

A black and white photograph of a vintage car, likely a classic British model, shown from a front-quarter perspective. The car is white with a prominent vertical grille on the left side. A round headlight is visible on the right side of the front end. The license plate at the bottom left reads '430'. In the background, several people are walking on a paved area in front of a building with arched windows. The title 'Floating Power' is written in a large, stylized, cursive font across the upper right portion of the image.

# *Floating Power*

june/july 20

# toccontact



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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Club Tools are available in these areas

Approximate position

For details of area meetings, please contact your local organiser

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## Editorial

Summer has arrived and our first national event of the year has just taken place, the 2001 25th Anniversary Annual Rally centred on Wells in Somerset. This was an extremely well organised event with a variety of activities and sights. A full report will be in the next issue.

This month we have contributions from members recounting their first encounters with their newly acquired Tractions. Their enthusiasm is shared by us all in our pride of ownership of a vehicle which is a milestone in automotive engineering. The reprint from the April 1982 issue of The Citroën Magazine is as true today as it was then, perhaps even more so. Particularly when we see that prices start at around £250 for a survivor up to £4000 at the other end of the scale!

All contributions from members are always welcome and if you have any technical articles accompanied by photographs to explain your point, these would be gratefully received by other members.

## Front Cover



A Boyd Normale at the Annual Rally at Wells.  
Full report next issue.

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## Chairman's Note

June 2001

Paul De Felice

**South African Spares:** The purchase of the spares has now been approved in full by the committee and the negotiations are going well. We have agreed with the vendor what we want to purchase but the finer details have not been settled so therefore I cannot give full details at this time. Hopefully, soon I will be able to report to you when the spares will arrive here in England.

**Wings:** The manufacture of the new wings is proceeding slowly. The wings produced looked very good indeed. However, minor modifications are necessary to duplicate the original shape which is proving difficult.

**The Social Scene:** Now that summer is upon us and our cars are out of hibernation, I hope you will support the local events organised by each section. There's nothing like a convoy of Tractions driving along on a sunny day. It not only gives us owners pleasure, but also people passing by!

Which brings me to Brittany. What a wonderful four days of French cars, French wine, and French cheese! The Brittany rally is so successful that they actually have to limit our numbers so Peter Simper has offered to organise a Normandy Rally in September. I have no doubt that this will be a great success and will become a yearly event!

After the enormous success of the Champagne and Chocolates' rally last year, Richard and Esther Hooley have decided to follow it up with a rally in Brugge which I know will be a memorable event. Regulars will know how enjoyable these rallies are but we really would like to see some new faces. So get your passports out and come and join us! Details of the above rallies are in the magazine.

I really would like to see more letters from members in the magazine. This will generate correspondence from other members. *It's your magazine*, so why not put pen to paper and let us have your comments, views, tips, stories etc. With this being the 25 anniversary of the club any stories from the past would make very interesting reading.

## The Ally Pally Classic Car Show

On the 17th - 18th March the Traction Owners Club had a stand in the Classic Car Show at Alexandra Palace. There were three cars on the stand kindly supplied by Peter Simper, Lin Richardson and Tony Latchford. The club's new backdrop was used for the second time and was very much admired by everybody who visited the stand. The people from the adjoining stand were so impressed that they asked for the makers name and details. The show was very busy on both days with lots of enquiries and quite a few membership details were given out. There was also a visit from Mike Fleetwood of Fleetwood Mac who showed a great deal of interest in the cars. The auto jumble was large with lots of different stalls selling all sorts of goodies like picnic sets that were far too tempting to resist. A CD player found a new home as well so those of the club that go camping may also now be able to hold dances alfresco. Many thanks must also go to the happy band of helpers who manned the stand for the two days; Grahame Pitcher, Chris Bailey and Paul DeFelice.

## toccommittee

June 2001

The third committee meeting this year, was held on Thursday 6th June at the Express by Holiday Inn, Milton Keynes attended by 14 committee members, sub-committee members and area representatives, with 9 apologies for absence.

During the reports by the club's officers on club administration, Treasurer Tony Malyon announced that the annual accounts should be finalised soon, the stock take had been completed and the list of stock checked and valued.

Peter Riggs, Membership Secretary, reported that total membership grew by 70 new members in the last financial year. He suggested that the club changed to credit card-sized memberships cards and this possibility is now being investigated.

Keith Feazey, Club Shop mentioned the difficulties he has experienced trying to find a manufacturer to make TOC grille badges. He has a mould for sand-casting but, since the last manufacturer retired, has been unable to find anywhere that can produce the badges to the standard required. If anyone knows of a sand-casting company who might be able to manufacture enamelled badges, please contact Keith Feazey of the Club Shop.

Peter Riggs, who is also a member of the Perigord Club of France, said there was a possibility of the French club making a 5-day tour of south-east England in 2003, with an emphasis on steam railways, and he thought this might possibly link in with a TOC event. Results of his liaison with the French club, if considered of interest to TOC members, will be passed on via Floating Power.

On the spares front Bernie Shaw is expecting to hear from Steve la Rue in South Africa on the progress of the potential purchase of valuable Traction parts; and the spares stock list has now been produced and will be included with an issue of Floating Power.

The committee was asked to consider locations for the Annual Rallies of 2002 and 2003, even though we had not yet attended John and Lynda Ogborne's rally in Wells. There had been talk of holding the rally in 2002 in the west country and Tony Latchford was asked to discuss the possibility with Malachy Bell who had made a tentative offer. Ken Cocker was reported to have offered to hold the 2003 rally in Scotland, if it was felt members would attend and this will be discussed with him as the committee thought members in the north would enjoy holding this event in their area. As organising the annual rally was considered a daunting task, Paul de Felice and John Ogborne had decided to pool their experiences, tips and information to assist future organisers: this valuable aid should be available soon.

As this is the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the TOC, Fred Anells, one of the founder members, offered to disclose the story behind the breakaway from the Citroën Car Club in 1976 and the creation of the TOC and John Reynolds the Motoring Writer and Historian had agreed to write it up. The committee passed a motion to accept this very kind offer.

Regrettably inflation has caught up with subscriptions and a motion was passed to increase the membership subscription to £26 and the overseas airmail charge to £15, to cover costs. This means the spares levy will increase to £39 in future.

The date and time for the next AGM was provisionally agreed for the afternoon of 28th October 2001, at a venue to be announced, subject to the availability of a suitably-sized conference room. Details of officers retiring or standing for election will be published in Floating Power and any nominations for the committee or other posts should be notified to the General Secretary in accordance with the club rules. Proxy voting will be available, also in accordance with the rules of the club; members wishing to take part by proxy should contact the General Secretary whose contact details are shown on the inside cover of the magazine.

The meeting finished after 11pm and participants left to travel to points as far apart as Kent and South Wales having, once again, done their best for club members.

# Subscriptions

Thank you to all members who have recently renewed their subscription, there are now about 150 overdue. If you are one of these please send your payment off soon. If not received by 1st August this will have been your last issue of Floating Power and your membership will then be suspended.

Peter Riggs, Member Secretary

# Going Spare!

**A plea from the heart from Chris Treagust:** *Please, please, please* can members be considerate when calling the Spares Hotline. Like many of us Chris has a full time job and looks after our spares needs in his 'spare time.' So he is not instantly available to despatch orders immediately and can only work with the information we give him. Unlike a modern Motor Factor we must all remember that the club can only provide a parts service at a level it can operate as a one man, part-time operation. So don't expect an instant turn around. As with most things, orders are much more efficient if they are in writing together with part numbers and your address and telephone contacts as the interpretation of some messages is consuming time and causing some confusion. It is unfortunate but there have been recent instances of an ill-tempered attitude from isolated members and this is not conducive to smooth running. Please check with the Parts List issued in Floating Power last October or refer to the club web site on: [www.traction-owners.co.uk](http://www.traction-owners.co.uk)

# FBHVC News: Fuels Review

## Peter Henley, Legislation and Fuels sub-committee

It is now more than a year since the general sale of leaded petrol was banned in the UK. A review of the current petrol situation may be useful because the options open to the users of historic, petrol engined vehicles remain fairly numerous.

Firstly, and as always, the engineering option remains the best choice; if an engine has, or can be fitted with, hardened exhaust valve seats, they will provide certain protection against exhaust valve seat recession.

The next most effective protection comes with leaded petrol (BS 4040). To counter the ban on leaded petrol sales in this country, the Federation was instrumental in establishing the distribution of BS 4040 leaded fuel for limited sales within the maximum permitted by the new legislation. Both Bayford Thrust, BWOC and Associated Octel have established a network of outlets throughout the country. An up to date listing of the garages supplying leaded 4-star petrol was distributed with the December 2000 Federation newsletter. There is now a wide but rather uneven distribution; there are more garages in the north east and south west with less dense coverage elsewhere. It is hoped that more even distribution will come with time.

This leaded petrol sales network poses something of a dilemma for the historic vehicle user. To sustain the network in the long term, demand will have to be maintained at viable levels, yet the pump price of the fuel is comparatively high - typically at over 90 pence per litre while the highest price yet encountered was £1.09 per litre.

For those vehicles which are taken abroad for motoring events or holidays, it is most unlikely that leaded fuel will be available in any but a few countries. The national equivalents of LRP/LPG (lead replacement petrol/gasoline) most probably will be available but are unlikely to provide adequate protection. Therefore using leaded petrol at home offers no obvious solution for overseas motoring.

Finally there are the eight additives which have been tested on behalf of the Federation and endorsed. They were all listed in the December 2000 newsletter. These products are formulated to provide protection against VSR under all normal conditions and also have the advantage of being easily transported in the vehicle for world wide use. The only word of caution the Federation offers about the use of these endorsed products is that several different active substances are used and the effect of mixing them is not known - but it unlikely to be wise. In other words, select one brand and stick to it.



## REPAIRS & RESTORATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

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### TOC CLUB SHOP

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# Cracking on in Ireland

by Richard Sheil



***I thought it might be interesting to describe, in *Floating Power*, the first year of my Traction owning career. If any of the trials and tribulations that I have experienced can help others avoid similar pitfalls then so much the better.***

Late last summer I was able to realise a dream, that is to contemplate the purchase of a classic car. I had always liked Citroëns, having owned a GSA and a BX in recent years and having been dimly aware of Tractions back into childhood. In fact on a family holiday to Brittany in 1979 I had seen a few black Tractions flash by and this had lain dormant in my memory.

