

# RELIANT KITTEN REGISTER



## **Mewsletter 146** *January – February 2019*



I thought, in the midst of this cold weather, that the above might lift the mood. It appealed to my sense of – oh dear, it's that elusive adjective time again! Anyway, the point is, that one John Box, used to compete at events of this ilk, half century or so back, in a Jowett Bradford van. Then, decades later, he built 11 Tempest Vantiques, and here, another couple of decades on, in 2018, is one of them, wiping the board in class I believe, doing just the sort of thing John did in the Bradford.

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



# **The Reliant Kitten Register**

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E & o e

A Happy if somewhat belated New Year to you and yours,

As you have probably worked out by now, I did get the Christmas Mags in the post before Christmas, with 6 days to spare! I was very impressed with Royal Mail, who delivered most of them the day after I gave them to the printers to post, second class!

I am told, by she who believes she must be obeyed, that I will never be doing that so close to Christmas ever again!

It is now the first weekend in January, and your renewals are coming in thick and fast, which is wonderful. What is not so wonderful are my attempts at preventing a repetition of last year! I had, intended, do intend, to fully process the renewals as they come in, but, with everything else going on in life, it is, so far, proving to be beyond me.

Anyway, the proverbial thousand mile journey being begun by the first step, and not wishing to dwell on my shortcomings, here I go.

And instantly I am sunk by my inability to prioritise between notes and letters that have arrived with your renewal notices, e-mails, and telephone calls - I've said it before, and will no doubt do so again - I NEED A SECRETARY!

To digress completely, one of the emails that arrived yesterday was from Drummond Black, outlining no less than 5 technical meetings at 5 different venues at which the Scottish section of the Jowett Car Club will be covering things from fitting a windscreen to a Jupiter (2 bits of flat glass in a chromed brass frame) , one to a Javelin, (the first production car to have a curved windscreen), overhauling a steering box on a pre-war Jowett, to tuning carbs on a flat four, to fitting a modern oil filter in place of the old paper type that was so commonly used over half a century ago, and that is between now and May! I envy him the energy, never mind the technical expertise.

Back to matters in Hand, Dick Watson really does read every word I write in here! He did not know of the HRG I mentioned last time, so.... On top of that, he is keen to learn all about fitting a Webber carb to the Kitten engine. I know we have spoken about that in the past, several of you having done that, with great results. Makes me realise the need / demand for possibly a series of "Technical papers" on that, and other beneficial mods. More things for my "To-do" list, or could I delegate that job to you perhaps? Seriously, let me know what you think would make a good subject for such a paper, and, if you have the time and expertise, or just the patience to learn, and compile such a thing.

Back to your renewal notices, and, in the faint hope that all is not yet lost, I will just start with today's. Setting a 45 minute timer!

Brian Fereday tells me that he has made progress with his, running, Tempest, having replaced the alternator, starter motor, battery,

fuse box coil and distributor, (something else we might consider a "paper" on?). He has also tidied up the electrics, but tells me he is afraid to strip it all out and start from scratch. I understand perfectly Brian, but (and this is where I potentially stumble, already!) Someone was telling me about a firm who make new looms for the Kit car industry, and one of their standard looms fits our vehicles very well. His only frustration was how long it took him to solder all the ends on to it! I won't hold this back looking for the details, I can cross refer later when I come across the information.

Well Done Brian, good to know that the winter is being put to good use maintaining at least some of the cars. Ed.

Oddly enough I was just called away to grate carrots for the soup, one of the few tasks I am still both good at and permitted to do! I paused the timer, still limiting myself to 45 minute sessions on any given task, and it had taken me exactly 22 minutes to process that one renewal notice and type the above 2 paragraphs. That Secretary's post is still open!

Next up was Mick Rowley's, and he has not indicated any changes to his vehicles, the Fox is still running, and the Kitten and Rebel are on SORN. So I assume that I was mistaken about thinking his Fox was black. Marshall's memory fails yet again!

There were only 5 renewals today, and while 2 of them had no indication regarding the current status of the cars, I can now, once I find my hole punch, file them and move on. Still 8 minutes on the timer!

Dave Smith tells me that he has a number of Fox panels and doors for sale, see the supplement for details.

