

## LIFE'S LITTLE IMPONDERABLES

There are so many imponderables in life, aren't there? And as I get older, there seems to be more and more things to think about and keep me awake at nights.

Like for instance, why do they put artificial flavouring into lemonade and put real lemon juice into washing up liquid? Why is it that when you open a can of evaporated milk it is still full? And why is there only one monopolies commission?

Then when you think of the things that we say, it gets worse! We so often start sentences with "Now then...." – but is it "Now" or is it "Then" – they don't really go together at all! And have you ever heard someone say "Don't come running back to me if you break a leg...!" That might be a little difficult! – or "Do you want a good hiding?" – what's the option – a "bad hiding"?

And even our English language is not devoid of such imponderables. Why does the word "lisp" have an "S" in it? What bright *thpark* thought that one up then? Why is abbreviation such a long word? Come to think of it, why does the word monosyllabic have 5 syllables? And shouldn't "phonetics" be spelt the way it sounds?!

And then there are things like why is it that when you transport something by car, it's called a shipment, but when you transport something by ship, it's called cargo? And perhaps the most scary of them all, why is it that doctors call what they do a "practice"?!

No wonder I have trouble getting back to sleep once I've woken up in the middle of the night and taken my customary wander across the landing to the bathroom – which I have to say becomes more and more regular the older one gets – still it's better than the alternative – not waking up at the right time!!

But then I start to think about the imponderables about cars. Like why do so many young drivers have the stereo thumping so loud that you can hear it 6 streets away, in a third floor room with triple glazing? Actually, I may have found the answer to this. Most of these stereo systems have the amp and speakers in the boot, but once the driver gets into the car and shuts the doors they can't hear it - so they have to keep turning the sound up! See – when you really consider an imponderable there's often a simple explanation!

But there are more imponderables that I cannot explain, like, why, when I am searching for a place on a roadmap is it always in the crack between the pages, or, just as bad, the roads into that place on the map are under a sign for a Little Chef, so you can't read the road numbers? Whilst we are on the subject of map reading – has anyone else noticed that the typeface on road maps is getting smaller or being printed out of focus – or is it just that my arms aren't long enough any more!

Here's another driving imponderable - why, when I buy a sandwich to eat on a long journey, that I decide I will unwrap at the next set of lights on red, do all the traffic lights stay on green! At least I now know how to get the lights to stay green – just buy a sandwich in a plastic wrapper and leave it on the passenger seat!

Talking of food and drinks in the car –have you ever dropped those plastic caps that screw onto the top of the coke or water bottles? Have you ever noticed that you only drop them onto the floor – never onto the seat where they can be easily picked up again - and they always roll away as you are coming to part of the journey that needs both hands to steer and change gear? And what about the bits of chocolate that ALWAYS fall off the choc bar you are eating- why do they ALWAYS fall between your legs, and then as you try and find them, you end up pushing them further under your bottom so that the warmth from your seat can nicely melt them into your trousers or skirt?!

Why doesn't the chocolate ever fall on the floor and the bottle top onto your lap?  
Answer me that, then!

Of course, there are all sorts of other imponderables when it comes to TVR's, like are there two identical anywhere, what build quality system do they use in the factory, and why can't I afford a Tuscan?!

As an aside, I took the Tiv out last February for the first decent drive since the previous October – yes, I am one of those “saddo” drivers who only use the car when there is little chance of rain, snow, salt on the roads etc. Therefore my winter driving is limited to a few blue skied days and the odd blast every couple of weeks to turn it over (the engine – not the car), and give the battery a quick blast. Anyway, for once, we had a brilliant blue sky, dry roads – and it wasn't a weekday! So out comes the TVR, quick check on the tyre pressures, oil, water and hair piece, and we're away!

But where to go? You see, those imponderables are back! When I have somewhere specific to go, and especially if it would be a good drive in the Tiv, the skies deposit great dollops of wet stuff on “me ‘ead”, and then, when the weather is fine, I can't think of where to go.

So, I meandered through some of the leafy back roads of Worcestershire, with “Benny hat” pulled down over my ears (well, it may have been blue skies, but it was still about a hundred degrees below zero, and that was before the wind chill factor caused by a fast drive with the lid off!), and, of course, camera in boot – just in case!

I ended up driving round the Malvern Hills, and discovered some great places for that “one off” photo opportunity that will get my car onto the front cover of Sprint – trouble was, every one was either in the shade, covered with double yellows and on a bad bend, or was already occupied by people who had no right to take up my place! Actually, I did find one place unoccupied, but, thankfully, at the last moment noticed the pothole deeper than a ravine!

Why is it, when you have the time, the inclination and the weather for a photo shoot, (and you've not only remembered the camera but you've managed to put the film in as well!) you can't find the right place? It reminds me of the time I decided that a picture of the TVR in front of a majestic steam train would be so evocative that it was bound to be published in Sprint. So I found a place by the Severn Valley (preserved) Railway and parked the car at just the right angle, in front of a straight piece of line, and waited.

Eventually I heard the whistle of a steam loco in the distance, and rechecked shutter speed, aperture and my flies in readiness. Then I saw the steam – camera raised to my eye I lined up ready for the perfect photo – the steam got closer, then appeared in my line of vision – then passed by the Tiv, and then disappeared again – with no sign of even a chimney, let alone the engine attached to it! I had neglected to check the position of the line – I had parked the car in front of the one place where the track is in a deep cutting! Why does it always happen.....just another of life's imponderables!

Anyway, back to my trip round the Malverns – remember even though the weather has warmed up as you read this, at the time it was really cold - after a few more miles I had to face another of life's imponderables – the need for the loo where the nearest one is at least 500 miles away!

So, thinking on my bum (well I'd hardly be thinking on my feet when I was driving now would I?), I headed for the nearest garage and topped up with gas.

“Do you have a loo, here?” I asked the lady assistant.

“Certainly,” she replied, “it's round the back – Oh! And you'll need this....” And handed me a huge key with an even bigger piece of metal attached. It was obvious they wanted their toilets kept for customers only.

But when I unlocked the door, I really wondered why! It was disgusting! I won't try and describe it for the sake of decency, but it did make me wonder – perhaps the biggest imponderable of them all - why do they lock petrol station toilets? Are they scared someone might clean them?

David (G10TVR) Morgan