

# HISTORIC



The Magazine of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

Issue 1 · March 2024

## DRAG RACE



Why The Aston Martin  
'Razor Blade' Was Kept Under Wraps

**Plus**

The Last Hurrah?

Chronicle the end of the automotive American Dream

Federation Clubs Archives - Recollect

New web-based archiving initiative launched with Genus IT

Salmons & Sons

A personal connection to the Tickford Coachbuilders



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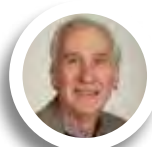
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## Regular Contributors



### David Whale - Chairman

*Chairman of the FBHVC since 2012 David has served on various historic vehicle international committees. His vehicle interests include a pre-production Morris Mini Moke, a 1938 Rosengart coupé, a 1904 Curved Dash Oldsmobile and a 1973 Range Rover.*



### Andy Bye - Museums & Archive Director

*Formerly Director of Quality & Customer Relations for PSA Peugeot Citroën. After retiring from his career in the Automotive Industry, Andy became a trustee of the Rootes Archive Centre Trust and helped save the Rootes engineering archive.*



### Karl Carter - Deputy Chairman & Skills Director

*Karl has led the development of the Heritage Engineering Apprenticeship Scheme and works closely with the Heritage Skills Academy. He is also a member of the Alvis Owner Club.*



### Dr HC Davies - Research Director

*Huw grew up with an Austin Seven before starting a career in automotive engineering. He now focusses on transport policy and practice, specifically in developing and setting the technical requirements for current and future vehicle technologies. His role in the Federation enables him to combine his profession with his hobby, that currently includes a 1932 MG Midget.*



### Malcolm Grubb - Events & Technical Director

*With 10 years as a government scientist before specialising in Business Systems and IT on a global basis, Malcolm now runs his own business systems consultancy. In parallel, he has been an active competitor, organiser and marshall, holding many committee and director roles within UK based motoring organisations and clubs.*



### Lindsay Irvine - Legislation Director

*A qualified barrister who spent over 30 years as a commissioned Legal Officer in the Royal Air Force, Lindsay continues to practice in a regulatory capacity. A car and aviation enthusiast from boyhood, owning a Riley RME for over 25 years. Counting coach driving amongst his qualifications, he is a member of several car and aircraft clubs and a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society.*



### Wayne Scott - Communications Director

*Enjoying a lifetime around classic cars, Wayne learnt to drive in a Triumph GTR4 Dove and has owned a Grinnall bodied Triumph TR7V8 for many years, which can be seen at shows and competing in regularities, hill climbs and endurance rallies. He is the founder of Classic Heritage PR, specialising in the historic vehicle and motorsport industry, working for both car clubs and industry brands alike.*



### Ian Edmunds - DVLA Manager

*An engineer who has been involved with the Federation since its early days, notably as Chairman of the Legislation and Fuel Sub-Committee (as it then was). His career in the motor industry involved vehicle legislation and certification matters. Owner of several historic motorcycles and cars ranging from 1927 to 1981, Ian is a member of five Federation member clubs.*



### Nigel Elliott - Automotive Fuels Specialist

*A career in engine and vehicle testing, fuels product development and quality in the oil industry culminated in his current role as a consultant and industry advisor in the UK and Europe. He is an active member of the British Standards Institute's Liquid Fuels Committee. He supports and competes at Shelsley Walsh in a modified Triumph TR7 and has many other historic car and club interests.*



### Andrew Fawkes - Editor

*Andrew is a member of the Classic & Historic Club of Somerset and a contributor to AstonOwners.com. He qualified as an advanced motorcycle instructor in 1982. His role as editor enables him to combine his passions for classic cars, motorbikes and apostrophes!*



### Mel Holley - Secretary

*With a lifelong passion for all forms of transport, photography and books, Mel spent his early career in electricity distribution, before moving to publishing. He has an eclectic collection of cheap quirky cars from eastern Europe and the Midlands.*



# HISTORIC



The Magazine of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

## From the Chairman

Perhaps you have noticed that our magazine now bears the title 'Historic'. Not only does our new magazine title trip off the tongue a little more easily, it also sums up what we do. The Federation's role in protecting the freedom to use historic

vehicles on tomorrow's roads hasn't changed. Indeed, it gets more important every day. We will keep you posted in the pages of *Historic*, on-line and, of course, in person at our various events throughout the year.

## From the Editor

Like many of the clubs who form our Federation, we started with a 'newsletter'. As we grew, it became a magazine, although many continued to refer to it by its old descriptor. When I became editor, I was slightly uncomfortable with a title that included the word 'news'. These days, only live reporting and social media can claim to provide news, regardless of the latter's unreliability as a source. A magazine that lands on doormats every 3 months cannot claim to be delivering news. However, it continues to provide a valuable source of information about the work of the Federation in protecting our use of historic vehicles. Thus, the rationale for changing our magazine's title to *Historic* is two-fold. Firstly, it says what we do: operate in the historic world. Secondly, it updates the Federation's output in a way that can be adopted across other media, such as our on-line activities. It's an evolution rather than a revolution, and one I hope you'll like.

The now not-so-New Year started with a bang. The Federation's 2024 Expo attracted representatives from more than 150 clubs to discuss and prioritise matters affecting the world of historic vehicles. There's more about that in these pages. The coming year will also see a bigger and better Drive It Day and Ride It Day in April, the first Inter-Clubs International weekend in late June and many other events of a local and national nature.

It's perhaps also historic that the Federation is bringing to you a new on-line archiving system so that, at last, those clubs that perhaps can't currently offer the facility to present their fascinating histories to their members, can now do so through the FBHVC's scheme.

The portents are good for another historic year in the historic vehicle movement, much to be reported in *Historic*.

### Drive and Display

It was pointed out to me recently that I don't have to wait until April to display my Drive It Day plate. It's not solely about celebrating a day, it's also about promoting the existence of that day in the historic vehicle calendar... and the raising of funds to support Childline®. I'm going to be proudly displaying my rally plate between now and Drive It Day. Have you got yours yet (page 11)?

### Revealing New History

This first edition of *Historic* includes some original research. The story on page 18 is the result of many months of painstaking work by its author, Michel Jones. He has not only read possibly everything about the subject, but also cross-referenced with tangential sources, such as 1920s aircraft production records. He also examined the vehicle in minute detail (with the owner's permission!), to test his own theories about contemporary aerodynamics and construction techniques. I know that his work has challenged a long-held view that the subject of his article, 'Razor Blade', was made a year later than his evidence indicated. That evidence makes Michael's work almost unchallengeable... and makes his story something of a scoop for us!

I'm reminded that everyone who provides articles for this magazine has put in much effort to do so and in some cases met resistance along the way. I hope Michael's example provides encouragement to anyone thinking of submitting something for publication. It also engenders recognition and thanks for all those who have done so in the past. After all, the past wouldn't exist if we weren't made aware of it.



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Chairman: **David Whale**  
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The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs exists to uphold the freedom to use historic vehicles on the road. It does this by representing the interests of owners of such vehicles to politicians, government officials, and legislators both in the UK and (through membership of Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens) in Europe.

There are over 500 subscriber organisations representing a total membership of over 250,000 in addition to individual and trade supporters. Details can be found at [www.fbhvc.co.uk](http://www.fbhvc.co.uk) or sent on application to the secretary.

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## Introduction

**A New Year often brings new problems but also fresh opportunities. It also contains rehashes of past and enduring issues, as you will read in this column. So, the topics of Car Cruising, emissions-based parking charges and road pricing have all featured before. However, they have endured into 2024 and will clearly continue beyond. That other enduring feature, the London ULEZ comes up again under the guise of early discussions on what may replace it. Just before Christmas, the Legislation Committee also discussed the issue of MOTs for later historic lorries (HGVs) which remains a bone of contention for many members, and the topic is covered below. An immediate solution is not on offer but the background bears repeating with a view to charting out a realistic way ahead. I touch on good old GDPR in the context of club archiving and finally issue a “Purple” warning.**

## Car Cruising

For those rusty or vague about this topic, I direct you back precisely 3 years ago to issue 1/2021. Under the title of “Car Cruising and Dangerous Doughnuts”, I described the background and impetus for local councils to legislate in this area. The annoying and occasionally dangerous behaviour perpetrated in some of our towns and outskirts arose in the form of large gatherings of what have been termed “boy racer” drivers on the public highway or in car parks. This forced councils to seek powers to ban them. As I described previously:

*“These activities coupled often with the sheer number of attendees give rise to alarm in members of the public and have on occasion resulted in serious injuries when control of vehicles has been lost... Restraint has come in two forms; a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) under the Anti-Social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act or an injunction under the Local Government and Highways Acts. An injunction carries the power of arrest and secondly the penalties for breach are greater (likely imprisonment for contempt of court) whilst only a financial penalty is available for breach of a PSPO.”*

3 years on and the problem persists. Not only are existing orders and injunctions being extended but new ones proposed, and we have recently responded to a consultation on a PSPO put forward by South Gloucestershire Council.

The relevance to the historic vehicle community has not been the fear that you or fellow enthusiasts are likely to indulge in “driving at excessive speed in carparks, racing other vehicles (including motor bikes and quad bikes), performing stunts

*(i.e. doughnuts) shouting or swearing at or otherwise intimidating other people.”* The issue of concern in the past has been the inclusion of a ban on “driving in convoy” as this could have applied to perfectly acceptable HV gatherings for a drive to the pub or a treasure hunt.

In the main, councils have responded positively to our representations on this issue and have either removed it or undertaken to ensure that enforcement is carried out sensibly and proportionately or as one council put it:

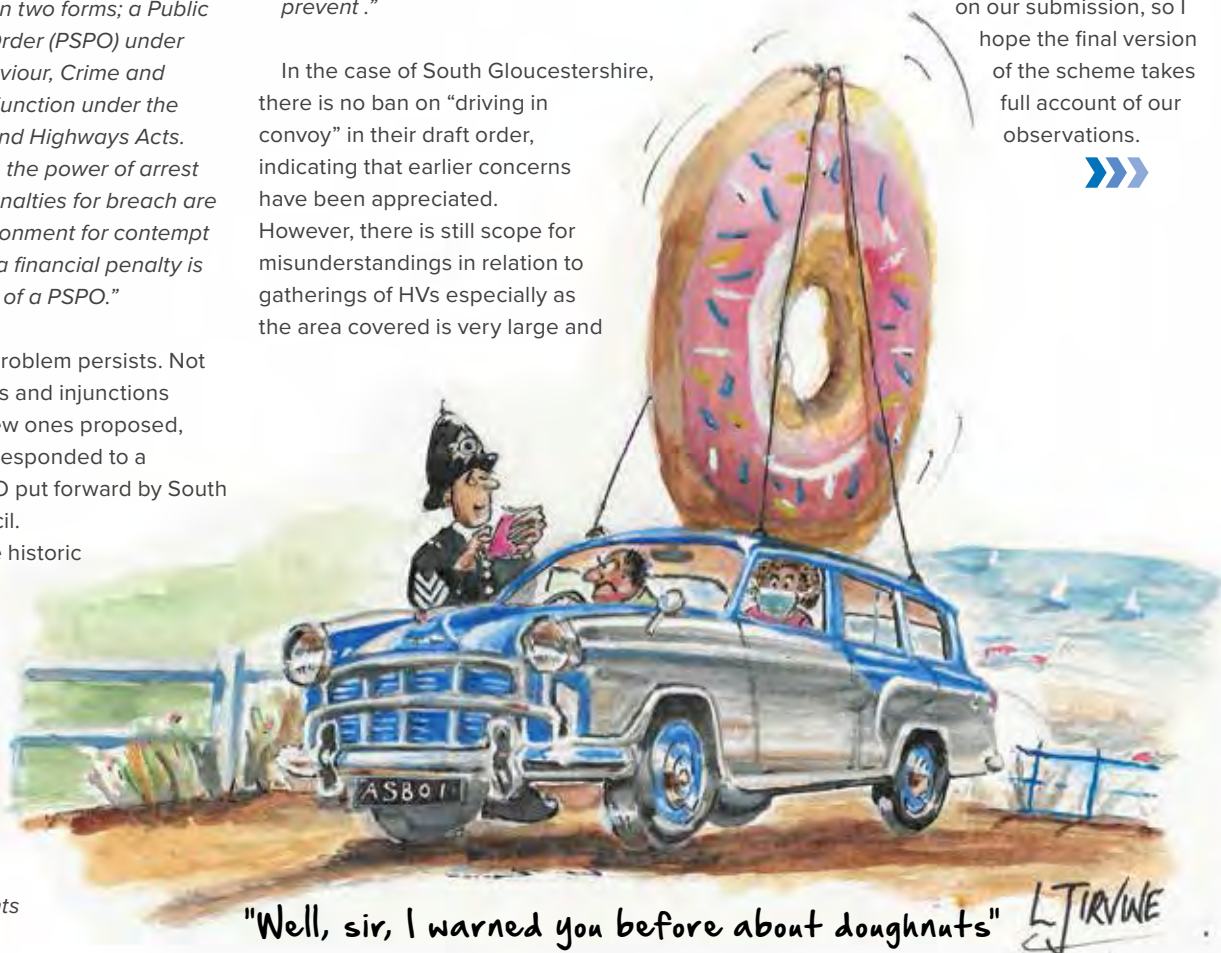
*“.....XXX and the Police fully intend to enforce the Injunction in a common-sense fashion, and that it appears unlikely that a historic vehicle convoy would give rise to the issues that the Injunction seeks to prevent .”*

In the case of South Gloucestershire, there is no ban on “driving in convoy” in their draft order, indicating that earlier concerns have been appreciated. However, there is still scope for misunderstandings in relation to gatherings of HVs especially as the area covered is very large and

encompasses rural as well as urban areas. We therefore submitted a response to the consultation which made two requests.

