

Eric the Viking – a restoration in many parts – June 2023

Spend since last report: £5,402. Total hours labour since last report: 44.5

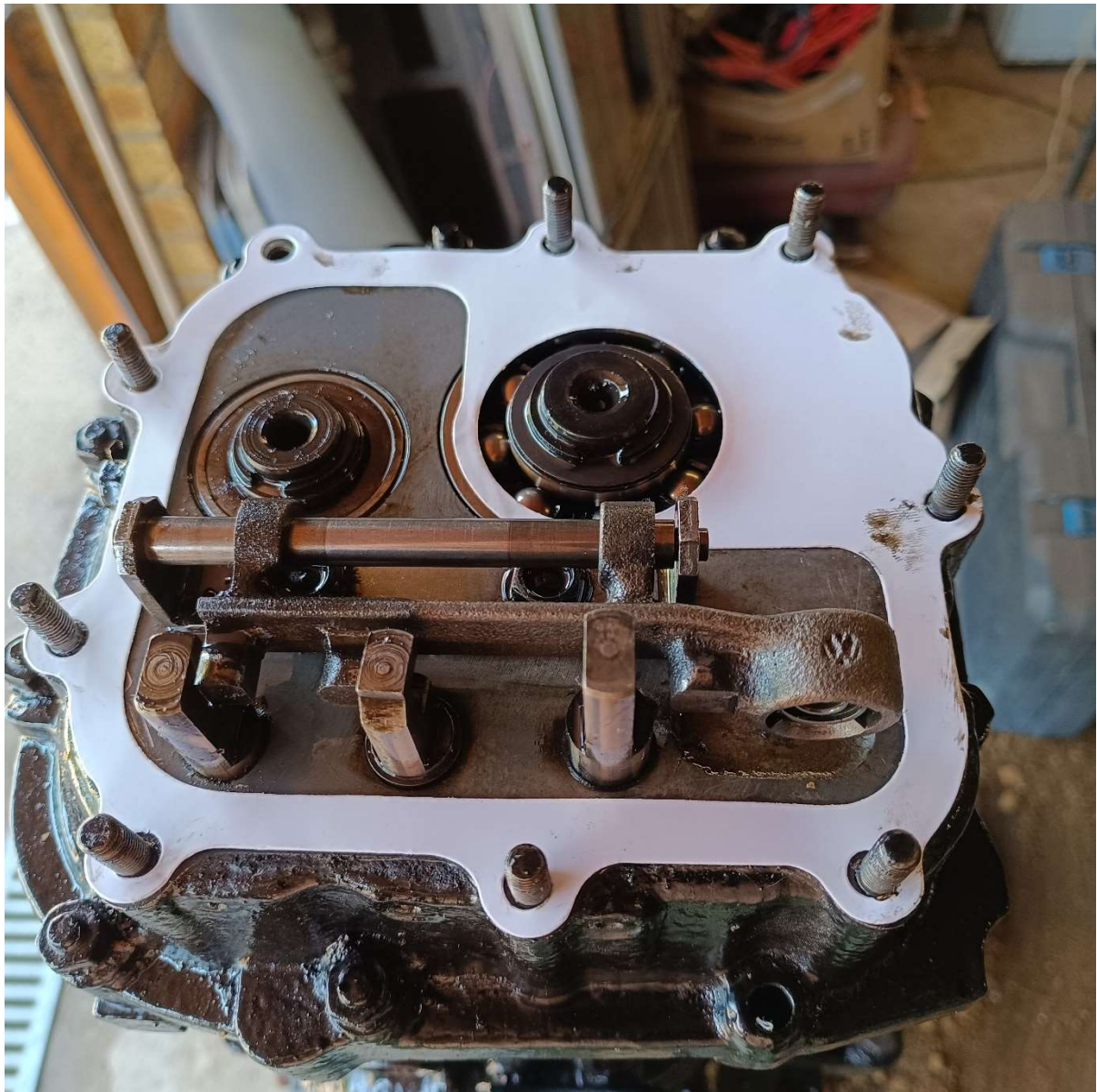
The combination of not knowing how to do the next piece and the cold kept me out of the garage on Eric from early December to the first week of May. Petruth Paddocks and a chat with “Ask Malcolm” (the magazine article is “Ask the Mechanic” but I spend a lot of time with the Chairman asking him how stuff works) galvanized me into action.

