

RELIANT KITTEN REGISTER



Mewsletter 144 **September - October 2018**



This issue's picture is Martin Seymour's very pretty Kitten Saloon. Martin, a long-term Register subscriber, has run Kittens for years, along with Moto-Guzzi motorcycles, but his last Kitten succumbed to chassis rot in the front suspension area so was declared dangerous. He scrapped that one, bought this, and is now changing over all the new/best bits from the old one to this one. Very good it looks too.

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



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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.

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Dinky Cars

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**SALES, SPARES, REPAIRS,
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Mews 144

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E & o e

Welcome to our late summer edition, well, I hope it will not quite be autumn by now!

July and August passed in even more of a blur than usual. I forgot more things that I can remember, wow, there's a statement for the books!

Anyway, here we are, September looms, my daily urgent task list now runs to two pages O.K. the font is a might bigger than this, so that I can read it easily, but.... *I NEED A SECRETARY!*

I must thank a number of individuals, though am fearful of forgetting someone, bear with me. In no particular order, John Box, John and Susan Pearce, Malcolm Rush, Colin Marshall, Duncan Bradford, I hope you are fully recovered now Duncan, you too Keith (Gittus), Alan Shaw, Tony Wiese and my long suffering wife (who I don't actually need to mention, as she never reads this!) Yoland and Roger Brown, Graeme and Jane Shaw. O.K., that will do for now. Seriously guys and gals, I couldn't do it without you.

There are a few folk I need to chase up for subscriptions, and I have to confess that I have not been on top of that task this year, but some of them are consistent casualties of my failure to ever get more than a third of the way, often nothing like that, through that daily task list!

Enough of my failings, I am in danger of throwing this one together in as much of a rush as the last one, and I do not like feeling pressurised like that, (though much of that pressure came from too many holidays this year, so it's not all bad!) never mind the missing details on the supplementary sheet last time! Sorry Clive.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again, *one day I'll get organised* (were it not for the fact that I hope to be cremated, my headstone might read "He's organised now!").

I must make mention of the RKR t-shirts that John had made, I know he had them for sale at Llangollen, but I suspect that there was no mention of them in the last Mews, (you'd think I could remember that!) See page 24 for details.

Right, I have put some of the pictures I took at Llangollen this year in, 6 to a page rather than 2 in some cases, and this edition is half full. Were I to make all the pictures 2 to a page, and add a few more, this edition would almost be almost complete, and I am tempted... however, it is "only" the 14th of September, and that would be cheating – so I feel I have a week or so yet to come up with some more text!

