

Reliant Kitten Register



Newsletter 114

September - October 2013



Simon Fitch's Ciper, actually purchased for his daughter, who's 15 so can't drive it yet, pictured in Leam Terrace, where Tony Stevens lived and a lot of Ciper documentation is addressed to! Unfortunately he couldn't park it exactly outside his house due to parking restrictions there - but this he hopes is close enough!

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



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

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

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**SALES, SPARES, REPAIRS,
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I N D E X

Edition 114

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Reliant Kittens

(For once!)

It occurs to me that we have focused this year on many interesting vehicles, but few Kittens, something that I intend to address over the coming months. This includes front cover pictures. I had communication from Rik Borgman this week (September 2013) which included a lovely autumnal picture of his beautiful yellow left hand drive Kitten estate, and were it not for the fact that we have the covers for both this and our Christmas edition organised, well, let's just hope I can find it when the time comes next year!

Anyway, just in case, I have decided to fill a space at the bottom of page 5, to give you a flavor of things to come.

A digression I know, but fearful of forgetting, I ought to note somewhere one of the little coincidences in life that just possibly might strike a chord with you? When I was a lad, back in the last century, we went on a school cruise to bits of Europe almost touching the Med. – at Gibraltar.

The point is that decades later I discovered that my dad's old friend, Tom Lockhart, the one who completed the renovation of my dad's model boat for me a few years ago, (see below during "sea trials" on the river Ouse – in full flood! - in York) was brought home, after completing his national service in 1947 from the far east on the same ship some 20 years before I sailed on her.



Then I discovered during a recent conversation with one of my neighbours, that he was a junior engineer on the same ship, and in fact was the last man on watch of her final voyage to be scrapped in Spain not long after I sailed on her. He still has the engine room inclinometer in his garage as a souvenir of his time on board the Dunera.

Right, enough digression. I have been exceedingly fortunate this year in the amount of input people have provided for the magazine, and the larger than usual number of pictures, both of which have conspired to save you from too many pages of my ramblings.

However, I have some technical stuff that I am struggling to find room for, and very conscious of how close to the wind we sail as regards the thickness of this publication in relation to the Royal Mail's limits for a second class stamp, well that old word I dislike so much – compromise, has risen yet again. Next time I will share with you some ideas on centering steering racks. Thanks John and Alan for your contributions. If you have any thoughts on the subject now would be a good time to communicate with me (John and Alan excepted of course).

A little Tempest update:

We now have 41 Tempests on the Register, but there might be a couple of duplications as not all records are complete.

There are also the 11 Vantiques.

Joe Mason at Reliant Spares has taken delivery of A269 MBU. From the picture I have, a few bits seem to be missing and there is no information on its history as yet. If you know anything about the car, please pass it on.

The unique Tempest 950 with Chrysler engine and coil spring rear suspension has changed hands recently, and is now with Ian Beveridge in Bury.

Regards, Roger Brown, Tempest Registrar

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Pruning the garden before winter sets in..

