

# MIDGE MAGAZINE



Winter  
2024



MOBC. the Midge Owners and Builders' Club



Jerome's Midge



Hello All.

I've been working at the domain name settings which should be <https://mobic.co.uk> and I think is now working, Once it is typed in it will probably take you straight to <https://midgebuilders.homestead.com/> which is the same address so you can type either in. The extra security level is part of the https component and I seem to have got that right at last. Whether there is any benefit in terms of actual security I have no idea, but the 's' does stop your browser from grumbling about 'unsafe or insecure site'.

The amount of 'copy' (sounding like a real editor there) is still very low, although various stalwarts have been...well, stalwart. However, there will come a time when it won't be practical to produce the current quarterly output. Relatively simple to resolve by reducing the frequency but I'll avoid that as long as possible and will try to continue until autumn 2025 when I retire. At that point the future is a bit foggy but I should be able to keep a few bits running like the web pages and my facebook moderator hat. I was thinking of using some of the funds accumulated while I was charging £10 for membership to make a calendar or send pdf files on a SD or thumb drive to those who want one. Or I could send the staff (Editor, web-master, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership secretary and Parking attendant) for a 2025 Christmas lunch.

**WHAT ABOUT ME?**

Ah yes, and the official typist.

**THANK-YOU.**

There will probably be some brass hexagonal badges left over. I have 5 that I know about and will buy back any that are surplus to requirements. I've not ordered up any oval MIDGE badges as yet as there aren't enough orders (2) to warrant a casting run of 30, but that would be an alternative use for some of the funds and the templates will be available to anyone who takes over any of the executive posts. The club could also make a contribution to the website expenses as that is embedded in my webspace ([jimhewlett.com](http://jimhewlett.com))

I'm up to about page 11 of this so far (Dec 17th 2024) so we'll see how it goes. I've read it through so hopefully there won't be too many typos.

JH

- Page 1. Editor's rant. Index
- Page 2, 3. Ken embarks on major surgery
- Page 4 Various links and videos.
- Page 5, George's feet are too big.
- Page 6, So are mine
- Page 7, Midge for sale sold (sorry) and a topless model!
- Page 8. A reprint of an image the editor likes.
- Page 9. Fixings chart.
- Page 10, Bits and bobs.
- Page 11, Roofing revisited
- Page 12. Chris gets on point
- Page 13. Paul's roof
- Page 14. Christmas gift suggestions.
- Page 15. Happy Christmas from MOBC
- Page 16. Tailpipe.



From Ken Nichols

A few words about my Midge..

After a embarrassing 13 years of ownership I've finally made a start..

When I bought her she didn't have a petrol cover, she been tapped up the rear, I never knew how badly.

Well, on investigation it turned out the rear chassis tower was bent.

And the bellies under the diff were rotten..

I decided a new chassis was required..

Luckily I found one locally, and.... well you can put it on your roof rack, lots of straps, it was fine.

I've now completely stripped the car down, and hopefully once I've done the modifications to the new chassis I can start transferring things across.





A few more photos from Ken.

Also demonstrating that Ken has a very tidy garage. He can walk around his Midge, I think that would be harder in mine and require some careful footwork.



[Peter Vivian did a youtube video interview](#)

It's on the facebook page if this doesn't open.

Random Videos of Midges

[Midge swarm](#)

[Big G](#)

[BG 2](#)

[Big Midge](#)

[Ethel](#)



As a seasonal gesture I found this picture of a polar bear in a blizzard. Enjoy.



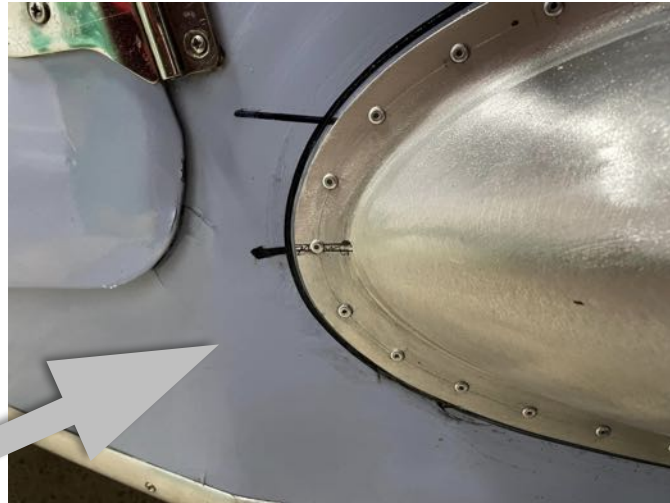
On the other hand I could have copied out all the jokes on the Christmas crackers



First go.