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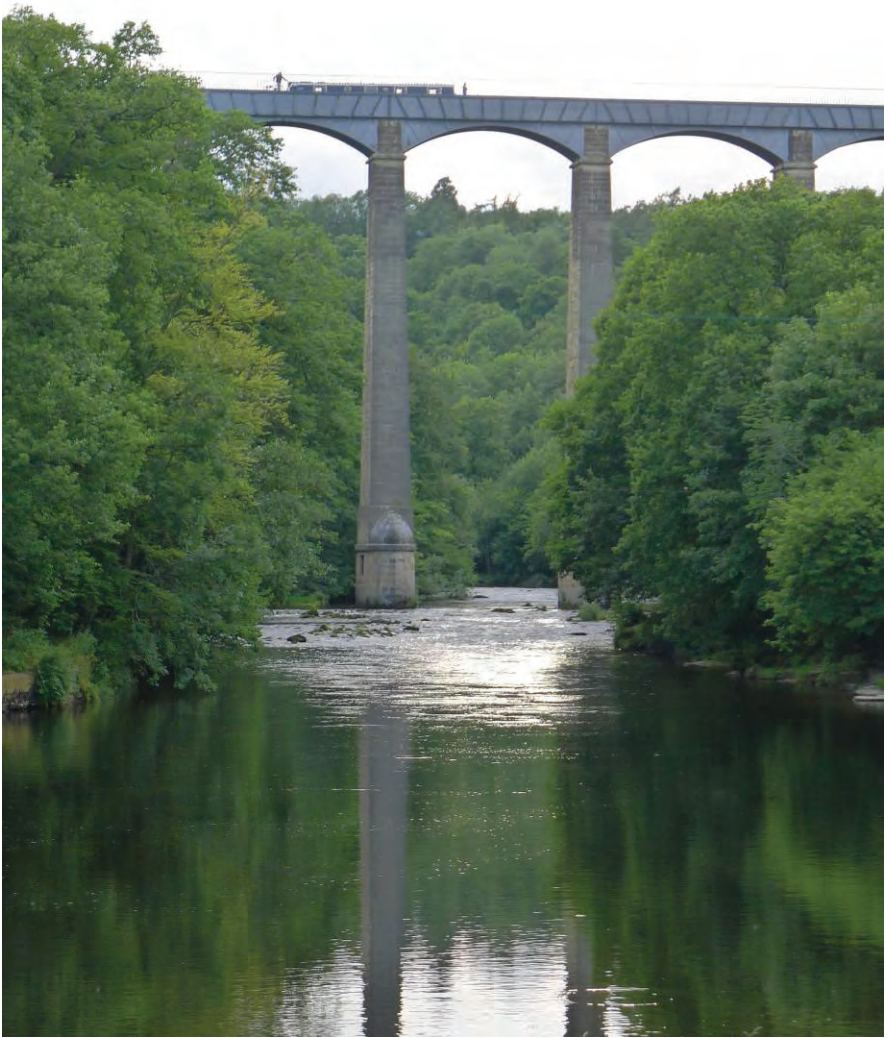
# **The 4th Annual Gathering**

## **Y 4ydd Casgliad Blynyddol**

The Register returned to the Llangollen Motor Museum once again on the 28th and 29th of July for its' annual gathering and road run. I travelled down on the Friday night (more of that later) and stayed in nearby Chirk, which straddles the English - Welsh border.

The weather forecast for the weekend wasn't good, especially in North Wales, and having had a few weeks of sunshine prior to the RKR event it was just a little frustrating. However, Saturday morning started off much better than expected, so maybe the forecasters had got it wrong (it has been known to happen apparently!). The drive into Llangollen was as pleasant as ever, though I was a little concerned when I saw a 'Road Closed' sign upon leaving the town on the road that leads to the museum. However, I carried on (as you do) and reached the museum OK, but it was whilst talking to other members there that I discovered the reason for the roads closure - the moorland around The Horseshoe Pass was on fire. Thankfully this year's little ride out in the cars didn't involve going up the pass (excellent planning Malcolm!) so we were able to go ahead as planned.

The destination on this occasion was the local World Heritage Site that is the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, it's not far from Llangollen but rather than take the direct route, Malcolm planned one that took in some more interesting scenery. The journey started by taking a narrow road that crosses the River Dee just upstream of one of the oldest chain bridges in the world, having been built in 1813. If you've not seen this then it's worth taking a walk along the canal from the museum as it's an impressive sight, and there's a riverside hotel there if you want to take in the view for a little longer. The bridge was originally built in order to transport coal across the river from the canal to Telford's London to Holyhead road (now the A5), thus avoiding paying the toll on the bridge in Llangollen (so it's not just Yorkshiremen and Scotsmen that are thrifty then!). Having crossed over the river we then passed under the Llangollen Railway before reaching the A5 adjacent to Berwyn station. We then headed east, passing through Llangollen, and on to Froncysyllte where we turned off onto some more narrow lanes that lead down to the canal at Trevor Basin, the starting point for our canal boat trip.



*You can't quite see me waving from the boat, Ed!*

The trip is like any other narrow boat trip at the beginning but 10 minutes into it you realise why this 210 year old aqueduct is such an important piece of industrial archaeology - the views over the Dee valley 120 feet below are truly remarkable and the guide on the boat gave us an excellent commentary as we all enjoyed the view from one of the highest aqueducts in the world. The aqueduct was designed by Thomas



Telford (that man again!) and took more than 10 years to complete. The cast iron trough on top of the arches being built from a number of sections that are bolted together and sealed with a mixture that closely resembles treacle! The original idea was to cross the river at a much lower level, and have a series of locks on both sides of the valley. The thousands of boat owners who have crossed the aqueduct over the years must be truly grateful for Telford's vision and ingenuity!



