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Spectacular Interiors

- Re-Carpet Your Car Yourself
- Moss Motors Upholstery Shop: Better Than New

6 Great New Products

Fall 2004 Events Listings



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EDITOR

Tom Morr

CONSULTING EDITOR

Ken Smith

ART DIRECTORGary Smith, Performance Design, www.
performancedesign.net**PRODUCTION MANAGER**

Kathi McCallum

TRAFFIC ASSISTANT

Christine Knight

CONTRIBUTORS

Kelvin Dodd, Lance Lusignan

EDITORIAL ADVISORSGiles Kenyon, Eric Wilhelm, Harry Haigh,
Mike Chaput

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ON THE COVER:

Lance Lusignan photographed Allen Dunne's flawless Healey 3000 for Moss Motors upcoming Austin-Healey catalog. We pilfered an image from the session that illustrates this issue's focus on interior and upholstery.

Editorial**Drive 'Em Like
You Stole 'Em?**

Modern Panasport alloy wheels are one example of adding today's technology to older vehicles. These wheels are also available in "plus" sizes.

Some British car owners forget about the "sport" aspect of sportscar ownership. Above and beyond attractive styling, these machines' allure was world-class performance and handling. Most British sportscars were engineered to go 75 mph down the highways and handle elegantly in the process—not always comfortably, but mechanically capable nonetheless.

Car enthusiasts tend to impose modern expectations on older iron (or tin in the case of some Brit cars). We've become so accustomed to four-wheel disc brakes, multi-port fuel injection, and even heated seats in late-model vehicles that we often drive our newer cars out of convenience or laziness, leaving our classics to collect dust. We view older cars through un-lasiked vision, forgetting their place in the evolution of modern technology. Just as a new supercharged XK8 is engineered to produce impressive times at the track, T-series MGs rolled out of Abingdon with race-ready aspirations.


Resto-Mod

Moss Motors conducted a survey of our customers' areas of interest. Modern performance was a common denominator. Each year, we see more owners willing to improve drivability of the cars, rather than a slavish dedication to authenticity. We've accepted the challenge: Why shouldn't older cars be able to benefit from modern technology? As a company we are dedicated to keeping all the parts necessary to restore a car to original specification available, but our customers are demanding options.

The Moss line of MG super-

chargers illustrates this commitment to modern performance. These kits are based on the highly efficient Eaton superchargers that come in many current factory-supercharged cars. We've also researched retrofit fuel-injection options as a way to improve overall drivability. We haven't decided if the end justifies the means here yet—just acknowledged that temperamental OE carburetors leave room for improvement.

Vehicle handling is also a paramount concern to our customers. While some enjoy wagging their cars' tails on pizza-cutter bias-ply tires, others prefer to stuff 'em hard in the corners and really stick through the twisties. Moss's R&D department is addressing these concerns with such items as bigger-brake kits. Also, we covered the performance advantages of retrofitting radial tires onto British sportscars in the Summer 2004 *British Motoring*. In a future issue, we intend to address tire/wheel "plus sizing": Conveniently, our new line of Panasport wheels supports several Plus 1 fitments.

If British sportscars hadn't been "driven hard and put away wet" decades ago, they wouldn't be as desirable today. Legends might be born in garages, but they don't make names for themselves by staying there. Take your car out for some exercise. Try to judge its performance by the standards of its time. If you have trouble doing that, then look into the myriad ways of "resto-modding" it. You might still be a time-traveler, but you'll be one who accelerates quicker and stops shorter. And who hopefully logs more miles of pure driving ecstasy. —Kelvin Dodd 

Re-Carpet Your Ride

Not rocket science nor brain surgery...

By Kelvin Dodd
Photos by Clark W. Nicholls

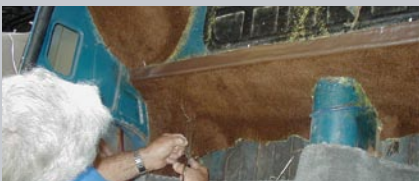
Old carpet stinks. Particularly in roadsters, ancient fibers can develop terminal cases of mold and mildew. Decaying cut-pile not only looks and smells bad, it can contribute to human respiratory problems. Luckily, re-carpeting is one interior-resto job that can be competently done by the conscientious British sportscar owner. Highlights of an MGB carpet job are shown here. 



