

The motivator years.

I didn't want to include this in the main body as it is not really very nice....but I am writing this as it needs to be gotten off my chest. What follows is true, and helps detail, bar a couple of omissions, the facts behind the restarting of the family photography business proper in the mid 1980s.

Most importantly it is fair that my Father in perpetuity is given some recognition for his successes in these years, recognition stolen away by the narcissism of others.

It reaches back to the early 1970s when Dad acquired another job in the motor-trade. This time as a salesman for a small local garage that at that time, offered cars from a low volume Japanese maker called Toyota alongside the Governor's true love – Reliant, yes that's right, the three wheelers.

Dad was an excellent salesman, armed with the people skills learned from two decades managing people as a photographer. Sales went up and he and the Guv got on very well, became good pals and a good professional bond matured between our families.

It all happened, according to memory...I was very young then you see...at about the same time. The time of the oil crisis, Guv thought that this would play right into his hands, predicting an unprecedented rise in demand for the frugal three wheeled Reliants.

At about that time or during tragedy struck. Terrible one, Mr and Mrs Guv had three sons one younger than I, Number1 at college and one very charismatic and incredibly popular middle son.

Poor lad was killed in an awful car crash in the Alkham Valley. Though I was young, I remember him being really good fun, laughing, caring, a keen sportsman and yes, very charismatic with that straggly 70s hairdo.

Can't recall actual dates nor his exact age but I do recall one very important thing: the night of his death Mr & Mrs Guv came to their closest friends....my parents at our house in Clarence Street. I remember their agony.

For a long time after that their family pretty much fell apart and Richard Taylor Snr stood up to the mark and out of compassion and loyalty, took on oh so much responsibility to do the best he could for everyone.

He foresaw the true reality of the knock-on effect of the oil crisis, the crisis that was the British car industry and the dreadful quality of their products.....he managed to persuade Guv to drop Toyota due to insufficient supplies, and partially Reliant in favour of a very keen marque fresh to the UK: Datsun (Nissan).

That business then went one leaps and bounds with a period of strong and sustainable growth for years after our family dedicated itself to that business, Dad worked like he never worked before, seven days every week a lot of the time and with a new showroom and posh new workshop those were halcyon years for all. They now proclaim to be a family "run" business but back then it went deeper, it was one team, one big happy family all the way down to a fine crew of loyal skilled workers in servicing and bodywork (where this business originated)

All was going swimmingly well. Then son number one left college and was inserted into the business in a fabricated managerial role. Proclaiming himself to be a Chartered Accountant he became Group Account Manager or something like that, over and above existing staff.

It was rumoured vigorously that the certificate on the wall of his posh office was faked, he never qualified for the Charter.....I can't comment on that but I did have a good search around the halls of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and other regulatory bodies but can find no trace of him or his membership or charter, not today nor historically. Strange.

Wasn't some many months sadly, that envious eyes set about those with a neat position in the family business. Eyes that observed with jealousy, people in positions that he thought should be under his control. A charm offensive on parents saw Guv encouraged to take a more formal, less involved role in the expanding business those eyes fell upon my father and his successful showroom in Cheriton.

So Dad found himself blamed for things created by others, he found himself under full time scrutiny by an increasingly aggressive regime led by Son1 now surrounding himself with his own mates and cronies....(as an aside here, hilariously, some of them embezzled from him and the business in later years....love the irony of that!)

Anyway, so over the years Dad defending his rights and his hard earned position fought back....who wouldn't?

Number Two (I didn't lose my maths, these words are carefully chosen!) was then also injected into the show. Now listed on Companies House as "Motor Engineer" which is not even funny! It is the last thing in the world he has ever capable of! Over the years he will have cost that business tens and tens of thousands with his unqualified and destructive efforts, yes, I have heard some trustworthy tales on that one!

From the get go it was evidentially clear to all and sundry that Number2 was a complete clumsy liability. Brash and like his brother, arrogant and cocky too....as an "apprentice" he felt empowered to bully existing staff.

On very solid authority I hear that he still treats the staff of that business like dirt, bullying and swearing and shouting at them for no good reason...it's great thought that he and Son1 hated each other. Jealousy through and through.

I was working there too by then, but in the spirit of the way the Guv ran shop there were a lot of members of various families working together there you see. Inevitably(?) then Number2 took it upon himself to bully and torment me in keeping with the way big bruv was bullying and tormenting my Father.

It was okay because it was me that was tasked with putting right the many outcomes of his incompetent work. You wouldn't believe the cover ups made to placated customers!

Over the years Number2 has moved into a director's role, not by skill or work but by sideways promotion and such.

Cuckoos in a nest I once called them and that is exactly right. See, you cannot fight nepotism nor can you defend against it, trying to perhaps was Dad's big mistake but what could be done? Throughout this onslaught Guv was conspicuous by his absence.

Inevitably a cloud was duly fabricated, one that Dad could be forced to leave under and they went after him, and of course succeeded, who was to stop them? I came to me too, within days I found myself on a redundancy notice... despite the firm being into a big recruitment drive. Odd that.

So, I went off to work at another garage, an independent one started by former colleagues who had also been "compelled" to leave the same company after many loyal years...also under "circumstances".

The late lamented Roy Lightfoot, Dad's lifelong best mate and much missed family friend offered Dad a sales position at Troy Garages selling Mazda, Son1 was annoyed by that, Dad going into the competition and taking his long term repeat customers with him. I recall threats being issued to which Son1 was told to go and get stuffed!

Son1 and Number2 dismissive as they were superficially, would actually take every opportunity to do us harm and do so with relish. I do know this full well...recalling a few incidents laid on for us. Worst of all they kept on doing so whenever they could, even when they knew that my Mum had cancer.

Unpleasant as it is, I like people to understand that all this stuff is relevant, it pushed us into, then drove us in our independence, I use it as a motivator still if I have to.

If you've read all that it could be construed as hard eggs....that's up to you, for me it's just hard, plain facts but it entertains me that history repeats itself. If you read my own boring bio then you will know what I mean! :D

Now...back to the important stuff...close this and read on!