

# RELIANT KITTEN

## REGISTER

**Mewsletter 119**

*July - August 2014*



*Say Aahhh,! Well, actually we were saying goodbye. This is, well it was, Phil Hallam's beautifully restored green Rebel saloon. You may have seen it on the ROC stand at the NEC in Birmingham a couple of years ago. It is now in Switzerland. This picture was taken on the longest day of the year (2014) just before it left these shores. One of half a dozen Reliants your editor brought north in the past 3 decades. Only 1 of which remains here now!*

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*The Kitten Register caters for all the under 1 litre Reliant 4-wheeled vehicles - plus all of their derivatives: Fox, Rebel, Tempest, Salamander, Cipher, Jimp, Asquith, Vantique, Liege and all other specials.*



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

# Dinky Cars

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E & o e

You are probably getting tired of my delight in praising those who make producing the Mewsletter so easy and such a joy. It is the 8<sup>th</sup> of April as I type, I have just begun this edition, which is not due out till August, and, thanks to Dave Price sending me the latest update of his “I did it my way” Tempest tale, I am off to a flying start, thank you Dave.

July now and I must apologise to both Bob and Keith, I can only say that my one consolation is my belief in the old adage that the man who didn't make a mistake, didn't make anything, and Keith, next time, I promise!

Just to remind me, this is the morning I am going to take a pair of Fox five leaf springs to my old friend John Sinclair's house, well, garage to be precise, to change the front bushes from the Fox half inch bore ones to Kitten seven sixteenth ones, for Peter Linfield to fit to his hard working Kitten.

Peter lives in Banavie, just north of Fort William, the Kitten is the only car he owns with a tow bar, and so he needs it to pull the trailer. Moira and I were going on a week's holiday in that general area, to a cottage on the south shore of Loch Sunart just across the water from the place that atomic element number 38 gets its name from, and the chance to both see Peter and Jennifer again and drop the springs off was too good to miss.

Peter was the second furthest from home at our get-together at Burford in 2005, oddly enough Dave Price was there with his Tempest too! Which makes me realise, it is about time we started thinking about another one of those get togethers. Well, the Kitten will be 40 next year!

One downside of being so far ahead with the magazine is that the supplementary sheets can get out of hand! An example of this is a note that Dave Schollar sent with his renewal back in March, which I only got round to processing after my return from our Easter holiday, Dave was telling me that he had a problem with modern petrol and was asking if we knew of a supplier of suitable quality fuel pipe that he could use to safely deliver the petrol from the tank on his Kitten estate to the pump, and hence to the carb? I do not have any bang up to date answer to that, if you do, please get in touch. Ed.

Well, thanks to more pictures, my Diary (which, thanks to the wonderful article on the get together at Tony Steven's place of all the current U.K. resident Cipher owners), gets delayed until next time! Some well meaning soul suggested that I could reduce my workload if I reduced the frequency of this publication to quarterly - I suppose one other upside of that might be that I could write less of the content myself - might be no bad thing what do you think?

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*Every now and then we are contacted by interesting people, here is an email which arrived in May this year, 2014. Ed.*

Hello,

I'm writing you from Mauritius. I'm a great car fan lover.

There were lots & lots of these Reliant Mini Reef Cub here. They were rent cars for tourists & was known as Mini Cub The Reliant Cubs were rent cars for the company Mautourco.

Lots of people confused them with they thought were Mini Mokes. They were assembled locally in the 80's. There were hundreds of them here. I remember them with round or rectangular lights.

There are some that have been left. About 10 or 20 I think.

I think this information is quite valuable to your club.

However there were no Reliant badge anywhere on the car. Even on the steering wheel.

I had one experience of travelling in one about 20 years ago, It was lots of fun.

Thanks, Regards Soorej Munraj

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Hi Brian,

2/7/14

I have been thinking about the Kitten's 40th next year and wondered if you would like me to organise something? There is a small motor museum at Llangollen and I thought that might be a good venue if they will have us.

I'm not too sure how much space they have. Let me know what you think and I will have a word with them. That's it for now I feel a coffee coming on.

All the best to you and Moira,

Cheers Malcolm (Rush) No. 352 From Whitchurch

## A special Rebel story (on the Rebel's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary)

Once upon a time, when I was a little younger and more able, I used to have something of a habit of bringing Reliant Rebels to Scotland.

Most of these were not in running order at the time, though I am happy to say that, with one exception, they all got back on the road, albeit some more quickly than others!

