

HISTORIC



The Magazine of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

Issue 10 · June 2026



DRIVE IT DAY®

In this issue

Deja Vu

Another look at design similarities

Training The Next Generation

Behind the scenes at Heritage Skills Academy

Helping Young People Into Classics

Introducing Borrow A Classic



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The UK Member of FIVA



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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. David was inducted into the CMS Hall of Fame in 2024.



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.



Geoff Lancaster - Communications Director

Geoff rejoined the FBHVC Board at the end of 2025 having served previously as Communications Director between 2013 and 2019. His automotive interests saw him pursuing a career in the motor industry. A change of direction took him to the food industry, and he retired in 2012 from his post as Head of External Affairs at Associated British Foods. He has competed in Hillclimbs and Sprints and is a member of several clubs, and a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Coachmakers and Coach Harness Makers.



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.



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.



Lindsay Irvine - Legislation Director

A qualified barrister who spent over 30 years as a commissioned Legal Officer in the RAF, latterly he practised as a Tribunal Chair. A lifetime car and aviation enthusiast, he has owned a Riley RME for over 30 years. Counting flying and coach driving amongst his transport qualifications, he is a member of several vehicle and aircraft clubs and is a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society.



Ian Edmunds - Technical Director

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.



Phil Sampson - Heritage Director

Following spells in the mining and defence industries, Phil moved into the automotive PR world in 1985 working for truck, bus and coach manufacturer Scania. In 1996 he started his own communications company specialising in the commercial vehicle industry. In addition to his activities with the Federation, Phil is a Vice-President of the National Transport Trust and a member of FIVA's Utilitarian Commission. His personal item of historic transport is a 1960 Triumph Thunderbird motorcycle.



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.



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.



Chris Cartmell - Projects Co-ordinator

Chris lives in Northants with his wife, Jane. Originally trained as an Agricultural Engineer, he spent almost 40 years with Mercedes-Benz UK in After Sales and as Warranty Technical Manager. Since retiring in 2011, Chris has focussed his passion for his two Rover cars and as Director of the Rover Sports Register Club. He has been a local councillor for over three decades, three times the Town Mayor and organises its popular classic car show.

HISTORIC



The Magazine of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

From the Editor

Anyone reading this who's ever edited a club magazine will know the feeling of relief that accompanies sending the final artwork off to print. The chances are that, when the printed copy lands on your doormat, you've also experienced the cold horror of spotting a mistake that was missed despite numerous proof readings. And so it is that I start this edition with an apology to our very own Legislation Director, Lindsay Irvine. If you looked at his, as usual brilliant, illustration in Edition 9 and wondered about its relevance, here it is reproduced this time with its missing caption in place!



Well Constable, the Commissioner is keen on a return to traditional policing

Thinking more about Legislation in Edition 9, I took the opportunity prompted by Lindsay's report, to complete one of the Road Safety Strategy surveys, specifically about motorcycle safety. Having ticked lots of boxes, I reached the survey's end, expecting a "further comments" box, only to be disappointed. Consequently, I wrote to the Department for Transport (as a private citizen) to state my view that earning a living from riding a motorcycle is incongruent with being a learner displaying L-plates. How many delivery riders have you seen weaving in and out of traffic because they're carrying hot pizzas going cold, and presumably being paid by the number of successful deliveries per hour?

As if to underline the point, a few days later I was being followed by a young lady on a moped or small motorcycle that had integral mittens over the handlebar ends. It was a warm day and so she was wearing only a pullover, rather than a dedicated motorcycle (safety) jacket. Her handlebars also had a mobile phone fixing. At each set of traffic lights, she stopped behind me, removed her hands from the mittens and tapped on her phone screen... she was not wearing gloves. As she veered away from me, I could see both the L-plate and the branded delivery box on the back. How I would have loved to stop and discuss with her the benefits of safer riding,

including protective gear... alas, I doubt her workload would have allowed her the time.

Surely, you should have to qualify as a 'competent' rider with the associated understanding of motorcycle road safety before being targeted and paid to deliver X pizzas in Y timescale!

Rant over... and on to more positive themes.

Since the last edition, we have enjoyed a packed start to the year: Race Retro in February, the Classic Car & Restoration Show in March and, of course, Drive It and Ride It Day in April. Our presence at the two indoor shows provided further good opportunities to meet members old and new. Whilst these events take up much time in planning and logistics, the payback is in stories shared and rarities displayed, such as the 1907/16 Berliet-Curtis Special at Stoneleigh Park and the 1974 Bultaco Sherpa 350 at the NEC.

It's too early to say how this year's Drive It Day and Ride It Day have fared in terms of charity income for the NSPCC's Childline. However, one thing we do know is that the recent sad demise of the Messerschmitt Enthusiasts Club after 60 years in operation, was also a glorious one, thanks to their funding of this year's Drive It Day plates to the tune of £5,000. You can read more about this most generous donation on page 17.

The Drive It Day weather played ball for most of the UK. My trip to Bicester Heritage's 'Scramble' revealed plenty of rally plates on display, both at the event and on the road beforehand. This was a marked improvement when compared to my previous Drive It Day visits there and hopefully will be reflected in the total sum collected that we'll be reporting soon on the Federation website.

I took the opportunity to take the photograph that is this edition's cover shot. The Aston Martin Vanquish is celebrating 25 years and the display at Bicester was a great opportunity to remind visitors that this once flagship model of Newport Pagnell is now 5 years into qualification as a Federation 'Youngtimer'... makes you think!

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!



President: **Sir Greg Knight**
Chairman: **David Whale**
Secretary: **Mel Holley**

Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs Ltd
PO Box 1563,
Peterborough, PE1 9AU

Email: secretary@fbhvc.co.uk
Phone: **01708 223111**

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 or sent on application to the secretary.

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MoT exemption and insurance By Dave Youngs



There are a number of subjects within our community that generate more heat than light. MoT exemption for historic vehicles is one of them. Each year, I hear the same concerns from club members and FBHVC supporters: “Will not having an MoT affect my insurance? Could a claim be refused? Does it change my agreed value?”

This month, I want to address those questions clearly, from an insurance perspective.

How the rolling exemption came about

In 2018, the UK introduced the current rolling 40-year MoT exemption. The change followed sustained lobbying by the Federation at the time, as many reading this will recall. The Federation argued back then that well-maintained historic vehicles, used infrequently and cared for by knowledgeable enthusiasts, present a very low road safety risk.

Many of the vehicles we insure would pass a modern MoT without difficulty. However, it was becoming increasingly problematic for some older cars, particularly pre-war models, to fit comfortably within an ever-modernising digital test system. Features such as fly-off handbrakes, cable-operated brakes and trafficator indicators were not always well understood within a time-limited, standardised testing process.

The legislation now allows vehicles over 40 years old to be exempt from annual testing, provided they have not been substantially modified in the previous 30 years. Owners must declare the vehicle as a Vehicle of Historic Interest (VHI) when taxing it, and crucially, the car must remain roadworthy at all times if used on the road.

The exemption recognises something the car community has long understood: historic vehicles are not used for everyday transport. They are carefully maintained, driven sparingly, and preserved as part of our motoring heritage. That trust is valuable, and it remains important that we continue to justify it.

Roadworthy has always been key

Turning to insurance, the principle is straightforward.

Every motor policy, whether covering a modern hatchback or a pre-war tourer, contains a fundamental condition that the vehicle must be maintained in a roadworthy condition. That requirement has nothing to do with MoT exemption.

An MoT certificate confirms only that a vehicle met the minimum legal standard on the day of the test. It does not guarantee roadworthiness the following week. Equally, the absence of an MoT certificate does not automatically mean a vehicle is unsafe.

For historic vehicles that qualify for an exemption, there is no requirement to obtain an MoT solely to satisfy your policy. If the car is legally exempt and properly maintained, your cover remains valid.

Agreed values

Another frequent concern is whether not having an MoT affects an agreed valuation.

Simply put, it does not.

An agreed value reflects the vehicle's condition, provenance and market position, based on evidence, photographs, and, often, club verification. The presence or absence of an MoT certificate does not increase or decrease that figure. Value is determined by what the car is worth in the market, not by whether it has passed a statutory inspection.

The “wriggle out” myth

There is a persistent belief that insurers look for technicalities to avoid paying claims. In over twenty years of running schemes in this sector, that has not been my experience.

Third-party liability is a legal requirement under the Road Traffic Act. An insurer cannot simply refuse to meet third-party obligations because a vehicle did not have an MoT.

It is true that policies contain wording allowing an insurer to reduce a policyholder's own damage settlement if a vehicle was proven to be unroadworthy and that specific defect directly caused the accident. In theory, that provision exists. In practice, I have never encountered a real-world case where it has been applied within the historic vehicle arena.

It would require clear evidence that a known and significant defect was the direct cause of the incident – a very high threshold. The reality is much simpler: maintain your vehicle properly and use it responsibly, and your cover operates as intended.

Why testing can still make sense

When you look at national MoT data year after year, most failures are not dramatic mechanical catastrophes. They are routine wear and tear.

Lighting faults remain one of the most common issues – blown bulbs, poor earths or misaligned beams. Suspension

components such as worn bushes, tired dampers, and corroded springs are frequently found. Brake imbalance, sticking callipers or deteriorating hoses can develop gradually. Tyres may have legal tread depth, but ageing rubber can crack and harden. Visibility issues – worn wiper blades, ineffective washers or minor windscreen damage – are also typical. Most, therefore, are simply the predictable consequences of time and use.

Which brings me to my personal view.

However knowledgeable we are about our own cars, a second pair of trained eyes can spot issues we may overlook. Deterioration is gradual. Wear creeps in. A formal inspection provides structured scrutiny that even a careful owner may not replicate in a home garage.

The MoT exemption was granted because the historic vehicle community demonstrated that it takes responsibility seriously. Maintaining high standards – whether through voluntary testing, regular servicing or club-supported inspections – protects not only our individual cars but the wider reputation of historic motoring.

From an insurance perspective, the position is clear. Exemption does not invalidate cover. It does not reduce the agreed value. It does not provide an easy route for claims to be declined.

The obligation has always been the same: keep the vehicle roadworthy.

I don't say this purely from an insurance standpoint. I say it as someone who values these cars and the people who use them. From an enthusiast's perspective, voluntary testing comes down to peace of mind.

Personally, I would rather know.

Your club can easily access FBHVC Insurance by registering as a participant via the simple form at insurance.fbhvc.co.uk. When approved as an FBHVC member organisation, clubs will receive a marketing pack with all the adverts, leaflets, logos, and other information they need to promote the scheme to members.



"No dear, it's not the same as hoarding toilet rolls".

Introduction

There is obviously a delay in submitting copy to the Editor and the subsequent printing and distribution of *Historic*. Thus, I am reluctant to inject a note of pessimism into this column as the Middle East conflict, soaring fuel prices and economic 'difficulties' which currently dominate the news as I write, may be all in the rear-view mirror by the time you read this in the early summer. Let's hope so! At any rate, I'm glad I wished you all a Happy New Year in the last edition!

The topics covered are varied again; Martyn's Law is in the vanguard as the Home Office guidance mandated under s.27 of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 is published together with a consultation on how the Regulator should operate and use its powers. I also rehearse the Federation's position on the fairly regular campaigns or petitions to widen the class of vehicles entitled to the exemptions and benefits which historic vehicles (HVs) as currently defined, receive. I follow on with our conclusions on the two calls for evidence which I covered in the last edition and a resolution to one of the insurance topics also mentioned last time round, and an update on one other. I conclude with a note of my high regard for magazine editors and their good taste in the articles they select.

Martyn's Law

In the last edition I reflected the increasing public and club awareness of the provisions of The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. I have provided a fairly extensive commentary on the development of the Act in many editions of this journal during the last and current government periods and have provided a fairly extensive suite of explanatory documents on the Federation website (<https://www.fbhvc.co.uk/martyns-law>).

That suite has just been updated and expanded with the addition of the Home Office statutory guidance released on 15 April 2026 which describes the requirements for qualifying premises and events, sets out information on the responsible person's responsibilities, and makes reference to the regulatory approach ahead of further guidance from the Regulator. That Regulator, the Security Industry Authority (SIA) has also launched draft section 12 guidance for consultation. This guidance explains how the SIA plans to operate and use its powers, consistent with "a supportive, proportionate and risk based approach". It sets out how the regulator will carry out its functions, including monitoring compliance, how it will take enforcement

action and how it will use its powers and exercise discretion. The s.27 Guidance is not out for consultation while the s.12 is. By the time you read this we will have considered and formulated any appropriate response on the latter guidance bearing in mind we want the regulator to be helpful and sympathetic and not unnecessarily heavy handed which might deter our largely volunteer membership from organising events.

For those reading this that are charged with organising club events, I have set out some immediate 'takeaways' from the 129-page statutory guidance below. However, that guidance document and the non-statutory additional annexes are on our website at the link above and are mandatory reading.

First, I make the usual disclaimer. I am not and cannot provide specialist legal advice but only intend to provide a summary and pointers to what we consider are useful and relevant to clubs. Your decisions must be based on the law and official statutory guidance and advice from specialists who hold themselves out as experts in the field.

References to the appropriate chapters in the Guidance are highlighted in **bold**.

