

KEMPSFORD

CLASSIC CAR & MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Newsletter
Summer 2012

Hello again. After a wet and miserable start to the season at the Coleford Show we thought it couldn't get any worse. Which just goes to show how wrong you can be, especially where the English weather is concerned. Wheel Nuts was cancelled due to the ground being waterlogged and, although Strawberries and Steam went ahead last weekend, I'm told it was something of a washout. Thank goodness Drive IT Day survived in spite of it being very soft going in parts of the Royal Oak car park. I parked my Westminster on the grass and it was touch-and-go getting it out again. Thankfully Roger was able to park his Rolls on the hard! There was a good turnout from the Club including Jonny Ockwell who achieved overnight fame by getting his picture in the Standard. (see photo). In all over 120 vehicles attended during the day representing 60 different clubs.



My sincere thanks go to Arthur Rolls (as ever) for his regular up-date on the bike section; Bill Tudor for his memories of restoring not one, but two MG TFs; and Dave Hitchings and his friend Hugh Allen for the fascinating tale of their European sojourn. Tony Alden is off on a similar jaunt next month and we look forward to seeing his take on it in the Autumn Newsletter. All other contributions will be gratefully received and *will be used*.

A TALE OF TWO TFs BY BILL TUDOR

In the early eighties I bought a very tired white MG TF, it was in a real broken-down state and obviously in need of a total ground-up restoration. I completed the task and you can see the finished article in the picture. I had bought it for my own use, but I knew that it would eventually have to be sold in order to finance the next project.

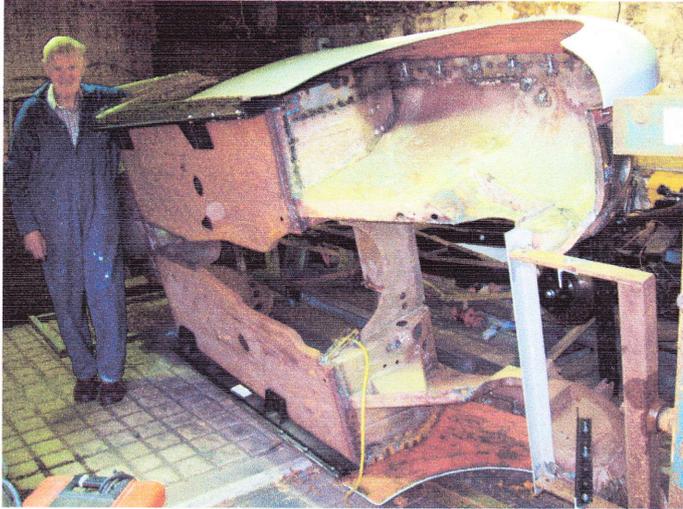


I had owned and used it for a few months when my brother's girlfriend saw it and fell in love all over again. It transpired that she had had a boyfriend in her youth who had owned a red TF. She wanted to buy it, and money was no object. But it had to be red! I could not face the thought of almost totally dismantling it just to change the colour. So, why not buy another restoration project and paint it red from day one?

That's all very well, but to find one fairly quickly was not going to be easy. It so happened that around that time there were a number of such vehicles being imported from the USA. I found one advertised and bought it. It was left hand drive – oh dear! And it had a Volvo engine of about 1.8 litres under the bonnet, with a Volvo gearbox and a shortened prop-shaft. It would seem that this was not an uncommon mod. in the USA. However, it did have the original 1250cc MG engine and gearbox to go with it. So the game's on!

Ere long I'm getting hassled by my brother's girlfriend, "How long will you take to make *my car*."

There were several snags to overcome. The main one being the inability to obtain a right hand drive steering rack. I eventually got hold of a second-hand one which leaked from the day I put it on until the day I sold the car! But you could live with it and it worked fine. Another problem was the brake master cylinder box.



Bill crosses the great divide from MG to Triumph

Having moved the pedals over, with the attendant throttle linkage problems, I had to set-to with tin snips to make a master cylinder box. The bonnet had been repainted in the USA with some sort of enamel and my cellulose reacted with it. This entailed a complete strip-to-metal effort on the bonnet, having tried a neutraliser in the hope of avoiding this chore. Yet another phone call, "When will *my car* be ready?"

One of the problems that was becoming worse by the week was finance. After all, she wanted chrome wire wheels, (disc wheels had come with the car), a chrome luggage rack and new bumpers. Before I had finished the car the bank owned the rolling chassis and half the bodywork, to say nothing of the new hood and side-screens!

