

MIDGE MAGAZINE



Autumn
2022



MOBC. the Midge Owners and Builders' Club



Robert's Midge



Hello All.

Well, summer finally arrived in the UK along with drought and fires, but we'll have seen some good conditions for Midge driving. I imagine that when this comes out (I usually try for the 1st of October) We'll start looking for flying jackets and odd hats while our antipodean members will be throwing aside their electric blankets and considering a run to the beach.

It's always a bit odd working out what to put into the magazine as I have to start compiling a few days after the previous issue. (Here it is, just now, mid August) so seasonal stuff is sometimes predictable and sometimes not.

While on temporal matters I am now 70. (Members that are even older are of course allowed to mutter and splutter in response) So I'm now almost as old as John Bircumshaw, my predecessor, although the maths suggests I'm unlikely to overtake him. It is my intention to continue until 2025, and achieve his 10 years service, but que sera sera.

Then, (if spared), I'll be looking for a successor (Treasurer, General Secretary, Editor, Membership secretary, web-master and parking attendant). It is easier now without the annual membership fees, and not much more than 23 hours a day (I'll not mention how many days in the month) and Facebook does most of the chat stuff. Sooner or later Members may wish to consider whether we should update the club publications in terms of the changing internet and social media. JH.

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Welcome to Robert Connor, Ian Smith and
welcome back Gerard Macluskey (812)



John Eden found a fault and wrote:-

'I took a drive in the Midge yesterday and the tick-over was intermittent, but worse, when I opened the bonnet on returning, there was a slight leak of petrol from the carburettor. I couldn't determine where it was coming from and when I took off the carb I still couldn't fathom it: all joints seemed tight. Now I know a little about engines but the Solex carb is beyond my comprehension: it looks like something the aliens use in a science-fiction film'.

He wondered about replacing it, and whether I had spares, but fortunately your trusty editor had this problem before and responded thus:

I don't have any spares I'm sorry to say, but I notice your heat shield is missing. It is supposed to stop hot air rising from the exhaust and boiling the petrol in the float chamber. (The petrol at the bottom expands as a vapour and blows the petrol out of the air vent at the top) Mine did that when carrying shopping, self, and wife uphill in high summer, noting the smell of petrol, Fiona was not pleased with the prospect of immolation and when I stopped the engine the sound of boiling petrol became a tad worrying. It's an irregular thumping noise with an odd fizz as the petrol drips hit the exhaust manifold and pipe. There are also small but worrying visible puffs of vaporised petrol. Not good.

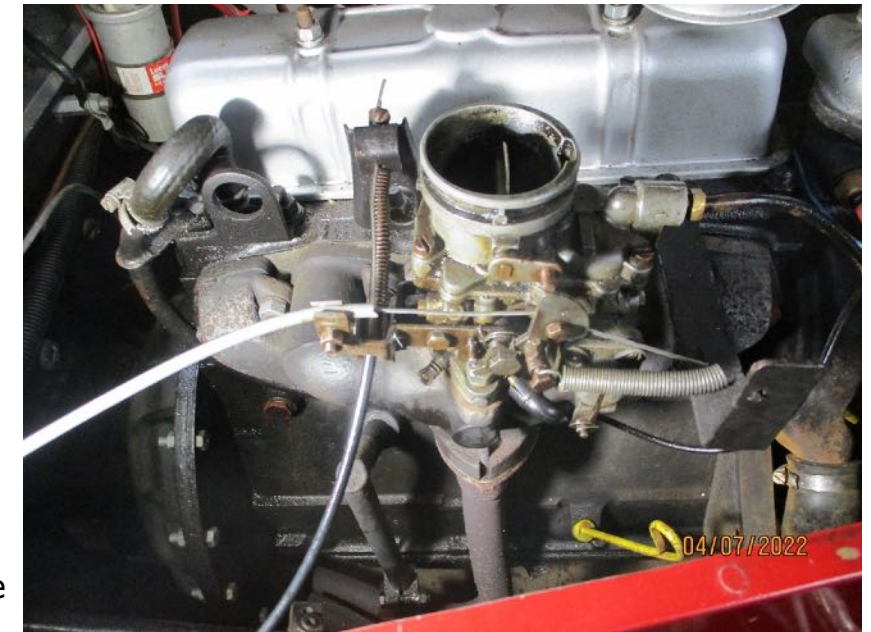
On examination my heat shield was missing. The shield often gets removed as they corrode and rattle without being obviously useful. Placed correctly they should reduce the heat reaching the carburettor as well as deflecting any petrol falling on the exhaust. The advantages of a cross-flow engine become clearer. I won't comment on the idea of putting the carburettor above the exhaust, that's just the way things were and modern drivers may not see the danger as it shouldn't be built like that now.

