

# Floating Power

November/December 2007





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# Floating Power

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## Editorial

Well, this is the sixth issue of *Floating Power* that I've edited so I'm half way through the period I envisaged doing the job for. The quality must have improved a bit over the year because Mr X of Yorkshire did actually renew his subscription to the Club in May!!

Once again I'm tremendously indebted to the members who have contributed material for the magazine - including Walter & Noëlla Callens, Robin Dyke, Mike Wortley, Keith Childs, Bernie Shaw, Jayne & Terence McAuley, all the section co-ordinators, and my Normandy Rally correspondent (who wishes to remain anonymous).

A lot of my time recently has gone into planning the TOC stand at the Classic Car Show (at the NEC between the 9th and 11th November) so I do hope that if you visit the show you will call in on the Club stand in Hall 1 to say hello to us.

As not one single person responded to my offer in the last edition of *Floating Power* to co-ordinate the resurrection of the TOC 'Mutual Assistance' network (which would provide details of members prepared to offer assistance in the event of a Traction breaking down near their homes) I can only assume there is no interest in the idea and I'll pursue it no further.

Finally, as the editorial 'cupboard' of articles/stories/snippets for publication is now bare (this being a 36 page 'bumper' edition for Christmas) I really do need your help, in the shape of input to the magazine, or for 2008 I shall be forced to look at reducing the size of *Floating Power*.

**John Barnes**

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**Last input date for Jan/Feb issue  
- Monday 10th December -**



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## Chairman's chat

I can't believe its almost a year since I took over as Chairman. With the loss of some dear Club members and friends there have been some sad times. However I feel that the club has moved forward as a whole and has made some minor but important progress.

The highlights of the year for me personally were the Brittany, Annual, and Normandy rallies which were all a resounding success due to the efforts of the organisers. Next year's events are fast approaching and will include the "Scheldeland" Tour in Belgium, 23rd to 25th May, and the Annual Rally in the Peak district, 27th to 29th June.

Of course we are still looking for volunteers to organise future events. So if you fancy heading a convoy of 40+ Tractions in your area please give it some thought. It is not as daunting as you might think to head up a rally, and help from past organisers is always at hand.

I will be handing over the Chairman's reigns at the AGM in November, to the only nominee. I am disappointed that for other committee posts such as Secretary and Treasurer we have no nominee's and that the existing postholders have had to be cajoled into carrying on for another year.

It has been said before, and unfortunately I must repeat that unless we get some "new faces" on board, in the not to distant future there may be nobody to hand over to.

So, in the meantime, I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at the AGM on the 25th November in Walsall, and of course at the knees up the night before.

Best regards,

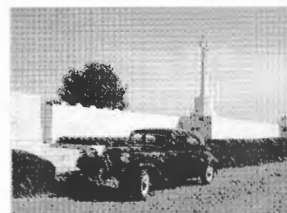
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## Front cover

The Editor's 1954 11B Normale pictured outside the Louvencourt Military Cemetery, 13kms SE of Doullens on the road to Albert.

From July 1915 to August 1916 field ambulances were stationed at Louvencourt - which was 10kms behind the lines on the 1st July 1916 at the start of the Somme offensive.





# TOC president ponders



September was a bit of a busy month for many of us but, despite a fraught start, I came through it very well in the end! (I expect the Normandy Rally report will make that clear for those who were not there). But back to the beginning .....after eight months of blood, sweat and tears – interspersed with varying doses of English Phlegm, French Temperament and more than occasional Dutch Courage in the form of Belgian Beer, my Légère was back on the road at the beginning of September - with less than two weeks to spare before the long awaited Normandy Rally.

Then, a few hundred miles into the running-in period and only nine days before we were due to leave for Normandy, it suddenly stopped firing on at least one cylinder. The events of the next few days all became a bit of a blur.

When it stopped I had been forced to leave the car without checking it out but when I went back to it in the evening there was apparently nothing wrong. As a precaution I checked and changed the plugs and then decided to replace the points and condenser as well. The likelihood of a failure in this area affecting a single cylinder is almost impossible but I really was clutching at straws and could find nothing obviously wrong.

Even though it now ran on all cylinders I was still very worried and, in sheer desperation (laced with blind panic at the thought of not getting to Normandy), I decided the head had to come off for an inspection of the combustion chambers. There was no logic – just the vaguest thought that perhaps one of the new unleaded valve seats might be the problem. It was not.

The whole thing went back together and consumed my last copper/asbestos head gasket in the process. I had already used my last down pipe triangle the previous week so, at nine o'clock on the Wednesday, evening I was attempting to open up the bolt holes in a similar size Triumph gasket. Then the drill snagged, and removed the top metal layer of the gasket. This in turn twirled madly at 600 rpm and in so doing removed much of the end of one of my fingers. At this point bad language and loss of blood stopped play for the night!

The following day I supervised the manufacture of some more down pipe gaskets – no point in working all your life in the gasket industry if you can't get an occasional perk! Meanwhile the hospital had insisted I should avoid sticking my nice new bandage inside engines for at least two weeks so that evening I conned a good friend into lending a second (and third) hand to finish the assembly. By 11:00 p.m. we were back up and running on 4 cylinders and sounding good. It was too late to road test but the mood was jubilant.

The next evening, less than four miles into the road test I lost power and had to limp home once more. However, on this occasion I removed the rocker cover at once while the engine was still hot. Bingo! - Number 4 exhaust valve was stuck open. In deference to the hospital I decided to leave opening it all up until the next morning (Saturday) and I abandoned the garage in pursuit of liberal doses of Belgian anaesthetic to numb the finger in preparation for an early start and a long day.

In the morning the postman arrived bearing gifts of various gaskets and other less essential - but none-the-less useful - bits which I had ordered from Chris Treagust earlier in the week. At least I knew why I was taking it apart this time and the head was soon off and the delinquent valve removed. Incidentally, it had closed again overnight as the engine cooled down so little wonder I could not see the problem the first time.

Close examination revealed a slight score on the valve stem at a point which would always be inside the guide and, as I carefully removed the excess material, I was surprised to find a second, almost identical, mark diametrically opposite the first one. I had replaced all valves and guides as part of the rebuild but the four new exhaust guides were subsequently damaged when the valve seats were fitted so I replaced them again before fitting the new valves.

I had supplied one each exhaust and inlet valve as patterns for the valve seat replacement. As far as I can see, the only possible explanation was that, after the seats were machined, my sample exhaust valve was tried in one or more (now damaged) guides and the stem was scored as a result - and I had failed to spot that when I built up the head. I ran a reamer down the guide again before re-fitting the valve and also checked the other valves but all were fine.

By mid afternoon it was all back together and running once more but when I checked the oil after a short run it was full of water – and more than could have spilled in as the head was removed - and there were gas bubbles in the radiator. A re-torque made no difference so, rather than risk expensive damage to the new bottom end, off came the head – again. This time I had used a head gasket purchased at Retromobile in February. It was a copper faced sandwich, similar to the original design, but with a harder (non-asbestos) filler. It had failed to seal at the back of number four liner.

Finally, at 9:30 that evening, sporting a soft-faced gasket from the Club Spares and after several oil changes and flushes to clear any residual water, it fired up and survived a short trip around the block. The following day I drove a round trip of about 200 miles without a single misfire or any other indication that anything was amiss. That night I locked the garage and swore not to go near the car again until we set off for Portsmouth in four days time. I was working on the premise that, if it got me to Portsmouth we would get to France - and the Normandy rally and, if it died anywhere after Portsmouth, at least we would be on holiday.

In fact we completed the Normandy rally without the engine missing a beat and then we went on to Brittany for another week before returning home. We clocked up over 1500 miles, used no oil, lost no water and averaged almost 24mpg over the 13 days. The fact that, during the first 10 days of September, I had achieved more miles per gallon than per head gasket was now merely a distant memory. And the finger is almost healed now.

As the report and photos in this issue show, the Normandy rally itself was nothing short of fantastic and I personally had a most enjoyable and memorable time for which I thank all involved.

*Bernie*

## Welcome

The TOC extends a very warm welcome to the following new members:

1998 **Mr H A Sage**, Howard Springs, Northern Territory, Australia  
1999 **Mr G S Walton**, Epsom, Surrey  
2000 **Mr A Lacey**, Waddington, Lincoln  
2001 **Mr W King**, Redding, Connecticut, USA  
2002 **Mr A Crandon**, Haslemere, Surrey

## Roger Dobson

It is with great sadness that we report the death, in July, of a relatively new member of the TOC - Roger Dobson.

Roger, who lived just outside Alton in Hampshire, bought Steve Shinebroom's Light 15 from him and then, literally weeks afterwards, was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Steve Reed, who was privileged to have met Roger and his wife Kate and to have taken Roger out in his beloved Traction, says "It is a great shame that this man, who was so passionate about his Traction, was never able to share his passion with his fellow Tractionists".

Our condolences go to Kate and her family.

## TOC AGM

Are you happy that the Directors and Committee are managing the Club's affairs properly? Do you think the events that the Club runs are right for most members? Do you believe that the long-term strategy for the growth of the Club will ensure its survival and growth? Is the Club addressing the Traction Avant-related issues you feel passionately about?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'No' then don't forget that the TOC AGM, which will be held on Sunday 25th November at the Quality Hotel, Walsall, West Midlands starting at 11am, is your opportunity to question members of the Board and Committee and to raise your issues.

And don't forget that Steve Southgate has organised an extravaganza evening for TOC members in a private suite at the Hotel on Saturday 24th November.

Space in the private suite is strictly limited to 100 people and as **Floating Power** goes to press Steve reports that there are only 10 places still available. So don't miss out on what promises to be one of the highlights in this year's TOC calendar - contact Steve Southgate today on 0121 352 1100 (eve) or 0774 763 3329 (days) or by email at [steve@imperial-cars.co.uk](mailto:steve@imperial-cars.co.uk) to reserve your place.

## 2008 TOC calendar

If all has gone according to plan you will have received your Member's copy of the 2008 TOC calendar with this issue of **Floating Power**. Hopefully you think it was worth waiting for.

More than 100 high quality photographs were submitted to the competition by 18 different members, so choosing just 12 photographs that were eye catching, interesting, and different in some way proved to be quite a challenge for the judges (Bernie Shaw, John Osborne and John Barnes).

The process that was followed, after agreeing some simple

guidelines, was that each judge - independent of the other two - selected his winning 12 photographs.

The 36 photographs thus selected were compared and it was found that 7 photographs had each been chosen by all of the judges (so 7 were in) and that 8 photographs had been chosen by 2 judges each.

A discussion/negotiation then followed regarding the relative merits of the 8 photographs in order to choose the 5 which would feature in the calendar.

During this discussion the front cover photograph was also selected (or more accurately it selected itself because of its shape).

The simple guidelines were that 1) no photograph that had previously appeared in **Floating Power** or TOC calendars would be included, 2) because of the shape of the calendar only landscape photographs would be included, 3) only one picture of any car would appear.

We would like to thank everyone who submitted photographs for the competition and would like to especially thank those members who went to so much trouble but whose photographs were not included in the calendar.

Because there were so many superb photographs I have taken the decision to include 'some of the rest' in this issue of **Floating Power** and look forward to receipt of your photographs for the 2009 TOC calendar competition which will open for entries on 1st January 2008.

## Classic Motor Show - NEC Nov 9th to 11th

Work is now underway to build the TOC stand for the Classic Car Show and we have the cars needed for the display. Unfortunately the same can't be said for volunteers to man the stand throughout the show - so if you are able to help please contact the Editor of **Floating Power**.

If its not possible for you to help, but you do intend visiting the show in November, don't forget that you can still make a significant saving on the entry cost by booking in advance on 0870 060 3776 or on-line at [www.necclassiccarshow.com](http://www.necclassiccarshow.com), and you can still help the TOC if you do so just by visiting the Club's stand during the show!

The show will be open to the public from 10.00 to 18.00 on Friday 9th November and 09.30 to 17.30 on Saturday 10th November and Sunday 11th November.

## Belgium 2008

Following the success of the **Chocolate & Lace Tour** in 2005 Walter & Noëlla Callens are now planning the 2008 Belgian tour - the **Scheldelande Tour** - which will take place from 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> May.

The outline programme is:

**Friday 23rd May:** afternoon - meet in Scheldelande, (which is to the west of Antwerp) where an option has been taken on 29 rooms in 2 hotels in a small village. There is free parking but unfortunately there are no campsites in the vicinity. (The Friday night will be spent in the village and dinner will be in the village because it's impossible to drive into Antwerp on a Friday-afternoon or evening because of the traffic!)

**Saturday 24th May:** morning - scenic drive including a visit to a WW2-memorial. Lunch. Afternoon - drive to Antwerp, check in at the campsite on the left bank (*Antwerp-beach*) of the Schelde (which is about a 15 min drive from the centre of Antwerp) or into a 4\* hotel in the old historic centre of Antwerp (where an option has been taken on 29 rooms). In the evening it is planned that there will be a visit ..





.. by public transport to a special Antwerp event in a trendy neighbourhood where food is available at many different places, priced from € 5 per person.

**Sunday 25th May:** morning - convoy drive and visit to an Art-Nouveau quarter in the outskirts of Antwerp. Noon - park Tractions in the centre of Antwerp, lunch from €5 per person. Afternoon - 'tourist' stroll through the historic centre of Antwerp and visit to the observatory. Evening - celebration dinner in an Antwerp restaurant.

**Monday 26th May:** as it's impossible to drive out of Antwerp (because of the traffic) early in the morning you may want to delay your departure until at least 10.00 or 11.00.

The costs for the tour are expected to be approximately £106 per person (camping) and £206 per person (4\* hotel) plus, in both cases, £20 per car for parking in Antwerp (where there is no free parking).

Robin Dyke has agreed to co-ordinate bookings and to provide any additional information as it becomes available. He is currently also checking out any cross-channel ferry deals that might be available/applicable.

Robin can be contacted by telephone on 0044 1865 858555 or by email at [johnrobindyke@btinternet.com](mailto:johnrobindyke@btinternet.com). Bookings are now being taken and more details will be published as plans are finalised.

## Happy build day

Following on from our series acknowledging the probable 'birthdays' of Slough-built Tractions owned by TOC members, Robin Dyke has now been able to improve the algorithms associated with his database so that today we start a series of entries for the French-built Tractions owned by members of the Club. The following cars which were built during November or December:

Registration No	Model	Probable Build Date
YFF 427	Légère	Saturday 01 Nov 1952
YFO 762	7C	Monday 02 Nov 1936
M-478359 (Spain)	Familiale	Monday 05 Nov 1956
CSK 431	Légère	Saturday 07 Nov 1953
3183 QN 78	Légère	Saturday 07 Nov 1953
DSK 287	Légère	Monday 08 Nov 1948
UAS 743 (9955 SA 76)	7C eco	Friday 10 Nov 1939
LHV 800 P	Normale	Tuesday 15 Nov 1955
YVS 463	Normale	Tuesday 17 Nov 1953
XSK 355	Normale	Thursday 17 Nov 1955
KSV 227	Légère	Saturday 17 Nov 1956
115 UXB	Légère	Saturday 18 Nov 1950
KSL 296	Normale	Monday 23 Nov 1953
AL-39-25 (NL)	15-Six D	Monday 24 Nov 1952
VSU 689	Normale	Thursday 25 Nov 1954
338 AV 24 (USA)	Normale	Friday 27 Nov 1953
C 53 XNL (WRX 878 H)	Normale	Tuesday 29 Nov 1956
BCN 569 V	Normale	Friday 30 Nov 1956
WEH 75 S (Shark-nose)	Légère	Friday 03 Dec 1937
CSK 565 (973 AH 72)	Normale	Wednesday 03 Dec 1952
BAS 420	Normale	Saturday 03 Dec 1955
TSK 587	Légère	Monday 04 Dec 1950
EUY 682 C	Légère	Thursday 07 Dec 1939
856 BTK 91	Normale	Wednesday 07 Dec 1949
672 TY 24	Légère	Tuesday 07 Dec 1954
YSL 805 (7660 KD)	Légère	Thursday 10 Dec 1953
GSK 452	Légère	Thursday 11 Dec 1952
403 XL 49	Normale	Monday 13 Dec 1948
TYJ 909	Légère	Friday 15 Dec 1950
PSY 124	Légère	Monday 16 Dec 1946
GSK 753	Légère	Friday 16 Dec 1955
YSL 757	Légère	Wednesday 17 Dec 1952

ESV 461	Légère	Saturday 17 Dec 1955
RMR 693	Normale	Monday 17 Dec 1956
ESV 322 (3561 SA 95)	Normale	Tuesday 18 Dec 1956
XPO 51	Légère	Saturday 19 Dec 1953
TYJ 304	Normale	Friday 23 Dec 1955
GVS 982	Normale	Monday 24 Dec 1956
FAS 296	Normale	Wednesday 26 Dec 1956
VSK 131	Limousine	Tuesday 29 Dec 1936

## Inventor beats speeding charge

An inventor was recently able to beat speeding charges filed against him by using his own satellite tracking device. Dr Phillip Tann, a lecturer at the University of Sunderland, was prosecuted after allegedly being caught speeding at 42mph last November by a mobile speed camera.