Back at the basin it was time for lunch, perfect timing, as there was a rather heavy shower whilst we were indoors, and it was very windy too, so thank goodness we weren't on the aqueduct at the time!

After a good nibble and natter we drove back to the museum by the more direct route along the A539. The rest of the day was spent catching up with friends, looking under bonnets, and sharing ideas, before we all headed off in our own separate directions, apart from those who were camping on site of course!

The forecasters had predicted rain for Sunday, starting at midnight on Saturday, and going through to the Sunday afternoon, and I'm afraid they were right! It was heavy during the night, with a thunderstorm apparently, and my Kitten had a nice little pool in the passenger footwell the following morning. On the positive side, it must have been very welcome for the fire-fighters on the moor! After

breakfast something unbelievable happened: for the first time ever the Kitten wouldn't start! I turned the key a couple of times and all I heard was a single 'click' each time, which I presume was the solenoid? So, I left it a few minutes, tried again, and it started straight away, no problem at all. I can only assume something had got rather wet in the downpour, it's been fine since then.

Back at the museum it was good to meet up with some more friends, both old and new, and whilst the weather could have been better it didn't dampen our spirits. Some had other things to do and bid their farewells around lunchtime, but those that stayed into the afternoon were rewarded with some lovely sunshine and a nice end to a great weekend. It was lovely to see a really nice turnout of cars and their owners, and especially to see Brian and Moira who made the long trip down from Renfrew.

As an aside, my journeys to and from Llangollen were slightly different this year as Brian asked if I'd be able to collect some reconditioned steering racks from Alan Shaw on my way down, and deliver some more for reconditioning on the return leg. I almost pass his home when I go via the Woodhead Pass, so naturally I said "Yes, not a problem". Brian had said previously it would be good if I could meet Alan, and he was right - he served his apprenticeship at The National Gas & Oil Engine Company, and then worked as an engineer through to retirement, and beyond. He still uses his skills to improve and recondition Kitten parts. I should add, (and I hope he doesn't mind me saying this), he's an unbelievable 92 years of age. What a gentleman, and an absolute pleasure to meet!

Tony Wiese - No. 967 from Wakefield.

*Tony, many thanks for that, and everyone else who was there at some point during the weekend, there is always room for your input should you feel so inclined.*

*There follow some of my own pictures, taken both during the canal trip, and after. Thanks too to Malcolm for thinking of it. Ed.*

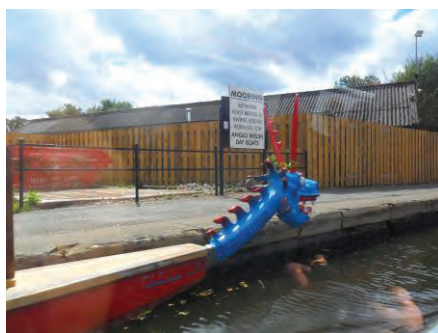




Thank you Tony, for treating us to this year's "commemorative device", the lovely brushed plaque to mark the occasion – an interesting co-incidence that our Hon. President chose a Fox, albeit a Tandy camper, as his car of the weekend!



I can't tell you how relieved I was when I saw how that one came out, trying to judge the timing with the cars moving past me to get some in the mirror!



Aye, there be dragons!

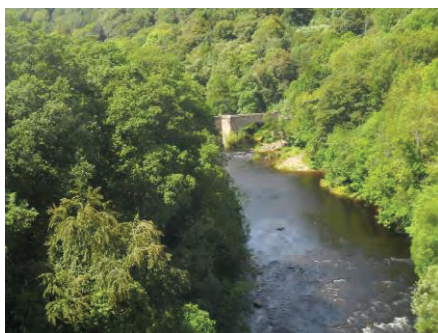




A selection of views and sights seen during our sedate trip along the canal.



I have to say it is a very relaxing method of getting about, if a tad slow!



