

# T REGISTER



# Totally T-Type



ISSUE 9

MAY 2005



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# Peter EDNEY



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# THE EDITOR

Welcome to Issue 9! Firstly, I must say thanks to you all for renewing your subscriptions to TTT. I have virtually 100% of renewals with just a handful of members to 'chase'.

Much water has gone under the bridge since the last issue. I refer, of course, to the demise of MG Rover. Doubtless some will accuse me of being wise after the event, but I was surprised that Longbridge kept going for so long. It always seemed to me that with over 6,000 on the payroll and declining sales, the sums couldn't have been adding up. Of course, we now know that the dowry provided by BMW (reportedly £909 million in cash, net assets and loans) has been exhausted. The company could never have been a volume car manufacturer in the cut-throat world of the automotive industry without a suitable partner and one never came along to sign up. Thus, without the necessary economies of scale, but still with the imperative to compete on price with more efficient rivals, the all-in cost of building and selling each car is reported to have been 9% more than the factory-gate selling price by 2003.

But, what of the M.G. brand? It is really not clear who owns it. I make this statement (which may well be overtaken by events) after listening to a radio interview with Jon Moulton of Alchemy Partners, the venture capital group, which was unsuccessful in acquiring what was then Rover MG when Phoenix Venture Holdings Ltd acquired the company for £10. But even if the brand name is available, it seems to be the case that there may not be an engine to go in the car because the intellectual property rights have been sold to the Shanghai Automotive Industry Corp in China. As I write, the Administrators are investigating whether the car and engine designs sold to SAIC were underpriced and whether there were flaws in the transfer of the intellectual property rights. The probe is also looking at exactly what or what was not transferred. What a mess!

What effect will all this have on the MG Car Club? Well, it's hardly going to be beneficial to the Club in terms of new members. (*continued on page 4*)

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Membership of the Club is already in decline. To quote from Peter Browning's editorial in the May Issue of "Safety Fast!" "The benefits to Club membership and its activities over the past 10 years with the return to MG production, first with the MGF and later the TF and the range of Z car saloons, opened a new chapter in MGCC history". Without the benefits mentioned by Peter, will that decline now accelerate?

For what it is worth, my own analysis is that the Club has failed to attract (and retain) enough new members who own "moderns" at one end of the scale and at the other, it has failed to retain enough "square rigger" owning members. One reason for the latter, which has on more than one occasion been conveyed to me is the lack of suitable coverage in "Safety Fast!" Well, TTT aims to restore the balance and there are encouraging signs that some former members are returning to the fold.

Against this background, one has to wonder what is to become of the proposed New Kimber House scheme which has so far cost the Club £45,415. Will it be abandoned? Well, I can say without hesitation that the overwhelming majority of 'T' Register members would breathe a hefty sigh of relief if that were to be the case. However, this seems unlikely, given the apparent determination of the Directors to fend off any rational debate which would call for a wide ranging examination of all the options.

So, in reality, there is only "one scheme in town" which has gone out to tender with tenders now returned and being/have been evaluated. Do you honestly think that any alternatives put forward now would be seriously considered? Well, as I type this, one has just flown past the window! And what of the justification for the size of the building which has been tendered for?

It is therefore not surprising that motions submitted for debate at the last Council meeting, which, if debated and carried, would have had the effect of halting further progress on the Board's scheme were disallowed by the 'powers that be'. It was clear to many of those present at the meeting that any 'threat' to the current scheme would not be allowed anywhere near the 'radar screen'.

Finally, I am pleased that Register Chairman, Dennis Barker, has taken Stephen Cox, Club Chairman, to task over some comments made in his "From The Chair" column in the May issue of "Safety Fast!". Dennis' letter, which has been addressed to the Editor and endorsed 'For Publication', is reproduced later in this issue, just in case it fails to appear in the magazine. On the evidence of the failure of other dissenting letters about the proposed New Kimber House to appear, it would be hardly surprising if it didn't.

# T REGISTER NEWS (BY JOHN JAMES)

## 'T' REGISTER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As was reported in the May issue of "Safety Fast!", the AGM was largely uneventful until the subject of the proposed New Kimber House was brought up under 'Any Other Business'. There followed a lively discussion culminating in the following motion, which was agreed unanimously by the 45 members present:

"We, the 'T' Register of the MG Car Club, resolve:

- 1). *that the T register fully support and endorse their Chairman as the elected Council Voting member and his actions in supporting the two proposed discussion items for alternative schemes relating to the Kimber House project.*
- 2). *that the illustrative alternatives proposed for discussion at the 19th March Council meeting should be put to the entire membership of the MGCC, these are.*
  - a). *Extend Kimber House at a cost of around £350,000.00.*
  - b). *Demolish Kimber House and erect a 'Potton' style building in its place.*
- 3). *that a Referendum be conducted through Safety Fast! with a prepaid reply form enclosed in S.F.*
  - a). *Setting out the alternatives and their costs.*
  - b). *Allowing members' comments.*
- 4) that until we have the result from the Adjudication of the Referendum, no further actions or expenditure be incurred".

At the time of writing, correspondence is still being exchanged with Kimber House about this motion.

The other matter to report (apart from an extremely healthy financial position) is the change in Committee members. Three members retired by rotation (David Barnes, Stewart Penfound and Roger Furneaux) and did not offer themselves for re-election. However, they will remain as co-opted members of the Committee and continue with their functional responsibilities, which are, respectively, Facilitator, TA/B/C and Specials Registrar and TA/B/C Technical Adviser. Two seconded members, Peter Cole and Graham Brown, were proposed and seconded as Committee members and unanimously elected.

Mention was made in the editorial of Register Chairman's (Dennis Barker) letter to the Editor of "Safety Fast!" in response to some comments made by MG Car Club Chairman, Stephen Cox, in his "From The Chair" 'slot' in the May edition of the Club magazine. Dennis' letter, sent on 25<sup>th</sup> April, is reproduced below:

"Peter Browning  
Editor Safety Fast!

### **FOR PUBLICATION**

Dear Peter

I should like to set the record straight concerning some comments made by Stephen Cox " From the Chair " in the March 2005 *Safety Fast!* about the March Council meeting.

The motion for debate that Stephen refers to was signed by the Council Voting Members of three CRBs and submitted in accordance with the timetable requested; nothing more is required by the Club's Articles. In my case I signed on behalf of the T Register after the motion had been approved by the T register committee, the procedure now said by the Board to be " custom and practice."

The then Company Secretary nevertheless rejected the motion for inclusion on the agenda because she assumed, wrongly, that it had not been considered by the committee. She did not bother to ask me or anyone else about the matter. A similar motion submitted by the V8 Register after approval by their committee was rejected because it was a few days later than the deadline set by the Board, something never previously regarded as important. As far as I am concerned, I regard " custom and practice " as allowing free and wide ranging debate at Council, not using procedural issues to prevent debate on subjects unwelcome to the Board.

Stephen is unfortunately misleading about the substance of the motion, which was not to propose an alternative scheme for a New Kimber House, but to appoint a sub-committee to review the office REQUIREMENTS of the club and to examine all alternatives including the Board's proposals and others, details of two alternatives being given by way of example.

It seems that the present Board does not want to justify, explain or discuss its proposals in advance of presenting a " take it or leave it " motion to Council in its own good time. I regret that this way of proceeding has created a bitter and divisive atmosphere with a real danger of splitting the Club up into factions. The tragic demise of MG Rover confronts us with a difficult situation, we should be pulling together, not pulling apart, and I sincerely hope that the Board will now be more willing to at least discuss its

project with those who have grave doubts about whether borrowing heavily to finance a prestige office building is the right direction for the Club to take.

Yours sincerely.

Dennis Barker - Chairman of the T Register of MGCC."

**Ed's note:** CRBs = Centres, Registers and Branches of the MG Car Club.

**STOP PRESS:** Please see the reply to this letter on page 36 – exactly as predicted in the final paragraph of the Editorial!

