

Floating Power

March - April 2021

Official magazine of the Traction Owners Club Limited



Honorary Life Members of the Traction Owners Club

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John Gillard
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Missing Magazine?

Please contact John Oates
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Be a part of Floating Power...

The closing date for input for the May/June *Floating Power* will be

Sunday, April 11th 2021

To submit your articles, photos and letters to the editor, email

Bryan Pullan on:
editor@traction-owners.co.uk

Cover Image

The Traction Universelle (Haute Garonne branch) had a three day tour of part of the Pyrenees in October 2020. Despite some horrendous weather (and the first snow of winter on the higher parts) Bob Street managed to get some shots while the sun shone or at least when the rain stopped.

Photo by Bob Street.



Editor's Epistle

We were glad to be rid of 2020, but is 2021 shaping up much better just yet? Already we are seeing events for the early part of the year in jeopardy with several already cancelled. The prospects in Europe appear, if anything worse, with some events actually going back to 2022. Hopefully, by the time that you are reading this, many of you will have received the vaccine which should enable some freedoms to be restored, and I hope that you will be preparing yourselves for Drive it Day, which should be able to take place, albeit it may just be that, a drive, rather than a rendezvous at a favourite pub and a chat over some food and drink.

Ah, those were the days.

The big news is that we are overhauling the magazine, to bring it into the 21st Century. If you look back over the years, *Floating Power* has evolved gradually from a black and white, fairly basic publication, through various iterations up to the largely full colour and glossy magazine that we are now used to. We recently dipped our toes into the water with January/February's edition sporting a cover image in full colour for the first time....I only received three comments, two for and one against! So, in the best traditions of statistical evidence (and an absence of an uproar thus far in the letters pages), I must assume that most of you found it acceptable.

This and future editions see us introducing a slightly different series of page formats, the aim being to give the magazine a more contemporary feel by the addition of some colour and texture. The contributors and most of the items are all the same, *Floating Power* is still intact under its new clothes, with all of its usual features intact.

As I write this, we are still in the depths of winter, and the gritters are still around occasionally, but a brief spell of cold sunshine accompanied by dry roads led me to gingerly turn the key and press the button on the Light 15.....and she started! There followed a brief but enjoyable drive in the sun around the neighbourhood, followed by a quick wash and brush up to shift some of the dust that I had hoped would blow away as I drove down the A6. A few messages from friends owning various vintage and classic cars showed that quite a few of them had drawn the same conclusions and had set out to warm the oil and scrub the rust out of their brake drums.



In this edition, in spite of the lockdowns, we do have some interesting stuff, my thanks to all those who have contributed.

Kevin Taylor's Big 6 continues to take shape in Australia, where Summer temperatures prevail, and we have an article from the first ever *Floating Power*, detailing the trials and tribulations of the early Traction design process and its first production run. I don't, alas, have the name of the author of this latter piece, which is now some forty odd years old, so if you recognise your work, or can pinpoint the source, then I will give a credit in the next magazine.

Plus, George Halsall tells how he swapped his carburettor to an SU, and there is an article by Andy Burnett on the various engine types that you might find under your bonnet.

An interesting response to the reference to road charging in the last magazine can be found in the Letters section. Mike Wilcock has penned something which might get you thinking.

Thinking also of the electric classics piece in the last magazine, it is also interesting to see that Citroën 2CV specialist, The 2CV Shop (in Warminster) are about to start a conversion service for 2CV's for a fairly eye watering £16,400. It isn't clear whether you can buy the bits and do it yourself for less. The conversion gives a range of around 75 miles, which makes it a local driver only. It will be interesting to see how many of these are actually sold in the UK, albeit it could be a novel way of getting a town car up and running in one of the cities that seem hell bent on pricing IC cars off their streets. 2CV Shop are also offering an 'as new' fully reconditioned electric 2CV for (sit down before you read on) a shade over £46k!!

Gulp. Much as I love my own 2CV, I can think of better things to spend £46k on! So for the moment, I will stick to petrol.

Keep driving.

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Committee

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Because of nuisance phone calls, if you are ringing from outside the UK or you are ringing from an undisclosed telephone number, I will monitor the call and will only answer if you start to leave a message.

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President's Ponderings



Unsurprisingly, I have very little to report other than having received my first plague jab - no side effects - and the successful completion of a couple of jobs in the garage



At last the Cloverleaf is back up and running and, as I had an appointment to attend, I took the opportunity to take it out on 12th February. By golly it was cold but the little beast started and performed well and I am confident that my fuel tank leak is no more.



Another unexpected, but "interesting", job was to refit the rear wing of the Picasso which I had managed to reconfigure with the aid of a particularly strong shrub in the drive. Fortunately, the basic external panels were plastic and suffered minimal damage. In fact, they sprang back into shape with a little persuasion but one of the inner supports, (also plastic) was torn to shreds. By absolute coincidence the hatchback then failed to open while I was working on the wing with all the parts and necessary tools neatly laid out in the boot! That problem was thanks to an over-engineered system requiring a press operated micro-switch to send a signal to release the catch and water ingress had caused corrosion at the contacts. As you might guess, access was a nightmare. Hey-ho.

Looking forward, there is still nothing to add to forthcoming event news. I am booked for both Jersey and Brittany and now we can only wait to see what happens. Appendages remain firmly crossed.

I therefore wish one-and-all a safe and covid-free lockdown until we again have some form of normality.



New Members

Welcome to the Traction Owners Club to the following..

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|--|
| 2809 | Mr Paul Diamond | Bideford, Devon |
| 2810 | Mr Martin Stevens | Eastbourne, East Sussex |
| 2811 | Mr Nick Price | Newcastle Upon Tyne |
| 2812 | Ms Annette Marshall | Bristol, Avon |
| 2813 | Mr David Lane | Harpenden, Herts. |
| 2814 | Mr Tim Martin | Flixton, Gtr. Manchester |
| 2815 | Mr Ian Vipond | Colchester, Essex |
| 2816 | Mr Andrew Peel | Middlesborough N. Yorks |
| 2817 | Mr Bill Angerami | Merritt Island, FL, USA |
| 2818 | Mr Donn Garriott | Browns Valley, California, USA |
| 2819 | Mr Joseph Dobson | Helpston, Peterborough, Cambs. |
| 2820 | Mr Alan Fish | Birdsedge, Huddersfield, Yorks. |
| 2821 | Mr Martin Powell | El Salto, Tenerife, Spain |



Chairman's Chat

I love it – but what do you think? A few years ago a member said to me that Floating Power looked like a grey magazine for grey people!! I thought it was a bit harsh but during lockdown it has given Bryan & I a chance to talk to Simon, our excellent Designer at Lion, and look at ways to give FP a facelift to hopefully look more modern but still keep its heritage. Using black & white photos is difficult as most are now produced in colour and have to be converted – which is not always successful.

We really do want to know what you think- both positive and negative please. Bryan will be very happy to hear from you all.

If you read In Committee on page 27 you will see we had a Zoom meeting on 7th February. Due to increased costs over the last few years we have decided we will no longer produce a printed calendar but will look at an online version. Martin still needs your photographs please and my thanks to Martin for all his work on the calendar over the last few years.

It has also been necessary to increase our postage costs for all non-UK members. This will happen from 1st March and applied in May for renewals. Again may I urge as many members as possible to opt for Direct Debit or BACS to help keep our charges down. Thank you.

At the moment there is, as expected, a delay in getting parts from CTA. Apologies to any members waiting for parts from Chris in our Spares shop – we are doing all we can to speed this up. Thanks to Cleve who is doing sterling work sorting out the paperwork needed for HRMC and Customs and to both Cleve & John for working through all our Parts and adding a new necessary Commodity Code... “luckily” lockdown means they both have “free” time to undertake this onerous task. Thank You chaps.

As I write this article on 9th February the news looks good re vaccines and I know many of our members will have had at least one jab by now. What we don't know is how quickly it will roll out to the rest of us and what plans will be in the Boris “roadmap” which hopefully we will have all seen by the time you read this. For us in the UK, when will we be allowed to travel? As a Committee all we could say at our meeting was “wait and see” and make decisions as late as possible. So, in the meantime, I will keep my case for Jersey packed..... ever the Optimist!! What I really, really want is the chance to get my haircut as you can see from the latest photo above!!

Beu

Writing for Floating Power

Many thanks for the various submissions for this and future editions of Floating Power. I am happy to receive articles on any Traction related topic, be it technical, personal, or a memory of a past project or event. As ever, the earlier that you can get your copy in to me, the more likely it is that you will find it in the next magazine and if it doesn't make it to the next one, don't be disappointed, it will be used in a forthcoming magazine if this edition is full.

Please submit your copy in Word, not .pdf. Pdf. format items have to be reprocessed back to Word, and the software that does this, often messes up the formatting and makes hard work of the exercise. Images can be sent separately, or if they are very large, by way of a link to an online App such as DropBox. Preferred format is .jpeg, but we can also cope with most of the more common formats.

Hand written copy is okay if you haven't any computer skills.(providing that I can read it!)

Many thanks

Editor



Traction Owners Club: Section Details

Please note, the chart below contains all of the contact details of the various Sections. Section Reports received are in the following pages. For contact details of your section, see the chart below.

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See section report for coming meetings/events.

Northern, Lakes and Borders

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Summer meetings at monthly Breakfast Meets at the Corner House pub, Wrightington, Lancs, first Sunday of every month, April to October, 9-30 am onwards. Also New Years day subject to weather. For details of other meetings or events see Section report, or email notifications.

North East

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See section report for coming meetings/events.

Peak

BEV & JOHN OATES

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The Peak Section meets for lunch on the first Sunday of the even month in Inns around Derbyshire. See Sections web page for details of locations.

Midshires

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See section report for coming meetings/events.

Eastern

JASMIN GAGEN

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Our regular meetings are every three weeks alternating between pubs below. The Angel Inn, Larling, Norwich NR16 2QU
The Compasses Inn, Littley Green, Chelmsford CM3 1BU

London

MIKE WILCOCK

T: 07761608656

E: london@traction-owners.co.uk

First Thursday every month from 7.30 pm at the Hare and Hounds in Osterley, Windmill Lane, Isleworth, TW75PR

Surrey/Hants/Sussex

SUE & PHILIPPE ALLISON

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See section report for coming meetings/events.

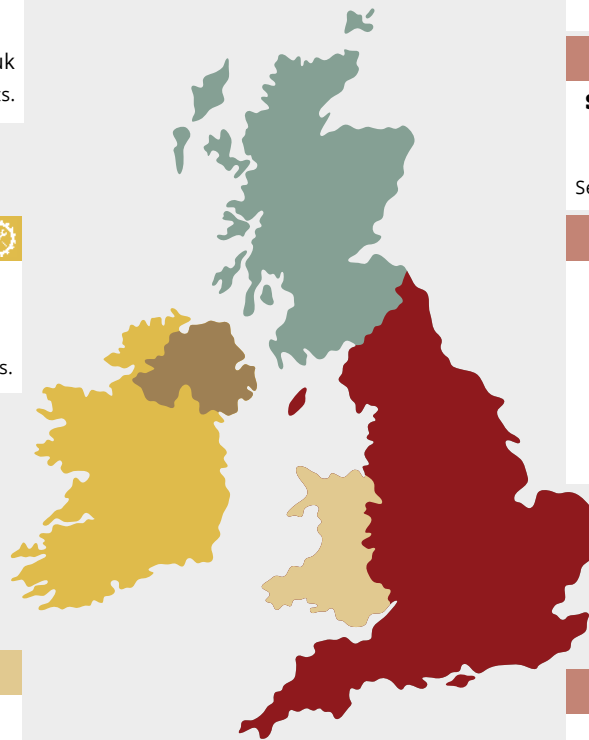
Kent/ East Sussex

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See section report for coming meetings/events.



