



MEWSLETTER 100

May - June 2011

Edited and distributed by Brian W Marshall,
16 Glendee Gardens, Renfrew, PA4 0AL

☎ 0141 886 6117 www.info@kitreg.org.uk



Much debating has taken place concerning which car to put on our 100th edition. Eventually an arbitrary decision was made to create a montage of cars featured on previous covers, covering most of the models that the Register caters for.....

Here's to the 200th!!!

The Register caters for all the under 1 litre Reliant 4-wheeled vehicles plus all of their derivatives: Foxes, Rebels, Tempests, Salamanders, Ciphers, Jimps, Asquiths, Vantiques and all other specials including the Liege.....



The Reliant Kitten Register

Rebel parts stock held by: - Adrian Hanwell

New Kitten / Fox / Rebel parts stock held by Brian Marshall
E-Mail info@kitreg.org.uk

Rebel alternative parts list contact: John Blagburn
E-mail: wirelessjohn@gmail.com

Kitten alternative parts list: ****Situation vacant****. Contact the Editor to volunteer.

Fox alternative parts list contact: Duncan Bradford, 52 St. Phillips Road, Norwich, NR2 3BN.
E-Mail hidunc@ntlworld.com

Our Mutual Aid Spares scheme is run for us by Phil Hallam 4, Greenhead Holding, Stevenston, Ayrshire KA20 4JX

Tempest Registrar: Martin Seymour 19 Cedar Court, Churchfields, South Woodford, London E18 2QU
E-mail mseymour@freenetname.co.uk

Mewsletter pictures – should be sent to John Pearce at Toddbury Farm, Slapton Road, Lt Billington, Beds. LU7 9BP
E-mail john@atodini.co.uk

The Register is a member of the FBHVC, which monitors UK & EU legislation and lobbies on our behalf to protect our freedom to use vehicles of all ages on the roads. Readers are invited to show their own support of this worthy cause by becoming members in their own right. Contact the editor for details.

It should be noted that opinions and ideas, information and advice printed in this publication are as recommended by our readers and others, and, while believed to be accurate and correct, such information is given in good faith, and it does not necessarily have the approval of the Reliant Kitten Register, and cannot be guaranteed by either the Editor, or the Reliant Kitten Register. Owners must satisfy themselves as to the suitability of any suggestions made within these pages, as no responsibility can be accepted.

Web page: <http://www.kitreg.org.uk> or have a look at <http://www.reliantkitten.co.uk>

Dinky Cars

RELIANT SPECIALIST

Wennington Marsh Farm, Wennington Road
Rainham Essex RM13 9EE

Tel: 07958 246891

**SALES, SPARES, REPAIRS,
ENGINE RECONDITIONING**

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Erddig - July 3rd 2011

At Erddig we will have a designated area in the small walled carpark, which is quite a nice setting. We will be issued, on arrival, with free entry tickets to the gardens and outbuildings (Workshops, Carriage Store Etc & more importantly the Tea Room!) this ticket can be upgraded to include entry to the house at a cost of £4 with gift aid or £3.60 standard.

Our front cover for this edition is, like so many things in life, a compromise, I never used to have difficulty making decisions, but....

Anyway, from top left clockwise we have – The Jacobs Asquith van, my old Rebel saloon, (still on the road with George Kerr from Beith in Ayrshire), A blue Cipher, a red Liege, A blue LHD, Kitten saloon, a green Jimp, a Tempest a Vantique (the last one made) and a Fox.

Where are they now? Well John (Pearce) had suggested that it would be a good idea for me to bring everyone up to date in that regard, and you were not wrong John, but! (the blue Rebel saloon apart) I have been

a bit slow lately, and, thankfully, I am not short of material at the moment (**Thank You** to all who have helped put me in that happy position, I am envied by Editors throughout the land at the moment!)

After all the talk of early planning, thinking ahead and wot not, here I am on the third of January 2011, having a look at what we have in store for our 100th edition – and the document only existed in my mind! So, first thing to do is create it – ahh, the biggest template I have is a dozen A4 sheets, that's 48 pages, plus the cover, so you can forget the dream of 100 pages – I can hear the huge sighs of relief.....

A time then for reflection, and looking forward too. In the beginning, oh my how I cringe now looking back at the early editions. But one has to start somewhere if any endeavor is to thrive, and I am in no doubt whatsoever that we have indeed been of benefit to the survival of the wee Reliants that the Register has grown to represent, engage and encourage over the past couple of decades, and that was after all the main objective, so, mission accomplished then. A pat on the back to those concerned, and there are a fair few folk involved I can tell you.

The list of individuals whose support, enthusiasm, knowledge, expertise and generous encouragement has made all this possible would fill a page or two, and I know I am both imperfect and not without the odd critic – though I can't recall his name now, there was one chap who took real offence at my reference to the fact that the best way to run almost any organisation was by benign dictatorship. He took the time to write and tell me that would be having nothing to do with me in future, clearly I struck a nerve, and I was sorry to have upset him, but, as someone once said, the man who didn't make a mistake, didn't make anything, and I hope you will agree that on the whole, I do not do too bad job of things. Then there was the fellow who wanted me to supply him with the magazines for all the subscribers in his part of the country so that he could distribute them for me, and when I said no thank you, (it is far simpler to treat all the magazines the same way – overseas ones excepted) when doing a mailing, having to select a couple of dozen and make up a special parcel really is more work, not to mention the fact that inevitably those individuals would not receive their copies at the same time as everyone else. He took offence and tried to discredit the Register for some time afterwards, so it has not all been sweetness and light!

As I have said in the past, one should accentuate the positive and not dwell on the unfortunate exceptions.

That said, it is a sad fact that some of the truly outstanding individuals we have met over the years are no longer with us, but if they have transport in heaven, I am sure their skills will have found good use.

So, where are we now? A couple of decades after this all started, almost half a century since the first Rebel was made and 36 years after the first Kittens appeared, even the Fox is over a quarter of a century old now.

Back in 1991 I struggled to get the first edition of what was to become the Mewsletter out by the end of the year, 1992 saw just a couple of editions, and then we settled down to putting it out quarterly till 2000. Which explains the maths, i.e. given that we have for the past decade put out 6 editions a year, how does it come about that after 20 years we are only now at edition 100, just an average of 5 a year.

Had I been smart, like George Mitchell for example with his magazine for the Volvo 300 series folk, I should (isn't hindsight wonderful?!) have had ever increasing page numbers through the editions, that would have made indexing a whole lot simpler, but it is I fear rather too late to start now – future generations of Editors please note. A sobering thought but had I done that this would be something like page number 2,456 or so. If you want to know how many words that is you can do the maths yourself, but it must be a lot! (don't forget we have been including the odd picture this past 3 or 4 years!)

The ability of human beings to endure things is remarkable, we still have a dozen or so of the first 100 folk who joined the Register in the early years with us today, and the reason that the vast majority who have left us have done so, is because they no longer have the car. That said we continue to enjoy the support of an increasing number of ex-owners, as well as some potential owners, indeed nigh on 20% of those reading this do not currently own a qualifying vehicle – what a glutton for punishment you are! But your continued support does mean a lot, and really is appreciated. It is a substantial part of what makes doing this so worthwhile and enjoyable. Seriously, **thank you** - (and no, you can't have a fee for providing therapeutic services!)

At the risk of offending those whom I may inadvertently omit from it, I do feel that special mention ought to be made to a few individuals whose help and advice has been of immeasurable assistance over the years. I'll make it alphabetical as I would really struggle to give them any other kind of priority. John Blagburn, John Box, Duncan Bradford, Peter Davis, Dennis (of Michaels), Les Cruickshank, Keith Gittus, Dick Goodall, Phil Hallam, Adrian Hanwell, Terry Horler, Moira Marshall, Brian Millar, John Pearce, Susan Pearce, Richard Plaxton, Martin Seymour, Alan Shaw, Graeme Shaw, Dave Smith, Les Smith, Alan Osborn, Tom Wardley, Paul Wheatley, and of course Sandy Riddoch who first encouraged me to get on with it two decades ago.

There have been quite a few others of course over the years, but they are not currently on the mailing list.

Right, listen, equally important stuff – I am often asked (and often wonder!) how many of our wonderful wee cars are left out there, Richard Plaxton – who really is much more on top of his computer than I am on mine – clearly has a grasp of these things, the latest (4th Quarter of 2010) info from the DVLA is :-

Rebel 37 taxed + 39 on SORN giving a total of 76

Kitten 163 taxed + 164 on SORN giving a total of 327

Fox 59 taxed + 89 on SORN giving a total of 148

I have long believed that there were as many off the road as on, uncanny that the number of Rebels and Kittens on SORN is almost exactly the same as the numbers on the road, and even more Foxes, though I believe that Tempest Cars are responsible for at least some of the Foxes being on SORN! About ten of them are bare chassis with running gear but no bodies (yet!)

As Richard rightly pointed out, the usual caveats apply, I know of more than a few that have been off the road so long they are probably not on SORN at all. At least the number of potential vehicles looks encouraging. I wonder how many models can boast more recorded vehicles off the road than on!?

The Guild of Motor Endurance's Sportscar Challenge for 2012 will, I am told, be a 20 country 10 day European Tour running from London to Athens and will take place from May 20th to May 29th 2012. £250 will reserve you a place. The fee for the event will be £1,250 per person. For further details or to be placed on the mailing list, contact Carol Bury, 10 Coronation Street, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 3DA or telephone 01386 45556, or mobile 07739 173995 or e-mail carolbury@hotmail.co.uk

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Our on-line profile attracts a number of contacts – here is one example :-

Hello Info,

6th April 2011

I have been on the hunt for two years now for the right project - A Kitten DL Estate, not a hatch, nor a Fox nor even a Scimitar, but a Kitten DL estate.

I learnt to drive in one of these cars - a red 1976 one, I also got the job of trying to keep it going for my mother as I was a motor vehicle apprentice at the time. The car drove me mad, between the leaking rocker cover to the overheating and 'crazing' paint, 'me mum' was patient in the extreme while I fought with the Kitten and its foibles and my total lack of experience (the car was actually purchased from a motorcycle dealers in Newcastle under Lyme) and how I wish I still had that particular vehicle despite the fights we had, I am now in a position to treat her nice both experience wise and financially.

Anyway a long story short I am looking for a similar vehicle, a little nostalgia whilst I still have the faculties to do so, all the searches that I do keep coming back to your newsletters etc (I am actually getting quite familiar with them now)

I am trying to find a Kitten DL Estate to purchase, the condition isn't as important as the fact that it must be unmolested and original / authentic - no Vauxhall seats, disc brake mods or motorbike engines thanks, the older it is the better - a 1976 would be perfect, in red would be Utopia.

