



GO ON - WHY NOT JUST OPEN THE DOOR BACK TO 1971?

AIR COOLED MEMORIES

THE PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE FOR LWY 812 K

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A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

I had my first car in 1979, it was a Morris 1100 built by B.M.C in 1971 and issued in full pensioner specification, white with a dark green external windscreen visor that I could not seem to remove. Nonetheless, it was my own personal space and it offered full protection from the elements...well until the sub-frame fell off anyway.

So, some weeks later, my second car was an eight year old 1972[K] VW Beetle 1302S in bright yellow and full S specification. As far as I could determine, the S stood for slow as, although it was a 1600cc, the air-cooled engines never did muster much in the way of performance. Just look at those accessories though, the rear window louvre, aluminium wing and door handle covers and, just out of view, a large polycarbonate stone guard on the front bumper. It also had some good, factory fitted, "extras" such as a proper dashboard. And what about those "*flashes*" trailing from the rear window and those sporty stripes on the doors?

Well, I must admit that both were meticulously painted on with under seal between precise, sticky tape lined patterns to hide the small random rust eruptions. Even as an eight year old car, people used to admire it in the street though, a level of recognition that very few cars of today could achieve. It was last seen on fire at the top of a local hill; apparently the cause was found to be a leaking fuel line dripping onto the hot engine.



R.I.P 1972 - 1983

The Beetle model probably gained it's reputation for reliability in the 1960's with everybody from hippies to film stars owning them. Woody

Allen paid homage to their solid build in the comedy film *Sleepers* in which he awakes in the distant future. Attempting to flee he finds an old VW Beetle in a cave and of course it starts first time. Then we had Herbie and that iconic "F" registered white one parked behind *The Beatles* as they crossed Abbey Road. Before all this of course, the model had a very dubious history, it being the brain child of one Adolf Hitler as a "people's car" but, like that Basil Fawlty, we wont mention the war.

So why are we here then? Well its not my fault that that *The Rolling Stones* have just re-mastered and re-released their 1972 album "*Exile on Main Street*" amongst much publicity. Nor is it my fault that we have so many retro/time travel shows on the TV.

What probably is my fault however, is the fact that my mind travels when I am using sites such as Ebay and... well, I ended up bidding for a car. Not just any car you see, no not for me, but instead a rather well restored 1971 [K] Orange Beetle. You wait to when I see that Mick Jagger next, I'll have a word or two to say to him alright:

"Mick, how are you doing?...I have something that I want to say to you...I want to know... well I would like to know... erm... erm... well how can I put it?... Do you ever see that Bianca these days that's all?"

THE LADY HAS HISTORY

Sounds like a Frank Sinatra song but isn't, no, it's a comment on the sheer amount of time and money lavished on one single car - not by me I hesitate to say. I know that the ladies say they do not look their best in the morning until they have put a bit of slap on but really.

So this particular *Lady is a Tramp* and, like the paparazzi, I have the pictures to prove it:



SOME EVIDENCE OF A ROLLED UP CARPET, KITCHEN CABINETS AND A WASHING MACHINE...FOR TWO SOLID WEEKS NOW ALL I HAVE EATEN IS FISH AND CHIPS. THE WIFE WILL BE BACK FROM HER SISTER'S PLACE TOMORROW AND I WILL BE IN A SPOT OF BOTHER IF I DO NOT PUT THE WALL AND WINDOW BACK IN PLACE AND GIVE IT ALL A GOOD CLEAN!



FAIR CONDITION AS MANY OWNERS WILL TESTIFY, RAN WELL IN THE PAST BUT NEEDS A BIT OF ATTENTION NOW
AND I DO NOT HAVE THE TIME TO DO IT. NO DELIVERY OR GUARANTEE BUT STILL A BARGAIN AT £995 o.n.o

**DID THIS ADVERT CARRY ANY HINT OF DANGER FOR YOU? NO? WELL
MUCH MORE WORRYING THAN THAT MIGHT BE THE SIGHT OF A PREVIOUS
OWNER RISING FROM THE DEAD IN THE FIRST OF THIS PAIR OF PICTURES!**



To keep the rather tenuous musical link going, John Lennon referred to *"ten thousand holes in Blackburn, Lancashire and somebody has to count them all"* on the song "A Day in the Life". Well, I'll tell you what, if I had to do one task or the other, I would be looking at the train timetables with a click-counter and a bag of sandwiches in my hand.

Luckily for me, my own "somebody" didn't fancy Blackburn and persevered with the necessary work until it was fully completed. Now, when talking about cars and restoration projects, the word "completion" is a bit of an oxymoron. I now have to realise that I am in danger of polishing brake callipers or meeting VW Beetle owners in a cold and wet field in Nottingham over a lousy sausage sandwich.

That "somebody" though, for those that are interested, did do the following :

1. New floor pan
2. New heater channels
3. New rear suspension panels
4. New front quarter panels
5. New spare wheel well
6. New front panel
7. New rear valance
8. New bulkhead section
9. New axle beam

10. New wings x 4
11. New bonnet
12. New steering box
13. New starter motor
14. New ball joints
15. New track control arms
16. New suspension bushes
17. New brakes front & rear
18. New brake pipes
19. New master cylinder
20. New exhaust
21. New heat exchangers
22. New headlights
23. New bumpers
24. New window seals
25. New clutch
26. New tyres x 5
27. Battery 12v Sealed Cell
28. And naturally a full re-spray and rust-proofing

I also had a significant role in this process by not only purchasing a few pedal rubbers but also by fitting them...all on my own without help!

So the Lady has spent some time in the bathroom of life and can now emerge back into the world with full tax exemption and very cheap agreed value insurance. It is now up to me to run a rule over it all and pronounce my verdict. Well it looks fantastic given that it has had more cosmetic work done on it than one of those American film-stars and carries a full M.O.T certificate as a badge of pride.

The power provided by 1300cc of flat four air-cooled noise meant that I had to place a quilt in the rear storage area as some insulation. The gear change is more like driving a military vehicle, woops the war again, I meant to say like stirring a witches brew with her own broom and, of course, the luxury of having plastic seats at my time of life is something that I can live without. A contemporary handbook revealed a maximum speed of 81m.p.h and a 0-50m.p.h [not sixty you must note] of a rather sedate 12.5 seconds. The engine creates 57 H.P, slightly more than a modern lawnmower yes, but also with a global warming return of only 29 mpg.

So what has been proven? For me, I would say do not attempt to time travel as it can be very costly and ultimately futile. Yes, the car is admired by all those that see it - well apart from that man in an A.M.G Mercedes who was very anxious to pass me that is - but for me it's my every day Ford Focus that I will still go shopping in. And the Beetle? Well it's now to be called "Joan" [as in Collins] a name from which I will

allow you to draw your own conclusions.

Yet despite this, the car has a certain unique character, almost a joie-de-vivre in our world of sameness...hold on though, where's the air conditioning switch, electric windows, Sat-Nav, heated seats, rev counter, clock ...CLOCK? No bl**dy clock? Can anybody show me the door through which I came back from 2010?

So after this background story, it must be time to reveal the car to you in it's present splendour:





