

FN82 update September 2022

With the arrival of the replacement upper, fixed turret ring it became possible to begin the build of the turret rings. Firstly, the outer surfaces were sprayed with wash, primer and matt black and then the bearing surfaces coated with grease. The remaining surface, seen below with the holes in it, was left untreated in preparation for being bolted up with jointing compound. Given the problems encountered in obtaining this part every effort was made to reduce the risk of corrosion on this one.



At this point it is essential to fit the special bolts to the rotating ring. These bolts come in three lengths and fit to particular positions depending on how many items they pass through on the accommodation plate. There is absolutely no chance of fitting these later.

The vertical rollers, pictured above, are held in position with a special nut. This nut is locked with a tab washer that is held in place by a small pin and split pin. The small pin also serves to stop the bearing mount rotating whilst the special nut is tightened. Actually, quite cunning. The set-up is shown below, but with the tab washer not fully locked at this point.



The horizontal rollers are then fitted onto their studs and secured. This removes any lateral movement within the rings.



Before continuing, it's a good idea to fit the bolts that will secure the turret to the airframe. Although the AP2799Q says there should be fifteen of these there are actually fourteen and, to complicate matters further, there are sixteen holes in the airframe mount. The extra two holes are actually alignment holes that engage with two special bolts on the turret stops.

A tight string serves to keep these in place until they can be temporarily secured using a plain nut. With the rings wedged apart, jointing compound can be applied into the gap and the process of bolting together the rings can begin.





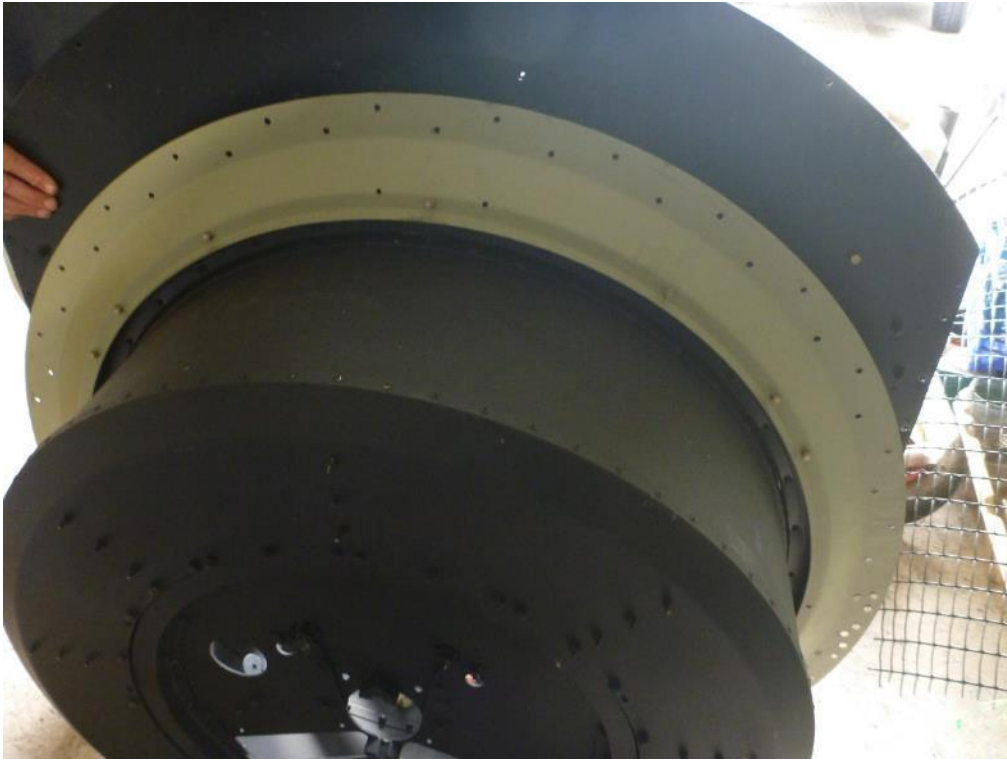
This particular turret has five fittings that also go in at this point, although the AP2799Q only mentions three of them. In general, the rings are held together with countersunk head bolts, with the heads at the bottom – some of these bolts also secure fittings. The fittings include the turret lock and traversing stops (below).



