

RELIANT KITTEN
REGISTER
MEWSLETTER Number 15



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Hello again, see that, you responded so well to the renewal notice, that the first edition of 1997 was in the post during the first week in February. Well, there is not much that you can do now to encourage me to get future editions out early, except send me articles for the magazine!

While on the subject of renewals, just over a hundred folk have seen fit so to do, my thanks to you all. The rest of you will receive no further magazines unless I receive your 1997 subscription, so if you want to receive any more of whatever you would like to call this, and have not already renewed, now would be a good time to attend to it - I do not intend to spend time writing to individuals, as, happily, there are so many new enquiries that I am kept quite busy enough thank you very much. Lecture over.

Talking of numbers, the situation is of course constantly changing, and when I talk of renewals, I am excluding the new subscribers who have joined us in recent times. May I take the opportunity of once again saying Welcome, and thanks for your support.

I really must spend more time trying to analyse the figures, I have again run out of some copies of the magazine back issues - about one in 5 new subscribers wants all the back numbers, and I am sure you can imagine just how much money I could tie up if I were to keep say 25 copies of each edition in stock! I did organise about 10 to 15 copies of each edition about 6 months ago, thinking that would keep me going for a year or so, but I have just run out of editions one and two. This brings me neatly onto a subject which you can help me with. This is by no means the first time that I have run out of one or more editions, and I suspect that a few folk are owed one or two - please feel free to remind me if you are one of them - I do have records, but to be honest, with fast approaching 400 cars on the system now, I never actually take the time to look back and see where the gaps are - so please do remind me if you think I owe you one or more back numbers.

On the subject of the magazine, and in particular this business of an index of sorts. I do intend to have a 'Rebel round up' in this and future editions, and a "Fox's den", and if any of the other minority folk would care to have a say, lets be hearing from you. All those Jimps and Tempests out there - oh, my thanks to Thomas Touw, for his article on codes (Cipher). I have even had communication from an Asquith owner, watch for it on a future front cover.

I am often faced with decisions, aren't we all? The difficulty that I often have is in trying to decide - in advance - just how far I can go, before divorce proceedings are begun!?!

The last dilemma began the other week when David Heywood (Register No. 4 no less) came North in search of a Kitten. We had an enjoyable day (well I thought so, perhaps you should ask David what he thought - I'm sure he was shaking a bit after 30 miles or so of my driving in the Rebel!) At any rate, he decided on a red Kitten estate with a particularly good chassis, but no M.O.T., and needing some work on the front suspension and brakes. However, on our travels, we went to Ayrshire to look at Donald Jack's saloon. It has been off the road now for about 15 months, and unfortunately, the clutch is firmly stuck to the flywheel, and will not disengage. I had however, forgotten just how much work, and as much to the point, how many new parts had been fitted to this car, during its body off rebuild 4 years (and just 22,000 miles) ago. Complete engine overhaul, you know brand new pistons and liners, new bearings etc. etc. But also 4 new dampers, and new springs all round. Stainless steel exhaust, copper brake pipes throughout, with brass ends, and silicone fluid, and it seems to work, because the brakes are not sticking like the clutch! The chassis was so good that it did not need any welding, but was shot blasted, and thoroughly painted before reassembly. The interior has all been re-done, a new headlining, new carpets, the entire boot area is carpeted - but it is the nice wee touches like the marine fitting, chrome, dished, with a lifting ring, which he fitted to the rear parcel shelf, instead of the hole that was there before. The stainless bonnet steady, and clip, also made up in stainless, the speakers neatly set in the foot wells behind the inner wings - O.K., I'll stop, this is not an advert, definitely not, because I want it! The only problem, besides the clutch, and the fact that the rear window lets in water, is the fact that it

is not an estate car (he is keeping that, his wife uses it every day!), and of course, just how close to the divorce lawyer it would bring me. That, and the small matter of something like £700. It does have scruffy wheels mind you! (He probably switched them for the ones on the estate car!) Perhaps I should start doing the lottery - yes, I am still one of those rare individuals who has never bought a lottery ticket.

Right dreaming over, on with the mag. But, as I say, it makes you think, at the risk of getting Donald into the divorce courts too (Davina probably doesn't read this anyway) he must have spend well over £2,000 on it, never mind his time, and it has only done 22,000 miles since.

Update on that story, I bought it for Moira last week, and like all those wonderful wee cars, it has a list of things to be done! Not a big list, and it is on the road in daily use, I even fitted electronic ignition to it the other day, thanks to Jim McKillop and George Anderson, but Moira wants the fuel gauge fixed, and I can't make up my mind whether to remove the tank, or cut a hole in the floor, to replace the sender unit. Yes Donald, it looks like a faulty unit, when I disconnect the wire, and earth it, the gauge does give a reading. Then again, if I was going to fit a tow bar, that tank would be coming off anyway - decisions again, there's just no getting away from them, is there?!?

