

# Reliant Kitten Register

NEWSLETTER – TWENTY-THREE

*July/August 1998*



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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This front cover - "The Naked truth", perhaps should have been kept back to page three! It is not quite what you might think it is. I suspect that some of you might recognise it as a Rebel chassis, but look again, the exhaust runs beside the propshaft, the gearbox cross member is rectangular, not circular, and you would need to look very closely to see (it is not clear, viewed from this angle) that the steering is different also. Observe that huge stiffening tube, bent over between the tops of the front suspension turrets - it supported the spare wheel, as well as reinforcing the chassis! Note also the bracket for the chassis mounted hand brake! It is indeed a Rebel, but one of the 50 or so manufactured before the major chassis changes were introduced in 1965/6. This one was photographed for us by Bruce Emery from Leigh on Sea, and the car, chassis number 100032, registration number GLD 662C, belonged to the recently deceased Mr. John Bennett from Spencers Wood near Reading. Ordered new by him at the 1964 Motor show, it has recently been acquired by a private collector.

Hello there, I will begin this edition with an apology, I dislike constantly apologising for things, and so often don't, but my beloved did comment that my constant references to my bad memory were as bad as constant apologies, so for a couple of editions at least, I will assume that you all know what a bad memory I have and we'll say no more about it!

One matter which would seem to cause concern are the posting dates of this publication, you would not believe the number of telephone calls I get in the days before dispatching it, asking when it is coming out, now we are talking a single digit number here, but it is obviously a matter of concern to some of you. After what I was saying above about not apologising, I won't, I will simply state that it comes out when I have time to do it, and that will happen half a dozen times a year at approximately two monthly intervals, and yes that means anything from 4 weeks to 12 weeks apart. It all depends on a number of variable factors, some within my control, some not. Generally any given edition will be posted at some point in the two monthly period mentioned on its front cover. I did say somewhere in edition 21 that I'd talk to you again in June, and I did, indeed a couple of weeks earlier than I had expected to, because Alan decided to take a holiday at short notice, and so my deadline was moved up suddenly. Right, I shan't witter on any longer, other than to say that to a certain extent it depends on articles from you - must master the graphics one day, I can just see the finger pointing out of the page here!

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Jim Smith deserves a special mention; Jim is one of those guys who has been working on a Kitten, a very nice red estate car, for a number of years. A project when time permitted you might say. Not all plain sailing either, the trapped nut in the chassis for one of the engine mountings was stripped, and he burnt the old one off and welded a new one in, not a simple task.

You may remember he was the chap who was having difficulty dismantling a dual circuit master cylinder some time go.

It had become something of a standing joke when I asked Jim how the car was progressing, but he has done it, M.O.T. passed in May, taxed from the beginning of June, insured under that marvellous deal with Richardson Hosken's Specialist Car Division of Library House, New Rd., Brentwood in Essex, CM14 4GD, and he loves it - corners like a go cart, very nippy, well, we all knew that Jim, but welcome aboard, and well done. It is always good to hear of a Kitten returning to active service after a period of hibernation.

Speaking of which Les Smith deserves a mention too, all these Smiths getting Kittens back into service, must be something in the air, see Dave's story in the readers letters page, and well done Dave, and if I don't ring you to ask before going to print, is it the Swift seats we are talking about when we mention the Suzuki?

Bill Dick was on the telephone the other day, and suggested that since I was clearly failing miserably as far as the alternative parts list was concerned, why did I not delegate? I made the comment that the problem there, apart from finding someone, would be satisfying myself that the information was accurate. Adrian Hanwell rang a few days later, and the subject came up again, but he reckons that the important thing is to gather information at a central point, verification of its accuracy can come later, and while not ideal, is one approach which at least would help see some progress being made. So, providing that we all realise that the plan is to gather information, which may or may not be accurate, and so is subject to verification, then please can I have volunteers, one for each model perhaps? Do please get in touch if you are prepared to help in this important task. If I can have a list of names by the end of August, I can publish it, so that our knowledgable readers will know to whom their information should be

sent for central collation and storage. Well, it sounds like a good plan to me, please get in touch, it needn't take up a lot of time, though it will, I assume, run for a long time.

Yes Phil, I realise that I have still to send you details of my new Rebel bits for the Mutual Aid Spares scheme, and I also realise that I forgot to include a form with the last edition, less rush this time, I hope, it should be in with this one.