## **REBUILD 2005**

There was a full report in the May edition of "Safety Fast!" of this event, which was probably our most successful ever. I find it difficult to add much value to the SF! report, especially bearing in mind that I didn't attend any of the sessions! (not through choice but through having to look after the Regalia stand). I have a few copies of handouts on the sessions by Brian Rainbow (Preserving the MPJG Engine), Paul Ireland (T Type Carburettors) and Ron Gammons (T-Series Steering Problems and their Solutions). These can be sent to you on receipt of a stamped addressed A4 envelope (47p stamp, please).

## **REGISTER T-PARTY AT SHUTTLEWORTH - 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY '05**

Organiser, Graham Brown is now praying for fine weather for this event. Enquiries and bookings have notched up a gear since the report in the T-Type Newsletter in the May "Safety Fast!" However, we still need more entries to make the event as successful as in previous years. Graham points out that whilst it is quite possible to turn up on the day, this is inadvisable since we will be only allocated an exclusive T-Type enclosure to accommodate the number of advance bookings advised and if you turn up on the day you are likely to end up in the general throng and not in the T-Type enclosure. So the message is 'book with Graham!' (details below).

The Saturday afternoon Run around the North Bedfordshire villages, lakes and country parks is definitely on (as is the Saturday evening dinner at The Victoria Arms in Wilden) and it is still not too late to enter for the Saturday Run or the Sunday T-Party (or both!). For more details contact Graham Brown [graham@isisbeford62.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:graham@isisbeford62.freeserve.co.uk) or telephone him on 01234 358729 – he will be very pleased to hear from you.

## **SILVERSTONE INTERNATIONAL WEEKEND - 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> JULY 2005**

The Regalia stand will be up and running, first thing on Friday morning and

*Totally T-Type, May 2005 7*

will be situated, as usual, in the main Car Club marquee. We will again be hosting the Silverstone 'natter' from around 5.30pm on Friday afternoon in the Specials' marquee, where you are cordially invited to join us for a glass of wine or soft drink and some 'nibbles'. The Specials' marquee is situated in the tented area in the competitors' paddock. Whilst enjoying a drink and some 'nibbles' you will be able to view the fine collection of XPAG Specials, which Keith Hodder has once again managed to assemble and these will be joined by a small collection of supercharged T-Types, which Tony Smith has organised.

The Regalia stand will be open for business all day Saturday and Sunday but to lighten the load we need some volunteers!

The sessions required are:

Friday		11.30-1.30	1.30-3.30	3.30-5.30
Saturday	9.30-11.30	11.30-1.30	1.30-3.30	3.30-5.30
Sunday	9.30-11.30	11.30-1.30	1.30-3.30	3.30-5.30

David Barnes organised this rota last year, but since, at the time of writing he is having trouble with his e-mail, it might be safer to contact me in the first instance. I can be contacted at [jj@octagon.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:jj@octagon.fsbusiness.co.uk) or telephone 0117 986 4224 (preferred line) or 0117 986 6287. When David resumes normal service with his e-mail fixed, I will gladly pass on the rota arrangements to him.

## **REGISTER AUTUMN TOUR IN SHROPSHIRE 9/10/11 SEPTEMBER 2005**

We continue to make good progress with the organisation of this event, thanks to the generous assistance of John and Kay Wray and Roger Still in planning the routes. The Tour has been fully booked for some months and we look set to have a record entry of 60 cars. All entrants should receive a communication direct from me soon after receipt of this magazine.

## **17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005 – 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST PRODUCTION TC AT ABINGDON**

The suggestion to mark this important anniversary is to organise a gathering of cars (all T-Types welcome) in Abingdon for say, 11.00am on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September and then to depart on a Run, which would incorporate some of the test routes, returning for a lunch in the vicinity of Abingdon. Interest from local media would be sought.

In order to gauge the likely level of support, would those who are interested please contact me at [jj@octagon.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:jj@octagon.fsbusiness.co.uk) or phone 0117 986 4224 (preferred contact number) or 0117 986 6287.

Two ideas for a commemorative item are currently being researched.

## **PRACTICAL SKILLS WORKSHOP 2<sup>nd</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER**

Graham Brown has been very active in trying to ensure that we run a Practical Skills Workshop this year. Although a couple of tentative dates have been given above, we are not quite yet at the stage where we can definitely say that the Workshop will take place. However, we are very hopeful!

If our plans come to fruition (and we will certainly know well before the Silverstone Weekend) numbers would have to be strictly limited (say 36 divided up into 6 groups of 6). We envisage a start time of 10.00/1030am through to 4.00/4.30pm with 4 sessions of 1 to 1½ hours and a break for lunch. Applicants would need to select any 4 from the 6 topics below (which at this stage are purely illustrative.)

- Head Gasket replacement-getting it right
- Carburettor Set Up and checking-understanding the mysteries
- Timing and Distributor set up –all about dwell angles and gaps etc.
- Brakes bleeding /set up and adjusting - knowing the finer points
- Rear Wheel Bearings /seals and half shafts- emphasis on bearings and seals
- Doors and their mechanisms – keeping a good safe fit.

Further details will be published as soon as we are in a position to confirm.

## **REGISTER UPDATES**

TA/B/C and Specials Registrar, Stewart Penfound reports some updated numbers as follows (previous figures as at November 2004 are in brackets)

**TA** 1211(1197) **TB** 179 (172) **TC** 3970 (3562) **Specials** 59 (not given)

We will surely go through the 4000 barrier for TCs by the end of the year?

Updated numbers for the TD/TF models were not available at the time of going to press but it is hoped that we will be able to give this information in the July issue of TTT.

Derek Hopper sent me the following letter last summer. Like the NHS waiting list, to which he refers, it has been on my 'waiting list' for some time, for which I apologise.

*"Could you please find space in the T-Type news letter for my few comments, as last time I sent a letter in it ended up like the NHS waiting list. FORGOTTEN!*

*I'd like to say how pleased I am, and I am sure many more are, to receive the new revamped news letter. It's a far cry from many years back, when we received just two sheets of news and the cars were going for £100 a throw.*

*I was also impressed with the C.O.T.Y. form which was enclosed, and at last the competition to run from January to December, as I campaigned my car the year before and when I rang in the results I was told that it closed in September. Yet I had not seen any information regarding this, as I've got most of the newsletters going back 'yonks'. In the late '60s it was from the beginning to the end of the year and there were two classes, TA/B/C and one for TD and TF. Rows of cars (Happy Days).*

*I also hope the judging has been sorted out, not someone who just walks around the car with a duster and says what a pretty car it is.*

*The classes have all been lumped together I see, not enough entries I suspect. Could this be down to the £11 entry fee? (now £13 on the day and £10 in advance – Ed) Personally I think it is far too much compared with other organisations. I know the Club will say it is due to the cost of hiring the circuit but I still think they would get more entries if it were cheaper.*

*On a closing note, I've been involved in the concours scene since the late '60s so I know a bit about the 'spit and polish brigade'. I guess I was taught that in the Forces working on aircraft. I have done my share for the Club, as with my son we won the Barry Lacey Malvern Trophy, campaigning our car all over the country in 1975.*

*I wish Graham all the best in his new venture and hope that entries do pick up for him.*

*Keep up the good work!"*

**Ed's note:** The Car of the Year (C.O.T.Y.) scheme, to which Derek refers has not, despite Graham Brown's best endeavours, been a success. Continuing on the National Health Service (NHS) theme, I said at the last Committee meeting that Graham was given a "hospital pass" (as in rugby) and he has done everything possible to revive the patient, but to no avail. It seems to me that members still like using their cars but most are coy about telling us that they have used them. Times change and the world has changed enormously since the 60s. We had better accept that!

## Replacing the King-pins on the Beam-Axle T Series.

The steering performance of the early T-Type cars is often much maligned. It is usually the Bishops Cam steering box or the Ackerman angle that gets the blame when a car will not travel in a straight line. However, the problem often lies elsewhere. After all, the steering mechanism of any car is there to allow it to negotiate corners, not to keep it going in a straight line.

True there are better steering systems, or we would still find similar systems on modern cars, but a properly adjusted Bishops Cam steering box should steer a T-Type perfectly well, but it can only do so if all the other steering components including the king-pins are free from play.



