



WELCOME TO THE V8 NEWSLETTER

Overheating, ignition or fuel problems?

Richard Withington recently contacted the V8 Register and also posted on the Bulletin Board when he experienced problems with his V8, Damask 1471. Richard unfolds the tale of tracing the problems and the eventual outcome, which resulted in normal service being resumed:



"Recently whilst travelling at moderate pace on the A52 trunk road the coolant suddenly overheated without obvious cause. I suspected a burst hose but before I could stop on such a busy road the temperature needle fell back to normal. I attributed it to a sticking thermostat as the rest of the journey was without incident. The next day, intending to check coolant levels, hoses etc, the engine started but only enough for me to drive out of the garage. It then stalled and refused to start. I suspected the ignition system, but this seemed fine. Plugs removed and gaps checked etc. (Richard also suspected that the brief overheating could have affected the Accuspark ignition system but this was quickly discounted.)

"Numerous attempts to restart the engine over the next few days were unsuccessful, notwithstanding help and advice, from enthusiasts and professionals alike. Contaminated fuel was suspected so the tank was drained to no avail.

In the absence of any other avenue and a strong smell of petrol on trying to start the engine, I removed the carburettors and had them rebuilt by Andrew Turner, locally to me; they were returned in superb order and refitted, Hay presto! After some coughing and backfiring the engine is

now running normally. However, the exhaust did emit a lot of smoke and smuts on the initial start-up but all is fine now. Andrew Turner advised that the O rings on the choke jets were in very poor condition, I can only conclude that too much fuel was suddenly being forced through the choke jets and flooded the engine to the point where it would not fire despite an adequate spark.

Incidentally, the cost of carburettor refurb was £400, which I feel is very reasonable when you consider a refurb kit from Burlen is over £200 for parts alone.



Richard's refurbished SU Carbs, prior to refitting

As an interesting footnote, Tony Lake had the following to say about potential contaminated fuel when Richard was at this point in his fault checking: One option to salvage your fuel is to dose it with as much E10 as you can squeeze in to the tank, the ethanol will absorb the water. Another option is to dose it with methylated spirit which is ethanol diluted with methanol which gives it an awful taste and is poisonous causing blindness, otherwise folk could make their own gin with a few botanicals and avoid the alcohol duty. Ethanol has an affinity for the water at the bottom of the tank which is absorbed and then disappears in the combustion process. Before E5 and E10 various products on the market were based on ethanol as a means of absorbing water in petrol without having to drain the tank.

The rebirth of an RV8

Andrew Noble has a very smart British Racing Green RV8, which he acquired in 2016, needing a large amount of work to bring it up to the standard he was looking for. He already has a Pageant Blue MGB GT which he'd had since 2001,

and had converted to chrome bumpers and carried out a rolling restoration over several years. That car also has a new engine and gearbox awaiting fitment, now that the RV8 project is finished.

But back to 2016, where Andrew takes up the story.

"In 2016 I was offered an MGB Roadster V8 conversion, which was part of a deceased estate. Unfortunately, and for various reasons the deal fell through but my appetite had been whetted. As I already had the mindset for another MG I was looking through the classifieds in Classic Car Weekly one day and saw 'my' RV8 for sale locally - so I went to take a look. The original registration was M366 BLP and it was owned by Martin and Sue Price. Martin was then the chairman of the MG Car Club Midlands Centre (he's now the President) and the price was a little higher than I wanted to pay. Initially I could see the interior was well worn and damp; there was a scab on the driver's door and the paintwork was poor. Inspecting the underside on a ramp I could see a lot of surface rust underneath but no serious corrosion issues. One of the cats had also been cut open and the inside removed. I struck a deal with Martin and agreed to buy it for a price we were both happy with, considering the work needed. There was just something about that car; I should have walked away but I didn't as I could see the potential. It was also a high mileage car as Martin and Sue had obviously loved the car dearly, using it as a daily driver.



25/11/2016. The day the RV8 was delivered needing work to get it useable

The car was delivered to my house in November 2016 and parked at the back of my garage. With only a short MOT I decided to leave it as a retirement project as I was due to retire in 2019. I did sort out some corrosion issues on the front of the hood frame and the interior was sent to a family friend who had taken an interest in the car and owned a trim shop, this was David Keene, who was on the original project adder team, hence the interest.