I did as much reading up as I could on Tractions, both in the classic car press and on the Internet, and began to form an idea of what I could afford. I discovered that there were a few Tractions in Ireland and arranged to go and see one, owned by Anselm Aherne to see if I was really interested and to let my wife and children see the type of machine I

had in mind. After that I was hooked. I replied to an advertisement for a car which was located in Cornwall and began to hatch a plan for a weekend dash to England. I was also in touch with John Gillard at this stage and he sent me a stock list.

I arranged to meet John on a Saturday morning last September and arranged to visit the car in Cornwall that evening. So together with my brother-in-law, Cormac we took the HSS to Holyhead one Friday evening. We then raced down to London in time for a pint just before closing time and spent the night with friends. On the Saturday we went to Classic Restorations and saw his Aladdin's cave of fabulous machines. Having looked at one car which was within budget we headed off for Cornwall to see the other car. This car was in similar condition to John's but the engine block had a crack in it and the engine felt pretty worn.

I negotiated a hefty discount as a result of the worn engine and was now the proud owner of

1955 Onze Normale with 12V conversion and headed off to drive as far as possible towards Fishguard. Unfortunately this was virtually impossible at night, in pouring rain, in rural Cornwall, with hopelessly perished wipers and a car that stalled at every junction. We decided to pack it in after about 10 miles and to start afresh next day at around 6am. This weekend was certainly turning out to be good fun but a little hectic.

The next day we managed to drive from Launceston to Fishguard in around 6 hours, which was around 250 miles. In fact after a breakfast stop I headed off in the Traction while Cormac finished his breakfast. It took him almost an hour to catch me on the motorway as I became accustomed to the fabulous driveability of a Traction, even one with a very worn engine. I even managed to overtake a few cars. We stopped every hour or so to top up with oil and water as steam was coming out of the side of the block. Maybe this crack was worse than I thought!

We made it back to Dublin late on Sunday night tired but elated and with aching limbs as a result of driving such a heavy car. I had driven almost 1000 miles over the weekend with the last 350 done in the Traction. The next day the car stopped dead with a leaking fuel pump. It was pure luck that we managed to make it home.

#### **SEIZED**

I repaired the pump and spent the next few weeks messing about with the car, trying to get it to run better in the hope that I could get a year or so out of the engine before a rebuild was needed. I hoped that I would be able to seal the crack in the block with araldite but it became clear that there was already a huge araldite patch on the block which had been cunningly hidden by engine paint. In fact the crack was over a foot long and I realised it was a miracle that we had made it home in one piece. About a month after getting the car the engine seized solid and had to be towed home. The car was left in the garage for a while, while I figured out what to do next.

I was fortunate to locate a complete engine in Freddie Vaughn's garage in County Offaly. Thank you to Norman Moore for giving me the tip off. So in early December I bought this engine which was of completely unknown provenance and quality. I reckon it must have been sitting outside in the rain, under a gate for at least ten years, judging by the amount of sand and gunge that came out of the engine when I took it apart. I had hoped that with these two engines (the one that had seized and this "weathered" one) that I would be able to use most of the parts again. It was not to be.

#### **SWISS CHEESE**

The new engine yielded a sound block and a few valves whereas the seized one was quite badly damaged inside. The pistons looked like swiss cheese with huge chunks missing and most of the rings completely shattered. How this engine ever ran I don't know.

Readers might be interested to know that I bought most of the spares for the engine in Holland ([www.ctaservice.nl](http://www.ctaservice.nl)). With Ireland being in the eurozone it was prohibitively expensive to buy parts in the UK as the punt has slipped below 75 pence. So, better to buy from a supplier in that zone too. It might be even more beneficial for you given the strength of sterling.

I had never rebuilt an engine before, although I had kept various bangers on the road in the past so I really enjoyed the challenge. With a copy of the original Citroën repair manual and advice from the parts supplier I started to rebuild it. I spent many cold mornings in the garage and succeeded in getting the engine back together and into the car by Easter.

The parts supplier had a fabulous parts book with exploded diagrams. This is also available at the above website. This was very useful when rebuilding the oil pump as it allowed me to put the pump back together correctly rather than reassembling it incorrectly as the last person to work on it had done. However in

spite of this very professional service they could not supply everything that I needed. For example they could not provide the seals between the liners and the block in the required variety of thicknesses. Luckily I had discovered that Roger Williams had these parts available.

#### **UNLEADED HEAD**

The engine went back together fairly straightforwardly. As the head was off the engine I had it converted to unleaded. However, you might be interested to know that I was in touch with a parts supplier in Pennsylvania ([www.bradnaussauto.com](http://www.bradnaussauto.com)) who specialises in Tractions. He had been driving his Traction around for 15 years or so on unleaded without converting it and had had no ill effects. It would seem that the suck it and see approach is probably the right one for those whose engines remain in one piece.

It should be said at this stage that I had access to a machine shop at critical stages of this job and found it invaluable. How those without manage, I don't know. There is always something that needs to be machined or modified. Even the old liners had to be pressed out of the block. There was no way they could be tapped out.

#### **SEIZED AGAIN**

I got the engine running by late April 2000 and decided to go on a test run with no bonnet or radiator grill fitted. I drove for about a mile when the car stopped with the engine totally seized again. Fortunately this was at the top of a hill and I was able to roll the car down hill back to its garage. The gear linkage had managed to fall off its bolts above the bellhousing. Then the starter pinion jammed into the flywheel which was the reason for the apparent seized engine.

While attempting to reattach the gear tower I managed to drop the fixing bolt into the clutch and so the gearbox had to come out again. I was starting to get quite quick at doing this type of job. Within about a week or so I got it all back together again, and went for a more successful test drive.

I took it to Mc Namara's who are the local Solex agent where they pronounced the carburettor completely worn out. More expense. But luckily when I brought the carb back to them a few days later to see if it could be repaired, they actually had a complete brand new carb casting in stock. Apparently the Solex 32PBIC was used in all sorts of cars including the Peugeot 403 and they had held onto their spares.

#### **CRACKING UP**

Just before removing the carb to send it to be rebuilt I also managed to crack the exhaust manifold. I hadn't realised the importance of having the exhaust manifold and the inlet manifold absolutely in the same plane as each other. The crack was repaired by brazing (I hope the repair will hold!) and the manifold refitted in time for the repaired carb. This time the two manifolds were machined absolutely plumb before fitting. However when they were fitted there was now an exhaust blow from

the manifold. It had been almost impossible to tighten all of the nuts which clamp the manifold to the head because of the restricted space. But I realised that the bolts were M8 which should have needed a nut with a 13mm head. For some reason Citroën had seen fit to use M8 bolts with 14mm nuts. Simply changing them for 13mm nuts made it possible to grip all of the clamping nuts properly and so the blow was gone.

#### **GO ON HOLIDAY**

I refitted the rebuilt carb a few days later and the car now wouldn't run at all. Time to call it a day and go on holidays for three weeks to the South of France where I saw no Tractions at all. And I was unable to remove the steering wheel from an H van in a scrapyard which would have done very nicely for my car. To make matters worse, the car we took to Perpignan, my father-in-law's Honda Legend, broke down with a broken gearbox. When the car was eventually repatriated it took almost a month to fix due to parts supply problems.

I was in a fix, I had to leave my modern car with my father-in-law and needed transport. The Traction had done about 5 miles under its own steam since the rebuild and now wouldn't run at all. I towed it to the carburettor specialist and paid them to get it going. A bit of a disappointment after working so long on the car to be unable to make it run at all! They did their magic and it was immediately pressed into service on the daily commute to work.

The car managed this with flying colours and I succeeded in making it to work every day in the month of July, without being too late! I only broke down twice! First time due to a simple electrical problem, which was solved, short term, by simply running a wire from the coil to the battery, thus hot-wiring the car. The second time the starter pinion jammed on the bendix within the starter. The collar, which stops the pinion running off the end of the bendix when the starter is energised, had become loose. This was fixed by tack welding the collar once it had been fully tightened.

This Traction has now done around 3000km since getting back on the road. I have been on the Citroën Car Club summer run in Enniskillen, which involved a round trip of around 450km in one day. This was a very enjoyable day out and it was nice to meet other Traction owners. Thank you Michael Wood for a good day. On that rally I had the chance to drive Malcolm Saggars' "Traction with least Attraction". This car has been converted to run on diesel with a BX engine and Skoda gearbox. It seems sacrilegious to have such a concoction but it is fabulous to drive. The car was completely devoid of any slack and drove beautifully. It was nice to have 5 gears in a Traction! Thank you Malcolm, and I hope you enjoyed your trip over to Ireland.

I have been on a few other runs closer to home. One evening the Blessington Vintage Car Club had a car treasure hunt which was great fun. As this was an evening event I ended up about 45 miles from home at



1030pm. I made it home within the hour the only problem being a very hot smell coming from the dashboard. I realised that the rheostat for the instrument lights was getting very hot due to the current being drawn by the instrument lamps and stopped for a moment to remove them. Problem solved for the moment.

After some investigation I discovered that the rheostat was burned out and I have simply taken it out of the circuit as full brightness of the instrument lights is inadequate anyway. But this was not the end of the problem. There was still a burning type hot smell whenever the headlights were switched on. By chance I realised that the ammeter was very warm. Puzzled by this I realised that all the current in the car must pass through this meter as it indicates the direction of current flow from the battery. This relatively high current was generating heat due to unwanted resistance at the gauge. Cleaning up the contacts at the gauge and at the light switch by loosening them, spraying with contact cleaner and retightening has had the desired effect. Not only that, but the car runs better too. I now have the full 12V or so at the coil rather than losing around 3V at the ammeter and the car is running better than ever. Touch wood.

I have also been on the Irish Veteran and Vintage Car Club's annual picnic run to Powerscourt in Co. Wicklow. This was most enjoyable and was an opportunity for the whole family to have fun in Daddy's "new old car".