See how things change with the passage of time! It is a month now since we became the custodians of the little white car, and some work has been done. I fitted a pair of door mirrors, it only had the one, and the mirroring was tarnished, I finally got round to fitting the expansion tank to the radiator, though I am having to use two pressure caps at the moment as I can't find a source of flat caps, any one any ideas? I even fitted a new fuel tank sender unit yesterday (8th April) and David Heywood did send me an article about his day's Kitten hunting (in season of course) which you will see further on - but I was so impressed with the electronic ignition, an ETi200, that I wrote to the manufacturers, and they are prepared to offer us a reasonable discount if we buy enough of them. So, as I seem to be spending money pretty fast these days, a Rebel stainless fuel tank and a pair of Kitten rear springs now lurk in my lock-up, beside a Kitten stainless exhaust and a three piece clutch kit. The thing to do if you want one is send me a cheque, payable to the "Reliant Kitten Register", for £26.50, and I will have one, or more if you so desire, electronic ignition kits delivered to your home address. In fact you can have two for £54.00.

This unit still uses the points, but with a lower current, and hence longer life, has an immobilising switch, and a timing light, even I, with a little help from a friend, can fit it in an hour. The box itself only measures 3" by 2", and has just 4 wires, one of which is an earth, it needs extending, as the manufacturers assume that you will be attaching it with one of the screws that hold the unit to the body, and fibreglass does not make a good enough conductor ! I fitted ours just above the radiator, beside the coil, and so, two of the leads can be just a couple of inches long, no messy wiring at all - great stuff.

Right, the venue and date for our first attempt at an annual get-to-gether, and my thanks to George Sampford, but I am running out of time. The only three people who have contacted me in response to the suggestions made in the last edition, were all in favour of a different option. To be honest I do not see 2% as being a representative number, and so I have elected to say that, anyone interested, can come along to the R.O.C. annual do on the Sunday afternoon May 25th, at Shugborough Hall, between Rugley & Litchfield. Milford in fact, J13 off the M6 South of Stafford, use the education centre entrance on the A513 and we will just see how many 4-wheeled Reliants make it - see you there. My thanks to Gordon Jackson of the R.O.C. for agreeing to having us come along.

There has been so much correspondence recently. I know that the Register is still in its infancy, and so to make comparisons with previous years seems a bit of a nonsense, but I would have said that, in the past, the Winter was a quiet time as far as enquiries go. Since the beginning of December however, there have been over 40 new enquiries, almost half of whom have joined up already, so I have been kept busy, indeed am again having to arrange reprints of several of the old editions of the Mewsletter, as many new subscribers seem keen to read all of them! I'll just put the figures in print here,

it currently costs just £8.00 for the first 12 editions, including postage.

All these new folk mean of course that the Register details published in the last edition are now well out of date, we are now looking at over 375 known cars. What I will try and do is publish the next page, or two, of the Register in this edition, and, in conjunction with pages 7 to 14 of edition 14, you will get a more up to date picture of just where we are.

On another matter completely, Mike was looking for a tow bar in the last edition - did you ever get one Mike? I have been in recent consultations with the company who used to produce them for Towsure, the Camping and Leisure folk in Sheffield (Towsure used to sell Robin / Rialto tow bars for about £30, but no longer do so, owing to the small demand) and I can't get the Witters brigade to sell me one for much under £50, So I am, subject to satisfactory negotiations, going to have a batch produced.

Don't be under any illusions, it is a difficult bar to fit, allow a day - it usually takes me 5 or 6 hours. The fuel tank, and probably your exhaust will need lowering by almost an inch, and if I remember correctly, on the saloon you will need to cut the rear valence - I guess the back moulding of the Robin and Kitten are not the same after all!

Anyway, the point is, let me know if you want one, because the price will certainly come down if we can buy in bulk, and I have to say that they are being realistic there, a batch to them is just 25, I have asked for prices for 5, 10 and 20, but 25 would be their ideal - talk to me.

On the subject of batch quantities, and I honestly don't know if they were pulling my leg, if not, something else must use them too, but rear springs have shot up in price, I am told because the normal batch quantity is 1,000, yes you heard me, a thousand - just how many Kittens are there out there ? Anyway, that's what they tell me in an effort to justify a 25% price hike, and the news that they may only be available in future to special order, and I dread to think what that might cost. For now we are looking at £80 odd for a pair. They do still have a few sets in stock, (15/03/97), but the Register does not have the funds to go stocking such items in any quantity - let me know sooner rather than later, if you would like a pair, or better yet if you know of a cheaper source.

You will probably have noticed that this edition was a bit later than we all thought / hoped it would be in reaching you - just blame me, my brother Alan, for moving, and my decision, there they go again, decisions getting in the way, to redecorate my "office" and double the shelf space. The refurbished office has yet to be completed, in the end I had to move back in before work was complete, just to get operational again, the dreaded word that springs to mind this time is compromise - one year I will get by without it very well - I hope!!

