

Ask Which?

Each month this year, we will feature one of our original members on this page as part of celebrations of our 50th anniversary



The Whitakers with their faithful 1959 toaster

A wedding gift that has lasted nearly 50 years

A Best Buy toaster still faithfully serves up perfectly browned bread nearly 50 years after it was bought for a couple as a wedding present.

Jenifer Whitaker, a founder member of Which?, and husband Michael were given the Morphy Richards toaster in 1959.

Mr Whitaker said that in all that time he couldn't even remember having to replace the element. The only thing they have to remember is to put bread in both slots, to stop the elements getting too hot.

The couple have clearly chosen their appliances well over the years. They also have a Sunbeam 12-speed Mixmaster and blender, also from the 1950s, that still work.

And a Bauknecht GT 345 chest freezer from July 1971 continues to hum away

quite contentedly, even though these days it is relegated to the couple's garage. Mr Whitaker said: 'It keeps food at -18° C after 36 years' use.'

However, the couple, who use 'Good Energy' from renewable sources, were rather shocked by how much energy the freezer was using.

Mr Whitaker turned off all other electrical equipment in the house and worked out that the freezer on its own was using the equivalent of more than 1,000kWh a year and costing them £116 a year.

Reading our report on freezers in the July 2006 issue, they discovered that a modern freezer could have running costs of less than £20 a year and they've decided to buy a new freezer. The toaster is still going strong.

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■ March 2007 Best Buy competition

The following won a satnav: Mrs Mr E Corlett, Edinburgh; Mrs J Coulson, Wakefield; Mr K Holland, Nottingham; Mairi Pomery, Edinburgh; and Millicent White, Thornton Heath

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