- a. The new statutory guidance marks a mid-point in the implementation of the Act. The inspection and enforcement provisions are not yet in force which will be some time around April next year.
- b. For clubs using or hiring premises where no more than 200 persons can reasonably be expected to be present (i.e. halls and pavilions with a small capacity) thanks to our interventions amongst others, these do not come within the scope of the Act.
- c. Above 200 persons, for “qualifying premises” or “qualifying events” there are 2 tiers, a Standard Tier where no more than 800 persons can reasonably be expected to be present and an Enhanced Tier of more than 800. The full definitions of what are “qualifying premises” and “qualifying events” and how to calculate the numbers expected are set out in the Act. Some types of premises are excluded by law and there are formulae on how to calculate the numbers of persons who “can reasonably be expected” in **Annex A** of the Statutory Guidance. However, if one thinks of “qualifying premises” as being a building or building plus land and “qualifying event” as being something

held on a bare site or a restricted cordoned off area of a park, then you are getting the idea. See **Chapters 4 and 5**.

- d. As I have advised before, the 2 tiers are marked by the extent of the duties on the “responsible” person who is either the person or persons in control of the premises or organising the qualifying events. Under the Standard Tier, the responsible person’s public protection duties are largely discharged by measures centred around post incident processes including evacuation, invacuation, lockdown and communication. However, under the Enhanced Tier, **in addition** to those processes, preventative actions are required, including monitoring, movement control, physical security and safeguarding of information about security measures. **Chapters 7 and 8**.
- e. All measures taken by the responsible persons (and some are ‘musts’ as opposed to ‘shoulds’) are subject to the “reasonably practicable” test which will be familiar to those used to Health and Safety at Work Act duties. To quote the guidance: “Reasonably practicable means proportionate. In considering what is reasonably practicable, the responsible person should weigh what can be done to

achieve the objectives of procedures and/or measures, balanced against the cost, time and difficulty of implementation.”

- f. **Chapter 6** assists with who a “responsible person” is as the duties outlined above (which include also registering and supplying information to the Regulator) fall to them. As will be seen from the Guidance, there may be more than one responsible person given the size of the premises and its normal use.
- g. Compliance and Enforcement is dealt with in **Chapter 9**.

As I have written previously, where clubs are using venues which are either in the business of hosting events or are used to it, the responsible person will generally be the controller or owner of the venue. Compliance will fall on them and increased charges may be the only indicator of the effect of the Act. Where premises are hosting events where greater than normal numbers are expected (e.g. a pub allowing large events in their garden) or bare fields are used, only then will the organiser potentially become a joint or sole responsible person. Helpfully, the Guidance and Annexes have several useful examples demonstrating different scenarios including bare sites and some indication of how to go about fulfilment of duties.

Petition 20/30 & the First Principle of War

I have alluded to the “be careful what you wish for” aphorism in a previous column. That was in the context of a campaign to include “younger” classics in the London ULEZ exemptions enjoyed by HVs. You may recall the much-expanded ULEZ area prompted a demand to reduce the age of an HV from 40 years to 30 years (or even 20). For the purpose of this column I think the above aphorism remains relevant but would propose to add Principle No 1 of the Principles of War in British Army Doctrine; “**Select and Maintain the Aim**”. In the pursuit of the main objective, don’t be distracted by subsidiary demands, no matter how tempting.

Though by no means the only recent online petition concerning VED (you will find quite a few and some quite odd on the .gov website), one that has achieved greater media coverage concerns a demand for reduced VED for vehicles as young as 20 years. The specific wording of the petition is: “Introduce a 50% VED reduction for cars aged 20–39. High taxes force functional vehicles to be scrapped, creating a “disposable” culture. Keeping existing cars is greener than building new

ones, as it preserves embedded carbon. This “Young-Timer” bracket supports the circular economy and UK heritage.”

The grievance is centred on the level of VED on post 2001 vehicles; at that time VED became CO₂ emissions based as opposed to the previous regime based on engine capacity. Thus, post 2001 cars with large capacity petrol engines producing high levels of CO₂ are particularly penalised. The argument further developed in the motoring media is that the resulting very high level of VED is disproportionate to the value of some very fine cars making them uneconomic to run. Given that they had years of life left in them, this is argued by some to be ‘scrappage by the back door’ and bad for the environment. Others advance the view in the letters pages of the motoring media that while “40 years” was a good start for government concessions on VED and MOT, now it is time for younger “classics” to receive the same benefits.

Our response to this petition is broadly consistent with the position we took on the expansion of the London ULEZ (News Issue 2 2023 and Historic Issue 2 June

2024). The Federation aspires to persuade the Government of the day to reduce the VED exemption for vehicles 40 years and over to 30 years in line with the international definition for historic vehicles. However, the pursuit of concessions for a 20+ year category, even for tapered or reduced VED benefits has not been contemplated under the historic or heritage banner.

We appreciate that many of the vehicles which are in the 20 – 39 year range will one day be **future** classics and part of UK Heritage. Through our new Youngtimer scheme, we are encouraging the generation driving them to take an interest in motoring heritage and preservation. We also agree with many of the sentiments expressed in the Petition that keeping existing cars is greener than building new ones, as it preserves embedded carbon and is good for the economy.

However, it has to be acknowledged that achieving a 40 year **rolling basis** for a zero rate VED and exemption from MOT (subject to a number of caveats relating to modification and class of vehicle), constitutes a significant advance



on the earlier concessions for HVs first passed in 1995 which were frozen once before. It is also one about which there were real concerns might be lost in the recent Budget. The Federation is therefore careful to ensure that it does not weaken the arguments for these valuable concessions for UK historic vehicles. Specifically, we pay heed to the Government's rationale for the VED concession which: *"is intended to support classic vehicles, which the government considers are an important part of the country's historical and cultural heritage."*

This aligns with the FIVA definition to which the Federation subscribes which not only classifies an historic vehicle as being at least 30 years old, but one "not used for daily transport." You will know that one of the strongest arguments the Federation has had for maintaining freedoms, protections and exemptions for historic vehicles has been that many (indeed most) are used occasionally purely for pleasure and as a hobby which has been confirmed in the annual mileage statistics in the recent FBHVC National Historic Vehicle Survey (NHVS) report. That report also confirms that compared to the total number of cars on the road, the historic sector is small with many vehicles not in regular use. It should also be noted that in exchange for

the 30 year concession, many European countries impose a limited use condition and rigorously enforce it.

The Government was prepared to accede to the **rolling 40-year basis** in part because the fiscal impact was minimal estimating that only around an additional 10,000 vehicles would qualify each year.

By contrast, although we do not have precise up to date figures to hand, DfT statistics suggest that the number of registered cars that are 20 - 30 years old is more than four times the entire HV parc. This number is consistent with the significant rise in new vehicle registration from the 1980s (albeit dipping in the 1990s) peaking around the millennium. The number of cars on the road has risen from 4 million in 1950 to over 35 million and the attrition rate for older ones is generally greater than for younger whose manufacturing standards mean greater longevity. The loss of revenue in exempting this new class would be noticeable.

While the Petition seeks to frame its argument for a reduction in VED in terms of *"UK Heritage"*, based on the age of many of the vehicles, their number and their continued use as everyday transport, the Federation would find it hard to rebut a

Treasury view that they are not *"heritage or historic"* vehicles.

In addition, the NHVS survey demonstrated conclusively that historic vehicles under the current definition enjoy overwhelming public support. That support may be undermined or diluted by what might be perceived as a tax subsidy for a large number of older polluting cars at a time when even EVs are subject to VED and road pricing in the near future.

So, while the FBHVC accepts the contention in the Petition that there are environmental and economic arguments for fully functional vehicles to be kept in service rather than scrapped, bearing in mind the first Principle of War, these factors are not core to the Federation's campaign for HVs.

Finally, we need to look ahead to the main challenge for the Federation and its international counterparts over the next decade. This will be maintaining public support for the existing current freedom to operate historic vehicles, as policy shifts in favour of alternative technology vehicles.

My thanks to Wayne Scott our former Communications director and editor of JEC magazine who reproduced our position as set out above and lent support to it with additional well-crafted rationale printed elsewhere in this magazine. (See page 13).

Automated Vehicles Call for Evidence & Road Safety Strategy

Another Principle of British Army Doctrine worth adhering to is "economy of effort". Use just the right amount of effort at the right time and in the right place. This is especially true of a volunteer organisation like the FBHVC. The Legislation Committee looked carefully at both these official consultations and decided that responses were not required on this occasion. In the case of the Road Safety Strategy, none of the proposed measures could be identified as affecting the HV community any more than the wider public. Whilst, our survey indicates that our community has a larger proportion of "older drivers", you would no doubt agree that this is not a robust basis to resist proposed eyesight tests on licence renewal at 70 and subsequently. I was supported in this view when

I read how many club magazine editors promote responsible attitudes towards fitness to drive.

In relation to the Automated Vehicles Regulations Call for Evidence, we were not deterred by the 79 pages and 125 questions but we had already made our case in relation to HVs in our detailed response to the earlier consultation on the Statement of Safety Principles which the Secretary of State for transport is required to promulgate under the Automated Vehicles Act. This statutory Statement should set the standard for the regulations to follow albeit we have not yet seen the departmental response. So, by not expending time and effort on unnecessary responses to these consultations, hopefully we have more time to devote to what is essential.

Association of British Insurers (ABI) Code

In the last edition I described changes to the ABI Code of Practice on Vehicle Salvage which removed the clause allowing HVs and "cherished vehicles" to be assessed out with the provisions of the Code. We identified a potential threat to an HV written off on economic grounds but where a damage assessor placed it in one of the two categories (A or B) in the Code which would prevent the owner repairing it regardless of cost. Once placed in such a category the body would have to be crushed even if the owner had an apparent contractual right to retention of the salvage. As I previously explained, the position was governed by The Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002 as amended by later 2018 Regulations.

Ahead of any negotiations with the ABI we have sought some feedback from insurers with assistance from another organisation representing commercial interests. They have not identified any significant issues with the Code but do have concerns about whether damage assessors who may be well versed in modern vehicle repair technology would understand or be sympathetic to repair schemes for older vehicles.

We anticipate that by the time of publication we will have met with the ABI in the hope that any potential risk to HVs can be suitably mitigated. As I advised previously, in the interim, if the worse happens, ensure that your insurance company instructs an assessor of the damaged vehicle who understands older vehicles and more traditional repair techniques.

A Good Read

Under the banner of what the professions call Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and also for some inspiration, I have lately had the opportunity to scan through some club magazines. Clubs are obviously what the Federation is all about and I was interested to see what topics were raising concern and how they were being explained. Although some of the detailed technical content was occasionally a bit beyond me, the sheer variety of the topics covered and the maturity with which serious issues are dealt with, is impressive. Wise advice on insurance, legal and medical fitness are provided and I was pleased to note how much the FBHVC national survey and activities were valued.

As an aviator, I was also encouraged by the number of articles which combined motoring and aviation themes. This should not be surprising as many pre and post War famous British companies were both successful motor and aeronautical businesses: Rolls Royce, Bentley, Alvis and Bristol. I had overlooked Armstrong Siddeley until I read a club article on their Parkside works, the latter producing quality cars and reliable radial and turbine aero engines. In its Armstrong Whitworth guise, fine aircraft were designed and produced. Another article reminded us of Humber's venture into very early British aviation with a claim to have produced the first all British

monoplane. All British in construction perhaps, but in fact a licence-built copy of the French Bleriot, the conqueror of the English Channel in 1909. The awesome English Electric (EE) Lightning featured in another article (including a spectacular mid crash photograph). EE was a company which designed and produced the world's first jet bomber in a Preston engineering garage, despite having no previous aircraft experience! Well done to the hard-working editors that seek out and reproduce such fascinating articles.

Fuels

Nigel Elliott

UK Fuel Supply Issues

The ongoing issues with the US/Iran conflict and the blocking of the Strait of Hormuz has had a dramatic effect on global crude oil prices that has immediately fed through to UK petrol and diesel pump prices. Diesel has experienced the highest increase in price, often approaching and sometimes exceeding £2.00 per litre. The UK typically imports around 50% of its diesel demand, but exports excess petrol to other countries such as the US.

UK refineries were originally configured like US refineries as gasoline (petrol) machines, as diesel demand was relatively low in comparison. They typically have large catalytic crackers that break down heavy refinery streams and produce lighter products such as catalytic naphtha's, and it is the most favoured method of increasing the ratio of light to heavy products from crude oil. Over the years, with the increase in diesel demand in Europe, refineries have invested in more units to increase diesel production, but this is expensive.

Esso Fawley Refinery has recently completed an \$800 million project to increase diesel production by 40% that should help the UK reduce imports by 25%. This required the construction of a new hydrogen plant in order to hydrotreat (desulphurise) the diesel to meet the European fuel sulphur specification of 10mg/kg (10 parts per million). Modern refineries are highly integrated and optimized and nothing is wasted. The existing diesel plant and hydrotreaters use hydrogen produced in the refinery

by the powerformers (catalytic reformers) that upgrade petroleum naphtha octane by dehydrogenization of naphthenes to form aromatics such as toluene. The amount of hydrogen from this process is ultimately limited, so a new hydrogen plant had to be constructed to enable the increase in diesel production.

The closure of Grangemouth and Lindsey oil refineries has exacerbated the diesel supply situation and it's vitally important for reasons of security of supply that the UK does not lose any more refineries. One good piece of news is that Phillips 66, that operate the Humber refinery, have purchased the adjoining Lindsey Oil Refinery from the liquidator and plan to make use of some of the processing units going forward.