Ray Oldfield, one of our more recent subscribers, has had a Kitten move into the same street, and he was wondering if this was unusual, and whose it had been, if we knew?

Well, we certainly do. That is the high mileage well looked after estate car that for many years past belonged to Graeme Shaw. I think it is on its 4th or possibly 5th time round the clock, still on its original engine, which tells you all you need to know about Graeme's standards of maintenance. That said, unless I am mistaken, we do not know who

the new custodian is, perhaps you could pop the enclosed through his door in passing – how am I going to remember that?!?

Dave Williams, our man in Wrexham, who has recently joined the ranks of the retired, finds, as I did, that one is busier than ever, and so work he had hoped to have done to get his Kitten estate back on the road, is taking longer to find time for than he had imagined it would.

Welcome to my world Dave!

As I hope you will see Dave, I have corrected the spelling of your street name, my apologies.

Charles Braid, who describes himself as “Prisoner 1016” tells me that his Kitten estate is on SORN, still on the ramps under wraps, which he hopes will protect it till he is able to complete the work, mainly body work and repainting. Thanks for the update Charles, I am delighted to hear that your mobility has improved recently.

I should take the opportunity to say a big thank you to those who have contributed to the spares fund, some very generously, it is appreciated.

Colin Marshall, whose Suzuki powered Liege you read about in his comprehensive report on its tour of the Highlands and Islands recently, is one of those who had to point out some errors that I had made with his address (and his writing is very neat), so it was finger trouble at this end to blame, sorry Colin, duly corrected. Ed.

Dave Miller from Leighton Buzzard, your kind comments are duly reciprocated, good to know that your Kitten is still giving service.

Dick Sherwin from Horsam tells me that his and Sheila’s lovely Kitten estate, the one which was professionally completely rebuilt in 1999, does not get much use these days, but is still MOT’d and on the road. It had disc brakes and 12” alloys, and lovely rear lights fitted during that body off restoration. I can’t actually remember when I enjoyed a coffee with the two of you, I guess I could console myself by remembering that I did! Thanks. I’d love to see how that powder coated chassis is doing 20 years on. I always think of small Fiats in relation to their No, 126, which gives you some idea of how long they have been with us.

Malcolm Rush, a name most folk will recognise, is one of those who has fallen foul of my bad memory – I can't remember how to delete blank vehicle records that I accidentally created in the past. As a result, Malcolm's renewal notice, like a few others, has 2 vehicle records on the right hand side of the page, one of them blank, another with the details of his excellent dark green Kitten estate. Fear of messing the whole thing up has prevented me from even trying to delete the blank one. I did manage it once some years ago, but just can't remember how! Richard / Susan, help!

Alan Shaw's was one of the first renewals to arrive at the end of December. Alan I both envy and admire your organisation and skills, thanks for helping keep so many of our wonderful wee cars on the road.

Patrick Vallat's year you will read about further on, our man in Switzerland has had an even busier year than most. Another of those first class engineers in our ranks, with the added bonus of being multi-lingual. Patrick, thanks for your continued support. I hope that 2019 affords you more time to work on the cars.

Right, time for a coffee, it is now 07:40 on Sunday the 6th of January, I have been at this for the past hour or so (not setting the timer in case it wakes Moira!) back later – that said, I only have another 7 pages to fill, and all Steve Head's input, with pictures, still to put in, thanks Steve.

I'm scared to say anything lest I jinx things, but, right now, it is looking as though I might get this to you in January (we just know something will scupper that idea, don't we!?) - you are of course chanting - "OH NO WE DON'T" aren't you? Definitely time for that coffee!

Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> now, and after having to resolve, well, find a way round really, a software problem, I am back and raring to go, except that I need to leave in 5 minutes and won't be back at the keyboard before this evening....

Right, I am roughly half way through the renewal notices that have arrived up till now, so I am going to press on.

As it happened there were only 3 renewals today (8/1/19) and so a chance to make some progress with the backlog. That said, one of

them had cash, including a generous spares donation, one, a cheque along with a correctly completed form, (as the one with the cash had), and an envelope containing just a cheque, nothing else, from a man who I am 99% certain only has a Fox, and it is his daily transport, but I am not in the business of making guesses, I really need the renewal notices back!

