

Gas Up Your Pony with a 1971 - 73 Reproduction Tank (Part II)

by Bob Vickery
photos by VTC & Co.

In our last installment we introduced you to the reproduction gas tank for 1971-73 Mustangs available from SEMO Classic Mustang, Inc., and produced by American Designers, Inc. As promised, in Part II we present installation of the tank in a 1972 Mach 1.

Before beginning our project we reviewed the 1971 Ford Car Shop Manual, Volume Two (Engine), to see what the manufacturer had to say on the removal and installation of the gas tank. This manual doesn't give much information concerning the actual removal or

installation, but instead focuses most of the fuel section on the function of the system itself.

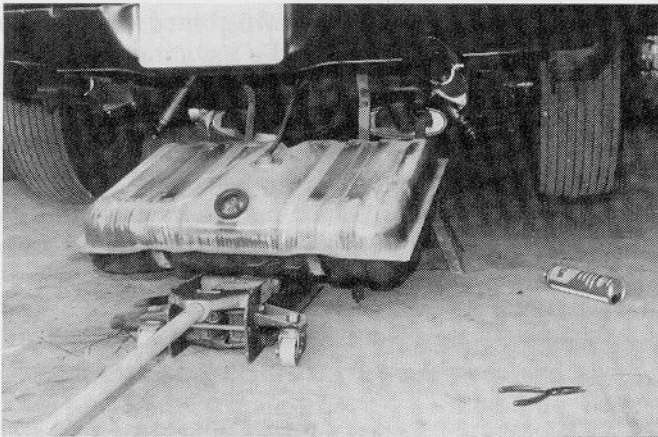
Before any steps were undertaken we made sure the existing gas tank contained a minimal amount of gasoline. (In other words this was a good excuse to take the Mach out for a nice long drive.) We also set up our work station in a well-ventilated area.

Since we would be working underneath the rear of the car as well as in the trunk area we opted to place the car on jack stands. (Remember to use extreme caution any time a car is elevated and, if

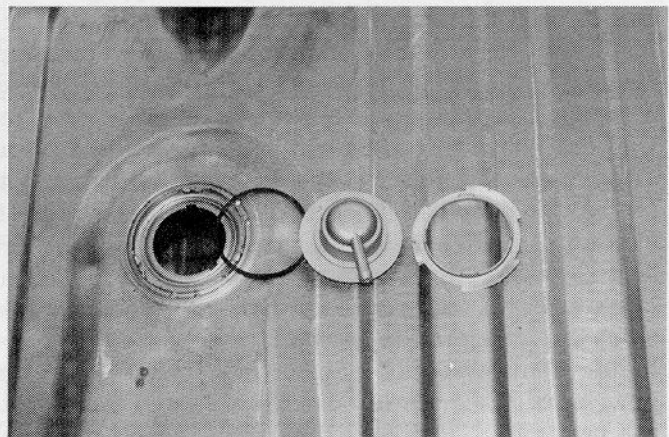
at all possible, work with a partner.) The screw-on fuel cap was removed and deck lid opened. We then removed the five external retaining screws that hold the filler neck to the rear body panel. Inside the trunk area we removed the screws which secure the filler neck bezel and seal. By firmly pulling on the filler neck, it will slip out of the tank boot. Slide underneath the car to detach the fuel sender plug and remove the gas line. This line is 3/8 inch in diameter, be ready to plug both ends quickly when it is removed.

Toward the back of the tank are two wire holders which attach the fuel sender wire to the tank. These should be removed.

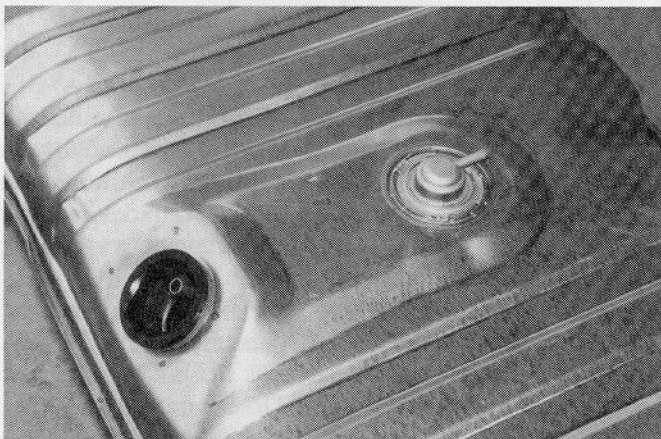
Now it's time to remove the nuts located at the back of the tank which secure the tank straps with a 9/16 deep-well socket. (A floor jack was placed under the tank to keep this metal object from abruptly striking the concrete floor.) After dropping the tank



Above left - Here's the 25-year-old tank once it has been lowered via a floor jack.

