

# **TRIPLE-M REGISTER BULLETIN**



**April/May 2013**





*Two photos by David Parr of the low mileage L2040 (see article inside)*



# **BULLETIN No. 72**

## **April/May 2013**

### **Editorial**

**Front Cover Picture:** Anthony Littlejohn's Q-type at the Brooklands Centenary in 2007. - Photo by Philip Bayne Powell

**Back Cover:** List of Additional Equipment, submitted by Gerhard Maier.

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Future Events	3
Chairman's Jottings	7
Secretary's Report	9
What, When, Where, Who??	13
F-Type Cylinder Head	14
Right-Angle Drives	18
Register Championships	21
Basic Engine Tuning	22
Gears Un-boxed	27
Preferences	30
Photos from the Past	35
L2040	36
From PB to Musket and Back	38
Your Letters	39
Hints and Tips	39
Cartoon Competition	40
Your Adverts	41
Contacts	44

I remember thinking, during the nineteen fifties, how awful seemed George Orwell's portrayal of 1984 which was then some thirty years in the future. Nowadays, almost as many years after that dreaded year, we can look back and think that perhaps it was not so bad after all! There were even some good things to come out of The Year, the 1984 Yearbook for example, containing some wonderful articles, two of which are reproduced in this bulletin. I realise that the Yearbook would not have been published until 1985 but the articles may have been written in 1984! If you've never read them, I think you'll find them instructive and entertaining. If you've read them before I hope you'll find it worthwhile to read them again.

This time of year, with not so much happening in the Triple M sporting world, there are few event reports

submitted and my store of articles is running very low. This is one reason why I am having to resort to reprinting more old material, though we do have one or two technical items for you, even one written by me! When you read it, you will see that it is not necessary to be an expert on the subject about which you are writing, so please do your bit and send something in.

As you know the Bulletin comes out regularly every two months and it is put to bed in the 3rd week of the month, and then sent off to the printers. So could I ask you to send all contributions to me well before the 3rd week of the preceding month of publication; this also applies to any adverts that you may want to put in (which are free to subscribers).

**Triple-M friends will be saddened to learn that Colin McLachlan's wife Isobel died on 12th March.**

Colin says: "The MG PA has been a big part of our life together, and Isobel was very supportive when our small breakaway group formed the beginnings of what was to become the very successful Caledonian Centre.

"We were both involved in the organisation of the first few Two Day Rallies which subsequently became the Three Day Tours in early May each year. Isobel particularly enjoyed setting fiendishly cryptic observation clues for the runs. We honeymooned together by going on an Octagon Lake District weekend in August 1991. When packing the PA, I carefully left the hood till last, so that it would be on top of the luggage and readily available when it inevitably started to rain. We were a hundred miles down the road when I realised it was still sitting on the garage floor! Needless to say it rained most of the weekend, but the marriage survived.

"Isobel also helped me with last year's Border Reivers' Raid, in spite of being not as strong as she used to be.

"From mid-February her health started to decline rapidly, but she was still able to have visits from many family members, to say her goodbyes. In the final few days she told me that she was ready to go, and thankfully this wish was fulfilled before she started to suffer any serious pain or indignity.

Editor's note: Isobel's funeral was to be on Friday 22 March. Isobel requested that money you might have spent on flowers should instead be donated to Cancer Research UK, or MacMillan Cancer Support



*A picture of Isobel and Colin, taken in happier times*

## Future Events - 2013

13/14/April	S.W. Centre Kimber Classic Road Trial	01761 221893
15/16th June	(Provisional date) MG Live, Silverstone	01235 555552
23rd June	75th Anniversary of the Cork Grand Prix	<a href="http://www.triple-mregister.org">www.triple-mregister.org</a>
7th July	Abingdon Works Centre Car Show	See below
20th July	Pre-War Prescott! - Saturday 2013	See page 4
23/26 August	Main Register Event, Llandrindod Wells	
Please contact Elizabeth Taylor at <a href="mailto:e.taylor@oakend.net">e.taylor@oakend.net</a> or tel. +44 (0)1628 665055		
28th August	Gerrards Cross Classic Car Show	See page 6
25 -27 October	Rally of the Pre-war MG Register of Australia	See page 5

## The Abingdon Works Car Show

On the 7th July 2013 the Abingdon Works Centre will be staging a revival of the original Abingdon Works Car Show. An event which in the past has been held in the town and showcases all of the cars built at the Abingdon factory between 1930 and 1980. Naturally it will also include all marques of MG manufactured from 1925 until the present day. The event, which is in aid of charity, is being organised jointly with the Rotary Club of Abingdon and supported by the MG Car Club.

Vehicles that were built at the factory also include other names such as Austin Healey, Riley, Morris Minor 'Woodies' and some commercial vans all of which are invited to attend. Everybody will be welcome to the show, whether an owner or interested member of the public. The event will include an arena parade, traders, local businesses and other commercial suppliers, tuning, sports equipment and a display of vehicles from the original Factory Competitions Department together with catering and entertainment for all the family.

The show, on the banks of the River Thames, will also offer a great place for a picnic, a chance to visit the Abingdon Town Museum in the Old County Hall which incorporates the MG Museum. It is also planned to offer an optional road run around the old works test circuit.

If you could circulate the date of this event to your members it would be greatly appreciated. Further information will be published as the event develops together with entry forms. More information will also become available on our website [www.mgabingdon.co.uk](http://www.mgabingdon.co.uk)

Thank you

Mike Lamb

On behalf of the Abingdon Works Centre of the MG Car Club

[www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org)

## **Pre-War Prescott! - Saturday 20th July 2013**

I am delighted to invite MMM members to participate in the third Pre-War Prescott Garden Party on Saturday 20th July. Now in its third year, this exciting and rapidly expanding annual event is open to all Edwardian, Vintage and thirties cars and fills a gap in the annual schedule of club events held at this famous hillclimb venue.

Pre-War Prescott is characterised by a relaxed garden party atmosphere that offers untimed climbs of the hill throughout the day. The day is free from the formality of a competitive meet. No flame-proof overalls, helmets or racing licences will be required. Passengers and children may be carried, and saloons are equally welcome to join in the fun.

Full catering and licensed bar facilities will be available all day, the BOC shop will be open and there will be numerous trade stands, autojumble stands and much more to see and do. In addition a number of one-make clubs and registers will be present with their club tents and spares stands. Motor Wheel Services will also be on site and happy to fit new tyres for you during the day. And once again, we are honoured to have the SU Carburettor Company as our main sponsor for the day and the SU boys will be out on the hill with the remarkable Skinner Special.

The event is fast becoming a significant international gathering, the objective of which is to honour equally all those cars that survived World War Two. Many of our pre-war cars were used during the war and contributed materially to our victory. And many of us are now driving cars that were owned in the war by those who never returned, and whose sacrifice paid for the freedoms we enjoy today. To repay just a small part of our debt, the RAF Charitable Trust has been nominated as the official charity of the event, and a significant donation will be made at the end of the day with proceeds from a no-reserve auction of donated spares and automobilia organized by Hereford Vintage Auctions during the lunch break, when we are also expecting a display by aircraft from the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The day will conclude with the award of various prizes followed by a BBQ and live Forties entertainment on the hill. And for those wishing to make a weekend of it, there will be a Cotswold Navigation Rally and parallel Scenic Tour on Sunday.

Much more is in the pipeline for this year's expanded event, and breaking news can be found on the event website at [www.prewarprescott.com](http://www.prewarprescott.com), where online entries can also be made.

Ian Grace [vintageminor@gmail.com](mailto:vintageminor@gmail.com)

## **The 5th biennial National Weekend Rally of the Pre-war MG Register of Australia**

This is set for 25 -27 October 2013 in the historic city of Bathurst - 200 kms West of Sydney. With only 350 MGs built before 1940 spread across Australia, which is an area larger than all Europe, the Register is proud that participants with 70+ year old cars make the effort to drive long distances to attend and enjoy the social interaction and camaraderie.

The selection of Bathurst as the venue for the 2013 event is to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the staging of the 1938 Australian Grand Prix (AGP) at the nearby and now famous circuit of Mt Panorama. For this event on unsealed public roads an MG NE (NA0520) was purchased by ex-pat Aussie John Snow in England and shipped to John Sherwood in Australia as they both thought it had a good chance of winning this handicap race. This was despite the formidable entry including three K3s and Peter Whitehead's B-Type ERA - also specially imported.

Regrettably the NE failed to start but the MG marque's honour was upheld by the nine other MGs including two TAs which were 3rd and 5th. This very NE, now residing on the other side of the continent in Perth, will be the star attraction at Bathurst along with many of the surviving racing MGs that competed in Australia before WWII including the two PAs that won the 1935 and 1937 AGPs and a replica of the TA that won the 1939 AGP on handicap. A freshly restored Q-Type will also be in action again.

The weekend will also celebrate the 80th anniversary of the K3's class win at the 1933 Mille Miglia with one of the team cars present (K3002) and possibly another (K3003) and the 'recce' K3 (K3752). The ex-Bira K3 (K3030) will also be attending and possibly two others that reside in Australia. There will be several K3 replicas swelling the ranks.

The owners of all these cars and all the other MG sports, tourers and saloons will have the opportunity to drive around the Mt Panorama circuit over the weekend as it is made up of public roads.

The weekend will be further enhanced with the attendance of some vintage MGs, examples of all of the MMM MGs as well as some elegant SAs, VAs and WAs. As the Register embraces all MGs up to 1939 there will be a good selection of TAs and TBs making up an expected total of more than 100 pre-war MGs.

The weekend will start with a Friday Greet & Mingle evening at the Bathurst Racing Car Museum. On Saturday there will be a car display in the centre of Bathurst and a run to the historic town of Sofala to pan for gold followed by a barbecue evening for story telling - true or otherwise. On Sunday there's a scenic and historic tour around the region with a relaxing lunch stop and a Grande Finale Presentation Dinner.

International visitors with or without their pre-war MG are most welcome and there are hosting arrangements available with local MG owners.

For further information visit the website <http://prewar.mgcc.info/>



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[www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org)



## Chairman's Jottings

This note is being penned by the same person who wrote the Chairman's jottings for the February Bulletin. Why is he saying that you ask? Well, since we were last in touch we have had the Register AGM at which the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were all re-elected for another year. Also re-elected were the committee members retiring by rotation – so off we go with the happy band of 11 committee members ready to serve the Triple-M Register!