The condition isn't too important providing it isn't a lost cause i.e. the chassis must be sound or repairable. I want a base that I can get as close to the original as possible. If I manage to source a molested one I need to find a source of 'original' parts - and I do ultimately plan to drive it, not leave it stuck in a garage as an ornament.

What do you suggest? I am losing hope of finding such a thing. I'd happily subscribe / join if I had a reason to, then I would become a real nuisance. Since you keep coming up in my searches I might as well include you in the process Neil Kirkland AKA Garfield

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REBELLIOUS CONDUCT 22

Firstly, hearty congratulations to Brian for bringing us 20 years of the Reliant Kitten Register.

Furthermore, for 100 editions of 'Mewsletter'. A momentous milestone that I am sure Brian must be, and certainly should be, very proud to achieve. It's a big 'thank you' from me despite my modest 6 years (almost) of being on board. Here is to the next 20 years and of course – the 200th edition of Mewsletter.

When I joined the RKR in 2005, I soon heard rumblings of a demon inlet manifold modification that, it was suggested, not only improved performance and economy, but it didn't cost anything to do either. Truly, having your cake and eating it – this must be it! It took some time for the technical reasons to appear in Mewsletter so I was wondering exactly what this demon modification was and why it worked. However, it seems that most people who had performed this modification failed to report any improvement in economy or any decisive improvement in performance. The best that seemed to come out of it was slightly smoother running and a sharper pick up. From wondering what it might be that I was missing out on, I have now come to the conclusion that it is hardly worth the cost of a new inlet manifold gasket to carry out this modification. If you have missed out on the big secret, it is to balance out the effect of having longer inlet manifold tracts to front and rear cylinders compared to the inner two cylinders. Most scribes on the subject suggest that the inner two cylinders run 'richer' than the outer pair due to the shorter inlet tract. I think the term 'richer' is an inaccurate description. The carburettor will supply a predetermined amount of fuel in relation to the volume of air passing the jet. Hence, whatever the mass of air being drawn by each cylinder, the fuel to air ratio should be constant. In the case of our engines, the inner cylinders most probably draw a larger mass of air because of the shorter inlet tract. Effectively, this increases the charge volume in these cylinders compared to the outer pair resulting in a higher compression pressure. Rather than a mixture imbalance, the inner cylinders have a better volumetric efficiency than the outer pair due to a shorter inlet passage allowing more air to be drawn in on the intake stroke.

However, the column of air in the inlet tract does not move at a constant speed. As the inlet valve closes, the rush of air is suddenly halted this produces a partial flow reversal. Hence, a pulsating effect takes place, this pulsating effect will vary according to engine speed and the volume of air between the inlet valve and throttle butterfly. Hence the volumetric efficiency of an engine will vary at different speeds. Dependant upon the design of the engine in relation to inlet manifold, cylinder head porting, valve timing and other crucial factors, there will be an optimum speed at which that engine will perform to its best efficiency. Indeed, some engine tuners maintain that a short inlet tract will produce good acceleration whilst a long tract on the same engine will produce higher top end power. The BMC A-series engine has two shared inlet ports and to overcome the inherent imbalance in air flow, a 'scatter' camshaft is available that provides different inlet valve timing on the centre two cylinders. By modifying the Reliant manifold, it possibly only shifts the optimum efficient running speed without actually improving overall efficiency and maximum power output. Certainly, modifying the manifold to pass more air by easing out the restrictive areas will improve top end power, but will not make any real difference at part throttle settings. It could be reasoned that with a standard Reliant manifold, that all cylinders will produce equal efficiency - but not at the same rpm.

The effectiveness of drilling the manifold between the inner and outer tracts may only be realised at a critical engine speed. If you do not drive at this particular speed for any length of time, then most probably, you will not notice any improvement. Some may be fortunate to have drilled the right sized holes in the right place

and at the right angle and then driven at the right speed. Theoretically, a swap to twin carburettors should prove a better solution, or to go the full Monte, a four point fuel injection system. I think not somehow!

Matching the ports between manifold, exhaust and inlet, to the cylinder head and the easing out of restrictive lumps, bumps and sharp radii is certainly good practice but unless you drive with your foot to the floor, one you will hardly benefit from otherwise. With most engines, if you can achieve a 10% improvement in power output with simple, easy to do and inexpensive modifications, then it may be worthwhile. With only 39bhp from the 'big block' 848cc engine, then 3.9bhp seems hardly worth getting your spanners out for. Let's face it, we are not going to frighten any Subaru drivers are we? Then arguably, we need every drop of power that can be mustered just to keep up with today's traffic.

Which brings me onto the life and times of LRF 671K, my Rebel van/estate which is now back in semi-regular usage. It really has been a stalwart this year of the daily commute and may have to remain so. I had it in mind to retire early with a nice financial incentive from my employers – they now think differently – so the daily commute continues. Anyway, apart from replacing a broken clutch return spring and changing an exhaust mounting to stop an annoying rattle on start-up, the Rebel drives on leaving a flaky paint trail wherever it goes.

I am looking forward to July 3rd and a rare gathering of RKR subscribers at Erddig near Wrexham. Hopefully, both LRF and I will be there although I am certain that not all of LRF's paintwork will survive the journey!

Terry Horler

Terry, thanks as ever for your input, hope to see you at Erddig. Ed.

Update from our man in Santiago

Dear Brian,

started in early November 2010.

This is going to be rather long I'm afraid, to try and make amends for my writer's cramp over the last year or two.

Very many thanks, for the lovely classic-motoring Xmas card, that arrived together with the Mewsletter edition in November, featuring the nice blue Reliant Rebel on the cover. It almost got me wishing I had kept that brown Rebel estate that came sans engine, not even the Morris 1000 motor and trans, that having last powered it, had gone AWOL. As you may recall, I bought it together with "**JOHN**", (the yellow Kitten Estate) from Rodney Sterry, a farmer from a village called March near Peterborough, but Mike and Barbara Cowie's sudden and unexpected offer, was just too good to pass up; having two identical Kittens; why even the same colour, just like twins keeping each other company, as they travelled out to the uncharted faraway lands. I offered the brown Rebel to ex-B.A. pilot Bill Dick, when I left Mike Cowie's trailer in his care, but apparently he never took delivery. We yakked away that day with Bill and Tommy McLean for a while, as Bill had flown into Santiago, quite a few times while still an active pilot; alas I later read that he has passed away. It was comforting to hear in one of recent Mewsletters, that his widow now has a new partner to keep her company. Any wee wifey that is prepared to help her husband in this hobby, rather than hinder him or complain as many do, surely has my vote of confidence and approval and I wish her very good luck and many happy years ahead, with her new partner.

When you have only one restoration project, like an "only child" you can give it your undivided attention, during part of one's free time, but when there are about 12-15 seemingly clammering away at you like children, it is a different story.... each in different states of modification and as the more important parts often have to be imported, they often get set aside for a few months or more, before being taken up again.

However, once my two Kittens are finished, they will be very different beasties; like chalk and cheese;

JOCK: the wild Scottish "Bravehearted" warrior from the Highlands hopefully with a rorty high revving Honda H22A engine (220bhp & 163lbs ft) mated to a W50 Toyota/Aisin 5 speed transmission. Do not underrate these Jap boxes as they snick into gear at the bat of an eyelid; Lotus on their upgrade of the Excel SE switched

to the beefier Aisin W58 trans. (I have a W58 trans in my Capri 3 coupled to a Toyota 4 litre V6 motor.) Re. IRS: I have two sets of IRS from wee Suzuki SC100s, but they are trailing link, whereas I favour double wishbones, so I may well opt for the set-up featured in the Haynes Roadster kit manual written by John Gibbs. I also have an E30 BMW IRS set up, but its also trailing link, and incredibly it is just a tad larger than the SC100's set up. The E30 diff, has a long 2.7:1 ratio, to keep the revs lowish on motorways. I am also going to fashion a roll cage for **JOHN**, as he will be used as a fast hack instead of the Golf. I designed and first fashioned from thick cardboard, then from plywood, a "saddle" shaped fuel tank, for use under the Kitten's rear seat, holding about 60 litres. I must get our fuel tank man, to copy it in 1mm sheet steel. Then I may be able to squeeze the spare tyre, where the wee fuel tank usually resides, behind the diff. In Chile, most cars sold are alas, the bread and butter versions, otherwise with the extra import duty they cost an arm and a leg, so special or hotter version's engines, have to be ordered from the USA, Canada, Britain, Germany & Japan. Problems? Yes, a big one!

The Honda H22A engine I ordered, unbeknown to me previously, spins the wrong way round, I suppose I should have figured it out really, as I believe earlier Hondas were the only range of FWD car whose engines sat on the UK's nearside of the engine compartment, whereas the later Honda K20 engine sits on the offside and spins in the correct direction, like all modern FWD cars. The only exceptions I know of, with centrally-located transverse engines, are the classic Mini engines; bolt upright with the trans underneath unfortunately sharing the same 20/50 oil, hence their trans whine away like a good un, whereas the later Peugeot 104 and its siblings, that also had a transmission situated right under the engine, but thankfully with separate oil. In Captain Pug's case, the engines lie backwards, at about 72° to ensure a lower/more rakish bonnet line. If I can flog the H22 and replace it with a K20 engine fine, otherwise....scratch the old conker and ...

First thoughts being stubbornly cheesed off, were of just turning the whole damn engine round 180° and fabricating a bellhousing take-off, braced with steel tubing, from the various bolt on items in front of the water pump, alternator, sump etc etc, but fitting a flywheel onto the nose of the engine where the damper goes and the damper where the flywheel normally goes, which could be a hassle to say the least.

Second thoughts; try to turn both cams round 180°, the starter motor could be re-jigged by my electrician to spin the other way and modify the nose of the starter, likewise the oil pump, water pump, cam belt tensioner etc and hopefully the cam advance mechanism will work just as well, or fit a few K20 bits. What I cannot get hold of, old Tommy McLean in Düsseldorf or another pal in the USA, will have to obtain for me on Ebay.

Over the hill, (the Andes), in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where their predominantly Italian blood is far more "racer oriented" than the predominant Spanish blood of most Chileans; they turn the whole Honda cylinder head round 180° and fit the engine on the off side, as the race cars being LHD, the car then balances out better and they use a VW trans which are manufactured in Argentina by AutoLatina up north in Cordoba, and then substantially beefed up for racing. My pal in London; John Edwards' brother in law, worked there for many years, but now retired, lives in Preston, Lancashire.

I do believe the H22 and K20 probably use the same block, so I could also try and fit a K20 head. Why is life never easy?

In retrospect, a best idea would have been to get the whole Honda set up from a S2000 sports car; 2 litre engine with 240bhp, trans and rear diff, then no problems, but alas I did not. On the basis that "If a job is worth doing, then it is worth doing well" I may just order the trans and diff from the USA and be done with my problems.

