

November 2014

Brandt made a full mockup of the seat in vinyl to make changes and have patterns for the seats. We did some adjustments the height to lower the seats as much as possible. I was unable to find the decorative metal inserts used in the seats that might have been used in any other production seats. This met I had to design the parts in SolidWorks and have them made. From the factory photos there was an insert in the decorations so I made an indent in the part for a leather insert. These parts were made on an NC mill and then chrome plated. Near the end of the month the seats were done. I attached the metal sides and backs.



We tried to come as close to the seats in the GM design photos. I had to use a seat frame from a 66 GM bucket seat that best fit what is in the photos. The seats were done in leather and turned out fantastic they are as close to the original seats as possible. I had to make some changes to the rear lower seat to get a better fit for the bottom seat and a good fit for the rear back.

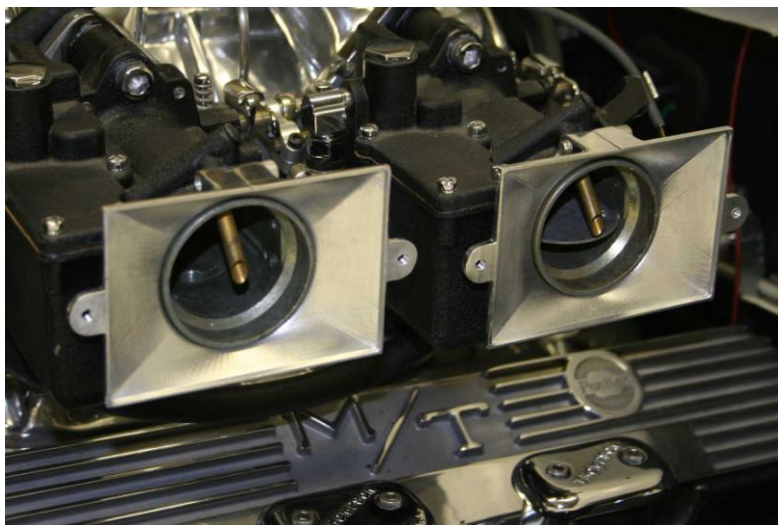




After some searching I found a set of seat belts that were the same as the ones in the car when done. The seatbelts that were in the car and were so badly rusted they could not be saved. With these installed and all the seats installed, this completes the interior except for the steering wheel.

The front bumper was rechromed and installed. I also completed the installation of the backup lights and license plate light. The fuel tank was completed with the installation of the filler neck.

After much searching on Ebay I found 4 of the flame arrestors for sale. The mounts were not correct but the elements were. After purchase I cleaned them and found all in good condition. Using the photos from GM I design the mounts using SolidWorks, for the side draft carbs. to be as close to the original ones as possible. I sent the SolidWorks solid models off to Solid Concepts and they made the in an NC mill.





Mount polished



Frame layout





Complete arrestor



Engine with arrestors in place

December:

Since I now had the front end on the car I was able to try the fit of the hood. Everything seem to look good except the very top end of the blower hit the hood. This created a big problem as the hood was ready for final finish and to push it up would damage the scoops. I had to start over on the hood and make necessary changes. At first I tried to look at what was done at GM. I could not find any record of a change. After a close look at the GM photos you could see a slight crown in the hood so this was problem when the car was nearly completed.

For some time I had been trying to find out what to do for tires on the car. Early photos show the car with the standard 1in white wall used in 1963. Later the car showed with a very small about 3.in yellow line. I contacted all tire companies I could find and see what I could do. Nothing was available in a yellow line and no one would make it. One radial tire was found but radials were not use in 1963 and the yellow line tires were bias ply tires. The decision was made to use the correct tire for 1963.



I had the wheels blasted and painted the aluminum. I went through my collection of trim rings and center caps and found the best ones. I had them polished then I had to do re-grain the surfaces with a scotch bright pad. This was done in a special fixture on the wood lathe for the caps. The wheel trim rings required the set up shown in the next photos to make the graining. This set up allowed me to rotate the wheel on a spindle and use the scotch pad to make the appearance.



