearknob.htm

Refurbishing RV8 alloy wheels

Following the contributions to a V8BB thread on refurbishing RV8 wheels launched as a query by Hugh Boddington, he set about cleaning his wheels and replacing the removable studs. In this note he provides a photo record of how he refurbished his wheels.

The centres of the wheels were as new, but there was a milky appearance around the ugly studs and air valves. Hugh's plan was to strip the rims having first removed the studs. He decided he would not re-lacquer the wheels as it is easy enough to clean them with 0000 grade wire wool and use a suitable wax. The problem is around the studs. So he decided he would either leave them out or fit stainless steel slotted pan head bolts to make life easy for cleaning. In Hugh's opinion the slotted pan headed bolts look better. He felt fellow RV8 enthusiasts

will probably think him mad, as he does like to keep classic cars original, but he would in any case retain the studs. But without the studs then at least his sponges, leathers and fingers will not be torn to ribbons when cleaning the car!

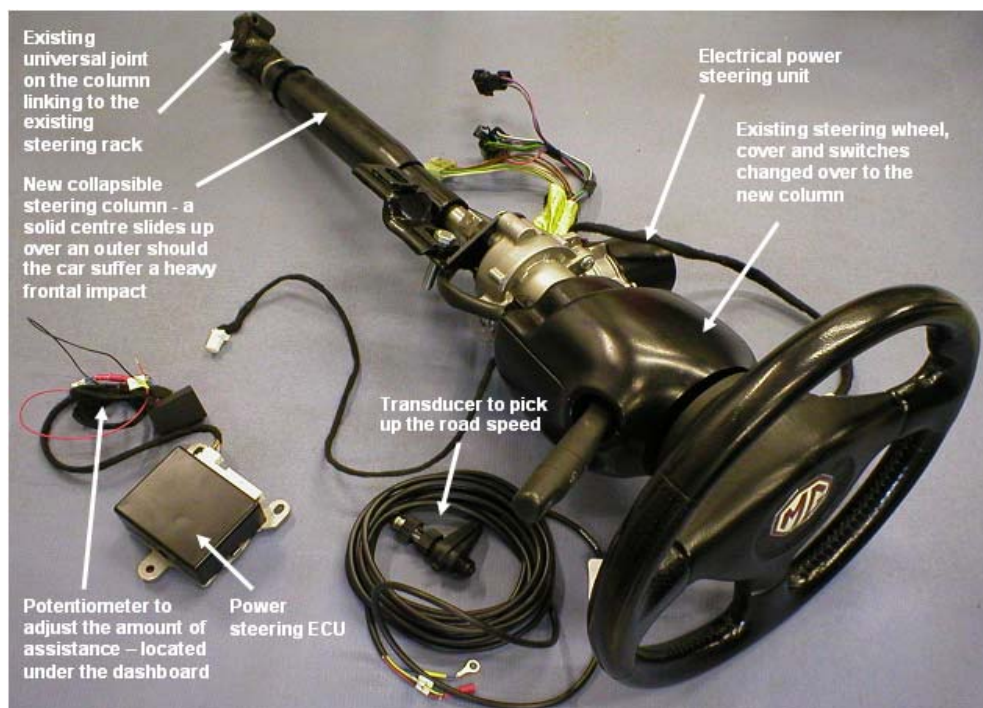
Hugh prefers Socket Button Head stainless steel bolts (M6 thread x 20mm length) as an alternative to the original studs which he feels are rather angular in shape and ugly. The problem is whether the alloy and stainless steel will mix without problems over a long period? Angus Munro suggests "this could be solved by the use of a nylon washer between each of the stainless bolts and the aluminum surface." Angus provided a useful briefing note on stainless steel in contact with aluminium alloys which is available as RV8NOTE317 on the V8 website.

The work sequence and products Hugh used were:

- Remove tyre and air valve.
- Apply the Nitromors paint and varnish remover.
- Clean the wheel with Rustins grade 1 wire wool.
- Finish with wet and dry 400 through to finest 1200 paper.
- Polish up with Autosol chrome, aluminium and metal polish.
- Buff with electric drill and mop.

The job took two days for the four wheels and the result is very good. There is a copy of this note with a full set of photos on the V8 website.





Clive Wheatley offers a new EPAS system for MG V8s

An exciting new Electric Power Assisted Steering system for RV8s and MGBGT V8s is now available from Clive Wheatley mgv8parts, the well known MG V8 specialist based near Bridgnorth in the West Midlands. The high quality EPAS equipment is supplied by the Dutch group EZ Power Steering who have developed the equipment and installed it on a range of classic cars including Jaguars and Aston Martins as well as a number of MG models.