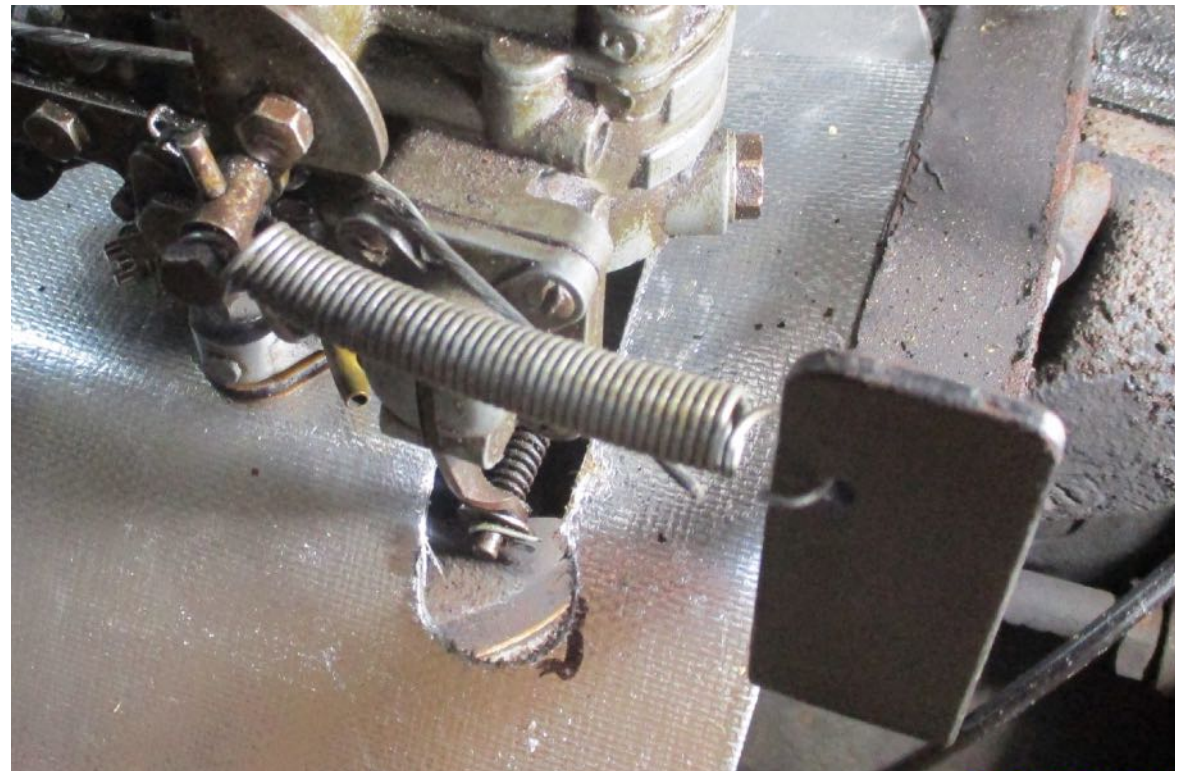
John wrote back: I made up a heat shield yesterday - an aluminium plate covered with heat-shield foil - bent so that should any petrol try to escape it should at least miss the exhaust. I might fabricate a scoop, too, depending on how this works.

