



OSU 197

*Floating
Power*

june
ninety
three

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Richmond

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For further details,
please contact your local organiser

Floating Power

VOLUME EIGHTEEN ISSUE TWO **June
ninety
three**

WELCOME to a bumper June issue of Floating Power. Unfortunately I can't guarantee 24 pages every issue – unless perhaps you send in more articles!

We are now well and truly in the rally season, and there seems to be plenty happening of interest to tractionistes, not least the Annual Rally, full details of which can be found on page 16.

All those who helped make the TOC's presence at the Top Gear Classic Show a resounding success can give themselves a well deserved pat on the back. This issue's centre spread hopefully conveys some of the atmosphere and charm of Chez André (in spite of my appalling photograph!).

You may notice the occasional subtle comment regarding contributions for the magazine, we ALWAYS need material – pictures, articles, news items. I hope to begin a series 'Tractions Extraordinaires' in the near future, so anything on special bodies, conversions etc would be more than welcome.

Next issue will (hopefully) feature a rally report from Yorkshire, more electrical technicals and a story about rivalry in an Irish garage.

A final word – just to bring to the attention of a small minority of members the paragraph in toctalk about money owed for parts.

A reminder that the deadline for the next issue is July 17.

See you at t' Mill!

John Starke

PS

If you haven't renewed your membership subscription – BEWARE – this will be your last 'Floating Power' – unless you take remedial action forthwith, i.e. PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION NOW!

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cover picture by John Starke
Tractions at Earls Court

As it is impractical for us to verify the accuracy of information and advice given in this magazine, neither the Traction Owners' Club nor officers and members thereof selecting or contributing any material, accept any liability for any error, omission or inaccuracy therein.

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ISSN 0265 0630

CHEZ ANDRÉ TAKES TOP PRIZE

CHEZ ANDRÉ was the place to be over the May bank holiday weekend when André, alias artist and Traction owner John Griffiths, opened his new café to the public for the first time at the Top Gear Classic Car Show.

City financiers who had queried the viability of a small French café in Hall 2 of the NEC were soon eating their words as André and main backers 'the Traction Owners' Club', collected one of the show's top prizes.

Serving fine cuisine (cheese and onion and ready salted) to the clientele, head waiter Stanley Barker was also seen taking money from people wanting to join some obscure car club.

Although also awarded three Michelin stars, André decided to close on a high note, and so sacked the staff and dismantled the café. Rumour has it that a replica Eiffel Tower may be their next venture!

For a full report, turn to page 12.



Uncorking the Cordiale

Members Debts

UNFORTUNATELY, a small minority of members seem to be avoiding making payment for items acquired through the club's parts operation. I'm sure you know who you are!

Consider this to be a final courteous request to those involved to pay up, as the committee is considering taking legal action against those who still owe money.

It doesn't take much to work out that a club like ours needs the **support** of the membership in order to survive let alone thrive and these actions of an admittedly small number of individuals impairs the service that we endeavour to give.



Classic Citroëns at the South Bank

CLASSIC Restorations' third annual London riverside rally for Citroën Traction Avants will take place on Sunday 22 August, at Gabriel's Wharf, London SE1. Organisers Classic Restorations expect to equal last year's attendance of over fifty cars.

Attractions planned for this year's event include a local treasure hunt, a traditional concours d'elegance, entertainments for children and adults, stalls for the Citroën enthusiast and a selection of cars for sale. There will also be an exhibition of special interest Tractions.

There will be free priority display parking on the embankment promenade for Tractions. A wide range of parking is available nearby for other cars.

Gabriel's Wharf boasts a selection of restaurants, cafés, bars and craft shops open all day and is within a short distance of the Haywards Gallery, National Film Theatre and the Museum of the Moving Image.

The rally site will be open from 11am. Further details are available from Classic Restorations on 071 928 6613.

.....in brief

■ **WANTED**, two '7's for the TOC stand at a major show in November at the NEC. Please phone the Helpline if you can help.

■ **AFTER** the Earls Court show last month not only did 'Your Classic' magazine feature the TOC as its spotlight club, but 'Classic Cars' also praised the club.

■ **SOMEONE** is now the proud owner of a very tidy looking Citroën 23U Type 2 ton military truck (used extensively in film and TV) sold at a recent Sotheby's auction in Cornwall, maybe the new owner if a member, would like to pen a line or two about their acquisition?

■ **FOLLOWING** an approach by 'Le Club de la Baie du Mont St Michel', (well known for their enthusiasm both Traction and vignoble) Stan Barker is right now discussing arrangements with them for reciprocal meetings between our clubs.

■ **THIS MONTH'S** bad boys are the BBC Top Gear editors who decided not to include the liveliest and most charismatic display in their TV resumé of the NEC Classic Car Show, broadcast in early May; concentrating rather on Bentleys, Morris Minors, Honda S800s and, horror of horrors, the Triumph 1300.

Also, for some obscure reason, a third of the programme was to be devoted to the humble E Type and their humbler owners.

Come along BBC, surely a picture hook is more of a motoring milestone than a 'Triumph 1300!



HELPLINE

0425 74476

(24hr answerphone)

When phoning please give:

- 1) Your name
- 2) Your phone number
- 3) Reason for calling

Chemical Danger

FOLLOWING much publicity and many warnings about the danger of serious injury or death resulting from contact with chemicals in car parts, Alec Bilney has sent this extract from an official statement by the Health & Safety Executive.

"There has been much concern of late about the dangers from what has turned out to be hydrogen fluoride (hydrofluoric acid) from fluoroelastomers in burnt-out vehicles. The concern has arisen in part from sensational reports on television (BBC Top Gear) and in the press (Car Mechanic February 1993). Statements of the following kind are not untypical: "In a fire, the powerful chemical can eat through steel or glass like a knife through butter. If an unsuspecting motorist or mechanic handled it, the only treatment is amputation".

This is not so.

Fluoroelastomers are synthetic rubber-like materials containing chemically bound fluorine, which are used in the manufacture of O-rings, seals and gaskets. The amount of fluoroelastomer estimated to be present in each of these seals is about 10 grammes and the total amount in a car engine only about 40 grammes. Millions of such parts have been used over the last 30 years, and although they do not present a hazard in themselves, at temperatures in excess of 315°C rapid decomposition occurs, releasing hydrogen fluoride, with other products.

Anhydrous hydrogen fluoride boils at 19°C and is an excellent solvent. It is readily soluble in water to produce hydrofluoric acid and attacks glass and steel (but not 'like a knife through butter'). On contact with the skin it produces burns which may not be obvious at first but which may become extremely painful later.

Mutual Aid

A BIG thank you to the nine members who have so far stepped forward to volunteer for Mutual Aid duty.

We now have good cover for the Midlands, West Country, East Anglia, North West and even Northern France.

However, we still need people in the following areas to complete the service: Wales, Scotland, Yorkshire, North East, South Coast, London and South East (Kent, Sussex).

A complete listing will appear in the next issue.

Apology

HUMBLE apologies to everyone, especially Roger Williams, following the article on Sticking Clutches in the last issue.

An inadvertent error resulted in "poorly" appearing instead of "properly" when referring to the adjustment of the front brake shoes.

Copious washing with water followed by treatment under medical supervision will allow even serious burns to heal.

The source of the present concern about fluoroelastomers seems to stem from the only incident of which the HSE has knowledge, which occurred in the early 1980s. A researcher who was working on a test rig designed to test fluoroelastomer O-rings to destruction, suffered a chemical burn and subsequently had part of one finger amputated. The injury was attributed to hydrofluoric acid which was generated in a particularly concentrated form as a result of the unusual conditions of the experiment. These conditions should not occur in a vehicle fire.

In vehicle as in other fires, toxic and corrosive products may be generated by a wide variety of materials. In practice, there are unlikely to be significant quantities of



hydrogen fluoride associated with burnt-out vehicles, although small quantities may be trapped and only released during dismantling. The acid may also be present as surface contamination. It may be neutralised with lime water and small amounts may be washed away with water. As a general precaution, anyone handling parts which may be contaminated should ensure these are cool and should wear neoprene or PVC gloves. The gloves should then be decontaminated.

Thus, while there may be some risk of injury from hydrogen fluoride (hydrofluoric acid) from fluoroelastomers in burnt-out vehicles, much media and other advice on this matter is at variance with the facts. In practice there are unlikely to be significant quantities of hydrogen fluoride associated with burnt-out vehicles and burns from this and other corrosive combustion products can be avoided by taking simple precautions."

Extract from an article by Dr J J Friar of the Health & Safety Executive.

Common sense says take precautions when visiting scrapyards and dismantling fire damaged and other cars.

Whether the the cars are fire damaged or not, children should always be kept well away from any potential danger.

Reports have also appeared in the C.C.C. magazine, the Citroënian.

Traction Sticker

ABOVE is one of the many clever sticker designs received so far – OR WOULD HAVE BEEN, HAD ANYONE ACTUALLY SUBMITTED ONE!

Surely someone somewhere must have an idea or two.

Also, what about tax disc holders with club logo and info?

section scene

PEAK SECTION

UPDATE on our events:

June 6 Tour of the Buxton area with the High Peak Historic Vehicle Society. 11am start at the Bull. (This replaces the treasure hunt, now later in the month).

June 20 The (re-arranged) Treasure Hunt. Meet at the Bull 11am.

August 1 Boules Competition

August 22 Visit to the National Tramway Museum at Crick, nr Matlock. The driver and one passenger of vehicles over 25 years old are admitted free. Meet in the car park at 11am, bring a picnic and hope it's sunny!

Further details on all the above from: Bev & John Oates 0298 78473

Error in last FP!
The Peak Section meet on the first Sunday on **even** months not every month.
Sorry - Ed

SCOTTISH SECTION

THE C.C.C. is organising a Scottish Rally in August at the Doune Motor Museum, to which TOC members are duly invited.

With our members scattered the length and breadth of Scotland, this is an ideal opportunity for a get together at a good central location.

Details from Ian Nairn on 031 449 4569

Roger Williams continues his series of technical articles by lifting the lid on the most taboo of subjects, and looks at a way of strengthening the Traction's gearbox.

Citroën's original specification for the Traction included an automatic gearbox but the engineers could not cure the problem of overheating. Despite numerous warnings of this problem, André Citroën stuck doggedly to his original concept. He was only finally persuaded to revert to a manual gearbox when taken for a short run in a car fitted with the automatic gearbox. It boiled over after only five kms. Legend has it that this was only about a month before the Traction's launch and, even allowing for some unofficial design work on the manual gearbox, it was a considerable achievement to get them produced in time for the launch at the 1934 Paris Salon.

