

PROGRESS REPORT

ON THE 1914

COPPERTHITE PIE WAGON

By John T Craft

Every passing day brings closer realization to Michael Copperthite's dream of a Model T Ford Pie Wagon to use in the promotion of his rebirth of the Connecticut-Copperthite Pie Company of Georgetown, near our nation's capitol in Washington D. C..



Tom Keenan Photo

Tom Keenan loaded the pie wagon body onto his trailer to haul to his shop for a complete restoration.



Richard McGuinness (retired United States Air Force Helicopter Mechanic) shows off the Copperthite Pie Wagon's engine. Richard completely went through the engine, shimming and tightening bearings, checked all parts for wear, cleaned head and block and installed new head gasket. He replaced the flywheel and two broken drums in the transmission. After the bands are installed the complete power unit will be cleaned, primed and painted a cast-iron gray.

In the beginning, Gary Cooper had the Pie Wagon completely dismantled. Then had the frame sandblasted to clean up and remove all rust, then primed, filled, and sprayed with black enamel. The springs, axles, wishbone, differential, radius rods, were cleaned, repaired, and painted ready to be assembled on the finished frame to build up the chassis.



Here's Tom Keenan with the Pie Wagon body after he had sanded all the metal panels and gave them their first prime coat.



The interior cab area from rear of the driver entry door forward including the firewall will be spray painted black, so Tom has masked off the beautiful finished stained wood interior, the windshield and front corner glass from any overspray.



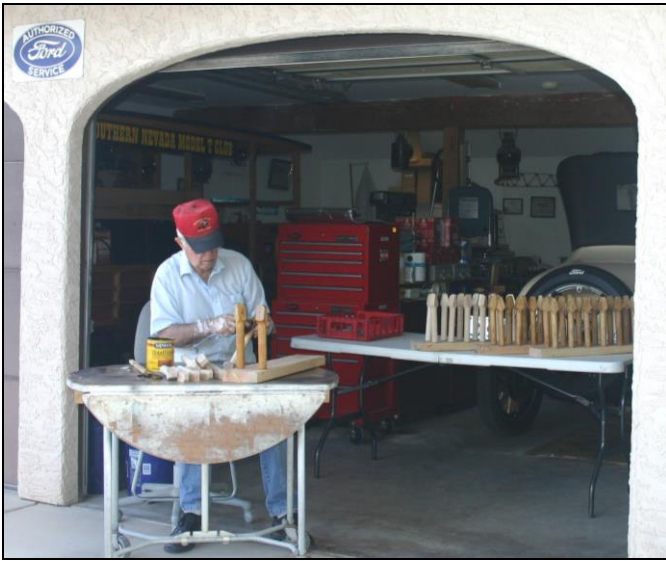
Pie Wagon Body receives first black prime coat



Tom masked off the glass of the cabins' lift windows, sanded and filled the wooden frames and applied their first prime coat.



Dave Cuddie has worked his magic on building this dashboard and metal dash from scratch. Dave always takes great pride in his work as is shown in this beautiful piece that will enhance the ambience of the interior of the Copperthite Pie Wagon. Dave owns a 1927 Model T Coupe. He also owns a 1931 Model A Station Wagon that in 2004 he bought from a life-time friend in Michigan and hauled back to Las Vegas and logged 1,458 hours doing a ground up restoration. This Station Wagon (a brilliant masterpiece of his work) made the cover of Woodie Times Magazine, September 2011. Dave has been employed at the Mirage mega-resort here in Las Vegas as a master wood technician for the past 24 years.



After the 48 spokes (twelve for each wheel) are allowed to dry overnight, they receive their first of three coats of Helmsman Clear Gloss Spar Urethane. After each coat is allowed to dry at least 4 hours, (I chose to let them dry overnight) each spoke's entire surface is sanded lightly with very fine sandpaper (220 grit) to ensure an even finish and proper adhesion of the additional coats. Helmsman Spar Urethane is specially formulated to protect wood against nature's



I have been given the honor of staining and finishing the wooden spokes.

toughest conditions because it forms a protective barrier against rain and moisture and its special oils allow the finish to expand and contract with the wood as seasons, temperatures, and humidity change. Its enhanced ultraviolet absorbers reduce the graying and fading effects of the sun.

I have chosen [my favorite stain] Minwax Wood Finish Golden Oak stain 210B. This is an oil-based wood stain which provides long-lasting wood tone color. It penetrates deep into the pores to seal and protect the wood and is ideal for the Pie Wagon's artillery wheel's new Hickory spokes.



Here Tom shows the freshly painted felloes.



I took the finished spokes over to Tom's garage where Tom and I used our collective mystical wheelwright knowledge to insert them into the felloes. We then placed each assembly over a chosen hub then placed it in Tom's impressively-wide Multi-Ton press to press the spokes onto the hub.