Did you spot that the Library Shop has been re-launched on our website? Thanks to some hard work by project leader Mark Dolton, Librarian Peter Hemmings and our Webmaster Nick Feakes, the Library now shows our various products in much greater detail and better still, you can now purchase and pay for items on line. You can access the Library from our website front page or alternatively click [www.triple-mshop.org](http://www.triple-mshop.org)

One endearing feature of the Bulletin is the cartoon produced for each issue by Ged Seagrave. Ged lives within sight of Hadrian's Wall and has a PA restoration project underway. Perhaps his cartoons are a displacement activity? He's pretty good at them and tells me that he has had some coaching from Bill Tidy – and we all know who he is!

We're pleased to announce that in recognition of his work, Ged has been awarded the John Kidder Trophy for 2012. Named after a sadly-deceased key member of the Triple-M fraternity, the Trophy is awarded to the person or persons whom the Triple-M Register Committee considers merit the award on the grounds of either a notable performance during the year or a notable contribution to the Register during the year. Well done Ged!

### The Charter of Turin

The FIVA Charter of Turin was launched in January and received a brief mention within our website discussion forum and then a resounding silence! By the time you read this note it will have received an airing at the recent MGCC Council Meeting and I thought you might be intrigued to know a little about it, so here is the briefest possible summary:

- The Charter is FIVA's reaction to demands from international political organisations such as the EU Parliament and UNESCO
- It has been 4 or more years in the making
- Principles and guidelines provide support for owners of historical vehicles in the use, maintenance, repair and restoration of their vehicle
- 'Historical' means a vehicle that is 30 or more years old at the date of adoption of the Charter.
- FIVA safeguards the right to drive historical road vehicles on international public highways

The Charter instructs users:


- To maintain as much of the original vehicle as possible in its running and restoration
- To document all work undertaken, and, to maintain its roadworthiness.
- There is guidance which distinguishes the approach to be adopted for Preservation, Conservation, Restoration, and, Modification
- FIVA will be issuing a Handbook to provide further explanation of how the Turin Charter should be put into practice
- An ID card based on the Charter is also in the planning stages, guaranteeing every owner, buyer and seller that the vehicle has been used and cared for according to the Turin Charter. This may provide owners and purchasers with some degree of assurance about the authenticity and provenance of vehicles
- A component marking system is proposed

Although adherence to the Charter is believed to be voluntary, it is significant for all of us because it represents an important step in safeguarding the interests of owners and users of historical vehicles.


See [www.fiva.org/EN/Torino/Charter%20of%20Turin.html](http://www.fiva.org/EN/Torino/Charter%20of%20Turin.html) for further details.

We will keep you posted!

Dick Morbey



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## **Secretary's Bulletin Report on Triple-M Meeting held on 3rd March 2013.**

The Committee was pleased to welcome ex Committee members Keith Hall and John Reid.

Chairman Dick Morbey reported the 2nd and 3rd 2013 touring event sub-committee meetings have been held, a local recce undertaken and contact made with 3 sponsors. P Green and N Feakes have been enhancing the pictures area of the web site and it is pleasing to note the good reception to the new Register Library shop. Assistance is still being given to 2 overseas members who have encountered problems with orders for spares. The next Council meeting is on 16th March where the Club has requested the Register to give a presentation on The Charter of Turin. Committee agreed Ged Seagrave, who provides the cartoons for the Bulletin caption competition, should be the next recipient of the John Kidder Trophy.

George Eagle, Secretary, reported both he and D Morbey had attended the MGCC Council Meeting/AGM, and they also attended the MG Live! review meeting held in Birmingham. He reported that 2012 was a routine year with the usual email traffic, assistance given to owners over matters raised such as valuations, vehicle identity etc, assistance given to the Librarian at Silverstone and overseeing the Triple-M car park. An index covering all the Yearbooks has also been produced, the committee decided this should be posted on the web site and possibly published for sale.

Bob Milton, Treasurer, reported the accounts for the year 2012 have been completed and all VAT payments and refunds completed. There was also a detailed analysis of the costs/income relating to the Bulletin. The Committee agreed to the suggestion that the Yearbook should carry an advertisement for the Bulletin and vice versa. Likewise it was agreed the Triple-M Shop should advertise both publications.

Robin Hamblett, Registrar, reported the following "new" cars – 4 J2s, 1 PA and 1 PB. The current data base shows 3123 active cars, 346 are known but do not have a Register number and 441 cars that were either voided or have "another" status. Assistance was also given to an M type owner over identity problems and the DVLA.

Mike Linward, Competition Secretary, confirmed he had almost finished work on his 2012 Yearbook report which to-date totalled 7000 words. The final positions on the 2012 COTY were 1st F Boothby J2(s), B Bennett J2-PA(s) and 3rd the Bayne-Powell NA Allingham. I Baxter, NA(s), won the speed championship and B Foster C (s) won the racing challenge trophy.

Peter Hemmings, Librarian, reported that sales of the 2011 Yearbook have held up well with a total of 268 sold to-date by mail order plus 168 sold at MG Live! There was

a rush of orders received since the E Shop went live in January. January and March were busy months with liaison with Mark Dolton on testing and finalising the new web shop leading to a successful early February launch. The site attracted favourable comment and was very busy in the first week. A cost analysis has shown it may be necessary to increase postal rates, particularly with hard back books. N Churcher has sent in a collection of photographs for use by the Register, there is an ongoing process of scanning photos held by the Register and a decision will be taken as to how to use these once the process is completed.

Dick Morbey, Safety Fast scribe, is of the opinion that now might be time to find a volunteer to take over as Scribe.

Bob Richards, Bulletin Editor, thanked C Spoelstra and P Hemmings for their assistance in producing technical articles from old Yearbooks, currently there are sufficient to last a few more issues. It would obviously be preferable if members could submit new technical articles. The Editor would like to improve the Bulletin – for example more colour pages – and will be considering this as and when the savings from the use of the new franking machine and reduced printing costs feed through. It was agreed consideration be given to printing in the Bulletin the details of cars listed for sale on the Register's web site, and also whether subscribers should be offered the facility of paying by either Standing Orders or Direct Debit Mandate.

Cathelijne Spoelstra, Yearbook Editor, confirmed good progress is being made on articles for inclusion in the 2012 Yearbook. Deadlines have been set which should enable delivery to the UK by 1st May, i.e. well in time for MG Live! 2013.

Elizabeth Taylor, Yearbook Advertising, confirmed all invoices for advertising in the 2011 Yearbook had been paid with work well underway with regard to the 2013 Yearbook.

Web site Library Shop– a vote of thanks was given to M Dolton, P Hemmings, N Feakes and all for a job well done. The facility to enable Members to post pictures of their cars is in development, there will be a need to “log on” and a tag to enable searches for any particular item. A limit will be set for the number of pictures posted for each car.

Future Annual General Meetings. To encourage more members to attend should consideration be given to holding a future AGM in combination with an event – for example the Annual Dinner, Gaydon Museum etc?

### **Annual General Meeting.**

D Morbey, Chairman, opened the meeting by welcoming attendees M Allison, Triple-M President, B Silcock, MGCC Chairman, B Clare, G Smith, D Potter, Mr and Mrs M Pancheri plus K Hall and J Reid who had attended the Committee meeting in the

morning. Apologies for absence were received from M Dolton, I McKay, A Reid and Mr and Mrs T Metcalf.

D Morbey, Chairman, stated it had been an honour being elected as Chairman in 2012 and he was conscious of the duties and responsibilities involved. Although it is still early days he felt the task had been made much easier thanks to the friendly support of all members of the Committee. 2012 was another successful year. As is known the Register is much more than just a list of cars, the objectives include encouraging the use of Triple-M cars on the road and in competition, providing technical advice and support which includes publishing the Bulletin and Yearbook. Registrar R Hamblett added 30 cars in 2012 taking the total of active cars on the data base to 3123. In the year the Register purchased a new lap top PC for use by the Registrar; there were the usual considerable number of queries relating to identity and authenticity of particular vehicles. The Library, which provides the biggest source of revenue, is in the capable hands of P Hemmings who, with M Dolton and N Feakes, was part of the team which established the E commerce shop on the Register's website. N Feakes, Web Master, has continued to develop the website and is currently looking at enhancements to the pictures library which will include a searchable pictures data base. B Richards has brought in improvements both in quality and content to the Bulletin. Current circulation per issue is 425: 324 in the UK, 70 in the EU and 31 rest of the world. C Spoelstra, Yearbook Editor, puts in a huge amount of work to ensure the content is both well written and interesting. The 2011 edition was delivered on time and well received. The advertising is looked after by E Taylor who is well steeped in all matters Triple-M. M Linward looks after the competition aspect of the Register, his main task is the compilation of the competition results for the Register's premier awards including COTY which has 145 participants. In 2012 the Register held the usual events which included the Annual Dinner/prize giving, Summer Gathering and Border Reivers run. The main event for 2013 will be the Welsh Marches weekend to be held over the August Bank holiday weekend. Other activities have included issues of Governance and picking up of the Club's brief on the Turin Charter.

G Eagle, Secretary, stated that there had been no response from members to the AGM Notice posted in Safety Fast, Bulletin and website. Other activities were as outlined earlier in the report. For the year to December 2012 16 metal badges were sold and only 3 cloth badges. Closing stock is 32 metal badges and 62 cloth. This stock is sufficient to cover the next 12 months but there will be a need to re-order metal badges towards the end of 2013. G Eagle stated that by the date of the 2014 AGM he will have served for 14 years as Secretary – the longest ever – and it might be a good time to hand over to a younger and more energetic successor.

