

CAFÉ RENÉ

# Floating Power

November/December 2005

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November/December volume 29 issue 6

# Floating Power

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Original cover of the first edition of Floating Power.

## Front Cover



COVER: Picture taken at the NEC during the Classic Motor Show of Café René the Traction Owners Club stand

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# Editorial

Welcome to the last edition of Floating Power for 2005. Its exactly a year since I took over as editor and I just want to say what an absolute pleasure it is putting the magazine together. I've got to know so many lovely people whether it be on the telephone, email or letter. Everybody is so friendly and charming it really makes it all worthwhile.

I'm sure you've noticed the front cover!! Best Themed Stand - wow!! Congratulations to Mick and Moira Holmes and their team of helpers who organised a prize winning stand at the NEC. There's a full write-up on page 20 entitled Café René. This should bring a smile!!

John has mentioned in his (last) Chairman's message the article on the formation of the TOC. Its really fascinating reading and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did - there are some great pictures too. I'd like to mention that as next year is the Club's 30th anniversary, if you have any pictures from 1976, I'd be really pleased to receive them.

And now some very sad news. Unfortunately, Fred Annells' wife Edna recently passed away after a long illness. Its heartbreaking for me that the article that Fred was so keen to have published regarding the formation of the TOC comes at such a difficult time for him and his family. Everybody on the Committee and the Club send their sincere condolences to Fred and Barry and his family at this very sad time. As Alec Bilney states in his article, Fred is so fundamental to Tractioning in the UK and has become the granddad of Tractioning.

Before I put this issue to bed, I'd like to wish you all a merry Christmas and I look forward to meeting you all through the pages of Floating Power in 2006.

*Pat De Felice*

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### Pin-up



Walter Callens in France in 1975 with his Mehari.

# Chairman's Message

I really don't know where this year has gone.

It seems it was only a few months ago we were at the 2004 Annual General Meeting. However, by the time this issue is on your doorstep, the 2005 AGM will have taken place.

We will have a new chairman and I take this opportunity to wish him - or her - all the best for the coming year. I have enjoyed my year as

chairman immensely and I hope you feel that together we have continued to improve our excellent club. Thank you all for your enthusiasm, co-operation and support.



This edition of Floating Power is rather special. It is dedicated to a record of the formation and very early days of the TOC. Alec Bilney has worked very hard in gathering together written records and in contacting founder members. I am pleased to say that many of those who joined in the first few months of the TOC are still members and their experience is invaluable to the rest of us "newcomers". I am certain this magazine will be of interest to you all, even the most recent members, and I believe it helps to put the TOC into context, particularly with respect to the vision and tenacity of those founder members. Congratulations to Alec, and to all those who contributed to the article, for giving us this important record of the club's beginnings.

It is also fitting that we should be reminded of the formation of the TOC at this time because 2006 will be our thirtieth anniversary year. I don't know whether the founders had any idea that in 2006 the club would be flourishing in the way that it is, but they can now be proud of their achievements and we can all look forward to the next thirty! The success of the TOC hinges on a combination of three things - Floating Power, spares and, last but not least, the camaraderie of rallies and meetings. Long may they all last!

*John Ogborne*

## Big Thanks!

Moira and I would like to thank all TOC members who took part, and helped to man the TOC stand at the Classic Car Show at the NEC over the last weekend and made the show a resounding success, winning the first prize for the best themed stand at the show.

We would like to thank Alec Bilney, John Ogborne, Richard Carlin, Tony Latchford, Steve Reed, Alan Reece, Tim Walker, Jim Fox, Sheila and Peter Marley, all brought along their cars to display, nine tractions in all, being the biggest show of Tractioning ever at the NEC

We would also like to say a big thank you to Sheila and Peter Marley for their hospitality, accommodating Peter Simper., Tony Latchford, Richard Carlin and Moira and I at their home, thus making it much easier to get to the NEC each day.

Thank you all once again

*Moira and Mick Holmes*

# The Beginnings of the **toc**

## FORMATION OF THE TRACTION OWNERS CLUB IN 1976

As recalled in 2005 by those involved.

### Forward

It has been a pleasure to help get this story into the records of motoring. Writing the report has given me a healthy respect for the founders of our club; for their courage in taking the initial steps, for their stamina during the early years when everything needed to be established from scratch, and their prescience in setting the highest standards immediately rather than hoping to improve from an average standard.

When collating sometimes disparate information, I found myself indulging in happy memories of thirty-plus years ago, and recalling the scene in which everything was set. But motoring has changed dramatically during that third-of-a-century, and recent converts to classic motoring may not realise the extent of the changes. Thus, as I wrote each part, I found it necessary to explain how primitive life was then so that a reaction became understandable. Such explaining needed to be done so often that the story itself was becoming disjointed. So I decided to put them all together in a leading box, and set the scene before the story was told. When a draft was circulated to contributors, the responses were universally supportive. I hope those who read the final article also find my approach understandable.

It has been impossible to avoid referring to the personalities and some differences of opinion when the club was being formed. The attitude of indifference on the part of Citroën Cars necessarily coloured the background for the whole period. My reference to each incident has been as factual as possible. Fortunately, as a balance, it has also been possible to record the compromises made and the willingness on everyone's part to reach a successful conclusion of each matter. All felt that the most important thing was to form the TOC in such a way that it would be a point of communication between fellow Tractionistes. They succeeded, and the club has continued to serve its purpose ever since.

I have sprinkled faces of founders into the story when possible. I felt there was little point in showing a line-up of Traction, however early in the club's existence, since it would look exactly the same as a line-up in 2005. But it seems that TOC founders were and still are Traction enthusiasts: their photos show their cars.

I will welcome all comments on the story, and invite advice about omissions or corrections to the text, in order to get the record complete.

Alec Bilney

June 2005

## The way it was in the beginning

In the 1950s and 1960s, new cars were expensive, and the price gap between new and second hand was, relatively speaking, greater than now. In those days, people who ran old cars usually did so not because they wanted to but because they had to, and the primary struggle was to keep them running. The cost of maintaining originality by using new parts was very often a prohibitive factor. The availability of replacement parts for all makes of cars depended on the interest and efficiency of the manufacturer's main dealers or authorised outlets, but also on economics. It was usually much, much cheaper for an owner simply to put up with something being deficient or, if repair was essential, to get parts from a vehicle breaker's yard. Thus it was simply not worthwhile for a dealer to carry much stock for discontinued models, and the older the car the less stock was justified.

It was a vicious circle, driven by the market, such that by 1975 there was no part, unique to the Traction, that could be purchased over the counter. At best, some mechanical parts for early IDs fitted the 4-cylinder 11B-engine.

There was very little readily available literature to help an owner maintain an old vehicle. *Motor Sport* had been effectively alone as a standard bearer for older cars until *Classic Cars* was launched in 1973. But both were regarded as dealing with exotic cars, and neither were really spanner-mags. anyway. Even *Practical Mechanics* described work on current or very recent models.

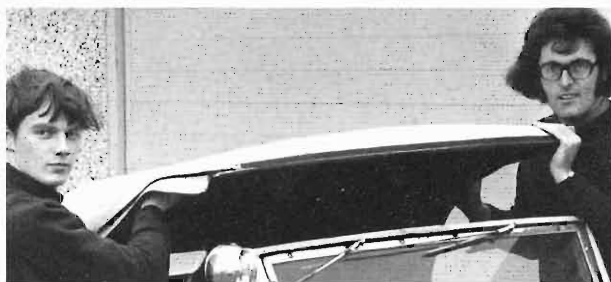


For anyone looking to purchase a second-hand car, *Exchange & Mart*, then a weekly pulp tabloid newspaper, had a *Motoring* supplement that was the information source; it was the only publication that catered to all tastes in vehicles, and in whose endless columns of sales and wants could be found calls for meetings anywhere in the world. When, in the late 1970s, Paul Skilleter founded *Practical Classics*, it opened a new world of advice to owners of the common man's car, and paved the way to the present plethora of magazines, with guidance on running repairs, and with symbiotic spares and restoration advertising. It is very much easier to run a fifty-year old car in 2005 than it was to run a twenty-year old car in 1975.

In Britain, the Citroën Car Club (CCC) had been formed in 1949, and covered all Citroëns. The owners of Traction Avant models could be, and many were, members of the CCC in the same way as owners of very early Citroëns and DS, GS, CX and 2CV models. It is worth noting that in 1949 the Traction was the current Citroën model, and almost all members would have owned one, or been familiar with it. The 2CV and some commercial vehicles were also front wheel drive, of course, but in those days of petrol rationing and coupons many rear wheel drive cars would have still been mobile. This familiarity with, and perhaps pride in, older models of Citroëns may have influenced subsequent events.

The CCC magazine, *Citroënian*, was published monthly and, in 1975, each edition contained a section called the Light Fifteen Corner, a few pages devoted to the Traction model. It had been originated by an enthusiastic Tractionist, Brian Drummond, but by 1975 was run by Graham Brice.

At CCC meetings, Traction owners tended to spend lots of time peering under each other's bonnets, and sharing innovations that had been successful.



**TONY HODGEKISS** (Shown on right in picture) "We did all sorts of things to keep our cars going then, when spares were not available. There was no easy way to get stuff from dealers overseas, although we had heard that they existed (adverts for Depanoto gave a postal address only, no telephone number, paying them was still frightening because sterling exchange controls had only recently been relaxed, there were no eurocheques or credit card transfers. Foreign money had to be obtained and sent in cash.). I knew of Fred [Annells] and his skills, but he was miles away and I had to keep my car going, not get Fred to do things. I remember feeling a distinct sense of achievement when I managed to construct a cork rocker-cover gasket by cutting up two BMC gaskets and splicing them together. Modern silicone gasket compounds in tubes did not exist, Traction gaskets were not available, so I made one. It worked perfectly. I didn't know if it was possible to get new 165 x 400 tyres in the UK. I never tried. The original Michelin Xs just kept going, or we found used ones in people's garages, and there was no minimum tread depth then - at least, I think there wasn't".

**WALFORD BRUEN** (Shown left in picture) "[After acquiring my Traction,] I attended a number of CCC rallies in the first couple of years, getting to know a good few fellow enthusiasts despite the great distances involved. We Traction owners tended to stick together and do our own thing; rather than taking part in the Its-a-Knockout-type games which were so much part of the social scene then."

There was a general feeling among Tractionistes of having little in common with owners of modern Citroëns. This feeling was compounded by the reducing number of Tractions being grouped (albeit willingly) in one part of a rally field, while more modern machinery became increasingly dominant in concours d'elegance and in driving tests.



**BRIAN BROCKWELL** (shown left) "[When I first had my Light Fifteen] in 1966 I was a member of the Citroën Car Club but did not take an active part, only making use of their magazine. I felt that the CCC was aimed more at the newer cars. Articles on Tractions were limited to the Light 15 Corner."

In some other countries, dedicated Traction Avant clubs already existed. The Netherlands had a large number of Tractions in circulation, and their owners had formed the Traction Avant Nederlands (TAN) in 1964. A primary result of TAN was the bountiful spares supply subsequently created. In France there was a body called Traction Universelle, which acted as an umbrella organisation for local groups in the regions. A Traction Avant club existed in Scandinavia, publishing a large format magazine with lavish illustrations.

**ALEC BILNEY** (Shown below) "Soon after buying my Normale, I found that even at the sprightly age of twenty there was no handbook for sale at all, and no professional mechanic would take on repairing it. I was on my own! I knew no other owner or driver of this type of car and, indeed, was not actually certain what it was that I owned. Friends recalled their own exposure to "light fifteens" but, like me, felt my car was bigger than it should be and we all found the gently curving top of the radiator grill somehow wrong - photographs all showed a protruding nose. Despite getting it through an MoT and registered in UK, I was still finding things out for myself."



## The need for a dedicated Club

In the mid-1970s, the emphasis of older car ownership was beginning to shift away from running a cheap vehicle, and towards restoration and pride in owning an original classic car. This brought with it two needs which were complementary. One was a need for rationalising the supply of spare parts and owners' access to it, and the other was a need for publication of historical information and promulgation of technical advice to help owners. As a result, even the most famous marques began to spawn registers devoted to significant models.

