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### **About FBHVC**

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

FBHVC is a company limited by guarantee, registered number 3842316, and was founded in 1988.

There are over 540 subscriber organisations representing a total membership of over 247,000 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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### **EDITORIAL**

**Geoff Lancaster**

Whisper it ever so softly, but the editor (yes me!) has gone electric! OK maybe not likely to cause quite such a stir as when Dylan took to the stage clutching a Fender, but nevertheless bound to cause a stir amongst some of the purists amongst you.

So how do I justify this odd behaviour? I'm not generally known as a tree hugger. Neither do I subscribe to the current hysteria in the media over diesel pollutants. We've known about the effects of particulates for decades and I haven't noticed any piles of bodies littering the streets of our metropolitan conurbations. It must be the astronomical fuel economy claimed by the manufacturers of these so-called PHEV hybrid vehicles then. I'm no Scrooge let me emphasise, but like all of us I still haven't come to terms with the fact that the fiver I put every week in the tank of the little red Austin Healy Sprite when I was 18 (yes, yes, I know it is a long time ago!) would last the whole week. Well first let me say that in real world driving, and I've only had the car a month, the economy is only slightly better than the best modern diesels and of course some lean burn petrol engines are also approaching these sort of figures. So, the economy is welcome, and will be even more so when there are more fast charging centres around the country, but that isn't my motivation either.

The answer lies in my obsession with historic vehicles on the ground and in the air. You see it's the relentless progress throughout history in technology that turns me on, and herein lies my fascination with the 21st century incarnation of the electric hybrid. The earliest automobiles at the turn of the last century used a variety of propulsion systems, internal and external combustion engines and electric power was quite popular. The combustion engines were polluting (no change there then) and unreliable (technological development took care of that one), and electrical power though clean and quiet lacked the flexibility of range.

That electricity has had a renaissance is not however down to any huge developments in battery technology. They are still heavy, capacity-limited and time consuming to charge. No, the technology leap which has facilitated this rebirth has been microprocessor control systems: thousands of binary calculations that decide whether the vehicle will propel itself by electricity, petrol or some combination of both. They command the system to recharge the batteries on deceleration and braking through a Formula 1 type KERS system.

Technology: I just love it!

### **LEGISLATION Bob Owen**

**DVLA** As of the date of writing this piece, we have made further progress with DVLA. They had promised to follow up on a number of particular matters arising at our meeting and in February they did as promised. Clarifications of detail arising from their letter are contained in Ian's sections.

### **Originality of Bodies**

As yet we have no experience to report on the working of the understanding on replacement bodies on chassis. However, I have reason to believe a number of applications may now be being progressed, which will enable both us and DVLA to assess how well our understanding works. For members who are now proceeding, may we remind you that strictly following the recommendations set out in the last Newsletter should make success more likely.

We will be continuing to liaise regularly with DVLA on this matter and I would wish to repeat the advice that if any applicant considers that an application, whether for a re-registration under V765 or a dating certificate supported registration, has been rejected despite appearing to the applicant to comply with these rules, then they should approach us.

We still intend to work with DVLA to develop a valid glossary of terms used to identify bodies which we will share with you when available.

### **Accurate V5Cs and the Vehicle Enquiry Service (VES)**

On this issue, there is one big improvement to report, and a possible disappointment.

DVLA have decided, probably for reasons unconnected with our concerns, that from the end of March the Vehicle Enquiry Service (VES) will require entry of only the registration to enable a search. This will mean that the ongoing issue of erroneous Makes in the DVLA database will become irrelevant. This is clearly an improvement and it does mean that from the DVLA point of view a real problem has been solved.

However, the Federation has been complaining, long before the introduction of the VES, and largely for reasons of historical accuracy in the DVLA database, about the software issue which, where the vehicle has no manufacturers' code, can cause an incorrect 'Make' to be entered into Box 1, and does make the entry of 'Model' into Box 2 impossible. You will recall from the last Newsletter that we recognise that the current system architecture simply does not permit manual entry into Box D2.

DVLA had told us they were re-platforming the database and that, when they did so, they would give serious consideration to including an ability for the desk officer to make a manual entry into Box D2 corresponding to the relevant entry in the submitted Form V/55/5. We will of course continue to press them to take this step, and will advise you of progress on the matter when, and if, it occurs.

My recommendation that those making new applications for registrations, particularly in respect of older overseas vehicles, which are likely not to have relevant codes, to not complete the Model portion of the V55/5, remains valid, though I would recommend that if you choose to do this you explain in writing with the form why you have done so, to avoid the application simply being rejected for incompleteness.

### **Roadworthiness Testing**

Along with my board colleague Paul Chasney I attended a meeting with DfT in London to discuss progress on the United Kingdom implementation of the latest EU Directive on Roadworthiness Testing. DfT has, it would appear, encountered significant difficulty in finalising its recommendations to ministers following its consultation and at the time of writing had still failed to do so. This means it did not meet the 31 January deadline for a reply to the consultation.

The DfT people emphasised that, once announced, their recommendations to ministers would not be the subject of any further consultation.

But it does appear that the DfT intends to proceed with its preferred option, a right to exemption from MoT testing for Vehicles of Historic Interest (VHI) over 40 years old. It remains clear that DfT considers it is legally bound by the terms of the EU Directive to create a new class of VHI including a requirement that VHIs have not been 'substantially modified'.

The Federation had stated in our response to the consultation that the '8 point rule' (intended originally to decide if enough of a radically altered vehicle remained to retain authenticity), was unsuitable particularly for complete vehicles which had not been disassembled recently or indeed at all. It was unclear whether DfT were still proposing to make use of the 8 point rule or whether the definition of a suitable criterion for inclusion as a VHI was one of their outstanding problems. DfT did advise that the definition has been the subject of some discussion between DVSA, within whose bailiwick this falls, and DVLA.