When the young lady collected the car I ran all the way to the bank with her cheque! It was quite a day and to cap it all I had to completely re-position the driver's seat – her legs were too short to reach the pedals! She did keep in touch for a while and collected several concourse and other trophies at the numerous shows she attended. En-route to one show a deer jumped over a hedge into the road and landed on the bonnet, doing about £3,000 worth of damage. It wrecked the whole of the front end and her confidence in the car. She sold it to someone in Lancashire. I didn't get a chance to buy it back – I think she had, by now, broken up with my brother!

MOT CONSULTATION FROM THE FBHVC NEWSLETTER

Mike Penning, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, announced the results of the Historic Vehicles MoT Exemption Review on 21 May 2012. The Department for Transport is in favour of exemption for pre-1960 vehicles and it is proposed this will take effect from 18 November 2012. Owners of exempted vehicles will be able to take them for a voluntary test under the new regulations.

The FBHVC's initial response is a cautious welcome to a result that matches the wishes of the majority of respondents to the Federation's MoT survey. We hope to get more information about the detail of the proposals from the DfT in due course, particularly about passenger carrying vehicles in commercial use which would appear, from the DfT statement, also to be exempt from MoT testing.

In principle, owners of vehicle of all ages accept the discipline of being treated as ordinary motorists in order to use the road. The responsibility for a vehicle being roadworthy will not be withdrawn, nor has the need for the duty of care required to ensure that full and proper maintenance of the vehicle has been undertaken.



Facel Vega at The Royal Oak

In our survey there was considerable interest in maintaining some form of voluntary test which with the right equipment and knowledge, should not present problems, or cause any damage. The necessity for an MoT test is also enshrined in other regulations such as: first registration on import; as part of the V765 procedure; obtaining an age related mark; transfer of marks; re-licensing from unlicensed etc. In all these circumstances a test is necessary for the protection of fraud, and in the case of the import of vehicles never made in the UK, conformity with Construction and Use regulations. The current Individual Vehicle Approval test would not be appropriate. We will be seeking clarification on these issues.

The Federation has always been mindful that the use of historic vehicles might be restricted if exemptions from the annual MoT test were applied. We have been very careful to ask this question in all dealings with the Minister on this subject.

The results of the FBHVC MoT survey do not appear to be the same as other surveys conducted by the motoring press, and in some cases our member clubs have given us an opinion which is at odds with the results from our online survey of individuals. This wide diversity of opinions is being looked at closely by the FBHVC board.

MOTORCYCLE SECTION BY ARTHUR ROLLS

A few observations from the Bristol Classic Bike Show held at the Bath & West Showground in February.

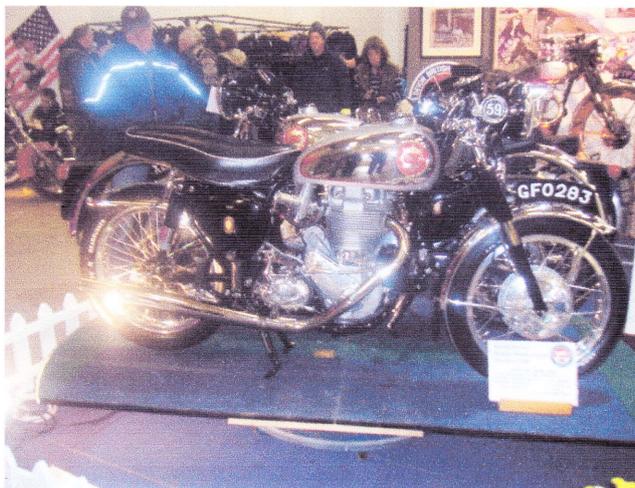
The Bike shown above is a 1926 Cotton model 29TT powered by a 350cc Blackburne CK o.h.v. engine and fitted with a Burman 3 speed TT ratio gearbox. This is one of six built for the 1926 Junior TT race. It was prepared to full TT specification and held at Cotton's Gloucester works as a reserve machine but was never used. It was purchased directly from the factory after the event. Although they were unsuccessful in the junior TT Cotton took the first three places in the lightweight 250cc race, after Moto Guzzi were disqualified for using the wrong type of spark plug. The winning Cotton was ridden by Paddy Johnston at an average speed of 60.2 mph. (rather him than me).



This 1925 Ner-a-Car (left) was voted best in show at The Bristol Classic Motorcycle Show in February. It was purchased as a project bike and has taken a couple of years to restore it to what must be better than new condition by its owner, who like Phill and myself is a founder member of the new North Wilts Motorcycle Club. The Ner-a-Car company was an

American firm and the bikes were made in England under licence by the Sheffield-Simplex luxury car maker. Although originally fitted with a two stroke engine, the bikes made in Britain were fitted with a 350cc. Blackburne side valve four stroke engine and Sturmey Archer three speed gearboxes, and used a centre hub steering system.