1. Remove the seats, side panels, and old carpet. Verify side-rail carpet fitment, then (permanently) glue these pieces into place, front piece first. Cut seatbelt holes with a sharp knife and small gussets in the rear pieces if necessary for a flat fit.



2. Next, install the rear wheelwell pieces. Molded kits fit flat, and budget unmolded kits will lie flatter if heated. On later cars, the carpet needs to be cut to expose the rear seatbelt mounting bosses.



3. The rear kickup carpet is next. The vinyl tab is exposed, so carefully lay it on the battery ledge first. Then form the carpet toward the floorboards, leaving the corners till last—they'll need to be trimmed at the sill rails.



4. The kit's "scrap" pieces cover the exposed steel by the wheelwells.



5. Footwells are high-traffic areas. Meticulously glue down the tunnel-side material first, then the firewall panel. In later cars, the factory secures the firewall panel with self-tapping screws. Use an awl to locate the original holes or drill new ones in the bulkhead. Repeat for the passenger's side footwell.



6. Replacement kits use carpet behind the brake handle in lieu of the original black vinyl. Unscrew the handle, move it away from the tunnel, then cut a slit at the bottom of the carpet and lower it in behind the handle.



7. If trans-tunnel padding isn't affixed to the carpet, install and trim it to clear the seatbelt mounting boss. Attach the front carpet, then fit and trim the tunnel carpet around the shifter opening. Cut a small hole for the lever, then enlarge the hole after the carpet is fitted.



8. For the underseat carpet, use an awl to find the seat holes and cut a circle of carpet and padding at each location. Then install the interior panels, trimming the carpet where necessary.



9. Snaps are now installed on the footwell and battery-cover carpets. These allow the carpet to be lifted out for drying or for access to the battery compartment.



10. Male snaps are riveted through the vinyl edge of the kick-up carpet and tonneau (if required). Finally, install the seats by lining up the alloy and wooden spacers, pop in the battery cover carpet and floor mats, and enjoy your newly carpeted interior.

Inside Moss Motors Upholstery Shop

Our "better-than-factory" factory

By Kelvin Dodd
Photos by Kelvin Dodd

Sometimes you have to take matters into your own hands. When Moss Motors started having trouble sourcing factory-replacement interior parts, we decided to make our own. That was in the seventies. Fast-forward to today, where we manufacture many British sportscar interior panels, upholstery skins, carpets and other non-heat-welded parts to better-than-original specs. Whether you need a seat cover for a 1945 MGTC or one of 650 other upholstery, carpet, top, tonneau, or side cover components, Moss literally has you covered.

Just as modern automotive technology has spawned major mechanical benefits, today's materials and manufacturing processes are light years ahead of previous generations'. Material quality is superior in many respects, and automation maximizes fit, finish, and overall value.

Heat-seamed interior components became standard in the early seventies, and Moss still sources them from the original manufacturers in the UK. Moss also imports our molded carpet kits. Everything else is "mass-produced" by Moss on a small scale. This allows us to even offer a line of deluxe leather kits for later MGBs that features the same hand-made quality we lavish on our early sewn interior kits.

Upholstery, Seats & Tops

All our leather hides come from Italy. They're hand-cut, and the surface grain is embossed by our own stamp to replicate the original upholstery's grain. All vinyl material is sourced from Columbia and is dyed to match our leather.

As new seat frame components have become available in recent years, Moss has been able to add a line of



1. Moss Motors has hundreds of factory-spec templates for carpets, interior panels, seat upholstery, and convertible tops.



2. Assembling upholstery kits requires an extensive inventory of foam, carpet, vinyl, leather, glue, thread, black waterboard, fasteners, and miscellaneous items. Running out of any one item can set production back, so keeping track of supplies and suppliers is extremely important.



3. This special cutting tool can accurately cut through nine layers of carpet when crafting carpet kits.

complete seat assemblies. The two main problems used to be finding good frames and competent shops capable of understanding assembly techniques. Of particular note are our MGTF seat assemblies. This type of upholstery fitment was the result of many calls from upholstery shops that weren't



4. Michael shows how carpet pieces are cut and moved in batches of nine. In the background, note how materials are on rollers over the cutting table to maximize speed and minimize lifting.



5. Obscured by piles of carpet, Martha stitches edges and any pleated portions of Moss carpet kits.



6. Interior panels begin as precision die-cut blanks of wood veneer or black waterboard.

able to properly reskin TF seats.