It will be of interest to any reader involved in the Historic Vehicles Working Group, which DfT itself initiated but which met only once on 2 July 2014, that DfT have made clear they have no intention of reviving that group. We thus appealed

again for no final decision to be made on the criteria for inclusion in the VHI category until at least the Federation had been given a chance to contribute.

DfT are still seriously considering some sort of mileage limit. We did attempt to persuade them of the administrative difficulties of doing this and the lack of evidence of any real benefit, from the point of view of road safety or otherwise, from imposition of a limit.

It was not clear to us whether the issues, not raised in the consultation but possibly arising since, of a sunset clause to ensure the difficult parts of any legislation would not unnecessarily survive Brexit, when we will presumably no longer have to comply precisely with EU Directives, were being considered. We pressed the point that it ought to be.

Perhaps most seriously, we now know that the Government in Sweden, a Member State of the EU with no intention of leaving, has decided that a classification such as is implied by the Directive definitions is simply administratively unacceptable and has decided instead to grant exemptions from testing based purely on dates. The DfT representatives seemed unwilling even to consider the Swedish approach, believing their legal advice simply precludes that course of action.

The Federation remains very concerned at the possible consequences in the future for the testing of currently historic vehicles which nevertheless do not prove acceptable as VHIs particularly, as seems possible, if the category of VHI is extended to all vehicles, including those currently generally exempted by reason simply of being built before 1960.

We will be progressing with our pressures on the Government through the All Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicles Group and things may have moved on by the time you read this. We will continue to keep up the pressure on behalf of our members.

### **Low Emissions Zones**

Transport for London (TfL) has confirmed its proposals for the Emissions Surcharge on the Congestion Charge. It does contain the historic vehicles exemption as we would wish. We would expect their work to finalise a revised Ultra Low Emissions Zone will continue to include the same exemption.

There is one minor issue which may have passed some readers by. While all vehicles in the historic class, whatever the qualifying date for that is on the day you read this (see below), the exemption also refers to 'all vehicles built before 1973'. This is *not* a mistake. That date is based upon the definitions set up for the original Congestion Charge and the London LEZ. The effect of the earlier date (at which time the rolling VED exemption was not in place) is that vehicles such as good vehicles still carrying goods, and more importantly buses still carrying passengers on heritage services built before 1973, which are not eligible for the historic class, nevertheless remain exempt. A small, but nevertheless welcome addition to what we had understood.

I should in fairness add that we are still not quite sure of the status of overseas historic vehicles. But based upon the experience of both German LEZs and the Paris ban, from which foreign historic vehicles are permitted exemption, we remain hopeful that a method will be found of making sure our overseas colleagues are protected.

### **Vehicle Excise Duty**

I should remind everyone that, from 1 April 2017, the ability to be registered in the historic class and thus to be eligible for nil rate VED rolls forward to vehicles built up to 31 December 1976. Because of a change all these years ago in DVLA procedures, it is possible that there might be issues with vehicles built before 31 December 1976 but first registered during 1977, in respect of which in previous years there was a clear procedure whereby manufacturers' records or approved equivalents were accepted and the date of manufacture was corrected. We have queried the position with DVLA and they are examining the situation. If any member experiences problems with this circumstance please let Ian or myself know.

### **Compulsory Insurance under the EU Motor Insurance Directive (Vnuk)**

And finally... No doubt by now everyone has heard of the Vnuk case and its consequences: for those who have not, there follows a short explanation.

On a Slovenian farm, the unfortunate Mr Vnuk was knocked off a ladder inside a barn by a trailer attached to a tractor. The tractor was duly insured to comply with the European Motor Insurance Directive as it was then understood. When Mr Vnuk sued, the insurers of the tractor argued, correctly, that under its motor insurance policy they were not liable because the accident had not occurred on a road but on private property.

This case worked its way right up to the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which held that, under the precise terms of the EU Motor Insurance Directive, all vehicles should be insured against accidents occurring 'in normal use', which this use

of the tractor clearly was. While the EU Governments were collectively shocked at this interpretation, it does appear sound on the basis of the words of the Directive.

I give this explanation simply to make clear there is nothing perverse about the origins of the problem, though there may be catastrophic consequences.

The ECJ ruling has caused sufficient concern in the EU Commission for them to have decided to look at possible amendment of the Directive. This will however take a little time, and there are strong public policy arguments against amending any EU Legislation to remove a right of compensation from a citizen where the ECJ has decided he ought to possess that right.

The ECJ ruling has apparently caused more concern in the UK than many jurisdictions for reasons which are not quite clear and which I have no space to go into here. In short the Government has decided they do have a need to be compliant with the Directive and to compel insurance of *all* motor vehicles, whether or not they are used on the highway. To be clear, none of this is affected by, nor is it concerned with, public liability or occupiers' liability insurance.

On the one hand this means they are looking at such vehicles as Segways and ride-on mowers, and on the other it means they are now looking at compulsory insurance of all vehicles involved in motor sport. They are also considering whether they need to require insurance of all vehicles on SORN.

There are aspects which also concern the motor insurance industry. Thus, while it would in principle be possible to exclude certain categories of vehicles from individual application of the requirement, known as derogation, any actual risk occurring would then have to be met directly from the Motor Insurance Bureau, which of course the industry funds. The industry obviously has views on being left as insurer of last resort because others are exempted.

Obviously the major concerns of the Federation are motorsport, in which the Federation is significantly involved, and compulsory insurance of vehicles which do not, and perhaps cannot, move.

The Department for Transport has launched a major consultation, for response by 31 March, on the whole issue.

On motorsport, the real concern is that insurance might both become compulsory and also impossible to obtain at any realistic premium, if at all. Much, if not all, of motorsport in the UK might be effectively prohibited. The Federation has decided to work with the MSA on this aspect. The MSA is consulting also with many other bodies, such as for example the ACU, to obtain an across the board view. The object is to ensure that we make both the best, and the most consistent, possible case to Government to obtain an acceptable outcome.