I have done a thousand other small things to the car to make it run better. New shock

absorbers and greasing the suspension a few times have made the car much lighter to drive. I have begun to prepare a list of things to do to the car over the winter to make it drive better still. I will probably rebuild the gear linkage as there is considerable play in it and will change all the rubber boots in the suspension and drive train. This is all before I take the interior or bodywork in hand. To the uneducated eye the car doesn't look too bad but it could certainly do with a retrim and a partial respray as well as rechroming. It is enough to bankrupt you. However the good thing is that it doesn't all have to be done at once and I can spread it over the years so as to minimise the outlay and maximise the enjoyment. There would be no point in taking the car off the road in summer as these jobs can be done over the next few winters.

I have really enjoyed my year with the Traction. It certainly is good fun sorting out the problems that occur, but it is also fabulous fun to drive this car. It never ceases to amaze me how well such an old car design works. I can keep up with the traffic and sometimes cause a few surprises. One day on the motorway I actually overtook a brand new Mercedes. Once I had completed the manoeuvre I burst out laughing and had to pull back into the left lane and slow down, I was laughing so much. At this, the Mercedes sailed regally past.

It is fun to drive this car around with my children in the back. There is a lovely response from people when they see such an old car with three young children. It makes them, and me, smile.

I know very little of the history of the car apart from the fact that it spent time in the Charente in the mid 1990s. It had only been in England for around a year and had never been registered when I bought it. I have written to the last two French owners to see if they have any more information on the car and I await their replies with interest.

I intend using the car off and on, even sometimes for getting to work and for adventures further afield. Last weekend I did a round trip of 500 miles to Kerry and back. This trip was incredible with my confidence in the car growing with each mile. The car didn't need oil or water for the whole trip despite occasional forays to well over 70mph. By the way the only problem for me is noise. Does anyone know the simplest and most effective way to reduce the noise level at 60mph to a level where conversation is possible?

#### THE KNOWLEDGE

To conclude, this has been great fun and a most interesting project. It is very satisfying to puzzle out the problems that occur on such a great machine. Traction experts are few and far between in Ireland which makes keeping the car on the road even more fun. In retrospect I wonder if I made a good choice buying a car at the bottom of the price and condition range. I console myself with the fact that once each job is completed I have learned more about the car and I have also gained the knowledge that whatever has been repaired is now in good condition.





## 12th ICCCR USA

**In the pioneering spirit of André Citroën - whose cars were the first to cross the Sahara Desert, explore the impenetrable tracks of darkest Africa and travel the ancient silk route to China - the Amicale Citroën has decided to bring Citroën cars back to North America!**

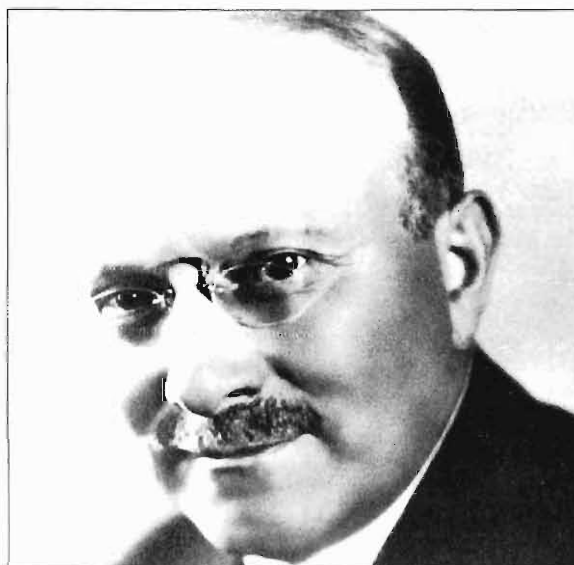
The 12th International Citroen Car Club Rally will be held on August 9th, 10th, and 11th, 2002 in New England.

Citroën cars from Europe will travel by a roll on / roll off cargo ship from European ports to the port of Boston.

North American participants will have their first chance to drive to ICCCR, since all of the previous meets have been held in Europe. A raid of North American Citroën owners will be run from the West Coast to the ICCCR.

The event will commence with a traditional ICCCR on August 9-11. A Raid to Montreal, duration of one to one and a half weeks, will follow and will include a Rendezvous with the Antique Cars Clubs of Quebec. Cars will return to Boston for shipping to Europe.

Work has begun on making this an event of epic proportions and I am pleased to announce that the Organizational Committee for the 12th ICCCR has been formed.



### Approx costing for ICCCR Aug 2002 USA

Cost in \$ and £ for USA as of 12th March 2001 @\$ 1.4263 to the £.

Student Housing: \$25 each per night .....	= £17.53
Hotel: 1* \$100/120 per room .....	= £70.11/£84.14
Hotel: 2* \$140/155 per room .....	= £98.16/£108.68
Hotel: 3* \$165 per room .....	= £115.68

#### Montreal Hotels

Hotel 2* \$90/120 per room .....	= £63.10/£77.12
Hotel 3* \$125/120 per room .....	= £87.64
Hotel 4* \$160/120 per room .....	= £112.18

#### ICCCR Registration Fee

Husband and Wife/partner@ \$35 per couple ..... = £24.54

#### Raid Montreal Registration Fee

Husband and Wife/partner@ \$15 per couple ..... = £10.52

Barbecue Friday Eve 9th Aug, \$35 per person .... = £24.54

Gala Dinner Sat Eve 10th Aug, \$60 per person .. = £42.06

Gala Dinner Wed Eve 14th Aug, \$60 per person = £42.06

*this being held in Montreal*

Treasured Car Shipping approx \$1,000 ..... = £701.00

*(Not bad when you consider how much a cross channel fare costs. Ed)*

All applications must be on the official form which is available from Graham Pitcher. Forms must be COMPLETED by the end of MAY 2002 and sent to the ICCCR USA for registration.

**All payments direct to ICCCR - not to Graham Pitcher**

More information available from Graham Pitcher TOC rep.

020 8360 9192

email: [hedleygraham@hotmail.com](mailto:hedleygraham@hotmail.com)

### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

from David Conway

#### 11th ICCCR - Chevetogne - The Last word?

At the meeting of Amicale Citroën International in Paris, we were given the amazing news that the organisers of the Rally in Belgium had made a staggering financial loss of 10 million Belgian Francs which equates to £160,000. This loss was carried by Citroën Belgium who had agreed to underwrite the event. It also resulted in the loss of almost all the A.C.I. funds which had been loaned to the Belgian Clubs to help the initial financing of the meeting. Consequently, there is no money available to help with the initial funding for the 12th ICCCR in Massachusetts. Apparently Belgian law does not require a published account for an event like the ICCCR. When the Treasurer of the A.C.I. asked Mr Paul Wills for a look at the accounts it was taken as a personal accusation. verb sap.

Please note that we should not blame "The Belgians" or "The Belgian Clubs" but solely The 11th ICCCR organising committee"

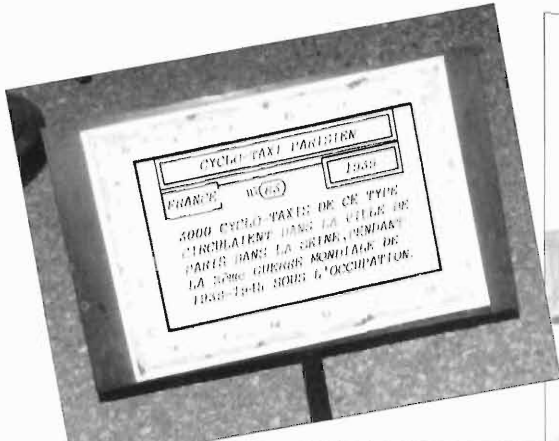
#### 12th ICCCR - Massachuetts, USA. 9 - 11 August 2002

Following the report previously published in the Citroënian (and to come in Floating Power), I can now report that bookings are being taken. To help in the administration bookings must be on the official application forms or a photocopy. (Please send SAE if you require one). Shipping costs for cars will be from \$1000 to \$1500 for the return trip, and cars will be picked up from Southampton, Le Havre, Zeebrugge & Bremerhaven. Cars should be ready for pick-up in New Jersey on August 7th and 8th for a 10 day crossing. The collection point in New Jersey is adjacent to Newark International Airport.

#### 13th ICCCR - Frauenfeld, Switzerland - 2004.

Plans are already well under way for this event.

# tocgallery



Following the front cover photograph on the last issue of *Floating Power*, the Editor spotted this museum piece in the Loire Valley. Apparently over 3000 of these bicycle taxis operated in Paris during the Second World War.



Spotted by Carol Bilney in the Barri Gothic, Barcelona recently. She doesn't speak Spanish but thinks it says, "because of my 70 years friends, I drive at 80"

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# CITROËN

Magazine



**“The design of the traction was so far ahead of its time that even the oldest versions are still practical propositions for everyday use. The most recent models were built almost thirty years ago, but that doesn’t stop you driving them quite fast, quite hard and putting up good average speeds”**

Motoring writers invariably deny suggestions that their life is packed with glamour – “Must beat the hell out of working,” is a favourite jibe – but it certainly does provide opportunities to drive some interesting cars. I have been fortunate enough to cover a few miles in assorted Rolls-Royces, Porsches, Lamborghinis and Aston Martins, but one motorised dream that had tantalised me for many years was not realised until last summer. One day in June, when the Welsh borderland was at its most beautiful, I finally had the long-awaited opportunity to get behind the king-sized steering wheel of a *traction avant* Citroën. It was a 1955 Big Fifteen – one of the last to be built in the Slough factory – and had been on the road since this father of three teenagers was himself contemplating adolescent pimples and that first, nervous encounter with a razor.

My children were not exactly bowled over by the car. To their eyes it just looked old... and much less exciting than our neighbour’s immaculate 1929 Bentley. But the mood changed when I outlined the *traction*’s remarkably long history, indicated the Citroën’s most salient features, and finally quoted Michael Sedgwick’s words in *Cars of the Thirties and Forties*, a commendable book published by Hamlyn at £12.50 in 1979. “Car of the Decade,” he said. “If there’d been international panels voting on such subjects in the 1930s, Citroën’s *traction* must surely have taken the title.”