But formation of one-model clubs and registers was not universally welcomed, and people running the existing marque clubs were generally unimpressed, feeling that they could continue to provide an excellent home and meet the needs of all owners. At that time, most larger marque clubs had very strong associations with their respective factories and even main dealer showrooms. A large club, whose management spoke for owners of all a manufacturer's cars, was considered to have a stronger voice than would several smaller groups speaking only for owners of one model.

# The Beginnings of the **toc**

Thus there was some resistance to the apparent fragmentation that one-model clubs were thought to be creating, not least because of a perceived competition for members.

Among Citroën owners, concerned Tractionistes who knew each other, not all within the CCC, discussed a need to arrange a reliable supply of spare parts, and to hold meetings where their cars were at the centre of activity, not a minority of old bangers parked in a corner of the field. There was also a feeling that more could be done to publicise the Traction's history and achievements, and for that a dedicated, large-format, well illustrated magazine would be necessary. These two aspects prompted thoughts of establishing a new club in Britain, dedicated to Tractions.

The management of Citroën Cars in Slough, the UK contact, was renowned for taking no interest in its heritage, and it consistently declined to become involved with any attempts to exploit its history. This reflected the view of its parentage in France, where interest in older vehicles was decades behind that in Britain.

In 1970 Citroën Cars had notified its dealers and the public that the company would no longer support its discontinued models. Remaining stocks of parts were sold off at knock-down prices, or given away, or even thrown away. One reliable report is of 200-plus brand new radiator grills for Slough cars going into a skip because there was no demand. The *Citroënian* of June 1970 included six pages of obsolete spares that were being sold by the Slough factory at a 75% discount off list price.. There is no explanation of why such

a list is presented, or why the 340 items are considered to be obsolete. The first page (38 items) and most of the second page (44 items) appear to be entirely Traction material, such as *Driveshafts (6-cylinder) - £5.4s.0d.* One can only suppose that this was clearing the shelves, and that all Citroënists knew it was going on.

At the CCC summer rally at Salisbury Racecourse in 1977, the CCC was raising funds by selling old ID engine gasket-sets that had been made available by the factory at Slough. The hope was that they could raise some funds for the CCC. Once Tractionistes had learned that the cylinder head gasket in one of the packs fitted the 11B engine, it was found that 25 sets for £10 was a bargain even if all the other gaskets in the pack were useless.

As late as 1980, a new director at Citroën Cars expressed the view that attention given to discontinued models was distracting buyers. He informed dealers that display of non-current models in their showrooms could lead to loss of the franchise. The relationship between the factory and the owners clubs was cool and guarded, helping neither party.

Tractionistes felt that the gains from the CCC's size and its factory association were at best minimal or were non-existent, particularly in view of Citroën's recent washing-of-hands and disposal of so-called obsolete parts. They felt they could do better if they looked after themselves, especially in the informal rough and tumble of the second-hand parts market, and in finding sources of the new-old stock that dominated ownership then.

## REPAIRS & RESTORATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

### TOC SPARES

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### TOC HELPLINE

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0044 115 911 0960

### TOC CLUB SHOP

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Email:

[steveshine@btinternet.com](mailto:steveshine@btinternet.com)

### SALES & MAINTENANCE

Imperial Cars, Steve Southgate  
Oxford Street, Bilston  
WV14 8AA  
Tel 01902 495758

### SALES, MAINTENANCE AND RESTORATION

Classic Restorations,  
John Gillard  
First Floor,  
636 Old Kent Road,  
London SE15 1JE  
Tel/Fax 0207 358 9969

Traction Renaissance Services, Dennis  
Ryland  
Woodholme, Frithwood, Brownshill,  
Stroud GL6 8AD  
Tel 01452 771011

### STAINLESS STEEL BUMPERS

Jonathan Howard  
Tel: 01608 643065  
Fax: 01608 642973

### INTERIORS

South Bound Motor Trimmers  
Little Dean Yard,  
London Road, Stockbridge,  
Hampshire SO20 6EL  
Tel: 01264 810080

### TRANSMISSION

Roger Williams  
35/37 Wood Lane, Beverley,  
North Humberside HU17 8BS  
Tel: 01482 863344  
Fax: 01482 888619  
Email: [rdrw@steam-car-dev.karoo.co.uk](mailto:rdrw@steam-car-dev.karoo.co.uk)

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Gloucestershire GL17 0DL

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Heritage  
Tel: 0121 246 6060

### WWW

Club website:  
[www.traction-owners.co.uk](http://www.traction-owners.co.uk)  
Club chat: [inside\\_trac@egroups.com](mailto:inside_trac@egroups.com)

## USEFUL SERVICES

Listed below are services that a TOC member has used and would like to recommend.

COMPANY DETAILS	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
<b>Armourtex Powder Coating</b> 14-16 Rowe Lane Urswick Road Hackney London E8 Tel: 0208 986 2028	Powder coating for wheels etc.
<b>Bainbridge Engineering</b> Unit 3A Spencer House Brettenham Road Edmonton London N18 2EU Tel: 0208 807 7453	General welding repairs to bodywork
<b>Keith Ardley</b> Reflector Re-Silvering Service Bedford House 14 Bridge Road Mepal Ely Cambs CB6 2AR Tel: 01353 778493	Re-silvering of headlamp
<b>G. W Findly &amp; Sons</b> 262 Alma Road Enfield EN3 7BB Tel: 020 8805 0575 Evenings: 020 8482 5453 Mobile: 07931 521 377	Welding Specialists
<b>Ashby Chromium Plating</b> Based in Hatfield Will pick up work and deliver back in North London and surrounds Tel: 01707 258 607	Chrome Plating

If you are pleased with a specialist service you have used let us know so that TOC members can benefit. If you use any services in this section tell them you are a TOC member.

Importantly, Tractionistes felt that membership of TOC and CCC were not mutually exclusive. In the end, this proved to be the case, with a high proportion of owners opting to be in both clubs.

## The decision to go for it



**TRICIA BRICE** (shown left) "[Formation of the TOC followed] the Lewes Meeting, which in turn came about at the instigation of John Dodson and Reg Winstone, the call spreading partly by word of mouth and partly in response to an advert in Exchange & Mart. Ardent

Tractionistes were intrigued, because up until then [a dedicated club] had been only a twinkle in their eyes. One driving force was the desire to put together one of the best club magazines in the UK. In later years ... the editors of *Floating Power* won awards ... from *Classic Car* magazine."

The creation of a quality magazine was important to the founders. It was to be a physical entity to build the club on, and to generate more interest because so many members, especially those remote from the centre, judge their club by the magazine. The magazine is also a show of strength for a club. But to justify the work and investment of time that such a magazine would entail, it was necessary to know there would be support for it and for the dedicated club it represented.



**JOHN DODSON** (Above) "In November of 1975, an advertisement was placed in *Exchange & Mart* to gauge the response. I cannot remember everything clearly, but do recall Dave Shepherd appearing on my doorstep on the day the ad. came out."

Reg Winstone and John Dodson were able to get things off to a flying start, due to their existing professional involvement in publishing. The editors and immediate contributors went to Beaulieu and searched through the archives, gaining access to material that deserved a wider audience; many articles translated from French by the editors had not been published in English before. Reg Winstone recalled the stimulation of creating the first edition, and that the excitement snowballed when the take-up became clear. The earliest covers were drawn by the editors, and all the layout and typing was done by enthusiasts. By the time that Tractionistes met the CCC committee at Westminster to discuss the basis for forming the TOC, the first edition of *Floating Power* was already printed.

It was fortunate that *Floating Power* appeared in its glossy form to start with, because it set a high standard that could be maintained. In 1976, there were not many magazines of such a standard, and certainly not club magazines. It is the same format today.

The Traction spares situation was at that time no more than an informal grapevine whereby learning of availability of any bit was accidental, or only gained after extensive enquiries following a lead. Longer-term owners, recognising their own future needs, had often saved spare parts or re-useable bits and, either by accident or design, they had themselves then become sources for other owners to consult. It was known that some of these people were now concerned at both the capital involved and the on-going cost of storing those parts. There was a real danger that, by the owners moving out of their self-imposed role, the stock would be lost unless steps were taken to preserve it. Some sort of funding was needed to ensure the best outcome. The matter became critical in late '75 when one prominent source threatened to dry up, and a rescue process was needed immediately. The active Traction owners had to organise rescue of the existing stock, mainly by dismantling non-running cars into large sub-assemblies for transporting to safe storage, often at their own homes.



**JOHN GILLARD** (shown left)

The CCC Committee was approached with a request for funding. But there was serious resistance within the Committee to such a move on behalf of only one, older, Citroën model."

This reinforced the desire of Tractionistes to take control of their own affairs.

**JOHN GILLARD** It was then that the significant

advertisement was placed in the Citroën section of *Exchange & Mart*, and the response encouraged us to proceed further."

50 carb. Citroën Traction Avant, owners, pre-56 cars. SP48 send sac. Dodson, North Cottage, Mengers Farm, Barcombe, Lewes, Sussex for details of new register, magazine and activities. NP49 on 46975. GS 1220 estate, March '74, taxed with in '76. 1 owner, regularly serviced, radio, inertia V6s. GS belts, hrw, radial, cats, 33,000 miles, metal

*The Exchange & Mart*

Thursday, December 4, 1975

**TONY HODGEKISS** "One day in late '75, I was asked 'Had I seen the ad. in *Exchange & Mart* about the formation of an owners club for Traction, separate from the CCC?' There was to be an inaugural meeting at Mengers Farm, Barcombe, near Lewes (John and Judy Dodson's home). Myself and Maria went along and discovered several other Traction owners and enthusiasts, some known to me and some not. [They] described their plans for the club and the new magazine."

# The Beginnings of the **toc**



## **DAVE SHEPHERD** (Shown right)

"For me, the beginning [of the TOC] was early December 1975, when I read an advert in Exchange & Mart, requesting that anyone interested in forming a club for Citroën Traction Avant motor cars, should contact Mongers Farm, Barcombe, in East Sussex. I thus got involved with John Dodson, Reg Winstone, Graham Brice, etc, and talked about forming the club. As a result, during the next few days we all phoned round to other Traction owners we knew, to get a feel for what interest there was 'outside'".



Thank you for replying to our advertisement.

We have formed a nucleus of a club for 'Traction Avant' owners which offers a new regular magazine and programme of activities specifically for the pre 57 owner, over and above the necessarily partial attention which the existing C.C.C. by its very nature, can give.

The intentions of the Club are as follows.

1. The compilation of register of 'Rosalie', Light 12, 15, Big 15, Big 6 and their derivatives which is as comprehensive as possible with the view to establishing personal contact.

2. The production of a magazine of a high standard of content and presentation.

The magazine will be devoted to:

(a) Articles about the evolution and exploits of the Traction. (b) Detailed technical information, ideas and alternative solutions to apparently unsolvable problems. (c) An up-to-date spares supplement.

3. The active liaison with overseas Traction Clubs, Dutch, American and provincial French clubs with a view to the exchange of information and facilities.

4. The sale of a series of publications about Traction - reprints of material hitherto not generally available and translations.

5. We hope not only to establish a tool and manual loan service, but to produce duplicates in such quantities that they would be economic for the individual owner to buy outright.

6. A programme of meetings and rallies - interesting, exciting challenging and above all active.

The eventual fulfilment of the above aims depends of course, on the amount of response from enthusiasts such as yourself. In order to operate and produce the magazine an annual subscription of approximately £7.00 is necessary.

If you think the above potentially worthwhile, please let us know, and send us a 12p stamp, and fill in the form below. You will then receive the first copy of our magazine 'Floating Power' at the end of January. We hope that you will be sufficiently impressed to take out an annual subscription. Further details of the club's organisation and the extent of its affiliation to the C.C.C. will be contained in our first magazine.

The results of the discussion at John Dodson's home, and the response to the E&M advertisement, provided the confidence needed to get the club started, but it was agreed to approach CCC and propose that TOC should "come in under the CCC banner", because that would mean less chance of the club failing for financial reasons.