The idea of a working party to rescue the A5 Rebels has had some support, and looks like being on, and simpler now, thanks to Thomas Touw, our man from Holland, who has taken the one with the sized brakes out of the equation for us. It is just a question of when. It will obviously need to be a compromise, two or three people have said to let them know when we are doing it, and, if they are free that weekend, they will come along. A couple of others have said they will make themselves available whatever weekend we choose, provided they have a couple of weeks notice. Obviously this is a telephone job, rather than a magazine job, and thanks to Bruce Emery I now know the name of the lady who has the cars, and the village name too, next thing you know I'll have the address and telephone number as well! Leave it with me.

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Roger Archer from Blackpool, you may remember, was the gentleman who I mentioned in the flyer with the last edition, who is looking for an articulated trailer to go with his TW9. At the time of writing (26th June) I do not know if he has been successful in his quest, and mention him here just to jog any memories that might be able to help. Roger's home telephone number is 01253 355216, and works no. 01253 896208. Please give him a ring if you can help.

I have sought out and been offered a deal on HS2 carburettor replacement float chamber needle valves, complete with seats and the small gasket for the float chamber lid - after the bother I had getting one for the little red car in May, I thought I'd better investigate, and what do you suppose, of course they are available outside London, but not a lot, and, even if I agree to buy 10 at once, with the dreaded vat. They will still cost almost £ 8 each, which by the time we add postage will be costing you £ 9. Please let me know now if you would like one (or more than one!) or indeed if you know where we can get a better deal, and I will put the wheels in motion.

This is one of those cases where with the cost of telephone calls and the poor discount actually offered, it really was not worth the bother, but you don't know these things till you try, they might have offered a real discount and not this pretend 20% I have ended up with. Why is it I can get 40% easily from some suppliers, and have a struggle to get even 10% from others?

Still on the subject of parts for our cars, steering column bushes seem to be the thing this month, and I have to say that certain Reliant dealers are either poorly informed, or just plain unhelpful, even the ones who are well informed and helpful, have an enormous price difference between them! To cut a long story short, I have them in stock here at £ 7.00 a pair, including vat. and postage, delivered to your door. So, save yourself a lot of time and 'phone calls, and buy your Kitten and Fox steering column bushes from the Register while stocks at these prices last!

Our friendly front cover man, John Pearce, tells me that there is a possibility of a colour page in a future edition of the magazine, specifically to show you some of our cars - as you might have noticed, I tend to keep the front cover for specials, rather than standard cars, and a number of you have been good enough to send me pictures of your vehicles, and please don't stop doing so! But, to date, I have failed to let everyone else see them. Thanks to John's generosity it may be possible to rectify that situation to some degree.

One point which I perhaps omitted to make clear regarding the sensibly priced insurance cover offered by Richardson Hosken, and that is that the Classic car policy requires that the Kitten, Rebel, or whatever, is a second car. My apologies to anyone who discovered that the hard way.

Ah, here we have one of those odd corners! I was just saying to Moira whilst looking through my "To be used in the mag. sometime" file, that I really ought to simply copy some of the letters straight into the magazine. John Stork in particular, uses a script that belongs in a Registrar's office, and he writes pretty long letters, that is to say never less than a full A4 side. I've even been privileged enough to see his diary, one of those A4 things with a page to a day, and he keeps it faithfully in the same copperplate hand. I am just jealous John, both of the talent and patience to write in such a manner, and the self-discipline to keep the diary.

### **Rebel Round Up**

My thanks to Fred Heath for the following observations, which I should have published before this, thanks again Fred, and well done on the Land's End to John O'Groats run, it was good to see you again.

Dear Brian,

Thank you for the latest Mewsletter, it certainly raised a few points.

Concerning the list of colours for the Regal, Supervan and Rebel, my list of colours, enclosed, are entirely different. Hope the brochure and price list for 1968 is of interest to you. My Rebel's original colour was honey beige, grey plastic upholstery and a red boss in the steering wheel.

I was also given the book "Cars that Time Forgot" for Christmas, and your correspondent queries the 4 slots in the grill of the saloon. Whereas the estate featured has the normal three slatted grill normal for all 1966 cars on, the saloon appears to be a prototype body with the top slots filled in. The original very thin bars were very fragile; the later ones are not much stronger. This may be the reason for the move to fewer thicker slats. Having studied the photo of the saloon I was sure I had seen it before. I found it in the encyclopaedia of cars as a 1966 600cc model; the D registration appears to bear this out. In February 1965 the Reliant development model Rebel, chassis number 3 was up for sale with a photograph. This shows the grill having 7 slats, the top three slats being separated by a much broader bar from the lower four slats. Neither the Reliant development car, BUE 447B, or the car in the book, NBF 254D, were ever registered in the Reliant Rebel Register.

