

# THE CLEAR HOOTER!



NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB



Volume 36 Number 12, December 2020

WWW.CENTRALCOASTBRITISHCARCLUB.COM

## *Taxi Chronicles, Part 5 by John DeRoy*

Welcome to the final chapter of this extended tale of a newbie collector with delusions of grandeur. During the three-year nightmare restoration of my 1989 taxi (recounted in the last issue), the upgraded interior was inspired by photos I found online of a highly customized Fairway in Europe. That unique taxi ultimately led me down a rather large rabbit hole, presented in what follows.

Its then-owner Aleksander (“Alex”) and I originally meet by email in 2013. Alex has had a small, wedding taxi business in Poland that he plans to wind down before moving to the UK in about three years.



The photos of his black cab show it to be spectacular. It is *almost* the perfect taxi – a LHD Fairway Driver with a gorgeous, Rolls Royce-like interior including tan leather with burgundy accents, a front passenger seat, a flat-panel monitor



behind that, a dark wood half-partition rather than the factory standard dog-leg one, a wooden dash, and a few beautiful enhancements to the exterior such as a Daimler front grill. This is my dream taxi, save for the fact that it can't be brought over to the US until 2020. Greatly disappointed, I save photos of his taxi and eventually use these to inspire the custom interior work in my consolation prize, the 1989 restoration project. Once that work is done, I've decided to dabble with it as a wedding or special event car.

In early 2016, Alex has moved to Shillington, UK. I revisit the idea of my buying his taxi, since now I'm down to only having to wait four years to get it. (For some reason, four years doesn't sound as ridiculous as seven.) He offers it at a very tempting price (high by any normal Fairway price standards, but considering

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# BUSINESS INFO



## GENERAL MEETINGS:

**2021 Meeting Dates, none have been picked due to Covid. Check back here each month.**

Board meetings take place according to the needs of the club, usually before or after the club's General Meeting; but as often as is deemed necessary at the discretion of the Club President.

## NEWSLETTER

THE CLEAR HOOTER is your Club Newsletter and it is published monthly. The deadline for submission of any camera ready or digital ads, stories, reports and information that you'd like to see in the next issue is the **23rd** of the month prior to publication. Items may be sent to the editor at: [dtreid@gmail.com](mailto:dtreid@gmail.com)

**For Sale ads** are free to members. Non-members pay \$25. Ads run 3 months, unless otherwise indicated by the seller. Any commercial ad or to open a commercial account please contact Allen Merriam, [alyn123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alyn123@sbcglobal.net)

**Membership dues** are \$40 to join and \$30 to renew yearly. Make sure we have your e-mail for newsletter deliveries. If you need to have one snail mailed to you please let the editor know, [dtreid@gmail.com](mailto:dtreid@gmail.com) Extra \$5.00 for mailed newsletters, payable with your dues.

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THE CLEAR HOOTER! Is the newsletter of the Central Coast British Car Club, formerly The Central Coast Triumphs, founded in 1984 by Mrs. Lee Bloomquist and is a chapter of the VTR, Vintage Triumph Register

CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB  
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## Taxi Chronicles, Part 5 by John DeRoy



In early 2016, Alex has moved to Shillington, UK. I revisit the idea of my buying his taxi, since now I'm down to only having to wait four years to get it. (For some reason, four years doesn't sound as ridiculous as seven.) He offers it at a very tempting price (high by any normal Fairway price standards, but considering the work he's done to it, surprisingly reasonable). Step away from the car, John. Put your checkbook back in your pocket and just step away.

But I don't. Instead, I contact my British friend Neil, with whom I'd worked for several years at a large biotech firm here in Southern California. Neil has since moved back to England, is an Alfa Romeo enthusiast/collector, and stores his vehicles in a car barn on his property. "Neil," I write, "how'd you like to store a taxi for me until 2020?" I hope that he will politely decline. But he says yes, and by mid-2016, I have committed to buying Alex's taxi. To protect myself from the wrath of my family, I don't tell my wife about this, taking advantage of her "I'd rather not know" attitude toward my taxi habit.



A couple of months later, Alex sends me another email, this time saying that he has taken possession of a Polish friend's white 1992 LHD taxi that "is more beautiful" than Alex's black taxi. He includes photos of it. It's a nice car and in many ways resembles Alex's, except that this one is very white, inside and out, and comes with a cabriolet top. Thanks but not interested I tell him.

Two weeks later, for the heck of it, I show the photos of Alex's black and white taxis to a friend of mine who is in the catering business. I ask her which she thinks is more suitable to be a wedding/special event car. She says that the black one would certainly work, but she goes nuts with the white one, proclaiming it to be "the one." NOT what I wanted to hear. Now reconsidering my disinterest, I contact Alex. We work out a two-car price, but with the actual sale subject to independent inspections. How to find someone trustworthy to do this on the other side of the world from me? Thank you, Mother Ship LVTA.



After reaching out to the always helpful Mark Cooper for assistance, I email Danny Stephens, taxi specialist extraordinaire. Regrettably, Danny and Alex live too far apart, so that option becomes infeasible. Wait! What about Scott Hughes, the former spares manager at London Taxi Exports/ London Taxi Group? I've been in



contact with him since the Leacy acquisition of LTE/LTG.

Scott comes through. He agrees to drive one Saturday the thirty kilometers from his home in Bedford to Alex in Shillington, inspects the vehicles, provides me with written reports, and pronounces them both to be in very good condition, although with a few expected minor issues. He notes that both have been converted quite nicely in Poland from RHD to LHD. I happily pay his fee, knowing that his expertise has led to objective and accurate findings.

Alex agrees to keep the white 1992 for me for several months until September 2017, as that's when it turns the magical twenty-five years old and becomes legally importable to the US. The black one is trailered over to Neil's, where it will stay until its 2020 birthday. Neil will keep it on blocks and start it from time to time to keep it in running order.

Continued on next page

## Taxi Chronicles, Part 5 by John DeRoy



In late December 2016, I complete a wire transfer to Alex, buying both cars. I am now the proud owner of three Fairway taxis, only one of which is actually in my possession (the 1989 restoration is complete). I am filled with excitement and trepidation, the latter of which is caused by the total amount of money I've now spent on a fascination that should have remained just that. Oh, and maybe that I haven't shared any of this with my beloved and charmingly naïve, trusting wife.

I next proceed with two tasks: securing insurance for the UK-garaged taxis and arranging for the white one's shipment to me in September 2017. With a bit of help from Google, I find the right resources, and both items are handled in short order. Excellent! Now at least I can enjoy driving my 1989. Sure, there are still a few repairs that crop up from time to time, but nothing too big.

Fast forward to fall, 2017. The white taxi is transported to the port at Southampton, UK, where it leaves for its two-week oceanic journey to Port Hueneme, California, which is conveniently only a 30-minute drive from my home. It arrives on October 5. My customs broker has handled all the paperwork, and within ten days she calls to say the car is ready for pickup. The timing is perfect, because on Sunday, October 29, our temple is holding a car rally. My wife knows we'll be participating. She just doesn't know we'll be doing so in a white taxi.

On Friday, October 19, I drive away from the port in my latest "toy." It's pretty dirty, and the plastic rear window (recall it's a convertible) is yellowed so badly that I can't see through it. Okay, need to get that replaced before I get it home. If this car is to stand any chance of a warm welcome, it had better look perfect.

The port guys warn me that the brakes aren't working very well and that I shouldn't drive it far before having them checked. They're right – the pedal needs to be depressed all the way to the floor, and even then, stopping is a bit dicey. Thankfully I've already arranged for a tune-up at my local Nissan dealership, where I've taken my regular car for service for years. After fueling up, I drive the car the nearly ten miles to the dealer, where they instruct me to take it into the service area. The mechanics all stare, wondering what kind of a Nissan vehicle THAT is.

The service manager is great. He does an oil change, etc., but then says, "You are not driving this car away – it's too dangerous. You don't have any brakes because the front lines are damaged, and there's brake fluid all over the inside of the right wheel. I'm amazed you got it here without incident." Well, that would explain why it was so hard to stop on the way there. As for causality, it appears that when the shippers put the car in the RORO (roll on, roll off) cargo vessel, they must have wrapped the tie-downs to the brake lines. The service manager doesn't want to take on the job of replacing these on a car no one there has ever seen before. Joy.