Simon Robson, one of our Liege owning friends, is still on the lookout for both replacement Robin seat covers and securing clips. I should put this in the Reliant Owners Club mag, as, I think, it is Robin / Rialto seats that his Liege uses.

Wouter van Oploo tells me that he is looking for a Liege supercharger for one of his Kittens. As far as I know Peter only ever had the one batch of 6 made. If our Liege owning readers could put the word out, and confirm my memory, that would be great, thanks.

Obviously that gives me an opportunity to give Peter (Davies) a ring, but I am up against too many deadlines at the moment – I say that, I don't do deadlines, but there is a lot going on, and I have managed to hurt both my feet, so am taking things even easier than usual this month. That said, I did make the time to write an article for the Jowett Car Club's magazine, the Jowetteer the other day.

On with our renewal notices, well, the mail at any rate! I had just one bit of post today, a letter from Ron Dark. Ron was one of half a dozen or so folk I had scribbled a note to with their Christmas mag. He emailed me in response, but the email did not get here electronically, thank you Ron for including its text with your letter.

Ron is No. 101, and we do have a subscriber with the number 1001, Mike Wilkinson, who is the current custodian of what was, for many years, Andrew Norman's old Kitten van. Who can remember what cleaned a big big carpet for less than half a crown? O.K., so my mind wandered off track there, sorry about that.

Bill Starkey's is the next one on my desk, and, hopefully, all I need to say, apart from **thanks Bill**, is to refer you to his letter on page?

Michael Palmer, our Fox owner from just outside Nuneaton, tells me that he needs a fuel tank, a petrol filler neck, and a windscreen for it, oh, and some time to do the work! Michael, I hope to have got back to you before you are reading this. If not, please remind me. Brian.

Paul Stabler, from near Leicester, tells me that in spite of having fitted new poly bushes to his Fox Custom Pick-up, that pressing need for work on the drive unit is required. He tells me that positivity is needed, and I could not agree more. I know things must have been bad, because Paul has not ridden his Sunbeams even once last year! Thank you for your good wishes Paul, here's hoping for a brighter '19.

Bob Jones, the current custodian of my old friend Robert Fairfoull's rebuilt Rebel estate, you will remember the feature I ran on it when I had it after Robert died, and later when Bob's cousin Mark, who I sold it to, changed the axle ratio. (Have you still got the prototype SE5 Scimitar Mark?) Well it (the Rebel) now sports Minilite alloys and a Rebel racing manifold. A recent picture or two would be great if you can Bob. It is great to know it is in good hands.

Just taking a moment out to clear an email from my in-box. Yoland, she of Tempest fame, the girl who runs the SHACC so effectively, sent me a picture that had been taken at the NEC in Birmingham at the Classic Car show last autumn. It showed what I think is a Robin hatchback, along with the heading "Princess Ann's Kitten". I replied that I would need time to check why someone thought that was the case. My understanding was that the only small Reliant she had was a Robin van for use on an estate. With hindsight that was something I should have cleared up when I met her a few years ago, but as I was in my Kitten at the time, and we were talking mainly about Reliants, I think she would have said something if she had had a Kitten.

Back now to Rebels with a modified axle ratio, something they would all benefit from, other than the early 600's perhaps, which probably did need such low gearing. John Parker from Bristol, tells me that his Rebel estate is back on the road, having passed its MOT 12/12/18. It has, unusually, if not uniquely, a Ford 1,300cc engine and automatic gearbox fitted, but now has a back axle which gives 15.3 MPH per 1,000 RPM in top, compared to the 11.3 of the original, which John is hoping will improve the fuel economy. Please let us know how that works out John, and if you could let me have a picture of the car, that would be great. Oh, I almost forgot, John forgives me for forgetting about his handbrake cable, given that his scraped through the MOT. I will try and get some more made from the pattern I have John, but don't be shy about reminding me. Brian.

Keith Smith from near Chester has as many Kittens as I used to have Rebels, well, almost! However, unlike my Rebels, of which seldom more than one was running at the same time, 3 of his Kittens are roadworthy, with just one being rebuilt. Keep up the great work Keith.

