HORSELESS CARRIAGE REPLICA NEWSLETTER

A Publication dedicated to the reporting of news, events, articles, photos, items for sale, etc, having to do with replica horseless carriages. Newsletter published six times a year and special issues when needed.

The Olds Pie Wagon
Formerly at
Stone Mt, GA.
Actually Mr. Olds never named his creation as this. It was officially named “Light Delivery”. From a reliable source, the name Pie Wagon was given to the vehicle by the late Tommy Protsman. He found and purchased the carriage in shambles & had it restored to its present condition by the late George Green, an authority & restorer of many CDO carriages. The picture documentation below shows the condition it was found in and progress of the restoration process done.
I am very fortunate to have met Mr. Protsman’s son, Bobby. It was while traveling through Atlanta in November, 2007. We decided to visit the Stone Mountain site and the auto museum. It was during the off season for the park, however, after a brief phone conversation with Bobby, he stated he needed to catch up on some paperwork and agreed to meet my wife and I at the museum.

The “Light Delivery” carriage was even more beautiful than the pictures I’d seen previously. Bobby told me the story of how his dad had come to own the carriage and how much work had been done to get her in the present state.

After explaining to Bobby the hobby I was involved in, the HCR group we had and the interest others had in the “Light Delivery”, he allowed me to completely measure & photograph the carriage to possibly build one of my own.

As most of you know, I live and breathe for the HCR hobby and love to build, but my schedule was and still is, quite full.

About a year ago I was contacted by a member named, Gerry Hale. Gerry was bursting with admiration & desire to build the carriage. I could tell by the excitement in his voice and by his past projects, he was the one to build the “Pie”...

We agreed on the details of the build and I eventually sent Gerry the information I had acquired for the build. This is Gerry’s story....
Well this “Pie Wagon” idea thing all started in June 2008, when Jim Payne over at “Replicars” sent in some photo’s and wrote about the Pie Wagon at Stone Mountain Georgia. Since my wife and I would be going right by there on our yearly trip from Florida to Colorado in July to see kids, grand-kids, etc. we decided to stop at Stone Mountain to visit the Antique Auto and Music Museum, and it was love at first sight when I saw the Pie Wagon.

I bought a post card with the Pie Wagon on it and we were on our way. The more I thought about the Pie the more I thought I could build one; I didn’t have any projects going right now anyway. We returned to our home in Lake City, Fl. And I emailed Stone Mountain and asked them to send me every post card with the Pie Wagon on it that they had, there were several that I wish I had bought when I was there but didn’t. I knew if I had one measurement I could come up with some kind of scale or I could learn how to use a cad system.

I did know of Lee Thevenet at the “HCR” site and that he had CDO plans, so I sent an e-mail asking if he might know the wheel base measurement of the Pie Wagon.
Lee told me that he has been planning on making up a set of plans for the Pie Wagon however he just hadn’t the time to do so, however he could possibly put a build package together, with the measurements he had on the body, photos of the Pie (a bunch) and plans of the CDO, which I could use for reference, the rest would be up to me. Boy Oh boy, now I’m on my way!

After looking at everything Lee sent me, I wondered if this was within my skill level or not. My Pie Wagon had to look as good as the one at Stone Mountain or it would go in the burn pile, so I got started. I used 2 X lumber for the side frame with ½” cabinet grade plywood on the outside all parts are screwed and glued together, I built the two sides first, wasn’t as hard to do as I first thought.

The rounded part of the front wasn’t that hard either, I just followed the instructions in the CDO plans and adapted some things to the size that I needed. The back part had me scratching my head on how to bend the 1 ½” X ¾” wood for making the doors; I searched the web on “How to bend wood”, then all of a sudden it dawned on me that I didn’t have to bend the wood I could use two ¾” pieces cut to the proper curve and laminate the two together. It worked great.
The Home Depot had their RIDGID band saw on sale which made cutting the arched 2X lumber for the top a breeze. I cut 1” X ¼” strips of white pine for the “C” part of the top and the rear part will have ¼” plywood put on later. With the body all assembled, I started on the trim, I used a combination of 1/2” plywood for the large shaped pieces and white pine for the straight and smaller pieces.

With the body completed, it was time for the body filler, prime, sand - body filler, prime, sand, etc, etc, etc, and sand some more. I kept telling myself, “The smoother it is the better it will look” it really did pay off. I also have a retired auto body man for a friend and critic, which is a big help.