Four modifications were made to the A Type gearbox between the launch and the introduction of the B Type gearbox in May 1935. However, all these modifications, including the B Type gearbox itself, were only of a minor nature and the 'design faults' which were ignored or overlooked in the rush to get the original A Type gearbox in production perpetuated in the B Type gearbox which stayed in production for nearly 22 years. Despite the inherent faults, the Traction gearbox did give reasonable service for many years when they were used as everyday cars. In those days if you could afford a car you could also afford to have it serviced. Regular servicing by Citroën agents and the availability of all the necessary parts meant that the gearboxes were generally kept in adjustment and in good running order.

In the 1960s a large number of Tractions were abandoned, along with many other

STRONGER BOX

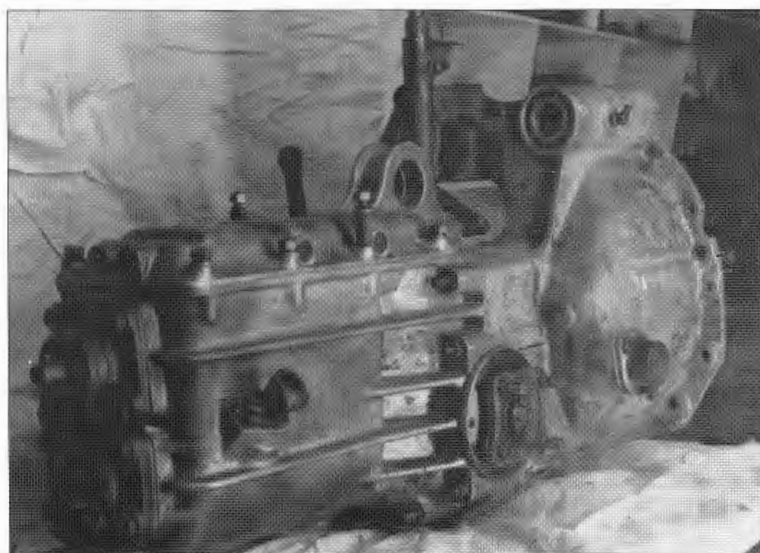
makes/models which have also subsequently become collectors cars, to scrap yards or to be used as bangers. When Tractions became collectable and restorations began in earnest many new owners felt confident to take off the cylinder head for a decoke, to change the pistons and liners or to change the clutch. However, when it came to the gearbox most people invariably made the sign of the cross over it and left well alone! Over the years many gearboxes became worn or went out of adjustment and they would finally give up, usually in a spectacular way, by splitting across the line of the output shafts. The main reason for these failures is the inherently weak fixing of the final drive. The crownwheel/differential unit is secured to the gearbox by two flimsy aluminium caps and the principal causes for failure are:

- 1/ the breaking of an aluminium securing cap.
- 2/ the flexing of the crownwheel/differential unit under load.
- 3/ the breaking of a tooth or teeth on the crownwheel and/or pinion.

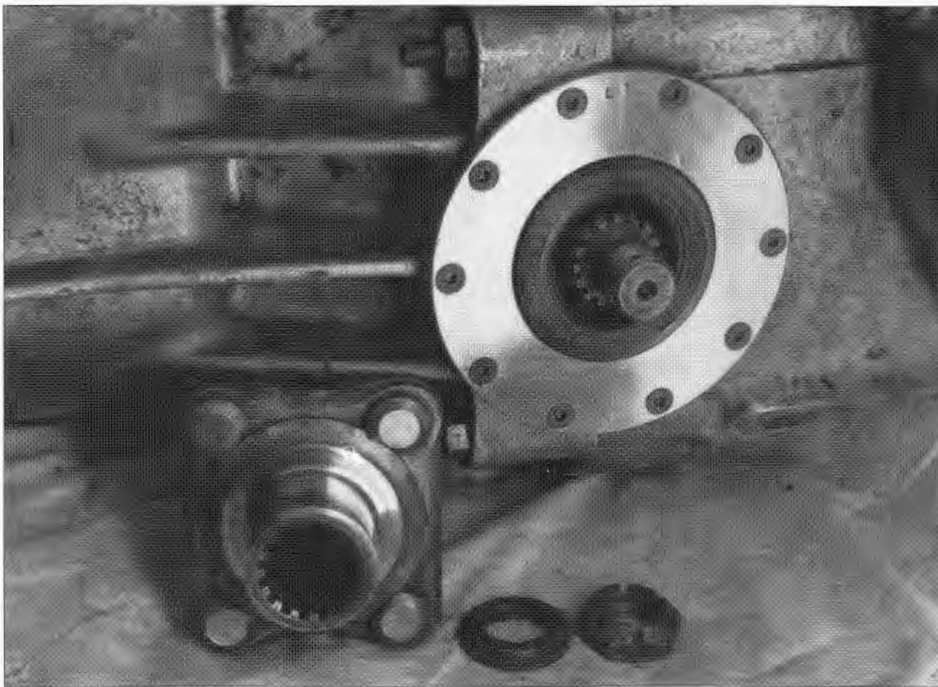
The result of all three types of failure is for the crownwheel and pinion to jam and the resultant forces find the path of least resistance ie through the gearbox/bellhouse casings.

Although there would be many less failures if the gearboxes were regularly overhauled there is still the inherent weakness in the rigidity of the final drive. A solution to this problem is to provide more rigidity to the final drive via additional bearings mounted, with new oil seals, in a flange which is bolted to the side of the gearbox/bellhousing. The annotated photographs and drawings illustrate the points made and hopefully give an understanding of why these gearboxes are a major point of concern to Traction owners.

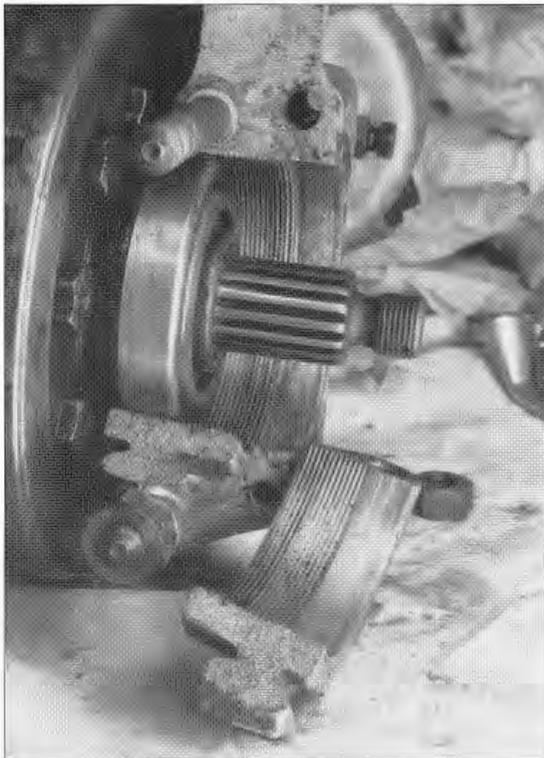
Roger Williams ■



◀
General view of a B Type gearbox showing the new bearing/oil seal flange bolted in place



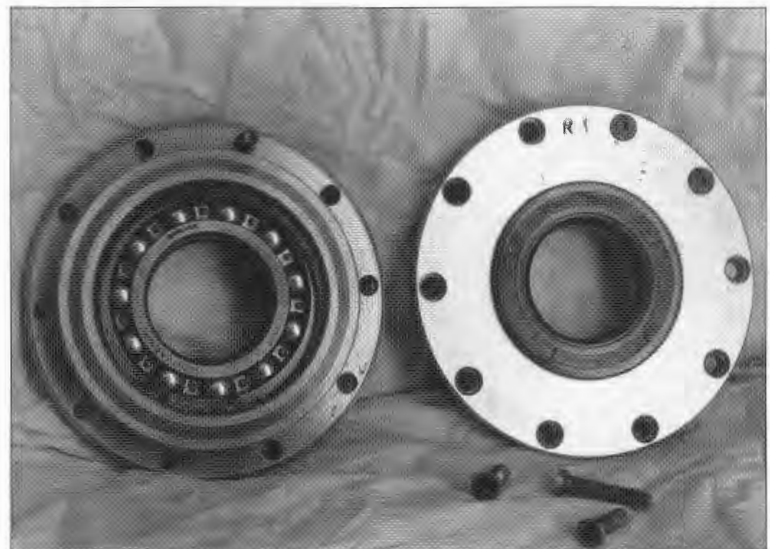
Close-up showing the new bearing/oil seal flange bolted in place with the output drive flange removed



Final drive taper roller bearing with broken aluminium securing cap. Note how flimsy the aluminium cap is and how much the output shafts overhang the bearing supports. The new bearing/oil seal flange provides additional bearing support right at the outside edge of the gearbox



Front and rear views of the new bearing/oil seal flange and securing bolts



Typical damage to crown wheel and pinion



SCHEMA D'ELECTRIFICATION. (JUSQU'À JANVIER 1946.)

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. PHARE AVANT DROITE. | 7. FEU D'AILÉ DROITE. | 13. BOBINE. | 19. BARRETTE DE LIAISON. | 25. LAMPES DE TABLEAU. | 31. FLÈCHE DE DIRECTION GAUCHE. |
| 2. " " GAUCHE. | 8. " " GAUCHE. | 14. PRISE DE BALLADEUSE DROITE. | 20. INTERRUPTEUR D'ALLUMAGE. | 26. COMMUTEUR FEUX D'AILÈS. | 32. PUITS DE JAUGE. |
| 3. AVERTISSEUR AVANT DROITE. | 9. DYNAMO-VENTILATEUR. | 15. " " GAUCHE. | 21. " DES LAMPES TABLEAU. | 27. " DE FLÈCHES. | 33. LANTERNE ARRIÈRE. |
| 4. " " GAUCHE. | 10. INTERRUPTEUR STOP. | 16. DÉMARREUR. | 22. AMPÈREMÈTRE. | 28. " CODE. | 34. STOP. |
| 5. BARRETTE AVANT DROITE. | 11. BOUGIES. | 17. BATTERIE 6 VOLTS. 90 AMP.-H. | 23. MONTRE. | 29. PLAFONNIER. | |
| 6. " " GAUCHE. | 12. DISTRIBUTEUR. | 18. ESSUIE-GLACE. | 24. CADRAN DE JAUGE. | 30. FLÈCHE DE DIRECTION DROITE. | |