The first was a white estate car, PJJ 697L. A sad story, it had suffered a gearbox failure, and the girl selling it was doing so as her husband had been responsible for its repair. He had removed the gearbox and sent it off for overhaul work which had been done, but then he died in a light aircraft crash before putting the gearbox back in the car.

The owner of the vehicle asked the mechanic's widow just to sell it, so I went off the M1 at Junction 8 with a trailer, and collected it.

That would have been about 1978 or '79. I had the Rebel on the road in a few months, a lot of other things needed attention, but it took me, slowly, due to an overheating problem, between Renfrew and Leatherhead every couple of weeks for three months while I studied at college there (part of a career change forced on me due to illness).

PJJ served us well for a few years, but other Rebels soon joined the fleet, and PJJ was taken off the road for some major improvements, while we dabbled with a Kitten or two, and some other Rebels.

A friend was very keen to buy PJJ from me, he had had a long term loan of it, and so a deal was agreed. Sadly he had an accident in it in Paisley which smashed the grille and headlights, and bent the very front of the chassis.

I had it repaired and it was almost ready to be brought back into service, but my employer decided to send me to London on a training course which scuppered my MoT plans, however, I had insured the car in anticipation.

“Anything Goes” was the show I took in at the East end’s Prince Edward theatre the first evening – the course was not very demanding, so no homework was required. I rang home during the interval, and something was clearly wrong, but my beloved would not be forthcoming about the problem.

When I returned home 36 hours later, the problem became clear, some local jobs had burnt my wooden garage to the ground, with PJJ still inside!

One thing I was impressed by was that the fuel tank had not exploded. We all know that petrol does not burn well, petrol vapour burns well, and the fact that I had been gradually topping the tank up from a can each week in the last month of the renovation meant there was very little air in the tank, so not much room for vapour!

Small consolation, as was the £500 the insurance company eventually paid out.

My next 4 Rebels were saloons, much to my frustration. REO 244L I did not have to “Import” as it already lived in Glasgow. I had foolishly told the owner that, with an MoT, it should fetch £250, he promptly got it through one (I have no idea how, it had the worst chassis I had ever seen on a Rebel, which, to be fair, was covered in fresh black underseal by the time I bought the car!) and demanded that I gave him £250 for it! He was an old chap and I felt sorry for him, never again! The brakes seized on on the way home, and it went downhill from there.

The next one was a turquoise saloon that was to be Moira’s car, until it was written off on the M80 just short of Stirling one Sunday morning when a drunk driver ran onto the back of the Rebel at high speed. The offending car was a Mitsubishi and the impact caused the Rebel to accelerate from 50 to close on 90 in less than a second, so ended what had been a nice wee car. No one was seriously injured, and I did retain the salvage and used the engine and gearbox, and the front two thirds of the stainless exhaust I had had fitted to it, the tail pipe being too badly bent on impact to be repairable.

Then the next two were both light green saloons, one, I brought up for Phil Hallam, MNW 309F. The other LDB 203F was interesting. It had been taken to a scrap yard whose owner realised that it was an abandoned restoration project with a new galvanised chassis, a new fuel

tank, a new looking engine, but no glass or interior. He contacted Reliant, who gave him my number, he duly rang me, and a deal was done, but I had no room, so I asked my friend Michael in Wensleydale – who has a big garden, (and a Rebel he had owned from new!) – if I could store it there till we decided what to do with it, and he agreed.

It lived there for a couple of years, but sadly at the end of the day we dismantled it for spares (in Phil Hallam's drive one sunny Saturday afternoon), a great team effort by 4 friends, Phil getting the new chassis which he eventually put under MNW 309F.

Next one up was an estate car which Robert Fairfoull and I went to recover from just outside Lincoln. It had a fully refurbished galvanised rolling chassis, just what Robert was looking for to put under his white Rebel estate, which at that time had his personal number S 191 on it.

Last but by no means least. Old number three, which I had been trying to avoid taking on for years, as I had too many cars, Robert Fairfoull again came to the rescue, and he and I went just outside Carlisle, where John Blagburn joined us to help with the loading process, even back then my legs were becoming less than reliable! to bring it to Ayr, where Robert got it back on the road in a remarkably short length of time and looked after it for the better part of a decade before handing it over to me for the club to look after. That became too complicated and expensive, and it was sold last December, going abroad, which it did under its own power!