It was finally time to start the engine. To get ready for the start of the engine, the brake system was filled and bled. Racing oil was added to the engine and the oil pump turned with a drill to pressurize the system. One minor oil leak was found and corrected. Next we added water to the system and found two small leaks in welds for the pipes that go to the radiator hoses. These were removed and fixed. I set the clutch clearance and got the pedals-brake and clutch, adjusted. We filled the carburetors with fuel and tried to start the engine, but , it would turn over but not start. We ran out of time and several things needed to be fixed. I found a timing error and had to reset the distributor.

All things were done and-on-

December 22 we started the engine. After setting the timing and adjusting the idle mix and rpm we got it idle and to run fairly smooth. This was a big relief as all the linkages had to designed and built with very little data on what was on the engine when new. The way the linkage is set up, it is like driving a 4 barrel carburetor car, opening all 4 barrels at once. I did move the clutch some to see if we had a load and it was working. We are running 114 octane racing fuel as the compression ratio is too high for a blown engine.

Over the Christmas break I worked many of the systems in the car (dash instruments) and got them working. At the end of December the car is about 95% complete. Now that the car has nearly all the curb weight , I torqued the suspension bolts and nuts.

January 2015

I took a new hood, cleaned it removed the bracing and cut the holes for the scoops and grills. We fixed the hood to two 4in square 1/4in wall pipes on each side and applied a lot of force to stretch the metal in the center where it contacted the blower. While under pressure the scoops were welded in and the grill support plates welded. I used a 3M two part caulking No. to seal the under hood supports to the sheet metal. Upon release the hood retained its shape and will clear the blower.







Hood finished Jan 2015



Hood In primer



Hood finished



Hood finished and letters installed



Hood installed on car



Head lamp setup



Trunk carpet start



Finished trunk



Interior front



Interior rear



Leather top boot for show.

After the initial start of the engine we know something was not correct with the starter. At first we thought the starter gear was staying in and spinning with the fly wheel. Starting was a problem. With more help from Bill Nelson we loaded the car on a trailer and took it to his shop and placed it on a lift, we had another starter rebuilt and wanted to replace the one on the engine. This turned out to be a major project as the cast iron header exhaust manifold had to be taken off the engine to get to the starter. After removal we found the gear was badly chewed up. We installed the new starter and attached everything back. Upon starting we could still hear the gear in gauging. Upon close inspection we found that the flywheel was the problem. This was the flywheel that was on the engine when I got the car and it was a later model flywheel. Pontiac had moved the starter to the engine block and this starter mounted on the bell housing. Fortunately the car was on a lift and we removed the transmission, clutch and flywheel as well as some of the exhaust system and replaced the flywheel with the correct one with the help of Arizona Desert Specialties, Jules, who had the correct flywheel. We put everything back together with a lot of help from Bill Nelson and several of his shop people. We then tuned the car and fixed a few remaining problems, all in the last week before leaving for a show.

In the fall of 2014 we received an invitation to the Amelia Island Concourse. This show is in Jacksonville Florida. This was the show we attended after the last week of work on the car. Bill Nelson and I trailered the car to Florida, 2000mi one way for the show. This was the the car first show after finishing it and its first appearance in 50 years. This was a big event with 350 cars and some 35,000+ people attending.

The car went up to the judging stand twice. The first time the car had been selected to take part in a fashion show with a model dressed for the year of the car. The second time was to receive the Amelia Island award



Out of trailer in Florida



First drive to show field



On Amelia Island show field





Interior and award ribbon



Engine at Amelia Island



Concept car class



Concept car class front view



4 of our cars at the AACA show in Tucson March 2015

The final items for the car are:

Steering wheel- In the photos taken at GM styling when the car was done, show a Corvette flat wheel. This was changed before the first show to a dished Corvette wheel. This wheel was in the car when I got it. The wood part was walnut and had come completely apart, it was not possible to repair. I did find a new Corvette wood wheel that is the match to the one used in the car.

The head lamp housing-When the car was done at styling, They had installed a European style head light which was a rectangular shape. It did not fit the opening very well. A change was done before its firstshow in Los Angles. You can see the regular headlamps behind a lens and stone guards. Designing and making this part is proving to be hard to do and is under way.

The top boot- This was fiberglass boot and custom made for the car. Al I have to go on is the photos of the car. i was able to design a the boot using SolidWorks. So far is has been nearly impossible to find anyone who can make the mold. At least and not break the bank. For now a leather boot is on the car for show.