As for the number of Anadol vehicles made mentioned in the book "Cars that Time Forgot" 10,000 cars made was mentioned but this was for the first 4 years of production and the average 2,500 per year in the early years was probably exceeded by a wide margin over the total 18 year production. 100,000 cars made in total was not an impossibility.

The problem of incorrect information on computers is not new. The unfortunate effect is that, since the younger generation believe all that the computer tells them, this misinformation will be passed on as gospel. The fact is that at the end of the day the writers are paid by the number of words written and the bean counters ensure that the quality of writing and editorial effort is down to a price and not up to a standard. In consequence if the author can take words already written, even if wrong, he gets paid, and the garbage is perpetuated.

As my Rebel is now 29 years old (first registered 04/1/69) and having covered 166,000 miles, I believe that I can comment on the durability of Rebel parts. When the car first came into my possession in 1993, it drove adequately but not well. Since the front nearside shock absorber was clearly shot, I decided to change the pair. I used Spax units as I couldn't find any original units, and the handling was much improved. With this success I changed the rear pair of shock absorbers for Monroe units, the improvement was marginal, but noticeable. My conclusion is that the rear dampers are more than adequate for a lifetimes motoring, but the front are not.

As a coincidence, I had the opportunity to test a 1970 Rebel last year, only to find the nearside shock absorber was entirely lacking any damping. Was this just a coincidence, or were the two sides actually manufactured to different standards?

I look forward to seeing the list of Rebel spare parts, not that I need any just now. My local motor factor is very good at finding parts off the shelf in most cases. Recent parts located include all brake components, clutch, new and reconditioned units, and track rod ends right and left hand thread. If anyone needs a current part number I can oblige. I have also had success purchasing through Reliant Motors Strichley, card enclosed.

Yours sincerely - Fred Heath

Send Bill Dick's list of parts to all Rebel owners Brian!!!

### Foxes' Den

Right, you Foxy lot have either not written to me recently, or I have been as disorganised as I sometimes dread being, and have lost it!

It is currently the 14th of July, the next few weeks are looking fairly busy - the white Kitten saloon advertised by me in the past is going, in different bits, to a number of new homes - sad that they are worth more in bits than they are as whole cars, but there we are. At least it will help prolong the life of a number of others, indeed may be resurrected itself one day. So I have decided to finish this edition off smartly so that it does not get bogged down with that other magazine that I produce, and also leaves me free to attend a couple of car club events in August.

So, since I have been pretty good in the rest of this edition about giving our readers some space, though I would accept the criticism that my previously stated intention to keep technical stuff to a specific area of the mag., does seem to have fallen by the wayside somewhat. More technical items required ladies and gentlemen please.

The matter of which electric fan to use for your Kitten, Rebel or Fox, given that we don't all have a spare £100 or so to "do the right thing" and buy a Kenlowe one, keeps nagging at the back of my mind. I think the Metro one is probably the easiest to fit, though I understand that the Volvo 340 one can be used O.K. and the Peugeot 106 petrol one, which I fitted on - oh, be careful now Brian lest you blame the wrong individual, but I think it was our front cover man John Pearce, who recommended this particular one, having just used one of them himself, I have to say that I found it required quite a lot of trimming to get it to fit in, and even then I could not get it as close to the radiator as I would have liked. Sitting as it does some three or four inches in front of the radiator, I feel that it is not giving its best, but it

is well up to the job. Some of the traffic conditions I had to cope with, in really hot weather on the way to Lands End for the run in May, was as good a test as any I can remember, and it worked well. I simply use a switch on the dashboard to control the fan. So you do have to keep your wits about you. Having said that I would guesstimate that the percentage of the 3000 or so miles that I covered which had the fan in use would be a figure of less than 0.5%. Though it has to be said that the percentage of the time the journey took that the fan was on, was probably nearer 1.5%. Something to do with the fact that it was only ever on in heavy slow moving traffic.

Yes, all right, I will admit that I used it a couple of times on steep long hills, not because I had to, just because the engine was not properly run in, and I did not have synthetic oil in the sump yet.

There is one Fox owner, who I have to say I am sorry that he has not yet seen fit to subscribe to this organisation, who fell off a ladder recently, and broke both a wrist and a hip. So let us all learn something from his misfortune, and take care when aloft. (Difficult to use crutches with a broken wrist!).

Those of you who have signed up recently, will be aware of my failings as regards keeping an adequate supply of back numbers of the magazine - normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

That is two years running that I have failed to realise how many magazines I need. I now have plenty of last year's editions, having had them reprinted, but failed to realise how many I would need in the current year.

