



Northumbrian
May 2015



A good turn out for Drive It Day

www.mgnorthumbria.org

Chairman's Chat

Hello again,

I wrote last months newsletter chat outside in the sun, but it appears we now have a cold spell back.

So the Jubilee news, round1 has been complete and as expected the lowered suspension has made a big difference, well worth doing if you have a rubber bumpered car. I also mentioned I wasnt going to do much to affect the visual appearance, but that was before I discovered the correct colour scheme for a Jubilee's wheels so had to go and buy some paint, see before and after pics. Quite bright. Other original features were tinted windows and cloth seats but I will stick with what I have and enjoy driving her.

By the time you read this she will have celebrated her 40th birthday, date of manufacture is 29/4/15. There is a national party for Jubilee's in Abingdon on 17/5 but I wont be going.

It has been nice to get back out on runs even with the unexpected snow on the 12th. I am off on my travels this month with a visit to Leicestershire to see my mother & sister and by pure chance it coincides with the Nth Leicestershire MGOC Charnwood Chaper. My chance of furthest travelled has gone with at least one car going from further north than Whitley Bay, see you there Les.

So I wont be here to take part in Jonathan's first run on the 10th. I will be asking for numbers at club night as if there is enough demand he will book a room at the Newcastle House Hotel in Rothbury for lunch, for many years the end of the Chairmans Run. If you wont be at club night and plan to go please let me know before 7/5/15 and I will pass the names on.

More on Drive It Day will appear in the June newsletter.

Anything else important happening in May? Ive not seen anything in the election debates about a commitment to keep the historic road tax exemption and the rolling extension. We need to know. Vote carefully!!

May you have a good month

Cheers

Tim Cook

chairman@mgnorthumbria.org

Classics in Corbridge Bric a Brac Stall

Following my appeal for volunteers to run the stall we now have a small group which means no-one will need to spend all day on the stall. Eileen Dalgarno will be co-ordinating it and will accept donations for items to sell on the stall. If you have anything suitable please get in touch with her or give it to her at club night or on a run.

Thanks to both Eileen and the other volunteers.

Warkworth Show

As I mentioned at the last club night we have been invited to attend the show on 22nd August at Warkworth Castle.

Warkworth Show & Competition entry is free and the entry forms will be available soon.

Free entry to the castle and show for driver and passenger(s) No entry fee to competition

Arrive by 10.30am latest and Depart 5.00pm earliest.

If you are interested in going, put it in your diary and watch the website and newsletter for more details.

MG Owners Club

Are you a member of the national club? While it is not a requirement of membership of this club you may be interested in joining. If you do quote our area number, 0304, and MGOC will send this club £3.50

Classics in Corbridge Charity Donations 2015

In April we sent out a press release, to the press and to the charity & voluntary sector networks, giving details of this years show and our hope to have another large sum of money to give away. The criteria are the same as last year, ie groups must be applying the buy something specific as we dont donate to general running costs or to appeal targets. An application form is available on line. If you know a group that might want to apply please let them know.

The MG Northumbria Yorkshire Dales Weekend



Saturday 12th - Monday 14th September 2015

Based in the small village of *Gargrave* close to Skipton, enjoy a splendid weekend driving through the beautiful Dales

The Premier Inn, *Gargrave* beside the Leeds - Liverpool Canal

offers easy payment and cancellation opportunities

Please email John Mitchell if you plan to join us to ensure you receive instructions nearer the date

johnpatrick.mitchell@virgin.net

Event Diary for May

1st **Clubnight**, Backworth 8.00 pm

10th **Club Run**. Meet at Milkhope Centre Blagdon NE13 6DA leaving about 10.45. Coffee shop opens at 10.00. Suggest we all park under trees near Centre exit. 46 miles to Rothbury for approx 1.30 lunch at Newcastle House Hotel. Please e-mail me by 7 May so I can confirm numbers with Hotel. Jonathan Bayliss.
jonathansbayliss@gmail.com

20th **“Non-workers” half day run**. A mid-week run for those who don't have to be at work! Starting at 1.30 from Brockbushes Farm on the A69 and ending at Stanhope. About 60 miles and Mike Mitchell promises no gates!

31st **Club Run**. Meet at The Fox and Hounds. Coalburns, Greenside. NE404JN at 10.30 am where coffee and bacon sandwiches are available. About 60-70 miles ending at The Punch Bowl, Edmundbyers (meals served all day).

New Member

This month we welcome to MG Northumbria

Alan Carter of Gosforth. Alan has a Triumph Dolomite 1300.

Croft Nostalgia Weekend

Dave Stokoe reports that classic car parking at this event is now open to cars registered before 1 st January 1977.

MG Harrogate Show

John Mitchell would be grateful if those who intend going to this event on 8/9 August could email him at (johnpatrick.mitchell@virgin.net) me that they plan to come would be great.

GET YOUR CARB INTAKE CORRECT IF YOU WANT TO RUN WELL!

My 1972 MGB has always run very well, until I took it out on a dry day this February when it was idling roughly and hesitating when accelerating. More worryingly I could also smell what seemed like hot plastic! – was the wiring loom about to catch fire? When I got back home, I was relieved to find the hot plastic smell was just a supermarket plastic bag, which had got itself wrapped around the front exhaust downpipe, where it had melted and become a congealed mess.

The poor running was more difficult to track down. I tried all the usual checks, such as compression pressures, power at ignition coil, oil in dashpots etc.) to no avail, so decided to take the distributor out to check it (having first set No 1 piston at TDC).