They say the camera never lies, but the difference in elevation of the camera between these two is a lot more than it looks, the one on the right being taken from the viaduct looking down over the river 125 feet below!



As you can see from the ripples there was a light breeze, but you can also see the blue sky, and white clouds, we were very lucky being under cover during the brief but at times heavy showers.



This was by no means my first canal boat experience, though I do have enough fingers to count them (memory failings excepted!) but I had forgotten how relaxing and serene an experience it is, as a passenger at any rate.



Thanks Malcolm, an excellent choice of how to relax for couple of hours.





While several brave souls happily endured the rain, this wimp just sat in the car. There is little I like less than sitting in a puddle, which is what usually happens if I venture out in the wet in the wheelchair!  
Besides, it does not handle well on wet grass!





This, unless I am very much mistaken (I must check my records are up to date, they still show this as belonging to Philip Naylor, and I know he sold it in 2009). Anyway, as I was saying, this was our President's choice of the car of the show, congratulations Carl. – *(we do have 6 leaf back springs in stock!)*





# **An exhausting business!**

## **Mild steel exhaust for Kitten Estate**

Hi Brian,

19<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Years ago, I had my Kitten equipped with a custom made stainless steel exhaust. Being my daily car, I regularly have to drive for one or two hours due to my work.

For those long trips on the highway I found the exhaust too noisy, too tiring. I decided to go back to a standard mild steel exhaust, hoping it was quieter.

I live in Holland and could not find one. In the last Mewsletter I found a message of Keith Gittus, he could offer mild steel Kitten exhausts. I contacted him by email for the price and also posting costs, which were O.K. for me, so I asked him to send one.



Within 3 days I received the exhaust, very well packed, all-in good order. The exhaust came in two pieces, downpipe complete with bracket for attachment to the engine flange, and second half with silencer.

The exhaust is a copy of the original, but with a greater bore, outside pipe diameter 41 x 1.5 mm thick. Assembly was nearly a straight fit. Just a little filing of the flange holes, and a slight extra bending of the bracket, easily done by hand. All the remaining was a straight fit.



My Kitten is a left hand drive one, so I have the clutch cable and clutch operation at the left side, where the exhaust passes. Because of the clutch cable I had to attach the bracket to the lowest stud on the engine flange. Everything kept clear of the exhaust, so also for left hand drive it is a straight fit.

The exhaust has a slightly bigger bore than the old one, but I

didn't have to change the fuel mixture. However, tickover was faster, so I think it gives less backpressure. I cannot compare with an original Reliant exhaust, but I think this one is somewhat louder than the original, with a lower sound. It is less noisy than my stainless steel one, with less resonances. It is not really silent, but not too loud, and with a sporty low sound.



Many thanks to Keith Gittus for his kindness helping me to get the exhaust in Holland!

Best regards, Coen Bouwmeester No. 864 from Holland.

*Thank you for that Coen, I imagine there are many envious Kitten owners reading this wishing the chassis on their Kitten was nearly as well kept as yours appears to be, congratulation, your work has clearly paid off. Ed.*

# Poison!

Bob Neal, our man in Essex, was good enough to send me details of a recent change in the law from this July (2018) in relation to the purchase, and, I assume, storage of, Sulphuric acid. The stuff we use in our car batteries (well, most of them!).

Sulphuric acid has apparently been re-classified as “regulated substance”, and as such, it is now illegal for it to be sold to anyone who does not hold a valid Explosives and Precursors and Poisons licence (EPP for short). Not something your average motorist is likely to have.

This potentially affects us because of the increasing tendency of buying dry car and or motorcycle batteries, often on-line, usually to save a few bob. Batteries sent by post or carriers, I was going to say must, and I do not know of any exceptions, please let me know if you do, be dry for shipping, and so you need to get the acid added locally.

