



Reliant Kitten Register

NEWSLETTER 82

May - June 2008



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

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The Reliant Kitten Register

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Kitten alternative parts list contact: ****Situation vacant****.

Fox alternative parts list contact: Duncan Bradford

Our Mutual Aid Spares scheme is run for us by Phil Hallam

Tempest Registrar: Martin Seymour 19 Cedar court, Woodfields,

Mewsletter pictures – should be sent to John Pearce

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.

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

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Our new trend in cover pictures continues with this rear quarter view of the recently refurbished Vantique that belongs to a firm we all know.

Pictured here outside the factory where it was built in Cumbria, well the cottage next door to be precise. The two John's were responsible, John Box, not only because he built it in the first place, but he rebuilt the engine last year, and helped with the renovation project, and took the picture, thank you John. And John Melody of Tempest Cars who did the front suspension, brakes etc, and got it generally cleaned up painted and MOT'd, you can see the results, not a bad team what? Oh, and we helped too, where do you think the new front dampers and springs came from?

Welcome once again to your favourite read, I will try to stay better focused this time. It is already early May, I have not actually posted the last edition yet, desperately trying to find a couple of things to go in the envelope, and, unusually, have only today started this edition.

I am finally getting round to updating the database with the information you provided on your renewal notice, and a number of things have come to light, see the pages on "Notes from your renewal notices".

This memory of mine let me down badly in May (or was it April?), anyway, John Sawle of the Liege Car Cub was wanting to do an article on the Reliant B.R.M. Over Head Cam engine, and thought it would just be a matter of ringing me and asking for the name and telephone number of the individual we know who has one of the 2 surviving such engines, (the other one was used in the Kitten that did the Monte Carlo Rally, but it has long since been removed from that car, and I do not know where it is now.) And that would have been just fine, if I could have remembered who had it! What was really annoying was that I had been talking to said individual on the telephone earlier this year – but could I remember? I thought to myself, this is easy, interrogate the database, we only have details on a few Tempests, so I ran off a report of Tempests but no name jumped out at me, I thought, well I am sure I made mention of it in the mag at the time, after all it was through the Register that Hans sold it – yes I rang him to ask, but he was not in, and his assistant could not remember either, she would get him to ring me – 2 days later I rang back, he was with a customer, she had passed on the message and was surprised he had not rung back, she would remind him. So, I used the report I had to ring a few Tempest owners and ask if they could remember? Good it was to talk to you chaps, but I did not learn what I had set out to learn – then I thought, just look and see, there are 'only' about 900 entries in the database, so I started at the beginning, and saw some things I should up-date, but did not allow myself to get distracted – Yes, I know, a first this year – till I came to Number 587, Bruce Jones – why had it not shown up on the Tempest report I had run off? because it was down as a Tempest SC (as in Steve Campbell), and so the report, which had been asked to look out all the Tempests, missed it – one has to be very specific with these computers you know! So, the next time I ring and ask who has the B.R.M. engine, you will be able to remind me, won't you?

Rebel Round Up

Dear Brian,

15th May 2008

Thanks for the latest magazine, as for the question of Rebel mileage, I usually aim for less than 3,000 each year to avoid hiking up the insurance. Last year, and in previous years, I managed just over 2,000 miles. The only year I exceeded my limit was when we did the LeJog in '98 when I went over 4,000 miles. This year I will be going to cut down on my rally visits, the Southwest and the National only, as I will be going to do the Jogle in August. Total mileage of my Rebel has now reached 184,527 as of today, of which I have put on about 28,000 since 1992 when I first bought her. Total mileage on the current engine is over 106,000.

The modification to open up the exhaust manifold and replacing the mechanical fan with an electrical item made a big difference to the power and flexibility of the engine, but the more recent inlet manifold modification seems to be less about power and more about economy. In the past on my long runs and rallies I consistently managed just over 57mpg, I will be monitoring the fuel consumption over all the runs this year to see if there has been any real improvement although I seem to be cruising more at 55-60mph rather than 50-55mph as previously.

Regards, Fred (Heath) Tonbridge (Kent) No.177 Rebel WPC 92G

REBELLIOUS CONDUCT - ELEVEN

Firstly, I had better put right a clanger that appeared in my previous episode concerning the difference between early and late type brake master cylinders. What should have appeared was that the difference in length between the mounting flange and centre line of the reservoir body is HALF AND INCH, NOT 5". A decimal point seems to have gone missing here. (Or was that too obvious for anyone to question?)

In edition No 81, 'REBEL ROUNDUP' looked at the mileages covered by present day Rebel users. For the record, I bought my 1972 Van/Estate, LRF 671K in August 2005 with 78931 on the clock. I believe this to be genuine as there are MOT certificates dating back to 1980 and 32721 miles. The 1983 certificate shows that the engine was by now an 850cc unit at 43147 miles. Curiously, the previous certificates state the engine to have been a 748cc whereas the VIN plate and date of the vehicle indicate that a 700cc would have been original to this vehicle. Possibly, the original 700cc engine could have been replaced prior to 1980 or simply an error by the MOT examiners. In my hands, LRF has covered 15032 miles as of the 15th of May 2008. I use my Rebel as my daily commuter for work and local running around, occasionally; it may get a journey in excess of 20 miles.