Then Phil (he tends to spend more time in France than he does over here these days), decided he needed to reduce his fleet, and so it came about that MNW 309F was put up for sale last year. Completely by chance it too went abroad, this time to Switzerland in June 2014.

So, how do I feel? Well, very mixed emotions really. Delighted that in Robert and Phil, I was fortunate in my choice of custodian as they both stayed the course, improved the condition of the cars in their custody, albeit by very different methods, Robert using a chequebook, wisely, and Phil using his all too rare skills and experience to produce between them two if not three exceptional Rebels. Two of which are now overseas, and a third is in Wales – which reminds me we have not heard from Mark Jones for a while, I must drop him a line. He, you may recall, got the very tidy white estate car with the new galvanised chassis, the one that used to be S 191, Now CSM 802L. Update on that Mark and I

spoke last week, good to hear from you again Mark.



Phil's Rebel saloon on the last day he owned it – 21/06/2014



Phil with Goran, the Rebel's new custodian 21<sup>st</sup> June 2014.



All loaded up, just to complete tying down for the long trip home.

# A visit to Stevens' Research

A report by Simon Fitch

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, all of the UK Cipher owners gathered in Kent to meet Tony Stevens, and take delivery of the first new batch of Cipher windscreens to be made. Perhaps it is best to give a little background.....

Originally Cipher windscreens were made by cutting 10mm off each side of a 1976 Toyota Celica windscreen, however given the present cost/availability of these screens and the failure rate experienced in cutting them, making a new batch this way was not an option. Fortunately Tony, when planning for the future, had anticipated this problem and had made a "male" Cipher mould that could be fitted into a "female" Toyota Celica mould to make a bespoke screen – this had been stored for many years awaiting the day it was needed. Back last year with almost all the Ciphers needing new windscreens, it was apparent that a new set of windscreens was required to stop the Cipher disappearing completely from the roads.

The Cipher owners through the RKR therefore contacted Tony for help. Fortunately Tony had retained the mould and with his kind assistance, and contacts at Pilkington's, was able to arrange a trial to see if the windscreen mould was still good after all these years. Thankfully Pilkington's approved the mould – thus the Cipher owners clubbed together and ordered a sufficiently large batch for the price to be a very reasonable £250 per screen. Indeed, given that a lack of windscreens has affected all of the Ciphers at one time or another, most owners took the chance to order a spare as well – thus giving a good batch size and allowing a price saving !

On the day of the 10<sup>th</sup>, we all travelled to Tony's home, where we met Tony and his wife Jean, and were provided with a wonderful lunch (once again many thanks to Jean). During lunch many interesting topics were discussed, including the fact that Tony always intended the Cipher to have front disk brakes fitted to the kitten chassis - so Joe Mason's disk brakes are very timely, and according to Tony, fitting them is entirely in keeping with the car. It's good to know we can fit them and not feel guilty about completely changing the originality of the car. Another thing that popped up in conversation was the BRM Reliant engine, which

although Tony hadn't been offered one of them for the CIPHER, he felt its characteristics and power would have been ideal. It would have been very interesting if a CIPHER had gone into production at Reliant with these additions, who knows, the SS1 may not have been built!

One thing that everyone realised was that it was a very historic day - in all (and including Tony and myself) there were 5 CIPHER owners in one room - which must be a record! And certainly every CIPHER owner in the UK was there (one day we'll have to arrange a meeting with our Dutch compatriots!). Tony had realised this and had produced a beautiful scaled copy of the original CIPHER ½ scale drawing for each of the owners – a very kind present and one I know all the CIPHER owners are extremely grateful for.



From Left to Right – Gay and Paul Johnson (Red CIPHER), Dave Corby (Green CIPHER), Peter Gordon (Kit CIPHER), Helen and Simon Fitch (Blue CIPHER), Tony Stevens (No.1 CIPHER)

We then proceeded on to Tony's workshop, and picked up the windscreens. We also got to see No.1 (which was fitted with the first of the new screens) and the forerunner to the CIPHER, the Stevens' Sienna. The Sienna, built on an unmodified Kitten Chassis, looks similar to a Tempest – although built many years before (1977).



