

## 1935 BSA Light Delivery Van

History of the van as told to me by owner, David Francis Cox on 4th October 2018.

The vehicle was purchased by Thompson and Hills Ltd, Auckland in 1935 and used in their business until they gave it away to David Cox's grandfather, William Triner on his retirement. William was a long serving Electrical Engineer for Thompson and Hills Ltd. The family think it would have been around 1947/1948. Apparently, the van was not in very good mechanical condition and the family believe if it hadn't been given to their grandfather it would have been dumped.

William did not have a driver's licence. Therefore, he left the car on the family dairy farm at Stanley Road, Glenfield. At some time after he took delivery of it, he decided to teach himself to drive. He took the vehicle out and drove it down the road. Lost control of the vehicle, ran off the road and hit a tree. Hence the frontal damage on the van. It was never repaired. After that he put the vehicle back on the farm where it stayed until his death.

His daughter and son in law inherited the vehicle. Neil Francis Cox was the son in law. Under their ownership it was shed stored from around 1955/1956. Apart from shifting it a couple of times to different sheds on the dairy farm it never moved. It stayed there until 2011. The family stated at one stage Neil decided to get the vehicle going and overhauled the motor. He put new pistons in and rebuilt the motor. His son stated that he put back the old spark plugs to save money. He never attempted to start the motor.

After Neil's death the vehicle was given to his surviving four sons. Two of the sons, David Francis Cox and John Cox took control of the vehicle. John, a Takapuna Lawyer thought the vehicle was worth mega bucks and did not want the vehicle disposed of because he had intentions of restoring it. He wrote to the BSA Club in England around two years ago and requested details of the vehicle. He supplied a photo of the identification plate on the fire wall. They emailed back that as far as they are aware this vehicle is the only whole surviving vehicle in the world. Unfortunately, David cannot confirm this because John died around 18 months ago. John had the original ownership papers but unfortunately these have been lost since his death.

The vehicle stayed in the storage shed at Stanley Road, Glenfield until the farm was sold to Metlifecare in 2011 for a new retirement village. The vehicle was then shifted to David's place at Taynith Place, Glenfield where it stayed in a shed of sorts until we took delivery of it on 20th September 2018. David advised us that the motor is not seized and still turns over.

## Restoration Beings

With research we also came to the conclusion it was the last one in the world as only 700 were ever built.

Discussions with Harold Kidd as he had owned 2 ex P&T ones found in Rotorua in the 60s, he backgrounded the history and said he had found records in the Turnbull Library of the cars for Meat deals but only 7 vans were in the deal. With this history the club went ahead as it will be a great restoration



The club then picked it up on a trailer and delivered it to the club rooms,

Slowly the van was stripped down carefully recording templates and measurements.

Where possible parts were overhauled and finished, carefully labelled then stored in plastic bags.

The sign written side panels photographed then carefully removed and stored as we want to reproduce the advertising when finished



**Sign writing**

The woodwork was in a bad way with rot, so removed with care and the rear van body removed on a jig and stored as one piece for work on it later



**Body on its way to storage**

The chassis had suffered some serious damage from its connection with the tree, also the suspension. The front axle is twisted and the drop arm had been broken and crudely brazed up. Steering linkages also broken and a piece of angle iron brazed between the break.

The club is fortunate that some of its team are engineers so a new tie rod has been made. The drop arm was more of a problem as no replacement could be found so a bar of high tensile was forged into a rough shape so with a lot of grinding and machining we now have a better than new arm

