

MIKE

HERE'S THE OLD GAMMA 5 AS DISCUSSED. I SAID IT WAS GOING TO NEED SOME WORK! AS I EXPLAINED TO YOU I HAVE LOOKED AFTER THIS LANTERN FOR YEARS AND I WOULD LIKE IT TO BE PRESERVED. I ALSO HAVE FOND MEMORIES OF HUGE NUMBERS OF THESE LANTERNS (ON ABACUS RAISE & LOWERS - MOST OF WHICH ARE STILL THERE) AROUND SPONDON (SANDRINGHAM DRIVE FLATS - AREA), CHADDESSEN (WATER FORD DRIVE FLATS / FOOTPATHS) AND ALSO MICKLEOVER (SILVERHILL ESTATE) ON FOOTPATHS. I PLAN TO HAVE MY OWN CLEAR-BOWL GAMMA 5 INSTALLED IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE BUT MINE IS A MORE RECENT VERSION WITH SCREWS IN THE TOP.

I FIRST ENCOUNTERED THIS LAMP IN 1989, THE WEEK I RETURNED TO WORK AFTER GETTING MARRIED. I WENT TO REPLACE THE TWO PORCELAIN FUSES (ONE ON THE NEUTRAL!) WITH THE CURIOUS ORANGE ISOLATOR/CUTOUT UNIT, WHICH WE PURCHASED FROM THE LONG-GONE ADVANCE ELECTRICAL ON SHAFTESBURY ST. I CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN THIS LAMP EVER SINCE, EVEN WHEN NOT EMPLOYED TO DO SO. SOME YEARS AGO I PERFORMED THE RATHER CRUDE REPAIR TO THE BOWL AFTER A HOLE AND CRACK IN IT APPEARED, PROBABLY FROM KIDS THROWING STONES. THE REPAIR WASN'T BRILLIANT BUT DIDN'T LOOK TOO BAD FROM THE GROUND AND WAS INTENDED MAINLY TO PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE LANTERN AND KEEP OUT THE WEATHER. THE TIMESWITCH IS ORIGINAL AND HAS BEEN CLEANED/OVERHAULED OVER THE YEARS. THE OLD BALLAST HAD BECOME COMPLETELY RUSTY - ALL THE PAINT HAD "BLOWN" OFF - AND IN, ABOUT, 1999, I REPLACED IT AS I FEARED IT MAY FAIL AND GO SHORT - CIRCUIT AND DESTROY THE ANCIENT LAMP IN THE PROCESS. I SUSPECT THE LAMP IS ORIGINAL. IT IS A "POWERWHITE" BRANDED PHILIPS WITH THE FRANK ON THE END OF THE BULB, WHICH PUTS IT AT NO "YOUNGER" THAN ABOUT 1980. I ESTIMATE IT IS PROBABLY AROUND 1974/1975. IT'S PRETTY DIM NOW, BUT STILL GOING!

THE COLUMN, BY THE WAY, IS ON THE LONG DRIVE WAY TO NORMANTON CEMETARY, OFF STENSON ROAD AND NOW CARRIES A 125W MERCURY BETA 79. THE NEW BASE BOARD CARRIES A CHARLES ISOLATOR AND SWITCHING IS BY A DIGITAL PROGRAMMER IN THE HOUSE WHICH ALSO SWITCHES OTHER OUTSIDE LIGHTS & THE TOILET LIGHTS.

ALSO THERE'S A BOX OF ASSORTED GEAR, MOSTLY CAPACITORS AND A COUPLE OF THE NEW "STANDARD-ISSUE" TRIANGLE-KEYS. THE TRANSTAR FLUORESCENT BALLASTS ARE USED TO RUN 40W (LATELY 36W) T8 U-TUBES IN THE MACKWORTH PRINCE CHARLES AVENUE CLOCK.