

T REGISTER



Totally T-Type



ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER 2004



Peter EDNEY



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THE EDITOR

Welcome to Issue 6 of **Totally T-Type!** Apologies if this is a little late in coming out, but things have been even more “last minute” this month than is usually the case. As I type this, I do not know for sure whether you will have the new look magazine, but I expect you will. I hope you are pleased with the improved quality. Quality, of course, costs money, but do not be alarmed, we have found a way forward and I shall deal with this on the next page.

There has been much consternation in the James household since son, Stephen, announced that he is off round the world for a year on 31 January. Mrs J is understandably concerned for her ‘little boy’ (he’s only 26!) as we live in uncertain times. Mr J has far more practical concerns nearer to home, such as “who is going to recover the file when your ham-fisted Editor loses half the magazine by pressing the wrong button on the keyboard?” “Who is going to download the PayPal payments for Regalia into the Register bank account, and who is going to maintain the website?” So there are several crash courses which the Editor must be put through and there aren’t too many brain cells left – but we shall manage!

I attended the Annual General Meeting of the MG Car Club recently and I must say that I found it illuminating. I was particularly interested in certain aspects of the Treasurer’s Report and it was a pity that the Treasurer was not at the meeting to answer a question of mine which held up the meeting for at least 5 minutes whilst the Chief Executive ferreted around for an answer. With my continuing concern about the affordability of the Kimber House proposals, I had spotted a worrying trend in the relationship between subscription income and Kimber House costs and wanted to draw the attention of the Directors (and the meeting) to this. (*continued on p. 4*)

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The position in 1998, as set out in the Treasurer's Report, showed subscription income, at £295k, comfortably exceeding Kimber House costs of £225k. However, by 2003, subs income, at £289k, barely covered the Kimber House costs of £281k.

The answer given by the Chief Executive was that the 2003 figures quoted in the Treasurer's Report were incorrect and the actual position was that subscription income in 2003 was £324k and Kimber House costs were £330k. I'll say no more.....! Anyhow, enough of this from me, but you will find a report on page 9.

Now to next year's subscription rate for **Totally T-Type**. You may recall that you received the January 2004 Issue free and your £6 subscription provides you with the next six issues, i.e. up to and including the January 2005 Issue. Therefore, next year's subscription rate needs to cover the six issues from March 2005 to January 2006. Although our printing costs will have risen substantially, the Committee has decided to keep the subscription rate the same and to try to make up most of the shortfall through advertising revenue.

The other decision of the Committee was that the £6 subscription rate should only apply to T Register members (i.e. those who are fully paid up members of the MG Car Club and own a T-Type). Recipients of TTT, who do not fall into this category, would need to pay a subscription which is more closely aligned to its printing and distribution cost. This has been set at £12.

Subscriptions for next year are due immediately after receipt of the January Issue, but earlier renewals would be most welcome. Your cheque, payable to 'MGCC 'T' Register' should be sent to me at 85 Bath Road, Keynsham, BRISTOL BS31 1SR. Please also include your MGCC Membership number and your T Register number. If you are an overseas subscriber and a 'T' Register member, these rates are unchanged for next year, i.e. £11 Europe and £15 Rest of World.

Mention was previously made of the MG Car Club AGM, which was held at The British Motor Industry Heritage Trust, Gaydon in Warwickshire. I was due to drive the 80 odd miles in the TC, but the weather was very wet, so I am ashamed to say that I chickened out. However, I atoned for my sins by taking the TC to the same venue with fellow members from the Lacock (Wiltshire) natter on 7th November.

Finally, next year's European Event of the Year in Holland is already attracting entries from T-Type owners. I know that Register Secretary, Chris Sundt intends to go and, judging by an enquiry from John Ward, he is also going. Brian Rainbow (01926 612415) can get a return ferry from Harwich to The Hook by fast Sea Cat for £166 return, car plus 2 people.

T REGISTER NEWS

REGISTRATIONS

I regret that I am still not ready to publish the breakdown by model and by country. We'll need to carry this forward to the January edition. However, the higher profile which the Register undoubtedly has through the worldwide circulation of this magazine is having a beneficial 'knock on' effect with new registrations. I am indebted to Marco Di Paolo, Vice President of the MG Car Club of Argentina for sending us much valuable information on the TCs in their Register. I'm not sure of the final total of new TCs which Marco has given us, but there must have been nearly 20 which we didn't know about and are therefore new to the Register.

REBUILD 2005

The date of 20th March, 2005 at Ernulf School, St Neots, Cambridgeshire is confirmed. This will also be the date of the Annual General Meeting. Organiser, Peter Cole, has suggested a list of possible topics and these have been included in the **Safety Fast!** notes for December (which you should receive around the same time as this, that is if you are in the UK). There is still much ground for Peter to cover before he is in a position to come up with a final draft timetable, but we should be in a position to publish this in the January Issue of TTT.

SALE OF REGISTER YEARBOOKS

The sale of past Yearbooks mentioned in the September Issue has been well supported, mainly by overseas members. Just to recap, the 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 Yearbooks are being offered at £3 per copy. The 2002 Yearbook is being sold at half price (£4). The 1989 and 1995 Yearbooks are sold out and the Yearbook was not published in 1994. It is also worth mentioning that we can send full sets of Yearbooks overseas directly to the addressee in a blue Royal Mail mailbag at a discounted rate of postage.

REGISTER WEBSITE

The much improved Register website will become live on 31st December. It will be known as www.tregister.org (but you can't access it yet). In the meantime, you can access the Register's existing site at www.mgcars.org.uk/mgct/ The December **Safety Fast!** notes give this

information and the January **Safety Fast!** Newsletter will contain a feature on the new website.

REGISTER 'T' PARTY AT SHUTTLEWORTH

Committee member, Graham Brown is currently in negotiation with the Shuttleworth Trust regarding a concessionary rate for our 'T' Party. This is normally held to coincide with the 1930s Summer Air Display on the first Sunday in July. More details to follow.

THE AUTUMN TOUR

This year's Autumn Tour was really good (they seem to get better every year!). A full report with photographs will appear in the January **Safety Fast!** Newsletter. In the meantime, the Secretary has asked me to publicise a couple of the awards and this follows below. However, before doing this, you really ought to know that next year's Autumn Tour will be in Shropshire, the year after, in Yorkshire and the year after that, in either, East Anglia or Devon/Cornwall. Further details on the 2005 Autumn Tour (9/10/11 September) will be published along with the Newsletter report mentioned above.

Now to the Secretary's request. It is customary to present awards at the Gala Dinner held on the Saturday evening of the T Register Weekend. Chris Sundt takes up the story of the Secretary's Award:

"One cup that is awarded each year at the T Weekend dinner is the Secretary's Trophy. This is, for those that have not seen it, a miniature Bluemels steering wheel mounted on an octagonal plinth. I gather it was made some years ago by Abingdon apprentices, but know nothing else of its history. Perhaps someone can enlighten me.

This Trophy is presented to a member of the Register who has, in the opinion of the Secretary, performed some exceptional service to the Register that should be recognised. When I took on the job of secretary, I sought advice from previous incumbents and Chairmen as to what guidelines, if any, existed. There are none. It is at the whim of the Secretary.



Looking at who has been awarded it over the years, some familiar names appear – Paddy Willmer, Keith Hodder, Peter Cole (last year). This year I decided to break the mould.

There is a body of people who go largely unrecognised – those that sit quietly beside the driver stoically braving the weather (“it’s only a light shower, it’s not worth putting the hood up”) and struggling to cram a fortnight’s clothes into one tiny bag. Many of them continue to tolerate inconvenience at home – bits of engine in the kitchen, spare parts stored in bedrooms. A few have to put up with their other halves spending significant amounts of time on T Register business, whether as Committee members or organising events (like the recent superb T Weekend in Buxton).