And that is enough for now, I only have 2 pages left to fill, and am hopeful of more ready typed up input coming from Bill Starkey shortly, and is not yet the middle of January, though that is close now.

~~~~~

## Rebel Round Up

Our other Renfrew resident reader sent me this picture, and, well, in his own words (below the picture) Thank you Thomas.



Is this one known to the Register? From a Hubnuts video, the guy with the invacar.

No and Yes is the answer, we did not know of the car, but Ian Seabrook, AKA Hubnuts, is in fact a Register subscriber, and he owns a Fox amongst his collection.

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# DVLA and vehicle tax problems.

By Paul Wheatley

Sue recently needed to buy a bigger vehicle to replace her Renault Kangoo.

Her craft fair stuff has greatly increased in volume this year, and so she settled on a very nice, used Renault Traffic MPV, which was, until recently, owned under the "Motability" scheme (as her Kangoo had been before we bought it). We agreed to buy the new vehicle in the third week of November. We obviously needed to tax it, so I went online to the DVLA website the same day. Having entered the details of the vehicle I was informed that because I needed to change the taxation class from its present "disabled" status, it could only be done at a Post Office.

Sue visited the village PO the following morning, only for her to be told they couldn't change it, because the computer said not - it kept asking for proof of the keeper's disabled status, which obviously we don't have (and don't want). They advised trying a main PO in town, so she drove to the one in Worksop. Computer still said NO! The software still didn't allow that option.

To cut a long story short, there followed three further visits that day, and a forty mile round trip to the garage we bought it from to obtain the full V5C. We witnessed a number of phone calls between the Post Master, the PO's staff computer helpline and the DVLA.

DVLA seemed to be of the opinion that either the PO staff were incompetent, or the Post Office's computer system was at fault. The Post Master, not surprisingly, took some umbrage at this. He told DVLA he had been issuing car tax for almost fifty years, and had done so many times online in the very recent past, without any problems whatsoever.

The PO helpline chap insisted that the DVLA computer was at fault. DVLA said that as far as they were concerned, the vehicle could be taxed there and then. I eventually spoke direct to DVLA who advised us that we now had to apply by post and it would take 8 to 10 working days for the paperwork to be sorted out. In the meantime it would be illegal to drive the vehicle on a public road. Not good for Sue's already booked and paid for Christmas craft fairs, which was the reason for buying it!

The following day I spoke again to DVLA to ask for some more information about the postal application. This time the more helpful chap I spoke to told us that he could see there had been an omission on the database dating from when the vehicle was first registered, (presumably a DVLA error). He then spoke to his supervisor and told me that all I needed to do was to take some photos of the vehicle and include them with the application so it could be confirmed that it hadn't been structurally modified in any significant way (it hasn't).

He also confirmed that it would take no more than 8 or 10 working days to get the paperwork sorted and back to us.

Needless to say, almost a month after we first tried to tax the vehicle and presented payment, it hasn't been sorted.

Having been in touch with DVLA again, we have now been told that it might take up to six weeks for them to sort it out (obviously not including the DVLA Christmas shutdown) and that we still cannot drive the vehicle! Annoyingly, I have discovered that Sue's Kangoo has since been sold, and is now taxed and on the road with its new owner.

DVLA have closed all their local offices. It appears they have made an error with our vehicle, they now have a computer system that doesn't work and they cannot cope with their workload. As far as I can see, we have no comeback against them whatsoever.

Regards, Paul Wheatley.

.....

Hi Brian,

September 2018

Just a little pictorial update of my progress on the Kitten, coming along nicely, what do you think?

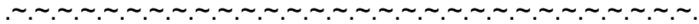
Best wishes, Henry. (Haddon) No. 1081 from Wolverhampton.

*It is looking good Henry, keep up the good work. Brian*





Henry Haddon's Kitten pick-up



## John Bull Tyres

By Phil Hallam

Originally formed as the Leicester Rubber Co. in 1906 to sell tyres, the John Bull Rubber Company was launched in 1934 to make tyres (actually the same year as my Riley was produced). In 1959 it was acquired by Dunlop, and probably stopped production sometime later. In 1937 they manufactured Metallastik bushes etc., something we have on our cars even today.

I bought my Riley (unseen) in 1971, from the vicarage at Shenstone near Sheffield, and on collecting the car, the two 4.75/5.00 tyres were in the back seat. At the time my brother-in-law drove the Riley, and we towed it behind my father's Morris Oxford little did we

know that the blue leather seats had been 'renovated' with shoe polish which ruined my brother in law's clothes.

John Bull Tyres UK ltd still exist today producing truck tyres and have a vintage range for the likes of Sentinels Fodens and Scammells.

So, in answer to the quiz, I have owned the tyres for 47 years, but they could date back to 1959, so that's 59 years and kept in the dark most of the time, they are still ok if a little hard!

.....

Hi Brian,

21/12/18

John Bull Group was taken over by Dunlop in 1959 so that would be the date for the last "independent" tyres, but I have no idea whether the name was used afterwards. On the other had there is still a John Bull Company selling truck tyres.

Regards Roger