Clive is enthusiastic about the new EPAS system saying "it is well engineered with all new parts, including a new collapsible steering column, and is a simple and neat installation requiring very few modifications to the car. The system uses new EPAS parts and fittings, not new or recycled MGF EPAS parts." A key safety feature is the new collapsible steering column - a solid centre slides up over an outer should the car suffer a heavy frontal impact - essential for driver safety.

The simplicity of the system is a major benefit - it is completely hidden underneath the dashboard and there is no hydraulic pump, no pipework, no new steering rack and no oil reservoir to locate in a cramped engine bay. It's quiet in operation with no noise from pumping hydraulic fluid and it uses less energy than a hydraulic system as the electric motor only uses power when steering assistance is necessary.

On the road the electric power steering system is truly speed-sensitive. It will steer

light at low speeds and not become lighter at high speed. The amount of assistance can be selected by turning a potentiometer located below the dashboard, so the driver can select the desired feel - for example more assistance with wider tyres or a smaller steering wheel. With an hydraulic system there is usually little feel and no possibility of adjustment at all.

The fail safe characteristics are good too - in the unlikely event that the electric power steering system has a defect, the car would steer exactly as it did prior to the power steering conversion." The same Factory fitted steering rack is retained so if a future owner wanted to revert to no power steering, the conversion is relatively straightforward.

EZ Power Steering say "the advantages of an electrical system as opposed to an hydraulic system are numerous" but an important feature is the efficiency of operation. "The electric motor only uses power when steering assistance is necessary, whilst an hydraulic pump is continuously operating when the engine is running with an hydraulic PAS set-up." They add that "generally an hydraulic PAS uses around 4 horsepower and therefore consumes extra fuel even when driving straight ahead with no power assistance."

EZ also note that "because the electric power steering system is truly speed-sensitive it will steer light at low speeds and not become lighter at high speed.

As many MG V8s enthusiasts are interested in power steering retrofits, we

hope to have a review of this new EPAS system on the V8 website soon.

V8 Gathering at Abingdon

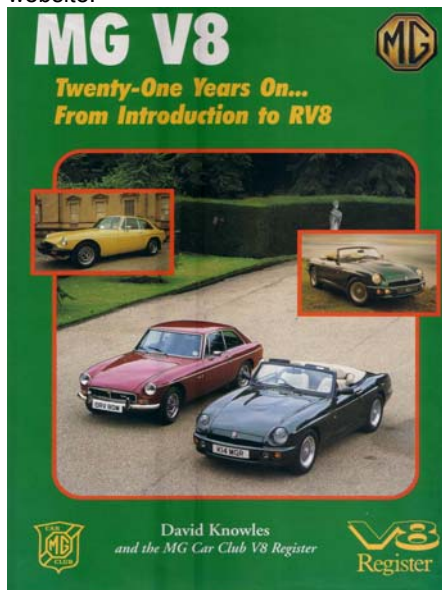
Julian Holmes is arranging a V8 event on Saturday 17th July 2010 at Abingdon when members will have an opportunity to see the new Club Office extension as the V8 Committee will be meeting at Club Office that day. Members will be able to drive the Factory test route used for the V8 model and then join an informal lunch at a pub on the test route circuit.

The team at Club Office has recently produced a very good leaflet on the test route with a good map showing the route in detail. Copies are available as a download via a link to this event on the Rolling V8 Calendar on the V8 website. For further details contact Julian Holmes on 07765 432390.

MG V8 - Twenty-One Years On

This popular book has been out of print for some years and is increasingly difficult to get hold of, even secondhand copies. At the end of 2009 a copy was auctioned on eBay fetching almost £100 and then a V8 member with a spare copy available put one up for auction on the V8 website where bidding closed at £60. That book went to fellow V8 enthusiast Chris Bone from Norfolk, who was clearly pleased to get hold of a copy.

Well in March this year another copy of the book was put up for auction by a V8 member, this time on eBay with a 10 day bidding window and a starting price of £50. Bidding is likely to be brisk and the outcome of keen interest to those seeking a copy. So a report on the successful bid figure will be available as a NEWS item on the V8 website.



Concerns with modern antifreeze formulations for classic MG enthusiasts

Concerns over the suitability of current antifreeze formulations for use in classic cars were raised in a recent newsletter from the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC). When you refer back to the handbook for the MGBGT V8 it recommends using Bluecol "U" Universal antifreeze but on visiting the Bluecol website, a small footnote stated their Bluecol 5 Year product is "not suitable for classic cars". So what does a V8 enthusiast use for antifreeze in his car today and what are the issues behind the changes to an iconic motoring product like Bluecol and the concerns for a classic car enthusiast?

The FBHVC report noted technology moves forward and new antifreeze products are constantly being launched with claims of improved formulations and performance. With the recent bitterly cold weather in the UK and Mainland Europe, antifreeze has been in the headlines with some alarming stories which at first seem to be about the well-known tendency of antifreeze to find the tiniest hole and cause leakages - but in these cases it has led to catastrophic engine problems. So what types of antifreeze are available?

