

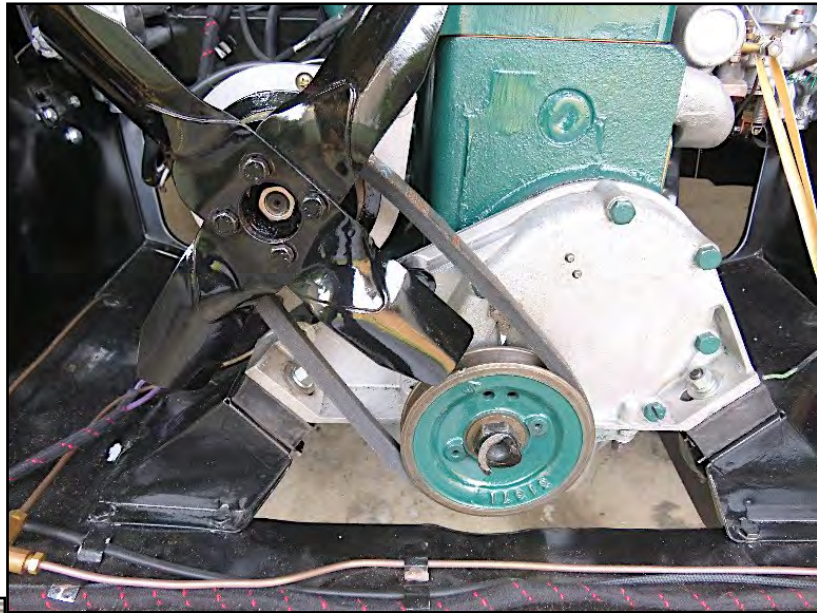
My Story So far - Pt V

By SMM 34643

I was getting quite excited by this time. My panels were on, all painted, compounded and looking pretty sharp. My interior was all there, just had to be installed at the right time. My engine was just about ready for a test start - except I didn't have an exhaust system fitted yet! "How are we going to get that done?" I wondered. "And what about all my windows? My split screen windscreen is notoriously difficult to install!". My excitement was being tempered with concern bordering on paranoia...



Painted and chromed split bumper bars on the outside table (above) and finally attached (below)



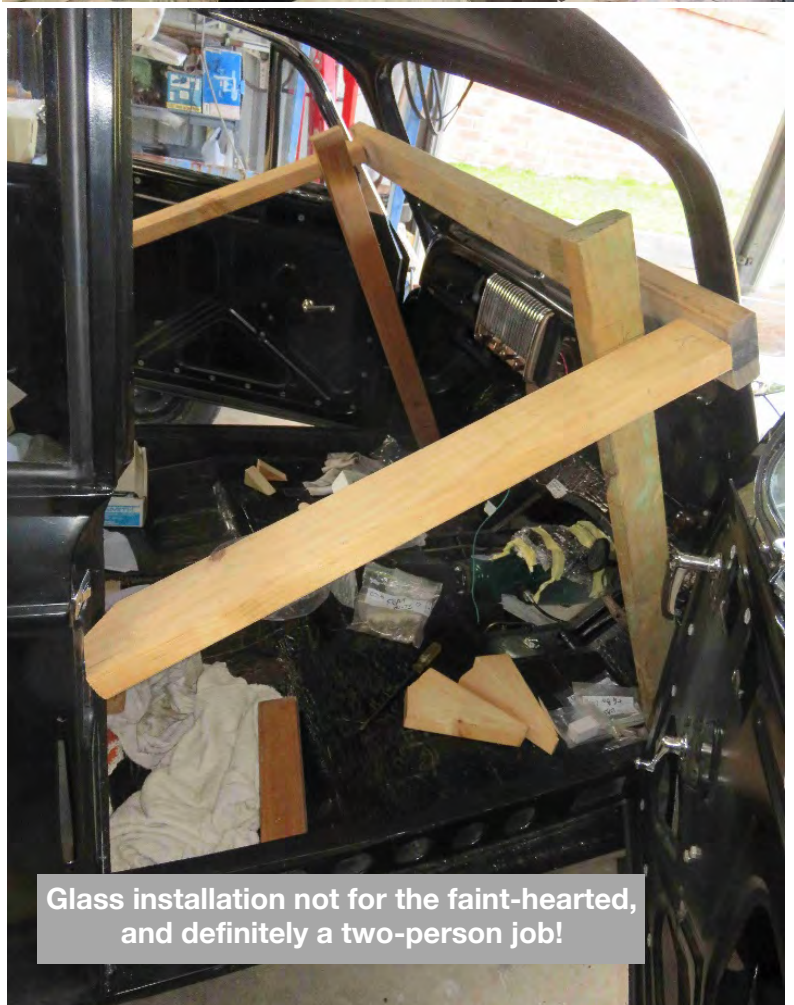
But Les just kept on, bit by bit, despite COVID-19 still being an issue. From late May 2022 through June and July he assembled my split bumper bars, finally purchased the correct length fan belt - and fitted it (wouldn't you know, some of my sibling's engines use a slightly shorter fan belt, and guess which one Les had bought!). He then installed my grille, and fitted up my doors with their door handles and chrome window frames and glass, the weather strips (inner ones only on early Lowlights like me!), and plastic inserts for my door trims.