**Fig 1: King-pin components.** *A king-pin set for one wheel comprises the king-pin, two bushes, a thrust washer and a cotter pin. The cotter pin supplied here is not like the original. Note the head of the cotter pin provides a steering end-stop in conjunction with a special bolt that fixes to the back of the stub axle.*

The January TTT carried an article on how to remove the king-pins. Having removed the old king-pins and with the stub axles off the car, the next step to better steering is to remove the old king-pin bushes from the

stub axles. The bushes are a tight force-fit into the stub axles but they can be removed using a simple tool turned from a piece of bar that will locate in the old bush and pass through the  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch diameter hole in the stub axle. (See Fig 2)

**Fig 2: A tool to push out the old king-pin bushes and insert new ones.**

It will require a considerable force to push the bushes out, which can be provided by a press if one is to hand, or by a vice if you can find one where the jaws open sufficiently wide. The same tool can be



used to insert the new bushes. When inserting the new bushes it is important to make sure the grease hole lines up with the grease nipple in the stub axle. It is also important not to push the bushes too far into the stub axle. If they are pushed in too far they may prevent the stub axle fitting back onto the beam axle.

Once the new bushes are in place, the next step is to ream their internal diameter to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch, to accept the new king-pin. Not only must the bushes be reamed as close to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch as possible, but the hole in each of the two bushes must be in line, or the king-pin will not pass through the two bushes. There are at least three ways to achieve this as described below:

### **Method 1, The Way It Used to be Done**

In the days when our cars were being produced, king-pins were commonplace and your local garage would have been equipped with a special king-pin reamer designed specifically for the purpose. This was like a modern reamer but with the addition of a long pilot of reduced diameter that was able to pass through the two unreamed bushes, thus lining up the cutting part of the reamer to ensure the holes were reamed in line. (Fig 3 below shows a modern  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch reamer.) Unfortunately king-pin reamers are now as rare as rocking horse teeth (I think that's the correct expression) so other more inventive ways of achieving the same result have to be found.

**Fig 3: A modern  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch reamer.**



### **Method 2, The Easy Way**

The easy way consists of using a modern reamer, but only replacing one bush at a time. Thus with one old bush and one new bush in place it is possible to use the old bush to line up the reamer to ream the first new bush. (See Fig 4)

**Fig 4 Reaming the first new bush using the remaining old bush as a guide.**

Then the second bush can be replaced and reamed by using the first new bush, now reamed to the correct size, to align the reamer. (See Fig 5) Easy isn't it?



**Fig 5: Reaming the second new bush using the other new bush as a guide.**



### **Method 3, The Push Way.**

The push way is for people who are lucky enough have a lathe. Here the lathe chuck is removed and the  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch reamer is fitted to the Morse taper of the headstock. A mandrel is then fitted into the tailstock which passes through both unreamed bushes and supports the stub-axle. The stub-axle is then slid

off the mandrel onto the slowly rotating reamer until both bushes are opened up to the required  $\frac{3}{4}$ inch diameter.



**Fig 6: The stub axle with bushes reamed and king pin fitted**

So, there you have it. Pay your money and take your pick. I hope this helps some people to eliminate those elusive steering problems previously blamed on the much-maligned Bishops Cam. A new set of king-pins is certainly worth trying before taking the more drastic step of joining the ranks of the Datsun steering box enthusiasts. Just think, if everyone fits a Datsun

steering box to their T-Type, in fifty years time the "Originality Police" will be debating from which chassis number Abingdon started to fit them!

**Peter Cole**      [peter.cole@onetel.net](mailto:peter.cole@onetel.net)

Thank you for an interesting article, Peter. Your mention of a lathe leads me in nicely to the next article!

# **Lathes – A Great Aid to Restoration Work**

**Eric Hayes – Australia**

*By way of introduction, Eric e-mailed me earlier in the year asking “would I be interested in some articles?” “Of course!” said I and he has promptly followed up with this article and another (which will be published in the July TTT) on painting a CW windscreen wiper. Now it’s over to Eric.....*

As the owner of a fairly complete machine shop, comprising one lathe - a milling machine with vertical head attachment, slotting head, rotary table, dividing head and a vice, two drilling machines – one ¼” and the other ½” capacity, 6” bench grinder, band saw and a power hacksaw.. Welding gear and a compressor and spray equipment makes it complete, and of course plenty of hand tools. It did not suddenly happen that way but was built up slowly over many years when I was actively engaged in the building of 5” gauge live steam locomotives.

When, after a time I had a hankering to once again become involved in MGs and when, starting the first of several restorations, I found the workshop I had amassed useful beyond belief.

It is not necessary to have all of the above, but with a lathe, drilling machine, 6”bench grinder and some hand tools you will amaze yourself with what you can accomplish.

Anyone involved in restoring and maintaining old cars such as T types would find the investment in a lathe really pays off, makes you independent to a degree and brings great satisfaction when you actually produce a masterpiece, and your friends say, “DID YOU make that ?”

In the Model Engineering fraternity over 90% of the builders of these finely detailed models have had no previous machining experience, in fact a great many have not used their hands in a practical manner previously. So if that group can do it, so can T-Type owners, who by definition, would have to be a fairly intelligent bunch.

**“But I would not know how to work one?”** There are books and there are also bound to be evening classes where one can learn the basics. The approach is to learn the feel of the machine by taking on making simple objects first and as your confidence and ability improves more complex tasks can be tackled.

Do not be fazed when things do not turn out as intended and several hours’ work end up in the bin. That happens to everybody. You would have learnt a lot in the process. Remember, anyone who has never made a mistake has never done anything. I regularly start off making more of an item than I want to finish up with as I know there could be causalities along the way.

***“I will need such a lot of equipment”*** Not necessarily. Start off with the basics. Most lathes use tool holders, so all you will need is several lengths of HSS tool bits which you can sharpen as desired – boring bars and other types of tools can come later - a drill shuck and a set of drills. A 6” bench grinder is essential – you probably have one already. Taps and dies, instead of a complete set just buy the three most common on a T-Type – ¼”, 5/16” and 3/8” BSF and BSW. Buy other sizes as needed, such as the common BA threads you will encounter. As for the ‘mad metric’, I refer to them later on in this article.

Some measuring equipment will be necessary and digital vernier callipers, so readily available now at cheap prices, would enable you to measure turned objects both inside and outside diameters. You do not have to have a full set of micrometers, although a 0”- 1” is handy.

***“Where do I obtain all this?”*** Your nearest Model Engineering supplier. England was the home of Model Engineering at one time. It is now a strong hobby in many countries, so there would have to be many suppliers around. They are a great source of small tools, lathe equipment and books on all aspects of machining. Their stock of materials is usually second to none, and will cut off short lengths of bar stock, so it not necessary to spend unnecessarily on buying vast quantities of material. I have a favourite one here in Sydney and the material carried is amazing.

***“What size lathe is the most suitable?”*** To start with, there are two systems of measuring lathe sizes. One quotes the radius of the work that will clear the cross slide, that is the slide mounted on the carriage that moves across. The other quotes the diameter for the same size. I have a 3½” Myford Super 7 which takes 3½” radius over the cross slide. Of course, over the bed pieces of much larger size can be accommodated. I find this size does virtually anything that will be encountered in car restoration. If it will not fit in this, a very much larger one is called for. I recommend around the 3½” to 4½’ (radius) I had a 6” but found I was not using it enough and sold it. Mostly I found I was engaged in making fiddly bits and the larger lathe was not fast or sensitive enough.

These days with virtually everything you pick up being made in China, (in Australia it is any way), lathes are comparatively cheap. In front of me I have an advertisement for such a size machine for around A\$2000.

There is also one this size that has a vertical milling head over the work area. I have not examined it, but the idea appeals to me as it gives the capability of being able to accomplish simple milling jobs, for example, making a special bolt and then milling the hexagonal head.