David Heywood also deserves special mention for taking the time to do a technical(ish) type of article, which you should find after the adverts. Some of his points will be old hat to many readers, but it did bring home to me that not everyone has been running Reliants for decades, and not everyone, reading this, has read all the earlier editions, though that is entirely their own fault.

Right, I struggle to understand many things in life, not struggle hard mind you, life as they say, is too short, but here I have for some reason a gap in this page left by the software, so I'll just fill it with a letter, thank you William Davies of East Sussex, and welcome.

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Battle, Jan,'97

Your name and address were passed on to me when I ordered some parts from Michaels of Selby to enable my local garage to repair my old Reliant Kitten DL estate. It's a 1978 model which was originally yellow, but was painted a rather garish blue and silver by a previous owner. The registration number is BHG 451S. It's rather tatty now, but has done over 140,000 miles on its original engine. I've

owned it since 1989 when it had covered 97,000 miles. I was told that it had had a rebore not long before I bought it. I've spent more money on it over the last seven years than I would have liked, but I'm quite attached to it and will keep it going as long as the cost of its survival is not beyond all reason.

I'd be happy to have it put on the Register and would be fascinated to receive a quarterly magazine about Kittens as long as the costs of doing so are not excessive. Regretfully I have no technical know-how whatsoever; so I have to entrust repairs to garages. For anyone who could do most of their own mechanical work it would be quite a cheap car to run. I enclose an s.a.e as requested in your leaflet,

Yours Sincerely, William Davies

William did join us a few days later, no. 336 - Ed.

Without much further ado, I will get on with our readers letters and articles. I said much further, because one decision I think I am going to make is to keep the technical, or mainly technical articles to the back of the magazine, after the adverts, and the letters and stories to the front behind my waffle - as I have said in the past, there will always be areas of overlap, but I will try. In other words that is the closest we are going to get to an index for the meantime!

To Moscow via Alexandria and back. A day of Kitten hunting with Brian Marshall

Once upon a time there was a man from England who wanted to buy a Kitten

"So, you want to buy a Reliant Kitten?" said Brian. "Come over here for a day, and I'll take you round to see some." There was a sharp frost as I set out one January morning, and then the sun burst through as I made my way around Edinburgh and on to Bathgate for my first appointment. I made a quick 'phone call, and ten minutes later a Kitten saloon came into view.

"Hop in" said the owner, and Jim Spence gave me a quick tour of Bathgate, showing off the tight turning circle. We crawled underneath, and inspected the chassis, and somehow got distracted onto discussing how to fit a 1600cc twin cam engine into a Kitten. I could not find a word to describe the colour of the bodywork; it was something like uncooked pudding. "It's caramel, according to the book" he said proudly. I thanked him, and made my way to the motorway to Glasgow.

Caramel, I thought to myself while speeding along the M8. I wonder what the kids will make of that. They gave a unanimous "Yuk!" when I told them about a chocolate brown Kitten. Would caramel be more acceptable? By this time I was at the Marshall Mansion, being welcomed with home made soup, and prepared for a hectic afternoon of Kitten-hunting. (yes, you do need a licence)

"Lets go" said Brian, and we jumped into a moss-encrusted hut parked outside, which turned out to be a Reliant Rebel. We visited some of Brian's lock-ups and sheds where various members of his Kitten and Rebel family were hidden away. Some were very smart and almost ready to roll, while others were politely described as "projects."

"There's one" said Brian, and, sure enough, when my eyes got used to the gloom I could just make out a Kitten under a pile of other things. I was beginning to get confused, was this the one with the worn ball joints, or the one with the rattling engine? I started to scribble some notes.

Alexandria was the next stop, and a spotty red Kitten estate was standing in the drive next to a Reliant Scimitar. No MOT and there was some work to be done, but the chassis was excellent and a spare engine was included in the deal. The price had come down, so I scribbled some more notes, promised I would be in touch, and leapt back into the chauffeur driven Rebel.

"There's a wee saloon down here" bellowed Brian, trying to make himself heard above the Rebel's engine noises. We swerved into a side street and peered through the railings at a blue Kitten in the bushes. "Not for sale, it just sits there."

"Time to eat!" shrieked the chauffeur, so we returned to Renfrew, fed the inner man, changed cars, and headed south towards Kilmarnock, through a village called Moscow, and into a confusion of minor roads. There, in a workshop, we met a gentleman who was teaching himself to use a wheeling machine so that he could repair the inner wings of a pre-war Rolls Royce. It looked a very long term project. His white Kitten saloon was immaculate however, and still for sale.

On the way back Brian told me stories of members of the House of Lords in Rebels and Kittens, and a coral reef in the Caribbean which is mostly chopped up Reliant. My day of hunting was over, and my envelope was covered in scribblings.

It was late when I got home. "I've been to Alexandria and Moscow, and I've travelled in a Rebel with toadstools." They gave me a pitying look, as only teenagers can.

David Heywood - Norham (almost Scotland!) P.S. I chose the spotty red one.

Thank you David (I think!), I do like the Marshall's Mansion bit, if ever there was an inappropriate name, that must be it, but I do like it.

