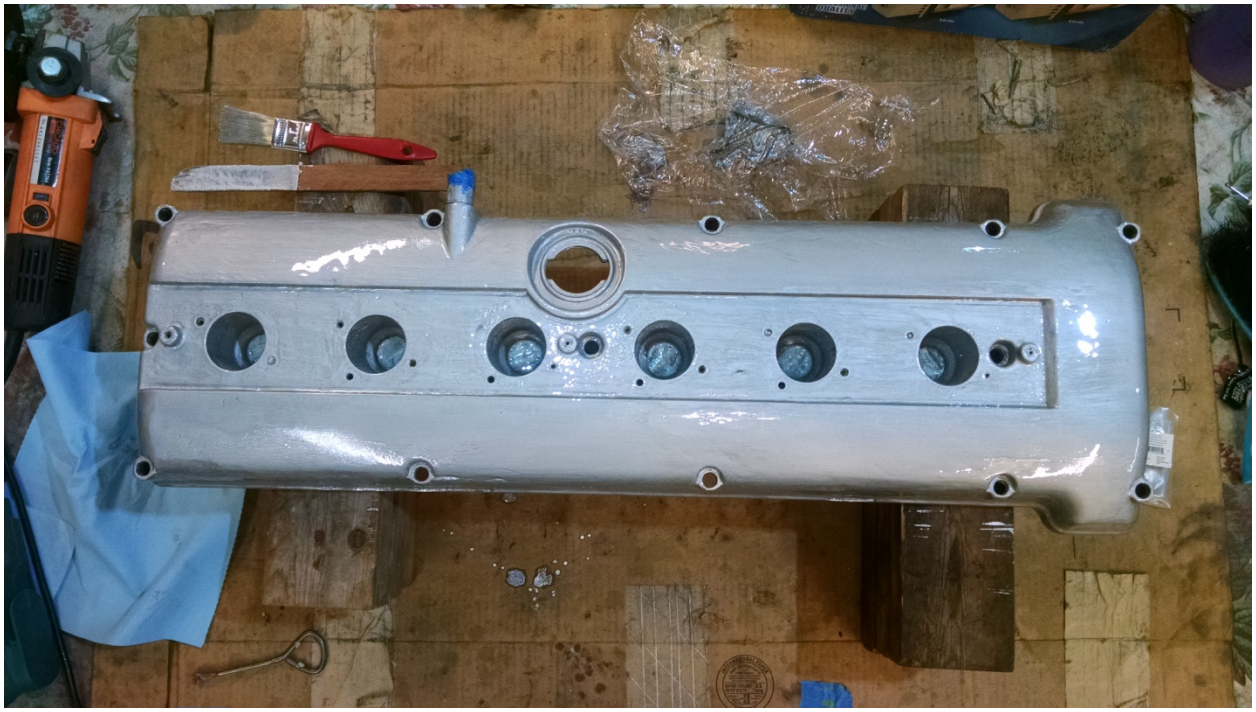
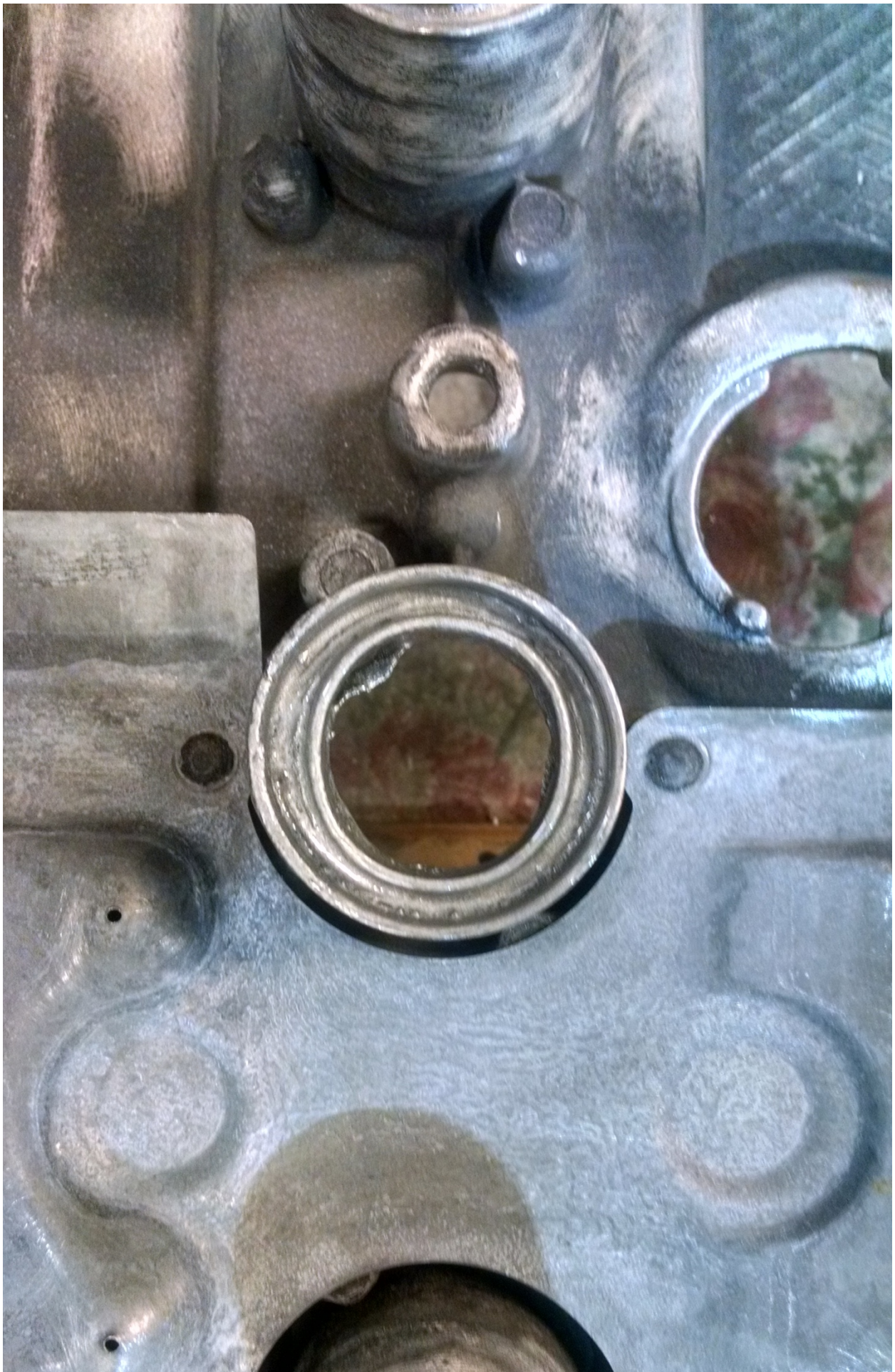
Second Coat and Installation