All machines are B.G.S.C. – Back Geared, like Low range for slow work, SC, Screw cutting – the ability to cut screw threads. These days most new machines have the capacity to cut both Imperial and Metric thread pitches. If you happen upon a good older second hand machine that has Imperial thread cutting capacity only - no worry. Except for the mad metric on the engine nearly all other threads are BSF with maybe some BSW. Cylinder head studs are high tensile – bar stock would be hard to purchase, and then only in long lengths, and not very user friendly anyway, best left to the people setup to manufacture them. MGBs use Unified threads and unless you take on making parts for more modern vehicles –who wants to anyway? - the lack of metric thread cutting facilities will be of no consequence. If encountered, you can purchase the appropriate die.

So give it serious thought, if you have the room and of course the money to spend, you will wonder how you ever did without one.



**Editor's Note:**

Eric's Myford Super 7 lathe is pictured above. I forgot to mention in the lead in to the article that Eric says he was inspired to write something for "Totally T-Type" after reading the earlier articles penned by Stephen Rigby – the two are obviously kindred spirits!

## Notes from a Rebuild No. 6

### Exhaustive Research

#### What's that smell?

About the only advantage I can think of, in waiting thirty-odd years to restore your T-Type, is that you have plenty of time to consider what was wrong with it originally and how you'd like to get it right. Sitting by the roadside in 1968, having driven my girlfriend in TC0301 from her home above the Arctic Circle in Norway to Calais, and watching the floorboard above the silencer burn merrily with thick black smoke, convinced me that "next time" I'd do it right.

Replacing the gasket between the exhaust manifold and down-pipe for the third time in a few weeks, I swore that "next time" I'd try and fix it properly. Some day I'd have the time and the resources...

#### "Next time"

Next time was about 33 years later. The first thing to get was as good a stainless-steel exhaust system as I could find. Unlike some recent stories I've read, the silencer brackets fitted perfectly with the holes in the chassis side rail and, bolted in place, the "pea-shooter" tail pipe aligned perfectly with the correct P-type chassis bracket (purchased from Abingdon Spares). There were however a couple of other problems:

1. The bracket that fixed the down-pipe assembly to the correct bolt on the bell-housing was not in the right place
2. The triangular "yoke" bracket that holds the top of the down-pipe to the three studs of the exhaust manifold, had all the holes drilled incorrectly.
3. The connection between the silencer and the rear of the down-pipe was not perfect

2 & 3. were fixed with some judicious filing, all the time repeating the mantra "Oh why can't they do it properly!"

#### The Exhaust Mystery

In my Notes from a Rebuild No.4, I asked how the TC battery was meant to be fixed down. My second puzzle is: How is the exhaust manifold outlet meant to connect to the down-pipe? Where does the funny circular cone fit? What is it meant to do? How does it help give you an airtight joint? I tried a million times in the sixties and never got it right.

"Next time" I didn't bother to find out. At some time in the 33-year research period, I'd been given the following advice:-

- a) Throw away the cone
- b) Ensure the face of the exhaust manifold outlet is flat
- c) Assemble the exhaust system without the triangular copper/asbestos (?) gasket.  
Tighten up the three brass nuts fully, until the two triangular faces of the yoke and the manifold are flush.
- d) Spot weld the underside of the yoke to the down-pipe
- e) Take the whole system apart and weld the yoke to the down-pipe.  
Make sure you have an airtight joint right around.
- f) While you're having the welding done, you can make sure the bell-housing strap is in the right place.
- g) Reassemble and tighten the brass nuts fully; this time using the exhaust gasket.

Net result: a solid airtight joint, with the down-pipe at exactly the right angle

### **Refinement**

Talking to David Butler, our TD/TF Registrar, he told me that on his TD he had gone one further, by machining the yoke and the manifold surfaces flat and replacing the gasket with a little sealant. This avoids the problems caused by the gasket disintegrating after a few hundred miles, which seems to be a problem with some modern replacement items.

Happy fettling!

*John Steedman*  
[johnhwstedman@aol.com](mailto:johnhwstedman@aol.com)

## **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.**

# Keeping and Driving a T-Type

How can I have allowed time to pass, as it has, with absolutely NO progress on my doors and wood for nearly a whole month? To be fair, there has been another major event MG wise which has taken up at least some of the time, namely the T Racers' Dinner. A great event it was too: firstly the annual meeting when we decide the programme for the forthcoming season, which is now on the T Register Website, and the nearly fifty of us (including ladies) sitting down to an excellent dinner, following which I presented the trophies for the 2004 season.

**15 February.** At last I am back in the garage and today I have shaved wood, packed gaps etc to make a smooth surround for the door. (Photos below, one showing the corner fit, the other, on page 20, the later door fit). Now to fitting the hinge: I have lined up the door as correctly as possible, and the upper hinge is screwed in place with two short screws just to hold it for the moment until the extent of adjustment required can be judged.



**25 February.** I manage a couple of hours in the garage again at last. On the way home I called into NTG (I love living here, as NTG is like calling into Tesco Express, rather than driving 290 miles as I once had to...) as my upper hinge seems loose, so how can the door be a good fit in any case? Mike Green tells me that a set of new hinges will be expensive and only come in sets of four, and that, all I probably need is the hinge pin assembly. I buy two of these, as if I were buying a

loaf of bread (the point I'm making is that living nearby, which I can hardly get over, means that TC parts, when in stock, are so readily available to me!!). Fitting these, tightens the hinge up perfectly. The door now closes, but I do not think I yet have sufficient clearance for when I re-skin the wood rail beneath the door. Time will tell.

**26 February.** I have recessed the upper hinge by 1/16th inch, and having tightened all the screws and nuts and bolts on the wood, am now ready to

skin it. As my new panel has not arrived, I am using the original panel for now. Working in half hour slots (actually timed with the kitchen timer!) and alternating with some home decoration I'm trying to get done, I find that few problems become insoluble and that I am also taking a fresh look at the job in hand every time I return to it. Better than six hours uninterrupted, most of which are frustrating. I shall continue this process for the time being.



**27 February.** This morning I let the upper hinge in another 32nd inch, which has raised the front of the door sufficiently. The striker is now fitted, that and hinges all bolted through (they were not before, only screwed into the wood post, so continually coming loose for thirty years) and the door has just closed to perfection. A lovely

click. 'Like a Rolls Royce', I said to myself!!

**5 March.** At last the weekend, after a week when I get nowhere near the TC. My wife has been reminding me of a looming three days when if the M.G. is not operational, then it is taxis for Evelyn to get to school. Waste of money! So, whilst not hurrying my project, it seems that I am now in the position of having to put things back together; after all, the new wood is the purpose of this project, and the door hanging has been, so far as I can judge, successful. Therefore at 0700 I begin work; refitting rear wing (removed in order to get the aluminium skin off the rear door pillar). Then, refitting the front wing which has gone fairly smoothly; of course in all this, new positions for the wood screws have to be identified where the new wood is involved in the fixing, so more time consuming than refitting to established bolt holes! Then, refitting the radiator, never a job I enjoy, especially the radiator surround. Headlamps too can be remarkably difficult, and as I write this I still have to find the bolt (radiator to wing stay at the join under the headlamp) - it must be somewhere but currently lost.

I am glad to say that there have been no further major hold-ups, and the car is looking this afternoon increasingly more like the real thing as every minute passes. I have also started the engine and run it for about ten minutes to check water leaks, having fitted the radiator, and any other

matters that I may have forgotten since laying the car up for this most recent work. It has been a rewarding day.

**6 March.** A few things happened this morning. First, the garage roof leaks with melting snow, so buckets have been put out! Then, in beating back the steel of the rear panel over the (partly) new wood behind the door post, some paint is loose, so quite a lot of tidying up of that will have to take place. Eventually, after replacing the floor and seat, the wheels, and sweeping the garage floor so as not to deflate a tyre accidentally when reversing out, I put on my cap, start up, and drive to the garage for petrol and an air check. Now, the season has begun, I have the car ready for the family emergency on the 17th, and I may even drive it to 'Rebuild', though I think I'd like to have more of the tidying work completed before the expert eyes of my colleagues on the T Register see it. Much to do, but at least the door didn't fling open!