In the past you could buy the acid and do it yourself, though the only time I have done that, many years (decades) ago now. I used to hand crank my dad's Jowett Javelin rather than buy it a new battery, dynamos (generators) were much better at working with a low battery than alternators are. However, our next door neighbour worked night shift, and he was just nodding off when I was cranking the car – I was good at it, it seldom took me more than two or three swings of the handle, but even one was enough to upset him, so he gave me a big caravan battery that he had kept when he had sold his caravan, it had been almost new, and he charged it and drained the acid off to give it a long shelf life, so I had to get acid and refill it. That battery saw the Javelin out, terminal corrosion and a failed gearbox killed it 4 years later, I last drove it on my 21st birthday, I know, that was not yesterday. LGB 750, a number I very much regret not holding onto. The other time was a 6 volt bike battery.

So, it will be off to your local battery supplier in future if you need to get acid in a dry battery.

Ed. With thanks to Bob Neal for making me aware.

## *Some de-ciphering required?*

Hi Brian,

I trust you're well and keeping busy!

I have been in touch with Tony Stevens, who is trying to sell the Lada based Cipher. I wondered if it would be too much of a stretch to put it in the for sale section of the next Mewsletter?

The details are basically as follows:-

This car was intended to be **the Lada Sports Car**, and is the only example that exists. The car was designed and built by Stevens Research Ltd. in the late eighties in the UK under a Joint Venture between Stevens Research, LADA, and various Russian, Lithuanian and British interests.

Built using Lada Samara mechanicals in the factory at Stratford upon Avon, it's been in storage ever since the Lithuanian Government withdraw from the project.

Contact Tony direct if interested, those contact details can be found on the supplement enclosed.

Regards,. Dave Corby, No. 980 from Essex.

*Ahh, an odd corner, a golden opportunity to remind you of the wisdom of agreed value insurance, with the built-in right to be able to retain the salvage in the worst- case scenario. Duncan had been delaying changing / updating his, as he was waiting till he had the Fox resprayed. Most unfortunately, he had a nasty bump last month, but worse yet, the insurance company have written the vehicle off, he can't even keep the perfectly good chassis!*

*This is just wrong, but very distressing, and difficult to avoid after the event. Good luck Duncan. Ed.*



## Liege Page

After the last edition wended its way through the postal service, Bob Riches, our man in Oz, eventually had his arrive, and a certain article, not to mention his appearance of the front cover, prompted him to communicate with me.

Bob, great to hear from you as always.

He kindly sent me a link to an article about his Liege, the only one in Australia.

Were it not for the fact that we devoted quite a few pages in the last edition to Peter Davies' wonderful creations, I might have taken steps to ask if we could copy that article in here. One day perhaps.

Meantime I will share a picture with you, which might give a flavour of things :-





## *More questions than answers!*

### Reconditioned PARTS SUPPLY

It seems to me it has been a while since my penchant for song titles or lyrics came to the fore within these pages, and, as my life seems to be entering a new phase, and indeed the Register's path is, In my mind at any rate, becoming either less clear, or perhaps just in need of better definition or re-definition? Anyway, never mind stars colliding, or was that Jupiter and Mars? next spring or whatever :-

For some time now we have been doing our best to help keep our wee cars, I am talking specifically of the Kittens and Foxes here, on the road. I just had a long conversation with Keith (Saturday September 22<sup>nd</sup>) about steering racks and ball joints in particular (completely ignoring the, perhaps more pressing matter of wishbones, but they are in a different category), as we are looking at re-manufacturing these rather than reconditioning, though crack welding is no doubt something that.... enough said.

I said "doing our best" earlier, clearly my best has not been nearly good enough, and for those shortcomings I can only apologise.

I can hear the words of someone ringing in my ears saying "never apologise or explain anything" but that is just not in my nature.

I really do not know if it laziness, lethargy, or just too much on my plate, or a general lack of discipline, the fact is that over the years (and my lack of proper record keeping and my tendency to trust people) we have "lost" far too many old units.

A long time ago I considered charging a deposit, but that route seemed not only potentially complicated, but requiring a level of administration that I simply was not prepared or able to devote to it, either then or now.

The result of this is that my slipshod ways have allowed us to drift, in spite of a number of generous donations of excess old units, and a couple of deals that I did to get a few extra ones in exchange for a

reconditioned one. We have gone from a peak of having about ten or more reconditioned racks in stock, plus a few more in the pipeline, to having 2 or 3. We should have nearer 20 in stock by now, had I been properly on top of things.

