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ALWAYS SOMETHING TO DO

The to-do list never seems to get any shorter on Bennett's 944

STEVE BENNETT

944 LUX

Occupation: Editor, 911 & Porsche World

Home town: Hoxne, Suffolk

Previous Porsches owned: 6

Car: 944 Lux

Year: 1983

Mileage: 123,678

Owned for: 1 year

Mods/options: None. Just as Stuttgart intended!

Contact:

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THIS MONTH IN BRIEF:

Paintwork has been sorted and a number of niggles - thermo switch, idle valve and headlamp motor - repaired

the paintwork. While superficially pretty good, it's never really stood up to close inspection, particularly the bonnet, front panel, spoiler and roof. The front end and bonnet had been treated to paint over the years, but it had started to react, and the roof was tired and the paint flat. The sills, while largely solid, had been repaired before, but not very well, and each side featured the same coin-sized blemish.

I needed a good local bodyshop and, while picking up one of Paul Stephens's retro look 911s, I found one in the shape of Bentley Automotive in Clare, Suffolk. Main man Nick Bentley agreed to take on the work and got the spray gun loaded up and oven warmed. Nick does a lot of paintwork for Paul Stephens and his work is certainly very good, as was proved when I picked my 944 up a couple of weeks later. From ten paces back it doesn't look much different, but close up it's now about as good as I can reasonably expect. No, it's not going to win a concours, but I've not seen many better early 944s.

Shortly after the paintwork, the headlights decided they weren't going to pop up any more, the thermostat fan stopped working and the idle lost the plot. I hate trying to fix

electrical faults, so I booked it into my local garage, Cowhams in Fressingfield, Suffolk. A new thermostat switch sorted out the fan, which is a cheap fix, and I felt sure that the headlamp problem would be just a switch, although I had discounted it being a fuse, having enough electro nounce to at least check that far. Surprisingly, it turned out to be the motor itself.

I suspected that the idle issue was probably with the idle control valve, and the multi-meter proved the point. Time to get some bits and, keen to expand my horizons, I tried used Porsche parts specialist, Frazerpart. They have supplied me with a few bits before, including a DME relay which I brought from Frazerpart's eBay shop.

This time, Frazerpart's, Max Schenker found me a headlamp motor and idle control valve and the parts were with me in no time for Cowhams to fit - all at a reasonable price and complete with a Kit-Kat - a nice marketing touch!

If you're casting around for parts new or used, then I'd recommend giving Max a call. **PW**

CONTACTS

www.frazerpart.com

www.cowhams.co.uk

www.autowerkenorwich.com

Bentley Automotive: 07836 580587

Running a 26-year-old car as a daily driver is always going to be something of a trial, and sometimes I wonder why I do it. But when I'm out and about mixing it with all the silver and grey bland mobiles that occupy the tarmac these days, I do get a certain sense of satisfaction that my old 944 can still, hopefully, brighten up the roadscape a bit. Not that it's let me down, it's just that there's always something to do, although part of that is my desire to get it as spot-on as possible.

So what's new? Well, since having the dash top and Dansk stainless steel exhaust system fitted at Porscheshop, the big money spend has been on

