

Ferrari Restoration

(Peter probably won't even notice it's not a jag)

Those that attended the AGM will have heard Don Bowater use the term "Spannergate" when giving out prizes for the Dipstick of the Year. Incidentally, John Bourke was the worthy recipient. No names were mentioned so I thought I had better confess. About 2 years ago I bought a 1983 Ferrari 308 Mondial. It was in an appalling condition, but I thought I was up for the challenge. The owner started the car, and it ran perfectly. I bought the car and bit by bit I restored the car, fixing all the broken bits.



At some stage the previous owner had filled a dented mudguard with bog and hadn't sanded it before painting. I couldn't live with it, so decided to do some swot on Youtube and it looked easy. I painted the rear guard and was reasonably happy with my job. However, the door next to it looked terrible, so I painted that, and then the front mudguard. At some stage my son in law came to see how I was getting on, I wasn't home at the time, but when he returned home, he said to my daughter Robyn "how do I tell your father that his job is not good enough for a Ferrari? A week later he took the car up to Katikati to be totally repainted.

The next job was to change the cams left belt but to my horror, I found one was already broken. It must have happened just as the previous owner turned the engine off, as I had not tried to start it. The engine has 32 valves and 16 were bent. I was lucky I had contact with a good mechanic in Whakatane. I took the engine out and he restored the valves, and a few other bits. Back in the car, the engine ran beautifully, but was hard to start from cold. I was unable to fix it, but Don Bowater knew of a mechanic in East Tamaki who was a Ferrari specialist. Ken Woodward eventually found somebody (not me), had not replaced a pipe on the airbox on top of the engine. This could not be seen from the outside, but Ken ran smoke through the engine and found the leak. He put the engine back and was admiring his work with the car idling on his forecourt when there was a sudden bang, then silence. He took the engine out again and took one of the camshaft belt covers off. There was a 6" ratchet spanner jammed between the pulley and the belt. Fortunately, because the car was idling there was no other damage. I had done 100kms before I sent the car to Auckland, so the spanner must have rattled along from under the gear box and fallen onto the cam belt cover. Engine out once again.

I am pleased to say the car now starts and runs beautifully and is a dream to drive. A bit like driving a Go Kart.

Roger