Years ago, during the early sixties, looking in Hot-Rod magazine, fellows in the USA, fitted Chevy Corvair flat six engines, to VW Beetles and VW camper vans, still using the VW transaxle and ended up with 4 reverse and one forward, (just like Italian WW2 tanks), whereupon they then either had to use the Corvair transaxle, or turn the Crown wheel of the Beetle box through 180°.

Meanwhile, I have been asking around and it seems gearboxes CAN be rotated the "wrong way round so to speak", and still function properly, so I shall give it a try and the diff I can just turn upside down and solve the problem, so with that in mind, I may take up the project again.

Aside from that I have everything else for the plot: The FS (front steer) Renault 5 steering rack, the casing is made of cast alloy and looks much beefier; being made to also handle front wheel drive torque-steer,

but the RWD FS Chevette rack, has the casing made of tubular steel, I prefer the latter as it is more compact. I have three of each, as my classic Mini (project: mid engine, like in Z-Cars from Aldbrough east of Hull) will be getting the RS (rear steer) rack, replaced by an FS rack, a RHD RS Mini rack, could also be fitted as a LHD FS Mini rack and thus moved in front of the wheel line just like on the Kittens, the Mini uprights have to be swapped over so the upright extension that mates to the rack is now pointing forwards. The reason for all this trouble is to thus leave the steering column much nearer the horizontal and the steering wheel almost vertical; I really hate the present bus-like stance of the Mini steering wheel. I have a few Toyota Corolla steering columns for my projects, with wee UJs at each end of the steering shaft, to reach down to the FS rack.

Older Toyotas have very precise switch-gear, made of metal and fitted either side of the steering wheel, compared to the plasticky ones some other makes have. The one on my current daily hack a 1990 VW Golf GTI, is not a patch compared to the one on my back up hack; a 1980 Toyota Celica, but whereas my Toyota was built in Japan, the Golf not built in Germany, rather was assembled in Mexico, with only a German engine and trans, which may account for it.

At the front of the Kitten; new Nissan V-16/Sentra hubs, with brand new 11" vented discs, made by Quinton Hazel, I suspect intended for a 405 Peugeot, with two piston Citroën Visa alloy callipers. The wee Citroën C15 vans use similar alloy callipers. The Canadian semi-metallic pads I obtained are surely big enough.

Rear discs also about 11" vented Quinton Hazel but with Citroën GS alloy callipers. These though fitted inboard either side of the GS transaxle front of the GS, come with an extra handbrake fixture. Curiously though the Citroën GS car is larger and heavier than the two cylinder 652cc Visa, the pads are smaller and there are small separate circular pads for the handbrake fixture. I could not find the correct round shaped pads anywhere, so I just had some made locally fitted to the original backing plates. They are glued on, then cured in an oven, so should be safe enough, otherwise a pair of rivets might be advisable, sort of belt and braces. These Citroën callipers are for unvented rotors, so a pair of alloy spacer plates will have to be made and sandwiched between them.

Jock's wheels are BMW E30; 6" by 13" alloy wheels with 205/60-13 tyres, Instruments I have Smiths, off an MGB. The grill will be modded to fit round Hella 7" lights as per the Kitten van, plus larger side lights, likewise the rear lighting will also be improved, considerably. In a lightweight car with no crumple zone and so many large 4x4s running around driven by silly women talking on their cellphones 'tis best to be well illuminated at night.

JOHN: in total contrast, is the quiet phlegmatic intellectual Englishman, silently going about his business, not even whirring away like the early morning milk-carts do in the UK. The plot is to use a Toyota Prius series 3 or up, electric motor; with only 67bhp, BUT a whopping 295lbs ft of torque @ 0-1250 rpm. Initially, I will also mate it to another Toyota/Aisan 5 speed trans,(I have about 4 of those stashed away) plus a Mercedes Benz diff, for the extra torque, but as perhaps the only Reliant Kittens in Chile, if not all of Latin America, (are there any in the USA or Canada? as I remember you mentioned one or two had gone out to Australia) if one ever has a wee prang in one, I can take a mould of the damaged part, off the other one, for a fix. This electric car, was initially intended if fuel prices ever got out of hand, which they threaten to every ten years or so. When I returned in 1978 from my 18 years in the UK, petrol out here was pretty rough stuff, seemingly not far short of paraffin with only 82 and 92 octane and cost about 13 and 15p a litre, so racing chappies with over 9:1 compression, had to use 100/130 octane AVGAS. Now we have: 93, 95 and 97 octane and it costs between 90p and 110p a litre and if it went up much further, **John** would make a lot of sense. I remember back in the late sixties in the UK, my old Jag thrived on the 101 octane which was then available. Actually, when I am older and whiter for my retirement, John might well be used much more, to glide to and from the supermarket, the hardware store and the..... I was going to say petrol pump, but thankfully no need.

However just like ones bally cellphone; do not forget to plug it in every night! Oh yes and don't forget to grease those joints. (who said that?) Sometimes I feel my knees could do with a good dollop of grease.

The main crucial issue with **John** are the infamous lithium batteries which can be very costly. The Toyota Prius series 3, engine I ordered, alas has not yet arrived from the USA. The Nissan Leaf (typical silly greenie name!) is theoretically the first non hybrid all electric car, not just announced, but currently on sale, so we shall follow its progress with interest. But the car is reputedly priced at US\$25,000 and that is without batteries which will have to be leased otherwise the price might almost double. I also saw and sat in, a wee Mitsubishi I-MiEV all electric car at our car shows here, but only a prototype. It is nice, being far "dinkier" and

more compact than the Leaf, in fact it's not much larger than a Kitten estate, but with hardly any bonnet, interior space is naturally greater and I see it has very recently been launched in Japan and Australia. If you run out of amps in Aussie, do you get a willing kangaroo to tow you in! How do you tempt a roo except with a female roo? Do they eat carrots, wheat or grass, would a nice nosebag full of freshly cut lawn do the trick and how do you keep it fresh in the Aussie heat?

If however an impeccable Japanese gentleman, runs out of amps in Japan, and is stranded on the motorway, then perhaps their oriental code of honour, forces him to commit hara-kiri!

Though lithium batteries like any new technology released in the western world by greedy capitalists, are very dear, through Alibaba, direct from the factory, I have discovered in China a few very reasonably priced sources for what I need, i.e.: a largish lithium battery under the Kitten bonnet to weigh no more than 80-100kgs 180-220lbs (perhaps even a trifle less weight up front; say 60-80kgs, might be enough), fitted where the engine would normally lie, as the electric motor only takes up the space inside of the bellhousing, However since I will still be fitting a flywheel, clutch and a W50 Toyota 5 speed trans I may have to fit the thinnish motor just in front and still leave room for the large battery as there will be no radiator. I guess for a car heater, one just finds an electric blower with internal elements. Do you need a fan blowing onto the battery, to keep it cool? I also would like to fit two smaller, back up batteries, say 15-25kgs each, would sit under the rear seat either side of the propshaft tunnel where the saddle tank goes in Jock. What is harder to workout, is how they use the electric motor as brakes/cum battery charger. Maybe just lifting the throttle pedal or rheostat, lift it a little and it brakes a little, lift it a lot and it brakes a lot, ideal really for a one legged person, but if the accelerator is sprung and your foot ever slides off the throttle by mistake, you will surely be projected through the windscreen, if like me you hate seatbelts. I only use them on motorways, at high speed. Our limit here is now 120kph or 75mph. I do not think I will need a roll cage in John, as it will be for more tranquil commuting in town.

Alas, the spanner in the works, last year was the bally earthquake repairs that have kept me very busy all of this year, damage thankfully here in Santiago with the 27-2-2010 "shake" 8.4 on the Richter scale was not as damaging to us as the 5-3-1985 version that was 7.8 on the Richter scale.

Brian, to digress slightly, I adored your colourful Xmas card, which featured a very nice Riley RM series, filling up with petrol at Hillside Garage and an Austin A30 or A35, keeping out of the cold, in the good company of an early Austin Healey 3000, also inside the showroom. (During my misspent youth, I used to eat big Healeys for breakfast, in my XK150 3.8S FHC during the late sixties and early seventies when living up in Newcastle, and bombing down the A1M to and from the Croft circuit on race days. To think we only used 185/70 by 16" Pirelli Cinturatos or Dunlop RS tyres on wire wheels. Some pals in the XK club, later fitted the V12 E-types 7" by 15" wire wheels with 205/70 by 15" Dunlops. Why even my wee daily hack; 1990 Golf GTI 1.8 uses 195/65-14).

A family friend in the fifties out here in Chile, had an all black RM series even with RHD plus the typical canvas roof, perhaps a preview of the vinyl covered roofs of the late sixties/early seventies. (Question: In the rain sodden U.K. especially north of Hadrian's Wall, did the canvas roofs not cause premature rot or were they wax impregnated, like military canvas?). Out here in the fifties we saw a few A35 cars and the very rare A30/A35 pick-ups with their spare tyre bolted to the back of the pick-up box looking rather cute, rather than bolted under it, just behind the diff. Morris 1000 pick-ups were more popular and more practical with a larger box. Another Brit pal, had a RHD Lanchester with the weird pre-selector box, and a third friend of my grandparents had a lovely old RHD SS saloon with wire wheels, which I deeply regret not buying when he passed away, to keep my current LHD XK120 roadster in more appropriate company. Brother Charles' is a fixed head.

I had your Xmas card colour-photocopied in A4 size and framed, to hang up in my workshop. American cars being more low-tech were no dearer, often cheaper, as many still had side valve engines, being better able to handle the awful roads we had back then, and the higher consumption was no worry, as petrol in those days really was dirt cheap. Today in Venezuela, you can still get a litre of petrol for about 15p, as friends of mine who went over to represent Chile in golf matches have confirmed. Makes one want to bring a tanker full and park it in a warehouse, but petrol unlike diesel fuel, does not keep.

What an amusing wee car/buggy the Caribbean/Reef Cub is and far better looking, than the Mini Moke or the Citroën Mehari, beach cars as they used to be called in the sixties. They were theoretically ideal for summers, but now with global warming, perhaps not in the UK, but certainly out here, open top cars are so hot

and the air conditioning is useless in one, (only good for giving you cold feet!) so they can only be used, in the early morning, late evening or at night.

I think it is a marvellous idea to have got your son-in-law Colin interested in restoring a Reliant Rebel. When that is done, he can then try his luck on a Kitten, and after that, perhaps you can persuade Thomas Touw to part with a single Cipher sports car, why there are now so many good lightweight and powerful all alloy 16 valve engines about, to make it perform more like a TVR, less like a Spridget, for his lead-footed father-in-law! Why has Thomas suddenly given up on his Ciphers? Collecting old cars is an extension of the old Dinky/Corgi toy syndrome. I should know.

