

# RELIANT KITTEN REGISTER

## *NEWSLETTER – TEN*



Spring 1996

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Hello again, and welcome, it seems that we have actually made it into double figures with this edition! I must apologise to Mick Copland for failing to mention his name on this page the last time. Thank you Mick, it was his Kitten Pick-up that featured on the front cover. I must sadly admit that the photograph did not copy nearly as well as I had hoped it would, but there we are. Which does bring me neatly on to the next point - I have both approached, and been approached by, a number of publishers recently, the idea being to get money from us. The carrot being a much higher quality magazine. Specifically a neat A5 booklet complete with not only excellent quality printing, on a glossy paper, but also excellent photograph reproduction, both in black and white, and colour. I have to tell you that I would love to go down that path, as the magazine quality is something that I am not proud of. Now don't get the wrong idea, I am perfectly happy with the content, apart from the absence of photographs, it is the quality of the printing and copying that I am not satisfied with, well, it is a compromise, but only that, and not, in my opinion, an entirely satisfactory one. Having said that we would need twice as many subscribers paying twice as much per year, before it could come close to being financially viable. The quotes range from £200 to £260 per edition for a minimum quantity of 250 per edition (plus the dreaded V.A.T.), and by the time you add postage and envelopes, I would be looking at an annual bill of over £1,300, which with a current income of about £300 - £400 from subscriptions, gives you an idea of how far away we are. Like I said, if we doubled the subscription, and doubled the number of subscribers, it would be almost getting there, - perhaps, one day.

Speaking of companies who have approached me recently, and to take on board a point asked by some folk, I have been offered some "high quality car badges", now before we all get too excited, the design, as with that for the certificates that some of you may remember me talking about some years ago, and the artwork, would have to be finalised, and paid for, and even then the badges, in the sort of quantity we would be talking about would cost the better part of £20 each. I only mention it in passing and to keep you informed. If you feel that we should talk to them, let me know. Oh, and by the way, just so as I don't forget, the company is G. K. Beulah of Hull, there, I can't lose that now!!

Also a company called Team 17 (Multimedia) Ltd, who trade under the name "The Big Room", have written to me asking if we are interested in having information about our cars included on a CD-ROM which they are putting together about motoring history.

Their aim is to produce the most comprehensive information ever published about the motor car from day one to the present time, and I have indicated the Register's willingness to co-operate in any appropriate way.

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At the time of writing this, January, just after mailing edition No. 9, I have no way of knowing what the response to the subscription renewal notice will be, Perhaps I will know more by the end of this edition.

As to my thanking the individual responsible for the front cover this time, at the moment I am trying to decide between Guy Buntinx's stainless manifold, and John Whitter's Tandy Fox Caravanette, I will try to see which copies best before deciding, but, lest I forget to say something at the time, thank you both for the pictures. Thanks also to all who have sent me photographs, I do not normally take the time to acknowledge such things, unless I am writing to the individual for some other reason, but they are always appreciated.

Another great idea, well I thought it was a great idea! Was the reduction of the margins, but our tame copy man found that he was having to take great care, and even then things were almost getting off the edges, so we are moving some way back, in the never ending search for that always elusive thing I dislike - compromise.

Oh, and if it is not too late by now, go and get yourself a copy of the April edition of the Top Gear car magazine, where you will find a 10 page article on Reliant.

**Brian**

By the way, I have been offered a number of rolls of 1" masking tape for just 50p obviously, unless we were to meet, there would be postage involved, but it is great for home decorating, or doing these odd spraying jobs on the car; just let me know if you would like some put aside.

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On the number of current subscribers front, it is now the 8th of March, and 53 of the 90 odd folk who were invited to renew have done so, three have written telling me they have sold their Kitten, and do not wish to renew, and 9 had joined recently enough as to be considered current. The rest of you, will, if I am organised enough at the time, have another notice included with this edition, please use it NOW.

My thanks to those who have already renewed, to the rest of you I would say, please renew promptly if you want to receive any more magazines.

On the car front, the number of vehicles on the Register is now sitting at 212, and I have a few leads to follow up.

**Brian**

### **Members Letters**

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Dear Brian,

26/01/96

Many thanks for another excellent magazine. Sorry to add to the confusion, I do believe that you are right on the number of leaves in the springs, I have trouble counting the bigger numbers! I have never encountered any wear or deterioration in the rubber bushes.