I did point out to Keith that airing my frustrations in here is in all likelihood a bit like preaching to the converted. Many, most I should imagine, of the "defaulters" have probably not bothered to renew their subscription, and so won't be reading this!

Now one could argue (please do!) that the service has not been affected by all this "frantic paddling beneath the surface". Given that we started from nothing, it really ain't been that bad.

I have to say that were it not for Alan Shaw's technical skills, engineering prowess, and willingness to help, things would not only have come to a head over a decade back, but.... well, I just dread to think where we might be. Thank you Alan.

Ball joints, while in a different situation historically, and I won't bore you with the story of them here, I think it is well enough known, and has been covered at various times within these pages as the situation, particularly with bottom ones, has developed and played out.

The fact is that the stock of new ones has diminished over the past few years, there are no plans to ever have any more new ones made, just as with steering racks, and the return rate of old unit ball joints has been abysmal recently. By recently, I mean over the past couple of years or so.

I expect this may be down to the fact that many people have been buying for stock, to secure the future of their vehicle, and who can criticise that? In those circumstances there is no old unit to be sent back for recon, at least not until a new one is needed!

We have aided and abetted that to some extent, by supplying a couple of dealers with these over the past few years, (when we felt we had plenty, and had a lot of money tied up in them – not all Kitten Register money I might add, thank you to those individuals who stepped up at the time.

So, apart from filling a few pages, the point of all this rambling is to share our worries / thinking / concerns, in the hopes that by doing so either a conversation may begin, or thoughts or ideas, even a catalyst might come along. Sometimes in life, the solution to a situation can be glaringly obvious, it just takes another mind to see it – is yours that mind perhaps?

Another reason is that the racks are becoming a problem for me. Well, let me be honest, the racks have not changed, it is my physical abilities that have! I can no longer get up the ladder into the loft, where they have been kept in the past. Packing them has become a real challenge, and takes me well over an hour – I know, just reading that over even I am thinking “how can it possibly take an hour to pack a rack?” well, the fact is that the last one took me almost 2 hours to pack, and I was absolutely exhausted by then.

The obvious answer is for me to delegate, as I do with other items, such as the dampers and springs. The difficulty with the racks is that they come without oil or “boots”, a job I have done locally prior to sending them out. So, anyone taking the racks off my hands, would need to be able to organise that locally. On top of that, historically, I have always collected the racks from Alan (just east of Manchester) when passing, something I have not been a position to do this past year or so. Thank you Tony, for both collecting the last batch, and returning the old units we had managed to secure, your efforts are much appreciated.

So, where does that leave things? Well, 4 of the last 5 racks we supplied were collected, 2 from me here in Renfrew, and 2 at Llangollen. I then had an enquiry from Bristol last month, but, in spite of it being an MOT failure of a Fox used as daily transport, (the owner was not a Register subscriber) nothing came of it, he did not ring back, and I had not been in a position to take his details when he called.

One thing that did surprise me was that he had been advised that Fox racks are different from Kitten ones, quite contrary to my understanding and experience! Do talk to me if you can confirm or deny his (mis)information so that I can put the individual concerned straight! I don't know the Fox owner, but I do know who told him they were different! Had I more time I might have tried to contact him that way, but right now, getting this to the printers is a higher priority, especially given how few racks I have here!

# Kitten Register T-Shirts

An ideal Christmas gift?

I suddenly realised how muddled my thinking has become, here I am running late, trying to fill a page or two, and all I need to do is share this picture with you (as I promised to do on page 4). Contact John Pearce for details :- See Mewsletter pictures contact inside the front cover.



# Extracts from the OFF

(The Old Orange Folder)

September 2018

So, I can't remember when last I actually delved in here to both thin it down, and at the same time fill a page or so in the Mews. I know I have mentioned it in the not too distant past, but can't remember if I actually used any of it! It says "NEWSLETTER MATERIAL" on a white sticky label on the front top right corner, the same type of label the envelope this magazine had on it when it arrived, unless of course you are one of our "digital" guys.