## **Some STEVENS CIPHER background.**

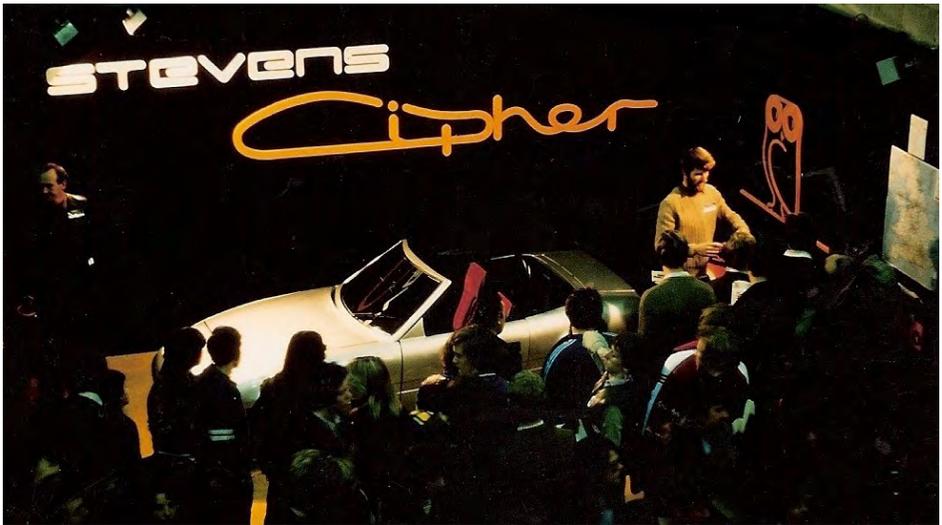
By Professor Anthony Stevens

Back in the early 70's I was persuaded to stop making other people rich by creating vehicles for them and start doing it for myself. So I started making 20's style Delivery Vans, then Jaguar convertibles and estate cars and all sorts.

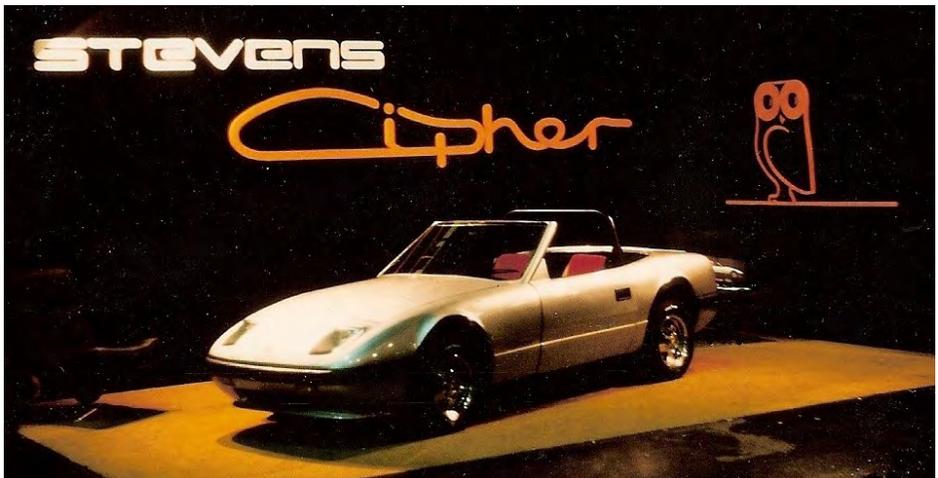
Then in 1978, I decided to fill the void being left by the demise of the MG Midgets and Triumph Spitfires with a new all-British sports car. My interest was and is always in high volume, so I talked to the banks who said they would only support me if I could show them a waiting list for something similar. The only waiting list was for Morgans, so I designed a sort of updated retro style, the Stevens Sienna, with Reliant mechanicals. It got a lot of press attention, but it was not what I wanted to do and not what was needed.



So I then ignored the banks and in 1979 designed and built the Cipher. This was shown at the 1980 Birmingham International Motor Show. The Cipher got rave reviews from all the press, and dealers committed themselves from all over the country and abroad. However, despite all this interest, upon going back to the banks for funding we got nothing.



During the motor show, a team from Japan spent most of the show on our stand. Within 3 months of this visit, they had started a development programme with our press release as their 'mission'. To date, they have sold 1 million of them, (*think Mazda MX5 Ed*) and this shows the viability of the Cipher design. It is a great pity as we are still the most creative nation in the world, in design and many other areas including banking, but we just don't seem able to join them up to get the national benefits we deserve. Only 6 or 7 of the original Ciphers survive and at present most of them are being restored. Hopefully we can get them all together for an event at Goodwood.





Since the original Ciper there have been many reincarnations, with potential manufacturers in America, Russia, India, and most recently, Malaysia. The Malaysian Ciper is larger than the original with front wheel drive, both open and coupe models exist, with Proton / Mitsubishi power

train. There is currently pressure to produce this latest Cipher, possibly with an electric drive as the Stevens Company is one of the leaders in this field.

We'll see!!