It appears he 'had previous' in the matter of errant petrol and added an anecdote:

Many years ago I was driving to a camping holiday with girl-friend in my MG TB. Getting dark, fire under bonnet. Fire extinguished, hood buried under tent and camping gear, so we slept in the car *under the tonneau cover*. By gosh, I must have been flexible in those days. Morning revealed a loose fuel pipe, easily fixed. On to the camp site with interesting bonnet paint job. Hence - wary of under-bonnet fires. The girl-friend married me, by the way. Brave girl. JE

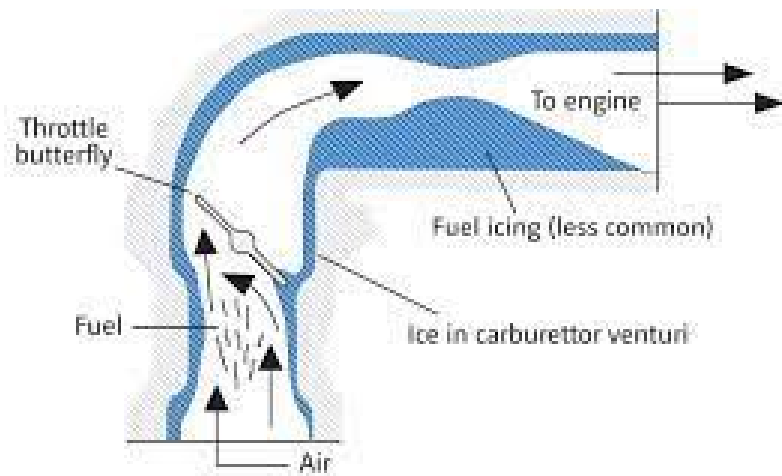
Mk1 Midges tend to have poor ventilation around the engine, and the gearbox can block up the bulkhead gap. The louvres can be useful, but they may be largely in front of the carburettors and therefore not cooling them much. Also the radiator may be feeding hot air directly around the carburettor if the flow has to go through that first. The upside is the cars without cabin heaters stay warmer in winter, but I suggest thermal monitoring and I'll put a link on page 4.





Here we have John's adjusted arrangement to allow free travel for the throttle linkage and a support for the choke return spring. The head bolt should be firm enough, but a small flap will stop any chances of the spring pulling the arm around, which can happen if you need to tweak the position of the arm to get the spring tension right. If you have a few spare cylinder head nuts and a bit of spare thread for them it can save the question of maintaining the torque on the head bolts. I've not had any overheating problems since I

added a heat shield (rather less neat than John's) but you might want to shield the fuel pipe as well. The other end of the thermal spectrum can conceivably produce icing through the Venturi effect but not many Midgees go out in extreme cold, and rarely suffer from over cooling. If anyone wants, or even if they simply don't object, I can put in a small piece for the Winter magazine on how to keep your carburettor warm enough for arctic use and suggest suitable hat styles for ears and other bits of exposed skin. If reminded I might delve into the odd bits of heat related pipework in and around the Triumph engine that are generally ignored.





As promised just a page or two ago, these are on **Amazon** (that's a link) and when I bought them there were 3 for £8. Search 'external thermal monitor' if they've gone. I'm going to fit mine on the top of the float chamber, but as I've not used one yet you'll have to work out the details and I'm not issuing any guarantees. They run on a wee button battery so they don't need wiring in. If the engine is cold then they'll read the ambient temperature. I doubt they are waterproof.



While we are on the subject, the **Winter 2020 magazine** page 12 had an offer of stick type **fire extinguishers**

£60 may seem a bit steep but they are at £84 on Amazon at the time of writing. I rather doubt the same discount will be available, but it might save you from having to cover your burning engine with your favourite flying jacket.

Obviously your 3rd party fire and theft should cover you, but I feel this might be useful in the event, The bits in **bold** are links

In spite of the picture I would advise against mounting it in such a position that you might grab it rather than the handbrake as, for example, you roll backwards over the cliff edge.

info@glossfireaction.co.uk
and the main website is at
<https://www.glossfireaction.co.uk/>



Malcolm has (near enough) finished his rather neat hand made mudguards. Congratulations seem to be in order.