The Reliant, Rebel in fact, Coral reef bit, does remind me that Bill Dick, hello Bill, and welcome to those hallowed pages. Bill did send me a list of his Rebel spares last month, but, as usual, I have more work to do It is an extensive list of all Bill's Rebel spare pans, but the pans which are for sale is not so big a list, and I will have to do the extraction, if you'll excuse the dental expression, and publish the for sale list another time. Yes, I know I should do it now, but I am already three weeks late with this edition - perhaps if we increased the subs to £ 20 or so I could employ a secretary - only kidding - I think ! As I was saying, on with the mag

Dear Brian,

4/12/96

A long overdue thank you for the past Mewsletters which arrived just in time for me to take to Tenerife for many enjoyable hours of reading by the pool or on the beach. It was great to read how the Register took shape to become what it is today.

I must say that it is a credit to you and with the latest Mewsletter I would say that you have hit the nail smack on the head, and would suggest that you have reached the right standard and does not need any improvement. - *Thank you Dave, flattery will get you anywhere, but seriously I do feel the same way, just wish I could avoid always having the odd spelling mistake or wrong word, there is always room for improvement, but we are pretty close, mind you there is a dissenting voice, you can't please all the people all the time, but one out of about 40 (who are good enough to write) in a year can't be bad Ed. -*

A few years ago I was heavily involved in Berkleys and was the Club's Secretary, also producing their magazine and newsletter. I therefore know how much work is involved in producing the Mewsletter, I am sure that the membership are rightly grateful to you, and have every reason to be pleased with the Mewsletter.

(Honest this is a real letter from a real person, I'm not just making it up, I do sometimes edit out the embarrassing / flattering remarks, but Moira said that I should not be so shy ! Ed.)

I will, of course, do a write up of the Fox rebuild and change into a Tempest. Let me know if you

want it in stages or the completed article -*Which ever you find most convenient Dave, but bit at a time might help to ensure that it gets done!*

I have been involved in motorsport for about 40 years now, if you think this may be of interest to members I can let you have something to fill more pages - *Well people, would you like such a thing as a competition corner?*

Regarding the name for the Mewsletter, why not Mewsletter, or is it thought too corny? Also I would say 2nd class post is good enough, of course it is a first class publication, but why put money into the Post Office purse, lets keep it for the Registers benefit.

Yes Dave, and the many others who have expressed a similar view, as all the best (and worst !) politicians seem to say these days, I hear what you are saying Trouble is, I am not a political animal, so we will act accordingly.

Keep up the good work, oh, by the way, no I don't think you are getting above yourself with the binders, just keep thinking about it and put me down for a couple when you have produced them.

Kind regards, Dave Price

What can I say, thanks Dave. Just a couple of other points Dave made, firstly a Fox Workshop manual I think we agreed, HELP Bob Neal, anyone! am I correct in saying they never produced such a thing ? and Dave, did I ever send you a Kitten one instead ? As to the alloy rocker cover, yes we have one when would you like it?

Just imagine, lying on a beach in Tenerife, reading the Mewsletter Moira wants to know if she can come next time!

Dear Brian,

April '97

Thank you for your letter and the "Mewsletter" - nicely put together, and a colour cover too! I'm running a Kitten van (works van) at present, having just recently sold an orange estate PAP 807R that I owned for about 4 or 5 years. I also have a saloon OOA 709R for breaking, in fact the engine in the van came from that one, but even when I put a better engine into the van I doubt whether the saloon will be worth putting an engine in, so, parts available:- doors, glass, rear hatch etc, the trim is poor, but the body is not bad.

I'm intending to keep the van indefinitely, so I'll probably spend far too much replacing / rebuilding the engine, gearbox etc

Here are a couple of tips - *Oh no, should I keep the next couple of paragraphs back to the end of the mag, in the more technical area, no, can't be bothered, here we go - you may be aware of them already :-* Doors, when they fall off (when, not if!) because the / a previous owner let them get too bad; repair them from inside (remove the door first) using epoxy resin, as this is a bit stronger than polyester. I use a resin system designed for boat building, and timber repair, although it may not be worth buying one specially for one odd repair, if you are doing a lot of repair work it is well worth it.

Build up is several layers with the door propped up at right angles to its normal position, as epoxy is not as thick or sticky as polyester, also too much in one go will generate a lot of heat as it sets

Tip 2:- Having bought your resin give a generous coat to any hardboard or cardboard that suffers from any dampness, like the door panels on my van. A hot air gun, or even a hairdryer will ensure that the

resin is very thin and will soak through, leave to go off between sheets of polythene and heavy boards. The end result looks just the same, but is flat, waterproof, oil proof, and virtually bullet proof!

Cheque enclosed, many thanks in anticipation of Mewsletters to come.

Andrew Norman, Nutley

Dear Brian,

Alton, Feb.'97

Thank you for your prompt response to my request for information regarding the KITTEN REGISTER. I would like to register my Kitten estate with you and enclose a cheque to the value of £16.00, for the register and cost of the previous copies of the Mewsletter.

