



NEWSLETTER 91

November - December 2009

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Our more observant subscribers might notice that this is not a picture of a Reliant! It is actually, I am informed, Brian's Desktop wallpaper from his computer but he does assure me that it is Reliant-related in some way..... Hopefully he will reveal all inside these pages!

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.....



The Reliant Kitten Register

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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.

It should be noted that opinions and ideas, information and advice printed in this publication are as recommended by our readers and others, and, while believed to be accurate and correct, such information is given in good faith, and it does not necessarily have the approval of the Reliant Kitten Register, and cannot be guaranteed by either the Editor, or the Reliant Kitten Register. Owners must satisfy themselves as to the suitability of any suggestions made within these pages, as no responsibility can be accepted.

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

Dinky Cars

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**SALES, SPARES, REPAIRS,
ENGINE RECONDITIONING**

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Our most recent 2009 subscription renewal was, at the time of writing, received on November the 10th! This, while welcome in the sense that we do not want to lose people, or contact with the cars, is really not good enough, but appears to be a frustrating fact of life, in spite of my efforts. Please help me out here by using the enclosed renewal notice sooner rather than later. Thank you.

Seasons greetings to you and yours. We normally aspire to give you a bumper edition at this time of year, and right now October 10th, that is the intention.

The cover picture, well, I thought I'd do something different. Here I am at breakfast inside the house the cover picture was taken from, sitting next to Bob Riches from Australia, that's his wife Judith across from him, and Colin's wife took the picture, Colin Dunbar being the other man in the picture at the top of the table:-



The next photo, below left, shows the view from inside the house, facing away from the dining table above. The railing you see outside is where I was standing when I took the cover picture. The other one, below right, is looking down from the balcony. The wide gravel bit is the drive, the narrow bit, to the left of the big bent tree, is the single track Glen Quaich road, which is just entering a hairpin bend!



Why the house pictures? What is the Reliant connection? Well Bob, who owns what I believe to be the only Australian resident Liege, helped design the house. Sitting as it does to the south of Kenmore near the Glen Quaich road end, on a very steep site, with that spectacular view looking over loch Tay, and yes, that is snow on the mountain top in May! So, snow and Christmas seemed good, and the Liege as you know is Reliant powered!

Ahh, I was going well there, a quarter of the mag done already, (9 pages down, 22 to go!) when my old friend John Johnstone dragged me away for a day :- He picked me up at 10:30 in his green 1949 Javelin on Sunday the 11th of October.



There were 8 Jowetts at North Queensferry, (it was really amusing, we had caught up with another Javelin, Eddie Hawthorne's maroon one, a couple of miles before South Queensferry, and were following it north across the Forth Bridge, when we saw another Javelin, a sandy gold colour one, belonging to Jack Kirk, heading south across the bridge). When we all finally assembled outside the designated Hotel at North Queensferry, there was a blue Bradford van, 2 Jupiters (both red!) and 5 Javelins! I seldom remember that many cars at club runs back in the 70's, I was impressed. Not only that, but the sun shone too! We went in convoy to Glenrothes to a new club members garage, where we drooled over his Javelin, it is in primer with no doors, wings or glass, it did have the bonnet and boot lid on, he is doing an excellent job, Gordon McKay knows little or nothing about Jowetts, but he is learning fast, his ethos and workmanship are of the highest order, it was both interesting and encouraging to see a car that is almost 60 years old being brought back to life. Davie Thomson, another new member, was there also, getting hints and tips for his Javelin's rebuild.

I actually let my membership of the JCC lapse last year, but still keep in touch, I was even asked to book the venue for their AGM (New Lanark) for them again this year – is there no escape?



We then retired to an eatery on the north bank of Loch Leven for a feast and blether before heading on our respective ways. One surprise was that the new road crossing of the River Forth just west on the old Kincardine bridge is now open, shows how often I am over that way these days, I used to make the journey to Fife several times a week, how things change... Frustratingly John and I spent an hour covering a couple of miles in heavy traffic at road works near Cumbernauld where, if the signs are to be believed, the work will not be complete till 2011!

All in all a really good day in the company of some old friends, and meeting some new folk too. Still, while it might have kept me from the keyboard, it was a wonderful way to spend a Sunday, thank you John.

What, I can hear you thinking, has this got to do with our beloved wee Reliants, well, this, - doing a comprehensive rebuild of a Javelin, costs thousands of pounds and hundreds if not thousands of man hours, just as the restoration of one of our Reliants does, and, like our wonderful wee cars, at the end of the day you have a great car that is worth a lot less than you have just spent on it!

Right, enough with the diversification. Matters relevant :- Your renewal notice should be enclosed, please use it!

Roger Brown, further to his observations on page 13 said "I am sure I can come up with an idea for a logo, although you may not like it. A competition would be a fun idea." And while I may be concerned about his assertion that I may not like it, I don't suppose it would be compulsory, and, we do agree that a competition could be fun – so, let's be having your ideas for a new logo. I'll not set a deadline yet, but early next year might be good, then again this Register will be 20 years old the following year. Hmm, by the time any change was decided upon and implemented – I'm thinking here of things I might find complicated, like changing it on the membership cards, well, we will see.

Sooner than that is the self imposed desire to have a booklet of hints and tips for our wonderful wee cars, I'm sure I said we would try and do that this year (he said, wondering exactly when you might get to read this!) That is a good idea which deserves more attention than it has had. Marshall take note, move that task up the "To do" list.

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A Rebel Re-homed

The background :-

I can tell you that "old number three" has moved home since the last edition of the Mewsletter fell through your letterbox. Saturday the 3rd of October, the windiest day of the year so far, wet too, but we were not to be deterred.

The Plan – Plan "A" that is!

I had arranged for my old friend and ex-Rebel owner John Johnstone to be at Renfrew before 08:00hrs, he arrived at 07:51, and we were on the road before 8 to meet up with my son-in-law Colin, who Arleen was dropping off at the "Fort" shopping centre on the north east side of Glasgow, just off the M8. Arleen was working that morning, and it was only a few hundred yards of a detour from her route, saved us a 7 mile detour to collect Colin from his home in Law. (a small village in Lanarkshire).

Off then for the border town of Annan, just west of the A74 where Colin was going to look at what was in fact to become his new car. After a test drive and check, the deal was done and by 10:30 we were off in search of a filling station to purchase sufficient fuel for his 70 mile journey home

John and I were to follow him, and then leave from Law in "Sammy" our faithful old Citroen BX, who would take us to Ayr (odd do you not think to be going to two places in the same day which are both called three letter words that have distinct meanings other than place names! – Law and Ayr).

However! my trusty old BX had other ideas and ground to a halt just a few miles north of Moffat, just south of Beattock summit on the A74. The weather was atrocious by then, having been windy but dry earlier.

When I say often, I mean often in relation to the number of times I seek their assistance, which is not that often! But I called the RAC, and, in line with their ethos, they would not take my word for the fact that we needed to be piggy backed home to Renfrew. So they sent Mark, their Mr. Fix-it, but of course, good as he was, he couldn't, so he sent for the piggy back wagon. An hour and a quarter wasted.

So it came to pass, some 2 hours after my first call to them, we were loaded on a piggy back breakdown truck and off on our way north towards Glasgow and hence home to Renfrew.

The delay had caused us to revise the original plan, which had involved Colin being at Ayr, (we needed his brawn, no, nothing to do with Jenson Button) but he had a commitment which tied him into being home for 16:30, and by this time we were not going to be able to make that deadline. So :-

Plan 'B',

Enlist alternative help, Phil Hallam, a name regular readers will recall, happens to live about 15 miles from Ayr, and I had anticipated the delay with the RAC, and had rung Phil just after the breakdown to see if he might be available should we need him. In the event he was and we did.