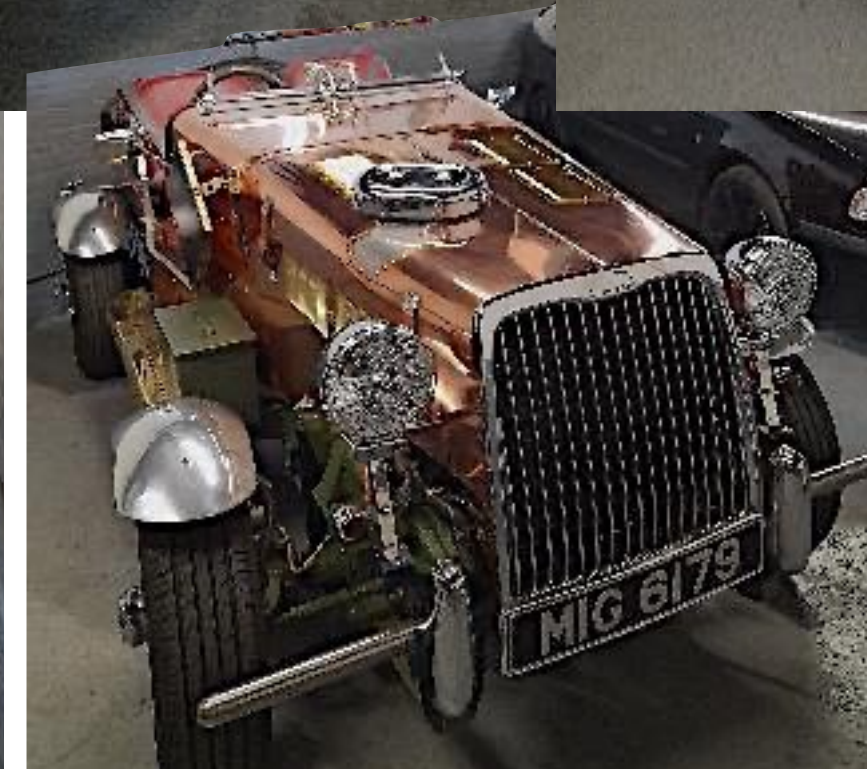
For those who haven't seen them before they are fibre-glass replicas of appropriately aged mudguards. Wider than the originals and reshaped, the single template mould was made using a bit more than half of two metal ones (thereby gaining the width) and then two were moulded from that.

A neat bit of work.





The blue is the plastic skin^ that came with the alloy sheet.



It usually takes several builders to get from plans to a road going Midge. In this case Brian Carnall modified Chris Herd's red and blue Mk2 with a spectacular sheet copper finish. There are not many Mk2s so I think this may be unique. I'd suggest the name 'Penny' but await advisement.

<<Actually I think the air filter is going back on the inside, but the panel beating is impressive. 6



While wandering the back lanes of the internet I found this which is supposedly a way of saving fuel. Although it's never going to fit in a Midge, member's other cars do have a socket for computer readouts and I wouldn't want anybody risking their engine management chip. There's a review here.

<https://www.sabireviews.com/ecochip-fuel-saver-reviews/>

I'll save you the bother, It's a scam, doesn't work and should never be plugged into your On-Board Diagnostics II (OBD2) port. I'm told they are reject stock from China, rebadged and worthless. Curiously many of the adverts for them involve a picture of somebody adding toothpaste to their fuel tank. That's not a good idea either. I wasn't fooled and I doubt anybody else was, so I guess it is more of an amusement than a warning.

Although not wanting to generate more work than is necessary I thought I'd see if there was any demand for club Merchandise. Obviously it would be dependent on sufficient numbers, and prices are approximate at present.

However, mugs, pens, pencils, coasters, (that's for coffee mugs not shipping) and possibly T shirts could be added to the hexagonal brass badges currently available on the club website.

I've had a delivery of oval MIDGE badges (recently unavailable) from a previous secretary who was clearing out a cupboard.

More news on that later in the magazine.

Prices would be non profit. I think the mugs would be about £6, probably direct from Vistaprint.

The coasters £1 plus postage while stocks last.