- a. That the order is amended to contain a provision for specific dispensations from Prohibited Activities for specific events to take place on land to which the draft order applies and
- b. The Council provide a clear and unambiguous assurance that guidance will be provided to those monitoring or enforcing the Order on the primary purpose of the injunction and that common sense should be applied to lawful gatherings of historic vehicles enthusiasts.

I am pleased to say that we received a swift and positive response from the Council on our submission, so I hope the final version of the scheme takes full account of our observations.



**“Well, sir, I warned you before about doughnuts”**

**LJ IRVINE**

## Environmental Issues Emissions Based Parking Charges

Having conceded a lack of success on this matter in the last edition (and not wanting to prolong the agony I won't go into all the background again) this topic finally hit the mainstream media before Christmas. I have observed before how late the big media hitters often are when it comes to raising a red flag on major issues usually after all the usual channels for consultation and protest are over.

All I can add is that my prediction that emission-based parking charges would catch on like wildfire with cash strapped local councils is already in progress. What started as a regime largely confined to residents' parking passes in London postal districts is due to spread country-wide with no obvious Government policy either on its philosophy or proportionality. What is almost certain is that we would not receive a different response to any submission from the over 300 councils which may go down this route and our lobbying efforts would be exhausted just trying.

### Project Detroit

Just as those in the locality get used to the expanded London ULEZ, what lies over the horizon? On the basis that the number of non-compliant (and therefore charge paying) vehicles is certain to decline, the income for TfL will too unless charges are increased or policies changed. The technical infrastructure which monitors and enforces the system is aging as well. Hence Project Detroit or Project 2030 to which our attention has been drawn. Because of some apparent obfuscation about these concepts, questions have been asked of TfL through Freedom of Information channels. The official line is here <https://bit.ly/3OsiIiZ> In summary, TfL is looking to replace its existing road charging technology platform (which covers the Congestion Charge, LEZ and ULEZ) with a new in-house one. What will have concentrated minds in their answer is:

*"The Detroit platform has the capability to be extended and we will be looking to build the system flexibly so that other forms of charging based on distance, vehicle type, etc., could be catered for if a decision was made in future to do so."*

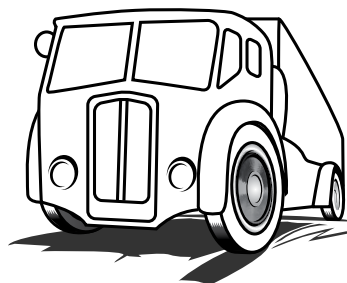
The second piece in the jigsaw is the Mayor's response to the policy questions put to him at Mayor's Question Time at London City Hall in November 2023. Mr. Khan is reported to have answered: *"I've been crystal clear. A pay-per-mile scheme is not on the table and not on my agenda."*

As I have reported before, councils including the GLA are bound to look at alternative schemes in the future as vehicles which do not meet emissions standards are withdrawn and revenue falls. We already have Road Charging in place as a concept (though currently emissions or congestion based), but pricing on the basis of per mile remains a political hot potato at local and national government level. We will obviously aim to retain HV exemptions or concessions under any future regime should minds at City Hall change.

## Historic Lorries

When changes were made in the exemption from MOT testing for historic vehicles (subject to certain conditions, including not being substantially changed) in 2017, exemptions were not universal. Whilst pre-1960 heavy goods vehicles retained an exemption they had enjoyed for some time, later HGVs even though in the HV tax class, would be tested if over 3.5 tonnes. The rationale was set out in the Government's response to the proposal. Based on the inputs to the consultation they had received and on some anecdotal (but disturbing) evidence they were aware of, the minister said in the report:

"We accept that there is concern over the implications of accidents involving heavier vehicles and those carrying groups of passengers, in some cases commercially. It is also appropriate that large vehicles



are subject to the same level of operator licensing requirements regardless of the vehicle age."

We are aware that position rankles with the HV heavy lorry community. The issue was the subject of discussion at a recent Legislation Committee meeting. It was agreed that while the matter deserved further consideration, progress would be unlikely without a sufficiently persuasive case and ideally a business or political justification or opportunity to consider a change. As well as our HCVS representative assisting in constructing a case, we would be eager to hear from those affected with the evidence and arguments to build a case.



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# GDPR

I appreciate this is a topic which is not even Marmite – there seems to be a universal frustration with its application whether it be “cookie pop ups” when you open a website or difficulty accessing historical information on the basis it contains someone else’s personal data. Post-Brexit reform of what is now UK GDPR has been promised in the Data Protection and Digital Information (No.2) Bill but it is not with us yet. However, in the two areas where there is particular angst, I do not see much scope for change. The two areas are linked and relate to information on the history of a vehicle. It is the case that until relatively recently (2017), for those interested in knowing details of their HV including previous ownership, those details were available from DVLA. For those lucky enough to have the old buff logbook (as I have on the Riley) much of its journey through life is documented. Without going into legal detail, the effect of EU and now UK GDPR is that the DVLA cannot disclose the details of previous owners. In response to questions put to us on the issue, we have considered suggestions of workarounds based on data protection principles (consent to disclose is the obvious one) but to anyone who has experience of being a reasonably large-scale data controller, the practicalities and cost of obtaining consent for disclosure are potentially prohibitive. Even with a charging regime, you can see that asking the DVLA to write to previous owners who may

have moved, passed away etc. in the interim for such permission would be a considerable burden and not a core aim or objective of the organisation. In addition, you can be sure some past owners may not welcome receipt of a brown envelope asking for such permission (“who wants to know and why?” might be a typical reaction).

The other related question we have received concerns club handling of personal data including sharing, and how this might affect archives containing vehicle histories. Club officials reading this will almost certainly have gone through the mill with drafting and implementing data protection policies and may have made use of the FBHVC Essential Guide on the topic. Many clubs have sought consent from members for exchange of personal data such as addresses and phone numbers. All this of course brings obligations such as keeping information up to date and ensuring continued consent. What about records of car owners as part of the club history? Can they lawfully be retained without the need for updating etc? A useful summary can be found on the National Archives website which states as follows:

## Archiving

- The law recognises that there is a public interest in permitting the permanent preservation of personal data for the long-term benefit of society where relevant.

- There is a specific provision for this – ‘archiving in the public interest’. This can apply to archiving by public, private or voluntary bodies.
- Processing data for archiving purposes must be distinguished from processing that supports daily business, as the exemption does not apply in those cases – for example, data gathered for marketing purposes. It also needs to be transparent.
- Safeguards must be met to use the exemption which minimise any adverse impact on living individuals.
- Public use of ‘archived’ personal data will generally be possible once the people concerned are dead, and may be possible earlier if the use is fair to the individuals in the records.

A fuller exposition is in their Guide here:

<https://bit.ly/3Ot8u1H>

However, the point I wanted to highlight in this article is set out in the final bullet above; a club should be careful about thinking it can replicate the old permissiveness of the DVLA in relation to disclosure of personal information. Personal data kept under the historical archive principle is still not readily disclosable without permission or until the relevant person has died (or deemed deceased). The frustrations of GDPR are not easily circumvented!

# Purpureus Pannus

Have you encountered the concept of Clickbait? To describe it, I turn again to my favourite ancient Roman poet, Horace (he of *carpe diem* fame) as he hits the right literary judgements. In one of his works, he talked about writers who would tack on a *purpureus pannus*, a purple patch, into their otherwise overly serious (or dull) thesis to get attention. Clickbait is along the same lines, attracting your attention with some sensational phrase or title generally to make you read some banal advertising for which the ‘influencer’ gets paid. Youtube is full of such *purpurei panni* often along the lines of ‘the end of the world is nigh’. Yes man with sandwich board is now online but with a bigger audience and whose words can cause unnecessary upset or distress. We were recently sent a couple of Youtube videos, one of an ‘influencer’ under the title **The Digital Revolution Spells The End For Older Cars** and another on the topic of Road Charging. Inter alia, the first claimed that in the future, insurance may

not be obtainable or be unaffordable for classic vehicles (as he termed them) due to the digitisation of vehicles. I should say his thesis was based on a German anecdote and a letter from a German whistleblower. This suggested that because future risk would be calculated on the basis of output from ‘black boxes’ in vehicles which would transmit driving styles, speed and times when the vehicle is being driven, classic cars would be disadvantaged because they were not ‘connected’. Actually, these concepts must be fairly familiar to readers, particularly in the context of young drivers whose premiums are based on the voluntary fitting of such boxes. However, this commentator links broader technical features likely to be mandated in future generations of cars, such as breath testing, to the idea that since ‘classic’ cars can’t conform ‘their end is nigh’.

We don’t entirely agree. Yes, the digital future is coming and many of the features he refers to, particularly increasing

‘connectedness’, are realities, especially for driverless vehicles. As I discuss elsewhere, Road Traffic law is being adapted to cater for these highly digitised vehicles with implications for insurers of those companies mandated in the future to carry liability for accidents. However, it is the market that generally dictates, and with many millions (and probably hundreds of millions worldwide) of unconnected cars, it is unlikely that insurers will want to reject this market. Having consulted our Commercial Insurance Partners, Peter James, they confirm there is no substance to the essential thesis of the video. As was obvious at the recent Federation Club Expo at the British Motor Museum, Peter James continue to welcome HV business! In relation to the ‘threat’ of Road Pricing, can I refer you to my fairly comprehensive article in 3/2022, the bare bones of which I think hold good. Oh, and remember, each time you click on one of these videos, the maker collects! *Vale*.

## Petrol Octane: a brief history

*In the late 1920s the Cooperative Fuels Research (CFR) Committee was formed to respond to the need of oil refiners and engine builders to develop a means of measuring and defining petrol combustion characteristics. Prior to 1929 the knock resistance of fuels was rated using an engine where the compression ratio could be varied between 2.7:1 and 8:1. Each fuel was run in this engine at various air/fuel ratios and ignition timing settings to obtain conditions for maximum power. The highest compression ratio was then established beyond which knock and power loss occurred. Fuels were assigned values that related to the Highest Useful Compression Ratio (HUCR), a scale was later standardized against toluene.*

The octane scale as we know it today was first proposed by Graham Edgar in 1926, established in 1929 and has been used ever since. Two paraffins of similar physical characteristics were selected as standards:

- iso-octane (2, 2, 4 trimethylpentane) defined as 100 octane number
- n-heptane was assigned a value of zero octane number.

Hence a volume blend of 95% iso-octane and 5% normal heptane has an octane number of 95. The octane number of a fuel is the % volume of isooctane in a blend with n-heptane that shows the same antiknock performance as the test fuel when tested in a standard engine under standard conditions.

In 1928 the CFR Committee decided that a single cylinder test engine was needed as a first step in developing a petrol knock test method. In early December 1928, the CFR Committee accepted the basic Waukesha Motor Company design and the first engine was constructed in 1929.

The test method simulated lower speed and lower load operation and was referred to as the Research Octane Number (RON). During the 1930s it was found that it was not possible to correlate the performance of cars on the road with just one type of octane number because engine designs and driving conditions were constantly changing. A higher load octane test was



Early CFR engine (credit: CFR Inc.)

developed to simulate high speed high load operation and it was called the Motor Octane Number (MON).

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### Test conditions for the RON and MON test methods

Test	Research	Motor
ASTM Method	D2699	D2700
Engine Speed (RPM)	600	900
Intake Air Temp. (°C)	Depends on Barometric Pressure	38
Mixture Temp. (°C)	Not Specified	149
Coolant Temp. (°C)	100	100
Ignition Advance (degrees)	13 btdc	Linked to compression ratio

Nowadays it's normal to define octane using at least 2 and sometimes 3 octane parameters:

- Research Octane Number (RON)
- Motor Octane Number (MON)
- Octane number of the front-end fraction of the fuel (R 100°C)

The octane number of the front-end fraction of the fuel is important for carburettor and single point fuel injection systems feeding a number of cylinders, as during sudden acceleration the lighter front end components of the petrol can reach the cylinder faster and if their octane rating is low can cause transient knock for a few seconds. Since the move to multipoint fuel injection at the inlet valve or in the cylinder this is no longer an issue and most oil companies have dropped the front-end fraction octane requirement, so older vehicles may experience transient knock during hard acceleration on modern fuels depending on their octane requirement.

Different engine designs have different RON and MON requirements but in general for classic and historic vehicles, both RON and MON are important. Modern direct fuel injection engines have been found to be mostly RON sensitive. This is probably due to the in-cylinder cooling effects of direct injection and stratified fuel mixtures. In Europe, RON is posted on service station dispensing pumps whereas in the USA (RON+MON)/2 is posted, hence the apparent lower octane numbers. A European unleaded 95 grade has a minimum RON of 95 and a minimum MON of 85 which would be posted as  $(95+85)/2 = 90$  in the USA.

The higher octane Super E5 Unleaded protection grade in the UK has a minimum RON of 97 and a minimum MON of 86 which matches the old leaded grade (BS4040). In mainland Europe, the Super Unleaded grade has a minimum RON of 98 and a minimum MON of 86. A number of Super Unleaded

grades are also available in the UK market with a minimum RON of 99 and a MON of 86.

