

PAST EVENTS – 2012

24th Techno-Classica – 22nd – 25th March 2012

Mick Popka tells us about his recent visit to Techno-Classica

Techno-Classica is billed as the 'largest classic car show in Europe'. In 2011 there were over 185,000 visitors over the four days that the show is open to the public.

The show differs from Retromobile and the NEC in two aspects: The major German motor manufacturers have a very strong presence and over 1,200 cars are on sale, either through car dealers or by private sellers.

At Techn-Classica you can choose between an Austin 7 and a Bugatti Veyron, depending upon the depth of your pocket!

2012, as you will of course be aware, is the year of the 15th ICCCR. In order to promote the ICCCR, we have been invited for the past three years by the German Citroen Clubs to join them on their 'Citroen Strasse' stand. This gave me the change to give the roadster a 'run' to blow the winter cobwebs out and to display an example of a very rare sight – a Citroen from Slough!

We set up the stand on Tuesday, in advance of the 'Press Day' which takes place on Wednesday afternoon and evening. The public are let loose on Thursday and arrive in force on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

For the stand and stall holders the 'big event' is the Friday night party, where the drinks and food are free and a band provides entertainment.

The 'Citroen Strasse' theme this year was the SM and the 85th Anniversary of the Rosalie. Appropriate cars from the Citroen Conservatoire were on the stand, together with cars owned by members of the club.

In addition to the Roadster, we had been requested to bring a Slough DS and a Bijou. Sadly, the latter two were not available so the UK contingent was placed next to the a beautiful DS21 Cabriolet, with the registration number 'D-S 21'. The owner of the vehicle lives in Dusseldorf and was able to request the number from the local registration office for a mere €20! However, having moved home from Dusseldorf, he decided to buy a flat to enable him to retain the registration number.

The Citroen Strasse stand features a 'French Café' similar to the TOC stand used at the NEC, however it contains a concealed area with sink, microwave, coffee urn, ready meals, wine, water and soft drinks – these guys really have it sorted!

I really got carried away with the show and took lots of photos which can be seen online at <http://tinyurl.com/cfbajdq>

I strongly recommend that if you have not been to the show, that you go next year.

Entrance is €20/£16.50 per person per day. Cheap flights are available to Dusseldorf from the low cost airlines (Leeds to Dusseldorf return is £85 – cheaper than the cost of the rail fare to London!). Flight time is 1 hour and the train from Dusseldorf to Essen takes 20 minutes. At Essen Bahnhof take U-bhan, Line 11 to 'Essen Messe' (7 minutes).

When you go, be sure to say hello to the people on the Citroen Strasse stand.



First Traction Avant Safety and Reliability Run – 6th May

Organiser's Report - On Sunday May 6th 2012 15 Tractions (plus a 2CV Beachcomber) participated in the first 151 mile gruelling Traction Avant Safety and Reliability Run from Chester-le-Street through County Durham to the Yorkshire Dales up to England's highest pub at Tan Hill (1,732 feet) and back through the Durham Dales to Chester le Street. The route required the participants to have a co-driver/navigator and they drove on minor roads often up and down inclines as steep as 1:4 and through rugged single track roads. The weather started clear and sunny and remained that way throughout most of the day although a flurry of snow occurred at Tan Hill (and this is May!!). The cars left between 8.30am and 9.00am arriving back between 5.15pm and 5.45pm. It was a full day's drive and tested participants driving skills and navigation skills; and the Traction Avants were put through their paces.

The Tractions lived up to their renowned reputation and all 15 cars (plus the 2CV) returned without too much mishap. Askrigg Bank to Tan Hill proved a challenge to a few but they all made it. They demonstrated that the Traction is a Safe and Reliable vehicle even if 60 or more years old!! We set them off with three questions. Nobody got all three right and only two knew the shape of a particular sign. Everyone knew what "traction avant" means.