We also manufacture our own T-Series and MGA tops, tonneaus, and side curtains. Material choices are Haartz Stayfast Cloth or vinyl.

Installing seat covers and tops is a skilled job that requires a feel for the materials and an understanding of

installation technique. This is why we recommend that all Moss upholstery and tops be installed by a professional. However, with care and dedication the home restorer can produce OE-appearing results.

Interior panels can often be competently installed by weekend do-it-yourselfers. Moss panel kits are assembled on waterproof wood veneer where moisture is a problem. Black waterboard—a resilient, fibrous material—is used where flex is needed such as in door pockets and kickpanels.

Carpet

Early-car carpets were made of wool. When wet, this factory material is prone to mold and mildew. Moss Motors uses USA-sourced polypropylene for our older-car carpet kits. The fibers are specially shaved to give the look and feel of the original wool. For newer cars, our loop carpet materials are sourced from both the UK (molded models) and USA to be as close to the original look as possible. Molded carpets make installation much easier: Flat carpet over rounded profiles such as a transmission tunnels won't lie flat without making additional cuts and darts. As an alternative, our budget kits for these cars are made in-house from a quality cut-pile using our own patterns.

Manufacturing & Special Orders

Moss's key to maximizing efficiency and keeping manufacturing costs in check is scheduling. Our special cutting tools rip nine layers of vinyl at a time. These layers can be different colors, so stock hues and special orders are combined until nine of one pattern are needed. This means that less-popular and special-order colors might be held until they can be batched with our standard colors. The upside is that we can offer less popular colors for the same price as the more common black.


Demand for some catalog interior colors is so low that storing items creates color-match problems between panels and seats. These color combinations are made on demand

and are handled in the same way as our more popular kits. The bill of materials and construction schedule are added to our batch production; extra kits for stock are often made at the same time.

Special-order non-catalog colors for complete kits present extra challenges. These are handled individually as time allows to ensure that the correct pieces are matched throughout the process. A piping color change is enough to throw off a batch, so time is scheduled each week to handle special-order items. A 15% surcharge is levied due to the extra care required.

Batch scheduling is further complicated by the fact that all leather components are hand-sorted and cut individually to ensure that there are no blemishes or creases. The extra labor and material costs show in the price difference between vinyl and leather kits, but the results are worth it. Visiting the upholstery shop when leather seat kits are being fabricated is a feast for the senses as the colors and scents give a preview of what the proud owner will experience after installation.

Moss Motors' upholstery shop employs eight skilled craftspeople: two cutters, two panel assemblers, and three sewers. Jenny Winston heads the staff and keeps all the materials on track plus lends a hand at the sewing machine when the end-of-month deadlines approach.

At the end of each work day, we're proud to manufacture many interior parts for British cars in California. Although the plethora of colors offered in classic British cars is no longer available, we feel that material quality and overall value make every Moss interior component better than new. 



7. Here's a layout for an MGA roadster seat cushion for both the foam and scrimback, an intermediate layer that permits the vinyl and foam to be stitched together.



8. Domi uses the template to layout the MGA seat-cushion foam.



9. Once the pattern is marked on the foam, Michael cuts it out with electric shears. Tools like this allow speed and accuracy compared to original manufacturing processes.



10. These Big Healey rear quarter panels are one of the more intricate components made in the Moss upholstery shop. Here, Sergio applies foam to formed waterboard. The piece will be covered in vinyl later.



11. Moss sends out vinyl to be made into piping over flexible foam core so that the colors will be an exact match among different lots.



12. Jenny sews this Big Healey trans tunnel piece.

2004 Event Calendar

SEPTEMBER

16-19: 6-pack Trials, Door County, WI, Jeff & Karen Rust, (815) 874-5623, ITRMPH2@aol.com

17-19: Southeastern Regional MG Festival, Peachtree MG Registry, Dillard, GA, Mike Cook, mikecook1@charter.net, www.peachtreemg.com

17-19: Indy British Motor Days, Indiana British Car Union, Indianapolis, IN, Don Haynam, (317) 887-3867, mgdr@quiknet.net

17-19: British Car Show, Central Virginia British Car Club, Richmond, VA, Pat Stith, (804) 741-3393

17-19: "The British Invasion, Inc.," Stowe, VT, Faith Lamprey, (401) 766-6920, www.britishinvasion.com

