

Cracker's Bonnet Strengthening Strip:

When I purchased Cracker the TC he was in very good condition, but not perfect. One shortcoming marked for early attention was slight bonnet droop, which is easily rectified by reinforcing the hinge with a section of equal angle. I had some 25mm x 25mm x 3mm thick aluminium equal angle so decided to use that. Although I would normally fit a reinforcing strip to both sides of the hinge (mostly for aesthetic purposes) I only had enough to do one side and my local aluminium supplier was showing nil stock. The photo below shows the two piece bonnet strengtheners I made for Kermit my Aero Merlin 3-Wheeler.



Kermit's two piece bonnet strengtheners.



Ditto.

Normally (as shown in the first photo above) I would fit the reinforcing strip with the corner towards the hinge pin but on my TC the sloping heater top was very close to the underside of the bonnet which meant

that I would need to reduce the rear end of the strip too much to gain sufficient clearance. The corner was therefore positioned away from the hinge pin which reduced the amount needing to be cut off the equal angle, hence leaving it stronger.

Sequence of events:

The tasks were carried out in the following order.

1. Remove the left hand side bonnet panel.
2. Measure up and cut to length the aluminium equal angle.
3. Offer up the equal angle and mark where it needs to be shaped to clear the heater and oil filler cap.
4. Cut out the unwanted pieces to give the necessary clearance.
5. Offer up the equal angle against the hinge and use the hinge as a template to mark and drill the fixing holes in the equal angle.
6. Fettle, clean and polish the various parts and secure together with stainless steel slot-head screws and Ny-Loc nuts.

Note.

The hinge was originally secured with chrome on brass BA screws which had been cut off flush with the bottom of plain brass nuts, hence longer screws were required. My local nut and bolt supplier didn't sell chrome on brass BA screws so I changed all the fixings to stainless steel BA. With the left side bonnet back in position I changed the fixings in the right hand side one at a time.



Unfortunately the photo doesn't indicate the full extent of the droop.



Aluminium equal angle cut of for heater and oil filler cap clearance.



Ditto.



That's better.

Summary:

I understand from John Hoyle that later NG kits had a bonnet reinforcing angle supplied as part of the kit but Emma my TD wasn't fitted with one.

It's nice to look down towards the radiator cowl and see a nice straight bonnet line. This is a small job that it well worth the effort on an older NG.