From George. Footwell extension on a mk1  
I have completed the fitment and re modification  
of the side panel so next couple of weekends I  
will get the painting done.

By extending the opening in the side of the  
footwell I now have plenty of room for the right  
foot. Very comfortable. The first version is seen  
on the left and here's the second below and  
right. There's a [youtube clip](#) as well.



Second go.



Like George I found my feet were too big. I didn't like the 13" Ford Cortina wheels on the 1930's style Midge and wanted to put 15" or 16" wheels on. Fortunately the T&J 'Ford' chassis matched the wheel stud pattern of a few cars from the '50s and '60s.



As you can see, the Ford Midge axles were able to take Hillman Minx wheels but that idea fell apart when I changed the chassis, or rather put the plywood tub on a Triumph chassis. A re-bodied re-body.

The reason behind that decision was that the Triumph was properly JC Midge registered but the Ford wasn't. Triumph stud patterns don't match anything else I have found, so horribly expensive wire wheels were in order. As a consequence, when the number plate changed, the steel wheels became wires. My regrets for all the work ensuing were slightly lightened by knowing that the rather tired 1300 Ford cross-flow and leaky Escort back axle could be dumped. The T&J chassis went to a new home with the 'blue' Midge bodywork, axel, gearbox and engine. I believe they eventually became a Jaguar. No names, no pack drill.

However, working my way back to the problem with my feet and the bigger wheels, one thing I didn't need on the Midge when I bought it was a wedge shaped bulge added to the original design so that a spare 13" wheel could be mounted in front of the driver's door. (There wasn't a door at the time.)

The spare wheel mounting wedge had provided foot space but completely clashed with the rest of the 1930s style bodywork. I could have lived with that but I wanted 15" wire wheels and the spare would have been too big to fit between the driver's door and the bonnet etc. So the spare wheel went on the tail end where I think it looks much nicer and breaks up the rather plain big flat back end.

I compensated for the reduced foot space with a narrower accelerator pedal and a couple of bends to the brake and clutch pedals. It was that or shaving off a toe or two. I was able to 'disappear' the bulge except that left a rather obvious split in the alloy skin in front of the newly

constructed upper door hinge. That's why it looks, on the middle right, as though I've wall-papered over a sausage. I should really disguise the pop rivets, a little filler should make them look like real rivets and I intend to make a proper shroud to cover where the exhaust comes out of the engine bay. Part of the shroud will be on the engine bay side panel and part on the bulkhead. I'm thinking of a double skinned cowl in the style of the Spitfire (aircraft) exhaust.

I accept that my metalwork is a bit lumpy, but I think you can make a virtue of necessity with slightly random bulges. The power-bulge on the straight six Triumph bonnets for instance look a bit more like engineering and less like fashion.

Those with better panel bashing skills and or styling skills may disagree.

I'll see if I can make my english wheel do the job once the air warms up a bit, or when I put a wood burner in the garage.



Noticed on the MOBC facebook page a **Midge for sale** (on ebay) it seems to be correctly registered, starts and runs. Click on the word Midge above for a link to the page It is currently stored in Barnet North London. £2500 asked. Closes 3rd Jan (I think) I've not seen it myself I had a chat with the seller. Seems genuine and his main concern is selling it before the house goes. Built, if I understood correctly, by his brother who doesn't drive much now. I can't offer any guarantee myself obviously but it looks like a bargain. No weather gear so it needs to stay indoors.

