



MEWSLETTER 93

March - April 2010

Edited and distributed by Brian W Marshall,
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This very tidy British Racing Green Kitten saloon belongs to Terry Dalton from Hull. The quality of the respray is excellent, the picture probably does not show the very neat bulge in the bonnet to best advantage, very subtle it is. The whole car is maintained to the highest standards, well done Terry. We hope that you enjoy many more miles in your beautiful example of the marque.

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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New Kitten / Fox / Rebel parts stock held by Brian Marshall

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Kitten alternative parts list: ****Situation vacant****. Contact the Editor to volunteer.

Fox alternative parts list contact: Duncan Bradford, 52 St. Phillips Road, Norwich, NR2 3BN.

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Our Mutual Aid Spares scheme is run for us by Phil Hallam 4, Greenhead Holding, Stevenston, Ayrshire KA20 4JX

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Mewsletter pictures – should be sent to John Pearce at Toddbury Farm, Slapton Road, Lt Billington, Beds. LU7 9BP

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

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

Dinky Cars

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**SALES, SPARES, REPAIRS,
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Regular readers will be aware of my love for Citroen BX's, you can I am sure, imagine my amusement when the BBC news reported on January the 13<sup>th</sup> – some 18 years after they stopped production of BX's - about the DVLA agreeing to make information about cars failing the MOT test available to the public, the feature news article picture showed a Citroen BX undergoing an exhaust emissions test – you couldn't write the book – could you? I was going to print the picture but came up against bureaucracy - : *“Unfortunately we are unable to grant permission for the re-use of images on the BBC website, as the images we use come from a range of sources with which we have a variety of licensing and re-use agreements, and therefore we don't own the copyright for many of these.”* being the response to my attempts to share it with you. So there you have it, I tried.

To matters of relevancy,

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I have been known to be accused of being too fussy, paying too much attention to detail, insisting on high standards to the extent that a job does not get completed because of my insistence that it be done correctly. You of course know me better than that – witness the mistakes of all sorts I have made within these pages over the years – but I do try (and the first one to say, yes Brian, very trying – is out!) Then something happens that reminds me just how little attention to detail I actually pay, and how quickly I can jump to conclusions – who was it that first said assume nothing? Assume made up as it is by an **ass** of **u** and **me**? Well, Lyn Rodden had kindly sent me a photograph, with an accompanying letter last September. I finally uncovered it during a desk clearing operation carried out after we took the last edition to the printers in January. Yet another computer orientated friend was coming to help me out, and I realised that he would not be able to get near the beast for the mountain of paperwork, so something had to be done!

A decision had been taken to adopt a different approach to processing the information from your renewal notice this year, and a list has been compiled of follow up tasks, which allowed me to file the actual bits

For the past couple of years or so I have been very happy to have John Copestake handle the collection, packing and dispatch of the rocker covers for us. He sells quite a few through the R3W web site, for which the Register receives a royalty, and he posts most of ours for me, which saves me work – always good. Not only that but he lives a tenth of the distance away from the pattern shop that I do, (I delegate, the patternmaker knows a lot more about foundries than I do, so I let him choose where to have them cast) so the arrangement suits everyone. Thank you John.

Kitten Register subscribers can buy them at a considerable saving on the retail price by placing their order through me.

Brian

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Right, I have just been off to the Post Office – again – spending more of our money on stamps, ahead of the April 6<sup>th</sup> 2p increase. I know it is 'only' 2p, but that is about 7%, well, all right, 6 and a bit, but still a relatively whopping rise. Might as well have the funds sitting on the shelf in front of me ready to stick on your envelopes, as keeping them in the bank earning not a lot of interest these days!

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Rebel round up

Wouter Van Oploo has recognised (as indeed some others have, myself among them) that we are not likely to remain fit and able to an age of 100 or more, yet that would be necessary if we were to renovate and restore all the vehicles we would wish. With his Kittens and a number of motorcycles vying for his attention, something has to find a new custodian, and he has decided that his left hand drive Rebel is the one.



The car is for sale, he wants it to go to a good home either in the Netherlands, or in the UK, or somewhere else. Perhaps Frank from Chile might be interested, because it's a very rare(original) left hand drive car, it's the only one in the Netherlands and perhaps one of only a few left.

The Rebel was featured on the front cover and page 3 of Mewsletter No. 80. The car is largely complete and original except for its engine which is a 700 unit instead of the original 600 one and is out of the car, furthermore it needs its original wheels, at the moment the car is fitted with Regal wheels and the all synchro gearbox fitted is of the Robin/Kitten type. It was registered in May 1967 and has chassis no 100108 and is / was a 600 cc.

My e-mail address : w.van.oploo@hetnet.nl and tel.no.0031735478546.

REBELLIOUS CONDUCT 20

Terry Horler

And just when you thought it safe to turn the page – I'm back. Yes, it's been a little while since I last wrote about the life and times of LRF 671K, my 1972 Rebel van/estate. The Rebel was enjoying "occasional" usage for the later part of 2009 but not so little to let me ignore it altogether. The reluctant start gremlin re-appeared just before Christmas. Typically, the weather was so wet and cold that trying to find a suitable moment to lift the bonnet was proving difficult. Anyway, such a moment did momentarily present itself so with the bonnet raised, I operated the starter. The resultant sparkage around the distributor cap was easily seen in the darkness of a December evening. Clearly, LRF was suffering from leaky electrics. Time to bite the bullet and purchase a new distributor cap and a set of HT leads. Surprisingly, my local spares shop had such items on the shelf followed by my £21 in their till. Fitting this little lot in the pouring rain is not ideal but had to be done – result – it wouldn't start. Had it got too wet, had I fitted the leads out of sequence? Trying to trouble shoot was even less ideal in such conditions. The answer was soon found, the LT wire to the coil pulled away from the Lucar spade as I fitted the new cap. With this repaired and an even wetter engine – it started. It has continued to start reliably ever since, a matter for which I have been very grateful over the longest damp and cold spell we have suffered in many years.

