



IN THIS ISSUE

- Aston Martin on Ebay 9
- At the Wheel 2
- Autojumble 10
- Brits in the Ozarks 3
- Brits 'Round BC 7
- Ladner-Bellingham Run 2007 1
- Leonardo Cirillo Obituary 8
- Letter to Heaven 1
- Notes From the Iron Man 8

NOTE THE DATE OF THE

CHRISTMAS DINNER

**TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 27**

6:30 HAPPY HOUR

7:00 DINNER

BE THERE!!!

DUES WILL BE DUE SOON!
THEY ARE \$20 ON OR BEFORE
DECEMBER 31
THEY ARE \$25 1/1/06 OR AFTER

OLD ENGLISH CAR CLUB OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER COAST BRANCH

NOV-DEC 2007 - VOL 12, NUM 6

Letter To Heaven

Les Foster

Sometimes bureaucracy moves in strange ways. Recently, I have been attempting to register to my name the 1952 Thames pickup that I purchased in New Westminster in July, 2006. The elderly gentleman that I bought the truck from had been unable to produce any documentation for the Thames on the day of sale but had assured me that the papers were somewhere in his apartment and had merely been mislaid following a move a few years previous.

As the world of Thames trucks turns very slowly, indeed, I wasn't overly concerned. A few days or even weeks were irrelevant- the truck wasn't going anywhere fast- of that I was certain! Weeks stretched to months, however, and the seller expressed concerns about his health. Tests were scheduled and appointments made. He was just too preoccupied to search for the documents. Commiserating with him, I was loath to apply any pressure. Every couple of months I would call him, inquiring after his health and gently broaching the question of the unfound papers. Every couple of months he seemed a little more infirm.

Finally, after a full year had passed and nothing had been produced, I decided that I would have to get serious about obtaining my documentation. My next step was to contact the Vehicle Records department of ICBC and describe my predicament to them. "No problem", I was assured. All I had to do was get the seller to complete his portion of the standard Transfer/Tax form, fill out my areas and return it to their department with a cheque for seven dollars. ICBC would search for a supporting document and, providing it was found, the truck would be mine.

Filled with new hope, I called the ailing former owner again and again but received no answer. I left messages. No answer. A couple of weeks went by and then the phone rang. It was his daughter. Her father was very ill and had been put in a Veterans hospital. Oh dear! I explained my predicament to her. His daughter offered to take my transfer form to him to have it signed and she would post it back to me. All was not lost! Sure enough, a couple of weeks later, there was the shaky signature of my aged friend adorning the all important Transfer form. Into an envelope with the cheque it went and off to the post office.

Continued on page 2

Ladner-Bellingham Run 2007

Steve Hutchens

Environment Canada's weather forecast for White Rock on November 2, two days before the run, was for "Sunny. Low plus 5. High 10. " I chose White Rock's weather to put on our website as it is about half way geographically on our route. It turned out that it was, indeed, mostly sunny and the high was 11, so it was a delightful day.



Celia donated her seat in our Morgan to Joe Irwin, a friend from Chantilly, Virginia, who was visiting us. Joe and I were in the Air Force together at McChord AFB in Tacoma in 1967 and 1968. Joe was curious about a run of old English cars, and was looking forward to the day.

We left Bellingham about 6:50 and were in the parking lot in Ladner at 7:42, near record time. Awaiting us in Ricky's were Alan and Mary Lou Miles, our registrars for the day, and early birds Gil and Joy Yarrow, Ken Miles, and Brian Lees. Bart and Audrey Shaw joined us shortly and we set to making breakfast decisions from the ample menu. A few minutes later the flood gates opened and the room filled as Alan and Mary Lou, having finished breakfast, started registering everyone. The total turnout was a bit thin, with some 26 cars registering for this great traditional run. Talk was that fear of delay at the border (both going south and then on the return north) may have dampened the turnout.

I tried to take photos of each car and I think I got 30 or so

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 1

Another couple of months passed. Are you noticing a recurring theme? I began to expectantly anticipate the "clunk" of the mailbox lid every morning that might herald an answer from the supreme arbiters of my truck's fate.

