



www.vwthingregistry.com

Quarterly Newsletter September-December, 2016

As many of you know The VW Thing Registry is back after many years of inactivity. I had tried for a few years to contact the Type 181 Registry and had no luck. Their website is still active but who knows where your information goes... The VW Thing registry has been around for almost 30 years. Originally the Mid-Atlantic Thing Registry located in Springfield, VA. Bob Miller and his family ran the Registry. It was a self-funded organization when it started as the Registry is today. In the mid 1990's the Millers moved to Riverside, Ca (very close to where the Registry is located today) and changed the name to The VW Thing, Type 181 Registry.

By this time the Registry had grown to a worldwide organization and that's why the name was changed. Bob had people from all over the world helping with Registry. They did not track all the Things in the world via the VIN as we do now, but they did keep contact and vehicle information for each member. Later they did start collecting money to join the Registry and it functioned more as a club. They have a quarterly Newsletter called "Things" that was very nice! This was prior to the Internet. Everything was mailed and communication was harder for members back then. Now we have the Internet, email and Facebook to reach the entire world in a matter of minutes! I honestly don't know where the Miller family is today... Maybe one of you have more information?

The Type 181 Registry was also located on the West Coast in California. It was Originally the Pacific Northwest Thing Association. Later called the Type 181 register when it formed with Things West club. By this time the VW Thing Registry was not active anymore. The Type 181 Registry was a worldwide organization also. This was an active organization until sometime in 2003. It was run by David Campbell and from what I am told he turned the Registry over to someone else and they did not continue it. I have tried to contact David for more information with no luck. Does anyone know David?





As of today the new VW Thing, Type 181 registry is self-funded just as it originally started and free to Thing owners. I have had some amazing help locating old information about the past registry from some people all over the country and world! I want to Thank Jeff Gilleland for all the old archives of the VW Thing Registry. He has a personal website that has lots of great history and information. He also made a Map of Things all over the world which you can see on our website.

Brad Ellman sent me the original logo, which we are still using today. It's as classic as the Thing itself!

Ron Domeck has been a wealth of information over the years. Him and his brother Dennis have a website: www.kubeltreffen181.com and it's the place for everything you ever wanted to know about

show in the country. I contacted Ron about doing a Kubeltreffen West show and he was very supportive and offered to help. The Registry plans to start this annual event in 2017. I am working with Gary Mondshine who organizes the Treffen event now. More information to come...



While Talking with Ron about our event, I met Jim Knox on The Samba who actually lives in the same town I do! He has a Thing and is very active in the Thing community. He offered to help with the Treffen. He also tried to help me locate any old information we could find about the past registries.

Denise Brown is a local celebrity with her Thing "Branson". We met on a Facebook group for Things and she introduced me to Gregg Mercer who is also located in California and he was the Admin for the group. Gregg had some changes at work and need to have someone else take over the group. The People who drive a VW Thing, Type 181 were one of the largest private Thing groups on Facebook with over 1,000 members. I took over the group as the group for our Registry and it now has over 1,300 members in only a month.

Last but not lease Michael Basso from Thingparts.com was the first business to contact the Registry and he has been a huge help! He is promoting the new Registry and selling our new Stickers on his website. He is a great person to talk

Things. They also have run the Kubeltreffen East All-Thing Show for years. This is the largest Thing

with if you have questions about your Thing or need parts!

I have close friends in my local VW Club Birch and Sandy Price who own the famous Real Thing, which is Coca-Cola themed. They will also be helping the Registry with events.

Lastly let me tell you about what the Registry does not that you have some information regarding its history. I will also tell you a little about myself in this issue and plan to give bios on other members in later issues. "The purpose of The Thing (Type 181)

Registry is to promote the preservation and enjoyment of the Volkswagen Thing, while keeping track of all VW Things around the globe. We track the VIN, owner's information, color and location. This is FREE to all VW Thing owners. Although we don't have formal meetings, membership does provide the opportunity to participate in various scheduled Thing activities all over the world. We network through our Facebook page and newspaper. We promote Thing and Volkswagen events and sponsor activities like cruises, parades, gatherings, etc. Our activities are made possible by our network of volunteer "Thing Ambassadors" throughout the country. Our members also receive discounts at participating VW businesses who sponsor the Thing Registry".