One person who has made a massive contribution to the resurgence of the T Register is John James. He has, almost single-handedly, built up the Regalia into a substantial, and profitable, business. ‘Totally T-Type’ was his idea, and he single-handedly produces and distributes it (with contributions from across the Register). His house is full of regalia, year books, printing and publishing equipment and bits of car – he has a TC (a rolling restoration), a PB (currently undergoing an engine rebuild) and a J2 (a long-term rebuild project). While it would be easy to award the Secretary’s Trophy to him, I felt there was someone else who deserved it more.

I therefore decided to award the trophy this year to his wife, Sue James, in recognition of her forbearance and support of all John does for the Register. I also did so to acknowledge all those who support us in our enthusiasm for all things T-Type. Congratulations, Sue – and well-deserved!”

Now to the Montague Burton cup (and I’m sorry, but I don’t have a photo). This award is presented to the T-Typer, who in the opinion of the Register Committee embodies, by his/her use of the car, the true spirit of T-Type motoring. Last year the trophy was awarded to Mike and Loretta Sherrell and their fellow travellers from Oz. This year it was presented to Malcolm Sayers, who managed to clock up this impressive schedule in his TD:

- 14th March - T Register Rebuild Seminar, St Neots
- 3rd April - MGB Register ‘Cotswold Run’
- 18th April - ‘The Kimber Run’ in Derbyshire
- 25th April - MGCC Devon & Cornwall ‘Atlantic Coast Express Run’
- 5/10th May - Starting Handle Club ‘Tour of Southern Ireland’

- 10/17th May -MGCC Eire & Northern Ireland 'Tour of Ireland' (on this run he helped Bernard Tetu of France, whose TF broke it's gearbox, the TF was shipped to Malcolm's house where he fitted a Sierra 5 speed gearbox, then rebuilt the back axle with crown wheel /pinion from Malcolm Hogg, and finally fitted a new timing chain before Bernard arrived from France to collect it!!)
- 30th May - MGCC Abingdon Centre 'Old Speckled Hen Run'
- 13th June - Octagon CC 'Wings Run'
- 27th June-5th July - Prix des Alpes Classic Rally, 8th overall, 1st pre 1960 car, winner of Gold Medal
- 12/20th July - Arden MG Octagon Group 'Isle of Man Tour'
- 25th July - MG Car Club Silverstone International Meeting
- 15th August - MGOCC 'Snowdon Run' started in Llandudno and finished in Betws-y-Coed
- 1/14th September - MG Car Club Italia 'Mare Gallura' tour of Sardinia
- 16/19th September – Circuit des Remparts, in Angoulême, France.

Malcolm was unable to attend the T Register Weekend as he was away in France with the TD, but he was subsequently presented with the trophy on his return from Angoulême.

Have a rest next year Malcolm – you've certainly earned it! – but I know you won't!

REGISTER DVLA REPRESENTATIVE

T Register members will have been saddened to learn of the untimely death of Malcolm Hogg. Malcolm was our DVLA representative and I know that he helped many members to reclaim the original registration number of their car in circumstances where it had "lapsed". The DVLA is very strict in these matters and will only deal with a nominated representative from a car club. The Committee has appointed Roy Miller, Register Historian, as the Register's nominated DVLA representative. Roy's contact details are given on page 38.

REGISTER ATTENDANCE AT THE OCTOBER MGCC COUNCIL MEETING

Each Centre, Branch and Register of the MG Car Club is entitled to send two voting delegates to MGCC Council meetings. It is the Council which dictates the business of the Club by ratifying the work of its Board of Directors, or putting forward items for discussion and possible action by the Board. The Council delegates who represent the T Register are Chairman, Dennis Barker and Secretary, Chris Sundt.

I think it is probably fair to say that the October Council meeting was dominated by discussion on the Kimber House proposals. Chris Sundt, our very able and hardworking Secretary, prepared a detailed report back for Committee members and I have tried to pick out the salient points from his report below. However, before doing so, T Register members will be interested to read a couple of extracts from a letter dated 24th September from Stephen Cox, MG Car Club Chairman. This letter was in response to one written by Dennis Barker on 19th August, expressing the concerns of the T Register Committee and a considerable number of MGCC members (at that time 200, but it is well over 300 now) relating to the proposals for a New Kimber House. The relevant extracts are as follows:

"If the Council votes approval to any plan, a fair amount of time will have passed and you will have had sight of all detailed plans, financial and otherwise. I would add that if we get that far, the Douglas Mickel Trust will have approved it too since we will not present plans which we cannot agree"

*" unless **we** are comfortable with the sums, we won't even put it forward for consideration. I am not about to expose myself being known as the Chairman who steered the Club towards financial meltdown and I know the rest of the Board would echo this comment"*

Now, turning to Chris Sundt's report back, I find it difficult to do justice in the limited amount of space in TTT to what is a very detailed summary of proceedings. However, I will try!

Three key conclusions were reached:

1. A detailed timetable for provision of information on the proposed New Kimber House was put forward by the Board (accepting that this information needs to be available to Council members prior to a decision at the next Council meeting in March 2005).
2. A Motion requiring the Board to investigate in principle alternative ways forward (including upgrading the present building and a move outside Abingdon) which can be considered in March if Council rejects the New

Kimber House proposal.

3. The Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Club need to be revised.

Taking each conclusion in turn, the detailed timetable would begin with the Board considering a complete proposal, including all financial information, in December. The proposal will be developed, based on a guaranteed maximum tender price (arising out of a competitive tendering process) and will be made available in electronic form to Centres, Registers and Branches (CRBs) in mid-February. CRBs to consult members prior to the Council meeting in March.

As regards the "alternative ways" motion, this would also need to be pursued if the complete proposal, due to be presented to the Board in December, were not to find favour with the Board.

Note: It also occurs to the Editor that The Douglas Mickel Trust need to be in this 'loop' and presumably would need to be happy with the proposals, since, if the DMT is not happy, then there is little point in the Board considering the proposals.

Finally, a revision of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Club would be presented to the AGM in 2005 as a revised draft. A Motion to do this was accepted by the Board, subject to a review of the feasibility of doing the work. If changes were to be agreed the revised M & As would (legally) come into effect following the AGM in 2006.

Hopefully this is a fair summary of the decisions of the October Council and the AGM inasmuch as they affect the New Kimber House proposals and the M & As of the Club.

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WARNING!...DANGER!....HANDLE WITH CARE!

The September Issue contained this warning from Bob Douglas following his experience of breaking a steering sector shaft in the Silverstone California Cup autotests, earlier this year. Eric Worpe has kindly penned some comments about this below.

“The previous edition of **Totally T-Type** contained a report from Bob Douglas on the alarming failure of the sector shaft in his TB Tickford. John James has since learnt that Bob had a Tomkin's modification fitted to the steering box. Could the Tomkin's mod. have increased the stress on the sector shaft, thus hastening its fracture ?

Almost certainly! The original Bishop Cam box, for all its vices, does at least provide a direct counter-thrust surface for the peg. The taper on the peg forces the peg to disengage from the worm and push up against the top plate of the steering box. The sector shaft/arm has only to cope with shear and compressive stresses, as all thrust forces are transferred to the top plate directly above the peg.

The Tomkin's mod. transfers the thrust force from the peg to the sector shaft, by way of the sector arm. The thrust force on the shaft is then countered by the bearing in the Tomkin's housing.

This results in a bending stress in the sector shaft/arm. This is not a stress that the designers of the Bishop Cam box would have anticipated, or made allowances for. The result ? A shorter life expectancy for the sector shaft. Had the Bishop Cam box in the TABC been of a more robust construction, then its life expectancy might not have been reduced significantly. However, the marginal strength of our Morris 8 "hand down" steering box seems alarmingly compromised by the additional bending stress introduced by the Tomkin's mod.