18-19: Colorado Conclave, Denver, CO, Alan Magnuson, (303) 400-8076

18: British Car Show, MG Car Club of Florida, Titusville, FL, Fred Wright, (321) 723-2232, sklein@cfl.rr.com

18: British Motor Car Day on the River, Southern Indiana Region British Car Club, Newburgh, IN, Jim Barrow, (812) 477-0013

19: British Car Day, Toronto Triumph Club, Toronto, Ontario, Chris Walker, (416) 410-4TTC, www.torontotriumph.com

24-25: Autumn in the Mountains British Car Show, British Car Club of Western North Carolina, Flat Rock, NC, Steve Hollar, (828) 259-9153, steve37mgta@netzero.com, www.autumninthemountains.org

24-26: British Car Meet, British Automobile Owners of NM, Silver City, NM, Kelvin Kittle, (505) 345-4207

25: MGs On the Rocks, MGs of Baltimore, Bel Air, MD, Richard Liddick, (410) 817-6882, RGL2MGBGT@aol.com

25: Wings & Wheels, Hummel Air Field, Topping, VA, info@wingsandwheels.us, www.wingsandwheels.us

25-26: All British Car Day, British Car Clubs of Austin, Austin, TX, Robert Skewis, skewistx@msn.com, http://txabcd.org

26: British Car Day, Montgomery, AL, David Price, (800) 239-7400, dprice@bituminousinsurance.com

9/30-10/3: Triumphest, South Lake Tahoe, NV, Tom, (650) 341-6716, www.triumphtravelers.org

OCTOBER

1-3: Autumn MOG XXVI, New England 3/4 Club, Williamstown, MA, Bill Alexander, (207) 799-7614, walexand@maine.rr.com, www.morgan34.org

2: Come Ride The Rails, Boston Area MG Club, Carver, MA, Paul Seeberg, (877) 685-8860, yellow_mgb@yahoo.com, www.bostonareamg.com

2: The Niello Concours at Serrano, Sacramento, CA, George Potiris, (916) 531-4136, GeorgeP@NielloConcoursAtSerrano.com, http://nielloconcoursatserrano.com

2: British Autumn Auto Show & Jumble, Somers, CT, Gary Booker, (203) 230-9782

2: Oil Spot Rally, British Motor Cars of Northern Colorado, Loveland, CO, Paul Estock, (970) 663-7272

2: Concours d'Elegance, Jaguar Assoc. of Greater St. Louis, Forest Park, MO, Gary W. Schlueter, (636) 477-1763, gdjags3@aol.com

3: San Diego British Car Day, San Diego British Car Club Council, San Diego, CA, Steve Kirby, (760) 746-9028, skirby210@cox.net, www.sandiegobritishcarday.org

8-9: Brits in the Ozarks Car & Cycle Show, British Iron of Northwest Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, Doug Schrantz, (479) 636-9172, dschranzt@arkansasusa.com, www.Britishironnwa.org

8-9: All British Car & Motorcycle Show, Nashville British Car Club, Franklin, TN, Jack Coffey, (615) 937-1535, details.Cont.coffeyjack@bfusa.com, www.nashvillebritishcarclub.com

9-10: Seaside Highland Games, Ventura, CA, Chip Robinson, (818) 968-2882, lpcol@earthlink.net

9-11: British Legends, Cape Cod British Car Club, Falmouth, MA, Kevin Thompson, (508) 540-7401, ktnkt@cape.com, www.capecodbritishcarclub.org

9: British Car Roundup, Valley British Club Fresno, Clovis, CA, Wes Crewick, (559) 323-0795, valleybrits@yahoo.com

9: Brits at Mercer, The Philadelphia MG Club, Doylestown, PA, Steve Harding, (610) 446-2073, mgbgt1@hotmail.com

16: All British Expo, Houston MG Car Club, Houston, TX, Ron Redding, (281) 346-2417

16-17: California Autumn Classic, San Jose, CA, Bill Meade, (831) 722-3253, billmeade@charter.net, www.autumnclassic.isportsdot.com

NOVEMBER

5-7: MG Jamboree, Florida Suncoast MG Car Club, Tampa, FL, Arnie Anderson, (813) 651-1646

6: British Car Show, British Car Club of Cape Fear, Wilmington, NC, Trudy Williamson, (910) 371-3222, jdtwilliamson@ec.rr.com

21: All MG Parts Exchange, Vintage MG Club of Southern California, Fullerton, CA, John Seim, (949) 786-5697, kingseim@earthlink.net, www.VintageMG.com