There are many aspects of the possible insurance of historic vehicles, whether simply on SORN or indeed pre-SORN including museum exhibits, where the view of the Federation is that insurance would be against no perceptible risk, as an immobile vehicle cannot have a motor accident and there are certainly examples of museum exhibits where their very position suggests they could never readily move.

There are a significant number of secondary issues, such as whether there requires to be a separate register of affected vehicles which are not already registered as roadgoing vehicles, whether there should be a sunset clause to deal with the consequences of Brexit, and so on.

The intention of the Federation would be to propose solutions which are as favourable to our membership as possible. Not all readers will realise that amongst our members are the owners of historic mowers and similar equipment! They deserve our support as much as any other category of member.

By the time you read this a full response will have been sent to the DfT and we will stand ready to follow it up with as much vigour as we can.

## **DVLA**

### **Ian Edmunds**

Following our meeting in November last year we have received from DVLA written confirmation of the agreements that Bob and I reported in the last Newsletter plus news of a development with VES that Bob reports elsewhere. In addition we have also received clarification of a further point.

In recent months some applicants have had registration application documents returned to them with a statement from DVLA that dating certificates must be in English. DVLA have now agreed that they will consider dating certificates in a foreign language if they are accompanied by a translation. Note that it is important in these circumstances to provide the

foreign language document as well as the translation and that in the case of any dispute, either now or in the future, the original foreign language version will be considered to be the definitive version. In my personal opinion it would also be wise to provide a translation of any other document that is considered relevant to the application and is not in English.

My thanks to a correspondent from a member club who has added to my knowledge by informing me that he has on several occasions received a new V5C by submitting a V62 (*Application for a vehicle registration certificate*) quoting only engine and frame/chassis numbers when the registration number is not known. Obviously this can only work when it is known that the vehicle in question was from the late '70s or later and had been registered in the UK. I had thought that a V62 could only be used when the registration number was known.

To end on a positive note – I hear of an application for the first registration of a vintage vehicle, returning to the UK from a distant land with no paperwork, which was successfully processed by DVLA within a week and followed by a new V5C a few days later. In my view that is good service by any standard. Needless to say the application and supporting dating information in the absence of any factory records took a little longer to compile! Nevertheless the quick and successful outcome amply rewards the time and effort involved in putting together a clear and complete application.

## **FUEL NEWS**

### **Manchester XPAG Tests, Modern Petrol – Volatility**

**Paul Ireland**

*The Federation contributed some financial support to this series of tests in 2016. Paul Ireland has kindly written a summary of his findings for this Newsletter.*

#### **Introduction**

To investigate the problems of running classic cars on modern petrol, a series of tests has been run on a 1940s twin SU carburettor XPAG engine at Manchester University School of Mechanical, Aerospace and Civil Engineering.

Petrol consists of over 300 different hydrocarbons. Measuring the volume of fuel that evaporates as a sample of petrol is heated gives a distillation curve for that fuel. The graph below compares the distillation curves of the different fuels used in the Manchester tests and that of 1930s petrol which remained virtually unchanged into the 1970s.

The curve for modern 95 octane forecourt petrol (blue line) compared to 1930s petrol (the orange dotted line) shows that classic petrol is much less volatile, especially at typical engine bay temperatures. This increased volatility of modern petrol is at the heart of the problems suffered by classic car owners.

A petrol engine produces colossal quantities of heat. Unfortunately, only around one third of this heat energy is converted into power to move the car forward, the remaining two thirds is waste heat, most of which goes into heating the engine bay.

At Manchester, the highest petrol temperature in the carburettors when running at full power was 42°C. Not sufficiently high to cause problems.

The thermal image shows the blue float chambers silhouetted against the white (300°C plus) exhaust manifold. Despite being positioned less than one inch above the exhaust manifold, the petrol flowing through the carburettors is keeping them cool. After the engine was stopped, the tests showed the carburettors were being heated by hot gasses coming from the engine through the inlet manifold, not by heat from the exhaust manifold: thus demonstrating that it is not obvious how the carburettors are being heated.

In slow moving traffic, two effects work to increase under-bonnet and petrol temperatures. Although the engine is running at low power and producing less heat, the rate at which heat is lost is reduced, there is less air flow through the engine bay. In addition, petrol is flowing more slowly through the carburettors and has more time to heat up. When the engine is switched off, petrol stops flowing and its temperature will continue to rise as heat soaks out of the engine, exhaust and radiator.

The distillation curve for 95 octane fuel (above) shows a rapid rise in the volume of fuel evaporating between 45°C and 70°C. As the fuel boils, vapour bubbles in the petrol result in the carburettor delivering a much weaker mixture. This is what causes the engine to stop or prevents it from restarting.

The best way to address this problem is to use a petrol with fewer low temperature components, more like the 1930s petrol. This reduces the volume of fuel that will boil as the engine bay gets hotter.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to make any specific recommendations for two reasons. Firstly, the regional UK fuel distribution industry is served by around 14 different refineries, all of which produce slightly different base stocks. Secondly, there are three different grades of fuel sold throughout the year:

- Winter fuel - October to April.
- Intermediate fuel - April to May and September to October.
- Summer fuel - June to August. This will probably have fewer low temperature components.

In practice these dates are not fixed and will vary with ambient temperature and the turnover at any particular filling station, making it virtually impossible to know what grade of petrol is being sold.

The data above indicates super grade fuels are possibly less volatile. However, it is worth trying different brands to find out which petrol and grade gives the smoothest performance and will reduce vaporisation problems.

It is important the engine is properly tuned. Even a few percent reduction in efficiency, probably not noticeable in normal road use, will increase the amount of waste heat. The cooling system should also be working efficiently. Electric radiator fans help keep air circulating but may make matters worse. In slow moving traffic, they are drawing hot air through the radiator and blowing it into the engine bay. It is also worth fitting a timer or equivalent circuit to ensure any electric fans continue to run for around 5-10 minutes after the engine has stopped.