Also in edition No 81, Dave Allen asks about the chassis number prefix system used by Reliant for the Rebels. From my own findings, I offer the following-

100009	First chassis number for a 600cc
R100505	First 700cc Rebel
E150235	The earliest reference to an Estate
E150663	The earliest van known to me
E150682	The latest van known to me
E150700	The latest estate known to me
E150791	The latest reference to an Estate/van
R101073	The latest reference to a saloon
941001	First 750cc
941762	Last 750cc

I have only seen an R or E used as prefix letters for the 700cc versions. The saloons then began 10**** and the Estates and vans 15****. Hence, it does not seem possible to identify an Estate from a Van from the chassis number for these versions. The factory Parts Book does not list any prefix letter to identify between 750cc Saloon, Estate or Van. We need the help of fellow Rebel owners to check their chassis number plates to verify this.

Dave also asks if my Rebel, LRF 671K, is an ex-Reliant owned vehicle. I suspect that it could have been but to date, I have not been able to verify this. The evidence that makes me suspect this is twofold. Firstly, its specification is something of an anomaly. Although it was a 700cc version first registered on the 13th of July 1972 as a Van, it has a 750cc type all synchro gearbox with 'long' gearlever and small transmission tunnel. It has a hydraulic clutch which required a different chassis and an access hole in the floor. It also has an alternator, which is listed as a standard fitment to the van only; the wiring loom suggests that LRF never had a voltage control unit fitted. The chassis number is E150682; very recently, I came across a later Rebel, E150700, which has the more expected short gearlever and large transmission tunnel of a 700cc version. Could LRF have been a development model for the forthcoming 750cc transmission update?

Secondly, the registration number LRF is a Staffordshire issue and shared the same 3 letters as carried by the 'AUTOCAR' road test example, LRF 442F, in the 20th June 1968 edition. However, the first registered owner of LRF 671K lived in Southampton where there was a Reliant dealership at the time. The V5C document shows this person to be the first registered owner from the 13th July 1972. So, could my car have been a development vehicle prior to being sold to the first private registered owner in Southampton? I do know that a slightly earlier Van, E150663, just 19 less than LRF, was first registered on the 16th of December 1971 and has the short gear lever and originally a dynamo. So why is my Rebel different to examples built either side of it? Why was it registered in Staffordshire when its first owner lived in Southampton? I would certainly like to know more about the history of LRF, as it just doesn't seem to conform, it must be something of a 'Rebel'.

According to Daniel Lockton's book 'REBEL WITHOUT APPLAUSE' only 29 700cc vans were built. So when were the vans introduced? Certainly E150663 being registered on the 16th December 1971 must be one of the very earliest examples. Detailed information on Rebel production numbers and identification points seem conspicuous by their absence. As Dave floats the question, it may only be answered if RKR subscribers pool their own knowledge and observations on the subject. To kick this off, I include a couple of lists that I have prepared on Production Figures and Specification Changes. These are far from complete and I would welcome any comments to help toward a better understanding of Rebel history. My sources have been from Glass' Guide and the Factory Parts book for the 700/750 versions. Surely someone out there must know more?

Finally, does anyone have a good 750 Rebel gearbox available? Mine is now slipping out of 3rd and 4th gears. As it is my daily transport, I would like a quick solution in the form of a gearbox change to remedy this frustrating problem.

Terry Horler

Thanks Terry, your offer of help comes at just the right time, after 11 editions of Rebellious Conduct it would seem fair to say that Rebels and you are not a passing fancy, and while I have been meaning to do more for years, I have failed to achieve as much as I would have wished. Below is some information Terry has put together, I seem to recall most of the Rebel saloons I owned had their chassis numbers beginning with an S, indeed for many a year, and I'm not saying my mind is changed, I believed that it was very simple, S was a saloon, E was an estate, and V was a van. For the first 4 years or thereabouts they only made saloons, so in the early days there was no need to differentiate.

Right, I've had a quick look, and bearing in mind my own fallibility, there are 4 potentially interesting groups of Rebels on the database, chassis numbers beginning 94, ones beginning S94 and ones beginning V94, and those beginning E94. All the V94 ones were listed as Vans, there are other vans whose chassis numbers begin 150, only about a quarter of the saloons begin S94, the majority beginning 100 or R100, and the estates being a confusing mixture of E150's and, wait for it, E94's, with more than a few 150's in there too! Terry, it is now mid May, I'll post you that report, though it will show you some of the weaknesses in the system, it is wonderful, but with hindsight could be better, like having the last up-dated date included, as well as an indicator if the owner is still with us or not, but hey, it's not a perfect world!

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Just a wee corner to fill here and I thought I'd digress – there's a first! Our minister, no, relax, it's not a joke, you remember her, Lorna Hood, (actually there are 2 ministers in Scotland by that name, ours is in fact E. Lorna Hood) well she had a really unusual day one week in May, seriously. She had two funerals on the one day, not unheard of I am sure, but what was very rare indeed about that day was that one of the funerals was that of a 100 year old lady, the other of a one day old baby. Reminds me why, lack of appropriate calling apart, I just couldn't do her job. Oh, she just got promoted, she has been appointed as a chaplain to the Queen in Scotland no less. Just the second woman to ever hold that position.