As is the norm: we disappear for two weeks over Christmas only to face goodness knows what when we return. It is a time when I expect some car troubles and sure enough – a flat battery. Not the Rebel however, but its replacement, the smart Roadster. So, the Rebel went back into being my daily commuter vehicle whilst I tried to find out exactly where the battery hides in the Roadster. Despite the very cold conditions and more snow than we have seen for a long while in the south west, the Rebel got me to and from work without trouble, so I kept on using it for the next three months. The only niggle – the barely adequate heater. I blanked off most of the radiator matrix but too little avail. When the weather finally eased enough for me to lift the bonnet again, I decided to remove the heater box to take a look. For some time, the blower fan motor had been making an awful screech when switched on indicating a dry bearing; it was even louder than the horn. It is very simple to remove and strip the heater box but I was surprised to find that it contained two matrixes. Hot water from the heater valve enters the bottom of the driver's side matrix, exhausts into an interconnecting pipe above the fan into the top of the passenger side matrix. The water then exhausts at the bottom of this second matrix to return to the water pump. This explains why the heater seemed less effective on the passenger side of the car. The driver's side matrix extracts the heat first only to pass cooler water to the second matrix. I would have thought it best practice to feed water into the bottom of both matrixes and exhaust both from the top. Designed to a price I guess? Anyway, apart from some accumulated debris to blow away and to drop some oil into the motor bearing all seemed well. Refitting was not so easy, the four bulkhead bolts are not captive, they all moved back into the bulkhead as I tried to replace the heater box. Access to the rear of the bulkhead is not without having to remove more than I was prepared to. Fortunately, I managed to pull all four bolts back with a magnet and then hold them in place with long nose pliers whilst the nuts were started. Phew, that was a close one alright.

I read with interest that the heater valve adaptor can be screwed too deeply into the cylinder head thereby restricting water flow through the valve. With hose and operating cable disconnected, I attempted to unscrew the adaptor. I managed but one turn before it all went solid. This did indicate that the adaptor threads most probably protruded into the water space and had become too corroded to screw back into the head threads. Not wishing to strip any threads or snap anything, I wisely gave up on this. I have gained one thread pitch extra water flow and luckily, no leaks! The heater now seems slightly better (emphasis on the 'seems' and 'slightly'). Without subjective testing and monitoring of ambient temperature and resultant demisting performance over measured conditions, 'seems' and 'slightly' is about as technical as its going to get. Needing no measurement at all, the blower fan motor now starts and operates with but a whisper – what a result.

The paint continues to "jump ship" and my once tidy looking Rebel is now looking rather patchy. If I leave it long enough it will probably only need a very light rubbing down before a repaint. It is now mid-March and LRF has provided reliable winter service, it will shortly have another rest as I drag my other cars out of winter hibernation. I can then spend a bit of time checking the Rebel over AT MY LEISURE (I hope) and not at the mercy of the weather.

Terry (Horler) - No. 755 from Bristol

Foxes Den

Well, we did not have much on the Fox front last time, and arguably this article could go under our technical section – if indeed I ought to publish it at all! But, a problem shared and all that.

Alex Marsden has a Fox which, in my experience, is unique. The bottom wishbones, chassis where it mounts, and bushes, are like no other Fox I (or others) have ever come across. Very frustrating for Alex, as he had asked for new bushes, which we supplied, but, as you will see in the pictures, were not a lot like the ones that had been on his vehicle – only one dimension out of three was the same – not much use!



The old one



The new one



Not only is the outside diameter different, but the hole in the centre is smaller in the original bush – why? It is hard to imagine a manufacturer changing such a component, I mean even if you suddenly found a supplier of bushes who was giving them away, would you really make special wishbones, and modify the chassis, (by drilling a different diameter hole for the wishbone mounting bolt) to take advantage of that? Equally well, if a previous owner needed to replace the original bushes, and for some reason could not find the right ones, would he really go to the extent of using a bush with a smaller diameter centre – I mean, opening out the mounting holes in the chassis could be done easily enough, if you were forced to use a bush with a bigger securing bolt, but bushing them down to take a smaller one – which does not appear to have been done... To say I am puzzled barely begins to cover it!

Upon further investigation however I discover that the chassis number, which on late Kittens and all Foxes in my experience, begins "SCD1401" for Kittens and "SCD1701" for Foxes, while the one on Alex' one begins "044H101", so perhaps there is a clue there?



You can see above just how slack the 'normal' bush is!



You can also see how slack the bolt is in the "normal" bush.

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Over the page you can see how the same bush sits with the new wishbones, I would have included a picture with the bush partially inserted, but they are a very tight fit and I don't have a press to hand I'm afraid.





Still with Foxes, but on a trim theme now, the latest from Les In Kent follows :-



Above the interior minus seats, once the new carpets were down, and below the view from behind with the back door open. I have to say Les, it's looking good. Keep up the good work.



