

# Remobilisation of a 1937 Morris 8

## Sports

### Episode 7: Upholstery Trim “I Did It My Way”

Hi, my name is Alister (Al) Gardiner. For feedback

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## Topics

This instalment covers upholstery trim and a touch of individuality in map pockets and cup holders.

I have just a couple of future articles to go after this one:

- starting issues - how can some things so simple be so difficult?
- My 6v/12V car battery – a custom solution using the ubiquitous 18650 lithium ion cell

See earlier issues for other topics I have covered.

## Seating

These were the first upholstery items I addressed. The car came with a pair of very ratty (literally) individual seats which I assumed were original.

I now know this is not the case as the original seating would have been a single bench.

Never wanting to look a gift horse in the mouth and also assuming these would be pretty rare, I decided to have a go at rebuilding them. It was only much later that I spied what looked like a whole container full of seats and other trim stuff at the Club! Ah well....



*The seats were a bit ratty looking*

I had a chat with Wayne of Patrick Auto Trimmers about getting them recovered, after I did my best with rebuilding the springing and wooden framing. He disappeared up into his mezzanine store and after rummaging around came back with a massive box full of miscellaneous old seat springs of all shapes and sizes. Armed with this, I set to work and replaced all the broken ones and the worst of the rusted ones. I liberally coated them and all the other metal parts in fish oil. While waiting for them to dry off I made two new wooden footings to Bob Bryan's basic specification and hinged them to the seat bases. Wayne then covered the seats in a nice blue vinyl with matching fabric backs, making an excellent job. I now hope my refurbished springing lasts long enough to do his work justice.

Positioning the seats took some time, as the space back to the previously installed rear partition was quite limited. I had to compromise for two extremes of height (me at 186cm and my wife at just 150cm). In the end I cut the partition down for the seats to fit, even so my legs are more bent than I would have liked. I certainly don't see long distance travel being an option.

### **Cards and Trim**

I didn't attempt any work on the interior until most of the wiring had been done, the seats fitted and the body painted. I have always wanted to have a crack at making and fitting vinyl covered trim so here was my chance.



This was something I could handle, since all the panels seemed to be basically flat. After spending some time on YouTube there appeared to be a fairly common set of steps: make a thin cardboard pattern, jigsaw out the card shape from a sheet of 3 mm hardboard or similar, and do final trimming and pre-fitting on the card. Then cut the vinyl cloth with about 30mm to spare all around, spray both cloth and card with the “magic” contact adhesive, wait a few minutes, and then bring the main surfaces together. I then trimmed the wrap around cloth with cuts as necessary and gave the card back fixing surfaces and cloth a further spray before going around stretching and mating. Plenty of short staples to hold things down until dry. Done. Then drilling and screwing to the wooden frame. Probably not quite to original spec., but I am happy with the overall result.

## Door Pockets

I wanted some door pockets. Looking on-line for inspiration, I found a plethora of choices for size, shape and position. Almost all were pleated. This would have been beyond me, and most designs were too small to be of much use other than to tuck a hanky in.

I had another chat to Wayne, and he explained that to make and fit the pocket styles I showed him would require routing out the door card and fitting from the rear for adequate support. Could be done, but fiddly (and time consuming, i.e. \$\$\$). So I gave myself a challenge to produce a screw-on alternative.



*My screw-on map pockets. The block of wood is there just to expand the opening and show the spring retainer.*

The photo shows the result. Large, nice and flat, no fancy pleating, with a surface embossing showing the “Morris chevron”, and best of all, simply screwed to the door frame from the front surface. No routing, no stitching, and no pleating.

Because of the narrow body front, the shape of the bucket seats, and my long legs, I positioned the pockets at the rear of the doors, out of the way of my knees and the front of the seat.

For those interested, I provide a few notes below on how I made them.

Using left over 3 mm thick hardboard card, I cut out the basic shape that I needed to fit at the rear lower edge of the door, and with the top of the pocket in line with the central horizontal wooden door brace (so I had screw fixing points available at each corner). I then cut out and shaped the chevron embossing from a further piece of left over, rounding the edges smooth all around with a rasp. This piece was glued to the front face of the main card. To hold the front face of the pocket to the door, I used a tightly coiled spring of about 8mm coil diameter at each side of the card. The spring centre is fixed to the pocket card using a plastic P clip, and the eye at each end of the spring is fixed to the door (top and bottom, using the 4 pocket mounting screws). The springs I had in a spares box, removed from I know not what in the distant past. You could probably use bungee cord in a similar manner. Effectively the pocket acts like a file folder with a spring return. Because of the single central fixing point to the face either side it is self-aligning to whatever is placed in it. The whole thing is then covered in vinyl cloth with generous (50mm) loose folds at each side and the bottom. I think the result is quite neat, and with not a pleat or stitch in sight!

## Drink Bottle Holders

Boyed with the success of my door pockets, I added another personal touch in the form of the ubiquitous (nowadays) drink bottle holder. These were again fashioned out of left over bits of card and vinyl. I fitted them to the back of the rear partition, the driver being able to easily reach the LHS, and the passenger the RHS.



## Still to be Done

I still need to install floor coverings and finish off the rear compartment. I was thinking of purchasing a set of carpets from the UK, but I think the quoted freight cost is a bit steep. I would be interested to hear how others procure carpets.

The final big ticket job is to get a hood and side panels made up using the frames I salvaged from the old bits that came with the car.

That's it for this this instalment - more next time.