The sector shaft on the TABC shares with the front stub axles a "critical component" status. So, how often should they be crack tested, or is it even worth crack testing them? It's almost a matter of when they fail, not if. Crack testing is not without its er...flaws, as X-ray inspections sometimes reveal what dye penetration or magna-fluxing fail to show. How can we have any idea of the 50 odd year stress history of these components, which would have had a safety margin based on a vehicle life of around 25 years.

As failure can occur without warning, a responsible action might be to renew critical components as a matter of course. It may take just one serious accident to force the hand of the Government or insurance companies to insist on the replacement of parts that are seen as safety critical. Who can argue that such a safety ruling isn't valid ? It's in all our interests if we wish to be allowed onto the public highway”.

Ed's note: I subsequently asked Eric for some clarification about the linking of sector shaft failure with the Tomkins mod. He replied as follows:

"My original note (i.e. the comments on the previous page) linked the "shorter life expectancy of the sector shaft" with the additional stress due to the bending moment applied to the arm of the sector shaft. It's not just the Tomkins mod that is responsible for the fracture, but the fatigue caused by the sector shaft's normal operation. This would have eventually caused the shaft to fail, even without the addition of the Tomkins mod. The sector shaft in our Bishop Cam box is a highly stressed component and should be changed as a matter of course".

Ed's further note: This is all very worrying. I thought long and hard before publishing this, as I would not want to cause unnecessary alarm. However, I have published it in good faith, as I think that on balance, it is better to be aware of the potential danger than to just ignore it. For my own part, I have been debating whether to keep the original box or to fit a VW box. I must admit that I keep changing my mind as my heart tells me to keep the original set-up but the head tells me to fit a VW box. However, I think I have now decided to keep the original box, but to fit a new sector shaft and drop arm. In the meantime, I am especially careful when manoeuvring the TC at slow speed e.g. when parking, as I believe there is greater stress on the steering box in these situations.

DISCLAIMER

Articles published in *Totally T-Type* are published in good faith, but the MGCC 'T' Register cannot be held responsible for their content. Always seek advice from a competent person before doing anything that could affect the safety of your car.

Now for some light relief (with the emphasis on relief!) as it's been fairly heavy reading up to now. Roy Ingleton, T Register member and author of the thoroughly absorbing book about John Gott, has written to me as follows:

"Like many other older members of the "T" Register, I occasionally (i.e. quite often!) find the need to take a "comfort stop" when on rallies or tours and this is not always convenient.

I have discussed this with my doctor and he has come up with a novel solution, details of which are enclosed and which you may wish to share with other members of the Register.

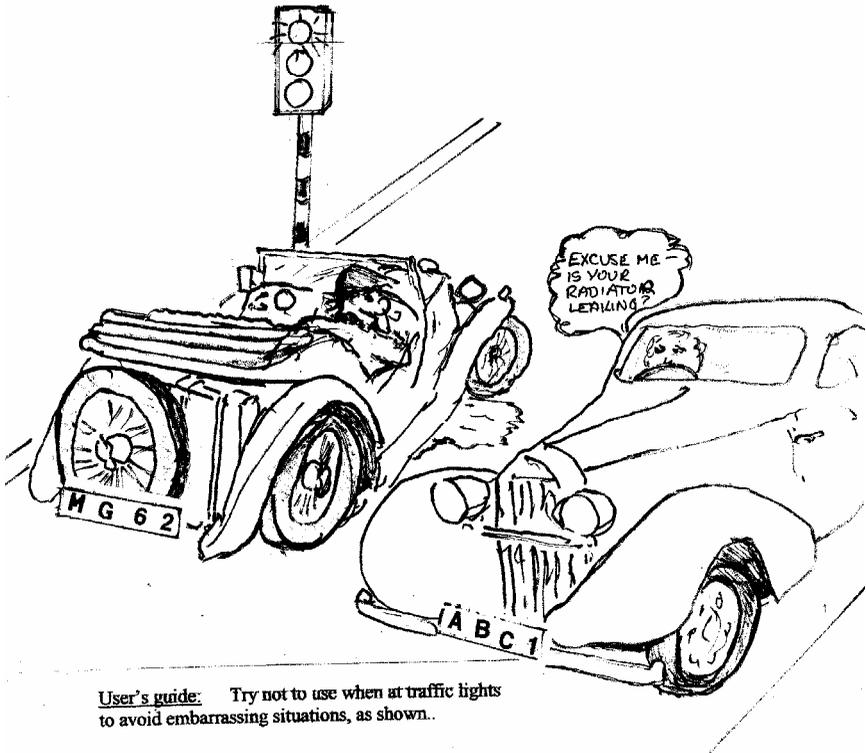
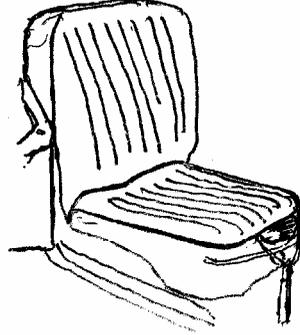
Patent MG "Comfort Adaptation"

Materials:

- 1 deep-sided funnel
- Small length of hose
- Velcro strip to retain funnel against seat

Fitting :

- Care should be taken drilling hole through floor.
- Diameter of hose suitable for an old wine bottle cork to plug hole when Adaptation not in use.



User's guide: Try not to use when at traffic lights to avoid embarrassing situations, as shown..

Ed's note: With apologies to our female readers!

Drag Link Ends: Another Cautionary Tale.

I read George Arber's article on drag link ends in the September edition of TTT with great interest. My TC did not have the usual drag link end, a previous owner had replaced it with modern ball joint. It took me some time to realise that the drag link end is not the same as either of the two types of track rod ends on the car.

I did not see the task of finding a replacement drag link as urgent, as I was undertaking a complete restoration of TC 3440, so initially I was happy to be patient, hoping to stumble across one at Beaulieu or another autojumble. Needless to say I did not find one, so after a few fruitless attempts at advertising for a replacement, I ordered one from a well-known supplier.

When it arrived it turned out to be a track rod end, not a drag link end. I also noticed several other features that concerned me. I discussed these with the supplier but was told that the manufacturer was a difficult person to deal with, was very aggressive and did not take kindly to any form of criticism. The supplier told me he had to buy them from him on a 'take it or leave it' basis. When I pointed out that in my opinion some of the features made the item dangerous I was told "that's why we have liability insurance". I was also told that the same manufacturer sold to all the UK suppliers, so wherever I went I would get the same item with the same set of problems.

After phoning around I decided to place an order with NTG who assured me they could supply a correct drag link. When it arrived it was indeed a drag link end, not a track rod end, but it had all the hallmarks of the same manufacturer, and all of the same problems. It appeared that either the first supplier had not conveyed my concerns to the manufacturer, or he simply couldn't care a dam about the safety of the end user of these parts. The problems I noticed included:

1. The adjuster thread was 14 tpi, not 16 tpi as I believe the original to be. Thus when the instruction manual specifies that it should be adjusted tight, and then backed off by half a turn, there will be more play than intended.



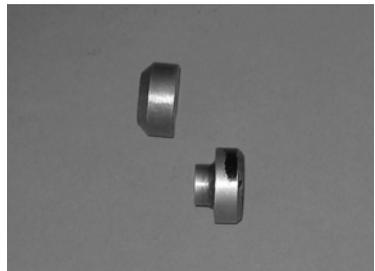
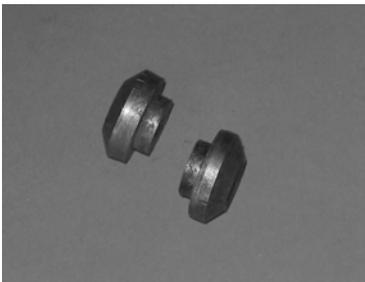
Note the differing threads, the upper plug with the finer thread is the Abingdon one.