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Matters Tempestuous

Dear Brian,

4-2-2010

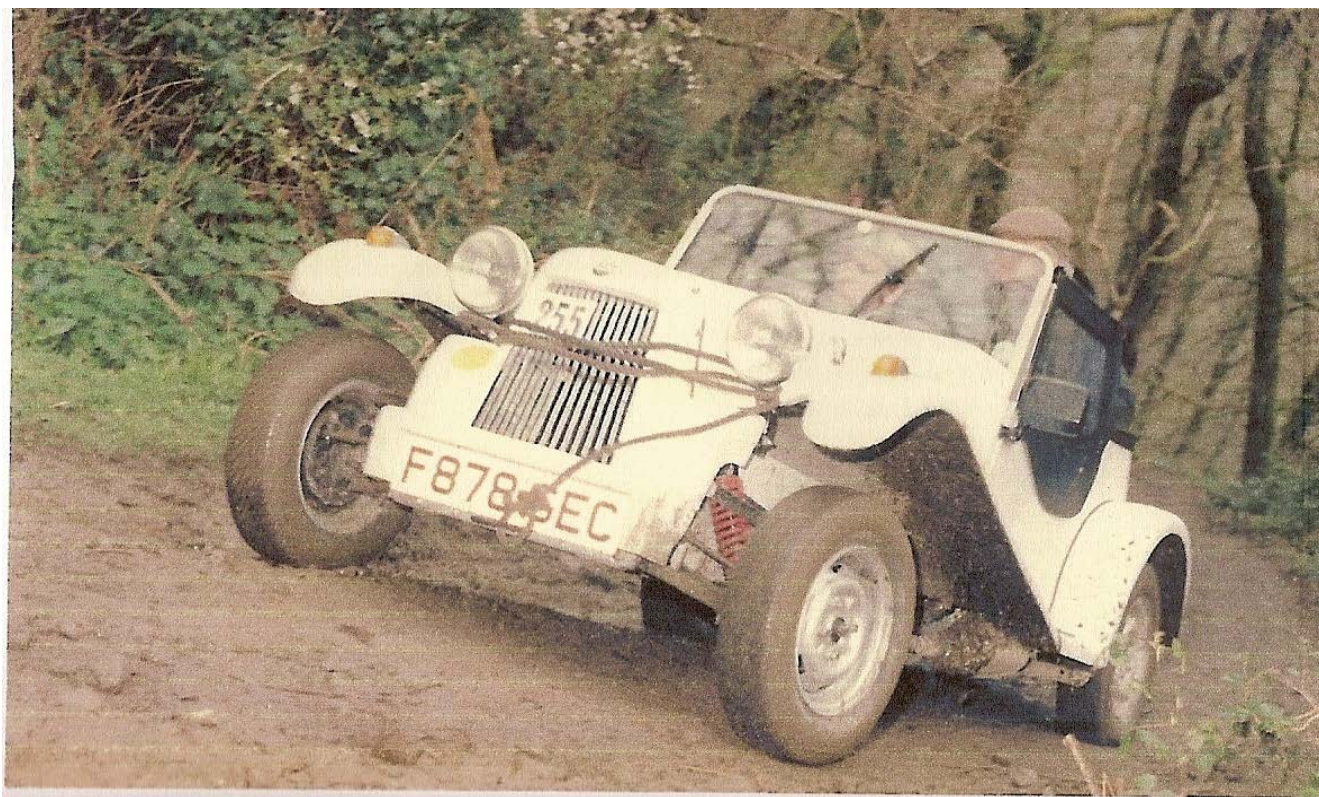
Thank you for the new Mewsletter and membership card. In view of the mention of the Lands End Trial at Easter I thought a picture of a Tempest competing in the event in the 1988 event might be appropriate for Easter if it is good enough to copy.

I am amused by the Toyota furore; when I complained to Reliant's M.D. that the bottom wishbone had come adrift on my 1976 Kitten van and others might do the same, he said thank you for telling them, and did nothing about it!

A chassis I bought from them in 1989 did exactly the same thing! The anchor bolt was only locked by a spring washer which was not up to the job.

Kind regards to both of you, and congrats on your Jowett promotion.

John (Box) Burton - No. 44



John Box as ballast with renowned sporting car trials driver Robin Jager behind the wheel on the 1988 Lands End Easter trial. They did not win that year, but the same car, driven by Dickey Mile, won a first class award in the same event the following year. In total that Tempest ran in the Land's End event three years in a row, and I am reliably informed that nothing broke or fell off.

Thanks John for the picture and history.

Still on matters Tempestuous, Jack Williams tells me that his old Tempest currently resides on the Isle of Wight in a collection of classic trials cars over there. Good to have you still with us Jack. Thanks for the note.

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## TEMPEST UPDATE

A write up of last year's Car Trials Championship is enclosed for the Mewsletter. The Tempest is now stripped down for a rebuild and modifications. I will do a write up each year to let you know what is happening. I do not think it will be completed this year, probably 2011.

With the car trials in disarray I will not be using the car for trials anymore and will be rebuilding the Tempest for fast road use and classic car runs, more on this when the car is finished.

The problem with the car trials was caused by MSA wanting to push standard cars, mostly front wheel drive cars, into the limelight and so changed tyre pressures. Class 4, (in which the Tempest is placed), cars have tyre pressures of 24lbs per square inch which is about twice the pressure of the normal road pressures, since when do we increase pressure for bad surfaces? Normally you decrease pressure not increase. The front wheel drive cars all have their pressures reduced and so class 4 have no chance and gradually class for cars disappeared from trials. Last year there were just two of us in the championship.