Anything that can be done to keep the fuel system, particularly the carburettors, cool will help reduce the severity of the problems caused by the low temperature volatility of petrol. An infrared thermometer or thermal imaging camera is the ideal way to identify hot spots. Unfortunately, as soon as the bonnet is opened, the temperature profile will change. As an alternative, digital multi-meters with thermocouples are now inexpensive and provide the means to allow your passenger to accurately measure the temperature of the fuel system even while a car is moving.

Unfortunately, there is no magic solution to this problem but with care it is possible to reduce its severity.

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **FIVA aims to encourage young enthusiasts to discover historic vehicles**

As part of last year's FIVA World Motoring Heritage Year programme, under the formal patronage of UNESCO, FIVA (Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens) vowed to initiate activities that would help attract younger enthusiasts to the historic vehicle movement.

An important step towards this goal was taken in Paris on 7 February 2017, when a FIVA Heritage Forum brought together the heritage departments of a wide range of manufacturers to share their views on this challenging issue.

"Engaging the interest of the younger generation is crucial to the future of the historic vehicle movement and a vital part of FIVA's long-term strategy," explains Dr Mario Theissen, senior vice president of FIVA. "Last November, as a first step in this strategy, we held a panel discussion with young enthusiasts at FIVA's Paris Symposium, and conducted a series of video interviews asking young people about their interest in historic vehicles.

"At last week's FIVA Heritage Forum, we were able to show these videos to the heads of manufacturer heritage departments. This sparked a lively and useful debate on how the industry can work together to bring the younger generation on board – encompassing a vivid exchange of ideas on projects to be initiated by the manufacturers or FIVA. We were delighted to see how the manufacturers are committed to introducing a younger audience to the joys of historic motoring, whether it's by supporting motoring events for younger people, ensuring there are plenty of attractions and entertainments at marque museums – or developing apprenticeship programs for students and young professionals. At future Heritage Forums, we'll be sharing the results of all these efforts, along with generating further fresh ideas and projects.

"The Heritage Forum was merely an early step in a long-term strategy for FIVA, and it was extremely encouraging to have such a fruitful discussion at a well-attended meeting with some of the world's largest and most respected vehicle manufacturers."

The Heritage Forum welcomed representatives from the heritage departments of Aston Martin, Audi, BMW, Bugatti, Jaguar Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz, PSA Group, Volkswagen and Volvo. The Forum also included a presentation by Paul Loveridge (head of FIVA Technical Commission) and Mark Gessler (former head of FIVA Technical Commission and FIVA ambassador for North America) on FIVA's Technical Code and the FIVA ID Cards. The next FIVA Heritage Forum will be held at the Padua trade fair on 25 October 2017.

## **TEMPORARILY MISSING MONIKER**

### **Gordon Bruce**

*The quintessentially British marque Bristol has been missing from the sales charts since 2011, but is due to bounce back with a new high-tech offering during 2017 – reason enough, we felt, to delve into the history of this extraordinary business, whose roots date back to the Bristol Tramways Company of the 1870s.*

*All photos for this feature courtesy of Bristol cars and other sources.*

Born of working class parents, George White departed the education system in 1870 aged 14, and while employed as a junior clerk by solicitors Stanley Wasbrough was appointed company secretary of Bristol Tramways. By 1894 he was its managing director and the following year revolutionised the city's tram system by replacing its horses and steam engines with electric power. The innovation quickly spread to Bath, Cheltenham, Swindon and even London. He then further integrated Bristol's transport network with a fleet of buses but, appalled by their quality, created his own commercial vehicle division to build quicker, more reliable equivalents; the first was the C40 that hit the road in 1908.

That same year, White launched petrol-powered taxis, whose quiet, reliable operation quickly supplanted Bristol's many horse-drawn cabs, and by 1911 Bristol Commercial Vehicles was building coaches, lorries, vans and even hearses; as well as the aforementioned trams, buses and taxis. A one-stop shop for integrated transport, the company was soon exporting its products to Europe, the USA and even Australia, while on the home front it was said the firm could provide mobility for every Bristol resident, from 'cradle to grave'.

### **Bristol takes to the air**

A recognised philanthropist, George White was accorded a baronetcy in 1904. The wealth of his success allowed him to indulge his son Stanley in his passion for the motorcar. The family purchased a Leon Bollée and it was in 1908, during one of their many trips to the factory at Le Mans, that Stanley and his uncle Samuel witnessed one of Wilbur Wright's first European demonstrations of powered flight. They reported back to Sir George, who was quick to grasp the potential of this ground-breaking invention and within two years he and Samuel had founded the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company, which rapidly became the world's largest aircraft manufacturer.

Its first successful design was the Bristol Boxkite, the production of which began in a former tram shed at Filton in June 1910. A month later the Whites formed a flying school with premises at Brooklands and Larkhill on Salisbury Plain – highly regarded, the operation was responsible for 308 of the 664 Royal Aero Club certificates issued between 1910 and 1914. Come WWI, the Frank Barwell-designed Bristol Scout was one of the first fighter aircraft to enter service, while the later two-seater Bristol Fighter became a stalwart of the Royal Flying Corps and then the RAF. Following the war, the company was restructured and renamed the Bristol Aeroplane Co., while Cosmos Engineering was purchased and formed the basis of a new engine operation - by 1929 Bristol-made aero units powered over half the world's aircraft, and broke the world altitude record five times between 1929 and 1937.