## **This was the editorial in the first edition of Floating Power:**

"Thank you for showing your support for our new venture; we feel that the response we have obtained from enthusiasts such as yourself, both within and outside the existing CCC, shows that there is a need for a specifically pre-57 club. At the time of going to press, it was intended to approach the CCC directly, and ask that we become an autonomous subsection, using Light Fifteen owners' subscriptions to produce this magazine in lieu of the Citroënian, having received the relevant members consent, of course. We feel that because Traction owners constitute a small minority within a club catering largely for modern cars, they

cannot possibly hope to provide space in which to publish the material and information that we think Traction owners want.

Should the outcome on the 22nd not be favourable, (see stop press) it will pose some organisational problems, but we intend to try to forge an additional club regardless; in either eventuality the club will generate its own momentum. At the beginning, however, its success depends on your participation in recruiting members, attending functions if at all possible and your contributions to the magazine and suggestions are essential.

Regarding membership and subscriptions, as this depends on the outcome of the committee meeting on the 22nd, details are appended in the stop press. As we see it, it is essential that we Traction owners band together in order that we may derive the maximum pleasure from our cars, and that we share our problems, facilities and enjoyment. It must not; cannot fail, as the opportunity may never reoccur.

Now or never - it depends on you."



However, this was not received well everywhere. There was concern in the CCC that the formation of a separate TOC would not only reduce its membership, but may leave Traction owners remaining in the CCC without the help and advice they had been used to.



**REG WINSTONE**

*(Shown left)*

*"This was where we began to tread on a few CCC toes, and relations were, for a month or two, fairly rancorous; on one side the attitude was that we had no reason to wish to separate our*

*activities from those of other Citroën owners; on the other side that the sooner we effected a total break the better.*

The TOC founders first put their proposal to the CCC committee on 22 January 1976 during a formal meeting in central London at the Pill Box pub near Westminster Bridge (now the Florence Nightingale). John Dodson was the Tractionistes spokesman. The meeting was very heated and agitated. However, though the discussion may have been rancorous it was nevertheless progressive, with phrases such as "When the dust had settled ..." and "When the smoke cleared ..." appearing in personal recollections.

**DAVE SHEPHERD** *"I attended meetings at The Pill Box with the CCC committee, and there was a good deal of bad feeling."*

**TONY HODGEKISS** *"There was an acrimonious meeting at The Pill Box pub in London. Established CCC members severely questioned the need for the TOC and our motives, and saw us as rebels to their cause and a diminution of the CCC membership. It caused a great deal of soul-searching and potential split loyalties of CCC committee members, but we did get some good friends from it, eg. Fred and David Conway."*

**JOHN GILLARD** *"Strong opinions were expressed on both sides, and the CCC committee meetings in the Pill Box pub at Westminster Bridge are still recalled by those involved. Some Traction owners resigned from the CCC as a result, an unfortunate development but one which encouraged formation of the TOC as a separate club rather than a register within the CCC. Some steadying influences, in particular Fred Annells who was on the CCC committee and who was dedicated to Traction, acted as go-betweens so that there was not an immediate schism."*

**REG WINSTONE** *"Both viewpoints softened considerably after the first dust of battle had died down. Agreement was reached on an affiliation which could only benefit both clubs by a renewal of goodwill, and we [soon became] compatible bedfellows."*

Two of the most ardent Traction enthusiasts admitted afterwards that they had had serious concerns before and during this meeting. Fred Annells and Graham Brice were on the Committee of the CCC so had a foot in both camps. Fred openly wondered whether the matter should not be taken any further, and both were worried that if things went wrong there would be a lot of disappointed Traction owners, and that formation of the TOC would be a destructive move rather than constructive.

The concept of a Traction Register within the CCC was discussed, and some subsequent correspondence actually uses that term,

but too many people felt that independence was essential.

A week later, the written response to the CCC from John Dodson on behalf of the TOC explained that, notwithstanding some conciliatory voices, the immediately hostile and negative attitude [of the CCC committee] had hardened the Tractionistes' determination to form their own club, and expressed the opinion that the overwhelming majority of Light Fifteen owners, if choice was forced upon them, would join the TOC.

When the first edition of Floating Power was subsequently distributed, it included a loose sheet called Stop Press, summarising the Pill Box meeting, and declaring the intention to proceed with the Traction Owners Club.

**STOP PRESS**

*The outcome of the "Pillbox" meeting with the CCC Committee*

Fifteen of us attended this meeting in order to make the following points:

1. Without at all criticising the efforts of those responsible for the "Light Fifteen Corner", we felt that the structure of the club is inadequate for our needs. We could only reflect the response we have had from those such as yourself who share our dissatisfaction with the status quo, by adopting the following position -
2. That autonomy for our section was of overriding importance, so that we can cater exclusively for our own register and issue "Floating Power", over which we must have complete control.
3. That an elected Light Fifteen Committee should be able to draw on Tractionistes subscriptions for our own purposes (magazine, spares, meetings, etc.).

Our proposals were met with no small degree of intransigence, illustrative in itself of the fundamental incompatibility of interests between us and them; at no time, however, was a single valid argument presented against us. As indeed it could not be - a 30/98 Vauxhall owner is not expected to enthuse over a club for Ventoras !

Faced with the indecision of the CCC, and with a large response from Traction owners, we are going ahead with the formation of an independent club, whose degree of affiliation to the CCC is yet to be determined.

There are an estimated 250 Traction owners in this country. We have made contact with 60 of these, and we hope that you will be prepared to assist us in contacting the remaining owners by spreading the word to any that you know of. (forms enclosed) We, in turn, intend to publicise the club as much as possible.

Our subscription will be £7. Considering that the CCC sub. is to be raised to £6.50, we don't feel this to be unreasonable. A proportion of this money will go towards the formation of a spares shop.

If you think the magazine and the club potentially worthwhile, please would you send your subscription by the end of February (renewable April 1977).

Thank you for your support. We will be electing a committee in the near future. If you would like to participate please write to (club address) for details of date and meeting place.

# The Beginnings of the **toc**

It now became necessary to form the club. The meeting has entered folklore as The Lewes Meeting, at which the officers of the club were elected. It was held on Sunday 15 February 1976 at Mongers Farm, and was attended by John Austin, Clive Baker, Graham and Tricia Brice, Walford Bruen, John Dodson and Judy, John Gillard, Tony Hodgekiss and Maria, Tony and Mrs Garrett, Bryn Hughes, Guy Isbel, Graham Sage, Dave Shepherd, Martin and Fenella Vickerstaff, John and Monica Watson, Reg and Ginny Winstone.

**WALFORD BRUEN** "... a call went out to all Traction owners to attend a meeting to discuss the formation of our very own club. The venue was to be in Lewes at the house of one John Dodson. I drove down from Scotland in my DS21"

**DAVE SHEPHERD** "The next significant meeting was at Mongers Farm in February 1976 where it was decided that a committee should be elected. I distinctly remember Tony Hodgekiss saying "Dave Shepherd works in accounts - he can be treasurer." That was that for the next sixteen years."

**JOHN GILLARD** "The Lewes meeting was really intended to formalise the arrangements and appoint people to roles and titles. I had driven from London expecting to be made Treasurer but was delayed by fog, and found the role had been appointed to Dave Shepherd. I certainly was not sorry to have that cup pass from me and, fortuitously, it allowed me to concentrate on a greater need, the provision of a source of spare parts."

## **MARTIN VICKERSTAFF**

(Shown left) "I remember a meeting at which the TOC committee was formed. Myself and my wife, Fenella, volunteered for duty."

**TONY HODGEKISS** "Reg Winstone pressed a red book into my hand, called something like Car events - how to organise them, and said he thought I would be good for

organising rallies and meetings. Frankly, I was never very good at that sort of thing, but accepted the job. I remember passing that book on to my successor, but where is it now?"

Two days later, on 17 February 1976, a TOC bank account was opened and fifteen subscriptions were paid in.

Much thought had gone into choosing the name for the club. It had been considered important to include the word Traction, because it was generic and covered all the cars - not just the Slough-built Light Fifteen. It reinforced a strong kinship with the French and with Paris-built cars. Although left hand drive imports were still comparatively rare in those days, it was felt important to be seen to include them. Such a clear definition of the club's potential was instrumental in attracting other Traction-only owners who would not have joined the CCC anyway.

However, in addition to Traction owners, the Club was intended to cater for owners of all pre-'57 water cooled Citroëns, and this was made clear from the start. The name for the magazine reflects this, since Moteur Flottant was introduced on Citroën's C4 and C6 in 1932 and then used on all versions of the 8cv, 10cv and 15cv as well as on the Traction Avant. Regrettably, the emphasis created through use of Traction in the club's name has meant that owners of earlier (rear wheel drive) models have never been numerous, and more often than not TOC meetings consist entirely of Tractions.

## The affiliation with CCC

Even after the decision to proceed was taken, the TOC committee recognised that it would be beneficial for there to be some sort of continuing affiliation with the CCC. Successive editorials in **Floating Power** provide an interesting insight as the affiliation grew. What transpired was for TOC to be a club within a club; it would be part of the CCC but entirely self governing, and self-financing. The arrangement was seen by some people as a very convenient - and, it appears, by a great many as a cheap - way to remain members of both clubs.

**JOHN DODSON** "Eventually a formula was worked out whereby finances would be handled by CCC, and the editor of **Floating Power** would present his drafts to the editor of **Citroënian** before going to press. In the end, nothing was ever not approved."

**ALEC BILNEY** "There was to be a convoluted membership scheme whereby the Citroën Car Club would be a parent body which TOC members could join if they wished but did not need to. I never did."

The next meeting with the CCC Committee was held at Fred Annells' house on 28 February 1976. Not only was there was a need to reassure each other, but it was necessary to clarify the form of affiliation with the CCC. About thirty people attended, including John Mann, treasurer of the CCC.

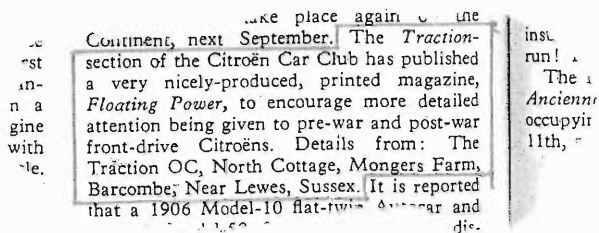
**TRICIA BRICE** "In time the CCC realised that the TOC was happening whether or not they opposed it, so John Mann the CCC Treasurer came up with the joint club membership idea for a reduced rate. I think with hindsight that this was a way of the CCC retaining members who were very pro-TOC such as Graham [Brice] (shown with Tricia, left). It has been suggested that without this, and other input from the CCC, the TOC would have floundered."



**TONY HODGEKISS** "Soon after the formation of the Club at Mongers Farm, the new committee met at Fred [Annell's] house in Burpham, Guildford, to thrash out how the TOC could be integrated with CCC activities to prevent a total initial split. John Mann the CCC treasurer came to an agreement with TOC about how much of our subs they should absorb to co-distribute **Floating Power**. The idea [was] partly that easier access to Floating Power might assist TOC membership, without losing people from CCC, and it probably worked. There was a special subscription rate for membership of both clubs."

The CCC treasurer seems to have been one of the people who wanted the venture to succeed, and his help was instrumental in the early days. He was a key figure in the TOC's start-up. Another was David Conway who initially tried to encourage the formation of a Traction register as a section within the CCC but, like John Mann, accepted and gave practical help to the enthusiasts when their determination became clear, despite a personal belief that there was strength in numbers.

The formal creation of the TOC was announced through the editorial of *Citroënian* in March 1976. It received a boost and a wider readership when it was given a mention in *Motor Sport*. Bill Boddy, editor of *Motor Sport* and the elder statesman of the vintage and classic car world, had mentioned the embryo club in his columns. In the TOC archives is a formal note from the TOC thanking him for the help when it was most beneficial.



MOTOR SPORT, APRIL 1976

**ALEC BILNEY** "In *Motor Sport*, I saw a mention of a new club exclusively for owners of the front drive Citroën cars, and inviting anyone interested to get in touch. I did so. In return I received a request for some money to establish a club called the Traction Owners Club, and Volume 1, No. 1 of *Floating Power*, dated January 1976, which I still have. Importantly, I was given a clear indication that other owners did exist, and they had the same problems as me."