Note: all of the above are volunteers and will also have other commitments. Please bear this in mind when trying to contact them. Up to date details of forthcoming local events will be posted either in the Sections page of the TOC website, or within Section Reports in Floating Power. A summary of the current Section reports is also posted periodically on the club's Facebook site.



TOOLS

Club tools available for loan:

Section News

Northern Scotland

Hi, folks, absolutely nothing to pass on with anything to do with our Tractions. A good foot of snow outside, absolute chaos on the roads, salt being ladled on too, so most certainly not a time to venture out with our Tractions!!

I have been working on other Citroens, but much later models, namely the C5 Exclusive Tourers, - latest repair entailed the replacement of a rubber pipe which had a cut on it and lost a lot of the hydraulic suspension fluid, which is the Total LDS fully synthetic type. Thankfully, I had a few bottles of it laid by, which was used and then came the big shock. The cost of a litre of LDS used to be only a few pounds, no longer, with the price from Citroen now in excess of £25 a litre!! No way was I or anyone with a grain of sense going to pay that exorbitant amount, so on to the internet, and now have a wee stock of 20 litres of it laid by, original Total canisters but at a mere fraction of the price being asked for by Citroen! Many in our immediate family and friends are C5 owners, so hopefully now covered in case of any problems.

Spoke with Smithy, who as usual, says he is "fine", still housebound, daughter visits him daily, and like Sheila and me, as all of us are over 80, has had his Covid "jab".

Keep safe, and I hope that it is not too long until things return to something like normal!!

Andy Burnett

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.

Southern Scotland



As last time there is almost nothing to report. Monthly Zoom meetings with TOC/CCC/2CVGB keep us up to date and help stave off the Lockdown Blues. So nice to be able to talk about cars without being accused of being boring – at best.

My Google Timeline for January indicated that I had driven a grand total of 44 miles for the entire month – mainly to either Tesco's or Morrisons. In fact, I had spent longer walking (4 hours /8 miles) than driving (3 hours/44miles).



Actually, I don't understand how they know that exactly – I might have been driving the Traction very, very slowly.

At the moment we are still planning to have a socially distanced Drive It Day on April 25th if the lockdown is lifted sufficiently. We will, of course, know nearer the day if it can go ahead. If it does, we will meet up at 10.30 am at the Castle Semple Loch Car Park, Lochwinnoch for a wee tootle around the back roads of North Ayrshire and Inverclyde. Here's hoping; let me know if you want to join us. In the meantime, a colourful shot of DID 2013 to cheer us up.

Peter Fereday

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.

Northern, Lakes and Borders



New member, Alan Fish, has joined us, based over in West Yorks, and is at the time of writing, looking for a suitable car, probably, Alan says, a usable large boot Light 15 or Legere. If you are thinking of selling one, or know of a Traction of any kind for sale, then let me know and I will pass on the details. Welcome Alan.

Alan is also involved with the Tiger Moth Experience, based at Sherburn airfield near Leeds, and he has suggested that we could hold a Traction Owners Club meeting at their base there on one of their flying days over the Summer, if and when Covid conditions permit. Sounds like a cracking idea to me, with a chance also to book a ride in one of these iconic aeroplanes, and to really get some flies in your teeth. Obviously we will be watching the pandemic carefully and will come up with a date as soon as is practical. The image is courtesy of Alan and shows the two Tigers that form the flying part of the experience.



I am also aware of a new vintage transport event which is proposed for September 4th and 5th, at the Villa Hotel, Wrea Green, on the Fylde in Lancashire. They are taking bookings for all forms of pre 1970 transport, so if you fancy taking part, best to get cracking now, since rallies and meetings are likely to be in high demand once restrictions are lifted. It is organised by the local Rotary, with all profits to charity. Entry for exhibitors is free.

Section News

More details at :

<https://www.rotary-ribi.org/districts/page.php?PgID=828927&DistrictNo=>

Other than this, there is not a lot to report. As I write this (in February), my car has hardly turned a wheel in anger yet this year, more because of awful road conditions with salt, slush, snow and ice being the order of the day, than being down to the pandemic restrictions.

Nothing much in the way of imminent events to report. However, we do have Drive it Day on the horizon, and hopefully this is a chance to get out in your car for a run, display the plaque and support the charity nominated by FBHVC (Childline). Even if you end up back where you started (at home) then you will at least have given your car an airing and shown the flag to the world at large. If lockdown limitations permit, I will send out a suggestion for a meeting point, route, etc. nearer the time.

Keep safe.

Bryan Pullan

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.

Peak



When will we be allowed out to play again? I don't know but I remain hopeful it might be in April.

So please keep Sunday April 25th free in your diary for a Peak Drive It Day event. We have plenty of routes we can quickly check out. If gatherings are allowed we may be able to have a picnic if the pubs are still closed. I'll email all those on my list IF we can go ahead. If not our next meeting will be on ????.

Bev Oates

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.

London



London members have finished all their servicing and polishing and with so many of us now jabbed (the Scottish 'jagged' might be more appropriate considering the length of the needle) are poised and ready for



the season. I'm four symptom free weeks past the event and thinking that I might soon be able to make a Traction research visit.

As for our cars, of course Peter's, Martin's and Ian's start first time every time as does Andy's. Andy, who many will know tows a vintage caravan, is fitting a cooling fan ready for the next Brittany rally. Inde's Six restoration is, for the moment taking its place amongst his 20 classical Mercedes. John Cresswell is close to overhauling his Normale's brakes and re-skinning a couple of doors so we hope that shortly it will be back in circulation. And Ian, always innovative and busy, has fitted a cabin heater and demister.

I put off thoughts of a Christmas drive around Central London and left the front wings in the front room to resume my extended 2019/20 winter overhaul.

Best to keep newly painted panels out of garages.

The suspected sticking front brake turned out to be a cylinder with 2 corroded and seized pistons and another not far behind. Six years ago I had the master and front wheel cylinders stainless sleeved so for a while I've had in mind to strip them. It must also be six years since I changed the brake fluid. Everything is now disassembled, cleaned and refurbished with the last fittings to add a servo, due next week. I'm closely following Ian's work, as well as borrowing his pipe tools, so, straightforward apart from a couple of complications special to early Legeres..... when finished I'll turn the car and service the rear and handbrake, should be simple. A full report when the job's done.

Time for displacement activity while I wait for seals and fittings.

A little more on Dragon Rapides: Most were made by De Havilland before the war, they were a unique manufacturer in that they made their own engines, propellers and undercarriages as well as airframes. They were also the last to adopt all metal construction instead of stressed wood and ply, a technology seen at its peak in the Mosquito fighter bomber, one of which is being scratch built to airworthiness (see www.peoplesmosquito.org.uk). As for Rapides, the RAF flew them in the communication role (*Dominies, editor*) while several airlines operated them from grass strips for internal flights. The last scheduled flights were, I think, to the Scillies. Duxford has 2 that fly throughout the Summer, not just on events days. We often see them gently droning over Camberwell as they make circuits of the London sights. It's a wonderful experience, 6 passengers and 'Biggles' up front in the same compartment. A bit like an aerial Traction with sliding windows. We flew out over Cambridge where Biggles made a few low figure of eight passes over the Colleges before fluttering back onto the Duxford grass.

Peter Simper has a late **Familiale for sale**, it's a fast car currently garaged in France. Perfect for touring and returning home with wine supplies, surely an essential journey?

And, I'm looking for an **11D head, with or without valve gear**, ideally before the next winter's overhaul.

Mike Wilcock

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.

Kent/East Sussex

As with many other sections there is very little to report here, except that a strain of the virus has ignominiously been named after our county of Kent!

We hope that with the vaccines getting out there now we might consider Drive it Day as an event to look forward to.

The FHBVC are showing Sunday April 25th as the date, if it is to go ahead I will circulate KES members on our plans.

In the meantime keep your tyres over-inflated up to the max to avoid flat spots and put the battery on a monitor charge.

John Barsley

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.

Surrey/Hants/Sussex

Firstly our condolences to the Family of Colin Gosling, such a lovely, quiet, polite gentleman. His distinctive two tone green Traction always stood out in the crowd. We hope to see it again at events and to welcome his nephew Tom to the Club.

At the time of writing we are again in lockdown and wondering if any of the planned events this year will take place. With a family wedding in May already postponed until next year it seems unlikely. At the moment plans are going ahead for Drive It Day on Sunday 25th April, we will update everyone when we have a clearer picture of what will be allowed nearer the time.

We have had news that a few of our members are due to get their first vaccination in the next few weeks, with a new vaccination centre at Basingstoke Fire Station and firemen doing the injections, things are looking up!!

Philippe is hoping to revive "What's going on in your garage" as the weather improves and members venture out into their workshops, if anyone in our area has any news/pictures please forward them to him for circulation.

All the best to all the members and see you on the other side.

Sue Allison

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.

West of England



I'm afraid I have to start this time with some sad news. Long-time local member and great friend Dante Mansi died suddenly on February 10th. He had been plagued by heart problems for many years. Those of you who know him will know what a jolly and irrepressible character he was. We shall miss him greatly. I will not say more now as John Osborne will be penning a fuller tribute for the next edition. Like most, I have not had a lot of opportunity to take the Traction out for much other than the occasional "essential" shopping trip, so not a lot to report. It occurred to me therefore to seek a comment or two from recently joined members in the area, who must be finding it strange to join a club but not be able to meet anyone. Not a huge response, but I did get this from Marc Allum in Chippenham:

"As no stranger to classic vehicles but new to Traction, the last few months has been a rather prolonged period of staring into the barn at my new acquisition 'Delphine'. I've been tinkering - of course - with a new carburettor fitted and various cosmetic jobs done, plus my usual interior 'dressing' for any old vehicles I own; in this case a beret on the back seat and a glove box full of period French maps and literature salvaged from the attic of my old house in France! Given the circumstances, I feel 'essential trips' sort of exclude classic cars although a couple of jaunts to Sainsbury's have kept her up and going. I look forward to meeting up with some of my fellow TOC members in the not too distant future."

One day you shall, Marc. Perhaps we could all "happen" to meet in Sainsbury's car park!

No Cheers this time.

Terence.Mcauley

For contact details see main table at beginning of this section.



Road pricing?

I was interested in your editorial reference to road pricing. It brought to mind two 'conversations' presented at Brooklands by Steve Copley on the development of EVs. They were held a year apart with the same two experts, one a director from Renault EV, the other from Charge Master (now part of BP), the outfit that installs home and public chargers. They are well worth searching out. The surprise was how fast things had moved in 1 year.

They also addressed the inevitable fall in tax revenue with the move from carbon fuels to electricity, bearing in mind the general use of electricity and the impossibility of isolating vehicle use. Their conclusion was that road pricing was the only way forward and would additionally be fairer. The audience agreed.

Most EVs have sat-nav and the software to locate available charging points; the software to facilitate road pricing is already embedded in some systems and easy to add to all EVs. ANPR and black box are old tech and will not be required. It sort of reminds me of my electronics and control lecturer telling us that "the danger of technology is that it enables us to continue doing that which we should have given up years ago". How very British!