B Milton, Treasurer, reported total reserves are £28758 an increase of £5104 compared to £28641 at end of 2010 and £23654 at the end of 2011. The fall in 2011 was due to the £5000 subsidy the Committee agreed, in line with MGCC guidelines,

to pay towards the costs of the very successful 50th Anniversary celebrations. The trading surplus of £7161 was achieved mostly from library sales including Yearbooks although the current Yearbook is showing slower sales than previous years. Regalia, including badges, contributed £1061, the Annual Dinner and Summer Gathering generated a small surplus whilst the Border Reivers Raid lost money due entirely to the income being received during 2011 and the majority of expenditure incurred in 2012. There was a loss attributed to the Bulletin due to the unfortunate late submission in December of the 2011 printing invoice and later than expected introduction of the franking machine. During 2013 subscription periods are being revised to commence from 1st January to enable the Register to monitor actual income and expenditure in the financial year. The expenditure on the administration of the Register at £2055 is less than that incurred in any of the previous 3 years. £1400 is committed to upgrading the Register Library web pages, the initial deposit paid in 2012 and the balance in 2013. Significant purchases in the year were the 2 PCs for use by the Registrar and Bulletin Co-ordinator P White. These will be written down over 3 years and importantly will enable the easy transfer of data and equipment to a new incumbent should this be necessary. One small purchase was of a till for use by the Librarian especially at Silverstone. Two bad debts were incurred but one of these relating to the Library has now been recovered. Stock is written down in accordance with MGCC guidelines, the exception being the metal badges. Apart from the 2 PCs fixed assets include the two trophies valued last year at £2800. In summary the total reserves amounting to £28758, without any significant creditors, puts the Register in a good position to fund the web and other improvements in the coming year. The Bulletin income must be monitored with regard to possible losses to the web version and expenses monitored following the full use of the franking machine.

B Silcock, MGCC Chairman, suggested the MGCC could assist in obtaining a better return on deposit accounts.

Election of Officers. Mike Allison took the Chair and D Morbey, G Eagle and B Milton were unanimously re-elected as Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Dick Morbey resumed the Chair. R Hamblett, C Spoelstra and P Hemmings were due to stand down on a 3 year rotation and were all unanimously re-elected.

AOB. M Allison explained he had spent the last 18 months recording the entire service records and had placed these on disc, one copy given to R Hamblett and the second to MGCC archives. He is now working on cars relating to competition events up to 1939 and would welcome any information from members. B Silcock stated the Register could invite guests to attend a Council meeting, all he would require is an emailed request.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 4pm.

G R Eagle, Hon Sec.

## What, When, Where, Who??

*'I keep six honest serving-men (they taught me all I knew); Their names are What and Why and When, and How and Where and Who' - Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)*

Bryan Ditchman has unearthed some mystery trialling photos, of which the locations are uncertain. The second of these photos (below) shows JB7521 (No. 16) driven by Lewis Welch who sat in for J. M. Toulmin on the 1936 Coventry Cup Trial held on Exmoor on March 14th. Courtesy of Ian Williamson, we have a photo of him on Coultsham and the one below which Bryan Ditchman thinks is the top left-hander on Hatherland.

Has anyone got a route card to back up Wheelspin on pages 69-71? This was the only time that Lewis Welch drove the PB Cracker and his was the only clean sheet in the event.



# Some Notes on F-type Cylinder Head Installation

by Ewan Harris

Following recent discussions about the failings of the F-type cylinder head gasket, the following is a resumé of the problem and measures which might help lessen it. There are likely to be two main causes:

- 1) Improving performance
- 2) Overheating causing the head to warp

One probably feeds upon the other, although a weak mixture will also cause overheating. A solid copper head gasket helps to minimise the risk of failure due to both of the above. It is stronger and provides a much improved path for the heat to travel from the relatively hot head to the cooler block.

Two components have been changed on my car:

- a) A solid copper head gasket is used together with Mike Dowley's Heldtite sealant; Wellseal has also been recommended. When coating the gasket with sealant, it is probably a good idea to let it partially dry for about half an hour before fitting,
- b) The standard  $\frac{5}{16}$ " BSF cylinder head studs have been changed for  $\frac{3}{8}$ " BSF. All studs should be in high tension (HT) steel.

The above two mods probably go together. I don't know if a solid copper gasket can be used with  $\frac{5}{16}$ " BSF cylinder head studs. The original ones can be tightened to only about 23 lbf ft. I don't know the torque setting for those specified by S & V, In any case always use HT nuts.

To enable all the cylinder head nuts to be put in place and tightened using a torque wrench (Britool), the front camshaft support/bevel housing has been drilled (see fig 1) so that the rocker shafts can be fitted from the front, using the tool made to dimensions shown at fig 2 and shown in use in the photo (fig 3). This allows the valve gear to be assembled after all the cylinder head nuts have been finally tightened. The disadvantage is that the radiator has to be removed first. The sequence for tightening the cylinder head nuts using a solid copper gasket and  $\frac{3}{8}$ " BSF studs is as follows:

- 1 Tighten to 15 lbf ft using the order found in 'Blower' (important) and leave for 1/2 an hour.
- 2 Tighten to 28 lbf ft and leave overnight.
- 3 Next day, tighten to 38 lbf ft.

Doing the above should obviate the need for checking after 100 miles, although, of course, this is still an option.



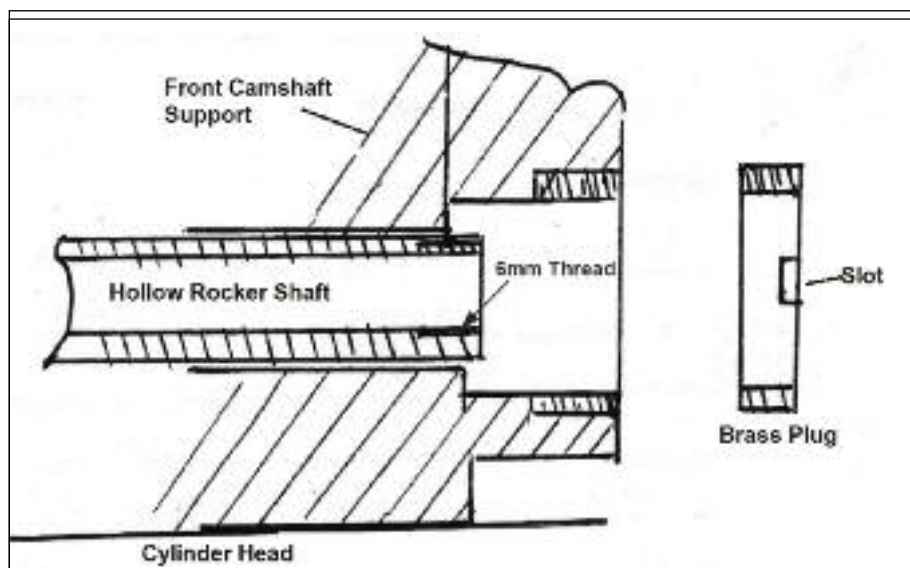


Fig 1

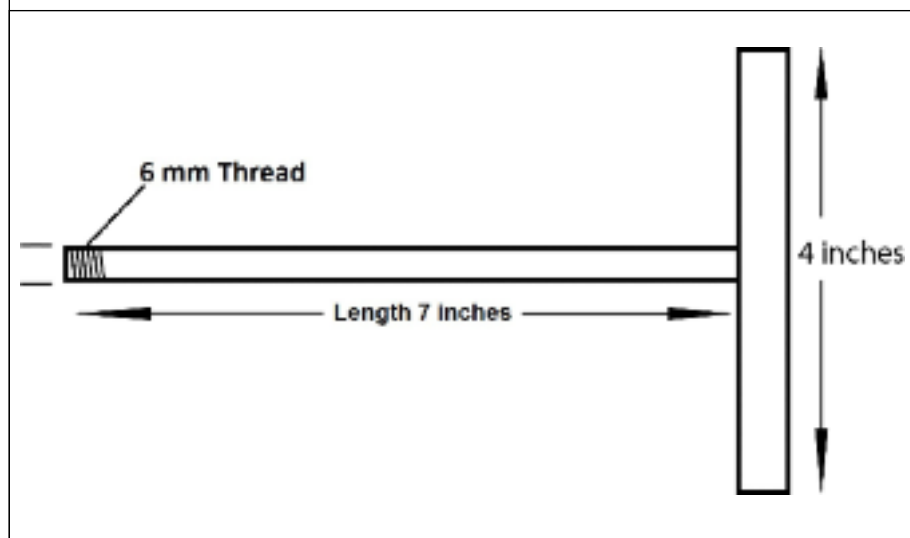


Fig 2



Fig 3

To enable  $\frac{3}{8}$ " studs to pass through the cylinder head, the holes need to be enlarged slightly, not much, I cannot remember the exact amount. However, doing that will cause entry into the water space at two holes, both on the nearside, the middle one and the rearmost one. These will then need to be drilled and further sleeved. Use copper or stainless steel; avoid brass.

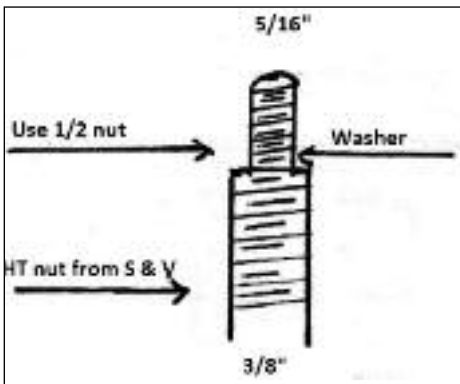


Fig 4

To enable the two rear rocker cover holding down screw supports to be fitted after the tightening sequence, the four studs involved were extended but with a  $\frac{5}{16}$ " BSF thread and the supports were shortened (see fig 4). It is a bit of a fiddle to find the correct lengths of everything, but it only needs doing once if the same gasket is always used. An alternative to extending the four studs is to use Barry Foster's method which is to put a plate on top of the camshaft

supports. Still on the subject of studs, it is permissible to reduce the diameter of the studs which pass through the siamesed inlet ports back to 5/16"; this is approximately the root diameter of a 3/8" BSF thread. Depending upon the exact steel used, it is possible to tighten 3/8" BSF studs a great deal more than 38 lbf ft. This is not recommended as there is a risk of pulling the stud out of the block.

After finally tightening the cylinder head nuts, it is also a good idea to temporarily put the camshaft in its supports, then tighten the two nuts on each support; this lines everything up correctly. Then remove the camshaft and fit the rocker shafts and rockers from the front.

When adjusting rocker clearances, avoid overtightening the locknuts, as this could cause the rockers to bind on the shaft.