Few people with any real knowledge of motoring history would seriously challenge that opinion. The decade in question certainly produced models that were faster, sleeker and a thousand times more appealing to the fortunate few with mink-lined bank accounts, but André Citroën’s contender, launched in Paris 48 years ago, was the great breakthrough, a technical *tour de force*, a dazzling beacon whose light clearly illuminated the road ahead.

Ideas had been refined since the turn of the century, but until the coming of the *traction avant* fundamental concepts had remained staunchly traditional. You based your car on a chassis frame – rarely anything more sophisticated than a couple of cross-braced girders – mounted the engine in front and directed its power to the back wheels. The typical suspension system had advanced only a few steps since the days when horsepower involved hay-burners with four legs. Braking tended to be a push-and-pray operation that was marginally more effective than lashing a

**“Prices start at around £250 for a sadly neglected survivor, but at the other end of the scale you must part with nearer £4,000”**

boulder to a rope and tossing it out of the window. The decade may have been notable for some spectacularly beautiful styling, but the average family car tended to be about as aerodynamic as a medieval cathedral and wasted a great deal of what little power lurked beneath its lofty, square-rigged bonnet.

Citroën’s epochal *traction avant* set new standards. The bold design, initially derided by many pundits as far too clever to survive, pioneered concepts that were destined to become commonplace when the rest of the world finally got the message. As its name

implies, the *traction avant* had front-wheel drive. It abandoned the old-established chassis frame in favour of monocoque construction, offered smooth, sure-footed independent front suspension, provided hydraulic brakes and wrapped the whole package up in a smart, wind-cheating hull whose efficient styling blended adequate performance with wallet-watching economy.

Today’s motor-industry jargon would describe the *traction* as a fine example of packaging. Pioneering the chassis-cum-body type of construction, combined with front-wheel drive, enabled the engine to be mounted closer to the ground, which lowered the centre of gravity and worked wonders for the car’s

**“The tractions built at Slough catered for British tastes – they had sunshine roofs, heavier seats with leather upholstery, walnut dashboards”**

handling and roadholding. Confining the engine and transmission to the same compartment also made the Citroën exceptionally roomy in relation to its overall dimensions, as did the wheel-at-each-corner layout. The car’s height, or lack of it, removed the need for running boards – steps that bridged the gap twixt front and rear wings and were a throw-back to the stagecoach days. Many things have changed since the *traction* made its sensational and controversial debut in 1934, but today’s futuristic Citroëns still pay tribute to the trends established by their illustrious ancestor.

“It was a very significant car, and its historical importance is definitely one of the things that appeals to people,” I was told by Tony Hodgekiss, chairman of the thriving Traction Owner’s Club. “It really represents the first time that all the “modern” features were combined in the same package. It’s a nice-looking car, too, and has great handling qualities that make it good to drive rather than just another box on wheels.”

The design was so far ahead of its time that, as Tony Hodgekiss points out, “even the oldest versions are still practical propositions for everyday use. The most recent models were built almost 30 years ago, but that doesn’t stop you driving a *traction* quite fast, quite hard and putting up good average speeds. The concept is still remarkably modern – particularly when you consider the sort of cars that were being built by other manufacturers before the war – and lots of our members run a *traction* as their everyday transport. It was intended to cruise at about 60 mph with four people on board, and that’s a pretty reasonable rate of progress even by 1982 standards.”

Founded in 1976, the TOC now has about 260 members who own at least twice as many cars between them and embrace most of the many variations on the *traction* theme. Those whose knowledge of the long-running model is nothing more than skimpy tend to think in terms of just the Light Fifteen, but there were Big Fifteens, nine-seater *familiales*, jaunty *cabriolets*, delectable two-seater convertibles and even a *commerciale* hatchback to underline the fact that there’s nothing new under the sun. The really lusty versions had 2.8-litre, six-cylinder engines – plus hydro-pneumatic rear suspension if they were made

towards the end of the *traction's* career – and were popular with cops and robbers alike.

A few TOC members have examples of the original 7A, the model that started it all in 1934, and the number of *tractions* in Britain is actually increasing, albeit slowly, as enthusiasts ship them over from France. Prices start at around £250 for a sadly neglected survivor, but at the other end of the scale you must part with nearer £4000 – maybe a good deal more for one of the really rare, coveted types – if you want something sufficiently immaculate to put plenty of *concours d'élégance* trophies on the sideboard. They might look high, but we are considering bargain-basement figures when you know the sort of money now being exchanged for some old cars with nothing like the Citroën's inherent merit and unquestioned status in the annals of automobile history. It is a simple case of certain makes and models being more "fashionable" than others, regardless of what they have to offer.

Like most of its predecessors – the cars that put André Citroën on the road to fame soon after the first World War – the *traction* was built in England as well as in France. I asked Tony Hodgekiss if there was anything to choose between them:

"It depends on personal tastes," he said. "Some people like the 'French' cars because they are examples of what the *traction* was originally. The versions built at Slough catered for British tastes. They had things like a sunshine roof, heavier seats with leather upholstery, and a walnut dashboard. Their counterparts from across the Channel looked a bit more spartan. Some people reckon that the

*"André Citroën would have been delighted with the way his brainchild became one of the stars of that superb BBC television series 'Maigret' "*

'French' cars go better, because they weigh quite a bit less, but I tend to be a 'British' fan because I like the sunshine roof. Enthusiasts from Europe will pay quite a lot for a Slough-built *traction* because they obviously regard it as exclusive and rather different."

One of the TOC's stalwarts is John Gillard, a former accountant who now runs Classic Restorations, and the club's spares service, from literally underneath the arches of Waterloo Station, in Cornwall Road, London SE1. In partnership with Bryn Hughes, he devotes himself exclusively to *tractions*, plus any Citroëns built before 1934, and handles anything from a complete rebuild, from the ground up, to supplying nuts and bolts.

"I bought my first one in 1970 – it was a 1939 Light 12, built in Slough – and really started this business when I realised that there was nobody catering for the needs of *traction* owners," he explained. "It's a fairly simple car to work on, providing you have the right tools, but some things are quite expensive. The engines have white-metal bearings, for instance, and are rather costly by modern standards, but they last and last and last."

What should you look for when contemplating the purchase of a *traction*? The most serious problem is body-rot, according to John. For all its merits, the monocoque design poses considerably greater problems than the

chassis-plus-bodywork alternative when years of neglect start taking their toll.

"You can rebuild them, of course, but it's an expensive proposition. So that's what prospective buyers should really look for. Don't be fooled by the paintwork – it's the condition underneath the paint that's really important." What's the *traction* got that makes it so special? "To some it's the technical specification. Others put the overall design at the top of the list – the basic appeal of the styling. A high proportion of *traction* owners are artistically-orientated people who just love the car for its looks. I suppose everyone would love to have a roadster version. That's a real fun car, and very rare, but I use a *commerciale* hatchback for the business because it's got so much space and is so very practical."

Ironically, the car whose sales eventually topped 750,000 and made the company one of the Big Five manufacturers in Europe by 1939 – just 20 years after the first Citroën was produced – also brought André Citroën's empire to its knees. Creating the *traction* was probably the most ambitious project of its kind that had ever been attempted at that time. It swallowed huge amounts of money and was financed by numerous loans. A great gambler as well as a far-sighted organisational genius, André Citroën risked everything on what he knew would prove to be the car of the future. But one of the relatively small creditors demanded payment and started a panic that resulted in Michelin taking the company over. The *traction* survived the storm, but Citroën

himself died midway through 1935. He was only 57.

A man whose many talents included a flair for publicity – he once spelled out the Citroën in lights down the length of the Eiffel Tower – Citroën would have been delighted the way in which his brainchild became one of the stars of that superb BBC-TV series based on Georges Simenon's detective stories. In the late Rupert Davies played the title character, and the haunting theme music created the perfect atmosphere, and the opening shots – a man struck on the wall to light the detective's pipe – remain vivid in the mind's eye after more than 20 years. I gave my wife's memory the gentle of jogs before writing this. The word *traction* had evoked nothing more than a shrug of incomprehension, but the car identified the moment I mentioned the series. "I know what you mean. You're talking about that big, black Citroën."

To her, as to millions of others, the *traction* will always be the car that sped Inspector Maigret around Paris. Just like Simenon's most famous sleuth, the "Maigret Citroën" has a character strong enough to transcend the realms of fiction and achieve an even higher status. He has become a legend.

*Interested in joining the Traction's Owners Club? If so, contact Maria Hodgekiss, 94 Oving Road, Chichester, West Sussex. Annual subscription is £13. A fine array of fascinating cars will be on parade at Glendevon Castle in Scotland when the TOC stages its annual rally on July 8-11.*

# LA CV CITROËN



PRIX: 17.700 FR\$

DE CONCEPTION ENTIÈREMENT NOUVELLE

TRACTION AVANT - "MOTEUR FLOTTANT" A CULBUTEURS  
ROUES INDEPENDANTES - FREINS HYDRAULIQUES  
SUSPENSION PAR BARRES DE TORSION  
CHASSIS-CARROSSERIE "TOUT-ACIER" MONOPIECE  
VOITURE INTEGRALEMENT AERODYNAMIQUE  
VITESSE : 95 KM. POIDS : 900 KG. CONSOMMATION : 9 L. AUX 100 KM.

LIVRAISON IMMEDIATE

*One of the original 1934 'Launch' advertisements that appeared in the French National Press*

## THE Motor GUIDE To Makes and Models

Development Histories and Specifications of British Cars, 1945 to 1956 with selected Continental Cars. By David J. Culshaw. Published 1959.

### CITROËN Citroën Cars, Ltd., Trading Estate, Slough, Bucks.

Although French in origin, Citroën cars have been assembled in this country for over 30 years, using a high proportion of British-made components and fittings to complete the cars based on pressings and mechanisms imported from the home factory in France. Since Citroën Cars, Ltd., is also a British-registered company and a member of the S.M.M. & T., it is justifiably regarded as part of the British motor industry.