I do believe that there will be a place for historic vehicles, possible because the sector can be defined more tightly so that it's effect and cost is marginal and not worth pursuing in the

grand scheme. Somewhat counter intuitively, it might have a greater chance of flourishing if like veteran, Edwardian, vintage and post vintage it has strict cut off dates rather than rolling qualification. I would close Historic at 1960, that wouldn't prevent the owning and interest in later stuff but it would limit the scope of societal advantage.

To this end I've never used the vague almost meaningless classic label, always referring to Tractions as Historic; that's what's in the log book.

Kind regards

Mike Wilcock

Some controversial thinking here.

Road pricing? A technological and civil liberties nightmare. Given the costs of buying an EV, it will be a long time before these cars are around in sufficient numbers for this 'add on tech' to be viable and there will probably be plenty of smaller IC cars on the road that will not have the technology for several decades to come.

Finally, closing down historic at 1960? Oh dear, this means that all the iconic 60's and 70's cars, eg: E type Jags, early Minis, 2CV's, DS's and DB Aston Martins (just for starters) suddenly cease to become historic cars. Readers, what are your views?

Editor

Farewell to an old Friend

After 28+ years Simone has now gone to a Citroen enthusiast in Cambridgeshire.

I would like to thank all at the Traction Owners Club for their help and advice over the years, in particular Steve Reed, Chris Treagust who does sterling work for Club Spares, and, of course, you for continuing to produce such an excellent magazine, which I have enjoyed for almost 30 years. So it is the end of an era, I am not only a retired architect but also a retired Tractioniste!

Au revoir Simone

After twenty-eight years Simone has departed,
It was in nineteen-ninety-two when our affair started,
Steve Southgate introduced us, purely by chance,
She had just come to England, arriving from France.
At only thirty-five then, her black body shone bright,
With her Parisienne beauty it was "amour at first sight."
So I took Simone home to join our family,
And the rest, as they say, is history.

My father-in-law "Aitch," a Citroen fanatic,
Took one look at Simone and said "She's fantastic!"
She took us to rallies, events far and wide,
She provided the transport for many a bride,
She took us to places we would never have explored,
And when she arrived, she was always adored,
Her beautiful body, her elegant style,
Drew admiring glances, the occasional smile.

Alas, all good things come to an end,
So I say farewell to a trusted friend,
Simone has gone with Joe, a true gentleman,
A Citroen enthusiast with his own H van,
She left our home without any fuss,
I wish Joe as much pleasure as she gave to us,
And as I stand in the garage all on my own,
It's not goodbye Traction, but au revoir Simone.

Barry Plant



Correction

This relates to a typo in the article on P28 of the previous copy of FP, regarding contact details. The letter q was mistaken for a letter g by the OCR programme that is used for hard copy or scanned contributions to avoid the need to re-type longhand, and is one reason why I urge contributors to submit their work in Word.

Hello.

The address in the article is not correct. Is it perhaps possible to modify it?

Perhaps others people would like to contact me.

It is : authentiqtrac@gmx.fr and not
authentigtrac@gmx.fr

Have a Merry Christmas

Nicolas Desgropes

Bona Annada

Hello,

Bona Annada -
Happy New Year.

We all wish you a
Happy and Healthy
2021 ! We brought
cookies for the
people of the elderly
home in Cadouin.

It was cold in our
Traction (2°) but we
had warmth in our
heart.

Best wishes.

Ronald et H el ene
KNOTH



Light 15 Engine Rebuild?

Dear Bryan

My Roadster has had an ID engine fitted ever since restoration in the early 1980's and I think the time has come to improve its originality by reconditioning one of the two Light 15 engines that have been maturing for a few decades in my garage. I have the original workshop manual, but this is dated and full of weird and wonderful tools, with measurements for those fully-fitted mechanics shops that no longer exist, operated by the skilled mechanic "wot I am not". It all seems frankly terrifying for an engine that is allegedly simple and conventional. Moreover, this admittedly magnificent tome obviously doesn't include subsequently modified and upgraded parts, or new techniques that have been developed since the 1950s. Has FP ever featured a step-by-step guide to an engine rebuild for the modern era, including the available modifications? I do have a reasonably well-equipped workshop and, here in Leicestershire, we are fortunate to have having a strong tradition of motor engineering so white-metalling, crank grinding, replacing valve seats and guides etc can all be undertaken locally. Armed with this information, perhaps more members would be encouraged to undertake the job?

On a separate subject, Bryn Hughes' reminiscences of the restoration of his Roadster by Mick Peacock in the early 1980's certainly brought back memories, although I beg to correct him! The car under restoration that was featured in Mick's flyer is in fact mine, DUO 157, purchased from a Mr. Myers of Plymouth in 1978. Work on the car started whilst Mick was still operating from a small wooden shed at the former Hathern Station and finally completed in the early '80's, I believe just prior to Mick embarking upon Bryn's car. I have the negatives of the brochure photos along with others in the set, although the finished car that was featured was an archive picture. I produced these flyers in time for Mick's open day, featuring DUO in almost-completed condition, to promote his new workshop. I also ran Ferroguard Rustproofing in Leicester until the building lease ran out, when I moved on to other things and the equipment was moved to Mick's workshop.

Mick and his father Larry produced the press tools in-house as they progressed with my car, prior to stamping out faithful copies of the various parts and panels needed to reconstruct the entire floorpan and monocoque, which were then welded together. On Mick's subsequent restorations, he was able

to increase the size of individual pressings following the installation of a larger press. Their combined skill was astonishing, many will remember that Mick ultimately went on to produce complete Roadster bodyshells including, as I recall, a Big Fifteen and of course the well-known Big 6 that was until recently owned by Steve Southgate. The floorpan measurements for Steve's car came from the totally original, low-mileage 15CV that I imported from France in 1981, following a chance sighting of its rather battered snout in the workshop of the local Renault garage. This 1948 car had been kept in the garage since 1952 following the premature death of its owner, who was apparently the mayor of Soulac-Sur-Mer, and it had been disturbed from its slumbers just the day before, following the death of his wife. Happy days!

My sincere thanks to you and the Committee for maintaining such a high quality magazine, keeping us informed and entertained during such a difficult 2020.

Steve Kemp

Thanks for the compliments. The magazine, like all such publications, lives or dies by the quality of its contributors, and tribute is due to all of the people who write for FP, be it on a regular basis, or as a 'one off' effort.

There are various features on aspects of engine rebuilding in the article archive, although nobody has, to my knowledge, produced a Haynes manual type step by step guide. As far as I am aware, the most complete recent feature was in two episodes in the March/April and May/June 2008 copies of Floating Power. This was more recently reproduced in FP during 2018 (May/June, July/August and September/October editions) of which copies can be found on the club website (if you do not have the magazines yourself).

Most of the special tools listed in the manual are no longer available as Citro en components as such, but members who undertake this kind of work do seem to manage to work around them with the help of a reasonably comprehensive set of generic tools.

Editor



1952 British Car Prices

Further to the item in the Jan/Feb edition of FP, Bob Cross reviews where in the marketplace Citroen stood in 1952, as regards new cars.

In the last issue of "Floating Power" David de Saxe raised the interesting question of British Car Prices in 1952 and how these prices compare with Slough-built Tractions. I have the book "British Motor Cars" edited by John F.Speed, published by G.T. Foulis & Co. Ltd, dated October 1952. This book lists all contemporary British Car Manufacturers (all thirty-seven of them !!!) and all current models produced. Each model has mostly, a full-page description, photograph, specification panel and retail price. Citroen and Renault are included because of their British factories. Using the information from the book, I have compiled a list - Manufacturer - Model - Price (including Purchase Tax), of cars in price competition with Tractions i.e., in the £900-£1,600 price bracket. I've added a few exotics like the Ford Anglia, Bristol 401 and the Bentley Mark VI to give a wider perspective. The prices are for Standard Bodies, without sunroofs and in the Bentley's case, without Specialist coachwork.

Bob Cross



Model:
**LIGHT FIFTEEN SALOON
SIX CYLINDER SALOON**

Maker:
**CITROEN CARS LTD.
Trading Estate, Slough,
Bucks.**

ALTHOUGH IT IS a Continental car in origin, the Citroen has become a common sight in this country since the maker established a British company as long ago as 1922. Here, Citroens have been assembled, with certain modifications to suit the British market ever since.

In 1934, Citroen introduced a model that was unique, in that not only was it of integral construction, but the drive was to the front wheels and the suspension was by means of torsion bars both at the front and rear. Basically, this design has remained unchanged to the present day but a policy of steady detail development has effected major improvements in many directions.

Both the "Light Fifteen" and the "Six Cylinder" have many features in common and these include overhead-valve engines with detachable wet liners, integral all-steel construction of



Engine		Dimensions	
Cylinders	4	Wheelbase	9 ft. 6 1/2 ins.
Capacity	1,911 cc.	Track (front)	4 ft. 6 ins.
Bore	78 mm.	Track (rear)	4 ft. 5 1/2 ins.
Stroke	100 mm.	Overall Length	14 ft. 7 ins.
Valves	Overhead	Overall Width	5 ft. 5 1/2 ins.
Compression Ratio	6.5:1	Overall Height	5 ft. 0 ins.
Max. B.H.P.	55.7 at 4,250 r.p.m.	Tyre Size	165-400
R.A.C. Rating	15.08 h.p.	Weight Dry	2,380 lb.
Transmission		Performance	
Clutch	Single Plate	Approx. Max. Speed	75 m.p.h.
Gearbox	Three speeds (w/d.	Approx. Petrol Consumption	25-30 m.p.g.
Control	On facia board	Fuel Tank Capacity	11 galls.
Overall Ratios:		Prices	
Top	4.3	Model: Saloon, fixed roof	Total £1,067 1s. 2d.
Second	7.3	Basic £685 plus P.T.	
First	13.1	Model: Saloon, sunshine roof	Total £1,082 12s. 3d.
Rear Axle	Spiral Bevel	Basic £695 plus P.T.	
Suspension		Brakes	
Front and Rear	Torsion Bars	Lockheed Hydraulic	

80

A.C. Cars Ltd	Two-door Saloon	£1,600
Armstrong Siddeley	Whitley Saloon	£1,557 1s 1d
	Hurricane Coupe	£1,557 1s 1d
Austin Motor Co	A70 Hereford	£976 16s 8d
	A90 Atlantic	£1,431 1s 1d
Bentley Motors Ltd	Mark VI 4.5-litre Saloon	£4,823 14s 5d
Bristol Aeroplane Car Division	401 Saloon	£3,112 12s 3d
Citroen Cars Ltd	Light Fifteen Saloon	£1,067 1s 2d
	Big Six Saloon	£1,521 8s 11d
Ford Motor Co.	Anglia standard Saloon	£489 3s 4d
	Consul standard Saloon	£732 12s 3d
	Zephyr Six Standard Saloon	£829 1s 1d
Humber Ltd	Humber Hawk Saloon	£1,129 5s 7d
	Hawk Touring limousine	£1,261 10s 0d

Engine Cylinders ... 4 Capacity ... 1311 cc. Bore ... 3.00 in. Stroke ... 3.00 in. Valve ... Overhead, Push Rod Compression Ratio ... 8.5:1 Max. B.H.P. ... 47 at 4,800 r.p.m. S.A.C. Rating ... 15.65 h.p.	Brakes Clutch Hydraulic ... Two-leading Shoe Front Transmission ... Gearbox ... 4 S. 4 in. Track ... (front) 43.0 in. Overall Length ... 117.0 in. Overall Width ... 53.0 in. Overall Height ... 56.0 in. Tire Size ... 5.50-13 Weight Dev ... 2,302 lb.	 CONSUL
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Transmission Clutch ... Single Plate Gearbox ... Four speeds, On Steering Column Overall Ratio ... Top ... 4.75 Second ... 7.48 Third ... 12.08 Fourth ... 17.58 Rear Axle ... Hypoid Bevel	Performance Top Speed ... 70 m.p.h. Approx. Fuel Consumption ... 38.50 m.p.g. Fuel Tank Capacity ... 9 galls.	Wheels Model: Standard Saloon Basic 1470 plus P.T. Total £715 15s. 3d.
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The Austin A90

Shortly after its introduction, the A90 invaded the U.S.A. in 1949 and set about establishing American Stock Car records at the Indianapolis Speedway. When the run ended, the A90 had averaged 70.54 m.p.h. for seven days and nights, including all stops for replenishments, repairs, changes of driver, etc. The distance covered was 11,850 miles and the petrol consumption was 17 m.p.g.