By the way, I never did thank you for those Liege magazines you sent me together with the Mewsletters, at the beginning of 2010. My apologies Brian, blame it on the bally earthquake, that really had many of us biting our nails and in a titter, as to what else would fall, in the countless post-earthquake tremors that followed for the next few months, in fact only this week, whilst in my office we had a 6.8 tremor, so I got under a door frame, just to be safer though I was up on the 4th floor.

I do trust you had a really Merry Xmas, a Happy New Year, with all your family.

Bye for now, Frank.

.....

Frank actually sent twice as many words as you have just read, he did say to edit it, and I have. Frank many thanks for the update, I'll keep more closely in touch now you have access to e-mail. Brian.

.....

Fox's Den

Hello Brian,

10th May 2011

I thought it was about time I wrote about my Fox as I've been a member for a year or more.

I would also like to thank you for all your work on the Mewsletter and for the Register at a wider level

My Fox so far

I bought my car over a year ago and it has not been a great ride so far. In fact it has only been used for about 4 months of that time due to it really not being what I was assured it would be. I won't buy from a dealer again! After being towed home on a strap four times, I thought it was going O.K., till it started making an appalling intermittent clattering noise. So out came the engine. I had already started rebuilding another engine I bought cheap, but Anglian Engines in St, Neots, who I strongly recommend, found the block was so badly corroded internally that it was useless, so I decided to rebuild the one that came with the car. It was a yellow top, but from an anonymous Rialto. The Fox had previously had a FIAT F.I.R.E. engine installed which was removed and sold to John Booth for £150, not as stated to me when I bought the car, but never mind, apparently they don't suit the Fox.

I didn't see any point in re-using the yellow top head as the high compression ratio brings its own problems yet makes very little difference to performance. After all, I was only going to run me and my wife around and maybe the dogs occasionally. No big weights.

So I used the cam and head from the red top engine whose block is now a door stop, except the cam and followers were in a terrible state too, so they were replaced with new from Reliant Spares.

Eventually the block came back from Anglian Engines with new liners, pistons, rings, bearing shells and thrusts and a nicely polished crank which was in good nick.

New valves, oil pump and gaskets also went in, so it's virtually new now. I also found that the flywheel had no bush in it for the gearbox shaft nose, which might have accounted for the noise and the destroyed new clutch just one day after I took delivery of the car!

We got the new engine in last weekend (16/4/11) and I've been putting all the other stuff in the engine bay back on.

While the engine was out I cleaned and painted all the engine bay. The rough mat areas were painted with a great Hammerite-type stuff from the 99p shop and all the smooth areas were painted with the brushing enamel which we bought to repaint the body. Where we live there is an almost constant wind, so there's no chance of spraying the car, hence the enamel, which is a quality HMG product I have used to paint canal boats. Being slightly flexible it is ideal for GRP. But you must use expensive quality brushes.

I did the engine bay with a 1" sable signwriter's brush I used to use on the boats. Two coats are ample.



I also detailed the engine bay by drilling out rivets for things like P-clips and the battery holder hinges and replaced them with black nylon screw fixings that push into 10mm square holes I made with a rasp.

I wanted the rain to go somewhere other than the engine bay, so I made up some aluminium sheet fences which run round the inner edge of the front part of the bay. They were screwed into the GRP with stainless self-tappers and Marineflex polyurethane sealer. I also hammered a cover that protected the area occupied by the heater fan "snail" and screwed that in. Now the rain goes out via brass drains I turned on my little lathe and exits below the headlights.

It also seemed that there was a lack of any real protection for the radiator, so I made a guard out of galvanised mesh and aluminium angle from a local factory's skip! That is trapped by the cover plate forward of the radiator and screwed to the floor of that cavity between rad. and grille/bumper.



Other jobs done while the car actually ran on occasions, was to carpet the load deck and roof lining in the cab. The carpets will be done on the cab floor when I've finished with the engine.

The car came with a big hole in the rear passenger corner, so I filled and blended that in using standard GRP techniques.



I found an aluminium (well Mazak, I suppose) heater blower on ebay for just £9 and restored that as it looks so much nicer than the old brown bakelite thing.

Currently I'm modifying a Spitfire 1500 steering column cowling to fit top AND bottom as the Fox doesn't come with a bottom half!

Finally, so far, I took the door window frames out and repaired where necessary and fitted new double fur lined channel from Woolies. While I did that I also made new door cards from aluminium, which will be veneered in a light wood to suit the period. I have tons of the stuff from my restoration days.

The first job we did was replace the seats with Ligier Microcar high back seats to keep my wife happy, though if I'm honest, I preferred the originals! Despite the enormous amount of expense and annoyance the car has caused me, I still love it to bits and when it DID run well it ran very well indeed and put a big smile on our faces, which no modern box could do. We WILL keep it whatever and I hope we can start to enjoy it very soon, once my son has seen to the wiring!

Cheers, Martin, - No. 877 from Outwell

Thank you Martin, we hope the future is less daunting than the past.

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More on Foxes by Duncan Bradford

Things have been quiet on the Fox front for a while, mainly because they've not misbehaved in spite of being quite heavily used, but if Brian wants some pages filled I'm quite happy to waffle on for a while...

The blue Fox pickup, which I bought new in 1984 and have been heavily using and abusing ever since, has had months off the road due to a mixture of fear and laziness. Just approaching home last time I drove it, I felt a slight crunching click as I put my foot on the clutch. Definitely one of the 2 roll pins securing the clutch release thrust! So no more driving until I've had the box off and replaced both pins. On the other hand, why not rebuild my spare box then swap that on. After all, the original has done well over 100k miles. [That was last June...]

The red estate / convertible is great fun to drive, except in traffic. It has the semi-racing spec engine in that John Box built, and I elected to fit a much-lightened flywheel on it. The result is an engine that hates idling, and can never quite decide what to do, but loves accelerating at high revs. Due to the unusual camshaft profile it has no low-down torque at all, indeed it struggles to pull from 20mph in third, whereas the yellow-top HE engine's cam allows it to pull well from 20mph in top. However, power certainly floods in at high revs, mainly between 5,000 and 6,000 which is as you'd expect for the cam was used to give a high BHP output at the 5,500 rpm working speed of the Reliant fire pump. Interestingly I once was foolhardy enough, on an open and empty dual carriageway, to take it as fast as I could in third gear. The satnav was reading 81mph when I changed to fourth, but it hadn't the torque to maintain that speed, dropping to the low 70s. 81 in third equates to 6,400rpm with the tyres I was using. I know the racers get far higher revs, but I think that's quite enough without the extra bracing they use, and proves an interesting point. Conversely, the standard yellow-top will beat 75mph in top, but gives nowhere near that in third. Maximum happy revs seem to be under 6,000. This gearbox isn't a Fox one, so has a lower geared speedo drive, as well as a leaking rear oil seal. Why not dismantle a second box to rebuild correctly - being a late Fox it needs the gearbox casing for the pre-engaged starter.

Many months on, and up to my neck in more pressing projects, the cats have made nests in among the gearbox display, and I'm chastising myself when James drops in, with a new Foxy acquisition, and happens to mention how slick he has got at rebuilding gearboxes. It was an obvious cue to test out his word, and later he drove off with all the bits. Watch this space!

The Tandy camper has about 10 camping weekends lined up for it this year, so has already had its spring clean and service prior to a very happy weekend 200 miles away at the Wetherby rally over Easter. What weather!

Fortunately I didn't leave the servicing until the last minute, because I found a weeping wheel cylinder on each of the front brake backplates. Quickly found 2 new cylinders from under the bed [my storeplace for the more important spares]. [And it's not for nothing that it's a custom-built double cabin bed high enough to crawl under and stack crates!].

What took me longer to find was the eleven thirty-seconds ring and open ender to service the tiny locating setscrew that holds these cylinders on. I looked in so many 'safe places' I've forgotten which one. Fortunately someone not so close to the problem pointed out that the obvious safe place is in the box with all the new wheel cylinders with a whacking great label on it. Oh, so clever, some people. No-one's yet come up with a way to stop me wasting hours looking for it everywhere else first though. You see you learn quite a lot about yourself with advancing age.

It was on the Wetherby rally that several people, having driven my camper and James' recently-acquired Fox around the site, confessed they had developed a yen for the Fox, but many had been put off by the impression that it was a bit heavy and sluggish.

Now the Fox, at around 600kilos, depending upon what's fitted in the way of bodywork, is a bit weightier than the Kitten, but for that you get a totally different constructional design. I regularly climb on the wings to get onto the camper roof to take photos, and jump back down onto the wing. Been doing so for years, with no damage [to the wing]. The glassfibre is much thicker than on other Reliants, and each panel is cleverly boxed and braced. They are a much sturdier and therefore safer, to my mind, vehicle for today's road conditions.

Despite the extra weight and the aerodynamics of a brick [Tandy = breeze block], I expect to get between 40 and 55mpg [35 and 49 and a bit, with a following wind, for the Tandy] And I keep records of all fuel and mileages, rather sadly, going back years! *(not sad at all Duncan, I actually use a spreadsheet these days! Ed.)*

And the Fox will cruise happily at 65 all day, and 70 if you slow down a bit every now and again. That's by the sat nav, by the way. A true 70 equates to 77 in the blue, 94 in the red and 88 in the Tandy. Never trust a speedo!

Which brings me to another point. Several people who've had Foxes say 'It struggles to get past 50'. Well in that case it must have something seriously wrong with it. Foxes may be different from the rest of the economy Reliant Range, but any Reliant with an 850 engine should have no trouble in topping seventy.

I'm not advocating driving around at high speeds at all. I generally potter about at 50 - 55 in the camper [ok, it's because I HAVE TO] But seriously, a vehicle that struggles to reach 50 is not a happy vehicle, and probably not safe to drive among modern traffic. Mainly though, a vehicle that struggles to perform is obviously not very efficient, and is wasting a good deal of precious fuel.

A year or two back I wrote a 3-part article on exploring the distributor and making sure it was doing what it was supposed to as well as it was supposed to. It no doubt seemed a complex issue for some and not something to bother with for others, but there's a huge bonus for getting something working properly. [Have you even got the correct disi fitted - they all look the same, but it's the internals that do the work, and they cover a huge range of applications]. I know someone who discovered their disi had started out on a Mini. [so of a totally different spec]. Although identical from the outside, replacing it with the correct one soon put a smile on his face. Several people actually rang or emailed me admitting they'd been sceptical about some of my suggestions, but were glad to be proved wrong. One chap, having finally adjusted his timing correctly, realised that because for 30 years a main Reliant dealer had been timing his wrongly to top dead centre [as it was never corrected in the book] he'd been disappointed in each car he'd had and traded up to each newer model; but only now got the performance he'd hoped for. He didn't know whether to be irate or happy.