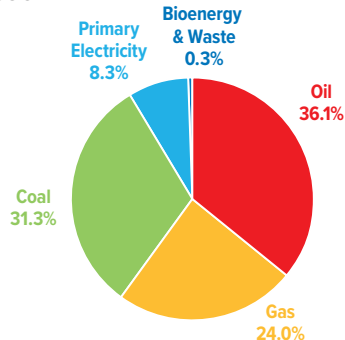
The high cost of energy, carbon taxes and environmental legislation in the UK and Europe, make it very difficult to compete with larger, essentially non-regulated refineries in other parts of the world, such as India. However, it seems that the UK Government

is happy to import higher carbon and environmentally poorer finished fuel, and risk security of supply, in the name of artificial net-zero targets that do not take into account the export of the UK's manufacturing industry to China and India.

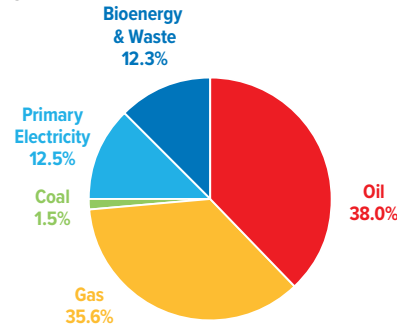
We should remember that just over 70% of the UK's energy comes from oil and gas, and a complete switch over to renewable energy is not possible in the foreseeable future, due to energy density and storage issues. The UK should of course increase the use of renewable energy wherever technically and commercially viable. Security of energy supply is critical to any country, and this is best met by a diverse approach to energy production. This means a rapid expansion of nuclear power generation for baseload and stability, continued expansion of renewables and the use of gas from the North Sea and possibly inland fracking for peak load management and back up for those days when the sun doesn't shine or the wind doesn't blow.

Inland Energy Consumption 1990 & 2024

1990



2024



Note: Primary electricity includes nuclear, wind, solar, hydro and net imports

Data from UK ENERGY IN BRIEF 2025 (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero)

Policy Review

For this edition, the big news from DVLA is that there is no big news! The next HVUG meeting had been scheduled for March but DVLA contacted us in February, actually while we were at the Race Retro exhibition at Stoneleigh, to apologise and explain that although they were still making progress on the next tranche of registration policy revisions, they were not going to be ready to announce them in March and had thus cancelled the HVUG. From the information we have we remain very positive regarding the likely outcome and DVLA have since assured us that

they are confident of being able to share details at the HVUG scheduled for June.

Whilst this delay is obviously unfortunate, I do not think it portends any negative conclusion. DVLA have been the victim of several circumstances which have, of necessity, diverted their efforts. Significant amongst these is the proposed charge-per-mile for electric vehicles which will require significant new administrative infrastructure to enable it to work.

As always, we will bring you news of any developments as early as possible.

gov.uk Website

The Government uses the gov.uk website to communicate and share information and support across all Government activities. The website is run by a dedicated office, I believe in London, and they are tasked with designing the appearance and operation of the site to be as consistent as possible across all subjects, and also to conform with the Plain English requirements. Thus, a Government Department, or an Executive Agency as appropriate, does not directly write the content of gov.uk, rather it tells gov.uk what it wants said and the gov.uk teams write the text and design the web page layout.

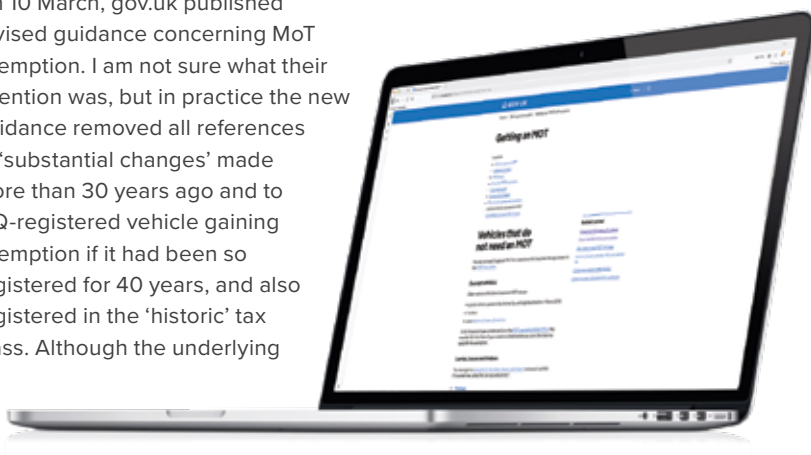
The thinking behind this method of operation is clear and in many ways it works very well, but it does carry a risk. The gov.uk teams are inevitably not subject matter experts and unfortunately sometimes in their efforts to make the format consistent and the information easy to understand, they actually get it wrong! There have been two examples of this in our sphere recently.

On 10 March, gov.uk published revised guidance concerning MoT exemption. I am not sure what their intention was, but in practice the new guidance removed all references to 'substantial changes' made more than 30 years ago and to a Q-registered vehicle gaining exemption if it had been so registered for 40 years, and also registered in the 'historic' tax class. Although the underlying

regulations had not changed, this revised guidance caused some concern for owners of vehicles directly affected. When the problem was pointed out to DVSA they fairly quickly initiated some changes through gov.uk – unfortunately in resolving one set of problems they introduced another and that version of the guidance was never published.

At the time of writing no further correction has been published on gov.uk but we are assured a new version is imminent.

The second example is rather less clear cut because unfortunately I neither know precisely when the change took place nor do I have a copy of the previous version. However, what is quite clear is that the details of the procedure for registering a historic vehicle with an age-related registration, typically either because it is an import or a 'found' vehicle with no paperwork, have virtually disappeared from Vehicle registration: Overview - GOV.UK. We have raised this with DVLA who have recognised the problem and undertaken to resolve it.



Heritage Skills Academy Apprentice of the Year

This year's winner of the Jack Daniel's Award given by The Morris Minor Owners Club for best apprentice of the year at the Heritage Skills Academy is Alfie Thomas. Alfie is an apprentice at Bob Houghton Ltd., a Ferrari Specialist in the Cotswolds.

Alfie joined the mechanical course at Bicester at the beginning of 2025 but he has fast tracked a year and has already shown himself to be a very mature and capable apprentice. Alfie is actively involved with the air cadets in his spare time and has volunteered to help the Heritage Skills Academy at Goodwood.

At the last two NEC shows, Alfie has also joined the FBHVC and Heritage Skills Academy stand, and he is a pleasure to have around. He stays on the stand all day giving his full attention to anyone who enquires and starts a discussion with him.

This year the presentation was made on the Morris Minor Owners Club stand at the NEC Restoration Show by Susan Akrill, National Liaison Officer for MMOC. Alfie keeps the Jack Daniel's trophy for the year and also received a cheque for £250.

He is another worthy winner and one the Heritage Skills Academy is very proud of.



Apprentice of the Year, Alfie Thomas, is presented with the Jack Daniel's Award and £250 by Susan Akrill, National Liaison Officer for MMOC, with FBHVC Skills Director, Karl Carter (right).

IS YOUR CLUB STRUGGLING TO FIND SOMEWHERE/ SOMEONE TO TAKE ON YOUR SPARES FULFILMENT?



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Electrical Systems - Diagnose, Repair or Replace

Restoring a classic vehicle can be a thrilling experience for any auto enthusiast. But beneath the polished chrome, fresh paint and reworked engine, lies one of the most critical yet overlooked components, the electrical system.

Whether you're working on a vehicle from the dawn of motoring, or something a little more up to date, ensuring that the wiring and electrical components are properly restored is key to both function and safety. Most classic vehicles were built in an era before modern electronics became standard, which makes their systems simpler in design but also more prone to issues. Understanding how to identify, repair and upgrade the electrical system helps you bring your classic ride back to life with reliability and confidence, while adding modern technology that is as good or better than before.

Understanding the Basic Classic Vehicle Electrical System

Most classic cars use a simple 6 volts, 12v, or in some larger commercial vehicles, a 24v electrical system, designed to power essential components such as the ignition, lighting, starter and gauges. Unlike today's vehicles with complex computer networks, early wiring systems relied heavily on straightforward mechanical switches and analog circuits.

However, over the decades, antique vehicle wiring can degrade due to heat, corrosion

or wear. Insulation becomes brittle, connectors loosen and earthing points may rust. These problems can cause frustrating electrical failures or worse, pose a fire risk.

Before diving into repairs, it's crucial to check electrical system components thoroughly: battery voltage and terminals, fuses, switches and earthing points. A simple continuity test or voltage check can reveal hidden faults that might otherwise go unnoticed.



Credit: Haynes Manuals

Common Electrical Problems in Classic Vehicles

Even the most beautifully restored vehicle can suffer from electrical gremlins. Here are some of the common electrical problems in vehicles, especially older models:

- **Corroded connections:** Moisture and oxidation can cause poor conductivity, leading to flickering lights or intermittent power loss.
- **Worn-out wiring:** Decades-old wires often have cracked insulation or exposed copper, increasing the risk of short circuits.
- **Faulty earths:** Classic vehicles depend on metal chassis grounding. Rust or paint between the connections can interrupt current flow.
- **Ageing Switches and Relays:** Time and vibration wear down internal contacts, causing inconsistent operation of lights or ignition switches.
- **Weak or dead battery:** Extended storage periods or infrequent use can drain classic vehicle batteries, especially during the winter period.

Recognising these problems early and addressing them correctly ensures your restoration is not only worthwhile, but dependable on the road.



Credit: Haynes Manuals

Diagnosing & Testing Vintage Electrical Systems

Before replacing anything, conduct a detailed electrical inspection and check your classic vehicle for signs that it may need a professional restoration to ensure you're addressing any deeper electrical issues, not just the surface ones. Start with the basics: battery voltage, dynamo/alternator output and starter motor draw. If your vehicle has been sitting for a few years, remove/replace the battery and clean the terminals. Check for frayed wires, loose connections and brittle insulation.

For more advanced testing, use a multimeter to measure voltage

drops, continuity and resistance throughout the circuits. Compare readings with the vehicle's original wiring diagram to detect inconsistencies. If you don't have any factory manuals, many classic vehicle forums and restoration books will provide you the necessary information and wiring colour codes. It is advisable that when working on classic vehicle wiring, label each wire during disassembly and take pictures before you start and throughout the process. This gives you a visual reference that makes reassembly easier and helps prevent connection mistakes that could lead to damaging delicate components.

Restoring Classic Vehicle Wiring: Replace or Repair?

One of the biggest decisions in restoring a classic vehicle's electrical system is whether to repair or replace it entirely. In most cases, the answer depends on the vehicle's age or condition. If the wiring is only mildly worn, you might be able to repair specific sections by splicing-in new wire and using high quality connectors. However, if the insulation is crumbling or the system has been modified multiple times over the years, a full replacement is usually safer.

Modern replacement harnesses are designed to mimic original layouts but use higher quality materials and insulation that can withstand heat and vibration better than older ones. When purchasing replacement classic vehicle electrical parts, choose reliable suppliers who specialise in classic vehicles. This ensures the connectors, colours and terminal styles and sizes match the manufacturer's specifications, maintaining authenticity whilst improving safety.

Upgrading for Safety Without Losing Authenticity

Many owners worry that upgrading their vehicle's electrical system will compromise its originality. However, subtle improvements can enhance reliability and safety without altering the classic look of the vehicle.

For example, converting a 6v to a 12v system can improve starting power, lighting brightness and accessory compatibility. Using a modern alternator instead of an old dynamo offers more consistent power delivery, especially if you've added accessories like electric fans or upgraded sound systems.

When installing classic vehicle electrical parts, always use proper fuses or circuit breakers. Early vehicles often lacked sufficient circuit protection, making them vulnerable to wiring fires. Adding inline fuses and relays where appropriate is a smart, nearly invisible way to prevent electrical overloads. Heat resistant wiring sleeves, modern insulation and hidden earth straps can also make your system more dependable while keeping the under-bonnet appearance authentic.

Important Tips During an Electrical Restoration

- Document everything before, during and after, for future reference.
- Label and organise, using numbered tags or masking tape during dismantling.
- Clean thoroughly, remove corrosion from connection points, fuse boxes, etc.
- Inspect earths, clean every grounding point and reattach securely.
- Use correct gauge wire, always match the thickness for proper current capacity.
- Solder and heat-shrink connections, avoid quick crimp connectors.
- Test before reassembly, and once installed, check for function before replacing trim.

Attention to detail during this process ensures the system performs flawlessly when you finally turn the key.

Preventing Future Electrical Problems

Once your vehicle's electrical system is restored to its prime, maintenance becomes the key to keeping it reliable for years. Vehicles that sit for long periods benefit from trickle charges to maintain battery health. Periodically check the electrical system's performance by verifying the charging

voltage and lighting brightness to spot early signs of trouble.

Trusting these notes may be of assistance to any of our members considering a repair to their vehicle's electrical system. However, if you are uncertain about any aspect of the work required, consult a qualified auto electrician.

VED - Be Careful What You Wish For

Wayne Scott outlines a view based on his FBHVC experience

There's been plenty of noise recently around parliamentary petitions concerning older vehicles and taxation. One asked to: "Reduce Vehicle Excise Duty by 50% for vehicles aged 20 to 39 years". Now, I understand why some are tempted to support it, and the argument that it would help move from a 'disposable car culture'. Preserving cars where the carbon footprint has already been spent makes sense — but I would urge caution.



On the surface, it can appear to address fairness. Dig deeper, and it risks opening a Pandora's box. If the petition were to secure a parliamentary debate, it is highly likely that the historic vehicle VED exemption — currently applied on a rolling basis to vehicles over 40 years old — would come under scrutiny. Once that door is opened, it may not close in our favour.