I now have an Austin Ruby to rebuild as well, now as I was left Graham Baddeley's Ruby to complete. I intend to build it as a Ruby Special in honour of Graham.

Keep up the good work Brian, the mag is brilliant and is a great credit to you.

Regards and Best Wishes, Dave Price

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## UK Car Trials Championship 2009

This was to be our first serious attempt at the National Car Trials championship and so to get off to a good start I entered the first trial in Bedfordshire in February knowing that some do not bother. Well it did not work as the event was cancelled due to heavy rain water logging the venue.

The Tempest is running on standard ignition which is at least reliable. Some will remember that last year, (2008), we had troubles with the electronic ignition, (Lumination), letting us down and forcing us to change back to the standard set up. To be honest I am not sure if it was the distributor as I set up a mini distributor with the electronic ignition fitted. I tried all sorts to cure the problem but without success.

Graham, my trial's passenger, had been very ill with lung cancer and was getting over chemo therapy, but died suddenly in March. I had known that the early part of the season would be without Graham, but I was hoping that he would be fit enough half way through the season.

I was unable to get someone to do the whole season with me so had to arrange for three people to passenger for me which meant that each had to join a motor club. To compete in car trials the driver has to have a Competition Licence and passengers must belong to a car club.

The next trial at Burton Dassett Country Park was entered in May with a neighbour's 13-year-old son as my passenger. Callum learnt very quickly and was an excellent passenger getting us up some hills by bouncing where we would not have done so without him. He seemed to pre-empt wheel spin and started to bounce before it, which made a lot of difference. A good fight with our normal Marlin competitor saw us second in class.

Our next three trials were cancelled due to rain making four cancelled trials, which was disappointing, losing us some valuable points.

Our next trial near Stourport Worcestershire was entered and was an excellent trial with some serious climbs, some vertical and needed a charge at with speed to get up to the top and flop onto the plateau at the top of each. The risk of not making them and falling back down gave a huge rush of adrenaline. Luckily we made each one and gave us clears which normally would have been good but due to the lack of Class 4 entrants the organisers merged the Ford Escorts into our class which meant we had no chance. The organiser made the mistake of asking me where all the Class 4 cars were. This gave me the chance to tell him that they were fed up with the high tyre pressures making wheel spin inevitable, and wrecking any chance of competition much like

you putting the Escorts with us today. "Well" he said, "we have got to give the front wheel drive cars a chance" "But" I said, "it could be done in such a way that we are given a competitive chance and not ruling us out all together, and by the way, I will not be here next season"!

Our next trial was at another Country Park near Stoke on Trent with some more serious climbs, which were very challenging. Only two Class 4 cars but at least no Escorts, only high tyre pressures. Some hills we did not get up in the morning but I changed my tact and route up the hills in the afternoon which gave us some more clears. Some hills were easy but were on a time limit, which in effect made them a race, great fun. The Country Park is so big and the hills long and spread apart that we did over 30 miles in the Tempest.

This was our last event for the year and a pleasant surprise in the form of championship results dropped onto the doormat at the end of October. We ended up 2<sup>nd</sup>. In Class, (out of 8) and 13<sup>th</sup> overall out of 52, which I was pleased about and made me wonder were we would have been if our 4 events were not cancelled.

Dave Price





Graham and Dave make it to the top



Denis Baggaley's very tidy Tempest  
(Which you will find in the adverts page if you are interested)



Denis' Tempest from the other side, now I found that picture rather amusing. You may be aware of John Box's not inconsiderable involvement with the Tempest, what you might be less likely to know is how involved he was with Triumph Heralds, and what do I see further along Denis' drive!

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Family Matters

Club member Adrian Hanwell, who is the keeper of the stock of unused Rebel parts, is interested in Family History (Genealogy) and is doing a ONE NAME STUDY of ALL the HANWELL families that he can find. The Hanwell surname is fairly rare, so ANY snippets of information relating to any Hanwells anywhere, past or present would be useful to him. If readers chance to come across any reference to any person named Hanwell, Adrian would like to hear from them. Adrian is also descended from the Cordiner and Hawthorn families from Boddam, near Peterhead in Scotland and also has family trees for these two families if anyone should be interested. His contact details are inside the front cover under New parts for Reliant Rebels.

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## Readers Letters

Buyer beware.

Have you ever given "progress" a thought and just how much being negative about it can cost you?

I will give you an example of something that happened to me this week when I wanted to insure my new, well, new to me, car.

I was the owner of a 1999 Vauxhall Astra diesel saloon (value £1000 if you are lucky). The fuel pump decided to give up the ghost – that meant the cost of the repair would be very expensive, probably more than half of the car's value at least.

Being a practical, couple my husband and I decided that it was time to buy something a little smaller, and a little newer. We looked at a Nissan Micra S 1.3cc petrol engine with only 38,000 miles on the clock. A nice tidy little car cheaper tax, cheaper running costs all round and cheaper insurance with a bit of luck.

Just how wrong can one be on the cheaper insurance?

I phoned my Astra's insurance company with the details of the newer car, and was told that will be £177.58p more plus extra for breakdown cover and get you home service (that was all in with the old policy!!) So I thought "no way" so I thought take the advice of the advert "Go Compare"

I sat down in front of the computer for an hour, and came up with 87 quotes to choose from; I thought that's a good selection, so I sat there for another hour comparing them all,

I narrowed the options down to 3 companies, all very similar so I did a lucky dip. Pressed the "Buy" button paid for it and then received a "Green" policy – that means there is no paperwork it's all laid out on the screen for you to read and check for any mistakes.