As regards your question about speedos, to my knowledge 4 types have been fitted. The earliest, with orange lettering, a chrome rim, and a custom Reliant fascia as illustrated in the original brochure, is part number 25063. Later versions of this had 10ths of a mile on the counters.

Speedos are graded in the number of revolutions of the cable per mile registered. The early ones were 940 revs per mile. The number is shown at the bottom of the fascia plate (visible in the vehicle, just very small print). Later instruments are Smiths branded with 10ths of a mile, and are at 1000 revs per mile. They have a black fascia with white lettering. The kitten van is also Smiths, but 1200 revs per mile to cope with the gearing. The difference between the 940 and 1000 was simply down to a compromise, and both are interchangeable.

As to the reason for a speedo failing, there are usually two reasons why the mileometer might not work. Either a plastic gear has broken, or a polyester washer (used as a circlip) keeping the gear in contact with the rest of the drive has come off. If the latter is the case, a bent aluminium, not steel, bracket can be made to hold the shaft in the right place.

The Reliant / Lucas electronic ignition system was condemned by some members in a earlier edition of the Mewsletter. *(I believe in fact that the unit that Dick had fitted was not the Reliant / Lucas one at all, but some other Lucas device - Ed.)* After running two of these units since the 1980's on my dad's and my Kittens, I can honestly say we have had no trouble at all, and as an electronics engineer, I can only say that the component choice, design, and build quality are all excellent (unusual in a Lucas product). I would suspect, and have been informed that, most problems are due to poor installation. The ideal place for mounting the unit is on the bulkhead behind the brake fluid reservoir. If anybody has trouble with their unit, please contact me as I may be able to repair it (on a chargeable basis).

Talking of modifications, I like to keep my Kitten more or less original, but there are 2 worthwhile mods. Starting from hot as Reliant, SU Carburettors, and all owners know, can be a problem due to heatsoak. Petrol can also burst through the pipe connections to the float chamber. Both problems can be virtually eliminated by cutting a piece of tin plate, bent into an L shaped section, to fit in place of the cloth / foil shield fitted by Reliant. The plate

can be mounted on top of the existing cylinder head nuts. This sheet is not only reflective but also provides an air gap, greatly reducing the heat absorbed by the float chamber.

Later versions of the Kitten have a pipe from the rear of the cylinder head (passenger side) which goes over the top of the blower trunking to the heater core. The top of this is the highest point of the cooling system. Cut it at the top, and fit a bleed valve (bits available from plumbers) and use this to eliminate air locks and so improve heater performance. I wonder if this may also reduce turbulence and so save No. 1 piston?

*This is a bit like poor starting, and easy stalling I am sure, in as much as some readers will wonder what all the fuss is about, re. heater efficiency, and others will be dashing round to their plumbers merchants. Personally I have found, whether by coincidence or not I do not know, but have found none the less, that fitting an expansion header tank to the radiator overflow tube, cures both coolant loss, and air locks ! ED.*

Have you ever wondered why the roll over bars rust, when the outriggers are good? I was at the factory last year and my own feelings were confirmed; after the chassis is welded it was sent away for a phosphate dip and then painting. The roll over bar wasn't, - so now you know!

One of the selector springs in my Kitten gearbox broke recently, and the car jumped out of first gear as I tried to set off, making a terrific bang - it frightened the driver in the car behind me! An easy enough item to replace , but a month later the car began to make an intermittent "chinging" noise under light load, and light acceleration, the noise getting progressively worse. My wife was able to confirm that the noise was coming from the front of the car. After much investigation, I found that the cause was - a shattered needle roller on the rear propshaft UJ. The sound being transmitted to the front by the shaft itself.

Engine oil consumption on my Kitten had increased recently from nil, to half a pint per 1,000 miles. Compression is good, and emission tests gave CO of 1.6%, and only 67ppm of hydrocarbons (*did I get that right Graeme, just 67, sixty seven - I thought I was doing marvellously, even with the ceramic magnet on, getting down to 250, and we were then allowed 1200, indeed I think at our cars' age even more, I am impressed!! Ed*). Burning oil was therefore not a problem, so it must be leaking. I eventually found the cause, tightened up the very short bolts that hold the front timing cover on (well, those you can get at). Oil consumption is now nil again, and the timing chain no longer chatters when starting from cold.