Prof. Anthony Stevens, 4<sup>th</sup>.June 2013 tony@stevensresearch.co.uk



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My thanks both to Tony for the above, and also in no small measure to Simon, both for what follows, and for convincing Tony to write that article you have just read for us. Also Simon I am very grateful that you have so willingly and effectively taken on the mantle of Cipher Registrar. Ed (*see, I do delegate!*)

Hi Brian, Just a note to accompany the following rare picture for the Cipher themed issue. Tony has kindly given permission for us to use this. As you can see this is a photo of two silver ciphers! This shows both Tony's No.1 and what is now my No.2, both in silver for the 1980 motorshow.



Apparently No.2 was painted so close to the event that the paint was still soft! - they make quite a stunning sight together. Shortly after this No. 2 was painted blue, and later Tony repainted his red - so we are not likely to see this sight again.

Simon (Fitch) from Leamington - No. 939

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## **A Cipher's journey**

Sometimes things never turn out like you'd expect. After acquiring my kitten a while back, the family made several suggestions for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Reliant (Tandy Camper, Jimp etc...), however the most popular, especially with my daughter, was a Cipher. Safe in the knowledge that they never turn up, I agreed that if one popped up in the future, we'd have a go at buying it as a family project.

A while back, the white Cipher kit (No. 6) turned up at Joe Mason's yard. It required a fair bit of work, but it would have been an interesting project. We had a look at it, and investigated the possibilities; it certainly was do-able. However, by the time we'd sorted all the requirements the kit

had been sold. As a friend of mine said, it was probably not meant to be, and things moved on. After looking into the whereabouts of the other remaining Ciphers, I found out that Frank was selling Cipher No. 2.

Well, that was an opportunity too good to miss; my daughter had already specified when we were thinking about the kit Cipher, that the colour should be blue, and given that it was already on the road, and any work needed could easily be accomplished as a family project, it really seemed like fate. After talking to Frank, it became clear that a few things would need doing, such as interior carpets and an interior heater, as it had been prepared for hill climbing – but these were relatively minor things. Indeed most of what the Cipher needed was already available in amongst my Kitten's spares. Everything seemed to be falling into place, it sounded like it was meant to be!

The day arrived for the family to travel down to Chichester to pick it up. After all, as it will eventually be my daughter Freya's car, she had to come too! We arrived at Frank's home to find the Cipher parked outside shining in the sun. I think everyone fell in love with it immediately. I've not seen the ladies in my family so excited for a long time, and I'm very, very grateful to Frank for giving us the opportunity to own this really important and lovely car. After a quick snack and a cup of tea (many thanks again to Frank and his wife for the wonderful hospitality), we prepared to leave. My in-laws and the children (+ one spare engine) headed back to Gloucester for the day.

My wife (Helen), the Cipher and myself were headed back home to Leamington – the Cipher's spiritual home and old stomping ground. Since Helen has much more experience on long distance driving, and she would be the Cipher's main driver, plus the grief I would get from her if anything happened while I was in control, we decided she would have the pleasure of driving it home. The moment we sat in it, it was apparent that, although it was low to the ground, the fit was very comfortable. Indeed, Helen found the slightly offset pedal position to be very well suited to her normal driving position. After waving goodbye to Frank and his wife, we set off on the long journey back. One thing that was immediately apparent was the Cipher's excellent road holding abilities, from the first corner onwards the Cipher clung to the road as if it was pushed down by a giant hand from above. Even compared to the Kitten's excellent handling, the Cipher was a revelation.

The Cipher enjoyed the long A road driving, as did Helen, who seemed to have regressed at least a decade! The Cipher's performance

was giving us both a huge grin. True, it was noisy, but what do you expect when you have a soft top and no sound proofing (!) , but it was still great fun to drive, especially on such a sunny day. As we drove back, the Cipher seemed to be raising a great deal of attention from all the other folks on the A34. I've never experienced a car where you cannot be anonymous. The Cipher provokes random waving from serious people and even photo's taken by others – it seems you definitely can't drive anywhere in a Cipher without being noticed. As Helen said, when a bus load of teenage students all admire your car, you suddenly realise that, contrary to your children's opinion, in the Cipher at least, you just might be cool too!



The Cipher stopped at A34 services for a well earned break.