So, plan 'B' involved returning to Renfrew, collecting John's Astra – which has a tow bar. This was essential in the absence of 'Sammy', and I knew that Robert, the man in Ayr, custodian of old number three this past 7 years or so, had a trailer. So, I had rung him too, to ask if we might borrow it, a request he kindly agreed to. Having set him and his artistic wife Elizabeth the task of creating a numberplate for the back of the trailer while we made our way to join them, we had a workable plan.

The execution of "Plan 'B'"

John made good time covering the 38 miles from Renfrew to Ayr, and while we were disappointed at the pouring rain and high wind, we were delighted to see Phil's car sitting there when we arrived. A cuppy was the order of the day, thank you Elizabeth, while we waited for a gap in the weather, and, in the fullness of time, an opportunity arose. 3 engines, 2 axles, a full set of front suspension and a couple of steering columns and boxes were duly loaded into the trailer, along with 6 spare good condition road wheels (with tyres). By then the rain, which had never been far away, had returned, so Phil and John set off, while Robert and I attended to the paperwork.

Off then into the evening traffic through Ayr and I headed north east for the A77. The first car to pass me on the A77 was a 1966 BMC (I'm not sure if it was a Morris Oxford or an Austin Cambridge) estate car – you don't see many of them, in fact I never did see many estate versions even in their hey-day. My preference, call me a snob if you will, was for the Wolsley 16/60, or even the Riley 4/72), oddly enough, they, like the Rebel, did not have syncromesh on first! The driver gave me a big smile and a wave as he was cruising at about 60, while I was nursing the Rebel along in the low 50's.

My mobile phone rang about 10 miles up the A77, it was John Johnstone, he had just seen me while on his way back to Ayr having unloaded the trailer he decided just to take it straight back. I guess that either proves that he is more observant than I, or that a Rebel is more conspicuous on the road than an Astra....

I made it home without incident. The only things I had not realised was that this Rebel's temperature gauge reads low, lots of hot air from the heater, thankfully, but the gauge hardly off the stop, or should that be the start? And the speedo reads slow, which is a first in my 4 decades or so of motoring, mind you it is only recently that I have enjoyed satellite navigation, otherwise I would only have suspected due to the journey time in relation to the indicated speed. It is not far out, but the other side of the accepted industry norm.

Initial impressions, well, given the weather it is probably not fair to make comment about the noise. Being the prototype as well as the earliest known surviving example there are a few things different from the 7 or 8 Rebels I have owned previously. The left foot (remember that mine does not work as efficiently as it ought) is expected to dip and raise the headlight beam, but the handbrake was the biggest frustration – really awkward to use. Kerry, what is yours like? This one has the lever not on top of the propshaft tunnel directly behind the gear lever, but wedged in between the drivers seat and the side of the propshaft tunnel where there is no room to grip it, just not enough clearance between the side of the tunnel and the lever. I suspect that feature is unique to this vehicle. The horn and indicators are operated by very long dash board mounted stalk switches on either side of the steering wheel – yes, we will take pictures, just be patient!

All in all, certainly not an ordeal, you just have to be wary of drivers almost clipping your front wing as they peer to try and identify the badge on the grill when they pass you!

The only problem was one of location – the original plan had been for the car to end up at Law, where a warm garage awaited, and young Colin was all geared up with his T-Cut and polish to get to work. However, here we were at Renfrew – hmmm....

Colin collected the car the following day, and took it home to Law. He has since polished it thoroughly, and we even drained the coolant and put in fresh antifreeze last Saturday (1/11/09), though I did bump the rather fragile grill with my knee and broke it – and so it goes on...

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REBELLIOUS CONDUCT 19

Terry Horler

You will no doubt be very relieved to learn that this will be a very short report concerning the latest life and times of LRF 671K. (Why would we be relieved Terry? After all, you didn't know that I had included the update on old number three! It is always good to hear from you, and of your life with LRF 671K, Ed.)

Surrounded as we are in Horler Towers by 7 vehicles to choose from, LRF is not so close to the top of the usage tree as it used to be. Even our Peugeot 406 estate has been displaced from the 'Most Often used' only to be knocked into second place by Jan's Smart fortwo. LRF is knocked even further by my Smart roadster, which has become my more regular daily commuter. However, this reduction in my Rebel's usage does mean that I can afford to have it out of daily action for spot of maintenance. Shame is, I don't really have much in the way of maintenance planned for it at the moment. One job that did get done was to replace the clutch master cylinder seal. The Rebel has been losing fluid for quite some time meaning that regular lifting of the carpet and unscrewing of the access plate became a way of life. I had replaced the slave cylinder seal and flexible hose some time ago so I naturally assumed that the master cylinder seal had to be next. I ordered a seal kit from "PAST PARTS", which left me change from £5 but oddly, the kit omitted the non return valve seal which prevents pressurised fluid returning to the reservoir. Despite having to put the Rebel on ramps to gain access, the job could hardly be easier – except when it comes to bleeding the air out. To gain access to the bleed nipple, the starter motor has to be removed, which can only be accomplished after the oil filter has been removed. To remove the starter motor bolts, the brake

master cylinder splash shield has to be removed from behind the front wheel. Hence, I appreciated not having to do all this in one evening in order to use the Rebel for work the following morning.

I am still living with a gearbox that will slide out of third gear on the overrun but with the reduced usage, another gearbox change can wait. With not having to have the Rebel available for the daily commute, I am more tempted to have a play with it in regard to the manifold modifications that are sometimes referred to within these pages. But is it really worth the effort? I have asked this question before, well, several times actually. What needs to be done, why and what benefits are to be had? Surely someone reading this can explain the merits of the magical manifold mods?

I did pop along to a local vintage show at the beginning of September with the Rebel. The only Reliant product attending that day. As always, visitors found the badge, counted the wheels and went away scratching their heads. And that is just about that – I said it was going to be a short one.

Terry Horler from Bristol - No. 755

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Fox

Nice work printing the Tandy stuff. Interesting that No.1 off the production line, according to my records, is in the RKR, belonging to Bruce Emery, unless he has sold it on. I have never been in contact with him, or run across him in the forums or at any rallies. The last one off the line now belongs to Sarah Huntley who bought it from Richard Lavender in Portsmouth this year & I met her at the ROC National, with her partner Steve. Steve has re-produced exhaust systems for the Regal, and I think he's interested in making the Fox system, from a new one I now have acquired!

Duncan (Bradford) Norfolk - No. 46

Letters

Dear Brian,

6th October 2009

I've given some thought to why I run two "Old Crocks", instead of the modern vehicles.

My Reliant Kitten used daily, is the newest car I own, being a mere 36 years old!

The other vehicle, a Bond Equipe 2-Litre, was made in 1970.

Both vehicles have a fibreglass body, which largely eliminates corrosion worries, as long as the chassis is painted and waxoyled.

They were built in the days when virtually all popular vehicles used Champion N9-Y plugs, Lucas M-35G starters, and Lucas ACR Alternators..These parts are still readily available, and cheap. The Bond steering rack-Triumph Vitesse - cost me less than £30 (reconditioned) -Trade- a few years ago. Kitten ones are much dearer!

Also, I can fix anything that goes wrong myself - unlike the modern electronic marvels. They have virtually no depreciation, and are fun to drive. I love them both!

On another topic, I asked a wise old garage proprietor why, even in the 60's there were such a multitude of fanbelts for the different makes when often the difference between most was less than an inch in length. Surely, I said, about six standard lengths would fit most requirements? He smiled, and pointed to his

spares rack containing well over 30 belts and said "They've sold them to me, even if I don't sell them". It's the same now with sparkplugs, Is this progress?

I enclose a short article on cylinderhead removal and a couple of other tips.