Recorded distances travelled by each car varied between 155.34 miles (250 kms) and 167.15 miles (269kms). So some did go off route. As the "sweeping up" marshal at the tail end of the run, covering breakdowns and lost cars, I became superfluous to requirements. I forgot to mention that the Nick Hopkinson team and Richard Sheil's team jointly won the lunchtime petrolhead quiz. These were marked by everyone at the end and the winners were awarded Blacksheep Beer Bottles or a flagon of cider. As I said to Rich it was a long way to come from Dublin to take home a bottle of beer!!

I would like to record my thanks to Derek Cansfield, Keith Kennels and the other starter Derek from the North East Club for Pre-War Austins for their kind assistance and support in helping put this run together, also Ian Canavan and friends in Bainbridge for marshalling and allowing the cars to park on the village green. In addition the Bowes Museum who gave us permission to park in front of the building and finally my brother Mike and Chris Naylor for marshalling at the checkpoints. It all came together well and everyone seemed to enjoy the run will this become an annual event in the TOC calendar, perhaps somewhere else in the UK?

Graham Handley

A Marshal's Perspective - After a week of almost constant rain, Sunday 6th May dawned clear, bright and sunny, though the biting icy wind must have been a shock to those who had made the journey from the more temperate climes of Southern England!

Fortified by coffee and a full English breakfast to combat the inevitable side effects of a pleasant evening at the hotel bar catching up with fellow Tractionistes, the car park soon echoed to the sound of 15 Tractions being simultaneously coaxed into life. Overnight temperatures had been as low as -5c which perhaps accounted for a couple of cars having to be push started. As one owner put it: 'I know all the books say you shouldn't, but what else can you do?'

The start of the run proper was from the Riverside Park at Chester-le-Street where drivers and codrivers/navigators affixed their rally plaques and were quizzed by the marshals before setting off at 2 minute intervals on a testing 151 mile route over the hilly back roads that criss cross County Durham, the North Pennines and the Yorkshire Dales. Having seen the last of the cars depart, heading towards the fine chateau style building that houses the Bowes Museum, I set off for Bainbridge in the heart of Wensleydale, where it had been arranged to rendezvous for lunch.

Having expected to have to make some preparations to facilitate parking on the village green, I arrived to find that everything had already been taken care of by the enthusiastic Ian Canavan and his team who organise the same facility for the Beamish Run each year. Thanks guys!

There was nothing for it then other than to grab a bacon butty and a coffee from the excellent Tea Room and await the arrival of the first cars. Bernie and Pearl Shaw were the first to arrive at 12.20pm with all other entrants parked up on the green and enjoying lunch within 30 minutes. The display of Tractions, and Ray Andrews immaculate 2CV, attracted plenty of interest and admiration from passing walkers and motorists.

After lunch I tagged on to the end of the run as participants headed off in the direction of the Tan Hill Inn and Stainmore. The road on this section climbs over 1,500ft in just 7 miles giving a combination of long 1:4 gradients and hairpin bends that present a challenging drive in a modern car.

A little drama was provided here by one Traction having to reverse down the foot of Askrigg Bank for a second attempt.

Another needed to be towed all of 300 yds after the driver was forced to stop on the steepest section of bank and found they were unable to restart. Happily though, all the drivers and their cars proved up to the task, all safely arriving at the Tan Hill Inn for a well deserved pint in front of an open fire as a flurry of snow fell outside. We pressed on from Tan Hill in mid afternoon with 60 miles still left to cover. After passing through the market town of Brough we took the back roads up through the North Pennines towards Stanhope. This area north of the A66 and west of the A1 is still relatively undiscovered. Most people speed past on the main roads rushing to get to the Lake District or Durham City which is a shame as the landscape is ruggedly beautiful, with spectacular views opening up at every turn of the road. It must be one of the few places left in England where it's possible to drive for miles without seeing another car!

Of course a TOC event just wouldn't be the same without a few cars deviating slightly from the planned route (i.e. getting lost!) The last 10 miles saw a fair bit of navigational ingenuity from the co-drivers as nearly everyone seemed to take a slightly different approach to the task of getting back to base. Whichever route was taken seemed to make little difference to the arrival time, as all cars converged on the hotel within a few minutes of each other. For me the highlight of the day was seeing two of André Lefèbvre's finest creations, the Traction Avant and the 2CV, being put through their paces on the same event.