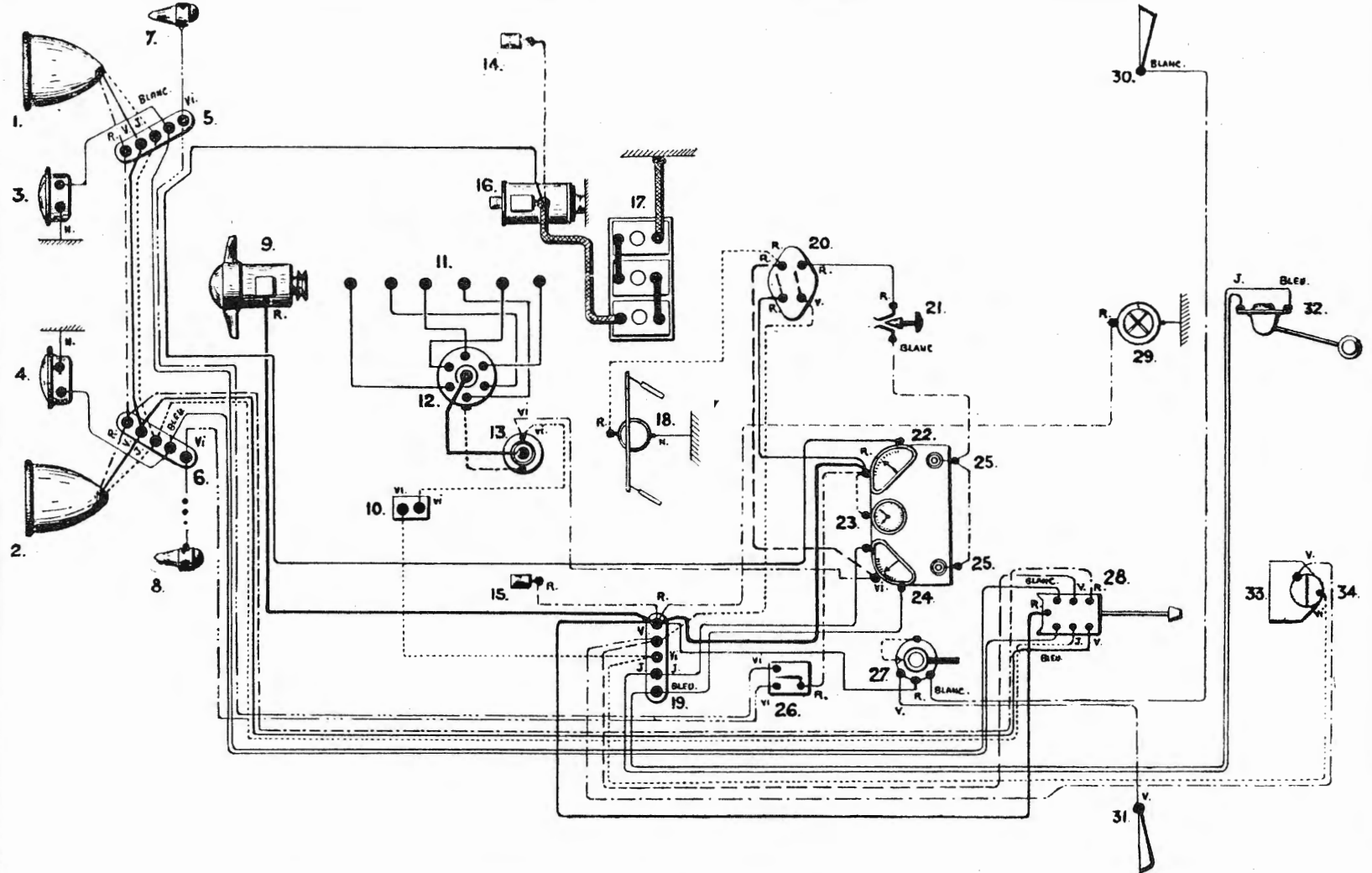
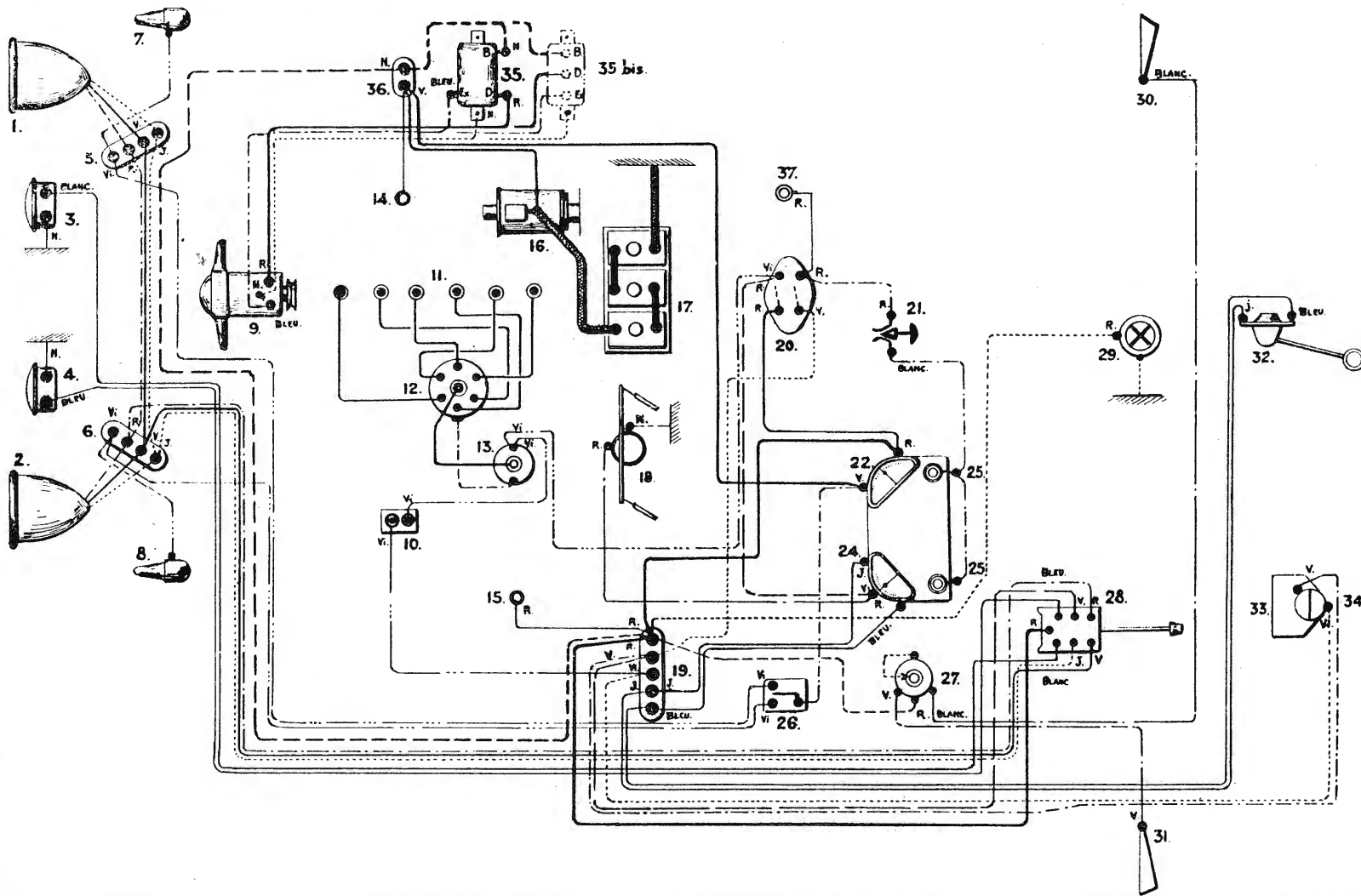


SCHÉMA D'ÉLECTRIFICATION.

(A PARTIR DE JANVIER 1946.)

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|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. PHARE AVANT DROITE. | 8. FEU D'AILE GAUCHE. | 15. PRISE DE BALLADEUSE GAUCHE. | 22. AMPÈREMÈTRE. | 29. PLAFONNIER. | 35 bis. CAS D'UN RÉGULATEUR CITROËN. |
| 2. " " GAUCHE. | 9. DYNAMO-VENTILATEUR. | 16. DÉMARREUR. | 24. CADRAN DE JAUGE. | 30. FLÈCHE DE DIRECTION DROITE. | 36. BARRETTE 2 BORNES. |
| 3. AVERTISSEUR AVANT DROITE. | 10. INTERRUPTEUR STOP | 17. BATTERIE 6 VOLTS. 90 AMP.-H. | 25. LAMPES DE TABLEAU. | 31. " " GAUCHE. | 37. LISEUR DE CARTE. |
| 4. " " GAUCHE. | 11. BOUGIES. | 18. ESSUIE-GLACE. | 26. COMMUTATEUR FEUX D'AILES. | 32. PUITS DE JAUGE. | |
| 5. BARRETE AVANT DROITE. | 12. DISTRIBUTEUR. | 19. BARRETTE DE LIASON. | 27. " DE FLÈCHES. | 33. LANTERNE ARRIÈRE. | |
| 6. " " GAUCHE. | 13. BOBINE. | 20. INTERRUPTEUR D'ALLUMAGE. | 28. " CODE. | 34. STOP. | |
| 7. FEU D'AILE DROITE. | 14. PRISE DE BALLADEUSE DROITE. | 21. " DES LAMPES TABLEAU. | | 35. CAS D'UN RÉGULATEUR DUCELLIER. | |



Following the article on French fusing in the last issue, some wiring diagrams were kindly sent in. These two, courtesy of Fred Annells, are from a 1948 workshop manual for a 1516. Next issue will include diagrams for Legere! Normale.

It all started out as a 'Phoneathon' search for any information about T.A.s in Southern Ireland, having been given a vague lead that there were a few TOC members in the Republic of Ireland and indeed even a few Tractions! I therefore decided in late '92 to trace as many leads and cars as possible.

Most cars and members as it turned out were located in the eastern half of the country and I was also informed that the Traction Avant had been assembled in Dublin! "Aye, right enough" was the typical response to such old wives tales which are common in the vintage car world – but on making further enquiries it turned out to be true.

Just before WWII the main dealer and distributorship was awarded to Ashenhurst & Williams of Dublin, however, due to the war there were very few cars to sell and as soon as it ended they decided to assemble the Lt 15 model at the premises. The reason behind this was that when the war ended a period of austerity was endured by most of Europe, Ireland was no exception and importing a car at that time was virtually impossible due to a very punitive tax regime. So to get around this and to remain in business, Ashenhurst & Williams arranged to bring in the body pressings from Slough in RHD form and use Irish labour and other materials to complete the cars. To the best of my knowledge the pressings were exactly the same as those supplied to the factory in Slough, also supplied were all the main mechanical components and electrical items. The remaining interior materials were furnished and fitted in Dublin, as was the final painting using ICI paints.

At any one time between two and six men worked on the car and the numbers assembled in any given year varied from 'a few' to fourteen. It has been estimated by the former owner that no more than one hundred in total were assembled up to 1958, after which the DS was assembled.

Whilst this was going on Citroën HQ at Quai Javel in Paris 'got wind' of this 'extra curricular' assembly line and were most annoyed! At once a couple of trouble-shooters were dispatched to 'rein-in' the Irish branch of Citroën International. However, they were suitably impressed by the small scale 'assembly line' that they used its techniques in other small market countries!

Members must excuse the uncertainty over some of the figures and dates as all records were lost when the company went into liquidation in 1982 so I'm relying on the memories of the former owner Geoffrey Ashenhurst (now in his eighties) and a retired employee of some 25 years service in the parts dept.

There were also a small number of Big Sixes in Ireland over the fifties and sixties but these were personally imported by expat Englishmen of the French diplomatic corps.

Finally there is to the best of my knowledge only one Irish built Lt 15 on the road at present, owned by Paul Burke-Kennedy of Dublin, an avid Citroëniste for many years. The car was used by one of the Ashenhurst & Williams directors for

nearly twenty years until Mr Burke-Kennedy acquired it. Indeed on one occasion he came across an elderly man admiring the car who then informed him that he had actually assembled that very vehicle!

Built in 1955, and registered on 31/1/56, FIK 629's body No. is 9/550050 with engine 10531104 on a Slough plate in the engine compartment. The car as it appears below is green bodied with black wings and red interior, a combination which it has had for many years and although there

have been some bodywork repairs to the usual places it is otherwise very original and is in regular use throughout the year.

If any mainland member has any further information or corrections to make to the information contained above I'd be glad to hear from them and I can be contacted on 0365 325847.

PS We intend to have the first annual run of Tractions in Ireland on Sunday August 8th, 1993

Frank Gallagher ■

Never one to ignore a rumour, Frank Gallagher picks up a luke warm trail that leads to an astounding revelation

// oh danny boy... a traction built in ireland //



◀ Paul Burke-Kennedy, daughter and Dublin built Lt 15



KENTWELL

revisited



With the Annual Rally almost upon us here are just a few images of last year's event at Kentwell Hall, in deepest Suffolk



*A quiet weekend near Birmingham,
with 30,000 visitors!*

A little bit of Brittany, or was it the Midi suddenly found itself recreated in a time warp within the centre of the NEC, Birmingham. Little less to do with Maastricht or Anglo-French relations, the heart of this typical village, with its bar and tabac, together with adjacent garage complete with the usual plethora of automobilia, did more to stir the Francophile heart than Jaques Delores and Maigret combined.

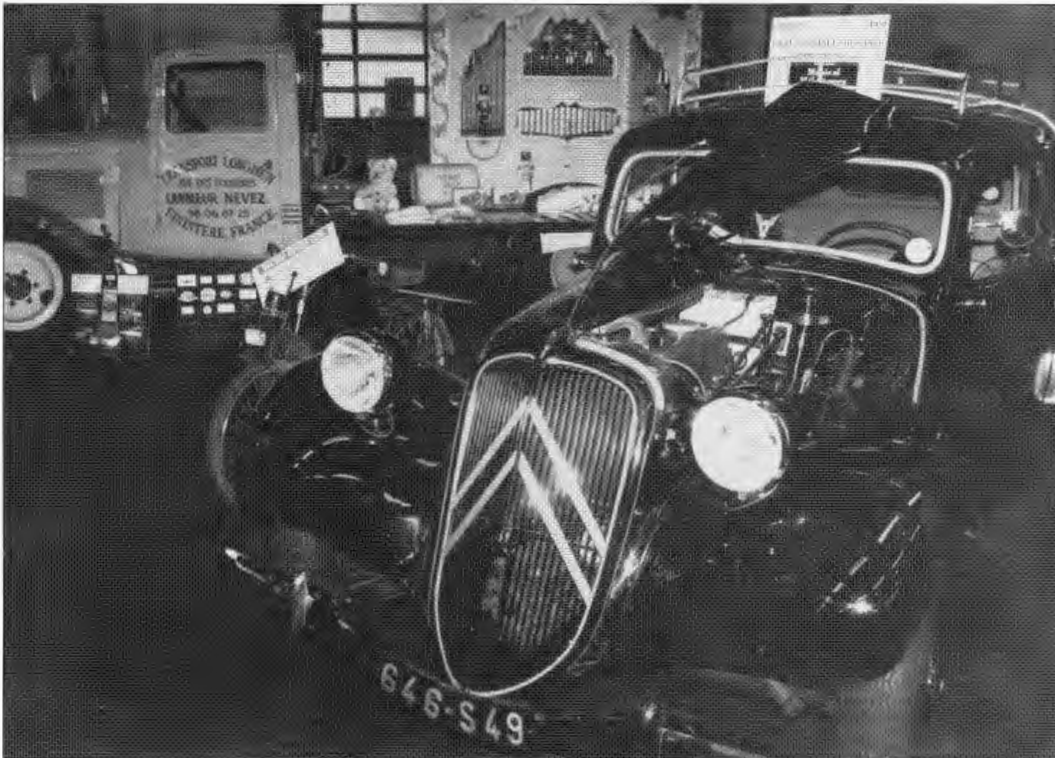
Keen to unite the kindred spirits of two nations, this idyllic scene was made all the more exciting and enjoyable by the equally time-warped delights of transport, encapsulated complete with the ambience of four decades past. For here, in the heart of Britain, lived a part of France that we all yearn. Along with the regulatory bicycle with freshly baked baguettes concealing

bottles of rouge ordinaire safely in the wicker basket over the front wheel, the Velosolex and of course the big black Citroën, recalled the golden age.

What could be more enchanting? Perhaps the menu with the plat de jour on a board outside Chez André; perhaps the mecanicien garagiste enjoying a lunchtime pastis with his sandwich au fromage; perhaps even les garçons, attired in customary aprons and boaters, listening to strains of "La Marseillaise" issuing forth from the fairground organ, especially if it



▲ Trophy time



▶ John Aspinall's Normale and the 'music machine'

▼ Barrie Longden looks up a recipe for boiled eggs

*...listening to
"La Marseillaise"
issuing forth from the
fairground organ...*

has arrived on the back of a Citroën camionette. Probably also a visit by the local gendarme to catch up on the local gossip.

In the garage next door all work has stopped for the midday break; several more black Citroëns are in the workshop and outside stands a blue H van. Tools and equipment are scattered around the workshop floor; wings and doors from an Onze Normale are propped against an aged petrol pump and a chipped and weather-beaten sign advertising huiles Yacco recalls the days of the Rosalie.

This fragment of the France we love is not entirely a figment of imagination; it existed sure enough – recreated by the Traction Owners' Club at the NEC as part of BBC's Top Gear Classic and Sportscar Show in early May. So real and vibrant, the ambience of the scene caused the organisers to present the TOC with the award for the 'most outstanding display'.

The design of the display was the work



"So where are the running boards then?"

AN ACCOLADE FOR andré

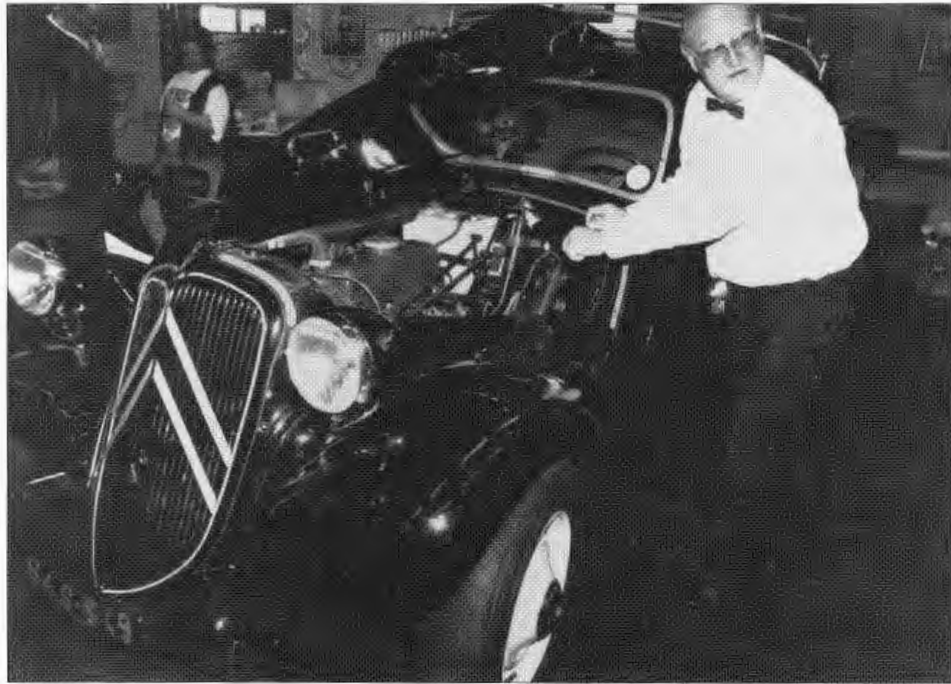


of John Griffiths who spent three weeks building the façade of the café and garage. So effective was it that on more than one occasion the café was mistaken for the real thing. Complete with full façade, double doors and curtained windows, the effect was quite astonishing.

Steve Southgate provided the garage equipment and props, as well as two of the cars: a 1955 Slough Six-H and a 1939 Limousine bodyshell, demonstrating the construction of the monocoque body and front end assembly. The third Traction, a 1951 11B, belonged to John Aspinall. Naturally, all the cars were in beautiful condition and created enormous interest of their own.

The garage façade was built by Cliff James who successfully captured the feel of a typical village service station. It was made all the more realistic by some of the period posters and Citroën signs.

The H van added to the scene, its rugged attractiveness furthering the totally Gallic atmosphere. One of the main attractions was Barrie Longden's superb



▲ Stan Barker caught hotwiring again

23U camionette resplendent as ever and completely captivating with its fairground organ.

Looking around the show, which all three days was packed to capacity, the standard of some of the 100 plus club displays was very high which proves just how exceptional the TOC stand was. Displays such as this do not just happen, they are created, and without a lot of enthusiasm, commitment and hard work, would not exist. It would be unfair not to include all the families of those who put so much hard work into this event; behind the scenes and in support they helped just as much to ensure the show was the success it undoubtedly was.

In recognition of their effort, Steve Southgate and the team received a most attractive Waterford crystal trophy, an award for a great achievement.

