

1967 Kombi Restoration : Part 4

Interior Fitout

Working out what to do with the interior of your car can be a hard choice: do you stick to original or go all out modern? After the experience with the Club Kombi I had reached a good compromise: clean and quiet. I settled on sound deadening foam all round, vinyl covered trim panels, felt carpet on the roof panels and car carpet on the floor.

If you are reading this, it may sound like everything was completed in a nice ordered sequence. In truth, weather and competition from other projects, kept me from finishing the paint work on my car. So to fill in time, I worked on the interior.

With the amount of Kombis which had gone through our house during the resto, there was no shortage of interior panels to use as templates. On the Club Kombi we had gone for fibreboard with a leather look surface in much the same colour and pattern as the original trim. The standard sheets however are a bit thin and tricky to work with. Instead I opted for 3mm MDF. The sheets were marked then cut out with a jig saw, prior to being filed and sanded to the right shape. Then I covered them all with red vinyl. If you buy a good quality contact adhesive, you can coat the panel and vinyl, then when touch dry mate the two together. There is enough stick to allow you to hand cut all the corners and cutouts and stretch these out so they can be glued down on the back of the sheet. If you stop your cuts a couple of mm short of the edge, the vinyl will then stretch over nicely as you pull it around the sheet, keeping the face nice and clean. I also opened up all the holes slightly larger than the originals to allow for the thickness of the vinyl. Using templates made up by Rob Gilbert for the Club Kombi, I also made panels for



this was all going to work in with the standard electrical setup. So I ran extra 5 core cables under the van and in to the cabin and cargo area. I then installed a fuse box grabbed from an old Type 3 under the dashboard on the passenger side. These are pre-wired for extras like headlight relay, flashers etc so are very handy. See my earlier article on "Accessorising your VW" for more details. The new fuse box now carries Battery, Ignition and the new Accessories run.



It is amazing how easily a central locking kit goes in to an old Kombi. The front doors are a breeze. The solenoid actuators mounted below the latch and have a good clear pull on the locking mechanism. By holding a drill through the head-lamp opening, I could open up a hole in the A-Pillar and door for the cables for both the actuators and the in-door speakers. The cargo door proved a bit trickier.

Because the door opens out, concealing the wires is a bit tricky. I borrowed a trick learnt from Rob Brown and installed spring loaded contacts like those used on the sliding doors of people movers. One plate fixes to the door, the other to a small plate mounted above the hinge. When the door is closed the two mate, allowing the locking solenoid to operate when needed. I drilled a hole at the top of the door pillar so I could run the wire down the pillar from the roof level. I opened up the latch for the cargo door to try to work out how the mechanism worked. If I drilled a hole in the corner of the lock, I could run a stainless steel rod in and connect it to the locking mechanism. This rod in turn connected to the solenoid. By putting a bend in the rod and carefully choosing the solenoid mechanism, I could use force the rod to follow the same arc followed by the original mechanism, ensuring it operated reliably. I had to drill a hole through the door ribs to mount the rod and mounted the solenoid on the other side of the rib where it will be covered by the door trim.



the sections behind the rear door. These then became the home for my rear speakers. As the panel is fairly narrow, I fitted the speakers to MDF standoffs.

My LCD monitor is mounted up on the overhead air duct. The wires were ran up the A-Pillar and then inside the rib, with the cable for the interior light, then back to the front of the car. Although time consuming, this technique keeps everything hidden. As the monitor is also used for the reversing camera, I needed to install a switch to select which was active. To help keep things looking original, I located an extra Kombi wiper switch and opened up an extra hole in the dash (the lower mounting hole is already there) next to

While work progressed, I had started collecting accessories for my Kombi. The list ran to a CD Player, DVD, LCD Monitor, central locking kit, immobiliser and alarm. There was no way that

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the existing switches. This switch then turns on the monitor and either the camera or DVD player.

I laid out all the wires for the accessories and made an extra wiring loom, that runs from the new fuse box to the switches and electrical items. My alarm remotes came with a little charging cradle. I tool an old mount from a mobile phone and grafted the two together so I now have a slide in charger socket for them, which mounts nicely under the dash.



The new style "DIN" mount radios are wider than the original car radios. Fitting one in the factory opening means widening the hole in the dash, which gets ugly. Since mine had never been cut and was even fitted with the original blanking plate, I needed to think of an alternative. I fabricated a mount in MDF which could go between the dash and the parcel tray and hold my CD/Radio. This mount has been sanded with nice round edges to match the dash profile and painted the same colour. The design worked so well, I made a second unit to go in my son's ute. I originally intended to mount the DVD player next to the radio, but had to reconsider when I found the DVD player was too deep for the available space. Now the DVD player resides in a custom box mounted on the underside of the fresh air ducting which runs across the cabin roof. It too has been painted body colour and fits in really well.

One of the real surprises came when, whilst both my sons were working full time, they bought me a safari window kit for my birthday. This came after I had top coated the interior, so I had to undo some of that good work to weld in the brackets for the latches and drill the windscreen frame for the hinges. A small inconvenience for the pleasure that Safari's bring!

Birthdays, Christmas and Father's Days also provide a good opportunity to drop plenty of hints about what parts are needed. The sheer number of body openings on a Kombi mean there is no shortage of seals to wish for. Although at times frustrating, a long restoration also gives you time to spread the cost of all these items. I spent some

time trawling through the Internet for part numbers and placed a big order for West Coast Metric with VolksFactory. This was followed later by orders for specialised parts from the Bus Stop and Classic Vee Dub. It's such a pleasure opening boxes of goodies and unpacking them! Two luxury items which made it to my shopping list, were an extension to the gear shift (to bring the selector in closer reach) and a lever assembly for the top of the hand brake (which means you no longer have to reach under the parcel tray to apply the handbrake). We had installed a SCAT shifter on Andrew's ute and, after spending a day replacing the various bushes and sleeves which carry the shaft back to the gearbox, managed to get it shifting very well. This was further improved by making up a Teflon sleeve to fit inside the ball joint socket at the front end of the shaft. So armed with this experience, I lashed out and ordered one for the bus.

....To Be Continued in the Next Edition.