The response was just as the founders had expected. Traction owners welcomed a dedicated home at last. By the end of March 1976 the TOC had 59 members and, by October, it had 179 members of whom 133 were in the CCC as well.

**BRIAN BROCKWELL** "It was in the *Citroënian* that I read that a new club had been formed, the Traction Owners Club. I joined the TOC in time to receive the second magazine and membership number of 32."

Brian was one of several people who mentioned the membership number. Such references caused considerable difficulty when this history was first being assembled. Originally, all contributors had assumed that the distribution of TOC numbers began when the club began, and that the original founders had been given the first so-many numbers. A subsequent sequence of nearly two hundred numbers with names in alphabetical order was thought to indicate that many, many people joined immediately, and were simply numbered and listed as a bundle. However, in response to a question about this, Tricia Brice recalled that the primitive manual record keeping then could not have coped with such complexity, or the administrative delay implied.

What actually happened was that the individual membership numbers from the Citroën Car Club remained in use for administration, and TOC membership lists were kept in alphabetical order. A prime advantage of this was that the joint distribution of magazines became economic. The printers of *Citroënian* had agreed to use the CCC membership number as the sorting method for mailing. A prefix of the letter T to some numbers indicated that that person was a member of TOC and CCC so should receive *Floating Power* as well. No prefix meant *Citroënian* only. But, of course, the system did not cater for people who were only members of TOC and who had to be sent only copies of *Floating Power*. For that, although never in the CCC, a fictitious CCC number was invented and the prefix FP added. This chronicle became FP5898.

It must have been difficult. Those involved remember significant hiccups in the process, mainly because *Floating Power* was printed elsewhere and needed to be delivered on time. The club archives contain some unhappy correspondence when things went wrong.

**TONY HODGEKISS** "As I was in the TOC from the start, I had the CCC and TOC membership number T2999. 'T' was added to let the CCC printers know that I was also a TOC member and was to receive both *Citroënian* and *Floating Power*. I assume there were other prefixes for other people who got *Floating Power* only. The CCC agreed to distribute both magazines via their printer at Worthing. I remember one evening having to rush the *Floating Power* down there from our printers to be posted with *Citroënian*."

**MARTIN VICKERSTAFF** "At first the TOC was affiliated to the CCC, so my CCC membership number became T1776. I still have my TOC membership card for 1978-79 and that shows my TOC number as 1776 as well."

That arrangement continued throughout the time that the two clubs were affiliated. But once on its own, new TOC membership numbers were created by Dave Shepherd in 1980 as renewals came in. The then committee was given priority in alphabetical order, thereby making Fred Annells number 001 \*. The next 180-plus numbers (see above) represent people who were established in the TOC in those first four years, and it is quite impressive how many of them are still active there thirty years later. Brian Brockwell's low number is therefore due to his name not his speed of response.

The complexity of subscriptions necessary, while the CCC was involved, needed studying if any one wished to understand them. When the option of joint membership was announced in March 1976, *Citroënian* called for £6.50 for CCC only, £6.50 for Traction Car (sic) Club only, and £9.50 for both. But *Floating Power* had established the TOC subscription at £7.00 per year. So in order to rationalise things, an announcement was made that TOC would reduce to £6.50 with any extra 50p already paid being put to use buying spares, unless anyone squealed. As a result there were one or two communications that, in retrospect, might be found amusing in their complexity. The following is a summary of a joint announcement:

If you would like to receive *Citroënian* only, send £6.50 to CCC.

If you would like to receive *Citroënian* and *Floating Power*, send £9.50 to CCC.

If you would like to receive *Floating Power* only, send £6.50 to CCC making this clear.

If you have joined TOC at £7.00 and would like *Citroënian* as well, send an extra £2.50 to CCC.

If you have joined TOC at £7.00 and do not wish to receive *Citroënian*, your extra 50p will be held for spares unless the TOC hears otherwise.

If you have renewed your CCC membership at £6.50 and want *Floating Power* as well, send £3.00 to the CCC.

If you have renewed your CCC membership at £6.50 and joined the TOC at £7.00, please apply to the TOC for a refund of £4.00.

# The Beginnings of the **toc**



\* Fred has already been referred to in this article, and he is so fundamental to Traction-ing in UK, that it is appropriate here to identify him further. Even in 1975 he had already been an enthusiast for Tractions for a quarter of a century, and he worked tirelessly to keep the flame alight. He organised

many Traction-only events in the pre-TOC days. He had amassed a large and varied collection of Tractions - so many, in fact, that he says he never really know the total. Fred was then still hard at work earning his living, but he was so well known that car spares dealers all over London knew his name, and they universally referred enquirers to him. He certainly proved the find-of-the-century to this chronicler. Fred has become the granddad of Tractioning, and was made the first life member of the Club. But it is interesting that his club number was accidental.

## The beginning of TOC activities

At first, the TOC committee met in The Rising Sun pub at Charlwood near Gatwick airport, simply because all active members were from the Southeast of UK. That lasted for about three years.

While some people were keenest on the magazine, others such as Graham Brice, Guy Isbel, John Gillard and Bryn Hughes worked hard to establish a supply of replacement, reconditioned and even new parts. This was the other important *raison d'être* of the club, and John Gillard started the first spares scheme.

The decision to create a fund for this through a voluntary spares levy within TOC membership was taken early on. The levy was to be, and still is, a one-off payment. There were spare parts available on a chance basis from major dealers and from private sources, but it took time to confirm reliable longer-term suppliers. Once the magazine got going, people on the fringes could be told where to get parts, and they could meet like-minded enthusiasts who could advise about fitting. Additionally, news about available parts was gained from people all over the country.

A third aspect of the club began to take shape as well.

There were keen social events where the founder members struggled to get to know others who had joined. Many of the people who have provided a memory have quoted a different event as being the first. Early club activity and public relations work was enthusiastic but, to meet printing schedules or CCC distribution deadlines, some events were publicised in **Floating Power** while others were only in the Stop Press insert. It would seem that a gathering of eighteen Tractions on 9 May '76 at the Penshurst Pageant was the first big meet, reported in **Floating Power** issue 3.

**TONY HODGKISS** "I think the very first event we went to was [held during] a 2CV-Pop Cross meeting at Blackbushe Airfield on 19 and 20 July 1976. We had put an advert in **Floating Power** to announce the TOC element, and about 6 - 9 Tractions turned up, more than I had ever seen in one place, and all better than mine. [It was] my first sighting of a white one; I had not envisaged such a thing existing!"

**TRICIA BRICE** "I can certainly recall early French picnics.

*The Rainbow Inn somewhere in darkest Sussex was the gathering point, and we then moved to [a nearby field]. The idea was to pool all the food and we did end up with a true French feast."*

There was a TOC treasure hunt in July. It was promised in the editorial of the third **Floating Power** but the details were only in the loose Stop Press. It would seem that seven or eight cars took part but there is no permanent record because printing schedules ensured that the report was also only in the loose Stop Press insert with the fourth **Floating Power**.

However, there is agreement that the first national gathering of the TOC was during the 3rd ICCCR at Kenilworth in August 1976. Reports suggest that some forty Tractions were present, which included some Belgians, French and Swiss, but it is not clear how many were TOC members.

**WALFORD BRUEN** "The first big get-together of the new club was at the ICCCR at Kenilworth, during the last weekend of August (unfortunately, I couldn't make the July treasure hunt). Being an international event, there were several cars from a number of countries."

A final, purely social, event for TOC's first Christmas was a nosh-up (a period term for an evening meal!) at a restaurant run by a Tractionist. At £3 per head it was bargain even then.

**REG WINSTONE** "High spots of the [TOC's] first year include that amazing convoy that set off across the Midlands from Kenilworth to Donnington Motor Museum; Mr. Bibendum picking his way over happy, prostrate, wine-filled figures at the French Picnic in September; and the happy uproarious Christmas nosh-up."

TOC area sections began to be formed immediately, to establish not only the social side but local networks of people who could and would help each other with mechanical work. Most areas formed by default when owners living near to each other met for what were then known as "runs". By planning these runs earlier than had been usual, they could be announced in **Floating Power** so that other, hitherto unknown, owners could join in. Walford Bruen became Scottish Area representative, Leo Quinn set up the Yorkshire area, and the London section was initiated by John Gillard.

**ALEC BILNEY** "On 17 May 1977, I went to Diss in Norfolk for the inaugural meeting of the Eastern section of the TOC with Tom and Rosie Evans."

The Northern section met for the first time at Garforth in 1979.

**TONY HODGKISS** "In 1977, Maria and I booked a table at the Yeovil Festival of Transport, probably in August. We were joined by a local member, and had details of the new TOC. We displayed some bits of Traction on the stand to show how it was different from other old cars. We did not have members' cars there, but we sold Traction bits and pieces from our garage clearout as well as material that we had obtained from the Club Shop. This was the first TOC participation in a national classic car show, and was the forerunner of our stands at Alexandra Palace and the NEC."

## The break with CCC

The different aims of the people in the two clubs is expressed in memories reported here. The CCC was primarily regarded as a social body which people joined regardless of car model owned,

whereas the TOC was primarily a technical body intended to keep pre-57 water-cooled Citroëns on the road.

**WALFORD BRUEN** "As far as I can recall, the TOC became fully independent of the CCC after a very short time."

**JOHN GILLARD** "The separation of the TOC from the CCC occurred after about a year, although the joint distribution of magazines continued until 1979."

The complications of continuing the integration with CCC, as the two clubs continued to grow but diverge, had become too much by 1979. By that time the TOC had 348 members. 246 of them belonged to both clubs so needed processing by two membership secretaries and their subscriptions accounted for by two treasurers. The CCC felt this was no longer necessary or viable, and approached the TOC about separation.

The December 1979 edition of *Floating Power* announced that the respective committees had agreed it would be best to separate the two administrations. This was formalised at the next AGM in January 1980. As a youth finally leaves home and goes off to seek his fortune, "an amicable separation" was achieved. Both clubs wished the other well.

The TOC AGM minute was

*"This year brings the most significant event since the TOC was formed - our complete separation from the CCC. ... We in the TOC agree that ... in the interests of the two clubs it is the correct decision. ... Our thanks to those members of the CCC who have helped and supported the TOC while we have been linked, and [we] wish the CCC well for the future." (FP Vol. 5 No. 1)*

A consequence of breaking away was that a complete, self-sufficient committee and its support was needed, but those people involved recall that TOC had by then become effectively autonomous anyway. There was a need to sort out subscriptions payments which, although a very modest amount for each member, was a substantial figure overall. Once such knots had been untied, the TOC stood alone quite successfully, and has maintained amicable relations with CCC.

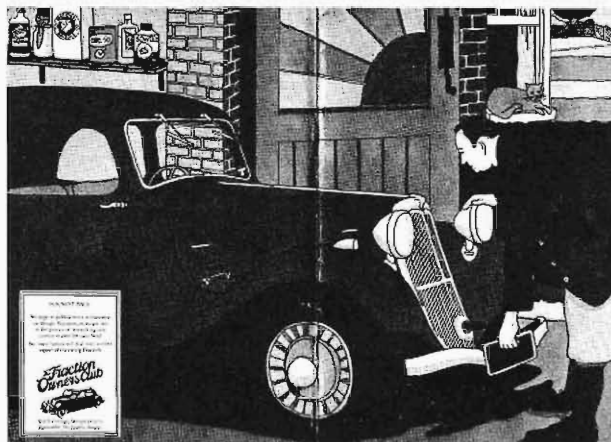
## Epilogue

Within two years of the Traction owners taking the initiative to branch out as a dedicated club and form the TOC, the same desire for autonomy persuaded 2CV owners that it would be appropriate to bring their affairs into their own hands, too, by forming their own dedicated club. The 2CVGB began in February 1978, and has also gone from strength to strength.

The TOC planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Traction in 1984 with a national rally at Knebworth in Hertfordshire. When, in 1983, the opportunity occurred to expand this into the 6th ICCCR, the TOC was able to take the lead and invited the other three UK Citroën clubs, CCC, 2CVGB and 2CV Cross to participate. It was the largest ICCCR so far with 1400 cars, of which 219 were Tractions from nine countries. The TOC had come of age.