I could try to lay the blame at the door of those who are more than a couple of months late in renewing their subscription, well, share the blame a bit at least! Indeed they were responsible for my thinking that I could get away with just having 225 copies made - wrong Marshall - we are back up to 250 now, and hopefully that will see me through the rest of this year O.K.

Well, yet another odd corner, just nice time to say have a good holiday or whatever over the summer, and I will talk to you again in September or October depending on the demands on my time, and how many of you write to me!

## **READERS LETTERS**

Dear Brian, 21-6-98

Thanks for the latest Mewsletter, I never know when it is due or if I have been missed. I assume now that I am on the mailing list.

To bring you up to date on my Kitten estate, it passed its M.O.T. in May after a chassis waxoil, new tyres, exhaust, mirror, rear light lenses, rear seat, fuel tank, and catches (all from the donor saloon) and brake overhaul consisting of shoes, cylinders and all new copper pipes including the little front ones from the chassis to hoses, (a job for a ferret I think) what an easy job they are (NOT!) I have also fitted since, new seat covers and carpet inside, the Suzuki seats already fitted are superb, the carpet shapes were easy to cut from templates using the old carpets, the cutting was hard due to the built in underlay, however it is another job out of the way.

A radio was then fitted (another ferret job) and after routing the ariel from rear roof under floor pan and back into the car, all works well, however it is time consuming. Second hand volt / oil gauges were fitted, 50lbs cold, and I think the needle flickers on tick over when hot? I think I had better start reconditioning my spare engine, that said it runs well and burns no oil, but you must be able to drive a train through the mains!

Attention has now turned to the body, which is damaged due to its poor 8 years in storage under a mountain of motorcycle spares.

I am very pleased with the fact it is now saved and back on the road again in daily use, I have no intention of turning out a "showroom" car, just a presentable and reliable vehicle. During the time I have owned it, a few other Reliant owners have contacted me, turning up information and parts, that's what its all about, a group of enthusiasts helping each other.

I have just sourced and fitted a tow bar and had to change the petrol tank sender that died, so it's not all plain sailing.

Sorry it's a bit of a rushed letter, but I wanted to bring you up to date. All the best,

Les Smith - Ashford, Kent

*See that, I managed not to interrupt once! The flickering oil pressure gauge at tick over and train passing room between the crankshaft and main bearings, I've said it before and I'll say it again, pressure is not everything, flow is the thing. The main purpose of oil (now he's going to get into trouble for this controversial opinion!) in any fast moving mechanical device is not to lubricate, but to remove heat. It is excessive heat that causes wear, and the oil is in fact primarily there as a bearing coolant, the pressure of that coolant is secondary to its rate of flow. Some manufacturers recognise this important aspect of oil, by fitting, as some of us have, an oil cooler. 50 p.s.i. on starting, not a lot hot at tick over, but what is it at 55 - 60 M.P.H. in top gear? Anything over 25 has to be good for thousands of miles yet. This railway tunnel thing simply helps reduce friction, and so the engine will spin freely, there does need to be a gap between the bearing shell and the shaft, or the oil could not get in there to do its job at all! Granted a TT gauge locomotive clearance is preferable to an O gauge one. (I was mentioning this part of the mag. to someone on the 'phone the other week, sorry but I can't remember who it was that deserves the credit for suggesting that if it were a tilting train it would have less bother!) I have never had a crankshaft reground just because it is a thou or two down on standard, if it's oval, that is another matter, but if it is round, I really don't see the harm in a thou or two of wear. I quite agree that it is the bearing shells that are meant to wear, not the shaft, and if the oil is changed regularly, (and the filter) and the shells replaced every 100,000 miles or so, the shaft should last forever. But I can well understand the attitude of any owner whose engine has covered over 100,000 miles wanting to replace almost every moving part of his engine when he is in there anyway. The question is, where do you draw the line? Not many folk actually replace the camshaft when reconditioning an engine, big ends and main bearing shells yes, piston rings, even the timing chain, and perhaps the drive gears, though not often, possibly even valves, mind you why, if they will grind in O.K.? But valve springs, and guides? Oil seals and gaskets certainly. It is all a matter of personal choice, and economic common sense. Just a pity that you can't just replace the bearings without removing the engine from the car, or I would be recommending that course of action, and before you all write in, yes I know you can do that with the big ends, but it always seems to be the mains that wear first, and that is not nearly so simple with the engine in place!*

Dear Brian, May '98

Enclosed cheque for membership, written last month! Available details of my cars enclosed (Rebel and Fox) I wish to have a chat with GUS's owner, and whoever can help me with info on Fox wheels I wish to buy either white spokes or alloys. Hope you had a good trip, nice to have met you.

Dave - Penzance

Dear Brian, 24th June 1998

Thank you for your subtle hint about my subscription!