Thanks to Graham and Wendy Handley for organising a memorable day out and to all the drivers and navigators for supporting the run, many of whom travelled very considerable distances to participate.

Hopefully this can become an annual event. Who knows by next year my own Traction might actually prove reliable enough to get to the starting line!

Chris Naylor

A Participant's View - I would like to tell you about a rally I did on the weekend of the 5th of May.

The event was based on a historic reliability trial called 'The Beamish Run'. It was a 150 mile route over some of the lovely countryside of Yorkshire and Cumbria. The journey up to Washington from Surrey was 300 miles. It was such a long journey we stopped 3 times for food, drink and a rest! When I say it was long I mean it was long; it took seven hours to get there.

We eventually got there at about five in the afternoon. We unloaded the car from the transporter and checked into the hotel. We then met some of the other drivers and the organisers and had dinner.

After dinner we got our rally plates and final instructions! In the morning we got the car ready and drove down to the riverside in Chester-le-Street (where the starting line was); we were put into 8th on the grid. We got out of the car and watched the first 5 cars start then we got ready to set off. We got to the first roundabout and went wrong! We turned left instead of right, but we soon got our place back though because one of the cars had to fill up with fuel!

In the next section past Annfield Plain we met several cars coming towards us but we were confident we were now headed in the right direction for our first run into the hillside. This was great fun as we passed close by a wind farm. Our first stop was the Bowes Museum. All the cars lined up against the entrance – 15 Traction Avants and a 2CV that looked quite spectacular. We had a quick snack and a drink before passing the checkpoint and continuing on our way. There were lots of people admiring the cars and taking photos.

We were climbing some steep hills and one of the cars couldn't get up the Buttertubs Pass. We passed by but stopped at the top to make sure they were not stuck. The car that couldn't get up had rolled down to the bottom and got going again and made it to the top.

We entered Bainbridge for lunch; we parked the cars on the green and went into a tearoom. The cars parked on the green were a lovely sight. We were the last to leave.

In the afternoon we had to climb Askrigg Bank and then Silver Hill to get to the Tan Hill Inn - the highest pub in Britain! At the top there were flurries of snow and rain - really exciting. On the way down the steep descent into Stanhope there were several hairpin bends, which tested the brakes and steering! Towards the end most of us missed a signpost to Rowley but we soon found the staggered crossroads further down the A68. Convinced we were back on the route we then met several cars coming the other way. However, we ignored them and carried on back into Burnhope and Chester-le-Street where the rally finished.

We were all very tired but it had been a fantastic day. We saw some amazing scenery and made a lot of new friends. The cars were awesome and we were thrilled that all these old Traction made it to the finish, proving they are reliable and safe to drive on the most difficult roads in Cumbria. The organization was excellent. Graham and his crew had put on a really good rally and I can't wait until next year!

Ben Hellett (age 11)

Pictures below



Ben Hellett, the youngest navigator

Being asked the 3 start questions



The start at Riverside Park, Chester-le-Street

Over the Yorksh. 721x666 Durham Dales 745x691

En-route over the Dales



Going over the Buttertubs Pass

Bowes Museum Barnard Castle

On display at the lunch stop at Bainbridge



Graham watches as they leave for Tan Hill

Descending from Askria Bank to Muker

Parked outside The Tan Hill Inn

First Cologne Drive it Day

On Sunday, 29th April 2012 with around 15,000 visitors to the Museum of Applied Art in Cologne (MAKK), thousands of individuals around the museum's forecourt, about 2,000 cars in the middle of the historic center of Cologne; the first "Drive it Day" in Germany held in the city of Cologne was a resounding success.



Citroën also established itself as a brand that has always stood for exceptional design; a sponsor of the very well staged event. Citroën impressively presented the enormous power of the brand in the past, the present and in the future. With numerous historical Citroën models, with the two concept cars REVOLTe and SportLounge as well as the range of current models the manufacturer showed an impressive overview of the brand along the tag line "Citroën yesterday, today and tomorrow."