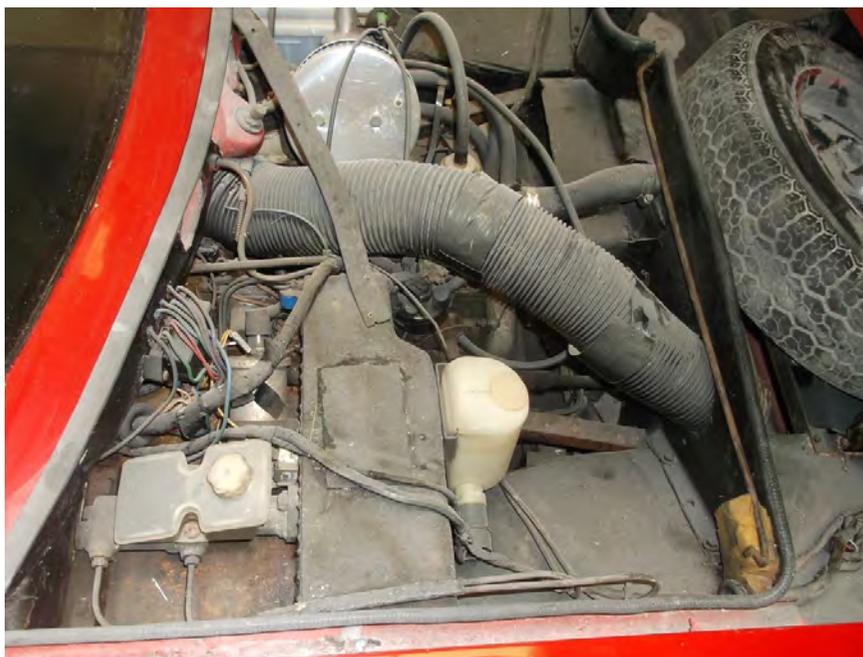
Ciper No.1 fitted with the first of the new batch of windscreens from Pilkingtons – an excellent fit!

Whilst we were there, the discussion of hard tops arose. Several Ciper owners are having trouble with their soft tops, due to age and other issues, and as a hard top was an option at the time, having a batch made is a good idea. As mine is fully vinyl covered (and fitted with glazing), a suitable donor to make a new mould was needed. Fortunately Tony had retained a raw fibreglass hard top in excellent condition, and so he will be taking a mould from it to make some more new ones. So it looks like as soon as the windscreen project has finished, we now have a new one!

Before leaving, Tony gave us each a stainless steel owl logo from his recent range of electric cars, and very kindly donated to the RKR the original Stevens' parts manual for the Ciper. This wonderful addition means that Ciper owners now have access to a full and complete parts manual, which should be very helpful to all the current restorations that are going on at the moment!



Cipher No.1 and the Sienna at the Stevens' Research workshop.



An under bonnet shot of No.1 – as it is completely original, I know many of us were taking notes! – the position of the fuse box is of great interest, since all later cars have it in the foot well – which is a bit harder to get too than No.1's fuse box.

Once again many thanks to everyone and especially to Tony and Jean for hosting us, and to Tony for his help in getting the new windscreens made. Fingers crossed we should be seeing a record number of Ciphers back on the road by next year. Perhaps just in time, as it was also realised that next year (2015) – will be the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the unveiling of the Cipher at the 1980 Motor Show (and of the construction of No's 1 & 2) – so all of us have our thinking caps on as to how to celebrate the auspicious date – we'll let you all know when something is confirmed!



Similarly, No.1's original dash and interior was of much interest to everyone, especially those undertaking restorations.

The next project for the Cipher owners – the production of hard tops. This original moulding (in fabulous condition) will be used as the master to allow a new set of hard tops to be made.



Simon Fitch, No. 939 from Leamington Spa

*My sincere thanks to Simon for making that record of what must have truly been a most memorable occasion for those involved available to us to enjoy. The saga continues as I was approached by David Rootes recently, he used to work with Tony on a development of the Cipher, and so it goes on...*

*By chance I had a call from Paul Johnson (middle left of picture on page 13) at the end of May. I owed him a dual circuit master cylinder, we had a fascinating chat about that day, and the number of people he and Tony both had dealings with in the past, clearly that was a truly memorable event which stirred many memories for all concerned, and not just about the Cipher, a meeting of minds and a unique occasion. Who remembers the Davrian? Or its successor, which Tony Stevens had a hand in the design of, the Corry Cultra? Ed.*

## I DID IT MY WAY 2014 UPDATE

The last time I wrote for these pages was Autumn 2009 at the end of the Car Trials season. Class 4 in which the Tempest was run became a bit of a joke as the regulations made it difficult for us by handicapping us with very high tyre pressures, which gave us no chance of success. 2009 saw a lot of class 4 cars give up, leaving about 4 cars to challenge for the National Car Trials Championship. So it was at the end of the season I decided to retire from Car Trials and strip the Tempest down for a major rebuild with an engine change and gearbox change. The body was taken off the chassis, the Reliant engine and gearbox removed and stored away for the winter. (I thought).