In the mid-1930s Research Octane Numbers (RON) were around 70 which allowed compression ratios to increase to about 5.5:1. Many 1950s vehicles, for example, probably require no more than 80 RON petrol, if such a product were available, yet will run well on 95 or 97+ RON petrol. Furthermore, most pre-war cars were designed to tolerate even lower octane fuels yet will also run well on today's 95, 97 or 99 RON petrol. Octane describes a fuels resistance to knock and has

nothing to do with the energy content of the fuel. There is no such thing as "too much" octane for older engines. Octane requirement should therefore be seen as a minimum requirement to ensure the correct operation of the engine.



Modern CFR engine (credit: Waukeshu)

**Unfortunately, since my last report which you will have read in December 2023, events have not progressed as we had hoped and expected, although, that said, we remain optimistic, as I will explain.**

You are probably aware that the Under Secretary for State with responsibility for the Agencies, Richard Holden, was promoted to Party Chairman in the Government reshuffle in November. His place was taken by Guy Opperman MP on 13th November. One quick and wholly expected result of this was that the DVLA Historic Vehicle User Group meeting scheduled for 23rd November was firstly postponed and finally cancelled. Mr Holden had expressed his intention to attend this meeting in person but not unreasonably Mr. Opperman did not consider at that time he was adequately briefed to step in.

This was potentially not looking so good – but the Federations ‘Westminster Division’ swung into action! David Whale wrote to Mr. Opperman’s office requesting a meeting as soon as his appointment was announced and, in addition to the routine automated reply received, within a few days, a response requesting him to write again in the New Year. Meanwhile the redoubtable Sir Greg Knight had managed to waylay Mr. Opperman

in a Division Lobby and have a few words.

The outcome of all this activity is that Mr. Opperman now has one of the Federation’s previous written submissions and we are pleased to report he was aware of a number of material issues currently faced by the historic vehicle community with DVLA and their ever-changing interpretations. He also recognises that the delay historic vehicle enthusiasts have been subjected to in addressing these issues is unacceptable and has committed to talk to the Secretary of State within a specified time and come back to us.

So, as I implied at the beginning – no measurable progress as such but nevertheless every reason to believe we continue to edge towards a far more positive position.

Entirely separate to the events reported above, there have been two unrelated developments with the V765 Scheme. This has not of recent times been a particular priority for the Federation. It has continued to operate without too many difficulties and we have tended to concentrate our efforts on the many DVLA changes that are totally preventing the registration of historic vehicles.

Nevertheless, at the HVUG meeting last August, DVLA unexpectedly requested our

thoughts concerning the documents and other evidence they should consider when coming to a decision on the reissue of a registration under the V765 scheme. We responded to essentially make two points. The first was that we strongly believe that in some cases (certainly not all) it is possible to form a safe conclusion from consideration of a portfolio of evidence and the second was that almost any document could potentially provide the necessary link between chassis/frame number and the registration being claimed. We supported this with a list of possible examples stressing that this was neither definitive nor exclusive. We await the DVLA reaction.

Unconnected to the above, the Kits and Rebuilds Team have carried out their regular housekeeping activity of contacting all the club contacts on the V765/1 list to prompt the clubs to update their information. As is usual, the package contained a copy of the V765/2 application form and also a copy of the V765/3 Guidance Notes. The latter have been rewritten but having compared old and new word-by-word, there is only one change, albeit quite significant. Where the old version stated that an authorising club ‘should’ inspect the vehicle in question, this has become ‘must’ inspect. It continues to be acceptable to delegate the inspection to ‘an appropriately knowledgeable person’.

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## NEW MUSEUM OPENS IN TAUNTON

*It felt like most of Taunton had turned out for the opening of the County Classics Motor Museum on 20th November. The main street was closed to traffic so that dozens of classic cars could be displayed, and hundreds of people gathered around the vintage truck being used as the speeches podium.*

The museum was opened by TV star, Richard Hammond, accompanied by civic dignitaries who all heaped praise on museum owner Patrick Hawkins for creating such a great visitor attraction right in the centre of the town.

Patrick is a true car enthusiast who has sunk his life savings into converting the County Stores into a car museum – it's focussed on affordable and accessible cars and motorcycles, mostly from the 1960s to the 1990s although with a few older ones too. Beautifully detailed and featuring a café and small shop, the Tardis-like building extends 110m back from the street front

(over two floors) to house c.100 cars and c.80 motorcycles – and an aeroplane! Vehicles are from Pat's own collection and also loaned by local enthusiasts.

Having sold his first car at the age of 11, he built a highly successful car sales business, owning 13 garages by the age of 36. Having spent almost all his life in Taunton, he saw the Museum as his way to breathe life back into the town centre, as it began to suffer from the exodus of shops that has hit all towns and cities in recent years. Due to Covid and lockdowns the conversion took two years longer than planned but is now an excellent visitor destination.

If you are travelling down to the southwest, the museum is just off junction 25 of the M5 and would make the perfect coffee stop with the benefit of a town centre for family members who don't want to visit the museum!

More details can be found at [www.countyclassicmotormuseum.co.uk](http://www.countyclassicmotormuseum.co.uk)

## FEDERATION CLUBS ARCHIVES - RECOLLECT

*At Club Expo we launched a new FBHVC initiative in conjunction with our scanning partner Genus.*

Our research shows that clubs are now starting to organise and scan their archive collections and there is a growing feeling that they then need to be more visible to club members.

This is not always easy when a club does not have its own club headquarters building or archive and so the Federation set about trying to find a solution which could be used by all clubs, and which was both cost effective and straightforward to operate by club officials, and easily accessible for members.

This solution is called Federation Clubs Archives – Recollect and it is web-based.

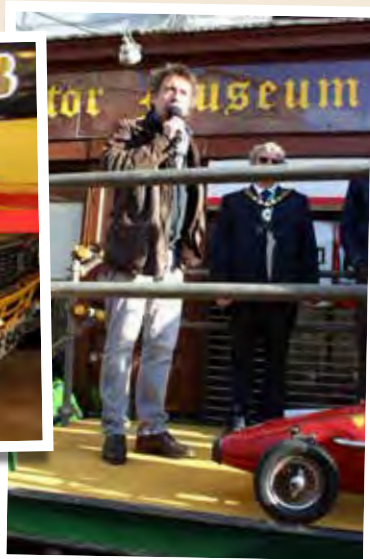
The site will allow clubs to display photographs, scanned documents, scanned 3D items such as badges or trophies, and there will be space for circa 30,000 scans with the basic package.

Each club will have their own secure branded section of the archive with no crossover between clubs, and access will be controlled by individual club officials.

The principal benefits to both clubs and members are that archive items which have been hidden away for years will suddenly be visible.

This can be built into a great member benefit and will also be greatly appreciated by overseas members.

Several clubs have already adopted Recollect. If you want to know more about this exciting, engaging new archive site, email [secretary@fbhvc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@fbhvc.co.uk)



### THANKS

I wish to thank Andrew Cross for supplying the detailed information and photographs about the Dunsfold Collection used in the last edition of this magazine. His support is greatly appreciated.



# FEDERATION CLUBS ARCHIVES



Does your club have archive material it would like to show club members



Do you want to add more value to member benefits?



Do you have overseas members who need more engagement



Have you looked at sharing your archive content online and been frightened by the cost and security



If this applies to your club, then the FBHVC and their partner Genus have the perfect solution for you, and it's called the

## FEDERATION CLUBS ARCHIVES - RECOLLECT

This will allow you to:

- Show your members c30,000 scanned images or photos?
- Know the images are secure and cannot be copied
- Allow you to control who can access the site - for example members only

### SO, WHAT WILL IT COST?



For an annual fee of just **£670 +VAT** your club can subscribe to this service  
Full training will be provided and an initial set up to personalise the site to your club with your logos etc plus a bulk upload of your initial data will be provided for a one-off cost of **£350 + VAT**

### SO, WHAT DO I DO NEXT



Tell us you are interested in being part of this exciting, engaging new archive site and we can arrange to talk you through the next steps to developing your Archives

Register your interest with the FBHVC by emailing

[secretary@fbhvc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@fbhvc.co.uk)





# ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO... Parts & Services

*I wonder where I can find this part or service? This thought has occupied many a classic vehicle owner's mind at some time.*

To assist members and clubs navigate their way through this and help ensure continued parts availability, the Federation has produced its latest in the 'Essential Guide to...' series.

Launched at Club Expo, it is available now from the members area of our website <https://www.fbhvc.co.uk/essential-guides>

While the established routes of old stock parts, sold at auto-jumbles and the like have been supplanted by eBay and similar sites, a number of clubs also run their own spares operation.

An alternative, if it is something that needs to be 'made up' – such as a hose or exhaust, may be sourced from a local engineering or manufacturing company. Add to the mix motor sport suppliers and it appears, at face value, that there's quite a range.

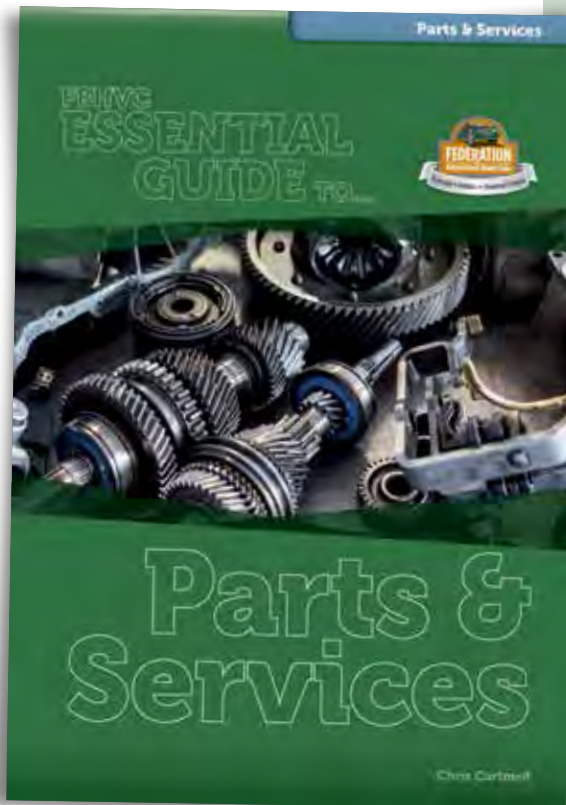
However, as time goes on 'old stock' parts are fewer in number, while those made of rubber may not be serviceable any longer. Rubber, as a natural product, degrades over time, eventually becoming harder and brittle. Therefore, rubber parts should be replaced every 10 years, or less if leaking.

Fake/replica parts (such as NGK spark plugs and Lucas copy parts) are often to be found on internet auction sites, and will not perform in the same way as the genuine items.

If it's a safety critical part (brakes or steering), or parts that take a long time to fit. Then proceed with caution, ensuring the correct specification and buy the very best you can afford.

When it comes to parts that are bespoke to a specific model, there is a higher-cost, more complex option, which some clubs undertake: Remanufacturing of parts.

Routes for this include 3-D printing, rapid prototyping and reverse engineering, combined with precision engineering, bespoke solutions and craftsmanship.



Questions to ask include whether old engineering drawings and/or tooling are available? And, are they covered by licences held by current vehicle manufacturers?

Product Liability Insurance is also required, which member clubs can obtain through our insurance partner Peter James – including cover for the USA where the rules are different.

Naturally, parts remanufactured must be of the highest quality and confirm to the correct specification and be totally fit for purpose.

The Directory section of the 'Essential Guide to Parts and Services' comprises details of a combination of FBHVC Trade Members and Supporters plus some extra companies that many of us will know.

We need your help to expand the list with your contacts. If you would like to recommend additional suppliers, please write to: [secretary@fbhvc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@fbhvc.co.uk) and we will consider them for inclusion into a 'Version 2' which we hope to publish shortly.

We thank Chris Cartmell for producing the guide, along with assistance from the Stag Owners Club and Paul Smith and Russell Lewis of the Stag Owners Club Tooling fund, for their generous assistance.

## Case Study – Stag Owners Club

To solve the problem of parts that are no longer available, the club set up its own operation, run through a standalone company, the Stag Owners Club Tooling Fund Ltd.

The club's Management Committee review and decide on what parts are remanufactured. An overview of the process is:

1. Suggestion received that a part is required
2. Check the market potential
3. Examine the availability of suitable alternatives
4. What is the final retail cost likely to be (will it sell)?
5. Seek the views of club members (will they buy it?)
6. If the answer is 'no', then the idea is usually cancelled

If a part is selected, then design is the first step. Fortunately, the Stag Owners Club has a volunteer who provides computer-aided design (CAD), thus saving thousands, or even tens of thousands of pounds in costs.

There are two starting points for the design, with lots of measurements or scanning of the part (using an original). This is transferred to a digital image, which is then refined. The next stage is very time consuming, with prototyping, testing and modifying.

Next comes contracts with manufacturers and distributors, plus pricing.

Less obvious considerations include rejection rates (these are variable depending on how the part is made), packing, delivery, storage and associated costs.





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# IN BRIEF... ARMSTRONG SIDDELEY

Words and images by Brian Page

The History of Armstrong Siddeley really starts with the car and aircraft manufacturer Armstrong-Whitworth acquiring Siddeley-Deasy Ltd in 1919 and producing the heavily US-influenced Thirty model from late 1919.