*Obviously not a man who revs his engine much beyond 6,000, or he would find that they do use oil - so I am told, John Blagburn or Alan Marshall step forward Ed!).*

My wife and I run a company, Acorn Design, producing cross stitch tapestry kits. We recently launched a kit, with Reliant's permission to commemorate their 60th anniversary, illustrating vehicles from the earliest to the present day, including a Kitten saloon (So now you know why we were down at the factory). The finished design measures 6.5" by 8.5", and everything is included in the kit to produce the design (photocopy enclosed). If anyone would like a kit they are available mail order from us at £13.99 plus £1.00 p&p, Cheque / P.O. to Acron Design, 25 Kershaw street, Glossop SK13 8NN please. We can also produce individual kits of cars at a reasonable rate (which depends on the finished size required) Please feel free to contact us for more details.

Take care, yours

Graeme Shaw

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The BobCat Story

By Joe Boulderstone-Salthouse, with thanks to John Box for the details.

Dear Brian,

28/01/96

Thanks for the Winter 1995/96 "Mewsletter", I read it from cover to cover as soon as I took it out of the envelope. To the story:-

Reliant Kitten Estate in London red, registered new on 08/04/76 by City Motors, Oxford, was purchased by its first owner bearing the registration mark SJO 941P (*Quite how it came by a Scottish registration number in Oxford, I have no idea, Ed!*)

In August that year the gentleman moved to Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria, taking the Kitten with him.

The Kitten became the property of Roveround on 01/05/78, and was used by them, in conjunction with a Kitten Van, as a hard working vehicle, delivering truck brake parts for the engineering company around Cumbria from its base in Kendal.

It was unfortunately hit in the side by a Mini Van; pushed off-course by the impact it leapt a fence, and rolled end over end at 44,000 miles.

Fortunately the driver was not seriously injured, but the body of the Kitten was completely destroyed. The salvage was purchased from the insurers, and the remains of the body removed and burned. Remarkably, apart from an irreparably damaged chassis, only the nearside lower wishbone was wrecked!

The chassis lay outside under sheets for a year whilst a few thoughts as to its future use passed through the mind of one of Roveround's partners; one John Box.

John's workshop lacked a project at the time, and the need to occupy his bored son Robert, led to the BobCat project in 1980.

The Kitten handling had been found to be entertaining, safe but fidgety. Was it possible to develop it, to improve the good bits, and remove the fidgety aspect?

The styling of the Kitten was little better than a garden shed (*Do I hear screams of 'Leave our little car's looks alone!?! Ed' - (Allegedly - if Ogle are reading this! Well, I liked it - J.E. B-S!)* Which would nearly reach 80 M.P.H. (mine reached 87 downhill once J.E. B-S.) Would it be possible to reach 100 M.P.H. with attention to the body shape and windflow patterns?

It needed to be made from easily available, cheap materials, and be immensely strong, as bendy cars don't work!

A CAN-AM (the nearest look-alike is the Porsche 917/34 J.E. B-S.) body style was selected for its aerodynamic shape and relative ease of construction.

A new estate chassis frame was purchased, and a rolling chassis built. The handling characteristics required a "nose-down" stance; so special front spring damper units were fitted to lower the suspension by two inches. The rear spring shackles were reversed, and parallel links fitted to the front halves of the springs.

A Triumph Spitfire trailing link was fitted between the diff and frame to act as a Panhard rod.

The engine was moved back 7" and canted 10% to the right. The ports and manifolds were gas-flowed, and compression raised to 10;1. Initially twin 1" SU. carbs were fitted. Cooling was by Triumph Herald radiator and electric fan.

A special pedal box and steering linkage was designed to provide full steering column adjustment. The body is built of a mix of alloy, fibreglass and alloy-faced marine plywood, fitted onto a welded steel-tube (square profile) steel frame.

The windscreen is cut from a range-Rover one, and the instrument binnacle is from the same source.

The fuel tank is from a Jowett Bradford van, and was beautifully made from tinned sheet steel. To maintain the "nose down" attitude, 10" wheels were retained on the front, but 12" wheels were fitted to the rear.

In effect this geared the Bobcat to give 104 M.P.H. at 5,500 R.P.M., where the engine gives its full power.

After much rubbing down, and filling and fettling, the body was finished in electric white (Vauxhall) and trimmed in brown Rover material.