Anyway, enough waffle, and maybe I'll get on with that other article,

about the carburettor. Unfortunately, although the SU is a marvellous, probably unbeatable, bit of kit, it takes a lot of understanding, and has to put up with a lot of unfair sabotage by people prodding and modding while neglecting to understand the principles on which it works.

Which means it's no mean feat to distil so much into a digestible piece of reading material, but we'll maybe have a go. *Oh do, please. Ed*

Keep yer balljoints greased, as Brian will no doubt say later. Oh, and, while you're there, best check on the brake cylinders ... - and find that spanner.

All the best, Duncan (Bradford) Norfolk, No. 046 hidunc@ntlworld.com

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Kitten Korner

*It occurs to me from time to time that I focus a lot on Rebels within these pages, this is of course the magazine of the Reliant **Kitten** Register, and the absence of more Kitten input reflects the fact that I currently only have the Rebel, and my incoming correspondence does seem to have a bias in that direction. I am naturally grateful to all contributors of course, and, particularly pleased to have the following input from a new subscriber :-*

Dear Brian,

29/04/2011

Regarding a 'Kitten Saga' I can't see a problem with that, although the day job can involve a lot of travelling so not sure how much or how often things will progress. I think episode one could be the transport and delivery, episode two the assessment and plan, and see where it goes from there, photographs are no problem, though, as you know, I have yet to collect the car!

So, the initial restoration plan (regardless of the initial condition assessment), in no specific order as a detailed inspection may reveal far more 'serious' elements that need attention, so don't hold me to it, I may also encounter issues that push me to work in other areas while I wait for parts etc. The list that follows will take place at some point regardless of what else is found - i.e. dead chassis, but I have no plans initially to do a body off restoration. I have a double garage but it is more like a warehouse than a garage because of a pair of Marquees and other festival gear.

- 1 : All suspension bushes replaced, joints and suspension components cleaned, inspected and replaced where necessary, greased where required. All components once cleaned and inspected, if not replaced, will be suitably re-treated i.e. sprayed.
- 2 : All brake components stripped, cleaned, inspected and replaced where necessary. All wheel cylinders and pipework will be replaced regardless, master cylinder will be stripped and inspected, will be rebuilt if possible using new seals. Backplates will be cleaned up, inspected and replaced / repainted using new bolts, springs and adjusters.
- 3 : The steering system will be stripped, cleaned and inspected then repaired and repainted or replaced as needed.
- 4 : All cooling and breather hoses will be replaced.
- 5 : The engine and gearbox mounts will be replaced.
- 6 : The distributor will be replaced as will the fan with an electric fan, the top of the engine and the bay in general will be cleaned up and the SU carb rebuilt - I think I will use your rocker cover too I had so much pain with sealing my mother's Kitten rocker box I can still feel it.
- 7 : I am still undecided whether I will remove the head and convert to unleaded overhauling and decoking at the same time, I probably won't initially at least.
- 8 : All oils will be drained, components flushed and then fluids refilled, the sump will be removed and cleaned out.

I always use Opie oils as my supplier, they have proved to be a good source of the more 'hard to get' products especially for classics and race cars. <http://www.opieoils.co.uk/> their service is top of the line, they won't be beaten on price, they are always willing to hear from car clubs for even more discounts.
- You can get a heavy weight fully synthetic and this is what I shall be <http://www.opieoils.co.uk/p-68899-fuchs-titan-race-pro-r-15w-50-ester-synthetic-engine-oil.aspx> using once the engine internals have been suitably degunged, I realise that most people will choke on the price, but if you consider the oil to be the engines blood, scrimping on it makes no sense to me at all.
- 9 : I may uprate the alternator / battery combination to suit the electric fan if needed.
- 10 : Engine bay will be thoroughly sorted / cleaned / tidied cables and clips replaced where necessary.
- 11 : Electrics - why does Lucas make me so nervous? all connections will be cleaned up, all cables will be checked for 'hardening' / abrasions, cracks etc. etc., and will be replaced as needed.
- 12 : The doors / windows and other ancillaries will be attended to but my priority will be the mechanicals for now.
- 13 : The interior will be stripped out and the overall condition of wiring etc assessed, at this point things like

window seals and leaks will be addressed.

14 : Interior components refurbished if needed.

I have already seen what you mean re the wheels etc and may run day to day on 12" it looks like this could be a substantial spend - can you advise the best rim size - 4.5J or 5?, in any case I won't be selling or disposing of any original parts anyway so I will still need a decent set of 145x10's.

I am not totally anal about 'original' but the spirit of original will be adhered to even if using 'non' original parts.

I have a budget in mind for the work of £1k so the final cost will likely be three times that if my normal project path is followed but I need a bit of discipline on this one as things are getting tight these days, I do cringe when people think that £50 is expensive for a ball joint or £20 expensive for a steering rack or something - compared to some of the cars I have had in my day that's cheap. I replaced the brakes all round on the Landcruiser last year and the job cost over £1500 !!

Do you have any source of a galvanised chassis or new chassis in A1 condition that could be galvanised? I have seen the state of some members chassis and it does make me nervous - I don't like welding, don't have the facility for it and am too much a control freak to trust the work of people I don't know (too many garage/MOT welders are not good welders - they are mechanics who can weld - there is a HUGE difference.) -- I don't want to spend more on tools than the restoration, been there, done that, not interested.

Best regards, Garfield (AKA Neil Kirkland) - No. 916 from Hyde

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My Kitten History

By Charles Barker from Lincoln

Well Brian,

24/4/2011

You asked for it. In the 1980's a friend of mine had a Reliant three wheeler which I rode in now and again, I quite liked it, but it didn't seem quite right. (In my opinion if you're going to have a three wheeler, get a Morgan).

Then in about 1986 ish another friend bought a Kitten (THN 62S) and I went to see it and had a ride in it, I was sold on the idea.

A couple of weeks later my friend told me there was one for sale near him, so we went to look at it.

It was a van conversion (WDO 781T I think) it had been stored for three years and didn't run, but we thought it was sound, so I bought it and had it transported to my friends smallholding.

I purchased a new battery and it started immediately, and I quickly turned it off as gauges were going in reverse, (previous owner had fitted battery back to front) no damage was done.

The clutch was worn out. I found a new one from a local motor factors that they had for years, I got it cheap as they didn't know what it had cost them. I had another friend fit this for me. Now an ex-friend, a month later the car had clunking noises underneath, because only one bolt was hanging on by two threads holding the prop shaft into gearbox.

The next problem I had was it kept burning points out. I think if I remember that this turned out to be it starting on 12 volts and running on 6 volts. So changed it to 12volt only.

Eventually my friend abused THN 62S by unfair loading (bags of Pig feed etc.) and broke a rear spring. So he gave it to me and as it had a better paint job and a smarter interior than mine, I decided to fix it up and sell WDO 781T. I found a man to make me a spring leaf and match the "spring" on both. (I have contacted this man recently re comments about springs, but he does not want me to advertise him to the club. My lips are sealed.)

So I sold WDO 781T to a young lad who was aware of you from another Club. About a year ago I saw this tarted up & with all sorts of modifications for sale on Ebay at £1,500. Don't know if it sold.

I didn't have much trouble with THN 62S until I had to do an emergency stop on a roundabout, my front nearside wheel stopped but the car didn't. Wheel hub etc. torn off chassis.

The car was recovered to a good mechanic and welder for repair. I got him to remove body because he has been known to forget the bodywork was not steel. I later got a call saying the chassis was "now't special" which down the marsh means knackered.

So I advertised for a chassis and I got a call from Bucknall, would I like one still attached to a Kitten. So I went to have a look and ended up buying PAL163R for a £1 and using what bits were needed from THN 62S to put PAL163R back on the road

This ran very well, the only downside being a leaky sunroof that wouldn't seal (a wet crotch in winter is not pleasant). In the end though I had to sell it due to finances, at the time I had three cars on the road.

So now I have OYC 321P, which hopefully will become my only transport when I am happy that it is reliable etc. Currently I want to refurbish the seat belts (remembered I had seen something in a mewsletter, found it, but the number is incoming calls barred) will try on the net. Also I am looking to change the front seats, do we change seats and rails?

P.S. I have two spare windscreens so will let one go if anybody needs one.

Cheers, Charles (Barker) No. 552 from Lincoln

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The following is self explanatory, the answer to the question from our point of view is sadly not, can you help? Ed.

Hello Brian / John,

May 4th 2011

Here is a question for both of you and the membership (I remembered the details of the Kitten I passed my test in).

Does anyone know the whereabouts of an Orange (it was red dammit) Kitten DL Estate Registration PEH 293R, First registered 2nd August 1976, last tax expired 1st April 1986, is it on the registers books?

There is no export marker and no notification that it has been scrapped, has this car been used for something else? Does anyone know this car or its current location?

If yes please get in touch. Neil No. 916



Hot off the press / ferry / camera, whatever, this picture is unusual for a number of reasons – obviously – it is a Kitten van, pretty rare these days to see one of them on the road, never mind one that has not had side windows fitted. Less obviously it is at Troon in Scotland in May 2011, about to board a ferry for Northern Ireland – and not going on holiday! Eddie Kelly, our man in County Londonderry, beat you to become the new custodian of Gordon Macdonald 's old Kitten, as advertised in the supplement of the last magazine.

Gordon used to clean windows, hence the custom made roof rack, not good for fuel economy I have to say!

Thanks for the picture and up-date Eddie, I hope it serves you well.

.....

Right an odd corner, and a question for all Rebel owners :- We are about to have a small batch of Rebel handbrake and speedo cables made, prices yet to be advised, and that to some extent depends on the quantity, so if you are, or might be interested, now would be the time to talk to me. Ed.

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Technical bit

GEARBOX BREATHER MODIFICATION

Hi Brian,

16/4/11

Just a quick item if you are looking to fill a gap? I have been getting as much use as possible out of the Fox recently with plenty of load fetching and carrying.

One mod that I found worked is shown below which I also passed onto a Liege owner who also found that it worked.

When I first got my Fox I found that the axle front oil seal was leaking and despite looking was unable to locate the breather hole in the axle. To overcome this I fitted a Series Land Rover axle breather on the axle by drilling the casing and fitting the breather, this cured the leak instantly.

Cover top with valve fitted.



As can be seen, almost Reliant designed to fit!

The Land Rover breather is cheap and has a mushroom cap that is free to move and rotate preventing any chance of it blocking up.