The Thirty had a large 5-litre OHV 6-cylinder engine with a three-speed transmission and could be purchased in factory produced bodies or a separate chassis with mechanics to be bodied by a specialist of the purchaser's choice. The vehicle was influenced by American cars of the time, as J.D. Siddeley's son visited the USA just after the First World War and visited various manufacturers States-side including Pierce-Arrow, Cadillac, Peerless, Packard and Marmon. Marmon definitely seems to have influenced Siddeley and the Thirty model included some of the American manufacturer's ideas of the era. The Thirty was produced from 1919 until 1931, although it continued to develop over the years, with later examples having the Wilson semi-automatic gearbox fitted and the engine became a 'monobloc' type with detachable cylinder heads from 1927, a forward-thinking idea at the time. A Thirty model was used by the then Duke of York for his tour of New Zealand in 1928 and proved to be reliable.

By 1926, Siddeley was back at the helm of the business, after buying out other members of the management. The company had prospered well, especially in building and selling Aero-Engines and Aircraft. Siddeley was knighted and became Lord Kenilworth in the 1930s. Armstrong-Siddeley had built a reputation for producing quality products, both cars and aircraft, although the company realised the finances of the world at the time were not in a good place and produced a subsidiary making cheaper models, called Stoneleigh Cars, for a few years. Other notable models of the 1920s and 30s include the Fourteen and later 14/30 models that sold over 13,000, which was considered a success at the time. Into the 1930s and the 12/6 model sold well between 1929 and 1936, although the model was updated with a more powerful engine from late 1931. The 12/6 Sports Tourer proved very attractive. The Twenty range, including both the short and long chassis cars, were well built and there were several special bodied versions available in the early and mid-30s. By then most models had the Wilson semi-automatic or pre-select transmission fitted as standard.

By late 1935, Armstrong-Siddeley had been purchased by Hawker to become Hawker-Siddeley, again a well-established manufacturer of aviation products at the time. The model range was 'updated' slightly, keeping in fashion with other motoring products of

the era just prior to WW2. During the war, motor car production all but stopped in Britain, apart from a few cars made as part of the war effort. Siddeley concentrated on the production of aircraft and aviation components, especially being part of the Hawker group, the manufacturer of the Hawker Hurricane aircraft to name just one of their great products.

After WW2, Armstrong-Siddeley produced the Lancaster and Hurricane range of cars from 1945. They looked relatively modern at the time, but mechanically were based on pre-war models. The rare Typhoon model, a fabric roofed coupé also appeared from late 1946. From 1949, the range was updated and re-named the Whitley in saloon, limousine and coupé variants, replacing the previous models and in production until 1954 and with the 18HP (2.3-litre) engine as standard from late 1949.

From 1952, the up-market and modern looking Sapphire range was built and included a 4-litre saloon, a 6-litre saloon and a larger bodied limousine. The range had the 3.4-litre engine and could be ordered with either all synchromesh manual transmission or electrically operated pre-select gearing, although later the Rolls-Royce Hydramatic transmission was available on the range.



Late 30s Short 17 model in Saloon form



1930s Long Twenty Limousine model





*The smart looking Lancaster saloon was available from 1945*



*The DHC version was called the Hurricane*



*The superbly built Sapphire range of cars  
This is a Saloon from the 1952-58 period*



*The 234/236 range. This is a 236 with 6-cylinder engine and wire wheels  
Only about 1,400 were built in total*

The type had a superb ride quality, its suspension was well crafted and the vehicle was regarded as a refined carriage. However, motoring trends were changing and the cost of the Armstrong-Siddeley cars was considered as too high, with the Sapphire launched at over £1,700 (a fortune at the time in the early 1950s). Armstrong-Siddeley attempted to launch a less expensive and more modern looking car, although trying to retain the traditional quality with the 4 and 6 cylinder 234 and 236 models from late 1955. They were perhaps not the most attractive looking vehicle and mechanically they were in many respects a backward step, using the old designed units similar to the Lancaster range from the mid-40s and earlier.

Armstrong-Siddeley was beginning to struggle financially, especially in the production of cars as other manufacturers were producing similar 'spec' products for less, including Austin, Jaguar and Daimler, to mention just some. The last model by Armstrong-Siddeley was the superb Star Sapphire in both saloon and limousine versions with the enlarged 4-litre 6-cylinder engine, servo disc brakes, twin carburettors and Borg-Warner automatic transmission. Approximately 950 were produced between 1958 and 1960.

Production of Armstrong-Siddeley cars stopped after the company amalgamated with Bristol Aviation and Cars in 1960. Their



*The last of the breed – The Star Sapphire*

products were well built with high quality. They were considered as easy to drive and were comfortable and had high engineering quality, but alas, they were expensive and perhaps slightly dated towards the end of their production.

The Company's logo strapline "Cars of Aircraft Quality" said it all, really! The passing into history of another great British motoring manufacturer was a sign of things to come, with so many great names amalgamating with others or stopping production completely in the 50s, 60s and beyond.



### **Brian Page**

*Brian is a historic vehicle enthusiast and professional assessor who, for the past 30 years, has run Classic Assessments, the independent vehicle inspection and assessment specialists that works with numerous car clubs. He lives in rural Norfolk and owns a 1937 Wolseley.*



# DARROG



*The Aston-Martin 'Razor Blade' with aerodynamic clamshell (credit: Autocar)*

**T**he adage that technology accelerates during wartime is demonstrated by the rapid development of fighter aircraft in WW1, when improved power output and aerodynamic efficiency increased typical maximum speeds from 87 to 134 miles per hour.

At the same time, demand for aircraft grew exponentially resulting in a doubling of the number of firms in the supply chain during the final twelve months of the conflict. However, at the cessation of the so-called 'war to end all wars' the British Government concluded that the risk of another conflict in the following decade was low and therefore investment in military aircraft should be scaled down.

With a surplus of unwanted machines flooding the market, and minimal public appetite for air travel, manufacturers quickly found their order books empty. Private flying was beyond the reach of all but the extremely wealthy.

Most companies had not had time to automate processes, relying instead on skilled labour. They were typically privately-owned and run by engineers/

designers with limited capital. This lack of investment forced many to diversify into other markets where, fortuitously, their skills were transferrable. As the roaring twenties beckoned, the re-emerging motor industry looked an attractive option.

While the captains of the aircraft industry were weighing up the pros and cons of diversification, Lionel Martin was busy re-establishing the fledgling business he had started with Robert Bamford in 1913. Although still only building prototypes, Martin remained convinced there would be a market for a premium light car that he described as a 'voiturette de-luxe.' The sort of people he had in mind were no doubt wealthy enough to be as interested in aeroplanes as they were in fast cars...

## **OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS**

In 1921, a 32-year-old flyer called Harry Hawker took up motor racing. Hawker was a close associate of Tommy Sopwith, founder of the eponymous aircraft company that had supplied many airframes to the

recent war effort. Having joined as a mechanic, Hawker had quickly risen to become Sopwith's designer and chief test pilot. He set several altitude records and is reputedly the first pilot to recover an aircraft from a deliberately induced spin.

Hawker had been well-placed in 1920 when Tommy Sopwith liquidated the business in the face of mounting losses. He became director of a new company, H G Hawker Engineering, which acquired the Sopwith assets. Tommy Sopwith chaired the company (which went on to build the Hurricane fighter during WW2) but was content for his friend's name to appear on the letterhead.

Hawker believed that racing cars could be made to go faster by adopting lessons learned in the flying world. He fitted a radically streamlined body to his newly acquired AC and went racing to see what it could achieve.

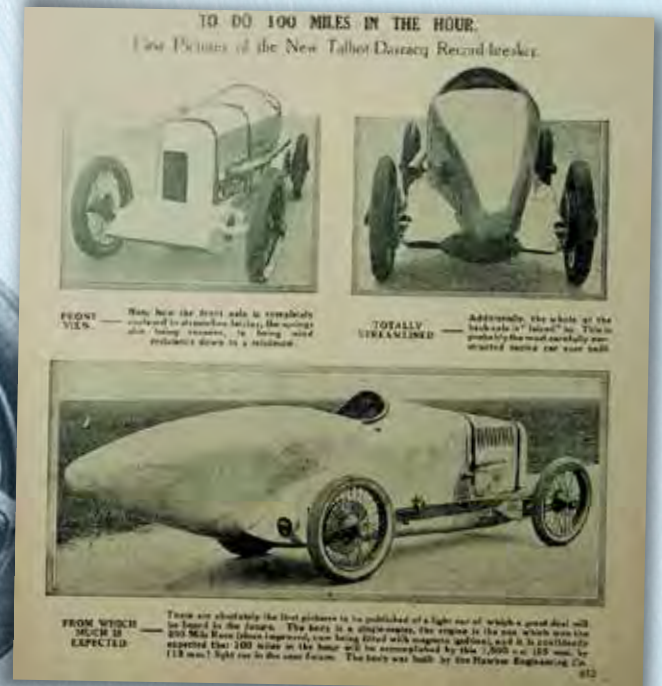
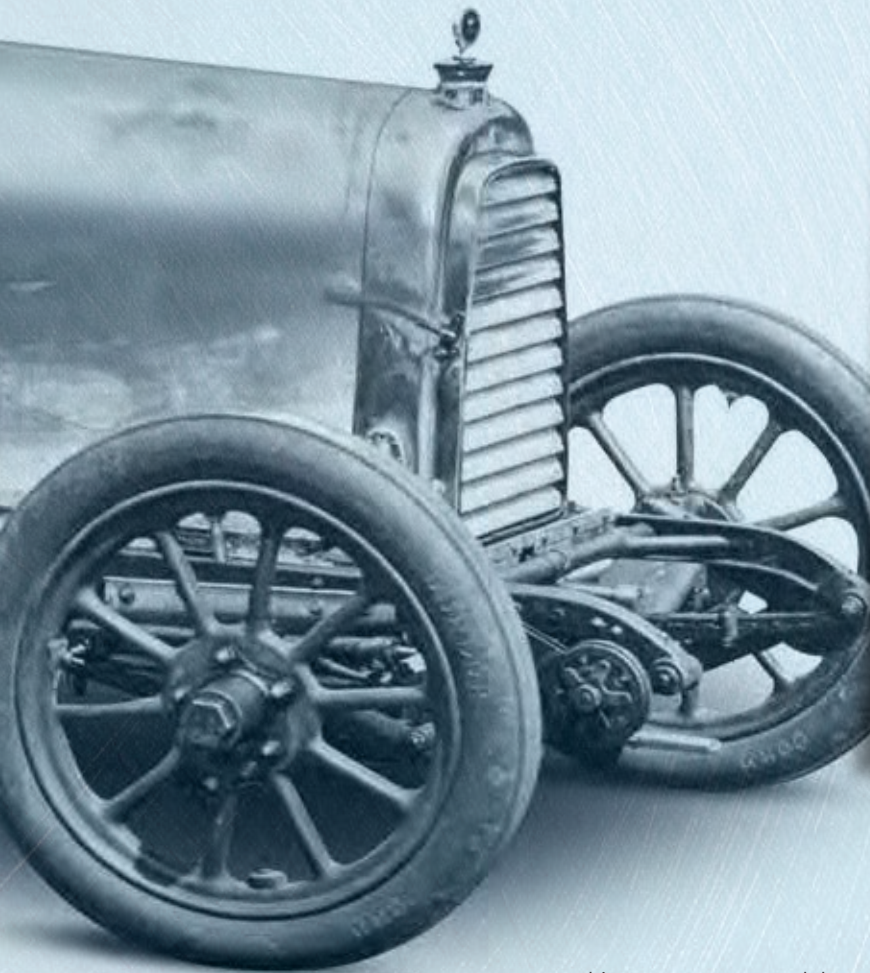
In June 1921 Hawker's AC set the flying half mile record for a light car at 105.14 mph, the first time the 100 mph 'barrier' had



# RACE

## Why the Aston Martin 'Razor Blade' Was Kept Under Wraps

by Michael Jones



Talbot-Darracq; streamlining, 1920's style

been broken in any category for that class of vehicle. Reports of new speed records were normally restricted to motoring journals and magazines, but his achievement secured valuable column inches in national newspapers! Lionel Martin duly took note.

In a biography of her husband (who tragically died in a flying accident just four weeks after his success) Muriel Hawker observed that the feat generated many congratulatory letters, including one from Lionel Martin who "was not too proud to say that he had coveted the distinction for the Aston-Martin car".

Disappointed he may have been, but Lionel Martin soon had his eye on a much bigger opportunity. *Light Car and Cyclecar* magazine presented an annual trophy for the fastest average speed over one hour from a standing start. At the end of 1921, AC topped the table at 94.69 mph. Hawker's

achievement suggested that a well-prepared streamlined car could raise the record beyond 100 mph in 1922. Whoever got there first would benefit from a PR bonanza.

The race was on!

AC re-acquired Hawker's car and started work. Talbot Darracq also joined the fray, commissioning Hawker Engineering to build a second streamlined body. The sleek new machine was revealed in a May 1922 issue of the magazine under the title *To Do 100 Miles in the Hour*, leaving little doubt about the nature of the company's ambition! The article featured images from the side, front and rear, enthusing "this is probably the most carefully constructed racing car ever built."

Lionel Martin took a different route, however. He worked with the de Havilland Aircraft Company and kept the project under very close wraps; it was at least a year before he revealed his radical machine, known to the public as 'Razor Blade'.

### WHY THE NEED FOR SECRECY?

As with the Hawker-bodied cars, Razor Blade's slender profile was intended to reduce drag over its external surfaces. However, Lionel Martin and de Havilland also understood that air flowing into the engine compartment created a high-pressure zone inside the car, generating yet more drag.