It was obvious from the first tests that the handling package had worked perfectly apart from the short Panhard rod which provoked a little niggle when taking hump-backed bridges at speed.

There was a problem, with the engine temperature rising with speed attained, eventually causing water loss. However, many runs were made, and on one occasion 5,500 r.p.m. was attained, hence the design target of 100m.p.h. plus, had been reached (1000 r.p.m. giving 19m.p.h).

In general the car was overgeared, and on two separate occasions the engine overheated badly, and it was decided that the problem was an airflow deflection over the radiator intake which the electric fan was unable to overcome.

A standard radiator and engine driven fan were fitted, and the problem cured.

The twin carbs also caused difficulty due to the loosening of fuel connections, probably due to vibrations from the engine being solidly mounted at the front.

A special manifold was fabricated from a combination of Reliant and Triumph Dolomite inlet manifolds and a single 1 3/8" S.U. carb was fitted which added power at 3,000r.p.m.

Although Bobcat is relatively heavy, the performance is quite lively when the full 7,000 r.p.m. is used; John Box says that the power curve only rises to 6,000 r.p.m. so downhill a theoretical top-speed of 114 m.p.h. might be possible; although in the hands of its present owner it is unlikely to much exceed 55 m.p.h. !! *(Try using your feet! Ed.)*

J.E.B-S. having been given a run in a "hot" Tempest by Ian Foster was impressed by its handling ability. Ian Foster is John Box's partner in Tempest Cars. The handling of the Bobcat is however, streets ahead of the Tempest, but unlike the Tempest, it is not suitable for trials, having only 3" of ground clearance.

Joe.

*Many thanks for taking the time to let us know all that Joe, and John Box too. I am sure that many of our readers will have found it as fascinating a story to read, as I found it typing it up, and I will be most surprised if you do not have a queue of people beating a path to your door for a look.*

*Yes, to answer your question about the Cipher at Tamworth, Thomas Touw has two, and I know that Reliant asked to have a look at one of them, so I assume that was it. In fact I have recently learned that Reliant had both of Thomas' cars when the most recent crisis arose, and Thomas was messed about very badly, having in the end to make two trips to England from Holland, at his own expense, to rescue his cars from the factory. Happily he has now got them back home.*

*As far as John's (Box) history is concerned, he and I first met at Doune in 1978 at the Jowett Car Club's annual gathering that year, where he had his 1923 replica racing Jowett doing impressive things in the driving competition. (in the good old days when I ran a Javelin, Ed.), but I did not know about the T.V.R. / Cipher connection.*

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Dear Brian,

30/01/96

Many thanks for the Mewsy News, it's nice to be kept up to date.

I notice that you are asking for speedometer information, so here is mine:- Rebel speedometers have the number SN 4208/100A 1040, and have no 10ths of a mile calibrations. (L reg. and older).

I have a speedometer which I think came out of the Kitten Van (S reg.) its number is SNT 4218/05 1120 which has white lettering on a black bezel and no tenths.

I have another one, bought at an autojumble. so I don't know what Reliant it came from, it is numbered SN6153/428 1184. The last number in all these instruments (the 1184 in that case) represents the number of turns per mile (T.P.M.), so all that you have to do to determine whether the van speedometer is different from the saloon car, is to check their T.P.M. numbers.

Incidentally, you can check that you have the correct instrument fitted to your car by carrying out the following checks. :-

1. Inflate tyres to the correct pressure.
2. Fit cardboard pointer to the speedo drive inner cable.
3. Mark the tyre at the ground contact point.
4. Get two observers, one to count the tyre rotations, and one to count the pointer rotations.
5. roll the car forward in a straight line until the tyre has rotated six complete turns.
6. Record the number of times the cardboard pointer has rotated, call this figure N.
7. Measure the distance from the hub centre to the ground (the rolling radius) call this figure R.

The speedo T.P.M. should equal N divided by R times 1680 plus or minus about 35. Note that worn tyres will reduce N & R by an equal proportion.

I hope this of interest to you.