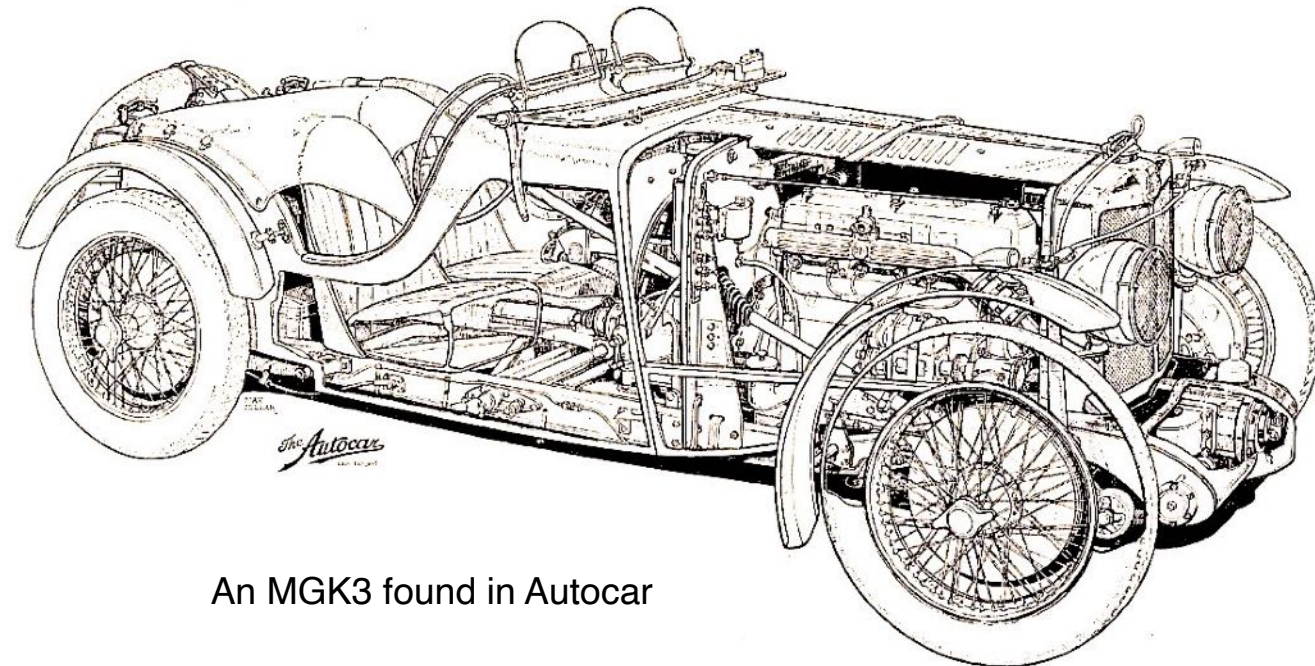


Now Sold according to the posting. Somebody had an early Christmas present. There won't be many at this price.

I'll leave it in as a blank page doesn't look good and I don't have a replacement article ready in time. I think there may be some gnashing of teeth as it looked too good to be true. Remember there are more Midges at <https://midgebuilders.homestead.com/Sales-and-wants.html> My apologies if some are already gone, sellers don't always tell me.

