

The Spare Wheel Love Handles (or Support Brackets) - After David Wellings.

The spare wheel in the Morgan can be a challenge to remove and to replace. It is heavy and awkward to get at, more so if you have a luggage rack fitted.

Removing the wheel is best done by removing the rack. Prior to doing so, place a towel or some such below the spare wheel to try to protect the bodywork as on slackening the "T" bar to remove wheel and rack, the wheel invariably drops to the lowest position.

Then, after much heaving, shoving and general mucking about one can remove the wheel, hopefully not dropping it on the bodywork.

It is just as much fun, if not more, trying to replace wheel and rack.

First, again protect the lower bodywork, then lift and jiggle the wheel under the "Cobra" 3rd brake light (if fitted) but over the wheel mounting brackets.

At this point the wheel is invariably either too low or off to one side as is found on replacing the rack and trying to re-align the "T" bar to secure rack and wheel.

In order to reduce some of this mucking about, David Wellings had the idea of securing supports to the existing ash frame that would then help to locate the wheel in the correct position thus simplifying some of the fun and games.

So, during the lockdown I decided to have a look and see what I could do.

To that end I have made a drawing that shows approximate dimensions I used for some off-cuts I had lying around, along with some photos of the job after fitted.

To Begin,

First, after removing my rack and relocating and fastening the wheel, I scribed along each wheel side, onto the ash frame cross-members a mark with to identify where the supports need fastening. This is easily done with a biro as there is sufficient gap between the body and wheel to make a good mark, close up to the wheel.

Now remove the wheel, remembering to ensure the bodywork is protected.

Hopefully you can now see to slightly arcing scribed marks on the frame supports. Your wheel supports will be fastened such that they are placed, just outside of these marks ie outward from the spare wheel.

I cut my wood supports to approx. 4.5" inches or around 114mm and then used a belt sander to create an arc in the wood of roughly the correct shape. In my case by marking the narrowest point of about ¼" and sketching an arc from there outwards, it would be near enough the correct arc.

The support brackets will need to be angled to best follow the arc scribed as the idea is to prevent the wheel dropping too much.

Since the ash cross member is below the centre line of the spare wheel, it isn't overly critical as by definition, they will be below the centre of the wheel and thus support it even if square, to a degree, but by trying to follow the arc, a better fit is obtained.

I used Mahogany off cuts and the frame is ash. Both are hard woods and so pilot holes should be drilled prior to screwing and fastening. I used 4mm for the support blocks and 3mm for the ash frame and used 1 ¾" size 8 wood screws, countersunk.

When drilling the ash cross members, the drill is VERY close to the bodywork, so protect the body with towels, masking tape or whatever else, but protect it!
IN addition, the fuel filters and pipes are run around this area so do check nothing is going to impinge. The ash frame cross member in my car is around 1" thick and my supports are around 1" square, so 1 3/4" screws were adequate and I didn't drill completely through the ash cross member.

Once that is all drilled, secure the supports and test fit the wheel. The wheel should just fit between the new supports and not plummet to the bottom of the bodywork. Check the alignment of the "T" bar securing bolt.

If all is well. Remove wheel, remove supports, ensure both surfaces of frame and supports are clean, glue and re-screw to the frame.

Now you can replace the wheel, attach the rack, fasten and tickety boo.
The drawing and photos are enclosed

Howard