A new interest in my life, the building of a full size light aircraft, has made my wife force me to (a) get all the jobs in the house and garden done (a lot!) and (b) review all my other "projects".

I have already sold / disposed of / cancelled the idea of many projects, and the scrapping of the rolling threshold for tax exemption on vehicles sealed the fate of my Kitten. I had previously tried, without success, to sell the Kitten whole and had decided to restore it ready for my 14-year-old son to drive as tax exempt in three years. A review of plans determined that I could no longer spare the time to restore a vehicle that I didn't need and was of more value as spares for the Salamander special that I am still going to build.

Please therefore accept my apologies for late payment of my subscription and note for your records that: -

(a) Salamander still held

(b) Kitten scrapped (to be fair the chassis was worse than I had thought, the internal body steel tubing had rotted (haven't they all? Ed!!) ) The seats if not ripped, were mildewed, and the paintwork poor.

(c) I have for sale some parts, see adverts page.

Yours sincerely, Paul Humphries - Werrington

*Thank you Paul for keeping us up to date. Paul was one of about twenty people who had not renewed their subscriptions this year, and who were privileged enough to receive special attention from the Registrar, that is to say got the polite reminder notice which I have to say has so far proved to be a bit disappointing in as much as that, a week after sending out 20 of them, all with stamped addressed reply envelopes, only eight have so far been returned, however three of them have rejoined the flock, so it was a worthwhile exercise, and I can remove the others from the mailing list with a clear conscience !*

Dear Brian, May '98

Following my phone call on the 11th of May, I forward an s.a.e. So you can send me details on the Reliant Kitten Register. I also include the article "lead out in the millennium". I hope it is some help to you. Myself I have been running my Kitten on unleaded for 5 years, using one of the fuel line products. But some people say when an engine has been run on leaded fuel for a long time, there should be

enough lead engrained into the working surfaces to enable it to run on unleaded fuel. So no one really knows if the in line product really works or not, I could just be lucky.

Yours sincerely, Trevor Bailey - Dorset

*Thank you Trevor, and as I said in my letter, sorry for the delay in getting back to you. This business of a lead memory is all very interesting, and no doubt varies from vehicle to vehicle, depending on a number of factors varying from the drivers technique, to the actual material used in the valve seats. Who knows, but 5 years down the line can't be bad, though you don't suggest how many miles that are! Ed.*

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The following is a typical written example of a relatively common telephone call to me, and I publish it to air both my own, and no doubt also the writer's frustrations: -

Dear Brian, 30/06/98

Thank you for the Mewsletter, it arrived just when I was thinking of writing to you! Could you please help me or direct me to whoever would be able to help, I need a passenger's door for a Kitten, a driver's door mirror glass, a pushrod, a vacuum advance tube, and two inner steering column bushes.

Where can I get all these parts? They don't have to be new, but in good condition. The passenger's door has been swung too far open too many times, and has already been repaired, but badly, and is beyond repair. The mirror was losing the silvering on the back, and has a crack down the middle. The pushrod was lost in the mud where the car was left until a few months ago; it is now in a lean-to garage. The vacuum, advance tube has been lost, and had a crease in it.

I need the two inner column bushes because one was damaged when I removed the upper steering column, and the other was missing (the reason for removing it in the first place) I still have the upper steering off the car because I can't get it back into the clamp on the lower steering column. I'm capable of completing the job if I can get the parts.

I'm only 17 and the only one with a car at the moment, and I want to learn to drive!

I'm also a keen cyclist and race quite regularly on the road, and hopefully off road in the near future.

Are there many Kitten owners here in Wales? Where are they? Which insurance category is the Kitten? and how much would you guess insurance would be for a 17-year-old male living in rural north Wales with the car garaged?

My Kitten is brown; the speedo has white numbers and no decimal point, and has 8a on the clock.

So many questions for you, but it is my first proper letter.

Yours faithfully, Meirion Rhys

Please phone if anybody has parts. 01766 530764, at home after 6.00pm, or work, weekdays 9am - 5pm on 01766 510910.

*Well, as you might imagine there was good news and bad news, the latter of course relating to insurance, which once again begs the question, asked in the last edition, can anyone out there help us with an insurance company that offers reasonable premiums for teenagers with Kittens. To give you a vague idea, anything under £1,000 for third party only, would be better than we seem to be getting offered at the moment - any insurance types out there who can help us please??*

The sad fact is that the Kitten is not a suitable vehicle for youngsters, unless they are wealthy youngsters, simply because of the high cost of insuring them. I know of no company who will offer classic car insurance to anyone under the age of 24, if you do, please get in touch.