*Aren't you all glad I asked! Right two volunteers please step forward while we try it out. Seriously though, thanks Adrian, I for one had never really thought about checking it at all, other than the measured half mile on the M8 near Glasgow airport which the Police used to use to check their car's speedos on, i.e. 30 seconds to cover the half mile at 60 m.p.h. which of course only checks the speed, and not the mileage recorder (odometer).*

I am surprised that you like the lower gearing of the Van. I do not like the low gearing of the Rebel (with the 850 engine fitted) and I am sure that the engine suffers from rapid wear at over 65 m.p.h. with the low gearing. I am now on my third (secondhand) engine, and the oil pressure is 10 p.s.i. with S.T.P. added. it throws out smoke now too, I suspect because the low pressure fails to lubricate the bores properly.

Is it possible to find out when the last 700cc Reliant left the factory? My 700cc car is M registered, but if I can prove that it is older than 25, I can qualify for zero road tax. I can see from the book of British cars that 748cc engines were being produced in 1968, so if the cut of was 1968 I should qualify. *Sorry Adrian, but I believe that the 748 engine referred to in 1968, was the old side valve unit. As far as I am aware the Rebel went from 700 to 750 in 1973, and so most of the M registered ones are 750's, yours was probably built in 73, but registered later - I think it is date of registration that matters.*

You mention light grease for the Rebel suspension, and of course anything works with frequent application, but I had a lot of trouble in the past with ordinary bearing grease, so I went to a boat yard and got some "NLG1" waterproof grease. This is a very light (white coloured) grease, and it does not solidify when water gets to it. I have not had any problems greasing the steering or suspension since.

You mention M.S.K. 140 as a bush kit number, but my notes ( sent to you previously ) have the Quinton Hazell number of QSK 1405, and this should still be available.

All the best,

Adrian

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Dear Brian,

30/01/96

Finally received your letter on Jan. 30th, so I am scribbling this quickly before I head of South again. Note new address, no 'phone yet, awaiting B.T. I have enclosed details of the Kittens for your file. The estate is resting at the moment, although only requires road tax to be useable. Apart from alloy wheels and one or two minor mods it is fairly standard. The saloon is somewhat different, it has a hand built tubular chassis, at present I am trying to fit a Toyota 1300 engine and five speed gearbox from a rear wheel drive Toyota Starlet. This will allow me to fit 13" wheels with the added advantage of disc brakes. Top speed will not be up much, but the discs should mean that I can leave braking a bit later, so it should give me a better A to B average. I had hoped to have it ready for Summer '96, but working so much away as I do its not going to happen.

Anyway, to the Metro distributor mod. I don't have a drawing here, but as it is fairly straight forward I will describe the basic operation.

1. Acquire a Metro distributor, complete, remember the forked clamp and clamp bolt.
2. Acquire Reliant distributor body, preferably one that is beyond use due to a worn shaft etc., as it will be unusable afterwards.
3. Accurately measure the amount of projecting shaft on the Reliant distributor from the bottom of the drive dog, and note it for future reference.
4. Using a suitably sized pin punch, and sitting the distributor on top of a vice jaws, drive out the pin holding the dogs, on both units. It may be easier to have someone to hold the distributor on the vice and if necessary, apply heat from a blowtorch, do not go beyond a black heat.
5. Remove both sets of dogs, and the thrust washer from the Reliant unit.
6. As the pin on the Reliant is slightly longer than that on the Metro, a drill will be needed to open the hole in the Metro shaft.
7. By trial and error, enough metal will have to be removed from (filed) the aluminium body of the Metro distributor to allow the dog to fit without causing binding. The distributor innards can be removed to allow the drive shaft to be pulled back for this operation. The ideal situation is to have a shaft turning freely with no noticeable end float, although a thou or two is O.K. If however you've gone wild with the file, a shim (brass washer) can be put behind the thrust washer to save the situation.
8. This one will make the purists cringe; Anyone getting this far will have realised by now that the Metro shaft is not as long as the Reliant one, so there is no bit sticking out the bottom of the dog. Measure how much the Metro shaft is below the surface (nearest mm), now add the amount you measured on the Reliant shaft (probably weeks ago, which is why you were told you to make a note of it!), and cut this amount from the end of the now unused Reliant shaft. Try to cut this as squarely as possible. I use a junior hacksaw as the teeth are finer.

At this point, after stripping all the plastic and electronic bits off the distributor, I cleaned all the mating surfaces according to makers instructions (the glue makers instructions!), and Araldited the bit from the Reliant shaft into the socket created between the drive dog and the end of the Metro shaft. I then put it point up into the oven at gas mark 1, well low, overnight.