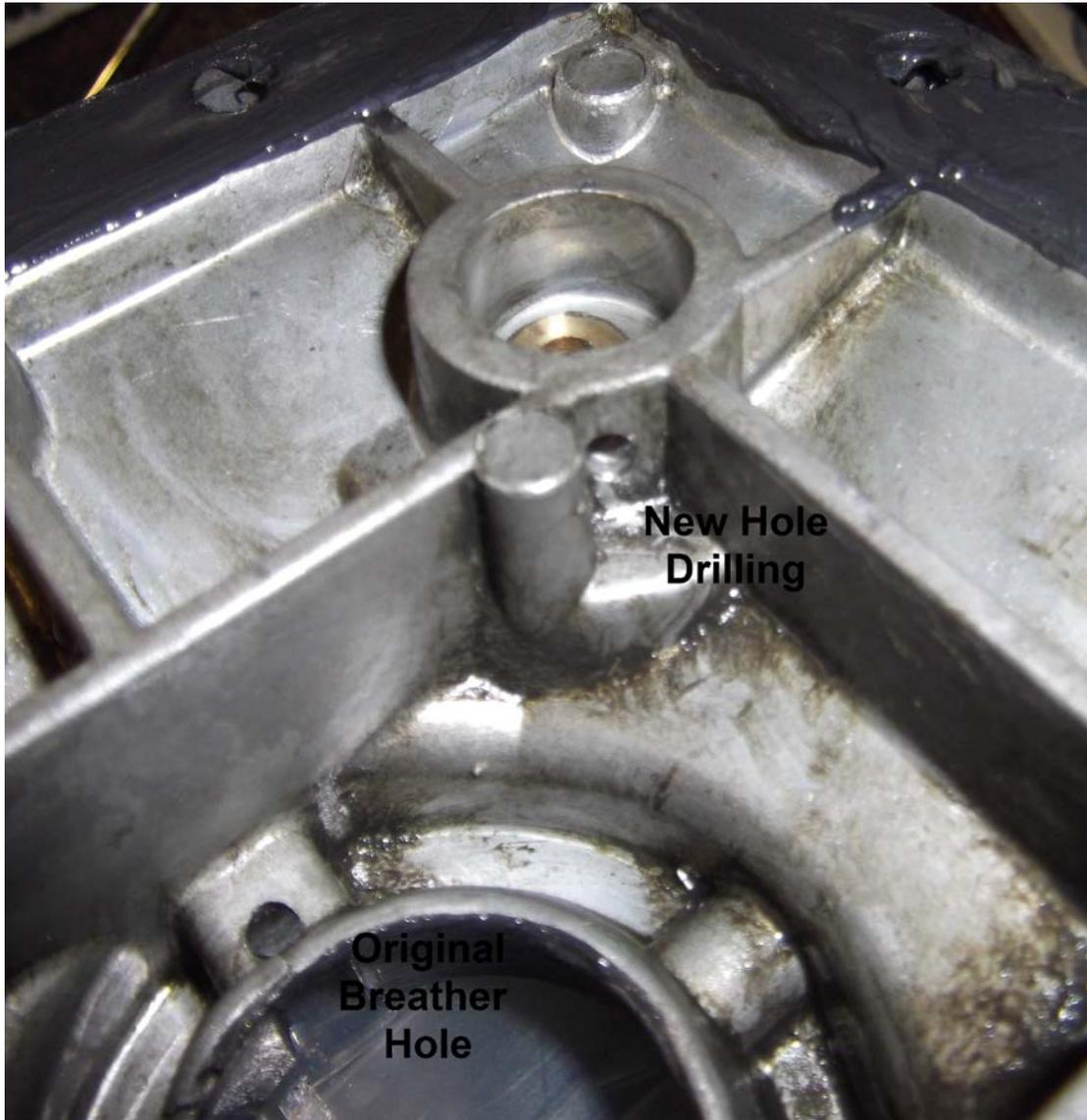
Which brings me to the second modification because the gearbox input shaft oil seal was also leaking on my Fox. I thought I would try fitting another breather on the gearbox, which is handy as the breathers were sold in pairs!

Removing the gearbox cover (not difficult on a Fox) where the round section of casting is towards the rear on one side of the cover, I drilled and fitted the breather, which requires an eighth BSP thread.

The underside of the cover rests on the splash guard gasket underneath which is quite a tight fit as the indented marks on top of the gasket show.

To assist in the relief pressure flow to the valve, the webbing was drilled from the centre section into the round web section on the underside where the new valve was now fitted.

Webbing on the underside and new relief hole drilling.



Reliant do have a breather hole for the gearbox on one side of the cover under the gear stick knuckle pin where it fits into the cover plate. However when the gear stick knuckle pins rests in this recess the breather hole is partially blocked by the pivot pin when located and it does not take long for the hole to block with oil splash from the gears.

The result was another instant cure to the leak from the input shaft oil seal. I know the seals harden a bit with age but it would appear that the pressure build up from the gears spinning and the fact that the original breather hole appears to be designed to become restricted would give the indication of premature seal failure.

The modifications were carried out a few thousand miles ago and the Fox still has a relatively "Dry Bottom"..... ☺

Regards, Les Smith No. 378 from Ashford

Oilite bushes in Reliant flywheel(s)

There are two different sizes, (completely ignoring the years they used a needle roller bearing in some of the 850's) and if you mix early and late flywheels with early and late gearboxes there become three sizes! Someone had a special batch made in brass to accommodate the third size, but that is not necessary as the correct thing is available as an Oilite bush off the shelf at half the price! So, once you understand exactly what you need, the story is :-

The original early one, Regal and Rebel and Rebel 700 :-

- 1) Reliant Part no. 2549 – Oilite bush ref. AI0709-08
($\frac{7}{16}$ " I/D x $\frac{9}{16}$ " O/D x $\frac{1}{2}$ " Long)

The late Rebel 750 and Robin / Kitten / Fox uses a :-

- 2) Reliant Part no. 25407 – Oilite bush ref. AI0811-08
($\frac{1}{2}$ " I/D x $\frac{11}{16}$ " O/D x $\frac{1}{2}$ " Long)

And if you use the lighter 850 flywheel with an early Rebel or Regal gearbox you'll be wanting :-

- 3) Oilite ref. AI0711-08
($\frac{7}{16}$ " I/D x $\frac{11}{16}$ " O/D x $\frac{1}{2}$ " Long)

Simplybearings.co.uk (01942 269837) do them all ex stock, off the shelf and provide an excellent service.