**Note:** The middle rocker cover screw support bracket should be put with its feet under the rocker shafts before the camshaft is put in place.

On the annealing of solid copper gaskets, there are two schools of thought:

- a) Just heat the gasket to red heat (70-75 degC) and allow to cool in air.
- b) Do the same but quench in water.

To me, both seem to work. A furnace is the ideal solution for attaining the above temperature; a potter's kiln is a good option. Copper melts at about 1080 degC.

Hope the above is of help. For any queries, please ring 01363 775672.

# Making of a P/N-Type Right-Angle Speedometer Drive

by Ian Marr

Did you know that Jay Leno makes parts for his older cars using the same process I do? I'm sure he started this method before me, but he has a deeper wallet! I was fortunate in having received an original speedometer drive with my PB. The housing was all cracked and nothing turned but all the pieces were there for me to recreate it. My first attempt was simply making a new housing from aluminum billet transferring the existing steel pieces to make an assembly. It was OK but did not look authentic and took a lot of time to make, photo 1. So, the seed was planted to make a pattern to have housings cast quickly.



Photo 1

3D solid modeling software was used to make an electronic model of how I wanted the part to be cast with added features to make machining easier to suit my tooling. My next step was to find a company that had a stereo lithography printer, sometimes called a 3D printer. This printer behaves just like your ink jet or laser printer at home

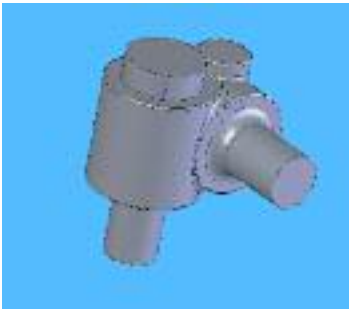


Photo 2

but prints in space making my pattern in 0.004" layer of ink each pass. This process is called rapid prototyping. It is very popular in the automotive industry having a prototype part made of plastic. I now have a pattern (photo 2) that I can take to a foundry to have castings made, but where?



Photo 3

Over a few OSH I discussed my little venture with Bob Grunau who has a long standing source for aluminum castings. I passed on my pattern and in a few weeks had 6 pieces that I could play with. Fussing around with them proved useful. They weren't that good! The casting was fine but the pattern needed correcting. I went back to the PC and electronically edited the pattern. My final pattern arrived from the printer with Bob taking it to the foundry. A few weeks later and I had 6 new castings to machine. Success! I was now satisfied with the housing pattern for the speedometer drive. Casting cost for the 12 "prototypes" was not cheap, but it gave me an easy to machine and decent looking final part.

With the cast housing done my next step was to copy the helical drive gears perfectly. More OSH with Bob recommending a gear shop capable of making the small gears. I spoke with them about which material to make the gears from and how they would go about making them. I passed on 6 "sticks" at 9" long for which at least 80 gears could be had. 2 weeks later I had my 6 "sticks" machined. See photo 3. Many hours later I had over 80 gears now needing heat treating. See photo 4. I sure learned a lot about those little gears and how gears of this size are made. I did find a gear manufacturer in the U.K. that could supply a catalogue gear but that meant changing dimensions of the pattern/casting to suit. In the end I have the part I wished for with unit cost way below the catalogue gear.

The axles and end caps were straight forward in making, with the axles needing a very small Woodruff cutter for the key-way to engage the gear. I then made copies of the lube fitting. Each piece was assembled and tested, using the lathe with speedo and its cabling attached for ½ hour each. The first test was a success as it also told me that my speedometer worked! There are four attachment parts that secure the

speedo drive to the gearbox. See photo 5. I had not intended to make those but some owners mentioned having them or missing one or two pieces. I have made those on an individual basis. Much to my surprise all dimensions were in Metric with the axles at 6mm and the lube fitting an M8x1.25 thread.



Photo 4



Photo 5

I set up a small production line for each part in the end making 26 drives with the final drive ratio being 1 to 1. I have some spares for my next production run and hopefully not needing 2½ years to make more! Makes you wonder how many people were involved in making something like this back in the day? I am a one man band just needing the assistance of others to complete. With today's modern manufacturing methods, making parts like these brings them to market quicker. I have 16 or so drives that are for sale at \$155.00 Cdn each. If you are interested, contact me at [bu9474@gmail.com](mailto:bu9474@gmail.com). Enjoy your MMM summer everyone and I hope this was informative.

Ian Marr  
PB 0474

## Triple-M Register Championships

### - Mike Linward, Competition Secretary

#### C.O.T.Y. 2013 Scores to 23rd March

Position	Register Number	Car	Registration Number	Driver/s	Points
1st	691	NA All'ham	BYU 271	Philip Bayne-Powell Rosemary Bayne-Powell	11
2nd	909	J2-PA/s	FW 3909	Bill Bennett	9
3rd	1883	J2	PO 8865	Patrick Gardner	8
4th	82	M	PO 1357	Nigel Stroud	6
5th	2615	PB	BOF 564	Tim Beckh	5
6th	797	K1	ALA 871	Christopher Hobbs Kate Hobbs	4
=7th	1428	J2	DG 6142	George Ward	2
"	317	Jarvis M	GP 1856	Philip Bayne-Powell	2
"	148	M	OY 1548	John Haine	2
=10th	907	K1	ADH 360	Ewan Graham Mark Darnell	1
"	2362	NA	BTT 726	Neil MacKay James Mather	1

Results from the following events are the only ones that have either been submitted or analysed and hence are the only ones that make up the 2013 COTY scores to date. Results can be submitted up to three months after the event took place or later at the Comp. Secs. discretion. However, to be included in the End Of Year final results, a submission must be made no later than the third week of January:

4th/5th January	MCC Exeter Trial	Full Results
12th/13th January	VSCC Measham Night Rally	Full
3rd February	VSCC New Year Driving Tests	Full
2nd March	VSCC John Harris (Derbyshire) Trial	Full
17th March	MGCC SE Centre Spring Navisat	Full

#### Slade Trophy 2012 Scores to 23rd March

Position	Car/s	Driver/s	Points
1st	J2-PA/s	Bill Bennett	6

# Basic Triple-M Engine Tuning

by Terry Holden

*Editor's Notes: The article below was first published in the 1984 Yearbook and is reproduced by kind permission of Terry Holden. I checked with Terry and he says the fundamental principles outlined in this article remain good today. However he pointed out the following: Firstly that most people will today be using NGK spark plugs B6 or 7 HS type and also that it is much easier to use a dial gauge, set up on the valve, to ascertain the point of valve opening. He was also concerned that the rocker clearances for the J engine are not clear in the original article and pointed out that these should be set at 0.06" for both inlet and exhaust in order to set the correct valve timing. The wider clearance of 0.08" on the exhaust was specified originally as an allowance for exhaust valve expansion which is probably not so relevant today.*

*He also mentioned that there are available today new camshafts to Sports and Super Sports specification. These have different valve timing from the original MG timing and the best method of timing such a cam is by using the point of full inlet valve lift which should be ascertained from the camshaft manufacturer. This is typically somewhere between 100 and 120 degrees after TDC.*

## The Original Article:

Over the years I have had the pleasure of driving many Triple M cars and have listened to numerous discussions about engine tuning. There is no doubt in my mind that our cars can be transformed by a carefully planned and thorough approach to the subject of tuning. Surprisingly there seems to be quite a wide diversification of views as to what is right and when we tried to get someone to put pen to paper on the subject for this Yearbook we did not get one volunteer.

That is why you are receiving my views on the subject. I, like many of you have had to learn the hard way, by trial and error so hopefully the following will be of benefit to those of you who are new to Triple M motoring or even some of you who have been running your cars for some time but are not satisfied with performance.

Let us start at the most important point, the condition of your engine. I have to assume for the purpose of this article that we are dealing with a basically sound engine that has been carefully assembled, balanced and run-in. Check your compressions with a good quality gauge. The level will vary from engine to engine but should not vary from cylinder to cylinder on any one engine by more than a few pounds.

Next step is to find Top Dead Centre (TDC). Ignore, or even better remove all existing flywheel markings, they could well be wrong after 50 years. Go back to basics and get it right. The best method is to use a flat steel bar with a 1" x 5/16" bolt located in the



centre. Place the bar on the cylinder block with the bolt pointing down into No. 1 cylinder. Bring the piston carefully up to touch the bolt and mark the flywheel or clutch cover plate carefully, in relation to a permanent mark which you should now make in the centre of the clutch inspection aperture lip. Next revolve your crankshaft in the opposite direction and bringing the piston carefully up to touch the bolt again. Mark the flywheel /clutch cover plate again in this position relative to the clutch aperture mark. Now bisect the two flywheel marks and mark this position permanently. You now have TDC correctly marked.

The next stage is to get your valve timing correct in relation to TDC. Again I will have to assume that your cylinder head has been correctly assembled and that you have a good camshaft. Set your rocker clearances to the following:—

	Inlet	Exhaust
M, F, D	0.004"	0.004"
J1, J2	0.006"	0.008"
KN, L, P, N	0.006"	0.008"

Ideally the above clearances should be set when the engine is hot but if you are setting up your engine for the first time just set them carefully and check them again later. It has been suggested to me that I should point out that rocker clearances are measured between the cam and the rocker not between the rocker and the valve but surely I don't need to say that do I?

Now if you refer to the Service Data Section in Blower you will find the correct valve timing listed for each model. For simplicity let us concentrate on and use as our example the valve timing of the J, K, L, P, N engine which is as follows:

Inlet Opens 15° BTDC

Inlet Closes 55° ATDC

Exhaust Opens 50° BBDC

Exhaust Closes 20° ATDC

This means that when the piston of No. 1 cylinder is at 15° before top dead centre the inlet valve on No. 1 cylinder should be just opening. To achieve this, calculate the measurement on the rim of your flywheel/clutch cover which equals 15° by simple geometry. It is shown as 1 5/16" in Blower but this is only accurate if your flywheel has not been machined. Mark this position and align it with the clutch aperture lip mark used for TDC.

Now, with the combination of sight and the use of a very fine feeler gauge or piece of paper between the rocker and the valve it is possible to ascertain when the inlet valve opens. Practise this for a while and when you are confident that you know the right position start trying different combinations of dynamo/vertical drive fork coupling connections, crankshaft/dynamo gear meshing and camshaft/vertical drive gear

meshing, until you find the best combination to get the inlet valve to open at 15° BTDC.