Ron Dark from Bideford - No. 101

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Hi Brian,

9/10/2009

You mentioned "If it ain't broke don't fix it" with regard to a change to cover layout. The old saying is as true as it ever was - but of course a snag is that you may think something looks fine and not recognise that actually it is broke. On the other hand, you can make a change under the mistaken impression that something is broke when 'taint. In that case you need a large publicity machine like the government has, to convince people that it was broken, even although it is clear to them that it was O.K. in the first place. I think you made a good decision - if only because you updated it to give an email address. Next job is to modernise and streamline that logo.

Regards Roger (Brown) No. 715 - Shropshire

Thank you Roger, I accept that the crown probably ought to be the Tamworth Castle turrets, but I was too lazy at the time to see if there were any copyright issues, and the wording, while just me – does reflect the situation pretty accurately – come on people – help me out here – what do you think, time for another logo design to go with our up-dated covers or what?

I'll need to dig into the archives now, I can't remember when, or indeed who designed the logo for us. I do remember it was actually drawn, not computer designed, and I remember that the winner was treated to a year's free subscription, but can I remember who or when? Answers on a postcard please, or e-mail me via the website if you prefer.

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Dear Brian,

10th October 2009

Thank you for the latest edition of the Mewsletter, some interesting items as usual. Duncan Bradford's article 'More Bang Less Bucks' caught my eye as I had carried out the exhaust and manifold mods on my Rebel (WPC 92G). My experience with the exhaust modification was gathered on long runs around Ireland and touring in the UK. The modification certainly improved the liveliness and fuel consumption, I used to get overall 57mpg on all these runs very consistently, when driving between 55 - 60mph. I still retained the original 701cc engine, carburetor and distributor but used an electric fan.

I later carried out the inlet manifold modification, in time for the 2008 Jogle run. I found little improvement in liveliness and must admit to being a little disappointed. Overall consumption was a disappointing 52mpg on the Jogle run although I have to say that the weather was mainly dreadful and the car was much more heavily laden than on previous runs. In addition more short journeys were made during this run so this may not be too surprising. I had obtained a 32mm Dellorto carburetor with the intention of using its better breathing to give a further boost to the cars performance and use an electric fuel pump but the move to Cyprus put a stop to that.

The Rebel has been passed on to Stuart Hale in Yorkshire who collected it in June this year and drove it home from Kent in the most awful weather but encountered no problems with the car on the way. Stuart tells me that he is going to continue with the plan to use the Dellorto carburetor but not substitute an electric fuel pump for the original mechanical pump at this time.

I do feel privileged to have had the ownership of such a reliable, roomy and pleasant driving car since 1991. The fact that it made every journey asked of it with little trouble and low cost speaks for itself. Although throughout my ownership WPC 92G was continuously improved it was still much the same as when new.

I was recently in Turkey where I had the pleasure of looking over an Anadol, it was the only one I saw despite them being made in Turkey from a Reliant design. I have to say it looked very smart, obviously having been well looked after.

I have heard that some Reliants were exported to Cyprus although I have yet to meet anyone who has heard of one here, has anyone any information on this and what models they might have been?

All the best to one and all.

Fred Heath No.177 - Cyprus

Fred, great to hear from you again, good too to know that the mail gets through to far flung corners of the world. Tell Gloria I was asking for her, I do miss you both at the R.O.C. national committee meetings. Ed

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Dear Brian,

14th October 2009

I've been out of touch for a while, but have at last completed my Liege. This now means that I have various Kitten parts that are surplus to requirements, including a chassis in good condition and various body panels, i.e. doors bonnet etc.

If any of your readers are interested I am open to realistic offers on 01547 253066 or at tonyclapham@hotmail.co.uk

Hope you are keeping well,

Yours, Tony (Clapham) Exeter No. 653 (L)

Tony, firstly congratulation on completing the Liege build, secondly thanks for keeping in touch, and thirdly thanks for your good wishes. Ed.

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THIS IS OUR MAGAZINE

(Use it or Lose it)

I realise that I have not been with the Kitten Register for very long but I do like the Magazine, and probably you are tired of seeing my name in each edition lately.

I also realise just how hard it is to compile a Magazine as I used to edit one at a previous Club in Cornwall, we had exactly the same problems as the majority of club Editors – VERY LITTLE IMPUT FROM THE MEMBERS.

When one joins a Club nine times out of ten there is a Magazine involved - once again as in most Clubs too many members sit back after they have paid their membership and wait for that magazine to drop on their mats every month, quarter or annually.

I know of a few clubs who take your cash and do NOTHING ELSE for their members - I could name a couple in this area.

Editors all over the country know that there are members with interesting hobbies other than their club topic - and perhaps those hobbies would be of interest to others and sometimes to discuss their hobbies in a magazine then they might acquire items that they have been looking for a long time.

You might not be able to put your words down expertly but I am sure there are many ways around that situation.

Why not give Brian a call and see what he thinks of your ideas – I bet he could make an article out of something which you think is of little use.

Please consider yourselves lucky that you receive a Magazine and that you are able to get advertising for your spares and sales FREE. If you advertise in the local paper or even on ebay your have to pay for that advert.

So please show your appreciation to Brian, send him an article, phone him with ideas, or email him. He puts in a lot of hours to give you something to show for your membership, now's the time to repay the favour.

You could make it your New Years resolution –

Why don't I start the ball rolling with the subject of Mamod and Wilesco Models?

When I first knew my husband Ian I owned a couple of Mamod models, one was a steam lorry and the other was a steam roller. I did not want to keep them as I was collecting Fairground Carousel working models.

I decided to sell the steam lorry and then Ian said that he had always wanted a Mamod model – so I gave him the roller. At the time I did not realise that I was creating a “monster”. We now go to car boot sales, flea markets, auctions and toy fairs to see if we can find a model that he does not already have. This has taken us to lots of places that neither of us has visited before, so it makes retired life a lot more interesting, also Ian has a hobby that he is proud of – he is now mounting them on boards so that they can be easily transported to be shown as working models at fetes and vintage rallies, thus giving lots of other people pleasure.



I also collect tinsplate toys as well as the Fairground carousels, from the very small old penny toys to the much larger models.

The assortment is amazing and the way that they are constructed and work is fascinating.

I love it when we have company and they look in the cabinets at the collection, they always come out with the same remark "I remember playing with one of those, is it possible to have a closer look or even see it working please?"

As they watch them work the look on their faces says it all – they are transported back to their childhood –MAGIC!!!

So come on let's hear your bit of interest and magic as I said at the start USE IT OR LOSE IT- the ball is in your court.

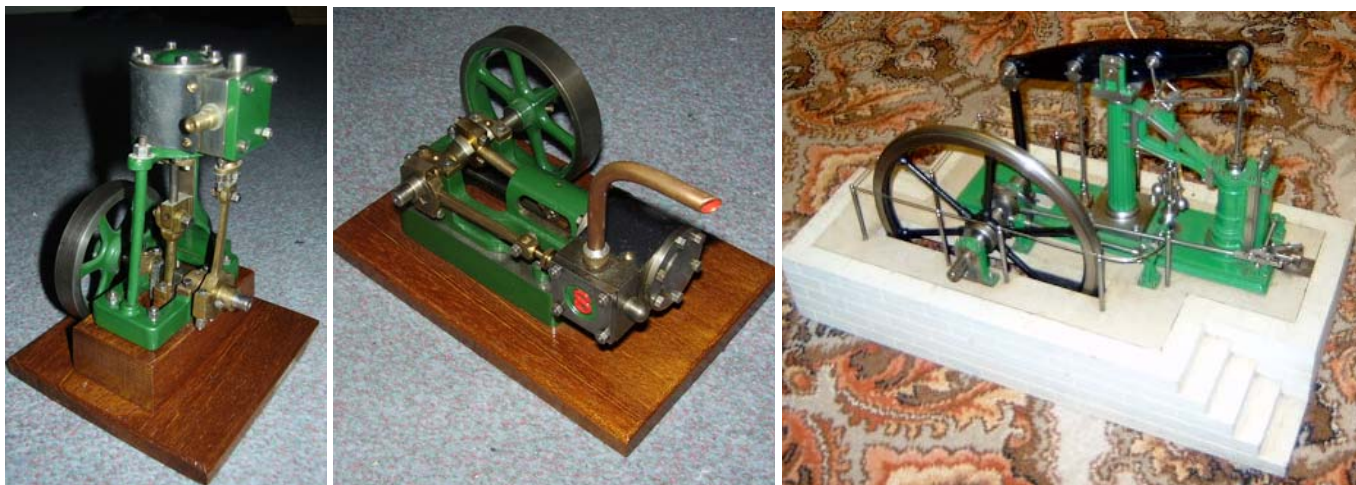
Lyn Rodden - Preston No. 860

Now I know you will find it hard to believe, but Lyn wrote that article with no prompting – other than my comments in the magazine – from me!