*I have to say that the first two responses were from Roger Brown and Keith Gittus, both with very similar stories to tell, both whose subscriptions are paid up till December 2020, being amongst our 50 odd five year subscribers – what to do?*

.....

**I woke up in my bed, with a roof over my head.**

**I have heat in my home, I have running water.**

**I have electric lights, I have food to eat.**

**I have clothes to wear, I have friends.**

**Life is good. I am blessed. I am thankful.**

.....

## Carb and fuel thinking

When I fitted the Weber..... In truth it was very straightforward to do, and was truly a “fit and forget” modification. Until I fitted the 4-branch that is, when for the first time ever it started suffering from fuel vaporisation in traffic and on hot days.

A simple mod has fixed this, by ducting the air filter to outside air (from the engine bay that it).

Except that in very cold weather, it now suffers from icing, something it never did before either, simple to unplug the pipe from the inner wing and point it down at the exhaust – cured!!.

Of course over the next few months I need to change again, because the introduction of E10, fuel (which has already started), means that super unleaded is going to be discontinued, because the bright young things at the DfT (who are applying this particular EU dictat) are convinced that all cars run perfectly on 93-95 octane standard unleaded. Mine does not, I assure you. It is a bug bear to start, and when it does it spits back through the carb, backfires, and pinks very badly at all revs..... The compression ratio is 11:1 on Hans's engines so it really needs “Avgas” or 5-star, which no longer exists of course. It runs well on super unleaded (98 octane) but if I can't get this then drastic measures are needed to modify the wee car to run on E5/E10. One saving grace is that Shell, BP and Esso all claim that super unleaded will remain available (from selected outlets) until 2020.

Two choices really, either I strip and rebuild its perfectly good engine with a replacement standard head, pistons, and a standard cam, or I convert to a modern ECU controlled injection/ignition set up, as all modern cars have. Modern cars tolerate the low grade fuel by the ECU continuously “tuning” the engine to run properly on whatever fuel is in it, by adjusting timing, running temperature and such according to the feedback it gets from the various sensors.

Of the two, the second option should prove cheaper I think, as I have been considering such a change for a while now, and have already got things like the trigger wheel and some of the sensors.

John (Pearce).

## Some Rebel ball joint and parts related emails.

Mr Marshall,

6<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Replacing all Tie Rod Ends and as basically the front suspension etc is mainly from the Triumph parts bin I thought no problem will order Triumph parts. Did not realise the Tie Rods are left and right handed. Apart from replacing with new units, all R/H thread, are you aware of any supplier for the correct units? Regards, Graham

*And, before I got back to him :-*

Mr Marshall,

10th December 2018

Further to my e-mail I have found a supplier of L/H and R/H Tie Rod Ends. Classicspares499 are offering a pair at £68 + 36 delivery. With reference WE657 they are listed as suitable for Regal & Robin 1963 – 1973 but will possible fit Rebels as well!

After some time CHG classic of Wisbech are returning my renovated head back to me, which now means I can turn my time to examining the block, including the main and crank bearings and pistons etc etc. This should keep me occupied until early spring if required parts can be found.

Any advice as to suppliers of the above would be gratefully received. Meanwhile seasonal greeting and may I wish you a Happy Healthy New Year. Regards, Graham

Mr Marshall,

12th December 2018

Lucky to pick up a set of main 20+ bearings but being old stock will wait to see if of any use.

Next job will be strip engine block down and unblock and clean it up. The bores seem OK but there is a lot of swarf in the pan so who knows what I will find?

Hopefully by the spring I will have a running engine in a completed chassis!!

All the best. Regards, Graham.

Dear Graham,

December 12, 2018

I'm glad one of us is on top of things! It looks like congratulations are in order, though they are not cheap, and I honestly do not remember left hand threads on a three wheeler, but, as I am only too well aware, my memory is far from perfect these days.

Please keep us informed with progress. Good luck, and do just ask if we can help.

Regards, Brian

.....

Loose ends! (looking for a Kitten in or near Bath)

Thanks for the response Brian - I didn't mean to imply that I was extending my deadline to you! Any info would be appreciated, I have a couple of friends keeping an eye out for the guy in Bath, so here's hoping...

Joseph Branston - Photographer [www.josephbranston.com](http://www.josephbranston.com)

.....

Not really what I wanted to be doing during December, but, as expected, rather a lot of damage having unavoidably been through some deep water, and thus taking on water into the engine. Even more annoying as the engine had done less than 4 thousand miles.



Martin Seymour, No. 551 from Reading.

Morning Brian and a Happy Christmas to all..

25<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Finding Mewsletter in my letterbox Yesterday led me to think I forgot to send the last Year's form back to you.

I had the craziest Year you could imagine in term of working, the more I approach retirement, (four years and bit) the busier I am....

This Year's task began last Winter when one of our customer needed selling his road-sweeping's recycling plant and asked CDEnviro (Northern Ireland, original supplier) for a quotation to move the plant, which was so high, he asked me to do it. I spent a few evenings in his shed with my daughter (she's a civil engineering drafter) taking a lot of measurements to do plans because it had to be completely modified to fit the new customer's shed. I started the move on 16<sup>th</sup> of April with my son, who is also a mechanic and in search of job, a few tools and a forklift...