The vehicle has been off the road for more years than I can recall, each passing year with the intent of at least starting to get it back into regular service.

Let's see what this year has in store to assist me in this goal.

Best regards, Bill (Flint)

Thanks Bill, I hope that you find some inspiration from the magazines. All the best with the project Brian.

Dear Brian,

Lytham St.Annes, Feb,'97

Thank you for sending the info on the Kitten club after our telephone conversation. I must congratulate you on the presentation of the Mewsletter. I am a member of various owners clubs, Mini, Fiat & Alfa Romeo for starters, and I think yours is much superior.

I've sold my Kitten now thanks, to a man from Ormskirk, whose name and address I did not unfortunately get. Even more unfortunately he was intending using it for spares for his Fox, although it was much too good for that treatment. I have had about 20 enquiries, and several of them said that if they could contact the new owner, they would happily give him a profit on the £175 I sold the car for. So you will at least be pleased to hear there is so much interest,

Regards, Peter Jackson.

I have printed Peter's letter just to let you understand that a lot of my time is spent with folk who do not ever actually subscribe to the Register, but they are aware of our existence, which can't be all bad and much of the credit for his complimentary comments must go to all you people who contribute in so many ways to helping me keep this up. Take a bow, and do remember that I really couldn't do it without your help.

Words from those across the channel.

My thanks to Thomas Touw from Holland, who sent the following story

Dear Brian Here's some stuff you might want to use for one of the greatest Newsletters there is. This story is more than one year old now, and my psychiatrist thinks it's time to talk about it now, so here I go

It was in 1994 that my father found a second Cipher, and unlike the Reliant prototype, which lay dismantled in our garage, this Stevens build cipher was a more or less driveable car. Although the

engine was leaking and burning oil everywhere, driving the car was extreme fun. This car is as close to go-carting as you can get!

Because of all the experience I had built up over the years trying to keep my Kittens and Robin on the road, it was only a days work to find a flat Robin in a scrap yard nearby, and transplant its engine into the Cipher. The Cipher was then ready for a test run to the continental meeting in Apeldoorn. My father in his GTC as a bag waggon behind me. Apart from a little fire underneath the Cipher the test run went very well. Now the Cipher was ready for the big work, a two-week trip across England with one of my friends. The main goal was to visit the Reliant factory, the Curborough weekend, and finding as many spare parts as we could.

The weather during those weeks was very hot (*Yes, it can be like that!*) so during the day we had to remove one of the headlights to get more air into the radiator. Before going to the Reliant factory we visited the 25th anniversary of the Bond Bug, and the TVR factory. When we were getting close to Tamworth, Reliants were flashing around, but no one could tell us where the factory was. Finally we found the place and parked the Cipher at the factory site. In only a few seconds the Cipher was surrounded by Reliant employees who were in, on, and underneath the Cipher. Peter Hall in person, made little test run, and within a few hours there was an agreement that Reliant would borrow both our Ciphers for studies, and probably reproduction. "This is just what we are looking for, This will save us months of designing and tons of money!"

In return they would completely rebuild both ciphers and make them better than new. I needed the car to get home, so we made an agreement that I would bring both Ciphers to the factory in the Autumn of that year.

The green Cipher was the driveable car and the white one was in parts, (we had already completely rebuilt its chassis) when we delivered the cars to Reliant. The rumours that the company was in trouble were everywhere, but Peter Hall assured us that there was nothing to worry about.

Just tell us what colours you want the cars, we will galvanise the chassis and...and...and...and.." This was too good to be true, but it got even better "Why don't you come over in your Christmas holidays and work with our development team on the Ciphers?"

Bring your Kitten to Tamworth "they said, "and we will give it a nice respray while you are here."

When I arrived at Tamworth, the factory was closed, and big men in long coats were sealing the factory.

"We have a few little problems, but they are just temporary, just go home and we will let you know when things get better"

In the next month I was on the 'phone to Peter almost every day. I was starting to get a little worried.

Your Ciphers are doing great, we are rebuilding two engines at this time, and the chassis of the white Cipher is on its way to be galvanised at this time"... "don't worry "...everything is O.K."... "could not be better"

Finally I asked one of the engineers if it would not be better to get my ears out of the factory "You should have done that months ago !" The next day I was on my way back to England for the fourth time, to get my cars back.

When I arrived at the factory nobody was there, Peter Hall didn't show up, and we found the

Ciphers outside in the rain. The green Cipher was just as we had left it 6 months earlier. They had never touched it! The white Cipher was even worse than before, the restored chassis had been standing outside for months, and was completely rusted. Two employees were willing to help us get the cars on the trailer, but that was as much help as we got.