Dr Tann had a satellite tracking device that showed he was travelling at 29.18mph at the time so, as he faced a fine and points on his licence, he contested the case and chose to go to trial instead.

The Crown Prosecution Service then dropped proceedings against Dr Tann, saying: 'The officer who operated the camera has retired. Without his verbal evidence, we could not prove the case to the required standard.'

Dr Tann's invention is built into a mobile phone and records its location and speed on a computer. He has already received Government funding for the device, and he plans to market a consumer version later this year.

He said 'Police cameras are not 100% accurate - but my device is. My system can track a GPS phone to within 0.5 metres, whereas current systems can, at best, track a phone to within 5 metres.'

## FBHVC News

### Paint

The long awaited consultation on the licensing scheme to allow the continued sale of limited quantities of vehicle re-finishing products that do not comply with the limits on volatile organic compound content set by EU was published two days after FBHVC's October Newsletter went to press.

There is good news and bad news: the proposed definition of qualifying vehicles is extremely simple - those that are over 30 years old - but the proposed method of obtaining a licence to purchase non-compliant products looks out of proportion. FBHVC is studying the detail with a view to responding well before the December deadline.

### Web site invoicing scam

One of FBHVC's member clubs recently received an invoice for a substantial sum of money from an Austrian company running a website listing club details. Apparently, this company called Construct Data (also trading under the name Fairguide) offers clubs free listing for their events and activities on their website.

The listing is offered free initially and renewal of the listing is offered annually. After a couple of years, the renewal offer is not on a free basis, but this is not made clear unless one reads every word of the small print. Those that renew assuming a continuation of the free offer find they have contracted to a three year listing at nearly £1,000 a year.

It transpires that the company has had its knuckles severely rapped in the Austrian court and has been ordered not to pursue those protesting the charges. The club that alerted FBHVC to the problem..

.. is thus simply not paying. If you or any organisation you know has been caught by such a scam, the FBHVC would like to know about it - the FBHVC network may be able to help.

### Smoking notices

This is not a subject that is of particular concern to most historic vehicle owners, but the general ban on smoking in enclosed public places that came in to effect in July impinges on those who have historic commercial vehicles that may occasionally carry members of the public.

The relevant regulations are Statutory Instruments No. 765 **The Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007** and No. 923 **The Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007**. Section 11 of the former states that enclosed parts of vehicles that are used by the public or used in the course of work (whether paid or not) by more than one person are to be deemed 'smoke-free'. The regulation defines what it means by 'enclosed' and makes clear that a vehicle (or part of a vehicle) used primarily for the private purposes of an individual is **not** included.

Section 1 of the latter defines a no-smoking symbol as being a 'graphic representation of a single burning cigarette enclosed in a red circle of at least 70mm diameter with a red bar across it'. Section 3 states that anyone with a vehicle that is smoke-free or contains smoke-free parts as a result of SI 765 has a duty to display at least one sign carrying the no-smoking symbol in a prominent position within each smoke-free compartment of the vehicle.

This all means that if you have a preserved mini-bus, bus or coach that you use to give members of the public rides at events (whether they pay or not) you need to display signs that comply with the regulations - any old-style 'No Smoking' sign will not, on its own, be sufficient to comply with the law.

### Gold-plating chrome-plating regulations?

Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) is a material used in various industrial processes. Unfortunately, there is a concern that because it does not break down naturally, PFOS will build up in the environment and cause problems for future generations. The EU has thus sought to limit the use of PFOS to all but a very few applications.

One application that is permitted is for spray suppression in the hexavalent 'non decorative' chromium plating process. FIVA received assurances from the European Commission that the process for plating external vehicle components should be exempt as the chroming serves the dual purpose of both weather protection and decoration.

DEFRA, which has the responsibility for transposing the EU requirements into UK law, is understood to be proposing to use a very strict interpretation of the regulations and to ban PFOS for all but 'hard' chroming purposes while the Health and Safety Executive is keen that DEFRA should take a more relaxed position, matching the assurances provided to FIVA, since PFOS provides excellent protection for workers in the chroming industry against known carcinogens that, without the spray suppressant, could easily be inhaled.

### FIVA works with the industry on the proposals to ban incandescent domestic lightbulbs

FIVA has maintained its dialogue with the European Lamp Companies Federation (ELCF) in preparation for an EU Regulation intended to ban from sale all traditional incandescent domestic light bulbs from 2015. FIVA has provided ELCF with information on bulbs used by historic vehicles which ELCF will now present to its

members in order to find a solution to a potential problem of either a ban on the manufacture of such bulbs or a reduction in supply as a result of the anticipated regulation. ELCF has indicated its clear willingness to help achieve a solution acceptable to FIVA.

### Imperial units safe

It is clear from a 'Proposal for a Directive' published by the European Commission early in September that it intends to abolish the existing limit on the use of imperial units because *it is appropriate to maintain the authorisation to use supplementary indications on a permanent basis*. This still has to be approved by MEPs, but the signs are that the battle has been won.

### Driving Licences

FBHVC has had feedback from some drivers who had lost entitlements upon a Driving Licence renewal, usually from age 70 onwards. They had followed the advice given in the last FBHVC Newsletter (to submit an application with supporting medical certificate) and had received an amended licence with restored entitlements quite promptly. Similar positive feedback has been obtained from drivers who were about to submit their renewal and had followed the advice.

FBHVC has recently received a new Consultation on the subject of Driving Licence Fees. This seems to have been triggered by the impending renewal in 2008 of the first of the 10-year Photocard Driving Licences. At present DVLA has different fees for different renewal requirements (exchange/endorsement removal/loss) and one of the objectives seems to be a measure of harmonisation.

On first reading, FBHVC believes this is unlikely to have special impact on historic vehicle owners, but will study the detail and respond accordingly.

### Electronic Vehicle Licensing (EVL)

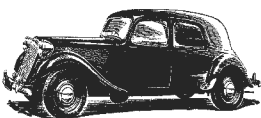
DVLA is keen for more vehicle keepers to use EVL as it offers considerable cost savings and a more accurate data base but FBHVC has received a growing number of observations and complaints from historic vehicle owners that they have not been able to obtain a licence via EVL despite being invited to use the service on the V11 renewal form.

It appears that the system refuses to proceed on the grounds that the records do not contain a specific date of manufacture and thus cannot determine requirement for a MoT certificate. Members have complained that they cannot tell from scrutiny of their documentation whether their vehicle meets EVL criteria and assume, quite correctly, that an invitation to use EVL upon the V11 renewal document implies compliance.

A check on [www.vehiclelicence.gov.uk](http://www.vehiclelicence.gov.uk) will confirm whether the year of manufacture is recorded; many historic vehicle entries will have 'n/a' on the relevant line. Members contacting DVLA have been advised that they could have the record amended provided that they obtained a dating certificate from the manufacturer.

In many cases this will be impossible, in others it will incur an expense that may be considerable. When most of our vehicles were current it was not a requirement for a date of manufacture to be inserted upon an RF60 or VE60 registration logbook; the assumption was that most vehicles when first registered were new. The EVL checking process lacks the flexibility to take account of earlier procedures.

This is frustrating for those who thought that EVL would be an answer to the problem posed by Continuous Licensing and SORN to people with an active lifestyle involving frequent travel. FBHVC has .



taken the issue forward with the Agency as it considers it unsatisfactory, if not discriminatory, that keepers of older vehicles may be required to incur significant expense in order to use EVL, a system that is in essence designed to save money for DVLA!

### Clamping VED evaders

A couple of club magazines picked up a story about over-zealous NCP staff, working under contract to DVLA, clamping and then, two days after admitting the mistake and removing the clamp, seeking to take away a SORNed 1970s Triumph car that was parked, awaiting restoration, apparently on private land.

The situation was saved by a neighbour who refused to move his vehicle to give the NCP tow truck access. FBHVC wrote to NCP seeking an assurance that this was a one-off error, that staff were properly trained about the circumstances in which they may clamp and remove untaxed vehicles, and that there was no financial incentive that might encourage action to increase the 'count' of clamped vehicles.

The response, from the Operations Director of NCP Services, explained that the tow truck had been booked at the time the clamp was applied, but (for some reason) had not been cancelled when the clamp was removed. It also suggested that the car in question had one pair of wheels on the public highway (which usually includes any pavement and/or verge).

There was re-assurance that NCP places great emphasis on getting things right, and a subsequent letter confirmed there was no financial incentive. Worryingly, though, the letter contained this: *"Currently we (on behalf of DVLA) are unable to enforce against untaxed vehicles that are on private land. It is hoped this will be addressed in forthcoming legislation."*

### More on tyres

FBHVC had two pieces of feedback following its recent warning about the risks associated with older tyres. That warning had been triggered by the death of the driver of an MGB that had overturned following a blow-out.

First, the Tame Valley Vintage and Classic Car Club, of which the unfortunate MGB driver was a member, wrote to say that the deceased had been a tireless worker for the Children's Adventure Farm which provides free holidays for under privileged and special needs children. This year the club's 2007 annual 'A6' charity run was in support of, and ended at, the adventure farm where a bench commemorating the driver's life was unveiled.

Second, a reader gently took FBHVC to task for not explaining how it was certain that it was the age of the tyre that had caused the catastrophe, and not some other cause, such as picking up a piece of debris or overheating due to under-inflation that might have caused a new tyre to fail in the same way. The quick answer is because that's what the official reports said and it matched with experience - but the point was well made so FBHVC looked a little further.

A large section of tread had parted company from the tyre. The police recovered this missing section of tread and matched it to the remains of the tyre. It was found in the verge some eight metres before the first indication of any tyre scuff marks on the carriageway.

The report did not specifically state there was no evidence of contact with debris and there was no way of knowing what the pressure in the tyre was prior to the accident, but it was noted that the pressures in the remaining three tyres were above manufacturer's recommendation. The effects of the burst tyre might have been exacerbated by the fact that the wheel spinner on this wheel was not

fully tightened.

Car tyres are made from a synthetic styrene-butadiene rubber which is easy to manufacture and has a significantly lower cost than natural rubber, but it does have the disadvantage that it is more prone to oxidation.

To counter this, tyre compounds contain anti-aging additives as well as 'extender oils' that improve grip and elasticity. Unfortunately, the chemicals that provide these properties are themselves harmful to human health and the amounts that may be used are strictly controlled at a level that provides a compromise between the need for the tyres to last a reasonable time and the requirement to minimise the health risk.

The 'reasonable time' is around ten years which, in the context of tyres for vehicles that are in regular use, is more than adequate. The oxidation means that the character of the compound is deteriorating from day one, but the effect is barely perceptible in the first few years if the tyre is looked after or stored properly.

If a tyre has been in regular use beyond that period there should not be a problem provided the tyre is kept at the correct pressure (to avoid risk of overheating). But if the tyre has been standing for months on end, the oxidation of the compound means a stiffening of the tyre walls so that when it is next used the unaccustomed flexing will cause heat to build up more rapidly than it would in a newer tyre or one that was used regularly.

When the tyre warms to a critical level, the natural degradation of the compound increases rapidly causing the long molecular chains that give the compound its flexible properties to shorten, and ultimately causing the tyre to start to break up. The tyre failure on the MGB was consistent with that picture.

### FBHVC chairman

Andrew Burt, who has served five years, has asked to stand down as chairman at the AGM - but rather than taking a rest, he is intending (if elected) to stay on to take responsibility for international liaison.

The FBHVC committee spent considerable time reflecting on his successor and at the meeting early in September recommended that Chris Hunt Cooke should be elected to do so - there are no other candidates, and Chris will stand for formal election at the AGM.

Chris is currently chairman of the Historic Rally Car Register and a director of the MG Car Club. He is a chartered accountant and was financial controller of a FTSE 100 listed company before taking early retirement. He has been treasurer of HRCR, and a trustee of the trust owning the MG Car Club's office building.

He had relinquished both positions recently, only to be asked to become chairman of HRCR and to become a director of the MGCC. He is a magistrate and serves on the Magistrates' Association's National Council as well as being on their Road Traffic Committee.

### UK in worst third of road deaths league

Just three EU member states are on plan to hit the EU target of halving road deaths by 2010 - and the UK is not one of them.

Luxembourg, France and Portugal have been able to reduce road deaths by 48%, 42% and 42% respectively between 2001 and 2006.

Meanwhile the UK (with all its speed cameras) has managed a reduction of only 8% between 2001 and 2006, and is in the bottom third of an EU league table (of 29 countries) for the reduction of road deaths, says the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC).



Dear John

Just a short line on behalf of the Spanish Traction Owners Group to say how sorry we were to hear the news of James Yeats' accident.

We much enjoyed meeting all the participants in the Gibraltar rally and well understand what goes into organising these events. In our one brief meeting we were able to appreciate James' inimitable contribution and regret that distance makes it difficult to get together more often.

Please transmit our sympathy to his family.

With our most sincere regards

*John Kiddell*

Andarrios, Madrid

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Dear editor,

I was informed that in the latest copy of floating power my son's (Jeroen Cats) decease by a tragic accident is mentioned.

I would highly appreciate if I could receive a copy of that magazine.

Please advise how to proceed.

Thanks,

*Wiljan Cats*

[I sent the following email response and then a copy of the last issue of *Floating Power* - Ed]

Dear Wiljan

Firstly my sincere condolences to you and your wife on the loss of your son – such a tragic waste at so early an age.

I did report Jeroen's death in the last issue of *Floating Power* as I felt it to be of importance to TOC members as well as the Citroën family worldwide.

I'll be pleased to send you a copy – which will be posted later today.

Kind regards

John Barnes

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Dear All

Just a line from all four of us to thank you, firstly for participating, secondly for all the pressies and finally for all the thanks which came verbally, by e-mail, letter and card!!

We think you might just have enjoyed it!

We too, had a great time. In fact I would go so far as to say that on the Monday night we were on such a "high" that we even thought about another tour.

Luckily though, in the cold light of Tuesday, sense prevailed!!!! We will be very happy to hand over the reins!!

Those of you who were not able to be present on the Monday evening will have missed yet another birthday party for Bernie - and the surprise package all the way from Texas.

This I gather was from a Mr Russell 'Teepee' Lott and contained a short letter, some form of Bernie's life history and, I gather, several pages of photos.

Several people did manage to study it before the Birthday Boy whisked it away and I managed to get a picture of the front cover, but that was it! Hopefully he may at some stage reveal the true story!!

As well as food; food and more food there were two birthday cakes. One for Bernie, naturally, and one for Jan Reece. Both beautifully made by Sue Simper.

There was a third cake, but luckily the organisers decided that I could keep it!

This last cake had been presented to me by Mick & Moira Holmes and was, in turn, a present from their daughter Tyla and her other half, Ray Wilson, who as the elderly "Rockers" amongst you will know, was the lead singer with "Stiltskin"; then "Genesis", and now, once again, "Stiltskin". (Who are on tour at this very moment!! - Tickets from Mick & Moira!!!)

I like to think that the cake was in recognition of the many times I dragged my two sons off to listen to some "proper" music!! (no correspondence on this, please!)

Anyway my thanks to all four of them!

So we will all look forward to the next Normandy Tour, whenever, wherever, and by whosoever!!

Thanks to all of you.

Best Wishes

*Martin Nicholson*

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[Being a resourceful sort of a chap I contacted Mr Russell Lott to see if I could get a copy of the letter Martin mentions above that he sent to Bernie. This is what he sent me - Ed.]

Hi Mr Shaw

You don't know me, we've never met, but I reckon I've known you most of my life.

I'm going to try to explain. You're going to be thinking who the hell & tarnation is this writing to me from the good 'ole US of A?

The folks around here call me 'Tipi' on account of one of the family in the past was a Cherokee Indian!. My real name is Russell.

By the way, Mrs Leigh, down at the Robert E Lee High (no relation by the way) is writing this: I don't even know how an old "computie" works!

My uncle, who knows you very well, arrived unexpectedly from England a few days ago with his old jalopy. He told us he was entered in a rally in our area, starting in a little town called Normandy, just up the highway from our home.

We'd heard nothing of any rallies and after a long while persuaded him that he'd made a big mistake. I guess he thought you'd organised the rally so that he could be with his kin.

Anyway he left us, very down at heel, to try to make it to France where we think your rally is. I don't think he is going to make it in time - 'specially in that old jalopy.

Before he went he left me a bundle of papers he wanted you to have in case he missed y'all ('again' he said; I didn't savvy that?) and Mrs Leigh is fixing to get them to you in the winkin' of an eye! (we've got some buddies in the US Air Force who can help us).

Well Bernie; sure hope you don't mind me calling you Bernie? If you're ever down in Texas, most particularly Deer Run Boulevard in Elm Creek, Maverick County, we'd be pleased to show you a real good time. That goes for Mrs Leigh too!

It's bin nice talking to yer!!

*Russ 'Tipi' Lott*

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Hello John

I found the article by Karel Beukema toe Water on the 15/6 Oleo very interesting and would like to get in touch with him. Could you let me have his contact details please or else give him my e-mail address?

Thanks for a great magazine.