You cannot rely on the dynamo fork being exactly fore and aft at TDC as per the original works instructions. The keyways may well have been re-cut over the years or different gears fitted.

Patience here will be well rewarded since getting the valve timing correct is in my view one of the most important aspects of tuning your MMM engine. There are various permutations on the above idea involving the use of vernier discs or special protractors but they are all a means to the same end and you can use your own ingenuity to achieve the desired result.

As a further check you can mark the 3 other valve opening/closing positions on your flywheel and examine your valve operation in relation to these.

When you are satisfied that you have found the right combination mark everything including the gear teeth where they mesh with paint and you will always be able to put everything back together in the future with no problems. Also make a note of what you have done for future reference.

If after setting your valve timing up to the inlet opening position you find that any or all of the other valve opening/closing positions are out, I would suggest that your first action should be to have your camshaft checked professionally. I had just this problem on a friend's engine last year and we found the new camshaft he was using to be wrongly machined despite the manufacturer's claim of computer controlled cam profiling. I know Mike Allison has also had this problem.

Stage three is the distributor and ignition timing. It is essential to keep your distributor in tip-top condition. This may seem a rather obvious statement but a worn or faulty distributor is one of the most likely causes of poor performance. Check for wear on the cam and spindle (even if the distributor is a new or replacement one) and rectify as necessary. Fit a new condenser and new points. Clean the points carefully even new ones and adjust to 0.015". Make sure the cap is not cracked or dirty and that the electrodes and centre contact are not corroded. Make sure the plug leads are in good condition and in particular that the connections to the cap and plugs are clean and carefully fitted.

Next we come to the controversial subject of ignition timing. There really has been some misleading information written about this so let's try and get it right.

There are several specifications of distributors suitable for our engines the main difference between them apart from the obvious 4 or 6 cylinders is the advance curve.

This can vary between  $8^\circ$  and  $14^\circ$  on the distributor i.e.  $16^\circ$  and  $28^\circ$  on the crankshaft. The amount of advance at the distributor is usually stamped on the base plate which carries the weights. However if the distributor is not new you cannot rely on this mark and you will have to check the amount of advance with a pointer and protractor, have it checked professionally or check it with a strobe light on the flywheel.

Whilst I have not actually tried an  $8^\circ$  or  $14^\circ$  advance distributor I suspect these are not ideal for our engines and would recommend that you modify your existing distributor or obtain one which gives either  $10^\circ$  or  $12^\circ$  advance with maximum advance being reached not later than 3500-4000 r.p.m.

Now before you go any further I am going to recommend that you go to your local accessory shop and purchase a stroboscopic ignition timing light. I use a Gunson Tachostrobe which has the mains powered xenon light source and is excellent for both coil/distributor and magneto ignition.

Next it's back to the geometry to calculate the measurement round your flywheel/clutch cover which is equivalent to  $35^\circ$ . Make a mark at this amount before top dead centre using white paint. Perhaps at this point I should give my reasons for recommending  $35^\circ$  as the maximum advance. An examination of Blower shows maximum advance on models J, P, L, K and N to be originally between  $40^\circ$  and  $46^\circ$ . Those figures cannot however be accepted at face value in 1984 because of improvements in fuels, plugs and the likelihood that your head has been machined to increase the compression ratio. Modern fuels burn much more quickly and more efficiently than the pre-war brew so this in itself is a strong reason for advocating less advance, Apart from this I have found from practical experience that advancing your ignition beyond  $35^\circ$ , to  $40^\circ$  or even  $45^\circ$  does not greatly affect performance but could well put unnecessary strain on your bottom end.

So set up your strobe light, start the engine, increase engine speed until the timing mark is stationary i.e. at maximum advance and adjust your distributor until your white mark aligns with your clutch aperture mark.

To obtain the last ounce of power from your engine you must rely on either road testing in the time honoured manner on a fixed section of uphill road or even better have your car tested on a rolling road. If you try the latter be wary of the maximum power settings which the operator may recommend.

Well, that has finished the controversial part, now let us deal with the easy items. Firstly plugs: well they are not too much of a problem these days because most modern plugs operate in a wider heat range than the old ones. I use Champion L92Y set at 0.025" for general road use. These are the extended electrode plugs and give good performance.

Carburetters should obviously be in good condition. Watch particularly for spindle and butterfly wear. I have always used standard needles for road use without any mixture problems. Balance your carburetters carefully and get the mixture right. It tells you how to do it in all the books so there is no need for me to spell it out here. You only need to use 2-star fuel on all unblown MMM engines.

I am afraid this article has not given specific advice relating to M, D or F engines mainly because I have no experience with these. However I see no reason why the same principles should not apply.

I have also concentrated on the need to get the basic tuning and timing of your engine right. Once you have achieved that much you can experiment with detail modifications to the above settings to suit your engine. It is also very worthwhile making sure that your inlet and exhaust manifolds are carefully aligned with the ports in the head.

If you are still not satisfied with your engine's performance I suggest you start looking for a supercharger. Next year we hope to talk about fitting one to your Triple M car and what special tuning and engine modifications are required.



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# Gears Un-boxed! or How Not to Dismantle Your Wolseley Type Gearbox by The Editor (from his own experience)

During the rebuild of my P-type, which I bought with the engine out, I decided not to dismantle the gearbox, as a cursory look through the top opening revealed shiny gears which all engaged and turned smoothly. "Leave well alone" is one of my maxims and I was later to regret not sticking by it!

With the engine and gearbox fitted, and the car assembled just sufficiently to allow a short test drive on private land, I was pleased to find that the gearbox functioned OK with no serious problems.

As the rebuild neared completion, I decided to connect the mileometer cable to the gearbox. (This may puzzle the uninitiated, but P-Type and 'Some-Other-Type' owners will know that the mileometer is the only instrument driven by the gearbox, since there is no speedometer fitted as road speed readings in 3rd and 4th gears are shown on the engine-driven rev.counter). This was when I found that I could not fit the cable, as there were no mileometer gears in the gearbox to which the cable should be connected. So much for my inspection!

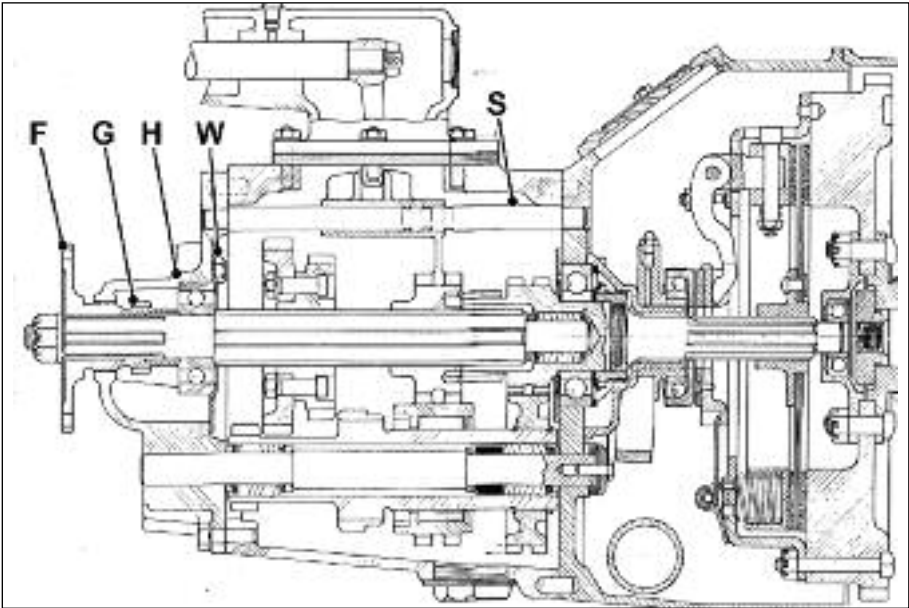


Fig 1 (Drawing adapted from Triple-M Website)

[www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org)

After obtaining the requisite mileometer gears, I thought it would be a simple matter to insert the drive gear **G**, see drawing fig 1. Surely, after removing the propshaft and the drive flange **F**, I could slide the gear straight on to the mainshaft. The drawing seemed to confirm this. Not so, for when I slid the gear along the shaft, it was too big to go through the rear housing **H**. Perhaps a J2 one would go through the housing but a P-type certainly would not.

Removal of just the rear housing was maybe all that I needed to do but this was not advisable with the gearbox in situ as shaft realignment would surely be a problem. So, out with the gearbox and stand it on its bell housing. This way the shafts would perhaps stay aligned when the cover was removed?

The gearbox designers thoughtfully provided some lugs on the rear housing to allow a lever or hammer to assist removal. So after removing the fixing nuts, I tried to lever off the rear housing.

### **This was when things started to go wrong!**

With reasonable pressure, the rear housing lifted but only by a small amount and would not come any further. Had I removed all the nuts? No! There were two nuts **B** and **C** (fig 2 ) which I had slackeden but not removed completely, because it seemed, that the bolts on which they fitted were rotating. Eventually I managed to remove

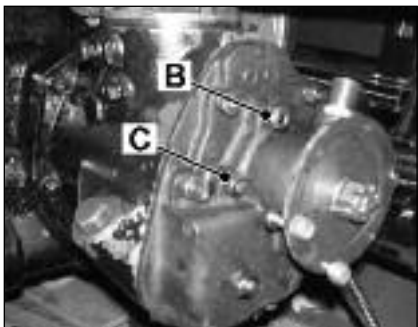


Fig 2.



Fig 3.

those nuts, but as I removed each one there was a rattle as something fell into the gearbox! Still the housing would not lift. Surely all the fasteners were removed? I applied more force. - Result: one broken rear housing (see fig 3) but still not removed; something was retaining the housing. Back to the manuals!