Next came my headlights and horn, installed and hooked up, followed by the radiator and then my bumper bars. I had to make sure Les fitted the rubber flaps between my front guards and the bumper valences, just like when I was new. Did you know about these?

Now, glass in my doors is one thing, but what about my fixed windows?? Well, Les told me he had been doing some research on the internet for fitting my rear and side windows,



Headlining all in and all good,
finished off by Johnny B (right)



Glass installation not for the faint-hearted,
and definitely a two-person job!





Thumbs up! Johnny B pleased with my glass instal, albeit a bit crowded with the carpentry shop

and that he had obtained the clues to do this without any great drama, but that my windscreen was a different matter... Fortunately, for the windscreen job, he had been given advice with photos from Denis Woodford, another of his fellow MMCCNSW Club members, who had already driven down this road with his Series II restoration a couple of years before. This proved to be a big help, but while side windows, and even my small rear window can be a one-man job, my windscreen was going to need at least two. Guess who I was hoping would be able to come! (Johnny-B-Goode, anyone?)

Les did manage to install my side windows by himself, helped by a glass suction gadget, venetian blind cord and lots of soapy water. But Johnny B Goode was needed for the windscreen and the rear window!

So, come August, my good mate Johnny B Goode came to help again. The first thing they did was to install my large centre headlining piece, definitely a two-person exercise. I hadn't seen this piece since Les took it back into the house in January. It took a bit of effort to get in, with much grunting and banging, but it was so nice to have this fill the empty void up my middle.

With this in place, I was ready for my rear window to go in. They used the same procedure as for the side windows, but with Johnny B pushing hard from the inside,



while Les pulled the cord lifting the rubber around the body lip, it was done! Once this was in, they screwed on the internal metal surround.



Next was the tough one that I knew Les was dreading - the front windscreen. Denis' method was to use a timber framework set up in, and across, the doorways that kept pressure on the screen and held it in place while the rubber was pulled over the body lip, so Les had made this before Johnny B had arrived. They set this up, and with the rubber sourced from Old Auto Rubber at Penrith carefully inserted around the two windscreen sections, and with the required slave pillar in place, they set about the process. Johnny B sat inside applying progressive force with timber wedges between the frame and the screen, while Les pulled the cord lifting the rubber over the lip. They used Vaseline this time rather than soapy water for lubrication, and it did the trick nicely!

Denis' tip to tape a cord on the inside to pull the bottom lip out worked well and the rubber fitted beautifully. The final centre pillar and the chrome surround still had to be done, but you should have heard Les' sigh of relief!

The next major job needing two people was bleeding the brakes. Then Johnny B helped with fitting the ignition light, which sounds simple enough, but is a terribly designed fitment, unless you have the factory installation tool – well, I think they must have had one, but it was such a long time ago, my memory is a bit hazy. With Les under the dash and Johnny pushing on the light from above, they finally got it in, only to find later that this brand new light was a 'dud' and had to be replaced.

Before returning home again, Johnny B helped with installing the steering column and the gearbox lid and lever, which then enabled Les to bolt in the gearbox floor cover.

Les completed a few other tasks after Johnny left, which included modifying and fitting my spare wheel bracket, installing the fuel filler neck and cap, inserting the piping between my body and rear mudguards, (front had been done with the grille), and finally giving me my proper wheels and new tyres, instead of the old working set that he had sat me on since coming off the rotisserie. It was time for another "Yippee!"

Before he left, I heard Johnny B say that he would like to be there when my engine is started for the first time. I'd love him to return. - and I wondered if he would.



Stay tuned!
SMM 34643