

Over the winter, whilst my engine was receiving some attention, I decided to have a look at the wheels of my 1934 Box Saloon. They had been hand painted many times and were not looking wonderful. Rather than applying another coat of paint, I thought that powder coating would be a better solution, so I took them to the local man and asked him to blast clean them and report on their condition. If there were any loose spokes it would have been an easy job to replace them, although it would have been impossible to turn the nipples on the original spokes. He came back with the news that the spokes were fine but two rims had completely rusted away on the inner edges, where the tyre sits and someone in the past had filled in the holes with body filler. I enclose a photo. The whole of the rim edges were similar! I looked around for a couple of second hand wheels, but as these may well have been no better, being 80 odd years old, I decided to replace the rims and spokes with new items. This is not a difficult job for me as I regularly rebuild motorbike wheels and have also done several car sets in the past. This I did and I now have 5 good looking , powder coated wheels, ready for the summer. Just a note, the centre caps were put on at the factory and were not expected to be removed easily. I had to get mine pressed out after unsuccessfully trying to knock them out with a hammer and drift. They are now powder coated as it would have been a big job to polish them all.

I know that many people do not give their wheels a second thought but it is worth checking, next time you remove a tyre that they are sound. I have seen many motorbike rims that have corroded away, on certain makes of Japanese alloys. On one, the outside of an alloy rim came away and left my friend on an Autobahn with the inner tube hanging out of the gap. I also saw the result of a pressed steel wheel on a Daimler Dart tear off over the wheel nuts when on a track day at Oulton Park. On both instances no collateral damage was done. If the outside flange of your Seven decides to part company on a corner, it could well have you on your roof.

Remember that our cars are around 80 years old and , as far as we know may have been parked in a field or worse at some time in their life. Many were parked up for six or seven years during the war. Oh just in case anyone was wondering, "body filler is not the solution."

Happy motoring, Ian F.S.Wall