REBEL PRODUCTION

Chassis No	No. Built	Running Total & Changes
19th Sept 1964	Rebel 600 saloon announced	
January 1965	100009	600cc Engine
January 1966	100113	104
January 1967	100373	260
August 1967	R100505	364
October 1967	R100509	496
December 1967	R100645	500
	E 150???	636
January 1968	R100655	646
	R100811	Seat belt anchorage deleted
	E150235	from Saloon & Estate (Earliest Estate
		Chassis number in parts book)
January 1969	R100899	244
	E150434	890
		(Number of Estates to this point not known
		but must be at least 199. E150235 to 150434)
January 1970	R100954	55
	E150520	86
January 1971	R100985	31
	E150625	105
January 1972	R101004	19
	E150669	44
September 1972	R101073	69
	E150791	122
September 1972	941001	1421
		750cc Engine

September 1973 941762 761 2182 Production ends

Total number is 2182 plus the Estate build to E150434 ??

Notes to the above. R prefix – 700cc Saloons. E prefix - Estates and Vans.
941001 to 941762 - 750cc Saloons, Estates and Vans.

REBEL PRODUCTION CHANGES

100009	First chassis number
R100505	700cc engine replaces 600cc engine.
R100811 E150235	Safety harness anchorage deleted from chassis frame
R100953 E150519	Chassis frame revised. Change brake master cylinder. New brake pedal and lever. Revised accelerator pedal Cross shaft assembly.
R100955 E150529	Change clutch pedal and lever arm
R100983 E150615	700cc Engine revised. Cylinder block, dipstick. Oil filler cap/breather. New air filter case to include breather pipe connection.
R101035 E150725	Oil pump
941001	Chassis frame revised. 750cc engine. Gearbox. Rear axle. Door casing assembly. Rear lamps. Facia panel. Choke cable.
941056	Revised dipstick, tube and support
941204	Chassis frame revised. Rear suspension bump stop.
941218	Chassis frame revised. New radiator (Body mounted)
941762	Production ends

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Now I will jump to a couple of very recent pictures of Steve's turbo charged Reliant engine, excuse the break in continuity, as you will read elsewhere, this edition had to be finished in a hurry and is one of the things I really dislike in life – a compromise – but we do have to make them sometimes!



On a Foxy theme now, I thought I'd share these with you.



Fox's Den

I am still not hearing a lot from the Fox people, that said Duncan Bradford, who has survived, indeed thrived upon a house move this year, is a great help and source of inspiration, and he did send me similar pictures to those on the previous page some time ago. These ones however were sent in by Sandy Byrne who owns the darker one, well, I am looking at it in colour, Duncan's one is red and Sandy's grey, so I am assuming hers will appear darker, it is the one on the right, with the 'Fox' back numberplate and tow ball.

Sandy deserves a special mention as she was the one who stepped up when Duncan was wanting to have a second batch of stainless Fox door window frames produced last year. Sandy also wants to know where, or indeed from which vehicle or aftermarket specialist Keith Gittus and Don Evans got the alloy wheels that adorned their Foxes, and what if any spacers or other mods are needed?

Hi Brian,

I received a phone call from John Metcalf on Saturday 29/03/08 asking me to draw/dimension up the Fox exhaust. It did get me thinking, and the conclusion was, that you only need a two piece conversion exhaust. One silencer box, with inlet and exhaust connections one end, plus the side exhaust pipe, as the engine to silencer pipe can be recycled from the car its intended for. This will keep the size/cost down when manufactured, stored or dispatched.

Keith. (Gittus)

So, food for thought? Anyone up for having a batch of Fox silencers and side exiting tail pipes made up? And if so should we do them in stainless? Talk to me, Ed. Oh, and Keith, not only have you more room than I, but you are so much better organised, would you care to keep them for us if we do go ahead? Let's be clear here, am I correct in thinking that in the Fox the silencer runs across the car, just like my BX, and the inlet pipe from the silencer turns forward to face the pipe coming from the engine? Whatever, I am sure the technical aspects can be confirmed well ahead of any production. I honestly think if we do go ahead, that a donor vehicle would need to be given to whoever is making them, just to be sure everything will line up correctly. Ed.

Notes from your renewal notices

I must apologise to a number of people, it is now May and I am only now getting to grips with the paperwork, when processing the renewal notices I found a number of things I should have made reference to months ago, to those affected I can only say I am sorry.

Guy Buntinx from Liege in Belgium, who has been with us for over a decade, 1995 I believe it was when Guy first joined us, and in spite of his support for all that time, I realise that I have failed to pass on information in both directions. So, Guy has asked me to run a wanted advert for a Log book, V5 or V5C as it is these days for a Bond Bug. You can e-mail him at guy.buntinx@ulg.ac.be. He tells me that all members are welcome at Liege, where he has a large workshop if you are in the area and have a problem – I just hope that such an invitation does not lead to a rush of people with problems with their Reliant dashing across the Channel – or under it

these days! Guy also makes mention of Foxes converted to electrical power in the Nordic country, I assume those are the ones that became radioactive and were buried by the Swedish Electrical Company, or were the others?

Guy, and other readers in Europe, if the information is of help, the Register has both Sterling and Euro bank accounts, and you can pay your subscriptions into either if that suits you, the details I will publish another time – I must get this to the printers before Moira and I head south for the second time in a week – long story, but I was right – something always conspires to keep us busy. This at the end of May into June.

Moira told me to spend an hour this morning (early May again by the way!) dealing with renewal notices (I had asked her for help with the paperwork recently) and she will then file them, so far I have done 4 in 45 minutes, only 200 odd more to go! (Is it any wonder all I did when they arrived was to record the financial details, bank the cheques, and lay them aside for processing?)