It took us 6 months to complete the mammoth job, (the plant had come from Ireland on 12 flatbed articulated trucks....)

But it works well again, you can easily imagine I had a few sleepless nights...

And at the same time, my daughter started transforming her little old farm house barn to fit a new kitchen, bathroom and under roof two guest rooms, also needing my help because of being single and a bit short of money... We spent two weeks in October changing the 24 roof's beams by hand (12cm.X20cm.X7.50m) with my wife and a friend, ending the second week with insulation, roof windows, and tiles...

And since that we spend the weekends working inside the barn, so my restored Kitten and Marcos were not even started, and my friend's Grantura's chassis sits in my workshop waiting for me to continue the mechanical restoration.....

But I've decided next Year should see both on the road again ... (I already said that last one)

Wish you all the best. Patrick (Vallat) No. 702 From Switzerland.

*Many thanks Patrick, and good luck in 2019. Brian*

## Responses to the old car picture from last time (Page 26)

Hello Brian,

23<sup>rd</sup> December 2018

Christmas good wishes of course.

I reckon that the picture on page 26 of Mewsletter 145 could be a Sunbeam tourer made by STD. Probably about 1929 vintage?

Certainly pre-1930. I hope it is a "20HP" not a "16HP" as it looks a sizeable body. Exceptionally well-engineered cars.

BTB I had a friend who had a "Golden Sunbeam" bicycle - all I can remember is it had a puncture repair outfit stowed inside one of the celluloid(?) handlebar grips. Later I had a Sunbeam S8 motorcycle.

Now got a Moto Guzzi Monza as a project.

ATB, Nigel (I can cheat now ... it is actually a 16.9HP)

.....

## Exercise for those over a certain age.

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface where you have room on both sides.

With a 5lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides, and hold them there as long as you can.

Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day you will find you can hold this position a little longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10lb potato bags.

Persevere till you are comfortable, then move up to 50lb potato bags.

Once you have the knack of that, try moving up to a 100lb potato bag in each hand, that is the level I am at now.

After you have mastered that, put a potato in each bag.

.....

Hi Brian and Happy New Year to you.

Poor end of the year for my Kitten. Motor overheated badly after I fitted a new radiator.

Opened the bonnet to find the dip stick hanging out and oil everywhere.

So I removed motor, (first time I have ever removed car motor)  
My good friend Steve Bird stripped it, and found all piston rings broken,  
and one poorly valve.

After measuring bores and checking everything thing else, he  
said he would rebuild it.

James Holland dispatched the spares down within a few days.  
The next day my mate rebuilt the motor in a couple of hours, and had it  
running on the bench.



I then fitted the motor back into the kitten by myself.



The car has had a test run and all seems ok. Hopefully the Reliant Gremlins will leave me alone for a while.

Steve (Head) No. 1013 from Andover.

Hi Steve,

1/1/19

A Happy New Year to you and yours too.

Many thanks for the pics and update on progress.

I'm delighted that you got it fixed so quickly, I hope it lasts well. Don't forget to have the head torqued down, at least once, and soon.

To belatedly answer your question about racks, yes, I have one here with your name on it, and one of the new boxes to pack it in.

Good engine builders are getting hard to find, would Steve do another one do you think? That said a 2 hour rebuild sounds pretty quick! Did you fit a new clutch and roll pins while you were in there?

Regards, Brian.



## A Foxy move

by Bruce Emery.

Hope you and Moira are keeping well.

24<sup>th</sup> December 2018

We moved house in September but have only just got round to writing this! We decided it was time to down size, and have moved to a bungalow from a 3 bedroom house. We are still in Leigh-on-Sea.

When we moved to our previous house 12 years ago, I put the Fox in the garage with the intention of getting it back into a roadworthy condition, but over the years more and more stuff was put on top of it, until you could hardly tell there was a Fox underneath! 12 years later the Fox was still in the garage awaiting repair. (See attached photographs.) Where does the time go!



Prior to moving I needed to get the Fox out of the garage so I could sort things out in the garage. I bought myself a garage tent, and erected it outside the garage.

I pushed the Fox into the tent complete with all the stuff on top, the first time the Fox had moved in 12 years! I slowly sorted out the stuff on top of the Fox, and, eventually, I could see the vehicle underneath. Now I had the task of sorting out the garage!

Nearer the time to move I needed the Fox out of the way as we were hiring a van and doing the moving ourselves, and couldn't move the Fox at the same time. My friend Doug said I could put it on his drive, and he could tow it there for me, as he has a towing dolly that lifts the front wheels off the ground.

The Fox is a non-runner so it has to be pushed everywhere, so when it came to getting it up the ramps onto the towing dolly, we were unable to attach the winch due to the steepness of the ramps and the lowness of the front of the Fox, so we asked two men who were passing by to help, and together we pushed it up the ramps. After securing the wheels and attaching a trailer board, Doug drove the short distance to his house, and I followed in my car.