◀ Cliff and Barrie apprehend a spy from the BMW camp

Malcolm Bobbitt ■

tractionARRIÈRE

Monsieur Poirot would have fiddled with his bow tie; Inspector Maigret on the other hand, might have sucked intensely on his pipe, and sighed. The case in question is that of a missing bus, a Citroën, that was last seen in the vivacious Thirties.

Citroën's entry of any degree into the public transport market dates back to the early days of the 1930s when André Citroën established Les Transports Citroën, a system of scheduled services linking towns and cities throughout France. The plan had originated in Lyon in 1931, spreading quickly to neighbouring areas with the familiar brown and cream coaches fulfilling an important role in local communications. Services were extended to Paris, to Nantes in the west and across France to Strasbourg in the east. Over fifty regular routes were in operation by the end of 1932 and by mid 1933 these had grown to a staggering 126.

It is claimed that Citroën's transport system occupied a total of some 1600 vehicles which, on average, travelled 130,000 kms daily, carrying 36,000 passengers. Citroën was not allowed to enjoy such success for long: arch-rival Louis Renault set up in opposition, following Citroën's routes using his own coaches which were painted in equally distinctive colours of blue and yellow.

Citroën may have hoped for similar success in Britain and this is where the mystery begins. Certainly there is proof that the decision was taken to market a Citroën bus in the UK; this happened at a time when Citroën tried to exploit the commercial market in Britain with a series of heavy duty vans, lorries and tractor units. The company's brochure for 1932 carried illustrations for a whole range of commercials, including that of a twenty-seater coach. The price was right, £495 for a fully fitted vehicle, or just £250 for the chassis. For such a bargain, the mystery remains as to where the customers were!

In truth, Citroën found it difficult to market their product. The transport industry may have been reticent in investing in what was considered an unknown quantity, especially in view of the fact that market leaders consisted of such companies as Thornycroft, Dennis and Maudslay. Bedford and Chevrolet, who were under the General Motors umbrella, shared recognition with the like of Short Brothers and Tilling-Stevens. There were also a number of smaller, but no less reputable, companies such as Grose of Northampton, and it is with this last company that much of the mystery lies.

To explain exactly why there is a mystery at all, one has to look at the number of coaches, or rather buses, that Citroën supplied. At the time it would have been usual for a customer to stipulate a particular type of coachwork, the coach-builder having designed the vehicle in

accordance to the specifications of the chassis manufacturer. In the case of Citroën, who were able to offer a complete package, it appears that Grose were favoured in supplying the coach body. It is also possible that the chassis, which was not dissimilar in construction to that of the Bedford, lent itself to the Grose style of coachwork. Furthermore, it appears Grose specialised in supplying to some of the smaller chassis manufacturers. Looking at various coach-builder specifications, few, if any, based their wares upon Citroën's chassis and, as a result, only a handful of Citroën buses were actually manufactured in Britain.

THE CASE OF THE MISSING BUS

Grose, whilst not actually denying they built bodies for Citroën, can find no record of doing business with the company. The fact that a Grose-bodied bus built on a Citroën chassis was demonstrated at Olympia's Commercial Motor Show is another matter. So also is Citroën's brochure, showing their bus which is remarkably similar to the Grose product, outside the Kingsthorpe Cemetery outside Northampton, a location frequently used by Grose for their publicity pictures.

Grose were, however, no strangers to Citroën. During the Twenties they had supplied a special body for a Citroën Kegresse to transport Queen Mary on a tour of the Government War and Transport Vehicle Works at Slough. The picture of Queen Mary, appearing to enjoy the ride over the rough ground, is well known, and a retired foreman from Grose remembers preparing the vehicle.

In essence, leaders in the smaller bus and coach market were probably Bedford who had a reputation for quality and reliability. Their LWB model was a full £15 dearer than the Citroën, but, for the customer, Bedford's comprehensive service network made the extra cost seem worthwhile. Grose accordingly engineered themselves to supplying substantial numbers of bodies for Bedford and earned healthy respect for their coachwork.

Citroën first introduced their twenty-seater bus to Britain in December 1930,

and the first road test can be traced to February 1931. The following autumn, specifications were updated resulting in slightly larger engines. Two bus chassis were displayed at the 1931 Commercial Motor Show, one was left in bare chassis form whilst the other, according to The Commercial Motor, had a Grose body fitted to it. The Citroën stand also included a selection of other commercials ranging from a drop-side lorry, delivery vans and the Kegresse half-track.

Records show that at least one Citroën bus was registered in Britain. Supplied new to S.C. Warren of Cranleigh, Surrey, PL 9047 was registered in June or July 1931. Assuming this was not the vehicle on test in 1930, it would appear that at least three buses existed. The question remains as to where there any more supplied and what happened to them? It would be productive if it were known how many bus chassis were built, but alas it seems such records are not available.

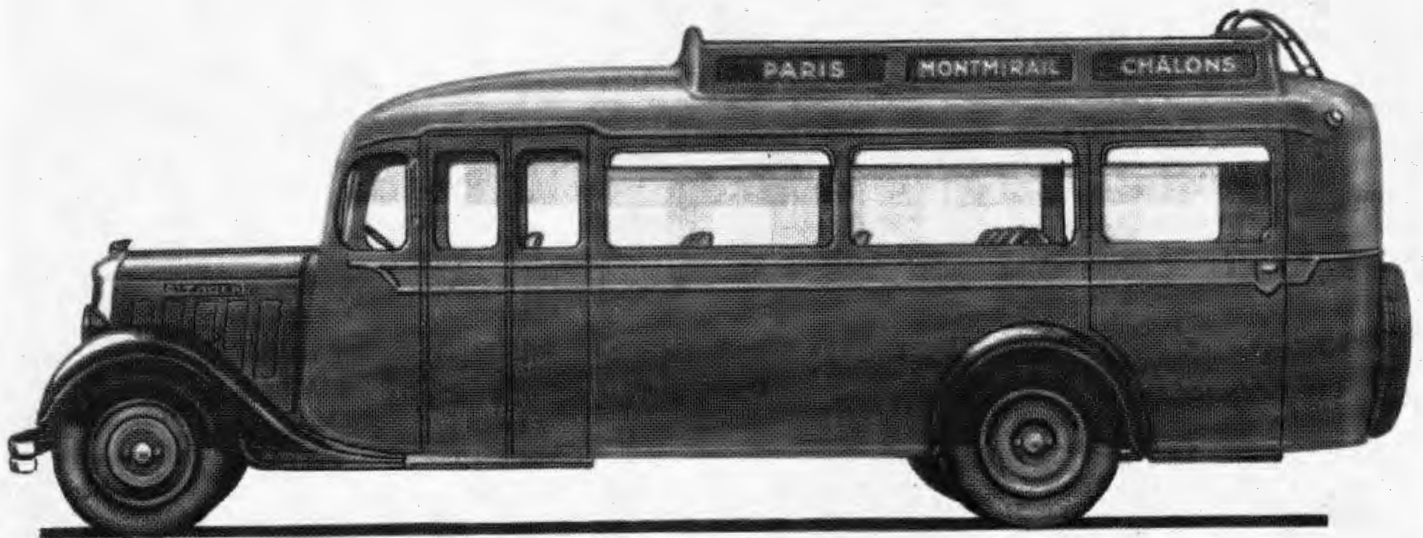
There is a curious twist in the tale which again reveals a mystery, not in respect of Grose but the well-known firm of Duple which had become part of the General Motors Corporation. By the mid-Thirties continental coach travel had reached some popularity and tour operators were adding particularly luxurious vehicles to their fleets. A leading company in continental coach holidays was London-based European Motorways which had been established in 1930. The company offered comprehensive tours to the Italian Lakes, Bavaria, Scandinavia, northern Spain and Portugal as well as a prestigious 54-day Grand European tour.

For the 1935 season, European Motorways purchased at least one new Citroën twenty-seater pullman coach to enhance their fleet which now consisted of three Citroëns, two Leylands and a Rolls-Royce. The Citroën coaches, which were left hand drive, had bodies built by Duple at Hendon in north London, however, Duple have recently advised they have no such records now available.

From contemporary records, it appears the Citroëns were the last word in luxury. The Commercial Motor stated: "Its exterior lines are smart and flowing, whilst the interior appointments are invitingly restful, there being no suggestion of cramping." With an overall length of almost 29ft and width of 7ft 8in, the coach was by no means small. The interior, with armchair-type twin seats on one side of the aisle and single seats on the other, was indeed plush with glass-topped walnut veneered folding tables. It was possible to provide hot drinks from a servery at the rear which housed Thermos jugs and crockery in a specifically designed unit. The coach could be heated by Clayton heaters in less clement weather while for balmy days of summer, the roof could be folded back.

The questions concerning the Grose-bodied buses and Duple's coachwork for European Motorway's coaches remain somewhat a mystery. Perhaps Poirot and Maigret could work together on this case!

Malcolm Bobbitt ■



5301. Car " Tout Acier " 23 places sur châssis surbaissé.

UP to the present, the main difficulty of those who operate passenger-carrying services has been to find a luxury saloon coach of full-sized 20-seater capacity with the following features:—

- (a) A really sturdy chassis of adequate capacity (not an adapted chassis).
- (b) A body of modern design and construction, built by body-builders of high repute.
- (c) A really reasonable price.

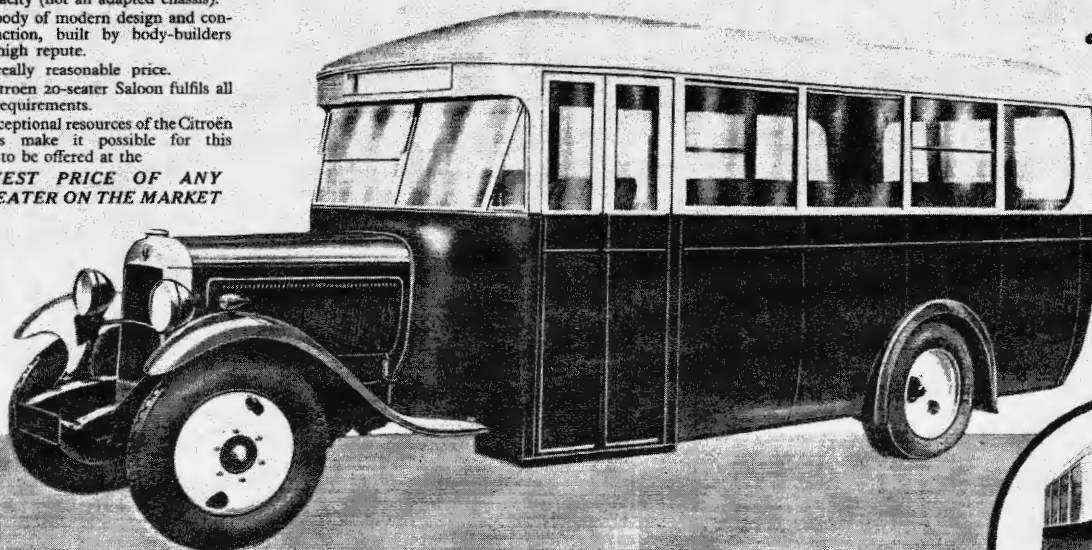
The Citroën 20-seater Saloon fulfils all these requirements.