There are always letters which arrive on my desk, and I am not certain, after replying to them, if they should just be filed, or published within these humble pages, and I did have a bit of space when this arrived from the owner of the very neat Fox, which sheepishly adorned the front cover of the last edition:

Dear Brian, July '98

Thanks once again for an entertaining Kitreg22. I was surprised and pleased to see the Fox on your front cover. It looks better than in my original print! It's the ideas of photography, which I find most interesting. I have tried before at Skirwith to have Lambs and Ewes surround the Fox, but the ground was too soft.

One picture it's said replaces a thousand words. Now we have "Who's afraid of the big bad Fox". Others may use the Fox theme with a Yorkshire Hunt with pack of hounds / real Foxes / and or Cubs all over it. (Would those be Caribbean Cubs? Ed.)

With the Kitten, Lions / Tigers around it. Tame ones preferred.

There are many other ideas for Rebels as well.

Bob Hunt - London

Dear Brian, 6th July 1998

Thank you for your quick reply.

You say that steering column bushes are readily available from any dealer, whereabouts are they? And which is closest, if you look at a map of Wales I live in the armpit of Wales, 6 miles North West of Portmahog. Cheshire wouldn't be too far and neither would Somerset / Bristol, as I often go in that direction with my cycling as my grandfather lives near Yeovil, which is where I got my Kitten,

Thank you for the list of Kitten owners in Wales, you said that one might have a spare door, but you didn't say which one!

Will I be able to buy a vacuum pipe from a dealer when I find one?

I enclose a few drawings of an idea how to ease the lower steering column clamp open. Welding the nut on would remove the need for two spanners when tightening / loosening.

I would like you to send me the pushrod, also the prices for the bushes and the pipe please.

Yours faithfully - Meirion

*One of these days I am going to make the mistake of using a letter in a magazine, only to discover that I have in fact used it before!*

The following, which I know will strike a chord with some of you, has been lying on my desk for I don't know how long, but if I had used it before, I would have marked it accordingly, even if I failed to file it, wouldn't I?

In truth I can to some extent blame the author, for at least some of my confusion, as he is yet another of you lot who fails to date his letters! (One of these years I'll graduate to an incoming mail date stamp!!)

My thanks none the less to Peter Terry for the following: -

Dear Brian, 1998

Please find enclosed my Register application form and payment.

Thank you for your letter outlining the known history of the Kitten. I know Graeme Shaw quite well now, as he has been on hand to give advice during the restoration of the car.

As you pointed out, insurance on the car for my son Daniel has proved to be too expensive. As he is only 18 years old the best quote we had was for T.P.F.& T. cover at £1,100, and as a consequence we have decided that he will be unable to have the car himself. I have therefore taken over ownership of the car, which is now almost completed.

The entire braking system has been replaced, chassis welded, waxoiled and undersealed, the body "T" cut and polished, engine steam cleaned and overhauled. Axle overhauled, half shaft bearings renewed and exhaust system replaced. The total cost of purchase and renovation now reaching nearly £500, still it will be worth it in the end. And I hope the investment will be worth it and that I can look forward to many years of service from the car. Daniel has an eye on it himself, and can see it being his car, in the new millennium.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future and having a good read through the back issues.

Best wishes - Peter

*(Brian now dashes off into Paradox - the database in which I keep a record of all magazines sent out to subscribers - to check that the afore mentioned back issues were in fact mailed!)*

Thanks Peter, it is good to know that the brown saloon, which not only stood in a driveway for so long, but was advertised within these pages for about a year, has finally found a good home.

I have to say that the word 'overhauled' clearly means different things to different folk, as in my one experience, local price differences excepted, to overhaul all the parts you talk about would have cost me a lot more than the £500 figure you mention, just for the parts, never mind the labour and original purchase price of the vehicle. Obviously a lot depends on the condition of the vehicle in the first place, and the standard to which it is being restored.

From what I understand the history of the car to have been, I would think it likely that you can indeed look forward to many miles of - what was it that Esso used to say their sign meant? - Oh, well, I can remember "Happy Motoring" even if you can't! And no more extra's here!

Oh, all right dear, my beloved was suggesting that my long memory of things in prehistoric times might not be appreciated or understood by many of our younger readers, those born before 1950 can jump to the next paragraph, the rest of you gather round and listen - imagine the camp fire smouldering, the stream running by - oh, never mind all that, the jingle went - Brian now plays with the Alt key for a while to find quavers, semi quavers or whatever, oh bother, I give up! "The Esso sign means happy motoring, the Esso sign means happy motoring, the Esso sign means happy motoring, stop at the Esso sign; for Esso extra."