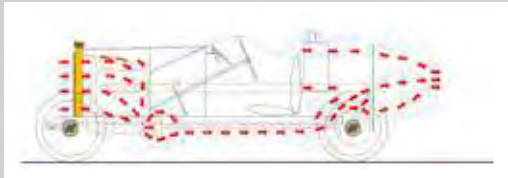
Their solution featured a louvred radiator grill that could be adjusted from the cockpit, enabling the driver to optimise the volume of air entering the car whilst also keeping an eye on the engine temperature. An April 1922 article titled *The Value of Streamlining*, illustrates the thinking behind this approach:

"Strictly speaking, a well-streamlined form should not have any opening at its front. This, of course, is essential on a car, but it has been found that by blanking off the radiator to prevent air passing through the tubes, into the centre of the body, and finding only an escape through the driver's cockpit, 3 mph was added to a single-seat racer that was previously capable of 95 mph."





How airflow and drag are affected by cockpit design (credit: Scott Cullen)



Throughflow of air was a feature of Razor Blade's design

The reference to air escaping through the driver's cockpit is interesting as Martin and de Havilland went a step further than simply managing the flow of air into the vehicle; Razor Blade also featured a tail vent to release trapped air, thereby reducing drag. Passing trapped air through the rear of the car also meant that it was less likely to spill out over the external surfaces and cause unwanted eddies.

Considerable thought was given to the layout of the cockpit aperture. Unlike the Hawker-bodied cars, where the driver's head protruded into the airflow, Razor Blade featured a fairing behind the driver's head to minimise disruption to the airflow. Martin even experimented with a 'clamshell' lid that closed around the driver's shoulders, once seated. This approach was abandoned (possibly because it was claustrophobic) but it shows an impressive level of sophistication for the period.



AC's big news in 1921

## DISASTER STRIKES

S. C. H. 'Sammy' Davis, a well-known motoring journalist, was chosen for the record attempt. Davis was Martin's guarantee that, if successful, his investment would be rewarded with valuable publicity. Davis was also brave, which was just as well, because Razor Blade turned out to be rather a handful!

After completing a few warm-up laps, the car circulated comfortably at 103-104mph. The omens looked promising. Then, without warning, the offside front tyre detached itself from the rim. Unperturbed, Davis held the car and brought it clattering to a standstill. Several further attempts were made, but each time the same tyre would fly off the rim at speeds over 100mph.

Unfortunately, the fault could not be corrected before AC (who also experienced numerous setbacks) finally nudged the one-hour record to 101.39 mph in November 1922.

No doubt AC were delighted with the press coverage that followed. *Light Car and Cyclecar* waxed lyrical about an 'epoch making' feat that had been 'considered almost impossible on a light car.' Noting the company's earlier disappointments, the editorial proclaimed that 'with the failure of each attempt something new, either about metals or design, has been learned, and the sum total of knowledge gained in building a super-car such as this is undoubtedly far more than could be collated by any other means.'

Lionel Martin may well have tried to better AC's record during the first half of 1923 but, if he did, there is no record of this. Regardless, having missed out on the 100mph publicity opportunity, there would have been little point in keeping his radical design under wraps for much longer.

Ever the pragmatist, Martin revealed Razor Blade to the motoring press in

August 1923. *The Autocar* highlighted the 'quite unusual features,' judging that it was 'probably the narrowest racing car at present in existence having the driver entirely within the streamline.'

*Light Car and Cyclecar* marvelled that Razor Blade had 'no air trap' and suggested it 'probably represents the greatest advance in high-efficiency small car design.'

Three days later the car appeared in public at Brooklands' mid-summer meeting, where Major Frank Halford (an associate of both Martin and de Havilland) won the 100 Short Handicap race, lapping at 99.81 mph.

## THE LEGACY

The rest, as they say, is history. Razor Blade enjoyed further success in racing, hill-climbing and record-breaking and is widely believed to have inspired 'Sammy' Davis's design for the British Racing Drivers Club badge in 1928 (Davis was a founder member).

Razor Blade is now a museum-piece, but the extreme strand within its DNA persists with Aston Martin's 'Valkyrie', a ground-breaking hyper-car designed in collaboration with Red Bull Racing Advanced Technologies. Drawing heavily on racing 'know-how', Valkyrie reputedly delivers more downforce than a Formula One car!

Although a century apart, Razor Blade and Valkyrie both highlight a determination to learn from other disciplines, where knowledge transfer might offer a competitive advantage. As previously noted, technology tends to advance fastest when the risk (and consequence) of failure concentrates the minds of decision-makers.

In the case of Razor Blade, the catalyst for that progress was war, whereas with Valkyrie it was the intensely competitive world of today's Formula One series.

Which brings another adage to mind: 'Racing improves the breed.'

Razor Blade to Valkyrie: 100 years of automotive aerodynamic development (credit: Aston Martin Lagonda)





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### History of Motul

Motul dates back to 1853 in the USA, where it was part of the Swan-Finch portfolio. Motul didn't make motor oil then as there were no motor vehicles to put it in. Instead, the focus was on the whale-oil business for igniting lanterns- owned then by the Rockefeller Group.

In the 1930s Ernst Zaugg became the French distributor for Motul and, in 1957, acquired Motul in its entirety. Motul has remained the French family's business ever since. The oil brand took advantage of the opportunities offered by the evolving industry to focus on innovation and excellence.

To continue with this ethos, in 1953 Motul launched the first true Multigrade oil to market. Innovation did not stop there as in 1966 Motul brought the first semi-synthetic oil to the automotive industry, Motul Century 2100. Following this up, in 1970, with 300V -the first fully synthetic motor oil on the market. Developed from Motul's experience with Ester-based products in the aviation industry by Michel Sinson. Both these products have defined the path of the lubricant market ever since.

Motul also has a range of mineral and synthetic oils specifically tailored for vehicles of all types. These have been developed and formulated with a deep understanding of what it takes to keep vehicles of all eras running at the optimum.

### What is Club Motul?

Club Motul is an online shop for you to purchase a range of Motul lubricants and maintenance products as and when you need them. We create a club specific promotional code for your club. This promotional code gives your members 15% off products across the Club Motul website.

There are a few ways in which you can get the products you need for your vehicle. You can browse the Club Motul website to choose the oil, brake fluid, additives or anything else you know you need for your vehicle. Alternatively, you can enter your vehicle's registration into the oil selector or pick your vehicle from the list to see the recommended Motul products for your vehicle. If you can't find what you are looking for by navigating the website or using the oil selector, get in touch with us and the Motul UK Technical Manager will assist.

### Club Motul and FBHVC

FBHVC Discount Code: **FBHVC23**

All you need to do is add the products you need for your classic to your basket and apply the code at the checkout in the 'Enter Your Promotional Code' box.

If you would like any more information about how Club Motul works and the benefit on offer, you can contact us: [membership@clubmotul.co.uk](mailto:membership@clubmotul.co.uk)

## YOUR CLUB CODE: **FBHVC23**

## HOW TO USE YOUR CAR CLUB DISCOUNT CODE



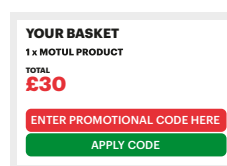
### STEP 1

Go to [www.clubmotul.co.uk](http://www.clubmotul.co.uk)



### STEP 2

Choose your MOTUL products.



### STEP 3

Enter your code at the checkout.



### STEP 4

Free UK next day delivery over £50.



# The Last Hurrah?

By Roy Dowding

I came across two old *American Car and Driver* magazines recently, from February and April 1976, and could not resist having a quick look at them. What immediately struck me was that there were probably more advertisements for cigarettes than for cars. Times have certainly changed in that respect. But what was even more apparent was that adverts for imported cars outnumbered the US brands by 250%.

While one or both issues carried rather lacklustre adverts for the Oldsmobile Cutlass, Ford Granada, Dodge trucks, AMC Pacer, Buick Regal, Chevrolet Monza 2+2 and Chevette, these were overwhelmed by those for the Fiat 128 (which pointed out that the basic Chevette had no back seat!), BMW 5-Series and the Datsun 280Z and B-210 (called the Sunny in Europe). There were also adverts for MGB, Honda Civic, Volvo 264,

Toyota Celica, Alfa Romeo Alfetta, Mercedes-Benz 450SL and 280, Porsche Carrera, Renault 5, Ford Capri, Peugeot 504 and the VW Rabbit (Europe's Golf).

Thinking back to that time, the UK was also seeing the beginnings of the onslaught by Japanese and European makers on its market share. This was not helped by the utter mess that was British Leyland, saved by the Government from bankruptcy the year before, and now suffering the effects of constant strikes led by the infamous 'Red Robbo'. Poor build quality and unreliability played a significant part too. Yet, despite their poor workmanship, BL had the audacity to export Jaguars and the Triumph TR7 to the USA and advertise them in *Car and Driver*. Complaints were rife, and their reputations sullied for years to come, while confidence to buy was not exactly instilled by the Jaguar

advert copywriter stating: "Standard is the uncommonly thoughtful warranty. For twelve months, regardless of mileage, Jaguar will replace or repair any part that is defective or that simply wears out." An admission of impending problems - up front! Apart from tyres, what else could possibly have worn out in just one year?

Matters were made difficult for the US manufacturers by what would become known as 'The Malaise Era' - the result of tight emission controls and fuel-saving legislation which robbed most US-made cars of their power and flexibility. Added to this was the gathering momentum of American car buyers down-sizing to the new-generation US compact and mid-size cars or, increasingly, imports. Which makes the following article about the Ford LTD Landau all the more surprising!

## "All is well with the American Dream - the sun may never set on the [US] standard-size car."

Condensed from the *Car and Driver* February 1976 Road Test on the Ford LTD Landau by Patrick Bedard (ex-racing driver and contributor/editor/columnist to *Car and Driver* for 42 years).

"Blindfold the average American and take him round the block in a Ford LTD, then a Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow and finally a Mercedes-Benz 450SEL. He'd buy the Ford, as the others are too noisy or uncomfortable. It's possible that the LTD is the world's most hospitable car. Though competition is pretty stiff from Chevrolet, Oldsmobile, Chrysler and other builders of standard-size cars in Detroit, there is no doubt the LTD is one of the world's finest.

The Rolls-Royce (opposite left) is charming with genuine walnut on the dash and painstakingly tanned leather on the seats, while in the Ford you have basic woodtone accents on a moulded vinyl dash and machine-knit Kasman cloth on the seats. Simulated elegance you may say, but there's

no way woodtone will ever chip, crack, peel or shrink. And Kasman cloth is several cuts above the stuff on your sofa.

When you drive the two cars, they are unexpectedly similar. You sit higher in the Rolls, and the controls work easier, with less friction, but the steering is so light you must concentrate to hold a straight path. The Ford seems to have more road sense, needing less help from the driver. But overall, discounting the huge price factor, one drives about as well as the other.

The Mercedes (opposite right) is different - a car that grips the road, gobbling up miles of twisting road without even breathing hard, but doesn't come close in comfort. The seats are as hard as church pews and ride quality and interior noise level are not in the

same league. When you're rolling across the prairie at 55mph, the Ford is by far the better choice.

At Detroit's box office, standard-size cars are still Number One, despite the economic crisis and energy crunch. The LTD outsells the Ford Pinto and Chevy Impala sales trounce the second place Chevelle. Why? They are the only bargains left in the auto world. Fully loaded, the LTD runs to US \$7,500, about the same as a 4-cylinder Volvo or the lowliest BMW [the R-R and M-B were around \$28,000 at that time]. There is no argument that bigger is more - in the case of the LTD, a full 18.5 feet long and a few inches short of 7 feet wide.

Detroit builds its big cars to a formula: body separate from the frame, allowing





Brochure shot of the Ford LTD with wheelspats (Credit: Ford Motor Co.)



A fair comparison? The Rolls Royce Silver Shadow – Credit: Meum Auction



1970s (now classic) Mercedes 450SEL – Credit: vintagecarcollector

better insulation of noise and vibration; solid axle rear suspension, which adds unsprung weight to stop the wheels following the contours of bumps, making the tyres do the work. It will float on freeways, which is where most American driving is done.

Engines don't put out the power they used to, because of emission standards, and tuning is invariably aimed at fuel economy, which in the case of the LTD was unexpectedly good. 12.5mpg in town and 13.0 on the highway makes it better than the Rolls and about equal with the Mercedes. Acceleration-wise, with its optional 400cu.in V8, putting out 180bhp

and 336lbs-ft of torque, it hits 60mph in 9.5 seconds and manages the quarter mile in 17.8 seconds. That's marginally quicker than the Rolls and only a fraction slower than the Mercedes.

Enthusiasts have always been critical of big American cars, because of the way they handle, but the 55mph limit has obviated much of that objection. The LTD is capable if you use the right technique. The Detroit theory is that a good car doesn't bother its driver with news fed from the road; communication between driver and car is a one-way affair. The driver tells the car what

to do. Never mind that the steering wheel doesn't feel connected to anything; when you turn it, the car turns. That's all you need. Just watch where you're going and turn when you need to – you drive by eye, not by the seat of your trousers.

It is this isolation, this lack of communication, that makes the LTD so remarkable. It shields its occupants from the discomforts of travel as well as any automobile in the world. And you don't have to be rich to own it. Little wonder that Detroit's big cars are still no.1 on the hit parade.”







From one extreme to the other: 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air and 1995 Chrysler Cirrus – Credit: Classic Auto Mall and Chrysler Motor Co. resp.