The bike shown right is the final chapter in the history of the Gold Star. The story started in the 1930s when Wal Handley lapped Brooklands at over 100mph. The Goldie was produced in various forms for almost thirty years, and carried such designations as M24, ZB32/34, DBD32/34. The 32 & 34 identified it as a 350 or 500cc, and the prefix letters indicated the model & mechanical specification. Each engine was hand built from selected components and extensively bench tested before leaving the factory. The Goldie was every young bikers dream machine, but in reality they were temperamental, uncomfortable and difficult to ride due mostly to the highly tuned engine and close ratio gearbox. But they were good for posing and pulling the "BIRDS". I owned an early 1950s model and sold it in the early 1960s for twenty pounds. The bike in the picture is currently insured for twenty thousand pounds and they change hands for ten to fifteen thousand pounds. What a wonderful thing hindsight is.



SUMMER QUIZ

Just to see if you have been paying attention to your Newsletters here is a short quiz. All the answers have been in the Newsletters over the years. Answers on the back page.

- 1 Can you name this motorcycle?
- 2 In Spring 2007 what did Steve Wilson of Classic Car Mart describe as "...the ultimate British sports car" and who does it belong to?
- 3 Later that year which of our members admitted to being handcuffed and thrown into the cells for suspected car crime?
- 4 I spotted this handsome vehicle at Wheel Nuts in 2008. What is it?
- 5 Which highly successful vehicle, other than the Augusta helicopter, did the Italian General Corradino D'Ascanio design in 1946?
- 6 What were manufactured by Riley, Humber, Wolseley, Hillman and Rover before they turned their hands to motor cars?
- 7 You will doubtless instantly recognise these two models as being 1932 Alpha Romeos, but who is the model European champion of the same year standing with them?
- 8 Why is Drive It Day held on the Sunday nearest to 23 April each year?
- 9 Harry Ferguson is hailed as "the father of the modern tractor" and is known for his work on four-wheel drive systems. Best known of the cars which used his designs was the Jensen FF. What do the letters FF stand for? Give yourself a bonus point if you can trace the connections to Tony Alden's Austin Healey 100/6?
- 10 Was this the World's first scooter? Like the Vespa and Lambretta which followed 30 years later this machine was built in a former aircraft factory in 1918. Whose factory was it?
- 11 Why have you never seen a Jaguar Mk VI?
- 12 Still with Jaguars: when the XJ220 was launched back in 1995 (we can argue about whether a car so young can be called a classic) it was the World's fastest production car. It had a 550bhp 3.5 litre engine and only 350 were made. How much was it to the nearest £40k?
- 13 Whose adverts claimed they made, "the best motorcycles in the World"?
- 14 In 2010 we visited Brooklands. John Cobb set a number of speed records in this 24 giant including the Brooklands Outer Circuit lap record at 143.44 mph in 1935. This record still stands. Can you name the car?
- 15 Who won the Best Sports Car in Show award at Wheel Nuts in 2008?



THE CLASSIC MUSEUM TOUR - MAY 2012 BY HUGH ALLEN

Car: Marlin Berlinetta. Builder, keeper and driver: David Hitchings

There is not much discussion about kit cars, once classed as specials. They are, after all, made from kits, bits and spare parts from scrapped cars or from specialist traders. Therefore those with "proper" classic cars so often frown them on. It is time that the boundaries became blurred. Kit cars, or "Hand build classics" as my friend calls his, have been in the market place for a very long time. Now they have come of age, we should honour the best, as well as the manufacturers and the individual builders, and welcome them into the stable of classic car: rallies, collections and museums.

I was asked by Dave Hitchings to accompany him from South Cerney, near Cirencester, to Brescia in Italy in his Marlin Berlinetta. This car, vaguely reminiscent of a 1930's Alfa Romeo, has been on the road for twenty years. He, David, built it and has kept it in immaculate order ever since. The advantage



he has, is that he has been in the thick of the motor trade for his career. He brought his skills and deep

experience to the build. It was in his car that we drove to Brescia, the heart of the Mille Miglia rally.



The purpose of this trip was to be in that city to see the myriad of classic cars entered for this year's event. In addition, we had targeted several museums to visit whilst camping by Lake Garda, and then on the way home: Museum Nicolis, Mille Miglia, Foundation Herve, the Schlumpf Collection and finally the Technic Museum in Speyer. Needless to say, the drive to Dover was on busy and crowded roads but we did not encounter any hold-ups. We were looking forward to continental motoring avoiding, where possible, motorways and tolls.