Gearbox



First, the easy job. Having mostly cleaned the outside of the gearbox last year, I did a final clean, then anti rust paint mainly as a habit. On top of that was primer and my preferred top coat of John Deere black paint. I also took the opportunity to take out the ends of the driveshaft section and clean behind, changed the gearbox oil and degrease the inside of the bell housing. As a word of warning – do not empty the oil from the gearbox until you can verify that the filler plug can be removed! With the gearbox on the bench, I also removed the

nose under guidance from the restoration manual and changed the gasket there that had perished and cleaned the “hockey stick” that operates the gears.



As part of the pedal work, I also cleaned the gear lever that was in the box with the pedals before adding a new gear lever knob. Eric came with an oddball gear lever extension that was about 18 inches longer than standard and a huge gear lever that looked like a golf club. That has been replaced with the gear knob from my old MGB GT that I sold 25 years ago and the knob has been in my toolbox ever since. The gear pattern is the same!



Next up were the pedals. With the underside all painted, I was able to install the steering box, drag link (steering box to beam pole), handbrake arm, brake pedal and clutch pedal. All were carefully cleaned back to bare metal then anti-rust paint, primed and top coated in black again.



The steering box was leaking on reinstallation but this was caused by the bung on the filler hole having a perished O-ring.

Then I turned my attention to the brakes. The master cylinder pictured was past its best and was replaced. The previous brake set up was not servo assisted, so I bit the bullet and purchased the master cylinder for servo brakes, along with the servo itself, vacuum pipe and other associated bits.

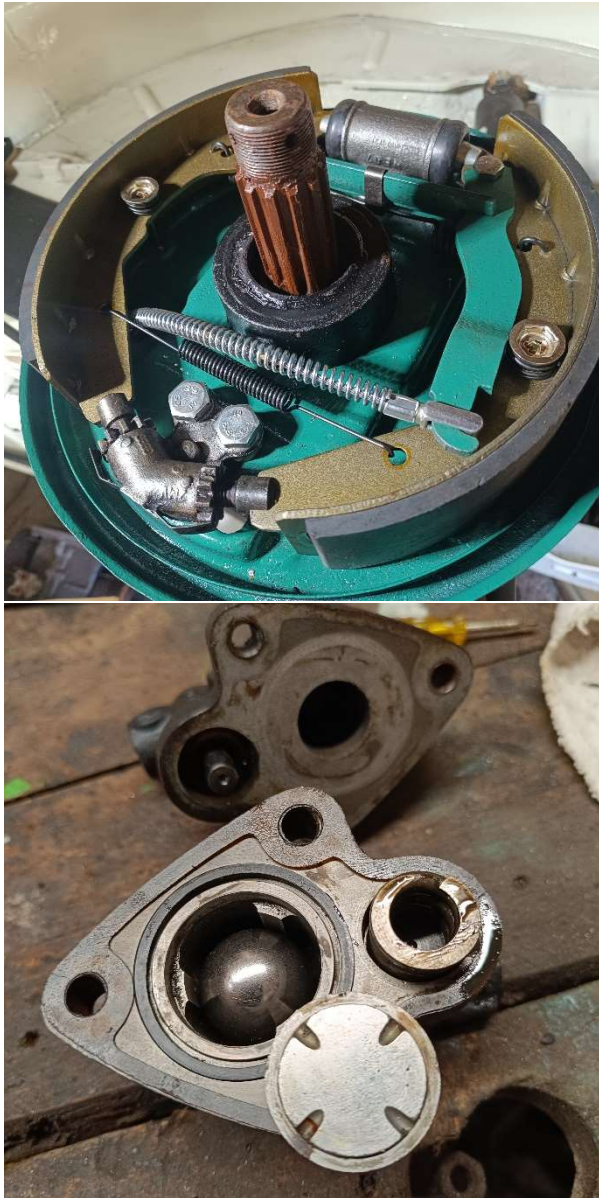


Again, I called on Malcolm's knowledge and experience to help me to take the first step. Eric's beam is an original German beam and the servo is a new Brazilian one meaning that the holes did not line up. An annoyance due to the extra time taken to make new holes in the servo mounting bracket on the beam, and the additional extra time to prime and paint the bracket that I painted last year!

The air pipe was then run from the servo down towards the engine bay ready to attach to the inlet manifold to generate the vacuum.