I retired from full time work in October 2009 and we went to Australia for three months. Anybody who has not been should make the effort and go. Australia is a fantastic country and you cannot help but enjoy it.

On our return to the UK in February 2010 I was given my old mates Austin 7 Ruby to complete. Graham Baddeley was my trials partner, sadly he died at the beginning of the 2009 trials season. We had ten years of fun trialling a Hillman Imp until I built the Tempest, and then with the Tempest. Graham had a very dry sense of humour which made the trials so much fun. Plus he became very expert bouncing at the right time which got us to the top of many hills. Graham's death was another reason for finishing with trials. It was just not the same.

Graham had been rebuilding an Austin 7 Ruby and so, Barbara, Graham's widow, asked me to complete the rebuild. This was something that I could not say no to. Although I knew it would put the Tempest rebuild on hold. I brought the Ruby home on the trailer, removed the body shell which I knew would need some long hard and put it on some trestles on the drive. The Austin 7 engine and gearbox were removed from the chassis and the rolling chassis stored in the garage.

The body shell, for some strange reason, was covered with body filler. This was done prior to Graham obtaining the car and drastically increases the body weight. My first job was therefore to scrape off all the body filler. A long, hard tedious job and took most of 2010 to carry out. When I did not feel like doing this I turned my attention to the fitting of the Reliant engine and gearbox from the Tempest into the A7 rolling

chassis. This also took some time as I wanted it fitted in such away that the car, (bodyshell), and chassis were not modified and could be removed and leave the option to refit the A7 engine and gearbox.

So why, I hear some asking and why the Reliant engine and gearbox? Well, I want to do something in memory of Graham , so I decided to do something different and name the car 'Graham Baddeley Ruby Special'. The engine/gearbox change to Reliant was not my idea but John Box who designed the Tempest . As soon as John had suggested the idea I soon realised that I should have thought of it, as the 850 Reliant engine and gearbox was developed from the Austin 7 750 engine and gearbox after Reliant bought the Austin 7 rights from Austin after they put the car out of production.

The rear gearbox mountings were easy to make and fit, but the front engine mountings were not so easy. My first attempt did not work and was soon scrapped. The next attempt worked fine, so much so that the bolts even use the original bolt holes in the front of the chassis. During 2012 John Box visited me, which he does every few years. During his visit he asked to see the Austin 7, which by then, had its repainted body shell refitted. John cast his expert eyes over the Reliant engine and gearbox fitting and declared it a job well done. Hearing this pleased me no end as it is easy to do a job as best as one can, and it still looks a bodge, which I do not like. So I was happy it is about right. The body shell was prepared for re-spraying with all the filler off the body shell and primed with a sealer undercoat. A new half floor was welded into the shell in place of the rotten drivers side floor and was ready at the beginning of 2011. I found somebody to do the re-spraying in Broadway, which is not far from Moreton in Marsh. Unfortunately he was booked up until October and knowing that he does a very good job I decided to wait until then.

The fitting of the engine and gearbox was also completed at the beginning of 2011. The next to receive attention was the suspension and was the subject of much studying as the Ruby is not known for its steering qualities. The problem being that the body weight is transferred onto the inside rear spring and off the outside rear spring. The A7 rear springs are semi-elliptical and so the inside spring lengthens and the outside spring shortens , thereby steering the rear axle which makes steering the Ruby front wheels a little exciting. So I decided to buy a set of Austin 7 Nippy sports car rear springs which are not only stiffer but flat

compared to the arched rear springs of the saloon cars. This then takes care of the rear axle steering problems.

Now for the front which I had thought would be best achieved with a Nippy flat front spring, but during my reading up of the problem I found an article by the late and very great Colin Chapman of Lotus cars. Colin, of course, started with the Austin 7 and built many specials around the Austin 7. The most famous being the Lotus 7. The article I found by Colin studied the Ruby steering problems. To cut a long article short, Colin agreed with the flat and hard rear springs but said that a flat front spring is not the way to go. A soft spring at the front and which is a little flatter than the original spring is best and is achieved by removing three of the spring leaves from the original spring.

