

Dana's MGA Rides Again!

Dana Booth and I have been working on his MGA that has been off the road for 10 years. He bought the car in 1974 and had to rebuild the motor. Then, in 1976 he was T-boned on the driver side. It took a lot of work, but he put it back together and drove it for a number of years. About 10 years ago he decided it was time to fix the body correctly and fix the rust and deteriorated interior, etc. He took it apart and labeled everything in bags. Then he took the body and rolling frame to Carlisle Auto Body and had them repair the body and paint it. It arrived back in his garage and he was slowly putting bits back onto the car.

During some of our BSMGAC tech sessions we tackled some jobs such as inspecting his transmission and another time recovering his seats with a tan leather seat kit. This helped get some of the parts back ready to assemble onto the car. Dana cut out new floor boards from marine grade plywood and painted them black as original. He was not making much headway over the past few years, so, he asked me to help him get it back together.

On August 23, 2019 Dana delivered his MGA to my garage and we put it up on the lift. We went over the car and examined everything to determine where to start. The front suspension needed new A-arm bushings and dust seals, so, that was the first job we tackled. Then we installed the transmission and transmission tunnel and floor boards. Once this was complete we were able to start putting in the new wiring harness, brake/clutch master cylinder, windshield wiper motor, heater box and other miscellany. We installed a new clutch plate and painted the engine and dropped it in. We rebuilt the carburetors and installed them along with the refurbished distributor with a new vacuum unit from British Vacuum Units. We installed the starter, generator, coil, radiator, oil cooler and all the other bits under the bonnet. We then installed the dashboard which Dana had recovered with new vinyl and wired it up.

All through this process we discovered missing parts and had to source them from Scarborough Faire and Moss Motors. I also supplied parts from by used spares. Dana also had a number of spares and extra bits what came in handy when a part on the car was found to be inoperative. We installed the windshield and a new fuel pump. Now the car was ready to start up. The moment of truth was on September 24 just a month after we began the reassembly. We put in fresh gas, antifreeze, new oil, and a new battery. I pulled out the choke, turned on the ignition, heard the fuel pump pumping with that sound that says it has fuel and pulled the starter cable. It cranked over a number of times and then fired up! The oil pressure came up and within a few minutes the temperature gauge came up to temperature.

Over the next few days we made adjustments to the idle, found faults in some of the components and fixed these. We tested the lights and found a bad headlight. The new fuel pump failed and had to be replaced. The tachometer quit and had to be replaced. We had no brake lights and the wiper motor did not turn on. Dana had put in new LED brake and running light bulbs in the rear and they were made for a positive earth car. We had changed it to negative earth in order to run a modern fuel pump and any other accessories he might want to run. It turns out that when we tested the brakes it blew the fuse that powers all the green wires. Once I replaced the LED lights with incandescent ones and replaced the fuse everything worked!

We installed new carpeting and installed the seats and seat belts. Now the car could be driven around and further tested. We had to do some adjustments on the brake and clutch push rods to have them operate fully and we used Dot 5 Silicone brake fluid to ensure we did not have paint issues from any leaks in the future. On Friday, October 4, 2019, Dana picked up the car to take back to his garage. There are still some things to troubleshoot and he needs to finish the interior panels and install the top bows and hood, but it is at least running and driving now. We will continue to work on it together, just not in my garage as I have some of my own projects to

work on over the winter. Dana and I enjoyed working on the car together and going to lunch each day we worked. I really enjoyed our time working and solving problems and Dana's wife, Kathy, is happy to have the car running again. I look forward to seeing it at various club events this coming year.

Dana's MGA in 2012



Dana's MGA engine compartment (partially done)



Dana's MGA leaving Jack's



Dana and Kathy Booth in the MGA at home