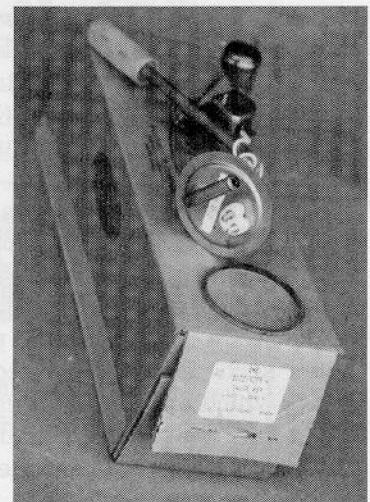


Above right - This is the top of the new tank after the fuel vapor separator and filler neck boot have been installed.



Left - The fuel vapor separator from the old tank has been removed, cleaned, and painted, and is now ready for installation in the reproduction unit.

Right - For this project we opted to install a new fuel sender unit.



straps, and lowering the tank, remove the hose for the fuel vapor separator. The tank is now free and can be completely removed.

Now it's time to strip essential components from the old tank for use on the reproduction model.

The fuel vapor separator and filler neck boot are located on top of the tank. Using a hammer and punch, carefully flatten the three bent edges of the locking ring and tap it around to remove the lock ring, vapor separator, and gasket. Clean and paint these items. To help correctly position the unit you will find two notches in the tank. Remember to place gasket first, separator second, and locking ring on top. Simply tap the lock ring around and use a screwdriver to bend the three edges up to secure it.

Pull the filler neck boot from the old tank and insert it into the new one. Remove the fuel sender from the end of the tank in the

same manner as the fuel separator. We installed a new sender unit and pickup, so all we transferred over from the old tank was the lock ring. (The new sender comes with a gasket.) Again, two notches on the tank help place the sender in the proper location.

Remove the tank straps, give them a thorough cleaning, and freshen the black paint. This is also a good time to replace the 20-inch-length 5/16-inch gas hose from the fuel vapor separator to the steel tubing attached to the body behind the rear axle.

Place the completed tank on the floor jack and raise it up high enough to reconnect the hose to the vapor separator. Then raise the tank up past the exhaust to reattach the two tank straps. Replace the old 3/8-inch fuel hose with a new hose approximately eight inches in length and plug in the fuel sender. Reattach the two wire holddowns back through the

tank flange.

Push the filler neck down into the boot and reattach the filler seal in the trunk with the screws previously removed. Then replace the five exterior body screws which secure the filler neck to the body panel.

You're now ready to fill'er up and replace the gas cap.

The tank we removed from the Mach 1 was the original 25 year-old slightly bent tank. The project only took approximately two hours, but made a vast difference in the appearance of the rear undercarriage.

If you would like additional information on the reproduction tank, contact

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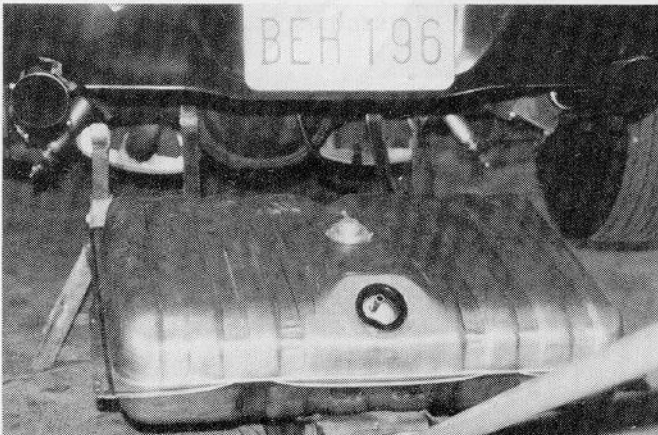
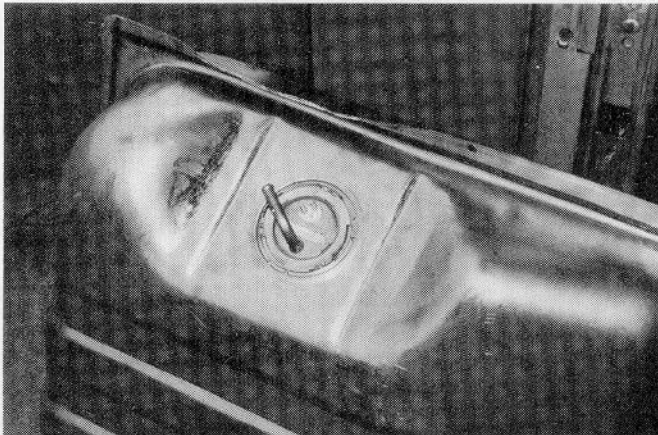
Phone: (573) 243-7664

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Left top - The bottom of the tank houses the new fuel sender unit.

Left bottom - The reproduction tank has all necessary components in place and is now ready to be installed.

Right - Replacing the 25-year-old undercoated tank of this Mach 1 improved the rear undercarriage appearance.



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