

Cowboy Mechanics

OR

Where there's a will there's a way

A friend's MG.B required a new ring gear on its fly wheel. Engine out, clutch and flywheel off - that was the easy part. Cut the damaged ring gear off with a cutting disc using my right angle grinder, easy. How to put the new gear on? For 30 odd years, when in business, I had Oxy/acetylene equipment, paying B.O.C. rent on the two bottles. Last year the rent was somewhere around £180. and I had only used it twice - making it uneconomical to retain them.

In the past, we just hung them up on a sky hook, heated it up to the correct temp. and plonked it on the fly wheel. What do I do now with nothing to heat up the ring gear? Knowing friends, suggested putting the flywheel in the freezer, and the ring gear in the oven on full heat for 15 minutes. Her in doors was not having any of that!. Moving my bed into the workshop was her response. Another friend, (yes, i have more than 1) Flying John (ex Boeing pilot) suggested making a fire with wood, and when I had lots of embers putting the gear in until it had expanded enough to drop onto the fly wheel. ,Sounded easy, and simple. This was in December. and our lawn (weeds and moss) has 40 foot trees on 2 sides - and the gales had blown lots of dead wood onto the sides which I collected up. Having been a boy scout in my mis-spent youth I soon had a fire going, and after around 40 minutes had enough embers to roast a pig, so put the gear in and had a cup of tea. I had ready by the side of the fire, the flywheel-hammer-wire brush-drift- and a pair of pliers. When I thought it was warm enough, I lifted it out with the pliers, a quick wire brush off, and onto the flywheel, straight on, I didn't even have to tap it!. It was a good hour before it was cool enough to bolt back onto the crank.

So that was it - job done.

No fool like an old fool

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