So after removing three spring leaves and re-fitting the spring to the chassis, I was delighted to see the slightly flatter spring and the chassis ride height now 10.5 inches compared to the original 13.5 inches and that with the original 19inch wheels fitted. Colin Chapman also suggests 15 inch wheels, 5 inch wide at the rear and 4 inch on the front. So the resulting ride height should be about 8 inches. I also fitted a new double friction shock absorber to the front, which should also help with the steering. Now it is sounding like a special!

This then took me to the wiring, which is not my best subject, although I can get by. The first problem, or as I thought, was the alternator on the Reliant engine instead of a dynamo. However the problem was, in the end, easy. The alternator has its own cut out and current control and did away with the A7 regulator, leaving the junction box part. I therefore purchased a new junction box alone to connect the remaining four wires to.

The body shell went off for re-spraying at the end of September, with plans for it to be back by Christmas 2011. Chris and I went to Peru in September 2011 to walk the Inca Trail, (why do I feel another article coming on?). My right knee was playing up before we went but when we returned it really was worn out. So much so that the local knee specialist said that I had to have a knee replacement in 2012. The body shell was not ready after Christmas, and I received a phone call from Cheltenham hospital on 2 January to say would I come into hospital on 5 January for my knee operation. So that meant that I would not be getting the body shell back until March 2012.

Anyway, it was March before I could drive again and able to collect the sprayed body shell. Worth waiting for as it looked really good. Bit by bit, with the help of the neighbours we got the body shell onto the chassis and bolted down. 2012 was just about the wettest year ever, and this delayed the A7 completion some more.

Gradually I got the radiator, grill, front and rear wings, running boards, bonnet and front and rear windscreens fitted. The doors were re-sprayed with cellulose before the car transferred to Graham, as was the bonnet and grill, it was pleasing that the body shell matched the remainder perfectly although not cellulose as it is not allowed these days. Two pack paint being used instead.

The doors were fitted after the roof lining was made and fitted in September. Another job I did not undertake myself, preferring to let the professionals do the job instead. I think re-spraying and roof linings being the only jobs I had done for me is not bad.

This will leave completion of the wiring and fitting hydraulic brakes, (Morris Minor) and 15 inch wheels. I had hoped this would be done before the spring, but the bad weather stopped that.

I had hoped to rebuild and renew the leather seat coverings during the 2013/14 winter but I have now decided to leave this to the experts as well.

Also I need to recover an age related Registration No. from the Licensing Authority in time for its inaugural run in 2014 with some luck. Then to start all over again on the Tempest.

Regards.

Dave Price No. 327 from Moreton in Marsh

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*Dave, many thanks, great to hear from you again, keep up the good work, and let's see the Tempest back on the road before too many more months pass! Ed.*



bushes were pushed out easily by firstly drifting the steel sleeves out in a vice using a large socket (out of my socket set) on one side of the damper eye, and a small extension bar the other side, wind the vice... and out it comes, job done!

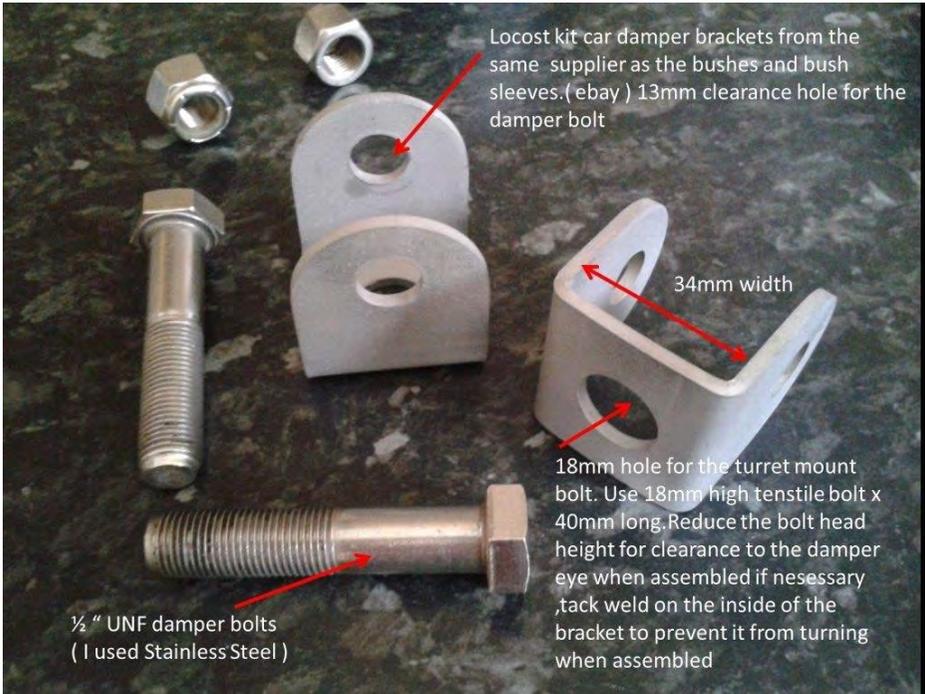
The remaining rubber bush can be removed in a similar way. I used 12" dampers (eye to eye), 7" long x 1.9" inside diameter springs rated at 160Lb. I believe they were £40.00 a pair (ebay again) the supplier was Rally Design. Bushes, Stainless steel sleeves are universal...the sleeves are made to your length and hole diameter, and match the bushes... search ebay ...universal bushes/,hotrod/,locost.