"Citroën had once more a good nose for an event where you can get in touch in a relaxed atmosphere with prospects and customers to join the brand," said Bettina Schulze Vowinkel of Citroën Marketing. "The inner city centre was a great combination of families, car and classic car enthusiasts – truly a success."

The exhibition of historical models had been compiled in cooperation with Amicale Citroën Deutschland and the Citroën clubs. I confirmed the great success of the event: "The first Drive it-Day in Cologne showed the variety of vintage and "Youngtimer" classic car scenes. The visitors were all very enthusiastic and rediscovered their childhood and youthful memories alongside the Citroën cars. It was a big family reunion and we look forward to 2013."

The decision for the 2nd Drive it Day next year is already taken. Romana Breuer from MAKK said: "The overwhelming response by the many visitors and the great atmosphere of this day has inspired us. We will organize another Drive it Day next year, that's for sure. Also we'd like to thank our sponsor Citroën for their perfect cooperation."

Special thanks to those of the Citroën club members who supported the event with their presence – and their cars.



Stephan Joest - Amicale Citroën Deutschland

TOC Annual Rally, Shropshire – 29th June – 1st July

The Gestapo were responsible for my love of Traction. Being a young boy I didn't know what they were. They flashed across the screen, usually chasing another one with a strange symbol on the door. The ones with the symbols were always the faster ones, they were never caught. But even at that age I knew it was the one for me. I grew up got married etc. etc. and life intervened but did find a little information about them, what make, model and where they were made.

In the manner of films, flash forward fifty years to 2010 and I said to my partner "next year is the year of the Traction". I was thinking if I don't get one soon the only Traction I will ride in is likely to be a hearse! To that end we visited the Traction Owners Club stand at the N.E.C. Not to book a hearse but to join the club and hopefully find a car I could buy.

Once there a very persuasive man named Peter Simper plied me with red wine and encourage me to join the club. I held out for as long as possible, well until the wine ran out, and joined. A very nice lady on the stand asked us where we lived and upon telling her exclaimed "Oh, you will be in our section", which turned out to be the Peak section.

I am glad I joined, initially, because in the very first magazine I received was a car for sale in my price range and not too far away. I thought it would probably be sold, my sort of luck, but Pam encouraged me

to telephone. It was still for sale. We both went to see it, I drove it and agreed a price and it was mine. Still 2010 and I had a car although because of inclement weather I didn't pick it up until January 2011 so it was the year of the traction after all. Pam drove me to pick up my car. On the way home I had to stop for fuel. Pam had a word with me, "Slow down" she said "You are breaking the speed limit".

We started attending the Peak meetings, met some nice people, took part in organised runs and started gleaning some mechanical knowledge of which I had none.

Latterly we were encouraged to take part in our first national rally. So, having booked the hotel and paid our rally fee we set off, after work, on Friday night to Telford into the unknown. We booked in at the hotel and found our room to be very acceptable, all usual facilities plus a raised dais with table and chairs, just right for coffee and a chat and above only sky, well, a skylight. Wonderful.

After a coffee, a brush up and dust down we ventured into the unknown. Down in the bar, the meeting point, we found most people had already gathered and were sitting with their friends. We found an unoccupied table and ordered a meal. Everyone seemed to be having a good time but we sat there for about 30 minutes looking around nodding at an occasional face we recognised.

Then a strange man, or should I say a man who was a stranger, approached whom I recognised from photographs in Floating Power magazine. "Hello" he said "new faces, my name is Bernie". Yes El Presidente Mr Shaw himself. I said I had seen his photograph in the club magazine. "Did you recognise my behind?" I denied ever looking at his behind! He explained a photograph had been published showing him leaning over a car engine. After that people came and sat at our table and chatted. The ice was broken. I suggested to Pam that we should do our part to meet others and so after our meal we moved more into the thick of things in an effort to speak to others and make ourselves known. The evening passed very pleasantly until it reached 10 o'clock when somebody stood up and said it was time for bed. I didn't know if this was compulsory or voluntary but not many people moved so I thought it must be the latter.

Perhaps they had a long journey to the hotel, maybe they were just tired. However, that started the procession and by about 11 o'clock only Pam, I and Mick Popka remained in the bar.