So, all this brings me to manageable lists: if running a TC involves a continuous series of weekends engaged in emergency repair work, no real progress can be made. If, as in my case at present, the car is running well, then my list can be worked through at a manageable pace, at times when I want to do the work, rather than always chasing my tail. I think that is the position in which I find myself; I certainly hope that having replaced this wood, the whole of the near side can be perfected within a relatively short space of time.

And on the list? Shock absorbers; renewing trim; seat coverings (still original but really shabby now); paintwork. Hope to get all this done during this summer, along with plenty of interesting drives but fewer motorway ones than last year.

**13 March.** I take the wheel off and mend a small puncture, easily found in the inner tube. This seems to have been caused by something on the inner rim, though I can't find anything so wonder whether in fact the puncture was due to my own rough handling of bars as I put the tyre on last time. I don't know. Anyway, having got it back on, off to the fishing lakes to remove some surface weed before the season begins. When I go round hard left handers, there is a slightly alarming sound of creaking wood! I shall further inspect my wood screws and joints, before replacing trim etc. At present it is all very bare, and I am awaiting the new panel in any case, so anything is still improvable/adjustable etc. Notwithstanding possible current teething problems, the joy of being out in the M.G. again in earliest Spring is inestimable!

**15-18 March.** My wife is away with the 'family car' so the TC is being used on a daily basis, something I love to do. This means getting up ten minutes earlier to allow time to 'get the car out', run the engine, check oil,

tyres, water. My father has a mnemonic for this - WOFLTB, (pronounced *waffle TB*, so there is an M.G. somewhere in there!) - which he does every Saturday: Water, Oil, Fuel. Lights, Tyres, Battery. Good thinking!

I've had the hood up this week, and the creaking sound of wood on the near side has gone. I am considering whether to drive the car to 'Rebuild' or not.

**20 March.** I decide to drive the TC to 'Rebuild'. The newly hung door is behaving well, but the old skinning of the near side looks poor and I hope the new piece arrives soon. There seems to be rather a delay on it. Having undergone so much work, my car is less polished than I would like and the trim has not yet been replaced. I notice a number of members looking at it closely. An encouraging word from John Steedman (whose TC is immaculate) and a rather dismissive comment later on from someone else - 'needs a lot of work'. True to a degree! Anyway, my way is to keep running if I can – whereas this member has had his car in the garage for over six years. I'm sure he and others like him will end up with a splendid rebuild. I prefer my 'running rebuild'!

**Christopher Tinker**

**Ed's Note:** I tend to agree with Chris – keep 'em running! – “trickle rebuilding” as it's called keeps you on the road.

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## **History and Rebuild details to date (16<sup>th</sup> April) of TB0557 Registration Number GKL 70.**

***The photograph on the front cover is of TB0557 taken in the USA, in 1998, three owners ago. The car then came across “the pond” and eventually found its way to Dick Woollett, who takes up the story.....***

I have been re-building and restoring historic cars for some many years, mostly for my own collections but with one or two commissions, my first rebuild was an ex USA 1938 TA, BAP 927 (now with Brian Rainbow).

Now, some five houses later, space (and my 60<sup>th</sup>) dictated a reduced collection, so all cars were sold off including a 1933 20/25 Rolls through, of all things, EBay “for cash”.

However you can take the man out of the MG driving seat but not the MG out of the man and I needed a “fix”, I am lucky that my wife Eryll has a great classic car passion as well and in particular, the TA was her favourite car, so we decided to research the purchase of a restoration project of any of the T series A,B,C. Indeed, so keen were we that we bought a 1972 MG Midget just to keep our spirits up and have a car to enjoy the summer.

I rejoined the Octagon Car Club (OCC) and started ringing around. We viewed some 4/5 T/Cs, all were overpriced runners! but all needing ground up work and therefore unviable. I was lucky while looking on the ‘net’ to come across Ron Gammons’ company site “Brown and Gammons”. At the bottom of the ‘Cars For Sale’ was a car owned by Ron as a project to turn in to a historic rally car, a 1939 TB, absolute basket case. TBs are few and far between, let alone a car not restored, and therefore correct. The price was just right and a visit to Ron’s soon confirmed that the sorry pile of bits was the car for us.

We had purchased the car and were on the way back to Ron’s office for coffee and to settle up when he casually asked where I was from. “KENT” was the reply. “Oh” he said, “that’s good as the car was first registered with the POLICE at Maidstone”, adding even more to our pleasure in the purchase and the rarity of the car.

We now have, thanks to the response of OCC members, a police history (no photographs) of the car in its new state including its service history and when and for how much it was sold after the war. We then lose site of it until about 5 years ago when an OCC member bought it from a chap in the USA and after an abortive stripping of the car probably found the costs and work too much and the car was sold to Ron.

So that’s the car’s paper history it now falls upon me to restore it to its “as delivered to the Police condition” this was started in October last year, I

hasten to add that when I mean restore it I (A) mean, do all the work myself and (B) not give it to a company and throw money at it and pick it up like a pebble on a beach a year later. The only thing out of my hands was the crank re-grind (by Peter Edney). I work on the principle that if I do not know how to I will teach myself. I also add that I am not an "if it moves chrome it" and "if it stays still chrome it" man nor am I an anorak man. (Do they search for POOL 74 octane petrol and asbestos brake linings?).

The first picture is of the car as arrived, the car was then taken down to bare chassis and not by shot blasting but by a 4.5 inch angle grinder with wire brushes etc then coated by hand with red-oxide two coats and then two coats of chassis black (not Hammerite, heaven forbid) this was followed by all the axles, springs etc and reassembled with all new BSF nuts, bolts etc along with new trunion housings and trunion bearings. Indeed many new parts had to be fitted as the original parts were missing or cream crackered.



I have just completed the engine re-build as you will see from the first photo on page 25, sprayed in correct colour (Aerosol from Peter Edney) with new sensible parts from OCC and John James, and blueprinted back together. This included using "Plasti Gauge" on the engine - for those of you who may not have heard of it, "Plasti Gauge" is a very thin string of plastic, perhaps 1 to 2 thou thick, which is cut into ½ inch sections and when you

first assemble the main caps and big ends you place a piece under the top cap, tighten to the torque setting, remove the cap and measure the amount of string squash against a paper gauge. This then tells you the clearance between the crank and the relevant bearing against the factory settings, this is the only way to assemble bearings.



Today the engine is in and waiting a new clutch disk from Harry (OCC Secretary), I have installed the brake hoses and will put in the back axle next week.

Then on my birthday at the end of April, I will give my morale a boost by starting the engine up on the "bench" or trestles in

my case, always a good noise to look forward to.

I will follow up with another update when I finish the project perhaps later this year or early next year.



All the best  
MG motoring Richard.

[richard.woollett@teso.net](mailto:richard.woollett@teso.net)

# No Names, No Pack-drill.

*This article from Stephen Rigby has been on the 'waiting list' since last November. It describes the Herculean efforts made by Steve to get his rebuilt TC registered by the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority, for the benefit of our overseas readers).*

The TC, having spent almost four years being rebuilt, approached the great day when completion loomed. I use the term 'completion' with a degree of licence. What I mean by 'completion' may not be same as one who considers completion as a finished car ready for the judges' verdict at a concours d'elegance competition. No, I mean stick a seat in it and make sure the battery and fuel lines are connected and it should go! Final tweaking and it should be ready for an MOT. It is late July and I insure the car through the MG Owners club on the chassis number. They require a registration number within a month. No problem!

With our sort of car we all appreciate the need for a sympathetic MOT tester who is aware of the rules and how they need to be interpreted on cars over 50 years old. Fortunately my local garage does most of the MOTs for the Vintage and PVT cars in the area and knows what to look for.

Although I was a little concerned about the brakes and steering the car sailed through with only the odd tap to make the sidelight work! The brakes, using leading and trailing shoes, are far less efficient than modern discs but scored well on the test machine. The play in the steering was also well within the permitted allowances even though it seemed a little sloppy to me. I leave with a big smile and an MOT certificate in my hot little hand.