The other method is to put the cut section in place, and have a run of brazing put round to hold it in place, however this means bringing the dog up to red heat with the loss of temper on the drive fingers, which may cause problems later.

Since rebuilding and fitting the Metro unit to the estate car I have done over 8,000 miles up and down to Cambridge (400 plus miles each way) and travelling on the A68 - A1 at speeds up to and over the legal limit for 6 hours at a time with no problems.

Well Brian, that's about it, now I know why they say a drawing is worth a thousand words!

Gordon Keay

Dunfermline

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*Thanks Gordon, I just hope that my crude attempts at reproducing your sketches don't confuse anyone who tries to make the change. Ed.*

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*About those chassis numbers*

*Les Cruickshank, who regular readers might remember told us the story of his body off job on Moyra's blue Kitten saloon some time ago, did write to me over a year ago in a similar vein to the following. Les, my apologies for not putting your last effort into print at the time, and my thanks for being patient enough to give me a second chance.*

Looking at the details published in the last magazine, it would appear that there are one or two errors, and in order to assist owners to decipher the numbers, and possibly improve the quality of your records, would it not be a good idea to include an article in a future edition of the magazine (*Said Les!*) He also went on to say (realising that if you want a job doing, then the best way, is to do it yourself!)

The book "The Scimitar and its Forebears" by Don Pither, gives some details on Reliant's chassis numbering system as applied to Scimitars built from October 1975 until the introduction of an international numbering system in 1979. Now, although this system is not claimed to apply to Kittens, I thought it reasonable to assume that there would be some similarities. With this in mind I compared some of the numbers on the Kitten Register with the code described in the book.

The book states that the first digit of the number is the last digit of the year of manufacture, therefore, in the case of a Kitten, this would be a number between 5 and 9 (1975 and 1979).

The second character indicates the month of manufacture, and is a letter between A (January) and M (December), the letter I not being used. So Moyra's Kitten, 7E1/14702393 would have been manufactured in May 1977 (first registered 13/1/78)!! Fine so far.

Now, that's the easy bit, because the next two numbers should be the colour, and, according to the book, 11 is Olympic Blue. Nearly right, its Venetian Blue, so I think that only the first of that pair of digits indicates the colour, because the fourth digit appears to always be a 1, and would seem to suggest the following :-

- |         |          |             |
|---------|----------|-------------|
| 1 Blue  | 2 Brown  | 3 Yellow    |
| 4 Green | 5 Beige  | 6 White     |
| 7 Red   | 8 Orange | 9 Turquoise |

Now, please don't all shout at once, I know that there are probably some mistakes in there, but Brian's records don't show whether the colours are original or not (*Many of them are not, I can tell you that for a fact. Ed!*) Were there any variations of these basic colours? I have three cars, all Blue, all "Venetian"!!

As I said, the fourth digit always appears to be a 1, so I don't know whether it is part of the colour code or not, but think it is the start of the next section of the code.

According to the book, the following 3 digits indicate the model, so, if we take the 4th, 5th & 6th digits of Moyra's car, 147, is a saloon DL, and from the records :-

141 - Saloon  
142 - Estate  
147 - Saloon DL  
148 - Estate DL  
149 - Van

The next part of the code is the serial number, and should be a five digit number. For the Scimitar Reliant used a series of numbers starting 01001, and it looks as though the same applied to the Kitten range, and looking at the numbers in the Register, there would appear to be more than one series of numbers. so did each model type have its own series of numbers ?

What's the point of all this you might ask. An accurate record of serial numbers would make it easier to estimate how many of each type of body were produced by Reliant, and help to satisfy the curiosity of nuts like me who have nothing better to do than count them. Yes Brian I said count them, not own them, though (according to my better half) some of us are having a good attempt at that too!

Now, don't all rush out at once, the strain on the National Grid when you all switch on those garage lights (*that's all very well for those of us with garages, and lights in them - Ed!*) to see these numbers, might cause a power failure, but how about checking them in your own good time, against the above criteria, and let Brian have the results. Some of the data plates on the bulkhead are extremely difficult to read accurately, so its best to check the number stamped on the left hand chassis rail in the engine compartment, just beside and behind the alternator.