Then suddenly it dawned on me that the company that the computer had placed me with were brokers and they had chosen the same company I had the Astra insured with, - only now, Breakdown cover, and all the trimmings, were part of the deal for an extra £50 on the total. I thought that can't be bad I saved £150 – my lucky day.

Then I started looking at the other companies again on the list of 87 and found the parent company of my insurer was charging another £280 on top of the original quote I had from the Astra policy and the new car policy. So looking at things in that light I had saved £430!!

It did not end there as I realised too that if you tax your car online your insurance policy details are already at DVLA - you do not require a paper policy.

To tax it at the Post Office you need that piece of paper as proof of insurance, they will not accept your print out from the computer so you have to apply to the insurance company for the paper work and this will cost you another £5.99 just for that Certificate.

I cannot understand just how these so called reputable companies can rip people off in this manner and get away with it.

All I can say is "BUYER BEWARE!!" Lyn Rodden

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Us.

I am annually bemused by the fact that I always seem to be so pessimistic about renewal numbers. You really would think that by now, almost 2 decades on, I would be getting a better grip on such things, but not so! I was correct a couple of years back thinking that our numbers had reached a peak. But I always fail to realise just how many people are slow to renew each year, in spite of my best efforts to encourage everyone to do so.

The note that was sent out to the recent – early March – renewal people along with their membership cards, made mention of a current roll of just 166 souls, but in fact when I checked yesterday, we have 188 on the mailing list, and that excludes advertisers and other clubs and organisations we exchange magazines with. So we are some time away from the magazine print run dropping to the 200 mark. Remember, everyone who joins this year gets all of this year's magazines, so we need spares.

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You will perhaps recall Roger Brown suggesting that our logo could do with an update, well, here is his suggestion :-





If memory serves (doubtful I know, but sometimes it works!) I think it was Al Osborn who, in the original competition, came up with the intertwined capital R's as used by a certain prestigious motor vehicle manufacturer, but rather than the founding partners names above and below, his proposal had the words Resin and Rockets so placed – I was very tempted I might tell you!

Anyway, your thoughts, observations and comments are eagerly awaited here at central office.

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## Getting Technical

Robert Fairfoull rang me today (8/2/10) in response to my question about fitting a servo to the brakes – in particular on a Rebel. He tells me that Lucas? used to sell a kit, he has one, and that while you need to find room to fit it, the plumbing was straightforward. As I understand it you only need to take the high pressure pipe from the master cylinder that originally goes to the 4 way brass union, and feed it into the servo, which requires a vacuum feed from the inlet manifold, and the brake pipe returns from the other side of the servo to the 4 way union. Sounds simple, provided you know exactly where and how to organize the vacuum pick-up, and can find room for the servo – easier on a Rebel than a Kitten or Fox!

I seem to remember a spacer between the carb and the inlet manifold that had a take-off which would serve this purpose, but I can't think....

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## More on manifolds

Now you are about to learn how my standards have been slipping – oops!

Last time you saw a neat drawing of an inlet manifold on page 25 at the end of an article by Clive Angel – well, that drawing was kindly drawn on a computer by Chris Tooth who had generously offered to tidy up a rough sketch that Al Osborn had provided me with, Al's article had preceded Clive's in that edition. Chris had asked me whose name he should put on the drawing, but I was up against a (self imposed) deadline and said there was no need as I would cover it in the text – then not only did I fail to do so, but I put it at the end of the Getting Technical section which made it look as though it came from Clive. Sorry Al. To further compound my error, when Al saw the smart representation of his sketch, he realised that it had not been interpreted exactly as he had intended – so not only did I fail to acknowledge where it came from, but I failed to have it checked by the one person who had the knowledge to check it – as I said, oops! My apologies to everyone. My only defence is the thought that the man who didn't make a mistake didn't make anything (though I can't remember who first coined those words of wisdom !)

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Dear Brian,

11<sup>th</sup> February 2010

So having got my Kitty car on the front cover and having a technical mention last issue, has left a number of points to comment on. To fully understand what I am on about this time you might have to refer to the Jan/Feb issue 92.

Starting at page 19 Clutch Release bearing- 'remove the locating washer from the end of the clutch shaft outside the bell housing.' Fine BUT the original equipment has a rose washer on the shaft, they are not to be trusted. Take it off, drill a 3mm hole (1/8 to you old boys!) through the shaft, fit a large penny washer and a split pin. Ah isn't that better?

Roll pins - It said last Mewsletter that stainless pins were harder than the 'soft' ones used. Fine - the Reliant fitted pins only last about one and half clutches so you must change the standard pins every time you go in there or you will be very embarrassed! But there are also some roll, even scroll pins that are stronger than stainless steel. It is an area that still needs research/care. What I did this time is to use 3 scroll pins. Allegedly the scroll pin allows more shuffle and hopefully then doesn't snap like the originals do. Then I added a third pin in the middle and at right angles to the two. See picture following.



Now some of the mods. to the pretty blue/silver car. The heat exchanger, I was told was off one of the Turbo MGs, certainly it fits very well. Unscrew the oil filter, replace the centre threaded tube with a longer one, place the heat exchanger to the crank case, and fit a nut to hold it tight. Then fit a smaller oil filter on it as you are now very near to the side of the engine bay. The water pipes are the bigger car size so there is a bit of juggling with them to connect into the rest of the water system.