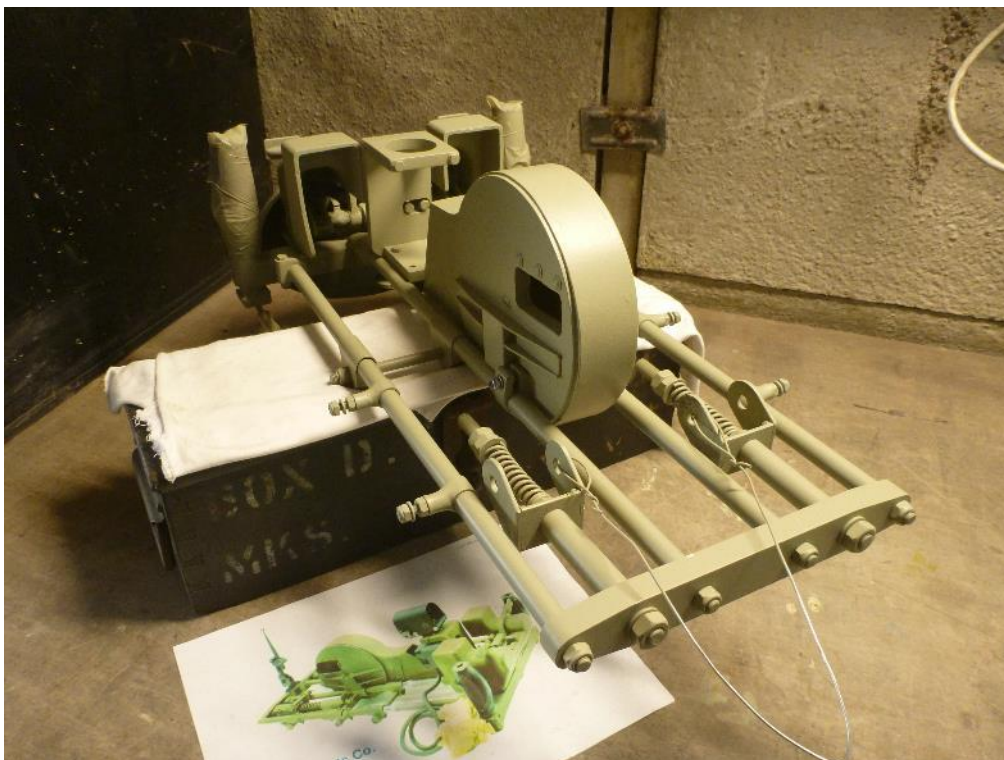
Once bolted up the turret rings, drum and floor assembly could be re-fitted to the stand. It is now possible to fit the accommodation plate to the rotating ring and find out if the three lengths of bolt went into the correct places. Pictured below is the assembly so far with the special bolts protruding and how a correctly positioned bolt should look.



With this done it was possible to try the fit of the turret rings, drum and floor to an original Lancaster rear turret mounting plate. All was in order and assuming the mounting plate fitted to 'Jane is the same there should be no problems fitting the turret.



Meanwhile, for a bit of light entertainment, the Dauntless rear gunner's mount was progressed. There was a fair bit of re-manufacturing required here and then the whole thing was sprayed with some left-over primer. The next job for this is to apply the grey finish and bolt the two guns in, after that it just needs to find a display home.



At the moment the Dauntless mount is already in Lincolnshire, whilst 'Jane's FN82 is scheduled for the second trip in October. Once there the final build of all of the sub-assemblies into the turret can start in the new (bigger) workshop. Next month – the final build.