The exceptional resources of the Citroën factories make it possible for this vehicle to be offered at the

LOWEST PRICE OF ANY 20-SEATER ON THE MARKET

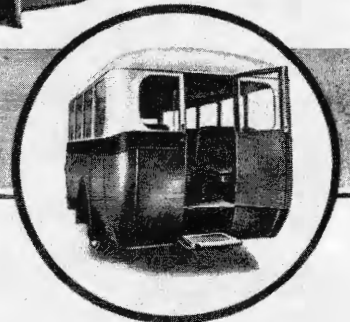
An entirely New Standard of Value! in Luxury Coaches!

£495



(CHASSIS £250)

POWERFUL 6-CYLINDER ENGINE
FOUR-SPEED GEAR BOX
DUO-SERVO 4-WHEEL BRAKES
HYDRAULIC SHOCK ABSORBERS, FRONT & REAR
ELECTRIC LIGHTING AND STARTING
TWIN REAR WHEELS AND TYRES
WHEELBASE 13 ft. 11 ins.
ROOMY SALOON BODY
REAL LEATHER UPHOLSTERY
PROVED PERFORMANCE



20-SEATER

CITROËN

SALOON COACH

A splendid proposition for City, Suburban, Country or Seaside Services.
A Luxury Coach embodying the latest road coach features at an amazing price.

Annual National Rally

11, 12, 13 June 1993

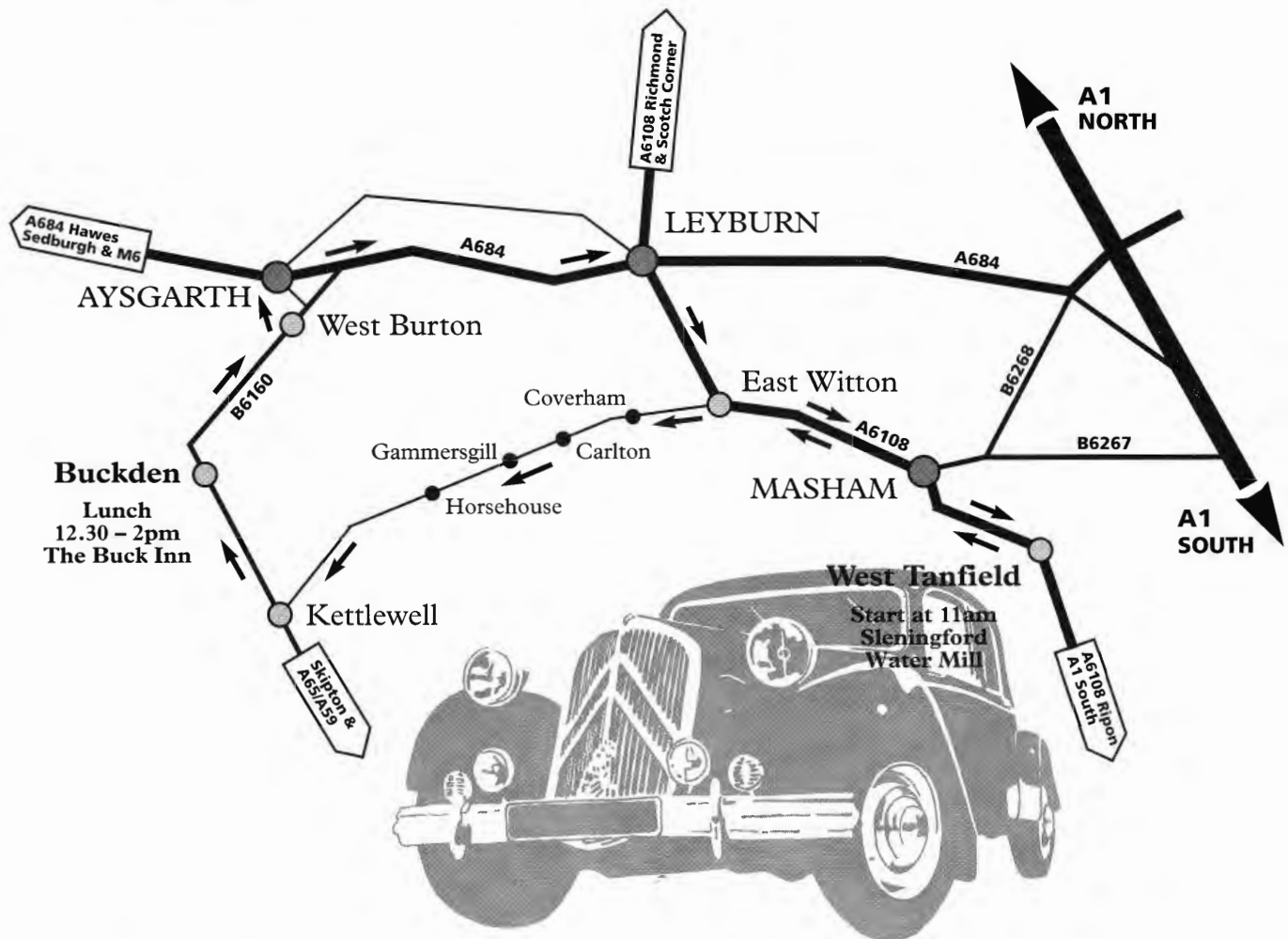
Sleningford Water Mill

nr Ripon, North Yorkshire

Located on the banks of the River Ure in the heart of the North Yorkshire countryside, the rally site is annexed to the fully equipped camping and caravan park at Sleningford Water Mill in West Tanfield

The map below also shows the route of the Convoy Tour on Saturday 12 June, (late arrivals can join en route)

For last minute information contact:
Lynn Clarke or Andy Cartwright on 0532 561286



THERE'S TROUBLE AT MILL!

...or there will be if YOU don't turn up

National and International Events

June 11 - 13

TOC Annual National Rally Sleningford Water Mill, nr Ripon, Nth Yorkshire

Let's face it, if you can't be bothered to go to this one, there really is little hope!
(Don't forget your flat cap and whippets!)

July 14 - 17

Tour of Brittany

Rumour has it that this will be the last tour of Brittany, as the organising club will disband on its completion. However, they do intend to go out with a bang (hopefully not a mechanical one). Starting and finishing at Chartres de Bretagne, this four day event will tour southern Brittany. The cost - 500ff per person (free for children under ten).

For application forms and information, please phone the Helpline. (Forms must reach the organisers before 14 June.)

July 2 - 4

CCC Annual Rally - Huntingdon Racecourse

Annual Summer Citroën Car Club Rally. A full programme of events is being organised.

Cost: Rally entrance £3 per car per day. Camping/caravanning £3 per unit per night.

(Hotel and B&B list available.)

Further information from the rally co-ordinator,

Brian Drummond, 5 Bishop's Close, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex BN6 9XU

July 15 - 18

Manx Challenge - Tour of the Isle of Man

Promoted by the organisers as an all round fun event, the itinerary includes hill climbs, treasure hunt, time trials as well as social events such as celebrity barbeque and gala evening.

We understand that entry fees will include ferry crossings and all accommodation.

Interested? More info from Stan Barker on the Helpline.

August 6 - 8

C.C.C. Scottish Rally

TOC members are duly invited to attend the Citroën Car Club (Scottish section) Rally at Doune Motor Museum. Further details from Ian Nairn tel 031 449 4569

August 22

Riverside Rally South Bank, London

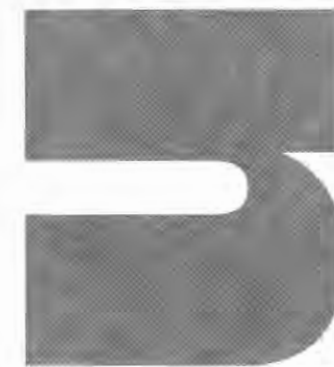
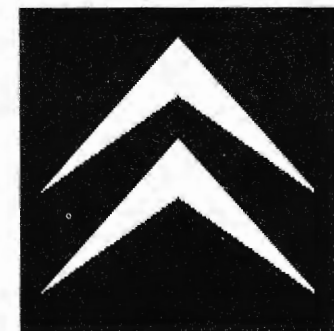
The third year for this growing event, organised by Classic Restorations, and expected to be the best yet.

September 4/5

Leeds Centenary - Festival of Motoring

An invitation has been extended to the TOC, CCC and 2CVGB to take part in this major rally for classic cars taking place at various locations in and around Leeds. A display area for some 60 cars has been allocated for the combined Citroën forces. If you are interested in taking part in this centenary celebration please contact Jim Rogers on 0274 545600

If you can help out at any of the events, please ring the Helpline, 0425 74476.



Dear John,

Enclosed are photos of tools and parts made over the winter,

Petrol tank filler pipe rubbers (large and small boot) £2.50 each + 30p s.a.e. (large enough to put rubber in).

'H' van radiator hose set (three hoses) £17.50 per set + £3.25 P&P.

Driveshaft inner bearing ring nut spanner (this has reinforced ring around teeth for those nuts that are very tight) the enlarged socket end is so that the distance piece between the wheel bearings supports the spanner in the hub when the brake drum nut is screwed on. Cost £28 + postage to cover 2.75lbs weight.

The spanner with the strange cross on it is for adjusting the ball pin in the track rod end. £11 + £1.50 P&P.

All spanners are made in tool steel.

More tools are being made to produce steering rack gaiters, steering rack pin rubbers and triangular door rubbers.

I hope this is of interest.

Mike Tennant
49 Hollywell Road
Mitcheldean
Glos
GL17 0DL



Balloons at Lightwater Valley (spot the Tractions!)



Dear Sir,

I am writing to ask for your assistance in locating the owner of a Citroën Traction Avant who would consider chaffering my girlfriend and I on our wedding day.

We are getting married in Ketton, near Stamford, Lincolnshire (my girlfriend's home village) and the reception is being held approx five miles away at Normanton, a village on the shore of Rutland Water. The wedding is not until August 1994, but I am keen to get the car sorted out quite soon.

I would, of course, be prepared to pay a reasonable fee for their trouble. I look forward to hearing from somebody shortly.