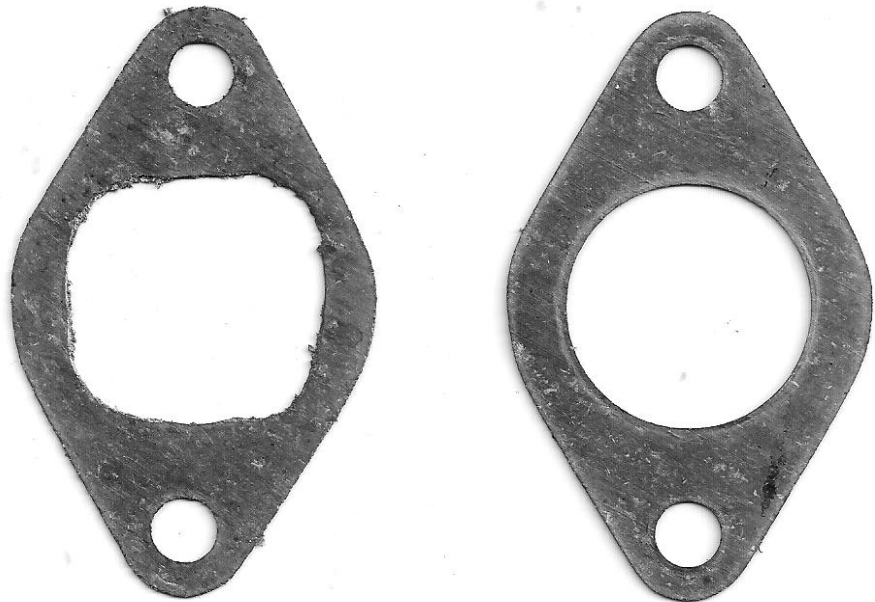
Last time Brian asked if the heat exchanger acted as a oil heater for the start up as the water gets up to temperature before the oil. Thinking about it I think he is right. So we get a quicker warm up as well as a better heater as well as cooler oil. What you might call a win win win situation! I think everybody should have one.

Now we come to Inlet Manifolds by Clive Angel, I agree with most of what was said, but there are a few point to make. Making the manifold fit the head and the gasket properly seems to be over fussy. I have never found the manifolds' position to be sloppy due to worn studs or stud holes in the manifold. To get the gasket to the right size and alignment I usually use nothing more than my penknife, cutting the gasket against the head holes. With the head off of the car of course. It is quite hard to see the alignment between the two parts, but of course the old gasket is the best tell tale in this area. While you are looking at this alignment and if you have the time, the exhaust manifold is often 1/3 filled with casting flash. Get the Black and Decker out, and use a rotary burr to make the manifold ports are the correct size and shape to match the head. Dirty work but some one's got to do it!

Now we come the drawing on page 25 nicely done by Brian from my crude drawing of what I do to inlet manifolds. Looking at the two holes drilled between the 1-2 3-4 (0.187 is in fact 3/16 or 4.5mm or thereabouts in case you don't have a 0.187 drill!) if you read the Clive Angel bit on 750 racer mods page23, there is a mention of a similar joining hole done from the head flange with a mill. But surely this hole is then at 90deg to my hole? My hole idea is in line with the gas flow so you see that as such what it steals from 2 and 3 is put into 1 and 4, exactly what needs to be done. As 1 and 4 are longer than 2 and 3 what you steal from 2 and 3 in this mod gets into 1 and 4, i.e. the shorter tubes, which give a richer mixture are robbed and given to the weaker. (Sounds a bit Robin Hood to me!) It balances the mixture. The ironic point here though is yes the mixture is very nicely balanced, but the difference in engine performance is 'not a lot'.

Now we come to the second modification to the inlet manifold, the shaping of the plenum as it drops away from the swan neck and tries to go around the corner. This does indeed give a little sparkle. The drawing pg 25 is quite good at showing the modification except the shape of the swan neck flange needs to be more oval or even towards square. See picture. While you are doing this, please take into account some blending of the

bottom of the swan neck. There is a gasket here and I have tried doing transfer of size from the small original size swan neck to the large modified size within the gasket or you will have to blend the swan neck out.



If you really want to get to grips with these modifications and can't quite understand, please get in touch. As these modifications are just time, effort, and some understanding, they cost nothing!

Alan Osborn. No. 295 - Norfolk

Now, because your less than perfect Editor lost a technical drawing that Alan Shaw kindly provided in December on alternator bracket failure and a remedy, here instead are some small pictures to whet your appetite for next time!

Keith Gittus has fitted different seats to his Fox (well, one of his Foxes). I have sat behind the wheel, and believe me if I can get in and out, anyone can!



Below some shots of the Tonneau cover that Keith had made.



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Rear brake shoe fitment.

This is particularly interesting – sometimes one assumes things, never a good thing to do. I had communication from the sister of the man – I would have said lucky – but they do not think so – who bought that very tidy red Kitten estate last year, the one we featured on the cover. It was one of the best looked after examples in the land – yet it failed its MOT a year later, with the tester allegedly saying it was a death trap and he could not understand how it had passed its last test, just 2,000miles previously! One of his major criticisms was the fact that the rear brake shoes were put on back to front, and while I can see that might reduce the efficiency of the back brakes, I would not have thought it dramatic or dangerous. He also had major concerns with “the front struts”, I am waiting, hoping to learn more detail, to see if it was the struts, or the bushes – watch this space. (The car had been rebuilt on a new Fox chassis, their struts being different to those on a Kitten, and located differently using bushes which have been known to have problems). As I said in my reply at the time, “*I would be very surprised if there was*

anything wrong with the struts, (he would hardly fit poor condition parts whilst fitting a new chassis on a car for his wife), the strut bushes however are quite another matter.” The quality of the bushes that were supplied at one time was very poor, “I am not sure if they were very old stock that had gone off with age, or just poor quality. Because that car had not been used for a number of years, I could easily believe that those bushes might have deteriorated very quickly once the car was in use, but could have been fine when it was presented for it's MOT before the car was sold.”