After much study, I noted that the text of G. Howell's J2 restoration manual referred

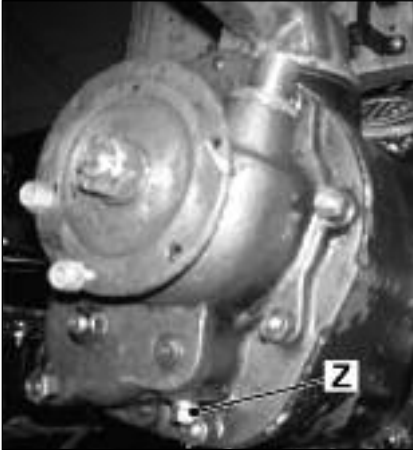


Fig 4

to a screw that retains the layshaft in the rear housing. This screw was not illustrated but after looking at the photos in 'Blower', I realised that it's **Z** in fig 4. After removing the screw, the rear housing could be easily lifted off!

With the housing removed, I discovered that I had not needed to remove nuts **B** and **C** (fig 2) as these nuts do not retain the housing but are for retention of the mainshaft rear bearing. Unfortunately the gearbox drawings show only bolt **W** (fig 1) screwed into a threaded hole in the housing; the nuts **C/D** and their bolts are not shown.

As mentioned above, something had fallen into the gearbox, (the two bolts for nuts **C/D**). This meant that I needed to remove

the mainshaft and its gears to reach the bolts! By following the instructions of G. Howell and B. Linger, this was easily accomplished, but this was not the end of my troubles!

It is necessary to remove the selector shafts to allow the mainshaft and gears to come out. On the selector shafts are spacer tubes (item **S** on fig 1). Some manuals advise you to note the positions of these tubes and refit them correctly, but I failed to do so. This resulted in my raising a query on the wonderful Triple M website to ascertain the correct positions. Now I am not a computer enthusiast but I have found that website to be a wonderful medium of help and information. I received some very helpful answers and it appears that the positions of these tubes vary from model to model of MG. For example, the PA may be different from the PB etc. The important point is that the tubes must be fitted such that they do not restrict the travel of the selector forks along the shafts.

My next problem was during assembly, in that I had difficulty getting the mileometer gears to mesh nicely and run smoothly. Back to the website for more advice!

It transpired that I had not pushed the drive gear far enough on to the shaft and there was a burr on its teeth! Since then I have completed assembly of the gearbox and, thankfully, found that all gears engage. Completion of refitting and a road test are still to come - roll on some warm weather!

If you need any further information on gearboxes, it should be obvious that I am not the person to ask!

## Preferences

by the late Mike Hawke (Reprinted from 1984 Yearbook)

I have a friend who has often asked me questions like, "Which would you prefer, a J2 or an L2?" It is not that he has an example of each in his garage and is ready to give me one, he is pondering on which model of Triple-M car to buy next. My liking for J2s must be deep, having owned one since 1953. But what about the L2? Is it simply a smoother, more powerful version of the J2 or are the differences more subtle? Or are the two models so different as to appeal to an entirely different kind of owner?

Those who have driven six-cylinder cars will know how smooth and effortless the engine can seem. It is not just the extra power. Because, as one of my instructors used to say, "The two theta terms cancel", the inherent balance of a six is so much better than a four and what power it does deliver seems to come so much more easily. I have succumbed to the siren call of the six, having owned, as daily transport, a Triumph Vitesse Convertible for nine years and an MGC G.T for fifteen.

Yes, I think the L2 is something entirely different in character to the J2. Those who are outside the old M.G. scene, looking in, often lump all early-perpendicular (or pre-1955) cars together. Or they consider all Triple-M cars to have the same characteristics. In this they are wrong, or at least guilty of over-simplification.

In "Maintaining the Breed", John Thornley says, "The limiting feature of the J-type engine was its two-bearing crankshaft. Even the fully counterbalanced J4 shaft, with its 1 5/8 in. diameter crankpins, restricted the supercharge pressure which could be applied before serious whip set in. And on the J2 the shaft bent perceptibly, unsupercharged and with only modest compression ratios. So the next development in the Midget was, quite obviously, the insertion of a centre bearing." This is one main dividing line between the various Triple-M models - the division between small and large camshaft cars. Anyone who has worked on a J2 cylinder head and then turned to work on a PA head will appreciate how massive everything looks. The PA is said by "Blower" to weigh 2 cwt (224 pounds) more than the J2. Where did Cecil Kimber put all that extra metal? If you want to make a small-cam car go well, with one or two exceptions, you have to make it light. If you want to make a large-cam car go well, you start with a weight disadvantage so, with one or two exceptions, you grab as much power as possible by supercharging it. When being driven, the large-cam cars have a much more solid feeling than the small-cam. Even George Cooper's PB-engined J2 has a different feeling to a normal J2, including a Laystall-cranked one. This opens up the more general question of which Triple-M models display certain desirable characteristics more than any other of the range.

In some ways the M-type is the least-loved of the Triple-M cars. It has always had a second-hand value somewhat below that of a J or a P-type. In the nineteen-thirties



this was simply because it was older and the laws of the normal second-hand car market applied. In the 'fifties and 'sixties it was older, had a more modest performance and, as well as the problems associated with cable brakes and two-bearing crankshafts, the pointed-tail body sagged. Yet M-types have a set of characteristics which no other Triple-M model can claim. The vee windscreen and pointed tail body are more typical of the 'twenties than the 'thirties (for which the J2 set the style). Whilst all our cars are now period-pieces, the M-types are much more so than any other model. They have a character which cannot be found in any other model of the range. In spite of their modest power they have been known to put up good performances in autotests and trials. If burning up Silverstone is not among your ambitions and you prefer the 'twenties line, an M-type might be your top preference.

The D, F1, F3 and J1 models can claim at least a vestige of one typical 'twenties feature in their body style, the rounded rear end, known in its more pronounced applications as "African Belly" or the "Fallen Woman". But their general body line gives a quite different aura compared to the M-type. The small, open four-seater has not been a feature of manufacturers' catalogues for decades, if we except the Morgan. The Morris Minor Convertible was a different concept entirely being a saloon with the lid cut off rather than a sports car with the arrangements down aft rearranged to accommodate two legless midgets (legless as in short of stature rather than legless as in drunk). So these cars are much more a car of yesteryear and a dying or nearly extinct kind than are their two seater counterparts. And they are each different, the smooth six, the low-revving D or its fussier but revving and better-performing J1. It is popularly supposed that many have been rebodied as two-seaters because that option is so much cheaper and easier than building a fully-original four-seat body when conducting a rebuild. It is also possible that a four-seater restoration, started when the family was young, might get to the body-building stage when those young are ready to drive the thing and could not fit into the back seat anyway! It is a pity that so many have been converted to two-seaters. Genuine four-seat cars are a rarity these days.

An even greater rarity, almost to the point of extinction, is the Salonette body on these chassis. Surely such cars have a period charm exceeding that of any two-seater, if only because they represent an anachronistic fashion which rapidly disappeared due to its very impracticality. Again, it is a pity there are so few-survivors of what was, at the best of times, a very rare type.

And so we come to the last of the small-cam models (saving the racing cars), the J2. This was entirely different to anything Cecil Kimber had produced so far. It was the first production model with the cross-flow cylinder head, transferring the engine from the "good touring" to the "rorty sporty" category and the body style with its scuttle humps, fold-flat windscreen and slab fuel tank and spare wheel(s) on the back set the fashion in sports cars for twenty years and is still with us in principle on such cars as Morgan and Marlin.

If we review this essay so far, what are your preferences? The purely vintage design of the M-type? The smoothness of the six-cylinder F-Magna? Or the similar-bodied but smaller and more handleable D or J1? Or the up to date "thoroughly thirties" J2? Time for another quotation. ".....the Vintage decade, throughout which designers fought a steadily losing battle against ever-increasing unsprung weight. To keep the movement of a heavy axle within manageable limits, and to resist the torque of ever-improving brakes, road springs became progressively shorter and stiffer, and shock absorbers became more and more unyielding. This was not so noticeable in large cars, but in smaller ones, especially as they became capable of speeds of 80 m.p.h., the high ratio of sprung to unsprung weight reached such alarming proportions that the unsprung tail had a distinct tendency to wag the dog. In the end this was the main factor contributing to the end of the Vintage tradition".....

And another, ".....increasing overall weight was another menace which the Vintage car had to withstand - and failed. Heavier brakes and axles called for heavier chassis; electrical equipment increased in complexity and weight; coachwork became wider, more luxurious, more rigid, heavier." Both these quotations are from "The Vintage Motor Car" by Cecil Clutton and John Stanford.

So far Cecil Kimber had built on the basis of the M-type by introducing a low-slung chassis first used in EX.120, developing a cross-flow cylinder head which increased power magnificently for his 1932 C-types and restyling the car to produce the definitive sports car shape of the 'thirties, 'forties and early 'fifties with the J2. Now he needs better brakes and a stronger engine to cope with the extra power. This is what the large-cam models are all about. He is following the path taken by every ambitious sports and touring car manufacturer during the previous decade.

The K and L-types show two different approaches to this phase of the development. The possible reasons for this have been given or surmised by much more knowledgeable historians than I. In "Maintaining the Breed" John Thornley hints at things like the 12-inch brakes being needed in a production model to keep the cost of the J4 down. In the case of the K-type with its much heavier chassis and axles (and 13 inch brakes) Cecil Kimber may have had several motives. He may have wanted a chassis to carry full 4-seater bodywork to follow on from the large 18/80 models, the last of which were still in the showrooms as late as 1932. It is clear that his other reason was to have a chassis which could form the basis of a proper sports-racing car and a racing voiturette. This was, of course, the K3 (and the Q type used the same chassis side rails). Both approaches produced very good cars but very different from their predecessor the F-Magna. At 4,000 r.p.m. the F-Magna is running out of breath whereas the L-type is just getting into its stride. With its swept mudguards and sloping, restyled rear, the L-type is very much a car of the thirties rather than the Twenties. The K1 is even heavier and, when one remembers that the touring motorist of the early 'thirties was not accustomed to revving his engine to 5,500 r.p.m., one wonders how many were driven to their best effect. Both models succumbed to the

trend of increasing weight and complexity deplored by the great and good Messrs. Clutton and Stanford.