You might think that this was enough to kill all our Reliant enthusiasm, but we don't let people spoil our hobby. We started to rebuild the Cipher ourselves, and a brand new tuned engine is ready to go. Our Reliant collection has got bigger since that time! We now own a SE-6, a Kitten saloon, Kitten Estate, Robin, / Bond-Bug, Reliant Cipher, Stevens Cipher, and with a little luck, an SE-4 by the time you read this. If anyone knows of an Ant or an early regal for sale, please let us know. *(There are always Regals and Ants for sale, keep in touch, Ed)* Not all our small Reliants are in top condition, but no rust anywhere, that must be one of Reliants biggest advantages.

Although put off by our problems of the past, we are pleased to learn that Reliant are producing cars again. The next time we are in England we will visit the factory again. It is a beautiful piece of motoring history.

Thomas Touw - Holland

Thank you Thomas, I can imagine, as I am sure we all can, just how frustrating, not to say costly your experience must have been, I look forward to seeing you at the R.S.S.O.C. annual bash at Pitlochry later this year, I trust you will be in the Cipher. Ed.

Dear Brian,

Feb.'97

Please find enclosed my cheque to cover the renewal of my annual subscription & apologies for lateness.

I enclose also a photo of my wheels, the paintwork I have improved enormously with Turtle Wax & Teflon, it has really made a difference, if you don't look too closely!

Since writing to you last, we have had to have a new clutch and bearing, but the old one had been on for 13 years & a new handbrake cable (15 years) keeping fingers crossed as it seems to be running quite well at the moment. Now (1)15,000 on the clock - how long can it keep running ?

I'm afraid we no longer do our own maintenance, except minor things, my husband now 76, no longer finds it so easy, though he drives his Scimitar SE6a with great pride, and for myself, having over the years driven so many types of cars from a Heinkel bubble to a Jensen 541 and Scimitar GT saloon, several Mini's etc. am reduced to feeling secure in my Kitten, that's old age for you !

Sorry to interrupt Pat, but I really must, firstly this age thing, both your good husband and you, surely this is wisdom and experience / good taste, that keep him from the big jobs, and you driving the car ! As to the Jensen connection, it never fails to amuse / amaze, whatever adjective you care to use really, but the number of Kitten / Rebel owners who have, or have had, Jensen 541's, Rolls Royces, Bentleys, well, lets just say that with your help, the figure is now over 5% of Register subscribers, indeed if you take the number of vehicles rather than the number of individuals, then it becomes more like 10%. While on the subject of Jensen 541's Bill, do you still have both the prototype as well as chassis number 10? and George from the Orkney's I never did ask which chassis number yours was ? I know that Geoff Sharrock's was a special, or at least had been highly tuned (or was yours a CV8 Geoff?) I do remember remarking in a magazine ankle at the time that Geoff's Jensen, he was good enough to take me for a run in it a few years back, and it took exactly the same time to reach 5,000 r.p.m. in both first and second gears as did my Rebel, the slight difference being, that by those revs in second the Rebel was doing about 24 M.P.H. while the Jensen had just cleared 90 ! - The Rebel does use a might less fuel

mind you! The biggest impression of the car were the huge soft leather seats into which all that power pushed you so firmly, as the song says, memories are made of this, thanks again Geoff; Sony Pat, you were saying -

I still have friends suggesting that it's time I changed cars for something more up to date, but no way, as long as we can, the Kitten stays!

Many thanks for sending the Mewsletter I love reading it.

Pat Allatson - Sywell

Pat, what can I say, I've interrupted more than enough already, I'm just glad you enjoy both the car and the mag. Long may they both keep going, Ed.

Dear Mr. Marshall,

April '97

We run a SE6A and a Kitten This Kitten is the second I have owned. It is an ex-demonstrator 1981 Estate - serial number SCD140860 BD 003261. I have owned her since 1985.

I heard of you through the Slice magazine and I would be most interested in receiving a copy of your News Letter.

Many thanks,

Margaret Boardman - Weston super Mare

People keep asking me how folk find out about the Register, well, there's one example. Ed

Dear Brian,

Newquay, Jan.'97

Thank you for completing my file of Mewsletters and also your kind enquiry regarding my wish for another car. However I am not yet contemplating this for the time being - doubling the joists in my loft and rewiring to make all accessible afterwards, then laying flooring there in order to make room for all the junk I've collected so far is taking up all my time. You are right, retirement does dramatically reduce spare time!

I was saying to Peter, that this being retired lark is murder, you don't even get public holidays! Ed

My junk consists of electronics and radio equipment as well as bits and pieces for the Scimitar and Kitten as well as piles of reference books plus lots of etceteras. Once the work is done I shall try to reduce the junk and hopefully get an empty garage again - it is freezing outside just now and any car jobs are murder! I'll be able to start spray-painting again too with a little heat.