She did say in a covering note that I should edit it as I saw fit, but I really am not the type of dictator who makes changes all the time, just for the sake of or, or to every article I receive!

Thank you Lyn, Ed.

Oh, just to balance the external combustion side of things :-



Old Tales from Tore

HINGE AND BRACKET - comedy duo, remember them?

Many Reliant owners must have had this experience. I stopped Kitty in a windswept car park and told my passenger not to open the door, I would get it, as the wind was gusting from astern. She took no notice and opened the door, which was caught by the wind, tore out of her grasp, and took off quickly. There was a 'rip' as the fabric check strap broke then a 'crunch' as the hinges took the shock. Inspection showed that the bottom hinge had partly pulled out of the door..... Drat! With careful use I was able to keep driving the car with myself opening and closing it. Putting off the inevitable as usual. As may be expected one day the hinge pulled fully out of the door and the top hinge fixing was also in a poor state. What now?

Luckily I have another car for spares and although its passenger door had experienced hinge trouble, a workmanlike repair had been carried out. So it seemed a swap of doors would be the best plan, rather than try to patch up the damaged door.

I have read in previous Mewsletters that changing doors is not a pleasant job, the writers were correct. But it had to be done, and here is how I did it, no doubt more practical readers will know of the pitfalls and can smile? If you know of a better way, please enlighten us all!

As an aside, please keep the door hinges well oiled. Stiff hinges are another common cause of hinges pulling out of doors and so easily avoided. There is an oil hole halfway down the shroud to the pivot pin which can be seen with the door open. Oil frequently! You have been warned.....

As usual on an old car I found snags, but I will detail my method in case any of you have not done this task before, it just may help somebody. I'll number the steps to remind me of them, if it's good enough for a major motoring publisher.....

1 Carefully open the door and support it, axle stands were used.

2 Remove the passenger seat, four 5/16" UNF screws with 1/2" AF heads. This eases access to and through the side panel in front of the door. I've had the seat out and in several times over 5 years of owning the car and well copper greased the bolts after each fitting so they at least were dealt with easily.

3 Remove the GRP inspection panel, on the side wall to the front of the door, it is fixed with several self tapping screws. The side wall carpet, if any, has to come off first.

3A To ease removal of the hinges from the body you may like to pull the door seal off the frame near the door hinges. Not essential but it does aid the exit of the door hinge pocket from the body.

4 Give a good squirt of WD40 from inside the inspection panel and onto the ends of the hinge securing screws. Pack up and leave overnight for the fluid to hopefully help free the threads.

5 Support the door in the open position and start removing the screws holding the hinge to the body. Three hex heads are easily visible on each hinge, but DON'T FORGET that there is a 4th screw on each hinge, which is located right at the back of the pocket into which the hinge folds when the door is shut. The three screws were 1/4" UNF, which a 7/16" socket fits. Snag was they were rusty and the usual 12 point socket could not grip them. Luckily I have an 'El Cheapo' socket set which has some 1/4" drive sockets with hexagon recesses and one did the job. These 1/4" hex head screws (yes they are screws, hexagon head setscrews to be precise, which have a thread right up to the head) fit into captive nuts. Well they are captive up to a point, being welded onto a bit of sheet metal. Once the screws are all removed, the nuts plus plate fall down and onto the ground. Recover them and keep safely! Of course the topmost screw got the never ending screws and I had to cut the head off with a floppy hacksaw blade in a holder, for once it didn't break, and then grind the stump off. There's always at least one stubborn screw on every job. More often many, I fear!

The 4th screw, in the pocket, is a pain. Its nut and washers fit onto a reinforcing angle and are difficult to access from the hole in the side wall but it can be done, in time. I lost the spanner several times while cursing it.

6 Once all the fasteners were removed I carefully removed the door. It is heavier than might be imagined, so be prepared for that. The bottom hinge declared UDI and fell onto the ground.....

7 Now I had to repeat the process with the replacement door on the other car.

8 It is a fact that our cars are hand built and no two bodies seem to be exactly the same. So when fitting another door, shims were needed between hinges and body. After looking round I found the shims that had

been fitted to both cars. 'Just in case' I made up from sheet steel another 6 shims with 2 holes and 6 with 3 holes. I'm glad I did!

9 The spare door hinges were cleaned up.

10 The threaded holes in the wee plates were a bit rusty so I ran a 1/4" UNF tap down all of them to make inserting the screws easier.

10 The wee plates with welded on nuts are difficult to keep in place when reassembling. In fact nigh impossible! After some thought I bought from Woolworths (can't go there again!) a roll of 'No More Nails tape' which can be used for holding items to bases without using screws etc. It's a double sided tape. Having de-rusted the plates and degreased with meths, I cut a piece of tape and applied it. It sticks quite well but ONLY if the steel is clean! Then with a craft knife I carefully cut a square hole at the position of the screw(s), removed the square of backing from over the screw hole and cut a square through the adhesive, which is quite thick.

At this point I must point out that some folk tack weld a length of welding rod to each of the plates and use the rod as a long handle to position the plates. But I do not have a welder.

Having thoroughly cleaned the inside face of the body onto which the plates sit, I peeled the red backing off the tape and applied each plate firmly in position. They did not all stick on first time..... I had to peel the tape off a couple, clean them up, and try again.

11 Fitting a door by myself was a pest. If you can get an assistant to help it would be a boon. The weight of the door means that when the hinge pockets go into the holes on the body they scrape along the base of the hole. This was not too much of a snag for 3 of the plates, but the 4th kept falling off and I had to keep removing the door to refit it. What now? A piece of thin steel wire was inserted through the tiny central hole in the plate and bent over to the top of the plate and the GRP aperture and down so the plate was wedged in place. Refitted the door again....

12 Once the door was roughly in place and supported, I started inserting the 3 visible screws on each hinge. The old screws were past their best and so I used new ones from stock. 1/4" UNF x 1" long were used but 1 1/4" long would be better, it allows more thread when shimming. I strongly recommend new screws to ease assembly, the job is enough of a pain without dud screws popping the plates off and having to start again time after time! Namrick (tel. 01273 779864) are my usual source but no doubt others exist. I can't get UNF fasteners locally now. It was tricky to fit the screws to the plate held by wire, but with a screwdriver and bits of wire to pull it into its proper place and a torch to aid vision, eventually (!) the screws went in and were tightened lightly.

13 Now I could get some idea if the door needed shimming. Careful and gentle part closing it showed that it fouled the back of the front wing by quite a bit. After adding shims one at a time behind top & bottom of each hinge, I eventually ended up with 4 shims at each point to make a fair job and tightened the screws moderately, they are quite wee.

I recall once speaking to Phil Hallam by phone just after he had fitted a Reliant door and the number of shims he used was surprising to both of us..... Now I know why.

14 Bet you all thought I had forgotten the 'hidden' bolt at the bottom of the door pocket? Not this time! This bolt is 5/16" UNF x 1" long and is essential for bracing the door hinges in place. I recall learning this from an earlier Mewsletter. I think it was Graeme Shaw who enlightened us all. I checked if shims were needed between the back of the hinge pocket and the angle, all seemed well so I tightened the nuts. It seemed a good idea to have a plain washer under the screw head, and first a plain then spring lock washer under the hex nut.