The necessary forms were sought from DVLA. A phone call to Customer Services takes quite a time to negotiate the various options but eventually I speak to someone who apparently knows about re-registering old cars. "You'll need a V55/5 and a V100. You will also need a V765 and a V765/1 and I'll chuck in a V382 and a V149 and V149/1. Then there's a V355/1 and V848. Now you must read INF34 and INF54/1. I'll get those sent off immediately." I'm lost in a sea of V-numbers. I also learn that DVLA and I have a different idea about the meaning of 'immediately'.

A couple of weeks later the forms arrive. V765/1 turns out to be a list of recognised vehicle owners clubs who are permitted to help with registration. During the long rebuilding process one of the people at a Club that caters for T and MMM cars has been a great source of help and advice as well as reasonably priced spares. Most of my queries were answered straight away. His knowledge of the problems involved with rebuilding a T-Type is encyclopaedic. As he is listed in the booklet, a call to him to ask if he can help with the registration is greeted with a hearty "of course!"

Forms, photographs, notes etc. are duly sent off to my erstwhile helper. Like many of us, he is good on the practical side but not so hot on the paperwork. Time passes. I phone. "It's on my desk." More time passes. I phone. "Top of my list." Nothing happens. More time passes. I phone. "I've just called a chap in your area to come and inspect the car." Nothing happens. I phone. "Really? I'll get on to someone else." Still nothing happens. It is now almost six weeks since I sent off the forms. August has drifted into September. MG Insurance want to know the registration number. I explain the problem. They are sympathetic. My phone calls are now almost daily. I decide to visit, taking more photographs including one of the chassis number on the dumb iron. He seems totally unaware of the frustration I feel at the time being taken and says these things always take a bit of time.

Then during a casual conversation a friend tells me his re-registration took about three weeks from start to finish on his Singer Le Mans. My patience snaps. I call another contact. Can they help? "Of course" comes the reply. I call my reluctant registrant and tell him to return the forms to me immediately. I should have known better than to use that word again! Eventually they arrive without a covering note. I've obviously upset him, but it is now almost the end of September and I've not been able to use the car! Forms etc. are dispatched to my new helper who happens to be in my area that weekend and inspects the car. Forms duly endorsed by T Register (what a give away!) and dispatched with covering letter to DVLA. I'm told to give it a couple of weeks. Result at last!

I rejoice too soon. MG Insurance cancel my policy because I haven't supplied a registration number. I phone and explain again and the car is re-insured with another company but I must supply a registration number within a fortnight. Time passes.

September slides imperceptibly into October. After about ten days I call DVLA to be told that the forms should have been sent to my local office. Have Swansea got them? There is no trace, they will have been forwarded to my local office, I am told. If you try to call your local DVLA office the call goes to Swansea, as I found a day or so later when I called to see if my local office had my forms. I am told someone from the local office will call in the next hour or so. I take the precaution of asking the person's name. I'm outside when the call comes through but a message is left on my machine. "Swansea deals with all these sorts of things," I am told, "we have to send any requests to Swansea for approval." I call Swansea again and get through to the person I had spoken to before. Eventually I am passed to yet another person, a delightful sounding girl with a very strong Welsh accent, who tells me the forms "may have been lost" or "could be somewhere in the system as we are about a fortnight behind at the moment. I'll call you next week."

A week passes. I receive a call from my Welsh siren who tells me the forms have still not turned up. "But, they are only on the 22<sup>nd</sup> in the post room." I point out that that is over three weeks behind and ask a reason for the delay. None is forthcoming. There is still hope, as my forms would have reached them on the 27<sup>th</sup>. "Well, there you are then!" is the reply. "Call again next week, bye-ee." The frustration has now reached a point that it is becoming laughable. Had I but known it, the forms were actually received on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, but as often happens in large organisations, one section knows nothing of another section's workings.

The morning of 21<sup>st</sup> October dawns. A weighty envelope with a DVLA logo drops through the letterbox. At last! Sweaty fingers grapple with the sealed flap. I give up and tear the wretched thing open. "Dear Sir, Thank you for your application....Unfortunately, I cannot deal with your request at this time...I return your original documents."

What! I don't believe it! Victor Meldrew, eat your heart out! I am forced to cool off for a couple of hours as I have work to do but on my return I call the number on the letter. This is a department at DVLA that deals solely in rejecting things. DVLA, it appears, has an entire department dedicated to saying 'NO'. They need more evidence, and the form needs to be signed by an approved signatory. I point out that I have supplied the evidence they asked for. "Who told you?" As I only have a first name and a team number I give them this. "This person had no right to tell you this, etc etc." I struggle to keep calm and remind the harridan ticking me off that I was only following the instructions given and that as the approved signatory has recently sadly died, in the circumstances could not another be used? The manager of the department does what they can only do, and says 'no'. Calls to the T Register reveal an alternative signatory; all is not yet lost.

With copies of the Register entry and the Register's production records faxed to me I prepare to start again. More forms.

The following day I receive a call from a less strident Welsh maiden who tells me she is the person who actually rejected the application. Being, by now, used to the lilting tones I ask what is required calmly and without emotion. I fax the copies from the Register to her. Will this be sufficient? Will there ever be a time when my TC gets on the road? She will consider the matter and call me back in an hour or so. Fortunately, the day is hectic so the time passes quickly. Some four or five hours later I find time to call DVLA on the number on the letter and ask for the less strident maiden by name. Apparently this is not allowed, as the public are not supposed to speak to these beings. I protest that she was going to call me some hours ago and insist on speaking to her. "She'll call you back." I stand my ground. By now I know no fear of dragons or DVLA personnel. She deigns to speak

to me only to inform me that she will call me back in a few minutes. What more can I do? Reluctantly, I hang up.

Minutes later the phone rings again. "If you re-submit the forms we will look at them favourably." Does this mean I get my registration number? Apparently yes. DVLA has had a change of heart. As simple as that. I check once again what needs to be re-submitted and parcel it up. This time it is sent 'Special Delivery' at the vast cost of £3.75. Worth every penny? We shall see.

The documents will have arrived the following working day. As I have been told all is now in order I expect the treasured registration to arrive by return. Two weeks pass. I call and go through the routine question and answer session of why a mere member of the public should speak to such an exalted being and await the return call. It comes eventually and I am told that the signatory has had to be confirmed as the previous one had died. I refrain from telling them that I had told them that in the first place and ask how much longer this is likely to take. "A few days," I'm told. I won't hold my breath.

The following day a weighty envelope arrives from DVLA. Could this be it? Has the day finally arrived? No, it is my copies of letters and photographs that I had sent to them, but the signs are good, as there is no letter of refusal.

The morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> November is bright and sunny. A nondescript envelope amongst the entreaties for me to use this credit card or install these windows turns out to contain a garish blue document. It is my V5C and apart from the declaration that "the vehicle is new at first registration," all seems to be in order. There is a feeling of anticlimax. This precious document that has taken so long to materialise is now in my possession. I call the insurance company and go off to the Post Office to get a tax disc. I can't have one! The insurance cover-note I have has the chassis number and not the registration number on it. Even though the chassis number is on the V5C it is not good enough for my Post Office 'Jobsworth'. My inane laughter causes more than one odd look from the pension queue, but what would they know!

**Stephen Rigby**

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## TINKERING WITH TC/0750

I don't seem to get much time these days to work on the cars. Although semi-retired, I wonder how I ever had the time to go to work! Looking after a three year old grandson while mum works part-time to help pay the mortgage eats into my time, but I wouldn't change it for the world – kids are so rewarding (until they start answering back!). He's not yet ready to go crawling under MGs but he's very enthusiastic and knows an MG when he sees one. However, I digress.