The records were taken in a standard A90 with "convertible" coachwork and this particular model was subsequently superseded by the "Atlantic" sports saloon which, despite its "hard top" is notable for the large amount of window area with consequent good all-round visibility. The chassis design is on similar general lines to the A70, but differences include the power unit which is a four-cylinder of 2.6 litres capacity with twin carburettor induction system; the power output is 88 b.h.p. at 3,800 r.p.m. Girdling brakes, hydraulically operated on the front wheels with mechanical operation for the rear wheels are fitted to the A90 and all lever bearings of the mechanical linkage are sealed against the ingress of dirt or moisture.

The four-five seater body has two doors, and leather upholstery, a full complement of instruments and good luggage space in the rear locker.



Engine Cylinders ... 4 Capacity ... 2,600 cc. Bore ... 87.5 mm. Stroke ... 111.0 mm. Valve ... Overhead, Push Rod Compression Ratio ... 8.0 at 3,800 r.p.m. Max. B.H.P. ... 88 at 3,800 r.p.m.	Brakes Clutch Hydraulic ... Front: Two-leading Shoe Rear: Semi-elastic cone Dimensions Wheelbase ... 81.0 in. Track ... (front) 43.0 in. Overall Length ... 117.0 in. Overall Width ... 53.0 in. Overall Height ... 56.0 in. Tire Size ... 5.50-13 Weight Dev ... 2,300 lb. less fuel Fuel Tank Capacity ... 12 galls. Petrol Model: A90 Atlantic Basic £1,041 plus P.T. Total £1,041 15s. 3d.
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Jaguar Cars Ltd	Mark VII Saloon	£1,774 16s 8d
	XK120 Sports two-seater	£1,759 5s 7d
Jowett Cars Ltd	Javelin Saloon	£1,082 12s 3d
Lanchester Motor Co	Fourteen Saloon	£1,533 14s 5d
Lea-Francis Cars	14 h.p. Saloon	£1,759 5s 6d
M.G. Car Co.	1.25-litre Saloon Series YB	£989 5s 6d
Morris Motors Ltd	"Six" Series MS	£997 1s 1d
Riley Motors Ltd	1.5 litre Saloon RM Series	£1,339 5s 6d
	2.5 litre Saloon RM Series	£1,642 12s 2d
Rover Co Ltd	"75" Saloon	£1,487 1s 2d
Singer Motors Ltd	1500 Saloon	£1,129 5s 6d
Standard Motor Co Ltd	Vanguard Saloon	£1,020 7s 9d
Sunbeam Talbot Ltd	"90" Saloon	£1,347 1s 1d
Triumph Motor Co Ltd	Renown Saloon	£1,440 7s 9d
Vauxhall Motors Ltd	Velox Saloon	£833 14s 5d
Wolseley Motors	Four-Fifty saloon	£1,028 3s 4d
	Six-Eighty Saloon	£1,121 10s 0d



What else do I have in my garage?

Hello Bryan,

Just to show you what can happen when your hobby gets out of hand!

Photographed in lockdown we have -----

Two Tractions- the Roadster (which I've now owned for 50 years), and the unique 1935 Slough Big 15.

Slough-built B12 (1926) and Rosalie Ten (1933)

C3 Cabriolet (1924) and B2 Tourer (1923)-as seen at Coombe Park year before last.

ID19 Decap. with Slough 2CV above it and a "modern" 2CV6 in front of it.

In the lockup garage, my lockdown project - a 1960 2CV Bijou!

All, apart from the Bijou, are in running order and looking forward to taking part in tours and shows once "normality" returns!

Best wishes **Walford Bruen**



What else do I have in my garage?



Off His Rocker??

Joseph Dobson was slightly confused by the fixings on his rocker cover



I have recently taken ownership of a lovely 1957 Normale and as part of getting to know the car I decided to check the tappets as they were, as I thought, a little noisy. Upon dismantling the air cleaner I became aware that this operation may not be as simple as expected because on first inspection it appeared that the long stud and nut holding the rocker box cover on had been welded to the cover. When was the last time the tappets were adjusted I thought?

The first picture is of the engine bay before I started to tidy it up showing the rocker box cover. The second picture shows the "welded" stud, nut and cover. I contemplated cutting off the protruding stud and grinding away the nut whilst trying to avoid too much damage to the cover. I spoke to Chris at "Spares" and ordered among other things a replacement stud and new nuts. So, armed with my grinder and hacksaw I started by cutting off the stud which was the easy part. After doing this a close inspection revealed that the nut was free. So, out with the spanners and give it a good wrench to detach it from the "weld".

Here comes the bit where holes need to appear to drop one's self into. What I had identified as "welding" was no more than larger round blobs of grease that had accumulated under the air cleaner.

Needless to say I told myself how stupid I had been and carefully removed the rocker cover to start adjusting the tappets. I suppose there is a moral to this story somewhere.

D'oh!!



Trials & Tribulations of the first Tractions

We all know that the initial design and launch of the Citroën Traction was not exactly smooth, but did you know just how difficult things were?

This article, first published in *Floating Power* no 1, in January 1976, sets out the trials and tribulations of launching the Traction in the 1930's. Unfortunately the archived magazine doesn't give the name of either the author or his sources, but it makes for an entertaining and interesting read.



We all know that the initial design and launch of the Citroën traction, was not exactly smooth, but did you know just how difficult things were?

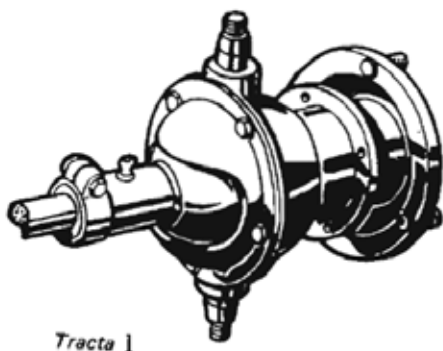
The main problems experienced from the very beginning of the development of the Traction Avant model, centred mainly around the gearbox and drive-shafts: the former due largely to Andre Citroën's insistence on the use of the all-automatic Senseau de Lavaud gearbox, and the latter complicated by bitterness and in-fighting at the works. Some of the older employees were bitterly opposed to the project of a new front-wheel-drive car, and resented the arrival of such men as Andre Lefevre who had previously worked for both Voisin and Renault, and who had long been an exponent of f.w.d., to a position of second-in-command in the design office. It was Lefevre who introduced Gregoire to Citroën, when he decided to use the Tracta universal joints on the prototypes being tested at the Montlhery track, running the cars night and day.

This intensive testing showed up a worrying weakness in the design of the U.Js, which frequently overheated and melted the lubricant, whereupon the centres seized solid on to the supporting jaws.

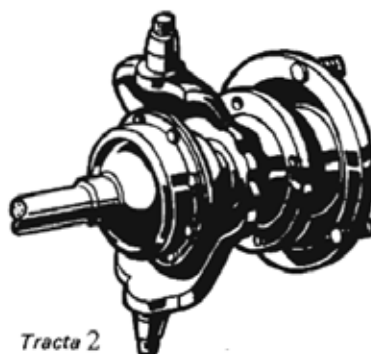
The U.Js had an average life of under 600 kilometres. Gregoire had designed two types of joint - the older 'stationary' one was

used with every success on Lucien Rosengart's 'Supertraction', but unfortunately that installed in Citroën's Traction prototypes was a 'rotating' type, so-called because the housing turned with the shaft. The whole affair seems to have been riddled with intrigue; Bendix, the manufacturers of the joint, after a rather half-hearted attempt to improve the sealing, renounced the design altogether - knowing of the prejudice at Citroën against it, according to Gregoire, they preferred to cede the point rather than lose the order for equipping the prototypes with Bendix brakes. Gregoire, meanwhile, got an inspector to check the manufacture of the U.Js, and this brought to light the fact that not one was correct to the drawings: tolerances were badly out, and assembly was frequently faulty. He stormed into the office of Maurice Norroy, 'quality director', and threw the faulty parts on his desk, accusing him of sabotaging the production of the Tracta joints.

Meanwhile the troubles of the '7' continued. Lefevre had decided on the use of the American Rzeppa sealed joint, and this, although sturdier than its predecessor, made a highly alarming noise when cornering, 'like somebody cracking walnuts'. The design office approached an old supplier of Citroën's, Glaenzer, to design a hook-type joint with needle rollers, and this, in spite of trouble with the central spiders seizing up, was eventually adopted on all Traction Avant models.



Tracta 1



Tracta 2



Glaenzer.

Trials & Tribulations of the first Traction

Problems 'up front' continued, however. That stalwart Francois Lecot on his marathon Paris-Monte-Carlo run, which no doubt showed up a fair amount of faults on the model, found even his equanimity somewhat ruffled when with monotonous regularity at intervals of 15,000 - 18,000 miles, one of his front wheels was to be seen bouncing happily along the road in front of him.

Eventually his engineer, Brisset went to Gregoire to ask his advice, and they discovered that the cause of the trouble was the stub-axle, which was placed under too great a strain in spite of the extremely tough steel from which it was made, being both a driving and load bearing member.

Gregoire modified the hubs to make them 'semi-floating', replacing the exterior ball-races on the stub-axles by needle rollers. This was done in the greatest secrecy, as Lecot's car was supposed to be strictly standard.

In spite of support from Maurice Norroy, the modification was not accepted at the Quai de Javel, principally because it had been submitted by an outsider, that outsider being Gregoire, against whom there seems to have been an unfortunate amount of prejudice in the upper echelons.

As to the question of the gearbox, this was a bone of contention from the earliest days of the new model, and contributed in some degree to Andre Citroën's financial ruin. Citroën had fallen in love with the all-automatic Senseau de Lavaud gearbox since seeing it at the 1927 Motor Show, and insisted on its being adapted for the '7', in spite of the assurances of his engineers that a great deal of development work remained to be done on the gearbox, and that it was highly unlikely that it would ever be suitable for mass-production methods. Citroën had a de Lavaud gearbox fitted to his personal C6, which performed very satisfactorily, owing largely to the improbable fact that Citroën hated driving, and only took the occasional gentle promenade around the Bois de Boulogne!