15 Gently shutting the door proved it was reasonably in line, but the door catch did not work! So I needed to remove the working item from the broken door and fit it. Of course the countersunk screws were stuck,

so squirt with the WD40 again, and leave it overnight. Might work?

16 Tried to remove the lock securing screws on the 'new' door, they were stuck fast, and all I achieved was to round off the Philips heads. So I used a 1/4" drill bit and my cordless drill to drill off the heads. The backing plate fell into the bottom of the door of course. During my efforts to retrieve it I found a few screws and an exhaust clamp. Never found one of those in the bottom of a door before! The lock mechanism was very rusty and could not be freed easily so I left it soaking in WD40 in case it could be salvaged. Throw nothing away!, look in my shed.....

17 The door lock from the broken door was easily removed. I had had it off a couple of years back and had well greased the fixing screw threads on reassembly. It paid! I cleaned up the screws and ran a die down them as a precaution. Again I had to 'fish' for the retaining plate which this time was OK. The rain started again.....

18 Refitting the door lock is fiddly. The pull rods seem to need to be first fitted to the lock and have to be carefully threaded through the door frame and the lever on the back of the lock had to be wriggled through the hole. Then I had to position the backing plate and insert the screws, could have done with three hands, not for the first time.... To avoid losing the backing plate again. I tied a bit of string through one of the holes on the backing plate and threaded it through the corresponding hole in the hole while trying to fasten all together. A screwdriver helped to line up the holes in lock, door and plate, just as in fitting new front suspension units. I adjusted the pull rod lengths by simply pulling them out of place and screwing in or out of the nuts at the lock end then re-attaching. At last the door fastened, and locked successfully.

19 After discovering the lock problem I fully expected the window winder to be stuck too, but luckily it worked fine, if a bit stiffly. I can live with that. So I greased the runner on the glass channel and lubricated the pivots and spring.

20 Before fitting the interior door trim MAKE SURE THAT THE PLASTIC SHEET IS PRESENT ACROSS THE DOOR OPENING UNDER THE TRIM or you will have yet another water leak to puzzle you. A supermarket plastic bag, with handles removed and slit along two sides should be big enough; I used the largest size of LIDL bag as I had one handy. After I had cut a hole for the door handle housing rectangle and one for the window winder, I taped the plastic sheet in place. MAKE SURE THE LOWER EDGE OF THE PLASTIC IS TUCKED INSIDE THE DOOR. This diverts water leaking past the window seals into the bottom of the door and out through the drain holes. I checked they were clear with a screwdriver. I have never yet heard of a Reliant on which the window seals are watertight, on many cars they hardly touch the glass! Luckily it doesn't matter as long as the plastic sheet does its job. My thanks to Phil Hallam for pointing this out many Mewsletters ago.

20 Then I replaced the interior trim panel. The 'new' door has the elastic door pockets, not the handy and larger moulded ones. As the interior trim panel is a bit soggy and tatty I intend to replace it with the other (plastic) type when time & weather permit. Then I refitted the window winder.

21 The side wall access panel was replaced with new self tappers and the wall carpet refitted. I took the opportunity to grease the seat runners too before refitting the seat with plenty of copper grease on the securing bolts.

21 Having refitted the window winder, finally I gave the door a good clean up to remove all the bits of moss, lichen etc. The air here must be clean for them to grow so well?

22 Did I say finally? Hmm. Of course I then had to clear up all the bits and pieces left over, putting the rubbish (not much) in the bin and the 'useful junk' (rather more!) in the shed. I wonder if I can manage to build another shed for extra storage? Can't be too difficult? My problem is carrying 8 foot by 4 foot timber sheets; they sure won't fit into a Kitten! Long battens Kitty can manage, up to 8 feet or 2.4 m, long. I've done that a few times.

Conclusion :-

I'm glad that's done! I have only changed a door once before and that was on a Morris Minor a good while ago. I didn't enjoy that job either. I will try to avoid a repeat of this situation by watching that wind! And I will continue to keep the hinges well oiled. The main enemies in this job were Old Man Rust, on bolts, awkward assembly of hinge bolt plates, and of course wet weather, as I don't have a garage. If I had not had a spare car door I would have needed to attempt a GRP repair, which would have been interesting to say the least? I know others have succeeded. Oh and 'just in case', I have fitted TWO door check straps of a doubled stout webbing material, as a belt & braces precaution.

My grateful thanks go to all who have written words of wisdom on this subject in previous Mewsletters and to our indefatigable Editor for compiling so many Issues. The info was most helpful.

Now which of the 'pending' jobs should I tackle next? #157

Dick, good to hear from you again, I'm delighted that you found the file – Dick has long been promising me that article, but it was 'somewhere safe'!

Oddly enough I had Mr. Anderson – the current custodian of the "White ghost" – on the 'phone the other day, he had just received his copy of mag 90, but had never had number 89! The Kitten was going for an MOT this week, late October. Ed.

Oh, Dick tells me that he only forwarded the article in the last edition that I gave him credit for – I will need to be more careful in future.

Dick, Moira overheard our conversation on the telephone yesterday – 10/11/09, and took me to task for not being more specific about Frank Haynes' greeting to you in his letter. What he actually said was "I hope all is well & give my regards to the revered technical editor from Tore" My apologies for any omission – Oh, and good to hear from you again Frank (from Chile in South America – with 2 Kittens)

Technical Talk

Head Removal and other Tips : by Ron Dark October 2009

(1) To remove a reluctant head: Obtain a fairly substantial bar of steel, around 1 1/2" wide, and at least 1/4" thick. Drill holes to enable the plate to slide easily up and down the rocker shaft studs. Remove the rocker shaft, place the plate on the studs, and, using washers, build up the washers till there is just enough room to screw a nut on the studs. Tighten the nuts evenly, and the plate will push down on the head studs, and break the seal. This method does not exert pressure centrally, but once the seal is broken, it is usually easy, by carefully tapping with a hide hammer, etc, to move the head up the studs. I have used this method also to remove the head on my 6-cylinder Vitesse-based Bond Equipe, which I have owned from new, and it has never failed. The following pictures I think will make it clear.





(2) An easy way to cut rubber fuel and heater hose cleanly is to use a sharp pair of Garden Secateurs... Much safer than a knife.

(3) If you use one of the classic Wanner or similar grease guns, and you need a flexible hose to get into an awkward position, there is no need to spend a fortune. Just get one of your old discarded, non-metric brake hoses from the Kitten, and it will work perfectly.

(4) A pair of old brake shoes make an effective wheel chock..

Happy head removing, Ron Dark - Bideford No. 101

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Lucas Dizis:-A postscript.

With many thanks to Duncan Bradford's fine attention to detail and research, I hope he will tolerate my postscript. Starting at the end (pun intended) Duncan mentions the good old Lucas coil having poor connections on the LT side and removing the nuts to the terminals and cleaning everything up. I had a poor starter for many years especially when cold, and we all know how the Reliant does not like a 'soggy' battery. Then one evening I was doing some testing in the dark-setting tickover/mixture etc I just happened to notice some St Elmo's fire in the direction of the coil, I gave the LT wires a poke and the engine stopped! Now in my case the terminals were riveted on. So how to repair them? With the coil on the bench, clean with a fine wire brush all around the brass terminal and rivet. Then carefully hammer the rivet down tighter with a small punch, check it is shiny clean, then solder over the rivet head to terminal. By the way after 268,000 miles and most parts being replaced apart from above repair the original coil was still in good working order!