I see Ralph Erwin's is next, hello Ralph, I will manage the 10 miles to get over and see you this year, I really will. Oh, Ralph has a Kitten, complete, it even has a stainless exhaust, he will happily pass it on to a good home, he has some spares too, you will need to collect it / them from the north side of Glasgow, Bearsden to be precise, 0141 942 0397 is his number. You will need a trailer as the car has been off the road for about 6 years or so.

Roger Goldthorpe deserves a mention, Roger I think congratulations are in order, I know from your renewal notice that back in February your car was still off the road, but I see on Peter's website a nice white Liege on the road, well done you, I hope you and Kathy have great fun with it – they definitely go faster with the hood up, but you will have a bigger grin with it down!

Good to know that Bob Keene's "Atomic Kitten", the one with the 2 litre Ford engine, is back on the road after a winter lay-up. Thanks for the up-date Bob.

Now I am not the only one who makes mistakes, not wishing to shame individuals (yet!) the soul from Solihull whose number is 242 and who has been with us since the 1990's and has owned his current Kitten since 2005, though he does take the time to indicate the status of the car on his renewal form, and that is appreciated, indeed very important if we are to keep the records up to date – (you would be amazed to know how many folk don't even bother to do that), number 244 from central Scotland for example, actually, just looking at the Scottish ones, the majority of you don't bother to update the vehicle status of your cars on your renewal notices, Peter Linfield and Dick Goodall excepted, thank you Peter & Dick, now I know I know most of you, (the Scottish ones) and I have some idea of the condition of most of your cars, but come on chaps! Many people never takes the time to fill in the blanks - I still do not know some engine numbers – now that might be difficult or even unknown in the case of a rebuild, but we don't even know what colour some of the cars are! I only tell you this to make the point that failings in the accuracy of the database are not all my fault!

Tony Smith from Littlehampton deserves a special mention, Tony has been with us for a decade now, and in spite of giving up his Kitten recently he sent £20 this year, saying that this will probably be his last year with us and thanked me for the pleasure the mags have given him over the years and for my availability to discuss problems. Tony, thank you, such gestures are what make it all worthwhile, I know that you have not been keeping well lately, and hope that you are much improved by the time this reaches you. Thanks again, Brian

Philip Naylor from Derbyshire deserves special mention. Philip told me back in 2003 that YNG 785S his Kitten saloon was off the road, but by 2004 it was nearing the completion of an as original as possible rebuild, and by January 2007 he said "It will be running one day" Well, that day has arrived, well done Philip. Any chance of some pictures please nicely? Makes me wonder if it is about time we had an official award for such achievements, but I don't know everyone, so how would we judge a winner – hmmm, food for thought, your thoughts, ideas or suggestions on this would be appreciated.

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To digress a bit, Yoland kindly sent me the following picture taken at Stoneleigh recently. Now I am sure that Martin will be sending something in about that gathering, but you know how good I am at keeping things 'somewhere safe', so I thought I'd just share this with you now.



Back to the official award thoughts, Ron Stowell's "Kittivan" was an interesting project, how would we decide? It has changed hands again, must have been frustrating to do all that work and then discover that you just can't live with the car, at least its future ought to be secure for a few years after all the work its two previous owners did on it. However, unless I am mistaken, its current custodian is not a subscriber – Registrar awaits indignant letter or call from the Kittivan's custodian! Anyway, 'somewhere safe' I should have some pictures, if I find them in time, they should be on the next page(s). Forget that plan, I had a hunt, can't find the pics, but I did uncover Ron's letter. To keep in digressing mode, Moira's Aunt, you remember, the one I didn't call in on on my way south in March in spite of passing within a mile of her door, well she died yesterday, so we have to get down there to make arrangements and give up the house, If I can get this to the printers before we go, there is some chance you will get it in June – oh, the other thing that happened yesterday was that the front covers arrived while I was 100 miles away playing spot the Jowett in Kenmore and Creiff.

Right, Ron's letter :-

Dear Boy,

12th Dec. '07

Yea I'm alive - ! But without Kitten.

Writing to let you know the 'Kittivan' is finally completely restored in tip top condition, but now in the good care of a new custodian in Garforth near Leeds.

Nothing wrong with the Kitten, but I found it just that bit difficult for ME to get in and out of, me being the problem, NOT the car! I found the door, and the distance between the steering wheel and the seat was a problem. I've spent thousands of miles driving new Peugeot cars and well, the problem getting in and out of the Kitten, it just didn't add up.

So, Kitten went on e-bay, and I got a call from this chap from Garforth. He had a Kitten and a motorcycle licence – the Kitten was on its way out and he just had no choice really, jumped at my car – notes in hand, he really got a good deal!

Anyway, I bought a Fiat Cinqcento, 43,000 miles, immaculate condition, 13 months MOT, months tax Really Mint, £500. I get 45 – 50 MPG, about 75MPH, modern driving, a really smart little car. Blow the gears in, lovely interior which doesn't fall apart when you pull the door shut, radio cassette, electric windows, central locking and on and on, all for £500.

Yes I love Reliants. Morris Minors, Jowetts etc, but – Brass is Brass and £500 isn't much brass for what I got. So many thanks for all your past help, I enclose some pics of Kittivan.

Yours Ron.

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Now there may be others, but Simon Robson for one was asking about an early Rebel remote gearchange – I know I have said this before, and I think I really mean it this time when I say I really will be giving one of the lock-ups up this year, so I will keep an eye out – obviously that is not the sort of thing that I would ever scrap, but there are going to be difficult decisions ahead. Thanks for your continued support Simon.