Event Submissions

Please send us your event announcements. Include event name, dates, location, sponsoring club, contact person, and all applicable contact information (telephone numbers, email address, web-page URL.) We also welcome photos of your previous events. Please email the highest-possible-resolution digital images or send color prints or slides to

Kelvin Dodd
British Motoring Events
P.O. Box 847
Goleta, CA 93117
doddk@mossmotors.com



Dashing from one coast to the other can be exhausting. But when it involves British Cars and their owners, logging some frequent-flier miles can be highly rewarding. Attending this year's North America MGB Register event in New Jersey gave us a chance to hello to a lot of old friends. (Photo by Kim Tonry)

Hot Products



Panasport Wheels

When classic style and performance are important, many British car owners look to Panasport wheels. They're made of a lightweight alloy and feature a polished rim, steel tapered-face inserts, and hub-centric machining for a precise fit. Plus-sizing fitments makes these wheels great for both vintage racing and street use.

854-750	TR250-6	15x6	\$279.95
854-755	TR250-6 +1	16x7	\$332.95
854-705	MGB	14x6	\$259.95
854-715	MGA/B +1	15x6	\$279.95
854-725	MGA/B +1	15x7	\$309.95
854-735	MGA/B +2	16x7	\$329.95
854-745	SPIT/GT6	13x5.5	\$237.95
854-765	TR7/8 +1	14x6	\$262.95
854-815	TR7/8 +2	15x6	\$269.95
854-825	TR3-4	15x5.5	\$279.95
854-835	Sprite/Midget	13x5	\$234.95



Weber Soft Mounts

Vibration plays havoc with fuel level, and any Weber DCOE installation works better when the carburetor is isolated from the manifold. This kit does the trick. Customer demand has been overwhelming, and we now have plenty of Soft Mount Kits in stock.

222-251 \$32.95

Healey Timing Chain Sets

Moss offers two reliable ways for 6-cylinder Healey owners to set up timing between the crank and cam. Our basic Timing Chain Set features a multi-keyway crank sprocket for straightforward installation. Or, for Healey owners who want a cost-effective way to achieve adjustable cam timing, we offer a vernier set. Its keyway slots allow advancing or retarding timing 2, 4, 6, or 8 degrees at the crank.



460-358 Austin-Healey 6 cyl. Timing Chain Set with Multi Keyway Crank Sprocket \$149.95



460-368 Austin-Healey 6 cyl. Vernier Timing Chain Set \$214.95



Whitworth Tube Set

Made in England, this set of four spanners nests together to give you the most popular Whitworth sizes—3/16", 1/4", 5/16", 3/8", 7/16", 1/2"—in a compact space. Although not concours-correct, these spanners are similar to the ones supplied in tool kits for many British cars of the '40s, '50s, and '60s. Set of 4, with Tommy Bar.

387-100 \$17.95



MGA/MGB Silicone Gasket Set

No more single-use cork gaskets! The kit includes valve cover and side cover gaskets that are made from aircraft-spec silicone for a superior seal and to be reusable. They work great with alloy valve covers.

296-425 \$23.95



Triumph British Flag T-Shirts

Every Triumph-owning Anglophile needs one of these. Beefy cotton T-shirts withstand multiple washings. Also ideal for wannabe Triumph owners.

013-445	TR6-Flag, M	\$18.95
013-446	TR6-Flag, L	\$18.95
013-447	TR6-Flag, XL	\$18.95
013-448	TR6-Flag, XXL	\$18.95
013-450	TR3-Flag, M	\$18.95
013-451	TR3-Flag, L	\$18.95
013-452	TR3-Flag, XL	\$18.95
013-453	TR3-Flag, XXL	\$18.95
013-455	TR4-Flag, M	\$18.95
013-456	TR4-Flag, L	\$18.95
013-457	TR4-Flag, XL	\$18.95
013-458	TR4-Flag, XXL	\$18.95
013-460	Spit IV-Flag, M	\$18.95
013-461	Spit IV-Flag, L	\$18.95
013-462	Spit IV-Flag, XL	\$18.95
013-463	Spit IV-Flag, XXL	\$18.95
013-465	TR7-Flag, M	\$18.95
013-466	TR7-Flag, L	\$18.95
013-467	TR7-Flag, XL	\$18.95
013-468	TR7-Flag, XXL	\$18.95