~~~~~

*Aaarrgghhhh! An extra odd corner!!! Just room to tell you that the damage to Martin's virtually new engine (see the bottom of page 18) was caused by water ingress to the engine – a big puddle no less. This possibly raises questions about air filters I think, but more on that another time. Ed.*



On arriving at Doug's we unloaded the Fox, and pushed it onto his drive, this time it was a bit easier getting off the towing dolly as we could use gravity.



A couple of weeks later, after we had moved, we did the whole thing again!

This time we used some of Doug's neighbours to help us push the Fox up the ramps.



One two three, ups-a-daisy! (with a little neighbourly help!)





The Fox is now on the drive in the tent and, hopefully, I will now find the time to carry out some repairs.

All the best. Bruce. (Emery) No. 129 from Leigh-on-Sea

.....

### **Further on wiper motors and SU carbs.**

In deference to John Pearce last issue. I must add a couple points.

JP gave some fine details of wipers motors and mechanisms, as he said 'can be easy enough' but some consideration might be useful before with regard what bits you have, and what you are hoping to achieve.

If you fit a two speed motor then you will need a two speed switch! One of the switches than can do this was the later Reliant Rialto column switch. Or of course you could have your 2 speeds via a.n.other switch on the dash board.

And another thing, there is another area of failure/consideration,

this is the multi-way plug socket into the wiper motor. It isn't quite what it seems, the socket in fact is the parking switch. Which can be frustratingly intermittent and/or non-functioning. Especially when it comes to parking. With some care they can be taken apart and serviced, but it is a white plastic assembly that needs prising apart. First though, when plugging and unplugging, it this is best done with the wipers mid screen, so ignition on, wipers on, then ignition off when wipers are at half-mast. Remove multi-way plug, then with care, prise up the metal clip that holds the switch into the wiper. This can be done with the wiper in position on the car, but being able to stand on ones head under the passenger dash is a necessary requirement.

If you have trouble in this department you may phone me, but I will not come and lie under your dash board!

