

FN82 update June/July 2021

By the end of May, the cupola rear half had been completed with the exception of manufacturing and fitting the Perspex panels. Having put this off for long enough the job really needed to be done. I have discovered that one way to produce the double curved panels is to produce a metal former on an English wheel and then use this and a domestic oven to form the Perspex panel. It's slow process, but I have yet to come up with a better idea.

The end result is a reasonably smooth finish with only a small amount of distortion. One such panel is shown below, dry assembled into the frame.



Another day or two resulted in the production of all of the remaining flat panels, images of which are shown below. The panels are currently dry assembled and so will be removed and assembled with a sealant in due course. The fasteners will then be touched in and so the cupola rear half will be a completed assembly.



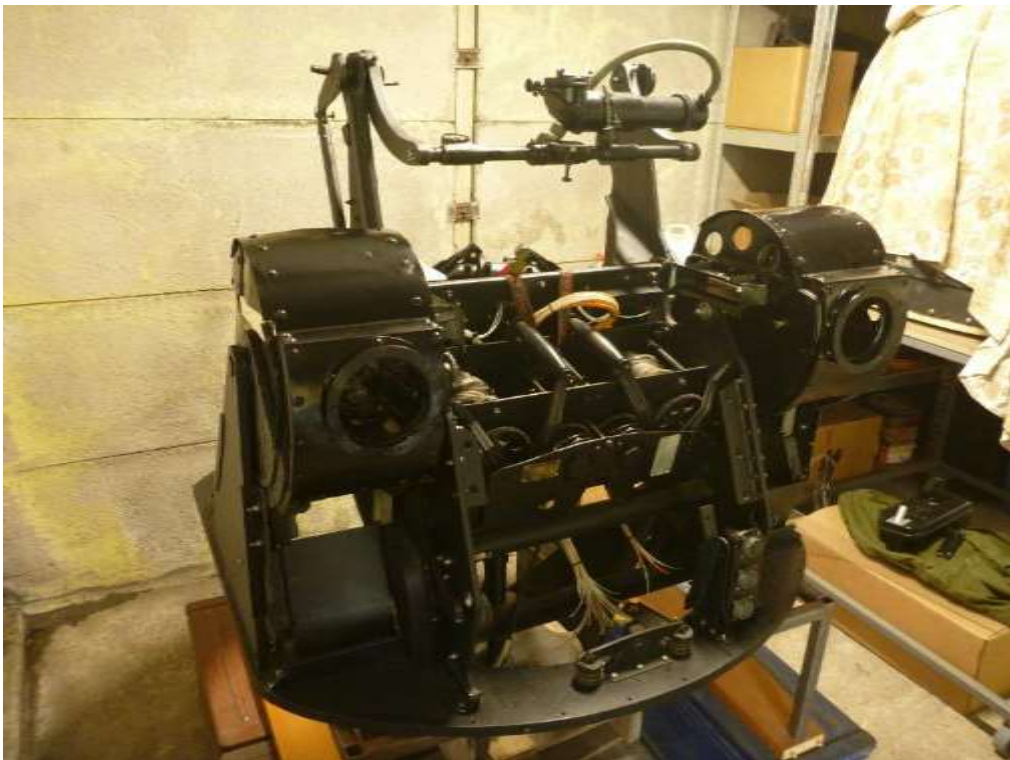
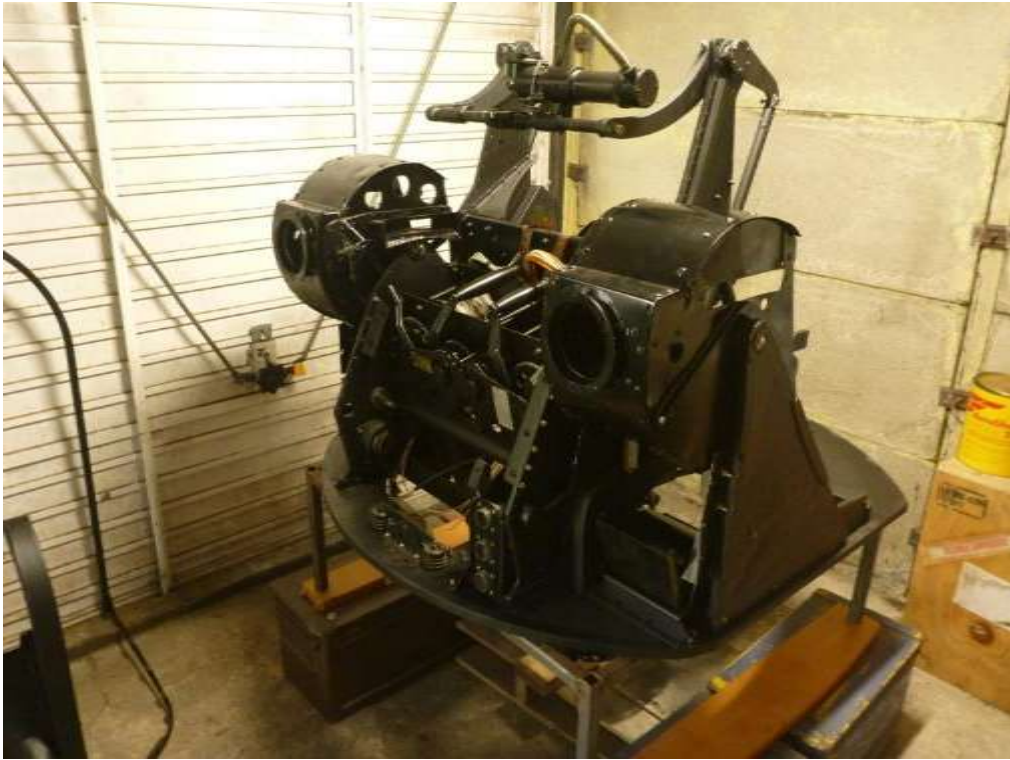