**BRIAN BROCKWELL** "At the 2nd Traction Owners Spring Rally held in May 1979, at Tewkesbury, I bought the last raffle ticket to be sold and this was also to be the first out. I had given the ticket to our son Ian, so he had won the first prize, an original drawing by John Dodson which featured on the cover of the TOC

magazine Volume One, Edition Two from April 1976. Ian still has the drawing, and it is in pride of place on his living room wall."



## Acknowledgements

It is my pleasure to pass thanks to everyone who has contributed to this article. Although I have always considered myself to have been involved in the Traction Owners Club from its beginning, I was not involved during its formation. For the details of that action, I needed to pursue the people who were instrumental at the end of 1975. Without exception, those people have been informative and generous with their time when responding to my e-mails or during my telephone calls at odd hours when something needed to be clarified.

The quotations from those people show who they are.

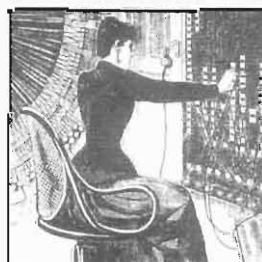
Time was also given generously by significant members of the Citroën Car Club, so that the dramatic days of early 1976 were considered from both sides. To them, thank you.

Not mentioned in the text, but also deserving thanks, are some current members of the TOC's committee who contributed through loan of files.

My thanks must go John Reynolds, who originally undertook to write this memoir and who, instead of resenting my intervention, welcomed the opportunity to get the task done and gave the approval of a professional author to my style of presentation.

Above all, I must thank Tony Hodgekiss for his encouragement and unwavering support when I sought yet more details from his memory or yet more guidance on arrangement.

Finally, to Fred Annells. It was his enthusiasm for putting this information onto paper that began everything in 2001, and whose chivvying because nothing seemed to be happening that persuaded me to get involved. He, at least, will be glad it is done.



**tochelpine**

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from abroad

0044 115 911 0960

email: [toc.helpline@ntlworld.com](mailto:toc.helpline@ntlworld.com)

# toccorrespondence

## Where is my car?

In 1989 I sold my 11B white ID19P engine to someone who lived in England. Did you buy this car in the summer of 1989 in the south of Brittany from a Citroën garage?

The French registration was 4146 QZ56.

I can find parts and tools for Tractions in my country. I have in stock a front grille in good condition.

Gildas

*Atelier Sport Auto 56*

*5 Route D'Auray*

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## Something Different?

This was sent by the Classic and Sports Car Magazine.

David Evans, clubs editor of Classic & Sports Car, said this (only once): "For the Best Themed Stand, we always look for something different - for people who've made an effort or displays that make us smile. Obvious contenders were the Riley RM Club's Murder Mystery tableau and the Sunbeam Talbot Alpine Register's Monte Carlo backdrop. "But the winner was in a different league, with a fantastic selection of cars - one of which was a pukka Résistance car and one car used by the Germans during the war, complete with the permit required for use on the road, plus several Slough-built -with the potted history of each on the windscreen.

The attention to detail was spot on: it wasn't just the 'Allo 'Allo! idea - everyone even looked like the characters they playing. The funniest thing I saw during the show was Lieutenant Gruber and René walking through the autojumble in all the gear. Brilliant. And it made people laugh, which is the main thing."

*David Evans*

## Success in France

Yesterday I went to the AGM of Traction Universelle in France (Nord), and took some of my Floating Powers to show them to the French members. I had lots of success with them, they especially loved the covers, and of course the articles - also the technical ones - and were surprised to hear that a lot of TOC members made contributions by sending in pictures and articles... that's unusual in France. I left an extra copy I had from an earlier magazine. So, keep up the good work,

*Walter & Noëlla Callens*

## Hello everybody, former Belgian visitors!

### A funny thing happened on our way to... Brugge

We already read in the local paper that the people of Brugge were surprised by some new carillon-tunes playing in the afternoon.

Going to the city for christmas-shopping we indeed heard something new coming from the Belfort.

It seems that, on special request of UK-visitors a few weeks ago, the carillon player has changed his program and plays now and again some popular English songs. Such as 'Show Me the Way to Go Home', but especially 'Roll out the Barrel' becomes very popular now.

In Dutch this song goes like '... en de poembak, de poembak, de poembak is kapot... (X3) ...en den ouwe is versleten en de nieuwe is kapot'" which is a drinking song, and also popular by our government when they go abroad (as seen on television) !

Since you've all been here last May, we have to ask you : who is responsible for this change, because till now Brugge was such a stiff city and the carillon always played dull songs... ???

Tell us, so we can thank you.

*Walter & Noëlla Callens*

### and in reply:

Dear Walter and Noëlla,

That's it. Blame the English if anything is different!  
I don't believeeeeeeevee it!

I am sure all those who visited Brugge in May and sat eating mussels in that draughty old square - in the pouring rain - while the carillon belted out some totally unrecognisable dirge will, like me, be disturbed to hear that the Brits are being blamed for the fact that the Brugge Carillon Player has finally got enough sense to play some decent music for once.

I hope he never gets his pump back and I am pleased to hear it is Kaput. As far as I am concerned, if he plays a tune telling everybody about it, it sure beats the sort of boring (foreign) rubbish that this magnificent instrument previously churned out.

I don't know who was responsible but I think they deserves a drink - I'm thinking of starting a collection!

*Bernie Shaw*

\*p.s. - For reasons I do not fully understand Mrs S does not wish to be associated with the above comment. Last heard muttering something about which side her bread is buttered.

## New headlights

I have just read that new Citroëns may soon be fitted with headlights which vary in intensity with speed. This is nothing new. My headlights dim automatically when I slow down.

*S Lcksvee*

# Letter to the Editor

---

## Dear Sir,

First of all I should like to offer my congratulations on completing your first year as editor. In my opinion the standard of Floating Power remains as excellent as ever, making my visits to the dentist something to look forward to these last few months. However, I do have one small criticism regarding the frequency which, in the past, was rarely a problem. For years I was able to time my six-monthly dental check-up to coincide with the availability of each new issue of FP kindly supplied in the waiting room by my dentist, an avid Traction enthusiast. Now, however, the magazine is coming out so often that I have been forced to have two fillings and one totally unnecessary extraction in order to keep up to date. If you are unable to revert to the previous time-table perhaps you might let me know if there is a TOC member who is a hairdresser so that I might arrange appointments with the necessary frequency (but without the more painful side effects).

On a different note, my mechanic tells me that during my recent attempt to emulate the famous "Traction Over The Cliff" test (as performed in the early Citroën promotional film) the car fared better than he would have expected but then added "it will need a bit more than a rub over with T-Cut" to put it back on the road. With hindsight I realise: a) the cliff should have been less shear,

b) it would probably have been better to have gone for a sandy beach rather than rocks. I have since re-watched the original footage and now realise my other big error - the driver did not stay in the car during the original attempt. On a brighter note, my physician is of the opinion that the incident has not done any permanent damage to the spine and I shall be able to drive again when the casts are removed.

Nevertheless, the only regret I have is the lack of filmed evidence of the event. Of course I set the camera in advance but, due to a minor miscalculation on my part, the car destroyed it on the fourth bounce. All very regrettable because I had been hoping to submit a report and some stills from the video sequence for publication in your magazine. Next time perhaps.

Meanwhile, I wish you continued success and assure you I shall do my best to supply further articles and reports to support your editorial efforts in the future.

Kind regards,

*Tyrone Parker-Lott*

---

## FBHVC News

### MoT Testing

Widespread worries that computerisation of the MoT testing system was leading to a stricter testing regime caused the legislation committee to invite the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) to come to the conference after the AGM in October to answer questions. VOSA not only agreed, but also sent two senior officials to the August meeting of the committee to reassure those present that the standards for the test are unchanged. They also answered several specific queries that had been raised by members of subscriber clubs as well as discussing issues such as the testing of coaches and buses that are not used commercially and the costs of re-tests, a subject on which there may be some good news in the not too distant future. Computerisation should be completed by early 2006. The problems raised related to three areas: loss of tester discretion; apparent changes of standards, particularly for brake tests; and problems arising from incomplete or mismatched DVLA records.

The men from VOSA showed that the computerised system had an answer for each one: the system is capable of coping. The difficulties stem from testers who are not sufficiently familiar with the system to know what to do with the unusual. As such, the problems are likely to be transitional as testers get used to the new regime. The message for those who suffer during this period is to persuade testers to use the help lines, and if that fails to make use of the public lines themselves. Please also report the problem to us.

The weight of vehicle being tested was a frequent theme in complaints from owners, summarised in the question: if the test has not changed, why has weight suddenly become critical. The weight of a vehicle is essential information for the proper function of a roller brake test. Weights for common modern vehicles (including a notional amount for driver, tools, fuel etc.) have previously been provided by charts available to testers - that information is now on computer. If the vehicle is not common, or is old, the tester needs to key in the weight. In the past, a tester may have simply used his experience to make a reasonable estimate: now he has to be more accurate. Once a weight is recorded for a particular vehicle, the figure will appear automatically for future tests. If the weight is not known, the vehicle should still be tested on

the roller tester for out of balance, grab, judder etc., but the overall efficiency should be established by using a decelerometer (often referred to as a Tapley meter). Lack of known vehicle weight is neither a reason to refuse a test, nor a reason for a failure.

Another common theme was dealing with vehicles that have incomplete or incorrect records. The first thing the new system prompts the tester for is the registration number, followed by the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN - a chassis or frame number) so that it can check the MoT database which is linked to DVLA's records. Absence of one or other of these numbers has (incorrectly) caused more than one refusal to test. The system allows a test to take place provided there is at least one unique number with which to identify the vehicle. If there is no match with the records on the DVLA database, as would be the case with a freshly imported vehicle, a new record is automatically set up based on the VIN. Lack of a VIN is a cause for failure only on a vehicle first used after 1 August 1980, but two conflicting VIN numbers are a cause for failure on any vehicle - a potential trap for older cars that have separate car/body and chassis numbers.

If the VIN on the vehicle presented for test differs from that on the official record, the test should continue on the basis of the number physically on the vehicle being tested and an automated system will alert DVLA to a mismatch between the records and the vehicle. The mismatch itself should not be a cause of failure, and action will be taken by DVLA to ensure the problem is rectified before the next test. This might involve a vehicle inspection if there is a radical difference, for instance if a car has been re-shelled but DVLA not notified. Owners can save themselves hassle by checking that the numbers showing on their V5C registration documents match those on their vehicles and, if necessary, getting the records put right before their next MoT test.

As an aside, FBHVC sees many copies of registration documents as a result of the process of applying for FIVA Identity cards. It is not exaggerating to say that one in four is incorrect in some way or another, usually as a result of the owner not telling DVLA of changes of engine or colour.

# CITROËN



# toctech

## volume 1

# Maintenance **26**

## TECHNICAL

Brakes

Flat Spots

Regular Maintenance Pays Off

# tocshop

## TRACTION OWNERS CLUB

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Poster 3D Traction	£2.50
Poster Traction Avant (bas relief)	£2.00
Spare Parts Manual UK to 1949 Repro	£32.90
Sports Shirt TOC Motif (S. M. L. XL.)	£14.00
Sweat Shirt TOC Motif (S. M. L. XL.)	£15.00
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Tee Shirt TOC Print (L.XL.)	£7.00
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# The Final Word on Brakes?

Send your toctech tips to  
John Ogborne:  
Whimbrel Cottage,  
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Wells, Somerset, BA5 1EX  
Email: jogborne@onetel.com

Mike Lewis felt that the topic was left a little in the air, so here is what is perhaps the final word on the subject of floating versus fixed mounting of brake shoes.

(Apologies to Mike for the error in the last issue. The printer's software interpreted the symbol for the coefficient of friction, "mew" (a "u" with a tail), as an underscore. Sorry if this caused any confusion but it was shown correctly in the diagram.)