*Henry O' Hara*



Dear John,

It was a couple of issues ago that you published a picture in *Floating Power* of Lindsay Gordon's beautifully restored Light 15, with him mentioning that the paintwork had been done by Terry Argent in Chelmsford.

This was an extraordinary coincidence since I - a Chelmsford resident - had gone out that very morning to try to find someone to paint my own Light 15, but had come back a bit disappointed.

On my return home, the post, and with it the magazine had come and I read Lindsay's note.

You were kind enough to put us in touch. I discovered Lindsay lived not far away, and he kindly visited me so that I could see (and admire) the job that had been done on his car.

Suitably impressed, it then transpired that the afore-mentioned Terry Argent's workshop was literally 300 yards from my house, hidden in a small industrial estate.

This was in February, and the target was my daughter's wedding - the 9th June.

Prior to the paint job, I stripped the obvious bits, and delivered the shell to Terry Argent, along with four doors from Chris Treagust to replace the originals that were weighed down with polyfilla.

It emerged a good while later, the doors having been a perfect b\*\*!x\* to fit, but it was all, finally, beautifully done.

There then followed the rebuild, with the doors once again 'prominent'.

Needless to say, while I am sure the paintwork is now much better than when the car left the factory, and many things rebuilt better than they were built in the first place, the process left me with a list of things that I would do 'properly' once the wedding, and the pressure was off.

Here's the obligatory photo (right), and this would be a good moment also to thank Chris Treagust for his help.

Along the way, a number of things were revealed as in need of replacement, and Chris was always there to send the bits I needed.

So, one daughter married off - only three more to go!

Kind regards,

*Clive Hardy*

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Dear John

I thought you might be interested in this photograph of Fred Annells doing his best to pull a 'bird' during the Traction Universelle 'Specials' Rally at Bescançon in May 2007.

Fred and his son Barry took their Coupé and like everyone else had a great time.

Some chaps just never stop trying do they!!

*David Boyd*

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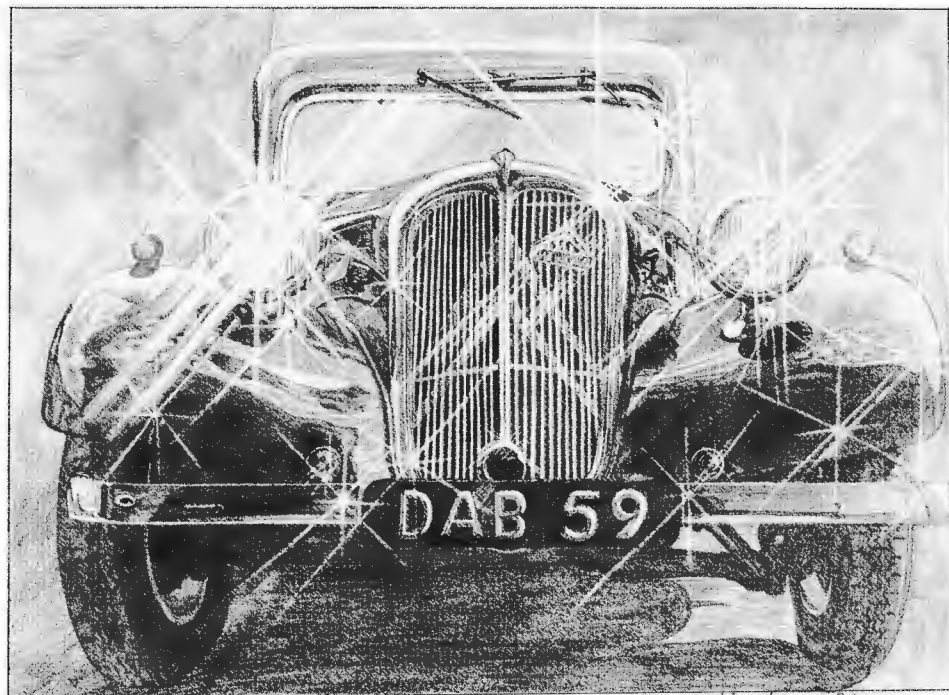
Hello John,

I'd just like to thank you for putting my letter in the magazine. I was very surprised to get an e-mail from the owner of the car called 'Mitzi'. He didn't know where the photo was taken but gave me lots of information about the car which he has owned for 40 years.

'Mitzi' had a lot of modifications to engine and gearbox to obtain the 100mph she had been timed at. I can remember seeing the car as a child and it is very comforting to know it is still around and being looked after.

*Robert Harness*





[As you can see from the above email even the winners didn't know their photographs had been selected until they, like you, received their copy of the 2008 TOC calendar with this issue of Floating Power.

Richard's photograph of his dad's car was so striking that all the judges immediately picked it as one of their choices - but I felt this drawing of the car, by Richard's sister, was also so impressive it deserved to be seen by all members. Editor]

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Bonsoir les amis,

Bernie, peux-tu faire paraître les 2 photos ci-jointes dans Floating Power. Si oui - Merci.

Celle qui paraît dans le brouillard, je l'ai prise du train. Une belle brochette de Tractions.

3<sup>ème</sup> Tour de Normandie "TOC"

Du 14 au 17 Septembre inclus, nos amis Vicky, Sue, Martin and Peter vous avez concoctés 4 jours de parcours et de découvertes dans cette verte Normandie.

Normandie encore intacte, contrairement à d'autres régions ..... Tous ensemble allions dans la même direction.

Le joie de se revoir, revoir nos amies nordistes, André et Jo, nos amies belges Noëlla et Walter .... etc.

Hommages et anniversaires furent fêtes, cela avec une profonde et sincère amitié.

A tous les participants je vous dis merci de ce moment merveilleux.

**Nicole Crusson - Robillon**

[The above letter, complete with photographs, was sent to Bernie by Nicole Crusson after the Normandy Rally.

Nicole asks if it would be possible to print the two photographs in **Floating power** (one being a photograph taken through the window of the tourist train, the other being of a gaggle of Tractions at the poultry farm).

She goes on to say that our friends the Nicholsons and Simperts managed to create a rally that allowed us to discover the best of rural Normandy, a region that has not yet been spoiled like other regions.

She mentions her pleasure at meeting up again with old friends and the sincere feelings of real friendship that surrounded the various celebrations during the rally.

She ends by saying a big thank you to all the participants in the Normandy Rally for the wonderful time she had. Ed]

Hello John,

Thanks for your e-mail. Hope all is well.

Following is a potted history of DAB 59. It's everything relevant - as much as I know.

Does your enquiry mean my sister's drawing will be in the calendar? I hope so!

Anyhow, sorry it's a bit long but please take anything relevant. Actually I have thought that the history of some of the things done on the car, plus some old photos, might be of interest to members via the magazine.

Like everything it's a question of making the time, though I could have a go at putting something together at some point, if you think there's enough in it.

So. Chassis number 122891, 1939 Slough Light 15, was registered in Kidderminster and sold from the Land Oak Garage, Kidderminster to a Mr Williams as an "ex-demonstration model" on new years eve 1939-1940. He paid £125-0-0 less an allowance for a second hand Ford V8 (I have the original bill of sale).

DAB 59 was then sold in the 60's, by another Mr Williams (presumably a relative), to a car dealership in Birmingham and bought by a Mr. Maneylaws in June 1967 for restoration.

My father sold Mr Maneylaws some parts. Dad had had Citroëns for years (he still drives a Berlingo today) and was getting rid of spares as he had not long swapped his Light 15 for a Ford Anglia.

In 1968 Mr Maneylaws decided to emigrate and wanted to find the car a good home.

As my dad was completely broke at the time my mother bought the car (for next to nothing)!

After basic mechanical work, and some new paint, it became their daily transport for a couple of years after they were married in 1971. Later dad moved on to a DS then CX's - but he kept the Light 15.

In the early 80's, with interest in Tractions on the increase - and by now a member of the TOC - Dad decided to improve the condition of the car. He therefore had a bare metal re-spray and everything re-chromed. That's when the picture was taken.

Chevrons behind the grille were also added, although originally in 1939 I believe Slough did away with the big chevrons, replacing them with the little grille badge.

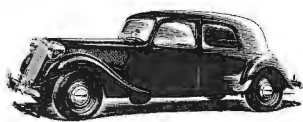
I've been looking after the 15 since about 1999 and have fitted Roger Williams drive shafts and clutch, which revolutionised it.

Currently the hubs are all in bits and the brakes are being rebuilt (leaky wheel cylinders) so I've just finished pestering Mr. Treagust for more bits.

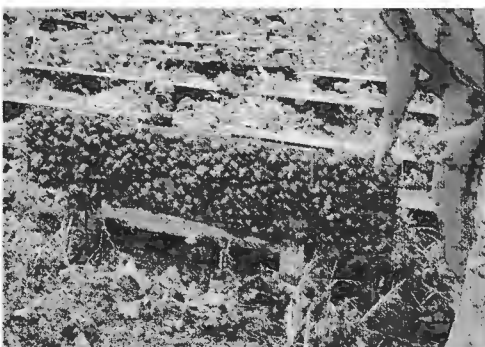
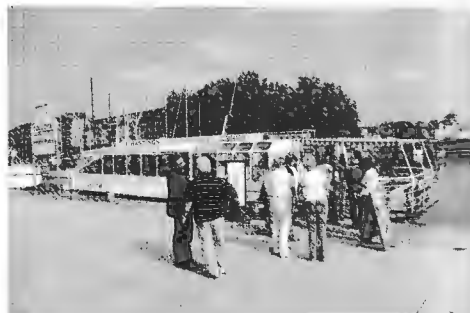
That's about it. Let me know if you need any more.

Regards,

**Richard Waynham**



# TOC members report



## 3rd Normandy Rally - 14th to 17th September 2007

The 3rd Normandy Rally, centred on *Villedieu-les-Poêles* in *Basse Normandie*, was attended by more than 30 Tractionists and their crews from the UK, Jersey, France, Belgium and Norway. The event was well organised and extremely enjoyable thanks to the commitment and hard work of the organisers - the teams Nicholson and Simper.

**Friday 14th** A 09.30 meet at the Pegasus Bridge Memorial at Benouville, close to Ouistreheim, was the official start of the Rally - although many of the crews had travelled to Normandy together or had met up at hotels en-route.

A guided tour of the Memorial Museum was the choice for most Tractionists although some opted instead for a leisurely coffee at 'Café Gondrée' - famous for being the first house in the area to be liberated after D-Day.



After the tour (or early coffee) Martin heroically led the convoy to Quai de Veneuvre in the centre of Caen, where the group boarded a boat for an excellent lunch served during a 3-hour cruise down the beautiful Caen Canal to Ouistreheim and back.

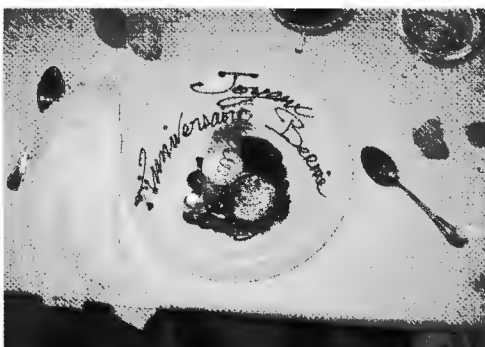
The convoy, eventually having escaped from the quai-side car park thanks to positive action by Martin & Vicki, then proceeded to the hotels that had been reserved at Villedieu before the day ended with a delicious buffet supper in the 'Hospitality Suite' at Pete & Sue Simper's house.

**Saturday 15th** After forming up at Ste Cécile the convoy drove to Cartaret on the west coast of the Cotentin Peninsular where a specially reserved Tourist Train was waiting to take us on a journey to Portbail.

Numerous red-flag road crossings and emergency brake tests (to retrieve the red-flag person) were cheerfully endured as the group tucked into a magnificently presented 'light lunch' and the odd glass or two.

The train guard (affectionately dubbed the Fat Controller) took us on a walking tour of Portbail and, on the return journey, to a house (*Lavoir de la Mere Denis*) made famous throughout France for its part in an advertising campaign for washing powder.

The 3-hour train ride was followed by a pleasant 60km drive in beautiful sunshine back to Villedieu for dinner at the *Hotel Restaurant St Pierre* and a memorable, if noisy, evening which included well deserved presentations to our hosts, the start of Bernie's birthday celebrations (with 'Happy Birthday to you' sung in English, French, Welsh and Norwegian) and a toast to absent friends.





**Sunday 16th** From Ste Cécile we followed a scenic route to the *Barrage de Vézins* where we stopped for refreshments before journeying on to *La Faisanderie* a fowl farm near the village of Milly, where thousands of pheasant chicks are reared each year. A picnic lunch in the sunshine was followed by a guided tour of the farm (with French - English translation courtesy of Bernie) and an opportunity to purchase local farm products. Whilst there we learnt that all proceeds from visits to the farm that day were being donated to a local charity for the care of children with meningitis so an impromptu TOC collection was organised to swell the funds for the charity.

The next stop, just a few kilometres down the road, was the *Manoir du Coquerel* (with not a chicken in sight) - a very grand Calvados distillery. Following a video explaining the history and making of Calvados we visited the cellars before tasting a variety of different Calvados products and purchasing bottles of the 'amber nectar'. The Tractionists all seemed to run better on the return journey - but maybe this was just imagination.

Dinner was a gourmet meal at the delightful *Restaurant Le Moulin de Jean* at Cuves which had opened for the evening especially for our visit. The fantastic location, the superbly presented meal and the excellent service was rounded off, for the 6volters amongst us, by the exhilarating 20km drive back through the Normandy countryside to Villedieu.

**Monday 17th** With rain forecast for the day Pete Simper led the convoy north from Ste Cécile towards St Georges d'Aunay. An unscheduled stop en route for our leader to change a rear wheel (a puncture and a flat spare tyre) resulted in a 'knee jerk' reaction from Bernie on a foot pump. Once on the move again we soon reached *Le Pied Tallis* - a SNAIL FARM where, undaunted by the rain, we were given a guided tour, followed by a tasting accompanied by white wine and cider. There were a few 'no thank you's' but many people tried snails for the first time and were pleasantly surprised.

It was then on to the lake at *La Vallée de Craham*, near Cahagnes, for lunch. We had been warned that service would be slow and fortunately were able to shelter from the weather. At one stage dense smoke from the kitchen caused some concern regarding the whereabouts and safety of the Tractionists at the head of the queue for food!!!

The lunch officially ended what was a very successful and enjoyable rally, but for the majority of the participants there was one final treat left for later in the day - Bernie's birthday party chez the Nicholson's, at *La Bessardière*. Birthday cakes, made and decorated by Sue Simper, were presented to Bernie and to Jan Reece, and Bernie also received a parcel from one Russ 'Tipi' Lott (the nephew of an old friend of the TOC - Tyrone P Lott), which had been posted from Russ's home in Texas, and contained a selection of anecdotes and photographs recording Bernie's youth and adult life.

From all who attended the rally sincere thanks go to Martin & Vicki and Pete & Sue and to their volunteer helpers who's hard work and commitment made the event such a success.







## España Por Favor

Not being great fans of "What I did on my holidays" rambles we were not planning to write up our trip to Spain, but as Mr Editor is worried he will be short of copy here we are.

We had long harboured a desire to go to the Picos de Europa in Northern Spain. They are a small mountain area about 40 miles square, west of Santander, where the Spanish go to on holiday. It's busy in August but by mid-September has quietened down and it is easy to find somewhere to stay, and to eat, so that's when we went. The plan was to stay in a few places and go walking in the mountains.

There are two classic walks to be done. One is to take the cable car up to Fuente De and walk back down (1000 vertical metres or so over about 10 km), have a suitably splendid Spanish lunch, and then 4km back to the bottom of the cable car - indigestion permitting!

The other is to walk the Cares Gorge - 10 km along a path (a bit like a canal towpath) but with the river anything up to 300 ft below (you just have to watch where you are going!) - and back again after lunch. We did both, so felt jolly pleased with ourselves.

The tale of the construction of the Cares gorge hydroelectric canal, and the path built to service it, is fascinating in its own right and must have been quite a feat nearly a century ago.

One little gem of a hotel was the Hotel Del Oso at Cosgaya - more alpine than Spanish - and for the last few days we went to stay on the coast at Ribadesella, which is a small town at the mouth of the river Sella.

Ribadesella is a fishing port and old town on one side of the river, while on the other side there is an excellent promenade and beach facing the sea (we can recommend the "Gran hotel de Sella")

To end the travelogue, a note of some other places we visited:

On the outward and return trip we stopped at San Vicente da la Barquera for coffee, nice little spot on the coast. Comillas is the place if you are into northern Spanish architecture - and some spectacular looking churches and monasteries.

We also went to Lastres on the coast - very steep but no centre to it. Santillana Del Mar is a real tourist honey pot with wall-to-wall coaches and lots of old architecture. Laredo is a dump - a sort of Spanish Weston Super Mare. Llanes seemed a mixed bag - interesting old town.

On the way back we stayed at Castro Urdiales; a surprisingly nice town with good places to eat around the old port area - we stayed at the Las Rocas hotel which is at the other (beach) end of town. It was OK but a bit run down.