Pausing for a deserved rest break for both the Cipher and ourselves on the A34 services, we had the strangest part of the trip. We had just parked up and locked the car, when a large people carrier pulled up alongside. Upon getting out, the driver asked if this was a Reliant (!). That really surprised me, I hadn't expected to encounter anyone who actually knew about the heritage of the Cipher on the road, after all there are so few of them. It was really nice to meet someone with an interest about the history of the car, I didn't get his name nor how he knew its Reliant powered heritage, but if you are reading this, it was great to meet you. The rest of the journey proved to be a similar experience, but we think this may have

been due to the fact that later in the journey we were in traffic heading for the kit car rally at Stoneleigh. I think the Cipher had all the Cobra and Caterham owners scratching their heads over what a Cipher was. Unfortunately for them our schedule didn't include a trip to Stoneleigh, but I have to admit we were sorely tempted to do a flying visit!

Nearing Warwick, we realised that if we headed into Warwick from the right direction, we would have an opportunity to drive the Cipher to a place with real significance in the Cipher story, 3 The Butts – Warwick, Steven's Cars Ltd's old address.. After passing by, we realised that the parking wouldn't allow us to stop for a photograph, and so we pressed on for home. After parking the Cipher safely up, we reviewed the journey. With an MPG of over 65 and such a smooth and enjoyable run the Cipher was a fantastic drive. But perhaps the best bit was not only the enjoyment and appreciation it created in us, but also in those who saw it pass by. It made us realise what a fantastic opportunity Reliant lost when they decided not to make the Cipher. Even now, whenever the Cipher is out and about, it doesn't fail to attract admiration and praise from those who see it. Not bad for a car made in 1981, and a testament to the enduring good looks of Tony Stevens' design.

Simon Fitch - 11/06/13



Out and about in Warwick – summer 2013

# The Stevens' *Ciphers*

( in order of build rather than registration )

By Peter Bird and Tony Stevens.

**1. Reg No:** MVC 856V **Colour:** Red (originally Silver) **Builder:** Stevens Cars

The first built Cipher, used for road and endurance testing & appraisal (from which details like the spoiler were redesigned), fuel consumption testing and legislation (radio suppression tests, etc), and for the press. Originally Silver for press black/white reproduction purposes, the car was later repainted red. This car was used for the majority of press testing and thus features in many publications, including, *Car* magazine Oct 1980 and *AutoCar* magazine Dec 1980, as well as *Motor* magazine Apr 1981.



Presently owned by (2013) : Tony Stevens - Location U.K.

**2. Reg No:** VDU 80X **Colour:** Met. Blue (originally Silver) **Builder:** Stevens Cars

This car was originally painted silver for the Motor Show debut. Although a non-runner at the time (and with the paint still a little soft!) the colour linked this - the show car, to *Car* magazine's test report. The interior reflected detail changes to the trim and dashboard layout. Soon after, the car was resprayed metallic blue and sold to David Greenwood of Deddington High St. Garage. This car was borrowed back from David for press purposes and features on the front cover of *Motor* magazine Apr 1981.



Presently owned by : (2013) Simon Fitch - Location U.K.

3. **Reg No:** TKV 648W **Colour:** Red **Builder:** Reliant

This, the first of two Reliant built cars, was made to assess the manufacturing procedures required to put the CIPHER into production. After assessing the car, the Reliant management came to the conclusion that it was too costly to engineer a production car.

This decision was highly strange as the CIPHER used existing Reliant parts and Reliant already had the expertise to produce the GRP bodies. Many think this conclusion was probably reached because the Reliant management had already decided on the Michelotti designed SS1. The third built Red CIPHER is interesting in the fact that although built after the Blue CIPHER (No.2) it was in fact registered with the DVLA before it.



Pictured when the car was part of Thomas Touw's collection, this car was one of three that Thomas owned for over a decade.

Presently owned by (2013): Paul Johnson - Location UK

The picture at the top of the next page is also of this car.



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4. **Reg No:** VWK 342X **Colour:** Black/White **Builder:** Reliant

The Second (and last) Reliant built car was painted in the White over Black colour scheme to reflect Tony's passion for Ferraris.