The dealership keeps the car for the weekend while I figure out where to take it. I call Craig, the transmission guy who'd worked on the Beardmore (part three of this series) and ask him for a referral. "I can do that – bring it here," he says. Score! The car goes to him on Monday morning.

Craig fabricates and installs the new lines, and when I pick it up Tuesday morning, he states that the muffler needs replacement. He's right – it sounds like an old, loud, outboard engine. Okay, add that to the list of miracles to be pulled off in the next four days if we're to make the car rally on Sunday. I swing by a muffler guy a few blocks from the upholstery shop that will deal with the rear window and ask if he can replace the muffler. No problem, except the one on the car is nonstandard, with a downpipe configuration that won't allow for a universal one. "If you can get me a replacement from England, I'll install it," he tells me. I immediately call Leacy and they FedEx it out, with three-day delivery due on Friday. Fingers crossed, because muffler man is closed on the weekend.

## Taxi Chronicles, Part 5 by John DeRoy



Undaunted, I proceed to the upholstery shop. They love the car and replace the opaque rear window. They also convince me to replace the ratty rear carpet with a pristine white one they have available. But while preparing to do that, they discover that the passenger compartment heater is leaking badly. Fortunately, there's an auto repair shop two doors down that sets up a bypass to stop the leak. The car is returned to the upholstery shop, and the carpet installation is done. On Friday morning, I pick it up, take it to muffler man, and pray that the part from Leacy gets there on time. Wonder of wonder, miracle of miracles, it does! I've just pulled off the Mission Impossible of taxi-dom.

I pick it up at Friday afternoon and park it overnight at the upholsterer's because on Saturday afternoon, a mobile detailer will come and clean it up. I swing by when that's done and move the miraculously completed car to the office where I work, not quite fifteen miles away. Lyft returns me to the upholstery shop, where I pick up my regular car to venture home. (Over the course of the week, Lyft and I have become good friends; as part of all the coordination required to get the taxi from one shop to the next, I repeatedly need to get back to my "regular" car, wherever it has been strategically left. During this time, I also have become a serial liar to my wife, having come up with multiple fabricated commitments to explain why I am leaving home early and not getting back until late every day. Little did she know I was being unfaithful with a 3,500 lb machine.) That evening, while my wife and daughters are out – and think that I'm home – I drive my 1989 to my office, park it, and return home in the white one stowed there earlier. I place the white one in our attached garage where the 1989 usually resides. Later, the family comes back, they park in the driveway (not even entering the garage), and we all get a good night's rest.

Suffice it to say that on Sunday morning, a couple of hours before our road rally is to begin, my wife and kids get the shock of their lives. I finally come 100% clean with my wife, share all the details of my activities and deceptions for the past year or so, and notify her of the 2020 car yet to come. I'm pleased to report that we're still happily married, and she has been incredibly supportive of my goal of starting a wedding/special event car business on the side. She has even been trustworthy editor for this entire series of articles.

As for that, it's been a long haul. I've known all along that the cost of commercial insurance is prohibitive and that entering the limo service requires application for a Transportation Charter Permit (TCP) through the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC), which adds cost as well as administrative burden. But patience (and ignoring all sound advice to abandon the dream) pays off.

Within the past couple of years, a variation on the Uber/Lyft ride-sharing model has arisen. It's called peer-to-peer **car**-sharing, and it's been likened more to AirBNB for cars. Essentially, classic or vintage cars are rented for a few hours from owners through an online platform, which provides commercial insurance for the duration of the booking. It's essentially pay-as-you-go commercial insurance. No PUC involvement or TCP is needed under this model.

The best offering out there is Hagerty's DriveShare website. There, vehicle owners set various price points – one for the renter to drive the car, one for its use only in photo shoots, and one for the renter to be chauffeured in the vehicle by the owner or another DriveShare-approved driver.