During my seven years lobbying the government as part of the team of directors of the FBHVC, I learned a simple lesson: you must pick your moments carefully. Sometimes the wisest course of action is not to rock the boat. The historic VED exemption was secured and defended on a clear, carefully argued basis — that these vehicles are part of our transport heritage. They are not for daily transport. They are not disposable 'old cars' clogging up commuter routes. They are cherished, maintained, and sparingly used vehicles that represent engineering, design and cultural history.

That argument worked because it was true — and because the data supported it.

However, many of the vehicles falling into the newer age brackets now being discussed do not fit the same profile as the cherished classics that we know so well. A significant proportion of these are everyday cars still being used as low-cost transport. If an exemption is perceived to create a loophole for cheap motoring, it will not last long. Government will close it — and they will do so comprehensively.

What might that look like? Increased surveillance of usage. Mileage-based taxation. Restrictions on when and where historic vehicles can be driven. Greater administrative oversight. Once you invite the Treasury and the Department for Transport to 'review' a concession, you cannot control the outcome. This is not scaremongering. It is experience.

Those of us who have sat across the table from policymakers know how easily a well-meaning campaign can produce unintended consequences. You can walk into a room defending a principle and walk out having lost ground you previously held. That is why the FBHVC continues to engage constructively and carefully, backed by research, usage data and economic impact evidence. Strategy matters.

So, yes — be careful what you wish for.

Training the Next Generation



HERITAGE
SKILLS ACADEMY



Highlights from 2026 so far at Brooklands, for the apprentices on the coachbuilding course

The FBHVC-supported Heritage Skills Academy [HSA] brings experts together from across the restoration industry who are committed to preserving the skills, knowledge and enthusiasm required to maintain and restore the world's finest classic motor vehicles.

Through early 2026, it's been fantastic to see the continued impact of our apprenticeships — both in the workshop and beyond it. From strong alumni outcomes to busy training blocks at our flagship sites, here's what's been happening at Heritage Skills Academy.

It builds on a strong 2025, when 43 talented apprentices passed their End Point Assessment (final exams) and progressed into employment within heritage engineering and historic motorsport. Among them, 14 apprentices achieved an overall

Distinction, an outstanding accomplishment. Now, a total of 69 apprentices are on target to complete their qualifications in 2026.

Brooklands Museum workshop

The Coachbuilding team at the Brooklands Museum workshop has had a busy start to 2026 with an influx of apprentice training with eight cohorts already completing their first weeks of the year.

Training has focused on core coachbuilding skills including panel repair, fabrication and welding, and live restoration projects such as the Mini - including rear valance replacement, applying careful measurement, alignment and fitting techniques to ensure accuracy.

Chassis-based learning has included a bonus task of hot solid-riveting repairs to a historic Renault chassis mounted on the Chief jig (pictured), reinforcing

the importance of correct set-up and controlled repair processes.

Apprentices have also developed skills in machining, increased understanding of business principles, estimating and project planning.

Trim and interior work have also been delivered at both introductory and advanced levels with apprentices completing their first sun visor and seat pad tasks alongside stripping full interiors and seat retrimming projects, demonstrating clear progression from original components to finished results (pictured).

Visits to British Motor Heritage and Brooklands College have further supported apprentices' understanding of heritage vehicle construction and collaboration with external supporters.

Bicester

The HSA has grown so much that in addition to the existing workshop at the Bicester Motion site (previously called Bicester Heritage), last year an additional workshop was opened on an industrial estate in the town.

Our mechanical apprentices at Bicester have had a busy and highly practical start to the year, building skills and confidence through hands-on block release training.

Apprentices have designed and manufactured precision components, including brake hose clamps. They have also been developing core engineering skills such as reading technical drawings, tool selection, machine use and working accurately to tight tolerances, alongside a strong focus on safe working practices.

Workshop training has covered key chassis systems, including brakes, steering and suspension. Apprentices have stripped and inspected components, bled hydraulic systems, carried out wheel alignment and completed chassis drop tests, reinforcing real-world workshop discipline and accuracy.

Transmission training has seen apprentices strip, inspect and rebuild clutches and gearboxes, strengthening their understanding of precision engineering and attention to detail. More advanced apprentices have progressed to chassis measurement and geometry work using traditional techniques, bridging theory and practice on historic vehicles.



The long-term restoration of a Lotus Europa S2 – an apprentice-led project – has passed a milestone with the fabrication of a dummy dashboard and starting the engine

Restoration Project

In November 2024, the HSA was the grateful recipient of a 'barn-find' Lotus Europa S2, which was generously donated to support the development of our apprentices. Recognising its potential, we decided that this would make an ideal restoration project for the apprentices to experience classic car restoration.

Our initial expectation was that the Europa would require a complete chassis replacement. However, thanks to the car's history in a dry climate, the chassis

was found to be in good condition, necessitating only minor repairs. The chassis was subsequently sent away for shot blasting and powder coating.

**Heritage Skills Academy
has made the difference
between giving up on
apprenticeships all
together and making
them the backbone of my
staff skills programme.**

Employer feedback

While the chassis was away, the engine and gearbox were separated and thoroughly inspected. Components required for the reassembly of a rolling chassis were either restored or sourced as new parts. The rolling chassis was displayed on

the HSA section of the FBHVC's stand at November 2024 NEC Classic Motor Show.



At Bicester, apprentices are transferring theory into practice with a range of tasks being undertaken so far this year

With the chassis' return to Bicester, preparations for the next phase of the restoration were underway. However, disaster struck when the Europa's stored body was destroyed in a major fire that engulfed one of the hangars at Bicester Motion in May 2025. This necessitated a thorough reassessment of the project's direction, a process that remains ongoing.

We continued with the chassis restoration and earlier this year, with a dummy dashboard fabricated, the rolling chassis with engine and gearbox fitted, was fired up. Oil pressure was good, the Weber carburettor was tuned and the alternator was charging.

As we celebrated this milestone, unexpected good fortune came our way.

During a visit by one of our staff to a classic car restoration company that has one of our apprentices, an offer was made of another Lotus Europa abandoned project which included a complete bodyshell and chassis.

We snapped up this offer and now have all the elements required to progress the project. The bodyshell is complete but will require some repair and respray. This is a part of the project to keep our apprentices and staff busy during the coming year.

Real Careers, Real Impact

We recently completed our HSA Alumni Survey (of those who have graduated from the Academy), and the results strongly reflect the long-term value of heritage apprenticeships, for individuals and employers alike.

It shows that the majority are now in full-time employment in heritage or engineering. Career progression is good with many already in senior (including a Workshop Manager) or supervisory roles.

This outcome is strengthening the HSA's industry credibility as it is now recognised across the sector.

Former apprentices consistently reported that the programme gave them strong practical competence, confidence working on historic vehicles, and skills directly transferable to specialist employment.

These outcomes reinforce what we see every day: heritage apprenticeships don't just train skills, they build sustainable careers.

Perhaps most encouragingly, alumni spoke positively about the reputation and credibility that an HSA apprenticeship brings when progressing within the industry.

Short Courses now booking

Alongside apprenticeships, our short courses continue to be popular with enthusiasts, professionals and employers looking to upskill.

These in-person bespoke courses provide practical hands-on learning. Places are strictly limited on each course to ensure high-quality.

They can be booked by anyone – of any age – and are delivered by the same expert tutors who train our apprentices, in professional workshop environments at Brooklands and Bicester.

The prices are from £150 for a one-day, and from £300 for a two-day course. They sell out quickly, but new dates are released through the year. They are generally held at weekends, although some are mid-week.

The courses are:

- **Classic Car Bodywork & Welding Workshop** (3 days)
- **Classic Car TIG Welding Workshop** (2 days)
- **Introduction to Wheeling & Panel Making** (2 days)
- **Care for Your Classics: Essential maintenance** (2 days)
- **Automotive Electrics: Fundamentals to fault-finding** (2 days)
- **Classic Car Workshop – Brakes** (1 day)
- **Classic Car Workshop – Steering & suspension** (1 day)
- **Fuel & Fire: Ignition & carburettors** (1 day)

For more details of each course and online booking visit:

www.heritageskillsacademy.co.uk/short-courses

Build Your Future Workforce

The HSA exists because of the strength of our partnerships. Our apprentices bring commitment and enthusiasm. Our alumni demonstrate long-term impact. But it is our employers who make heritage skills sustainable.

By investing in apprenticeships, employers are:

- **Securing their future workforce**
- **Protecting specialist knowledge**
- **Passing craftsmanship to the next generation**
- **Strengthening the wider heritage engineering sector**

With fully-funded training available for apprentices aged up to 22, there has never been a better time to develop talent within your business.

Whether you are an established restoration company, a specialist motorsport firm, or a growing engineering workshop, we would be delighted to speak with you about how apprenticeships can support your plans.

To find out more, employers should contact recruitment@heritageskillsacademy.co.uk or call **01438 718224**

About The Federation Skills Trust

Answering the call to ensure that vital vehicle engineering skills are passed on to new generations, in 2018 the FBHVC entered a collaboration between many organisations and individuals.

The FBHVC created a charity – the Federation Skills Trust – to deliver Heritage Engineering Apprenticeships, as a result of the government's revamp of apprenticeships making them more employer-led.

The programme is developed from the earlier Classic Vehicle Restoration Framework created in 2014 as a partnership between the FBHVC and The Institute for the Motor Industry.

Today, using weekly residential block-release, apprentices attend

courses delivered by the Heritage Skills Academy (HSA).

Apprentices attend training at Brooklands (Surrey) to learn bodywork skills, and Bicester (Buckinghamshire) for mechanical skills.

These unique locations provide the finest academy in the world for the training and education of the UK's next generation of world-class heritage engineering technicians.

The three-year apprenticeship is the most successful of its type, with more than 200 apprentices either in training, or having graduated from the Heritage Skills Academy since it started.

www.heritageskillsacademy.co.uk



DRIVE IT DAY®

Messerschmitt Enthusiasts Club's Drive It Day Donation



We are very grateful for a substantial donation of £5,000 by the Messerschmitt Enthusiasts Club, which was an excellent start to this year's fundraising for the NSPCC's Childline.

The club told us: "After almost 60 years of support and friendship to owners and those just interested in our marque, the Messerschmitt Enthusiasts Club (MEC) has regrettably closed due to the decrease in active involvement by our small and ageing membership along with continued difficulties in recruiting club officials.

"Over the years, the Club had built up a reserve of funds from the sale of vehicle parts, and the Committee unanimously agreed that the monies should be put towards specific projects where the MEC's legacy could be seen to have made a difference.

"Also, many of our members enjoyed being part of Drive-it Day using our little cars for 'runs out' or 'meets', and the Federation perhaps gently cajoled those whose cars generally remained locked away for most of the year.

"The assistance the Federation has given to all classic vehicle owners and their clubs is second to none. The MEC wanted to acknowledge that by supporting the production of the 2026 Drive-it Day vehicle plates thereby boosting fundraising for the Federation's chosen charity.

"In this way, all MEC members out in their cars on 26 April could be proud that collectively we were very much part of the day, and feel good that our small, informal, friendly and enthusiastic club has helped such a worthy cause."

"Naturally, we want to assist with the Messerschmitt movement and ongoing discussions are taking place to crystalise our input there."

Drive It Day - View From A Club

Writes Phil Horsley: "What a fantastic day out—and a perfect reminder of why being part of the Kennet Valley Group of the TR Register is so special.

"Eleven cars took to the road for Drive It Day, with the route of 100 miles of some of the finest driving roads through Berkshire, Wiltshire and Dorset.

"A well-timed coffee stop at Waitrose Garden Centre & Cafe, Leckford along the way gave everyone a chance to catch up, compare notes, and enjoy the atmosphere that makes these runs so enjoyable.

"Of course, no great club run would be complete without a few navigational 'moments' – including the occasional sight of fellow members coming the other way!

All part of the fun, and it only added to the laughter and camaraderie that define these days.

"The highlight destination, the Boscombe Down Aviation Collection, did not disappoint. It's an incredibly interesting collection, brought to life by knowledgeable and welcoming staff, and presented in a way that really engages visitors. Not many places give you the chance to get up close – and even climb into – the cockpits of historic aircraft, making it a truly memorable experience.

"All of this, enjoyed under excellent weather, made for a superb day out exploring some of the best countryside our region has to offer.

"If ever there was a reason to be part of the Kennet Valley Group, this was it."



Federation of British Historic Vehicles Clubs (FBHVC) Communications Director Geoff Lancaster says: "Buoyed up by the tremendous weather, historic vehicles flocked in their thousands to more than 60 events across the UK."

"We are delighted that so many people supported Drive It Day in its 21st anniversary year.

"Sales of fundraising rally plates are up by 20% – setting an all-time record – and all profits go to support the NSPCC's Childline service. In the last five years, more than £250,000 has been raised by enthusiasts for the vital service.

"We are also extremely grateful to the Messerschmitt Enthusiasts Club for its generous donation of £5,000, sponsoring the production costs of this year's plates, which has made a tremendous difference."

"JustGiving donations are still very welcome via the 'donate' button here:

www.driveitday.co.uk



Deja Vu

By Roy Dowding



recently came across a photo which at a quick glance could be taken for a Jaguar XK120 wearing a special body with styling based on a Mk VII saloon. It turned out to be a 2-door Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport, dating from 1948 with coachwork by Antem Carrossier, a French company founded by Spaniard Jean Antem. It's more than likely that the styling was the work of Philippe Charbonneaux. It's interesting to compare it to the Mk VII, introduced in 1951, particularly the front bumpers and positioning of grilles under the inboard headlamps. Now I have no desire to alienate lovers of the superb products of Sir William Lyons, but this is not the first time that one of his designs has borne a remarkable similarity to something else from a few years before. Think Jaguar XK120 (1949) and the BMW 328, notably the version revised for competition in 1938.