So, if my philosophical friend asked me, "Mike, which would you prefer, an F, L or K 4-seat tourer?", I might be hard-pressed to give an answer. The lighter construction of the F (the F and L chassis were almost identical), that ENV gearbox and the earlier body style are all attractive. But I think the sturdy L-type engine would win the day in the end. The K1 would be dismissed as too big and cumbersome, as indeed many considered it to be in 1933 when some were retro-fitted with the more powerful KD engine. On the other hand, if I were allowed to supercharge it, I would have to reconsider. The point to be made here is that, although the K and L-types were an improvement on the F so far as the 1933 market was concerned, they are not necessarily so today when one buys for second-car motoring and club events. When the P-type was introduced, the March 1934 "M.G. Magazine" proclaimed, "More than one hundred new features." How many can you list? The trend of increasing weight had spread to the Midget range. BUT the P-type was a more durable car. Look at the Triple-M Register. Over the years the P-types have been much better than the J2s at retaining their original engines (not many four letter words beginning with "F" for them) and fewer have earned the marginal note "hydraulic brakes". The power-to-weight ratio was restored with the advent of the PB and somebody once said that the PB was a J2 with all its faults corrected. It was more than that because it was a much sturdier car and could be supercharged without a great risk to reliability. Nevertheless I am not sure that I would swap a J2 for a PB and maybe we will see why later. The N-type is the only non-racing model we have not yet considered. As has been pointed out on many occasions, the N was really the rationalisation of the exceedingly complex L and K range of models. A heavier L or a lightweight K2. That it was a good and successful car in its day can be surmised (as if we did not already know) by the number that sold and by the fact that it was the last Triple-M model to remain in production. If anyone were to express the opinion that the lighter L-type was preferable and all but the ND (and NE of course) were overbodied, it would be hard for me to argue against him.

Many have deplored the pushrod TA which followed the o.h.c. cars. But our cars arose from the Morris parts bin of 1928 and, by 1935, they had strayed a long way from it. With the incorporation of M.G. into the Nuffield Group and Leonard Lord's evangelism for commonality of parts, this was inevitable. The MGB was much the same sort of case in 1980. With the exception of the lighter hydraulic brakes, the trends deplored by Clutton and Stanford continued and customers were offered N-type body size and engine capacity on an elongated P-chassis at P-type prices. Even if Cecil Kimber had been allowed to pursue his own line of development, what were his options at M.G. prices?

You might say, "Look at the R-type". Yes, it is a racing car; yes, many have deplored the racing axe of 1935 and suggested that there was a six-cylinder 11/2 litre version

on the way to show European voiturette racing a thing or two. But what about the R-type as a basis for a sports car? Could we have had a Lotus Elan ('sixties model) style of M.G. in about 1938? As Andrew Smith (the PB Andrew Smith, not the K3 one) said when looking at an R-type, "They were really thinking when they designed that one". He was green with envy and almost drooling as he said it. There is no doubt which Triple-M model one of us would prefer! Me? I'd go for a twin-cam version. To get one of those running properly must be the ultimate Triple-M challenge.

Inadvertently I have strayed into the racing models. This was not the intention for, in discussing preferences, there can be no doubt that they are preferable above all others. There are not enough of them to go around and some try to make their sports model look like the equivalent racer, K3 and K4 copies being quite numerous. Is this really necessary? Most of us, when we bought our first Triple-M car were quite unaware of the choice of models in the range, subject to availability. Some of us may have landed up with one we liked. Some may have grown to like their choice above the others we learned about later. And they do grow on you. Some have swapped, a practical solution to the cravings brought on by wider knowledge. This is easy if difference is not large. It is possible to endow your car with the desirable characteristics of some other. The engine reliability of a J2 can be brought up to P-standards by fitting a Laystall-type crank. Owners of later models can reduce weight just a little (cycle mudguards and all that). For this reason, I think I prefer my J2 to a PB even when discounting the sentiment which arises from nearly fifty years of ownership.

What would be my choice? Excluding the racing models, I would go for a Laystall-cranked J2 just like mine. But then, I'm biased. Excluding that, what next? An L2 or an ND perhaps? But some variations on those early models tempt me. Could I fit a counterbalanced crank and some strong con-rods to a Styles-bodied F-Magna? Barry Foster could promise 55 b.h.p. which would be enough to keep up with modern traffic. What is your preference?

## Some Photos from the Past

Submitted by Nev Churcher (more inside the back cover)



### **Nev wrote:**

The ND as I bought it from Alan Scott for £7-10s (as the back axle was faulty....). A super weathered car. I could not afford the work, so I sold it for £15, saved up and bought a 'just going' J2. Those were the days!



## L2040 – One family ownership since 1934.

by George Eagle



*Photo by John DeCesare.*

My attention was drawn to this car when it was advertised for sale in the November 2012 Safety Fast. The advert read “History since new, family owned since '34. Must be one of the most original Magnas, even has original Dunlop Fort spare tyre...” The advert states the car came with original tools, logbooks, handbook and manual.

On looking further into the history of this car I came across an article in the 1989 Yearbook entitled Parr Excellence and written by Guy Harris. The story starts with William Parr who ran his car sales and repair business Broadway Garage, Harrow Weald. The dealership expanded in later years to include Austin and later BMC, MG and BL.

On 8th June 1933, L2040, registration number AMF 13, a duo tone red 2 seater Magna L2, was first registered. At about this time, William's 19 year old son Jim first became acquainted with MGs when he drove a J2 for a short while and decided one day he would own his own MG. On 1st January 1935 William purchased AMF 13 and gave it to Jim as a 20th Birthday present. The car was used by Jim for several years and toured the country often with his brother or a lifelong friend Phil Vincent. Jim even met his future wife Doreen when he offered her a lift in the car! At the outbreak of the war the car had covered 47200 miles.

In 1959 Jim's son David used the car for about a year before abandoning it for an Austin Healey Sprite. In about 1960 the L2 was laid up in a garage for the next 27 years, and the Registration number was transferred to a succession of cars. When he sold Broadway Garage in about 1984, Jim was encouraged by his wife Doreen to refurbish the L2, and despite the 27 year storage the car was found to be in remarkably good condition. All the wood and metal work were still original, as were the brake and clutch linings; all that had to be replaced were the shock absorber bushes. The only attention the engine required on strip down was a rebore. Whilst Jim was doing the mechanical work, his son David stripped the paint and carried out a re-spray using some of the original paint flakes to ensure an accurate match to Carmine and Saratoga reds. All the bright work was re-chromed, including period extras fitted by Jim 50 years ago – these included headlamp stone guards and fish tail exhaust which cost 9/6d. The original red upholstery was retained. At the May 1989 MGCC meeting at Silverstone Jim and David were delighted to win the Triple-M class concours.

The lucky new owner of L2040 is John DeCesare who amongst other MGs, also owns L2077. He advised me the car came with loads of history including period photos to when the car was new and subsequent decades, The L2 came with the original buff 1933 log book and also the continuation buff log books. It also came with a very extensive number of Tax discs starting with the first! The mileage is now approximately 49000 on the clock, the engine runs beautifully and the gearbox is very positive and easy to use. What a rare find!

A feature of the L2s is that many have been in very long term ownership, for example G Jarvis owns the ex demo L2010, D Smith L2045, M Newman the ex Ashton-Rigby L2054 and S Cooper L2080.

I wonder if any Triple-M car can boast a longer one family ownership? There is another L2 which is currently being rebuilt by the son whose father was given the car in the late 1930s.

## **From PB to Musket and Back**

**by Bryan Ditchman**

In June 2005 I acquired PB Chassis 0295. From the chassis file it was found to have been a works demonstrator 4-seater and was also used as such by Knott Brothers in Bournemouth; thus started my research into P-type 4-seaters.

To assist in the restoration of this car, I advertised for a "late PA requiring complete restoration". A few weeks later, when Safety Fast came out, I was contacted by John Simpson, who said that he thought he had exactly what I was looking for. In May 2007 the "wreck" of PA2136, stored in a barn since May 1972, was inspected and purchased.

The car was generally complete except for the bonnet but came complete with a spare original P-type body tub in good usable condition, without woodworm. Amazingly, all the chassis oiling system was complete. The car was stripped down in 3 days and the chassis carted off to the bead-blasters. It was at this time that I thought of building another Musketeer by extending this spare chassis by  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches to get L-type specification. After much deliberation, P'Athos was born, such that we could have another team with Aramis and D'Artagnan.

By September 2007, both chassis had been straightened and repaired by Roach Engineering near Romsey, including the extension for P'Athos.

Both cars are now on four wheels again, with new suspension, brakes and restored transmissions, awaiting engine assembly. All white-metalling was carried out by John Kirby in South London.

The 2-seater body is now fitted to P'Athos with new doors; the 4-seater body is due for completion later this year.

Both cars have been rebuilt with nearly all original parts which have taken around five years to acquire and refurbish; I am indebted to many register friends who have assisted me in this respect; a few items still elude me.

Unfortunately, I am looking into passing on the P'Athos project in order to finance the completion of the 4-seater PB; so if a thoroughbred Triple-Mer is interested, I shall be pleased to pass on up to date details. Meanwhile, we press on regardless; do something on the cars every day, even if it is only an article for the Bulletin!



# Your Letters

## From Philip Bayne-Powell

Jay Hall has contacted me about my article.(See *the February Bulletin - Ed.*) It appears I have got my Baumers mixed up. I had Walter Baumer's name as Ford's co-driver in the Le Mans C-type, but it appears that it was Maurice Baumer, NOT Walter. So it seems I have caused some confusion, for which I apologise.

# Hints and Tips

## From Philip Bayne-Powell

The rubber gaskets on our water manifolds, have a nasty habit of distorting when tightened up, and allowing water to seep out of the joint. In addition the two faces of the joint are often less than smooth, due to the past corrosion. When one tries to tighten up the rubber gaskets to accommodate these imperfections of the surface, more load is applied to the rubber gasket, which then distorts more.

To overcome this, the rubber gasket can be glued to one of the joint faces, which will prevent a certain amount of distortion under load. This still doesn't resolve the need to accommodate the unevenness of the joint faces. A suggested solution is to use two rubber gaskets with a sandwich of cork, all glued together, and also to one joint face. The rubber being glued to the cork in the middle is then restrained from distortion, while the cork will compress to take up the unevenness of the joint.