Hexagonal badges were £7 but the postage might have gone up a bit



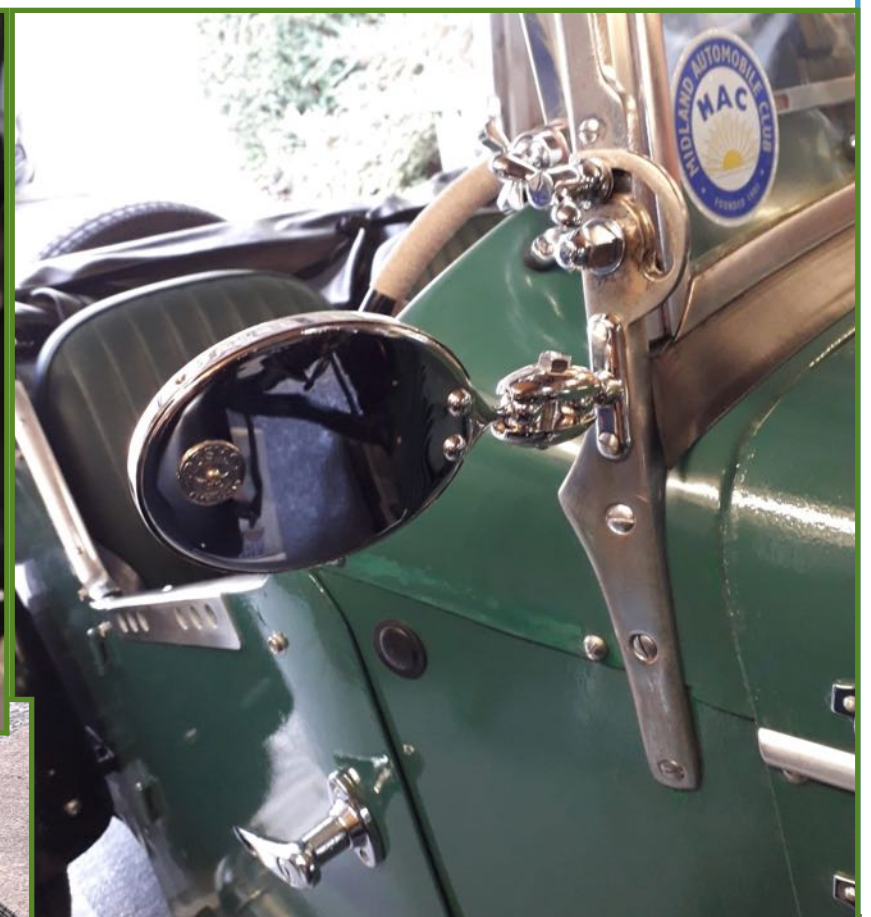
Pen,

Brass Hex badge,

Resin coaster

Mug

Robert has found a 1930s Auster (Birmingham 1900-1940) folding windscreen. It is at last in place, mounted as it were, on Monty. The wiper motor and wipers still to sort, as is the hood, but useable as it is. There's a period DesMo oval mirror for viewing admiring glances and a 30's mod to the top of the doors to stop paint wear. Lucas CWX wiper motor and blades all ready. I think I'll roll mine into his garage and see what happens. The fairy godmother of shiny bits seems to be in residence.



I may run out of green ink.
JH

Robert's (Previously James Orr's) Midge, or maybe his son's. It's on a T&J Ford conversion chassis I think. Seen here in its previous incarnation and next to James' current Midge. Nobody knows what the arrow refers to. 1500 Ford type T&J chassis by White Rose. Originally 1981. Now Re-bodied in racing style and generally re-vamped and now owned by Robert Connor. Robert also owns 963J a 1971 Triumph 13/60 based Midge (page 10)



Robert Connor's Triumph based 1300 1971. One Midge isn't always enough. It's an odd thing, once you get a Midge, other ones turn up. I'm told you get that with omnibuses too. I get the impression that he was casually wandering in the general vicinity and couldn't shake it off. It's almost a disease and I'd advise getting a really plausible reason, or reasonable excuse together before bringing it home. There again there are some who say it is easier to ask forgiveness after, than for permission before.



