

MGB Restoration

Last year started off with not much getting done on the long task of restoring my MGB roadster. Sure it looked great after the bodywork and new paint but that just illustrated how much there was to do. I admit that last Summer I lost heart with the process and even tried to sell it and buy a running car. But wiser heads convinced me that I should press on as I would regret it if I did not.

So Howard and I took the black lump of an engine to Ken Miles for a rebuild and coat of bright red paint. I knew the engine to be in good shape already but I wanted to know the details before I put it back in the MGB. Ken confirmed this and we didn't have to do any major work putting it back together except replacing the camshaft and valve train. Eventually the engine was ready, looking great in a coat of new paint, so Neil helped me get it back in to my garage.

My friend Gord Graham was visiting again in October and with his help we got the engine and transmission back in the car and started hooking up some of the many bits resting in my basement and garage. A car looks more "alive" with the engine and assorted pieces all back where they should be. This was a great boost to how I felt about the restoration process and helped me get it moving again. Having the new hoist in my garage also saved my back from lying on the cold, garage floor and made working under the car much easier.

A daunting job was the replacement of the windshield frame in to the car body. I'd read many stories of just how difficult this could prove to be. But I followed a tip I'd read somewhere about first wrapping the screen with 90 pound test fishing line, spaced about every 2 inches, to counteract the force of the



lower seal. Gord and Howard held the frame for me while I wrapped the line around and tied it off. I had started this process weeks earlier but discovered that the windshield glass was not centered in the frame so I took it to Crystal Glass to get it refitted properly. We lowered the screen in to place and used a long center punch to locate the bolt holes inside the cockpit. The process went much faster than I expected. With bolts in place and tightened, we cut and removed the fishing line and the seal fell into place.

The last job I did on the car was to recover the dash. I had bought a new dash pad from Ken at Brit Bits last year so I had to remove the old cover and foam from the metal dash frame. Using a heat gun and stripper blade this went quite well although care must be taken to leave the structural foam, which is much denser, to support the new pad. While I felt competent removing the old dash I did not want to try gluing on the new one and fitting the instruments. So, after consulting the Friday Lunch Group, I took the dash to The Seat Cover Center on 99 St. and they did a great job of putting it all together.

Now it is ready for installation in the MG this Spring.

Cheers, Harry Midgley