No, it is just that when all this work is finished I would like to strip and rebuild a Kitten or a Fox. I've always been sad that the Cipher never really got off the ground, I was delighted to see that one on the front cover of issue No. 8. I wonder where the GRP moulds are now? What a wonderful kit car it would make - *All right me again, I was asked by Phil Hallam almost a year ago to get him the drawings / moulds for the Cipher, and I did write and talk on the 'phone to Dr. Tony Steven, I must move that job up the priority list a bit. Ed.*

Regarding my Kitten serial number Without doubt the body plate is very clearly engraved 8A 16 14702961. I bought it secondhand from a well established Reliant Dealer and their original sales document and the registration document show it as 8A 10 14702961. The registration document shows

it was first registered in March 1979 (LVY 260T). and the original colour was, and still is, Sierra Tan (code 47)., so that is not in doubt

Referring to the 1976 Coding service sheet you recently sent me, it would seem the car was built in 1978, January. but what the 16 or 10 mean I've no idea.

Hang on a minute Peter, the 16 or 10 is if I remember correctly, the colour. I assume that you thought the 47 was the colour, not so, again if I remember correctly the 147, or Indeed 142 or 146 or 149 or whatever, the first three digits of the actual chassis number, Indicate that the vehicle is a Kitten (FW10) and whether it is a saloon, estate or van, right or left hand drive. The actual number being in this case 02961 in other words the two thousand nine hundred and sixty first Kitten built.

If you get a chance why not look and see what the actual chassis number is on the diagonal brace just beside the alternator. I think what has happened here is that Bert wrote it down for Fred to engine, but Bert's writing was so bad that Fred mistook the 10 for a 16 Certainly in the early days the colour codes only went as high as 10, but and I need more information here, I suspect that as time went by, more colours were introduced, and yours is quite a late one, so perhaps the bad handwriting was the other way round, and the mistake is on the original sale document and DVL C's computer, if you tell them lies, they will tell you lies ! (Computers that is)

I really must make time and room to publish the full story.

Peter went on to make some consoling comments about effort, his wife, the theatre, or was it the stage, at any rate, I can't remember, but he did say not to worry about it! Seriously Peter, thanks for taking the time to write, I hope the attic flooring exercise is complete, and do feel free to chase me on the Cipher front

Cars and things for Sale or Wanted

Wendy from Wales has a Kitten saloon for sale, complete with radio cassette. M.O.T. till May, £300

Webasto sliding roof fitted to the roof of a Kitten saloon. Also an aluminium tail gate for a saloon, professionally built. Buyer collects from Harry Darby

Bill Rouiller has a Saloon and an estate car for sale. The Estate is M.O.T.'d till July. £250 for the pair.

2 Kittens R reg estate, yellow, 68,000 genuine miles, M.O.T. just expired, taxed till September.

Yellow saloon, major rebuild 4 years ago, garaged every winter, bucket Cobra seats, no back seat, all new carpets, M.O.T., no tax. The above for £500 each.

Jim no 40, crash bar, olive drab, aluminum truck top, wide wheels, work lights and beacon on roof M.O.T. and taxed £950.

Loads of spares for all three.

Fox Pick up / hard top 1983 50,000 miles from new, fully overhauled door frames. Factory rear seat conversion. With infill panel. Full break overhaul. Excellent condition throughout. full M.O.T. 2 new spare front seats £875

For Sale Kitten Van with side windows and rear seat, mot till Jan '98 taxed till June '97. New tyres, new

brake shoes, and many other new parts. Offers near £ 300 to James 01492 623784, North Wales

Reliant 750 cylinder head, decoked and ready to run, partially tuned. £25.00

850 cylinder head as it came off £25.00

Free to a good home, Alan also has a saloon rear hatch glass, black plastic headlamp surround, rubber bumpers and a Robin steering box.

Alan has copies of the book "750 Racer" by Herber & Harvey, The what happens and how to do it book on 750 racing, includes lots of tips on tuning the Reliant engine. £19.00 incl p&p.

Rear end accident damaged Kitten saloon, M.O.T. till August. Running engine, new front shocks and exhaust, serious offers to Derrick Nicholson

1978 S reg Yellow Kitten estate, year's M.O.T., new exhaust, bucket seats fitted, good body. Contact Mr. Radley on 01462 451213. Some spares. Offers in the region of £ 400

A tidy brown Saloon, is, as far as I know, still lying in Glossop in Derbyshire, and looking for a new home contact Graeme Shaw in the first instance

Dave Smith has for sale the following vehicles: P registered Kitten estate in white. M.O.T. till December good condition £375 ono

V registered Kitten saloon, Just repainted in original red. Very clean and tidy, 11 months M.O.T. £575 o.n.o.

Breaking Kitten saloon and estate car for spares. plus loads of other spares, including a good rolling chassis, sensible offers for anything,

1977 DL Estate, fair condition. (too good to swap) Laid up for 8 months, reasonable offers considered. Charlie Cross has a Fox for sale - £800

A set of cords piston rings, believed to be for an early Reliant engine

Wanted : Tow bar for Reliant Kitten, also limp handbook, parts list, drivers handbook or any other technical information, also source of spares such as windscreen rubber surrounds and windscreen wiper aims and blades.

Wanted Fox or Kitten chassis - Eric Wallace.

Waverley

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SPECIAL NOTICE

I have just received delivery of a hatch of Rebel handbrake cables which I commissioned. They even have a grease nipple to help ensure longer life than your 20 odd year old original one on your Rebel.