It's a dull life here in Rickmansworth which, interestingly, once held the UK record for the largest day to night temperature range ..... so back to brakes, then. The trouble with this subject is that it's really quite technical, and several things which even engineers in Beverley or Rickmansworth might suppose to be necessarily so, aint. As I shuffle eagerly but arthritically forward to grasp the theory by its fundamentals, new aspects keep snagging my mental zimmer-frame and alter my course a bit. If you can stand it, here's the latest.....

In short, it now looks very likely that Roger's modification will result in reduced lining life and less even heat distribution, and there are some suggestions below which I hope may help anyone working with the pivoted system. I've stopped fussing over where the reported 40% improvement came from. My money is now on it most likely being due to a material with a different coefficient of friction and maybe a dash of optimism. (The coefficient of friction usually has the symbol  $\mu$ , pronounced 'mew'. This should have appeared in my letter but the printers couldn't find it and gave us ' \_ ' instead. They should get a cat. Sorry).

Using heroic effort to overcome pitiful ineptitude I recently calculated the wear pattern for floating shoes, and the results predict that wear will be heaviest (for the leading shoe) at the trailing end, tapering off to nothing by about 3" from the leading end. Forward of that point there should be no wear at all unless you drive backwards a lot. Previously I'd thought that removing this first section would help (R3 in my sketch, Sept/Oct issue), but the numbers say no, not unless the trailing end were to be extended about 1.5" toward the eccentric. Obviously that's not an option but, if it were, the lining arrangement would be very similar to modern drum brakes. Which is nice. Or would have been. Another possibility is if the stop that replaces the eccentric can be angled a bit to give an upward component to the reaction force there. In Rickmansworth we are agog to hear how these predictions compare with experience.

I do think Roger considerably overstates the need for accuracy when adjusting the eccentrics of the old system. Like several TOC members, I'm well qualified to talk about old eccentrics and I say that extreme accuracy is not essential, it's just that the greater the accuracy, the shorter and sweeter the bedding-in period will be. It is bedding in that will produce the full contact Roger says is essential, though while I'm at it I have to disagree with him on that too. Full contact should benefit fade resistance, but the theory does not depend on it. It works fine for whatever portion of contact you can choose.

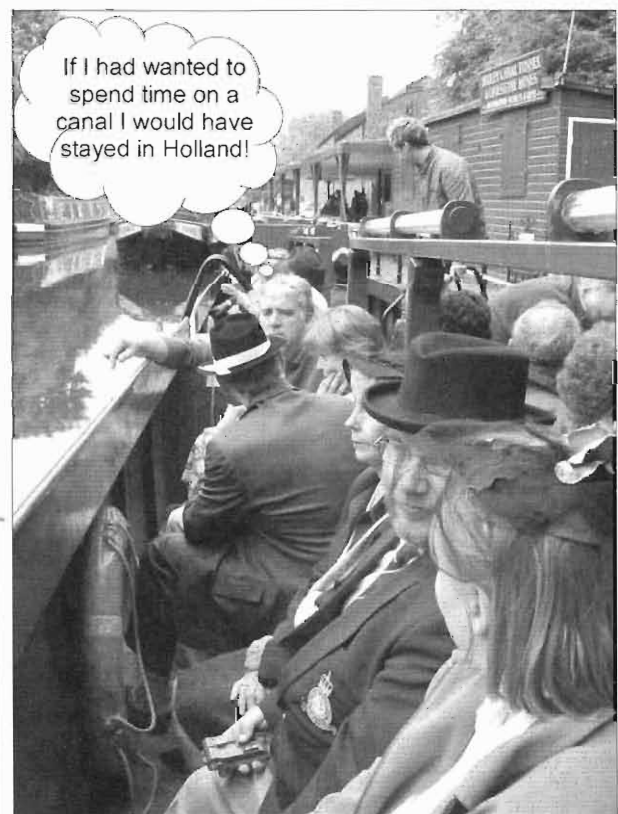
It would be a pity if members were needlessly frightened away from doing a traditional brake reline, but availability of the adjustment tool should help. Also, it may be a good idea to make a longish but shallow chamfer on the leading end of the lining - say just .010" deep tapering back one inch. (This is in addition to the shorter deeper chamfer normally made on riveted linings to remove the bit that sticks up past the last row of rivets.)

This ensures that even if not so well adjusted, the first contact would be away from the most sensitive or self-actuating area of the lining, giving more consistent performance from the start.

You could also look at the wear on the old linings before removing them, and if reasonably even, record the place and position of the eccentrics and shoes so they go back unchanged. (By 'even' I mean the linings should be thinnest at a point somewhere near 90 degrees round from the eccentric. The wear takes the form of a crescent with the fattest part of the crescent and thus the most wear at this 90 degree point - the linings should look noticeably less worn close to the eccentric.)

Note that the only purpose of the adjustment is to get the distance of the pin from the axle centre to be the same as for the corresponding distance on the actual shoe that is fitted there. That means it doesn't matter if the drum is changed or skimmed or if the new lining is thicker or thinner than the old lining had been - if the same shoe goes back on the same pin with the eccentric in the same position, the adjustment remains as good (or as bad) as it was when the old linings were first fitted. Not a lot of people will know that, probably.

The Repair Manual (illustration 73 is clearest) shows that the leading shoe lacks the first 2" or so of lining at the leading end. If a lining were fitted including this 'missing' section the geometry is such that the brake may lock on completely if contact is made only at that leading end. (It's very like walking along smooth ground sliding the end of a stick along the floor in front of you. If the floor gets too rough or the stick gets too upright, the tip will catch.) It is possible that brakes have mistakenly been relined in this way with unfortunate consequences. Anyone having Roger's modification and changing back to the original should remove this section of lining.



# toc tech forum

## Flat Spots and their Causes

David Boyd has again put pen to paper with some suggestions on possible causes and the elimination of flat spots. This was in response to David de Saxes letter in the September/October issue.

David de Saxe raises an interesting point on his old Singer car which uses Solex carburettors. This is a problem not unknown to Tractions, which mainly use Solex 32PBIC or 34PBIC carburettors, or the Solex 35FAIE as was used on the pre-war and just post-war cars.

Sometime ago we had a similar problem with one of our cars that had a flat spot which was most noticeable when pulling away. Upon examination, it was found that the accelerator pump jet was size 65 instead of the correct 50. Clearly the larger jet was pumping in too much fuel causing an over-rich mixture. A quick change of jet to 50 immediately cured the problem.

The correct accelerator pump jet size is 50 for all the carburettors listed above. So if your engine misses a beat when you put your foot down, try checking the pump jet first before resorting to anything more drastic. *Other factors that can cause these problems include:*

- Accelerator pump not working at all; broken diaphragm membrane is usually the problem, so fit a new membrane
- Timing is out
- General condition of the engine
- Check the electrics, ignition etc.

I hope this help someone out there!

## Regular Maintenance Pays Off

John Gillard of "Classic Restorations" found this old service note from Citroën UK dated June 1938. As John said, it must have generated plenty of business for under-worked Citroën specialists!




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**I M P O R T A N T**

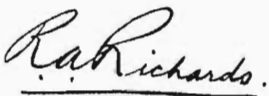
Dear Sirs,

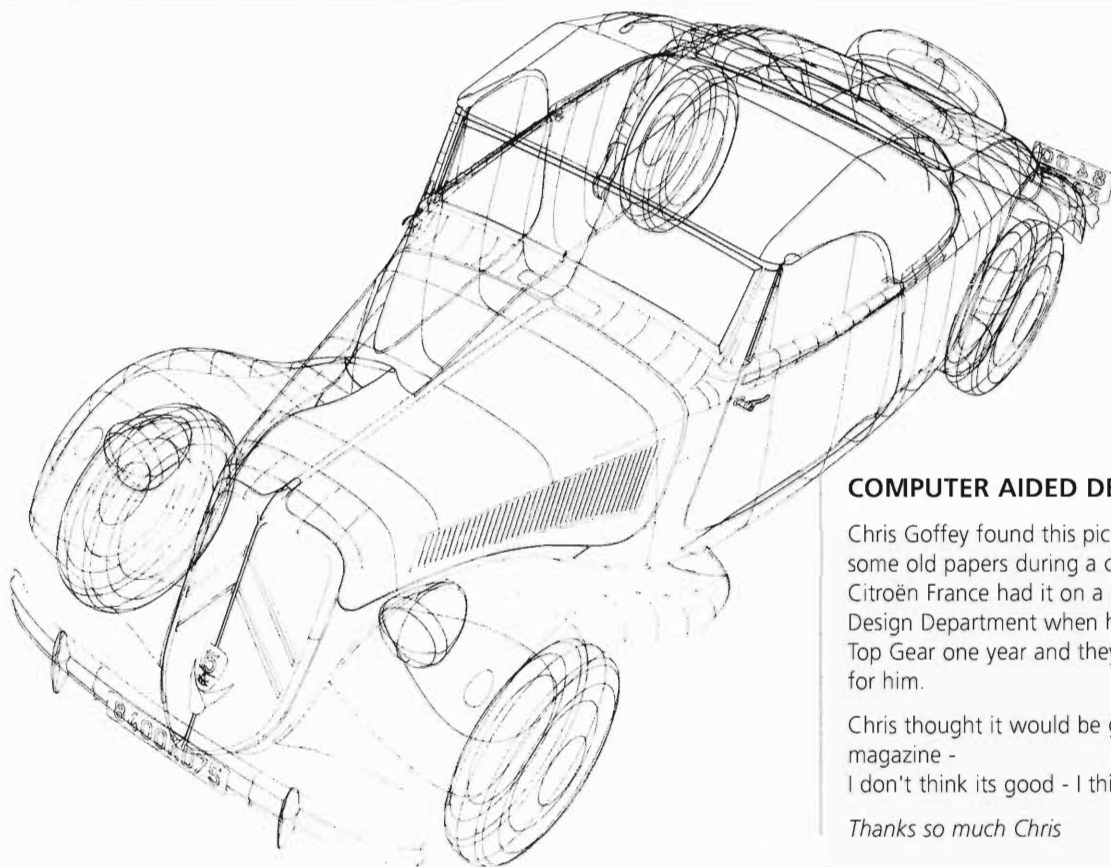
LUBRICATION OF DRIVE SHAFT SLIDING JOINT.

We have received a number of complaints in connection with a bumping noise in the front of our Front Wheel Drive Cars. In the large majority of cases this has proved to be caused by the sliding joint in the drive shafts. On further and careful inspection it has been noted that in the majority of cases these drive shafts have not been lubricated properly. It should be particularly noted that the four greasing points on the drive shafts, two on each shaft, should be greased regularly, say once a week, and sufficient grease should be put in on each occasion as these points cannot be over-lubricated.

We would suggest that in all further cases where you have a complaint of this nature, the car should be taken in, thoroughly greased at the points mentioned above, and that you should explain to the customer how it should be dealt with, when we think you would find the trouble disappear and greater satisfaction be obtained by the owner.

Yours very truly,  
CITROËN CARS LIMITED.

  
Chief Sales Executive.



## COMPUTER AIDED DESIRE

Chris Goffey found this picture amongst some old papers during a clear out!! Citroën France had it on a computer in the Design Department when he was there for Top Gear one year and they printed one off for him.

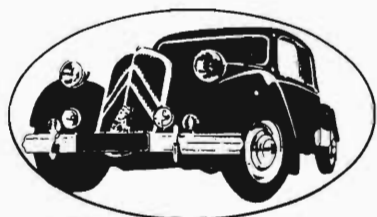
Chris thought it would be good for the magazine -  
I don't think its good - I think its *beautiful*.