Les Cruickshank - Dundee

*Thank you Les, as I said earlier there are quite a number of Kittens on the Register which to my knowledge are not the same colour they were when they left the factory, and that is not just the effect of neglect and sunlight that I am talking about. For instance I do not think Reliant produced any Black Kittens (just wait for the response to that one!) and I know of four Black ones. Also my "new" red saloon, Keith Parrott's old car, was brown, Donald Jack's estate was Green, and I don't know what colour his saloon was, but he painted them both with the same white paint he used on his Scimitar.*

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*I received a letter today addressed to :-*

*The Reliant Kitten Register  
c/o Brian "Mines a shiny red one" Marshall,  
16 Glendee Gardens - etc.*

*It came from John Blagburn in Shilbottle and he has seen my new car, well truth to be told it is Moira's new car, the rebuilt saloon with the galvanised chassis which was advertised in here a few months ago. Anyway, he went on to say:-*

Dear Brian,

18/3/96

Thanks once again for your splendid efforts in getting those springy bits to me and consequently coming to the rescue of self and Kitten yet again.

The way in which the wee thing now handles and rides has reaffirmed the wisdom of swallowing the old pride and going brand new, so please feel free to let other Register subscribers know that, until they throw away those O.E. dampers and springs, they cannot begin to enjoy their Kittens fully ! The Phil Hallam sourced parts are a doddle to fit (*O.K. I once got it wrong trying to put a pair on Alan's Kitten, but that was due to a lack of commonsense on my part*) They will not only make the handling much sharper, but the car to which they are fitted

will be less affected by side-winds, will turn in more precisely and will respond to the helm in a manner Mini drivers dream about in their beds at night:

But, I hear you all say; " What about the disadvantages, John?. " Well, the dynamics of the things are beyond criticism, however a major problem does indeed exist - *Oh jings, what's coming now, Ed?!!* - it is all very well that the bits come in a lovely red finish, springs too, but - think on this - how are we supposed to admire them once they are fitted, without crawling under the car? This is a huge dilemma for me, so I would suggest that Kitten owners thinking of fitting a pair, purchase two pairs, and mount the second lot in a suitable hardwood, glass fronted display case, hey presto, problem solved! Happy Kittenning.

T.T.F.N. John Blagburn

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For Sale : Barbara Neal's Jimp

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Very Low Mileage Fox, I think it is about 19,000 miles from new ! Contact John Riley.

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Free to a good home, Kitten body shell and other bits, contact Brian Midgley.

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Wanted: One or two 850cc engines, preferably in the South of England, for Guy Buntinx.

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It has been an edition or two since I made much of the parts which are available through the Register, and indeed the parts which are becoming difficult and or prohibitively expensive, to obtain.

The rod from the steering rack to the bottom of the steering column is no longer available, though it is only a bit longer than a Rialto one, still available - anyone care to lengthen a few ? I can still supply serviceable secondhand ones. I can also supply secondhand, stripped, cleaned and inspected, and reassembled with new rubber gaiters, and painted, steering racks for £25.00 exchange, plus P & P. I see that John Box has a new one for sale.

John Box can also be of assistance with front suspension bits, but not the dampers, talk to Phil Hallam about them, and just get the ones with the adjustable spring seats, rather than the standard ones, for all the difference in cost, the ability to fit the springs without using a spring compressor, and then be able to adjust the ride height so simply, is more than worth the extra few pounds. I should point out that I am not suggesting that you should not go the whole way, and get adjustable dampers too, if that is what you want!

We still have two alloy rocker covers in stock, and of course own the pattern, so more can easily be produced. These come complete with neoprene gasket and chromed tube nuts, and cost £35.00 plus postage.

We also now have a pair of 4 leaf rear springs in stock, and a reconditioned clutch, also, when I find it, a water pump.

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To those of you who were good enough to write to me after receiving edition number 9, and since, my thanks, in particular John Wardley and Guy Stanley, who both wrote stories, which, had I the space, would surely have found their way in here. However, I have those postage weight restrictions to consider, and time too - instead of the current register details this time, and since I did say that I'd give that a rest for a while, I will risk infringing a copyright, and beg forgiveness from those concerned, should they still be about, and let the last word be on this speedo calibration thing !

We have Jim Clarke to thank for the gospel according to Reliant - you see, they changed the number of teeth on the drive gear!! Oh NO, I'll need to swap all those old gearboxes back again!!!