

# One Imp leads to

**Chris Clark, Woking, Surrey**

You may recall my letter just over a year ago about the acquisition of my second Stiletto, *Fugly*. Well, since getting the car back on the road in late 2011 it has been a pleasure to own and drive and has never let me down, the only failure being a burst heater hose and even then the car got me home. I love sitting on the motorway overtaking modern cars as they look on in surprise at this 'old timer' behaving badly and overtaking them. During my time of unemployment I made good use of *Fugly* and it has given myself and others much pleasure and is always a topic of conversation wherever we go.



***Posh and Dolly at the 2010 Woking Classic Car Show 2010. Something needed to fill the gap...***

*Photo: Chris Clark*

Upon buying *Fugly* I promised the seller I would show him the car once it was back on the road. So, one sunny day in May 2012 I decided a cross-country drive to Henley, *Fugly's* old stomping ground, would be a pleasant way to spend a few hours. It proved an enjoyable run out and

the previous owner was really pleased to see the car and how much I had achieved in six months; he even gave me a few spares he still had for the car. While having a cup of tea with him and his wife, he advised me that the person he purchased *Fugly* from had another Imp and a large quantity of spares he was willing to sell. Fortunately he still had his contact details and



***...enter *Fugly*!  
(Also see back cover)***

*Photo: Chris Clark*

# another...

tend not to get too excited as rarely are there any real treasures among the items on offer. So I was somewhat surprised to hear the seller had a 998, big-valve head, rally/circuit gearboxes, 28/36 Weber, R17 cam, etc he was prepared to sell. Now, seeing as I am just a couple of months

kindly passed them on to me.

Back home and a few weeks on and I got round to calling the number. Having been offered some 'great' Imp spares before, I



**Comfy chairs were a tenner from a car boot sale**

*Photo: Chris Clark*

visit to the seller's home some six months after we first spoke. I worked out a value for the items and invited a friend to view the items with me as some would be of use to him also. The seller was true to his word; he had all the bits mentioned and much more besides. We worked out a deal between us and a huge load of Imp parts, mostly 'sporty' were ours. Two weeks later and everything was back home. I now had a 998 engine to build up and more than enough spare parts to keep my Stiletto on the road. But what to do with the 998? MSM – or *Posh* as I now call it (more of that later) had a nearly new 930 installed and was performing well and *Fugly* has proved so reliable – “if it ain't broke don't fix it!”

Well, my predicament of having a spare engine was soon resolved. On the club website under the 'for sale' section Richard Claydon had posted a Singer Chamois project. He was losing the storage facility the car was garaged in and

older than the Imp (and many other club members seem to share this birth year from those I talk to) I thought I would make this landmark in my life special by treating myself to some special Imp parts. To cut a long story short and several 'phone calls later, I finally managed to arrange a

**Arrival of a trailer full of Imp bits prompted the need for something more suitable to put them in..**

*Photo: Chris Clark*



needed to move it on fairly promptly. When I acquired *Fugly* I really wanted a Chamois but couldn't resist taking *Fugly* on as a project. Richard's Singer had already received a major amount of work care of the Gurners who had a lot of bodywork carried out and the car resprayed in Sebring Red, or tomato soup red as I call it (maybe I should call this car *Heinz*). What more could I ask for? A really solid freshly painted car ready to re-fit with all the parts I had acquired a few weeks earlier!

A quick viewing led to the inevitable and so it was that Imp number three joined the household. But it had to be one in, one out. Initially and with a heavy heart I put *Fugly* up for sale on the club website but over the next 24 hours I re-thought my decision and pulled the advert. This left me with the choice of selling my beloved 'Dolly' Sprint or my Volvo P1800ES project. It had to be the Volvo... It required major expenditure and work and was not tax-exempt. I already had the Dolly 'SORNed' as it was hard to justify paying £220 a year road tax to drive 200 miles a year – why incur more expense on another car that would be in the same predicament? One day the government will realise how ridiculous this pre-1/1/73 tax rule is and return to the rolling 25-year rule. I digress – rant over and off the soap box.

I made a 'phone call to a friend who had always said, "If you ever want to sell the Volvo..." and he was as good as his word. At least he will restore the car to its former glory, more than I could see myself achieving in the near future. He paid Richard the purchase price of the Volvo and I paid

the balance. Richard and Karen kindly delivered the car down to the barn I use while I sorted out secure storage for the Dolly (the barn is far from secure and I needed the space the Dolly was taking up for the Chamois). A quick chat with my neighbours, one day spent tidying up and a very reasonable rent agreed and the Dolly is safe and dry in their garage. The Chamois is now back home and work has commenced. New brakes and shocks are now on the rear and I am currently fitting the exterior trim with the best of the stock from my spares





stash. Amazingly, I have found most of the parts I need for the Chamois in my shed including parts I didn't even know I had! A leather interior from a Ford KA has been purchased from Fleabay and Richard sold me a nice set of alloys so it is starting to come together.

I doubt it will be ready in 2013 and I am torn between the 'overtly sporty' look or a combination of original Imp with some sporty concessions – watch this space.

And why have I called MSM *Posh*? For those of you who don't like the practice of naming cars, think of the conversations I had with the wife. "I am taking the Stiletto out." "Which one?" would come the reply. "The green one." "They are both green..." *Fugly* and *Posh* makes it much easier to explain and maybe to go with *Posh* I now have *Sporty* the Chamois (*as it's red and you are clearly well on your way to accumulating 57 varieties of Imp it has to be Heinz! GP*). Just think of the potential, I could get another three Imps to complete the 'Spice girls' set, maybe a spice metallic one for 'Ginger', a Caledonian for 'Baby' and that yellow V8 engined Imp for 'Scary'.

To top it all I thankfully started a new job in August after a year of unemployment (well I need to pay for all the Imps somehow) and my daily commute is via 'Shanks Pony' so all the cars sit at home unused. *Posh* was taken to Brooklands on New Years Day along with another impressive seven Imps that turned up but it has a nasty rattle from the suspension or similar and a low down misfire and *Fugly* has a flat battery and flat front tyre due to lack of use. Once the snow clears, I must get it out and use it again before I forget how much fun it is to drive.

In the meantime the Chamois will be receiving some serious attention (between all the Imp relate events on 2013) with a view to hopefully being ready for 2014.



Ex-Neil Gurner Chamois  
looking very nice  
Photo: Chris Clark