Anyway, you might ask what all this rabbit is doing in FP. The only excuse is that the trip was done "en Traction" - by boat from Portsmouth to Bilbao; 2 nights out, one night back - lots of whales & dolphins to see. The return trip was aided by the tail of hurricane Gordon!.

In the grand scheme of things it was not a long trip, only about 1000km. and mechanically completely uneventful - so no tales of replacing gearboxes by the side of the road.

Now there is a motorway (free) along the north coast, getting about is very easy, although there is a lot of development going on along the coast which suggests that the area will get busier.

We did get rather apprehensive about the ascent to the lakes at Covadonga. This is a climb up to 1200 metres over 12km. We could smell the brakes on some cars coming down as we went up.

In the event it went well, and we learned that whatever gear you went up in, you came down in. So, particularly near the top where it was steeper, we came whining down in first gear with very little use of the brakes.

This was something of a new experience, but the car seemed happy enough. (I think we were glad we were doing it with a 4 speed box with no worries about exploding gear casings!).

The highest point we got to was the "Puerto San Glorio" on the road south of Potes at a little over 1600 metres (or 5000ft in real money) but being a main road the gradients were less exciting and we sailed up and down without drama, although the altitude did take a bite out of the power output. Retarding the ignition helped.

I have subsequently been told that Tractions were very popular with Franco's fascist government officials and the less than friendly police of the time, but people seemed pleased to see it none the less. Apparently, Tractions were known as "Patos" (ducks!).

We saw few "classics" on the trip - there doesn't seem to be much of a tradition of keeping old cars - so more reason for surprise at seeing our Traction barrelling around.

All in all, a very relaxing trip with very laid-back locals who only blow their horn when driving so they can wave at their friends!

*Jayne & Terence*



Fuente de Top (top of the world)



giving the car a breather on the ascent to the lakes at Covadonga

## The HKP-plate

Searching the internet several years ago, Walter & Noëlla Callens found a photo of an early, red Traction in a terrible state of repair with a strange identification-plate on the engine. They wrote to the webmaster who was in contact with several classic car owners in Estonia. The webmaster told them that the Traction belonged to a young enthusiast who also owned a white Traction 11. Apparently this young man had been quite an active Internet user during the previous couple of years but had been very quiet recently.

The webmaster explained that the young enthusiast had bought the white, heavily rebuilt, Traction first and had started restoring it. He had then bought the red Traction as a donor car. On closer examination he found it was in fairly good shape so he decided to keep it to be restored in the future. The red Citroën had been left in Estonia by the German army at the end of WW11, so it is definitely a pre-war car, and the reparation plate on the engine, that had caught Walter & Noëlla's eyes, confirms it.

The webmaster further explained that all the Tractions now remaining in Estonia were almost certainly produced before WWII, or during the war, as they were either originally exported to Estonia in the 1930's (there was a Citroën dealership during the period of the first independent Estonian Republic) or were war-trophies taken from the German army at the end of the war.

Few post-war Citroens were imported into the Soviet Union and, to his knowledge, no Tractions have been imported into Estonia since its re-independence in 1991. The white Traction 11 is therefore also pre-war, or was built during the war, but - as can be seen from the photograph at the foot of the page - it has been highly modified using the "nose" and mechanics from a Russian GAZ.

The webmaster said that he would try to contact the owner of these Tractions again to find out his current plans and to establish how the restorations are progressing. Walter and Noëlla have heard nothing else from him.

Fast forward two years and their son - Tristan - a historian, with an increasing interest in WW11, became interested in the story of the red, pre-war Traction and decided to research the history of the HKP-plate on its engine. What he found is a fascinating story.

HKP 656 (Heeres-Kraftfahr-Park 656 / Vehicle Repair Park 656) was a Wehrmacht military unit responsible for the repair and refurbishment of Wehrmacht vehicles. The main HKP 656 workshops, the spare parts department and the 'HKP Headquarters' were located at the eastern outskirts of Vilnius. In addition HKP 656 also operated 16 other workshops, mainly privately directed, which were situated in Vilnius and its surroundings.

HKP headquarters were actually located on Olandu Street, opposite to the entrance to the main HKP workshops. The HKP "Panzerkaserne" workshops were on Valkovsky Street and a third large workshop was at a former bus depot on Legionowa Street.

In September 1943, just before the Vilnius Ghetto was to be liquidated, Major Plagge, commandant of HKP 656, managed to evacuate over 1,000 of his Jewish forced-labourer HKP workers and their families from the ghetto to hastily installed workshops in two pre-war blocks (of the Jewish-French Philanthropist Society, built in 1904) on Subocz Street, about 1.3 km from the HKP main workshops and the HQ.

Here the "Plagge-Jews" remained in relative protection for the final months before the Red Army liberated Vilnius. On 1 July 1944 - as the Red Army approached Vilnius - Plagge warned the Jews that he and his men had been order to leave the city and that SS killing squads were coming to the camp the next day.

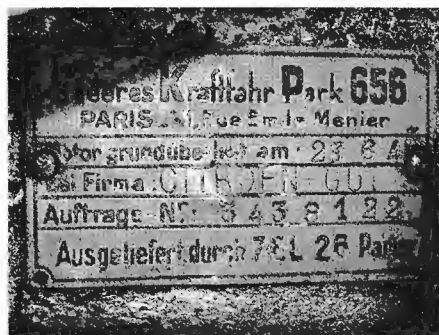
The HKP 656 unit left for Kovno during the night of 2nd/3rd July 1944 in accordance with their orders but Plagge's warning allowed many of the Jewish prisoners to go into hiding before the SS arrived and, as a result, 250 of the "Plagge-Jews" survived until liberation.

HKP 656 was different from ordinary Wehrmacht units, and even SS, SD, and other police units, because it was a specialist "working unit", concerned solely with the repair and refurbishment of Wehrmacht vehicles. The specialist nature of its work also meant that, with regard to work-related matters, the normally recognised chain of command hierarchy was not relevant and that the so-called "organisational hierarchy by function" superseded the "military hierarchy by rank". This meant, related to work tasks, that it was possible for someone of a lower military rank to have greater authority than a person of a higher military rank.

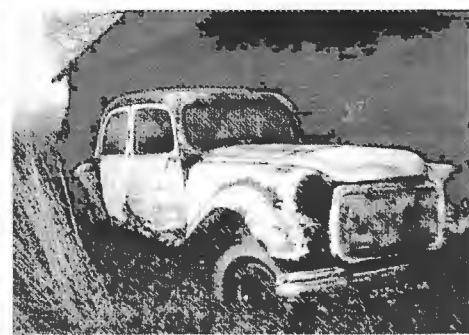
*Walter, Noëlla and Tristan Callens*



The red pre-war Traction



The HKP 656 plate



The heavily modified white Traction



## Goodwood, Brooklands and Chocolate-coated Peanuts!

On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September, my son Jonathan and I motored down to Goodwood for the Revival. In glorious weather, we camped for the night behind a delightful pub, The Lime Kiln, near to the village of Billshurst - some sixteen miles from the Goodwood circuit.

Waking up to the first real heavy frost of the coming Autumn, I had to literally scrape the eighth of an inch of thick ice off the Traction before we could think of going anywhere! As the Sun rose higher our spirits climbed and the drive down through the wooded Sussex countryside, with small villages dotted along the route, was surely what owning a Classic car is all about?

At the circuit we were directed into the pre 1965 car park alongside a beautiful black Legere. After exchanging a few quick words with the owner and his wife we were off to settle down on Madgewick Corner to watch the fun, and we were not disappointed. Of course at the Revival it is now mandatory to at least try to dress in 1950/60 style, if it only means wearing an old Trilby hat, like I did. But in mitigation I did stick my original 1957 Goodwood Press Pass in the hatband!

All too soon it was time to switch on the lights [it took us quite a while to get out of the car park] and to wend our way back to the campsite, and a very welcome meal at the pub. The request for us to take part in the pub quiz was politely declined on the grounds that we both had brain fatigue!

Next morning it was not quite as cold as the previous day, but still nippy enough to keep us on the move. Rather than retrace our steps back up the A34 via Newbury, Oxford etc, we decided instead to drive East, aiming for the infamous M25. Joining the Motorway in the wrong direction [I was navigating but found there are two junction 9s near Leatherhead] meant that the Traction would have to strut its stuff for half an hour longer than intended! But eventually we reached our destination, dear old Brooklands Track.

Over the years I have had quite an interest in Brooklands, being the sixteenth member when The Brooklands Society was founded in 1967. Unfortunately the track is over one hundred miles from my home in Leicestershire - so my visits have not been as frequent as I would like, hence the slight detour on our return journey home.

At the time the old track, and its environments, were going through a redevelopment (or should that be development) Daimler Chrysler U.K having acquired the land and permission to build a "Mercedes-Benz U.K Heritage and Technology Centre" near to the museum. Personally I think this could be a good thing in the long run as the spin-off may well be to the old track's advantage.

I was very anxious to see just what had been done, and to see if that unique Brooklands atmosphere was still there - which it is, in abundance! Our visit coincided with a Vintage Motor Cycle Club meeting, and seeing the paddock area in front of the Club House full of old bikes doing their thing, smelling the Castrol "R", and hearing the "Twang" of the Brooklands Cans [silencers!] made this visit more than worthwhile. But after two or three hours of wallowing in nostalgia we had to push on.

I never cease to marvel at the Light Fifteen on these occasions, you just jump in push the button, and off you go, using it just as you would a modern car. It is only the inadequacy of the three speed gearbox that lets you know that it really was designed over seventy years ago!

We had decided to return up country by "our" old route, covered many times, over too many years to remember. So it was that we reached Slough and its famous Trading Estate, where there was only one thing we could do, find Fairlie Road, and the old Citroën Factory, which of course is now a chocolate factory.

I must confess the modern-ish look of the place was a disappointment, especially with the M&M juggernauts parked up ready for loading, but it is still possible to see parts of Andre Citroën's first factory outside of France.

We were in luck when a couple of the workers spotted the Light 15. They well remembered the factory in its heyday, telling us that where we had parked [see photo] was the end of the assembly lines where new vehicles exited.

Just as I was hoping for some more first hand info' a security bloke strolled up, and my informants melted away [sorry about that] into the choc' bars, and chocolate coated Peanuts!

It was another ambition realized, and BHC had been "home", if only for a short time. The rest of the journey, through Aylesbury's mysterious traffic system, Buckingham, Towcester, and the M1 motorway home was uneventful.

A remarkable weekend, over 300 miles of very enjoyable, and at times, spirited motoring.

What a motor car!

*Mike Wortley*



Mike Wortley's Light 15 returns home to Slough

## TOCtech forum

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The information given in this section represents the opinions and advice given by each contributing author. Neither the TOC, nor its officers and members, accept liability for any error, omissions or inaccuracies that it may contain.

This section, as with the remainder of the magazine, can only exist with contributions from members. One of the greatest benefits of belonging to the TOC is the sharing of ideas and experience, particularly on technical matters.

No matter how insignificant you may think your technical problem and/or solution is, it will almost certainly benefit from publication, either by someone coming up with the answer or by others learning from your experience.

I am happy to receive contributions in any form – post, e-mail, verbally over the phone or in person. Now the longer evenings are upon us, how about writing something in time for the next issue?

Looking forward to hearing from you - via the "toctech" e-mail address for all technical e-mails and attachments please.

*John*

### The Regulator Explained

John Ogborne does his best to explain the workings of the regulator, more correctly called the "control box". A future article is planned to provide a similar explanation of the way in which the output of an alternator is regulated. Comments and questions on this explanation will be very welcome.

Many owners realise that the regulator is an essential component but have little idea about how it works or even why it needs to be there. This article is intended to explain why we need a regulator, how it functions, and how to diagnose, and possibly repair, simple faults

#### Why a regulator is needed

Although usually referred to as a 'regulator' the unit fitted to the Traction should more correctly be called a control unit. It has two separate functions - one is to act as a cut-out the other is regulation.

The cut-out is needed to avoid flattening the battery and burning out the dynamo when the engine is not running, the regulator is needed to avoid damage to the battery and dynamo by overcharging when the engine is running.

The dynamo has two sets of windings – the armature winding (which produces the charging current) and the field winding (which provides the magnetic field in which the armature rotates).

The cut-out disconnects these windings in the dynamo from the battery when the engine is not running or it is running at low speed to prevent the battery going flat and the dynamo burning out.

When the engine is running the dynamo speed increases/decreases in line with engine revs. As the dynamo speed increases the voltage it produces increases - as does the current it is capable of supplying.

The regulator ensures that the voltage and current output from the dynamo is limited to values that will not damage either the battery or the dynamo.

#### Traction regulators

French Traction have a simpler system than Slough cars. Regulators in French Traction are usually made by Cibié and have one regulation coil and a cut-out coil.

Slough cars usually have two separate regulation coils – one to control the voltage, the other to control the current – plus the cut-out coil. These are usually Lucas units.

Both types are described below but the principles are better understood by looking at the simpler French version. Where polarity is shown in the diagrams, negative chassis is assumed but the principle applies equally to positive chassis.

#### The cut-out

Figure 1 is a greatly simplified diagram showing the principle of the cut-out. Please note that the regulator contacts are only partially shown.

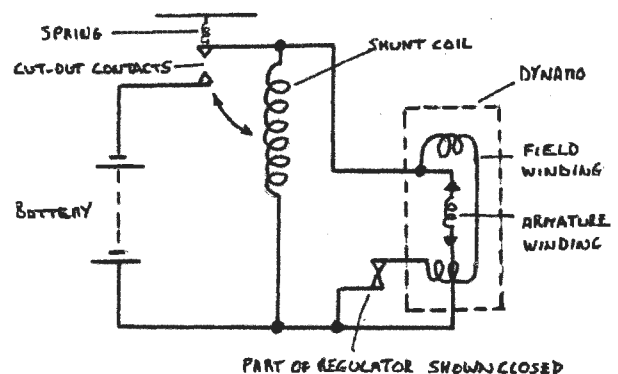


Figure 1

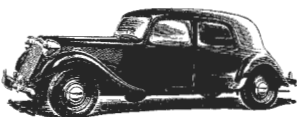
When the engine is not running, the spring on the cut-out holds the contacts apart, thus disconnecting the battery from the regulator and dynamo.

As the dynamo comes up to speed it produces sufficient voltage (typically 14 volts for a 12 volt system) to magnetise the shunt coil in the regulator.

This draws the core into the coil, overcomes the spring force and closes the contacts to connect the battery to the dynamo. (This sounds rather "chicken and egg", because how does the dynamo produce an output if there is no supply to the field winding?)

The answer is that there is sufficient residual magnetism in the dynamo to kick-start the process).

Once the initial contact has been made current starts to flow from ...



... the dynamo to the battery.

Figure 2 shows the addition of a second coil. This additional coil, which is in series with the flow but wound on the same core as the shunt coil, provides a much stronger magnetic field to maintain firm contact.

With currents of the order of 20 amps or more, the contacts must be very firmly held together to prevent arcing and contact pitting; the shunt coil is unable to provide sufficient force on its own.

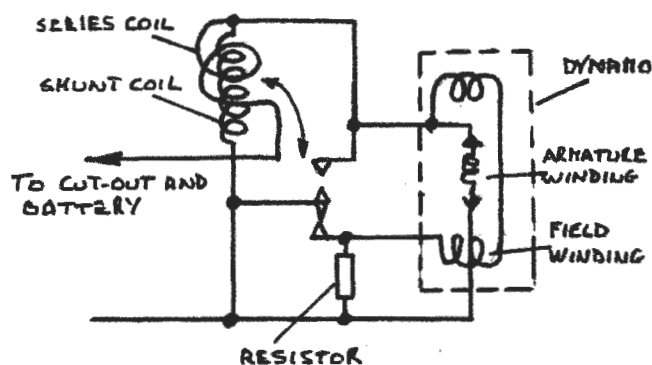


Figure 2

The series coil also enables the contacts to separate when required. If engine speed drops sufficiently low or the engine stops, the dynamo output voltage will drop below that of the battery and current will start to flow from the battery to the dynamo.

This reverse flow produces a magnetic field sufficient to oppose that of the shunt coil and the contacts are released. Without the series coil the contacts would remain closed because, even if the dynamo had stopped, the battery would still supply current to the shunt coil.

### The regulator

Figure 3 shows the principle of the regulator – again much simplified with the cut-out omitted but with full detail of the regulator contacts and its shunt coil.

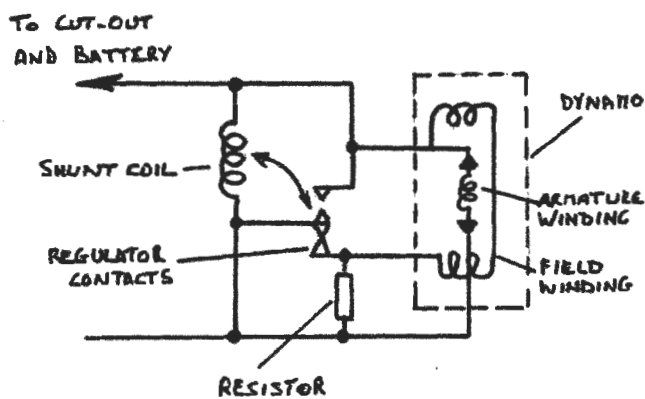


Figure 3

Assuming that the engine is running and that the cut-out has just operated, it can be seen that the dynamo field winding is connected in parallel with the armature via the regulator contacts.