Clearly the writer of that slightly biased article was on a last-ditch crusade to keep the ‘standard-size’ car alive, against all odds. Was he angling to be made President of Ford, or the American Automobile Manufacturers Association? History has proved him wrong – the sun did set – and the big ‘Yank Tanks’ have long since become a thing of the past, but their most common replacement has been equally enormous pickup trucks or SUVs, most still with huge gas-guzzling engines. Meanwhile, those once-distinctive mid-size and compact US sedans have all but disappeared, replaced by peas-in-a-pod lookalike Euro/Japanese MPVs.

Returning for a moment to that article, I can empathise wholeheartedly with his comments about the LTD’s uncommunicative steering. I still recall a spell driving a ‘57 Chevrolet Bel Air – it could be likened to navigating a canal boat in a strong cross wind. Yes, it did turn eventually, more or less. In that regard, it seems there had been hardly any change in 19 years. Forward another 16 years to a brand new 1992 Buick Park Avenue I drove for a week, slightly less ‘big’ but with handling only marginally better; surprising, given how much most cars had generally improved by then.



Chrysler deserved high praise for their 1995 Cirrus – voted “Motor Trend Car of the Year” – the closest thing to a decent 4-door mid-size car, somewhat akin to a BMW 5-Series, that any US maker has ever achieved. Good looking, great to drive, with

many useful ‘toys’, well put together and as strong as an ox. We enjoyed our time with several examples during trips to the USA in the late Nineties. I would have been happy to own one, but for the fact they were only available as LHD.



### Roy Dowding

*President of the Gordon-Keeble Owners’ Club and Chair of East Anglian Practical Classics, Roy’s had a lifelong passion for all modes of transport, especially automobiles. He owns two of his childhood dream cars, a Gordon-Keeble and a Reliant Scimitar SE4 Coupé.*



## Obituary

# NICK BALDWIN

Nick Baldwin, who has died aged 78, was a highly respected motoring author and historian. He was recognised as a leading expert on all types of historic motor vehicles. His interest was sparked by his father who was *The Motor* magazine coachworks correspondent before WW2 and afterwards worked for Jowett Cars before becoming Publicity Manager for the Rover Company, where he oversaw the launch of the Land Rover.

After leaving Malvern College, the teenage Nick got a job in the Land Rover Experimental Department. He remained a committed Land Rover enthusiast and owned many, including a rare Tickford Estate, and his final daily driver was one of the last Defenders.

His first job in publishing was selling advertising for *The Autocar* in the swinging sixties. At the same time he was writing articles on old lorries for the HCVS which caused Prince Marshall of Old Motor to recruit him as a staff journalist and later they formed the transport publishing firm of Marshall, Harris and Baldwin. This firm was sold to Warnes in 1981 on the untimely death of Prince Marshall.

This was the springboard for Nick to go fully self-employed as an historic motoring journalist and author. Since then, he has written 42 books and contributed literally thousands of articles to every relevant magazine you have heard of, and several you probably haven't. He compiled the *Observers Book of Commercial Vehicles* for many years and was a major contributor to the *Beaulieu Encyclopaedia of Motor Cars*. For several years he was on the editorial team of *The Automobile*.

Nick was Curator of the Stratford Motor Museum and a member of the National Motor Museum Advisory Council for over forty years, serving a term as chairman. He was also a Trustee of the Michael Sedgwick Memorial Trust for thirty-five years as well as being a member of the Guild of Motoring Writers and the Society of Automotive Historians.

For a number of years, Nick was a car valuer for Phillips auctions and

later for Christies, where he was involved in the sale of the Bugatti Royale for £5.5m at a magnificent sale at the Royal Albert Hall.

Nick had amassed a huge archive of road transport related subjects which is probably the largest of its type in private hands. The quality of its content is such that the Gaydon Motor Museum obtained a Heritage Lottery Grant to acquire the element on cars, leaving a vast quantity of material on lorries, farm tractors as well as the factories that built them and the people who designed them.

Over the years, Nick owned a huge number of different vehicles, from a classic Aston Martin to a veteran Yorkshire lorry. He also had a large automobilia collection which is displayed in the home he shared with his wife Julie, which is more like a museum than many museums.

Nick had many other interests too. He joined the Sherlock Holmes Society and was also passionate about classical music, notably Elgar, and was very knowledgeable about food and drink. For a while he was a Representative for the Campaign for Real Ale in Devon and at one time was Restaurant Critic for *Diesel Car* magazine.

Nick loved animals and nature, starting with the slow worm he had as a boy which went everywhere in the top pocket of his school blazer. Once he showed it to Gerald Durrell who met Nick's father to discuss a Land Rover for an expedition. The great man solemnly told young Nick that his slow worm was the biggest he had ever seen.

Nick was half-way through compiling the A-Z of Steam Vehicles for *Old Glory*. His final article on vehicle braking systems was completed a week before his death and titled, poignantly, Full Stop.

We offer our condolences to his wife, Julie. They met when she was helping her parents run a Somerset country pub and he invited her for a ride in his Austin Healey 3000. This was the start of many adventures and for nearly forty years they were inseparable.

**Roger Bateman**



*Nick with his 1932 Rochet Schneider 3-ton lorry and fox terrier*



*Nick and Julie Baldwin with Bart, Oscar and Lord Montagu (middle) at the Beaulieu Autojumble press office 2 September 2023. (Photo: Peter Love)*

**A Thanksgiving Memorial will be held at St Michael and All Angels church, Shepton Beauchamp, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 0LQ on Tuesday 19th March at 3pm. All are welcome to attend and the dress code is colourful. No flowers but donations to North Devon Hospice and the bell tower funds of two churches: St Michael and All Angels, Shepton Beauchamp, and St Hieritha, Chittlehampton, Devon.**



# Salmons & Sons

## The Tickford Coachbuilders

### Newport Pagnell - A Personal Connection

By Neil Cairns

**N**ewport Pagnell became famous when the M1 opened in 1959 - it was the first Motorway Service Area in the country. Unfortunately, the nearby Junction 14 became an awful blackspot for multiple vehicle accidents in the thick mist that would suddenly roll onto the carriageways in autumn.

It's perhaps rather sad that such a pretty little market town surrounded by rivers, should be known today mostly for having been all but swallowed up into the morass that is Milton Keynes. The town once stood on its own reputation as home to the specialist sports car manufacturer, Aston Martin Lagonda. The year 2010 was the bicentenary of the only cast iron road bridge still in use in Europe. The bridge spans the river Ousel (known in Newport as the Lovat) to join Newport Pagnell with Tickford End.

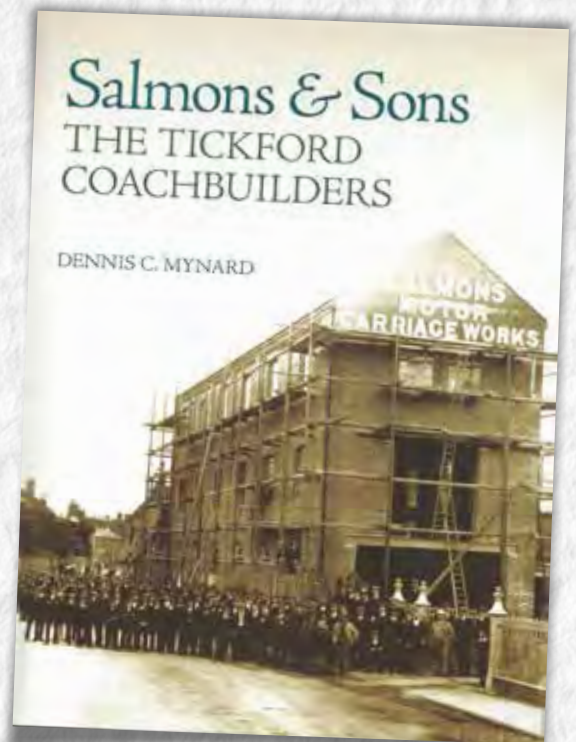
Tickford was originally a Priory. A village developed around the priory and circa 1830 the firm of Salmons was founded there to make carriages, farm carts, coaches and dog carts that eventually sold all over the world.

In 1898 Salmons ventured into the coach-building trade on motor car chassis, their

first being on a Daimler chassis for a Mr. Walter Carlile. The firm was based between Tickford Street and Priory Street and over the years bought up more and more land around the area to expand the business, until by the 1920s it was a busy, thriving concern owned and run by the Salmons family.

It was the 'Sunshine Saloon' built on chassis for customers that made the Salmons' fortune. They built bespoke bodies on famous car chassis manufactured in the UK and around the world (Austin, Armstrong Siddley, Daimler, Ford, Lanchester, Morris, Rolls Royce, FIAT, Hispano-Suiza, Delage, Cleveland, Lancia and many more... but not all at the same time!). The big cars' chassis would arrive with the radiator, scuttle, front wings and bonnet fitted, with rear wings tied on for later fitment. Salmons would then build and fit the body and trim the car for the completed 'Sunshine Saloon'.

The MG, Rover and Vauxhall cars trim shop was located alongside an aircraft hangar that Salmons had purchased in 1912. It was called 'Olympia' because of its construction was similar to the London Motor Show building. It was built by Boulton & Paul of Norwich and is now the oldest known surviving example of this type of construction. Salmons' body shop was in Abbey Drive, one half for Vauxhall cars and the other for MG.



*A fascinating history summarised in Dennis Mynard's book*

Salmons had patented a very efficient method of letting the sunshine in using a winding handle so the car's whole roof could be wound away by one person. This entailed a special in-house gearbox being fitted behind the rear seat, hidden in the boot area. The mechanism was guaranteed for life. It had been designed by the foreman Arthur Dalby-Balls. However, the mechanism was too heavy for smaller cars and so by the 1930s a lighter 'Spring Assisted Head' was designed and fitted that could still be operated by one person.

So successful was this sprung sunshine-roof that in 1933 Vauxhall had a contract with Salmons to build their open tourers on the 10hp model and their big 25hp cars. In 1936, MG also signed a contract, followed in 1937 by Rover. In three short years Salmons built many spring-assisted hoods on Vauxhall, Rover and MG cars.

At the Olympia Motor Show in 1936, Salmons exhibited an MG SA which won the 'Best Drop Head Coupe' in the RAC



*An advert from 1934 for the products*



*Bodyshop foreman, Mr. Pratt (circled), was a relation by marriage*



*Panelling a Vauxhall body*





Cars awaiting conversion to the Sunshine Roof



Trimming a Vauxhall



Fitting out vehicles in what was known as the 'MG Shop'



Vauxhall wooden body frame



Chassis shop in full flow



Machine shop crew (my Grandad is back row 2nd from the left)

coachwork competition. In 1937, Salmons built this body on the MG VA, in 1938 on the smaller TA and TB models and in 1939 on the 2.6 litre WA. This attractive MG drophead coupé became Salmons' best seller.

In 1937 Salmons won further coachwork prizes with the MG SA; first from the Institute of British Carriage and Automobile Manufacturers was followed by a third prize for an MG SA two-door foursome coupé in the 'standardised coachwork section'.

In 1938 Salmons once again had MGs on its Motor Show stand, an SA model in maroon with maroon leather and trim and a VA in birch grey with bright red leather

trim and a grey mohair roof.

Alas the second world war brought an end to car production after 1,655 MGs had been fitted out by the company. By then, the MG and the Rover drophead coupés were the main product of the factory.

In 1939 the family lost control of the firm and it went public as a limited company. In 1943 it was again taken over to become 'Tickfords' before being absorbed into Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd. As Tickfords it carried out the body development work for the Healey 100 sports car. However, none were made by them as Herbert Austin took it over as the Austin-Healey.

My personal interest in Salmons revolves around two brothers: my maternal grandfather and my great uncle. Grandad was Fred Thickpenny who was a fitter



The main building under construction, see book cover

and turner in the machine shop. His much younger brother was Bert Thickpenny, designer-draughtsman at Salmons, who went on to work for Tickfords and then Aston Martin. The photographs shown here date from 1924 and were given to my family by the last surviving member of the Salmons family.

Consequently, for me, Newport Pagnell's fame doesn't rely on a modern car company or a growing new town!







**The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs holds its annual conference for clubs each year at the British Motor Museum, Gaydon. The event, which this year was sponsored and supported by Peter James Insurance, aims to gather clubs together during the 'off-season' to share best practices, ideas and resources in preparation for the year ahead.**

This year, over 150 representatives of FBHVC member clubs gathered, a great networking opportunity but also a chance to hear from a cherry-picked panel of inspirational and informative speakers.

The day began with informal chats over coffee amongst the attendees before a formal welcome was made by FBHVC Chairman, David Whale who also introduced Tom Caren, Events Manager at the British Motor Museum. Guests also included Dominic Taylor-Lane from the Association of Heritage Engineers, Anders Clausager from the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain and Stephen Laing, Head of Collections at the British Motor Museum.

The opening keynote of the meeting was presented by the FBHVC Communications Director Wayne Scott and detailed ideas for revenue generation for clubs that allowed more freedom to invest in new member services and weather the current storm of increasing

price rises by leveraging sponsorships and commercial partnerships. Wayne outlined the many options open to clubs but featured the availability of strategic partnerships with Peter James Insurance who, with input from the FBHVC, have designed a series of club schemes for members. These schemes aim to pay clubs a generous commission whilst also tailoring the insurance offering to the specific needs of the club and its members. Dave Youngs, Partnerships Director joined Wayne on stage to discuss the options and give examples of how this is already working successfully for other clubs. In particular, Peter James was keen to explain that they have specific offerings to insure young drivers within clubs, a pain point that many FBHVC members have identified in the past. After a brief discussion about the further offerings of Public Liability and Product Liability cover that have been designed in conjunction with the FBHVC,

various questions were answered by the audience.