The White family prepared assiduously for the possibility of a second world war, and when it came the Filton works was the largest single aircraft manufacturing plant in the world, with a floor area of some 2.7 million square feet. The Beaufighter fighter/bomber, a development of the Beaufort, was used extensively by the RAF, Commonwealth air forces and USAAF. Successful post-war projects included the Britannia airliner, Bristol Freighter transport plane, Sycamore and Belvedere/173 helicopters and development work for Concorde. In 1959, Bristol's airframe division became part of the British Aircraft Corporation and its engine operation was merged with Armstrong Siddeley to form Bristol Siddeley.

### **Preparing for peace**

To overcome the dramatic loss of business following the 1918 armistice, Bristol had hastily undertaken the construction of car bodies for Armstrong Siddeley and bus and coach ones for the sister business of Bristol Tramways. The manufacture of a light car (the Bristol Monocar) was also considered, but only two were ultimately produced. Having assumed control of the business from his father, Stanley White was determined to have a more structured plan in place for the 70,000 now employed come the end of WWII hostilities. This ultimately included the manufacture of aluminium framed prefabs and high-speed metal hulled naval boats.

More germane to our story, as early as 1941 Stanley's son (another George White), had proposed a car manufacturing division, for which it was intended to purchase an existing maker. Alvis, Aston Martin, ERA, Lagonda and Lea Francis were all apparently considered, but in the end a marriage was forged with Frazer Nash. With the support of the War Reparations Board, the rights to manufacture the BMW 326, 327 and 328 and their famed six-cylinder engine were secured and the future looked bright. However, by January 1947, immediately following the production of the first cars, the parties fell out, Frazer Nash was resold and the Bristol Car Division became a standalone entity.

Place a pre-war BMW 327 alongside Bristol's first offering, the 400, and the ancestry is self-evident, but there were many differences. White's insistence it should be a four-seater saw it based on the longer chassis of the 326. The aircraft

grade Bristol body was more streamlined than that of the 327, while Bristol developed the already impressive 328 engine into one of the finest 2-litre units of the period, which powered not only all Bristol models until 1961, but various sports and racing cars from AC, Arnolt, Cooper, Frazer Nash, Lister, Lotus and Tojeiro. The car's interior trim was an unmistakably British blend of leather and wood.

The distinctly more modern 401 and ensuing 403 were styled by Carrozzeria Touring of Milan, while the 405 was, so far, Bristol's only journey into the four-door market - according to the late Bristol aficionado Leonard Setright, the nose design of the 404/405 was inspired by the air intakes of Bristol's Brabazon airliner engines. By the '60s, luxury cars were boasting ever bigger multi-cylinder engines and it was time for Bristol to step up to the plate, hence the 407 became its first model to feature a Chrysler V8 in place of Bristol's venerable six-cylinder unit.

### **Brief foray into motorsport**

To date the company's only direct foray into motorsport was with the 450. The pair that ran at Le Mans in 1953 had challenging looks and suffered engine failure. However, a trio of restyled coupes won their class and the team prize at La Sarthe in 1954, as did the open-topped derivatives of 1955. The future looked rosy but the tragic accident that killed 84 people during that meeting helped quash the company's competition desires - it donated its prize money to the disaster fund and destroyed all but one of the cars, which these days belongs to arch Bristol collector and Virgin Records co-founder Simon Draper.

The company's last hurrah before all car production was suspended in 2011 was the gullwing-doored Fighter. Powered by the V10 engine of the Chrysler Viper, the normally aspirated version was limited to a heady top speed of 210mph - just 13 standard Fighters are thought to have been made. Rather sadly, no examples of the proposed 225mph turbo variant ever found their way into production.

### **New chapter**

The order book is now open for the latest chapter in the extraordinary Bristol story - the £250,000, BMW V8-powered, carbon-bodied Bullet that features distinct design cues from the company's back catalogue. Only 70 will be made, a nod to 2017 being the 70th anniversary of the firm's car production. In an apparently neat completion of the circle, Bristol Cars is nowadays owned by Frazer Nash (though there is actually no direct link to the company Bristol briefly owned in the '40s), who see the Bullet as a public showcase for its innovations. The 2018 version will therefore boast its latest 'range extender' technology.

The Bristol showroom is a London landmark. In the days when the company's erstwhile sole agent, the late Tony Crook, also served the Fiat, Abarth and Simca franchises, the business straddled West Kensington's Addison Road, but for years has occupied just the north western corner of its junction with Kensington High Street. A successful racing driver, Crook was a Marmite character who began selling Bristols from a garage in Caterham before becoming a director of the company in 1960. He assumed full control in 1973 and then left amid acrimony in 2007, after being reportedly locked out of the showroom he had presided over for so long. Rumour has it he once paid people to dress up as tramps and sit outside the Rolls-Royce showroom in Berkeley Square. For sure, to purchase a Bristol you had to meet his approval, as did King Hussein, Tina Turner, Richard Branson, Bono and even Liam Gallagher, among others - Michael Winner reputedly did not. This requirement may partly explain why only around 2,700 examples of the breed have been crafted in 70 years - less than 40 a year.

As we write, the famous showroom is undergoing a makeover to reflect the company's more contemporary new direction. So too is the little known basement - a time warp treasure trove of filing cabinets and plan chests that not only contain the histories of every Bristol ever made, but everything from manufacturing drawings to wind tunnel models; also reams of exquisite artists' impressions of proposed facias, bespoke models that never made it into metal etc; all superbly crafted in pen and ink by a Mr Revell of the company's one-time aircraft division. As things stand Bristol looks set to add a very exciting future to its fascinating past.

## **RESEARCH**

**Paul Chasney**

### **How is your engagement?**

To most of us of a certain age, the word 'engagement' conjures up ideas of impending weddings, a period of preparation for a lifetime of commitment. In our modern world this word has a quite different meaning, what we used to call communication.

The Federation take engagement and communication very seriously. As an organisation representing its member's interests it is important that members are able to communicate with the Federation and in turn the Federation is able to communicate with its members.