In an effort to assert his point of view, Andre Citroën invited M. Senseau de Lavaud whose wealth derived from Franco-Russian coffee-planting parents and whose inventions were so prolific that he filed a new one with the Patents Office almost every week, and Paul d'Aubarede, the father of the Floating Power engine, on a trial run to Deauville in a C6 fitted with the de Lavaud gearbox.

The road was flat, and the test passed off without a hitch. Lefevre was accordingly instructed to fit the first five Traction prototypes with the gearbox, and early in 1934 this convoy set out to storm the hill at Meudon, to the west of Paris.

A rapidly diminishing convoy! The first casualty occurred only a short distance from the works when the clutch seized on one of the cars; two more fell by the wayside at the first steep hill, the fourth quickly following - the final Traction, merry gurgling sounds coming from the boiling oil in its gearbox, turned tail, and fled back to the Quai de Javel, managing to coast downhill for most of the way. Lefevre is reputed to have commented that de Lavaud had invented a lousy gearbox, but an excellent chip fryer!

Andre Citroën was immediately contacted at his home, and a meeting arranged in his office for that afternoon. After listening to the report of the test-drives, he turned to Broglie and Lefevre and asked how long it would take them to design and adapt a conventional gearbox. 'Two months,' Broglie said, after some thought. 'You have a fortnight,' Citroën replied. And they did it, using original casing, and introducing the novel system of linkages (Lefevre's 'Eiffel Tower') and the gearlever protruding from the dashboard, known affectionately at the works as the 'mustard spoon'.

Unknown to Citroën there had in fact been some covert work going on to prepare for just such an emergency as this, but in spite of that it is scarcely surprising that the hastily cobbled together gearbox has always been the car's weakest point. The surprising thing is that Citroën never saw fit to replace it with one of a stronger and more sophisticated design.

Citroën's financial situation was worsening day by day, and it was an increasingly desperate race between the disgrace of bankruptcy and the salvation that the new model was to bring. In the design office the men were working ten hours a day, seven days a week, and eventually Prud'homme, the chief of the test workshop, protested gently to Citroën, that they could not go on, they really must have a break of at least a couple of days. 'My dear Prud'homme,' came the reply, 'it's no longer a question of days, but of hours

'In that case, m'sieu, we shall all be here on Sunday as usual!'

Citroën's financial situation was worsening day by day, and it was an increasingly desperate race against the disgrace of bankruptcy

There seems to be a certain amount of confusion about the actual date on which the Traction Avant was first presented to the concessionaires.

In 'La Traction' Jacques Borge and Nicholas Viasnoff quote March 24th, 1934 as the pertinent date, whereas, Sylvain Reiner, in his biography of Andre Citroën, says that the presentation took place on March 21st. In the magazine 'l'Automobiliste', no. 38, Christian Tavard quotes the date as being a month later - April 18th - and backs up this claim by arguing that the factory-printed brochure, marked 'Confidential, strictly for Citroën agents and concessionaires only', and entitled "The Car the World was waiting for ..." gave the date of the Citroën Conventions as April 18th.

All, however, seem to agree more or less on the details of the meeting. The concessionaires evidently arrived at the Quai de Javel in an uneasy mood, having already been touched for a sizeable amount of money to help the ailing concern, and expecting to be asked for more. Much to the general surprise, however, Andre Citroën, when he appeared, had an air of great gaiety and good humour.

He first showed the film of Citroën's Central Asian Expedition, and then made the dramatic announcement of the advent of the new model. . . . 'I have to tell you that I am launching a counter-attack against my enemies, and you will soon be able to judge for yourselves the efficacy of the weapon. . . . It is, in a word, a

Trials & Tribulations of the first Tractions



totally new and revolutionary car . . . ' Uproar broke out amongst the assembled company many of whose morale had been at an extremely low ebb: they all tumbled into the waiting C6s, Citroën chauffeurs in their livery of beige and brown at the wheels, and were driven post-haste to the little workshop in the Rue Cauchy where the first '7' awaited them. The impression made by the car was all that Le Patron could have wished, the concessionaires were quite amazed by its low height, lack of running-boards, and general styling. There were a few dubious murmurs about ease of entry, the car was so low . . . Andre Citroën clapped his hands and called for 'Monsieur Chopski!'

The Polish Count Chopski, who worked in the Export Department, was a giant of almost seven foot, and yet the delighted audience saw him open the car door and install himself in the driver's seat with the greatest of ease. One or two doubtful murmurs were still heard - 'The French were much too conservative to buy such a car . . . 'F.W.D had never been reliable . . . ' but for the most part, Citroën had won the day, and the concessionaires, duly feasted, returned to their home towns excited and optimistic. Company shares rose by 10% the following day.

The heroine of the hour, the new '7' was in reality a very hastily assembled prototype, and Citroën had carefully avoided starting her up or offering any test drives. But within a month the model was ready to present to the press, and 350 cars left the works, each driven by a Citroën agent, taking home his first Traction Avant. (Again there is a month's disparity in dates: April according to the authors of 'La Traction', and May, if one believes l'Automobiliste'). The press was for the most part ecstatic, and the production lines started moving in earnest . . . reaching 300 a day by mid-May. Citroën agents were issued with words of advice - 'A test-drive well-managed, and you are almost sure of a sale', together with a curious document which was never on public view, but intended only for the eyes of the agent's 'most influential clients'. It contained a photograph of the results of a dramatic tumble from a cliff of three cars: a Renault, a Mathis, and a Citroën Traction Avant. The Citroën reaches the bottom miraculously the right way up, minus its bonnet but otherwise undented. The Renault and Mathis are reduced to a pile of twisted and unrecognisable metal. Rumour unfortunately has it that whilst the Traction was reinforced for the test, and the two other cars were semi- dismantled before being pushed over the edge of the cliff. The first Traction Avant was sold on May 3, and the first complaints rolled in soon afterwards, one imagines.

For these early Tractions were fragile, prematurely born, and subject to frequent 'pepins'. The gear linkages jammed, the doors flew open at speed, the halfshafts knocked . . . many a Citroën

The heroine of the hour, the new '7' was in reality a very hastily assembled prototype

agent experienced the ironic truth of the advice, - A test-drive well-managed and you are almost sure of a sale'. The concessionaire, for instance, who was showing off the paces of the new model to an extremely important client, braked to avoid a tractor drawing out in front of him, found that he had no brakes, swerved violently, flew gracefully over a ditch, and landed in a field. The half-stunned concessionaire heard his passenger exclaim: 'What road-holding! What a manoeuvre! And here we are - safe and sound' and produced his cheque-book on the spot .

Or Prud'homme, who came upon an unhappy motorist stuck on a Parisian cross-roads, and who explained that the gearlever was jammed, and he was unable to find neither 1st nor 2nd gears. Prud'homme opened the bonnet, and in a second had expertly disentangled his 'Eiffel Tower' linkages. 'But there's nothing wrong at all!' he said. 'You have a fine car, take care of it!' and sent the puzzled motorist on his way . . .

Or the Concours d'Elegance at the Bois de Boulogne in June presided over by Andre Citroën , at which five cabriolets were entered by the Baronne de Rothschild and her friends. The cars had a journey of 5 kilometres to make, and everything went extremely well until it came to their turn to pass in front of the jury. They were totally immobilised, all the brakes having seized on. Citroën, seeing that something was wrong, gestured discreetly to Prud'homme, who whispered in his ear that the brakes

were overheated, and that they needed time to cool down. Citroën accordingly strolled over to the jury and entertained them with all the wit and charm at his disposal. After a quarter of an hour, the cars moved off one by one, nobody having noticed the extraordinary delay.

And later the '11' and '15' overcame the rumours and adverse publicity that followed such incidents to become the most beloved car of the French - public - 'la Reine des Voitures'.





Bailey's Banter

Time moves on. We're now another year closer to whatever is next. One thing that we know is coming is the obsolescence of the internal combustion engine, not only in Europe at least but also in China. With it will go gearboxes, clutches, starter motors, catalytic converters, spark plugs, fuel injectors, fuel tanks and pumps. The makers of such things are finding other things to do and putting very little into development of their current products. One can therefore assume that the internal combustion engine is now close to being as good as it is ever going to be. Further developments will be mainly restricted to cost reductions rather than performance improvements.

This is just the natural order of things. There's already quite a list of components that are consigned to history. Mechanical dashboard instruments gave way to electronics decades ago and carburettors are now only used on lawn mowers. Oddly, one of the crudest of all devices, the windscreen wiper, remains largely unchanged since the beginning of time – or since it was invented in 1902 by non-driver, Mary Anderson. Far from disappearing, wipers just get longer and longer.

Something that has disappeared is the starting handle, which has been largely redundant since the invention of the starter motor. I never saw my father use one, I'm not even sure he had a car with one in my lifetime. Most manufacturers got rid of them in the sixties, but Citroen carried on supplying them for a while longer. My first Citroen (a 1979 GS) had one as did my 2CV in 1986. And so does my 1972 DS - or it should, but I lost it. The idea of bump starting a hydraulic Citroen without brakes is something I find very scary.

The only car I have ever started with a handle is my Traction Avant, which I would never bump start. There were periods when I had a poorly battery that would not hold a charge – I used my starting handle quite a lot and learnt that they can wear out.

As some of you know, the ICCCR in 2002 was held in Amherst, MA, USA. Some of you were probably there. It was my first ICCCR. We lived in California at the time and somehow it would have seemed rude not to go as it was "local". Actually, Amherst is almost midway between the UK and California but, as the flight was



Something that has disappeared is the starting handle, which has been largely redundant since the invention of the starter motor.

internal it seemed local. So, on the spur of the moment, I put a toothbrush in my pocket and hopped on a plane.

It's nice to come back from a trip with a souvenir and mine was a starting handle for my Normale. We had left the car in the UK two years previously, but I remembered the handle was knackered and expected to need it when it came time to wake it up.

This was in August 2002, nearly a year after 9/11. It turns out that, as well as being useful in starting a recalcitrant car, a starting handle has the potential to bring a plane down, so I had to check it in for my return flight. I didn't have a bag, so they just had to stick a baggage label on the handle itself and off it went. It looked a bit odd on the carousel amongst all the suitcases.

It would be another couple of years before I took the thing back to the UK and yet another two before I actually started to use the car again. When I did, I made a discovery of the bleeding obvious: not all starting handles are the same - and mine didn't fit my car.

There are four types listed in the TOC spares list - straight bumper, curly bumper, Slough and 6 Cylinder. The support stem on the one I bought was too long. My



car has curly bumpers and should need a longer stem than the later straight bumper types. Maybe I had bought one for a 6 cylinder car? Or some completely different model? After a few minutes with the angle grinder it fitted and worked fine. For a while. The last time I used it the handle broke and I threw it away, converted the car to 12 volts and have never needed it since.

Because there is a starting handle, there is a hole for it in the grille. The Legere has a nice round hole and, indeed so did the original Normale. In 1937 a pressed steel grille was introduced and the Normale's hole become elongated, but the Legere's remained round. Does anyone know why that was? Could it have been in anticipation of the 6-cylinder cars, allowing the same grille to be used on both the Normale and the 15-6 which are both wide body cars? If so, that would have been a relatively short-lived rationalization as the starting handle position was raised on the 15-6 when the engine rotation changed in 1947. This resulted in the slot in the 15-6 grille becoming more elongated, requiring not one but two covers. My Amherst purchase may have been for one of these cars.