Enough of your Editor's ramblings – the word from Thetford is :-

If you don't take note the fitting of rear shoes can be done wrongly. There are several funny holes/slots in the shoes and of course you have two dissimilar springs, all done to confuse! First the springs - the one with two coils goes next to the slave cylinder, the one with the long coil goes next to the adjuster. They don't need replacing every set of new shoes but if there is any doubt i.e. second hand car, or you can't remember when they were last renewed, then new ones are recommended.

Now the shoes themselves. I trust you all chamfer back the sharp leading edge. But which is the leading edge? This the end of the shoe that does NOT go right to the end of the metal. This is always the leading edge of the shoe. Now the leading edge is just that, it faces the direction of rotation, see diagram. So what happens if you get it wrong? You get an inefficient brake which I am sure you would be able to see on the MOT test, but in practice on the road it doesn't seem to make much difference. If it is wrong either both, or just one shoe fitted wrongly, then you can see it in as much as the shoe is not touching on its full surface i.e. one shiny bit, one unworn bit. Old shoes miss-fitted for a long time, or old shoes that have just been put in wrongly do not readily show two different areas, one that is touching, one that is not. But if you fit some new shoes, or some that have recently had their surface filed to remove glazing, you will readily see the non-contact area if the shoe is in wrongly. I recommend filing the shiny bit off and fitting them correctly.

While going on about rear brakes there are two types of drums, one with a chamfer on the outside corner one without. The later is in fact a front brake drum i.e. all four are the same. The later situation is the newer cars! (I would guess late 70s, I expect someone will know.) So the chamfered ones are the early ones. But they must be used with the spacer (like a horse shoe) between the brake plate and the axle. Reason for this is the brake plate has a skirt that fits near the drum to help keep water out. Without the spacer these old drums would rub on this water skirt. So if you have some front drums you want to use on the rear make sure these spacers are taken out. If for any reason you get this wrong then the drum would fit in a fresh place on the shoes, which might impair breaking ability, as of course the drums get worn to their set of shoes over the years/miles.

While on about brakes and suspension things I have just tried changing the top wishbone on a Fox chassis for a wishbone off of a Kitten. I have always been assured these chassis are the same (certainly in this department) But I now find that the two stems of the wish bone that bolt on to the two brackets either side of the top of the damper (with rubber bushes) have a different width apart-about 3/8" any clues any one? So I could not fit a Kitten wishbone to a Fox!!!

ALAN OSBORN - No. 295 from Thetford

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## Parts

The response from the questionnaire on the back of your renewal notices has been limited. Ball joints are the only common item mentioned. At the time of writing we still have reconditioned ones, and John Melody has an acceptable alternative solution available, and we have a few serviceable second hand ones.

I realise that brake back plates are also of concern, but not to many people. Saloon rear window stays, which are a problem for which I have no easy answer, and heater control knobs which I guess I either ought to carry in stock (a small and light part that I could handle) or at least get some and delegate. Any volunteers to visit scrap yards and liberate some – was it Nissan Micras that came with 4 perfectly acceptable alternatives?

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ATTENTION ALL FOX OWNERS, DUNCAN IS CONSIDERING COMMISSIONING A BATCH OF PETROL FILLER HOSES, THEY ARE NOT CHEAP, BUT IF YOU ORDER NOW YOU CAN HAVE ONE FOR £44 delivered. Cost is related to batch quantity, set up costs are high, that price is based on a batch of 10. Production will only proceed if we get orders for 4. Contact Duncan on hidunc@ntlworld.com if you want one or for more details.

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Adrian Hanwell has a contact who can make small castings, things like the Rebel front and rear badges for example, or door handles, anything like that. Adrian has kindly agreed to be the point of contact. As with all such things there are set up costs and minimum batch quantities. So talk to him if you are interested, I know Phil was looking for a Rebel boot lid badge recently – anyone else? Adrian can be contacted on ahanwell@ford.com

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Dear Brian,

04/03/2010

GREETINGS. On my way to senility, I find that I can never remember whether or not I have renewed my membership, so your requests, published in the "Mewsletter" fall on deaf ears. The five year subscription system makes it even more difficult to remember the renewal date. I am probably not the only one suffering from this problem. It struck me that you could do with a system that will tell members what their renewal date is, every time that a "Mewsletter" arrives.

I guess that your label printing system is somehow tied up to the membership list, which is why my membership number (0167) is printed on the top of the address label. If I am right and you have a record of the renewal date on the membership list, it should be an easy task to set up the label printing program, to print the membership renewal date onto the envelope next to the membership number.

Members will then be able to see their membership expiry date, every time they receive a "Mewsletter" and if that date is in the past, members (ex-members) will know that they need to renew urgently. Your renewal reminders, published in the "Mewsletter" could be written to remind magazine recipients to look at the envelope labels, to check the date. With this system in place, I suspect that a few readers will even renew super-early, to save you from sending them a renewal letter.

Regards, Adrian. Brentwood No. 167

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Yes well, the thing is.... I have never been brave enough to interfere with the database for fear of causing some disaster. I have had some terrible frights with it in the past, which have only served to highlight just how little I understand how it works. More than once I have had to enlist help having tried to 'tidy up' only to find I have deleted something vital!