Yours sincerely
Neil Durno

Tel 0572 756444

I'm sure some helpful person will spring forward to Neil's rescue.

FLOATING POWER AND BALLOONS

Did you see the advert in the last FP for a meeting where TOC members were invited to meet with the Pennine Region Balloon Association?

Although it was very late notice, three TOC families turned up at the Lightwater Valley site near Ripon.

Rob and Kay Scott and children from Rotherham,

Pat and husband (sorry, I've forgotten the surname) from Hull

John and Bev Oates (me)

The Saturday was gorgeous – just right for ballooning. We got chatting to balloonist Adrian Sumner who offered to take us both up for a flight. It was wonderful – flying gently over the beautiful Yorkshire countryside in the spring sunshine, a truly unforgettable experience.

The tractionists enjoyed the flights, and the balloonists admired the Tractions.

Although we only attended in small numbers, everyone seemed unanimously in favour of organising another meeting, and having spoken to Ed Macholc, the director of the P.R.B.A., we hope to arrange a date for next year so as to advertise it earlier in FP to get more TOC members there.

DON'T MISS IT!

Yours, from 2000 ft
Bev Oates

Glad to hear at least a few members attended. Given better communication, I'm sure we can make this joint venture a regular event. It certainly sounds very worthwhile, assuming you don't suffer from vertigo!

Dear Sir,

Are there any back issues that talk about changing driveshafts, also anything about the CV joint type of driveshaft? If so, I'd like to see them if possible.

Take care
Dennis Bayer

There have been various articles on all aspects of driveshafts and their removal/fitting. I will endeavour to include some up to date information in the next FP.

New Members

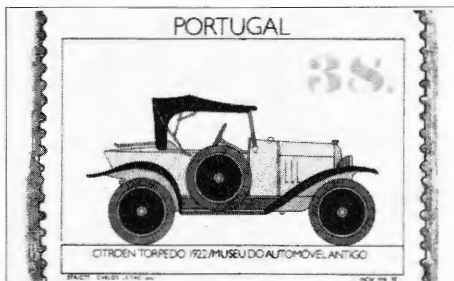
1151	P Burke-Kennedy	Blackrock	Co. Dublin
1152	P G Bamford	Grantham	Lincolnshire
1153	A Hillyard	South Godstone	Surrey
1154	S A Crown	Hampstead	London
1155	O Hyafil	N1	London
1156	K J Merry	Wetherby	Yorkshire
1157	N M Cotterell	Credenhill	Hereford
1158	W P Mallalieu	St George	Barbados
1159	G S Taylor	Swindon	Wiltshire
1160	A McAlister	Ballymoney	Co. Antrim
1161	A Idrissi-Sbai	South Shields	Tyne & Wear
1162	J Itingdom	Windsor	Berkshire
1163	R Pullen	Lincoln	Lincolnshire
1164	B Lockyer	Southampton	Hampshire
1165	A W M Roe	Byfleet	Surrey
1166	M N Millar	Perth	Scotland
1167	M R Lewis	Rickmansworth	Hertfordshire
1168	S Platts	Bradford	Yorkshire
1169	D J McKillop	Chelmsford	Essex
1170	D Noke	Whitehill	Hampshire
1171	B G Rose	Redhill	Nottinghamshire
1172	P Taylor	Preston	Lancashire
1173	C M Webb	Solihull	West Midlands
1174	P J Boyce	Belfast	N. Ireland
1175	H J Green	Tunbridge Wells	Kent

Dear John,

Congratulations on your first Floating Power, it is clearly different. Your editorial, and the reply to Mr Champ's letter, indicate you intend more changes, and would welcome material. I claim to have been a regular contributor, anyway, and as long as you spell my name correctly, intend to continue submitting stuff!

I now enclose a couple of articles that may help you fill the odd corners of the magazine.

The article on fluoroelastomers in burnt-out vehicles was made necessary after a scaremongering report on TV and radio. The facts, responsibly put by the Health & Safety Executive in its own publication, are much more realistic.



The Portuguese stamp is quite astonishing, surely. Has a Citroën ever been on a stamp before? Do we have any keen philatelists in the club who would know.

Best of luck with the task.
Alec Bilney

The article on fluoroelastomers appears in toctalk, but it is obviously sensible practice to take precautions when handling any corrosive or dangerous materials.

Olivier de Serres' book "Le Grand Vivre de la Traction Avant" shows two Traction stamps commemorating the centenary of André Citroën's birth. From the Republic of Gabon a 1934 7cv is depicted while an 11 Normale is shown on a 200f stamp of the Republic of Mali. It also mentions a faux cabriolet (coupé) on a stamp from the Congo.



▲ **Retrograde move?**
Citroën's concept car

Dear John,

Herewith enclosed are some Citroën photos I took at the Paris Retromobile earlier this year. There were some lovely cars there and I have included a picture of the racer driven by André Lefebvre in 1923 because of his involvement with the Traction together with one of Citroën's latest 'concept car' and the forerunner of the 'H' van.

Regards
Fred Annells

Dear John,

Just a short note to say that I have just taken delivery of the first of a batch of 10x31 Crown Wheel & Pinions manufactured by Roger Williams. It or they are now fitted into a rebuilt gearbox and I have to say that the quality appears to be excellent, no troubles having been experienced whatever with these new parts.

Having never driven a Traction with the higher ratio box (9x31 is the normal ratio) I have to say that the difference is terrific. Suddenly the Roadster is faster (84mph flat out), quieter and more economical. Why they were never fitted before I will never know because the engine is much less stressed and cruising at 65mph is no problem whatever. Having always been somewhat of a 'nuisance' on motorways I can now cruise along happily and even overtake in the outside lane occasionally!

From the driving aspect, a few more revs are needed to pull away in bottom gear and 2nd can be engaged at 5-10 mph. 2nd gear is transformed and becomes a very 'long' gear taking the car up to 45 mph quite comfortably before sliding into top. After that the car always feels as if it has plenty to spare and is very 'liveable' with.

I think Roger Williams has done a super job for the Club and should be congratulated.

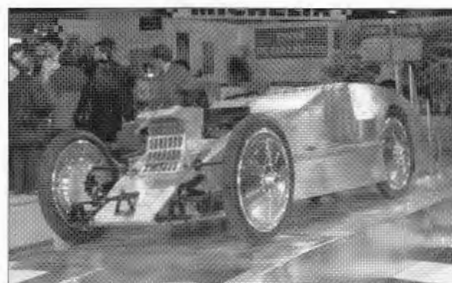
I thoroughly recommend a 10x31 CWP rather than bother with a 4 speed ID/DS gearbox with all the mechanical 're-engineering' which has to be undertaken. So get one and enjoy a **new** Traction experience.

Regards to all
David Boyd

PS

Thought the TOC stand at the NEC Classic Car Show was quite the best ever. Well done everyone.

Good news for anyone contemplating gearbox overhauls, new CW&Ps are available NOW through the Club Parts.



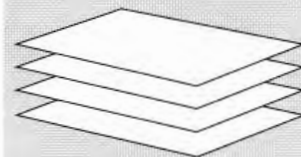
▲ **Lefebvre's racer**

▼ **Prototype H Van (G Van?)**



Please send all letters to the Editor:

John Starke
The Cottage
Harts Lane
Ardleigh
nr Colchester
Essex CO7 7QE
Tel 0206 231241
Fax 0206 230546



Dave Green

It is with much sadness that we have learnt of the the recent death of Dave Green. The following was received from Carole Green.

I know a lot of people knew him through our maroon and black Light 15 and several of our friends in the club were kind enough to attend his cremation on April 14th. He had made a marvelous recovery from a heart operation but died without warning from a brain haemorrhage.

He loved his Light 15 which he had renovated and owned for some eight years. With the kind help of friends, I shall get it on the road and try and carry on as Dave would want.

In case I haven't had the opportunity to thank those friends who sent letters and donations and attended on the 14th, can I say a big thank you, it means a lot.

Yours sincerely
Carole Green

Condolences to Carole and family from everyone involved with the club.

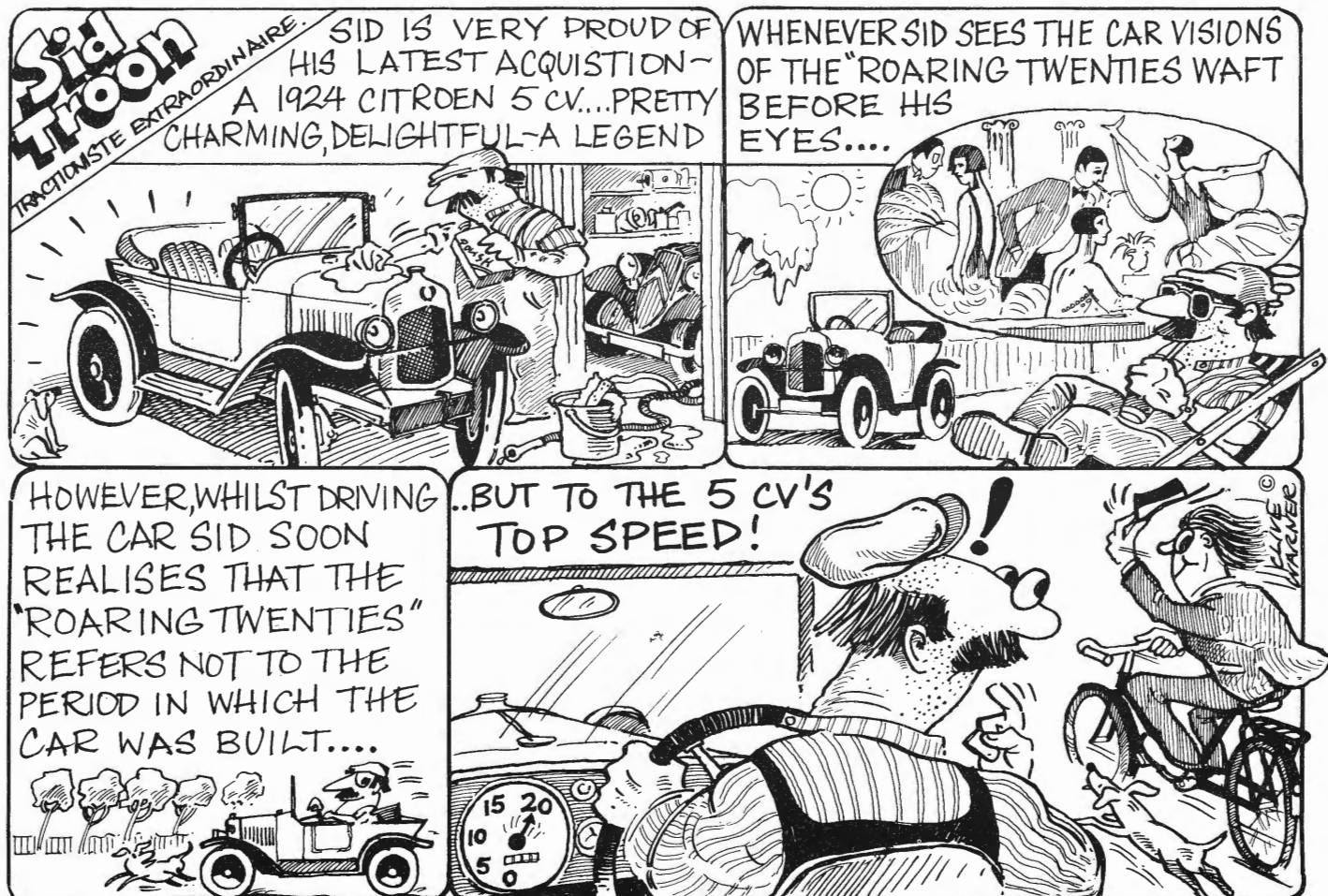
Dave was a longstanding member of the TOC we are all sorry to hear of his untimely death.