The chief Citroën model of the post-war period, the Light Fifteen, is virtually identical with the model introduced in 1938 and really owes its origin to the Super Modern Twelve, which appeared in 1934 as a car far ahead of its time and its rivals; the design has remained basically the same since then. From its layout of front-wheel drive, low build and "a wheel at each corner" were derived its tradition of exceptionally good roadholding, stable cornering and its characteristically rather heavy steering, features which apply with even greater emphasis to the bigger Six developed from it. One of the earliest examples of integral chassis/body construction, the Light Fifteen (and its bigger brother) had torsion-bar springing all round, with wishbone I.F.S., and a rigid beam axle at the rear. Long-stroke engines were used with identical dimensions (78 x 100 mm.) for the 4 cylinders of the Fifteen and 6 cylinders of the Six. Maximum speed and fuel consumption were about 75 m.p.h. and 25 m.p.g. for the Fifteen and 85 m.p.h. and 19 m.p.g. for the big car.

Traditional in appearance, having separate mudwings and headlamps and a shallow, flat windscreen (which could be opened on early post-war models), the two basin models performed in a firm, taut, long-striding fashion which gave them a "vintage" appeal and also better suited them for the man who wished to cover long distances than to the mainly town driver.

An unusual feature was the gear lever projecting from the fascia panel, an inter-lock preventing the lever from being moved until the clutch pedal was depressed. Elimination of the transmission line allowed a very flat, unobstructed floor to be used, the Six being especially roomy, and the lack of generous luggage room was made good in October 1952 when squarish luggage boots were added at the rear of the cars. At the same time the Big Fifteen, a development of a pre-war favourite, was introduced, using the main body of the Six and the engine and front part of the Fifteen to provide a car combining great roominess with 2-litre economy of fuel.

Few major changes were made to the Light 15 during its life, the substitution of louvres for hinged vents on the bonnet dating from the beginning of 1947, and the introduction of pendant clutch and brake pedals from September 1949.

In October 1953 the remarkable 2 CV model

became available in this country, following on its considerable earlier success in France, where its 4-seat roominess, simplicity, exceptional riding comfort, ruggedness and general go-anywhere abilities were counted more important than its starkly plain appearance or its maximum speed of about 40 m.p.h. and fuel consumption was in the 60-70-m.p.g. range. This latter-day equivalent of the Ford Model T was offered with a larger engine in the following year, maximum speed going up to about 48 m.p.h. with only a slight falling off in fuel economy. Despite the fact that the Slough-built version was better finished and equipped than its French original, the car did not attract a large following in Britain, as the loading of import duty resulted in a total price of around £600. The novel specification included a flat-twin four stroke engine driving the front wheels, separate (and quickly removable) tubular seats and thin, flat doors, all-independent yet interlinked suspension, and a "push-and-twist" gearchange. In September 1955 a semi-automatic clutch was offered as an option.

In 1955 the announcement of the DS19 Déesse ("Goddess") shook the motoring world as it is seldom shaken, for this was another Citroën

that was so far ahead of its time as to merit the description revolutionary. Although the 2-litre engine retained the dimensions of the Light Fifteen, it was almost entirely new, and developed nearly the same power as the Six, giving the car a maximum speed of just on 90 m.p.h. The low, sweepingly curved body had a reinforced plastic roof and there was a futuristic theme in the styling throughout. Using front-wheel drive like its predecessors, the DS19 had oleo-pneumatic all-independent, self-levelling suspension which could be controlled to raise or lower the car and also to provide automatic jacking, the basic springing system having been used on the rear of the later Six models and having provided on them a foretaste of the extraordinary contempt for bad roads which the DS19 exhibited. The fascia-mounted gear lever required only finger pressure to operate, being power assisted and the clutch being automatic, while servo braking reduced all driver effort to the mere touch of a button on the floor. The steering, too, was power-assisted and the steering wheel itself had a single spoke as a safety measure. Numerous other interesting features were used in the design, and the deeply comfortable upholstery (especially on British-assembled models, which appeared in 1956) and unusually good all round visibility were typically practical aspects of a unique motorcar. And contrary to popular opinion at the time, the apparent complexity of the mechanism has in fact not led to major maintenance problems or expensive component failures.

Model and Type	No. cyl.	Bore mm.	Stroke mm.	Cap. c.c.	CR	b.h.p.	Vlvs.	Carbs.	Grs.
Light 15 (Type PVS)	4 dr. sal. <sup>1</sup>	4	78	100	1,911	6.5 <sup>2</sup>	56	o.h.v.	1 So 3
Six (Ser. 15c) <sup>7</sup>	4 dr. sal. <sup>1</sup>	6	78	100	2,866	6.5	76	o.h.v.	1 So 3
Big 15 (Type PVL)	4 dr. sal. <sup>1</sup>	4	78	100	1,911	6.5	56	o.h.v.	1 So 3
2CV (Type A)	4 dr. cab.	2	62	62	375	6.2	9	o.h.v.	1 So 4 <sup>5</sup>
2CV (Type AZ)	4 dr. cab.	2	66	62	425	6.2 <sup>10</sup>	12	o.h.v.	1 So 4 <sup>5</sup>
DS19	4 dr. sal.	4	78	100	1,911	7.5	75	o.h.v.	1 We <sup>3</sup> 4 <sup>6</sup>

Wbase ft. in.	O.L. ft. in.	O.W. ft. in.	O.H. ft. in.	Widest track ft. in.	Tyre size	Dry wt. cwt.	Introduced/Discontinued	Average list price (£)	Model
9 6½	14 7½	5 5¼	5 0	4 6	165-400	21	Oct. '45/Oct. '55	882	Light 15 (Type PVS)
10 1½	15 11¼	5 10	5 1	4 10½	185-400	26	Oct. '48 <sup>7</sup> /Oct. '55	1,335	Six (ser. 15c)
10 1½	15 6½	5 10	5 0	4 10½	165-400	22¼	Oct. '52 <sup>9</sup> /Oct. '55	1,116	Big 15 (Type PVL)
7 9¼	12 4¼	4 10¼	5 3	4 1½	125-400	10	Oct. '53 <sup>8</sup> /Sept. '54	565	2CV (Type A)
7 9¼	12 4¼	4 10¼	5 3	4 1½	135-400	10	Sept. 1954 <sup>1</sup>	598	2CV (Type AZ)
10 3	15 9	5 10½	4 11¾	4 11	165-400	22	Oct. 1955 <sup>1</sup>	1,486	DS19

Notes: 2CV has 6-volt electrical system. <sup>1</sup>Sliding roof optional. <sup>2</sup>6.2 before 1952. <sup>3</sup>Twin-choke Ze type from 1957. <sup>4</sup>2 in. shorter before Oct. 1952. <sup>5</sup>Three plus "overdrive" top. <sup>6</sup>Automatic clutch and power-assisted gearchange. <sup>7</sup>Ser. 6H with oleo-pneumatic rear suspension superseded ser. 15c in Oct. '54.

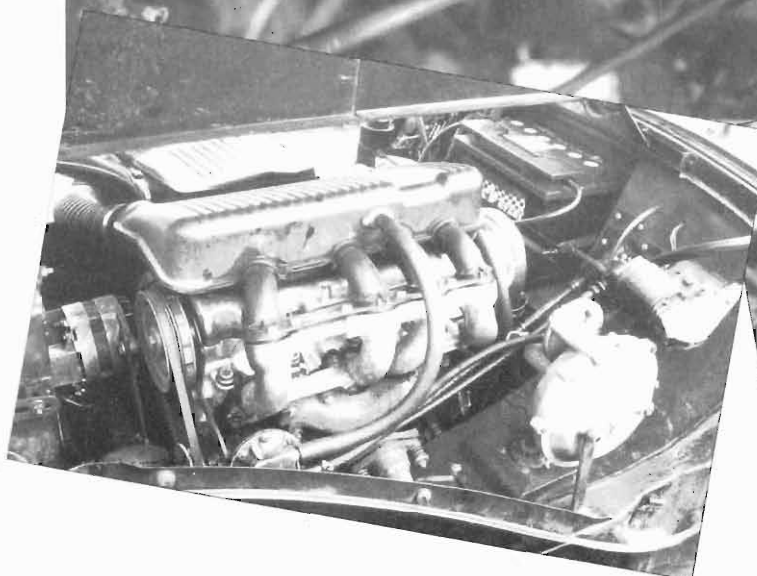
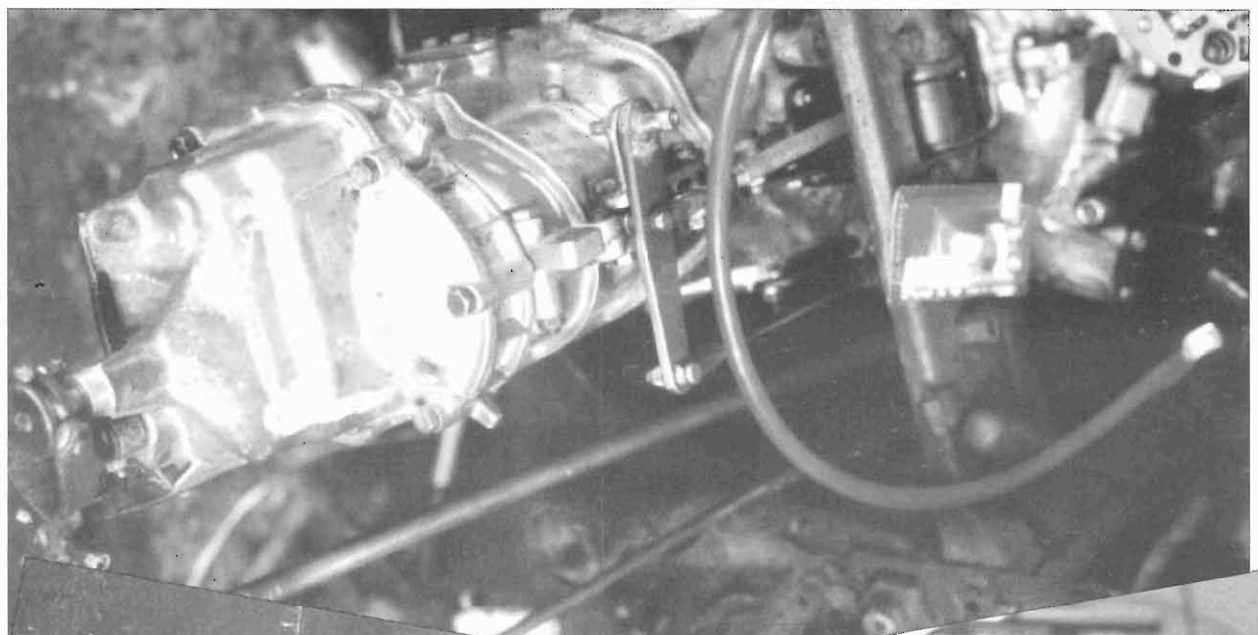
<sup>8</sup>Introduced first in France in 1949. <sup>9</sup>Introduced in France in 1947. <sup>10</sup>CR increased to 7.0 from Nov. '55

## Diesel Fitter

We in the South West have been truly Saggered! Although quiet during the winter months certain events have caused some excitement. A visit from Malcolm Sagger and his diesel Light Fifteen to do another conversion - this time on an Onze Normale - caused a number of members to visit Holbeam Cottage to gaze in wonder as he cast his spell and enthralled us with his knowledge. In just four days we had a diesel traction with a Skoda gearbox and those wonderful drive shafts started and tested. It was all too much! The car will be on the road by the time you read this article. The conversion is amazing; no vibration and it drives so well. It has been suggested that we present both cars at the NEC this year, and it would be interesting to hear your views.