During this time I gave thought about the wood spoke wheels. I didn’t know a thing about them or where to buy them, so it was time to call Lee. Chatting with Lee, I found out more then I needed to know about wood spoke wheels. I was unaware that there are different types and sizes of wheels and rims and the tools you will need for mounting the tires on some types of “T” rims. I found and purchased 21” wheels and tires on EBay, took quite a while for them to show up. The rims I bought from a gentleman I met at a car show. He had restored several Model T’s & the present one looked like new.
He stated, he might have a set of “split rims” out in the barn, he thought. I called him a few days later which gave him time to look for the wheels and get a shipping cost, he said that he had them, so I purchased them.

Now the job of making these 100 year old wheels and rims look new again. I wasn’t sure about how to do the necessary repair on the rims so it was time to e-mail Lee again. Lee was honest and stated that he did not really know very much about “split rims”, so he put me in contact with Dave Hughes, who was a great help. Dave sent me photos of how he did his repairs, it worked for him and it worked for me.

The wheels I bought did look like they were 100 years old and the spokes were really solid, so after cleaning them up it was time for body filler, prime, sand, using the body filler to fill the weathered cracks in the wood with some work they looked new again.

Now it was time to start on the frame, I used 2” X 3” tube for the frame, I have a 12 hp Kohler engine which drives a comet 44D torque converter to drive a ¾” jack shaft which in turn drives the 1” solid rear axel (as the original used) equipped with a hydraulic brake.
The front axle was built using 1 1/4” schedule 40 pipe, ¾” spindles. My neighbor and friend has a mill and lathe, was lots of help and who I owe many favors to now. The springs were purchased at a salvage yard, heated then bent to fit.

The steering spring was purchased new but also had to be heated and bent to fit. I had our local metal shop, plasma cut and roll the fenders for me, a friend and I bead rolled them.

The frame being complete, I painted it black using a black base coat, did the pin stripping, then sprayed three coats of “Clear Coat” and boy does it shine!

Now it was time for our yearly Colorado trip; we always do a lot of site seeing on our trips. This year we decided to take the southern route on I10. We hadn’t been to New Orleans or Biloxi since the hurricane.

After looking at the map it dawned on me that Lee lives right along the route we were taking. Lee had commissioned his son-in-law to make the decal package I needed and I could pick it up while there. A couple of e-mails later, we decided where to meet over a cup of coffee. My wife (Pat) and I met up with Lee and his wife Elaine for a nice visit and I got my decal package. The decals looked really great. I felt like I had known Lee for a long time after (and he makes you feel that way) with all of the emails we sent back and forth.
We were invited to their home to see all of Lee’s “toys”, only stayed one day and then off again. After a month long trip, we returned home at the end of July and back to the Pie Wagon.

Progress at this point amounted to having the frame complete and painted; body was primed and ready to paint.

I looked over the body and decided I would “body filler, prime, and sand” some more until I finally satisfied myself with the body. I sprayed the body with black base coat, the trim with red base coat, I then installed the pin stripping then three coats of clear coat, and it’s looking good.

Now it’s time to put the body on the frame for the last time, it had been off and on several times for installing the brakes, tiller, speeder controls and for some reason or other, but this was the final time. I had welded the short part of a “T” hinges to the frame and long part would lag screw into the body, now it’s REALLY looking good!! With the body now on the frame all controls had to be connected, steering controls, tiller and the lanterns that I bought on EBay.

Then came the time for the “OLDSMOBILE” decal that Lee’s son-in-law made for me, I took my time laying it out, first on a table top getting side, top and rear measurements, took a deep breath and put it on. WOW it’s looking better all the time.
Now comes the important part, who ever heard of a “Pie Wagon” without any pies? I made a shelf in the rear at door window height and there sits four pies (candle pies) you can see by looking in the windows, cool man cool!!
The weight of the original Pie Wagon was 1,100lbs; the weight on mine is 1,163lbs.

The project took an estimated 1500 (fun filled, enjoyable) M.H. (on the conserved side) and 13 months to complete.

The Pie Wagon was completed in the first week in October & ready for car shows.
This is the “display board we designed for any shows we attend.
So, how do you show off your now completed pride & joy “Pie Wagon” to about 30 of your friends & neighbors?

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You have a “Pie Party”
Gerry & Pat Hale

OK builders, what do you think about that one?

Gerry will post all of his build pictures on the HCR Group Site real soon...