

Cracker's 'B' Series engine timing marks.

Early 'B' Series Engines had the timing marks on the bottom of the timing cover, fine if you have a pit or hoist, otherwise a pain in the butt. Later engines had the timing marks in a position visible by looking down past the alternator. When I bought Cracker the first thing I did was carry out a service and was a tad annoyed to find he had the timing marks under the pulley.

After jacking him up and putting some blocks under the wheels I changed the contact breaker points and condenser etc. then set the timing from underneath, I thought I'm not doing that again, stopped the engine, set the crank to 14 degrees before TDC (Top Dead Centre) then bent up a bit of welding wire, trapped it under a timing bolt, drilled a small hole in the pulley and bent the welding wire so it pointed at the marked hole in the pulley. Last year after changing the points and condenser (which I tend to do every year regardless of mileage) I set his dynamic timing on the welding wire. No more grovelling underneath to set the timing.

With the radiator out for flushing as part of the 2025/6 winters jobs I decided to improve on the welding wire pointer. The photos should be self explanatory.



Postscript:

On a recent visit to the MGB Hive I was looking at a reconditioned 'Ivor Searle' engine and noticed it didn't come with the crankshaft pulley. Being quite friendly with 'Shane' (a member of the counter staff) we had a chat and it transpired that quite often people had fitted the wrong pulley and couldn't start the engine as the timing was out. It got so common that the Hive now keep a stock of second hand pulleys, ask people to bring theirs in when they collect their engine and do a swap if it's the wrong one.