The field winding is therefore generating as much magnetic field in

the dynamo as possible. Also connected in parallel with the dynamo output is the regulator shunt coil.

As the dynamo output voltage increases this coil creates a magnetic field sufficient to separate the regulator contacts, thereby cutting the supply to the field winding. This in turn removes the magnetic field from the dynamo, and hence the dynamo output. However, as the output reduces, the regulator contacts will be released and the field current will again flow.

In normal operation this process results in an oscillation of the contacts which, by setting the contact gap, the strength of the contact spring, and varying the number of turns on the regulator coil, sets the voltage from the dynamo.

The resistor across the contacts absorbs the excess energy generated as the contact is made and broken, and prevents contact pitting and wear.

Note that the contacts are "double throw" i.e. the centre contact changes over the connection rather than just opening. In this case, the contacts short-circuit the field winding of the dynamo to minimise any back emf effects and to produce a more stable setting.

Before explaining the next stage, it is worth mentioning a couple of points concerning batteries.

- Lead acid accumulators are best charged with a constant voltage.
- When a battery is flat, the difference between the battery voltage and the charging voltage is high and the result is a high charging current.
- As the battery becomes charged, its voltage increases, the difference decreases, and the charging current reduces to a trickle of one or two amps.
- A fully charged 12 volt battery will have a voltage of about 15V when delivering no current. This drops to:
  - about 13.6V under typical operating conditions,
  - around 12V when approaching the discharged condition,
  - as low as 9 or 10V when fully discharged. (6 volt batteries are obviously half these values.)

Figure 4 shows a more complete version of the regulator circuit.

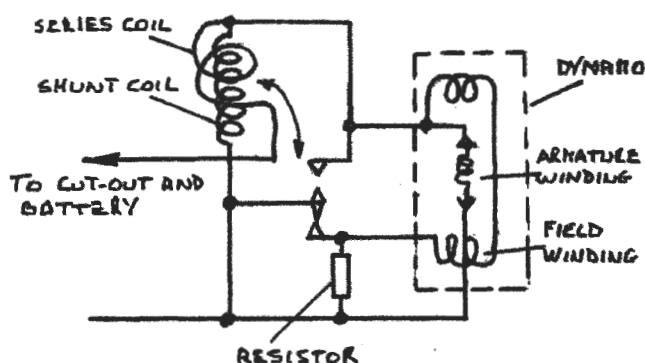


Figure 4

In addition to the shunt regulator coil there is a series coil wound in the same direction around the same core. As the charging current ...



.... increases, this series coil adds to the tendency for the contacts to separate and hence reduce the charging current. This is to prevent the ever-willing dynamo from charging a flat battery at such a current that it would damage the dynamo itself and possibly the battery.

For example, if the dynamo were allowed to generate a voltage of say 17V with the battery at about 12V, the current would be such that the dynamo would be in danger of burning out. There is also a chance that the battery would over-heat, resulting in accelerated evaporation of the electrolyte and buckling of the plates.

The series coil also helps to protect the dynamo when headlamps and other high-consumption components require a high current. The regulator series coil is designed such that there is always sufficient current to maintain a trickle to the battery under all normal electrical loads.

Clearly, if you have a bank of lights along the front bumper and switch them on at the same time as the wipers and indicators whilst braking, there is likely to be a good proportion of current coming from the battery!

The good news is that the series winding will protect the dynamo even if the lights are a bit dim and the wipers slow down.

On many regulators (not as far as I know on the French ones) an additional terminal labelled "A1" is provided. This is a connection to a few extra turns of the series coil and provides the supply for the lighting. This gives the regulator designer another degree of freedom for optimising the balance between the needs of the lighting circuits and those of the battery; the principle remains the same.

#### Temperature compensation

Batteries require a higher charging voltage when cold than when warm. Compensation for this is achieved by making the spring material of the contact assembly of a bimetal strip thereby making the mechanism stiffer when warm. A second benefit is that the charging current will be greater when the car has just been started (i.e. cold) and reduces as the regulator warms up in the engine bay.

#### Separate voltage and current regulation

As explained above the 'regulator' fitted to the French Traction has a single regulator coil with one shunt and one series winding whereas the Lucas control boxes fitted to Slough cars have two regulator coils and a cut-out.

The Lucas unit has separate shunt (voltage) and series (current) coils. The shunt coil provides the basic regulation function and the series coil caters for the high current situation.

This arrangement gives greater flexibility in optimising the charging current and was generally adopted in British cars prior to the universal adoption of the alternator. An "A1" connection is nearly always included with this design.

#### Faults and Fault-Finding

The usual advice is to leave well alone and this is generally the best option as the spring tensions and contact spacings are factory-set using accurate meters, tools and test jigs. However, when things do go wrong it is worthwhile removing the lid and checking some of the more obvious features.

If the system is not charging at all, assuming that the dynamo is not faulty and that all connections have been checked, the cut-out may be the culprit.

Remove the lid and check that the contacts of the cut-out are open; start the engine, rev it, and check that the contacts close. Allow the revs to drop and watch for the contacts to open again (you may have to reduce the tick-over to achieve this). If they do not close and open, the cut-out itself is faulty.

To be certain, run the engine and manually close the contacts. Charging should return to normal - although the cut-out may not remain close when released.

Another test method is to short circuit the cut-out by connecting the "A" (connection to the battery/ignition switch) and "D" (dynamo armature connection) terminals - when charging should be re-established. The short circuit should be removed after the test.

If the cut-out is operating, but at the wrong speed, it is possible to adjust the spring tension screw.

Begin by disconnecting the battery and cleaning the contacts with the finest grade of abrasive paper you can find. Clean away any resulting debris and wipe with a lint-free cloth and a little methylated spirits and then reconnect the battery.

Designs vary but the adjusting screw is usually fairly obvious, as is which way is increasing or decreasing the spring tension. The higher the tension, the greater the engine speed required to close the contacts.

Connect a meter between the "D" (dynamo armature) terminal and the chassis and increase the engine speed until you get a reading of about 12.5V (or 6.3V for a 6V system); adjust the screw such that the cut-out operates at this point. Adjustments are very fine, so make only small changes at a time.

Adjustment screws are often sealed with paint, which should be carefully removed with solvent or scraping before attempting to make an adjustment. Once adjusted, ensure that the lock-nut, if fitted, is tightened and that the adjustment is not altered by the tightening. Reseal with a dab of paint or varnish.

If the dynamo is charging, but too little or too much, the regulator is likely to be faulty.

To check the regulator, disconnect the wires from the "A" (and "A1" if appropriate) terminals, connect the wires together and insulate them; this allows the dynamo to run open-circuit.

Connect a meter between the "D" terminal and the chassis. (Some digital meters are unhappy when near to engine ignition systems and may give an unreliable or meaningless reading; it may be better to use a traditional moving coil meter such as an "Avo").

Run the engine from cold to about 1500 rpm and note the meter reading. It should be between 16.6V and 17.0V (8.2V to 8.5V for a 6V system) assuming an ambient temperature of 20 deg C.

Ambient Temperature	Reading in Volts	
	6 Volt	12 Volt
10 deg C (50 deg F)	8.3 – 8.6	16.9 – 17.3
20 deg C (68 deg F)	8.2 – 8.5	16.6 - 17.0
30 deg C (86 deg F)	8.1 – 8.4	16.4 – 16.8
40 deg C (104 deg F)	8.0 – 8.3	16.1 – 16.5



Unfortunately, as the engine warms up and the regulator itself gets warmer, the reading will change. The table above gives the relationship between temperature and voltage.

If the reading is not within range, turn off the engine and, after cleaning the contacts, make a small adjustment to the screw and try again. Increasing the tension will increase the voltage.

## A Carburettor Teaser

**Our editor John Barnes has encountered a problem with his carburettor that he would welcome advice on. By all means contact John directly but please copy it to me so that I can include it in the next issue of TOCTech for everyone's benefit.**

Shortly after buying my French-built 11B Normale I fitted a replacement carburettor, purchased from TOC spares, which performs perfectly well on the road - with the fuel level in the float chamber at the correct level and the needle valve functioning correctly.

On a very regular basis when in constant use (on a rally for instance) the engine will not start in the morning - even after the fuel pump has been manually operated to re-prime the fuel circuit.

What appears to be happening is that petrol is draining away/evaporating from the float chamber when the car is parked at night and that manual priming of the fuel pump is not refilling the float chamber.

When this happens careful removal of float chamber top shows that the float is lodged at the top of the chamber, with the needle valve closed, so that no petrol can pass into the float chamber.

Examination of the float, and the float chamber itself, reveals absolutely no marks, ridges or protuberances upon which the float can lodge or stick, and replacement of both the needle valve and the float has made absolutely no difference.

My morning starting routine is now: 1) lift the RH bonnet flap to check the water and to give the carburettor a couple of sharp taps (with a sizeable spanner) to dislodge the float 2) lift the LH bonnet flap to check the oil and prime the petrol pump 3) start the car.

Now that I know the 'fix' I'm rarely embarrassed by the car not starting - but I'd dearly like to solve the problem and would welcome any thoughts that members have on how to do this.

## CTA 6 Volt Coils

**A member has stumbled on a possible point of confusion concerning 6V coils supplied by CTA. This short item may prevent others from falling into the same trap.**

As may be remembered from the July/August and September/October 2006 issues it is important to connect coils the right way round. Failure to do so gives a weak spark and results in misfiring.

CTA 6V coils appear to be French army surplus and are of excellent quality; they come in a sealed cardboard tube printed with a glowing description of their unique design and promises of greatly improved performance.

However, CTA have stuck a label on the tube intended to clarify the connections but which is rather ambiguous. The label says (verbatim):

<<CONNECTIONS>>  
HOW TO CONNECT THE CABLES!!!

BAT. = CABLE FROM THE IGNITION  
RUP. = + CABLE FROM THE CONTACT-LOCK

Normally BAT (i.e. BATTERY) would be the connection to the battery via the ignition switch and RUP (i.e. RUPTEUR = contact breaker) would be to the distributor. However, this coil is actually intended for a positive earth vehicle, so what the CTA label is intending to indicate is that in French negative earth Tractions it should be connected the opposite way to the labelling on the coil.

A better form of words would therefore be:

<<CONNECTIONS>>  
HOW TO CONNECT THE CABLES

BAT. = CABLE TO THE DISTRIBUTOR  
RUP. = CABLE FROM THE IGNITION SWITCH/BATTERY

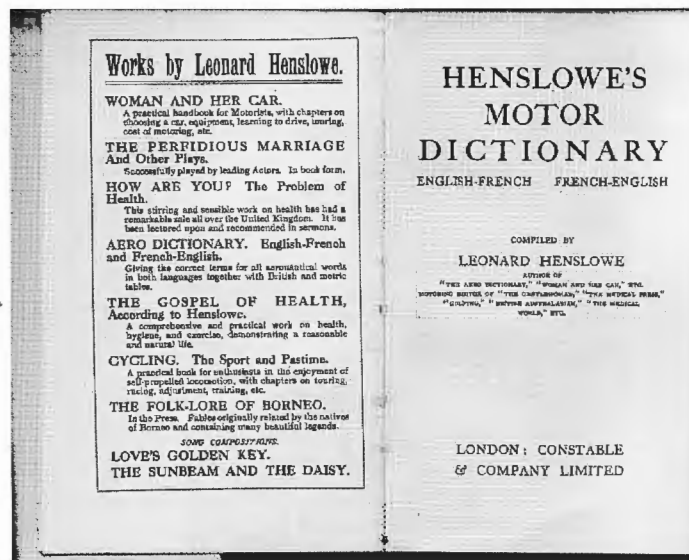
Of course, if you happen for some reason to have a positive earth 6V vehicle, you would connect it the way that the coil is actually marked.

## A Man for All Seasons

**As technical material seems to be a bit thin on the ground this time (more please!), I thought you might be amused by a scan of this frontispiece.**

I found this little book - an English-French, French-English dictionary of motoring terms circa 1920 - in a second-hand bookshop and was intrigued to see what an all-rounder the author, Leonard Henslowe, was. I am sure he would have made an excellent TOC member.

Out of sheer curiosity, I rooted around on the internet for more information on this veritable polymath and discovered that a copy of his "Woman and her Car", with its wonderful art-deco dust cover, is worth a considerable sum (unlike my crummy little dictionary which appears to be worth about 10p). Some of the translations appear rather dubious too!



# TOCrestoration

## 1948 11B Normale door panels

I needed new door panels for my Paris-built 1948 11B Normale so, not knowing quite where to start looking, I had a chat with Bernie Shaw at the last AGM. He said he could probably help and, sure enough, a few days later he emailed me the name and address of a contact in France who could probably help.

As I run a busy guest house in Stratford on Avon the door panel problem went on the back burner for a few months. When there was a few spare minutes I phoned the number in France that Bernie had given me.

Monsieur Michel Pallut has his workshop in the small town of Ydes, which is south west of Clermont Ferrand. Happily I speak fairly fluent French having (mis?)spent a lot of my youth in Normandy, living with a French family and going to the Lycee for a while in Le Havre.

Having made contact with M Pallut we began a series of phone calls with regard to the material in which to cover the panels. Unfortunately the original Gris Clair material is no longer obtainable anywhere in France so a series of samples of material, as close as possible to the original colour, were sent to me by the very friendly and helpful Michel Pallut.

The closedown of France for the annual summer holidays then occurred, M Pallut's workshop being closed until the 11 September. Any excuse to go back to France again being sufficient - I booked on to the Brittany Ferry overnight crossing on the 18 September.

Arriving in Ouistreham at 0715 was the first step on the way down to the south west of France. The names familiar to those of us heading south came and went. Caen - Argentan - Alencon - Le Mans - Chateauroux - Gueret - Ambusson - Ussel and then, the pretty little town of Bort-les-Orgues, only a few kilometres from my destination.

Here, I was assured by M Pallut, I would find a decent hotel with a good restaurant, which I did - the Central Hotel.

The next morning I reported my arrival by telephone to M Pallut and enquired as to whether or not my door panels were ready for collection. I had hoped to pick them up and then head north again in fairly quick time.

I was informed that three were finished but, as he had had to do an emergency job on another vehicle, the fourth would not be ready until three o'clock that afternoon. The best laid plans of mice and men.....!!!

As I didn't want to head north late in the afternoon and have to look for overnight accommodation en route, I booked into the Central Hotel for another night. Then as per instructions I reported to M Pallut's workshop in Ydes at three o'clock.

I was delighted with his workmanship and was pleased to meet a man who, although he works on the interiors of all vehicles, loves working on Tractions above all others. Indeed he has a Traction being overhauled by his friend in a workshop adjacent to his own.

From what I saw he is a very skilled craftsman, and he showed me before and after photographs of several different models of Traction, the interiors of which he had transformed from virtual wreck to showroom condition. He does not, however, work on Slough-made cars as he says the leather is too expensive.

He told me that if I gave him my Normale he would totally transform it in ten days to two weeks Unfortunately as Ydes is too far to drive the only alternative would be for me to trailer my car down.

I suggested he came to the UK for a month or six weeks to work, as I was sure members of the TOC would queue up to take advantage of his skills, and said he could set up shop in my garage if he wanted.

The reasons he gave against the idea were as follows:- He doesn't speak a word of English, he would have to transport his large and heavy sewing machine, and his stock of materials for a variety of interiors would be huge.

I did say however if anyone in the UK wants to contact him for work to be done I would be more than happy to act as a go-between for any language problems.

He will post any work carried out, if possible - my panels could have been posted to me but I fancied a trip to a beautiful corner of France that I had never visited.

The next morning I set off early to head back up north. This time I used the auto route for quickness as I wanted to spend a few days in Le Havre with my life-long friend and his wife who live in Sanvic.

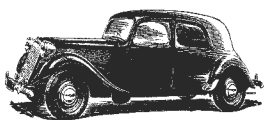
Jean-Pierre and I have known each other since we were 12 and I think together we learnt most things growing boys learn about life.

He thinks my door panels must be the most expensive door panels in the world. What does he know - he doesn't drive a Traction.

My phone number, should anyone wish to contact Michel Pallut through me is 01789 293404.

*Keith Childs*





# TOC members report

## Before memories fade - The Ypres Salient

Ypres was extremely significant in the First World War (WW1) because it was key to protecting the channel ports and associated shipping lanes. It was also a good point to advance from to seize Ostend to prevent the Germans using the port to launch sea attacks.

Saving the town of Ypres from the Germans was also very important to the Belgian people because, not only did Ypres represent the last part of Belgium still under its sovereignty but, following the bravery involved in saving the town from the Germans in 1914, the town itself was a symbol of defiance against the Germans.

After three years of war the campaigns in the summer and autumn of 1917 finally brought a breakthrough for the allies with the capture of Passchendaele in early November. However the cost, 270,000 casualties, was massive.