Those two 15/6 badges are hard to come by – the photo

shows one missing - and when **Jonathan Palmer** could not get them for his own car he took the bull by the horns and had a batch made. Now he's doing it again. and if you email him your requirements he will then send you details with a total price and payment conditions. Please contact him on newlandmusic@outlook.com or ring him on 01275 855213/07751 690993 (Jonathan wrote an article on the badges and their production in the January/February 2020 edition of *Floating Power*, please refer back to this if you need more details, Editor)

If you own a 6 cylinder car that is missing either part of the grille badge then contact Jonathan Palmer. They look great - it's almost worth getting a 15/6 to justify purchasing a set. And if that's what you decide to do, read on.



Another thing which will be consigned to history is the gearbox and, with it, the gearbox oil and therefore the oil seal. Not a bad thing as oil seals are nothing but trouble.

Back in the summer **Philip Vesey Holt** was working



on his gearbox and clutch and found his gearbox seals were dripping more oil than he would like - when he got it sorted out he was good enough to send me the following words and pictures.

"Since refitting the gearbox following a clutch replacement on my 1955 Traction 11BL, I frustratingly found that the box was leaking oil. Steve Read advised that the most likely cause were the seals around the drive shafts. On close inspection I could see a dribble of oil under where the drive shafts enter the gear box. The seals are in the form of metal discs about 60mm diameter with a felt core. Steve advised it was possible to change these in situ by removing the drive shaft and releasing the lower suspension joint. But as my car is the narrow 11BL I decided to take the gearbox off again. With the gearbox on the garage floor it is easy to remove the two drive shaft couplings which unbolt and pull out of the differential housing. The original seals are double sided metal discs with a felt core which need to be carefully prized out and then the gearbox casing cleaned.

However, I noticed the shaft couplings had deep grooves where the seals had worn the metal over the years. Chris Bailey recommended fitting SKF (ref 99146) sleeves, which tightly slide over the shaft to cover the worn area and give a perfect fit with the new seals. They come with a drift ring allowing them to be hammered into place without being damaged. Chris Treagust at the TOC spares shop sells a modern seal in plastic which is gently tapped into place with a smear of sealant on the edge. Before refitting the 'box I filled it with oil and left it for a few days to test the seals and all seems OK. It would be a good idea to change these seals at the same time as a clutch renewal as they are simple to do with the box removed."

And finally, that most obsolete of things - the chrome bumper. Designed to protect the expensive paintwork with something cheap, tough and yet attractive, the chrome bumper has now been replaced by something expensive, fragile and non-descript. Why? Partly because a chrome bumper was never terribly effective as a protection device and something of a restriction to the car designers. Mainly because the act of chrome plating is an environmental and health nightmare and is now very tightly regulated.

Chrome is an odd material to choose to protect steel from rusting because it sits in the wrong place in the Galvanic series. Whilst it is very nice and shiny, if a scratch is deep enough to expose steel it will rust. The corrosion will spread underneath the chrome which will eventually peel off in strips.

Getting parts rechromed is now expensive and somewhat risky too as the skills to do it properly are getting scarce too. Whereas once someone could learn the craft by making mistakes and throwing them in the scrap bin until getting it right, each part a chromer works on might be the last one left in existence - or at least the only one available.

And so I received this request for help from Australia:

Greetings from down under fellow Traction owners.

My name is David Belfrage & I am a member of Citroen Classic Owners Club of Australia, living in Brisbane.

I have recently purchased a Slough built Big 6 that needs new front & rear bumper bars.

Despite searching high & low in Australia I can't find any that are even good enough to repair / rechrome.

Should any UK club members have new spares or any that are in very good condition and want to sell them could I ask that you contact me please.

I have 4 over riders that are ok to reuse.

Thanks.

David Belfrage.

If you can help, please let me know and I'll pass on your message.

CCC members may have already read most of the above in the February Citroenian – apologies for that. They may also have noticed **Andy Barnett's** photo of an elderly Traction on the last page of that item apparently devoid of chevrons that demanded investigation.

I am grateful to **Walford Bruen** (who knows almost everything) for the following which has saved me from hours of fruitless study:

"In the "My Double Chevrons" page at the end of the latest Citroenian, a Mr Barnett seeks info on an apparently chevronless Traction. This is actually quite an interesting car so I wonder if I might reply to the gentleman through your column!

This particular species of Traction is all but extinct. The car in the photo is a London registered, Slough-built 7A model of 1934, in other words, one of the first cars to be produced at the English factory. It would have had the gutless 1303cc (72x80) power unit. Other features would have included friction shock-absorbers, worm & sector steering box, a boot only accessible from inside the car and twin scuttle ventilators. The front bumper, visible in the photo, is slightly vee-shaped and has a motif in the centre similar to the one on the top of the radiator grill. The early grills, incidentally, had thin alloy chevrons crimped behind the bars where they were difficult to clean and prone to corrosion making them virtually invisible after a while as in this case.



As far as I'm aware, there are only 2 or 3 surviving "Super Modern Twelves"--- one was restored a few years ago for the Swiss enthusiast, Hans Durr Auster but has since been sold on. (TOC members: see Floating Power March/April 2019)

Whilst the car in Mr Barnett's photo probably did have chevrons, Slough models for 1939 did not have them-- they had a small double-chevron badge instead."

So the chevronless car featured in "My Double Chevrons" probably did have chevrons but there was indeed a time in 1939 when the Slough cars were chevronless. I asked Walford what these look like and he pointed me to the 1939 Autocar and Motor road tests of the Light Fifteen in the Brooklands Books "Citroen Traction Avant 1934-1957".

Jamie Maisey is the owner of the Maigret car. All Tractions are Maigret



cars but John's is the Maigret car. It's the car that actor Rupert Davies bought from the production company after the last series was filmed. Sadly, time has not been kind to this car and it is a little down at heel. I asked Jamie for some information (I'll tell you why later) and this is his story:

"My first ever car was a 1952 LHD 15/6 Cyl, which I bought in 1988 having wanted a Traction since childhood.

It saw a lot of use in my ownership, through being a daily use car through the early 90's, then rallying (Monte Carlo and Rally of the Tests) in early 00's and family holiday car through the late 00's.

I ran a big end on the way home from summer holiday the Pyrenees in 2009 whilst my wife was 8 months pregnant with child 2. Unsurprisingly the car went on the back burner for a while and I sold it in 2014 (I think), replacing it with a Peugeot 504 Cabriolet (current favourite classic).

Meanwhile I bought a couple of DS's which superseded the 15/6 as daily user through the late 90's to mid 00's. A silver DS20 Pallas which was very comfortable, but which I replaced with a black DS21 EFI semi auto.



I still have the latter which is nearing the end of a long stint of restoration.

I also bought, but fairly quickly sold, a couple of Normales prior to getting into the DS's.

I then ran a few Xantias for a number of years, but replaced these with a C6 3.0HDI and a C5 3.0HDI Tourer which are currently the daily use cars for my wife and I.

The Maigret car came about as follows:

I lived just off Portobello Road in the 90's and was lying underneath the 15/6 in the street, fixing something, when I heard the 'I've got one of these'.

I got up and met Hoagy Davies who, it transpired, lived just around the corner.

He and his brother Tim had inherited their father's car on his mother's death and had it stored in a barn in Somerset.

I knew all about the car having read about it's being stolen and recovered in the early 80's. I later found out a lot more from Ray Andrews who was the man who found it in Northumberland and managed to get it back to the Davies family. NB Ray has an English 6H. (Recently sold – Chris)

Anyway after chatting, I gave Hoagy my number and said he could call me if he wanted any help with the car.

Fast forward 7-8 years to 2005 and I got a call out of the blue from Tim Davies saying they needed to move the car from the barn it had been housed in and did I want to buy it.

The answer was, of course, yes so I picked it up along with my friend Andrew Galt (who incidentally owns a pre-war commerciale).

We shipped it back to Andrew's workshop and dismantled it.

Time passed!

I had the engine rebuilt by Roger Williams at the same time as he rebuilt the engine for the other 15/6 (I think in 2012). Ditto the gearbox. I've bought parts for it. A Connaught Conversion SU carb system, clutch and drive shafts etc from Roger Williams, Stainless exhaust from Gough's, Some useful body panels.

But as I have said, time passed.

Meanwhile I've had a family etc, work has been extremely busy, so the car remains in my storage unit, dismantled as described.

As to my plans for it. I'm in the process of moving house so right now it's going back on the probably sell list. (I'll need a new kitchen)

I'm in 2 (or 3) minds as to how to approach this. Either sell as a pile of bits, put it back together as is, get it running and sell as a rolling restoration or fully restore and sell afterwards.

I'm not sure which yet.

I attach a couple of photos. The one on day of collection from Somerset shows from left to right, Car, Hoagy, me, Tim, Andrew.

All the best

Jamie"

If you have a 15/6 grille badge (or even a starting handle) and need a car to fit it to, or if you feel your life would be incomplete without the actual Maigret car filling your garage, let me know and I'll put you in touch with Jamie.

Why did I contact Jamie? Andrew Roberts made me do it. But who is he? An author, historian and journalist that's who. Amongst other things he writes about cars that are rare in the UK. One of the rarest is the Traction Avant Commerciale and he contacted the TOC for information and contact with

owners which I was pleased to provide. He also asked me what had happened to Rupert Davies' car and, to my shame I did not know. The internet is a wonderful thing, unless you value your privacy, and so I was able to track it down.

I wrote about the Commerciale in the Citroenian back in 2015. I claimed it was the world's first production hatchback, a claim for which I had no evidence whatsoever. **Mike Ormerod** then told me



that the Citroen AC4

Commerciale had a stronger claim to that title. And who am I to argue as he had one. I remember him telling me he didn't know why Citroen bothered with the rear hatch as the passenger doors were big enough to accept a fridge.

The publicity photos for the Traction Commerciale show it being loaded with timber, beer barrels and even cattle. So serious were Citroen about it being suitable for carrying livestock they include a drain hole for urine. I don't think the AC4 Commerciale could boast that. Nonetheless the Traction Commerciale is a pretty wonderful thing and it is rare in the UK. The TOC has 9 on its register that are taxed and therefore runners or close to being so. These are all big-boot cars with the single piece tailgate made between 1953 and 1956. There are a few others that are not taxed, including a very rare 1939 car which therefore has the small boot and split tailgate. One Commerciale was made in Slough in 1939 but all others were made in Paris.

I look forward to seeing how Andrew describes the Traction Commerciale in the Telegraph. Look out for it.



Chris Bailey

(Re the point on chrome plating, there are companies now who can coat components with a chromium lookalike finish that is, in essence a high quality paint finish, and is almost indistinguishable from the real thing. It is effective also on dodgy cast mazak type handles and other embellishments that pit severely and can't be re-plated, or replaced. Editor)

Which Engine?

Many of our cars will have had an engine overhaul or replacement, perhaps multiple times in their life, and depending upon where they were at the time and what was available, may not have the original type fitted.

Andy Burnett gives a series of clues that will help identify what exactly is under your bonnet lid.

Different engines can be fitted to our Tractions, - which one is fitted to yours? There are normally 3 possibilities for the 4 cylinder cars, the standard "Perfo" engine, the 11D, or the early ID/DS engine which although never originally fitted to any Traction, is now quite a popular replacement unit. All are of wet liner construction, overhead valves, have a



crankshaft carried on 3 main bearings and have a cubic capacity of 1911cc, except for the very early engines (1934/35) which had specific engines with a bore of 72mm and a stroke of 80mm initially before moving on to the now standard bore of 78mm, with the exception of the later model 7, which continued with its 72mm bore until approx.