Like the third built car, this car was used at Reliant for assessment of manufacturing procedures. The car has a further twist in its life when it was acquired by TVR for evaluation during 1983, and was featured in their main showroom to assess public reaction to the car. This car has currently

returned to Holland after chassis and body restoration in England carried out by David Speed in 2012/13.

Presently owned by (2103): Thomas Touw, Holland



Car No.4 in original build at the Reliant works, Tamworth (Note Peter Bird with the notebook in hand). Thanks to Dave Poole of www.sporting-reliants.com for allowing us to use the picture.

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5. **Reg No** : B387 VOU (Dutch reg. 71-PZ-02) **Colour** : Metallic Green  
**Builder**: Stevens Cars

Peter Bird started the build of this car while Tony concentrated on further project funding, and investigated LPG conversions for Grundy. However the build was interrupted when Peter was made redundant when negotiations ended due to the Delorean scandal and the failure of Hesketh Motorcycles.

Tony subsequently finished the car, with further interior changes over the previous Ciphers, and sold it on. This car is now back on the road after being restored by David Speed, after having been traded to him by Thomas Touw for restoration work on the white/black Cipher (No.4).

Presently owned by (2013): Dave Corby - Location U.K.



Perhaps the best known picture of this car when Thomas owned it



c. Sept 1986 Philip Walker owned the car. The car in 2013 after much restoration by David Speed in early 2013. Currently owned by Dave Corby from Colchester. Picture above taken summer 2013.

**This car is now back on the road, after having been traded by Thomas Touw in exchange for restoration work on the white/black Ciper (No.4)**

6. **Reg No:** N/A **Colour:** White Gelcote **Builder:** Falcon Automotive (Kit)

This CIPHER was built and exhibited by pB / Falcon Automotive c.1981 with kind permission of Tony Stevens (and using his moulds and jigs). The car uses second hand Reliant Kitten mechanicals, and was built to explore the marketing possibilities of selling the CIPHER as an all-new kit set, in the same way as Colin Chapman first sold his Lotus Elite and Elan models.

In recent years this incomplete car was bought in an e-bay auction by Philip and Samuel Andrews of Berkshire. On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011 Peter Bird visited them and confirmed its origin. It was subsequently sold to Joe Mason of Reliant Spares, who later sold it on in 2013 to its present custodian Peter Gordon from Harrow.

Presently owned by (2013): Peter Gordon - Location U.K.



The car in 2011



The car in 2012 at Joe Masons yard.

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7. **Reg No:** N/A **Colour:** White Gelcote (?) **Builder:** Falcon Automotive (Kit)

This CIPHER was built by Falcon Automotive c.1981 with using some of the Stevens moulds and jigs, and is designed to allow the use second hand Ford Escort Mk1 mechanicals. This was built as an incomplete kit, with just a running chassis and body panels provided. Further information on this CIPHER is limited due to it being “off the radar” for some time. However, recently established contact with owner has confirmed that this CIPHER has modified wheel arches, which does not follow the standard pattern of the Stevens vehicles. It is thought that this modification was made to allow the use of Ford rather than Reliant parts. Hopefully we will have more information regarding this CIPHER for a future Mewsletter.

Presently owned by (2013) : Anthony Bastiaanse - Location Netherlands

8. **Reg No:** E780 RRH **Colour:** Red **Builder:** Stevens Cars /LADA



This car was produced as the prototype for a Russian sports car in conjunction with LADA and various Russian, Lithuanian and British interests. Redesigned and built by Tony Stevens using Lada Samara mechanicals in a factory at Stratford upon Avon. The project was very secret and the only press cover, which describes the interaction of the parties involved and the plans for the model. This article was featured in *AUTOCAR & MOTOR* 24th January 1990.

Presently owned by (2013): Tony Stevens

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9. **Reg No:** N/A **Colour:** Silver over Matt Black **Builder:** Stevens Cars

This CIPHER was constructed in Portsmouth using an 1800 twin Cam Mitsubishi engine and power train. This CIPHER is different from previous CIPHERs in the fact that it is a coupe model rather than an open top model. This CIPHER is also much faster than previous CIPHERs with a top speed of 140 mph. This car was built and registered in early 1998 and is still owned by Tony Stevens. Picture over the page, and at the top of page 8.