As time passes and memories fade, many of the landmarks that would have been familiar to allied troops between 1914-1918 are now fast disappearing, or have completely disappeared.

This article contains some of the research carried out by the Editor for a recent visit with friends - en Traction - to the Ypres Salient.

To mark the 90th anniversary of this turning point in WW1 it is printed in the hope that it might be of interest to other TOC members planning a visit to this area (perhaps as an extension to the Scheldeland Tour in Belgium in May 2008?).

## Calais to Ypres

**St Omer** - From 1914 to 1916 the British General Headquarters were here, and from 1917 to the end of the war the Royal Flying Corp and Royal Air Force were headquartered here. In 1917 St Omer became a regular target for German air raids. Places to visit include:

- **50 Avenue Carnot** – where Field-Marshal Lord Roberts died on 14 November 1914
- **Place Maréchal Foch** – scene of Lord Roberts' funeral in 1914
- **37 rue St Bertin** – residence of Sir John French and Sir Douglas Haig
- **Hôpital Militaire**, rue St Bertin – opened in 1592 as a school for RC boys from Britain

**Arques** - during WW1 Arques was an important crossroads in the supply chain from the channel ports to the Western Front. At the Canal de la Haute Colme at **Les Fontinettes** there is an hydraulic barge lift (Assenseur de Fontinettes) which was built in 1887 to lift barges up and down the 50ft to the Canal de Neuf Fosse.

**Cassel** - the town has been an important road junction and scene of many military engagements since Roman times. In 1793 – 1794 the Grand old Duke of York marched his 10,000 men up the hill and down again during the Flanders campaign mounted by the Duke of Coburg against the French revolutionary army.

Cassel is most famous for being the headquarters of Maréchal Foch from October 1914 – April 1915 and in April 1918, and of General Plumer's Second Army from 1916 to 1918.

Places to visit/see include:

- **Jardin du Publique** with its typical Flanders wooden windmill and its famous statue of Maréchal Foch; and via the steep path to a car park the concrete bunker & entrance to underground cellars of an old castle used by the army. On a

clear day Ypres & Vimy Ridge can be seen from the park walls.

- **Castel Yvonne** where Lord Plumer lived.
- **Hôtel de Ville**, where Maréchal Foch had his office (which is now preserved as a museum).
- **Hôtel de Schoeberque** at 32-34 rue du Maréchal Foch was the residence of Maréchal Foch and where King George V, the Prince of Wales and Sir Douglas Haig stayed on different occasions.

**Poperinge** - 'Pop' was briefly occupied by the Germans in October 1914, but from its recapture on the 15<sup>th</sup> October onwards it was the forward base for the Ypres Salient for every British soldier.

Throughout WW1 the main square bustled with transport – horses, mules and lorries of all types – as all the roads from it led to one military facility or another. Places to see in Poperinge include:

- **Groote Markt** with its gothic **Stadhuis** and **St Bertin's church**.
- **Talbot House** in Gasstuistraat, which opened as a club in December 1915 for everyone. Out of this house the Toc H movement was born and in 1929 the house was opened as a venue for pilgrims.
- **Skindles** (further down Gasstuistraat) is now a private house but it was a famous officers club for the young Army officers who crowded into Poperinge throughout the War.
- **College Stanislas** in St Bertinstraat, which was used as an hospital by the Friends Ambulance Unit for civilian casualties from Ypres in 1915.
- **Poperinge Station** - as the real target for the German artillery - was reputedly shelled every time a leave train was due to vacate the station.

**Ypres** - Ypres dates from about 962. By the mid-1200s it had a population of 40,000, with another 150,000 in the surrounding area. By the mid 1500s only about 5,000 people lived here however.

Ypres has always been of strategic importance and has therefore undergone many sieges. In 1804 Napoleon visited Ypres and the main gate was named after him. After the battle of Waterloo Ypres was heavily fortified against any possible French invasion and the Napoleon Gate was renamed the Menin Gate.

Places to see/visit in Ypres include

- **The Asylum** (in Poperingsweg) is a red brick building now rebuilt in almost identical form to before it was completely destroyed. From December 1914 to May 1915 the Friends Ambulance Unit operated from this building.
- A few hundred metres from the Asylum towards the town centre the road crosses the old canal at **Bridge No 10** or **Devil's Bridge**.
- Straight ahead in Elverdingestraat is the HQ of the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission** and also the **prison** in whose cellars many British soldiers found shelter.
- **Grote Markte** with the **Cloth Hall** which was reconstructed between 1920 and 1962 to be externally exactly as it was prior to being completely destroyed during WW1. Many of the houses/cafes in Grote Markte are (externally) copies of those destroyed during the war. **St Martin's Cathedral** is reached across some of the original cobblestones of Ypres.
- The **Menin Gate**, whose archway forms the **British Memorial to the Missing**, contains the names of 54,896 of those who died between 1914 and 1917.
- **The Ramparts** stretch from the Menin Gate to the Lille Gate.

and provided the best shelter available to the British troops in Ypres. In the walls of the Ramparts, close to the Lille Bridge, the famous trench journal the *Wipers Times* was printed and published by the Sherwood Foresters.

- The **Lille Gate** was used as the main route to the front by the troops leaving Ypres because of its more sheltered southern aspect. The old Wooden House just inside the gate is a replica of the building destroyed in 1917, at which time it was one of the oldest in the town.
- Just across from the Lille Gate is the British Military Cemetery, **Ramparts Cemetery**, which is the only one within the old walls of the town.

## Ypres Salient & Passchendaele

**Essex Farm Cemetery** - Situated on the N369 (leave Ypres towards Boezinge) Essex Farm Cemetery lies alongside the field hospital where in 1915 Colonel John McCrae of the Royal Canadian Medical Corps wrote his famous poem 'In Flanders fields the poppies blow..'. The cemetery contains over 1,000 soldiers from Britain and the Commonwealth (and one German) including a VC holder (Private T Barratt of the South Staffs Regiment) and one of the youngest soldiers to die in the Ypres salient (Private Strudwick who was 15). Dugouts used by British divisions that once stretched along both sides of Bridge no 4 (Brielen Bridge) and British dressing station bunkers still exist.

**Boezinge** - was the most northerly boundary of the British sector for three years - from late 1914 - after the Germans were driven out of the village. From here to Dixmude was held by the French and, beyond Dixmude, was held by the Belgian Army. Fierce battles were fought in this area in 1915 (2<sup>nd</sup> battle of Ypres) and again in 1917. There is a **demarcation stone** towards the centre of the village and behind it a **concrete blockhouse** on top of which there is a German mortar (now completely overgrown with shrubs and ivy).

1km outside Boezinge, at the Carrefour de la Rose, is the **French 87<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> Divisions Memorial** which contains a genuine calvary from Plouagat in Brittany. A short distance further is **Artillery Wood Cemetery** which was named after the small copse that was here.

**Piikem** - In the village TL into Bikshootsestraat, cross the railway, then TL into Slaaktestraat to see the largest **German Bunker** remaining in the Salient (originally built as a signal bunker). Look for other bunkers on the way to the Bikschote road which were part of the chain of defences built by the Germans in the winter of 1915 – 1916. Follow the road to Steenstraat skirting **Polygon Wood**.

**Steenstraat** - this village was at the western end of the French sector in 1915 when the first chlorine gas attack of the war was launched by the Germans from either side of Langemark. At about 5.00pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1915 the whole 4 mile length of the front was quickly shrouded in gas and within 1 hour the French had retreated back to the canal. The French recaptured Steenstraat on May 15<sup>th</sup> and found some 2,000 Germans dead on the battlefield. After 1km cross the canal and look for the **Cross of Reconciliation**, on raised ground to the right, placed here by the French in memory of those who were gassed in 1915. The modern cross is aluminium and replaced the original memorial that was destroyed by occupation forces during WW2 who objected to the reference in the inscription to the Germans being 'barbarians'.

**Kippe** - Kippe is the northern extremity of the Ypres salient and was one of the centres of the gas attack in 1915.

**Houthulst** - outside Houthulst is **Houthulst Forest** which was captured by the Germans on October 21<sup>st</sup> 1914 and held by them until the Belgians recaptured it on September 28<sup>th</sup> 1918. The area was subjected to many gas attacks and the Germans converted the whole forest into a fortress from which their heavy artillery



HAS 475 at the **Cross of Reconciliation** near Steenstraat

bombarded the Allied lines to the south. When they recaptured the area the Belgians took 150 guns and over 6,000 prisoners. On the edge of the forest is the only Belgian cemetery in the area the **Belgian Military Cemetery**. In the centre of the woods there is a Belgian Army bomb disposal base where the shells, bombs, grenades and other ammunition still regularly found in the salient are brought for destruction.

**Poelkapelle** - was briefly held by the British Cavalry in October 1914 after which, until 1917, it was a German fortress. The town was ravaged by bombardments prior to the 1917 attack and one of the supporting tanks became bogged down in the centre of the town and was knocked out by the Germans. The **Memorial to Georges Guynemer** commemorates the French air ace who was killed on September 17 1917 during an air combat. Shortly after his plane crashed to the ground an artillery barrage destroyed the plane and trench where Guynemer's body had been taken by the Germans.

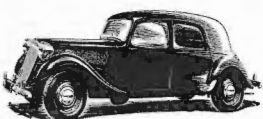
**Langemark** - Following the gas attacks on 22 April 1915 Langemark was occupied by the Germans and remained in German hands until August 16<sup>th</sup> 1917. In April 1918 the allies withdrew from the town under intense fire and when the town was finally recaptured on September 28<sup>th</sup> 1918 there was not a single building still standing.

Outside the town the German Military Cemetery - the **Soldatenfriedhof** - which houses more than 34,000 graves, contains old block houses.

A short way along the road, in front of other bunkers in the same line as those in the cemetery, is **The Memorial to the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers of the 34<sup>th</sup> Division** which, after its capture in September 1918 it was used as an advanced dressing station under the command of Robert Lawrence - a brother of T E Lawrence. Next door to the British cemetery, where until recently all bodies discovered in the Salient and identified as British were buried, is the **Cement House** - a square German pillbox.

**Canadian Memorial** - at Vancouver Corner (where you turn left towards Passchendaele) is the **Canadian Memorial** - a pillar .....





... surmounted by the head and shoulders of a soldier resting on his arms reversed, which is a memorial to the 2,000 Canadians who died during the gas attacks on the salient on 22 April 1915.

Close by there is an old windmill, which the Germans called the **Totenmuhle** (the mill of the dead) because it was one of their forward observation posts which was under constant attack. The current mill is a reproduction of the 1915 mill

After a further 2 kms, across what in 1915-1918 was deep Flanders mud, is s'Graventafel, where the **New Zealand Memorial** commemorates the New Zealand dead in the Passchendaele battles.

**Passchendaele** - Passendale village was held by the Germans for over three years until, on November 6 1917 – at the culmination of the Third Ypres Battle – it was captured by the Canadian Corps. In the centre of the village the North window in the church is a **Memorial to the 66<sup>th</sup> Division**. At Broodseinde is the **Memorial to the 85<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion** and 2 kms further along the ridge is the road to **Tyne Cot Military Cemetery and Memorial to the Missing**.

**Tyn Cot** - Tyn Cot was named by the men of the 50<sup>th</sup> Northumbrian Division who fought to capture the complex of bunkers and pillboxes which surrounded the old barn that stood about 50 yards west of the level crossing on the Passchendaele to Broodseinde Road.

After they were captured by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Division on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1917 these bunkers and pillboxes were used as a dressing station by the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> Divisions, and by the Canadians, and their dead were buried close by. After the war 11,500 Allied dead were brought here from the surrounding battlefields.

King George V included Tyn Cot in his pilgrimage in May 1922 (whilst it was still in the course of construction) and at his suggestion the **Great Cross of Sacrifice** was built above the largest of the remaining blockhouses (leaving a small section exposed to show the concrete). Behind the **Cross of Sacrifice** are the original graves (over 300 of them) which remain as they were found after the Armistice.

**Zonnebeke** - being the focal point of many attacks, was completely destroyed during the Great War and reduced to an ocean of mud. Next to the church is the gateway to **Zonnebeke Chateau** which houses the **Streekmuseum** where the history of Zonnebeke, Beselare, Gheluveld, Passchendaele and Zandvoorde is displayed.

Between Zonnebeke and Frezenberg, just before Frezenberg on the right, is the Zonnebeke brickworks. - **Vanbiervliet Steebakkerij** – at the rear of which, in 1984, the diggers found a **large underground shelter** which was either a forward post or a field dressing station (thought to be of Australian origin from the style of work).

**Frezenberg** - Frezenberg ridge was vital to the Allies efforts in 1915 and 1917 but in between it became a virtual German fortress. With the aid of tanks (one named 'Challenger') the village was retaken in July 1917. On the road towards Ypres is the **Aeroplane British Cemetery** (named from the wreck of a machine close by), the **French National Cemetery of St Charles de Politze** and the **Crucifix and Mourning Women** (erected in 1968 as a memorial).

At Railway Wood is the lone cross of the **RE Grave**, which marks the grave of one officer and eleven men of the 177 Mining Company RE, who were killed in the mining operations in this area in 1915-1917.

**Birr Crossroads** - just past the Menin Road crossroads (**Birr Crossroads British Cemetery**) is the most notorious spot on the entire Ypres Salient - **Hellfire Corner** - where the Zillebeke to Potize road crosses the Menin Road and the railway. Almost hidden under the wall of the house on the right is a **British Demarcation Stone**

marking the limit of the German advance in 1918.

This French Demarcation stone is on the road from Wulvergem to Mount Kemmel (visible in the background).



During the 10 years following the end of the War 119 Demarcation stones were erected in Belgium and France, along the 960 kms of the Western Front. They were the idea of The Touring Club of France and the Touring Club de Belgique ,

Marking the limit of the German advance in 1918, they are of pink granite and are approximately 1m high.

They have either the British Tin Helmet or the French and Belgian 'Poilu's' at the top, to the side soldier's equipment - gas mask case, water bottle etc. and the name of the place on the front.

## Messines Ridge

0.5km from Lille gate, on the N365, is **Shrapnel Corner** which was constantly shelled by German artillery and then, in 1918, by long range guns. 1km further on are **Transport Farm** and **Railway Dugouts Cemetery** where, in the embankment behind the cemetery, there are still vestiges of the shelters and dugouts.

From here the road to the left leads to **Zillebeke Lake**, which was the scene of many terrible battles. **Hellblast Corner** is at the Eastern end of the lake.

**Verbrandenmolen** - a very narrow road between the houses on the right leads down to a group of cemeteries on the fringe of Ravine Wood. The road then swings back sharply to the right and rejoins the Spoilbank road where, almost beside **Spoilbank Cemetery** is the section of the old canal known as **Kingsway** to the BEF. There are still two ruined locks and dugouts here.

**St Eloi** - this area is mostly remembered for the mine warfare carried out by both sides. The British fired 13 mines and 29 camoufflets and the Germans 20 mines and 2 camoufflets. Immediately prior to the Messines Ridge attack the largest single charge was 95,600 lbs of ammonal blown at St Eloi by the British which resulted in the 41<sup>st</sup> Division capturing the position.

Two of the largest craters – now ponds – lie on the left of the Hollebeke road. On the higher ground behind the pond on the Messines road is an excellent example of a **British Shelter** with a **German concrete dugout** in front of it, which can be seen easily from the Messines road. At the crossing of the old canal at the western end of Kingsway there is a **British Demarcation Stone** on the left.

\* **Warneton** - from the road leading to Warneton the ridge of the Dammstrasse can be seen on the left where the Germans occupied the White Chateau known to them as the **Bayershof**. Another British dugout can be seen in the fields. At the Oosttverne crossroads there is the memorial cross of the 19<sup>th</sup> **'Butterfly' Division** which marks the site of the divisions attack during the Messines battle of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1917.

**Le Gheer** - is a hamlet on the eastern edge of Ploegsteert Wood and was the scene of much military activity in 1914 . Just outside Le .....

Gheer (at the crossroads of Le Pelegrin) one of the 1917 mines exploded in July 1955 when a willow tree was hit by lightning during a thunderstorm.

**Ploegstreet Wood** - (Plug street Wood to the Tommies) now called Bois de la Hutte et du Gheer, was captured by the British Cavalry Division in 1914. It was partially retaken by the Germans who were then not finally dislodged until mid-1917. For the length of the war the wood provided shelter to some 1 million men in its labyrinth of glades and connecting trenches.

**Ploegsteert** - was badly damaged during the war. Behind the village church there are a few early graves from casualties of the Hampshire Regiment from attacks carried out in 1914.

Leaving Ploegstreet the road leads to **Hyde Park Corner** at which stands **Strand Cemetery** and, between two houses that stand near the cemetery, there are three British bunkers in good repair.

The **Ploegstreet Memorial to the Missing** is unique in the Salient as it is a circular temple guarded by two lions. 11,447 men missing from the battles of Armentieres, Aubers Ridge, Loos, Fromells, Estaires, Hazebrouck, Scherpenberg and Outtersteene Ridge are listed on the panels within the colonnade.



