

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project

Sunday 19th April 2015

Bahrain Grand Prix this afternoon. With practise times so close it could be an interesting race. It is quite usual for me to fall asleep watching F1 then ask Jane who one? I must try and do some work on the MG this morning as it seems I have achieved very little this week. An ex-friend can round last week, who hadn't seen the car for about a month, he said "Have you done anything to the MG? It looks the same as it did last time I saw it". Gee, thanks – that helps a lot.

Took the wheels off the MG this morning to make it easier to see the positioning of the exhaust system. Before I removed the exhaust down pipes I took a photo of position of the down pipe on the LH side, before changing them over.



I then took both the LH and RH exhausts off and changed the down pipes over.



It fits nicely in the position but will the 15" Minilite wheel with the 15 x 195/65 tyre foul the exhaust on lock. Before I tried the wheel and tyre I needed to be able to turn the steering wheel. I had only put a temporary nut and bolt in the steering UJ and it was fouling on the exhaust manifold because it was too long. I shortened the bolt to the correct length.

TIP: If you are going to cut a bolt thread down to length always put the nut on the bolt first before you cut the excess thread off. It helps put any damaged thread back in place when you remove the nut. Clean the end of the thread up with a file or linisher before you remove the nut. I tend to put a small taper on the end of the bolt to make locating the nut easier.

I fitted the Minilite wheel and tyre and Oh dear – no go, the tyre touches the exhaust downpipe. So we are back to square one



Refitted the down pipe from the other side and no problems, but of course the exhaust run is back on the inner side of the chassis rail.

I decided to change the position of the silencers and fit them further to the rear of the car, it sounds complicated, but all I did was swop the silencer and exhaust pipe end for end. This gave me more clearance under the gearbox crossmember which was pretty close before.



MGB V8 Roadster restoration project

Although the foreground of the previous photo is not in focus, this was deliberate, believe me. What I am trying to show is the silencer with a 90 degree bend attached to bring the exhaust over the top of the rear axle and eventually towards the back. I am hoping Alan; my brother-in-law can bend me up a 2" diameter stainless steel pipe from the silencer to the rear of the MG as he has a trailer and fabrication company called Freewheel UK. We started the company at Jaymic , Cromer, in the early 80's when we designed and patented the "Sidewinder" leaning sidecar. Some readers who were learner motorcyclists at the time may remember the Sidewinder. It enabled learners with 250cc machines to carry on riding when the size of engines for learners reduced from 250cc to 125cc, as motorcycles with sidecars were exempt.



There I go, digressing again.

Anyway – back to the exhaust system. My problem is making him a pattern of what I want. Do I buy some more 90 degree bends and make a mock-up of the 2" stainless steel tail pipe I want? Do I get some flexible exhaust and weld up the metal bits to hold the shape I want? Or, do I take the car down to him on a trailer for him to make the exhaust pipes to shape? Life's full of decision making. I thought I had finished having to make decisions when I retired! I know, I'll give Alan a ring on Monday morning.

Monday 20th April 2015

John did not turn up this morning, which was unusual. For the first time in ages I did not fall asleep watching the FI. I fell asleep before it, and was woken up by Jane just before the start. Robert had dragged me out for a pint or three at quarter to one. Poor old John was very down and showed me an article in the Mail that he had been reading that said with lung cancer the procedure he had with the camera and biopsy have increased the life expediency from 300 days to 500 days. I am taking him down to the Oncology department next Monday for his consultation on the treatment they intend to give him. It is all very depressing and difficult to keep up his fighting spirit.

Well, I don't know! Rang my brother-in-law, regarding the stainless steel exhaust, the 3" diameter x 2" long ring I want made for the air inlet pipe to go through the LH radiator mounting panel and overhauling a trailer for a friend. He's on holiday – what a cheek! Not back until next week. So what I have done is ordered 3 x 90 degree 2" diameter mild steel exhaust pipes via eBay and will weld them up to the shape I want for the tail pipes. He can then use them as a pattern for the stainless steel version. I will have to go and get on with something else today to keep me out of mischief.

Richard, who sold me the petrol pump, ancient pedestal drill, Dunlop trolley jack and Castrol oil cabinet, turned up with a box of books and other paraphernalia on Sunday morning. Amongst the 'stuff' is a pile of MG Enthusiast and other MG magazines from the 80's. If anybody would like them for FREE, let me know, and I can bring them down to the V8 Register technical day in June, or you can pick them up before, if you happen to be in Norfolk. mikemacartney@btconnect.com First come first served.

As I can't get on with the exhaust until the parts arrive on Wednesday, hopefully, I decided to get on with a bit more cleaning down of the inside floor pan, removing the tar seam sealing, rust, loose paint etc.



The parts I could not get to with the knotted wire brush on the angle grinder I scraped the tar off with a scraper and cleaned the rest of the tar off with thinners.



The seams were coated liberally with Kurust, so hopefully the Kurust would soak into the seams. I will leave this overnight to work and then coat with etching primer.

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project



While I had the wire brush on the angle grinder I looked for some other parts that needed repair. This front LH panel where the splash guard goes showed some rust holes, even more when all the underseal and paint were removed. To make the welding job easier the front wing needs to be removed.



The underside of the floor in this area does not look too bad, but the other side in the passengers compartment has been repaired before with a plate, as we used to call in the trade 'gobbed on'. Each time I have had the grinder out I have had a little grind at the welds to see if I can remove the plate to see what it is hiding. It is in such an awkward area for an old git to get to. After five minutes grinding at the bottom of the passengers foot well I have had enough. I suppose I am going to have to bite the bullet and remove the patch to see what it hides up.

Tuesday 21st April 2015

I am pleased to say John was in a lot better mood last night. He has bought an '07 VW Golf for his visits to the Norfolk and Norwich hospital for his treatment.

He is going to sell his 'Torrey Canyon' Toyota pick-up. It's still leaking oil after all my welding to the sump! The next time it's seen will probably be in the desert regions with a machine gun mounted on the back, as that's where all the Toyota pick-up's seem to end up.



These screws at the bottom of the wings are usually an absolute pain to remove. I have sprayed them well with penetrating oil before I even attempt to undo them.



This is the patch I think I am going to have to remove to see what is underneath.



I bought a different make of brushable seam sealer from Granville. It does not seem to be as good as the same product that I buy from Frost. For my liking it is too sticky and sticks to the brush and does not flatten out as nicely as the Brushable seam sealer from Frost. www.frost.co.uk 01706 658 619.

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project



Overnight the Kurust worked a treat in the cleaned out seams. It is now ready for a coat of etching primer over all the bare metal bits.



Wednesday 22nd April 2015

Got into trouble again last night! We have a white tiled floor in our kitchen and downstairs bathroom. Jane said that when she was washing the floors that there are little black dots that won't come off with the floor mop. I said "That's strange; it's normally mud from the two dogs, Darcy and Rolley. I wonder how that got there?" Jane replied "It's not strange at all. It's the little balls of underseal you have been cleaning off the MGB the other day". It looks as if I might be cleaning the floor myself with thinners! I know – I'll take a can of cleanings thinners into Jane and say "give that a try" – I'll let you know how I get on.

TIP – Don't do as I do and not bother to wear my overalls – wear a boiler suit and leave that and your boots in the garage!

More photos from yesterday. Had another go with the hand chisel and Dremel to get the plate off the passenger's floor.



Success, but see how rusty it is behind the plate..



As usual comments questions to mikemacartney@btconnect.com