The 'umble SU. John inferred by fitting the Weber, problems with the SU disappeared, but perhaps it would be better to fix the SU?

John mentioned a 'flat spot' pulling away, and possible intermittent idling.

The 'flat spot' or maybe it is considered a 'cough' or even 'hesitation' is something Reliant built in (another one of the foibles of mass manufacture down to a shilling). The air flow into the SU from the air cleaner goes through a sharp right-angle, not good. This air route needs a trumpet of about 3/8" radius. You either get your Black and Decker and a burr out, or see if you can buy a short bell mouth trumpet. If you are not sure what I mean, find a Morris Minor and take the air cleaner off the SU, all is revealed.

Intermittent idling-oil in the dashpot is a good start here. But a wear point on the SU that not a lot of people have found and fixed goes like this. I have been told the spindle wears and leaks and upsets mixtures at tick-over. Not ever found a worn spindle myself in 400,000 miles in Reliants, but I have found several worn butterflies. The tick-over increases such that you lower it by adjustment but you then find that the engine stalls when you press the clutch! (putting the lights on doesn't help either) (load on the alternator). The reason for this is that the butterfly at the sides where it sits on the spindle is worn, the butterfly is no longer round, but has two flat side to it! Not good. This allows uncontrolled air to pass round the butterfly and weaken the mixture. Replace the butterfly. Another point that shows this symptom up is a

significant drop in revs when the clutch is depressed. It can/should be as low as 50 revs drop, any more and tickover/butterfly is very suspect.

Apart from these two 'fine' points, John's usual words are to be noted.

Also worthy of note, not how you replace the bumper on a Fox Pg 23 last issue. Silly really what needs to be done such that in future we do NOT have a problem.

Greetings from Norfolk. A Osborn.

.....

I'm just going to clear some more of your renewal notices, and we can catch up with Bill Starkey next time.

Jon Goodson's was top of the pile this morning (after I decided to sort them onto numerical order), and at No. 1069, his was it. Thank you for the good wishes Jon, I have no idea why I thought you had the kitten van for almost three times as long as you have, records duly corrected.

Jim Clarke tells me that the DVLA have allocated a chassis number to his Liege, it actually starts "DVLA", and nowhere in it is there any reference to the fact that it was No. 00053 from the factory. I think it is sad that that has not been preserved at least in part. I guess we ought not to let sentiment stand in the way of things. Congratulations on moving ahead Jim, good luck, and please keep us updated with progress when you can.

Lenny Miller from Somerset tells me he has acquired a spare car, and will be restoring it. I know the guilt I used to feel breaking one Rebel to keep others going, and I am quite sure it is the same with Kittens, but better than both ending up scrapped. Keep up the good work Lenny. I see you, wisely, didn't put a completion date on it!

Phil Knowles from West Yorkshire, is not daunted by the task of renovating his Jimp, in spite of finding several botched repairs having been carried out on it in the past. It sound like this Jimp has, at last, found a good home. Thanks for the update Phil, and good luck.

## Epilogue

Once again, no, let me rephrase that, **for once**, I am here on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, with just this page to fill. So, full of enthusiasm, and thinking how glad I am that I do not live in Downing Street today, I shall wind this up and get it off to the printers.

I was a bit brief on my description of the amount of work that Phil has done on his Jimp. It now has virtually a complete new body, thank goodness he enjoys working with aluminum! Some pictures would be great as and if you can please Phil.

I have actually almost caught up with your 2019 renewals, a tremendous improvement on last year, some ten months ahead of where I was just a few months ago. Long may this progress continue.

That said, I do intend to attend as many of these Jowett meetings as possible over the coming months, lest I become a total recluse!

O.K., I'm taking it that by now you know what to do with these ball joints, trunnions, (oil in them of course) propshaft hardy spicers (though I do realise that not all of them have grease nipples) etc.

I was going to say, Phil, (Hallam) that I'll be down next week to take you up on your kind offer of help to encapsulate our 2019 cards, but that will be history by the time you read this!

If you are not one of our 5 year folk, and your card is not enclosed, then either, I have made a mistake – what me, Never! Well, Hardly Ever (*which captain sang a song with lines like that?*) or you have still to send in your subscription for 2019, in which case, please do so.

Till next time, take care, drive safely, and top up the antifreeze!

*Brian*

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