For no particular reason, a very small MGJ2, it just looked cute.

In the meantime >>

Robert Shallcross has been noticed and his Midge Monty photographed in the June '22 issue of Jaguar Driver magazine Page 66. Described as delightful, I think they meant the car. Not bad getting the biggest picture too. It appears the Jaguar drivers took it quite well considering.

This was before the windscreen was fitted.

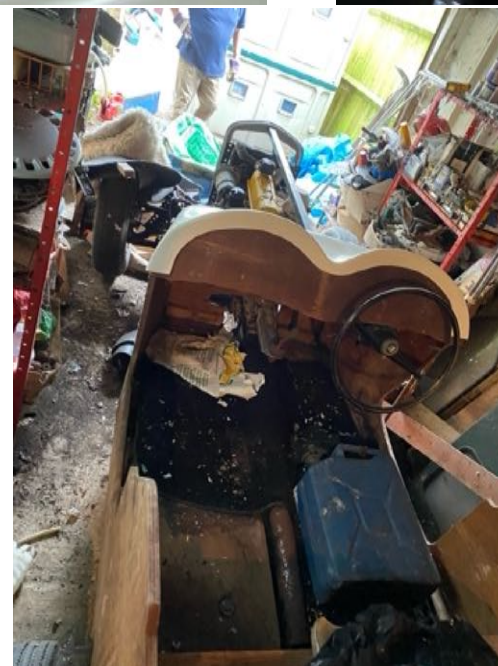
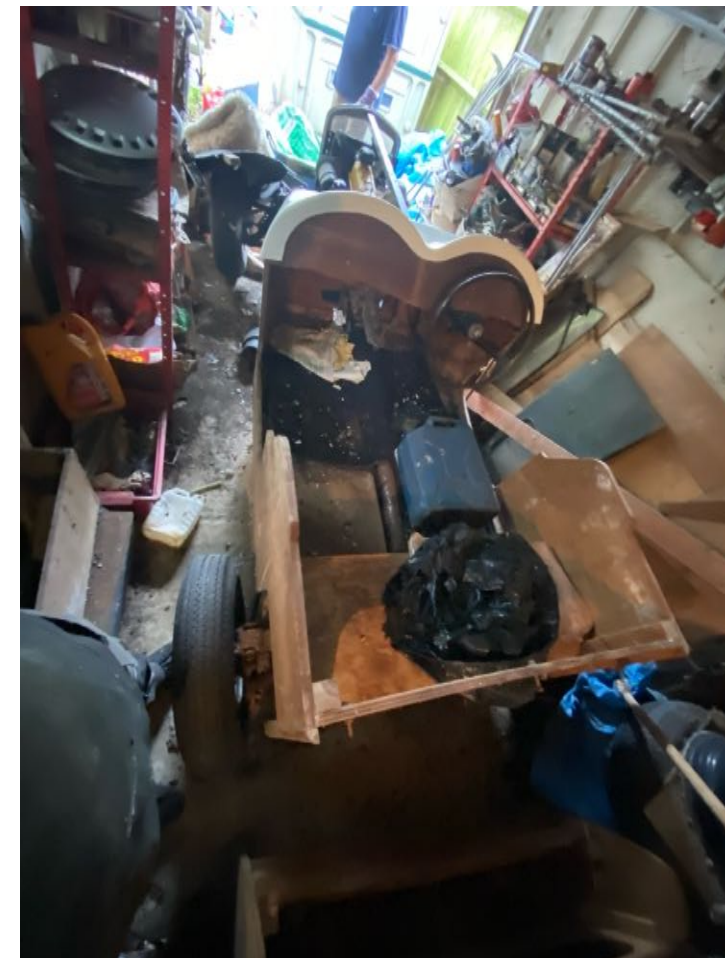