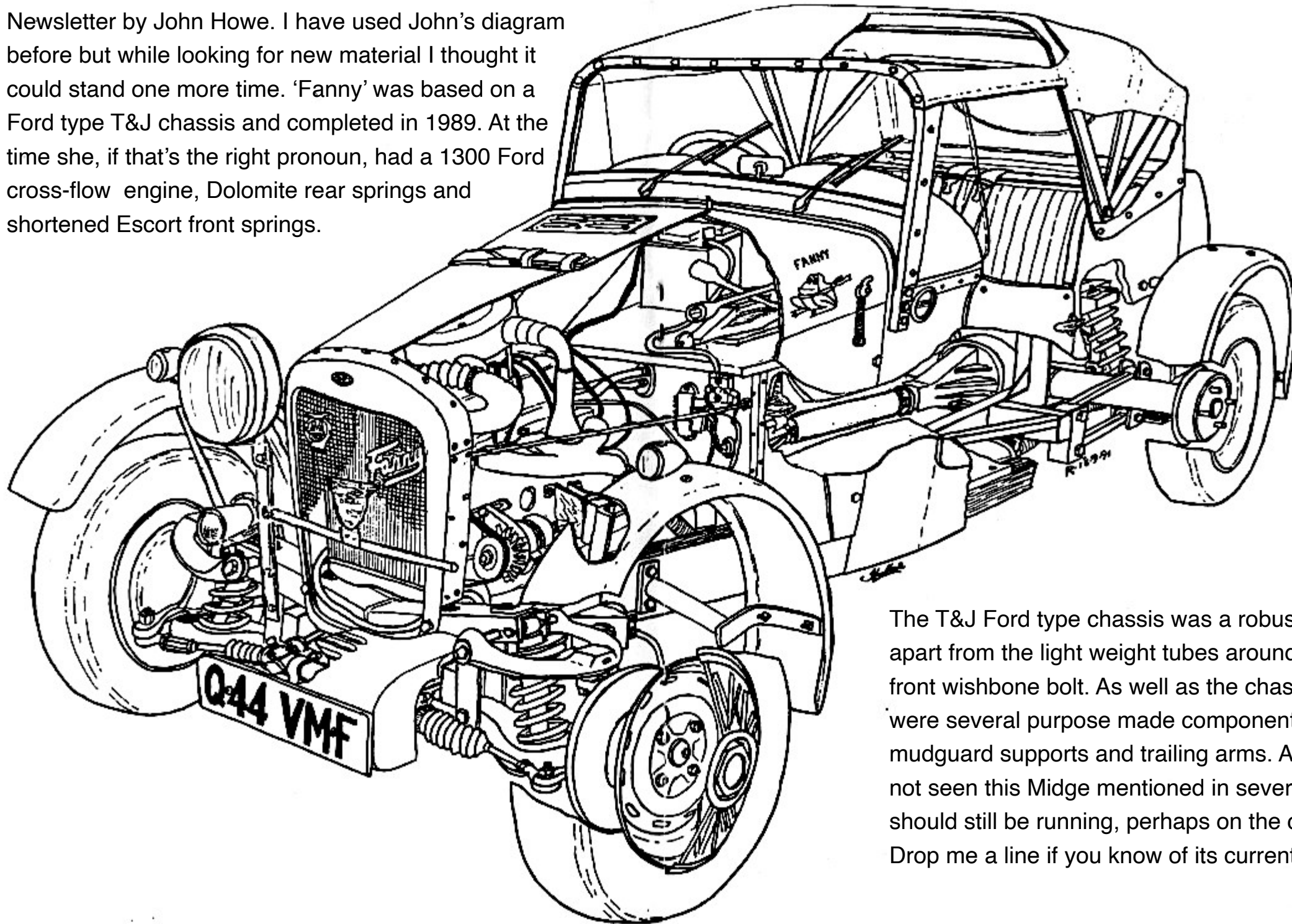


This Spitfire chassis was so tidy I thought everybody should see it.



An MGK3 found in Autocar

This from an article in the Winter 1991 MOBC Newsletter by John Howe. I have used John's diagram before but while looking for new material I thought it could stand one more time. 'Fanny' was based on a Ford type T&J chassis and completed in 1989. At the time she, if that's the right pronoun, had a 1300 Ford cross-flow engine, Dolomite rear springs and shortened Escort front springs.



The T&J Ford type chassis was a robust structure apart from the light weight tubes around the upper front wishbone bolt. As well as the chassis there were several purpose made components including mudguard supports and trailing arms. Although I've not seen this Midge mentioned in several years, it should still be running, perhaps on the continent. Drop me a line if you know of its current location. JH.



So is it a Phillips or a Pozidrive?

One of the perennial 'not quite right' elements of car tinkering is the kind of threaded fixings holding the bodywork together. The threaded part can vary from self tapping, wood, machine screw, and the thread itself can be fine, coarse, serrated as well as metric, UNF, BSW, BA, not to mention all the specialised ones like BSP and BSPT thread. The 'head' you fit the screwdriver into could be Allen, Torx, Square (Robertson), flat and any number of variations like having a button in the middle or three flanges. But it's the cross headed one we always have trouble with because the head has to be clean and in a good light to identify it. Most have small, medium and large options.

Generally the types vary with the country of origin, so you'll find **Pozidrive** (extra etched lines) in European products and **Phillips** (simple cross appearance) in the US. The type that many don't know about is the JIS or Japanese Industrial Standard which looks a lot like the other two. As a general rule the (American) Phillips has little extra cuts between the main flanges. They do give a bit more grip but the Phillips is designed to 'cam out' if the loading is a bit high, a legacy of the US aircraft industry where over-tightening of alloy panels would be a problem.