In the meantime, as I was also hoping to get the missing VIN plate from the seller, I was still keeping in sporadic touch with him. At one point in late summer he was back home and recovering. He'd found the VIN plate and would try to get it to me. A couple of more weeks rolled by and my phone calls went unanswered again but I eventually connected with his partner who told me that the poor man had had a stroke and was back in the hospital in a coma. She said she had no idea about the truck, its papers or any parts of it. She promised, however, to watch for them. The next time that I called to check on his condition he was gone. I talked for quite a while with his bereaved mate and felt quite sad about his passing. He'd been a likeable and interesting fellow and his failure to deliver on his promise was no fault of his own.

Then the letter came. I couldn't open it right away. It was too much. I put it on the desk and found other chores to do. Anything to avoid the awful finality of ICBC! Eventually I ran out of excuses and tore the envelope open. There it was - a photocopied APV250, circa 1974. Yes! No! No, no, no... the seller's name was not right. My friend did not own the truck that he sold to me. His wife did. His late wife did. By odd coincidence, that same afternoon, the seller's obituary appeared in the newspaper. It gave the sparse outline of the man's life - he being pre-deceased by his wife and later taking up a new relationship with her best friend, the lady to whom I had spoken on the telephone. By now I felt that I knew quite a bit about my truck's old owner and his family.

What to do? Panicked phone call to ICBC! I explained the circumstances again - no recent documents except a signed Transfer Form from the seller; old ICBC records showed the truck registered in the seller's wife's name; wife and seller no longer with us.

Once again the reply from ICBC was, "No problem!" All that I needed to do was send, by registered mail, a Transfer/Tax Form with my details completed, to the last registered owner at the last known address (as shown on that copy they'd sent to me of the thirty-three year old APV250) and include a covering letter requesting the former owner to complete and sign their portion of the form and return it to me. Either this would happen or the letter would be returned unopened to me or thirty days would pass. In any case, any one of these eventualities would satisfy the requirements of ICBC and the registration could be mine.

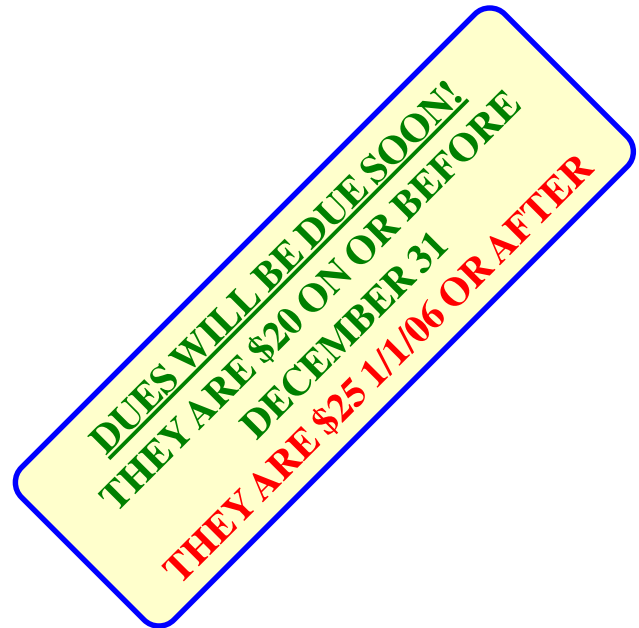
So that's how I came to write to Iris, wife of George. I'd read a bit about her in the obituary, and heard more from her friend who'd taken her place at George's side and now mourned his passing, too. Iris, dead these many years, was to receive a letter from someone she never knew. Writing to her was a rather odd experience. I found myself a bit of a loss as to how to begin. I kept imagining her sitting in the kitchen of her old home reading the letter from me, the morning sunlight streaming through the window, a hot cup of tea near her hand. Surely she would smile when she remembered the old truck - another one of George's crazy projects. The last time she'd seen the Thames it was hanging from the rafters of their garage, suspended in space and time by huge hawsers. My words were more than courteous, almost familiar but always respectful, "I purchased the Thames from your husband, George...", "Would you be so kind as to complete...", "yours sincerely..." etc; etc. After all, I was writing a letter to Heaven and I just might get an answer.

Canadian \$

Mike Smith

Due to the strong position of the Canadian Dollar, Octagon Group is able to honour all prices in the Moss Catalogue at par. For example \$100.00 US=Cdn. \$100.00.

Think of it, Moss prices without the



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