Further to Duncan's last piece the list of 1-2a-d is one of the most crucial of things to do to these engines. From time to time owners have come to me asking what 'bolt on goodies' they can fit, and of course in effect there aren't any, but a lot can be achieved by attention to that list, and none of it should cost you a bean! As most of it is just removal of bad casting alignments and attention to normal maintenance items.

I must add another area that Duncan overlooks, carburettor. There are three modifications you must do, heat insulation washer twixt carb and swan-neck. A 3/8 flare to carb. inlet from airbox and at the same time (a bit radical) remove the lifting pin and drill out the hole to full size (about 1/4) and then cancel the hole that goes through to the air box. This transforms the sparkle and pick up very well. There is further modifications that can be made to the butterfly and shaft-even more radical-that I can explain for you, either call me or I can detail in these pages. I probably did already but some time ago.

Now Duncan's 2d mod-modified inlet manifold-removing of party walls, this can improve things as standard there is a modest mixture unbalance 1 and 4 inlet tracks are 50% longer than 2 and 3 hence 1-4 run weaker. Balancing the mixture must improve things, but there is a lot of hype over this mod. See my item Disappointment recently in these pages. Certainly there are some improvements to be made to the inlet manifold, including the area where the swan-neck bolts on and the mixture is asked to drop down and go around a right angle. You might notice my advert Resin Rockets that offers to do this, but I am very happy to tell you how to do it.

Now going back further in Duncan's articles, vacuum advance in article 2 says that 'when the engine is under light load it sucks hard on the vac unit' correct BUT 'and harder still at speed' Now at first I was going to disagree with Duncan, but then I can see the interpretation is in the wording ie if the wording isn't very clear then interpretation becomes cloudy. The vacuum advance doesn't quite do that, you will only get vacuum when the throttle is light, speed is a secondary result. If you are uphill at 50MPH then you will have a large throttle opening and very little vac. very little advance (if any). If then downhill at the same speed you will have very little throttle-loads of vacuum, some advance will appear.

Going back to my earlier days of 'racing' around West London in the Reliant we decided that as 90% of the time the throttle was 'on the floor' then Vacuum advance wasn't happening hence we removed any unnecessary mechanisms. I have run this for many years. But I will now admit to not having had much in the way of economy, always struggling to get up to 50MPG, but then I was always going everywhere 'in the fast lane' Now that I am blessed with the quieter lanes of Norfolk and have become more responsible I am driving steadier, so I suppose a return to vacuum advance might be a worthwhile experiment. I do have a vacuum gauge these days and the present game is trying to get best speed with maximum vac. Hence least petrol, but the results are not too much worth shouting about yet.

Now the advance mechanism, with its two dissimilar springs to give a double rate curve. Yes I too had the modest pinking at mid range acceleration that Duncan mentions, just where the advance curve is a bit too sharp. In my case I went the whole hog and removed the knee in the advance curve altogether. I managed to find two springs the same, somewhere between the strong and the weak one. I did cure the mid range pinking and was reasonably pleased with the acceleration, BUT I still wonder if there was lots more urge to come by getting it right on a rolling road. I would love to spend several days on such a thing, there are many carb mods I have tried over the years, and ignition systems, advance curves etc., what is the best? I have had some reasonable results, I have had some failures, and eventually found where I went wrong. All good fun.

Alan Osborn. Norfolk - No. 295

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Dear Brian,

7/10/2009

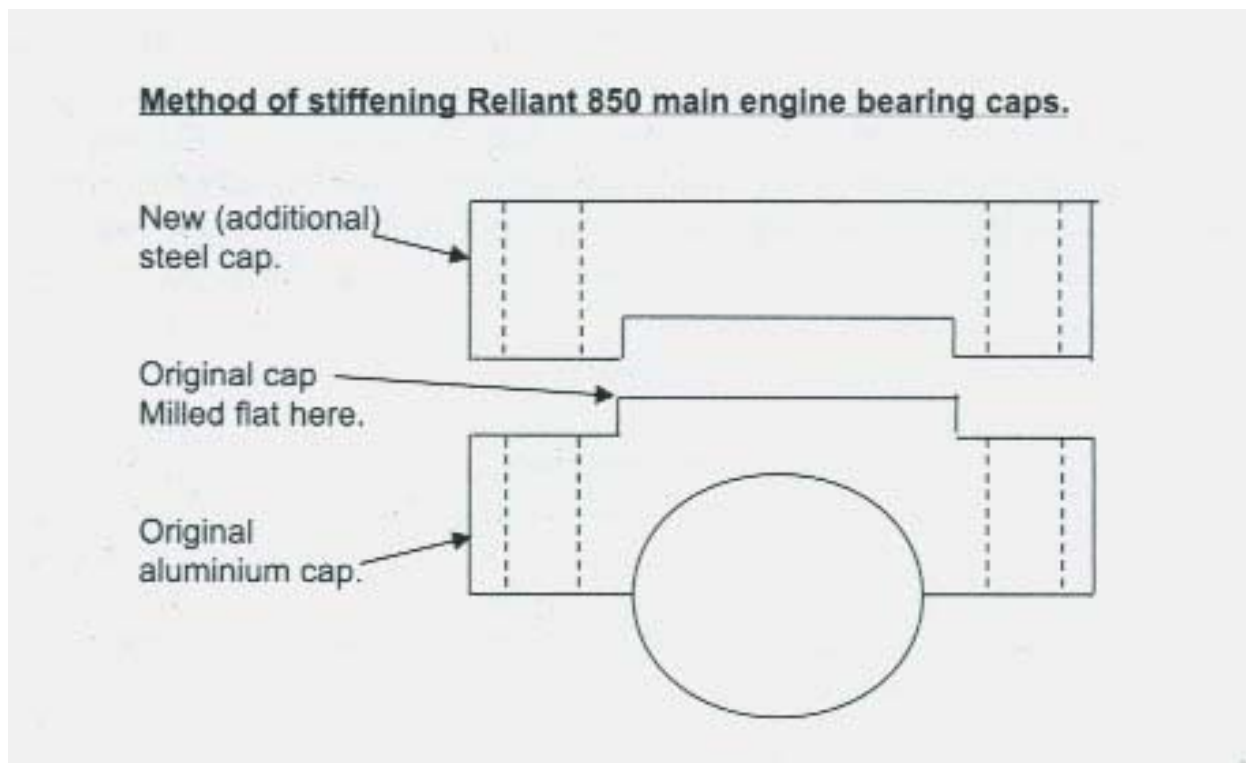
I have been in contact with Alan Osborn, who asked me what modifications I have done to my Rebel. My answer was as follows:-

In reply to your modification question, I am generally in favour of keeping things original, unless they affect reliability, so I have made very few. The 850 engine has an S.U. carburettor and I made a ninety degree bell-crank and a new rod, so that the Rebel's rod system would operate the carburettor's throttle lever. I designed and made a bracket to attach the exhaust downpipe to one of the bell housing studs, to prevent vibration from cracking the downpipe - I sent that drawing to Brian. I made a stainless steel anti-rotation plate for the rear door of the later estate car, to stop the escutcheon plate from rotating. I added an overflow catchment and fluid return bottle for the radiator. The front rail of the parcel shelf has been attached to the side supports. All three cars have stainless steel exhausts and that is about all (unless I have forgotten about other modifications).

I am thinking about stiffening the three main bearings in the engine and changing the axle ratio by milling the back of the aluminium main bearing caps flat, then adding steel bridges to the caps and refitting both to the engine block, using longer studs.

I am also thinking of reducing the axle ratio. I have obtained a later Reliant axle, with the same ratio as an 850 Ford Fiesta, but this axle is longer than the Rebel unit and has a different differential casing, so I doubt if I could change the crownwheel and pinion over (but I haven't dismantled it to investigate).

Regards, Adrian.



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Dear Brian,

26/10/09

A couple of thoughts for the Mewsletter.