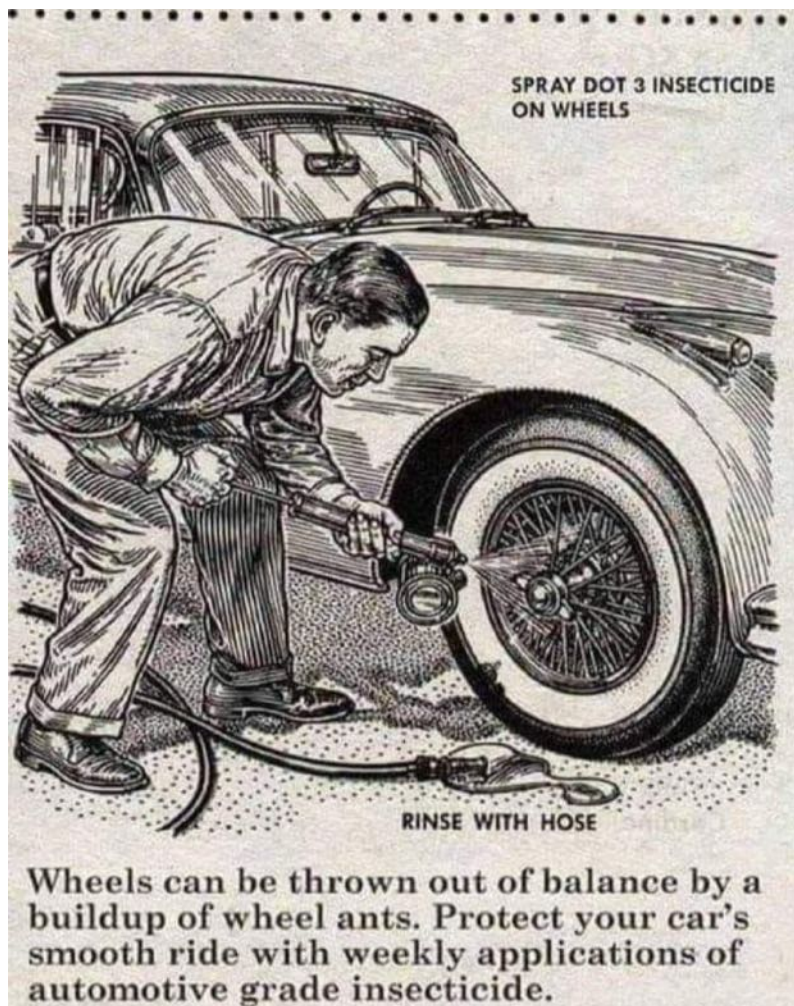
A Free Midge in West Sussex. Offered by Nick Redman. It could be gone by publication time in which case this will be 'what you might have won'. It is/was in a garage he'd bought. Nick doesn't want to scrap it if there is somebody able to give it a home

nicr_999@hotmail.com (there's an underline in the gap)

If nobody can find it a home, which I doubt, I'll ask Nick to retrieve the fibreglass dash-top and radiator surround.

In the meantime if somebody tells you they'd love to build a Midge, tell them about it.





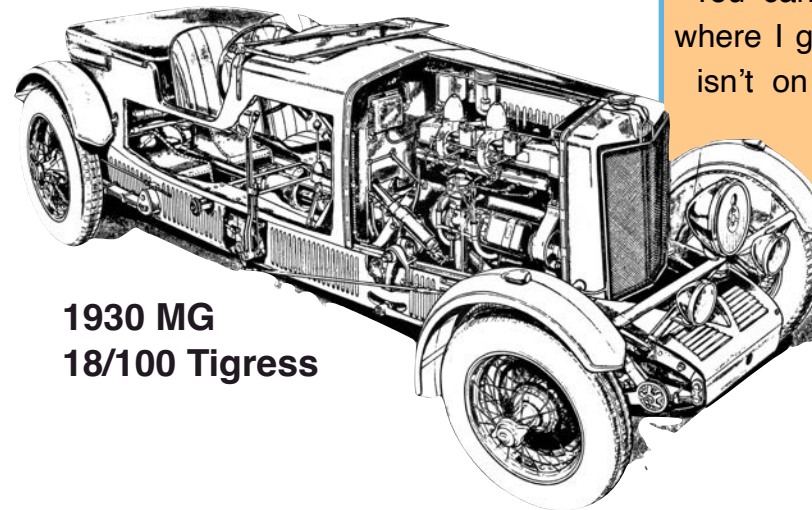
UK 2022/23 Events

The Car and Classic site does event prediction so much better than I can, there seems little point in copying their web page, especially as they can update as the months go by. If you go to