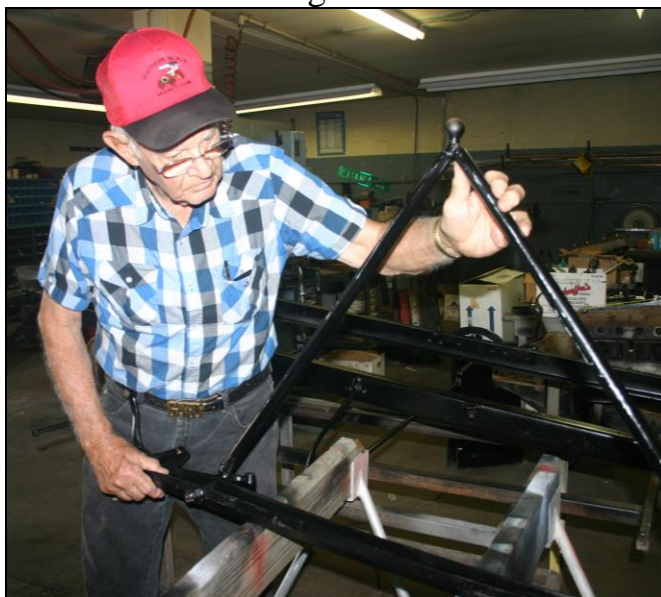


Next step was back to my place to drill the holes to receive the hub bolts. After

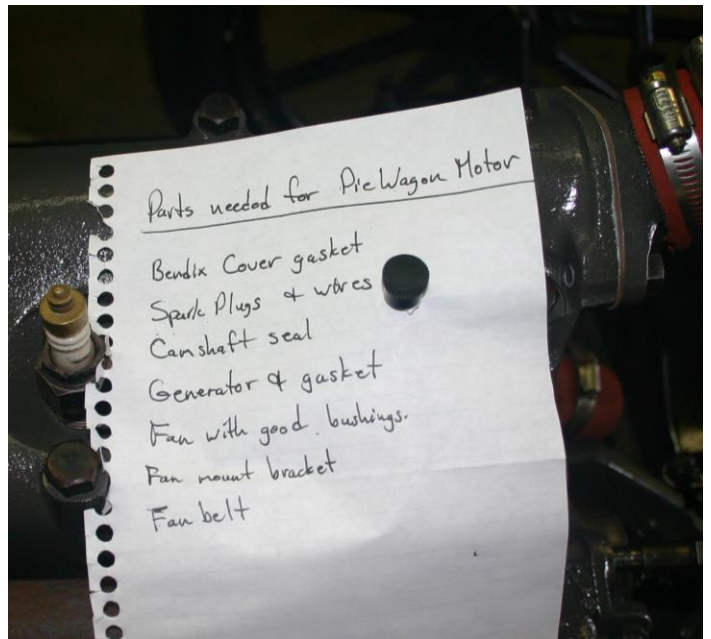
inserting the hub bolts and running the nuts on and torque to "Armstrong 80" on all four wheels, the next step is running the thread chaser down on all the hub cap threads.



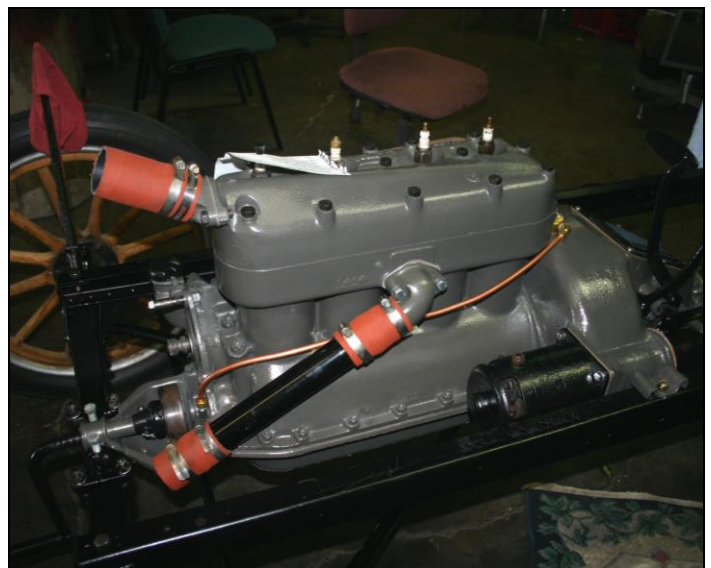
Gary Cooper has rebuilt the spindles with new spindle bolt bushings, reamed and faced for proper fit. The spindle arms have also received new bushings.



Gary checking the wishbone fit and the wishbone ball for wear.



Here Gary Cooper is checking and admiring Richard McGuinness's primer paint job of the Pie Wagon's engine.



Here Gary is checking the oval fuel tank for proper fit to the frame.

Engine installed waiting for parts listed



Gary Cooper delicately installs the new Firestone clincher tires (being very careful not to pinch the tubes) onto the demountable clincher rims for the Pie Wagon.



Here is the gallery of Friday morning armchair mechanics and morale boosters that keep all of us Model T club members acutely informed, enthused, enlightened and amused. All club members are welcome to join in. We usually gather here around 11 o'clock to tell stories and jokes and keep attuned to what has happened during the week and track the progress of the Pie Wagon. Then towards noon, we head for lunch at one of our favorite restaurants.



The black Firestone tires on the galvanize-colored rims mounted on the red felloes with the Golden Oak stained Hickory spokes and red hubs with nickel hubcaps are a beautiful array of colors on the artillery wheels for the Connecticut-Copperthite Pie Wagon.