



Battling on with my 1965 4.2 Mark 10 (Caspian)

Friday, 1st April 2016

So, today is All Fools Day – so what better day than today to take Prince Caspian, my long-suffering Mark 10, into town for a Roadworthy. Many people thought I was a fool to take on this project in May 2015 – were you one of them? I have to say there have been times along the way when I've had cause to question my sanity!

Did he pass or fail?? Read on.....



The rebuild so far

As mentioned last month, the rear suspension was finally married to the body, and the brakes bled, so the car could at least be driven out of the shed and into the sunlight, and the resulting space in the shed could be tidied, swept, scraped and generally given some long-overdue attention.

The outstanding items for the RWC are:

- Fit the bonnet and headlight surrounds
- Refit the back section of the exhaust
- Set wheel alignment and related geometry

The bonnet is very heavy and difficult to manhandle, so I enlisted Philip Agnew and my son Callum to assist. The trick when removing a bonnet from any car is to mark exactly where the hinge flanges meet with the body and the bonnet, to ensure the bonnet will fit properly into place, and the catches will engage and disengage without fouling. The last thing you want is to close the bonnet, and find it impossible to open..... Unfortunately, in the enthusiastic cleaning process after dismantling (and also because I had removed the hinges to have them powder-coated), I had removed all of the markings I had so carefully made, so I had to proceed with great care. *Are you beginning to guess what might have happened?*

Anyway, we finally got the bonnet bolted to the hinges, and after swinging the bonnet up and down several times, all looked lined up – but still I didn't actually close the catches; I was running out of courage. So, Phil and I shared a couple of home-brews and put the job off to another day.

The following day I thought I'd quickly fit the re-chromed headlight surrounds and get on with prepping the car – but it took me all day to fit just 4 pieces of chrome. They must have been slightly distorted during the re-chroming process, and getting them to fit without drilling extra holes for the mounting screws required the *Patience of Job*, but I managed it in the end. I even closed the bonnet on its catches, and pulled the release lever – YES!!! The bonnet popped up, albeit reluctantly – so I'm on a roll.



I was nearly there. The exhaust welding and wheel alignment could not be done at home, so off I went into town to co-ordinate these jobs, and to book the RWC (Road Worthy Certificate).

Thursday 31st March was a big day for me, and I started early. I just wanted to go over the car again to make sure all the lights worked etc. But the first job was to take my long-suffering wife Lee for a short drive, so I ushered her into the car, closed the back door for her, and climbed in. Caspian roared into life (remember half the exhaust was still unattached!!) and off we went, unlatched bonnet bouncing, into the back yard and round our mahogany tree 3 times, then into a shaded carport – no more than a couple of hundred meters, but boy-oh-boy it felt good! And Lee was smiling too.....

So, I started checking out the car – all the lights/indicators work, one seat belt mounting was loose so removed it and re-fitted – OK. Wipers – switched them on, then realised I hadn't re-fitted them after the windscreen was re-fitted – now fixed. Press the horn ring – oh bether – completely dead!! I had removed the twin horns at some stage when replacing the radiator, but I couldn't actually remember if I had ever heard them working. It was getting a bit late – around 3:30pm by now, and car electrics is not my favourite. Removed one horn and tested it on the bench with a spare 12v battery – nearly jumped out of my skin, but at least it works, so the problem must be a connection. A long piece of wire with crocodile clips acting as a complementary earth solved the problem, so I cleaned the earth connections, and just to be safe, I also installed a redundant earth cable just in case. Problem solved!

So now I'm feeling good, a potential problem solved, so everything is going well. Time to check the bonnet again. Closed the bonnet and pulled the release lever – NOTHING!~~! It's now after 5 o'clock!

To cut a long story short, a couple of hours and several bruised knuckles later, the bonnet finally popped up again – but I vowed NEVER to close it again!!!

Friday morning was beautiful and sunny, and Jay from Tidy Towing was on time at 7:30, so off to Bob Parkes Muffler City who did an amazingly quick job on the exhaust, then off to the Townsville Brake & Wheel Alignment Centre in Pilkington Street for the front wheel alignment. Next stop about 200 metres along Pilkington Street to Warren at Olde Ride Restorations for the dreaded RWC. I left the car there and joined my son Callum for a coffee on the Strand. Nervous? Who, me? I was quite resigned to getting a list of jobs to be done before a RWC could be issued, and sure enough, a couple of hours later, Warren called me..... **IT'S A PASS!!!!!! Yippee!!!**



Getting the Roadworthy may well be the end of this current series on Prince Caspian's rebuild, but it's certainly not the end of the various projects to be undertaken, such as carpeting, refurbish the woodwork, tidy up the boot and engine bay, paintwork etc. etc..... But for now, I want to enjoy driving my car.

See you out and about, fellow Jag lovers.