The rear drum brakes were replaced with the exception of the outer drum itself which was stripped and painted in high temperature Kawasaki green paint last year. The anti-squeal

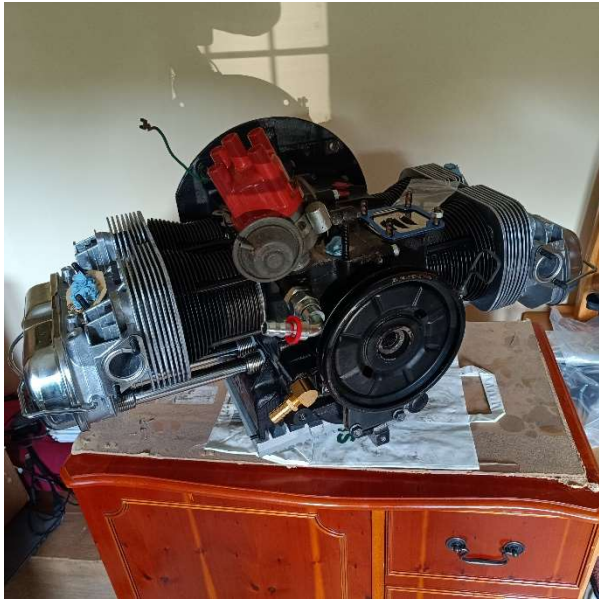
springs were a pain as you need to compress the spring a huge amount to get the top piece to connect to the pin. A neighbour gave me the trick of cable tying the spring closed in a vice with a cable tie at each side tied tightly. Then it does not ping across the workshop forty-five times as you try to connect it all.



That was it, brakes complete. Until again I played my "Ask Malcolm" card – the Bay window has a clever little device behind the front wheels as a brake balancer. In the event of kicking the brake pedal really hard, the balancer has a ball bearing inside (pictured) that runs up the hill and blocks off the brake fluid to the rear brakes, working almost like an ABS to stop the rear from locking up. I had not dismantled it but Malcolm as ever was right. Splitting the balancer, I found that the insides were gunged up and the ball was not moving. A full clean out and reassemble and that is now back in. I cannot add brake fluid to the system yet as Eric is still on his side, so I have no way of knowing if the system leaks yet!

The big news however is that on the run home from the Golden Valley Vintage event in Herefordshire, we stopped in at Stateside Tuning at Moreton in Marsh and picked up Eric's engine from James. In summary, James has built me a 1776cc performance engine with a type 3 case and dynamically balanced crank, extra deep sump and external oil filter. He also supplied an air housing / doghouse suitable for a VW "The Thing" (Jeep like open vehicle) / Type 181 and a Type 4 oil cooler, as you get 20% more cooling. With the increase from 2.5 litres of oil to 4.5 litres and the increase in air cooling ability plus a properly built engine, I will hopefully be running nice and cool. It looks cracking.

Next jobs are to change the seal on the gearbox input shaft and get the gearbox mounted. Then get Eric on his wheels and fit the new nose panel. That should make him look a lot



happier. In the meantime, having spent June either working on Eric or away in Poppy, I plan to spend July and August either working on Eric or away in Poppy. Across June, July and August we are due to be away in Poppy for 38 nights! Hopefully in amongst all of that fun I can make some good progress on Eric before we all head to Busfest. See you in a field somewhere.

Eric the Viking – a restoration in many parts – August 2023

Spend since last report: £197. Total hours labour since last report: 28.2

Who knew two months ago what fate would have in store for me. I had planned to be away a lot in Lorna's crossover Poppy and in amongst that, be in the garage working hard on Eric the Viking. Sadly, neither came to pass. In June, I managed to finish the cleaning of the outside of the gearbox, the top coat and the new input shaft seal as planned. The input shaft seal is a pain to remove and needed 3 self-tapping screws drilled through the metal collar and then a puller to bring it out as nothing else seemed to work. The new one does not leak which is rather nice.



The front gasket was also changed since I had serviced everything in there and with assistance from my able assistant (my wife), the gearbox was mounted onto the chassis when Eric was on his side. Which is not easy!



Tinware has been stripped for the engine and an impromptu clothesline affair put up for rustproofing and priming plus the inlet manifold and exhaust manifold were stripped as well. Then Eric was ready to go back on his wheels. This allowed some brilliant progress – the nose panel has been prepared and primed, the cab floor has been prepared.