1939. It goes without saying that if you were lucky enough to own one of these rare pre-war cars, you would not want to change its engine type, which would destroy its authenticity and originality.

The "Perfo" engine, the standard engine for most Tractions from about 1938 on, was a robust and strong unit, but as with most engines of the time, the main bearings carrying the crankshaft and more importantly, the bearings of each piston con-rod (big end) were all

made of white metal, a bearing alloy made mostly from a lead/tin mix. The con-rod bearing (big end) was in 2 halves, the bottom cap bolted on to make the circle, into which the molten white metal was poured, then machined to correctly fit the crankshaft journal. The main bearing caps were likewise in 2 halves, again with the same white metal.

By the 1950's the Perfo engine was now dated, with many other competitors' engines having moved on from the old white metal bearings.

This bearing material worked fine so long as the engine was relatively new, but once the journal started to wear and become a bit oval, the fairly soft white metal bearing material, particularly at the big ends, started to have a bit of movement at the bearing at the top and bottom of each piston's stroke, and started to "hammer." If this situation was not caught in time, the bearing surfaces broke up and melted out, allowing metal to metal contact, thus destroying the crankshaft journal surface. If you were lucky, the crankshaft journals could be reground, and new white metal

poured and fitted, but if the crank journal was now outside safe regrinding tolerances, you were in big trouble! These engines were of necessity of a low compression ratio to reduce pressure on the big end bearing, yet these same engines were renowned for their longevity and robust build compare with many other engines of the time and the great majority of our Tractions still use that engine today!

By the 1950's the Perfo engine was now dated, with many other competitors' engines having moved from the old white metal bearings to the thin-wall shell bearing as used in all engines today. These bearings, as the name implies, consist of 2 thin-wall half shells with a thin coating of bearing material thereon, with each set of shells made and machined to far tighter and exact tolerances to match the crankshaft journals. The conrods and caps were also made precisely to fit the new shells, as were the main bearings later. Engines fitted with the new shell bearings were made to extremely tight and exact tolerances, thus were far, far more robust, largely eliminating the wear and "hammer" problems of the old white-metal bearings, and as a direct result, compression ratios could be raised, leading directly to increased power output!

In 1954, the 11D engine started progressively to be fitted to French produced Tractions to largely replace the Perfo engine. This new engine had many, many advantages, most importantly that the big-ends were now fitted with the new shell bearings! (mains were still the same as the Perfo but mains historically were never a big problem) Main block was strengthened, modified oil pump, different camshaft, with splined drive for the output shaft thru the bell housing doing away with the old dog drive, and a different cylinder head, with bigger valves, stronger rocker gear, different breathing and air cleaner set-up, and easily identifiable with "11D" cast onto the head between the 2nd and 3rd spark plug apertures. These engines were and still are exceptionally reliable and were, of course, the test-bed for the DS/ID cars which were introduced very shortly thereafter. Although this engine in its entirety was not fitted to Slough produced cars, I have found very regularly that from 1955 on to the end of Slough Traction production, the 11D block was indeed used, but with the normal Perfo head instead of the 11D one. As one would expect, this is the engine very much sought after for our cars, as it can be exchanged for the Perfo unit with little difficulty, but make sure you have ALL the bits needed before you start, as there is a lot more to it that may initially seem, so do your homework before you start if you are contemplating this change of engine.(little bit more later) Yes, the Perfo head can be used instead of the 11D if necessary, remember you will also need the different

These engines were and still are exceptionally reliable and were, of course, the test-bed for the DS/ID cars.

oil feed pipe if using the 11D one, and that the cast part between the head and the water pump is different too.

Next to cover is the 1911cc 3 bearing early DS /ID engines which can also be fitted to the Traction, but this is a really big can of worms to explain. Yes, it is the engine to fit if you are also wishing to fit the "D" 4-speed gearbox too, but this too is a complex fitment which hopefully will be a separate article covered by others. The great advantage of these engines are that here both the big-ends and main bearings have the new shell bearings. There are many variations of these early "D" engines, some with the required flat headed pistons, most with varying degrees of domed tops, and if you want to retain the domed tops you either have to fit the original alloy "D" head or have the alternative Perfo or 11D head "scaloped" (would suggest you simply buy and fit a set of standard flat topped pistons and liners when you are refurbishing the engine to start with!)

What about the head? Well, more problems, first the fact that inlet and exhaust are on opposite sides of the head, so problems in particular in routing the exhaust pipe, water pipes, accelerator linkages, different water pump, pulley alignment, etc.. Also, when you lift the bonnet, this is obviously nothing like the original, and of course if you wish to change a plug, you now need to lift off the bonnet! Of course it can be done and has been done many times, but remember, the 11D head can also be used very successfully instead!

All three engines have all the same requirement to have the liners protruding by 4 thou (of an inch) and the need to ensure that the gasket,

whatever head you choose to fit, covers the differing water jacket holes, and indeed that the centring and spigot devices also match or are removed. All 3 engines have differing flywheels to suit the differing protrusions of the crank into the bell housing space, to ensure the starter ring-gear is in the correct same place. The "D" flywheel is obviously used if doing a 4-speed conversion, but that flywheel can also be modified to use with the standard 3-speed gearbox, despite the problem of the non-availability of a matching spigot bearing. I have converted many of my cars with both 4-speed and high ratio 3-speed gearboxes, using the "D" engine and flywheel, but always with an 11D head. - Coward?? Another way forward to improve longevity of the Perfo engine is when overhauling, get a matched set of either 11D or early "D" conrods BEFORE you have the crank ground and thus convert your engine to shell bearings for greater longevity and peace of mind! Enough!

A James Bond Connection??



With the new James Bond film 'No Time to Die' about to be released, (*don't hold your breath*) just about every classic car magazine you pick up at the moment has at least one article about cars in James Bond films. So I thought you might find it interesting to hear a little tale from way back, perhaps not in the same league as the Traction in 'From Russia with Love', but definitely much closer to home.

My wife Carol and I were returning home to Whitby in the Traction on a Sunday in the Spring of 2002. My car, together with my friend Ron's Riley RME, had been used as wedding motors for his daughter's wedding in Tadcaster and we had stayed over, after the reception the night before.

Somewhat the worse for wear, we were passing the Pickering Showground when traffic slowed to a crawl, some kind of event seemed to be on. Just then a marshal appeared in front of the car and directed us into the Showground entrance. OK I thought, we're not doing much this afternoon, let's see what's going on. It was then that I realised that the event was the Pickering Car Show and the marshal had, not surprisingly I suppose, thought that the Traction was an entrant. However, not wishing to embarrass anyone, least of all myself, we parked up some distance from the other cars in case the lack of entry sticker on the windscreen might have been noticed.

No sooner had we rolled to a halt when up runs this show official accompanied by a huge man. And I mean huge – over 7 feet tall. Oh dear, we are going to be thrown out bigtime. The giant then opens his mouth, 'I've always loved these cars, my dad used to have one. It has to be the car of the show!'

So, it came to pass that the Traction was awarded its only trophy in the 25 years that I've had it, by Jaws of 'The Spy Who Loved Me' and 'Moonraker' fame. At least I assumed it was Jaws, aka actor Richard Kiel of Detroit. The guy certainly looked the part and I certainly wasn't going to question his authenticity. Looking back, I realise I should have thought about his Geordie accent. Recent googling suggests it was far more likely to have been 7'3" Gary Tiplady from Wallsend, Tyne and Wear who had just started out in a lucrative career as a look-a-like for Jaws. Still going to this day.

Oh well I still have the pictures and the memories, although the trophy is now safely stored somewhere I can't remember.....

Peter Fereday



In Committee

The TOC Committee held an online Zoom meeting on Sunday, February 7th.

Editor – following discussion with our current publishing company and others we have decided to stay with Lion. It has been agreed they will also take on the task of fulfilment and postage which will reduce the costs. Simon Pringle, our Designer contact at Lion, agreed to work on a “facelift” for this issue of Floating Power. We await feedback from the membership.

Treasurer – we are operating on a very tight financial budget due to increased costs in our infrastructure. We agreed it is not the right time to increase subscriptions but we do need to increase postage to Europe and Overseas. From March 1st membership postage for Europe will increase to £15 and Overseas to £18. We need to encourage more members to pay via Direct Debit or Bacs to help keep charges down. We also agreed to no longer produce a printed Calendar due to the costs and will look at the option of an online version that members can print if required.

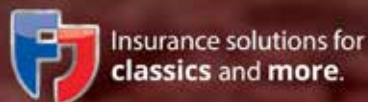
Spares – as expected there are some issues with getting parts from Europe so Chris may not be able to fulfil a member’s order immediately. We are working on adding

the commodity codes to our parts list as required by Customs. Cleve is applying for a deferment option with HRMC which should speed up the process of inputting - this has been agreed by all the Directors of the TOC due to Liability concerns.

We agreed that we need to carry out a complete stock take as soon as lockdown is lifted in order to complete the transfer of all our accounts to QuickBooks. This would be undertaken by a few people observing all the necessary Covid-19 protection measures.

Social – no final decisions can be made concerning our attendance at Shows or our planned Rallies until more is known of the road map planned by the Government.

Next meeting: Dates to be advised. it is still proposed to hold the ‘Social’ part of the AGM as part of the National rally in June.



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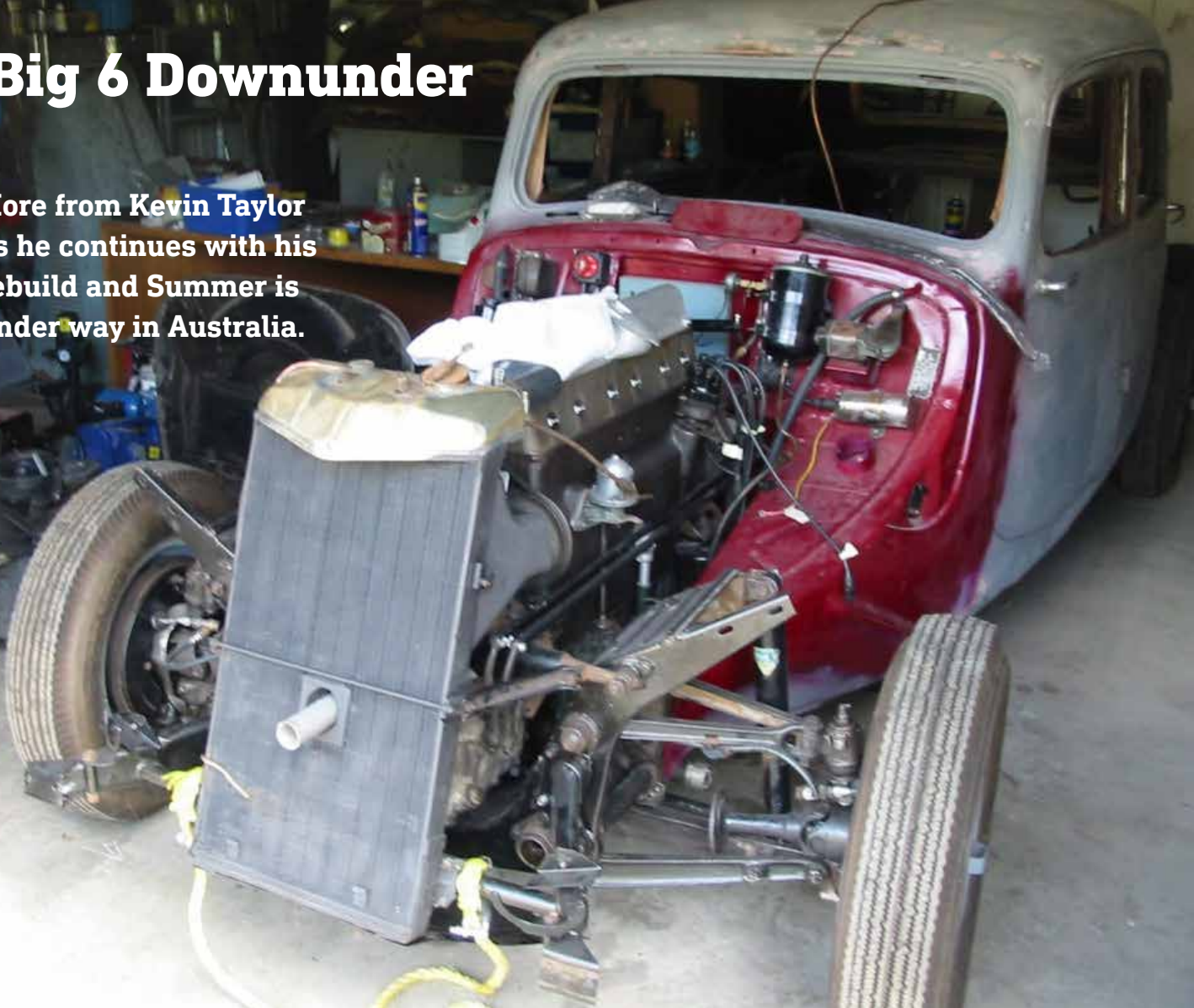


