



Dr Frankenstein, it lives!  
Hudson had "a mission",  
but has done a masterful  
job of fettling together  
the infill and earlier grilles

**BMW 2002tii**  
Run by David Evans  
Owned since May 2000  
Total mileage (2)60,072  
Miles since September report four  
Latest costs £4201

## FACELIFT MAKES LPB LOOK OLDER

The BMW had been back from Bavaria for barely a week when my mate John Hudson suggested bringing it into the garage (James Lyons Coachworks) where he's been restoring his CSL so that he could get stuck in. I'd ordered a few repair panels from Jaymic in preparation: inner and outer nearside rear arches, plus the adjoining sill-cum-flank piece and lower corner.

That left the two big items – front panel and bonnet – neither of which was available from BMW, and there's still no indication of when any more might be pressed.

Fortunately, WallothNesch in Germany showed front panels in stock on its website so I e-mailed Alexander Nesch, who confirmed that they had only a couple of genuine BMW items. I ordered one pronto, plus an inset piece from Jaymic that allows the later design to be adapted to take the earlier grilles – that's if you can find any of



Corroded front wing seam had turned ugly

them. They're also currently out of stock and about £300 for each bit!

Luckily, my other long-suffering chum Brian Buckett came to the rescue with some tidy second-hand grilles. He also had a good offside front wing to replace the one that was rapidly going the same way as the front panel. I had kindly been given a new pattern wing, but it was significantly shorter than a factory BMW item and would have left a quarter-inch gap to the door.

The old front panel didn't put up much resistance – most of the lower valance crumbled – and, once he was into the shell proper, Hudson discovered more areas of corrosion. A hole in the bulkhead had allowed water to get in under the carpet.

As John put it: "The floor was a bit crusty around the accelerator pedal bracket [he fabricates those], and water had gone into the chassis rail." The jacking point nearby was solid, unlike the soft metal beneath it. It also needed a new wing mounting band where one had been laid on top of the original on that side.

Now I was rubbish at metalwork, but even I can appreciate the sheer amount of craft that John has put into cutting down the infill piece and then fettling it into place. That



No more wrong front end gags, Gromit...



Hole in bulkhead had let water into cabin



Repaired floor, with new throttle bracket

was at the same time as calculating exactly where it needed to go so that the grilles would fit properly. Plus, he had to gently massage them back into the correct shape using a new one as a guide.

Hudson has even done away with the vent (for the carburettor airbox pipe) so that it looks like a tii front panel, which went NLA many years ago. He's been doing all of this in between sorting his lovely Fjord CSL and helping Jim with rebuilding his super-rare '60s TVR Tuscan.

Johnno also found that, despite it being a BMW Classic part, the new front panel was a full 12mm out on one side, so he had to unpick the welds and correctly realign it.

Next up was the engine, which, with the ancillaries, stretched timing chain and head off, revealed polished bores and a peculiar mark on number 4. I bought a new chain from WN and Johnno put me in touch with Steve Nelson at Top End Performance in the States for a new set of piston rings. Hudson has also been tidying up the engine bay, letting in repairs to both longerons and the nearside strut top. I've suggested the same rule of thumb with John as I did with Rob Moss at



...the 'new' old one is now welded in place



Odd radial mark but no step on number 4

Chevronics for the GSA: smart and solid but not too push to use. After all, there's no point in having a car if you don't intend to drive it...

There's still plenty more for the tireless Kiwi to tackle – mainly the nearside rear arch and sill, plus the back panel where some dolt had bumped the BMW and didn't even leave a note. But the main stopping block is sourcing a bonnet – so please get in touch if you can help.

### THANKS TO

- Brian Buckett • John Hudson
- James Lyons Coachworks
- Jaymic Parts: 01263 768768; www.jaymic.com
- WallothNesch: 0049 2932 900 450; www.wallothnesch.com
- Top End: www.racetep.com