Up next, was a positive and fascinating presentation from MOTUL who not only covered the incredible history of the brand but also gave all present an update on the current developments in lubricants for historic vehicles. Callum Goodland, MD for UK and Ireland and Technical Manager explained that significant work is being done with clubs to collect data to create an oil lookup directory for particular models and there was a lot of positivity around future supplies, technology and sustainability. Furthermore, MOTUL outlined their Club MOTUL offering, reaffirming the value of working with a strategic commercial partner to bring value to members within clubs, as was outlined in the opening discussion.



GENUS IT was up next, following an introduction to Museums and Archiving activities within the FBHVC by Andy Bye. Head of Digitisation, Andrew Austin from GENUS, gave an engaging walk-through on how their new Recollect system can help clubs secure the future of their archives through digitisation but also by making them more accessible through membership logins as well.

Bob Wilkinson presented an update on the Classic Car Loan Project with his unique brand of infectious enthusiasm. The scheme has gone on to grow and grow with many more vehicles



being loaned to young people looking at trying their hand at classic vehicle ownership and many more vehicles being offered into the scheme by clubs and individuals alike.

The success stories have seen lots of new, young enthusiasts buying classic vehicles and in some cases, buying the loan cars as well! Bob previewed the big annual handover to be held at the British Motor Museum on 6th April 2024.

An extended lunch break was then afforded to attendees to allow plenty of time to look around the museum, meet our commercial partners exhibiting in the foyer and chat over the talking points from that morning's sessions.

The first session after a hearty lunch grabbed everyone's attention as Nigel Elliot, Fuels Specialist Advisor for the FBHVC, took the audience on a journey through the facts and fiction around solving the fuels challenge as we head towards net-zero. Nigel covered in great detail, backed by his lifetime of working within the oil and fuels industry, the facts of the enormity of the challenge faced by individuals and governments alike as society adapts to the needs of climate change. He then also gave a succinct view of the impact of all these challenges on the historic vehicle industry. A lot to take in, some of it mind-boggling but everyone left this session feeling better informed if not a little thoughtful and challenged.

The next session saw an exciting announcement of a new 'FBHVC Fact File' this time as an 'Essential Guide to Parts and Services'. The guide is very much in its first edition and it's hoped that members will contribute to its growth over time. Contained within was a useful case study from the Stag Owners' Club on how they have managed to use the tools and contacts available to them through the FBHVC and other bodies to successfully remanufacture parts for their cars. The guide was

presented by Chris Cartmell, who has done a superb job at compiling the content. It is now available to download and read online via [www.fbhvc.co.uk](http://www.fbhvc.co.uk).

The afternoon continued with a detailed update on DVLA matters from Ian Edmunds, DVLA Liaison for the FBHVC and Chairman David Whale. There was much to cover on the huge amount of consultative work being done to represent the Historic Vehicle Community and its many concerns. David outlined the discussions that he had been having on a ministerial level and at all tiers beyond, and Ian worked through some of the specific points raised by members. There is a more detailed DVLA update from Ian on page 10.

Finally, Matt Coles, who was encouraged into historic vehicle clubs through the Morris Minor Young Members Branch, gave an insightful talk on encouraging young people into historic vehicles. He suggested "creating nostalgia" where cars were outside the lifespan of a young enthusiast by getting them involved in the fun of restoration, events or through taking part in initiatives like the Classic Car Loan Project. Matt said that with the age of automatic transmission-only motoring upon us, a whole generation will be coming through who might not drive a manual car and who might well not be as hands-on. So, it was important to nurture any interest as early as possible and make the hobby accessible. Matt made the point that the very survival of the vehicles that owners of today have spent so long restoring relies on these schemes.

The overall feeling of the day was one of positivity but also a huge realisation that working together as a movement was crucial for our survival and any areas that see clubs collaborating, such as events like the Inter-club International Weekend, for example, will become ever more vital to our prosperity in the future.

# A thank you for 2023 and here's to 2024.



***Last year was a great year for the FBHVC's carbon capture scheme, we balanced over double the amount of miles we did in the first year. A huge thank you to all the individuals and clubs that got involved to plant over 5,000 trees to date!***

We'll be getting the 2023 certification out to clubs shortly (now we've locked-in the final tally for the year) and hope you'll join us again in demonstrating the community can be green in 2024.

## **Why is it important to plant as part of the FBHVC's scheme?**

Any action you and your club can take to help the environment and tackle emissions is brilliant. Every tree helps, and the more of us beating the 'responsible historic's' drum, the better! However, we often get asked "Why choose the FBHVC's scheme over others?" So, here's a quick run-down on why we are so proud of the scheme and hope you'll carbon balance with us:

- We deliver via verified planting schemes in the UK: This means we account for the exact tonnes that your vehicles emit and our trees will capture, in legally protected and maintained woodland.
- Tree-V do the maths for you! Most schemes just ask you how many trees you'd like to plant, we help you understand how many you need to!
- We help you shout about your actions. We're here to help the environment as much as we are the historic vehicle community – if you've taken green action, we want you to let people know and help you not be criticised when out and about.
- The most important one – it means you are part of an organised FBHVC effort. By working together, it means individual efforts can accumulate and be publicised to HM Government, media and others by the FBHVC. A total of five million miles carbon-balanced by the purchase and planting of trees by historic vehicle enthusiasts is quite something to shout about!

If you'd like to get your club involved then please drop [tom@tree-v.com](mailto:tom@tree-v.com) a line or check out [www.trees.fbhvc.co.uk](http://www.trees.fbhvc.co.uk)

## Welcome

We are delighted to report that the Federation continues to welcome new members and supporters. This issue we offer a very warm welcome to our newest **Club Members**:

**The Maico Owners Club - [www.maico.org.uk](http://www.maico.org.uk)**

Dedicated to the preservation and restoration of all MAICO motorcycles and scooters, made in Germany from the 1930s to 1960s.

**AJS Car Club - [www.ajs-car-club.com](http://www.ajs-car-club.com)**

For owners of the Wolverhampton firm's cars, briefly made in the early 1930s. Best known as manufacturers of motorbikes, the innovative company also produced cars, commercial vehicles and radios.

**Mini Marcos Owners Club - [www.minimarcos.org.uk](http://www.minimarcos.org.uk)**

Supporting owners of the mini-based kit cars, sold from 1965 onwards.

**Chiltern Vehicle Preservation Group (CVPG) - [www.facebook.com/groups/244793812221954/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/244793812221954/)**

An 'all makes' club for all vehicle enthusiasts that meets in Dunstable (winter) and at various venues in the summer.

We also welcome our newest **Trade Supporters**:

**Shield Chemicals - [www.shieldchemicals.co.uk](http://www.shieldchemicals.co.uk)**

Specialist retail chemical and oil products.

**Venture Bound - [www.venturebound.co.uk](http://www.venturebound.co.uk)**

An eclectic array of app-based driving events transforming the mundane: Self-drive Quest Drive treasure hunts, 4x4 Icelandic Adventures, themed discovery/corporate events, at-home table-top rallies.

**Cross Channel Sports Cars - [www.ccsportscars.co.uk](http://www.ccsportscars.co.uk)**

Specialists in classic car sales and registration of classic cars in France.

**Vintage Chrome Company - [www.facebook.com/CumbriaMetalFinishingLtd/](https://www.facebook.com/CumbriaMetalFinishingLtd/)**

Chrome plating with over 20 years' experience and a large repeat customer base.

Also receiving a very warm welcome are our new Individual Supporters:

**Rod Baker, Patrick Begley, Simon Berry, Roger Bibbings, Terry Bird, Tim Brown, Clive Bull, Andrew Burt, Jim Cockburn, Colin de la Cour, David Giles, Cliff Mahoney, John Powis, Bernard Rogers, Stig Sjöblom, Richard Thomas, John Vickery and FP Todd Wetzel.**

## World's Fastest Jensen

Regular readers will know that we have been following the 'World's Fastest Jensen' story. For an in-depth report and some great photographs from their 2023 visit to Speed Week at Bonneville Salt Flats, see the March edition of **Octane** magazine (Issue 249, pp 84-90).



## Book your event now!

As the summer season approaches, your club's events are a great way of attracting new members (as well as having fun), so why not take advantage of our free events listing?

Thanks to the vast volume of traffic that our website enjoys, it means that people searching the web for phrases such as 'car club events', which Google helpfully auto-completes to 'near me' will find our events site on the first page of Google.

All events, motorcycle, tractor/agricultural, commercial vehicles and cars, are welcome to be listed and appear here:

**[www.fbhvc.co.uk/events](http://www.fbhvc.co.uk/events)**

It's a simple self-process to list your club's event, and you benefit by spreading the word and potentially having more attendees. To add your event, please go to **[www.fbhvc.co.uk/list-your-club-event](http://www.fbhvc.co.uk/list-your-club-event)**

Also, if you add a 'Drive It Day' event, it automatically also gets added to the bespoke events page on the 'Drive It Day' website.

**[www.driveitday.co.uk/events](http://www.driveitday.co.uk/events)**

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There are many advantages of your club being a FBHVC member, not least the information we supply (such as in *Historic* magazine), but also the rich resources that you can offer to your members.

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# DES CARROSSES A L'AUTOMOBILE LES ANNEES 30 age d'or ou chant du cygne de la carrosserie française

I recently came across a most remarkable book – not only for the magnificent materials used and absorbing content, but also its incredible title:

**DES CARROSSES A L'AUTOMOBILE  
LES ANNEES 30**

*age d'or ou chant du cygne de  
la carrosserie française*

This translates as *“From carriages to automobiles. The thirty-year golden age or the swan song of French coachbuilding”*.

It is a substantial tome, measuring 11" (29cm) x 10.5" (27cm) and runs to 420 pages. A hardback, printed on high quality art paper, it comprises hundreds of photographs, in black & white and colour. Most have never previously been published. They are interspersed with dozens of extraordinary colour illustrations by the author – artist Francois Vanaret – that are clinically accurate and with a novel use of pose, colour and textures that imparts an almost three-dimensional effect.

Some examples depicting Bugattis and a Bucciali are reproduced here, necessarily smaller than the originals in the book, with some loss of the overall impact as a result.

The book is only available printed in French, but the author, with his friend Donald Toms, has made available electronically a translation into English of the text accompanying each of the chapters and picture legends.

Besides the stunning photographs and superb paintings, period advertisements and brochures are featured, all combining to provide coverage in depth of the work of makers such as Bugatti, Talbot and Delahaye as well as the famous French coachbuilders, including Chapron, Kellner, Vanvooren and Franay, to name but a few.

Published by the author, copies may still be available. If interested, please contact: [francois.vanaret@wanadoo.fr](mailto:francois.vanaret@wanadoo.fr)





In a previous issue (5/23), I quoted from an article on very early electric taxi cabs in London. Mick Hamer writing in *Bustler*, the magazine of the **Cardiff Transport Preservation Group**, tells us of early experiments with electric buses in London. There were many early experiments but in 1906 there was founded The London Electrobus Company who planned on having 50 buses on the road. In July 1907 the first successful electric bus route was established from Victoria Station across London to Liverpool Street Station. They only achieved twenty buses and "two years later the Electrobus vanished from the streets of London". Hamer goes on to say: "The Electrobus entrepreneurs were a gang of fraudulent financiers who systematically siphoned-off most of the money that shareholders had invested in their company".

Thinking about early buses, an article in *Wolseley World*, the magazine of the **Wolseley Register**, tells us about how the Great Western Railway experimented with running a bus service as early as 1903 from Helston in Cornwall to the Lizard. Author Amy Egan says: "The Chairman was very keen to see this type of service which in some cases could do away with the need to build light railways to connect with the main line". In the same article Peter Seaward added: "GWR were one of the largest operators of Wolseley buses – single and double deck – but they were frustrated by the long delivery periods and also had to convert many of the double-deckers to single deck as they were considered underpowered and struggled with the terrain - road conditions and topography".

The following appeared in *Cheval de Fer* the magazine of the **Ariel Owners Motorcycle Club**. "Fun and games at the Annual [Pershore] Rally. Games were always part of annual rallies in the 1970s/80s and then for some reason they fell to the wayside. In the past, swords and buckets of water featured but I am not too sure how well these would go down now. Revisited for the Pershore rally, they seem to be now an established and fun part of the weekend". Examples given were "Bungee.... one end of a series of old inner tubes are tied to a post and the competitor puts the last one around the waist. The objective is to stab a screwdriver in the ground at the furthest point/maximin stretch." Another task was to take a scrap piece of an Ariel motorcycle and throw it into a box, whilst on the move. Then there was the one where two chairs placed some distance away from the rider who had to indicate the narrowest the chairs could be placed to that he could ride through without touching. More difficult than you might think.

Finally, "Slow riding, a simple slow riding event, everyone starts off together and the last one across the line wins." Why have they lost popularity? Have we all become too serious?