Nor would it be the last!

I have always been struck by the overall similarity, particularly above the beltline, of the Jaguar XJ6, introduced in 1969, with the Giugiaro-



Jaguar Mk VII (credit: Consignify.com)

designed Alfa Romeo GT/Junior/GTV series dating from 1962. The likeness is especially noticeable with the 2-door Jaguar XJC.

It would be wrong to single out Jaguar (or Sir William Lyons) as being alone in, shall we say, being influenced by features of previous outstanding cars. You might recall my article "Stolen Artworks" (*Historic*, Issue 9, March 2026) which cited some of the several designs of the American, Virgil Exner, that had been copied by others who then took the credit!

Among the most blatant was the 1955 VW Karmann-Ghia, acknowledged by Ghia himself to have been inspired by Exner's 1952 Chrysler D'Elegance.

No less shameful was Raymond Loewy's 1956 Studebaker Power Hawk – the recreation of a stillborn design exercise for Studebaker by Virgil Exner back in 1948.

Immediately following WWII, British and European car designs began aping those being produced in the USA. Our humble Hillman Minx Phase III of 1949 and its big brother, the Humber Hawk, were



unashamedly based on the styling of the somewhat larger Plymouth of the same year.

This was totally understandable when it's realised that both Chrysler Corporation and the Rootes Group had retained the services of Raymond Loewy – yes, him again, but at least on this occasion Loewy was acting 'above-board'.

Surely one of the most attractive outcomes of the Loewy/Rootes association was the Sunbeam Rapier series II, a transformation of the basic Audax-series Minx body into a pocket-size 'lookalike' for the Studebaker Golden Hawk, itself the development of that Exner design dating back to 1948.

Not immediately obvious was why, in 1948, the L1 Velox and Wyvern from Vauxhall, then part of General Motors, and the Six from Simca, up until then essentially producers of French-built Fiats, should appear bearing such a similar design, seemingly scaled down from early 1940s Americana!

One of the most striking examples of a styling feature being replicated is that of the very distinctive curved bulges running alongside the length of the bonnet, culminating at the front with the car's headlights.

This 'fashion' appears to have begun in 1936 at Opel in Germany with their Olympia and Kadett models.

One year later, Renault announced the Juvaquatre with exactly the same feature. While 12 years later, when Russia recommenced vehicle manufacture after WWII, Moskvitch brought out their 400 Saloon with very similar styling, save that their grille was vertical.

One cannot leave this subject of 'borrowed design' without tracing the roots of the Trabant, made in Zwickau in the former German Democratic Republic.

All told, more than 3 million Trabants were made from 1957 to 1990, commencing with

the P50, with its unique body construction. This consisted of phenolic resin reinforced with fleece padding made from cotton offcuts supplied by Russian mills forming a material known as Duroplast.

The Trabant replaced its predecessor, the similar-looking AWZ P70, which had been introduced in late 1954. Its body was also made from Duroplast, on a wooden frame and plywood floor, reminiscent of the way in which the early Lloyd LP250 and 400 were made.

The Lloyd was manufactured in Bremen, in West Germany (as it was then) by the Borgward/Hansa/Goliath Group, from 1953. Lacking any powerful presses at the time to make metal panels, Lloyd initially built the bodies from synthetic leather stretched over a wooden frame, similar to the Weymann fabric construction method utilised by vintage sports



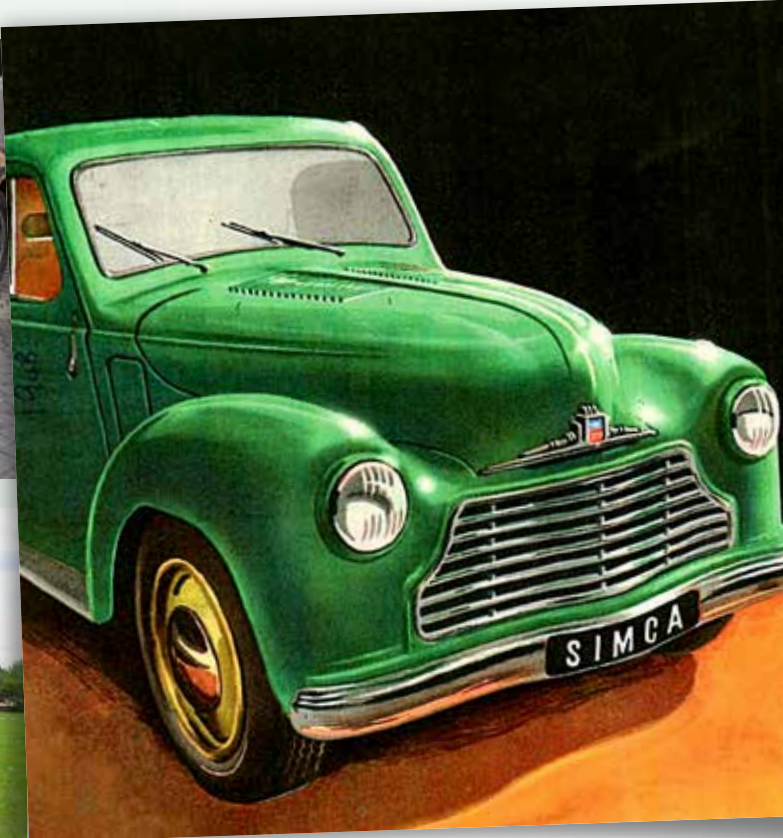
Alfa GT Junior (credit: paledog.de)



Jaguar XJC (credit: jaguar.ozcarnut.com)



Sunbeam Rapier Series II (credit: klassiekerweb.nl)



The 1948 Simca Six, one of their first models to depart from Fiat designs



Studebaker Golden Hawk (credit: hagerty.ca)





Trabant P50 (credit: www.origo.hu)



Trabant 601 (credit: auto5p.eu)



AWZ P70 (credit: 3dmodels.org)



Lloyd LP400 – (credit: Automobile Riekman)



Simca 8 Sport
(credit: Alfa Romeo Classic Forum)



Renault Frégate (credit: lesanciennes.com)

cars such as the Bentley. However, a transition was gradually made to using steel.

It's interesting that neither of the East German imitators of the original 1953 Lloyd were made from metal! Quite how what was essentially the same concept of car managed to traverse an emphatically enforced border between West and East Germany to spawn the AWZ is not clear. But the 'bloodline' is obvious.

Mechanically though, they were very different. Whereas the Lloyd utilised an efficient 4-stroke 596cc 2-cylinder engine, the 1954 AWZ had a wheezy 22bhp 2-stroke 2-cylinder 600cc engine derived from a pre-war DKW/Audi Zwickau design, which

was notoriously smoky. The succeeding Trabant bore a similar engine, of slightly smaller capacity initially, though it grew to 600cc with the upgraded 1961 Trabant 600 and subsequent 601 models.

To return to Simca for a moment, Battista Pininfarina designed a pretty little coupé for the company in 1948, based on a Fiat 1100 chassis and mechanicals. Called the Simca 8 Sport, the car bore an

intentional resemblance to the Cisitalia 202, which Pininfarina had created at the same time. The Simca Sport was made in small numbers from 1949 to 1952 by Jean Daninos' company, Facel Metallon.

Was it subliminal that the Renault Frégate, an in-house design announced in 1951, bore such a resemblance to the diminutive Simca coupé, despite it being a four-door saloon?



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.

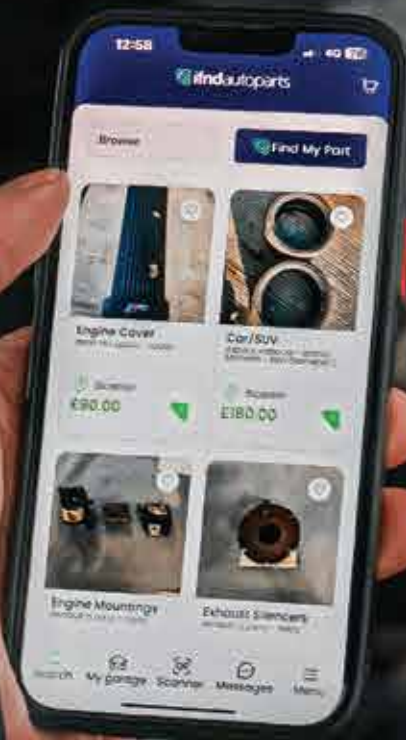


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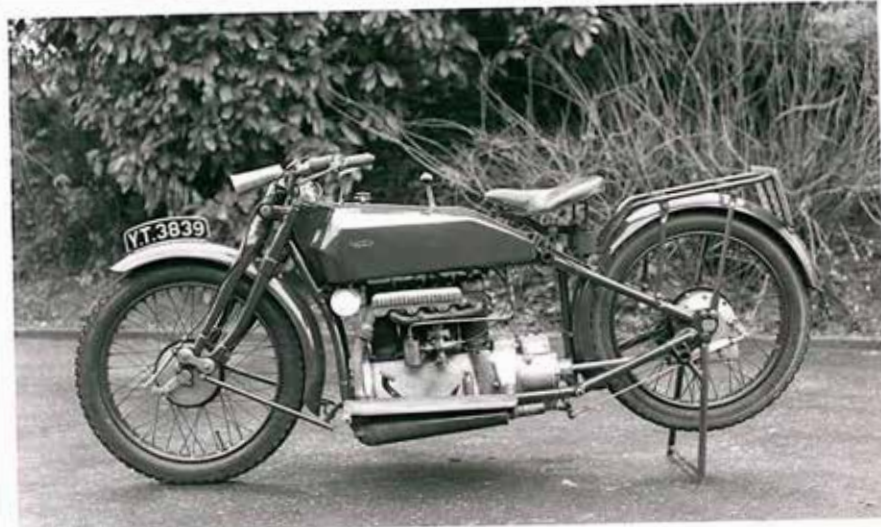
ifndautoparts.com

The Vauxhall Motorcycle

By Neil Cairns



The survivor as it is today (credit: Milntown Estate)



25616-6 THE VAUXHALL TWO-WHEELER
Sole survivor of six prototype motor-cycles built by Vauxhall in 1924. The very advanced design featured a 4-cylinder engine, with integral clutch and gearbox, and shaft drive to the rear wheel. This one is in a private collection in the Isle of Man.
Vauxhall Motors Ltd. Issued June 1978 Copyright free.

The Vauxhall Motorcycle (Photo published in 1978)

Just what does a triple-expansion marine steam engine have to do with motorcycles? Well, if you have owned a Vauxhall motor car, quite a bit. The firm began way back in 1857 when a Scottish engineer called Alexander Wilson set up his company, that by 1897 became the Vauxhall Iron Works, in Wandsworth Road, London. The area had once been the gardens of the house of one Fulk le Breant, later becoming Faulks Hall, and even later 'Vauxhall'. Wilson chose the Griffin as his company's badge, and they produced marine steam engines for ships and boats on the river Thames. Two of these engines were still running in the mid-1960s in tugboats on that river. In 1903 the company built its first car and then moved to Luton in 1905, as they needed bigger premises. The Griffin was adopted as the heraldic badge for the firm's products.

You may well own, or have owned, a Vauxhall car. But did you know that the company once dabbled with motorcycles?

Years before General Motors took over control of the company, and like many other car builders, Vauxhall decided to have a go at the motorcycle market. Alas, like many others they went for the luxury end, not the bread-and-butter market. History is littered with failed 'luxury' cars and motorcycles. The reason that Vauxhall aimed for the top end is quite simple, as back in 1922 Vauxhall was an independent, if rather small, luxury car manufacturer. They made expensive cars, limousines for the rich and famous, and so they were not about to build cheap motorcycles! Vauxhall had moved to Luton from Vauxhall Iron Works in London in 1905. By 1922 they were building big cars such as their famous 'M-type 14-40' and the huge '25hp D-type'. It would be another three years before General Motors took over Vauxhall, their first British factory, having failed to buy Austin in 1925. GM had until then assembled imported CKD American Buicks in Willesden, selling them as 'Bedfords', a name Vauxhall would use again in 1931 for their commercial vehicle arm.

It was Major Frank Halford to whom the designing of the company's new product fell: the 'Vauxhall Four' motorcycle. Halford was an aircraft engine designer who started with the Ricardo company. The company's book *'Vauxhall, A Century in Motion, 1903-2003'* describes the bike as 931cc having a 37mm bore and stroke. Although *'The Griffin Story'* by Vauxhall's publicity department makes no mention of this motorcycle at all.