Traditional blue ethylene glycol is toxic but a highly effective antifreeze and contains silicates as an inhibitor to help prevent corrosion in an engine with mixed metals in its make-up. Bluecol and Blue Star are well known brand names and both of these are declared suitable for 'classic cars' on their company websites. Be aware that there are also low or no-silicate ethylene glycol formulations (usually red) available which may not be suitable for all engines.

Propylene glycol is another well-known and less toxic antifreeze formulation and usually contains silicates but Comma, the main manufacturer, has now discontinued it in favour of an ethylene glycol product containing 'bittering agents' to make it less palatable and minimise the risk of accidental poisoning.

Both of the above products use inorganic additive technology (IAT) with iron and steel corrosion prevention provided by nitrites and nitrates, aluminium protection by silicates and phosphates and molybdates providing high lead solder protection, with borates helping to control acidity.

Recently problems have been reported concerning the use of antifreeze mixtures using **Organic Acid Technology (OAT)**. OAT was introduced in the mid-1990s and the products are biodegradable, recyclable

and do not contain either silicates or phosphates and are designed to be longer lasting. However these products do seem to cause problems in older engines; over and above the ability of antifreeze to find the smallest crevice and leak, OAT antifreezes have been accused of destroying seals and gaskets and causing a great deal of damage in 'old' engines. For this reason the manufacturers of OAT antifreeze products do not recommend their use in historic and classic vehicles. These products are usually coloured red, pink or orange.

The **final category is HOAT**. These products use hybrid organic acid technology in an ethylene glycol base with some silicates in the formulation alongside the organic corrosion inhibitors. The product is usually coloured green and is not recommended for use in historic vehicles.

The Federation is still researching this problem but their advice at the moment is:

- Only use blue coloured IAT antifreeze in historic vehicles.
- Only use OAT products ('advanced' or 'long life' antifreeze) if the vehicle used it when new and if specifically directed by the vehicle's manufacturer.
- Never mix different types of antifreeze without thoroughly flushing out the system.
- Always replace the coolant within the time scale specified by the antifreeze manufacturer as the corrosion inhibitors break down over time.

So the useful information from the FBHVC is quite clear for classic car enthusiasts.

Looking back to the driver's handbook for the MGBGT V8 published in 1973, it recommended the use of Bluecol "U" universal antifreeze to protect the cooling system of a V8 and that if supplies of Bluecol "U" universal are not available, any antifreeze conforming to specification BS3150 may be used. Bluecol "U" universal should not be mixed with other universal antifreezes. The handbook adds that the "anti-freeze can remain in the cooling system for two years provided that the specific gravity of the coolant is checked periodically and fresh compatible antifreeze is added as necessary. After the second year the system should be drained and flushed by inserting a hose in the filling orifice and allowing water to flow through until clean. Refill with the appropriate anti-freeze solution and add a quarter of a pint (0.15 litre) of neat anti-freeze to the expansion tank."

The RV8 Owner's Handbook says on page 96 that "for maximum corrosion prevention, use Unipart Superplus antifreeze and



summer coolant and if it is not available, use an ethylene glycol based antifreeze which meets BS6580 and BS5117, with renewal every year."

Looking at the **Bluecol website** today you find they have three products on offer – Bluecol 2 Year, Bluecol 5 Year and Bluecol "U" Universal top-up. But which product do you use with a classic MG?

Bluecol 2 Year Antifreeze & Summer Coolant, in a pack with a blue label, is a methanol-free, ethylene glycol based antifreeze and engine coolant for your radiator and cooling system for use throughout the year to maintain maximum protection against winter freezing to minus 36 C and summer overheating, whilst at the same time protecting the materials in the cooling system against rust and corrosion. Bluecol 2 Year is suitable for all engine types, including aluminium. It does not evaporate in use and is not flammable. The important footnote says it "does not incorporate Organic Acid Technology (OAT) and exceeds the requirements of BS6580:1992" and BS3150. Most important it adds it is "**suitable for classic cars**". But note that Bluecol 5 Year Antifreeze & Summer Coolant, in a pack with a red label, incorporates the latest in Organic Acid Technology (OAT) and the website has a footnote which warns "not suitable for Classic Cars." Confusingly we found Bluecol "U" Universal top-up with a light blue label on the pack was shown as not suitable for classic cars. But on querying this with Bluecol we were advised their website was incorrect and in fact it is suitable for classic cars! So take care choosing your antifreeze when you next carry out your routine coolant



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change to maintain the corrosion prevention and make sure it is suitable for an MG V8.

We have a detailed note on Organic Acid Technology (OAT) on the V8 website.