

## **Rear Spring Replacement - 1964 BJ8** **by Hoke Smith**

I thought that replacing the rear springs of our "Annabelle" would be easy: remove seven bolts, remove spring, and replace in reverse order. I should have listened to my Momma! While trying to find a resource, or at best, instructions on the best way to accomplish this task, I came across the statement "If you are a religious person leave this task for someone else". After reading that quote, one side of me said "maybe I can't" but the other side of me said "I can"! Some of the best advice ever given to me occurred a long time ago when I was a second grader at Tucker Elementary and it was given to me by a wonderful non-politically correct teacher named Mrs. Keith. I was trying to do something that was very hard for me to do and she was trying to encourage me. When in exasperation I said "I can't do it!", she corrected me by saying "Hoke, never say I can't. Instead, say I'll try". Well now for over fifty years her wonderful advice has rewarded me on many occasions.

First of all, I will explain what should happen, then, what did happen, and what tools and parts you will need to make your experience easier:

**Step 1:** Raise rear of car and place jack stands firmly under frame. Also, chock front tires in front and behind.

**Step 2:** Remove both rear wheels

**Step 3:** Soak all attaching bolts and nuts on a daily basis for several days prior to removal with liquid wrench. (I used a new product called P.B.)

**Step 4:** Place floor jack under middle of frame where it attaches to the axles and raise the spring to relieve pressure. (Oh, before I forget, it is best to complete removal and replacement on one side at a time where you will have a reference in case you forget which bolt went where! This advise seems to come with maturity you know!).

**Step 5:** Remove both nuts from the rear shackles and remove shackle from spring.

**Step 6:** Remove nut and bolt from front of spring.

**Step 7:** Remove the four nuts from u-bolts attached to axel and lower spring.

**Step 8:** Prepare new spring and hardware to be reattached by inserting the four bushings at rear of springs and on to the shackles. I used white lithium grease to thoroughly lubricate all contacts on springs before installing. By the way, when you order springs from Moss or Victoria British, (I ordered mine from the latter) , the rear bushings part # 5-340 were not included. I would also order new nuts for the shackles and a new bolt and nut for the front attachment when you order the springs.

**Step 9:** Attach spring to the front bracket but do not tighten.

**Step 10:** Raise the spring with a bottle jack and patiently attach the two u-bolts with the four nuts. Again, do not tighten.

**Step 11:** You will now see that the rear of the spring is pushed tightly against the car chassis. You can pull the spring down and attach the shackles and bushings by using a large c-clamp attached to the top of the spring and the frame extension. With shackles bolted in place, tighten all nuts and bolts and repeat on the other side.

Now, this is the way it should go if we lived in a perfect world without rust! Oh, if it were only so easy! This is where the religion from the above quote comes in. This is what really happened:

**Step 1:** I removed the nuts attaching rear shackles to rear of spring (no problem).

**Step 2:** I removed nuts from two u bolts attached to axle (no problem).

**Step 3:** I removed nut from bolt at front bracket (no problem).

**Step 4:** I tapped bolt with hammer to remove it from bracket (PROBLEM!). No amount of tapping would remove bolt. I soaked and soaked again the bolt with liquid wrench to no avail. I brought out my propane torch and heated the thing up, to no avail. I beat the Sam Hill out of the bolt and the blankity blank thing would not budge! See, now it is getting personal. The "I can" from my youth sets in, and I know that this bolt WILL be removed in a proper non-destructive manner. It is now power tool time. After sleeping on this problem for a night or two, I asked a good buddy of mine if I could borrow his air cut off tool.

**Step 5:** Using a metal cutting disk, I removed spring from bracket leaving the bushing still housed within bracket.

**Step 6:** Purchased several metal cutting blades for my sawsall and I cut the bolt on the inside of bracket (both sides) and removed the source of my problem.

This is what happened after forty years of never being removed or disturbed. The front bolt and the metal sleeve that is attached to the rubber bushing became one. The bracket hole was only large enough for the bolt and the rust fused sleeve to bolt and prevented it from being removed. After I had figured out what was wrong, the problem was a snap to fix. However, this is something your Momma (or any book written) will not tell you! Now you know.

This is one project that I am glad that I did. Annabelle now sits higher and handles better and she does not scrape on my drive. Parts required for this project are: Two springs, four nuts for rear shackles, bolt and nuts for the front bracket, bushing set for rear shackles, and white lithium grease. Tools needed

are: assorted wrenches and sockets, cut off tool with several metal cutting blades, sawzall with metal cutting blade, and large c-clamps. Good luck!