

Eric The Viking – A restoration in many parts – Part 2 – 17th December 2015

The story so far...intrepid but slightly bonkers camper van enthusiast buys basket case 1973 rag top bus with Viking roof after thought in need of restoration before it is sent to the great busjam in the sky. The van had arrived and a single day had been spent looking at what was there, followed by half a day starting the work on the sliding door.

October 2015

The project was on hold pending the completion of the welding course at the local university. No purchases of welding gear until then, no work on the bus, nothing. With three days to go, an email from them advised that the course was cancelled due to lack of uptake. Rats. A hasty rethink and a call to a friend who uses a welder periodically in his job. He is rather busy at the moment, maybe another time. Then a chance conversation with a neighbour whose very close friend has a brother just down the road who used to be a welder professionally. He can give me a list of things to buy and come over to help point me in the right direction at mates rates. Fantastic, loving that plan. The days became weeks and due to personal commitments he was unable to help either. This meant that the welding knowledge, hardware and progress remain non-existent.

Despite this, the interest has not waned.

November and December 2015

A great trip to Brighton and the end of season trips all complete, our other van Poppy has been put to bed in the garage as Eric rests (or is that "rusts") nicely on the driveway. The porous cover either blowing in the wind or sodden in the never-ending rain has the added assistance from pallets pinning the cover to the bodywork as protection against the rain. No further work has been possible outside and the sliding door work has stopped as the next job is the cutting and welding. Project Van was relegated to second fiddle by Project Wedding and will start up again in the New Year. Juggling a job, wedding planning, a fiancée who is not 100% and a van restoration isn't possible in the sunshine state, let alone a soggy Buckinghamshire autumnal driveway.



Our passion for our vans continued into the wedding plans. We even made our own wedding cakes – Eric is a chocolate cake, Poppy is a flourless orange, lemon and almond cake. Whilst we won't win awards for our decorating skills, you can see where we were going with the plan and the thought is there! Part of our honeymoon plan includes some time at home and unless a thoughtful guest has forsaken the traditional toaster in favour of a MIG welder, I can fruitfully spend that time buying the bits that I need so that I can kick start the restoration work as we begin our married life.

Anyone know which end of a welder is which?