

centre of attention



No, it's not a Rootes Press photo, it's Michael Taylor's unregistered Californian. 'Unique' is an often misused word but this car is just that, being the closest you will find to a new Imp, having covered just 82 miles from new. See next page

Photo: Michael Taylor

82 miles from new Californian!

Michael Taylor, Chester, Cheshire

I am 43 years old and an Imp Club member. I have been looking for a good Imp coupé for some time and came across an unregistered 82-mile Californian to be auctioned by H&H at their Duxford sale on 15th November and, well, I just had to buy it!

Understandably there was a lot of interest on the club's Forum and Facebook pages. I announced, "I'm going to go and buy it from the auction," so off I went, placed a bid and bought it. It wasn't quite that simple of course: the car attracted much attention and bidding soon exceeded its estimate of £6,000-£8,000.

I arrived back home to find there was a lot more talk about the vehicle and the price (as you would expect – some £20,700 with auction fees). Personally I know what it costs to restore classic cars these days, even a humble Imp, and this Imp is truly unique. I absolutely expected to pay what it sold for in the end. There were some very nice comments on the Forum and Facebook pages when people found out I'd bought it. I think they were glad it went to an Imp Club member rather than spirited away abroad never to be seen again.

The car is not concours but is amazingly original; it has had a professional repaint at some time in its original Forest Green, purely due to the deterioration of the ancient cellulose paint.

I certainly intend keeping the vehicle and plan to take it to a couple of classic car shows for people to see, maybe Tatton Park and the NEC show. *(And the National please! GP)*

As I said, the car has never been registered on the road and I intend keeping it that way. I'm not planning on driving the vehicle because it is possibly the most unique Imp surviving though this



does mean I am still without an Imp I can drive! I plan on buying another that I can enjoy and drive to some local meets.

I believe the car was owned from new by an aircraft engineer for many years before being sold (for £4,000) and kept in a collection in Ireland. It has never had a rear number plate fitted; the front plate – MDP 248F – appears to be fictitious and was presumably fitted for display purposes.

The chassis number is B401 006507 HCO and the car came off the production line on 27th October 1967. As you would expect, being unregistered, the car is unknown to the DVLA. If anyone can shed any light on its history I would be grateful. Please e-mail me: cossietaylor@hotmail.com. Thank you.



Photos: Michael Taylor