

STAFF CAR SAGAS

Kettle on... time for some tall tales from the PC workshop



Danny Hopkins
EDITOR

1972 Triumph 2000

Engine 1998cc/6-cyl/OHV
Power 84bhp@5000rpm
Torque 100lb ft@2900rpm
Gearbox 4-spd man + o/d
0-60mph 14.9sec
Top speed 98mph
Fuel economy 25mpg

Work done

New driveshafts fitted;
front seats revived and
recoloured; scissor lift
purchased for the garage.

2

(day)

TIME

610

(£)

SPENT

66

MILES

Also in Danny's classic garage

1956 RILEY PATHFINDER
Leather Repair Company
seat miracle performed.

1970 JENSEN INTERCEPTOR II

Used sparingly, but with
lots of enthusiasm.

1971 MORRIS MARINA 1.3

At Josh's for suspension
love and final tweaks.

1998 MAZDA MX-5 NB

Needs a new hood, anyone
got one going spare?

2001 ALFA GTV 2.0 TS

Still needs cambelt doing
and exhaust, too... next.

2004 VAUXHALL FRONTERA 2.2DTI

Next in the queue for some
real attention. Engine and
brakes overhaul.



Danny and Mike get to grips with a saggy bottom.

Are you sitting comfortably?

Danny's family heirloom gets some love

This car has been part of my family since new, having been bought in Reading in 1972 by my grandad, Harold Hopkins FRS. It was my grandparent's only car from that day until 1994. The Triumph then lived in my Auntie Sue's shed, until 2014 when I persuaded her to let me restore it. It is the first car I remember travelling in, it's the forever car and the one I'll leave to my girls. So, it leads a reasonably sheltered life. In 2018 I took it back to its original home, my grandparents' house in Reading where my much loved, and now sadly no longer with us, grandma Christine was reintroduced to the car. She was amazed at the transformation, but not so keen on the Cosmic alloys, Mountney steering wheel and Alfa 156 seats. I promised her I would return it to the original spec at some point – and now the process is beginning.

The original seats have been carefully stored along with the steering wheel. The steering wheel was crusted with years of filth and grime and I took the opportunity to clean it

before refitting. The seats were also dirty, but again, came back with a clean. I kept the Alfa driver's seat in for the drive to Beaulieu and its 1972 recreation, a trip which included a stop at my Grandparent's old house, now under new ownership... including the garage where the Triumph lived for the first 22 years of its life.

Then it was time to get serious and give the car a real dose of longevity. By which I mean some hot wax injection and a professional underseal treatment. I called my old mate Mike who runs Corotec, just north of London and booked myself in for one his specialist treatments. A couple of days later – after a particularly pleasant blast down the A10 – I was at his Hoddesden workshop.

'It is time to give this cherished car a dose of rust-proofed longevity'

A Corotec treatment includes the scraping off of the original underseal, remedying of all corrosions found therein (Mike is a serious bodywork guy as well as a corrosion healer), filling of every cavity with wax and the conversion and covering of all surface rust. In other words, the Triumph was going to be future-proofed.

Italian instincts

Mike's an Italian man, and has a passion for cars from his homeland... so his expertise in all things rusty is born of bitter experience, that's what got him started. He is also a man with an eye for detail, and was soon walking around the Triumph with me sucking his teeth and coming up with a list of things to do. New ethanol-friendly, Cohline rubber fuel lines to replace the slightly brittle old ones I fitted in 2016, a weepy clutch slave cylinder, some duff welding (mine – oh the shame of it) and a note to me to get my twin Strombergs rebuilt...

Then we pulled out the Alfa 156 driver's seat and checked over the original. All was

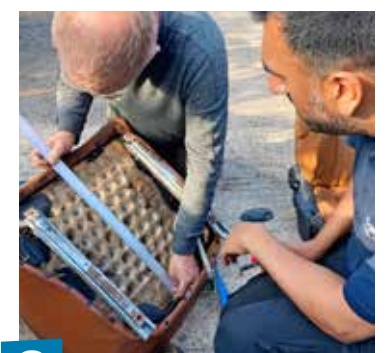
Revitalising original seat



1

Squab gone

Rubber seat support had disintegrated, leaving my bottom on the floor. Time for medium term fix – straps required.



2

Measure once

Rubber out but hooks left in, Danny measured the distance between them both lengthways and across.



3

Straps cut to length

Nine lengths marked (an inch longer than the measurement made between hooks), then cut using heavy tailor's scissors.



4

Flame deployed

To seal and strengthen the ends of each strap, Danny and Mike used a lighter to heat and part melt the nylon.



5

Poke Fun

A hot bradawl was used to melt holes in the straps at the points where the hooks would attach. Once cooled, straps fitted between the hooks.



6

Job done!

With the straps fitted (Danny and Mike needed to relocate a couple of holes to keep the right tension), Danny has a driver's seat worth sitting on again! Cost? Less than five pounds in materials. We will keep you posted as to how long it lasts.



Lines

Seven years of modern fuel and Danny's lines are a bit brittle. There's no harm in upgrading. A five yearly change regime makes sense.

not well. The old rubber squab support (made by Vitafoam Ltd... still going?) was hanging, and so would my bottom be if Mike and I hadn't creatively imagineered a solution with an old tie strap. I hope you enjoy our step-by-step solution. Needless to say I felt fully supported once the seat was back in place.

That left Mike with a free hand to get busy with scrapers, wire brushes and all manner of gloops. He is a bit of a magician, but his magic is based on logic and hard work... he is not afraid to completely deconstruct a classic's body parts in order to gain access to the most remote crevices and seams. Oh, and he treats old Triumphs with the same respect he treats an exotic... as it should be. I helped as best I could, taking bits off and helping remove trim, but Mike's bodywork knowledge helps him work out exactly where to inject and cover, where to convert and where to coat... it's a bit of a science. I was happy in the knowledge that I was adding many decades to my family Triumph's life-span, while at the same time coming good on my pledge to Christine to make sure that the car was as she would have remembered it.

Precious memories

My grandad, Harold Hopkins FRS, was the inventor of the zoom lens, endoscope and was twice nominated for a Nobel Prize. He is acknowledged as the 'father' of the fibre optic cable... Harold commuted in the car to the Physics Department at Reading University and his pipe smoke still stains the headlining. I won't clean it up and there is still one of his pipe cleaners in the glove box that will never leave. I played in the car as a child, helped grandad work



A quick test... perfect. A drive back to the grandparents's house in Reading proved successful.



That's a much better place to sit. As supportive as my grandparents would remember back in the day.

on it, so now it's going to be back to how he and Christine would remember it. A family heirloom in original condition once again. In 2015 the car completed the Club Triumph 10 Countries Run, with co-driver Dale Barker of Moordale Motors – it proved its spurs then, now it will prove its family worth now.

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USEFUL CONTACTS

- Corotec (bodywork protection)**, corotec.co.uk, 07549 881696
- Club Triumph**, clubtriumph.org.uk
- Classic Driving Development**, classicdrivingdevelopment.co.uk
- John Spencer**, (paint) 07976266936
- Leather Repair Company**, leatherrepaircompany.com
- Lloyd Reed**, lloyd.reed01@virgin.net
- Longstone Classic Tyres**, longstonetyres.co.uk
- Moordale Motors**, (servicing) moordalemotors.co.uk
- SuperFlex Buses**, (bushes and suspension) sales@superflex.co.uk 01749 678152
- Triumph 2000/2500 Register**, triumph2000register.co.uk
- Triumph 2000-2500 Owners' Club**, triumph20002500.co.uk