Right dear, can I get on with the magazine now please? - Thank you.

Right, finally, I include some of the information that Dick Goodall has been good enough to send me from time to time.

### **Getting More Technical**

Lubricating of Rebel swivel pins (or whatever the correct term is) I may be wrong (What you Dick, never!) but I imagine that oil is more likely to penetrate to the vital points than grease. Why? Because it is much thinner and can travel by creeping down very small gaps. The snag is that it also leaks away more quickly than grease does. I seem to remember that Morris Minor swivels were supposed to be oiled, not greased. But that had to be done every 1,000 miles, so the recommendation was changed to grease, to help lengthen service intervals to 3,000 miles.

Just me again Dick, yes I am sure you are correct, Triumphs as well, though the Rebel originally was meant to be serviced every 500 miles, yes, you read correctly five hundred miles, I even have an old service book somewhere to prove it! And to think I moan at the Citroen needing serviced every six thousand!! We really are spoiled these days are we not?

Now, as I was saying, I was one of the Minor owners who had the interesting experience of having the front suspension collapse on one side. Due I think to the steering not having been greased for a long time before I bought the car - very second hand. At about the same time I read a letter in a motoring magazine from a man who had his Morris Minor from new, and in 150,000 miles had never experienced a suspension collapse, or even changed any of the swivel pin parts. He OILED the swivels every 500 miles.... Honest, I hadn't read this far before my rebellious comments above!! Ed.

Now it may well be the case, as the learned Mr Box pointed out, that certain modern oils do not mix well with say phosphor bronze steering or gearbox parts. A point that Jowett Bradford owners who mistakenly used Hypoid oil in the back axle became well aware of!! But I think that Castrol ST90 is suitable, because it was recommended for the Jowett Bradford diff. would a more educated person care to comment?

Just me again, sorry to keep interrupting, but I really must not allow this publication to become sidetracked onto old Jowetts, I mention this in passing because, I don't know if Dick is aware of the fact, though he might well be, but I am sure most of you will not know that John Box's involvement with Jowetts goes back more decades than either of us would care to remember, indeed he is rebuilding a pre-war Jowett even as we speak - but do feel free to comment on the oil situation as far as its use on Reliant bits is concerned John .....

Here may I suggest that ANY decent lubricant is better than none? If you do use grease then grease regularly, and make sure the grease is going in and coming out where it should. Grease nipples do rust up, and grease channels clog up if lubrication is neglected. Seriously consider the use of Saab special chassis grease. This I have found to be a superior product, and well worth the extra cost.

Dick Goodall - Muir of Ord

### **SALES & WANTS**

July 1998

For sale: - Rebel estate car, restoration project about 70% complete, but will need to be trailered away to its new home. Offers around the £250 mark. Birmingham area. Contact Steve Jenkins on 0121 707 2740

July 1998

Our man in Bedfordshire, Dave Smith, has, as ever, a variety of parts ranging from complete cars down - ring Dave on 01525 404638.

08/05/98

John Lyon is looking for a good set of alloy wheels for his Kitten, give him a ring if you can help on 01789 841229

19/01/98

For Sale: - "P" registered Kitten estate, white with a black roof, excellent runner, new clutch just fitted, and loads of spares. M.O.T. till March 1998 £ 375, contact Paul Grellier on 01962 776547 - Winchester.

July 1998

For Sale: - Rebel estate car, E150113, very interesting history and full Scimitar type interior fitted with 850cc engine from new!! Call Sam Stretton on 01299 832072 - Kidderminster area.

Now I know that Sam is a very busy man who is grateful to the three people who have contacted him about this interesting Rebel. He simply has not been able to make himself available to progress matters with the sale of the car - keep at him chaps!

July '98

For Sale: - 1976 Kitten saloon M.O.T. till January '99 Purple, but in need of respray. Taxed till August. North East, ring Anna on 0191 2621550 or 0966 501640.

July 1998

For Sale: - Howard Wroe of 35 Aberford Rd., Wakefield, Tel: - 01924 371087 has an S registered Kitten estate complete with a new galvanised chassis, built up complete except for fitting a new back brake adjuster, fuel filler, choke and throttle cables. Offers.

July 1998

For Sale: - Rebel saloon chassis. Never been on the road, galvanised from new, available with running gear if required. Contact Brian on 0141 8866117

July 1998

For sale: - 850 engine and gearbox £50. Tow bar (Dixon Bates?) £25, new unused clutch cable £5, refurbished set of door hinges with new door internal strengthening plates £10, will post if required. The above all for a Kitten, contact Paul Humphries on 01782 304606 or Email paul.humphries1@virgin.net

Stoke-on-Trent area.