I was recently preparing my son's rather "beaten up" Mini for the dreaded MOT test when I realised that I would have to replace a leaking rear wheel brake cylinder. This was accomplished without too much trouble, except that I couldn't get the new E-clip to fit in the groove of the cylinder and thereby secure the cylinder to the backplate. 'Standing on one's head' doesn't exactly help of course, especially when one is showered by dust from the subframe, so I "cheated" and put the old E-clip back in. Looking at the new, now surplus to requirements, shiny clip I figured that it might well be suitable to replace the 'horseshoe' circlip on the brake shoe anchor pin on my TC. However, if I was going to replace both circlips on the nearside and offside front (the rear will have to wait), I would need to obtain another E-clip. I picked up two new ones in an engineering supplies shop in Bath – these were slightly thicker than the E-clip from the Mini wheel cylinder and they fitted the groove in the anchor pin exactly. The photo on the right shows (from L to R) the E-clip from the Mini wheel cylinder, the horseshoe clip (Part no. 66388 "Circlip for anchor pin" in the TC Parts List) and one of the E-clips I bought in Bath.



The two photos above show the pivot pin removed from the

backplate. The photo on the right has been added to show the Thackeray washer (Part no. 39382 "Thackeray washer for anchor pin" in the TC Parts List) more clearly.

The next photo shows the (almost) bare backplate with the pivot pin now fixed to the backplate. The snail cam adjusters can be clearly seen ('cos I painted them silver!), also the steady pins for the brake shoes with washers and split pins temporarily attached, waiting for the brake shoes to be fitted.



The next two photos show the assembly, first with the original 'horseshoe' circlip fitted and second with the E-clip (now painted silver) fitted.



The last photo shows the completed assembly, ready to receive the brake drum.

I hope this article has been of some use.

**JOHN JAMES**



## Checklist

Here is my Checklist as requested by the Editor in the January issue. I only have beam axle cars so it does not necessarily apply to TD and TF models, someone out there with one of those Y type convertibles (steady on TT! –Ed.) may wish to modify the list to suit.

I perform this check with the car supported under the chassis on axle stands so that the suspension 'hangs' from the car without any load. This allows grease to get into the load bearing contact points if you choose to do the mentioned service items along with the other checks. There is little point in greasing items when the components are sitting under load with metal-to-metal contact, the grease can't get where it needs to be!

When to crack test? That is the question! My cars do an average of 3000 miles per year, I definitely drive them enthusiastically and I am comfortable with my 36-month crack test cycle. You need to check as frequently as makes you feel comfortable. I suspect there is little time between a crack starting and failure on these high stressed parts so there is probably no guarantee that they will not fail the day after they have tested OK. All you can do is take sensible precautions. By the way, should we crack test the drop arm and steering arms as well? I have heard of drop arms failing in the past.

I have seen some awful stub axles so take a close look, particularly the radius where the axle pin meets the vertical kingpin portion of the forging. Make sure there are no nicks or scratches here, it should shine and be as smooth as a baby's bottom, to prevent stress raisers in this critical area. Also check that those big washers which fit over the axle pin and provide the seating for the inner wheel bearing are the right way round and not contacting the radius.

I use red dye crack testing, which I do myself. You can get the cleaner, dye and developer kits from engineering supply companies such as Buck and Hickman at a modest price. I am not sure if red dye testing is adequate for this type of work and would like to hear from a qualified stress engineer about the pros and cons of the different types of crack testing.

I use taper wheel bearings on the front and wonder if they increase the stress in the stub axle. I guess that the improved front hub stability outweighs any additional stress, or does it? Enough of this, I'll soon be too frightened to get out of bed, let alone drive a T type!

When you have the stub axles off the car it makes sense to overhaul the kingpins. I find that the bushes wear before the pin but I have not been able to buy just the bushes. I end up buying a kit with the pins and thrusts included. Does anyone have a source for just the bushes?

I have suggested to our honourable Editor that he puts the Checklist Excel document on the web site, that way you can down load it and print it when required, print it in landscape for best results.

Yours paranoidically      **Tangerine Terror**

<b>MG T Type Beam Axle 6 Month Checklist</b>		
	<b>Car registration =</b>	<b>Date and sign =</b>
	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
		<b>OK or Not OK</b>
1	Front axle securing bolts	Secure
2	Rear axle securing bolts	Secure
3	All road springs	Leaf cracks
4	All road spring shackles/trunions	Secure
5	All road spring front attachments	Secure
6	King pin cotter pins	Secure
7	Track and Tie rod ball joints	Secure
8	Steering box mounting	Secure to chassis and box
9	Drop arm	Secure to steering sector shaft
10	Steering arms	Secure to stub axles
11	Steering column upper mounting	Secure to body
12	Steering wheel	Secure to shaft
13	Steering box condition	Full motion,bearings, wear, cover plates
14	Clutch/brake pedals and links	Wear and security
15	Prop shaft U/Js/spline and flange bolts	Wear and security
16	Fan blades	Secure
17	Body	Security of panels and mountings
18	Brake fluid	Master cylinder level, leaks at joints,hoses and wheel cylinders
19	Tyres	Tread, sidewalls and pressures
20	Wheel spokes	Tightness
21	Knock ons	Tightness
22	Wheel bearings	Smooth, wear
23	King pins	Wear
24	Handbrake	Cable condition, security
25	Fuel system	Leaks
26	Rear Hubs	Oil leaks
	<b>Crack Test the following components every 36 months*</b>	
27	Stub Axles	
28	Sector shaft	
	<b>Service following items every 6 months</b>	
29	Adjust brakes	Footbrake and handbrake
30	Check all oil levels	Engine/gear box/rear axle/steering box
31	Grease	Suspension/steering/prop shaft/handbrake

**NOTE:** This 36 month interval is no guarantee, it is just what I am comfortable with. Adjust to suit your own comfort levels.

**Ed's Note:** I had a few problems with getting this to fit the page, so I'm sorry if you have had to get the magnifying glass out! I've printed some copies of the checklist in landscape and will bring some to Silverstone. In the meantime if anybody wants a copy I will gladly send one on receipt of an A5 SAE with 21p stamp. For website readers who have registered for automatic notification, I'll send them a separate copy in EXCEL and I'll also ask the TABC list Webmaster if he will consider putting it on their website in the technical section.

**BINDERS FOR TTT** I am going to order 100 of these and they will be available at Silverstone. Those who have contacted me (and in some cases sent money) will have binders posted (unless they collect at Silverstone).

# XPAG engine "overbores"

*Some months back, Roger Wilson received an email query about overboring a 1250cc XPAG engine. This prompted him to pen the following notes (which have been on the Editor's "waiting list").*

As was normal when the XPAG engine was introduced, there were oversize pistons available up to +.060", to allow for three (and possibly four) sizes of rebore. Later on, at some time during the TD (and Y) production run, a range of "overbore" pistons was introduced. These were, and still are, available from +.100" (giving 1350cc) to +.140" (which gave 1390cc), and as far as I can determine, they are all nowadays three ring solid skirt pistons. However, with some of these larger sizes there are a few concerns, as follows;

**+.100" (1350cc), +.110" (1360cc);** these sizes do NOT usually give any + problems with thin walls down the cylinder bores. The standard head gasket, oval or round water hole, as appropriate, should be used.

**+.120" (1370cc);** this size occasionally gives trouble - say about 10% of + attempts - with thin walls down the cylinder bores, whether an oval or round water hole block is used. The boring doesn't actually go through the cylinder walls; the trouble shows itself as a split in one of the walls, and it usually occurs after the engine has been assembled and run a few miles. The standard head gasket should be used.

**+.130" (1380cc);** this size very often results in the split cylinder wall problem mentioned above, as I know from personal experience. Also, it is the largest size that can use a standard head gasket, as around the bores the lips of the gasket are almost flush with the edges of the bores.

**+.140" (1390cc);** this size almost invariably results in split cylinder walls. In addition, the standard head gasket overlaps slightly into the bores, and is therefore not very satisfactory. The XPEG gasket is not suitable either, as not all the waterways line up; for the XPEG engine (and its gasket), some water holes were moved. It makes one wonder why this size of overbore was made available.

Regarding my own experience, I bored out two engines to 1380cc, and both suffered from split cylinder walls. I therefore had one of them bored out further, and some thin wall sleeves (or liners) were pressed in to go back to 1380cc. Since then I have had no trouble; in addition, 1380cc (plus TF stage 3 tune and a few other mods) really make the car go. The car has a 4.3:1 rear axle ratio, but I think it would cope with 4.1:1 (even up hills).

