



Experimenting

In another TME exclusive, we show, for the first time, what the Mk 2 Moke was meant to be.

When Modern Motor did their New Guinea test drive, they concluded by making a few recommendations – an all-synchro gearbox, better waterproofing, more power, extra fuel capacity and self-parking wipers.

Whether it was in response to this, or already on the drawing board, the Moke shown here is the prototype Mk 2 Moke, built in 1968 or early 1969. It answers all these criticisms, and more, but was never accepted for production.

Bob Stennett worked in the Leyland Experimental Department, on the still secret P76 project, around the time this Moke was built. Although not a big fan of BMC cars – his background was with Fords – that changed after driving a Moke for the first time as he recalls. “We were fortunate in being able to borrow cars for weekends, and I borrowed a Moke, just a normal production Moke, and took it away to a boys’ camp one weekend, and I thought this is great.”



Bob with the Moke in 1971; complete with rounded rubber front corners.



Note full-width wheel arches, back panel and right-hand panniers.

Bob applied to buy an ex-engineering Moke, when one became available. But, although aware of this Moke, he didn’t have anything to do with it before he got it in 1971. “This one sat in the yard for quite a while, after they’d done the initial styling and evaluation of it. It must have been in the yard for at least twelve months, just sitting there doing nothing, and it came up for sale so I bought it.”

Bob drove the Moke regularly for the next twenty years, registering it first in NSW, then later in Victoria. For the past fifteen years it has been sitting in his shed, and he dragged it out to show us the special features.

The most notable change is in the panel work, especially the right side pannier. A second fuel tank has been fitted, turned around 180 degrees, and the side panels are hand-crafted to perfectly match the left side. The front pannier is left usable, just as on the other side.

To accommodate the second fuel tank, the battery has been relocated to under the bonnet, on a bracket similar to that on a Morris 1100. This is perhaps the greatest disadvantage with the car, because space is already at such a premium. In order for the battery to fit, the horn has been relocated, and a smaller windscreen washer bottle fitted to the right side of the bulkhead. Adjusting the clutch requires removing the battery and the bracket.

Both fuel tanks are piped separately to the engine, with a shut-off valve for each and independent electric fuel pumps. Each pump has its own switch mounted on a small panel on the dash, which also holds the choke cable.

Getting back to the bodywork, all four wheel arches are full-width panels. There are no welded-on extensions here, and the rear panel is full-width as well.

The front panel is still a normal little-wheel unit, and where this joins the wider wheel arches were rounded rubber corner blocks. They were originally made of wood, with rubber coating, to indicate how the final product would look. These were on the car when Bob bought it, but have since been lost.

The other unique feature of the front panel is the removable grille. This is a work of art, with a double-skinned surround and clips for the grille to simply push into. Bob said the original grille was missing when he got the car, but the current one, a modified Land Rover grille, was in its place.

If you would like to read the rest of this story grab your copy of The Mini Experience from your local newsagent, or subscribe today.



Bob and the Moke today.