As that was drying, the rear hubs and CV joints were cleaned, driveshafts built up and installed meaning that from the back wheel to the other back wheel is complete and painted. During assembly, there were a few areas in the rear wheelarch that were sub-standard and they received an extra coat of L90D pastel white paint which really makes it all look very smart against the black of the running gear.



With the rear brake shoes now complete, I could finish and double check the brake lines from end to end and then enlisted a neighbour with a brake bleeding kit and more knowledge than me (not difficult) to assist on bleeding. We cleaned the top reservoir in the cab (under the driver's seat) and filled that down into the new reservoir on top of the new master cylinder that goes with the new servo upgrade. More brake fluid added. And more. Nothing coming to the rear brake – traced to it all coming out of the unions at the front. Further investigation showed that I had made all brake pipe unions with trumpet flares like old English classic cars instead of mushroom flares. Every single end and that is about 22 ends.

Having just got Eric on his wheels, he was dutifully turned once more back on his side and I spent a good number of hours carefully removing each brake nut in turn, snipping off the trumpet flare from the pipe and making a new mushroom flare. Some of the brake nuts were damaged, so for completeness these were discarded as they are around 50 pence each, renewed as I remade each joint. As I got to the front, I had 2 pipes left to make but no brake nuts and they were overdue as we packed up for the AGM. Finally arriving on the day that we

left, they were put in the garage ready for my return, so that I can make the pipes that go from the central union to each front wheel's flexible pipe.

That was the weekend that I dislocated my ankle and broke my leg. Everything is on hold until that is mended!

Purchasing this issue are mainly odd sundries – welding helmet, clutch bearing, brake fluid and hoses, and oil cooler mount and a rev counter for a boat. Obviously!

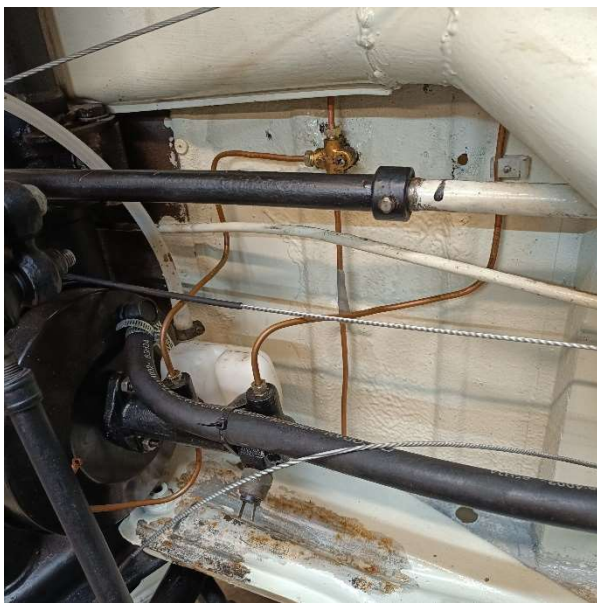
October 2023 – no work done

Eric the Viking – a restoration in many parts – December 2023

Spend since last report: £230. Total hours labour since last report: 9.75

A fairly brief update for what happened in November and December. Following the broken leg, I started walking again in October and was not really able to get around properly until mid November. The pain and swelling from the ankle was not expected and continues, with the Consultant now saying this may well continue for at least a year. Great.

Being somewhat weak of ankle, in discomfort and rather fed up has meant that only minor jobs have happened. The exhaust manifold has been wrapped in heat bandage to reduce heat under the engine as it will vent out of the exhaust rather than radiating underneath. The brake pipe nuts that arrived just before the AGM were fitted to new pipe from the front splitter to the flexi hoses for each front wheel.



More seam sealer was added on joints to really try to keep the metal from rotting and as I was there, I added some insulation to the central hot air pipe which is easier when Eric is on his side. Bolts have been checked, the clutch cable bracket on the torsion tube was advised by an ex-air cooled mechanic to be a little flimsy, so that received a further 2mm steel plate to make it stronger.

The discolouration on the lower part of the photo is where brake fluid was coming out of the reservoir during my convalescence! Brake fluid is a great paint stripper, so that area has been cleaned down, neutralised,

rust proofed, primed and painted. Again.

Spending this time is a set of Fuchs alloys with tyres from an ex-club member and a load of Just Kampers bits for pedals, grommets, brake light switch and other little bits. It soon adds up!

Maybe I can get in the garage soon and start bolting bits on, but in the meantime, I'm going to put my sore ankle up.