Darren Butler is the next one up (Moir sorted the ones that were still on my desk into numerical order) Darren I need to tread carefully here, please don't take offence, but I think more than one of us is confused! Darren's 2008 renewal notice clearly states that since joining last year he has added another two Reliant Kittens to his collection (he only had the four previously) I am the first to say that when in a hole one should stop digging, but you know what my memory is like, I am not too proud to ask for help – two things Darren, I'm certain that you joined us in 2002, not just last year, I even have a note that you sent me some pictures (though I was not smart enough to date it!) which I had to return, and I honestly have no idea if I ever did. Anyway, the point is that Darren now has 3 saloons and 3 estates, two of the saloons are running, and he hopes to restore them all one day. Darren, thanks for the details of your new ones, neither of them were previously on the Register, and also for taking the time to fill in the blanks with the missing details on the other ones, it all helps. Good luck with your restoration plans, do keep us posted.

Stephen Briggs from Tameside I also single out for special mention, Stephen has owned a Kitten van for what is fast approaching a decade now, (yes it has side windows) it has been in that category that my system does not cope well with, in that it is both running, and off the road. It has been that way for several years now. Stephen, your generous spares donations over the years are greatly appreciated, it is thanks to the generosity of such individuals that we no longer need to hesitate when ordering parts for stock – that said, which parts to hold, as regular readers will be aware, always presents challenges, but having funds to hand makes things much easier . We don't take such things for granted, and I often feel that the silent majority go unrecognised, so to all who support us in that way, thank you.

Simon Moore was the next one to attract my attention – Simon, I can just hear you thinking “I didn't do anything wrong” and you are quite correct, the form was completed correctly, signed and dated (unlike some I could mention!), had all the pertinent questions answered – but! And it is, as usual, my fault. I had a note that your car was running back in December 2005, and I also have a note, undated (again!) that the car had had a body off rebuild, but, as I said, I failed to record when that was done, my question is this, if it was indeed given a body off rebuild, why is it now off the road?

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The records show

I keep meaning to do something really useful with the information you have provided over the years – one day... What did come to light recently was that my ‘box’ where we keep details of Kittens we knew about which subsequently changed hands, and their current whereabouts and condition are unknown, has grown over the years to the extent that there are now over 100 of them!

Just' 56 are known to have been scrapped (kept in a different ‘box’). The corresponding numbers for Rebels are 27 ‘lost’ though just glancing through them I suspect a number of them will have by now have joined the 17 that we know to have been scrapped.

On the Fox front the numbers are 18 lost and 4 scrapped, there being so few of them I looked more closely to discover that one was broken and used to make a Tempest, one was scrapped and two were taken away by insurance companies as the result of fires!

And presumably scrapped.

Now we know that a lot more than 1 Fox has become a Tempest donor, John (Melody) if you ever have the time, the details of the ones you currently have waiting in the wings would be interesting to have, I know, I should have made notes when I was down, it's not a perfect world! Also I have, thanks to John Box, some more relevant details in this regard, one day.... (I'll get organised).

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Readers Letters

Dear Brian,

9th May 2008

Thank you for your recent reminder, and apologies for not renewing my subscription when the form arrived with the November / December magazine. Like you, the last few months have been hectic. Running between Longtown and Peterhead workwise (*this from a man who lives in Cumbria! Ed.*)

Although I do not own one of the small Reliants that your Register caters for, I really do enjoy reading your magazine. I think it is all to do with a simpler age when one could work on a car with a basic set of spanners and not need a computer to get the thing running. I do hold a desire to get a Fox or a Tempest one day, but like others I own a Motoguzzi - and two BSAs – which demand attention before I think of any additions to the stable. There is little enough time at home for what I have, and the domestic chores, and I think the wife would leave if I got anything else!

I enclose a cheque for £20, and apologise again for the delay.

By the way, I don't suppose any of your readers are into M/C trials and would swap a Reliant for a Bultaco trials bike? But where would I keep another car? Ah well....

Yours sincerely, P. N. Burt - Cumbria No. 577

Peter thanks for your continued support, I know just what you mean about the frustrations of time and space versus keeping the other half on-side. Why does it have to be so complicated? – like these modern electronic vehicles? Progress is the only 4 letter word I know that has 8 letters in it! Ed Oh, by the way, the extra 7" in the Tempest wheelbase make it a much nicer drive than a Fox or Kitten, never mind the lower centre of gravity and the fact that it is a roadster – great grin on your face all the time, mind you digging the flies out of one's teeth can be a bore! (Not that there is anything wrong with a Fox or Kitten).

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Dear Mr. Marshall,

15th May 2008

Just out of interest, do you happen to know, or does anyone in the Reliant Kitten Register know, or does the Reliant Car Company know, what the CO2 emission figure in g/Km (grams per kilometre) is for a kitten?

I have just renewed my road fund tax for my kitten at the correct rate of £120 for a year. This is the rate for cars registered before 1st March 2001. I have a Rate of Vehicle Excise Duty form, V149. This particular one is a little out of date as it gives the above tax rate as £110. However it also gives the rates for vehicles registered after March 2001, depending on the CO2 emission figure. These vary from zero for up to 100, to £190 for a CO2 emission figure of over 185 for petrol cars.

