

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project – Report 43

I have been looking for another four casters to match the ones I bought at the autojumble, so far to no avail. They are Rhombus Rollen that have an overall height of 128mm from the top of the mounting plate to the bottom of the grey tyre. If anybody has four casters of this height hanging about in their garage I would appreciate being able to buy them. Also, I am still looking to buy a complete set of parts for the rear anti roll bar for the late date MGB, if anybody can help. I have had a few thoughts on how to raise the bodyshell up to the height of the bodysell spit. One thing that came to mind was that I could use the engine lift. Anyway that's enough on the bodysell spit for the time being, let's go back to:

Thursday 16th July 2015 continued

It was just after 10:15am and John and his son Michael turned up. We put Michael to work on the blast cabinet cleaning up a small pile of parts while the rest of us had tea and coffee. Michael is young and does not need to stop for refreshments. As we were about to move to the kitchen an acquaintance in the village who has a collection of pre-war MGs turned up in his latest purchase, an MG TA. He had purchased this from Bavaria. It still had the original leather upholstery and was all round in excellent condition, with black paintwork and red upholstery. It even had an MG registration plate. I offered him a couple of hundred quid for the number plate for my MGB, but he was not impressed!

Over morning refreshments John said he had been thinking yesterday on the way to and from his chemotherapy treatment in Norwich. Unfortunately after having been given a blood test and waiting for the results before the treatment he was told that his blood was 'duff' and he needed a blood transfusion before they could give him anymore chemo. They could not do it at the Norfolk and Norwich hospital for a number of days, but it could be done at Cromer hospital on Friday.

John suggested that while he is an 'invalid' and not able to help on the car that we did not bother to finish the wiring to enable us to start the engine, but I got on with stuff that I can do on my own without him. I thought he wanted to finish the wiring before the bodysell was done so he could hear the engine running, but he said he was not too bothered about hearing the engine running. He suggested "Why not see if we need to take anything off the inlet manifold etc. so that the engine fitted under the standard MGB bonnet. With the engine and gearbox out any machining could be carried out on the engine. I could then get on with the bodysell etc.

After tea we got the bonnet out and tried it. There was still not enough room for it to close. I wanted to remove the plenum chamber and fit lumps of plasticine on top of the inlet trumpets, close bonnet and measure the distance between the trumpets to calculate how much metal had to be machined off the inlet assembly. John thought otherwise - he suggested; that as he had blagged a free bonnet from the seller of the MGB, that we use this old Citron yellow bonnet and cut a hole in it where the plenum chamber touched the bonnet. Being a tight wad I said it was a shame to cut a hole in the bonnet as I might be able to sell it on eBay! Both John and Dugald said "As it didn't cost anything and it was rusty anyway, what was there to lose." They were adamant. They added that I could weld it back together afterwards and still sell it on eBay if I really wanted to! I gave in – measured roughly where the plenum chamber was touching and marked the area with a piece of chalk. Out came the Dremel. I fitted it with a thin cutting disc and attacked the bonnet with the Dremel.



Attacking the hole in the bonnet with the Dremel cutting disc. John then said "Don't ponce around with that tool, it will take ages. Use the angle grinder with the 1mm cutting disc". He was right again – the angle grinder soon cut through the bonnet.



The first cuts made with the angle grinder and the bonnet pushed down. The bonnet still touched somewhere. Let's lift the flap and see what's touching.

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Not enough room at the front, so let's cut some more metal up to the bracing bar across the bonnet.

The metal was then bent up to reveal the top of the MGRV8 plenum chamber.



Dugald and John then measured the distance that the plenum stuck up above the bonnet with a bit of wood that they found lying on the floor. I said why not use the spirit level that should be somewhere near the sewing machine. You can see me looking on thinking "What are they doing?" After much looking for the spirit level, Dugald went off to the bottom shed to get another steel rule.



At last they managed to measure it accurately, 10mm above the top of the bonnet. We all agreed that 15mm clearance would be sufficient. I suggested that I could panel beat the bonnet up by 15mm over a large enough area without it looking different to a standard bonnet. Shouted down again I agreed to machine 15mm off the manifold or trumpet stack or both. Mind you I may have a look again at the engine mountings and see if they will recess into the chassis rails – but don't tell them!

It was now lunch time and Jane produced two fresh crabs she had just bought in Cromer off the Fisherman, fresh bread and a selection of cheeses. I brought out a selection of bottled beers. We all sat down to a very nice lunch that may have lasted all afternoon – if the phone hadn't rung!