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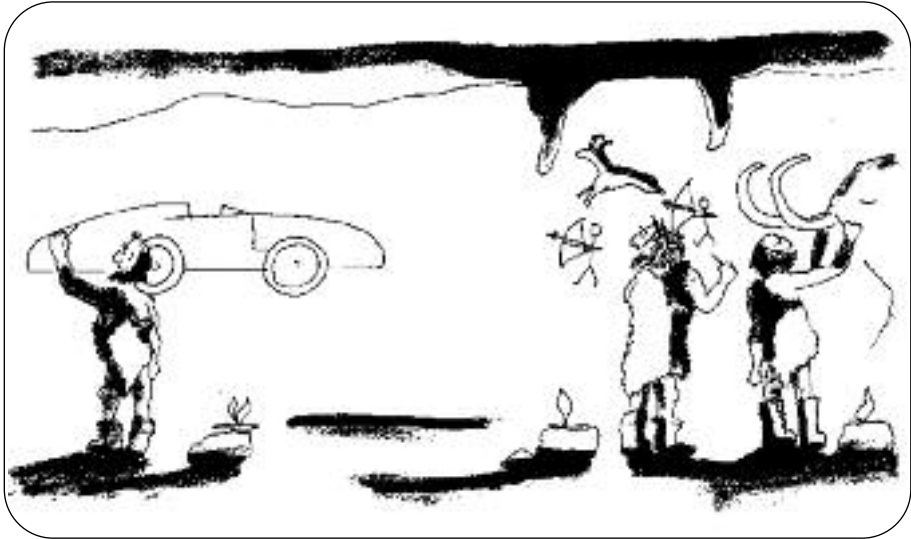
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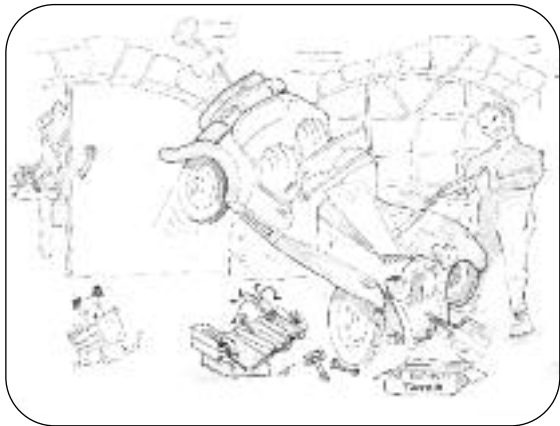
## Cartoon Competition



Your suggested captions for the cartoon above are warmly invited and should be submitted by e-mail to: [triple.m.caption.competition@gmail.com](mailto:triple.m.caption.competition@gmail.com). For details of the Competition Rules, please refer to the August 2011 Bulletin or the web page: [www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org).

Congratulations to David Rawlinson who is the winner of the last cartoon (shown on the right). His winning caption is "I think the car is ex-Northumbria Police as well."

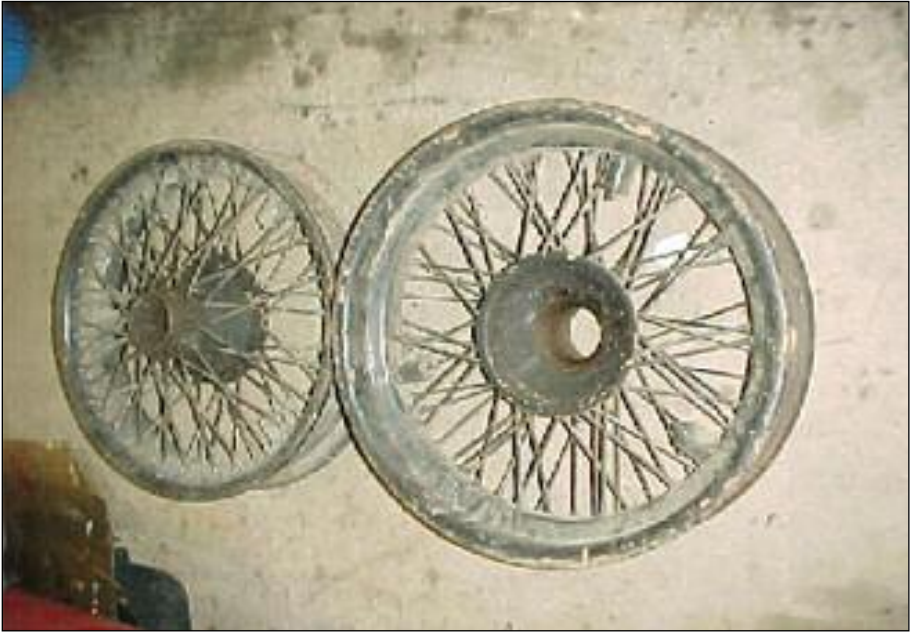
David will receive Ged Seagrave's original artwork for the cartoon, with the caption inscribed. Some of you may require an explanation about the cryptic caption? David lives in Alnwick in Northumberland - which is in the North East of England - hence the Northumbria Police comment - not that anyone is saying that this constabulary deploys Tazers.....



[www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org)

## Your Adverts

### Parts for Sale



**2 No. 18" wheels x 3.25", 70 spoke** (14 to well, 56 to outside rim), with 3No. "balance pots", 42mm, long hub; £70 each.

MG C-type (or J4) new front housing with water pump mounting; also suit for upgrading J-type for racing etc; £350.

MG F-type 12/12 camshaft hardly used; £350.

New finned cast aluminium outlet manifold for Volumex Blower, with MG logo; £80

MG VA 18"x 2.5, 60-spoke wheel; £40.

Lucas Vacuum wipers, £15 each

Used screw-front licence holder, £4.

Aircraft-type oil temperature gauge; £15

I also have some adhesive shock absorber dials for the Type 502 Hartford shockers (the smaller diameter ones, as fitted to the earlier cars). A crisp fiver will see a pair sent to a UK address.

Philip Bayne-Powell 01483 811428 or philipbp@mgcottage.freemove.co.uk

## **2 Transistor-assisted ignition units at £25 each**

A 3-position wiper delay unit for self-parking wipers, with instructions £10

Some odd bits for bottom feed carbs £12

Ewan Harris Tel 01363 775672

## **Parts Wanted**

**P/N gearbox remote turret** (gear lever) Phone 01132610638, evenings or leave clear message on answerphone.

## **Talelights**

*The peculiar spelling above is due to the inclusion here of some extracts from "J2 Tales", written by Mike Hawke in 2003 as a way of marking 50 years of J2 ownership. (Kindly submitted by his son Jeremy.)*

"This year I mark (the word "celebration" might not be 100% appropriate) fifty years ownership of DG 5405 (Chassis No. J2396), which left the M.G. Works at Abingdon in October 1932 and is therefore just a little older than I.

We have seen a lot of motoring together, some of it serious, some amusing. Here is a collection of fifty tales (with a few extras), mostly light hearted, about DG 5405 and some other J2s we have been involved with. Keeping the fifty theme, I have produced fifty copies of this little book to give to fifty (well, forty nine actually) friends who have encouraged and helped me in this mild form of eccentricity. I hope that it brings a smile. The stories are NOT in chronological order, I just wrote them down as they came to mind. some have appeared in the M.G.Car Club Triple-M Register's Infoletter and one or two in the much earlier Bulletin of the Register.

### J2 Tales (2)

In 1958 I took my J2 to Prescott Hill Climb. I was approached by a spectator who claimed to own a J2 which "will do 95". I was sceptical, but he assured me that it was so, so much that I began to wonder if he might have a J4 after all. Spurred on by this thought, I took the time off to walk to the spectators' car park to see this marvel of tuning. Hiding under the bonnet was a Ford engine, not the usual 1,172 cc conversion but a Vee 8! The thing actually nestled under the bonnet quite well and the bulges in the bonnet sides were quite modest.

Those were the days when fitting a foreign engine was quite respectable. In 1958 or 59 at Snetterton, I was shown a conversion done to a J2 by a man who claimed to be a mechanic at B.R.M. The 1,172 cc side-valve engine had an aluminium head, a Shorrock supercharger and all the goodies imaginable. That car had seen a lot of money spent on it.

#### J2 Tales (4)

J2 chassis flex when they are taken over bumpy roads. If the doors are not too good a fit and body flexure is sufficiently great, then doors can fly open. A friend of mine in a J2, nipping through the Devon lane on a scatter rally came to a sharp right hand bend at the foot of a hill. The door flew open and the navigator was deposited neatly onto the grass verge.

Leaning onto a nearby gate was a local sage. "Ur", he said, " too much speed dull be the death uf ee.". This became a catch phrase among us. So far as I know too much speed has yet to cause the navigator's death.

At an MGCC Sprint at Brands Hatch in the early sixties, Steve Dear had BOTH his doors on his PB fly open. One at Druids and the other on Graham Hill Bend, the next left-hander at the bottom of the slope.

#### J2 Tales (7)

It was the time of the Salisbury Trial of 1969. The R.A.C. in their wisdom had decreed that those under sixteen years of age should not travel in open cars in trials. This ruling left Ecurie Hawke in some difficulty. How were we to transport self, Ann as normal bouncer, but now required for baby-minding duties out of the car, two boys (then aged six and four), the trialling spaniel and a replacement bouncer to the trial venue?

Fortunately, Keith Wein, a J2 owner from Bath (J3626) who has since emigrated to New Zealand complete with J2, came to the rescue. He volunteered to go to the trial on his motor scooter, wife on pillion.

The trial over, we repaired to a hostelry in Amesbury for beer and eggs and chips to await the announcement of the results. After an hour, Jim Tyler said to me, "your dog is looking a bit sad out there in the car". I replied to the effect that he'd have to wait for his supper until we got home. "It's not supper that's worrying him, go and see". I did. There had been a snow storm sufficient to fill up the cockpit of the J2. All that could be seen of the spaniel was a little black nose poking out from under the dashboard.

We had an interesting drive home, Keith using the J2's wheel tracks for guidance.

This tale originally appeared in infoletter no.123 and it was John Harris' editorial remark against it which gave me the idea for this little collection."

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More photos from Nev Churcher

Above: Nev's £25 J2  
Left: Harvey Noble 'Q'.

Below: Another view of the J2 with Nev driving, Alan Scott as passenger and Adrian Price (C-type) standing