The specification for the motorcycle as designed by Halford was very exclusive and obviously aimed at the top end of the market. The engine was an in-line four with the cylinders as separate castings mounted on top of the alloy crankcase/sump casting. The valves were fully enclosed, quite an up-market bit of engineering for 1922, I might add. The air-cooled, in-line engine produced 30bhp, which was well above what the average 1,500cc car engine could muster back then. Sidecars were then very popular so the tubular frame had large, strong lugs brazed into its construction so one could easily be attached if required. As the bike was almost 1,000cc it was probably intended for the sidecar/family market anyway. Solo, it could cruise at 50mph and attain an 80mph maximum speed, returning about 70mpg. Like a car engine, the sump carried the oil, termed a 'wet sump' lubrication system. There was no oil pump supplying the crankshaft and so lubrication was by 'splash' only, with the crankshaft being carried in three ball main bearings. One assumes oil must have

been pumped up to the ohv gear as other 'normal' open ohv systems on contemporary bikes had to be lubricated by the rider. Very unusual and rather advanced in its styling for the early 1920s, the Vauxhall Four had a saddle petrol tank (one that sits over the frame's top tube) and of course this tank had those famous chromed Vauxhall Flutes on each side. Again, following car practice, the three-speed gearbox bolted to the rear of the engine so being a modern 'unit-construction'. The cast aluminum footboards were used, one side to carry tools and the other with the silencer inside it. The rider's foot must have got a little warm at times!

When the design had been approved by the directors, six were laid down and parts for four were made, but only two were completed. Here again the information diverts a bit. Vauxhall say the engine was designed by Halford, who later went on to design aero engines. Bill Snelling says it was a small copy of the aero-engines Halford had already designed, although they were usually with their cylinders facing downwards. Whom do we believe? Probably Bill Snelling, as Halford was by then quite a famous TT rider and had served in WW1. Either way, it was a very smooth-running bit of kit.

Maintenance of the engine had been carefully thought out as each individual cylinder could be removed on its own without disturbing the rest of the engine. Likewise, the gearbox and clutch could be removed in-situ once the saddle frame pillar had been removed. In those days frames were often bolted up, unlike the all-welded ones of today. Front suspension was by leading link, and these were mounted on a duplex tubular cradle frame. The three-speed, hand-change gear lever ran in a slot in the centre of the petrol tank, unlike nearly all the competitions' whose gear levers were on the side of the tank. The front and rear spoked wheels were quickly detachable, the rear one being shaft-driven, and both carrying seven-inch drum brakes that stayed on the machine upon wheel removal. The shaft drive was of the spiral-bevel under-slung type. The clutch was quite massive with multi-plates alternatively of steel and bronze, six inches in diameter running in oil. Again, we divert a little as Vauxhall say the clutch was foot operated; Bill Snelling who has ridden the replica built by Bob Thomas in 1951 makes no comment; a retired Vauxhall development engineer, Mike Walls, says he remembers it had a very heavy clutch that required a hand and foot control to be

used to disengage but the hand control was sufficient to control its engagement.

By 1924 company policy had changed and the motorcycle project was cancelled. The two completed machines were sold, one to an Ernie Swain for £45 (quite a sum then) and the other to a Vauxhall apprentice. The other bits were given to the workers. The bike then joined the long list of forgotten maybes. But in 1951 a dismantled 'Vauxhall Four' was found in an Oxfordshire collection and these were acquired by Bob Thomas to rebuild into a functioning machine. Research uncovered a bit of a story about the two motorcycles. One had been scrapped in the 1930s, and the other had been bought by a chauffeur in London. He used the bike for years, stripping it down every winter to overhaul it. Then, half-way through an overhaul, he died. The bits were purchased by another chap who left them outside his house when someone stole the frame, possibly for the war effort! Bob says, *"All I got was the engine, gearbox and wheels."* Over the next eight years, using Vauxhall original blueprints, a tame mechanic and the efforts of Vauxhall apprentices, another 'Vauxhall Four' rose from the bits. Sadly, within a few weeks of receiving the drawings, the drawing office at Vauxhall burnt to the ground, taking with it all the old records. Vauxhall had become quite interested by then and charged their apprentices with building the massive duplex frame and the fluted petrol tank for Bob. If you recognise the name Bob Thomas, he ran Murray's Motorcycle Museum in the Isle of Man.

Bill Snelling has ridden the bike and says: *"A sophisticated motorcycle capable of smoothly motoring to 80mph."*

A full description was published in the 19th November 1925 issue of the *'Motor Cycle'* and more can be read in the biography of Frank Halford by D.R. Taylor, published by the Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust.



Historic Crime & Historic Vehicles

By Dr. Ken German

In the decade up to 2025, over 1 million vehicles have been reported as stolen in the UK.

The total is actually around 1,343,995 which represents a more than conservative average as vehicle statistics are notoriously difficult to assess. It involves searching at the Home Office, the Office for National Statistics, the Police National Computer, the Ministry of Justice, Interpol, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, other industry bodies and data handlers (probably the best!). These, plus a plethora of Freedom of Information requests will unfortunately reveal only that each has their own unsynchronized method of collection and accuracy.

What is concerning is that over half a million of these stolen vehicles have not officially been found.

Many of the 690,777 owners of today's 1,934,178 historic vehicles currently registered for the road may well remember the early 1990s and just how bad vehicle theft was. Indeed, the period from 1990 to 1995 saw the highest amount of both cars and motorcycles ever stolen in the UK, the police recording an annual 350,000 reported thefts on the Police National Computer. It's still the worst period for vehicle crime we have ever known.

Of the 1.75 million vehicles in total stolen during this 5-year period, only 30% were subsequently recovered, leaving surprisingly 1,225,000 still unaccounted for to date.

Whilst 90% of these, 'now classic' vehicles for one reason or another may no longer exist, due perhaps to accident damage, donated parts and scrappage, it still suggests 12,250 (10%) of them remain unaccounted for, with every chance that they have survived and still exist somewhere in the world.

In that same period, 625,000 motorcycles were stolen and, in my experience, I believe that a far greater percentage than 10% survive today, either complete or as a donor of parts to some other existing machine.

It's likely that whilst many of these old vehicles have been forgotten by both the police and insurance companies (unless extremely rare or valuable) they have not

been by the victims who still incidentally legally remain their rightful owners, due to a UK stated case that rules, 'you can't pass title on anything you do not own' (R.W. Jones v National Employers General Insurance Association 1987).

That said, any stolen machine that has spent 6 to 10 years in the wilderness could even now slip easily through the net of due diligence and be innocently (or not) sold on to an unsuspecting (or not) buyer.

Those who knowingly resort to the altering of a frame and engine number to that of a similar vehicle with the intention to deceive (colloquially known as 'cloning'), popular with today's thieves, are well aware that a long period after the theft occurs helps with fraud, forgery, registration and document changes necessary to aid their trafficking of all stolen vehicles around the world.

Notwithstanding this potential vacuum of information from the PNC and the DVLA, anyone researching for provenance should nevertheless consider the public-facing registers and data handlers such as Experian, HPI, Retainagroup, Vehicle Information Services, NaVCIS and Interpol, all of whom may still hold some kind of useful information on a long-time stolen classic. Not forgetting the UK's ultra keen 2 million historic vehicle enthusiasts' vociferous use of social media who have frequently and not unsurprisingly turned detective and sought out likely suspect vehicles and those responsible by themselves.

Much is reported of the 90 million containers that pass-through EU ports every year, citing them as responsible for the ease with which stolen goods can both enter and exit the UK. It's unfortunate that currently, law enforcement is only able to physically inspect two percent of them. That, and



Old blue V5c (credit Dr. Ken German)

the freedom of movement granted within the Schengen Area connecting highways, railways, interconnected shipping networks and ports to cities across 27 countries, still appears to favour the criminals. They are apparently adept at identifying the corrupt officials who have access to the correct logistics and shipping manifolds and can authorise which containers are to be inspected and indicate which are to be allowed through, allegedly for a 7 to 15% cut of the load value.

Whilst any provenance offered with stolen cars from the UK, either for registration or sale elsewhere in the world, must be fake or forged. It's interesting to note that recently suspect elderly RHD cars stopped by European authorities have revealed a variety of these fake histories and provenance. They are proffered by a likely courier to support re-registration that surprisingly still includes stolen blank DVLA V5 registration documents, albeit out of date by a decade or two, ideal for misappropriated historic cars.

These blank documents were from a batch of two hundred thousand unused green/blue vehicle registration certificate (V5C) issued by the DVLA from 1 June 2004 to 14 August 2010, that were stolen whilst in transit en-route to being destroyed due to printing mistakes. These were replaced with the red/pink V5C which was issued on 15 August 2010 and lasted to April 15th 2019, when the current version with a red & pink hue appeared.

For interest, the missing numbers are: -

- BG9167501 to BG9190500 - (22,999 serial numbers)
- BG9190501 to BG9214000 - (23,499 serial numbers)
- BG8407501 – BG8431000 - (23,499 serial numbers)
- BG9282001 – BG9305000 - (22,999 serial numbers)
- BG8229501 – BG9999030 - (1,769,529 serial numbers)
- BI2305501 – BI2800000 - (494,499 serial numbers)

At the time, when the police were informed of the theft, their 'Operation Drift' successfully managed to recover around



SABTVRO (credit Dr. Ken German)

70,000 of them. Since that time however, only a handful of these blanks have been discovered each year, almost all being used as fake provenance to obtain historic ratification in the registration process from some foreign authorities, usually as either an ex-museum item, from a collector's private collection or naively as a 'barn find'.

Also found stamped onto other classic vehicles stopped at border controls, were unusual 17-digit VIN/chassis numbers starting with the identification letters SABTVRO which relates to a period when it was possible for a thief to erase the serial numbers on a car or motorcycle.

In 1980, the UK made it a legal requirement (Con & Use Regs 1986) to mark a 17-digit VIN on the chassis/frame and/or on an attached plate as a single line presentation with a 30-year traceability for vehicles first used on or after 1 April 1980.

Before this, British makers stamped their own chassis/frame and engine numbers (often both) as the administrative identifier on older vehicles. DVLA guidance still requires every UK-registered vehicle to have a unique, stamped-in VIN.

Where originality of the chassis/monocoque or frame could not be substantiated, the DVLA usually did and still does issue a Q-plate and a unique VIN with the first 7-digit prefix as SABTVRO.

SABTVRO (7 digits) was the DVLA's replacement for both the issuing country and manufacturer, the next three digits (8,9,10) were the issuing Vehicle Registration Office (VRO) code, the next four digits (11,12,13,14) indicated the year

of issue, followed by the day (Julien calendar). The final digits (15,16,17) were the vehicle's unique serial number.

Suffice to say, up to the closure of the local registration offices in 2013, thieves abused the system and took full advantage of removing the identification numbers from all types of stolen vehicle and applied to the Local Vehicle Licence Office (LVLO) for a new one.

After a brief and basic examination of the vehicle, a payment for the road tax was required along with the production of an MOT certificate. This could be stamped onto the car once the 17-digit SABTVRO was known (a task usually undertaken by the applicant). A Q-plate or in some cases an age-related registration number, was then issued.

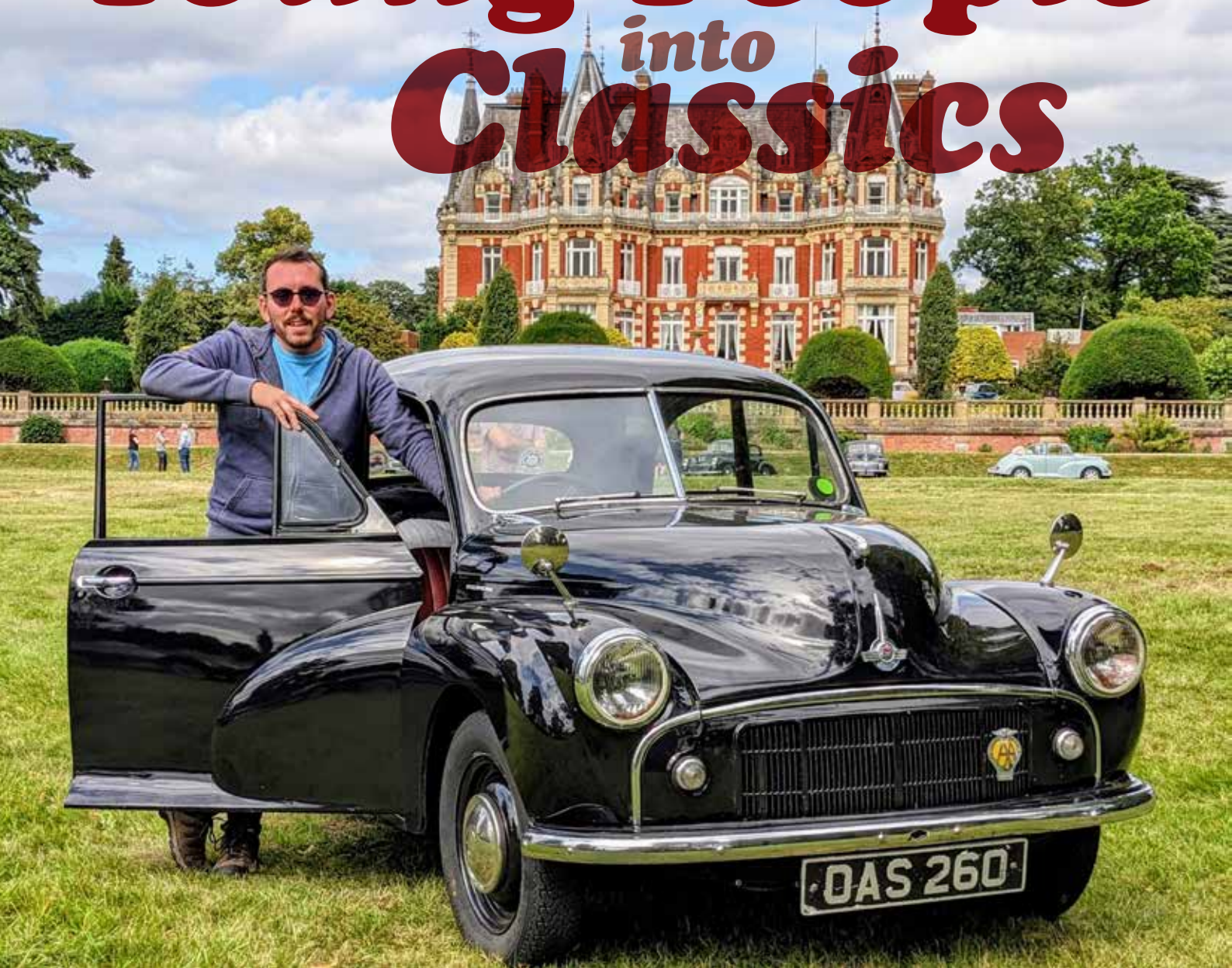
Thieves often used the given registration number and VIN on several similar stolen cars at the same time, many of which were driven abroad to holiday destinations and sold on or re-registered on the continent.