To #157: There are 2 flasher units on both Kitten and Fox. These can be either 9FL, 6FL and 7FL, whatever, you will need a 2*21w + 5w for the indicators, and a 4*21w + 5w for the hazards. Lucas aren't perfect, but are better than the currently available rectangular units that don't really fit the clips, and in any case fall apart!

If anyone knows where Lucas ones are currently available, please let me know! (01743 884583 is the number to do that on, or for those so equipped :- andrew@acnorman.co.uk)

On the subject of modern replacement components, I had trouble with the Fox missing the odd beat and not responding as it should up hills. I replaced the condenser, then the points, and then cleaned the plugs. Then cleaned the carb (this over a period of weeks, becoming months, with less use due to the reliability concerns). Then I replaced the rotor arm, and, at Duncan's suggestion, the ignition switch (the back he said comes loose, and indeed it was loose) still however, no improvement!

Eventually, after carefully going over things again, I found that the condenser tag was not crimped properly onto the wire. So I changed the condenser again... All fine! Hurrah! So that's dodgy flasher units, condensers and rotor arms with loose rivets too. All of these being new items!

Best regards, Andrew (Norman) Shrewsbury - No. 291

Andrew, congratulations on your perseverance, I am delighted that you had the determination to keep on and finally get to the bottom of what must have been a very frustrating time. Thank you also for taking the time to share the story with us. Ed.

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I just couldn't resist this little nugget from the net...

A Letter of Recommendation

1 Trevor Adams, my assistant programmer, can always be found
2 hard at work in his cubicle. Trevor works independently, without
3 wasting company time talking to colleagues. Trevor never
4 thinks twice about assisting fellow employees, and he always
5 finishes given assignments on time. Often he takes extended
6 measures to complete his work, sometimes skipping coffee
7 breaks. Trevor is a dedicated individual who has absolutely no
8 vanity in spite of his high accomplishments and profound
9 knowledge in his field. I firmly believe that Trevor can be
10 classed as a high-calibre employee, the type that cannot be
11 dispensed with. Consequently, I truly recommend that Trevor be
12 promoted to executive management, and a proposal will be
13 executed as soon as possible.

P.S. The idiot was standing over my shoulder while I wrote this report. Kindly re-read only the odd numbered lines.

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Inlet manifold mods.

Some thoughts, by Brian Marshall Autumn 2009

I have been meaning to put in my tuppence worth for a while, and now seems as good a time as any.

I was surprised, though different opinions and experiences are usually beneficial, and I would not like to be surrounded by 'yes men' in any endeavour, but surprised nonetheless by Alan Osborn's quick dismissal of the benefits others have experienced of the "inlet manifold mod". Now I could not swear to it in court, the number of people I mean, who have found such a modification of benefit in a number of ways, but!

Just what is the "inlet manifold mod"? The technical details of what we are, I hope, all talking about here, is a means, achieved by removing material, of allowing the fuel / air mixture to migrate between (some might say balance out between) the normally self contained paths between the carburettor and cylinders 1 & 2 and 3 & 4.

Memory again raises possible doubts, but I seem to recall that it was when, having fitted a 4 branch exhaust manifold, that different colours appearing on the 4 different pipes (on the same engine, different cylinders) caused questions to be asked about the uniformity of the mixture being received in each cylinder, and I believe that using one version of the “inlet manifold mod” caused things to become constant across the cylinders in that regard.

To my knowledge there are three ways of doing it (no doubt any engineer will be able to tell us of many more) but for the purposes of this article I am dealing with three.

The first, and possibly oldest, possibly from the 750 racer days? to try and give credit / lay blame in the appropriate area (my memory is far from perfect), is to drill a small hole in the wall of the aluminium between the relevant chambers – a picture or sketch in here would be good! Just how one does that, and if it matters if the hole is drilled parallel to the face of the manifold / head (and if so how do you achieve that?) or at an angle, and if so does it matter which way? Or indeed what angle?

Secondly, more ruthless, but faster if you are doing a few, as Phil Hallam kindly did for me some years back, set up a milling machine, and gouge a huge groove between the two pairs of neat round holes, roughly an inch deep if I recall - again a picture or drawing would be helpful, but the result was a very sharp angled (90 degrees) trench dug out between each of the two pairs of round holes

Thirdly, much more time consuming, but in my mind neater (and though I know nothing about such things I could easily believe that gas flow engineers would approve), carefully gently and smoothly remove some of the wall in a rounded / curved way using a hand held dremmell or similar tool, or even a small grind wheel (are those tell tale notches on the right hand side of the original round port?) blending the two into one. (While holding the manifold firmly in a vice I assume!) This is what I think Duncan Bradford did, and somewhere I do have a picture, thank you Duncan.



Neatly 'blended' version.



Milled version

Now, what I would really like to know is; what difference is there, if any, between these three methods? Is one more efficient than another? Which one is “best” and when I say best, just what does that mean? Best for power? Best for economy? Best for torque? I suspect, no, not suspect, believe, that if you improve the power output, and or the torque, but do not make use of the extra power, that you would find an economy benefit.

Human nature being what it is however, I doubt that many could resist using the extra power!

The problem in answering that question, this side of having an engine on a test rig, and doing a series of tests on it with each of the manifolds fitted, in turn, and a standard one for comparison purposes, is that most people who are doing such mods are always looking to improve things, and while they might only change one thing at a time, it will not be long before they then change something else. Given that fuel

consumption varies with the weather, and is always measurably better in summer than winter, a controlled environment is essential for test purposes if an accurate assessment is to be made. Now I think I am right in saying that Alan's concern / frustration was that there was no change in top speed after fitting a modified inlet manifold. And by his own admission he did not run a test for long enough to make fuel consumption comparisons.

I cannot recall, nor I guess did I document it at the time, exactly how I found it on my Kitten a decade or so back, but I felt it helped. I believe that Fred Heath found it a small benefit on his Rebel, you too John Blagburn and John Pearce too. But which way were they done, and how much benefit?

Does it matter? Who cares? Perhaps more to the point who is prepared to do anything scientific to prove it either way (is either the right adjective when we are looking at comparing 4 different versions anyway?).

All these questions – do you have any answers? I have a bit, the front bit, of a Kitten Chassis here in Renfrew, (All cleaned and painted white no less!) I also have a complete Rebel estate chassis at Sheriffmuir near Stirling. (Shotblasted and painted before storage) Either of which could be adapted into an engine test bed. It has been a while since I wandered off into song titles, but Dreaming, or Dream, dream dream dream, spring to mind right now!

So, more questions than answers, we really could all burst into song right now!

I'll make a serious effort to contact Hans of Rebels Racing fame who I think was one of the first to notice the different discolouration of the various pipes on a multibranch stainless exhaust manifold on an 850 engine which raised questions about uniform mixture being admitted to all cylinders, and see if he can shed any light on this for us.

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Federation News

FBHVC AGM October 2009

Once again the AGM at Paulerspury went off with smooth aplomb. The finances saw a 10% increase over 2008. The profit for the year was nearly £6K being slightly down on last year, it could be said as due to reduced interest at the bank! But I think the term steady as you go would be about right.

There has been good support from the clubs lately. Their membership now totalling some 350 000 persons. But more trade supporters are still sought. You get two years membership and the use of the Federation logo as well as several other perks, including a free first call on a solicitor with regard to Vehicle/trade related problems. If you or anyone might be interested then please ask for details from :- admin@fbhvc.co.uk

The recent government scrapage scheme did cause them some concern but when it is examined any Historic vehicle would be worth more than the Government £2K towards a new car. Bearing in mind that the scheme is of limited duration and not compulsory.

Recent concerns regarding old type paints was voiced but apparently some workable conclusion have been obtained, the details will be in the small print for those who need to know and/or are in the trade for such things.

Now hands up those of you who remember what "Drive it Day" is and when! It is Sunday 25th April next year, and it is when anyone with an older vehicle is encouraged to get it out and drive it! I.e. join in on the road with others and raise a smile.