Whilst waiting to drive onto the Calais ferry, my mind was taken back to my first memory of taking a car over the channel. It must have been in the mid 1950's when, as a child, I lived in Berlin. Coming back to England for leave, my father drove us in his Mercedes Benz 220S. At the dockside in Ostende his car was winched aboard with a crane, chains having been attached around the car. It was a fearful sight to me gazing up at the family car waving about beneath the derrick.

We drove aboard in the Marlin, enjoyed a snack lunch, and very quickly disembarked. The signposting in Calais is appalling unless you want to find the motorways. Is it reasonable to thank God for Sat Navs? David has Marlene to direct and navigate. She took us on our way along a route that seemed illogical to me clutching a map. For our entire trip we had Marlene on hand but not without constant map reading alongside. Later on our journey in Italy she said, "Take the Strada Regionale Gardesana Orientale". What should we do when faced with that long instruction as we faced a roundabout full of Italian traffic?

And so to open countryside and quiet roads: patchwork fields and small wooded areas. There



were acres of oil seed rape, obviously a viable crop at the moment.

Etap hotels are a chain of inexpensive hotels throughout France and we used these for overnight stops in Laon, Besancon and Chambery. In the daytime we were accompanied by the gentle rumble of the 3.5 litre engine, on occasion becoming a strong throb at high revs. Motoring in a Marlin is such a different experience from an average "Eurohatch". It has a narrow cockpit and a glorious view along the louvered bonnet, past chromed headlamps to the road ahead. The car often drew admiring glances, thumbs up, smiles, headlamp flashing and tooting not only in France, but in Italy, Switzerland and Germany too.



Chambery was the last stop before arriving at Lake Garda. That evening we followed Marlene's directions to a restaurant, climbing up to 4,500 feet, only to find it closed. A packet of sandwiches had to suffice, though the drive up and back was spectacular along the tortuous mountain road. It was worth it.

En route to Lake Garda we saw no kit cars and only a handful of "interesting" cars, all of which were modern: Ferraris, Porche, Alfa Romeo and one Bentley Continental. There must have been many others we missed. Our journey as far as Lake Garda was 1045 miles. Eurocamp is good value to holidaymakers out of season. We had booked both the ferry and caravan through them. We had a caravan for six nights on a site near Salo, at the southern end of the lake. It was surrounded by other travellers from Poland, Germany and Holland. Whilst there we had days out:



A day at Sirmione, an ancient town on the southern shore of the lake. In one car park were six Mille Miglia entrants testing their timing gear. This was an admirable foretaste to the day in Brescia.

To the Mille Miglia museum in Brescia showing an excellent display of vehicles that have entered the race in the past. David reminded me that Stirling Moss and Dennis (Jenks) Jenkinson had pioneered the idea of putting a rally route onto a scroll.

To the Museum Nicolis with a fine collection of cars, motorbikes, bikes, cameras, pianos and typewriters. It was fascinating to see side by side a 1927/28 Rolls Royce and the equivalent Fiat. Each was huge and opulent yet their pathways of development have diverged considerably over the years. The current Fiat 500 (retro style) is utterly at variance with a contemporary Rolls Royce.



A day in Brecia to watch the myriad of classic cars collected in the various city squares. Where else do you find twenty Gullwing Mercedes Benz cars amassed, each one immaculate, or a pair of 1920's Bentleys driven by "Bentley Boys", Alfa Romeos.... Amongst the Gullwings and outside the Mercedes courtesy premises stood a 220 virtually the same as that which my father once had. He had bought it new in Berlin and had kept it for twenty years. The 384 entrants filled the centre of the city and were the focus of a tremendous festival atmosphere.

So the sunny caravan days passed. We left Italy and used the Simplon Pass to enter Switzerland. Our destination was Aigle, to visit the Foundation Herve. David, some years previously, had been involved in the restoration of some of the cars of that private collection (including an MG K3). It was Sunday, the day of the week according to the Internet when this museum would be open. We discovered, having found the place, that it was open on Fridays and Saturdays only. Oh well, the Internet is not infallible after all!



Leaving Switzerland we motored on in Marlin style to Mulhouse. There we spent several hours wandering through the vast collection of cars (c. 400) including about 40 Bugattis. Mulhouse is by the Alsace region of France and so adjacent to beautiful wooded hills, zigzag climbing roads and ancient pretty villages (Riquewahr and Ribeauville). A return to this region is a distinct possibility sometime in the future.