Another member to get his car on the road is Gordon Smith; his Onze Normale should also be up and running by the time you read this. Gordon brought his car as a very basic shell and boxes of bits some years ago. It has been a great credit to him and his tenacity just finding out where everything goes.

*Malachy Bell*



## Club "le longue dent de loup"

For those in the know; the "club" is for those of us who converted our beloveds to four speeds using a post 1963 ID 19 gearbox. I wrote an article last year about the problems I had been experiencing but perhaps it was too cynical because the gods decided they hadn't finished with me yet.

I had the box converted using a Philippe Chauvet kit and whilst it is idiosyncratic, it did the job for me.

Unfortunately, the nose bearings wore out in less than 1000 miles. The first set of replacements managed little more than 1500 kms before failing. (I'm sorry, I forgot. Europe demands we talk in metric these days.)

The second set of replacements lasted oh, I don't know, something like 1000 kms before the retaining bolt for the top bearing came undone. This is not a reflection on the workmanship of the mechanic since I believe this critical piece of the car was designed with a penchant for falling apart. I'll come back to this bolt later. In any event, a further 2000kms and they had failed again.

Fortunately, I live fairly close to a club member who knows his stuff and so once again, the bearings were changed. All well and good, except I had to drive 120 kms home. (Yes. That's ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY!!!)

This lengthy trip produced not only the beginnings of bearing wear noise but also a rather funky cha cha cha tapping.

Now although this may be hard to believe, the strongest part of your car is the ball bearing; but my funky ball bearings were disintegrating. In fairness, the money for these was returned without question; well, maybe one about my gearbox, but still the money was promptly slipped back into my palm.

I have now personally replaced both bearings and they have been test driven over a full one kilometre. One has to do these things in stages. So what have I learned?

**1. The provenance of any spare part is critical. As the availability of original kit reduces and re-manufacture becomes the only option, one must be extremely careful as standards vary wildly.**

*For example, the penultimate set of bearings raised an eyebrow as the inner race was inset and not flush with the outer race. Whilst the inset was only a few millimetres, it was sufficient to cause doubt. Additionally, the ball*

*encapsulation, which also failed, was less substantial than the SNR sets I have just installed.*

*I'm sure there are members out there thinking, "Yes I've seen it all before." My question is, then: how do you feel about setting up a central register of preferred manufacturer/supplier parts?*

*I don't mean, "Oh I get all my stuff from CTA in Holland." I mean a register giving the origin of the product, name, reference number, etc. and where it can be obtained. The agreed list could be published, say, once a year in the magazine, although clearly no recommendation could be inferred from publication as it would be caveated, just as the technical items are.*

*Would this list be long (excuse the pun) or very short? For example, I would rather pay one of our most experienced (engineering,) club members to compile the list from members' submissions than pay for the dubious front wing development. Is there anyone out there good enough who doesn't want paying? I seem to have paid the same price for each set of bearings, so by supporting good quality suppliers we stand a chance they may stay in business.*

**2. The long bolt-head design does not facilitate easy removal without a specially-made tool to fit the two flats, and is far from ideal. I spoke to Roger Williams for the first time about the problems I had been experiencing and he very kindly reshaped this Citroën nightmare into a recognisable hexagonal head.**

*Roger also supplied me with a hexagonal 32mm, three-quarter inch drive socket (not the poorer 12 sided jack of all trades socket) with the chamfered face, or lead-in removed. The chamfer may make it easier to fit the socket on the bolt quickly but its drawback is that it reduces the effective area on the bolt head faces which take the loading. It also raises the chance of the socket slipping off just when you're applying maximum torque.*

**3. I was nonplussed by the top bearing coming out 5mm just when maximum torque is finally applied to its retaining bolt. With zero experience in gearboxes I thought I was doing something wrong. I knew that when tightened, the bolt drew the shaft towards the front of the gearbox but couldn't quite get my head round this final movement being caused by the shaft moving on the helical gears. But it does. Once tightened, the bearing just needs to be pushed back into place.**

*The cover is obviously important in preventing this movement and due to the accuracy necessary in setting up a gearbox, the fitting of this cover over the bearing shoulder is critical.*

*Accepting advice, I have used grease on the paper gasket rather than the proprietary blue gunk which creates a thicker sandwich and undermines the design tolerances. Under pressure and heat, the grease impregnates the gasket, forming a perfect seal. You may wonder what difference an extra millimetre makes but in this location, I'm told, the answer is "quite a lot".*

**4. There is, of course, one critical point I haven't mentioned. When tightening the bolt, the only effective way of achieving maximum tightness is to lock the gears together. With the gearbox top removed this is reasonably straightforward, or so I'm told. However, one of the idiosyncrasies of the Chauvet conversion is that you can engage reverse and first gear simultaneously, at least on mine you can. To attempt the tightening of this bolt without locking the gears invites disaster, because you are not tightening against something solid. Also, thoroughly clean and be sure to apply Locktite 638 liberally to the top bolt and bottom nut before refitting.**

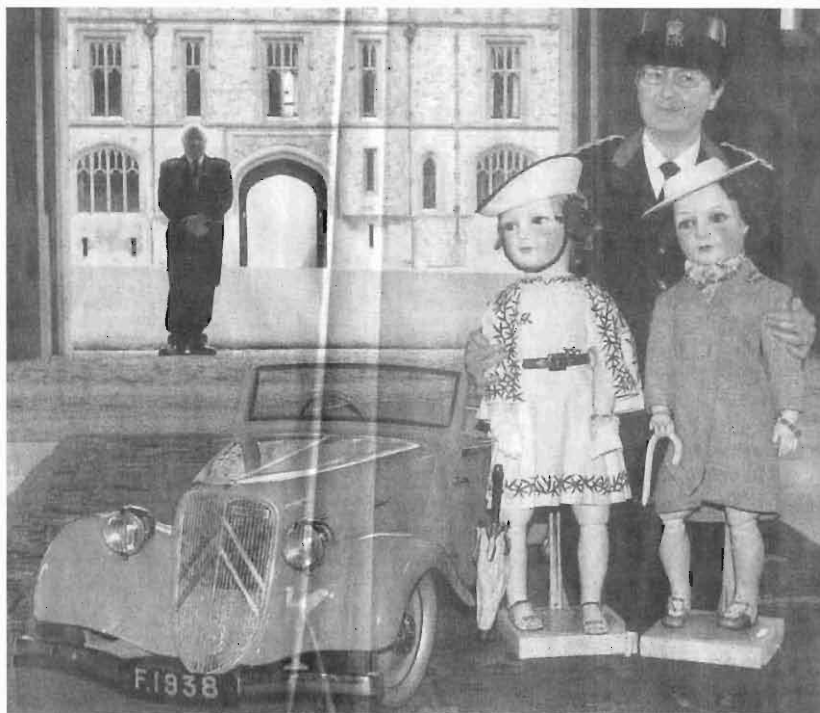
My apologies to those of you who knew all the above, but there are many of us out here who haven't rebuilt dozens of gearboxes to whom any information is welcome. Of course, you may see glaring errors in what I've said or done so do feel free to criticise or write a more instructive article, or volunteer to compile the above list.

I really hope the new "good quality" bearings solve my problems, as failure may indicate some other fault in the gearbox. I have been hearing on the grapevine noise which disappears when you push the clutch pedal to the floor you may wish to re-read the above more carefully.

One final thing. How did I know it was bearing noise? Well experience helps, but a simple test is, if you hear a spinning, rumbling noise which disappears when you push the clutch pedal to the floor you may wish to re-read the above more carefully.

Stewart Watson





*Designer dolls given to the Princess Elizabeth and Margaret are on display at Windsor Castle along with their sports car.*

## Royal dolls get their car back 50 years on

### French diplomatic gifts are finally reunited, reports Caroline Davies

TWO remarkable dolls, symbols of Britain's strong alliance with France on the eve of the Second World War, were reunited yesterday with their custom-made sports car for the first time in 50 years.

Mlle France and Mlle Marianne, modelled by Jumeau, one of France's most famous doll-makers, were presented to King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to mark a four-day visit to France in 1938, the first state visit undertaken by the new King and Queen.

Complete with 350 haute couture outfits designed by the leading Parisian couturiers of the Thirties, along with accessories and their own miniature Citroën cabriolet, they were gifts to Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret from "all the children of France".

Both 3ft dolls, their car and a selection from their wardrobe are now on display at Windsor Castle.

The dolls, part of the Royal Collection, were presented by the French foreign minister, Georges Bonnet, during a visit intended to consolidate the alliance of the democracies against the fascist threat.