STOP PRESS+STOP PRESS+STOP PRESS SPORTS SHIRTS & SWEAT SHIRTS WITH NEW STYLE TOC LOGO NOW AVAILABLE:

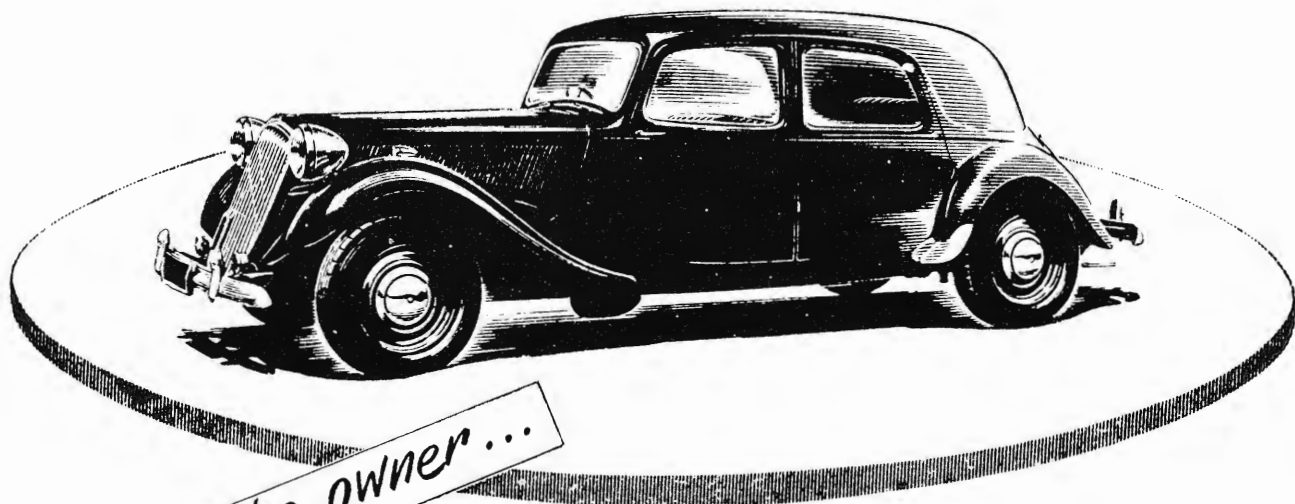
Posters	Les Tractions	£2.50	Tee shirts	(Traction print)	
	Traction 3D	£2.50		in red, white, blue or grey	
	Traction Avant blue/white	£1.50		children (26", 30", small)	£5.00
				adults (M, L, XL)	£6.00
Badges	chromed TOC grille badge	£15.00	Workwear	(blue polycotton with Traction motif)	
	TOC windscreen sticker	£1.00		overalls (42", 44")	£19.00
	enamel Traction brooch	£2.50		warehouse coat	£15.00
	blazer badge (3in square)	£5.00	Various	20 floating power covers	£4.00
	embroidered Traction badge	£5.00		greeting cards (pack of six)	£1.50
	blinkies (battery operated)	£5.00		ball point pen	£0.60
Models	Burago 1/24 scale die-cast 15CV	£7.00		balloons	£0.10
	Matchbox kit coupe/roadster	£4.00		mugs	£1.50
Sweat shirts	(embroidered Traction motif)			tea towels	£2.00
	in red, navy, grey, burgundy or white			golf umbrella (blue/gold)	£17.50
	children (26", 30", small)	£12.00		enamel plaque	£18.00
	adults (M, L, XL, XXL)	£14.00		Brooklands Gold Portfolio	£9.50
Sports shirts	(embroidered Traction motif)			Brooklands Manual 4cylinder	£19.95
	in red, navy, green etc			The British Citroën (by M. Bobbitt)	£23.95
	adults (38", 40", 42", 44")	£14.00			

please state alternative colours when ordering clothing

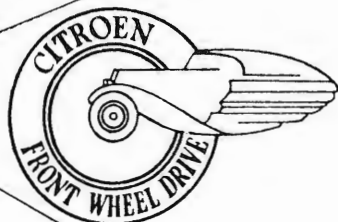
send orders to: **Steve Southgate**
34, Woodlands Avenue
Walsall
West Midlands WS5 3LN
telephone 021 357 1056



CITROEN *Viewpoints...*

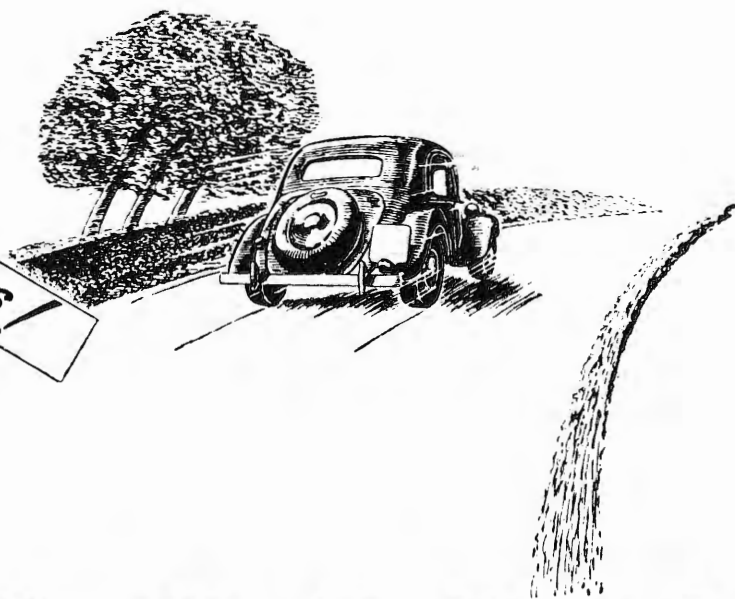


as seen by the owner...



... and by other motorists!

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INTEGRAL CHASSIS AND BODY
FRONT WHEEL DRIVE

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PRICES :
"LIGHT FIFTEEN" Saloon from £799. 7. 3
"SIX CYLINDER" Saloon from £1,150. 15. 0
(Including Purchase Tax)

CITROEN CARS LTD. SLOUGH BUCKS.
Telephone : 23811. Telegrams : Citroworks, Slough.

CARS FOR SALE

For Sale

1951 Slough Light 15 for restoration. This car is extremely sound with very little rust to shell and would make an ideal restoration project. Work has already started with a stainless steel exhaust and new wiring harness. £2750
081 866 9392 Roger Waters

For Sale

Unfinished project
1948 Slough Lt 15
All metalwork done (doors, wings & bodyshell) currently in primer
All complete
£2200 ono
0621 819384
Mike Pitcher

For Sale

1954 Large Boot Normale
Paris built LHD
Lots of work done
Low kilometrage
50,000francs
Bruno Choquel
010 33 44 25 19 89
50 km north of Paris

For Sale

1953 Big 15 Paris built LHD
Black in excellent condition having been fully restored to a very high standard both bodily and mechanically ie bare metal respray, re-built engine, front suspension, new driveshafts, all new brake cylinders complete re-trim etc no expense has been spared to make this car into what must be one of the best around. Realistically priced at £5500
0286 650 711 Bob Anderson

For Sale

I have recently heard from a friend in France who has told me about the following cars:
1954 11C
1956 11B
Both vehicles are complete with original documentation but require substantial renovation.
Contact me for further details.
R.J. Reed
2, Apsley Road
Plymouth
PL4 6PJ

For Sale

1953/54 Big Boot Traction
Paris built LHD
MoT and in running order
Photographs available
For further details,
please contact A. Bowman
0702 77444 (daytime only)

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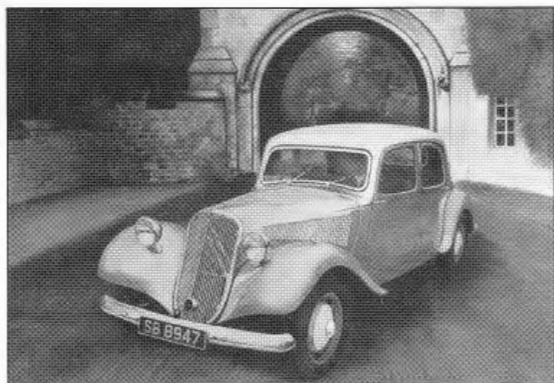
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photocopy?

081 866 9392 Roger Waters

Wanted

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Slough Light 15
Malcolm Bobbitt
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Wanted

'Floating Power'
Vol 13 Nos 1 & 2 and Vol 14
No4 to date.
Can anyone help with these?
Stan Platts 0274 683848

Wanted

for 1948 Slough Lt 15,
RADWAR front kick plates,
one (to three) chrome wheel
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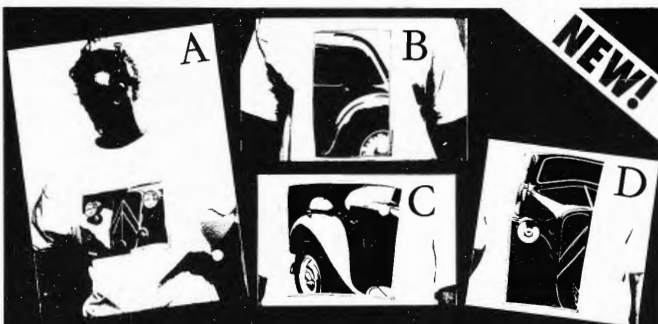
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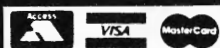
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