2. The siamesed hole arrangement in the body wall through which the tail of the ball pin emerges consisted of two large holes, so the pin could very easily be removed through either hole. Bearing in mind that the whole drag link assembly hangs upside down from the pin, in the event of a failure of a component within this style of drag link end the link arm could possibly drop off the ball leaving the car with no steering at all.

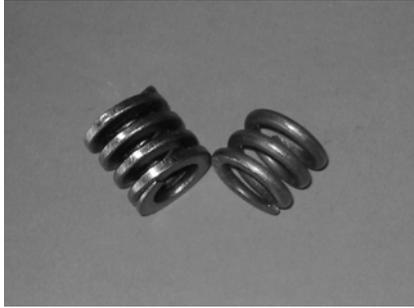
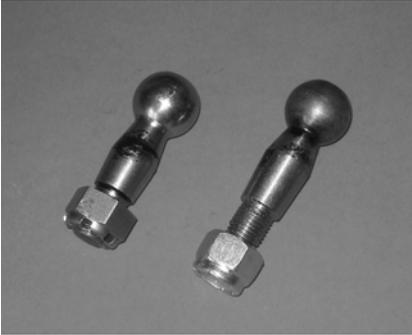


*Photo (above right) **Upper:** NTG with two large holes, through either of which, the ball can easily be removed. **Lower:** Abingdon Spares with smaller hole in the operating position.*

3. As George Arber found, there appeared to be no well-defined shoulder for the inner ball cup to locate on. It appeared that the main inner chamber had been drilled out rather than being bored out, therefore there was an angular shoulder left by the tip of the drill rather than a more desirable square shoulder.
4. The cross-drilling that took the locking split pin was off set from the diameter, so it was very difficult to fit the split pin.
5. The surfaces of both the cups and the ball were softer than I expected them to be. I could easily mark them with a file, therefore they may have been liable to wear more rapidly than expected. In my opinion it is important that the ball at least is case hardened rather than being hardened throughout, which could make it brittle and possibly liable to snap at the neck.



***Cups** in left hand pic NTG cups. **Cups** in right hand pic Abingdon Spares cups.*



Ball pegs: Left hand, Abingdon Spares, with 3/8 BSF castellated nut. Right hand, NTG, with 3/8 UNF nyloc nut. **Springs:** The left hand spring with the square section is the Abingdon Spares part.

Additionally, but not a safety issues, the thread on the tail of the pin was 3/8 UNF rather than BSF, and it was supplied with a nyloc nut rather than a castellated nut as the original. The pin was however cross-drilled so if I chose to replace the nyloc nut myself with a castellated nut it would probably be lockable with a split pin. I also noticed that the spring inside the drag link was made from round section wire rather than square section wire as per the springs fitted to my original track rod ends.

I e-mailed NTG about these points and asked them to let me know who the manufacturer was so that I could speak to him myself, if no one else would. Mike Green at NTG refused to disclose the manufacturer, even after I assured him that I did not want to buy parts directly, and promised not to disclose the manufacturer's name to a third party. When I highlighted the problems that concerned me, adding that in my opinion they made the drag link and track rod ends sold by NTG and others potentially unsafe, he e-mailed back. I quote his response verbatim:

"We note your comments re the drag link ends, and can only add that we agree with your conclusions. We have tried get the supplier to improve the quality, but have only met with the reaction you describe."

I asked him a second time but he once again refused to disclose the manufacturer. So as far as I know this manufacturer is continuing to make these potentially unsafe components and is supplying them to the trade, who in turn are supplying them to unwitting end users. NTG tell me they now have a new supplier, but I have not seen an example of their new part. Other suppliers may have switched too. However if you have bought a drag link end or track rod end from a UK supplier in the past I can only suggest that you drive your car with caution until you have satisfied yourself that it is safe.

Still needing a drag link end to complete my car I started to look further afield. I finally managed to obtain one from Abingdon Spares who described the item as 'refurbished'. Whether it is actually an original item I cannot say, but it certainly doesn't have any of the features exhibited by its UK counterpart.

The adjuster thread is 16 tpi. The hole through which the ball pin emerges is smaller so that the pin can only be removed through the second hole, and then only with much difficulty. The axial length of ball cups is much greater, making them more robust. The shoulder on which they sit is better defined so that the chances of the problem that George identified is less likely to occur. The surface of the ball and the cups is much harder, so hard in fact that I can't mark them with a file. Interestingly the part is stamped with the initials SEV inside an octagon. Perhaps someone will recognise this logo?

I am still somewhat concerned however that even on the part supplied by Abingdon Spares the ball pin can be removed, albeit with some difficulty, through the hole in the side wall of drag link end. I had always believed that the pin was assembled via the end cap, thus providing some semblance of steering even in the event of an internal failure. Perhaps someone can confirm or deny this?

Incidentally, when reassembling the drag link end the correct order is *cup, ball, cup, spring, cap, split pin*.

Peter Cole.

peter.cole@onetel.net

Ed's note: I thought it fair to let NTG see this article and to comment if they so wished. They did, indeed, take up the offer and their e-mailed comments are reproduced below:

"Many thanks for giving us the opportunity to comment before publication of the Magazine.

In general I feel that Peter Cole's comments were valid, and as a result, we have researched the matter and now have a new supplier with a superior product, which we did offer Peter Cole, although by then he had obtained them from another source.

Where the difference in opinion arose concerned our company policy of not revealing our supplier, a practice that is pretty general in the trade. In this case the matter was addressed without delay, and has now been rectified. It has always been NTG's policy to respond to customer queries as promptly and positively as possible, and it was hoped that a satisfactory

conclusion was reached. At least our company has taken the opportunity to improve a product and regain customer confidence in this area.

I hope that these comments will be appreciated by your readers."

Regards,

Mike Green, NTG Motor Services Ltd.

Ed's further note: There are ways and means of overcoming the problem faced by Peter. One solution was e-mailed to me by Lyn Harcombe and is reproduced below. Another, is to buy the complete new steering bars with rose jointed ends from T Racer, Tim Patchett (see his advert below).

From Lyn Harcombe

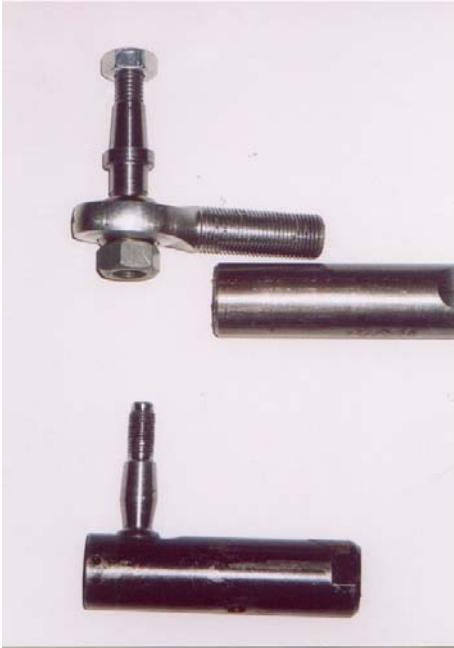
"The article by George Arber in the September issue of TTT brought back similar symptoms that I experienced with my own TC. The ball joint at the end of the drag link had worn and the small amount of 'upward' play between the ball and the cups was sufficient to cause considerable free play in the steering.

I took the step of replacing the existing ball and socket arrangement with a rose joint assembly. The adaptation proved extremely easy and did not in any way alter the basic arrangement at the end of the drag link. A local engineer manufactured an end piece which was threaded 20 tpi at one end to fit the drag link and 5/8 inch UNF at the other to take the rose joint. He also made a new piece which was bolted into the drag link end and tapered at the other to fit the Bishop Cam steering arm. I hope that the two enclosed photos (*see next page*) show how it was all done. The final result is a very neat assembly which looks very similar to the original arrangement.