The Federation has sought member input to its 2016 National Historic Vehicle Survey, its parts survey and more recently a survey of systems used by member clubs. A disappointing connection between all these surveys is the level of engagement with our members. The Federation has access to survey software that is able to track, within a small margin, whether communication emails are opened. The key connection between the recent surveys is that only a little over 50% of member clubs appear to have even opened the emails communicating information about the surveys, let alone completed the survey. Quite separately the Federation has concerns that the newsletter is not perhaps reaching all our membership. Specifically, whilst the printed copies of the newsletter are distributed, the soft copy, distributed to member clubs by email, does not seem to be reaching as many enthusiasts as we would hope.

Our conclusion is that the email addresses held by the Federation may not be appropriate addresses for the communications being sent. Our request therefore, to all our members, is that as part of your membership renewal you ensure the Federation holds at least one email address for your organisation that is monitored by a member tasked with ensuring communication emails are appropriately distributed within your organisation for action to be taken when necessary.

Thank you. Let's enjoy our engagement!

## **TECHNICAL AND EVENTS**

**Tony Davies**

I've just spent a weekend on our stand at Race Retro - and a good show it was this year. From what I could see three different types of visitors attended during the three days. Friday seemed to be primarily club officials; Saturday mainly grass-roots enthusiasts and Sunday seemed to be family day. These all represented a real cross-section of all of our members for us to talk to - great!

Whilst wandering round Race Retro I mused over what events for historic vehicles are available for the real entry-level newcomers who might want to just have a go to see if they enjoy driving or navigating an event of one kind or another. I concluded - not a lot! Yes there is the HRCR series of National B events but they demand an RACMSA National B licence to participate. Yes, there are many very enjoyable classic tours for folks to try. There are also many events for those fortunate to be reasonably well off but where are the events where licensed teenage sons or daughters can borrow mum's or dad's 1965 Mini or 1963 Triumph Herald just to come and have a go?

I'm not talking about serious competition here but a one day event without any expensive frills. Probably on a Sunday so it doesn't spoil a visit to the football match, starting at, say, 10.30, and finishing at 15.30 so everyone can get home to go to work on the Monday morning. Format - probably three or four *simple* autotests and a couple of *simple* regularities run at lowish, less than 27 mph, average speeds. No complex navigation with OS maps, but straightforward route-finding via descriptive route-cards and no need for a Brantz or similar trip-meter. *And* an entry fee of circa £60 please.

So come on you organisers, think where your customers are coming from in a few years' time and even further into the future. Just as we, FBHVC, have managed to get our Ofqual apprenticeship scheme up and running with the help of a few colleges can we, with the help of a few organisers, get some entry-level events going as well? I sincerely hope so. Who is going to be the first organiser to take the initiative?

Meanwhile looking at this year's calendar, HERO's Summer Trial 2017, based at Stratford on Avon, is a good 2½ day event and is suitable for novices. <http://heroevents.eu/event-type/summer-trial> will tell you all you need to know.

The variety of HRCR scenic tours is available again during 2017 for your enjoyment of the historic scene during the coming months. These really are to be tried if you want some enjoyable low-key outings in your historic vehicle. Have a look at [www.hrcr.co.uk/hrcr-championships/scenic-tours-series](http://www.hrcr.co.uk/hrcr-championships/scenic-tours-series). Who knows, you might still get an entry on one or two of the early rounds if you're lucky.

For other HRCR events, [www.hrcr.co.uk/events](http://www.hrcr.co.uk/events) is the place to look. A real variety of events is available throughout the year. But again don't delay, entries fill up very quickly these days, especially the National B events!

For adventures further afield have a look at [www.endurorally.com/pages/coming-rally-events](http://www.endurorally.com/pages/coming-rally-events) or <http://rallyround.co.uk> for some other great offerings.

Finally I hear a whisper that our great clan of UK organisers that provides us with a mouth-watering array of events may soon have a new recruit to their ranks. So watch this space for even more tempting offers in the future.

## HERITAGE

### Keith Gibbins

Drive it Day, on the 23 April, is nearly upon us and in addition to having committee presences at Bicester Heritage and Brooklands, our webmaster and Frazer Nash enthusiast, Tim Jarrett, will be at Silverstone for the VSCC Formula Vintage event. This year is the VSCC 80th anniversary and the new name is designed to introduce VSCC racing to a wider audience. See <https://goo.gl/HboFX2>

Talking of Bicester Heritage, our chairman, David Whale, was pleased to visit with Rodolphe Rapetti, general curator of the French National Heritage Trust (a very senior role in the French Ministry of Culture). Rodolphe is very much a man of culture, as instanced by his authorship of a book on 19th century art symbolism.

Fortunately for us he is also a vehicle enthusiast who spoke at the International Symposium on the significance of the historic vehicle in Turin late last year. We have also used an article he wrote on 'Conservation and Enhancing of Historical Heritage' as the first section in the Charter of Turin handbook we are preparing. This uses one of the texts from Roland Barthes book, *Mythologies*, which seeks to analyse the historical, social and aesthetic meaning behind the appearance behind the appearance of the DS Citroen as the basis of his article. This contains, in our view, an important sentence in Rodolphe analysis, "However, a perfectly preserved vehicle is a working vehicle."

This may seem a tad academic when for example, as I do, greasing the front suspension on a Morgan but the value of enhancing the intangible and cultural aspects of the historic vehicle should not be underestimated as a contributing factor to the long-term survival of our movement.

We had a good meeting with the new Heritage Alliance CEO, Lizzie Glitheroe-West, in March at which David Whale detailed the findings from our survey last year. We are following this up in two ways: firstly Triumph Spitfire enthusiast Colin Higgs has volunteered to join the Heritage team with a specific focus on the HA and secondly Lizzie is convening a meeting with all the mobile heritage folk to see how the movement can fit with the Heritage 2020 initiative. See <https://goo.gl/TJ59sc>

As described elsewhere we attended Race Retro. Just to show the range of enthusiasm covered, I enjoyed a chat with the keen owner of a first generation two speed semi-automatic Honda Accord, which was parked next to Carlos Pace's F3 championship Lotus!