Anyway, with a deadline fast approaching, and as you probably know, I don't do deadlines, but there comes a time when, if something is going to happen at all, action needs to be taken – **that time is now!**

The folder in question is – hang on till I find a rule - just over  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick, that would be 20mm to those under a certain age!

To digress ever so slightly, I agreed with my grandson recently that we would in future, to avoid confusion, call a rule a measuring stick, (which does present certain difficulties when we are using a tape measure!) , however, I asked him for a rule, he brought one from my desk, and informed me it was a ruler. I pointed out to him that the Queen was a ruler, a rule, when it is not a guideline or one of a set of instructions, one might even be considered to be a law.

A rule of the type we were talking about, is a device for measuring things, so, in future, we are referring to it as a measuring stick, regardless of the material it is made from. I prefer a steel or wooden one, but I even have the odd plastic one, in fact my slide rule is plastic, but now we are in serious danger of digressing just too far, and I can't remember when it last saw the light of day!

So, the contents of the orange folder, the first few bits of paper were from about 2005/6. One was to let me know that Kitten YLE 240S had been acquired by James Clapham's dad in Devon, and was destined to provide donor parts for a Liege. They last renewed their

subscription a decade ago, back in 2007 in fact, which is where my difficulties and systems start failing me. What do I do now? I don't have a note on file about what happened, was the Liege ever built? Where is it now? Should I break from this and take the time to either phone / write or email him to find out – indecision and procrastination rule, which are 2 reasons why I end up with so many bits of paper on my desk!

Given that this is not an isolated case, perhaps a standard text communication might be a useful tool, it could be emailed initially, where I have an email address, and, assuming it does not get bounced back undelivered, that might suffice, to, if not to resolve matters, at least salve my conscious!

I am under pressure right now to sort through / clear / recycle / tidy up, take to the charity shop, some of the contents of my mother's flat which I sneaked into the house when Moira was out the other day (having planked it in the lock-up last month – my brother would have binned the lot!) and, with 3 weeks of intensive grandchild minding beginning in less than 50 hours – were I younger and fitter, doing an all-nighter might be a solution, but....

O.K., today's compromise / solution is to set the timer, and spend a fixed amount of time on an, as yet to be agreed, number of areas. I now have 11 minutes left of my current slot allocation to this task, can I negotiate a time slot for chasing up folk, or does that have to vie with Mewsletter time??? We will see.

Moving quickly on, Carole Hall, from the south coast, had written to me in March 2006 to let me know that her husband Stephen had died suddenly. And I still have Fox E496 RUB down as belonging to him – I wonder what became of it? I had written her telephone number on the letter, so I do not doubt that I would have rung her at the time, but I failed to make notes, or, if I did I can't find them, and can't remember anything about the conversation.

That is one restriction of the database software that frustrates me, a lack of space to record notes - Susan, we must talk!

My time for this 44 minute session is up – more later - hopefully later today!



Back again, I have decided to shred Carole's letter, and, in spite of the lovely letter-heading on it, one from Simon Moore from the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2005 updating me about the extensive work he had been doing on his Kitten. Simon had enclosed pictures, which a p.s. tells me he did not want back, but I have allowed them to become separated from the letter, and I can't remember if I ever shared them with you.

Simon sold UTT 302X in Sept 2008, and I have not heard from him or of the car since.

Then, more recently, a note I had made about the Reef Cub which the late Alex Tanner had sold to Joe Mason in July 2012, but what became of Alex's Rebel ECG 280H? Oh, hang on, there is a note on the database, Andy Skinner bought Rebel UCM 681L from Alex in February 2015, perhaps he might know something, but sadly, he never joined our ranks, and so I have no contact details, I'll shred that sheet too.

Next was a fax (My Fax machine died a decade or more ago!) from Dr. Graham Austin dated 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2001, thanking me for our conversation regarding Kitten VFA 574S, which he had used for trials, and while needing a paint job, would not take a lot to put back on the road. However, I cannot find that car on the database – was my disorganisation really setting in as far back as that?