The system does not store renewal dates as such, all subscriptions are due at the end of December. We do store a last renewed date, which I record as the date the cheque (or other payment method) reaches here, or the bank statement. So, I guess a cleverer person than I could make use of that information to calculate who was due that year, but the 5 year folk are handled differently. I have never produced a membership card with an expiry date beyond 30/12 of the current year. I could easily do so, but it would spew them out like that for everyone, and that would waste a bit of coloured ink and paper – I might just do that next time mind you.

I made a big mistake a few months ago, our 5 year guys are aware, but the 4 new folk who have so far taken up the offer I made in the recent magazine are not, yet, aware, that I got the year right, 2010, but it was in fact 31/12/2010 that our 5 year folk were due to renew, not the end of last year! I am seriously considering letting the 4 new 5 year folk have 6 years for the 5 year price to keep everyone in line. Bear in mind that one of the main reasons we offer a 5 year sub is to save me work – which is why we only make the offer every 5 years and do not offer it continually.

*So, thanks for the thought Adrian, but for now I am not inclined to change. I quite accept that it is possible to do better, I never said I was perfect – though others might take a different view.... Editor awaits hopefully for constructive words from his favourite proof reader – **OUCH!***

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Sales and Wants

For Sale :- "T" registered Kitten saloon complete with many spares for refurbishment. Peter Heming, Cornwall

For Sale :- Kitten estate body tub, separated from a poor chassis. All parts present, plus some spare mechanical bits from 2 cars. The car has a cherished 1950's pre date letter number, just 2 digits and 3 letters. A lot of work for an enthusiast. V5C present, but car is dismantled. You will need a trailer to collect. Contact Jim Smith for details - Central Scotland.

For Sale :- R reg Kitten saloon, Reliant blue, new tyres and windscreen. Taxed. Mot expired Sept. 2009 needs to be used and some cosmetics . Located in Hertfordshire. Reluctant sale £550 Terry Silke

For Sale :- Gearbox Syncro rings John Box at Stable Cottage, Thornleigh Drive, Burton in Kendal LA6 1NQ
johnsbox711@btinternet.com

For Sale - A rare opportunity to buy a one owner Tempest, built in 2002 by Denis Baggaley on a Kitten chassis. This example is in showroom condition, it has TR7 seats, real luxury, hood spare wheel cover, built with new shocks. It was featured on the cover of Mewsletter 58. Taxed and tested till May. £2,900 is the price, and the car lives near Stoke on Trent.

For Sale :- Kitten windscreen, contact Denis Stoke on Trent area.

For Sale :- A pair of re-upholstered Kitten front seats, Port Seaton, Jimmy

For Sale :- A new batch of window rubbers to fit the Rebel (and possibly Regal?) is now available. Contact Phil Hallam if you are interested. We are talking of just about £50 per car set, an absolute bargain. That is back and front screens and side windows, complete with the silver inset strip. £15 windscreen and £12 for rear window. Sides (saloon) £19 the pair plus p&p..

For Sale :- Phil Hallam also has some Rebel brake shoe retaining parts i.e. the spring cup and pin for the front and rear brake shoes. Rears are £4.65 per complete axle Fronts are £5.25 that includes postage.

Wanted :- Coen Bouwmeester still needs a pair of Kitten heater control knobs so that he can complete his rebuild. Oh, and he could do with a pair of chrome door mirrors too. You can contact him on coenbouwmeester@ziggo.nl or just ring Brian for details.

Wanted :- Graham Spraggon is looking for Fox bulkhead and door cards and bottom door hinge.

Wanted :- A Kitten Saloon or Estate. Preferably not too far from North Yorkshire. Ray Moon is the man, but until he returns the form I do not have a number, he is near Thirsk, give the Editor a ring if you can help. The car does not need to be on the road as he is planning a rebuild.

Free to a good home :- various Kitten parts including, doors, bonnet, windows, window winders etc. Tony Clapham Exeter area

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EPILOGUE

Life's little coincidences never fail to bring a smile to my face. Dennis (Michael's Dennis) gave my number to one Paul Smith from Thirsk at the end of January, he had been in touch regarding suspension bushes. Nothing to do with Reliants however (Jowetts neither!) but for his Lanchester. We had our conversation and I asked him which model of Lanchester it was that he had, to which he replied an LD10. Now it so happens that the LD10 Registrar is none other than our Rebel owning Adrian Hanwell from Brentwood in Essex, whom Paul knew, he also knew my friend from Glasgow, George Anderson, who used to own an LD10 in which I won a – blindfolded – driving test at Glamis a decade or so back. The world is indeed a small place when you specialise. I could tell you that George has replaced the LD 10 with a Daimler SP250, and go on to tell you that John Box has a very tidy one of them as well, but he is selling his this year I believe, and we don't want to get too sidetracked, do we – or are Daimlers a more acceptable distraction than Jowetts?

Spring must by now be just around the corner – surely! Time then to give the car a check-up after what was the coldest and snowiest – and hence most road salty winter since our wee cars were launched on an unsuspecting world. So, if yours has not been hibernating, even if it has come to that, now might be a good time to have a look, and a clean and lubricate the chassis and suspension – even if that only means emptying the contents of a can or two of WD squirty in the appropriate areas.

So far I have not heard a word from you about support for a get together this year – I know I should lead from the front, I think we should we focus on our 20th anniversary next year?

Whatever, take care, drive safely, talk to you again in the height of summer. Oh, and be not forgetting the lubrication of parts various.

Brian

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