July 1998

For sale: - Kitten estate 1978 taxed till December, M.O.T.'d. Just expired today 06/07/98, lots of spares, you will need a trailer for the spares - too many to fit in the car! Tel: -I 01670 713271. It has 4 new tyres, the list is endless. Needs a new thermostat housing, and some brake work. £200, Cramlington Northumberland. New spare handbrake cable, + too many bits to list.

Don't forget that I have new Rebel handbrake cables in stock, complete with grease nipple, for £19.00 delivered. Call the Registrar on 0141 8866117.

For Sale: - 1976 Kitten estate no tax or m.o.t. Spares or repair, some spares. Contact Tim on 01621 860315.

July 1998

Rebel chassis number 100003 is for sale, contact Brian in the first instance.

## NOTES

I was asked the other week to locate a Kitten brake master cylinder repair kit, and indeed the clip which holds the rear brake cylinder to the backplate. Well, you know it was very simple to find a repair kit for the later dual circuit system, but it took three 'phone calls to locate a kit for the more common single system master cylinder. As for the cylinder retaining clip, well they fall into the same category as SU carburettor needle valves, used to be available over the counter in every accessory shop in the land, but these days - yes sir, you get one with every cylinder purchased, but I didn't want to purchase a cylinder, just the retaining clip - well, that took half a dozen 'phone calls, and a drive into Glasgow to collect them, yes them, I thought that since they were becoming so hard to get, I'd buy a few. So if you need any Kitten rear brake cylinder retaining clips, I'm your man. As for the repair kit it is an AP Lockheed one, part number LK10959 master cylinder repair kit. Which brings me neatly onto the matter of alternative parts for our vehicles. Bill Dick was on the 'phone the other day 20/06/98 to be precise, and he came up with the suggestion that I should delegate more. Now that sounds good to me, the main problem being verification of the validity of the information gathered - I well remember someone telling someone else that the Rebel uses Triumph Herald front suspension, and as those of us who run such vehicles will know that is not true, but is one of those myths which has people diving all over the country in search of cheap Herald bits, only to find that they don't fit. So we do have to be very careful here. Having said that, I have made no progress at all since Adrian Hanwell was good enough to send me a copy of his list of alternative spare parts some years ago now, I have failed miserably to expand upon it at all. So, volunteers eagerly awaited for the collation of such lists, one for each model perhaps?

Merton Priory Press Ltd. tell me that they are about to publish a revised and extended second edition of Philip Riden's guide to motor vehicle registration records. To filter out the blurb, what you want to know is that it covers the period from 1903 till 1978, has a complete list of index marks, including the dates for which records survive, and they claim it is an indispensable reference book, 96 pages with 13 illustrations it should have come out in June ISBN 1 898937 25 7, available by post for £ 7.00. I can get a Club discount if 10 or more of us are interested, so we can do it at a fiver a time if enough of us want one, I could be tempted, if you could too, let me know, just so I don't lose the information the address is 67 Merthyr Rd., Whitchurch, Cardiff DF4 1DD, Tel.: - 01222 521956 fax 623599. But, as I said, we can enjoy a £ 2.00 discount if we buy 10 copies or more, so give me a ring on 0141 8866117 if you are interested.

One thing, yes another one, that I keep meaning to do something about is to try and pass on some of the many hints and tips that Harry Darby gives me from time to time. Harry is very good at 'phoning me to tell me of the success or otherwise of his latest attempt at making the land speed record holder (in your dreams, Harry) go faster, and use less fuel doing it, and, because I simply listen to him on the 'phone, and make intermittent notes, by the time I get round to typing anything up, I discover that my notes are either lost, or not comprehensive enough to make sense. So, sorry Harry, this time I tried harder, do correct me if I got it wrong, but the 1½" SU from the Metro, without the economy device that the later ones had, I think it was an FZX14? Or the FZX229, anyway he feels that it runs better now, and

at 106,000 miles on that engine now we are agreed that it is high time the " Running in - please pass " sign came off the back window!

I do have a note with Brian Millar's name beside it to keep a look out for 18" pre war wire wheels, I am curious to know how he will fit them to the Kitten, but I seem to remember they were for a 1933 Cadet - if you happen to have some lying in your living room we will be happy to help tidy the place up for you.

As regards insurance premiums for those younger than myself by a day or three, sadly I have now had a written reply to my request for help from Richardson Hosken, and they apologetically confirm that their classic criteria stipulates that drivers must be over 25 years of age, well I knew that, I had written specifically to ask if there was any alternative, but it seems not as far as they are concerned.