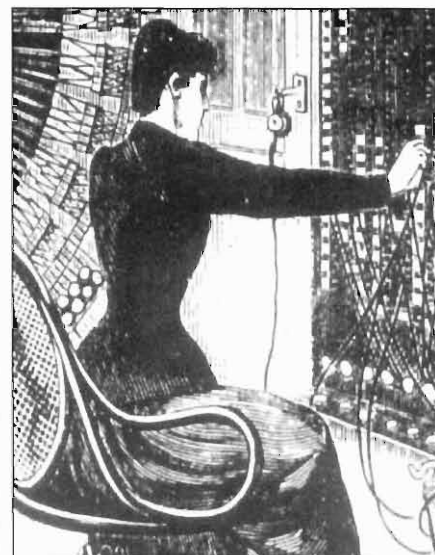
At the time, newspapers eulogised about their significance. "If their fame has hitherto been a little overshadowed by the grosser and noisier links that bind the two countries together, their influence will spread far and wide," wrote *The Times*.

The dolls' 5ft Citroën 7B Traction Avant cabriolet, in French racing blue, was a symbol of French innovation, being a two-seater version of the first front-wheel-drive car invented by Citroën in 1934. It has been kept at the Queen's Norfolk estate at Sandringham for the past 50 years.

*Reprinted from The Daily Telegraph, April 12, 2001.*

## New Members

- 1707 J. B. Macpherson, Gillingham, Dorset
- 1708 C. J. Carroll, Reading, Berkshire
- 1709 S. O'Toole, Enfield, Middlesex
- 1710 K. Austin, Shardlow, Derbyshire
- 1711 F. Packham, Tavira, Algarve, Portugal
- 1712 G. Beasley, Cliftonville, Kent
- 1713 D. J. Goss, Old Bedhampton, Hampshire
- 1714 P. B. Osborne, Starcross, Devon
- 1715 R.A. Jones, Retford, Nottinghamshire
- 1716 C.R. Burke, Swanage, Dorset
- 1717 A.M. Walker, London SE5
- 1718 R.Z. Rychlik, Bridgwater, Somerset
- 1719 R. Moore, Offenham, Worcestershire
- 1720 R. Dobbie, Tavistock, Devon
- 1721 A. Jones, East Wittering, West Sussex
- 1722 R.G. Wilson, Dennistown, Glasgow



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## Subscriptions

Thank you to all members who have recently renewed their subscription, there are now about 150 overdue. If you are one of these please send your payment off soon. If not received by 1st August this will have been your last issue of *Floating Power* and your membership will then be suspended.

*Peter Riggs, Member Secretary*

# Well Oil be Blowed!

by Alan Large



*Having purchased on the spur of the moment a car I knew nothing about, I had only briefly seen, but looked good on the auctioneer's screen. I found myself the proud owner of Valentine, christened has she was purchased on Feb. 14th. 2001 Valentine's day.*

Having paid, picked up the keys got in pulled & pushed at every switch she was dead. Having asked the gathering crowd for a push to no avail and asked who could give me a jump-start, "you can't do that it's a six volt, ask inside for their booster," a voice said. So with guidance a quick touch onto the starter she burst into life, having jumped in, found first gear and having travelled the 20 or so miles back home, it was time for a though check something I would normally do before buying any car. But this car was special and well its no good making excuses as I have already said, it was all done on the spur of the moment.

So having loaned a six-volt battery charger, the disconnected battery was charging merrily, next the dip stick horror, recheck nothing what's so ever **there was no oil** so having calmed down and given her its first oil change. Next check the radiator **water was nil** so having cursed myself once again, she was given a good cleaning out and refilled with anti freeze and water. Other items looked better so with a flat battery I decided to leave her until the next day.

Still excited and worried in case any damage had occurred I refitted the now fully charged battery gave another reassuring look round turned the engine by hand and finally started her up there were no nasty knocks in fact you could hardly hear her running. So with more confidence building up inside, I thought take it to the local garage to make

sure there were no more nasty surprises and any way she didn't have a test certificate.

Needless to say she failed - left indicator and number plate light not working, wipers not working and with a dodgy wiper, along with a debate on washers which I escaped with because of the opening windscreen, which I had found earlier whilst fiddling with the switches. Also a leaky petrol tank I thought well that's not so bad.

Lights no problem just bad connections, next the wiper motor an exchange unit, new wiper blades and a brand new tank from France fitted good job I had joined the Traction Owners Club and along with useful advice had made contacts where to get spares etc. she was ready for her re-test. In the mean time whilst waiting for the parts, I had been in touch with the DVLA at Swansea as the original registration 421 R 43 seemed more appropriate to this 1952

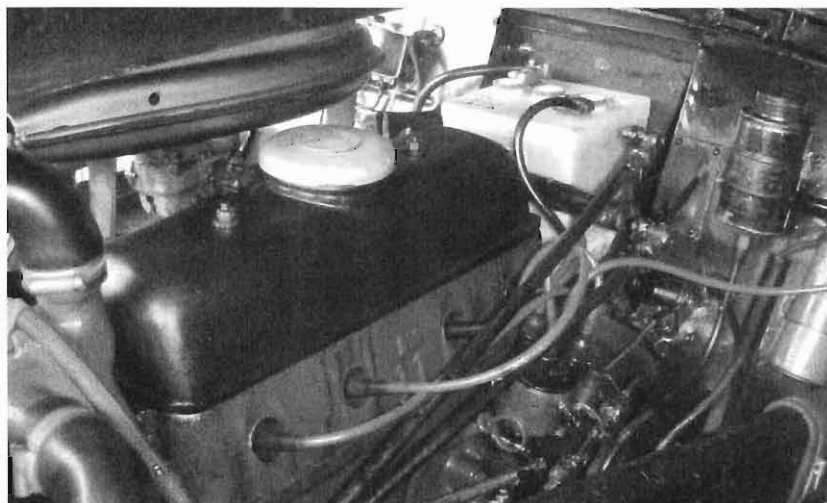
French Citroën than NUE 81L which it was registered under. Unfortunately the DVLA only deals with British registration marks so therefore it was impossible to register under its original foreign mark. Still I'm not one to be put off, so after more phone calls, & letter writing I was put in touch with my local DVLA and through a very helpful Mr. Ricky Youd of the Nottingham DVLA I was informed that if I could substantiate the exact Year of manufacture of the vehicle then an age related plate to give the historic vehicle more credit would be forthcoming.

After contacting Citroën UK. With the chassis number, engine number etc. they finally confirmed after contacting their French counterpart that my Citroën was actually built on 4th June 1953 not 1952 as it was purchased under. This was passed over to Mr Youd who by return of post gave Valentine her new number XSL 502. I still couldn't bring myself to remove the quaint shaped plates so mine is probably the only car with two sets of plates.

Having passed her test with flying colours, insured and showing off her Historical exempt Tax Disc. She is now ready for the forthcoming shows & events. Throughout you may have noticed I refer to Valentine as 'her' well because of the grace, style and name she sure ain't butch.

I have already made friends with other TOC owners after attending the PEAK meeting and have a new wardrobe of sweatshirts etc. after meeting up with Keith & his wife, at the TOC SHOP.

With the aid of sketches (thanks to Peter Riggs) along with repair & spare parts manuals & collection of classic Citroën books I FINALLY REALISE why this car is so SPECIAL.



13<sup>EME</sup> RALLYE AUTOMOBILE DE MONTE-CARLO

# VARSOVIE MONTE-CARLO

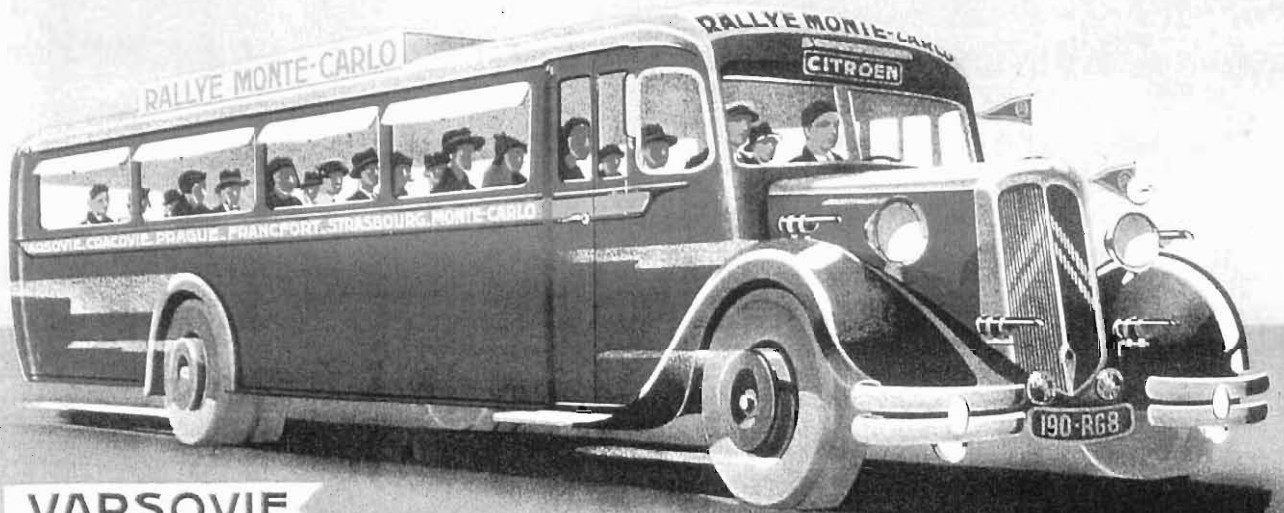
2456  $\frac{\text{KMS}}{\cdot}$  EN 59  $\frac{\text{H}}{\cdot}$  30

SANS AUCUNE PÉNALISATION DE PARCOURS  
PAR UN

AUTOCAR

# CITROËN

SUR UN NOUVEAU CHASSIS POIDS LOURD TYPE 45



VARSOVIE

CRACOVIE

PRAGUE

FRANCFORT

STRASBOURG

MONTE-CARLO

LYON

AVIGNON

AFFICHES GAILLARD - PARIS. AMIEI

Pete Statham of Tiptree sends us this poster relating to the Citroën Monte-Carlo Bus and asks if there is a good book on Citroën commercials available. Does anyone know of one?