Many thanks to Richard Plaxton for holding my hand on this, James and John were both involved as well in providing all three types, between them, and at the end of the day the Rebel had the 700 flywheel anyway! Ed.

~~~~~

Me and Reliants,

20/02/2011

First let me introduce myself. I am Erik Hofman, born and raised in Wierden, a small town in the east of the Netherlands. I am 42 years old. Married to Angelique, we have two kids, Jesper and Oskar. I have been a Reliant owner since 1993. First love was a 1976 Scimitar GTE. Since then I have never been Reliant-less. The first years were rather simple, with just the Scimitar.

My first Kitten was a non runner. I spotted an old car, a Austin A135 Princess in the yard of a USA car trader. Next to the Austin I noticed a known shape, a Kitten saloon. It turned out the trader was a former Reliant dealer! That car once belonged to his brother. After engine failure it was put aside. The Kitten was beyond rescue, with no valid registration and no engine. But I bought it anyway. I thought someone might need it. I was right, Thomas Touw bought the car, because it had a very good body. It was used to restore his mother's Kitten.

Later many other Reliants were bought and sold. In the sports range a LHD Scimitar GTE se5, a few LHD Scimitar 1800ti's. In the economy range a LHD Robin Van, a LHD Kitten, a Regal mk2. The current fleet is a Scimitar GTC, a Scimitar SS1 1600 and a Regal MK6. Some day I will get myself a Rebel!

The internet is very good for classic car owners. Almost all cars I found or got offered through internet. In the late 90's I started a website about Reliants. The website grew and now is <http://www.scimitar.demon.nl>

I am a member of the RKR, the RSSOC-NL and the RSSOC. For the RSSOC I am a member of the webteam, I am one of the forum administrators of Scimitarweb. I am also a keen reader and sometimes poster on R3W, and Driepoot.net, a Dutch Reliant forum.

I guess this tells who I am. Ciao, Erik Hofman No. 740 the Netherlands

*Erik, thank you, responses such as yours have made it easy for me to fill this bumper edition with minimal stress, indeed what to hold back was the problem – Oliver Smith kindly gave me a write up, with good pictures, of his Rebel rebuild, but as one of his cars will be on the cover of the next edition, I took it out and held it over. Your story could well be the start of a wider introduction – any volunteers for next time?*

.....

## *Giving up wine*

I was walking down the street when I was accosted by a particularly dirty and shabby-looking homeless woman who asked me for a couple of quid for dinner.

I took out my wallet, got out ten pounds and asked, 'If I give you this money, will you buy wine with it instead of dinner?'

'No, I had to stop drinking years ago', the homeless woman told me.

'Will you use it to go shopping instead of buying food?' I asked.

'No, I don't waste time shopping,' the homeless woman said. 'I need to spend all my time trying to stay alive.'

'Will you spend this on a beauty salon instead of food?' I asked.

'Are you NUTS!' replied the homeless woman. I haven't had my hair done in 20 years!'

'Well, I said, 'I'm not going to give you the money. Instead, I'm going to take you out for dinner with my husband and me tonight.'

The homeless woman was shocked. 'Won't your husband be furious with you for doing that? I know I'm dirty, and I probably smell pretty disgusting.'

I said, 'That's okay. It's important for him to see what a woman looks like after she has given up shopping, hair appointments, and wine.'

.....

## **From the Federation**

Honestly, these good folk do so much it is often difficult to single out a brief summary.

They have chosen to adopt the larger A4 size for their newsletter, personally I am very happy with our A5 sized offering. I will try to be objective about their new format after a couple of editions.

Meantime, the survey mentioned last time would be a good thing to do if you have not done so already – details over.

## IMPORTANT SURVEY

**The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs exists to ensure that we all continue to have the right to use our vehicles on the road - whatever their age.**

**It does this by lobbying politicians and government officials but it can only be really effective if it is armed with accurate information about the interests**

**it represents, such as the number of people involved and the number of vehicles they own as well as the value the movement brings to the economy.**

**FBHVC's last survey was in 2006, when the gross value of the movement was shown to be in excess of £3bn annual expenditure. This now needs to be brought up to date, so a new survey has been started.**

**We urge all our members to take part and to encourage their friends to do so as well: the more people who do, the more accurate the results will be, and the more accurate the results are, the better FBHVC will be able to protect all our interests.**

**The simplest way to participate is to go to [www.fbhvc.co.uk](http://www.fbhvc.co.uk) and click the link to the survey. The link will open early in May and remain open until the end of July.**

**If you prefer to complete a paper questionnaire, please send a C5 stamped addressed envelope to FBHVC, Kernshill, Shute Street, Stogumber, Taunton. TA4 3TU**

*O.K., it occurs to me that I ought to delegate in an effort to not only make my life easier, but to provide you with both regular appropriate updates, and to help avoid stagnation and too much routine. In short would any of the recipients of copies of the Federation's newsletter care to take on board the regular creation of a page (or two) of Federation news for the Mewsletter? If you are up for that undertaking and do not currently receive a copy, let me know and I will have you added to the mailing list. Ed.*

Hi Brian,

25<sup>th</sup> April 2011

I just thought you might be interested to know that I've finally completed my "back burner" project to design and fit front disc brakes to Little Lucy. This has been an on/off project for a number of years because I was never in a position to give it the full-time effort needed to design it properly. However, I had got as far as buying some "experimental" discs and alloy calipers four years ago but after some initial work, other things took

priority and the project got put away in the cupboard for a later date.

I had some time off work recently and by coincidence I was in touch with a couple of other Liege owners who had been doing their own brakes conversion. I regained some enthusiasm for mine and got out my old drawings and the brake parts. After dismantling the front suspension, re-measuring everything and making a rough drawing and a template or two in hardboard, I suddenly had a "Eureka" moment. The maths finally worked out and the modifications to the car were finalised.

I designed and drew a caliper mounting to be made in 10mm plate and took my idea to a local engineering company, who already know the car. They were very helpful and keen to help make it work. Thankfully they immediately understood my amateur engineering drawings (my dormant but incomplete engineering college training from 36 years ago did finally come in useful).

Everything fitted together perfectly, with a simple lathe modification to the Kitten wheel hubs to allow the discs to be mounted on them. I was careful to design everything in a way that would minimise machining to the discs themselves, so future replacements would be easy and cheap.

In the event, the discs required a friction surface skim, to allow them to fit inside the calipers, with no other changes.

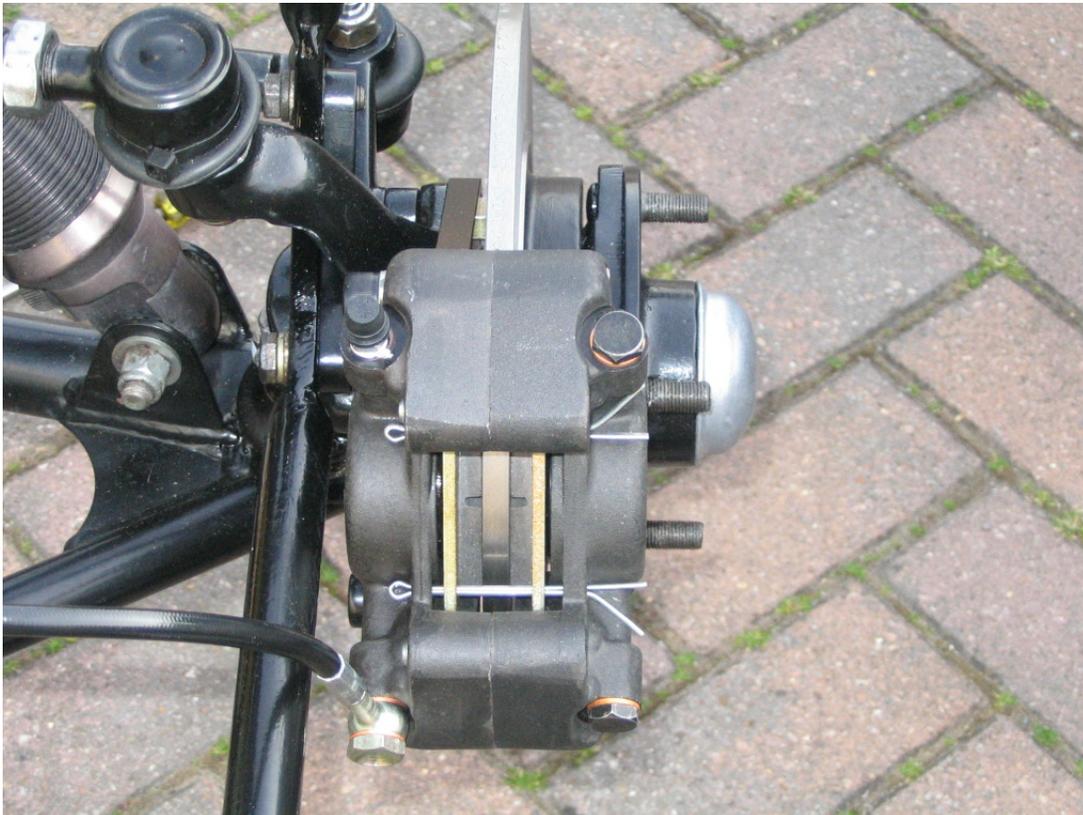
The final part of the project was sourcing a company to make up new steel braided brake lines to my design. This was done very efficiently by Merlin Motorsports, who provide a top-notch product with a very rapid turn-round. I took the opportunity to replace the rear flexible hose (chassis to rear axle) with a similarly upgraded one from the same company.

The brakes now work extremely well. The car pulls up dead straight without drama or locking up, which is a great contrast to the unpredictability of the drums. Despite all new parts being fitted and regular adjustments being made to the drums I was never completely confident in them.





An added bonus was the total simplicity of bleeding the system. It took just ten minutes and a fifth of a litre of brake fluid to obtain a rock solid pedal. With the drums it usually took litres of fluid and sometimes a second attempt the following day to remove all the air from the system.



Unfortunately the conversion is unlikely to fit a Kitten due to lack of room behind the smaller wheels on those cars.

Best regards, Paul Wheatley - No. 422 - Shireoaks

.....

*Recently, when clearing my e-mail in-box, I came across the following, and a confused conversation I had back in March with Tom Wardley suddenly made sense – sorry Tom and Ted!*

Hello Brian, how are you?

Thu. 18th Nov. 2010

I was speaking on phone to Kitten owner Tom Wardley from Thurlaston this morning, and he mentioned you might be interested in contact. Phoned retired Ron Martin who designed TW7 Robin chassis, "he instructed designer Terry Bailey on conversion to Kitten". Terry recently retired from London Taxis. I thought it may be of interest,

Cheers Ted Laban. : Senior Chassis Designer Sportscars, Reliant, Two Gates 1965 >73

1st job SE4 revised rear suspension.

1969 modified 1962 Minivan – see photo



SE5 Scimitar GTE + 4x4

Four wheel bug running prototype, see Dave pooles web site [www.sporting-relants.com](http://www.sporting-relants.com) prototypes.

Invalid car chassis proposal variable transmission.

Rear engined running prototype.

Allegedly retired, currently building Reliant special.

.....

Dear Brian,

9.5.11

You might like to use this item from my "archive" in your 100<sup>th</sup> edition.

It marks the last throw of the dice for the four wheeler chassis. The proposal was looked at by Bean's management at their request but, despite initial support, it became mired in the Bean's internal management fracas which caused the outfit to go down the pan.

However the modified suspension lives on in the "Raptor"! Although delayed by 18 years, the test program will start shortly!

Kind regards, John (Box)



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## PROJECT 'RENARD'

### Object

To develop Fox chassis to accommodate a restyled cab to facilitate the fitment of coachbuilt purpose designed bodywork.

### Method

A simple extension of the rear of the chassis frame would be required involving an increase in material gauge of rear longitudinals and kick ups, a new rear cross member and relocation of the cross tube, to which the rear dampers are attached, and rear spring anchor bushes. Increase in wheelbase thus achieved 9" (228 mm).

### Mechanical

- 1) Legislation requires that light commercials comply with certain rules, one being that of emissions. In order to legalise the 850 Reliant engine it will be necessary to develop it to incorporate a single point injection system and catalytic exhaust. In order to assist low speed flexibility a heavier flywheel is required. An output of 50 BHP should be the goal.
- 2) In order to improve location of the gear lever and reduce manually induced selection loads the gear box will require a remote control mechanism.
- 3) Front suspension wishbones to be redesigned to fit 'Sabre' uprights and disc brakes. (This work has already been done and exists in prototype form).
- 4) Modification of the front suspension increases the track by approx. 55 mm and the rear axle tubes and halfshafts will be extended to match. The stud diameter and pitch of the hubs must be modified and subject to extensive test, it may become necessary to incorporate the larger brakes of the Sabre. If it is necessary to increase the road wheel dia. to 13" a change of axle ratio will be required down to 4.3:1.

Vibration from the longer propshaft may be eliminated by increasing its diameter otherwise a 2 piece shaft with steady bearing will be necessary.

### Body

Using the Fox body as a basis for modification it is proposed to restyle the front by grafting in 'Robin' headlamps, moulding a new bumper and flaring the wheel arches to accommodate the wider wheels and track. The screen pillars will be raked and the door shells modified to incorporate wind up windows. The detachable back panel of the cab will be raked to allow extra legroom and will become an integral part of the cab. Access to mechanical servicing must be improved by redesign of the bonnet opening. The excessively heavy and clumsy Fox seats can be replaced by modified 3 wheeler seats. An adaption of the fascia and centre control console of the 3 wheeler can be fitted to the cab.