The Ploegstreet Memorial to the Missing at 'Hyde Park Corner'

**St Yvon** - At St Yvon is **Prowse Point Cemetery**, which is the only one in the area to be named after an individual, and marks the spot where men of the Hampshire Regiment and Somerset Light Infantry, led by Major C B Prowse, DSO made a gallant stand. This area was one of the sectors involved in the 'Christmas Truce' of 1914.

**Messines** - was held by the Germans from 1914 until 1918, when it changed hands several times before it was finally captured on September 29<sup>th</sup> by the 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Divisions. Messines Church is the only church in the area with a crypt - which was all that was left of the building. It was the subject of a number of water colours by a German infantryman called Adolf Hitler.

On the edge of the **New Zealand Memorial Park**, overlooking the Douve valley and the hills of Flanders, there are two German pillboxes which were part of the Messines line of defence. In the **Hotel de Ville de Messines** there is a small museum which commemorates the actions of the New Zealanders.

Leaving Messines on the Wulvergen road is the **Messines Ridge British Cemetery** and the **New Zealand Memorial to the Missing**.

**Wulvergem** - was close to the front line in 1914 and was subjected

to a gas attack in 1916. It was taken by the Germans in the 1918 spring advance but recaptured in September.

**Mount Kemmel** - at Mount Kemmel the **French Ossuary**, with its Gallic cock crowing above, is the mass grave for 5,294 unknown French soldiers.



The French National Ossuary at the top of Mount Kemmel

At the summit [note to Traction drivers - reached by climbing a 1 in 5 cobbled road] is the **French Memorial**, which was unveiled in September 1932 by General Petin, and **Café Belvedere** which has been rebuilt on the site of the original café destroyed in the battles of 1918, its look-out tower having been used as an observation post by Sir John French.

**Kemmel** - Kemmel village green was the scene of many British Army band concerts played to the troops during lulls in the fighting in this area.

**Vroilanhoek** - from Vroilanhoek the road leads to **Spanbroekmolen**, which is the largest of the 1917 mine craters. Now called the **Pool of Peace** it is the property of Toc H, but in 1917 it was called the **Lone Tree Crater**. It has a rim 4 metres high, it is 27 metres deep and has a diameter of 129 metres, having been created by the explosion of a charge of 91,000 lbs of ammonal which had been laid through a tunnel 513 metres long.

**Lone Tree Cemetery** contains the bodies of men of the Royal Irish Rifles killed in the explosion having left their trench too early.

**Wyschaete** - 'White sheet' to the Tommies is on a high ridge - even higher than Messines in places - and in 1914 it changed hands at least three times before the Germans captured it and turned it into a formidable fortress.

It was recaptured by the 16<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> Divisions in June 1917, lost again in the German spring advance of 1918, and finally recaptured by the Allies on September 28<sup>th</sup> 1918.

**Voormezle** - The village was just behind the British line at St Eloi and was captured by the Germans after heavy fighting in spring 1918. The ruins were then recaptured by the American 30<sup>th</sup> Division on August 31<sup>st</sup>. 1km outside Voormezle is **Bus House Cemetery** on the right. This cemetery was named after an estaminet that got its name from an old London omnibus that broke down in no-man's land after bringing troops to the front in 1914.



# TOCcalendar

## TOC 2008 Calendar—some of the rest



Marcus Lasance



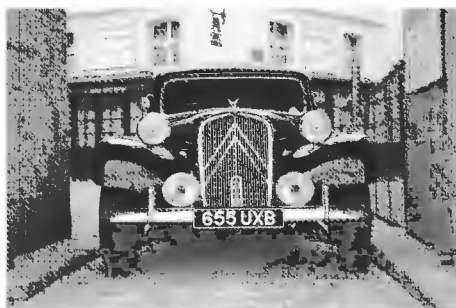
Marcus Lasance



Lindsay Gordon



Steve Reed



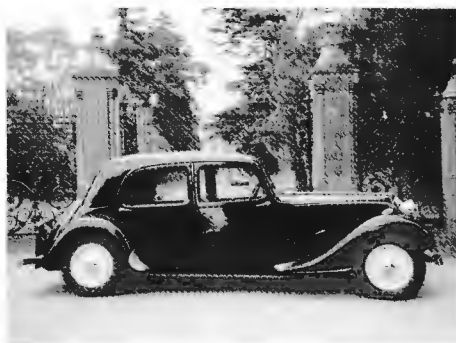
Steve Shinebroom



Steve Shinebroom



Andrew Rolph



David De Saxe



Andrew Rolph



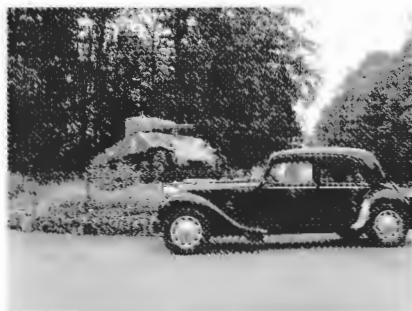
David de Saxe



Chris Hodgson



Chris Hodgson



Mike Tebbett



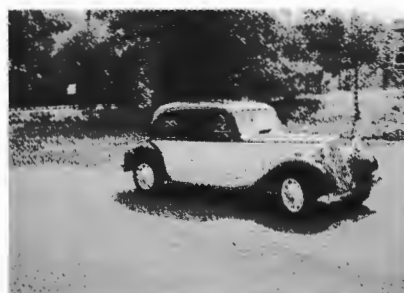
Chris Bailey



Mike Tebbett



Colin Archibald



Colin Archibald



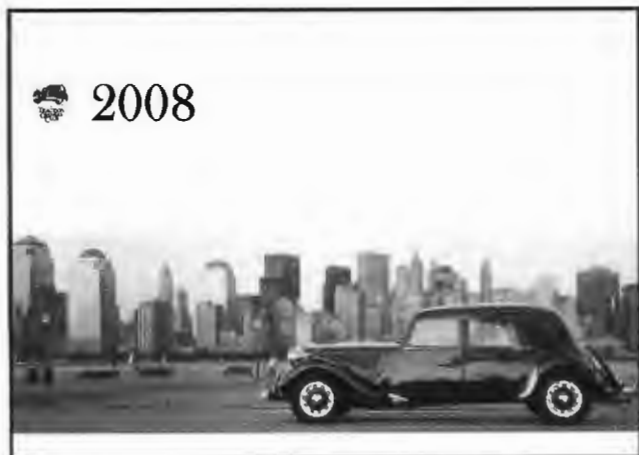
Andrew Rolph

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## TOC 2008 Calendar - extra copies

Members will remember that earlier in the year the TOC committee agreed that a 2008 calendar, funded out of cost savings achieved in the production and distribution of *Floating Power* during 2007, would be produced as a thank you to members for their continued support of the Club.

In anticipation of a demand from members for additional copies a limited number of extra copies have been printed - so - now that you have seen the 2008 TOC calendar, would you like an additional copy, or copies, to give as a present to friends or relations? If so copies are available, whilst stocks last, from the Editor of *Floating Power* at £3.00 per copy, plus postage.



Orders, stating the number of copies required and specifying your name and full postal address, accompanied by the full payment in £sterling, should be sent to:

M J Barnes, Floating Power, The Byre, Brockhurst Lane,  
Monks Kirby, Warwickshire, CV23 0RA, UK

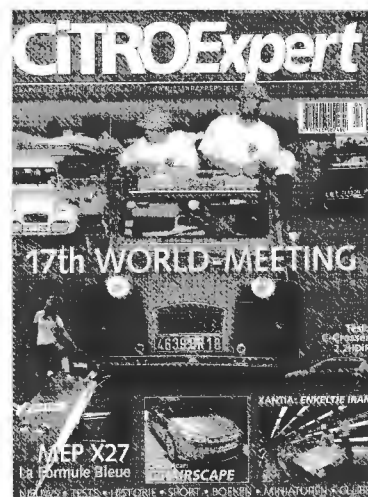
Payment should be by £sterling cheque (made payable to the Traction Owners Club Limited) or may be by credit/debit card (in which case the order must authorise payment to the TOC and must include the appropriate credit card number, valid from and valid to dates and security code from the back of the card).

Every effort will be made to dispatch calendars within 24 hours of receipt of orders. UK orders will be sent 2nd class post and non-UK orders will be dispatched by airmail so there should be no difficulty with ordering calendars as Christmas presents. Copies of the calendar will also be available to purchase at the Classic Car Show at the NEC (9th - 11th November) and at the AGM (25th November). The costs - inclusive of postage - are as follows:

Number of copies	UK	Europe	Rest of World
1	£ 3.60	£ 4.44	£ 5.40
2	£ 6.83	£ 8.40	£10.26
3	£10.20	£12.30	£15.06



# TOC magazine review



## CITROËN MAGAZINE

*Citroën Magazine* is a high quality commercial Citroën magazine.

**June 2007 n° 52.** 30 pages

- News:** 4X4 C-crosser (SUV) and the new C4 Picasso
- Environment:** Citroën introduces a system to reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions by 15%
- JUMBLE 2007:** at Bokrijk, Belgium on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, organised by Citroëfeer, was a big success with 863 participating Citroën-cars.
- Concept car:** C-Métisse won the 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the Louis Vuitton Classic Concept/Concours Award, 1<sup>st</sup> was a 1961 Ferrari 250GT California.
- Tourism:** C6 goes European in a Brussels-Berlin-Prague-Vienna-Brussels tour

**September 2007 n° 53** 31 pages

- New cars :** Test 4X4 C-crosser (SUV) Announcement C5 Airscape Cabrio and the prestigious C6 appears in the new film 'Roman de Gare' by Claude Lelouche
- Environment:** Paris re-introduces the tram for a cleaner environment. ECO-tour with the C2 and C3 in Bouillon (Be) & the Elzas (Luc). The new C4 HDi 110 FAP: the "cleanest" car in its category
- Features:** make an appointment with the garage for the winter check-up of your car. Annual rally of the Panhard club in the centre of Antwerp

## TRAXION

*Traxion* is the club magazine of Traction Avant Nederland (TAN). It is published every month except August.

**Sept and Oct 2007.** Pages 178-222

From September 2007 TRAXION has a full colour cover, sponsored by CTA, and carries a CTA advert on the back. Contents included:

- News:** The announcement of a new Citroën showroom on the Champs d'Élysées and further details on 75 hours for 75 years in Arras 2009
- Events:** The very first announcement of the 'Hemelvaartrit' April 30<sup>th</sup> – May 4<sup>th</sup> 2008... somewhere in France? Plus a report on the Danish jubilee-meeting in Svendborg to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Danish club in which 2 TAN-members participated.

**Reviews:** of

- Alfred Hitchcock's film "To catch a thief" with Cary Grant & Grace Kelly.
- André Berthomieu's crime & comedy musical "Pigalle-Saint-Germain-des-Prés" (1950) with Jeanne Moreau
- 9 European Citroën/Traction club magazines:
- FranceMobile (formerly Citro-Rama) in Rheinberg, Germany - a very good fair but few visitors.
- "Deventer Traction-stad" the annual national TAN-gathering on September 9<sup>th</sup> in which 150 Tractions took part (including 'Blackadder', one of the Tractions that participated in the Peking-Paris rally).

## CITRO EXPERT

*Citro Expert* is a high quality, Dutch commercial magazine with interesting reports and information about old and new Citroëns.

**2007 n° 4** 72 pages.

This edition contained reports on:

**C5 AIRSCAPE:** the review of this new model describes it as "green (ecological) and eye-catching: with strong nose with double chevrons, tight lines with splendidly incorporated door-handles and a tough back"

**MEP X27:** a 10 page report about *La Formule Bleue* racing cars of the 1970s which were fitted with Citroën-technology.

**Xantia's for Iran:** a story about a PSA-Citroën assembly plant established in Teheran in 1997. For a number of years now it has been producing Xantia's for Iran..

**2CV meeting:** a report of the 17th 2CV world meeting in Sweden including a note about a sticker observed on one 2CV saying: « La 2CV est le cadeau de Dieu a l'homme » (The 2CV is the gift of God to mankind).

**Tourism:** a report on **ARPAJON**, capital of Haricot, which disappeared in the satellite towns south of Paris.









*Walter & Noëlla Callens*

*Walter & Noëlla Callens*

*Walter & Noëlla Callens*



## Section Co-ordinators

<b>Eastern</b>	<b>Tony Latchford</b>	2 Inchbonnie Road, South Woodham Ferrers, Essex, CM3 5FG	Tel: 01245 328 009
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<b>London</b>	 <b>Peter Simper</b>	215 Whitton Road, Twickenham, TW2 7QZ	Tel: 020 8891 1093
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<b>Scotland</b>	 <b>Frank Grant</b>	Dun Donnachaidh, Crathie, Ballater, Aberdeenshire, AB35 5UL	Tel: 01339 742272 email: <a href="mailto:frankgrant@btinternet.com">frankgrant@btinternet.com</a>
<b>South Midlands</b>	<b>Simon Saint</b>	Snigs End, Danes Green, North Claines, Worcestershire, WR3 7RU	Tel: 01905 454 961 email: <a href="mailto:janeandsimonsaint@hotmail.com">janeandsimonsaint@hotmail.com</a>
<b>South West</b>	 <b>Walford Bruen</b>	Wintersland, Southerton, Ottery St Mary, Devon, EX11 1SD	Tel: 01395 568909 email: <a href="mailto:kembru@btinternet.com">kembru@btinternet.com</a>
<b>Surrey, Hampshire &amp; Sussex borders</b>	 <b>Steve Reed</b>	No 1 Terwick Cottage, Rogate, Nr Petersfield, Hampshire. GU31 5EG	Tel: 01730 821792. For details of section events and regular meetings please contact Helen or John on 020 8330 7216 (open all hours)
<b>Welsh borders</b>		New Area representative required. Please contact Bernie Shaw for details of what's involved.	Tel: 01933 274382 Email: <a href="mailto:bernie-pearl@lineone.net">bernie-pearl@lineone.net</a>
<b>West of England</b>	 <b>Terence &amp; Jane McAuley</b>	7 The Normans, Bathampton, Bath, BA2 6TD	Tel: 01225 466 939 email: <a href="mailto:mrsjane.bear@toucansurf.com">mrsjane.bear@toucansurf.com</a>
<b>Rest of the world</b>	<b>Robin Dyke</b>	18 Henfield View, Warborough, Oxon. OX10 7DB	Tel: 0044 1865 858555 or email <a href="mailto:johnrobindyke@btinternet.com">johnrobindyke@btinternet.com</a>

## London Section

The London Section meets on the last Tuesday of each month at the following locations:

Even months - from 8pm at Ye Old Cherry Tree, 22 The Green, Southgate, London N14 (020 8447 802). For further information please contact Paul De Felice on 01992 890975.

Odd months - from 8pm at The Rose of York, Petersham Road, Richmond, London TW10 (020 8940 8005). For further information please contact Peter or Sue Simper on 020 8560 3267 (days) or 020 8891 1093 (evenings).

## Peak Section

The Peak section normally meets for Sunday lunch in a variety of hostelrys in Derbyshire every second (even) month.

Our next meeting will be at lunchtime on Sunday 2nd December at The Ketch. We have visited this pub in the past but I've noticed it has been recently refurbished so well worth another visit - we haven't had time to call in there yet so it will be a new experience for all.

Our group has remained very stable and, as it has been quite some time since anyone new joined the TOC in our area, there are few new ideas coming out of the Peak group. We just like meeting to have a good chat and to eat!!

The exciting news is that Richard & Carol are organising next Year's TOC Annual Rally around the Ashbourne area so we hope to welcome lots of TOC members to our bit of England.

*John and Bev*

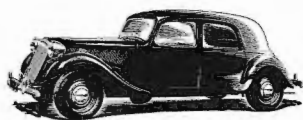
## Scotland Section

Please note the new contact details for Frank Grant. Will all Scottish members please confirm their email addresses to him asap and note that the Club tool set is now at his house in Crathie if needed.

The Scottish meeting and events programme for 2008 will continue on the last Sunday of the month basis. Provisional dates so far are;

**May 25th, Elgin.** A visit to the Moray Motor Museum and Johnstons Cashmere Mill with a nice lunch somewhere in between.

**June 29th, Dundee.** A visit to RRS Discovery and the Verdant Jute works and restaurant, a great day out see [www.rrsdiscovery.com](http://www.rrsdiscovery.com)



**July 27th, Alford Motor Museum.** The usual extravaganza is not being held this year because of major building works. Instead we are invited to join a multi-marque club meeting, a visit to the Museum and a chance to talk nuts & bolts and compare widgets to your hearts content! Then one of the best High-Tea's in Aberdeenshire.

And for further South can I suggest.

**31st August, Rosslyn Chapel,** and a nice lunch

**28th September, The Falkirk Wheel** and again a nice lunch, please see [www.thefalkirkwheel.co.uk](http://www.thefalkirkwheel.co.uk)

**Unless you want to suggest anything else?**

Meanwhile the successful 2007 programme continues as can be seen from the following photographs:

**Lunch at the Aviator**



Desserts are consumed at the last lunch meet of the Scottish section. Cars present were Kenny Cocker's Familiale, Hugh's Commerciale, Henry's Big 6, Phil & Paula's Light 15, Steuart & Claire Watson's Legere and Nick Macintosh's new purchase the (ex-Brian Hall) Light 15.