June and July saw another major paint spraying session and the display turret collimator was swept up in that. This allowed the collimator to be fitted, but at some point it will need to have a reflector glass manufacturing and fitting.



Regular readers will recall the condition of the display turret gun cradles. These proved to be quite a challenge, with the vast majority of fasteners having to be drilled out. However, the end product seems convincing enough for display parts and, once fitted, the turret is beginning to look remarkably complete.

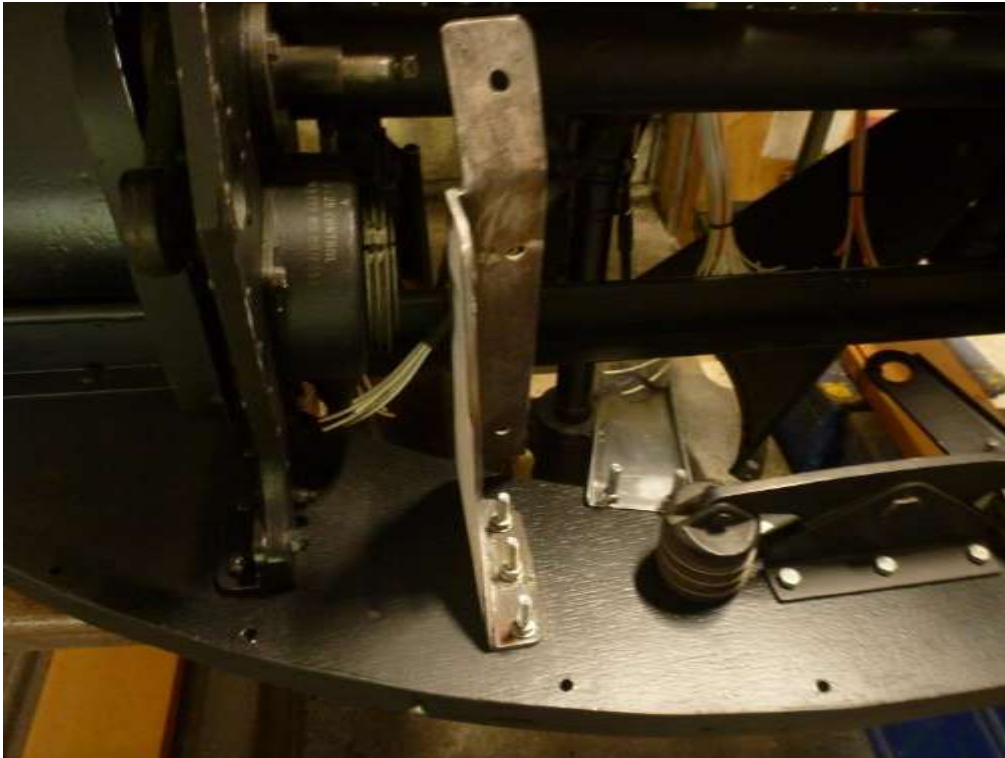




Another assembly that needed reproducing is the fixed floor. Seen below is the original from NX611's turret beside the re-manufactured item for the display turret. This assembly mounts the two lower ammunition feeds and has the turret control unit passing through the central hole.



Other re-manufactured parts include the armour plate mounting bracket and elevation ram hydraulic hose bracket as shown below.



With these small items out of the way, attention shifted to creating some of the many missing parts for the display turret cupola front half. Seen below is a re-manufactured main arch for the cupola.

This arch has to be accurately made as it mounts the rear end of the four arches that support the major Perspex panels that give the turret its distinctive look. The arch has since been drilled in preparation for fitting the Perspex and now needs to be secured to the accommodation plate.



This final image shows the display turret fitted with the cupola from NX611's turret. With a reasonable degree of imagination, it is now possible to see some light at the end of the tunnel. July also saw this project pass 1000 manhours.