In 2019 I retired but unfortunately shortly afterwards Covid arrived. This should have been an ideal time to start such a project but I had already started other projects on the house so the RV8 had to wait a little longer. In fact, much longer as I didn't start work on it until March 2022.

Once I started, (the engine appeared to be running well) I realised the whole car was quite tired and in need of some renovation and updating. The engine bay was very neglected and scruffy, which was not surprising for a daily driver. As I started stripping the front suspension, I saw the corrosion that had previously been badly repaired underneath the inner front wings, without removing the

engine. In order to repair this area to a good standard the engine would have to come out and once you start this journey you fall down the inevitable 'rabbit hole' and just keep going! There was also a lot of surface rust on most of the suspension components and the underside was generally in poor condition. The brake calipers had been mentioned in previous MoTs and the service history as being prone to seizing. Again, the condition was poor and would require dismantling and a complete overall or replacement.



Front suspension and calliper condition, prior to dismantling.

The car was slowly stripped down to a bare shell. Along the way we found badly corroded fuel pipes. The fuel pump itself appeared to be leaking and the hoses were in need of replacement. The filters didn't look like they had ever been replaced. In February 2022 the complete suspension and front axle were removed. The front axle was solid but heavy surface corrosion was evident. The serial number and date of manufacture (12.06.94) were still evident on the axle, which didn't appear to have been powder coated but merely painted in chassis black paint, as were all the other suspension components

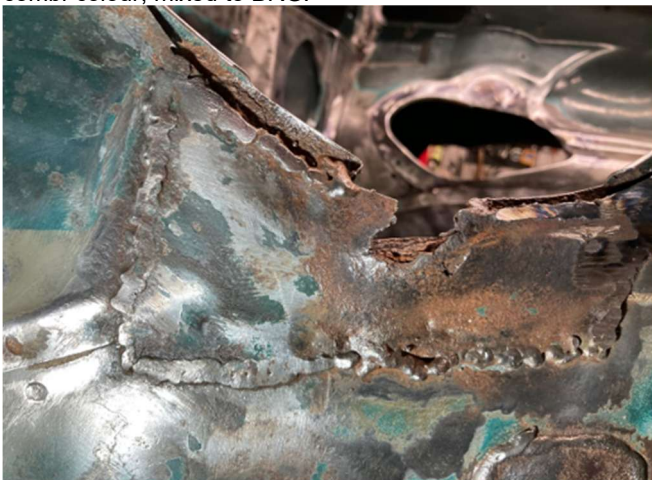


By April that year with the engine and gearbox removed the engine bay corrosion and general detritus could be clearly seen. The engine bay was completely stripped in order to replace or refurbish everything that needed attention. There

was surface corrosion to the bulkhead components, the expansion tank, heater box and pedal box mounting plates. The front axle and suspension components were sent away for shot blasting and powder coating. A recommended modification was also carried out at this stage to the steering rack mounting points to prevent them from cracking in the future. All powder coated components were subjected to an electro plating / painting process prior to the powder coating being applied for durability purposes.