*Thanks so much Chris*

## New Members

*A warm welcome is extended to all new members of the club:*

- 1911 J R Dobson, Holybourne, Alton, Hants
- 1912 E J Davies, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, Shropshire
- 1913 Suga Shimpei, Nerima-Ku, Tokyo
- 1914 C M Quirk, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
- 1915 C Lloyd, Hartburn, Morpeth
- 1916 R Shipper, Higher Walton, Warrington
- 1917 I A F Stokes, Richmond, Vermont, USA
- 1918 J F Joyes, Caversham, Reading



**TRACTION  
OWNERS  
CLUB**

## Anniversaries

- 19 Nov 1189 First game of Ping Pong
- 26 Dec 1792 Charles Babbage born, besides inventing the "difference engine"
- 24 Dec 1818 Franz Grubber composed Silent Night
- 25 Nov 1844 Carl Benz born
- 10 Dec 1868 First traffic lights installed outside Houses of Parliament - powered by gas and operated manually by a policeman
- 28 Nov 1895 First car race in America - average speed 7? mph
- 14 Nov 1896 Speed limit for horseless carriages raised to 14 mph
- 19 Dec 1915 Edith Piaf born
- 6 Dec 1926 Mussolini introduce a tax on batchelors
- 30 Dec 1937 Pierre Michelin killed in a crash in his Traction
- 31 Dec 1938 Dr Harger's Drinkometer introduce in Indianapolis
- 11 Nov 1950 Pierre-Jules Boulanger killed in a crash in his Traction
- 1 Nov 1959 First section of the M1 motorway opened
- 22 Dec 1965 70 mph speed limit introduced on motorways
- 17 Nov 1970 Computer mouse patented

# Café René

A strange and wonderful event took place on the 3rd of November this year when a small café in Nouvion, Northern France was transported, in its entirety, to the NEC in time for the Classic Motor Show. It is now well documented by many eminent historians that this simple café was one of the main centres of resistance to the German occupation of France during WWII. However to the people involved at the time it was known simply as 'Café René', a name which many people reading this will recognize from their viewing of the series of moving historical documentaries presented by the BBC in the 80's and entitled 'ALLO' ALLO!

To complement and pay tribute to the brave men and women involved in this heroic struggle a display of photographs of personnel of the FFI (Federation Française Internationale), the French freedom organization was erected at the side and the whole area was surrounded by a display of nine superbly presented cars.

You will all have guessed by now that I am describing this year's Traction Owners Club stand presented as our contribution to the show theme of TV and Film and designed to emphasize the prominent role that the Traction Avant played during this turbulent time in history.

*The cars presented were;*

- Alec Bilney's 15/6 familiale.
- John Ogbourne's 11 B Normale.
- Richard Carlin's 11B Normale.

These three cars were decorated with FFI symbols and the Cross of Lorraine.

- Tony Latchford's 11B Legere.
- Steve Reed's 11B Normale.

Steve's car deserves a special mention as he has original documents showing that the car was licensed for use in Paris during this period.

- Allan Reece's 11B Normale.
- Tim Walker's Light 12.
- Jim Fox's Light 15.
- Peter Marley's Light 15.

Of course, such a display would not be complete without the people involved and amazingly, we were able to contact and persuade a number of them to come out of retirement and appear on our stand. A special thank you goes to Madam Fanny,



René himself, Herr Flick and his lovely assistant Helga:- still together after all this time, Constable Crabtree, Lieutenant Gruber and many of the peasants active at the time. Also present (and I shall say this only once) was Michelle of the resistance.

From that moment the party began as, wine flowing, everyone relived their old memories. On the Friday Constable Crabtree, using his baton to great effect, persuaded many visitors to piss by our stand and was not averse to kissing all the Mademoiselles. Madam Fanny was surprisingly sprightly considering she must now be at least



130 years old and René had not lost any of his skills as patron, brandishing his tray like a work of art. One sad note is that Lieutenant Gruber had not forgotten that he was once a member of the master race and was obnoxious and threatening to all. However he was later to receive his just deserts.

Saturday came and the party continued. There was tremendous interest in our stand from the visitors and not many passed by without a laugh or a smile. Lots of photographs were taken also. Then late in the afternoon:- tremendous excitement!

We had been informed by a show organizer that we must attend the award presentation ceremony that evening. Then... YES! We had won the award for 'Best Themed Stand of the Show 2005'. The applause and cheers from the rest of the participants was long and loud as we all went on stage to collect our trophy. All agreed it was well deserved!



On Sunday there were fewer visitors, probably because of the bad weather but this did not stop Lieutenant Gruber behaving as obnoxiously as before. Then, in a moment of supreme justice, he was captured by a party of American soldiers from a nearby stand, handcuffed and summarily executed!

All too soon the party ended and it was time to pack up and go home. Special thanks for a wonderful show must go to all of our special guests, also to all the Traction Owners Club members who prepared and displayed their cars and finally those members who put in such an effort over the three days to make the stand such a success. I haven't mentioned anyone by name but you all know who you are.

*Richard Carlin*



# Book Review

## Title: Traction Avant

Author: Jon Pressnell

Publisher: Crowood

Format: Hardback, 240 art paper pages, 8.5x11.25in, profusely illustrated with colour and b&w images.

ISBN 1 86126 614 6

Price: £29.95

As a motoring writer Jon Pressnell will be familiar with many readers especially as he has for long contributed to magazines the like of *Classic & Sports Car*. He has produced a number of books and is known to be a Citroën enthusiast. This, his latest book, is long awaited and it has taken some four years to produce. It is a comprehensive work encompassing the entire spectrum of the Traction Avant and comprises twenty chapters in addition to supplementary material that includes an introduction, a thumbnail sketch of André Citroën, an appendix on buying a Traction Avant, a bibliography and an index. Tractionists will know only too well that their cars, recognised as being so radical and influential, not to mention charismatic, have been surprisingly ignored in respect of English language-published books.

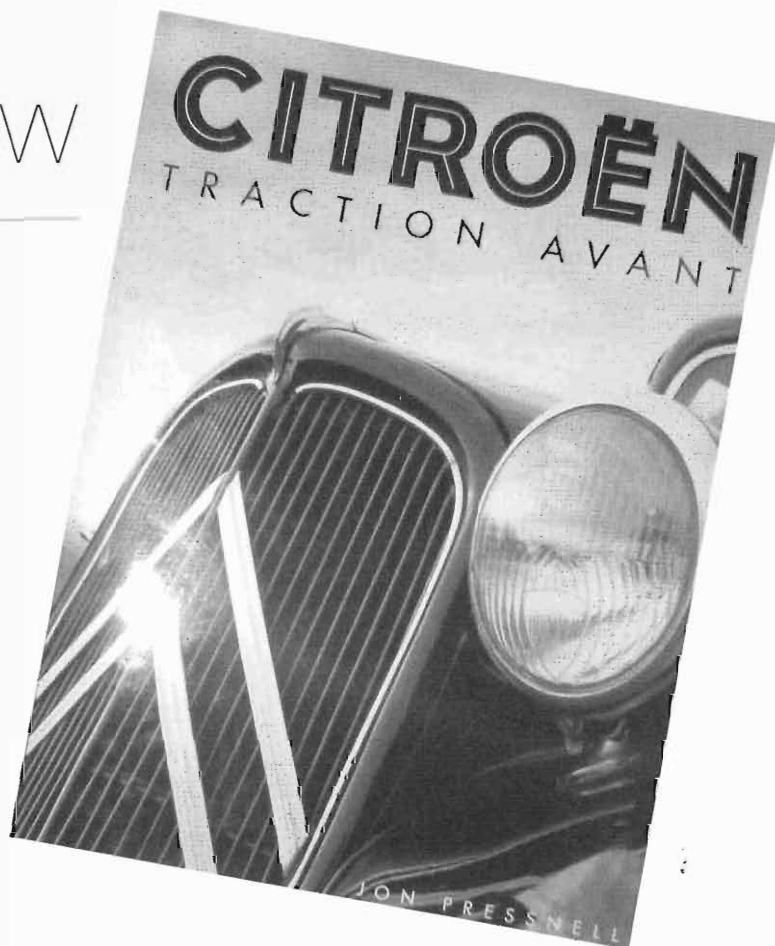
From the acknowledgments it is pleasingly evident that the author has consulted a number of TOC members in the course of the book's preparation, and there appears pictorially a healthy number of member's cars. Moreover Pressnell has been careful to discuss the whole subject of the Traction with such personalities as Ken Smith, former chief engineer at the Slough factory, Fred Annells, Ted Knight, Olivier de Serres as well as other Traction aficionados.

Evident about the book is the format which departs from Crowood's usual rather staid style and which, arguably, is limiting in the manner which material is presented. We have instead a size of book and layout that is much more in keeping in expressing the virtues of the Traction Avant, and there are colour images throughout as well as many monochrome photographs. While some of the pictures will be familiar to Citroën devotees there are many which are new, and that includes a number from Citroën's archive.

Following the initial chapters which examine the background to the Traction Avant and the car's context within mainly the European motor industry, the author begins his route detailing the Traction's design, development and launch, the latter, as we know, being very premature. His coverage of the work undertaken by André Lefebvre and Flaminio Bertoni and others is fairly comprehensive. Le Patron's impatience to put the car into production is discussed by the author who explains how this exacerbated Citroën's financial downfall, leading to the firm's acquisition by Michelin.

The route through the different model types in order to explain their place in Traction Avant law was never going to be easy, if only because of the wide variety of styles and designs. Pressnell has rightly chosen to firstly tackle the pre-war four-cylinder cars, en-route discussing the remedial work conducted by Lefebvre following Michelin's take over of the Citroën empire. This leads nicely to discussing the need for larger engines than those originally specified, and introduction of the Normale. An account of the roadsters and coupés follow after which the long-wheelbase Traction Avants are examined, and in this event both pre and post-war cars are spotlighted.

The chapter on the ill-fated 22CV receives wide comment, the author seemingly to dismiss the theory that some prototypes were fitted with Ford V8 engines. Bernard Citroën's (son of Le Patron) account of the 22 having a Ford V8 is regarded with some scepticism - that is until additional information to support the Ford theory is given by other personalities who were privy to the car's development.



Pressnell's delivery shows him to sit on the fence rather uncomfortably over the issue...

The post-war saloons and the 15-Six have separate chapters, the latter by necessity covering both pre and post-war periods. The latter includes information about the late models which were given hydropneumatic rear suspensions in advance of the yet-to-be announced DS of October 1955. Enthusiasts will find much to interest them on the chapters regarding localised production, namely Belgian and Slough, the latter benefiting from serious input by Ken Smith and Ted Knight.

The author takes a look at other aspects of the Traction Avant: the different models and types to be found around the world, and then there's those marques, such as Delage, La Licorne, Georges Irat and Rosengart, that used the Citroën in specific aspects as their dedicated products. Coachbuilt and modified Tractions have their place, as do the subjects of the Traction in motor sport and French culture. Last, but not least, Jon Pressnell takes a look at the work embarked on replacing the Traction, and the car's legacy, especially inasmuch that it influenced designers and engineers the like of Alec Issigonis and W O Bentley. The chapter on buying a Traction is succinct but nevertheless useful. By the sheer fact that Traction owners and enthusiasts have, over the years, researched the relevant models and spoken to those involved in their manufacture and maintenance, it is debatable to question as to whether this book adds any new information. Rather than try and answer this, I would say that the work is presented in such a manner that the end product is different to other books on the subject.

The book is not without minor criticism. The presentation of some material appears to be fragmented, and while there exists production figures, specifications and paint colours, these are not always easy to find. A small number of images, presumably owing to age and original format, suffer in quality. A lamentable omission is a table of chassis numbers, and relative dates. Notwithstanding these arguably marginal gripes I enjoyed the book and I have no doubt it will delight Traction Avant enthusiasts. It should also persuade those who have yet to experience the qualities of the Traction to try an example; it could well be the beginning of a long love affair.

Malcolm Bobbitt

# tocsection scene

## West of England Section

A day spent at The Tredegar Vintage Rally in aid of Leukaemia Research on September 18th completed the 2005 West of England section program. Although only three Tractions attended, the Patillo family, Tony Malyon and Jan, Dave and myself enjoyed a great day out. Plenty to see and lots of stalls to persuade us to part with our cash.

Following our planning meeting back in January, we visited Farleigh Hungerford Castle near Bath on a cold but bright day in March. Many thanks to John and Lynda Ogborne for this suggestion. After an excellent Sunday lunch the convoy of eight Tractions arrived at the castle where we enjoyed an audio tour of the ruins.