The reason we use the VIN to track Things is because owners will change over the years, but the VIN will not. We will have information on where the Thing is located or has been located over the years, if it still exists and who currently owns it.

As for myself, I am located in Southern California outside of Los Angeles. I have owned my 1973 VW Thing since 2008. Here is a story from VolksAmerica Magazine about Types 181's and my Thing:



"Volkswagen may have gotten a little emotional with its color choices, but for model names it lacked va-va-voom! Here's a Type 181. It's a... a... Something. That's some Thing! To sell it, the marketing gurus called it lots of things. In the USA it was known as the Thing. In Germany it was called the Kurierwagen, in Great Britain they got to call their RHD version the Trekker (strictly speaking this is a 182 model, but close



enough), in South America the Surfari, in Italy the Pescaccia, in... you get the idea? Never lost for marketing inspiration, the Thing was built around the world but sold only in small numbers. In fact the last one sold to the general public was in 1980, and yet the model sold-on to the military around the world until 1983.

Originally designed as a go-between military vehicle (another military project was to be built for Europe but had yet to surface), production was from 1969 to 1983. But it only sold in the US in 1973 and 1974. The original version (VW Type 82 Kübelwagen) was used by the German military in World War II. Kübelwagen means "bucket car". No, it's neither sexy or inspiring...

Hence a new name was required. Over 50,000 Type 181s were used in the military. It was first sold to civilians in 1971 in Mexico and Europe. It was dropped from the American line-up in 1975 because it did not meet new safety standards. US Type 181s were only available in Blizzard White, Sunshine Yellow, Pumpkin Orange and Avocado Green. Now the Thing is a cult classic! Used in many movies and ads all over the world as a VW icon. Things have sold at almost \$50,000 at

major auto auctions in recent years. Original list price was \$2,750.

Eric and Roxanne Goodman own this 1973 VW Thing in Pumpkin Orange.

"I bought it for my teenage daughter as her first car in 2008. When I bought it the previous owner had sold most all the original parts from the Thing. All I got was the body and chassis. I had to replace everything from the top to the hubcaps and everything inbetween. It had no interior or anything, not even windshield wipers or a horn. We spent 7 months restoring the car."

"All the original parts had to be found. I bought parts from all over the world including Europe and Canada. I did not want to use any aftermarket or replacement parts. Lots of the patents look used but that's what I wanted. It's over 40 years old and it looks it, but is in great condition. The original parts we could not find or had to replace (upholstery, top, etc.) came from the Thing Shop in Arizona. After 5 years of ownership, I am still finding small original parts I need. Some VW Thing specific parts are very hard to find in the USA."

"The engine is a stock rebuilt 1600cc. Standard equipment: seats, glovebox light, heater, seat belt, removable doors, fold-down windshield and convertible top. Stock 14"



wheels. When it was restored we powder coated most parts. All the mechanical parts have been replaced also. The car was always a California car and I am the third owner. Had no rust. I even found an original factory roll bar and duckboards.”

“Finding a Thing with no cuts or modifications is getting harder. My car is all original!”

Please visit our new Website: www.vwthingregistry.com and register your Thing. Once we have your email address, you will start receiving our Newsletter for FREE. You can also order Registry stickers and your Thing will be listed in the VW Thing, Type 181 Registry list. We will be sending out the List once it is complete. Also please “Like” our Facebook page: www.Facebook.com/VWThingregistry.com

We have over 700 Likes and we have only had our page for a month. Please share both our pages with your Thing friends! Thank you for your support. Send us any information you think the members would like or any registry or Thing history you have and we will share it.

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