I have also, from an insert in my kitten manual this:- Fuel consumption test results Passenger car fuel consumption order October 1977. The results were recorded in an official fuel

return (over 60 discount) rail fare. Fred lives in Enfield and can be contacted on 02083 637523. Oh, and he didn't mention the stainless exhaust and three row radiator that my notes say that car had!

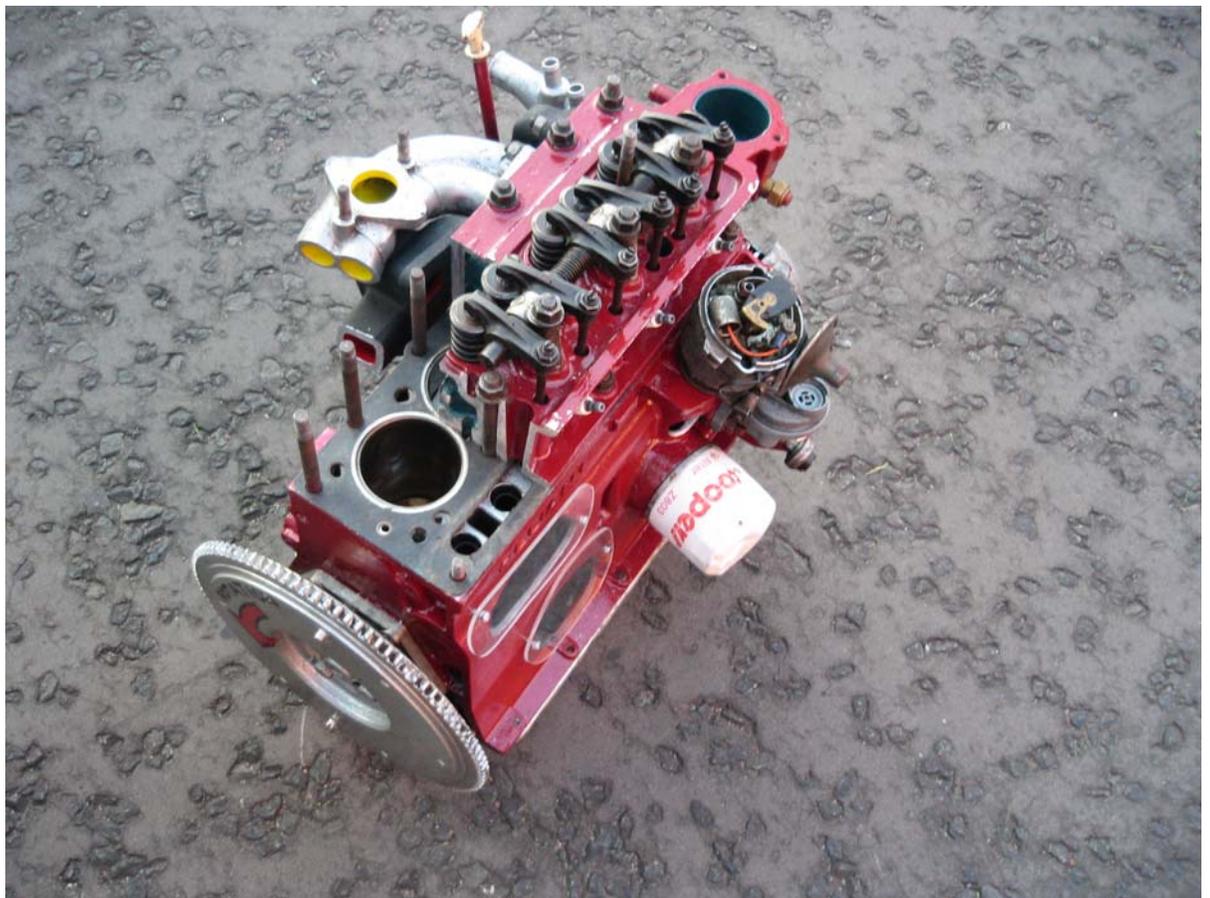
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I think it is a while since I mentioned Sandy Riddoch within these pages. It is all Sandy's fault! (Isn't it great to have someone to blame?) He was one of a small group I consulted back in about 1990/1 when I was despairing of my inability to talk Terry Scott into widening his Rebel Register to include Kittens and Foxes. Michael Bentley used to compile his "Rebellion" as the magazine was aptly named, and I actually did the copying and stitching of his last few editions for him – all to no avail however, and Sandy put his hand in his pocket, handed me a ten pound note, and told me to get on with producing a magazine for Kitten owners – of which he happened to be one at the time – and so it began. Sandy is a key member of the team that currently run the Thistle branch of the R.O.C. these days, and he recently (August 2007) brought over to show me a sectioned Reliant engine which I thought you might like to see.





Graham Spraggon, John Johnstone, Sandy Riddoch and Phil Hallam (leaning on my stick), at Renfrew in August 2007



Tales from Tore

Further experiences with Kitty 15/05/08

New SU fuel pump :-

In my last note of December I was waiting for a new SU fuel pump with electronic rather than points control. It did arrive and after fitting, normal Kitty service was resumed. It's very reassuring to hear it clucking away when the ignition is switched on. So far so good.

Engine trouble :-

Things went well until February, when the engine played up again. It was an odd symptom, the car ran well mostly but every so often it felt that the engine cut out dead for maybe half a second and then with a bump it went well again. After a while I decided that action was needed when the car stopped at home and would not restart. As a first step I renewed the contact points and condenser, to no effect. Then followed a few days, between periods of rain and sleet, of trying to make sense of the situation.