As to the performance of the mod? Well, I don't think it works any better than a properly adjusted ball and joint arrangement but it has removed all play from the drag link mechanism which is bound to reduce any overall free movement in the steering. Whether it will last any longer than the ball and joint remains to be seen."

Tim Patchett's Christmas offers.....

One piece oil pump shaft and gear, high material spec to suit TC-TF XPAG/EG Wolseley 4/4 etc @£35. Rose jointed steering bars (drag link and tie rod) suitable for TA/TC. Direct replacement for original items no drilling just swap over easily fitted BZP finish c/w socket sets and nyloc nuts @£120. TB/TF distributor drive gears £25 TC gearbox 3rd gears newly manufactured @ £235 only three left. Alfin drums new to suit TA/C and TD/TF @£380/pair. Other new parts available please ask, postage at cost. Tel /fax 01274818748 mob 07876220175



Above (left): the two photos from Lyn Harcombe as referred to on page 18. **Above (right):** the rose jointed steering bars (drag link and tie bar) as advertised by Tim Patchett on the same page.

TF Madness - Session Two

For those who luckily missed Part One (March Issue), I am suffering from the above infliction and have been for the last two years.

I am writing this while convalescing for two weeks in Torbay, Devon, having been told by my therapist and long suffering wife that I had to come out of the workshop and leave "Tiff" (my TF) all alone for a fortnight. Doesn't seem fair to me, but who am I to argue?

The progress over the last few months has, I think, been quite good. The engine is back in and running, but only after severe stress with the valve timing as I did not notice that the engine on the XPAG video was upside down so counted the links the wrong way. **Note:** must get new video player – glasses –brain cell.



The instruments have been done by Vintage Restorations and on collecting them I was presented with a plastic wallet containing the various bits of fluff and the odd spider that had been found inside them. Obviously the engineer has the same warped sense of humour as I do.

Sanity seemed to return for a little while until suddenly, in a flash of complete lunacy, it struck me that with the new body fitted, there was no reason why I could not drive her. So battery in, hot wire ignition, temporary feed to starter switch and earth (jump leads), fuel tank from an old outboard engine wedged on the top of the tool box, a plastic box for a seat and off we go. BRILLIANT!!!! Drove out of the garage around the yard and back in again, grinning like the proverbial Cheshire cat, even if every time I pressed on the pedals my makeshift seat went backwards in direct proportion to the pressure put on the pedals.

This may not seem much but it was the first time for 20 years that Tiff had actually turned her own wheels and I was over the moon and could not be made to shut up about it. It was at this time all around me were giving each other knowing looks as obviously there was no hope for me at all.

In my last session I think I bumbled on about the seats. Well I'm glad to say that, ably assisted by the wife, one has now been completed, only the other one to do! There's an awful lot more to rebuilding seats than I thought, the originals weren't that bad anyway.



I have suffered many sleepless nights pondering about a 5-speed conversion, since, if I'm going to do it, it needs doing now before all the finished body etc is fitted. My therapist has been no help at all and discussions with other 'nutters' – sorry – T-Typers, came out at 50% for and 50% against. Great Help!! Anyway, at Silverstone, I ordered the kit. I know it will upset the purists but it's no different to putting an MGB overdrive on a PB, is it John? **Ed:** ahem!!

The present situation is that all body panels and the new body have been filled and 4 coats high build primer applied and trial fitted. (a waste of time so I'm told because they still won't fit when you try fitting them again) Ha, more stress!! But she does look nice sitting proudly on new wire wheels.

After many weeks of making excuses to myself as to why I couldn't take her to pieces yet (be honest this was the only time I had seen her as a complete car) I stripped everything off and have applied 2 or 3 coats of



Reno Red. Even though I say so myself, well somebody's got to! I'm pleased with the results so far.

The weather in Devon at the moment is excellent for spraying ie. hot and sunny and I'm just wondering if the wife would miss me if I shot back to Hastings for a couple of days to

finish the spraying. NO!!! I don't think I'd live long enough to finish the rebuild. Ah well!

The above, when written down, does not seem much work, but with all the other bits and pieces that crop up as you go along - it's been a busy time, and I still don't know where some of the bits go. That's torn it! - I'm depressed again now because I should have a lot more done by now and I've just been warned that I should not be writing this while convalescing away from anything MG. (not quite! - I've smuggled an MG book and a T Register polo shirt under my bed)

Must go now before I'm caught again!

Next gripping instalment when they let me have pen and paper.

Mel Brookes

Ed's note: Mel also included the following note with his "TF Madness" contribution.

An open letter to all 'T-Typers'

I think we are all guilty to some extent of taking what our Committee do for us for granted. There is always help and advice on tap, events such as Rebuild, Silverstone and the myriad of other events that don't just happen, they are organised for us by hard working volunteers.

This brings me to the point of this letter.

I felt it time to put something back, so volunteered for a couple of sessions on the T Register stand at Silverstone this year. Feeling a bit nervous as the new boy, I was soon made welcome and found myself talking T matters to all manner of people from the U.K. and abroad. I can honestly say I thoroughly enjoyed every minute.

So next time, if you get the chance to volunteer, don't just think about it. **DO it!** I can assure you you'll not regret it

Mel Brookes, Member No. 97833

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THE REBUILD OF TD 17571

This is TD 17571, as bought by Malcolm Purvis, who lives in South West France. Malcolm bought the car on EBAY and it was shipped to France



from the USA earlier this year. The Register has been able to assist Malcolm with technical queries and with details of some recommended suppliers and I understand that he has used the services of Brown and Gammons for replacement parts and for overhaul of items suitable for

refurbishment.

Little is known about the history of the car. It was last registered in Pennsylvania 1971 as 801 13 S.



Malcolm has stripped the car right down and now has a rolling chassis with much of the brake work done. He has recently sent a photo of the current stage of restoration and this is reproduced on the left.

Keep at it Malcolm, you'll get there in the end!

Specials

(No issue of TTT would be complete without a missive from 'The Tangerine Terror' – here's one on Specials.....)

It was good to see the display of XPAG Specials at Silverstone this year and especially the variety. Each one is someone's version of the ideal car and it is interesting to see that performance, that is speed and handling, are of paramount importance. I may be wrong, (something which happens very infrequently) but all the cars displayed look to be competition cars with their principal design criteria to win races. It was good to see Andy King's car on display and if you walked the auto jumble area, there were some more Q type replicas to be seen. Question, if they attempt to replicate a Q type, are they copies and therefore not specials? Whatever, keep the spirit alive, and long live the Specials Register!

Building a Special is normally one of those projects that seems like a good idea at the time. The initial outlay looks modest and the result looks to be just round the corner, but beware, before you attempt your own Special, it is not that simple. By Special, I am not talking about a TC with the front cycle wings, that is a modified car, a true Special is a car optimised for a set purpose and is a very different undertaking. The time taken to complete the dream is dependent on three things; your resolve to complete the job, yours and your friends' skills and last and by no means least, your ability to grit your teeth and continue to pour ever more money into that collection of bits in your workshop.

I almost forgot the workshop, do not try to build a Special in a cramped, damp, mud floored hovel without mains power with only a hammer and adjustable wrench. Your prerequisite is a proper vehicle workshop with corresponding tools and equipment.

If you want a quality finished product then you need to accept your limitations and recognise those skills you need to beg, borrow or steal. Despite what we think, there are very few of us who are expert designers, engineers, mechanics, bodybuilders, trimmers and painters all rolled into one. There are lots of Specials out there that are a tribute to their builder's tenacity rather than skill and close scrutiny often shows them to be short of professional execution. If you ever stand back after completing any part of your Special and say to yourself 'that will do', then it won't. Accept no compromise, you have to be able to say to yourself that what you have just done, is the best it can ever be.