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10. **Reg No:** N/A **Colour:** Red **Builder:** Stevens Cars



This car is the most recent version of the Cipher, which was built by Stevens Cars as part of a project with Malaysian backers. This soft top car has several modifications to the overall body shape to fit the different mechanical and electrical components required by the project.

Presently owned by (2013) : Tony Stevens

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Just to keep you right up-to-date, here (over the page!) is the green one on the road in August 2013 now owned by Dave Corby from Colchester. This car was brought over from Holland in 2012, and rebuilt by Dave Speed, who is, as part of the deal to acquire the green one, did up the black and white one for Thomas Touw. It is now back in Holland.



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Getting Technical

A quick tutorial on fitting a steering rack to a Kitten.

Jack up the front of the car and secure on axle stands. It's not actually essential to remove the front wheels but it might be a good idea anyway.....

To start, loosen off the lock nuts on the track rod ends half a turn.

Now loosen but do not remove, the nuts securing the track rods to the steering arms. You *can* use a splitter to crack the tapers but I don't like these. With the nuts backed up so that the nyloc bit is clear of the thread (i.e. they are finger loose), a sharp clout on the end of the steering arm with a 2lb hammer usually releases them. The nuts are left on so if the hammer slips/misses, you don't fubar the thread.....

Once both sides are released, straighten up the wheels to the straight ahead position (important this) to centre the rack, then remove the

track rod ends and lock nuts from the track rods. You'll need these for the new rack. It's worth measuring the distance from the lock nuts to the ends of the track rod threads before removing them – it'll only be a rough guide but should be close enough on reassembly to get you to the tracking adjuster without ripping the front tyres – they really do wear amazingly quickly if the tracking is out!!!!

Now disconnect the steering column lower universal joint from the rack, removing the nut and bolt completely – the bolt runs through a groove on the rack pinion so the u/j will not come off if the bolt is only loosened and left in place..... There's no reason to try and uncouple the u/j from the rack, this will be easier when the rack is unbolted from the chassis.

Now look carefully at the clearance between the bottom of the radiator and the rack. Some radiators have deeper bottom tanks than others which can make removing the rack awkward to say the least. If it looks tight, simply removing the radiator fixing bolts and sliding it up a bit is all you need to do – there's no reason to remove hoses or drain the coolant.

Now remove the four rack fixing bolts and lift the rack clear. These bolts are captive in the chassis.... After the rack uncouples from the u/j, do not turn the steering wheel.....

Check the mounting rubbers but these are usually OK.

Centre up the new rack before starting to reassemble.....

Reassemble in the reverse order. I've always found it easier to feed the rack spline into the u/j whilst the rack is only loosely fitted.....

First journey should be to the wheel alignment centre.....

Whatever the mechanic might think, tracking needs to be set to parallel, if anything with half a degree of toe-in but no more. ABSOLUTELY NO TOE-OUT!!!!!!

Have fun!

Any problems, feel free to call me.... 01525 758171

John (Pearce) Leighton Buzzard No. 304

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## The latest from down under

Brian,

September 2013

Where has the year gone? I have been attuned to send you a greeting all year and received my last prompt with the arrival of Mews 113, and that must now be two months past. Another interesting read.

I never seem to catch up with the jobs that must be done these days, and the situation is not assisted by the unexpected failure of something around the house or worse my toys. Both Austin and Liege have caused me grief this year and because of my inability to cope as once I did, both have been immobile for unnecessarily long periods. The A7 suffered generator failure and had to be rewound - both fields and armature - and craftsman able to undertake this work are now very thin on the ground so one has to wait in turn.

The Liege most inconveniently ceased to function without notice, in fits and starts, and I could not locate the cause, except that it was obviously an ignition fault. I carefully, in order, changed the condenser, then coil, then distributor cap, and finally rotor button and presto it seems to work again.