Pam retired which left Mick and me to talk about motorcycles and things, talking so much our throats had to be lubricated with the odd beer. About midnight we decided to retire, the bar was closed. Back in my bedroom I had a late night coffee under the sky lit skylight.

Breakfast on Saturday morning was magnificent. A breakfast buffet with all you can think of and more including coffee. Unfortunately Pam and I had an appointment we could not cancel and had to return home on Saturday morning and so missed the planned runs but we did catch up with the rally at Cosford R.A.F. Museum.

Now I have no particular interest in things aeronautical, but, I was amazed at the extent and the content of the museum and spent the rest of the afternoon wandering about being um... amazed. How do they get a V bomber inside a building, it must have been built around it.

I was surprised how quickly the time passed and soon we were heading back to the hotel. I would recommend this museum to everybody and allow a full day to see it all. A quick shower, shampoo, shave and coffee before assembling in the bar for a preprandial drink and another opportunity to put faces to names seen in the magazine.

Dinner was the same quality as breakfast, excellent. During and after dinner a duo supplied background music and music to which one could dance, although nobody danced, lots of folk sang if the right songs were being played, and mostly they were. There was a raffle and I won a prize - result. Most people enjoyed the evening and at about midnight, the party goers started to disperse. Mick Popka was determined to get intoxicated based on my wallet or was it me who was determined to get Mick intoxicated. Anyway, it didn't work and around 1 o'clock I decided to go back to my room and have a coffee before bed. I like a coffee before bed, a ritual of mine, it helps me sleep. I think that I must be

addicted to the stuff. Sunday morning and another fantastic breakfast, I don't think I could manage breakfasts like these every day. Then, off on the morning runs, first the Iron Gorge Bridge museum. Pam and I did not visit the museum, electing instead to walk along the River Severn to the bridge.

Designed by Thomas Farnolls Pritchard and cast and built in 1870 by Abraham Derby the third, who was the ironmaster who cast the various parts of the bridge in Coalbrookdale, and opened on New Year's Day 1871. As we were walking by the river a lady was releasing a female swan which had had an angler's hook removed from its throat. The male, who had been looking after their young, recognised its mate, made a bee line for the lady to attempt to break her arm with its wing and protect the female swan. Anyway, the lady was able to release the swan without injury to herself and to the delight of the male and the young. The male and female were later seen on the opposite side of the river canoodling.

Next, off to Wroxham, a Roman remains and a modern Roman building. The latter was, apparently, a project to recreate a Roman villa which was featured on television. We looked at both and the very interesting, small but perfectly formed visitor centre, made our purchases and prepared to move on to the last attraction of the rally. See what I did there? A small dispute developed here, we thought parking was free, the staff thought otherwise but a good old British compromise saved the day. We would have to pay for parking but get the charge refunded in the visitor centre. Great eh?

Attingham Park was the last visit of the rally. A house and grounds owned by the National Trust used as a hospital during the last World War, then a school and now a popular visitor destination.

It had been arranged that our cars could be parked within the grounds of the house; consequently they were arranged around an inner courtyard where other visitors had the opportunity to have a look at them and also chat with the owners.

A tour of the house followed by a browse in the shop and the rally was near the end. A final gathering in a room provided by the house for presentations and goodbyes ended the rally.

Pam and I stayed a little while longer to end the weekend with an afternoon tea and then wended our way home.

As first time attendees at a TOC national rally we found people very friendly, the hotel and staff excellent and the rally very well organised.

Thank you Martyn.

What a bargain! What a weekend!!

How the rally fee covered entrance fees, car parking and the dinner I will never know.

Brian Connolly

Photos below



Photos courtesy of Steve Wright

15th ICCR – 2012 – Harrogate, Yorkshire

From Wednesday 8th to Monday 13th August 2012 something wonderful happened in Harrogate. It was the 15th International Citroen Car Club Rally – last held in the UK in 1984. For pictures and feedback visit <http://iccr2012.org.uk/new/en/index.shtml> - Post Event. Available in English, French and German.