It is also important to stay on track with your objectives. You will have many influences trying to push you off course; **time** – 'got to get it done for the XXXXX event', **cost** – 'can't afford an XXXXX', **advice** - 'I shouldn't do it like that mate, if it were mine I would do this'. Give any of these diversions

very close scrutiny before accepting them, just like Meatloaf said, 'sleep on it'.

Why this outburst on Specials? You guessed it, I am building one myself. It is based on a T type and is being built as a fast road car with track day potential. It had to be a comfortable all day driving fit for me, no mean feat. It had to be distinctively MG but also different from any other T type Special. There were too many other criteria to list here but after 11 months it is now bodied and running but not yet road legal. The present schedule is to have it complete for late September, then dismantled again and painted ready for New Years Day ('05) at Adstock.

If you are considering a Special then take your time, do it right, double you first time schedule and then triple your budget. Once you have started get some beer and an old armchair in your workshop, so you can contemplate your wisdom in comfort because you never know, you might end up selling the house!

Regards, 'The Tangerine Terror'.

Ed's note: This article just missed the last issue of TTT. Perhaps we can have a photo of the completed car for the January issue? In the meantime, here's another to whet your appetite. Taken by Piers Hubbard at the Indaba, this is "Fatman", one of the three Les Miller Specials. The car is owned by Rodney Green, who had a mishap with it recently and is in the throes of restoring it. The other two Specials are featured on page 28.



Notes from a Rebuild

No. 4

A TC Puzzle

If the answer is.....

“Dizzie cap, rotor, HT wire set, 2 set points, 3 plates and points, 5 sets spark plugs, Nulon bottle, tin of Nulon, roll of wire, 5 exhaust olives, muffler putty, muffler tape, 2 tubes Silastic, electrical tape, tube of contact adhesive, fire extinguisher, fan belt, plastic windscreen, fuel pump circuit, tin of Bars Stopleak, 2 spanners, 3 pliers, 2 screw drivers, points file, plug spanner”

.....what was the question?

Well the question was:- “what did Harry and Deirdre Pyle store in their TC battery box (as well as the smallest Japanese car battery available) for their epic 7 month journey around the world, described in Deirdre’s excellent and fascinating book, “Drive Them ‘til the Roads Wear Out”.

Battery Business

This attests to the huge capacity of the TC battery box, however I still can’t believe the oft’ told “fact” that Abingdon welded in used army ammunition boxes for this purpose after the war.

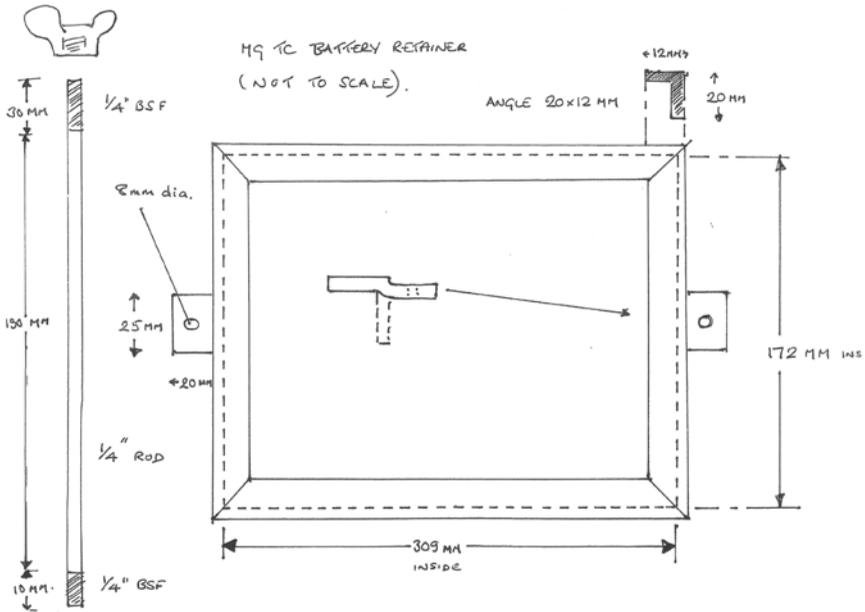
So, TCs had big battery boxes to accommodate the Lucas open bar STXW9A, where’s the “puzzle”?

The puzzle is whether original TCs had any means of securing the battery to the base of the box. Despite the fact that several TCs owners have had their cars for over 50 years, no one I know can tell me whether the battery was fixed or loose. The internet debate (www.mg-tabc.org), which has surfaced a few times repeats the following alternatives:-

1. The captive nuts in the battery base were never used and the battery bounced around in the same fashion as most do now.
2. The Lucas battery STXW9A, had drilled, moulded “ears” at the top outside edge of the casing which were bolted down with threaded rods to the base.
3. There was a mysterious and never identified securing frame which surrounded the battery top and was connected by threaded rods to the base. This component is not however identified in the factory TC parts list.

My solution

A few years ago, I raised this question in the Octagon Bulletin and received a very helpful reply from Ken Siddall of the Octagon Car Club, enclosing a drawing of a TC Battery Retainer along the lines of 3 (above), which I have redrawn below. I have no idea whether this is a copy of an original or is Ken's neat solution to a problem. As the photos show, the retainer certainly does the job and with the brass wing-nuts looks appropriately "period". I was told by Lincon Batteries that their M/O 242 battery has the same dimensions as the original Lucas and the retainer fits this, and the captive nuts, precisely.



So, can you solve the puzzle?

Did the Lucas STXW9A have “ears”. Does anyone have a picture of an original?

Do you have an original retaining bracket still on your car?! If so, the TC “obsessives” would love to see a picture of it.

Happy fettling!

John Steedman

johnhwsteedman@aol.com

Lincon Batteries 01702 525374

More Specials from Indaba, courtesy of Piers Hubbard.



This is “Spider”, which is now in the hands of Heyns Stead. He frequently campaigns the car in Historic events in Gauteng Province.

This is “Jasper”. This car is owned by David Gous and is raced whenever he has the time.



Keeping and Driving a T Type

July 29 I am spending some of the summer in Cornwall, so drive to the home of Roger Furneaux to seek help on my rear axle. On arrival, am greeted by his large dogs! He is enormously helpful, fitting a new bearing and seal to the N/S rear wheel. With his specialist measuring equipment he is able to tell me that my new rear bearing, bought from a stand at Silverstone last weekend, has too much play in it, despite being unused! I start up, ready to leave; 'nothing like the sound of an XPAG', he says, and off I drive back to my Cornish base in Bude. Also, while in Bude, have mended the starter motor, and what an awkward place it is! After removal of steering column, the problem of a dangling front cover is solved with a small screw found in my little box of 2, 3 and 4 BA. Also replace points – no gap achievable due to contact with cam being so badly worn! Amazing that the car has been running like this, but it has.

August 1st Drive Bude to Ipswich via Croydon. An early start to get ahead of traffic is interrupted when I suddenly realise that I have left John James' wheel behind. Katherine (daughter) and I therefore have to return, after about fifteen miles, and start out again! This means a faster drive across Devon (via Holsworthy and Okehampton), and much cruising around 70 mph on some of these straight A roads. I promise, this is good MG motoring country as long as you go early in the morning.

August 3rd Depart Ipswich for France. Take the Jct 2 south from M2 to West Malling, a nostalgic run as this is where I bought my car, then yellow, in 1972. Two occurrences but lovely motoring nevertheless. The first is that I hear and feel some uneasiness in the shock absorbers behind me. Second, the right-hand indicator has failed (not just the bulb). As I am on the way to France this is a concern. But with T Types we know most problems are solvable. Try mending an indicator, let alone shockers, in a modern machine.....

August 4th The ferry to Calais. I wonder how many times 'me and my M.G.' have done this route together? One memorable time was my honeymoon in '83 following the wedding at nearby Hythe. In those days the ferry would depart with car deck doors swung open, and while you were still in your car, you looked out to sea as the ferry sped away. A pity that lesson had to be learned so tragically (Herald of Free Enterprise).