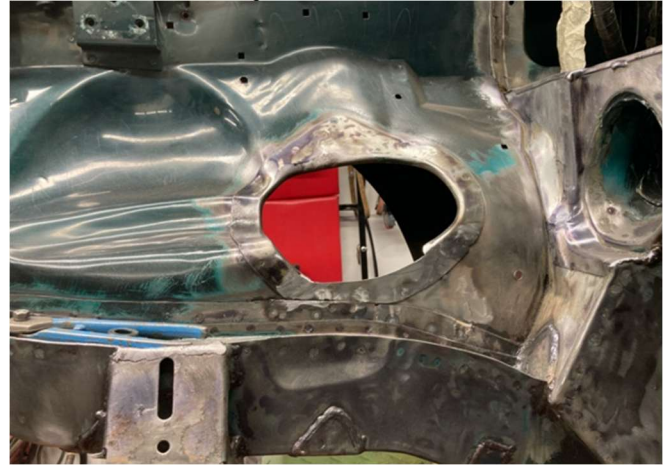


With the engine and gearbox out, the necessary repairs could be made. The inner wing corrosion around the exhaust manifolds was cut out and fresh metal let in and finished back to factory standard, including replacing the spot weld marks correctly. The full engine bay and front wheel arches were then stripped to bare metal, treated with a rust preventative, undercoated with etch primer, seam sealed and given a coat of correct BRG metallic paint. Next the underside was stripped, cleaned, treated with a rust preventative (Jenolite), seam sealed and sprayed with anti-stone chip primer. It was then painted over with Rustoleum combi-colour, mixed to BRG.



The front axle was rebuilt using all new or refurbished components, with new cupro nickel brake pipes, carefully bent to factory spec. At this stage the rear axle and suspension were rebuilt and reinstalled, with new components throughout. The engine was sent away to a local American car specialist, Jim Smith, and was fully

rebuilt. The only modification was the addition of a Viper Cyclone camshaft supplied by Real Steel specifically for the 3.9 litre EFI hotwire engines.



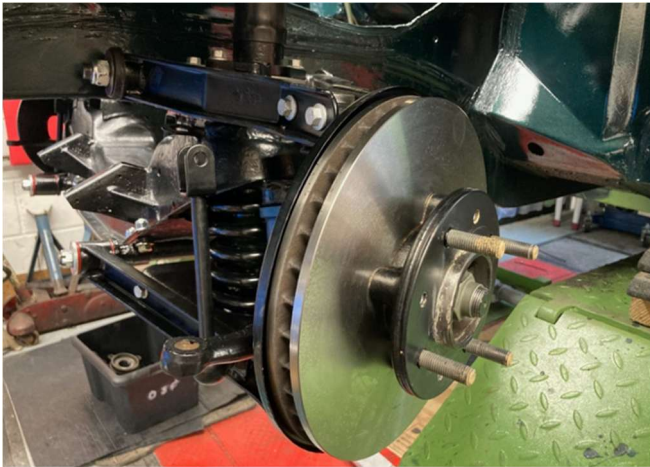
With the body back to a rolling shell it was collected by a local body shop and taken away for a full strip and repaint in the original BRG metallic colour. The shell was stripped down to bare metal / original electro paint, which, where possible was left in place. It was given a coat of etch primer and then a coat of black undercoat to match with BRG HNA top coat.



On return from the body shop the engine was re-fitted with the help of my good friend Julian Buckler. It was a really tight squeeze but we managed it with minimal damage to the fresh paint! Everything was then put back together over the last 12 months, replacing every worn component, which was either replaced or refurbished along the way.



I was lucky with the fragile windscreen frame; this was previously replaced by Martin and was still structurally sound. It had started to corrode on the bottom but it was caught in time and had only minor surface rust where the paint had cracked on the bottom corner. It was sent to be chemically stripped, and was then electro painted before being given a coat of satin black powder coat. It was then



injected with Bilt Hamber cavity wax for good measure to prevent a recurrence in the future!



After all the hard work and owning the car since 2016, the first time I actually drove it was in July this year, when it was taken for its first MoT in nine years! The MOT inspector just looked at it and said, "What am I supposed to do with this?" After a very thorough inspection (as it had been off the road for so long) it was finally given an MoT – with no advisories!



The registration number has been changed as a reference to the original fleet of factory demonstrators which all had MGR plates. I enquired with DVLA if any were still available and had not been previously issued. This one was available but they wouldn't sell it directly to me; it had to go to auction, where I was fortunate to be the winning bidder. Another interesting fact about the car is that it was a London car, originally sold by Cavendish to a Harley Street consultant. It spent most of its early life parked in Harley Street.

Obviously a project of this nature can't be completed without the help and assistance of several friends and family. I met Clive Wheatley some years ago when I worked in the Bridgnorth area; his help and advice have been invaluable. I actually took the car back to Martin and Sue Price recently and the restoration met with their approval! I believe my work here is done and so I look forward to owning and driving a true piece of MG history for years to come.



Sue Price (the previous owner) with the restored RV8



Andrew Noble with his very smart RV8