Vehicles manufactured in 1996 (now 30 years old) can now be called 'Historic' and it's interesting to note that in that year, circa 324,000 vehicles were reported stolen; 129,600 were not recovered. 49,000 were motorcycles, 34,300 of which are still missing.

For more information about how easy it is for vehicles to drop off the Police National Computer after only a few weeks, see: <https://bit.ly/4vgzzJi>

The author has a PhD in International Vehicle Crime and works as an international vehicle crime consultant.

Helping Young People into Classics



Matt Coles provides an update about the FBHVC-supported scheme to enable younger people to get engaged with classics.

Ever since I co-founded the Morris Minor Owners Club Young Members Register in 2011, which was one of the first clubs to have a youth section, I've been dedicated to inspiring the next generation of classic car enthusiasts.

It's vital for the future of our beloved hobby that younger people become engaged. Without their interest, there's

a genuine risk that these wonderful vehicles could one day exist only as static displays in museums rather than living, breathing pieces of history on our roads.

When Bob Wilkinson, founder of what was then called the Classic Car Loan Project (CCLP), approached me to join the new team he was assembling, I seized the chance without hesitation.



New Name, New Team

Bob explained that he wanted to take a step back and enjoy his own cars, whilst ensuring the continued success of the Loan Project.

Therefore, the team – myself (Matt Coles), in the role of Owner & Club Liaison Officer, Nathan Fletcher as Applications Co-Ordinator, and Josh Perry as Borrower Liaison – continue Bob's legacy under the name of Borrow A Classic (BAC).

BAC aims to transform dreams into reality for young enthusiasts who have always wanted to get behind the wheel of a classic car.

Our mission is to engage people, typically aged 21 to 45 (but by no means limited to this range), to kindle a genuine passion for classic motoring, fostering an interest that will hopefully encourage individuals to purchase their own classic car in future years, therefore keeping our hobby alive, and the cars we love on the road.

The heart of Borrow A Classic is a simple, generous offer: the chance to borrow a classic car for a full year at no cost, except for the insurance (and road tax if applicable).

Insurance is via FBHVC partner, Peter James Insurance, who have been a great supporter of ours since the early days of the CCLP.

BAC isn't just about letting people drive extraordinary vehicles; it's an immersive experience designed to teach borrowers what it's like to live with and care for a classic car.

Learning & Mentoring

From learning basic maintenance to understanding the quirks of classic car engineering, participants gain essential skills and confidence.

Nobody is left to figure things out alone; borrowers are paired with a mentor, usually a member of the associated owners club, to provide guidance, knowledge, and support when needed.

The range of vehicles available spans from the 1930s onwards, ensuring a diverse selection for everyone. Whether it's a pre-war saloon, an iconic classic from the swinging sixties or a more modern classic, there is something for everyone's tastes.

The car remains the property of its owner during the loan period, which is typically a year. The owner sets the conditions of use regarding everything from mileage to upkeep. These conditions are written in a contract, which is signed by both the borrower and the vehicle owner.

To keep the experience running smoothly and to ensure the vehicles are treated with respect, there is regular communication between the owner and borrower. Borrowers are also encouraged to engage with the relevant owners club, writing articles for club magazines, to foster a sense of belonging and community that will be so familiar to all of us who are members of car clubs.

More Than a Loan

Borrow A Classic is more than just a car loan. It is a movement that's building a community, passing on practical skills, and making classic cars part of the future by placing them directly in the hands of the next generation.

The heart of Borrow A Classic is a simple, generous offer: the chance to borrow a classic car for a full year at no cost

If you, or someone you know, has ever dreamed of discovering the magic of classic motoring, Borrow A Classic is here to help jump start your classic car journey.

If you would like to help encourage the next generation of classic car owners

by lending your car to a budding enthusiast, BAC can help you with this.

To find out more, go to

www.borrowaclassic.co.uk

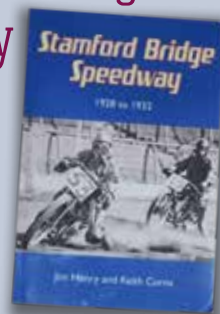
or email info@borrowaclassic.co.uk

Matt Coles - Owner & Club Liaison Officer

Matt has owned classic cars since passing his driving test, including several Morris Minors, a Triumph Herald, MG Midget and a pre-war Austin Ten Cambridge.

A co-founder of the Morris Minor Owners Club (MMOC) Young Members Register, Matt has always been keen to share his enthusiasm for old cars and to encourage others to join our hobby, something he is still doing today as a committee member of the Austin Ten Drivers Club and Chairman of his local MMOC branch. Matt volunteers with Borrow a Classic, and deals with clubs and owners ensuring borrowing goes smoothly.

Stamford Bridge Speedway



The latest soft bound book from London League Publications is another in their increasingly comprehensive range of books charting the history of Speedway.

The sport began in the United Kingdom in February 1928 and quickly became a firm favourite with massive crowds, many eclipsing even today's healthy football spectator numbers.

Venues soon appeared all over the country with a large number in the capital city with Stamford Bridge, the home of Chelsea Football Club since 1905, being the first major stadium to stage speedway in 1928.

In that first historic season, the meetings were mainly individual races for a variety of trophies. Some races were handicaps, others were match races with just two riders.

But, in 1929, the introduction of team racing and leagues transformed the new sport.

Stamford Bridge built a strong team, including Wal Phillips and Gus Kuhn, some of the top British motorcyclists from different forms of motor sport at that time who became top performers on the shale as well.

The team itself did well and many of the riders also took individual honours, and all looked set for a promising future. However, after the end of the 1932 season, it was revealed that the promoters had major financial problems and speedway never returned to Stamford Bridge.

Well-known speedway historians, Jim Henry and Keith Corns, have done their usual thorough documentation of the full five years of speedway at 'The Bridge'. The 152 pages include profiles of all the riders who rode for the team, with some period images along with a comprehensive records section and in many ways an insight into life during that period.

Although aimed at speedway enthusiasts, it is still an entertaining read and well worth the **£14.95** cover price. **ISBN 978-1-909885-41-7** Available from all good bookshops or direct from the publishers at www.llpshop.co.uk

Welcome

Once again, we are delighted to report that the Federation continues to welcome new members.

This issue we offer a very warm welcome to our newest Club Members, which are helping to strengthen our voice, while we also provide assistance, guidance and benefits for them:

Auto Classic Newport

An 'all-makes' club catering for all ages, makes and types of vehicles. Based in Shropshire, with regular indoor meetings and outdoor events.

West Midlands Driving Club <https://wmdc.uk/>

Based around the enjoyment of cars, from country drives to social events to activity days, it caters for members of all ages.

Lincolnshire Military Vehicle Group

<https://lincolnshiremvg.wixsite.com/lmvg>

Dedicated to the restoration, preservation and exhibition of military transport. It bridges the gap between technical heritage and public awareness.

Heinkel Trojan Club Ltd www.heinkel-trojan-club.co.uk

The club provides support for owners and enthusiasts of Heinkel, Heinkel-Ireland and Trojan Bubblecars, including a spares service.

Details of all FBHVC member clubs can be found in our searchable online directory at:

www.fbhvc.co.uk/member-clubs

We also welcome our newest trade supporters:

Full Car Check Ltd www.fullcarchecks.co.uk

Check any UK vehicle using DVLA and licensed data sources, with finance, write-off and key checks to help you buy with confidence.

Restorists Ltd www.restorists.com

Identify the right specialist for your classic. It helps you find the expertise that matches your specific needs.

MOTEST UK Ltd www.motest.co.uk

With 17 MoT and servicing branches across the South East, many of its staff have a real interest (and own) historic and youngtimers. The firm has many years of experience in MoT testing historic.

Also receiving a very warm welcome are our new individual supporters:

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Club events are a great way of attracting potential new members. Loading them onto our website is a simple self-service process.

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Dates for your diary

Please note the dates of our **AGM/Conference (Saturday 17 October 2026)** and **Club Expo (Saturday 16 January 2027)**, for which you will receive an invitation for your club nearer the time.

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I make no excuses for starting this issue with a piece from Caroline Boswell who is Editor of the **Scottish Austin 7 Club's** magazine *Meshing Point*. There is a tendency to regard most motor club members as being middle aged or older. Caroline devotes a complete issue to the younger members: "We are exceedingly fortunate in the Scottish Austin Seven Club to have many younger people taking an active role in restoring, driving (if they are old enough) and enjoying the little cars that we all love. Even those who are not especially keen on cars really enjoy the social side of the Club. It has been a revelation to read how much younger folk enjoy club events. This edition of "Meshing Point" is intended to celebrate our younger members and their role in the Club..."

I have selected just one of these articles. It has been written by Daisy Dunford and entitled 'My van project'.

"I started building my van about four years ago. Since then, I have learned an enormous amount. I was only 11 when I began, but I was very keen to create something unique and impressive. The project started with a few sketches in a random notepad which soon developed into the design for a surprisingly impressive body. My original idea was to make the



boot large enough to fit my clarsach*, which explains the unusual shape of the van. However, I think we slightly underestimated the size of my very large instrument! Even so, I really love the distinctive shape of my high-speed van and am excited to see how it continues to develop. I will be honest – it was not always easy building this vehicle. Some days meant getting up very early and working outside in the cold. Despite that I am really glad I persevered because I now have an amazing car that I built myself. I am hoping to get the van painted soon, but I am still deciding on the colour. The original plan was to paint it purple, although I am now wondering whether I should choose something completely different.

*Clarsach - a large harp strung instrument with gut or wire and is one of Scotland's oldest instruments. It is often used to accompany singing. It has a quiet sound... but can be amplified to blend with other instruments in the folk group.

I cannot describe how excited I will be to finally get my driving licence and take the van out on to the road showing off my creation. It is still two years until I turn 17, but in the meantime, I'll take every opportunity to practice driving."

Membership fees are something discussed on a regular basis by motor club committees. Recently one of our one-make clubs placed its findings openly on the magazine pages for all members to see. What they wrote is familiar to all clubs, but do they always tell their members the detail?

"It is nine years since the last revue of membership fees, and as we are all aware, prices have gone up in that time. Postage on our magazine has vastly increased – a UK first class stamp was 64p and it's now £1.70; a second class from 55p to 87p. International rates have soared as well. Our quality full colour magazine weighs in at 250gms, so second class in UK is presently £2, but is likely to rise again in April. Overseas rates are presently between £5.80 and £9, though we do get some reduction for bulk. Looking at Bank of

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England stated inflation over that period, what was £30 then should now be £41.52. It has therefore been decided to increase our fees from June 2026 for full UK membership from £30 to £38. Europe membership from £38 to £45 and world membership from £45 to £50... The above rates include the printed magazine sent by post – but we can offer savings on membership for those receiving the magazine electronically by link at just £25 (everywhere). The size is about 40mb, so a link to a download will be offered.”

[May I offer one comment on this. Possibly, clubs are shy at uprating membership fees a little every two or three years. Is that a better idea than waiting for a longer period and having to make a bigger jump in fees?]

Writing in **The Alvis Register Bulletin**, editor Nigel Boothman tells us that he has been “digging around in Bulletins from 50 years back.” He found the following excerpt from September 1975. “This Bulletin is rather small in content (although large in dimension) mainly because nobody has contributed an article. Fortunately, I have several letters, some of which have been converted into articles. It does not bother me much – quite the reverse, it reduces the amount of typing, stencilling, duplicating and collating I do to produce the Bulletin. It is your loss not mine”. Eric Boothman adds his own comment; “Thank goodness desktop publishing has evolved since then, I can sympathise with Dr. Padfield’s [the editor at the time] evident frustration, but at the same time it’s a usual reminder that flagging contributions are not necessarily a sign of flagging membership - it’s never been an easy job to extract words and photos from people who would rather spend their time enjoying their cars rather than writing about them.”

I doubt if many members have ever paid any attention to the way in which their magazine is bound. It’s a subject that’s been worrying Chris Gallacher, editor of *Slice*, the magazine of the **Reliant Sabre and Scimitar Owners Club**. He writes: “Since I took over the editorial reins in September 2024, I have been fortunate constantly to have more than sufficient content to produce a 100-page magazine including covers... 100 pages is, however, the maximum number technically viable with the present ‘staple-and-fold’ binding and it does lead to challenges... Following detailed discussion with printers Lavenham Press, and taking soundings from a membership sample, the Committee has approved a move to premium binding for ‘Slice’, known in the trade as ‘perfect binding’... With its squared off spine, perfect bound magazines now

sit squarely on the shelf... we also have the opportunity to include text (e.g. year, issue and date) and even colour coding on the spine itself, so that this may be seen when magazines are stacked on the shelf... we will be doing this at little or no extra cost to the Club. We believe it will elevate ‘Slice’ to the next level, and we hope you agree.”