I arrive at my brother's hotel in Reveillon (T Type owners welcome, just ask me for his details) and I find that an owner of a fifties Morgan is staying there. We attempt to resolve the failed rear O/S indicator together and eventually have to bypass the loom. There is a short somewhere in the loom (which is less than five yrs old, so mysterious, but such is T Type driving). This has become a priority for me because driving without a right indicator is sometimes almost dangerous, and certainly causes stress at

roundabouts and difficult junctions. When I first had this car, hand signals were still fully understood and many T Type owners were yet to fit winkers! So, if your indicator failed, then a hand signal was understood. I don't know when hand signals were removed from the Highway Code but I bet it was a long time ago. I am therefore relieved at having sorted out this problem; it makes for more confidence for my homeward journey! It's a bit like fly fishing; you fish with confidence or not at all; you drive a T Type with confidence or not at all.... I remember George Edney saying that we should not worry about oil pressures too much, simply drive with a mobile phone! Good advice! Eyes should be on the road, not on that little oil pressure gauge (so beautifully designed, but becomes worrying as your chequebook awaits the final death of your big end bearings, perhaps?)

August 6 Drive from Reveillon to Villiers s/ Mortagne with brother in the driving seat! M.G. behaves superbly for me, the passenger. How many of us ever get to be a passenger in our beloved car?? How different it is, and no steering wheel upon which to hang! Christine my wife loves, but does not drive, the car. Daughter Evelyn does, but not yet on public roads.

August 7 So, I am back in England after my French sojourn and a totally reliable T Type (so long as we can mend them, which we all can). Back to English roads, and therefore drivers, as well. Am I alone in finding that many drivers of more modern cars, who have recently overtaken you on some dual carriageway, are not ready to set off at traffic lights? Once the light goes to amber then green, it is at this stage that many seem to have the need to locate the correct gear (sometimes even *looking down* to find its position), then and only then, releasing the handbrake, and at last moving away. My method is to have the car *all ready to set off, no hesitation at all*. However, to be fair, during busier times like urban rush-hours, I do find some remarkably courteous and even competent driving around these days (except the ubiquitous white vans).

Sept 4 The beginning of September is another call on the TC. I have a new method of starting work again after the summer, and I find it most agreeable. Today I pack the tent, and my younger daughter and I go off to camp at a location near the Suffolk coast about twelve miles from home, and similarly from school/ work. The TC is purring, and it is so hot that the windscreen is flat. On Monday morning, we shall ease ourselves into work clothes (school uniform for Evelyn), and off we shall set with the wonderful anticipation at the end of the day of returning to camp, putting on holiday clothes and going off in the TC to buy BBQ stuff, followed by a visit to some hostelry before cooking!

On mpg, during the summer's long runs I have got up to 35 mpg, but since last night when I filled up with four gallons (18.18 'litres'), I only seem to have done 94 miles and the little warning light is once again shining. Surely not only 23 mpg? As there doesn't seem to be a leak, I believe that I am running too rich. It is many years since I rebuilt the carbs so maybe the job is necessary again? I do however remember that to run too weak leads to overheating of the combustion chamber and blowing the piston tops.

September 22/24 I am using the car for work these two days, so off to refuel Wednesday evening. The tyre looked a bit low on the rear N/S, and before I had gone half a mile I needed to change it, so that's another puncture to repair. At least you can get a T wheel off; ever tried a modern one?? The best way to remove the tyre is to stand on one side thus forcing the tyre well into the wheel, whilst levering the opposite side off.

Thursday brings rain, and I am happy to say that my second go at welding the hood frame together has been successful, as it is now needed. I am asked by people whether my car keeps me dry? It does, despite it looking less than water tight, but I don't boast too much. Most seem happier with the reply that this is not a car for bad weather. Of course it's not as comfortable as a new car, but it's a lot more memorable: I recall driving through some fearsome storms in the TC - Dartmoor in about '78, and the Severn Bridge in gales in '97, and each spring to mind as great experiences.

M.G. motoring has taken a bit of a dive as Autumn has approached - too much jumping in to the modern vehicle. I must remember even more often what a joy it is to check the dipstick and water, to crank up the engine (yes, I had to do that because of low battery only last week), and to use the choke (how many new cars have a choke??) I am unhappy about lack of use, and as I intend to keep these articles going if John James will allow, (*but of course! Ed*) then I must keep driving and upkeeping during the winter, as I used to do long ago when I couldn't afford any other means of transport in any case!

A few final anecdotes for this month:

1. As a T Type driver I am concerned that I need to invest more money in the car (I certainly could never invest more time). I shall look long and hard at finances!
2. Safety matters are subjects of many articles I notice, not least in TTT. So! nobody expected the T Type to be running nearly seventy years on. I agree. Articles about oil pressure worries never bother me, but articles about what amounts to metal fatigue do...I imagine that only crack testing can make one certain of safety in this area. I need to take advice.
3. There is so much knowledge around, but mine, even after thirty years, is not up to the scientifically brilliant articles about our cars that we read these days. I am going to look in to evening classes for some of the technical matters – after all, I am a musician, not a trained craftsman.

Finally, I had a wonderful drive to the T Reg Committee on 31 Oct, and only the T Type to take me (good, no possibility of succumbing to the modern car). 300 mile round trip, not a murmur, 65-70 all the way. And a visit to Paddy Willmer to collect racing stuff on the way home! Now that had to be a T Type drive, didn't it?

Christopher Tinker

AN OVERDRIVE FOR A TD?

Denis Baggi in Switzerland e-mailed me quite some time ago about an overdrive 'kit' which he has for a TD. This was in response to Bob Marshall's enquiry as to whether anybody had fitted an overdrive to a TD – Apologies to Denis for the length of time for this to be published – Denis takes up the story.....

“Years ago, I bought from my friend, Jerry Felper, in California, all the pieces to fit an overdrive to a TD. My understanding is that the pieces came from work done on a TD in Texas, and Jerry hoped to adapt it to an MGA but couldn't. The kit includes:

- the overdrive itself, probably from an Austin Healy (and switch). On both ends it has been fitted with the flanges of a standard TD propshaft. Its overall length is like that of the propshaft, hence it should be a straight fit
- two rails, those on which the propshaft tunnel sits, modified to take the extra bulge of the overdrive in the middle
- an extra chassis piece that should bolt between the chassis rails to support the overdrive.

I obtained an extra propshaft tunnel which would have to be enlarged in the middle to accommodate the overdrive. From my measurements, the whole should fit effortlessly and the only tell-tale would be an extra bulge between the seats, in front, and just below the gear shift. Obviously, the wooden floorboards would have to be modified.

I see no difficulty in fitting all this, which would give me an 8-gear TD! I am confident the whole would fit like a glove. But I never came around to do it, because I used to use the car a lot and could not afford to have it sitting dismantled for a week or so, the time to do the work.

If any T Register member is serious about this, I am willing to take some digital pictures of the whole. I am also willing to invite anyone to my place in Lugano and stay here to help me carry out the mod!

In exchange for this info (!), I kindly ask you to let me know if you get any answer from someone who has actually done it.

Obviously, you are more than welcome to publish this information if you so wish.”

Best regards,

Denis

Ed's note: a couple of photos are opposite. Anyone fancy a working holiday in Lugano?



Above: The overdrive unit referred to on page 32.

Below: The mounting 'gear' for the overdrive unit.