**Roger Wilson**

# HINTS AND TIPS

***Do you have a hint or tip which could be shared with others? If so, please let the Editor know, so that it can be published!***

**FROM HANS EEKHOFF ON COOLING** Hans wrote (some time ago) "I see that you're planning to write more about XPAG cooling and you add: "always a popular subject". I agree that it is, but you can deal with this matter for once and for all. As you know I am from Holland and I can tell you that there is not one single car in the Netherlands that has a drop of (tap)water in its radiator. All cars over there use ready-made 100% cooling fluid or "coolant" which, of course, mainly consists of water, but it is distilled, doesn't contain any calcium or acid and has (non-polluting) chemicals added so freezing point is about minus 24 degrees. Also it doesn't evaporate as quickly as pure water and therefore cools better, prevents your radiator from corroding and is harmless to the paintwork of your car (and no more water stains!).

To my amazement, "coolant" is virtually unknown in the UK and, although one can order it from Halfords etc., I bring my own back from the continent (every petrol station sells it). My advice is this: De-calcify and clean your cooling system very thoroughly, get a new radiator and from now on use this undiluted coolant. Top up every few months or so (I do it only twice a year and still don't need more than about half a pint) and never worry about cooling again. The radiator will last forever".

**FROM BOB MARSHALL ON TD/TF CLUTCH PROBLEMS** Bob wrote (recently) "Four years ago I modified the clutch linkage on the TF as per the notes (*in the March issue of TTT*) (which also appear/ed on [www.oconnorsclassics.com](http://www.oconnorsclassics.com)) and made the link adjustable using RH and LH threads. (I purchased the 5/16 BSF tap and die from A & R Sheldon of Bramhall Cheshire 0161 4400821).

Another source of clutch actuation problems is the cross shaft. This can wear in the bell housing. In my case the shaft was worn, the housing was alright. I got a local machine shop to make up a new one. It is critical that the key ways are cut in the correct position.

The clutch face of the flywheel can, with time, and particularly with non-use become uneven. With the engine out and the crankshaft out (for machining the oil seal faces by George Edney) I had the flywheel skimmed. This made a tremendous difference to the smoothness of the clutch.

Bob also commented as follows "Clock - someone mentioned they were having trouble with the clock - don't we all? When new, the clock was hardly quality and had an inbuilt weakness. It all comes down to the carbon build up on the switching mechanism for the bobbin. The *Sacred Octagon* published articles by Hal Kramer in June 1991, June 1992 and October 1992 which are helpful. I also have some notes sent from the USA which gives a stage by stage description of refurbishment. A few years ago a watchmaker in Bath gave the clock the once over and for a while it worked well."

**REPLY DATED 3<sup>rd</sup> MAY 2005 FROM PETER BROWNING (EDITOR OF "SATETY FAST!") TO DENNIS BARKER'S LETTER OF 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL (SEE PAGES 6/7 )**

*"Dear Dennis*

*This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 25th April marked for publication in Safety Fast! We do not think that it is in the best interests of the Club to bring this issue to the notice of members when Club business is conducted at Council by the CRBs, representing the members.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Peter Browning, Editor."*

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## **EVENTS (OF WHICH THE EDITOR HAS BEEN NOTIFIED)**

**THE PENDINE DASH – 14<sup>th</sup> AUGUST** Organised by the Pembrokeshire MG Car Club. It will begin at Pontabraham Services at the end of the M4 and follow a Tulip route (85 miles) through Carmarthenshire into Pembrokeshire, taking in the beautiful National Park coastal scenery of the Carew, Pembroke, Manorbier, Lydstep, Tenby, Saundersfoot and Amroth area before finishing at the Museum of Speed at Pendine. Tea/coffee supplied on route. Entry fee £15 per car, to include a Rally plaque. More information at [www.pembsmg.co.uk](http://www.pembsmg.co.uk) or send SAE to Neil Thomas, The Hollies, Gumfreston, TENBY Pembrokeshire SA70 8RA.

**BLenheim PALACE – 14<sup>th</sup> AUGUST** An event commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VJ Day. The day's programme will include a revival meeting of Forties themed attractions, a three-hour air display led by the Red Arrows and a Swing Concert featuring the Glenn Miller Orchestra. All pre-65 cars welcome. Car and driver free, passenger £10 (normal entry £20 per head {in advance} or £30 on the day), so good value. Period dress optional. Further details [www.flightfestivals.com](http://www.flightfestivals.com) or [www.flightfestivals.co.uk](http://www.flightfestivals.co.uk) or contact Sue Bowen by phone (01285 654777) or fax (01285 642100).

**BRITISH SPORTS CAR DAY – 21<sup>st</sup> AUGUST** Organised by the Gordon-Keeble Owners' Club and being held at Rougham Airfield, West Suffolk. Entry fee £5 per car (inc. 2 adults). Timed to coincide with the 2005 Air Display, the day also features a myriad of ground attractions which will appeal to every member of the family. Enquiries to:  
The Estate Office, Rougham, BURY St EDMUNDS, Suffolk IP30 9LZ  
Telephone 01359 270238.

**CAR FOR SALE** 1937 TA, with XPAG engine. "Black Pig" seeks new owner. After 42 years the driver has failed his 'MOT'. Very detailed history. £12,000 or offer. Allan Scott 01403 259780 (Sussex). E-mail for detail spec [tblackpig@aol.com](mailto:tblackpig@aol.com) Also for sale, bare TA chassis. No axles. In need of repair. No V5. TA short engine needs full overhaul. £2,000 or offers.

### **SPARES FOR SALE**

Original spec cross-ply tyres 5.50 x 15. Four 20% worn, plus unused spare £150. Please ring Peter Edney 01279 876976

8" clutch housing £75. 4.875:1 (8/39) std. Crown Wheel & Pinion £65. Both in good working condition. Also MGB Factory Workshop Manual and Tuning Manual. E-mail [roymill@waitrose.com](mailto:roymill@waitrose.com)

**SERVICES** I am now able to offer an exchange brake shoe relining service for TA/B/C. Linings are bonded rather than riveted and are suitable for the original steel drums. Price is £27.50 per axle plus return postage. This is a non-profit making service to T Register members only. John James 0117 986 4224 or [jj@octagon.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:jj@octagon.fsbusiness.co.uk)

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Treasurer	John Steedman 01962 760328 <a href="mailto:JohnHWSteedman@aol.com">JohnHWSteedman@aol.com</a>
Secretary	Chris Sundt 01628 621836 <a href="mailto:treg@netcomuk.co.uk">treg@netcomuk.co.uk</a>
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Registrar (TD/TF)	David Butler 01234 407351 <a href="mailto:david.butler@skf.com">david.butler@skf.com</a>
Rebuild Organiser	Peter Cole 01243 867687 <a href="mailto:peter.cole@onetel.net">peter.cole@onetel.net</a>
Competition Secretary	Chris Tinker 01473 461252 <a href="mailto:email@tinker.go-plus.net">email@tinker.go-plus.net</a>
Historian & DVLA rep.	Roy Miller 01753 884653 <a href="mailto:roymill@waitrose.com">roymill@waitrose.com</a>
Events Organiser	Graham Brown 01234 358729 <a href="mailto:graham@isisbedford62.freeseve.uk">graham@isisbedford62.freeseve.uk</a>

## **SECONDED MEMBERS**

TD/TF Technical	Barrie Jones 01579 370487 <a href="mailto:barriej@eurobell.co.uk">barriej@eurobell.co.uk</a>
Technical Adviser (TABC)	Roger Furneaux 01566 784111 <a href="mailto:roger.46tc@virgin.net">roger.46tc@virgin.net</a>
Registrar TABC & Specials	Stewart Penfound 01273 506216 <a href="mailto:stewart.penfound@btinternet.com">stewart.penfound@btinternet.com</a>
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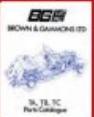
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