# tocsection scene

## Scottish section

Lunch Run 2001 took place in [yet again] the glorious sunshine of the Perthshire hills. The usual start venue of Caithness Glass brought together 14 cars for a route which took in Gleneagles, Strathallan airfield, (the parachute display was purely co-incident!) and the Sma' Glen to the lunch halt at Amulree Hotel. Andy Burnett had a testing day with ignition problems on Ian Nairn's Light 15 which culminated in the use of the dreaded tow-rope!

A short respite after an excellent lunch let everyone study each other's cars before setting off to experience the hairpins and gradients of Glenquach. I was unsure whether or not to use this road because of the gradient but the comments from those who tackled it justified its inclusion! This road features regularly on Le Jog but we didn't have to stop and re-start between hairpins! Continuing via Aberfeldy we reached the finish at Birnam Hotel for cream scones and tea, basking in the sunshine while John Savelli entertained us with a technical dissertation on how he repaired a punctured carburettor float with only a screw-driver and a stick of chewing gum!

What chance sunshine three years in a row?

### DIARY

**July 21/22** - Dalmeny House -CANCELLED-FOOT AND MOUTH

**August 5/6** - CCC Scottish Section Rally (Stirling Rugby Club), phone Andy Burnett 01339-886290

**September 21/22/23** - Autumn Weekend - Royal Deeside, phone Andy or me for details

### CCC Scottish Section - with invitation to TOC members

#### Grampian Weekend & Ceilidh 21/22/23 Sept - Aboyne Aberdeenshire

Following the success of the 50th anniversary "do" 2 years ago & after much pleading & cajoling the Scottish section are to stage another similar event, again based in the Village of Aboyne on Royal Deeside. The format will be similar to the previous event, with guests arriving in the area from far and near on Friday and settling in. The Friday night get together will be in the Huntly Arms Hotel, Aboyne, where a room with bar etc has been set up for us and the hotel will provide meals, suppers etc for all who wish. This is a good starting point for the weekend when old acquaintances can be renewed in a convivial atmosphere and, who knows, some entertainment may be on hand.

Saturday morning sees us all off on the tour, which will be crossing from Royal Deeside over to Speyside. The morning coffee stop will be at the well known Grouse Inn at Cabrach (you've never seen such a collection of whiskies!!) before going to the famous "Glenfiddich" distillery where we do the full tour. Lunch is booked at Dufftown, then on to Aberlour to the renowned "Walkers shortbread" factory where they are especially opening the factory shop for us in the afternoon.

If you like shortbread or any of their biscuits this is the place - for there are normally loads of "seconds" at very cheap prices as well as the full range of Walkers products. Different scenic route back to Aboyne for a short rest and then over to the Victory Hall for the Ceilidh with live accordion band. The meal this time will be two well-loved Scottish dishes "Stovies and skirlie" as the main course, followed by "Clottie Dumpling" with ice cream as the sweet. A vegetarian version could be provided if we know in advance. The CCC Scottish Section will be providing the bar as usual to keep the prices low. For a bit of fun why not all try to wear a "wee bit of tartan" (where we can see it preferably!!).

Dress as usual is as informal or formal as you wish and yes, if you can lay your hands on a kilt wear it - for a bit of fun! There will be a raffle to defray costs and if you care to donate a prize it will be most welcome on the night.

The price of the ceilidh & meal will be £6 and as space may be limited and to help us for catering, can we ask you please to book your tickets by phoning Andy Burnett at Aboyne (013398-86290) as soon as possible.

Sunday will be more relaxed with nothing planned so far, thus a chance to visit some of the many Deeside attractions if you wish.

The Huntly Arms Hotel (directly opposite the Hall) is offering a special price of £20pp B&B and there are various other B&Bs and hotels as well as camping & caravanning facilities.

As always, this fun weekend is open to all section members and friends throughout the Club. Some guests travelling from far afield may wish to arrive at Aberdeen by bus, plane or ~Train, and we will try to arrange transport to Aboyne as required. Normally plenty of space for passengers on the tour.

If you are arriving with a classic Citroën, safe overnight parking is available at "Citroëna"

If you wish to book Huntly Arms - phone direct - 013398 86101 and mention Citroën weekend rate.

Alternative details & tickets phone Andy or Sheila on 013398 86290 alternatively drop a note to "Citroëna", Aboyne, Aberdeenshire AB34 5JE

Look forward to seeing you all there.

### CCC Scottish Section Rally - Stirling Rugby Club 3/4/5 August 2001

Full weekend camping/caravanning (Thursday & Monday nights too if desired) plus ceilidh on Sat night, run on Saturday, full concourse & show on Sunday all for £18 per whole family unit.

Evelyn Crossan is the co-ordinator on 01330 823911

No pre-booking is necessary as there is plenty of space, but phone with numbers to help with planning.

*Kenny Cocker, 01821 650436*

## South West section

We are attending two rallies so far this year, there will be more to follow.

**14th - 15th July:** Historic Vehicle Gathering, Powderham Castle, Kenton Nr Exeter. Contact Alwyn Batty, 50 Halsdon Ave, Exmouth EX8 3DW. Tel: 01395 270971

**21st - 22nd July:** 23rd Devon Coastal Road Safety Run 2001. Contact: John Corah, Fir Croft, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9AX. Tel: 01626 832912.

## South Midlands section

Things have been quiet because of the foot & mouth epidemic, but there are three possible outings in July - Worcester (7th), Bletchley Park (8th) and Basildon Park (22nd) - please contact me for details of these.

The Woodcote Steam Rally has been postponed to **1st/2nd September** and relocated to an arable field just off the A4074 between Woodcote and Ipsden (that is between Reading and Oxford in the wider view). Saturday is the preferred day as our category of vehicle is paraded in the afternoon. You must fill in the official entry form - I can get these for you. Do come if you can, it is a good day out.

There is also the Cavalcade of Transport at Mytchett on **8th/9th September**. Dougie Lawson and I thoroughly enjoyed it last year. Again entry forms are needed - just contact me.

We still intend to organise a meeting at White Horse Hill with a pub lunch at Uffington, but we are thinking of April next year.

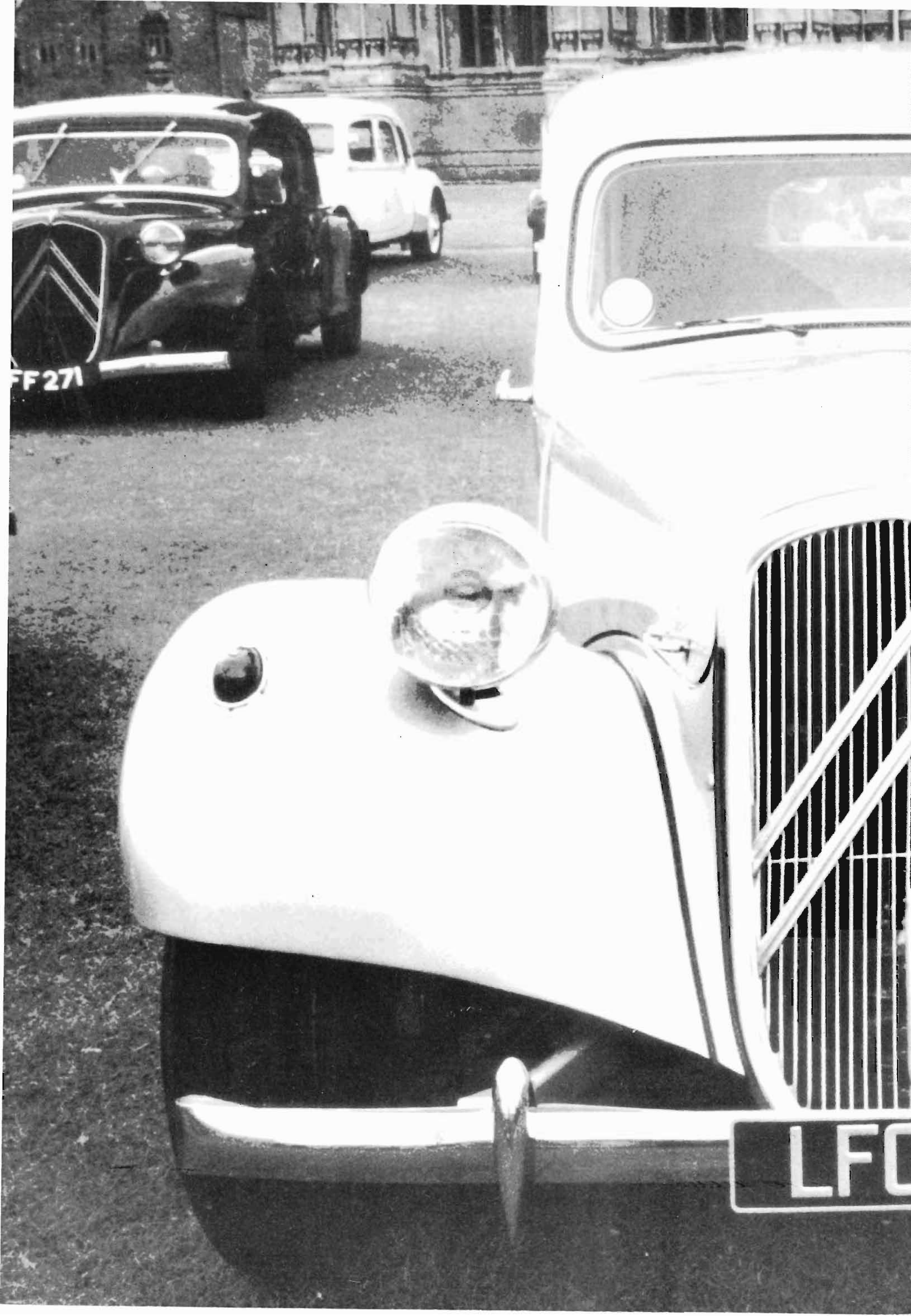
*Robin Dyke. Email jrobindyke@cs.com*

## London section

### London Section Meetings

Last **Tuesday** of the month **NOT Thursday** as last magazine.

Place of meeting: **June, August, October, December - Enfield**, at:- The Salisbury Arms, Hoppers Road, Winchmore Hill, London N21  
**July, September, November - Richmond** at:- Cafe Dysart (opp. Richmond Park), 135 Petersham Road, Richmond, Surrey TW10 7AA.



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