A (COMMON?) DISTRIBUTOR PROBLEM

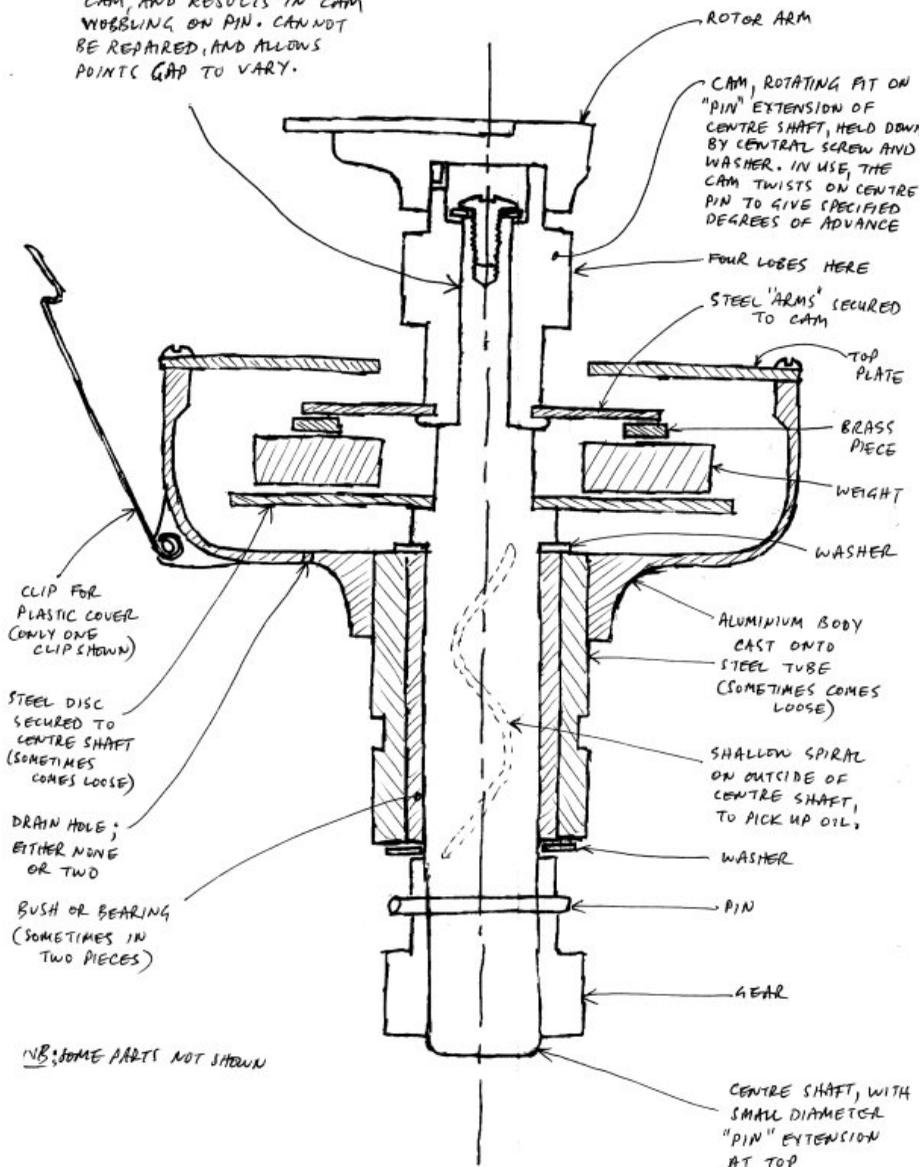
Roger Wilson has provided this useful article along with the drawing overleaf. It occurs to me that the problem which Roger has identified could well be the cause of Christopher Tinker's points adjustment problem? (see first paragraph of page 29). I had exactly the same problem with my TC, but took the easy way out and bought a new Mini Cooper distributor (suitably modified for XPAG use) from Peter Edney.

I thought I'd write in to mention a problem I have had with the distributor fitted to my TD. The distributor has been in the engine for at least 36 years, and has experienced quite a lot of use. However, just recently, I have found it difficult to set the points gap accurately, with the gap in the four positions being different, even though the four cam 'lifts' were equal. I discovered, by attempting manually to displace (sideways) the rotor arm, that the rotor arm and points cam assembly could be rocked slightly in all directions. I proceeded to remove the distributor, under the assumption that the main shaft bushes were worn, which would allow play between the bushes and the central shaft. The bushes I could replace myself, but I did consider that the main shaft could be worn at the two bush positions (sometimes one long bush).

However, with the distributor removed, and by gripping the bottom gear, I determined that there was, in fact, minimal wear between the shaft and its bushes. I then removed the rotor arm and the screw holding the points cam, and discovered that the cam could be 'wobbled' on it's shaft (which is a small diameter pin extension of the main shaft). Thus although the cam only twists a specific angle to give the ignition advance, if there is play in this position then the points gap will vary. This play can result from the centre pin being worn, or the inside diameter of the hole through the cam being worn, or both.

The only real answer would be to recondition or replace the distributor, but either of these options could be slightly expensive, although the engine would probably perform much better. However, the point of my letter is that wear can occur in this cam position, despite it being a lubrication point, and if points cannot be set accurately it is worth checking to see if such wear has taken place. In my case, I checked through a whole range of distributors that I had, and found another main shaft and points cam that gave minimal play, and fitted those. I also replaced the brass connectors that fit on the weights in the body of the distributor, as the holes in these connectors were badly worn.

NB: WEAR OCCURS BETWEEN CENTRE PIN AND HOLE IN CAM, AND RESULTS IN CAM WOBBLING ON PIN. CAN NOT BE REPAIRED, AND ALLOWS POINTS GAP TO VARY.



More on Distributors.....

Back in '97 when I became the custodian for a certain re-imported ex-USA late TD I started to discover one or two little oddities, courtesy of the previous owner over there in the inland regions of California, or his predecessors.

The first was the discovery, after the application of a large tin of Gunk to clean off the accumulations of caked-on desert and oil, of an XPEG. That explained why John (the TD owner who came with me to look at it) thought it drove quite "gutsy" compared to his.

The reason for this article, though, is the distributor. Mine's got twin points!

In no particular order here are some thoughts and observations.....

(a) was it inspired by the first batch of Jaguar XK120s that were exported there? I'm told they were aluminium bodied and had a bit more power than subsequent imports. One of the aspects of their "nearly ready for racing" state was a distributor with twin points that were arranged to restore the charge to the coil sooner than would otherwise be the case. Why? Well it seems that a "six" revving over 4500rpm loses potential power because the coil doesn't give its best due to the aforementioned lack of time to recharge, so a second set of points set to close after 15 degrees of crankshaft rotation overcomes this. Why bother on a "four"? I don't know, 4500 on six cylinders is the same sparks per minute as 6750 on four..... that's high revs for an XPAG, especially one that is not used for racing.

(b) Moss are selling a Malory distributor that has twin points. I have a period road test of a TD/C in the USA that had such an item and it was described as a "typical" aftermarket mod. Does anyone know what advantages this distributor offers, and could mine just be the result of a back-street copy? Mmmm

Whatever the intended benefits, I have not had to renew either of the points and only adjusted them once in my 14000 miles of ownership. If nothing else, it seems that as they only arch half as frequently, they are going to last twice as long. Discuss".....

Jim Reeve

Ed's note: Further to the Editorial, I have now started my "crash courses". I am happy to say that I can now download PayPal payments into the Register bank account and I can also "crop" photographs. It's all down in my A4 size, indexed notebook. All will be fine, I'm sure, as long as I can remember where I've put the damn thing. This reminds me of an "Eric the Penguin" birthday card which my wife received recently. One penguin says to the other "I've got some pills that improve your memory" "Do they work?" asks the other penguin - "I don't know, I keep forgetting to take them!"

ITEMS FOR SALE AND WANTED

For Sale:

Boxed set of new copper brake pipes and chassis fitting clips for TD (probably fit Y-type also) – complete set £30.

New veneered dashboard for TD, never even drilled or fitted - £35.

New side lamp chrome cases, torpedo shaped - £12 each.

Good dynamo with tacho drive for TD - £40.

Good starter for TD2 - £40.

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