**Phillips screwdrivers** can be made to fit in Pozidriv screws, and can turn them. However, they are liable to slippage, and can damage the screw.

**Pozidriv screwdrivers**, on the other hand, do not fit Phillips heads. If you try, you'll probably fail, and you'll probably damage your screw.

In my opinion the JIS is probably the best fit if you only have the one screwdriver and can usually be identified by a small 'dot' on the screw head.

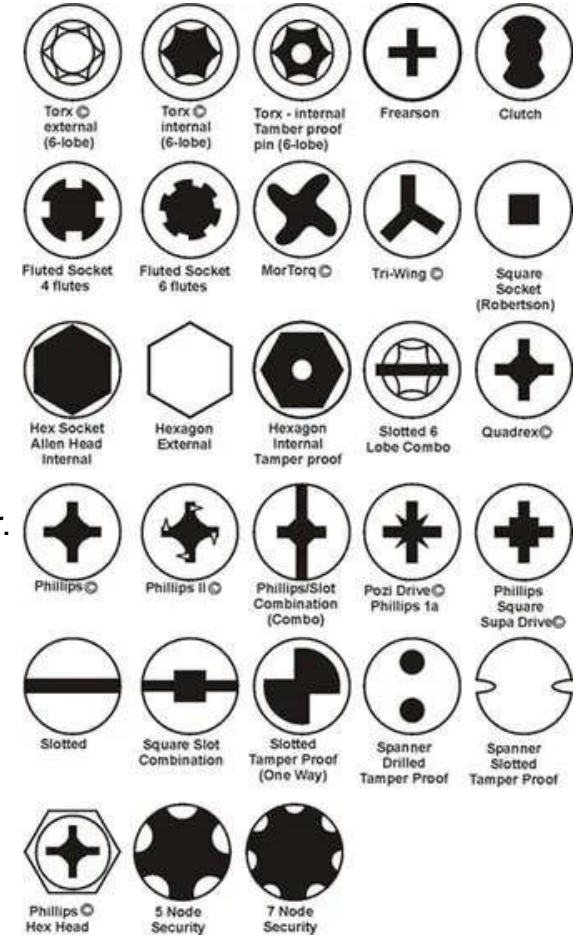
Pozidrive give the best transmissible torque but are the least tolerant of the wrong screwdriver. To maintain the 1930's appearance of the Midge it would probably be best to use the 'flat' or slotted style on dashboards and doors in spite of their tendency to slip off, skitter sideways and scar the varnish.

JH

There are many 'security' fixing heads but fortunately they are rare.

Perversely you can buy sets of them at most hardware outlets, which reduces the security aspect.

Most can be bypassed with the right sized flat (slot) screwdriver.

