

Tech Article; June 2012

We are working on an old Triumph TR3 (like there are any new ones) that is going on a trip to California with two drivers re-creating a trip they did 25 years ago. It is being filmed as a TV documentary. I recently found out that they are leaving in June and have been hurrying along on the repairs.

So, let me give you an example of how things are going. The radiator was green and damp at the bottom so we knew it had a seep. That would not do in Death Valley. To remove the radiator in a TR3, you get to pull the front center body panel out. That exposes everything up front. The steering box was leaking so now is the time to rebuild it as it is exposed. The radiator comes out and goes to the radiator shop. The first call from them was to see if we wanted the hole for crank starting back in the core. It will add money and a week delay to have it.

That should be a customer decision as I know I would leave it out. It is \$100 cheaper and has 20% better cooling capacity. Not the owners decision so we wait for the core. They were also supposed to call me before assembly so I could bring some tabs to mount on the radiator top tank that will locate the top of the radiator, an item missing from the one in the car. While we are waiting for that, we attack the steering box. There is no bushing in an idler arm so I make that in the lathe.

One item fixed with no play. Then the steering box comes out and I find a broken bearing that should never be able to break and they are hard to find. One is located so that goes together with new bearings and bushings. There is a long tube thru the steering column that is attached to the horn button, turn signal switch in the steering wheel, the trafficator. I test it, as we are supposed to fix the electrics, and find the right turn signal line is dead.

Now I get to rebuild the trafficator where I found a burnt wire, go figure. The wire is repaired; the unit cleaned and tested; then reassembled. Three items fixed so far, we are doing good. Except, we never anticipated any of them before pulling the radiator. Trying to be thorough, we examined the water pump as now would be the time to replace it. Yep, there is seepage from the weep hole in the housing. Sitting for a number of years has not helped the car. Off comes the pump, only three bolts hold it on.

A new pump is ordered and we wait. Three bolts for the pump and one nut for the pulley are all that stands between us and finishing the pump installation; how long could it take? About 3 hours would now be my guess. The old pump pulley did not fit the new pump. Back to the lathe to open up the inside of the pulley and then chuck the pump itself in the lathe to turn down the housing for clearance. We press the pulley on for the fourth and last time and it spins perfectly.

Now, back to the three bolts that hold the pump on. That goes easy. As we try to release the generator to adjust the new belt, we find a frozen bolt in the generator, As it is in the aluminum front plate, we decide to use gentle heat and some wax to free it.

This only takes about 20 minutes. Think this is long; then think about what it takes? You have to get your propane torch, a lighter, some wax (touch it to the hot bolt and it seeps into the threads), heat the bolt and gently work it back and forth so it does not break. Then get a replacement bolt and clean the threads in the front plate.

Well, we are finally done, the pump is on and the belt is tight. But, it leans forward as it goes around the crank pulley by  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". What the! Upon a closure examination, we determine the crank pulley was put together wrong some time ago in a previous life. To repair this, the crank pulley assembly must come off and be disassembled. No, it has to be disassembled on the engine and removed piece by piece as it will not come off as one piece. There are 6 bolts, nuts and washers. There are two pieces to the pulley and two pieces to the crank extension and the big bolt holding it all together. Even without the radiator in the way, it is an extremely tight working space.

The two piece pulley was installed in the incorrect location on the Mickey Mouse assembly and now it is corrected. The extension is reassembled in place and tightened and the belt finally lines up perfectly. So, we have replaced the water pump, where we started with just three bolts to install and spent 3 hours doing it, plus a few other things.

You may now be asking yourself, if you have read this far, so what? It goes to show that asking for something simple, or that sounds simple, may take a lot longer than anyone can anticipate. There is no way you can get quoted an accurate estimate to do some easy jobs on our old cars. If you have a shop working on your car, please understand that they also run into these kinds of problems. They are in the middle of a repair and have to spend extra time doing other repairs that were not visible until they started. Understand, they need to be compensated for this time. It is not their fault your car has frozen bolts, or new parts suck and do not fit, or that someone else worked on your car previously and screwed it up.

Cut us some slack, especially if the car works as it should when we get finished. Our goal is to make your car as dependable as possible at a reasonable price. But we want to stay in business and must charge for our time. I know a lot of you do not believe it, but we make very little from parts, the mark up from our great big Moss discount is very small. We have to make a living from our time and knowledge.

Now a moment of self-promotion; if I may? I am moving to a new location in June as my house is too small and I am tired of complaints about parking on the grass. It is against the law to park on your own grass in Cobb County. Even for a short time like lunch break with the guys. So, I have found a 4,000 ft. shop around the corner that used to be Moon River Hotrods. We will be installing lifts and all our equipment and hope to be open by the end of June. We will be able to do everything to your British car other than body and paint work.

We are going to be a stocking dealer for Moss Motors, we hope to have most of the tune-up, hydraulic, brake, clutch, and electrical items commonly needed. As time goes forward, we will increase the stocking items. We also are working on stocking wheels,

such as the Minilite style, and will be able to order any wheels including 18" current designs. We may be able to get tires like Vredestein that will fit the older British cars but will not stock any, special order.

Please watch for our grand opening soon. We are developing our web site now and will be adding tech tips, parts, and some other stuff to it as time goes on. If you would like to help move, please let me know, I could use some after the MG2012 in Dillard. Thanks for reading this far. See yall soon.