

MGB V8 Roadster restoration project – Report 20

Thursday 19th March continued

After finishing report 19 and sending it to Victor I thought I would spend an hour editing the Quest for King Dick. I then needed to go and get some petrol in a can for the 'gardener' to do some strimming and mowing. Colin the camshaft appeared with a brake drum off his Lotus Eclat that needed skimming.



All that got done on the MGB was looking, thinking about the MGB and skimming the brake drum. Which would be the same sort of thing you would do to an MGB brake drum if the pitting was not too bad. If there is a lot of wear to a brake drum you would need to replace it.

Friday 20th March



I tried to get out of cutting the grass by saying "With the eclipse of the sun it would be too dark to see the grass". That didn't work! Modified a rubber engine mounting

to fit on top of the RH chassis rail and cut out some bits of metal to weld to the existing RV8 mounting that is bolted to the engine.



I also checked that the exhaust manifold would clear the new mounting before welding. Couldn't do anymore until I get some help from John, hopefully tomorrow morning, when maybe we can get the engine fitted in place at last and get the steering rack in the correct position.



After lunch it was mowing the grass and taking the Arkley out for a blast. In the pub last night I gave Colin his brake drum and got bought a pint. Spoke with John and he is not sure he can make it on Saturday as he has a glass washer to install. Apparently we also have friends coming to lunch. So may be another wasted day?

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Saturday 21st March



Existing oil filter mounting will need moving.



Do I really need an oil filter? Do I need one fan or two?

I actually got a bit of work done on the MGB today. This morning I spent a bit of time wedging the steering rack into the position I wanted it. I shall have to wait for some help before I start welding brackets on.

I removed the horn brackets from the area in front of the radiator as I want to keep this area as clear as possible to help cooling. All but one of the screws and nuts came undone. The stubborn one I cut off with the Dremel and a small cutting disc. After lunch I spent a bit of time finding locations for other parts that fit under the bonnet. There is no way that the oil filter is going to fit in the position of the oil filter in the factory V8. I will have to remove this bracket and locate it, or make a bracket for it, further back along the RH inner wing. There is an ideal place, where you can see it in the photo. But I will double check when the engine is bolted in and the exhaust fitted. It might be too close to the exhaust and the pipe run may be awkward.

I am still debating with myself whether or not to fit an oil cooler? In my opinion it is not worth fitting an oil cooler unless you fit a thermostat for it. I did try to buy an oil thermostat off Moss, but unfortunately they only sell a thermostat with a full oil cooler kit and would not split a kit up. If I do decide to fit the oil cooler I can probably find a thermostat at Demon Tweaks, Europa or Car Builders Solutions. Anyway the MGRV8 was not fitted with an oil cooler as standard.

I have two fans that came with the MGB, I could fit two, but would the engine keep cool enough with one? Modern fans are a lot more efficient than the two fans that were fitted to the factory V8.



The MGRV8 and most V8 EFI engines have the air filter fitted to the front of the Hot Wire airflow meter. This means that the engine is taking in air to the engine at under bonnet temperatures. For the best thermal efficiency you are better with cold air which is denser. To this end, I am fitting a flexible rubber hose, welding a short 3" diameter pipe through the LH radiator mounting panel and fitting the RV8 air filter in the area to the side of and in front of the radiator. If I can't find a short length of pipe of this diameter, I shall ask my brother-in-law to make it on his rolling machine.

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This area I am still thinking about. Do I rewire the front loom and fit an 8-way fuse box, instead of the original 4-way fuse box plus the 3 extra single fuse holders that are on the existing wiring loom on the RH inner wing of the 1977 MGB? I could then integrate the RV8 ECU wiring loom into the original loom? Will the washer bottle, washer motor and radiator expansion tank fit in this area?



Sunday 22nd March 2015

Not a lot happened today. John came round and we discussed the engine mountings, rack position and wiring. It is very useful to have somebody to discuss ideas with. Got invited out for a lunchtime drink at the Blackboys – enough said! Below is a good photo that I took of the steering rack on Dugald's MGBGT V8. It may help with positioning the rack on my MGB V8.



While I am waffling on about steering racks I might as well tell you about the problem I had with Dugald's rack. After the car was finished and had an MOT there was a knock under breaking. I jacked the car up and put it on axle stands front and rear and removed the wheels and checked all the brakes to see if I could find the knock. In desperation I took it down to the local garage Wrights, in the village and asked Squiby (his name is Alan but he can be a bit fireworky!) and his son Jim if they could put the car on a lift and see if they could find the knock. All they could find was a slight knock if you grabbed the LH track rod and pushed and pulled it up and down. I asked how much I owed them and they said "Buy us a drink next time we see you in the pub". I thanked them and went home and ordered the bits I needed from looking in the parts book.



The naked steering rack with its boots removed.



Here are the parts I thought I needed. You only need one brass bush. Not the two they tell you in the parts book.

Stripping the rack is quite easy. Check yourself, as I may have forgotten something, is nearly a year ago that I overhauled the rack and I am getting to that age where you forget things. Which reminds me – there was an article in the Times about the large number of older people going to the doctors complaining about dementia. At the end of the article there was a list from the Alzheimer's

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Society of what to look for. It appeared that everything they listed applied to me – not a good sign! Anyway what was I writing about? Oh yes, the steering rack. The steering arms are locked on with a lock tab. You bend the lock tabs back and then unscrew the threaded 'lump' on the end. I can't think what you would call this. Under this is a spring and a pressure pad. Be careful not to lose these and note from which side of the rack they came. Undo the other side and the bolts on the bit where the steering column fits into the rack. The rack itself will then slide out. The brass bush is held in with a small screw. When you have removed this you can remove the bush. Clean everything carefully. Check that the rack slides nicely through the rack housing. I use engineers blue to check for any high spots. When you are happy with the fit of the rack in the rack housing, clean again. Coat, heavily, everything with grease (don't use oil) and reassemble. When it comes to screwing the "lump", let's call it the track rod holding nut, only tighten it until the track rod arms will stay in the place you put them. You should use new lock tabs if you can get them. I also forgot to say you need to put the screw in, to lock the bush in place, use a new one.



The rack housing where the brass bush fits.



Rack greased up and checked for sliding smoothly.



Rack with track rods being fitted.



Completed rack overhaul with its new rubber boots fitted ready to fit back on the car. I am sorry if I have left anything out of the rack overhaul. But you can always read the workshop manual before you start. I hope this week to really get stuck in to the MGB and get some more work done on it. It would be nice if I can get the engine running by the end of the month. As usual, comments, questions, suggestions and abuse to: mikemacartney@btconnect.com