



November 05, 2006

10th status - It drives!

As you can see from the picture, the chassis is out of the garage, and it came out on its own power! It was a little easier to accomplish this with the body out of the way. To resolve the problems I described last time, I removed the rear end, transmission and clutch. My machinist friend, Paul Kosma checked it all out. He advised that the clutch pedal was forcing the clutch fingers too far, and they were grinding on the center of the clutch disc. He also advised how to mate the new throwout bearing with pieces of the old one. When I reassembled it all, I started it up, and it still would not shift into gear. I thought about what Paul had told me about the clutch fingers and experimented with the clutch pedal. I soon discovered that I could shift smoothly into all gears if I only depressed the clutch part-way. I realized that with no floorboard to stop it, the clutch pedal had been allowed to travel too far, causing the fingers to grind on the center of the clutch disc. I then re-adjusted the clutch to avoid this problem. Today I test drove the chassis. I drove it about 2 tenths of a mile and was able to shift into high gear twice before returning to the house! The car shifted well, and thanks to the new throw-out bearing, there was no longer any noise when the clutch pedal was depressed.



Two weeks ago I removed one layer of upholstery from the doors and found some moldy original door panels. This made it clear to me that the original upholstery was standard and not deluxe, since the panels only had one row of stitching. After I removed the door panels I was pleased to find good solid wood inside each door. However, I was disappointed to find some rust out in the bottom of each door. Body man, Tommy Kuntz feels they can be repaired with little effort. I went to the paint store last week and had them mix Harvard Crimson Maroon, a 1931 paint color, which is a cross reference to one of the 4 possible paint codes on my data plate. At this point, I think I will use it for the body color. Tommy has already installed 3 of the 6 patch panels needed in the lower body. I drove down to his place yesterday and re-installed some of the painted wood in the rear of the body. Next week I will trailer the chassis down there, so that the body can be properly aligned on the frame before the trunk lid and doors are fitted. The chrome was still not ready when I checked yesterday. They advised it will be ready next week (that's only 3 months from when I dropped it off!). I am still searching for a few major parts. For example, Tommy suggested I look for a better gas tank cover and rear bumper brace, since mine are pretty beat-up. I've had the car for one year now. I'm pleased with the progress, but sometimes overwhelmed when thinking about how much is still to be done.