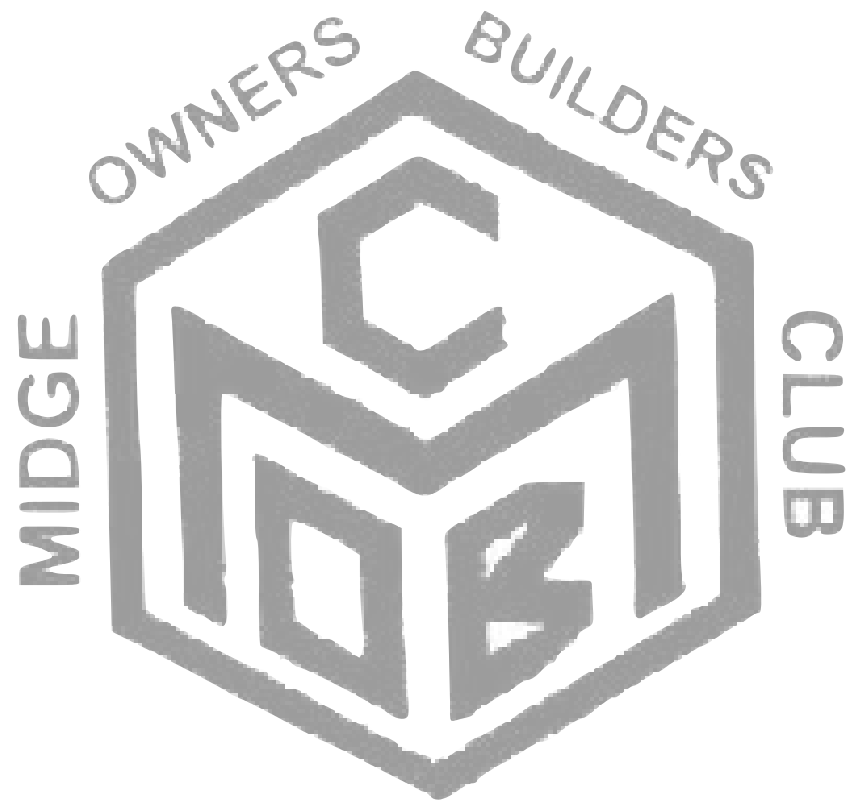


### UK 2023/24 Events

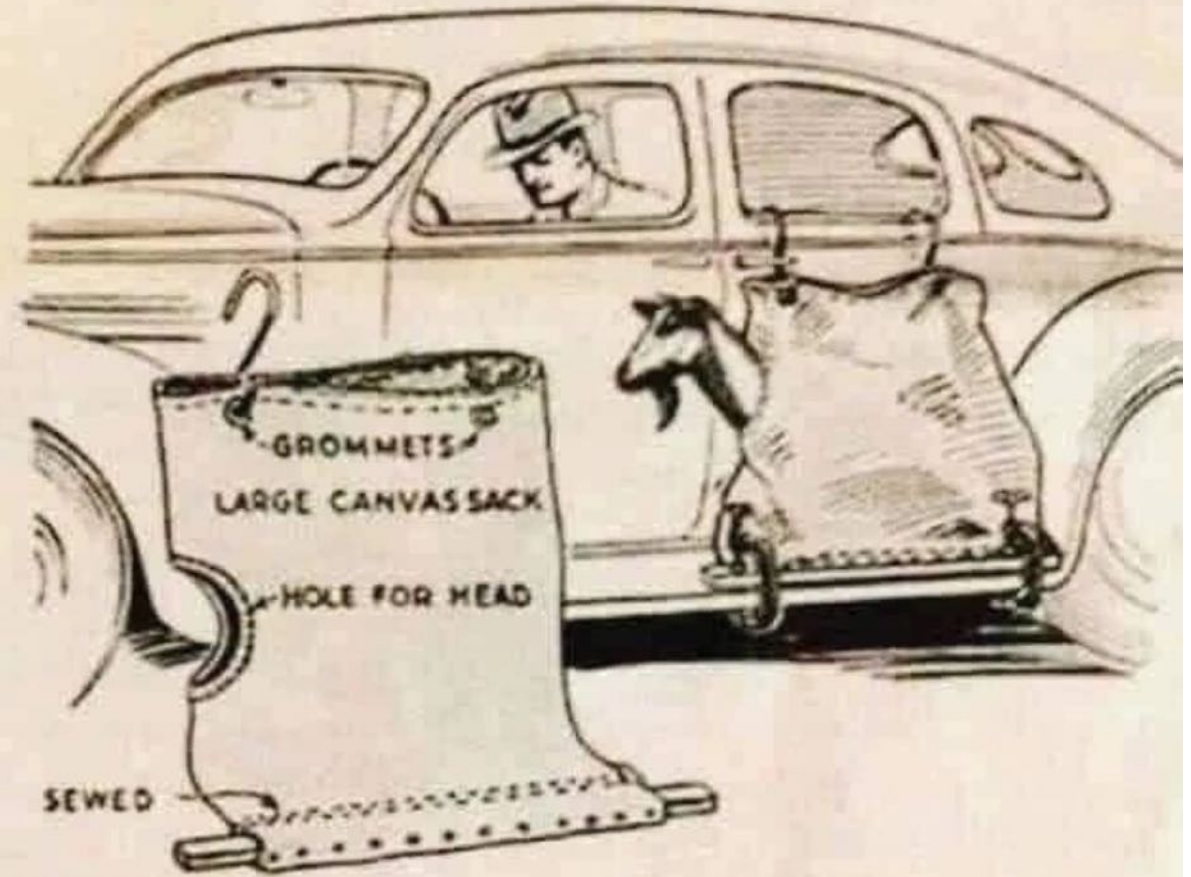
The Car and Classic site seems to be blank at the moment so try

<http://www.classicshowsuk.co.uk/classic-car-shows-events-search/major-classic-car-show-events.asp>

or <https://www.vintagecarsofeurope.com/events>



## Goat Rides Comfortably in Sack on Running Board



*Your goat will ride safely in this sack, which is quickly attached or removed*

When you take your goat along for a ride, but prefer not having it inside the car, it can ride safely and comfortably in this sack.