After lunch we had a conference style couple hours when some of the Federations concerns were discussed. One worry of the moment is the shortage of trade skills for the older machine, do we know who can do white metaling? Who has the skill to make body panels for pre-war cars? These skills are becoming rarer and the shortage needs addressing. One major thought is that there needs to be some sort of qualification for the restoration industry. The 16-24 age person needs to be encouraged by having a qualification to work for before these skills are lost. The idea of even a college for them seems quite adventurous but could be very worthwhile, after all steam locomotive technology is being kept alive so the motor industry must also be catered for. Some of us might be 'all right Jack' but as interested vehicle users, there will come a time when the shortage of a part will be very frustrating, or even terminal, for the vehicle. So perhaps we need to take care of the future of our older vehicles before it is too late. While concerning ourselves with these older trades, it might be worth mentioning another area of concern whereby replacement parts are of indeterminate quality. Just because they come in say a Lucas box doesn't mean that the part is as per the original specification, as we all know that any Lucas part now is often made abroad with indifferent care/concern. A prime area of casualness exists in the after-market restoration electrical part for motorcycles as a case in point, bullet connectors on indicators and rear lights where no socket exists, 1/4" holes that are 6mm, and wire colours on British motorcycle parts that bear no relationship to any British bike wiring colour scheme! There are many more the longer we put up with these shoddy parts the longer they will be produced. (personal comment from the author).

Don't forget the FBHVC clubs list is on www.fbhvc.co.uk Our past needs to be saved for the future.

Al Osborn - Norfolk - No. 295

Thanks for going along Alan, by the way I don't need to see your name in the minutes to know you have been there! (Alan had asked a question about the accounts, which, had I sent him last years in time, he might not have needed to ask, I'll try and be better organised next time Alan).

Alan made a 2 day trip of it this year, rather like I do when attending meetings a long way from home, much more relaxing I'm sure you will agree Alan. Ed.



Alan Osborn's 'new' car

A workout for your mind....

I remember a time when we had a Christmas Quiz, the winner of which got a year's free subscription and provided the quiz for the following year, what happened to that idea? Anyway, here are 5 questions that might tax your grey matter, answers in the epilogue.

1. A murderer is condemned to death. He has three choices, a room full of raging fires. A room full of assassins, or a room full of lions that haven't eaten in 3 years. Which room is safest for him?
2. A woman shoots her husband. Then she holds him under water for over 5 minutes. Finally, she hangs him. But 5 minutes later they both go out together and enjoy a wonderful dinner. How can this be?
3. What is black when you buy it, red when you use it, and grey when you throw it away?
4. Can you name three consecutive days without using the words Wednesday, Friday or Sunday?
5. This is an unusual paragraph. I'm curious as to just how quickly you can find out what is so unusual about it. It looks so ordinary and plain that you would think nothing was wrong with it. In fact, nothing is wrong with it! It is highly unusual though. Study it, and think about it, but you still may not find anything odd. But if you work at it a bit, you might find out. Can you do that do you think?

The answers, for those like me who didn't get them all, can, as I said above, be found in the Epilogue, Ed.

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Sales and Wants

For Sale :- Reliant Fox, A reg., hard top, back seats, new tow bar, MOT expired Aug 2009, clutch needs replacing. £500 firm. May break reluctantly if enough interest, May consider MZ motorcycle as part of deal John at Catwick East Yorkshire 01964 545872

For Sale :- R reg Kitten saloon, Reliant blue, new tyres and windscreen. Taxed. Mot until November 2010 needs to be used and some cosmetics . Located in Hertfordshire. Reluctant sale £500 Ring Terry Silke on 07885 346100

For Sale :- New Gearbox Syncro rings, also a full set of used but tidy Kitten instruments i.e. speedo , combined fuel and temperature gauge, oil pressure gauge complete with piping, voltmeter - all with the orange "R" and red needles all with chrome bezels, and a clock. £30 plus delivery. Ring John Box on 01524 781841 or e-mail :- johnsbox711@btinternet.com

For Sale :- Rare 1969 Rebel estate car, 3 owners from new, rebuilt on a new galvanised chassis 10 years ago, new front dampers, re-cored radiator, stainless exhaust, currently has no carpets or front seats fitted, the seats are there, and the paint has been stripped from the roof. Small child recently arrived, followed by a new boat, mean that Ian has no time to proceed with the work. Yours for just £500. Contact Ian Johnston at ian@orbister.org.uk or ring 01556 650365 Near Castle Douglas in the Scottish borders.

My apologies for the quality of the cover printing on this edition – not John's fault, his machine was waiting for parts and I elected to have them done locally, I had no less than three options – clearly I did not choose well, a lesson learned, sorry. Ed

Epilogue

Once again I have the illusion of being organised, it is the 19th of October, I am searching for the new toner cartridge that I know I have somewhere, to print the adverts page of edition 90, it, Mag 90, is here waiting to be put into envelopes of which about half are addressed and stamped, and this bumper Christmas edition is half complete already! On that cheery note I will sign off and get back to sticking address labels and stamps on envelopes and hope to beat the imminent postal strike, now where is that elusive toner cartridge?

Answers to the brain teasers on page 35 are:-

1. The third room of course. Lions that haven't eaten in three years are dead. That one was easy, yes?
2. The woman was a photographer. She shot a picture of her husband, developed it, and hung it up to dry (shot; held under water; and hung).
3. Charcoal, as it is used in barbecuing.
4. Of course you can name three consecutive days without mentioning Wednesday, Friday or Sunday - yesterday, today, and tomorrow!
5. The letter "e", which is the most commonly used letter in the English language, does not appear once in the paragraph.

I have to say that my old English teacher would complain bitterly about beginning a sentence with a preposition, but hey ho (Oh no, not more song titles!) the times they are a changing!?!)

And if you scored more than three you can have my job!

As a matter of not a lot of interest it is now October the 23rd, I launched the last edition into the beginning of the postal strike, and this edition is half done. Where is your bit? Oh, don't tell me, it's in the post?!

Right, I take it all back. I had added 1 A4 page for this bumper Christmas edition, then another 4 page article arrived and I thought – well, I could remove the stuff about the Jowett do in Fife, but that would only save 2 A5 pages, so something else would have to go, or be held back, and I'm not for holding back – or – I could add in yet another A4 page, well, it is Christmas (he said on the second of November!) and, thanks to Ron Dark, Duncan Bradford, Roger Brown, Phil English, Dick Goodall, Frank Haynes, Lyn Rodden, Terry Horler, Adrian Hanwell, Alan Osbourn and Andrew Norman, amongst others, here we are, over 3 dozen pages and over 2 weeks till my deadline – this is just too easy, see what could be accomplished on a regular basis if you helped like this more often.... Ahh, it could be bliss.

On the subscription renewal front, your renewal notice should be enclosed. As you are possibly aware, we have, for the past decade, offered a five year subscription, and the almost 10% of our readers who have taken advantage of that option in the past, have come to the end of their second five year term. I had been wondering in recent times if I really think I am still going to be doing this 5 years from now, but, spurred by the variety and volume of the input you have kindly provided me with recently I am so minded. So, from now, ending in December 2014, cor, doesn't that sound a long time into the future?!? You have the option of paying £70 now, thus saving yourself a tenner on today's figures, as well as protecting yourself against subscription increases in the next 5 years. The choice is yours.

You know, after I sent out final reminders last year, there were still about 20 odd folk who we lost touch with without an explanation, and I had meant to try and contact them to find out why – but never did manage to do so. Perhaps without a family wedding next year I might have the time to be more diligent,

but do, please, let me know even if you are not staying with us, it would remove any uncertainty, and be appreciated. If you don't have the time or inclination to write and invest a stamp, a short phone call would suffice - please, thank you.

Moira and I wish you a very happy Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year when it comes. Ed.

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