

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project - Report 15

Saturday 28th February 2015

John came round this morning to help me. This was a surprise, as he was still ill, but he insisted that we should take the MGRV8 engine out of the back of the Transit van. Who am I to argue? I suggested that he should be resting but it did no good. It was a struggle to get it out of the van with just the two of us. Unfortunately my roller shutter door to the workshop is not high enough to get the van under. After dragging the engine to the back of the van we managed to use the engine to get it out and rest it on the legs of the engine crane so that we could remove the RV8 exhaust manifolds.



I bought the RV8 engine and gearbox from a guy called Mark Herman, near Swansea motormark68@msn.com 01443 203281. He was very kind and let me pay a small deposit on it by PayPal while I was well enough to travel to collect the engine before my trapped nerve in my neck got better. When we got there he arranged for a friend to help load the engine and gearbox into the back of the van as he knew I was a bit duff. It appears that he breaks MGRV8s and had another engine, plus a complete RV8 back axle, springs, etc. If you need any RV8 second hand parts it is worth a call to Mark.

On the Saturday the **gearbox mountings** arrived from Clive Wheatley. Unfortunately the original rubber gearbox and engine mounts had been cut through when the engine and gearbox had been taken out of the car. The engine mountings were no problem to change. Just an unbolt and bolt up job. The gearbox mountings are going to be a bit more difficult as they are of the cotton reel type and there is nothing left to get a spanner or a grip on. A hammer, centre punch and maybe a chisel may be needed along with crossed fingers!

As there was still time before lunch we decided to try and **fit the engine and gearbox into the engine bay** to check where I wanted to weld in the new metal engine mountings on the chassis rails.



I had bolted the new metal mountings to the rubber engine mountings, so I could either tack weld them in place, if there was room, or mark the position where they were to fit then remove the engine and gearbox again to finally weld them in position.



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After lunch, Jane, Darcy the dog and I set off for a hotel near Stoneleigh for the MG & Triumph exhibition on the Sunday. The run was fairly good with very little traffic and we got from Aldborough in Norfolk to near Stoneleigh in about 3-hours.

Sunday 1st March 2015

After a four-course meal the night before and a big breakfast we set off for Stoneleigh. Having not pre-paid there seemed to be a huge queue to get in. This was for the pre-paid people to have their paperwork scanned. We went down the side of the queue, had to pay £12 each instead of £8 prepaid. I tried to get a discount for being a pensioner, no joy, and then I said I was under 15 as they could get in free! The woman behind the counter would not believe Jane was my mum, so I had to cough up the £24! Anyway it took us straight into the exhibition instead of having to wait to be scanned.

We headed straight for the Autojumble stalls to try and find the parts I needed.

When I enquired about the MG before I bought it I asked the guy selling it "What is missing". He replied "carpets are all that it needs, all the other parts are there". I think he was having a 'giraffe'! No horns, no washer bottle, a crap grille, no trim panels apart from a couple of damaged ones, no radiator expansion bottle, no front indicator/side lights, and no centre gearstick surround and armrest. Anyway, I found virtually all the parts I needed at Stoneleigh and then ordered all the small parts I had not got from MOSS. I was served by a very nice young lad, George, from the Bristol branch. He owned two MGBs so he knew where to look up the parts in the MOSS catalogue very quickly. They were selling parts on the day at 20% off the plus VAT price.

One item of interest I found was a new **original front side lamp/indicator unit**. It was in a box with repro ones. What a difference. The original is of a much better quality. Now I need to find a new original left hand one. Anybody got one spare?

I bumped into Victor at the show by the MGCC stand and met a couple of people who were following my rebuild reports. One even said he liked my sense of humour – that's a first!

A couple of ideas that Victor discussed were: **DRLs or lights to have on during daylight**, as many motorists don't seem to see MGBs coming as they seem small when compared to modern 'small' cars, and also a **device to look inside sills and box sections** to see how rusty they are.

Firstly, on the way home to Norfolk I thought about the **daytime running lights** and I thought – why reinvent the wheel? Why not do what bikers do and run in daylight with your headlights on dip?