Stainless steel sleeves ,34mm long, 13mm hole .Available from the same supplier on ebay

universal polyurethane two piece bushes , Available off ebay in yellow , blue , or black

Sleeves and bushes were about £30.00, and are polyurethane and stainless steel. The brackets again were ebay .... Locost,/ kitcar./ damper bracket. The man who fabricates them, makes them in different widths. I used 34mm, as they are the same width as a Kitten – Fox damper eye bush. A bargain at £1.50 a pair.. and you choose the damper hole size, (13mm, clearance for the 1/2" damper bolt). They are made to the same spec as the Haynes Locost kitcar manual.



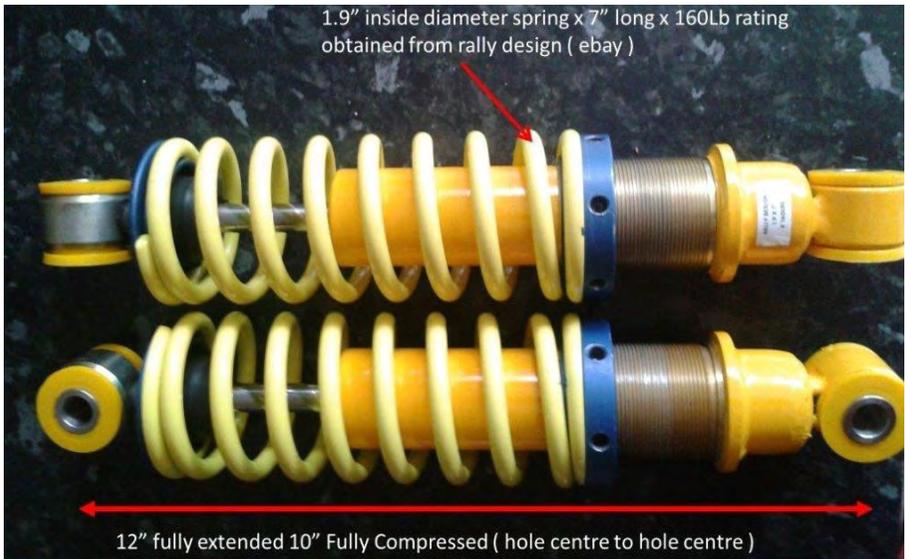
Drill a 18mm mounting hole, as the turret holes in the chassis are 3/4 " or approx 19mm. I used M18 x 40mm high tensile steel bolts drilled with a 3.5mm hole for a 3mm split pin ( hole was drilled 15mm from the end of the bolt ).The bolt head was reduced from 12mm to 8mm high ( to aid damper eye clearance when assembled ), this can be tack welded to the bracket if required.



This sounds a lot, but the bolts can be cut and drilled in a good vice (in the garage). Once done dampers can be obtained easily as there are eye mounts both ends....I used a 12" damper.... as when assembled to the bracket gives the same length and travel as the original. I used a 160lb spring as I wanted the front to be a tad stiffer for my Fox.. I believe 150lb was standard for the Fox,140lb for the Kitten.



Total cost was about £130 with the bolts. They weigh under 2kgs each. Very happy with the results, the pickup handles better than I could have imagined.