But I don't really want strangers driving my taxis, nor do I want to have to work every wedding or special event booking. Fortuitously, a local limo operator/acquaintance has introduced me to Bill, a provider of drivers for hire. If you want an evening out on the town, call Bill, and he'll have a driver take you in your own car. If you're moving long distance and are unable to make the drive yourself, call Bill, and he'll take you in your car.

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***Taxi Chronicles, Part 5 by John DeRoy***

We thus have a match made in heaven. I provide the vehicles, and Bill provides the soon-to-be-DriveShare-approved drivers. We will handle the administrative DriveShare transaction behind the scenes (to secure the per transaction commercial insurance), thereby making this transparent to the end customer. The perfect solution, and one that could not have been possible until recently.

We're still working out the details but plan to launch in July. Will I ever recoup my investment? Most likely not, unless I sell one or two of the cars (including, possibly, the 2020 dream car) at some point. How much business can we generate? Time will tell, but we're very optimistic. If all goes well, I'll reconsider outright commercial insurance and the PUC avenue, and perhaps you'll see an uplifting epilogue to this series sometime down the road. Wish us luck.





## THE TWELVE DAYS OF AN MG CHRISTMAS

On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me a broken-down old MG

On the second day of Christmas, Moss Motors sent to me 2 new seats

On the third day of Christmas, Victoria Brit sent to me 3 new windshield wipers

On the fourth day of Christmas, I purchased for me 4 new spark plugs

On the fifth day of Christmas, the MG received 5 new tires

On the sixth day of Christmas, Food Lion provided me a 6-pack of beer

On the seventh day of Christmas, my creditors gave to me 7 bills for parts

On the eighth day of Christmas, a friend gave to me 8 hours free labor

On the ninth day of Christmas, I went to NAPA 9 different times

On the tenth day of Christmas, the MG gave to me 10 skinned knuckles

On the eleventh day of Christmas, I bought from BP 11 gallons of fuel

On the twelfth day of Christmas, I gave to my true love and me a ride in my "brand new MG".

*Re-printed from Quadriga News, December 2018*



# UPCOMING CCBCC CAR EVENTS



A request has gone out to the membership to plan some events in 2021. We realize Covid forbids us from doing a lot of things; but we have managed over the last 9 months to do some drives and drive thrus. Please help us put together something for each coming month.

The wine tour to Pismo will not be happening this year. We are keeping our fingers crossed that we will be able to hold our annual July car show

We also requested some biographies from the members. Last month we had Ron Root tell us all about his life before CCBCC. The request is still out there, please send them my way (dtreid@gmail.com)

Also a request for what have you been doing during your Covid Staycation went out. We had some responses; but we are out of new ones for the newsletter.

Your board of directors have done a fabulous job with runs, drive thrus, lunches etc. It is now time for the membership to step up and help us out.

---

## *Behind the Wheel* editors corner

**With almost everyone having extra time during this virus crisis, now is the time to get some stuff done that has been put off for so long. How about an article for the newsletter???** I know you have something to say about your car, a trip with your car, an outing, a technical article. I am sure you must have a picture of your drive that you would like to see on the cover of the newsletter.

I am attempting to put out a newsletter every month, there may be times I miss a month due to being away.

The newsletter is a vital piece of communication to keep members informed of what is happening within our club and lists events that are happening that may be of interest to club members.

I would like to feature one member's British car on the cover of each newsletter. If you would like your ride displayed on the cover, please send me a high resolution picture of it in a nice place (not just the parking lot at work!!) to dtreid@gmail.com

**I have NO more pictures and stories for the front page of the newsletter. Let's see some of your favorite pics of your British car. Also I am out of baby pictures for the guess who this is feature. There must be some of you working from home and have no where to go, take some time and find a great picture of yourself as a kid, maybe even with a car in the picture.**

## **ARTICLES NEEDED:**

The newsletter is in need of articles on anything to do with the club or British cars. Please use Microsoft Word and save as a document. If possible use font Arial, size 12 and do not do any formatting, just paragraphs of words.



## CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS FROM ENGLAND

### You May or May Not Want to Try



- 1) **Crackers** - no, not the dry saline type, but rather a wrapped cardboard tube that two people grab and pull to split in two. Whoever is holding the side with the center attached still gets to keep the goodies. usually a joke, small toy, and paper crown.
- 2) **Paper Crown** - very important. After pulling your crackers, each person must put on a colored paper crown. It doesn't matter the color or the fit or the condition, you have to wear it.
- 3) **Brussel Sprouts** - guaranteed to be on most plates through the UK. Not sure about this tradition!
- 4) **The Queen's Message** - King George V started this in 1931 and has happened every year since. The Queen has been giving this speech yearly since 1952. It usually focuses on the events of the year for the nation and herself.
- 5) **Mince Pies** - sweet pies filled with dried fruits and spices, or, mincemeat. Their fruity taste is traditional for Christmas. Yum!
- 6) **Bread Sauce** - supposedly very delicious?? It is a traditional accompaniment to the Christmas dinner. The sauce is made from, yes, breadcrumbs, milk, butter, onions, and spices.
- 7) **Christmas Goose** - the traditional bird roasted for dinner is goose. Even the Prime Minister dines on goose at Christmas.
- 8) **Boxing Day** - Dec. 26 is a national holiday in the UK. The tradition takes its name from an old English tradition of giving people in service "Christmas boxes" of money or presents as a thank you for their work all year. Now it is more eating leftovers, shopping the sales and watching old movies.

*Thanks to the Spoke "n" Word,  
Newsletter of The Idaho British  
Car Club*





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# Welcome New Members



# 130  
Ronald Kibbe  
Santa Paula  
1967 Triumph TR4A IRS

#131  
Martin Leung  
1974 Triumph TR6  
Westlake Village

I ran across some very old ads, not always related to cars; but interesting



## WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING DURING COVID

There are a number of us who have had more time because of Covid to do projects that we have been putting off for a long time. Let's share them here in this newsletter. Please send me yours and I will publish it in upcoming newsletters.

Thanks to Chris Vujea for the suggestion.

# CCBCC CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY DRIVE THRU



Being unable to have our usual Christmas brunch at the Four Points Sheraton due to Covid, your board of directors worked very hard to make a very successful Holiday Drive thru at the Oxnard Harbor. We paid for a permit, purchased gift cards and raffle prizes. It was easy to drive your LBC or any car through to pick up a free gift basket and maybe win a large raffle prize. We had enough for 75 cars; but only 31 showed up. Almost everyone brought their picnic lunch and chairs and we social distanced on the lawn for lunch. Later that day the health department closed the park due to Covid. It was a fun filled few hours. We had approximately 52 people. See pictures below



Goodie bag table



Julie giving instructions



Raffle Table with 22 prizes



Junie with her raffle prize

# MORE PICTURES FROM THE CHRISTMAS DRIVE THRU



The Xmas gathering



Brad with his raffle prize



Alan in his beautiful jag



# MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE



It's that time of year again - time to renew your Central Coast British Car Club membership. Renewals are due by the end of February. You may download the renewal form on the CCBCC website on the FAQ page (<http://centralcoastbritishcarclub.com/join-the-club/>).

Here is the direct link to the form: <http://centralcoastbritishcarclub.com/content/uploads/2018/07/Membership-Form.pdf>

If you mail your check, please send it along with your completed form to:

CCBCC Membership  
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Alternately you can renew via PayPal on the same FAQ page. Please be sure to include your latest contact and vehicle information in the PayPal comments. And if we get back to having club meetings before the end of February, you can bring your membership form and check to that as well.

Because of the "interesting" year 2020 was, we didn't have as many expenses as we normally would. As a result, for 2021 only, the renewal cost is \$15 unless you need/want a new badge, then it's an additional \$10 per badge. And be sure to tell us what kind of badge you want (pin, magnetic or clip) along with the way you want your name spelled. Note that new memberships are still \$30 (plus \$10 for the name badge) as we hope 2021 will be a more normal year.

If you've already renewed, please ignore this email. If you joined as a new member in the last couple of months, you are covered thru next year. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me - Joel Justin, Membership Co-Chairperson at [j\\_bar\\_j@hotmail.com](mailto:j_bar_j@hotmail.com).