The previous owner had fitted the distributor with an Accuspark electronic Hall effect module in place of points and condenser. I didn't believe that this electronic module was the cause of my trouble because I understand that normally they either work fine, or fail completely. They are relatively cheap (less than £30) so I carry a spare in the glovebox. The rest of the distributor looked as if it had seen better days, and it was probably original to the car, and so more than 40yrs old, so I decided to get an exchange reconditioned one from MGOC. This reconditioned unit was slightly more expensive than the cost of a new Chinese Lucas distributor, but I wanted to stay with original equipment where possible.

The reconditioned distributor came with points and condenser fitted, so I swapped these for the Accuspark module before I installed it. I had a bit of trouble fitting the new distributor into the drive socket on the side of the engine. It wouldn't go in far enough to seat properly, and I was beginning to wonder if they'd sent me the wrong distributor, or if the shaft was over-size. By chance I rotated the distributor through 180 degrees and it dropped in nicely, although now the timing was now out.

On examining the new distributor and comparing it with my old one, which fortunately I had not yet sent off in exchange, I found that the offset key on the new driveshaft was 180 out of phase compared to the old one. I believe some classic British cars had the key in this arrangement, so this reconditioned distributor, although it was the correct model, probably came off something other than an MG. I managed to take off the end fitting after drifting out the locating pin, and turn it through 180degrees, so the key was now on the correct side and distributor now fitted, with the timing correct.

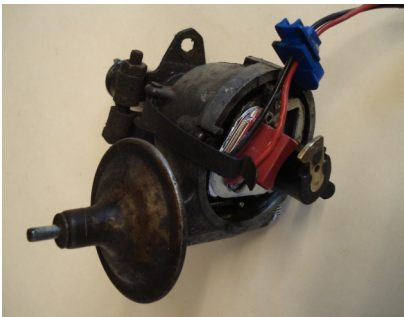


Fig 1. Original distributor with Accuspark module fitted

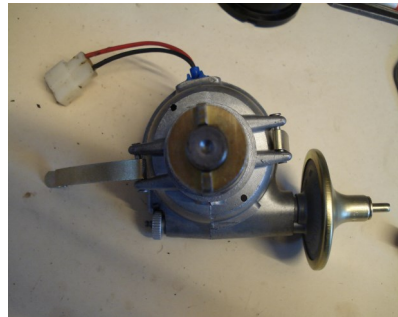


Fig 2. Base of new distributor showing offset drive key

My next job was to fit new spark plugs. Although the old ones looked in good shape I found that three were Champions and one was an NGK, which was a bit odd.

Next I decided to strip the carburettors to check if they were OK. The outsides were pretty grubby, but internally they were very clean and it looked as if new jets, jet housings, floats and float valves had been fitted recently by the previous owner. Never the less I cleaned the carbs internally and externally (incidentally, I found that Toolstation's carb cleaner is much cheaper than most suppliers).

One problem I did find was wear in the throttle shafts, where they go through the carburettor bodies. There was detectable play in the shafts when they were moved up and down by hand. I understand that this can cause air leaks into the carbs along the shafts, making setting a consistent idle difficult. When they were taken out of the carbs I found that there was a wear groove at the end of each shaft. The usual two options when this happens are either to fit oversize throttle shafts after drilling out and reaming the carb bodies, or to use new standard size shafts and fit bushes in the carb bodies, which also need reaming to size.

I was considering these two options when I came across some throttle shafts on e bay, which were new SU Burlen manganese bronze replacement shafts which had been modified to include a small O ring at each end (see photo). It is claimed these O rings will accommodate small amounts of wear in the carb bodies without the need for drilling and reaming. I thought they were worth a try, although I had, and still have, some concerns about the lifespan of the O rings. These were not alleviated when the new spindles came with spare O rings, suggesting they may only have a limited life! So far I've done a couple of hundred miles without problem, but I'll let you know how what they are like after a few thousand miles.

I fitted the new throttle shafts, put the carbs back on the car and then set the timing with a strobe light, balanced the carbs, and set the mixtures with a Gunson's Colourtune. I was relieved to find that the car now ran perfectly. By the way, am I unique in finding that using the lifting pins on the carb bodies to set the mixture is very subjective? – I think you are supposed to notice a change in engine speed when lifting the pins by about 1/32 inch, but I can't really tell much difference until I lift them so much that the engine starts to stall.

In conclusion, I'm not sure if it was the new distributor, the new spark plugs, or the new throttle shafts that cured the poor running, but I'm happy anyway!



Fig 3. Old throttle shaft and new one with O rings

PS Following my rant a few months ago about the pathetic windscreen wipers on my B, Jim Graham suggested taking the rubber blades out of Poundland replacement wiper blades and fitting them to my original Tex stainless steel wiper arms. The Poundland blades are, not surprisingly, only a £1! As such I suppose they make them a bit thinner to save material, but this also makes them more flexible so they seem to follow the profile of the windscreen better. It is a bit of a fiddle to dismantle the blades, cut the rubbers down to length, and fit them to the Tex arms, but the result has been a dramatic improvement in performance. So, a combination of Rain X, Poundland blades, and a single wipe switch has made life much more bearable – thanks Jim!

Kevin Prosser

When I was quite small my Dad bought an old car
A Bond Minicar with three wheels.
It kept breaking down
With it's nose on the ground.
We never did get very far!
The wheels had a problem I'm sorry to say,
It plagued us for many a year.
The bolts would sheer off and pedestrians scoff
As we pulled the old car on it's way.
Dad borrowed a dustbin from down a back lane
And propped up the Bond by the nose.
He's put new bolts in and we'd set off again.
As transport it was quite insane.
My mum got fair riled, she'd splutter and cough,
She wanted a car with four wheels.
"Nay lass" he would say.
"That would never pay,
That's one extra wheel to fall off!"

Emma M. Allen



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*Motor group TEC

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