Eventually I renewed all the HT leads, rotor arm, distributor cap and even the HT coil. This made no difference. Test leads were tried to eliminate things like a faulty ignition switch, voltmeter prods applied here & there but it would not start. I tested the new fuel pump, which was OK, and even pumped fuel into a jam jar to see if water was mixed with the fuel. I was so puzzled that I resorted to phoning others for advice. The engine still would not run. By chance, and luckily at a time when my PC was behaving itself, I found a thread on the R3W forums which mentioned that faulty points and condensers were being experienced by others. So I sent off to Michaels of Selby and ordered two sets of points and two condensers. Having fitted new points and condenser the engine sprang eagerly to life!! Which shows again(!) that new parts are not always of good quality.

Now wipers :-

After this the car went well for a while until early April. The wipers were a bit reluctant to start at times, but I decided to soldier on until better weather. Of course they stopped completely in a heavy snow shower.

All the fuses seemed OK and I decided that the drive rack must be sticking. So, having undone the bottom clamp on the wiper motor, and wriggled it free, I undid the nut holding it to the rack and tried to pull the inner cable out. It was well and truly stuck. Rather than tug furiously, I used the passenger side wiper arm as a capstan bar to carefully push the cable out. It was a rusty red colour, 'nuff said! The rust was wiped away using a bit of denim jeans material, it was rough enough to do the job and left no fluff. To finish the cleaning a stiff brush and petrol removed what old grease was present. Then a good amount of grease was pumped up the rack tube and the cable liberally greased. I did not have the correct grease to hand, of course, but the moly grease I use for steering ball joints seemed a reasonable substitute. Having refitted (messy job!) the rack cable and reinstalled the motor, a flick of the wiper switch showed that the wipers were working again.

And now...

There are of, course, the proverbial hundred and one wee jobs to do but the car is in service, which is its purpose. I did have to buy a couple of new front tyres in late April; they had done in the region of 15,000 miles. The rear ones should last a wee while longer. And the road tax is due at the end of May, but that can't be avoided. Shame!

Best Wishes to all, #157

Thanks for the update Dick, I would like to know how you can get through a set of front tyres in 15,000 miles. I used to get 12,000 if I was lucky on Avon Tourists on the Javelin, but I was always on opposite lock, the Javelin was such a delight to drive, it just cried out to be driven hard, and was so forgiving, I just couldn't help myself, but there was a price to pay – but a Kitten, surely something must be wrong?

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FBHVC News

Well o.k., not so much news as thoughts and statistics. I find it reassuring to have to complete the Federation's Renewal notice each spring, or is it summer now? It was April last year, and the 9th of May this year. Our numbers were down, but only by 3% or thereabouts compared to last year. I had had occasion to send out almost 50 reminder notices this year, and, thankfully, so many of those individuals did renew their subs, that I had to have extra copies of the last edition of the Magazine re-printed.

Anyway, I guess I ought to keep copies, but in my constant efforts to reduce the paperwork I have not been religious about doing so, and so I can't say for certain, but I thought that what we paid each year was a sum of the number of current members times a figure that they tell us each year, this year that figure is 35p. Accordingly I sent off a cheque for £82.25, (235 times 0.35) but as I was checking the form, which didn't actually say which individual sent it, I noticed that what it was asking for was the "Maximum number of members in past year". As I said in my covering letter to them I have no easy way of knowing that because the database is in a constant state of flux with new members and non-renewals. Anyway, the number last year was 244, and there are a few who I am certain will re-join our ranks in the near future, whilst renewing after April can save us that 35p, I would rather not do things that way, the extra postage and admin involved in sending out reminders is much more than 35p a head, not to mention the inconvenience of having to reset each individual's "current member" flag on the database, and, in this instance get an edition of the mag re-printed – I know, I ought to know by now how many folk are late renewing each year, but I also know how much money we have wasted in the past having too many mags printed, and with the last edition being late, I thought – wrongly – that most of your renewals would be in by the beginning of April. The cost of posting 250 front covers is less than half the cost of posting 300, so I thought I'd be prudent, but it backfired. Only about 8% of our readers took up our last 5 year membership offer – I know that many organisations that offer such a deal do it continuously, but that, to my mind, would be complicated, it suits me much better to have all the 5 year folk fall due in the same year – less admin – which was the whole point. So, with one exception (there's always one, isn't there?!) all our current five year folk are due to renew at the end of 2010.

With the increases in postage of late, a rise in subs next year looks highly likely.

So, what I hear you asking has this got to do with the Federation – didn't I say I was going to try and stay focused this time? O.K., so I got carried away, but I am sure you can follow the thought process.

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Spares

I made mention earlier of the Spares Fund and the generous donations it receives annually. I know that I am fortunate with the Register, the trust you have put in me over the years is appreciated. I know that in that elusive ideal world all such groups would receive the same sort of support, and while some do, and others make a spares levy compulsory, many do not, your support is appreciated and not taken for granted.

Maintaining the Register, and supplying the odd spare part to keep the cars running, along with producing the Mewsletter keep me as busy as I wish to be, the assistance of others is not only appreciated, but essential. Well done and thanks to those concerned.