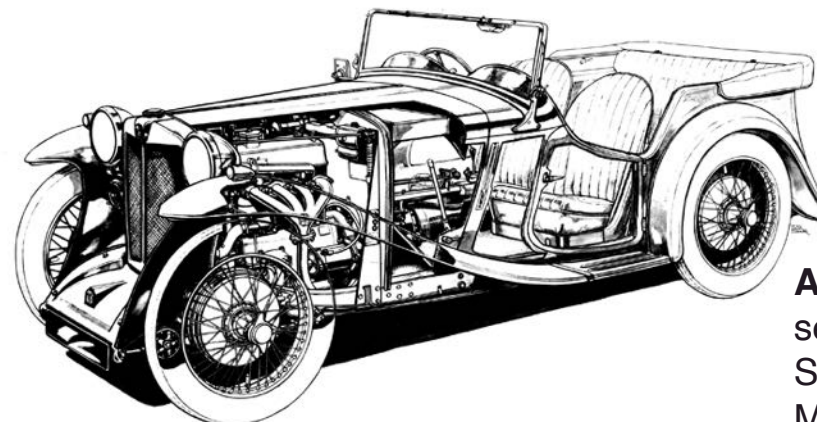
http://www.carandclassic.co.uk/car_events.php

You can get the information direct, that's where I get it. If something you know about isn't on it, tell me and I'll add it to our pages.

At the time of writing it's all a bit quiet.



**1930 MG
18/100 Tigress**



**A four seat MG P type
seen in 1934 Autocar.
Similar to Malcolms
Mudguard style**

Above, something Michael Taylor found. Presumably not specific to wire wheels but it would be worth checking before a long run... ditto:- cats under the bonnet, mice in the glove box, ex girlfriends in the boot and hedgehogs in the wheel arches.

Tailpipe

Last year I thought it would soon be time to replace some of the hardware that I use for the club, and was expecting the printer to fail once the warranty expired. It was objecting to overly thin paper. Paper-jam isn't as tasty as it sounds.

As is traditional with machinery, they never do what is expected. The printer should have failed a while ago but still seems to be working. The desk-top computer instead reached the point where it had to be replaced. The Mac did quite well running almost faultlessly since 2009 and supporting the club since 2015 making magazines, recording the finances and remembering the members. However technology is always advancing and in the technology war some combatants get left behind. Apple Mac support for the operating system was ending and the computer wasn't able to take an OS upgrade. Not wanting to lose any records I decided to replace the computer before some bug wiped its memory. I shall keep it with up to date records but off-line as a backup.

The club funds were conveniently quite healthy at about £850 and rising, even with the ending of the annual fee, because of the 2 or 3 quarterly new MOBC members and there is £150 worth of unsold badges in stock. Facebook members don't pay, but then they don't cost much and occasionally join the main club. The only significant regular bills are a small amount of postage, domain retention, a bit of ink and the odd casting run of brass badges which pays for itself eventually. The replacement, newly refurbished, computer cost £600 (new is well over £1k) so if nobody objects I'll extract £150 from the funds toward the new one. Leaving £699.22 in the bank. The Website is parked in my webspace so that's free and I get occasional cash donations for magazines, build manuals, and rounded up badge payments. With reference to the badges there are plenty of hexagonal ones at the moment. A previous secretary has uncovered 10 hexagonal and 5 oval ones which I have retrieved for the price of the postage (£6.95). I'll continue to sell at cost price until I need to get some more cast, by which time it may be worth getting them 3d printed in metal.

So, all in all, the club is doing quite well financially and reserves have risen from £500 in 2015. I've put off the secretary's European tour of French, Belgian and German members on the grounds that even if I empty the £700 balance I'll still only get as far as Calais before I have to return. The alternatives are to spend it all on lottery tickets or long odds racing results, or leave it in the bank despite their miserable interest rate. Opinions and suggestions are welcome.

Jim