You can use 1.9" or 2 1/4" diameter coilover dampers, but the 1.9 " have a lot more room inside the wishbone once fitted, and the clearance to the anti rollbar ball joint bolt to damper spring mount is no problem at all.

Regards Dean Howells. No. 941 from Cwmbran

*Thanks Dean, fabulous captioned pictures as ever, one day I must learn how to do that!*

*Now I was curious about this option, so I asked Dean some questions, and the one outstanding thing that became clear was that he wanted the front end to sit a couple of inches lower than standard, and this spring and damper length achieves that, to retain the original ride height you would need to use longer springs and dampers, which are of course heavier.*

*Nonetheless an interesting alternative solution, though I should point out that our new ones come with poly bushes too, and the ride height is adjustable over a range of about 3" or 4" in old money.*

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Still on the technical front, I did, rather late in the day, talk to John Box about the casting mark 14214 and stamped numbers 25379 on the latest batch of more efficient Reliant cylinder heads, and those identifiers are on the top at the manifold side. Thank you John.

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Hi Brian,

4<sup>th</sup> July 2014

A quick one. Having shattered the windscreen on my Fox the other day, I've now used my spare. New [laminated] ones aren't kept in stock now anywhere according to 2 companies' searches, and it's a 4 - 6 week wait for Pilkington to make one, at £200ish plus VAT.

I'm trying to a] negotiate a lower price for a batch and b] find how much interest there is in them.

Or am I barking up the wrong tree because having a stock of them wouldn't work through the Insurance side of things, as presumably they'd have to be sourced from an 'official' supplier due to warranties etc.

Scenario 1] I pay my insurance company the £110 excess and wait 6 weeks

Scenario 2] I source one in a few days via the club and pay £200 + fitting from my own pocket.

Hmm. I personally could wait the 6 weeks. Some may not want to. I will post on the Forum.

Well, food for thought at least.

Plan B would be to get one of the national places to keep one in stock I suppose.

Dunc. No. 46 from Norfolk

***So, can you help here? Do you have any interest in getting a new spare front windscreen for your Fox? If so, talk to Duncan or myself as a matter of some urgency please. There would be little more frustrating than us getting a small batch made, only to have them sell out in a few weeks when a slightly larger batch could have reduced the price! Talk to us if you are interested...***

~~~~~

### Correction.

One big downside of leaving a gap of several weeks, or in some cases months, with my memory, is that details can be missed.

I was very frustrated when reading the last edition, to notice that one bit (at least!) made no sense whatever.

On page 6, the second last paragraph, where I was going on about people rebuilding cars, Kittens in particular, though I have to say it has probably happened with at least as many if not more Rebels. Anyway the point, which I either missed or inadvertently deleted, was that in recent times several owners had had Kittens completely restored **without needing any help from us whatever!**

That said, in some cases the restored vehicle is sold soon after, and then I get a phone call or email from the new owner asking for the bits that were missed or fitted by mistake in the renovation process!

One beautiful looking Rebel had 4 different keys, the owner was very surprised to learn that they all left the factory with one key doing all the locks! (Door, ignition, bonnet and boot.).

That situation raised interesting questions about the interchangeability of lock barrels, a pretty specialist subject, learning more about which has been added to my to-do list. Feel free to come forward with your expertise if you can help.

Ed.

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## Federation News

The following is a shortened version to fit the available space, for a full transcript contact the Editor.

### **Federation Subscriber Organisations to Get Top Security Product**

Members of vehicle clubs affiliated to the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs and FBHVC supporters are being offered one of the top vehicle security systems at a very special price. The Federation has negotiated a group discount with makers, SelectaDNA so that FBHVC affiliates can purchase their forensic marking kit for less than £30.

Each kit contains a bottle of fluid in which tiny microdots are suspended. Police forces across the country regularly use this database when they recover stolen property. They are alerted to the presence of the forensic marking by shining an ultra violet light on the vehicle's components. If fluid is present it will glow under this light.

The product is very easy to apply and once purchased and applied it will protect the vehicle for its lifetime with the owner having no ongoing costs or subscriptions. Registration can of course be transferred to a new owner should the vehicle be sold.

Owners can purchase as many kits as they require direct from the Federation at a cost of £29.90 each. All that is required to get this special price is to give your name, club and club membership number, and of course a cheque made payable to FBHVC. An order form can be found at [www.fbhvc.co.uk](http://www.fbhvc.co.uk).



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