Thanks, Pam and Joel Justin...  
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## ***DRIVE YOUR TRIUMPH DAY***

Dear Fellow Triumph Owner,

One thing that has remained constant in this crazy pandemic year, is the pleasure to social distance by taking a drive in your Triumph. So, with that in mind, it's time to plan a social distance activity for Drive Your Triumph Day, February 10, 2021.

My name is Rye Livingston and I'm with the Triumph Travelers Sports Car Club in Northern California, which is celebrating our 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary. As you may remember a number of years ago, I encouraged members of our club to drive their Triumphs on February 10th, to celebrate Sir John Black's Birthday, the man who organized Standard's purchase of Triumph after the war, and went on to make the cars we enjoy driving today.

Last year I received about 350 photos from all over the world: Scotland, Ireland, the UK, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Uruguay, Netherlands, Switzerland, Finland, Canada, Holland, Czech Republic, and of course all over the USA. I'm hoping we can increase that number this year!

The concept is straightforward. On Wednesday, February 10th, go for a drive in your Triumph. Take a scenic drive on a country road or out to lunch, to the market, to work, wherever. Go for a drive alone or in a big group from your local Triumph Club. Take your spouse, buddy, child, grandchild or your dog; then take a photo. The photo is mainly of the car, and the owner if possible, ideally in front of a cool spot, landmark, scenic view or in your driveway. If it's the middle of the winter where you live and your car is in hibernation, or in the middle of a restoration, take a photo of it anyway.

Next step is to email a high-resolution photo to [driveyourtriumphday@gmail.com](mailto:driveyourtriumphday@gmail.com), along with some basic information: owner's name, year and model of car, and place photo was taken (city, state, country). The photos will then be published not only in our club newsletter, but also in USA's national magazine: Vintage Triumph Registry, and on the Drive Your Triumph Day website: <https://driveyourtriumphday.shutterfly.com>

Be sure to contact me with any questions you may have, and thank you in advance for getting the message out to your members and friends to Drive Their Triumphs on February 10th.

Regards,

Rye Livingston  
Activities Chairman  
Triumph Travelers Sports Car Club  
Celebrating our 62nd Anniversary  
1960 Triumph TR3A  
Mobile: 530-FIND-RYE



# CCBCC's First Rally



Picture captions:

Winners:  
1st Mark & Janie Oberman  
2nd Joel & Pam Justin

Organizers giving out directions to the drivers

Drone flying among picnickers

All of the participants enjoying their picnic lunch social distancing.





## Central Coast British Car Club Regalia

Baseball caps – 18.00  
 Key Fob - \$10.00  
 Grill badge is 30.00

License Plate Frame - \$15.00  
 Lapel Pin – \$3.00  
 Patch and sticker 2.00 ea.

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 Polo Shirts - \$13.00(S-L) \$15.00(XL & XXL)  
 Polo Shirts with pockets - special order only)- \$15.00(S-L) 17.00(XL & XXL)  
 Crewneck Sweat Shirt – (Limited availability) \$16.00(S-L) 21.00(XL & XXL)  
 Hooded Pullover Sweat Shirt – (Limited availability) \$22.00(S-L) 27.00(XL & XXL)  
 Full Zip Hooded Sweat Shirt- (Limited availability) \$27.00(S-L) 32.00(XL & XXL)

There is a limited amount of Regalia at each monthly meeting or contact Pam Justin at [pjquilter1@hotmail.com](mailto:pjquilter1@hotmail.com) or 805 491-3068 to order. Provide your name, size and item. Only club members can order Regalia.

In addition to our silk-screened regalia above, we are now offering for members, high quality club regalia. **Lisa Rizzo at Ventura Custom Embroidery** has our logo on file and can make almost any kind of regalia desired. Please visit our CCBCC Website to find all the information needed to order. Items ordered will be in Royal Blue (the official club color) or some can be in white. The list of regalia offered with current pricing can be found on the CCBCC website in the members only section. (There is a link just before the list on the site to download an order form to take with you if you visit the store)