Yours for just £22.00 each delivered, or £20.50 each if you can collect, or if I happen to be passing.
Brian 0141 8866117

NOTES

As I may have remarked before, this page will, I expect, become a regular feature of the Mewsletter, mainly to help jog my memory.

By the way, I was just talking to Dick Watson, the past custodian of the "Yellow Peril" that my brother Alan ran for a few years, and which is now giving service to Mike Cowie, as Blane Precision Engineering's works van! That Kitten has now done over quarter of a million miles, not all on the one engine mind you

Anyway, as I was saying before I got sidetracked, he tells me that

Burlen Fuel Systems Lid,
Spitfire House,
Castle Road,
Salisbury,
SP1 3SA

Tel 01722 412500
Fax 01722 334221

are the people to get on to for information and supply of S.U, carbs, and what I was interested in, electric fuel pumps.

Oh, excuse me a minute, after all this is the notes page. Michael Bentley, Dick Watson was asking if you know of any "Will Hay" films, he is very keen to find out if any exist, can you or some of your contacts help at all? Dick's Phone number is 01309 672971.

Still with notes in mind, I have a set of Kitten front brake pipe ends in brass, together with some Kunifer pipe, sitting in my car, ready to be sent to the gentleman in England to whom I promised them weeks ago, but my memory has again let me down, and I can't remember who they are for, if it was you, or you know who they are for, please help me out. Brian

Still with notes in mind, my apologies for omitting David Heywood's technical tips, next time I promise. Also I have included the colour version of the most recent additions to the Register, instead of the postcode version, just lack of time. For those who don't know the postcodes in their area, I will try to give an outline sometime, suffice to say that a postcode tells those who know how it all works, the street, and side of the street in which you live. Exceptionally long streets have several postcodes, and exceptionally big houses have their own unique code. It really is a great way round the country, ask any haulage company for a look at their software in action and you will be impressed I am sure.

Just one thing remains, and that is to thank Mike Black, and Phil Hallam for the sketches in the last edition, one of my many weak spots, thanks chaps.

Right, that really is about it for now, I will try to get back on schedule with the next edition, and even include some more technical stuff

Fitting an Oil cooler to a Kitten

Fitting an oil cooler coupled with a thermostat keeps the oil at the correct temperature and so reduces degradation of the oil, helping to protect your bearings. I have often thought that the oil gets too hot, and that synthetic oil is not the solution (*Just why is synthetic oil not the solution, Ed?*)

To save money the oil cooler radiator can be obtained from a Metro automatic, this is situated

next to the n/s headlight on the Metro, and it is usually in good condition, and easy to remove. At this stage also remove the pipes from the engine or cut them as the fitting to the radiator can be difficult and need easing oil or even heat.

You will also need to replace the Kitten's mechanical fuel pump with an electric one, since the existing one will foul the oil cooler take off. I used a Mini pump, fitted just in front of the rear axle, or you could use a Morris Minor type in the engine compartment. A blanking plate needs to be made to cover the hole in the block using 3mm plate.

The radiator (oil cooler) is fitted upside down in the triangular bit of fibreglass at the front o/s of the Kitten. Remove the grill and front o/s wheel and cut a square out of the fibreglass for the air to pass through the radiator. Bolt the radiator to the heater inlet duct using large washers to spread the load.

You will need to buy some new bits as follows

Thermoblock 1/2" BSP complete	Pt. No. SERB2 1 off
M/M Adapter 1/2" BSP 1/2" BSP	Pt No. DSE 037 2 off
Oil fitting 1/2" BSP Straight	Pt No. DSE 029 2 off
Oil fitting 1/2" BSP 90	Pt no. DSE 030 2 off
Oil hose 1/2" bore	Pt no. DSE 006 1 Metre

All the above can be purchased from Burton Power Products, who can be contacted on 0181 554 2281.

Phil Hallam

O.K. so I made a blunder or two! Not only did I fail to realise that the Oil cooler story was incomplete, not Phil's fault, mine entirely. I did think it odd, that his name was not on the bottom of the article, so I put it there, then realised, after the mag was away to the printers, that there was another page, and it had the method, and Phil's name at the end !

Worse than that, I had no sooner sent it away, when I realised that I was a page short, no matter, ring the copy man, and ask him to do it assuming that, once again, I would use the inside of the front cover. Sorry, no can do, thank goodness he realised, that the margins would then have all been on the wrong side of the page! The simplest things seem to make my life complicated sometimes!!

Yes. obviously I should put the end of the oil cooler fitting instructions in here, now, but I am not doing this in the usual place, and do not have the relevant article to hand - next time I promise.

As always there are things for the advert page which just missed the mag, but again, they are not to hand at the moment - NO I AM NOT MAKING IT MONTHLY!

Do enjoy the start of the events season whatever your interest may be, talk to you again in a few weeks.

The logo consists of the letters 'TPP' in a large, stylized, outlined font.

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