Our final visit was to the Technical Museum in Speyer, Germany. As a museum it is significant in that the collection is worldwide, historical and so varied as well as being a technical showcase. Yes, there was a good collection of cars including an old Mini that had been converted into a double decker bus! There were aeroplanes inside and outside the buildings, steam engines, fire engines, submarines and boats. A Boeing 707 had been raised on stilts to above house height. Metal staircases led us up so we could clamber inside the tilting plane. Coming down a metal spiral tube was an option; pick up a mat and enter the dark hole. Otherwise do as I did and go down the steps! Near a WW1 Fokker triplane was a Russian space shuttle into which we could climb. Other space artefacts are on show too. I do recommend a visit. Speyer, too, is

a lovely old German city, good to stroll around, drink coffee or enjoy Italian ice creams.

Our route back to Calais was a mix of wonderful straight rural roads through France, and towards the end, a busy period on motorways. The ferry back to Dover from Calais takes little over an hour. Then a drive along English motorways brought us back to South Cerney. Our trip of seventeen days and 2,600 miles had a tremendously varied itinerary, good accommodation, beautiful routes and most interesting museums. The day in Brescia, though, will remain the highlight.

PETROL PRICES

The lowest petrol prices in the area at 129.9p per litre is to be found at the Shell station on the Fairford – Lechlade road, and at the Esso 'On The Run' station on the A419 northbound at Cricklade. The Seven Bridges garage on the A419 is within sight of, but on the opposite carriageway to the Esso station, and charges an incredible 5p more. The price is down from its peak but has gone up by a staggering 55% since my first Newsletter in 2006 when it was 83.9p



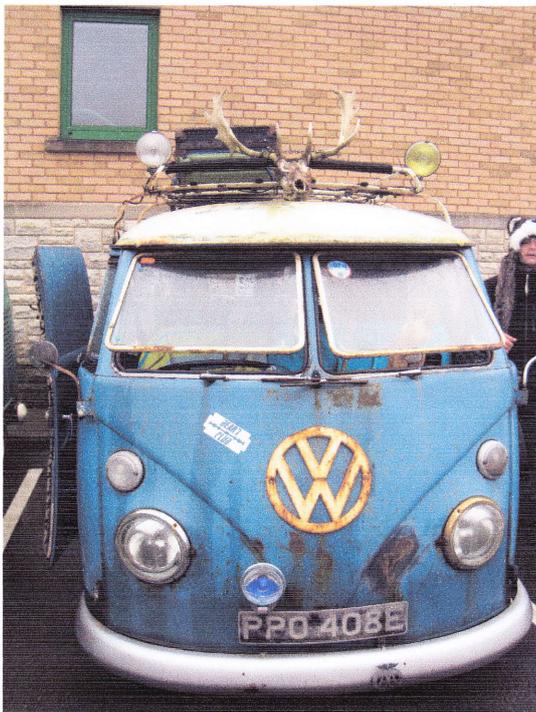
QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1 1956 Frances Barnet 197cc Falcon, belonging to Arthur Rolls
- 2 1972 Triumph TR6. Specifically the one belonging to Janet Lucas, which he road tested that year. After 1972 the TR6 power output was reduced, it is said to avoid up-staging the new Stag.
- 3 Tony Alden, and not once but twice!
- 4 It's a 1938 Triumph Vitesse
- 5 The Vespa. His design was originally turned down by Innocenti who later went on to produce the Lambretta
- 6 Bicycles
- 7 Tazio Nuvolari who won the European Championship for Alpha in 1932. The models are, of course, the work of Dave Hichings



Beautifully Restored Mercedes 300SL at Coleford

- 8 It's nothing to do with St George's Day, but commemorates 60 vehicles setting off on the start of the 1000 Mile Challenge of 1900
- 9 Fergusson Formula. Tony's Austin Healey was once owned by Raymond Massey, scion of the Massey family whose company merged with Fergusson's to form the famous tractor manufacturer.
- 10 Sopwith, maker of the famous Sopwith Camel (made famous by Captain James Bigglesworth and his friend Algy)
- 11 Sir William Lyons, the boss of Jaguar refused to allow the designation MkVI as it had already been used by Bentley. However it is said that an aborted version of the MkV with the XK engine was designated MkVI but only two were made.
- 12 £403,000. By the time the car went on sale Britain was in a recession and many companies and individuals who had pre-ordered tried to cancel. Jaguar would have none of it and put aside £7 million to fund legal costs.
- 13 Norton
- 14 It is, of course, the famous Napier-Railton. It was designed by Reid Railton and powered by a 24 litre Napier aero engine which delivered 535bhp at a meagre 2550rpm
- 15 Janet and Dave Lucas with their 1972 Triumph TR6



'Unusual' VW Van at Coleford

CONTACT: Alistair.Kennedy@cadcouk.com tel: 01285 810440