I found this while looking for amusing images, there being a half page needing filled. I couldn't see any reindeer images, so while it leaves me completely baffled I thought I'd put this in. A 'What the heck? It's Christmas' moment.



Quite some time ago, back in 2013, I made a roof frame for a Midge there is extra information at <https://www.jimhewlett.com/Triumph-midge-roof.html>

Bearing in mind the weather in a Scottish winter I was thinking about making another roof for one of the remaining Midges as regrettably I let the first roof go with the (green) Midge it was on, so I'm hoping I can find the second camping chair. I still have some of the flat strip steel and the conveniently sized tube. This time I may build in the tensioning levers designed by Terry Wetherfield (as was the crucifix style pivot seen above it). I'll have to finish the folding windscreen mounts this time as I prefer the 'Aero' or 'Brooklands Racing' screens most, but not all, of the time. Having a rag-top means you have to have a windscreen and that means wipers. I think I'll mount the wipers on the top of the windscreen this time as getting them through the roller-coaster dash-top was a pain. It's all a bit academic as few Midges go out in the rain voluntarily, but you can never be sure. The alternative is a tonneau cover and goggles, but if anyone has a Mk1 Spitfire roof frame I'd be interested (I have a Mk2 but it's not as nice. JH.



From Chris's posting on Facebook

Over the past 36 years with BEA I have had various ignition problems, but nothing that wasn't easily fixed, This past couple of months, though, has been different.

About six years ago I fitted Accuspark electronic ignition and all was fine - until it wasn't. One day in June there was nothing - no spark at all.

I sent for a replacement Accuspark unit, exactly the same as before. I read the instructions and dire warnings before fitting it exactly as before. Nothing - no spark and no sign of life. I double and triple checked every connection without success. I consulted the workshop manual which was no help. I suffered brain fade in my frustration and even tried a new coil despite having tested the old one. Eventually binned the new Accuspark unit and sent for a £4.95 set of points and condenser from EBay.

I was delighted that BEA started first time and ran like a dream. Two weeks later the misfiring started and quickly became terminal. Cheap Chinese condenser - I should have known! A £10 Quinton Hazel one from Amazon (probably also Chinese) solved the problem instantly and a road test to Aldi and another to the tip have been fine, so fingers crossed.

So what caused the Accuspark to fail? Possibly because I had just tightened the fan belt and the charge voltage went above 14V. The second one was just a dud. Talking to a friend who had had two fail on his Daimler Dart made me decide to give up on them as I would rather carry spare points and condenser for a 5 minute roadside fix.



CB.

I had a similar fault on my first Midge and went back to mechanical points but found the capacitors tended to fail as well. I enquired and was told the modern capacitors suffered from damp so I spray them with artificial skin. (Same stuff as you can spray on the HT leads). Fewer fails since then, and there's always WD40 which as a Water Dispersant helps it run off. I never rated it as a lubricant.

Incidentally I bought one unfinished Midge that was supposedly running when parked up and unchanged from then. I found considerable difficulty getting a spark until I realised the capacitor ring connection was the wrong side of the post insulator. I think the previous owner had had more difficulty getting it to run than he remembered and the Ford cross flow engine was mis-labeled as a sports 1300 (Wrong number of exhaust

ports) and somewhat worn. I think he had bought it from a scrap yard and may never have had it

running . JH.



I saw this on a facebook page recently posted by Paul Giuffrida and remembered that there had been some enquiries about hood makers. At the time Paul had found one so I thought I'd mention it. If anyone finds the firm has stopped could they mention it on the facebook page or tell me. The company has good reviews and seems to be in Swansea. I've not used them myself, but it does look to be a very tidy roof.