However with the extended and intermittent nature of the stoppages the starter motor did a lot of unnecessary work and now that device has thrown in the towel. Unfortunately the little pre-engaged Magnetti Morrelli used by Reliant is unheard of in OZ and there are no replacement units, and further because the auto elects have not worked on them they are unwilling to investigate. I thought -- "not to worry", because the spare engine and ancillaries purchased from Mr. Les Smith of Ashford had arrived and I can steal that starter motor on a temporary basis, but! the "spare" turned out to be solid with corrosion and we are still unable to disassemble it.

"Caviat emptor" and all that.

However I would ask you, if the worst comes to the worst and I cannot find anyone to overhaul the original unit; are they still available new or reconditioned ex UK?

Judith and I hope that both you and Moira are keeping "as well as can be expected" and that you are enjoying the busier life brought about by your growing family circle.

With fond regards, Bob and Judith. NSW, Australia No. 457

## **I thought you might appreciate this!**

**(even if you don't remember or are too young to!)**

When at a store checkout the young cashier suggested to the older woman that she should bring her own shopping bags in future because plastic bags weren't good for the environment.

The woman apologised and explained, "We didn't have this green thing back in my earlier days."

The cashier responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment for future generations."

She was right -- our generation didn't have the green thing in its day. Back then, we returned milk bottles, lemonade bottles and beer bottles to the shop. The shop sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilised and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So they really were recycled. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got blunt.

But we didn't have the green thing back in our day.

We walked up stairs, because we didn't have an escalator in every shop and office building. We walked to the shop and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two streets. But she was right.

We didn't have the green thing in our day.

Back then, we washed the baby's nappies because we didn't have the throw-away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy gobbling machine burning up 2200 watts -- wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing.

But that young lady is right. We didn't have the green thing back in our day.

Back then, we had one T.V. or radio, in the house -- not a T.V. in every room. And the T.V. had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of the county of Yorkshire. In the kitchen, we blended and stirred by hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the post, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not polystyrene or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn petrol just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity.

But she's right. We didn't have the green thing back then.

We drank water from a fountain or a tap when we were thirsty instead of demanding a plastic bottle flown in from another country. We accepted that a lot of food was seasonal and didn't expect to have out of season products flown thousands of air miles around the world. We actually cooked food that didn't come out of a packet, tin or plastic wrapping and we could even wash our own vegetables and chop our own salad.

But we didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people caught a train or a bus, and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their parents into a 24-hour taxi service. We had one electrical socket in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerised gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 200 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza place.

Isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we oldies were just because we didn't have the green thing back then?

Please share this with another selfish old person who needs a lesson in conservation from a smart-ass young person.

And remember: Don't make old people mad. We don't like being old in the first place, so it doesn't take much to piss us off...

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Epilogue

I am sitting back (sheltering from the sun!) in the latter half of July. I have edition 113 (the one before this) sitting in the hall in two boxes, just waiting for me to create and print the supplement before I pack and post it, and I decided to have a wee look and see how far on I was with this edition – only 2 pages to go! Wow! It is not due out for the best part of ten weeks yet!!

This year has been my easiest in a long time – if not ever – thanks to the volume and caliber of articles and pictures willingly supplied by both readers and others. My job has been so easy that I am almost dreading a return to what used to be considered “normal”, where I sometimes had to write a major part of the magazine. Actually, come to think of it, it has been quite a long time since I wrote anything approaching even a third of any given edition (thank goodness I can hear you muttering!)

However, I am aware that I promised you a feature on Jimps at some point, now long overdue, perhaps next time – any Jimp owners out there like to become involved with that?

Oh, never one to shy away from admitting any mistakes I might make, it would seem that, surprise surprise, the Royal Mail’s postage rates are more complicated than I had naively thought they were!

There is a lesser weight restriction on first class large than I had thought, it is not just about size! So my interpretation in here last time might not hold water! Sorry. It would also appear that though usually well under the 100g weight limit, I often encroach on the thickness limitations of a second class stamp. So I realise that I am pushing the limit with this edition, though I am confident that you would tell me, do please let me know if you are charged extra for delivery. If I don’t know I can’t do anything about it! Meantime I will keep squeezing the envelopes for a day or two before posting them.

Till next time take care. *Brian*

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