For the record we currently have about £1,300 in the spares bank account, to be added to that is £555 of spares donations received this year so far, and have a, slow moving (in many cases static) stock, of about £4,500 value at cost price, and are at or approaching re-order levels of three big items, front dampers and back & front springs, and yes, I need to finally bite the bullet and get Kitten & Fox bottom wishbone and Kitten front strut poly bushes in stock, but to get a sensible discount from the supplier we need to be spending over £400, which on top of the dampers and springs would be pretty much all the cash that we have right now, and I am not comfortable with the thought of having nothing in the 'Kitty'

The fastest moving parts we have are Fox front strut bushes (which last a long time, well our poly ones do) and steering racks and ball joints, though at between 4 and 6 a year front dampers are up there with the fast movers. The total number of parcels I post from here seldom reaches a couple of dozen in a year, remember that Duncan holds the front dampers and springs for us, and Graeme the stock of Kitten back springs, and much appreciated your doing so is chaps.

Static parts, well lets firstly try to define static! If you mean no movement in the past year, then 85% of our stock is static!

Mr. Kemp from Penzance just rang me up, half past ten Monday May the 5th looking for a lower steering column, his Kitten had just failed its MOT, and he was very worried as he was advised locally that there were none available. I am quite sure that I was just as delighted to be able to help, as he was relieved to learn that we carry new ones in stock. That's what I love about doing this, being able to help keep our wonderful wee cars on the road, hearing the relief in someone's voice when they discover that all is not lost – that's a really good feeling. But why did he not know that we had them? I didn't think it was a secret! Which brings me to the question of advertising – should I publish a stock list? It would only run to a page or so, but the chances are you would have lost it long before your Rebel, Kitten Fox or whatever needed any of the bits – they really are pretty reliable cars you know, and we only keep the bits that are difficult to get through the trade. Ho hum, more decisions! Your thoughts, views and opinions welcomed – talk to me.

Sales & Wants

For Sale :- 1976 Kitten estate - a rare opportunity this, Fred Rolph, for reasons you can read about on page 22, is selling his Kitten estate, why is that a rare opportunity? Well, because I have owned it from new, and because it has only covered a few miles, and because It has been well looked after. It will come with a years MOT and a new spare fuel tank and sender unit. It is a 1976 Kitten Estate with a genuine 37,000 miles from new, it has an unleaded head, Kenlowe fan. Lumention electronic ignition, complete new braking system (Master cylinder, wheel cylinders, copper lines and Goodridge flexes.) Good chassis, the body could benefit from a re-paint. It has had new front struts and back springs, and sits on a set (5) 5.60 by 10 Dunlop alloys. New battery and alternator, has negligible oil consumption and an electric fuel pump and filter king. All this can be yours for £1,000 and I can deliver it anywhere in the U.K. mainland for the cost of the fuel and return (over 60 discount) rail fare. I live in Enfield

Oh, and Fred didn't mention the stainless exhaust and three row radiator that my notes say that car had! Ed.

For Sale :- Fox (I think it is for sale – David, you were going to write with your new address and a contact number) David Leslie is the man, I know where his parents live, but don't have time right now to get contact details. The vehicle had new front dampers and springs a couple of years back, but David has moved on to, I think a Rickman Ranger was mentioned. David, if you get this, do get back in touch, Ed.

Wanted :- Stainless steel exhaust for a Kitten, Mr Rowley

Wanted :- Early Rebel gearbox, Pete Gnosill, Birmingham area.

Wanted :- A Rebel remote gearchange complete mechanism with gearlever Simon Robson

Wanted :- Late Rebel gearbox, Terry Horler

Wanted : Fox exhaust, Lesley Hardy

Wanted :- An (o s) kitten steering arm, part 40 0n page 144 of the purple Haynes manual. I also need a rear (n s) bumper end cap. Matthew Roberts.

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Epilogue

I don't know about your eyes, but I feel like a change of font. I much prefer this one, "Times New Roman", but the "Arial" that I use for the bulk of the magazine prints better and is, I believe, more easily read in the 10.5 font size we have settled on over the years. (This by contrast, is 11.5)

It is as I type the 15th of May, this edition, which I only started last week, is half finished already. I must get back to processing the remainder of the renewal notices. Moira has been of little help this past week, preferring to exhaust herself planting up the hanging baskets and getting on top of the garden ahead of the summer. We have enjoyed exceptional weather this past few weeks. Oh, just to prove that bits of my memory still work, and that I am a man of my word, you may recall back in 2000, probably late 1999, but in May 2000 the Jowett Car Club was hosting its big annual Rally in Scotland, at Pitlochry. Well, we are doing it again, and I didn't rope you in (remember the raffle tickets, and my saying I would not impose on you in that way again?) It is at Crieff this year, in 10 days time in fact, and I am just off to collect the programs from the printer in the morning, ahead of a big Rally Pack packing exercise at the weekend – don't say I'm not good to you. I'll give you the opportunity to be involved the next time they do it in Scotland if you like (if we are still on the go by then!)

It is now May the 20th, I have only 6 pages to fill. My thanks to those who have saved us from a "Brian's diary" in this edition, see, you can do it, and Block & Quail need not be involved!

O.K., I told you that I was wondering what life would throw at us next, well I couldn't have been more wrong, it wasn't life, quite the opposite, just off to England to make arrangements and give up Moira's aunt's home, so this has been flung together in a mad rush at the end, I can't find any of the 3 lots of pictures I want, and I'm out of time – bear with me please - time to go, don't forget to grease things, and all being well we will see you at Whittington Castle on August the 10th, though hopefully the next edition will be out before then, it might not, so have a safe journey, indeed may all your journeys be safe.

Brian

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