In May we chose a glorious day for, firstly, a picnic at Coaley Peak with wonderful far reaching views over the Severn estuary, followed by a visit to Woodchester Mansion. We have to thank Dennis and Maureen Ryland for this inspired suggestion. What an incredible place. This 19th century building was deserted during construction but has been saved from dereliction enabling visitors to study Victorian building techniques and to hear of its strange abandonment. It is hidden away in an enchanting wooded valley about 5 miles from Stroud. Well worth a visit if you are in the area.

August brought yet more sunshine for the BBQ in the Hackett garden. About twenty of us enjoyed an afternoon of food, wine and lots of chat.

Dave and I have really enjoyed running the section and we thank everybody for their help and participation. As we have an ongoing family concern at the moment, we would be happy to hand over the reins for 2006. Any offers?

We shall be meeting on January 15th 2006 at the Tunnel House at Coates for our usual planning meeting over Sunday lunch. We hope to see many of you there.

Finally, we wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy Tracting New Year.

## Surrey & Hampshire Borders

**18 December:** Christmas lunch Barley Mow in the Malting House. This event must be booked and paid for in advance. Menus and payslips will be sent to you as usual.

This seems to be the best venue, where we can take over for the afternoon. Raffle of course! Fluffy toy will need a good home.

## London Section

Regular meetings on the last Tuesday of each month at the following locations:

**Even months:** From 8 pm at Ye Old Cherry Tree, 22 The Green, Southgate, London, N14 (Tel 020 8447 8022).

**Odd months:** From 8 pm at Café Dysart, Petersham Road, Richmond, London, TW10 (Tel 020 8940 8005).

If you need any further information please contact Peter or Sue Simper on 020 8560 3267 (days) or 020 8891 1093 (evenings).

## Forthcoming Attractions

### OSLO 2006

Traction Norvége celebrates its 35th Anniversary in 2006, and invites its friends from the TOC to join in. The rally is based at The Linne Hotel in Oslo (only 10 minutes from the centre). The weekend starts on Friday 25 August 2006 from around 3pm with a light supper at 7pm. On the Saturday there will be a convoy drive round the neighbourhood, visiting various museum and including a picnic lunch in the lovely Botanical Gardens. There will be a "banquet" in the evening. On the Sunday there will be another convoy drive and we say goodbye after lunch.

The UK contingent need to get together to plan our routes to get there and to return. There is a choice of ferry routes, a choice of accommodation, and a choice what else to add (such as perhaps the new Oresund Bridge). Do we travel fast, or slowly with more stops? Are we to be away for a week or longer?

Contact:

Robin Dyke - [robindyke@btinternet.com](mailto:robindyke@btinternet.com)  
or Mick Holmes - [m.holmes1@ntlworld.com](mailto:m.holmes1@ntlworld.com)  
or Elisabeth Aronsen - [bbowitz@chello.no](mailto:bbowitz@chello.no)

### BREMEN CLASSIC MOTORSHOW - a weekend of highlights!

If you love classic vehicles there are three important days that you should mark in your diary in red. From 3 to 5 February 2006 the Bremen Classic Motorshow will open the classic vehicle season in Germany with numerous highlights from the classic car and motorbike segments.

Over the last few years, the Bremen Classic Motorshow has made itself a name among dealers, collectors and enthusiasts with a high-class sales exhibition, trading and restoration, extensive autojumble, impressive club presentations, a big private vehicle mart, the motorbike hall and the motorcycle auction - an auction that is probably unique. Alongside all the big German traditional makes, Bremen can also boast other rare and original exhibits as well as English, Italian and French classic vehicles and the popular younger models.

The show in the north of Germany is a persuasive event with a special focus on design & technology. In the coming year this will mainly be visible in the spectacular special shows "Borgward Motor Racing Sport" with guest of honour Hans Herrmann and "Neumann Neander Motorcycles" or in the examples of special bodywork. At the Classic Forum, experts will give valuable advice and tips on the topics "Engine Technology" and "Bodywork" and will also be available for answering questions from the public.

This year, over 30,000 visitors from throughout Germany, Benelux, Great Britain and Scandinavia came to Bremen to be inspired by the quality of the show and its powerful atmosphere!

In co-operation with the Bremen Tourist Office (BTZ) we have worked out a new group offer which can make your visit to the Bremen Classic Motorshow a real weekend of highlights. So mark the dates in your diary in red!

Best regards from the BREMEN CLASSIC MOTORSHOW team

Meike Wengler, Marketing / International Markets  
+49 (0) 421 3505 379  
+49 (0) 421 3505 566  
[wengler@mg-h-bremen.de](mailto:wengler@mg-h-bremen.de)  
[www.classicmotorshow.de](http://www.classicmotorshow.de)

# tocclassifieds

## NOTICE CONCERNING ADVERTISING

### RATE CARD

Charges for advertising in *Floating Power*  
TOC members advertising Traction or other Citroën related items: no charge.

Non-members and traders doing the same, £12 per issue. Ads such as holiday lets, £6 to members, £12 to non members per issue.

For display advertisements there is a sliding scale based on a full page @£240, other sizes @£5 per single column centimetre.

Advertisements are accepted in good faith but no representations are made as to the truth or accuracy of the same. Readers should satisfy themselves as to the suitability of goods and/or services offered.

No recommendation of any goods or services should be inferred from their inclusion herein. All advertisers are reminded of the provisions of the Trade Descriptions Act.

Please send all adverts to the Editor (address on page 3). Automatically included for two issues, unless you instruct otherwise.

## CARS FOR SALE



**1956 Paris Built Traction Avant 11BL.** MOT and tax until August 2006. Interior re-upholstered in authentic materials. 6V electrics have been improved and car starts without use of starting handle. Good runner. Photos can be emailed. Call Robbie Dobbie on 01822 616355

**1938 7C POPULAR 12.** An interesting winter restoration project. Paris built but RHD. Chassis number 208717. Single dial metal dashboard, pilote wheels, etc. Original and very rare. Only one other known surviving example. First registered in Sutherland. Serious offers to Nigel Webb on 01458 831821

**1955 Traction Avant 11BL.** 11D engined version. Black. One owner since date of import (1989) steadily restored ever since. Work includes respray, 12V conv., new headlining & doortrims, total brake overhaul, new Michelin tyres, s/s exhaust - too much to list! Photos & more details sent on request. £6500. Call Jon Fraser on 01379 870434 or email [jf\\_motor@yahoo.com](mailto:jf_motor@yahoo.com)

**1953 Slough Light 15,** originally bought in 1956. Regal red with red interior. Generally good condition, mechanically and appearance. Last used in 2003. Original buff log book. This car has been everywhere, the Arctic Circle, Iberia, the Pyrenees, the Alps, Venice, Vienna, Dubrovnic, Quai de Javel, Cannes etc !! Some spares. Reluctant sale due to age and ill health. £2,900. Contact John Cliffe on 01780 720 911

**Citroën Light 15, 1949,** small boot, Slough built. Has been restored and is mechanically good. New wiring and updated electronics, new chrome, but needs to be re-trimmed, and final adjustments made. It carries the original registration and has a current V5 - £3,500. Contact D R Shepherd on 01243 527727 or 07946 141078

**1949 (Small Boot) Slough Built Citroën Light 15.** (First registered March 10th 1950 in Blackpool). An excellent example of the "English Citroën". Professionally re-finished in black with cream "Easy-Clean" wheels. The immaculate interior has also been completely re-trimmed in red and beige. The sunshine roof is fully working and watertight. All Chrome is in first class condition and it has five new Michelin "X" tyres. The car is mechanically sound having been fitted with the later "11D" engine at some stage. Transmission is still original with the standard three-speed (9 x 31) gearbox. The original "Semaphores" have been retained but bumper mounted flashing indicators have been fitted for additional safety. This vehicle would make an ideal Wedding Car and is available with a current tax disc and MOT. Price: £8,250.00 o.n.o. - or would consider a "scruffy but driveable "Normale" for everyday use in part-exchange. Please Contact: Keith Norris, 01536 202207 (work)



**1956 Paris Built Traction Avant 11BL.** MOT and tax until August 2006. Interior re-upholstered in authentic materials. 6V electrics have been improved and car starts without use of starting handle. Good runner. Photos can be emailed. Call Robbie Dobbie on 01822 616355.



**Citroën Light 15 for restoration,** Slough Built (RHD) Lucas electrics 1950. Green. Original Reg document and workshop manual. Some spares. £3,500. Call Colin Palmer on 01285 659 739 (Glos)

**1952 Big 15 Slough RHD.** Black, light brown leather, sunroof. Excellent car in good condition. MOT Jan 05. £7,000. Call Neil Chapman on day 01934 621 771, evening 0117 927 9219



**1952 Slough L15,** Sun roof, leather seats. £6,500 spent in last 4 years on rebuilt engine and body work. £8,800 ono. Call Graham Taylor on 07797 720 828 or email: [grahamtaylor@jerseymail.co.uk](mailto:grahamtaylor@jerseymail.co.uk)

**1954 Slough built Light 15, big boot** (reluctant sale of Rupert). Black/tan leather. Totally restored 9 years ago and used daily (all photos, receipts). Fitted sunroof, R.W. drive-shafts, heater, S/S exhaust, alternator etc. Totally reliable mechanics. Interior fine, but bodywork beginning to need some TLC. Offers around £5,750. Brian Hollister 01342 719 611 (near Gatwick)

## PARTS FOR SALE

**Traction Tyres for sale**  
All new and unused-

185 x 400 Michelin 'X' - 2 available  
185 x 400 Michelin 'X' remoulds - 2 available  
185 x 400 Dunlop 'DS' radial - 1 available  
155 x 400 Michelin 'X' - 1 available  
All Tyres £25.00 each.  
Also a number of ID/DS wheels with 'single centre-nut' fixing  
Contact: John Mason-Wynn on 01989 - 770359 [Ross-On-Wye]

**Body parts for 1952 Paris Traction!**  
Front body section/engine bay including main front studs for mounting suspension. Bonnet halves. Rear body panel, includes small boot aperture and rear window aperture. Some rust but mainly solid. Please phone Jim Fox to discuss. Tel 01384-273428

### Parts for Sale:

- 1 off c. 1956 ID block complete with crank, pistons, liners, camshaft, oil pump etc.
- 3 off 1956 Alloy ID/DS type cylinder heads.
- 2 off 1954/55 Slough bumpers complete with backframe mounting irons and front type with hole for starting handle.
- 1 off second-hand radiator, suitable for all types of Light 15.
- 2 off ID 4-speed gearboxes, casings and all gear clusters differentials etc.
- 1 off ID/DS type flywheel,
- 2 off ID/DS clutch assemblers.

All the above parts are suitable for upgrading a 3-speed Traction into a 4-speed car.  
Contact: Alan Smith on 0117 924 9821

### For Sale:

Citroën 2 part factory manual for Traction Avant (Slough) - £35. André Citroën (The Man and the Motor Cars) by Reynolds - £8. Citroën Traction Avant 1934-1957 by Clarke - £9.  
All plus postage.  
Contact: Clive Hoskins on 01726 813207

## WANTED

Original French brochure for 1950 11BL. Also, pair period French spotlights for 1950 11BL. Telephone: 01726 813207 - Clive Hoskins

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Difficult starting after standing or when hot?**  
Our simple addition to the fuel system overcomes these problems and saves bonnet up pump priming in the rain! Easy to fit and many satisfied customers. Send £15 (includes P&P) to: David Boyd, "Tanglewood", 114 The Ridgeway, Astwood Bank, Redditch, Worcs, B96 6NA. Tel. 01527 894599 TIC

**Quality B&B in the Highlands of Scotland.**  
Visit the wonderful north west highlands of Scotland and enjoy a stay at Easter Badbea, situated on the shores of Little Loch Broom. We have one twin-bedded and two double rooms with full facilities and a spacious guest lounge with panoramic views of the loch and the mountains. Ideally situated for hill walking and bird watching. B&B £25 per person, based on 2 sharing one room.

Discount given if you turn up in your Traction!  
Like to find out more?

Call Paula or Phil on 01854 633 704  
e-mail: [philandpaula@easter-badbea.co.uk](mailto:philandpaula@easter-badbea.co.uk)  
for further informaton.

1/1

Car Club

Citroën Car Club



AOW 702