<https://g.co/kgs/C5xpNha>





*Obligatory festive section  
Ho Ho etc*

Or, if that's a bit big for your stocking



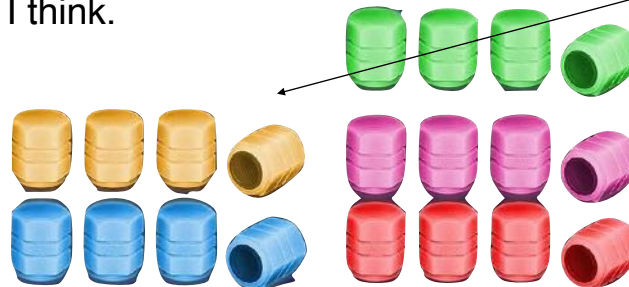
£279.99(+ postage £9.99)

ENGLISH WHEEL WITH ANVILS Ebay



If you get asked what you'd like for Christmas by a wealthy relative, how about a Tecalemit 2800kg 2 post Vehicle Lift on Ebay, exc cond , little use, ex Lambo agent, £995.00  
Collection in person  
only from Stockport, United Kingdom

Or below, something to put in your Christmas stocking. Well, just a bit late but maybe a Hogmanay Extra. Add Christmas lights to your tyre valves or some colour matched metal ones. Links in the underlined bits. I've no idea of their quality, but it might amuse. About £5. I think.





*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from MOBC*



## Tailpipe

I'm happy to report that after half an hour of fighting with the computer I have 'PDF Expert' installed on the main computer. This means I can continue to compress the magazines into a size that can be easily downloaded by most people's computers and hopefully phones, tablets etc. Let me know if you have difficulty. If you can read this, it's a bit late, but remind those using phones and tablets to copy the web address of the PDF and paste it rather than clicking it.

I used a PDF expert free trial until now but that was running out. The payment (£129.99) came out of club funds which are quite healthy especially after a donation. (Thank you Peter H) and after everything is settled out now holds £621.14

I did manage to dodge a potential bill for some software called WinZip which seemed to be needed to download PDF Expert for Mac. Cheeky beggars wanted £54 each and every year. I used a Mac Program called the Unarchiver (sounds a bit like a Raiders of the lost ark / Clint Eastwood thing). Being a Mac user since I retired 11/09/2011 I avoid Windows / Microsoft and all their works. Like EVs Macs cost more at the beginning but save money later. (My opinion; you don't have to agree).

The PDF software means I can store the magazines in my webspace <https://midgebuilders.homestead.com/MOBC-Magazines.html> . It seems almost impossible to persuade the internet to file it under <https://mobic.co.uk> although if you type that in it goes there happily...and immediately changes it to <https://midgebuilders.homestead.com/> I think it has something to do with 'masking'. I tried with a Spiderman mask but it made no difference beyond making my fingers sticky.

Anyway it all seems to be working, only took me 9 years to get there. Obviously it would be quicker and probably cheaper if I employed a professional. I was looking for material and found that something called YOUNPU has put some of our early magazines on the internet at <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/38664420/summer-magazine-midge-owners-and-builders> . I don't copy-write the contents so I'm not too bothered as long as they don't start charging anyone to look at it. Quite a few websites charge for access to other people's data like manuals and instruction sheets and pay the search engines to prioritise their pages over the originals, so if anyone wants money to see an MOBC magazine; do tell me and I'll see if I can stop it. But they are more expert than I am.

If you are reading this then obviously you have found <https://midgebuilders.homestead.com/MOBC-Magazines.html>

The material for this magazine was a bit thin, so I've padded it out a bit. While several contributors have provided good stuff there's still not enough to easily achieve the 16 pages I like without 'for-profit' advertising (not that I've had many offers) or less relevant articles. No kittens as yet and the only topless model has been the chassis on page 7. However, even now Spring 2025 looms as deadlines do. The readership is, like the editor getting older and stories getting rarer. Well done to all those who have contributed recently and the many who have over the years. I've tried many times to extract from the website how many readers there are, but met with limited success. It doesn't really matter as I like writing and compiling but it would be illogical if nobody actually read it. So I'll put in a [link](#) once more to discover the readership. It doesn't matter whether the reader has a Midge, wants one, used to have one, was talking to me about Midge last Tuesday, just joined, or simply fell over the website.

Have a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year and I'll see you in the spring. Don't forget the link just above.

JH