**Footnote:** Apologies to anyone wondering how the picture of the Hillman Imp related to the text in the previous Newsletter. A sentence got dropped from the comments about David Simister's article about buying classics – he has had 11 Imp variants pass through his hands!

## CLUB NEWS

### David Davies

It is pleasing to read the positive comments on the Federation's research in so many of our members' magazines and journals. The increasing availability of member clubs' publications on-line is also noteworthy. Some of these are now specially prepared for on-line as opposed to being simply existing publications transferred to the net.

2018 marks one hundred years since the end of WW1 and the **Crash Box and Classic Car Club's** objective is see the 'Baton' visit as many war memorials across the UK as possible, involving as many FBHVC member clubs as possible in each county to visit as many war memorials as possible in one day in their county (using classic vehicles) in the form of a relay. The idea is to select a number of war memorials in the county and plot a route between them. Precise details of activity for each memorial stop are yet to be decided but we certainly anticipate some form of record e.g. a photo at each location and probably posted on social media. Obviously at this stage they need to gauge interest to see if the concept is viable. Please would those interested email: [thebaton100@gmail.com](mailto:thebaton100@gmail.com) adding in the title line the county or counties (e.g. MMOC Kent Essex or MGOC Yorkshire) where they could help. The club anticipates a maximum of one day's activity per county although this might involve more than one club. More information from: [www.crashboxclub.co.uk](http://www.crashboxclub.co.uk)

**Brooklands Museum** hold the Brooklands Double Twelve Motorsport Festival on 17-18 June. They would therefore like to see as many British historic and vintage vehicles take part and display their pride and joy, as a club or individuals to compete in the competitions as possible. For anyone interested in competing, attending, or to reserve a stand for their club contact Steve Castle on 01932 857381 ext 244 or e-mail: [stevecastle@brooklandsmuseum.com](mailto:stevecastle@brooklandsmuseum.com)

The **Vintage Sports-Car Club** has launched Formula Vintage, with the aim of introducing the VSCC's unique and celebrated line-up to a new and wider audience of motorsport enthusiasts at five British circuits, with each meeting celebrating such British Racing legends of the pre- and post-war eras as Mike Hawthorn and Richard Seaman. A regular

programme of six pre-war and historic trophy races will top the bill at each meeting, highlighting the very best of pre-war racers, featuring pre-1931 vintage racing cars, pre-1961 racing cars and road-going pre-war sports-cars, as well as eclectic pre-war line-ups for our ever-popular all-comers scratch and handicap formats. Spectators will have access to the Paddock, to get up close with drivers and their historic machinery, and plenty of other off-track entertainment at each event.

There is a very interesting and in-depth article on the regenerative Rankine cycle steam engine in (what else?) the magazine of the **Steam Car Club of Great Britain**.

The **Austin Ten Drivers' Club** magazine tells us that there are now only 19 AA telephone boxes remaining out of the 1,000 that once graced the roadsides throughout the country and that eight of the survivors are grade II listed buildings.

The front and back cover of the **Traction Owners' Club** magazine consists of an arresting close-up of the front of a Supertraction.

The magazine of the **Association of Singer Car Owners** concludes the sad story of the decline and fall of Rootes Group in 1970.

There is an interesting article in the magazine of the **Transport Trust** which tells us that the Lotus Rotorvic 23 racing car had a V12 engine based upon six Ariel Arrow twin two-stroke engines.

The **Chiltern Vehicle Preservation Group** magazine gives us a brief but very informative history of Bibendum, the Michelin Man.

The magazine of the **Clan Owners' Club** has the first instalment of an article on installing a BMW K four-cylinder power unit in a Clan. Watch this space!

The **Boston Classic Car Club** news tells us that Coca-Cola was originally green...

There is a helpful article on fitting electronic ignition in the **Mk 1 Cortina Owners' Club** magazine –with the reminder that such systems are still not permitted under the rules for historic rallying.

Congratulations to the **Velocette Owners' Club** on their Diamond Jubilee! The **Historic Commercial Vehicle Society** is already making preparations for their Diamond Jubilee Rally in 2018. And the **Vanden Plas Owners' Club** have a busy year in front of them: 70 years of the Austin A125 Sheerline; 70 years of the Austin Plas A135 Princess; 65 years of the Vanden Plas Princess DM4; 50 years of the Vanden Plas Princess 1275 and 1300; 45 years of the Daimler Double-Six Vanden Plas Series 1; 35 years of the Austin Metro Vanden Plas; 35 years of the Austin Ambassador Vanden Plas.

The magazine of the **Devon Vintage Car Club** tells us that until the Tribhuvan Highway was built in 1956 the only way to bring a car into Katmandu was to *carry* it over the mountains.

The photograph in the newsletter of the **Southend and District Classic Car Club** of the snow blower based on a Rolls-Royce Avon engine and now on display at the Brooklands Museum suggests it to be a fairly anti-social contraption.

The newsletter of the **Crossley Register** is as substantial and impressive as the vehicles themselves. There is an article on a massive six-wheel tiger hunting car which was built for the Maharajah of Bahawalpur (who else?) in 1929. It has now been restored in Karachi.

The magazine of the **Morris Minor Owners' Club** has an eight-page special feature on the 40th anniversary Round Britain Marathon which took 30 days, covered 3,000 miles and raised more than £40,000 for Marie Curie (and was featured in News 1-2017).

The rear cover of the magazine of the **Ford Y & C Model Register** is a striking reproduction of a promotional painting in colour of a Ford Eifel.

The **Austin Seven Clubs' Association** remind us that it is the 150th anniversary of the birth of Herbert Austin and the 95th anniversary of the introduction of the Seven.