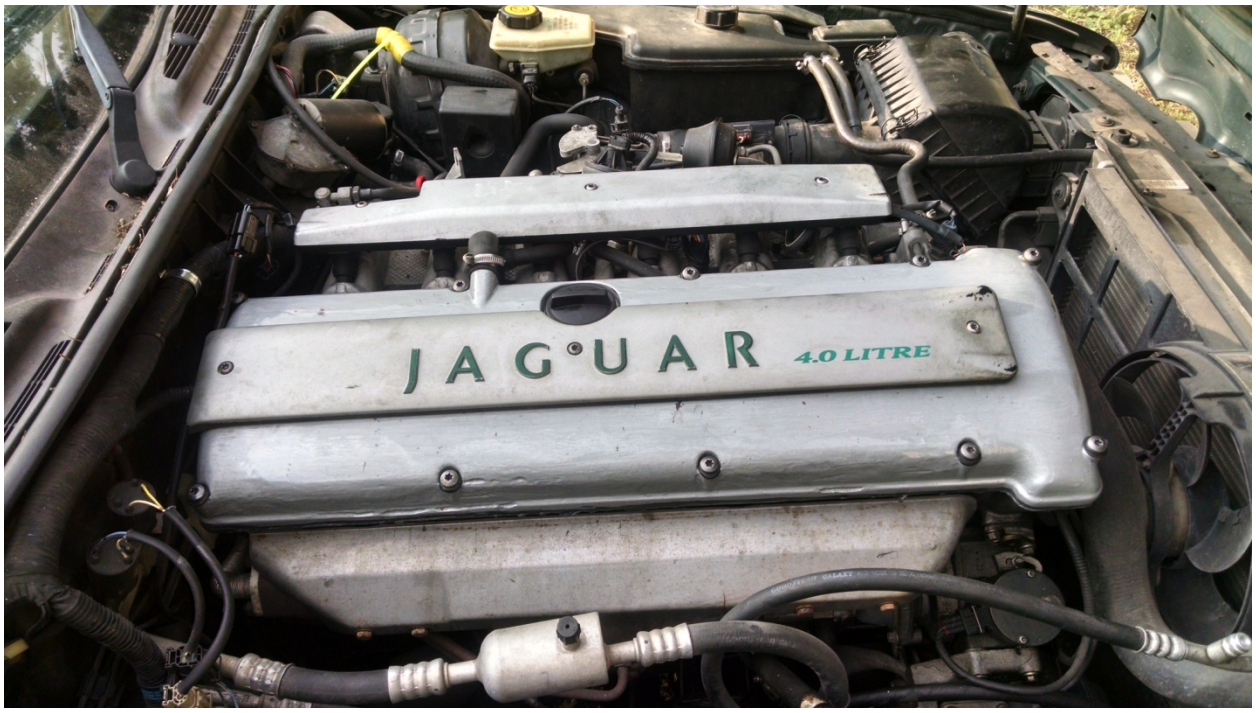
Couldn't do the second coat when first was exhibiting a "slight finger tack" nominally 4 hours, according to the instructions because we had to make a Stephenville run to take some furniture and presents to one of the deployed kids who was having his 21st Birthday. Therefore, I had to sand it lightly before applying the second coat. If I'd be honest, I kinda globbed it on, a bit heavy:



I used a model-brush to paint all of the seal-grooves. I found the paint had mended the breach in the #4 plug bore:



In my haste to get on with the installation, I forgot to lay it on its back and heat all the screw-bosses so the wax could run out. Install was straightforward in accordance with the how-to, including very liberal application of RTV sealant. My first thought on wax removal was to heat it up with the heat gun, then use my compressed air blow-nozzle to clear each threaded boss. Fortunately, I held onto that thought and pondered it sufficiently to realize how it was fraught with danger, most likely involving burns and/or extreme discomfort to my face, from blowback. Since I've pulled two cam-covers from the pic-n-pull, seems I have an abundance of coil-fixing screws. I decided I could drill a hole through the middle of one, heat the boss while driving the screw in, and the molten wax should come flowing out of the hole in the top of the screw. Unfortunately, drill bits aren't exactly the showcase department of my toolshed. All of the tiny ones are either broken or dull, so even with the aid of a drill press, I started to see chips just at the interface of the washer-head and threaded shank. So it walked a bit off-center on me. Ah well, didn't expect high torque forces to be involved, but realized I'd need to be alert to the possibility of snapping the head off. Fortunately, the plan worked as envisioned and I swiped a plastic scraper from the kitchen (shhhh!) and scraped the wax off the cover after it cooled and hardened. Cleaned the scraper and repatriated it to its place before "management" returned so all is well. (my daughter dissolved all plastic scrapers I had in the shop a few years ago refinishing some furniture with paint stripper)



As you can see, not time to get decorative with the coil and fuel-rail covers on this one, yet!

The problem with my side-by-side comparison of the two methods: Powder coat vs. POR15 revolves around the usage spectrum. The car that got the powder coated cover is my daily driver, with a 100-mile round-trip weekday commute, but used sparingly on weekends. It averages 72 miles per calendar day. On the other hand, SpruceBruce, recipient of the POR15 cover, is the spare-car, obtained primarily as a fall-back parts-bin to keep the other two "full mission capable" for daily-driver duties while new replacement parts can be obtained economically from the internet. In fact, the battery went stone-dead about a month after purchase and it has 3 bald tires and one new one. Of the baldy's, I noticed a split in the inner sidewall of one of the fronts that runs nearly the entire circumference! So..no road miles for it, currently. Even starting it up to move it in and out of the shop or to mow under it is a bit of a chore. However, I do hope to bring it into the daily-driver rotation for myself within the near future, assuming I can mend the air conditioning.

A third possibility also looms on the horizon. I'm persuaded the cam-cover currently on my son's '96 is far and away in the best condition of any of the 5 I possess. It is leaking slightly along the seal so needs my third set of gaskets and seals soon. I believe I'll polish the one you see in some of these photos soaking in degreaser, obtained from Pick-n-Pull Dallas, and coat the coil area and plug-wells with the same POR15, then apply their clear product to the exterior. I'll hold the "good" one and refinish in whichever method proves optimum and restore to his car a couple of years on when he is ready to depart to university.

For now, when freshly-done, the powder-coated version looks much better than POR15 brushed on. I believe the POR15 Silver is an excellent replacement for the factory-finish if carefully applied, particularly if sprayed on. The POR can be sprayed, but beware you'll need to buy their solvent for

cleanup and potential thinning. Mineral spirits won't touch it. (nor any other solvent or solution I could find sitting around my shop) It cures somewhat flexible, as I demonstrated by flexing the stirring sticks I used after they were dry and the paint did not flake off nor crack. It isn't as flexible as live-skin, fortunately and I was able to peel a few drops off of my toes (Don't paint in flip-flops) a day later when I noticed it! One final note on the POR15. I totally misinterpreted a note on the can about using plastic wrap to reseal the can if you don't use the whole batch at once. Thinking air was the enemy, I pushed it down into the can to contact the top of the paint, then spread the excess out over the top of the can and re-set the lid. The first time, no issue as I was back in there about 6-6.5 hours later. The next time I opened it, however, I noticed that the plastic in contact with the paint had begun to dissolve. Not wanting to contaminate the paint further, I dispensed with the use of plastic wrap when resealing the can that time. It never opened again. Prying all the way around the circumference with a standard paint can opener only unrolled the flange on the cap. Pulling on it with pliers only stretched it out further. I had to punch a hole in it (like you used to have to open the paper oil can with the metal tops) and cut out the center of the top with tin-snips. Then, I dumped it into a mason jar and sealed that up with vacuum from a "Foodsaver" that was still operable yet collecting dust in the shop. Tightened the screw-on portion of the lid, transferred the label from the can to the jar, and hoped for the best. I now realize you should stretch the plastic wrap tightly across the top of the can, and then pound the lid on. It is providing a separable barrier between the paint that lodges in the can groove when you pour, and the lid itself.