Michael Lavers is the chairman of the **Crash Box and Classic Car Club** (centred around Devon) and he writes: “At a time when many organisations and clubs are suffering falling numbers our Club continues to attract new members. Having attracted them it is important that they are made welcome and encouraged to get involved with the Club and our events. For future Club Nights we will try a Meet & Greet area... I expect you recall when starting a new school, a new job or even walking into the Club night for the first time, it can be a little daunting as a newbie. So, a smile and welcoming word is really appreciated... It is something we have not been good at in the past. Getting new members is great but retaining them and getting them involved with the Club events is really important”.

Writing in the Newsletter, the magazine of the **Sunbeam Talbot Darracq Register**, Paul Wignall compiles ‘Matters of the Moment’: “An interesting situation has arisen this month where we have been asked by a member to confirm a car’s value for insurance purposes. The requested value on this occasion was very realistic. Some years ago, Bill Barrott offered to do this job on the Register’s behalf: he was suitably qualified to offer this type of advice and took out insurance to cover any associated risks. Things have changed and Bill is no longer with us, we are the acknowledged experts on our cars and have a good idea of values, so should we be offering this service?” [A problem that I suspect is common to many clubs, if so, what is the answer?]

In **The Vintage Austin Magazine** Bob Kendall writes a most interesting article on early Austin advertising which was included in motoring magazines. Some of the earliest just proclaim ‘Hooray! Our new car is a huge success’ followed only by the firm’s name and address. By 1907 he writes: “There has been a vast improvement. The Wings and Wheel logo features at the top of the page although the Austin script hasn’t yet made an appearance. A photo of the car takes centre stage with drawings of the 18/24hp and the 25/30hp models also featured... the slogan ‘Silent, powerful engine,’ appears, as do trade association badges... In the bottom right-hand corner, there is the name A.E. Astington, a professional graphic designer



of the time. Perhaps the advertising budget had been boosted by 1907” [Some detail is too small to be very readable in the reduced advert illustrated in this magazine]. By 1910 the advertisements had become more polished and professional. In one of them: “The first thing to catch the eye is the photograph at the top. It clearly depicts the type of wealthy customer the company was targeting, with a uniformed chauffeur attending to his employers, resplendent in their finery, as they leave the car... The text describes the 15hp car as ‘an ideal car for ladies’ and ‘far better suited for town visiting and social functions than the horse drawn brougham’. Again, it is firmly pitched at a distinct target audience.” Other ads are illustrated and described. He concludes with: “These early attempts at advertising may appear to be a little rudimentary, but they must be viewed in the context of their time. Consumers in the twenty-first century probably would not be persuaded by them, but they did their job of pushing the Austin name forward, which is half the battle when it comes to publicity”.

The magazine of the **Bullnose Morris Club** recently ran a story of a 1929 Morris Coley ice-cream van “which is still going as strong as ever”. It is owned by the



Picadilly Whip Catering Company of South Ockendon and is one of the country's oldest ice-cream vans. John Bonar, the owner of the company, wrote: *"It was bought in 1930 by a Mr Hunter, and he had the conversion to an ice-cream van carried out. He took the original ice-cream cart body off a horse drawn arrangement and had it fitted to the Cowley. We are a family run business which was established over 40 years ago in 1963... I have sold ice-cream either from a van, or from an ice-cream barrow... In addition to the modern fleet the classic van has a special place in my heart. We run three classic vans, and the Cowley is the oldest. I am very fond of them all".*

In **The Albion Magazine** Malcolm Fleming writes about a visit he made to the Scarborough Fair Collection and Vintage Transport Museum as he was aware it had a sizeable collection of Albions. The background to the collection is: *"Graham Atkinson purchased his first steam engine in the 1980s and since then the collection has continued to grow and the collection on show is now extensive, and you can happily spend several hours viewing it... He has a wide range of vehicles and machinery, with a definite bias to fairground attractions as the name of the museum suggests. As well as fairground organs there are also vintage fairground rides including dodgems, carousel and a ghost train. There are traction engines and motor bikes, veteran and vintage cars, as well as commercial vehicles and tractors. But amongst lots of interesting sights in the various interconnecting sheds that make up the Museum (one of which includes a ballroom!), it is clear Graham also has a soft spot for early Albions. As far as I am aware, this is the largest collection of Albion vehicles in any motor museum".* There are two Albion cars, a 1909 A3 which started life in Australia and was brought back by Peter Jones in the Isle of Man, and the other is a 1913 A14 built in the last years of Albion car production. It started life as a taxi in Edinburgh. All the Albion lorries in the collection are then described in detail.

Ken Shepherd, writing in the magazine of the **Colchester Vintage Motor Club**, takes a look at the Highway Code over the years. *"Back in 1930 the government of the day was suitably frightened by the [accident] figures and advised the Minister of Transport, Herbert Morrison to do something about it. In April 1931 there appeared the first Highway Code, described as a 'code of good manners to be observed by all courteous and considerate persons'. It was a slim document of some*

26 pages... There are a few illustrations which show hand signals, whip waving signals, [There were still many horse-drawn vehicles about] and police on traffic duty at crossroads." There were examples of the wording summed up by *"Good manners and consideration for others are as desirable and are much appreciated on the road as elsewhere"*. The writer analyses the way it's changed over the years finishing with comment on the 2022 version, the 17th edition: *"The language of the introduction is telling, perhaps reflective of our modern times. I found no mention of 'courtesy'. I did find 'criminal offence', 'fined', 'penalty points', 'disqualified', 'prison'. 'MUST/MUST NOT' in bright red capitals shouts at us demanding our attention... perhaps, for modern officialdom, courtesy is too old-fashioned, too old hat, too namby-pamby"*.

In the last issue of *Historic* there appeared an obituary to FBHVC Vice-President, David Davies. The final words of the obituary ran: *"He will be greatly missed by many, not only for his enthusiasm, extensive knowledge of old machines, [motorcycles] both technically and historically, but also for his quirky sense of humour, wit and his unique use of language."* [I remember him well. For many years he used to write the equivalent of this column which I always read with great interest; I only wish I had his writing skills].

Country Motor Australia is a magazine we see, as they are members. In a really hard-hitting article Peter Radcliff asks: *"Who gets your collection after you?" "We are all going to die in the end. What arrangements have you made for your stuff? Many (most) of us are in the situation where our families will not be interested in the stuff we have collected. If there is any interest from them, it may be due to perception of untold riches coming from the sale of your stuff. In any case, your family, (or executors of your will) will give their heartfelt thanks if you leave some sort of a guide to help them dispose of it. A discussion whilst you are still here would be a good start... As one Club member friend (and a prolific collector) has said: "If I die, my missus will have the whole lot down to the tip the next day".* [Interestingly the article says, "if I die" and I think this is the problem here; many of us do not wish to think about that fact].

Some male collectors have gone to great length to conceal from their spouses the price paid for certain collectables, with the result that the spouse also has no idea of the value of the items and therefore will not go out of the way to seek a buyer for them after the departed leaves her in a mess (pardon the sexist bias but I have yet to hear of a

female collector who conceals the prices of her collectables from her male partner).

The "down the tip" sentiment indicates not only a certain lack of interest on the part of many of our spouses, but also a complete ignorance of the existence of a wonderful network of hobby enthusiasts and dealers we are part of. On the part of the collector, it also indicates a lack of personal organisation and a disregard for the preservation of the items after we are gone. [As you will have seen this is an Australian perspective – is it any different to other countries?]

Richard Peskett often contributes snippets he has picked up from his researches and sends them to *Veteran Car*, the magazine of the **Veteran Car Club**.



Here is an example which first appeared in *The Motor* of May 1903:

"Expensive Vanity. A contemporary explains the presence in the streets of so many cars apparently of a very high power. It states that there is a growing tendency to put a 20-horse bonnet on a 10-horse car. Some very moderate powered cars are artificially 'got up' to look like very powerful high-speed cars. Such 'whited sepulchres' fare very badly in the ordeal of the police estimates of travel rate".

Many one-make clubs have a spares department. Do you ever think how they operate and how much work is involved? Here is a quote from *Jowetteer*, the magazine of the **Jowett Car Club**. Incidentally this club always claims to be the world's oldest One Make Car Club. Chris Spencer writes: *"For the next stop I travelled a further 90 miles north along the Welsh-Shropshire borders to Bishops Castle. This was the home of [a late Club member]. The parts collection from his estate was substantial and wide ranging across the pre-war Bradford, Javelin and Jupiter models. It has taken some 11 months to sort, separate and recover the parts that were housed in several buildings on the site. The parts were then relocated to a single area for collection*



and loading. Without a small team [of club members] along with myself we could have never undertaken the identification and recovery of the parts concerned."

I hope The Editor of *Leading Link*, the newsletter of the **Greeves Riders Association**, will not mind my reproducing the following which was written by Trevor Childs about the famous Rickman Brothers whose fame as motorcross riders is well known, as are their own products. At one time they were making 4,000 motorcycles a year and even received the prestigious Queen's Award for Industry. Trevor Childs recalls an interview with Don Rickman. "Trevor: How did you get involved with a Greeves ride? Don: Well, we knew Derry Preston-Cobb and Bert Greeves very well. One day Derry phoned me and Derek asking if we would ride the Greeves bike at a meeting... They brought two bikes to Winchester for us both to ride. Trevor: What did you think of the Greeves? Don: Well, we thought that if Dave Bickers and Brian Stonebridge could ride these bikes, we would have no problem as we could ride any bike. Trevor: How well did you do... did you like the characteristics of the Greeves? Don: To be honest we could not get on well with the handling, so we never carried on riding the Greeves motorcycles".

Don Munro writes about 'Scrapyard Memories' in *Morris Monthly*, the magazine of the **Morris Register**. There follows a letter of comment from Nigel Stennett-Cox, who had worked in his late father's scrap yard for many years: "I well remember the frequent 'customers' who regarded the secreting of small articles in their toolboxes on leaving the yard, with Don describing the practice in an apparently approving manner. He then postulates that the practice is not theft on the astonishing basis that if said customer 'forgets' putting the stuff in their toolboxes, the behaviour does not constitute theft. I suggest the subjects try this one on a store detective who follows their target thief as they leave a store with stolen goods on their person..."

The advertisements in club magazines are always of interest. In *Sloper*, the magazine of the **Panther Owners Club**, there appeared the following: "Sale - Thatched cottage sidecar, designed by Will Hawkes. It has all the ironmongery attached to connect to an M100 rigid. As seen at the Bristol Classic Bike Show 2025. Fitted with yellow carpet and blue curtains and a collapsable roof plus a VW steering damper... £250. [I wonder if it ever appeared in an estate agent's window as well?]



Many of the magazines that I see contain excellent restoration type articles, far too long to be reproduced here. In *The Veteran Car Club Gazette* recently there was one headed Advertorial. It was by Patrick Kendall whose firm Kendall & Smith specialised in automotive carpentry (email: knsac@proton.me). The article in question was "De Dion Bouton steering wheel – a faithful reproduction." It was four pages long and very detailed. I will just reproduce part of the last page to give you a feeling for the thoroughness of the work:

"The final step was to varnish the wheel. Wood grain is often explained as if it were a handful of straws; the 'long grain' is the side of the straw and does not absorb oil or water particularly well, compared to 'end grain'. Each grain, however, is like the holes of the straws, it is very thirsty and loves absorbing liquids. Therefore, prior to varnishing it is very important to 'plug' end grain, so I applied boiled linseed oil first, which darkens the wood. Boiled linseed oil also hardens, but to ensure a complete plug I applied a thin layer of glue, also known as 'glue sizing', which once gently sanded creates a perfect flat surface.

When I was satisfied with the sanded finish, I applied a number of coats of a particularly good, premium, yacht varnish. Starting with a highly diluted layer all the way through the stages to a complete 1:1 layer of varnish. Yacht varnishes are ideal as they allow for a grippy, high gloss result with excellent UV resistance, waterproof properties and

durability, perfect for an object handled frequently that will see all kinds of weathers. After a fortnight of varnishing, wet sanding and revarnishing, I was able to give the wheel a final polish with a gentle yacht varnish that does not eat away at the surface but rather flattens any minor blemish to create a non-tacky high-gloss finish."

In *Gasser*, the magazine of the **National Street Rod Association**, there was an article which reminds us we must not take our hobby too seriously. It was a page headed "Beccles Soapbox Derby". Alice Fairhead wrote: "Soapbox derbies seem to be growing in popularity; this one happens to be in Beccles on the Norfolk/Suffolk border. It is now in its second year and is just down the road from me, so we thought we would hop along and see what creations had been made – and we were pleasantly surprised."



Soap boxes are three or four-wheel devices, originally devised for children, they have no power and rely on the gravity of the downhill course. Brakes are not compulsory but sometimes useful. Some devices are very car like, others more inventive. In this case Alice tells us: "The Morgan 3-wheeler came out on top at the end of the day, with a quick run of 28 seconds. The black and red '32 roadster from local business Broadwater Mouldings came second with a run of 35 seconds. Some of you will know long-time Hot Rodder and crew man Terry Howes; he built a very accurate '32 roadster with his team from Quayside Joiners and finished a respectable ninth". Some clubs that are lucky enough to have a suitable downhill course might consider organising such a meeting – it would draw spectators both from motoring enthusiasts and members of the general public.



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.

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