Here is a story for older readers. Nubar Gulbenkian (1896-1972) was a wonderfully eccentric Turkish-born Armenian who was born into immense wealth, so writes Graham Waite in *Vintage Taxi*, the magazine of the **London Vintage Taxi Association**. His London home was the Ritz Hotel, very close to Jack Barclay's showrooms. "In post-war years he ordered several Rolls-Royce motorcars, notably upsetting Rolls-Royce with the extraordinary Hooper and Co. coachwork he commissioned on a Silver Wraith known as 'The Pantechnicon'. Following a succession of Rolls-Royces, Gulbenkian was to choose as his main London transport an Austin taxi, as he was later famously quoted "because it turns on a sixpence, whatever that is". It was no ordinary London taxi as, through Jack Barclay and Co., he commissioned FML Panelcraft to construct coachwork to his own design and Gulbenkian went on to have no less than three of these bespoke taxis built". At least one is known to survive:



I love some of the "Motoring Tips" which club Editors find in old magazines. From the *Surrey Vintage Vehicle Magazine* are two. They are undated but are presumably 1950s. "Why waste time travelling when you can work on the move, record letters, reports, and speech ready for your secretary to type up." The illustration shows an office tape

recorder mounted on a plywood base sitting on the passenger seat, all safely tied down. A wire runs from the recorder to a converter on the floor (not fixed down) with a wire to the cigar (note, not cigarette) lighter. A wire from the tape recorder with the microphone on the end of it is loosely hung over the sun visor to dangle in front of the driver.

The second one. If you have a frozen door lock. "These are no problem for a pipe smoker. Just stoke up the old briar and, with the bowl opening at the lock, blow through the stem. The hot blast of smoke directed at the lock will thaw out the mechanism".



Many vintage, and some early post-war cars, were fitted with vacuum operated windscreen wipers. Mike Eggenton, writing in *The Vintage Austin Magazine*, the journal of the **Vintage Austin Register**, describes his experience with such a wiper. He had a 1927 Austin 12/4 Clifton in which he was to undertake a trip to Ireland, so he gave the car a full service. The vacuum wipers were not working well, so were taken to pieces but found to be complete and unworn. "Everything pointed to the rubber pipe which joined the wiper unit to the inlet manifold. At first glance there were no obvious breaks or other damage... I removed it from the car. Running it through my hands it looked perfectly sound until I flexed it and then all was revealed. The pipe was perished and there was a series of cracks running along it that were not apparent until it was bent. A new length of pipe was fitted and the wipers worked consistently, or as consistently as a vacuum wiper can work when on the road!"

Mark Yeomans writing in *County Council*, the magazine of the **Austin Counties Car Club**, delves into the problems of using plastic braided fuel lines on our cars. "The actual problem with this type of hose material is that over time the internal bore of the hose hardens and makes it impossible to tighten up a jubilee hose clip. This is probably the effect of more volatile modern fuels, but also plastic fuel hose hardens with age".



Idle Chatter is the magazine of the **1100 Club**. Some years ago, they obtained what they describe as 'The Skeleton Car'. It's a cut away version of the Austin 1100 Countryman which first appeared at the Geneva Show in 1966 and the following year the Earls Court Show. After a period in storage, it was purchased by the club. For some years it was loaned to the Stondon Motor Museum and when that closed, to the Bentley Motor Museum in Sussex, sadly that too closed. Now refurbished by the Essex Branch of the Club, the 'Skeleton' has now been loaned to the Great British Car Journey Museum in Derbyshire.

In the Citroënian, the magazine of the **Citroën Car Club**, there was a special feature. CCC member David Clark has recently taken his new C4 for its second service at his local Citroën dealer, Worthing Motors. While there he was given a copy of their flyer commemorating their 100th anniversary of being a Citroën dealer. Apparently, they are the longest standing UK Citroën dealership and still in the same family ownership on the same site. The article goes on to record the 100 years, plus several interesting photographs. They were not just Citroën dealers. In the 1920s they were agents for Citroën, Clyno, Durant, Rover and Singer cars and BSA and New Hudson motorcycles. They also held a stock of tyres by Avon, Clincher, Dunlop, Goodyear, Goodrich, Michelin, Pirelli and Kempshall.

The **Foden Society News** has republished an article which first appeared in March 1950 from the Sandbach edition of the Crew Chronicle. They tell us that after being demobbed from the RAF, Mr. Michael Shackleton turned to making children's toys out of wood. He began his production in a room at the back of the Wheatsheaf Inn. These were very successful and soon he had to expand. The article goes on to say "In January 1948, with little or no knowledge of mechanical engineering, Mr. Shackleton drew up his first plans for a mechanical toy, far more advanced than his wooden productions. With the assistance of Messrs. Foden, a perfect scale model of a Foden lorry was blueprinted". It took the team some eighteen months to make the necessary tools before production started. "In June 1949 the first Shackleton mechanical toy, a model of a Foden lorry, was put on the market. So great was its success that by Christmas over 20,000 had been sold at an average retail price of 50/- [£2.50] each".

Another extract from Wolseley World took my eye. Chris Pearson had an illustration from a 1915-1916 Lines Brothers catalogue (later Triang) which illustrated two Wolseley

pedal cars, one a single-seater and the other a 'tandem' capable of carrying a passenger behind the driver, that person also had a pedal facility. The cost £15.10s [£15.50]. He also illustrated a 1960 Triang A60 Farina style pedal car. He remarked that this had a lovely miniature Wolseley grille with the side grilles as well.

The **Morris Minor Owners Club** celebrated 75 years of the Morris Minor. One of their publications was an Unofficial History of the Morris Minor.



This bookazine takes the Morris Minor from 1940s through to the end of production in November 1970 but then goes on recording the Morris Minor in use for work and play, right up to date. The **Morris Minor Owners Club**, having been formed in 1976, the publication is mainly pictorial and very nostalgic with often extended captions. Much of the research for this publication was done by Ray Newell assisted by John Carroll and Mark Watkins. This is an example that might be taken up by other Clubs who have significant anniversaries for make or club.

Distributor the magazine of the **Southend and District Classic Car Club**, gave its readers some extracts from The Motor of 4th September 1934. This one came from a coroner aged 85: "I consider the speed limit out of date – a retrograde idea which obstructs genuine progress. Today time is money motorists and commercial drivers should be allowed to travel along these main highways as fast as they like, but not to the danger of the public. You may travel in perfect safety at 70mph – and again there are circumstances where 10mph is absolutely criminal". These thoughts were from Sir Samuel Brighouse, for 56 years Coroner for Lancashire and who considered himself an

experienced road user of 5,000 miles a year. (he was born in 1849).

Mel Holley, the Federation's Secretary recently exchanged correspondence with Colin Roberts, editor of the **L. E. Velocette Club** magazine. He has been editing the magazine for some 53 years and Mel wonders if this makes Colin the longest serving editor of any club magazine.

The Star is the official journal of the **BSA Owners Club** and in it, Brian Pollitt asks the question "When did the last motor bike produced and marketed as a BSA leave the production line?" There had been many theories and Brian tried to put these to bed. He had access to the factory despatch books, but here was a problem, there were three models being built at the end. Due to lack of demand some were put into store after build. These were then recorded in the despatch books when they were eventually sold, as much as 14 months after build. The author also contacted the club librarian who had spoken to Al Cave the former works manager. Al had said: "The last three BSA A65s had special numbers namely 098, 099 and 100 and they had a presentation to mark the fact." Unfortunately, these bikes are not documented in the despatch books. The historian's lot can often be complicated.

Flute News, the newsletter of the **Vauxhall Owners Club**, carried a three-page article on the well-known Luton commercial – the CA Bedford, first produced in March 1952 and in production until July 1969. From the beginning they also produced it as a panel van and a chassis/cowl for specialist coachwork. The company taking the most of these were Martin Walter of Folkstone in Kent for their famous Dormobile camper conversions. There were special train loads of bare vans from Luton to Martin Walters carrying 100 vehicles at a time. The production from the coach works was prodigious being around 40 units a day. The article says: "Though notionally independent, its conversions were fully approved by Bedford, sold through its dealerships and the two names became entwined in buyers' minds, even though Martin Walter offered conversions based on all manufacturers 10-17cwt chassis that were commonly available." It was the coming of the Ford Transit van that caused the CA Bedford to be phased out.

In the magazine Start Line, produced by the **Wigton Motor Club**, was an interesting advertisement. It read: "Land Wanted. We are looking for land to buy to use for events. If anyone knows any coming up for sale etc., please let us know". Of course, we know of the long-established clubs who own places like Prescott and Shelsley



hill climbs. The MCC some years ago purchased the famous trials hill, Blue Hills Mine in Cornwall, and recently a club in the Cotswolds was raising money to buy a plot of land on which was a trials hill.

The **Bristol Austin Seven Club** carried a five-page article on the Austin Big 7. The car appeared in July 1937 and was announced as an addition to the range and not a car to usurp the Ruby.



This article by Tim Reynolds is very detailed. It set me thinking back to my first Austin 7 In 1956, a 1931 saloon. Then the VSCC would not accept post-1930 Austin 7s unless they were sporty versions. Many Austin enthusiasts (including me!) looked down their noses at the Austin 7 Ruby, and the Big 7 did not feature on their radar. Comments at the start of the article *"The Bristol [Austin Seven] Club was hostile to these cars forty years ago, but when it was realised that they had become very rare, attitudes softened, and they were allowed in. There is now an Austin Big 7 Register who believe that there may be 200 – 300 cars surviving. Funny how attitudes change"*.

In *Historic Commercial News*, the magazine of the **Historic Commercial Vehicle Society**, Fraser Clayron draws our attention to an unusual bus service. We are used to buses taking the place of cancelled trains but when the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway in North Devon (1ft 11½") closed in 1935, Southern National modified a Bristol bus to take milk churns and mailbags which would have previously gone by rail. The bus route took in "all stations" on the closed line. He also mentions a Western National service that collected cut flowers from the growers and took them to the southern terminus of the Great Western Railway at Penzance. In this case, this was a regular bus service, and the photographs showed a bus full of passengers as 30-50 boxes of flowers were loaded onto the roof rack of the bus.

Steve Milner, chairman of the **Lincolnshire Vintage Transport Museum**, writing in the Club magazine *Conrod*, tells of a distressing fire. *"The Friends of King Alfred Buses group in Hampshire have lost several well restored and unique buses in a fire which*

*spread to their premises one night... This sad occurrence has certainly concentrated our minds at our museum and workshop, and this is a strong reminder to all members to be vigilant."* He then goes on to remind members of good practice in the workshops. What interested me was the fact that the fire had occurred in another building (presumably occupied by another firm) which spread to the collection. This is not the first time I have heard of a fire destroying stored heritage vehicles which started from a fire spreading from elsewhere.

Did you know that a Reliant Regal three-wheeler had taken part in the Monte Carlo Rally? Well, sort of. Slice, the magazine of the **Reliant Sabre and Scimitar Owners Club**, tells us how it came about. 342 ENX was a press/development car *"that was used to demonstrate the versatility and reliability of the model"*. It had done a 100,000-mile run up and down the M1. It then went on a 3,200-mile proving run in Northern Europe driven by ex-motorcycle racer Cyril Rogers. In 1963, the factory entered four Reliant Sabres in the Monte Carlo Rally. *"Three wheelers were not allowed to enter, but the organisers did allow 342 ENX to compete with press plates"*. This rally was one of the worst for years due to very severe winter with snow drifts and blizzards, but 342 ENX made it all way to Monte Carlo and received a finishers plaque from the Rally organisers. By contrast its next outing was to the Sahara Desert.

*Wanderer* is the magazine of the **Historic Caravan Club**. Their Editor re-printed an article by Barrie Phillips entitled 'Anobium Punctatum'. Any the wiser? It is the Latin name for the woodworm.



This five-page article should be read by any restorer who has a wooden frame on their car. It goes into detail about biology, detection, treatment, monitoring and safety. The article was originally printed in the *British Vintage Wireless Bulletin*. An interesting cross-over into our world.

In the magazine of the **Morris Register** there was an article which I found extraordinary as I had not heard about it before. Written by, I think, Geoff Campbell, the writer had been loaned by a retired Police Officer a book entitled *The Oxford*

*City Police 1869-1968* by Geoff Rose. In it was a headline from Oxford mail *"Plot to kidnap Lord Nuffield, to be taken at pistol point to yacht and forced to write a letter of credit"*. The extract from the book went into quite some detail of this plot, masterminded by John Bruce Thornton, real name Patrick Boyle Tullman, who over a period of eighteen years had obtained £82,000 from blackmail. The report is too long to print here, suffice to say the plot failed. *"Thornton was convicted at Birmingham Assizes on 22nd July 1938 and sentenced to seven years penal servitude. He died shortly after his release from prison. Lord Nuffield was very interested in the whole operation and insisted on being at all the meetings relating to the affair. He would have dearly liked to have been in control himself and Mr. Fox [Chief Constable] had great difficulty in preventing Lord Nuffield from allowing himself to be kidnapped"*.

A letter in *Goldie*, the magazine of the **Gold Star Owners Club**, caught my eye. Member Charles Falco was furthering a discussion on the future viability of the club and quoted membership numbers for three other one-make motorcycle clubs. I have often wondered if club committees would be interested to know membership numbers for other local or one make clubs and possibly a breakdown of that membership for comparisons. I cannot imagine that clubs would want to keep that information to themselves. Going one step further, a survey of clubs' costs as a pie chart might prove very interesting and show how the club membership fee is spent by other clubs in comparison with your own.



**Michael E Ware**

*Trained as a professional photographer, Michael started his own motor racing photography business in 1959. In 2001 he retired from his role as curator of the National Motor Museum after nearly 40 years. Since then, he has been an author and freelance motoring writer. He has also written books on British Canals and British Fairgrounds.*

## HISTORIC

If you are considering providing material for future editions of **Historic**, please note the copy deadlines for the remainder of this year are:

**Issue 2 - 30 Apr**

**Issue 3 - 30 Jul**

**Issue 4 - 5 Nov**

Feel free to contact the editor before submitting your article –

[editor@fbhvc.co.uk](mailto:editor@fbhvc.co.uk)



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