Part of me says I should try to contact him, even at this late stage, to find out what happened to the car, but, as you may have gathered, my time is limited, and, given that it looks as though nothing has been done about this in well over a decade, and I do not want to leave my family with thousands of bits of paper – which they would just bin anyway, another one for the shredder I'm afraid.

This may be clearing the folder and filling a page or so in here, but it is a might depressing!

Another conflict has arisen, the sun is shining, there is much to do in the garden, which is weather dependant, and I am hugely conflicted! The fact is I am not suited to sitting in the one position for too long – hence the timer – so I'll fit in a session in the garden next, a change is as good as a rest. How can it take 45 minutes to type up one page?!?!

Philip Andrew, No. 726, from Reading, joined us back in 2003 and was with us for 5 years. He owned Rebel GKT 736L and Kitten RDU 491R, though his letter of 19/03/03 tells me that he also had Kitten MOW 898R. I really need to communicate with folk like that. I do not doubt I would have sent at least one reminder when he didn't renew in 2010, but there is no note on record of what happened. There is only one car logged as being his on the database, that is the white Kitten saloon, and I am out of time again so can't check of the other vehicles just now, grrr, I need to work harder or stay awake longer!!

Oh well, we had a lovely lunch at the Aizle, (Ballat Crossroads, Balfron Station G63 0SE) one of our favourite haunts, a 45 minute drive from here, so that killed 3 hours. Then, with the weather still looking good, I decided to do some tidying up in the front garden, exhausted now, and having an early night. Just over 3 more pages to go, and only 40 hours before our grandchild minding marathon begins - I can do it!

One thing we did see at the Azile was a pre-war open top Alvis, I was amused to see a "wing" mirror mounted on the tyre of the exposed spare wheel, which sat beside the bonnet on the driver's side. It had those huge chrome headlights so common back then, they must have been about 15 inch diameter or more! Which brings me nicely onto a completely different tack, I saw a yellow Scimitar heading off up the slip road at junction 27 onto the M8 heading towards Glasgow this afternoon, 23/09/18, and was instantly reminded that I ought to look again into the world of dash cameras.

My apologies if you have read something similar in here in the past. I did visit Halfords earlier this year (or was it last year?, no matter) to talk about these devices, but it became clear that what I wanted to do was difficult if not impossible (perhaps I was talking to the wrong person, but he seemed to know all about them, and understand what I wanted to achieve). The episodes with the Scimitar and Alvis were just the sort of thing I would like to be able to grab a still from, indeed Moira and I saw a Rebel earlier this year. However, I am a long way from being convinced that grabbing a still picture from such a device is even possible, never mind within my capabilities.

If you have any relevant experience or knowledge, please share.

## Epilogue.

It is nearing the last week of September, I have just typed up the 3 pages on old units, racks in particular, I still have 6 blank pages to fill, and Arleen, our daughter, begins 3 weeks full time training for her new job (which, once she starts it, will only be 2 days a week), so our grandchild minding duties are about to increase dramatically in the short term, at the very time I need to get this edition completed.

I shall need to dig out that old folder again, unless something appropriate arrives by mail of one sort or another!

As you will have realised before you got here, I did resort to looking out the old orange folder. It has in fact lived in plain sight and easy reach for many years, and, as you will also have realised, should have been dealt with a very long time ago! Anyway, I am taking the view that all progress is a good thing, the fact is there are a few less bits of paper here now than there were last week, and that has to be a tiny step in the right direction.

Yesterday was the National Committee meeting of the ROC, which I used to faithfully attend to represent the Thistle branch for the past couple of decades or so, which I used to use to get a few days south of the border, you will have read of some of those exploits in the past. Frustratingly, since my stay in hospital last December, I have lost the confidence, if not the ability, to go long trips on my own. One has to ask the question, given that I have had ten days or more at home than usual this year, why the paperwork is in a worse state than ever?!? I could easily claim mitigating circumstances, but the simple fact is, I need to do better!

The phrase I think is – one day I'll get..... Meantime, you could do worse than lubricating ball joints and propshaft hardy spicers!

Speak again well before Christmas, till then take care.

*Brian*

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