## Conclusion

The reduction in weight brought about by the removal of the body rear, trim mods. and reduction of glass area together with improvements in power output should result in a chassis cab allowing the attachment of a variety of body designs that do not jeopardise the vehicle payload. A typical pick up body gives 40% greater volumetric capacity than that of the Fox. The longer wheelbase and wider track will give a greatly improved ride and handling characteristic without noticeable detriment to manoeuvrability and lightness of control.

It is most unlikely that any other manufacturer will produce a vehicle of this size and versatility and, given that high standards of build quality and reliability are maintained, it is envisaged that a market must exist for a considerable period of production.

John Box 29<sup>th</sup> October 1993

---

## *Matters Tempestuous*



Yoland in action at the Telford trial a wee while ago.

More recently Tempest Cars is on the move again. Joe Mason bought the business from John Melody earlier this year. Joe already had a Tempest, fitted with a turbo... Joe can be contacted through his website [www.reliantspares.com](http://www.reliantspares.com) or e-mail him on [joemason@reliantspares.com](mailto:joemason@reliantspares.com) or on telephone 07973470810

ear Brian,

Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup> 2011

Thank you very much for your email and for thinking of me. I did have a Kitten lined up and had even paid a deposit, but it was still sold to someone else, so it fell through.

I was planning to build a Special based on the Kitten chassis and running gear, but because I would have needed to extend the chassis for what I had in mind, I found out that this would involve IVA which I want to avoid at all cost. So, the loss of the Kitten wasn't all bad.

I've now changed direction completely and have acquired a Triumph Spitfire onto which I plan to build an all aluminium MK3 GT6 body. My only worry is that I won't have enough hours left to finish it!!! Time will tell.

Hope we shall meet up one day.

Best regards, John Bonnett

*I just slipped that in to show that I do do other things that you seldom get to hear about. John had enquired about the Register some months back, I had had sent him the bumpf, but he had not replied – no, I am not always so vigilant, but I do try! Yes of course I should have made him aware that Tempests and Vantiques have an extra 7” in the wheelbase department, but he had the Triumph by then, besides, we don't want to encourage these special builders, there are too few unmolested examples of our precious wee cars out there these days!*

Ed.

.....

### Another paint job update from Malcolm Rush

I thought I'd let you have the latest saga of "Paint Job", not on the Kitten this time, but Jan's Metro which has just left the "Paint Shop" ready to return to the road and make room for Kitten to be finished for Erddig.

As stated in the last installment, I have discovered a product called Barcoat, which acts as a sealer between old and new paint to stop any reaction. I used this for the first time on Metro and signs are promising. It states on the tin that one coat measured in microns is sufficient but I can't find microns on my tape measure so I gave it 3 coats for good measure! and left it to dry overnight. This was followed by 6 coats of Monofiller applied directly to the Barcoat without any rubbing down. This time I top-coated with 6 coats of one part paint to one and half thinners followed by 6 coats one part paint to two parts thinners which has given a much better finish, less orange peel and a wetter look.

I think I might try starting with one part paint to two part thinners on Kitten and see what that's like. By the time I've finished spraying I might have just about got it right! This number of coats gives a thickness that can be worked on to remove any defects. This time I finished by flatting with a well-worn ultra fine sanding pad followed by 2000 wet and dry (both used wet). In the past I have used an electric polisher fitted with foam polishing mop but this seems to need to run at a higher speed to overcome friction or alternatively be sprayed frequently with water.

I have tried hand compounding using soft carpet felt as a pad, which works well, but is hard on the arms. Some years ago I bought a 3" sanding pad with a flexible attachment, this keeps the pad flat on the surface, and is fitted into a normal drill. I fitted the carpet felt to this pad and using the drill on very slow speed I have found that it did not clog up as the foam did and seems to give a better finish. A final polish with Autoglym Ultra Deep Shine and job done. While it's still not concurs quality, it's pretty good and the best finish yet.

That's it for now, I won't bore you any more, hope to see you at Erddig.

Malcolm Rush - No. 352 from Whitchurch

.....

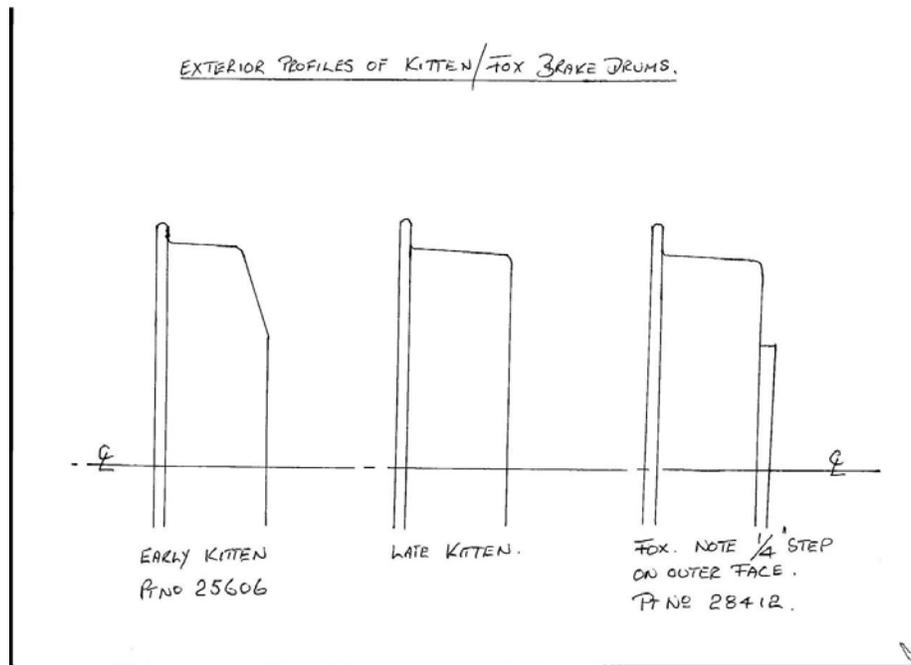
Ahh, take a breath, that's better. Just one more page to go! I have, as so often happens in life, been a little distracted of late, and now, June 7<sup>th</sup>, late is what I am going to be if I don't get a move on with this!

Moira has just proof read 47 of the 48 pages for us, I have spent an hour or so on the corrections, this editing thing can be challenging when you just cut and paste, and then don't want to sanitise things too much, (I'm not the only one who often types that instead of than or vice versa!) but glaring punctuation and spelling really has to be addressed, it is deciding what to let through that sometimes causes delay – I never used to have such qualms – must be getting soft in my old age – that said, generally I find that the older the author the less corrections are needed – relax, I'm not going to jump on my education standards soapbox! Mind you.....

Les Smith had asked me to help him resolve poor brakes on his Fox, it had Kitten brake drums when he got it (not something a buyer tends to check when inspecting a potential purchase I have to say!) Les had learnt the hard way, and was trying to both standardise and improve things. A constant battle, but I have to say Les, you are getting there. Keep up the good work.

Never having owned a Fox I was somewhat out of my depth, but I knew a couple or three men who would know, so some calls later and :-

My thanks to John Box who provided the following helpful drawing in response to the question I asked about the differences between Kitten and Fox brake drums. If I understand things correctly that is how the Kitten and Fox come to have different track from each other. Not entirely true of course because Fox axles are an inch wider than Kitten ones before you add another half inch with the raised external face on the brake drums! One thing I did not know was that Fox axles have an "F" alongside the axle number on the casing!



Keith Gittus also deserves a special mention as the man who physically resolved this – he had a spare set of good Fox drums in stock, and so was able to help Les in his quest to restore some originality (never mind the fitting of the correct wider brake shoes!)

*Guys, I can't tell you how comforting and reassuring it is to have such willing expertise on call.*

*Thank you. Ed.*

## Kitten inside door Handles

Although my original Kitten door inside pulley handle were there and in full working order, I never really liked the 'draw handle' idea of them. Bear in mind when you go to get out you have to look to get your hand within the dangly bit. So when I saw this idea I decided to nick it. And what do you know even though it wasn't broke it certainly now is fixed.

We now have two big black plastic things that you can grab and feel you actually have hold of the door. These handles? Bedford Rascal/Suzuki Cary and what do you know? they go straight on as the fixing centres are spot on!! Even the same screw. The handles in the picture have lost a screw cover clip, which is part of the plastic of the handle, so not an easy fix. Another idea from Mid Norfolk Alan Osborn.



The original handle



The "new" alternative

## Sales & Wants

For Sale :- 1977 Kitten estate, just under 48,000 miles, turquoise. Two owners from new, last MoT expired December 2008. £400 ovno. The car is in Essex. Contact the editor for details.



We still have a couple of those Rebel door window seal sets left in stock now, if you would like one just send me a cheque, payable to "Kitten Register Spares" for £16 please, and I'll ask Phil to send them off to you, complete with the necessary clips. Ed.

For Sale :- Roger Brown's heater vents – You can contact Roger on [roger@eleventowns.co.uk](mailto:roger@eleventowns.co.uk)



For Sale :- Fox pick-up conversion 2 piece, one to replace the floor bit and the rear panel with glass that fits behind the seats. I also have a brand new choke cable and a silencer that's fairly new. I am happy to let the lot go for £ 30. Call Terry

Yours for the postage :- Dear Brian, I have 18 back copies of the Mewsletter between 2003 and 2006 which I would be happy to give away. Anyone interested could contact me on this email address and could either collect from West London or I could post them at cost. If you could advertise this in the next Newsletter I would be most grateful. Many thanks John Hodgkiss

WANTED :- 13" Wheels with 4"pcd and no more than 5" (5 ½" at a push) wide rims. MG Midget ones are just fine. Contact Robert Fairfoull if you can help please.

Wanted :- Fox brake drums, Les could do with a pair. Les (Ashford, Kent)

Wanted :- Kitten bumper end caps, Eddie Kelly

Wanted :- Reliant Kitten Estate, running in good condition with MoT. Contact Alan

Wanted :- Kitten bonnet lock with key, also external door handles with keys. Contact Grant Stoddard

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## *Epilogue*

It is probably only fair to warn you that the next edition is half full already, (it is May just now) and it is nearly all about Rebels – feel free to help redress the balance!

Always open to ideas, there is I gather from comments received, some demand for more regular get togethers, Malcolm Rush offered the following idea, and I am open to suggestions – that said the Register is not a car club, however I am keen on the idea of waving the Reliant, in particular the small 4 wheeled Reliant flag to a wider audience – use your voice.

Hi Brian,

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2011

Just thinking aloud at the moment, I have been wondering if instead of finding a venue just for ourselves, whether it would be a good idea to book into organised Classic Car shows which would at least put the R.K.R. and our cars into the forefront of the Classics scene and who knows - may attract more subscribers and keep more of our cars on the road.

As you know I have to work away from home sometimes, in fact I had to come home to make it to Burford in 2005, only got back a few days before Whittington Castle in 2008, fortunately this year so far (fingers crossed) I won't have to go away before Erddig. With this in mind it is sometimes difficult to arrange things so far in advance if we book our own venue, whereas we should be able to get into a Classic show at fairly short notice. This creates the problem of letting members know what's going on when you have to write the mag so far in advance. My idea is that if we could put an ad in the mag asking anybody that is interested in attending any shows to let me have their email address (for preference) postal address and phone no. then I can contact them directly and organize bookings accordingly. If you think this might be a good idea I could set up an email address just for this, I know life is hectic for you at the moment so this is just a thought for the future.

Cheers for now, Malcolm Rush

*So, thank you Malcolm, was that you volunteering to be our events coordinator?*

Right, I did invite some special people to have an extra page for free to tell us something about themselves and or their businesses in this special landmark edition, only one was organised enough to politely decline due to pressure of work, the rest sounded keen, but will need to wait till next time because I only chased them once after making them aware of the initial idea, before I ran out of time and space!

My thanks to those individuals who responded in a timely manner to my pleas for input, you spoil me - DON'T STOP, PLEASE!

I have just spent a couple of hours improving the appearance of this edition, after making the corrections recommended by my lovely proof reader, and my neatness has liberated a whole page! Now I need to re-do the index – why oh why do I have to give myself so much extra work?

Right, executive decision. Phil Hallam has done more than most to help with the preservation and improvement of old number three, here he is in May 2011 fitting the fully refurbished wheels with new tyres that he had just fitted to the rims for me, the day before I had a gearbox failure in the car on my way into an event field at Bridge of Allan, life is never dull! Many thanks Phil for all your time and effort.



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