**North Kessock meeting**



Taken looking out over the Moray Firth, the photograph shows Phil Taylor's L15 with Phil's mother-in-law Mrs Gabrielle Taylor, who owned the car from 1963 to 1989, when she passed it on to Phil. She is 90 on the 20th October this year and remembers, when moving up from the

Midlands to Badcaul, Dundonnell in 1965, the Traction being used to transport the 3 family goats - which were milked directly into the tea cups on the way to their new home.

I now work for **Visit Scotland** so if you want to make a weekend of it for any of our future meets I can book your accommodation, just drop me a line!

*Frank Grant*

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## South West Section

The re launch of the SW section has got off to an almost encouraging start, but with only 18 members and a vast geographical area - extending from Penzance to Axminster - it is never going to be easy to get everyone together at once.

We did nevertheless have a couple of good meetings, at Lifton in April, and at my place in June. Participation in the region's major classic car shows was a little disappointing with no more than 2 or 3 Tractions.

At the Powderham Castle, Wadebridge and Mount Edgecombe events we joined forces with the Citroen Car Club, which made for interesting and diverse displays.

A section get together will probably be arranged for some time in November when we can dream up ideas for next year - maybe including a South West team for the Brittany Rally and possible excursions to French autojumbles.

*Walford Bruen*

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## Surrey, Hampshire & Sussex Borders Section

The section programme for the remainder of 2007 is:

- Nov 18 The Fairmile
- Dec 16 Christmas Lunch at The Barley Mow, West Horsley. This is also a pre-booked event so please contact us in good time if you plan to attend. Menus will be sent out in due course to those who have indicated they will attend.

Please call 0208 330 7216 for further details.

*Helen & John*

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## West of England Section

The Section meets on occasional Sunday's. This year has been something of an unsatisfactory one for local outings, not helped by the weather and clashes with other events. We will do better next year.

2007 kicked off with our traditional planning meeting at the Tunnel House at Coates, near Cirencester, in January. This is the only fixed feast in our calendar and was by far the best attended event.

In April we had a "Drive It Day" to the pub, the Old Station Inn at Hallatrow. A grand total of 3 cars. The pub is notable for having the front end of a 2CV sticking out of the wall of the bar!

In May quite a few folk, from far and wide, went to the "Vie en Rose" French car day at Prescott Hill climb. Those who went on the Saturday had the best of it - everyone on Sunday just drowned!

In July we were to have had a "picnique" at Nigel and Mary Webb's near Glasotonbury but Nigel found his garden better suited to planting rice than parking Tractions, so we all stayed home and \* looked out at the rain.

In September there was indeed a "picnique" at Julian Taylor's at Bridgwater, followed by the visit to Westonzoyland pumping station. This clashed with couple of other events, including the CCC do at Stratford, so attendance was not massive.

There was to have been an organised visit to Tyntesfield in October but other commitments by most of the regulars meant that this did not happen. A thin end to a thin year!!!

Which brings us back to where we came in - and the Tunnel House again next January 13th - when we will all be another year older and no doubt wiser.

What is clear is that the sheer number of available Traction-related events in a year means that, unless one wants to be a complete anorak and stand about looking at cars every weekend, one has to ration ones pleasures. Something we need to think about for next year - see you at the Tunnel House (Coates, near Cirencester)

Pip Pip

*Jane & Terence*

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## News from the rest of the TOC World

### New Zealand

There are at least a score of Traction enthusiasts scattered through New Zealand and most of them are, or have been, members of the TOC.

I have details of a dozen Slough built Tractions there - a mixture of Light 12s, Light 15s and Big 15s, but not all running.

Ian Howell has a silver 1953 big boot Light 15 and a 1947 "project" Light 15 with the engine out. He has just retrieved a 1954 "salvage" Light 15 but with 2 good tyres and possibly some reasonable seats. Bill McNickle has a 1955 Big 15 and Mark & Dave Shorter share a 1939 Light 15 roadster.

### France

Whilst on the Normandy Tour I noted the following report in the local newspaper *Ouest France*.

## TOUT PEUT ARRIVER



### Une Citroën miniature s'envole à 15 600€

Tous les vieux petits garçons qui ont aujourd'hui sabordé leur collection de petites voitures vont avoir le cœur brisé par cette information. À Bourges, où était organisée ce week-end une vente de la maison d'enchères Collectoys, ce coupé Rosalie Citroën miniature du début des années 30 a atteint la somme record de 15 600€. La voiture en plomb de couleur marron, « un modèle rare, pas vu sur le marché depuis des années, était estimé à 190 € » selon cette même source. est tombée dans la poche d'un collectionneur sexagénaire.



Translated, the article says:

*'All the old boys who have scrapped their collection of toy cars will be heart-broken today by this news. In Bourges this weekend at an auction by Collectoys, a miniature Citroën Rosalie Coupé from the early 1930's reached the record price of 15,600 euros. The maroon car made of lead, a rare model not seen on the market for many years, had been estimated to fetch 190 euros. The car had been bought by a sexagenarian collector.'*

I can think of several 60 year old members who were in France at the time.

### 70th Anniversary of the 15-Six

All models of Tractions are invited to the meeting at Fort de Seclin for the 70th anniversary of the 15-Six.

The event runs from Friday 29th to Sunday 31 August 2008 and they are hoping to attract hundreds of Tractions. At Dunkerque for the 70th anniversary of the first Traction we managed to get 65 Tractions over there, so we should manage to do as well this time.

I am sure that almost all of our 15-Sixes will want to make the trip. Sea France will offer us a discount, and I will negotiate with the other operators.

Seclin is just 7 miles from Lille (about 73 miles from Calais or 57 miles from Dunkerque) and is known as the crossroads of Europe. Fort de Seclin is a World War I site and museum and worth a visit in itself.

There are hotels nearby, but I advise that you book early. Admission to the Traction event will cost 40 euros for a car and 2 people, but only 30 euros if you book before 15 March 2008. Extra passengers will cost 10 euros. There is a meal on the Saturday evening at 28 euros per head (under 13s at half price).

I now have the booking forms and details of how to pay. There will also be an autojumble, and I have the forms should anyone wish to have a stall for the 3 days (inside the Chapiteau for 50 euros or outside for 15 euros).

For further details, advice on ferries, hotels, B&Bs, campsites, booking forms, how to pay, etc. please contact me.

### Italy

The 14th ICCCR meeting will be held from 15-17 August 2008 at the Autodrome di Vallelunga about 22 miles north of Rome.

Entry will cost 50 euros per car and driver, plus 5 euros for each additional passenger. You can pay by cheque in euros or by PayPal. Details of the event, including the entry form, can be found at [www.icccr2008.it](http://www.icccr2008.it).

Rome is just over 1000 miles from Calais, but you could save 400 miles by using the French MotorRail to Avignon.

### United States

And finally, Mark Gluck from New York has sent me this photo of his 1951 15-Six decorated for Halloween.



*Robin Dyke*

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## 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Traction. Arras - July 2009

Only 20 months to go .....

All the original ideas are still in place – Spares Market, Museum, Fashion Show gala dinner etc., plus some new ones, and we are now discussing more of the detail. Before too long we shall need firm commitment of assistance in a number of fields but at this stage we are starting by appealing for a short list of vehicles from which the museum entries can be selected.

We still hope to display 75 cars in all, with at least one from each production year and one of each model. It is hoped that the 75 will be split with 15 each from the UK Slough plant and the Belgian Forest factory and the rest from the Paris assembly line. I already have an idea of some TOC-owner cars that I believe to be eligible and I shall be approaching the relevant members in the coming weeks. However, I should also like anybody who has a vehicle of specific interest – not necessarily Slough built – to come forward as I should like to be able to present the TOC shortlist when the organising team next meets, in December.

Owners will receive a (small) reward for allowing their car to be displayed and there will be a “People’s Choice” type of Concours d’Elegance in which all visitors will be asked to vote for their favourite museum exhibit.

There is also to be a “Bapteme en Traction” on the Sunday, offering an opportunity for members of the public to have a ride (not drive!) in a Traction for the cost of a nominal donation to Charity. I believe this is something the TOC might assist with as we can offer a good selection of large and small French and English cars. I shall certainly be pleased to put my car forward for this and I look forward to hearing from other volunteers before I have to start a press-gang.

The organising committee is coping well at the moment but it will get tougher as the date approaches. We are not asking for additional help at this stage but we should nevertheless like to hear from anybody who feels they may be able to contribute in advance or during the event, in any way whatsoever. We expect to have registration information available on the website, <http://www.75heurespour75ans.com/index.htm>, in the early part of 2008. In the meantime please do check it for updates.

*Bernie Shaw*

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## Paris - Moscow - Paris rally. July/August 2009

Are there any TOC Members interested in joining the CAAR-Nederlands Paris - Moscow - Paris rally in 2009 after the 75-for-75 event in Arras?

The rally will start in Paris on 18th July 2009 and will travel via Brussels, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Linköping, Stockholm, Turku, Helsinki, St Petersburg, Tallinn, Riga and Velikije Luki to Moscow, arriving on 9th August. The return journey will commence on 12th August and will travel through Orel, Konotop, Kiev, Rivne, Lviv, Debrecen, Budapest, Győr, Vienna, Passau, Nuremberg, Karlsruhe and Reims to arrive in Paris on 28th August.

There is an option of staying at campsites or hotels en-route and the current cost projections for the rally (including entry fee, fuel, oil, minor repairs, accommodation, road tolls, ferries, food, events, excursions and incidental expenses - for a crew of two adults) for the 42 day/night rally is €12,500 for hotel teams (about £8,700 at today’s exchange rates) and €10,000 (about £6,700) for campers.

CAAR-Nederlands, the organising Traction club, which was formed in 1984, is organising the (approximately) 5,000 mile rally and is keen to hear from any TOC members who might be interested in participating.

Will de Hek, President of CAAR-Nederlands, says that the club is also keen to co-operate with other Clubs, especially with respect to rallies in other countries. Will would also like to know if anyone in the TOC would be willing to be the co-ordinator for entries from the UK.

To obtain more detail contact **Will de Hek**:

Telephone: 0031 (0)23 5360418

Mobile : 0031 (0) 619114583

Email: [caar.nl@planet.nl](mailto:caar.nl@planet.nl)

Post: CAAR-Nederlands, Engelandlaan 506, 2034NR Haarlem, The Netherlands







# TOCclassifieds

## ADVERTISING

### Charges for advertising in Floating Power

Traction or other Citroën related items

TOC members—no charge

Non-members/traders—£12 / issue

Accommodation or similar:

TOC members—£6 / issue

Non-members/traders—£12 / issue

Trade display advertisements:

Full page—£240 (inc vat)

Other sizes—£5 / single column cm

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 advertisements to the Editor (address on page 2) including your TOC membership number and payment (if applicable). Unless specifically requested advertisements will appear only once and repeats must be requested by the advertiser.

Cheques should be made payable to 'The Traction Owners Club Limited'.

### WARNING

Unless you specifically request otherwise all advertisements that appear in the 'Traction for Sale' and 'Parts for Sale' sections of this magazine will be placed on the TOC website approximately one week after the magazine is published. In recent months advertisements on the TOC website have led to attempted 'phishing' and 'cashback fraud' attempts on TOC members. Please therefore maintain vigilance when dealing with responses to your advert.

Information on what to look out for can be found on the following websites:

[http://www.met.police.uk/traid/alert/section/cashback\\_fraud.htm](http://www.met.police.uk/traid/alert/section/cashback_fraud.htm)

<http://www.carcrimeawareness.co.uk/>

<http://www.binary.co.uk/chequescam/>

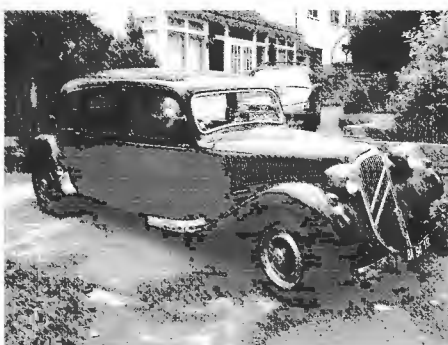
## TRACTIONS FOR SALE

**Unique opportunity:** In 2009 Citroën FWD will be 75 years old. I have for sale a RHD 7A assembled at Brook Green Hammersmith with original October

1934 registration number. One of six bodies sent from Paris to Citroën UK and possibly the Motor Show car of that year. The bodywork has been done, many new and used parts. Essentially requires assembly to complete a very interesting and special survivor. More details available from Bryn Hughes Tel: 01234 840467 or e-mail [bryndhughes@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bryndhughes@yahoo.co.uk)

\*\*\*\*\*

**1955 Paris built Familiale.** taxed and MOT'd till May 2008, good runner, needs a little TLC and some attention to slight body damage. £ 6500 ono. Contact Alex on 0208 401 6190 or email [yeats\\_alex@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:yeats_alex@yahoo.co.uk)



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**1956 Normale:** in beige and ivory, re-trimmed, rebuilt engine, first class body never welded, all door shuts are spot on, good tyres all round, lovely to drive, very light on the steering. Sold with full 12 months MOT. £8,000 ono. can be seen in Nottingham. Please contact Mick Holmes on 0115 9118218



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## TRACTIONS WANTED

**WANTED - Commercial for restoration.** A 'runner' in need of TLC would be ideal as I have more time than money. I'd like to have a car by the late summer so that I can use the long winter evenings to fettle. Anything considered. Roy Brooks Tel +44 (0) 7793 650012

**WANTED - Light 15.** Prospective member in Bradford-on-Avon is looking for a Slough-built post-war Lt 15. Must be a runner and in reasonable condition. Target price around £4k to 5k. Please contact John Osborne on 01749 675312 or 07801 337187

## PARTS FOR SALE

**For Sale:** Light 15 starter handle, Top & bottom water hoses, fan belt and assorted 12v and 6v bulbs for sale. Robin Dyke 01865 858555

**For Sale:** Pirelli and Michelin Classic tyres for your Citroën. Buy direct from the wholesalers at unbeatable prices! Remember to mention you're a TOC member when calling. Tel: 01590 612261 or visit [www.vintage tyres.com](http://www.vintage tyres.com)

**For Sale:** Starter motor for Big 6. 12volt Lucas type M418G/CJ29—25513D. Tested, in good condition & fitted new base plate and earth brushes £90. Tel Andy on 01339 886290

**For Sale:** Qty of new & s/h spares for 1955 11B including reground crank, brake drums & shafts, steering rack, cylinder heads, bumpers & irons, instruments, wheel embellishers, accessories, bonnets, rear wings etc. Phone Sandy on 0131 332 4078 for full list (Edinburgh)

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

**Tyres:** 165R400, 185R400, 130/140x40, 150/160x40 and 135x45 all Michelin. Please call Dougal on 01302 711123 or email [sales@longstonetyres.co.uk](mailto:sales@longstonetyres.co.uk)

## PARTS WANTED

**Wanted:** 11D flywheel to complete engine rebuild. Please contact John Barnes on 01788 832807 or by email at [toc\\_editor@btinternet.com](mailto:toc_editor@btinternet.com)

**Wanted:** Early Traction grille with short slot. Dennis Hewitt tel: 01934 834274 or email: [denhewitt@f1550.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:denhewitt@f1550.fsnet.co.uk)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Excellent B&B and Self-contained Self catering** in idyllic farmhouse in pretty hamlet in Poitou-Charente (second sunniest region in France). Bring your Traction or simply visit mine! Poitiers 40 mins and La Rochelle 1 hour with cheap Ryanair flights. Well behaved children and dogs welcome. Stabling and garaging also available. Double, twin & single B&B rooms from €25pppn. Breakfast from organic home produce, continental or full English. Vegetarian option available. Self catering sleeping up to 6. Also expert bi-lingual house-hunting assistance offered in this wonderful region. Just let me know your requirements in advance and I can arrange viewings and accompany you if required. For further details email: [carla.perry@wanadoo.fr](mailto:carla.perry@wanadoo.fr) or call 0033 549 27 91 82

**Vintage Luggage:** to compliment your Traction. Classic full leather suitcases available. For details email [select2@btinternet.com](mailto:select2@btinternet.com) or phone 01527 854553

**Free to a good home:** 200-ish classic car magazines - 'Practical Classics' mostly. Must be collected from south west London. Please contact Alex on 0208 401 6190 or email [yeats\\_alex@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:yeats_alex@yahoo.co.uk)



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

Please make cheques payable to the Traction Owners Club and allow 14 days for delivery. Overseas owners please email for cost of post and packing before sending cheques.

Looking for a Christmas present for the Traction owner who has nearly everything?

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**01243 511378**

Chris Treagust, 98 First Avenue, Batchmere, Chichester W Sussex, PO20 7LQ, email [chris.treagust@tesco.net](mailto:chris.treagust@tesco.net)