The **S.H.V.R** magazine has a delightful advert from the 1920s for the Wilmot-Breedon door locking set at 19/6d for a set.

A new magazine! The Reliant Motor Club Review from the **Reliant Motor Club** – and a really good read.

Kevin Price's lists of the spares he carries with him in his Volvo as listed in the **Volvo Enthusiasts' Club** magazine suggest a somewhat pessimistic outlook on life.

The **Southern Daimler & Lanchester Club** tell us that the Coker Tire Company of Chattanooga now manufactures new wooden wheels for all manner of antique automobiles and support this with an illustrated article on the production process.

There is a reminder in the **Standard Motor Club** Car Review as to how things used to be. In 1960 five students from Imperial College had the loan of a Phase 3 Vanguard estate from the company and tootled off to the Kashmir. They returned more or less unscathed after 85 days and some 16,645 miles. A book has been written about their experiences.

The **London Austin Seven Club** gives us another slant on the mystery surrounding the disappearance of Glenn Miller in 1944. Staying with Austin Sevens, the **Pre-War Austin Seven Club** magazine has a striking cover illustration of Matt Johnson at the VSCC Cotswold Trial followed by a photo-reportage of more fun and games inside – including the VSCC Goodwood Sprint.

The magazine of the **Wolseley Owners' Club** has a brief history of Caffyns – a family business for more than 150 years.

The magazine of the **Military Vehicle Trust** reports on 'The Wartime in the Vale' in Worcestershire in June which would appear to be an excellent week-end for military vehicle enthusiasts.

Startling intelligence from the **A40 Farina Club** who tell us that there are now less than 60 still on the road in 2017.

A photoreportage in the magazine of the **Ginetta Owners' Club** confirms my belief that Sywell Piston and Props meeting is well worth your patronage.

There is a succinct but informative description of Britain's V- Bombers in **the Preston & District Vintage Car Club** magazine.

The **Reliant Kitten Register** tells us that if you give a man a woman he will be happy all night. If you give him a woman who loves cars he will be happy for the rest of his life...

The magazine of the **Midget and Sprite Club** lists some eleven books that might be helpful for restoration and maintenance.

The **Double LL Club** newsletter strongly recommends the Concorde Champagne Experience at Brooklands as a day out with a difference.

## FEEDBACK

*Dave Corby and Brian Marshall from the Reliant Kitten Register responded to David Davies' question about the CIPHER in issue 1-2017.*

The original design was by Prof Tony Stevens, who formed Stevens Cars Ltd and built three prototype cars. These were based on Reliant Kitten mechanicals, but used a modified Kitten chassis and lightweight fibre glass panels designed by Tony. The design goal was to produce a car to fill the void being left by the demise of the MG Midgets and Triumph Spitfires with a new all-British sports car.

The prototype CIPHER underwent 'factory testing' and limited Type Approval checks. Used for road and endurance testing appraisal (from which details like the spoiler were redesigned, as it was too low), fuel consumption testing and legislation (radio suppression tests, etc), and for the press. Originally silver for press black/white reproduction purposes, the car was later repainted red. This car was used for the majority of press testing and thus features in many publications, including Car magazine Oct 1980, AutoCar magazine Dec 1980, and Motor magazine April 1981.

In an effort to gain funding or get the car into production Tony Stevens approached Reliant Motors. Two cars were built by Reliant to assess the manufacturing procedures required to put the CIPHER into production. After assessing the car, the Reliant management came to the conclusion that it was too costly to engineer a production car. This decision was highly strange as the CIPHER used existing Reliant parts and Reliant already had the expertise to produce the GRP bodies. Many think this conclusion was probably reached because the Reliant management had already decided on the Michelotti designed SS1.

TVR purchased a CIPHER to assess the possibilities of taking on the project. The car then sat in the showroom of Harrogate Horseless Carriages for a while, but TVR were really into larger-engined vehicles. Fed up with his inability to

organise serious financial backing, Tony allowed a delegation from Mazda to take what they wanted from the Motor Show, c. 1980 where two Ciphers were on show, and that is how their very successful MX5 came to be.

The last Ciphers were built by Peter Bird (Falcon Automotive) c.1982 using the original moulds and chassis jig: Peter having been originally part of Tony Stevens' very small team developing the Cipher. It was an attempt to introduce the Cipher as a kit-car, in the hope that it would generate the financial resources to then switch over to all new-components.

As so often happens a lack of funding meant the cars never got past the prototype evaluation stage so no full production examples exist.

The good news is that the survival rate is much better than suggested. The three that were built by Stevens Motor Company all survive. The two built by Reliant Motor Company both survive. Two kits were made by Falcon Automotive (Peter Bird), one based on Reliant parts and one based on Ford parts. Both have now surfaced and are under restoration so it appears that all the Ciphers have survived.

The website [www.stevens-cipher.com](http://www.stevens-cipher.com) has more information.

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to the following clubs who have recently joined us.

Bungay Car Club  
Fife Historic Vehicle Club  
Gold Star Owners' Club  
NG Owners' Club  
Rochdale Vintage and Collectors' Car Club  
Volvo Enthusiasts Club  
Waterloo Classics Car Club

Welcome to the following trade supporters who have recently joined us.

Castle Combe Circuit Ltd  
R Deacon and Sons  
RetroMarques Ltd

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Club and museum members and individual supporter subscriptions will be due on 31 May and the reminders will be sent out early in April. Please do check that we have all your contact details correctly recorded, and more importantly that we have an email address at least for the nominated contact and, for clubs, the editor of your publication.

If paying by internet banking, we *must* have the club renewal form returned either by email or post with your declaration of member numbers in order to process the renewal. Please make sure you return the whole form and not just the anonymous bottom half. Every year we get payments without paperwork, and paperwork without payments which becomes extremely confusing.

FBHVC relies on your subscriptions in order to carry on our work and we are very grateful for your continuing support.