Secondly, I have a **USB Inspection Camera** – as the box says: "easy to use video and still USB camera with a long flexible tube. See in hard-to-reach areas on your lap top". I bought it on eBay, new, I can't remember how much it cost but I am

sure it was under £50. I will try it on the MGB sills and show some of the pictures in my future reports. I hope the probe will go through the rust proofing holes.



As I left Victor at the Club stand, I came across the RPS stand. They had just what I wanted, a **GRP (glass fibre, to the uninitiated) rear valance**. The one thing I hate about classic cars is the chrome bumpers and cleaning cars with them on. I always seem to cut my hands while I am cleaning a car. The short while I owned Dugald's Teal Blue MGBGTV8 I hated cleaning the car. I did take it up to our local East European car wash but they blew off the driver's door mirror with their pressure washer and I had to buy a new one! Hence this MGB V8 is not having bumpers. As Dugald's car was an original Factory V8 I wanted it to be as original as possible but as I am rebuilding this one for myself, (I hope), and it can never be an original, so I am not bothered about originality.



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Gary at RPS, with the rear bumper/valance I bought at Stoneleigh. He was very helpful and can be contacted on RPS enquiries@rps-ltd.info 07900 431244. They have a large number of different mouldings for the MGBs. Unfortunately I forgot to take any photos at the show. This was the only one I took! The panel came with all the fixings plus a lock nut and a normal nut for adjusting the fit. When you have bolted it on with the normal nuts you can fix it to the bottom edge of the rear panel/boot floor with the self tappers and fixing clips. Then you undo the normal nuts and replace them with the lock nuts. Gary has put a lot of thought into the parts he sells.



On Monday morning John suggested we do a **trial fit of the rear valance**. "Why" I said - "Cos it will stop us tripping over it" be replied! John is too clever for his own good sometimes!

Victor mentioned to me he had seen some **reconditioned MGB front windscreens** complete at the show. They looked excellent value for money, but I can't remember the price and I forgot to write down the price! They can be contacted on: EB Engineering e.biddle478@btinternet.com 01684 577564.

I found that David Kingerly, Classic Car Spares davidclassicsparses@tiscali.co.uk 01332 873685. He supply the **Ambassador brake callipers**, that I am using with the Peugeot 505 vented brake discs at £400 outright, or he could rebuild my pair for approximately £150 the pair.



I had a bit of a dream that it would be nice to fit a **Hoyle suspension upgrade** to the MGB. I did not get a chance to chat to the guys on the stand as there were too many people around the stand. I was very impressed with the workmanship on their MGB displays of the front suspension conversion and their rear independent suspension systems. I don't know the price, but I bet they are quite expensive. I will try my MGB with what I have at present at a track day and then

decide. Hoyle, can be contacted on info@hoyle-suspension.co.uk 0208 776 7695.

C J Tools had a **shop soiled "bodysell spit" on offer at £550**. I chatted to the boss who I suspect was called Mr Misery. I asked if I could buy it now CASH and have it delivered. "No, that's the price, take it away NOW". I explained that it would not fit in our car with the dog in the back. No joy. Anyway in my opinion it was not very well designed, it seemed very complicated and had been built without drawing it out first. You even had to make your own brackets to fit the MGB.

Victor mentioned to me that the local pub seems to feature in my reports rather a lot! Well, when you are retired and you get tired around 5pm and you don't want to go on the computer and write up the reports on the MG rebuild or watch quiz programmes on the telly before dinner's ready, the Black Boys in Aldborough with real ale at £2.60 a pint beckons! After writing this in the report I may even be able to get a discount?

Anybody living in North Norfolk who would like an **unpaid apprenticeship** to help on the restoration? Benefits are: free tea, coffee, sandwich at lunch time and a beer if you want it at 5pm! May even get to have a go in the MGB V8, Singer Le-Mans, 1903 Crestmobile and the Arbath pocket rocket - a 595 Competizione. Age must be between 14 and 80 and must be a petrol head. Any takers to the above or comments, suggestions, abuse, etc. about the reports, please drop me an email to mikemacartney@btconnet.com