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Big 6 Downunder

More from Kevin Taylor as he continues with his rebuild and Summer is under way in Australia.



Today, as it is raining, I thought I would start on the front grill. It has been knocked at some time and is split and several of the strips are damaged or missing. I started by getting it roughly back to shape using G clamps followed by a couple of pop rivets to hold it in place. The five strips at the base will need to be replaced so I made up a template out of paper so that I can transfer this to metal.

The parts I ordered some time ago have finally arrived which means I can start on the petrol tank. I have been planning on taking the petrol tank out as I want to replace the gaskets and the two rubbers on the filler pipe. The fuel pipe runs under the rear wheel arch and as the pipe was obviously cracked it was in need of replacement. The glass fuel bulb has two connections. One that feeds the fuel and the other that carries it to the carb. One fitting came away easily but the other is not cooperating and I am wary of breaking the glass. The fuel tank is held by two straps and I had to hacksaw the two bolts that join them together. The tank is in surprisingly good condition and looks as if it may have been replaced in the past. It still bears the makers mark DG (Delaney Gallay)

Recently I went into my local car shop and asked for old fashioned chrome cleaner. The assistant was a little taken aback and could only suggest tubes of metal polish many

of which I have tried but with limited success. A young shop assistant who is into motor bikes suggested a product which has proved effective removing the tarnish and despite the pitting, it works!

I have had the exhaust manifold welded as two of the threaded sections were cracked. Finding someone willing to weld a cast manifold was interesting and my local welder was sceptical of the outcome. I understand that cast metal is not as easy to repair as steel and the finished look would not win any awards but as long as it works it's a success.

The door rubbers need to be replaced as they are no longer pliable and disintegrate as soon as you try to remove them. The top of the door seal is simply a tight fit and relatively easy to replace. The rubber in which the window glides also needs replacing. The top half is held in place with four clips that push into holes in the door frame. I will use the original as a pattern to cut to length and to also place the clips.

The radiator is fitted and all hoses replaced. I would be interested to hear from anyone who has fitted an electric fan. I apologise to the purists but Australia does experience a broad range of temperatures. Right on cue we are forecast temperatures in the mid to high 30s over the Australia Day weekend.

Although I have tried to keep the car as original as possible I have also decided to add a master switch which allows me to isolate the electrics and added additional fuses which will help to protect the different circuits.

Radiator grille, before and (right) after. (amazing contrast)



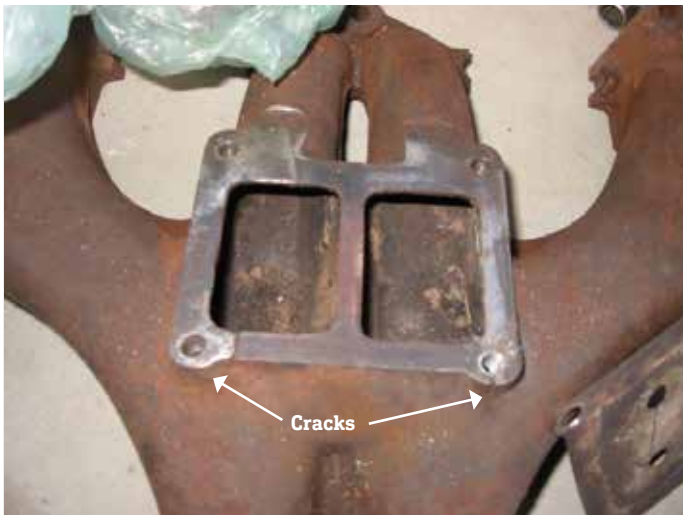
Fuel tank and components



Big 6 Downunder



What's left of the door rubber.



Crack repaired manifold casting.



Nice work, things are starting to look more advanced now. I assume that the whole car will be in the red that the bulkhead is now painted with.

An electric fan is a good plan, especially in a hot climate. If anyone has fitted one of these, I would be happy to include it in a future tech article.

Fans come in various sizes, and can be fully automatic or incorporate a manual override. Most modern fan kits come with zip fasteners that clamp the fan to the radiator core, New technology does away with top-hose sensors and replaces them with an aluminium probe that sits between the radiator's cooling tubes. This is permanently wired to the relay switchblock and is usually fitted close to the top-hose entry.

Benefits, well you can choose when the fan needs to come on, it saves a couple of HP driving the big metal fan, and also cuts down some of the engine noise at higher revs.

Worth considering.

Editor



Bulkhead mounted master switch.



Don Wright Special

A Traction derived racing car? Not as unlikely as you might think.

Some of you may remember an article that we ran four years ago describing the use of Citroën Traction components in motorsport in the post war years. This related mainly to Cooper cars who used the modified Traction gearbox transaxle setup in a series of rear engined single seat racing cars.

Recently Willie Sellers sent me a series of photographs of another single seater, which also used the Traction drive train, the Don Wright Special. This car, unlike its Cooper equivalents, was front engine, FWD and was built by Don Wright himself in the early 1950's in Sidney, Australia.

The car used the full engine and gearbox transaxle unit in a front wheel drive configuration. It also used most of the front suspension setup and initially the rear suspension also. In later form it utilised parts from the front suspension setup from a Morris 1000, in the rear.

The gearbox was the modified 4 speed Duriez type and the car was of a simple space frame construction, clad in streamlined aluminium bodywork.

The l'Epicard Duriez gearbox, as it was officially called, was first constructed in 1948. It is based on a normal Traction Avant gearbox housing but with some modifications made. All other gearbox components are different from the normal Citroën parts. Externally the gearbox in standard form, can be identified by the lever for reverse on the front of the gearbox. The gearbox was available in 3 versions



based on the various pinion/crownwheel configurations.

Apart from the twin SU carb addition, and what looks like an open exhaust, we are not sure what modifications the engine runs, but it was extremely successful in competition in Australia between 1950 and 1955.

Willie says 'I met Don in 2000 and asked about his special. It was in a scrapyard and the owner would not let Don have it. Don re-thought and reconstructed Lancia Lambdas, made one for Peter Giddings a well known pre-war s/c Alfa Romeo owner and racer. Ray Long was also a Lambda owner and eventually bought Don's car; Bill Smith restored it with 4 forward gears, and no reverse.'

The car has been in Long's hands for quite a number of years now, and has been fully restored to a beautiful standard. Obviously a labour of love.



Ray Long and restorer Bill Smith with the rebuilt car (photos by Willie Sellers, 2017)



SU Carburettor Alternative

In our article in the Jan/Feb edition of FP we mentioned a Northern Section Traction fitted with an SU Carburettor.

This is by owner, George Halsall, who tells us how he did it.

Dear Bryan

I was experiencing problems with the Solex carb on my 11B, poor starting, erratic running and a flat spot on acceleration. I decided to look into the problem.

The carb was removed, stripped and cleaned in a sonic cleaner. After it was checked over and nothing found that would cause these problems, new gaskets were fitted, the unit reassembled and bolted back onto the car. Alas, the same problems were present, although not as bad.

I decided to look for an alternative carburettor.

I found an SU carb with an aluminium conversion elbow fitted to it, that had once been on a Ford Escort some 40 years ago. On checking I found that it was 1-1/4 bore, the same as the Solex. The throttle shaft was located on the left hand side and when offered up to the manifold, the existing operating shaft lined up nicely with the throttle rod on the Citroën.

A small amount of drilling and filing and a piece of flat metal can be made to attach it to fit onto the existing Citroën linkage, and the choke cable was easily re-routed to fit onto the SU carb's operating lever.

The SU was stripped down and cleaned in the sonic bath, checked over, assembled with new gaskets, centring the main jet / needle and was finally fitted to the car. A fuel filter was also fitted and after first startup, I adjusted the main jet and the slow running screw to get a suitable tickover.



After four years running, I am still happy with the system, easy starting, smooth running with no flat spots on acceleration, and a slightly better fuel economy.

It would be possible to make a conversion elbow, depending on personal skills and facilities. Two plates made to fit onto a main copper pipe brazed between the two would do the job, making sure the correct angle (15 degrees for this SU) is obtained to suit that particular carb. Make sure that the

throttle shaft is in the correct location as there are left and right handed carburettors, dependant on which model they originate from, and the shafts can't be interchanged.

A good contact for SU carbs is DGS Carburation, who can be found on 07860932912 They also have a Facebook page: <https://en-gb.facebook.com/DGSCarburation/> DGS recondition carburettors, keep stocks of spares and are a good source of help and information. They are located in Knowsley, Nr Prescott, Liverpool.

Interesting idea. I have been in George's car, and it does start and run very well indeed. I must admit to a soft spot for the SU as a good, simple, trouble free carburettor.

Yellow Box engineering also produce a conversion kit for removing the Solex and substituting a new manifold, etc. This retails at £150, so not cheap, but a way forwards if you don't have any fabrication facilities. They will also provide a complete

kit with a new SU, if required. (for around £600.)

See <https://www.yellowboxengineering.co.uk/> for more details.

Alternatively, there are manifold fabrication specialists around in most areas who would fabricate a conversion elbow, probably using stainless steel, if you could provide details.

The 11/4 SU is common to a lot of English cars of the fifties and sixties, eg: Morris 1000, Austin A40, Mini and also as part of a twin carburettor setup on a variety of English sports cars. Reconditioned examples are freely available, and used examples for home reconditioning can be found on Ebay and other car spares websites.

I seem to remember that some time ago, James Geddes also offered a twin SU conversion kit for Tractions.

Editor



Standard pancake filter takes up least space, but there might be room to fit a Morris 1000 type air filter assembly if a more comprehensive air filter/silencer assembly is required, with less induction noise.

New Traction Club



There's a new Traction club in Italy, formed in 2019 by author and owner, Ubaldo Nifosi

Ubaldo asked for our help a few years ago in the writing of his book on the Traction, which he has since published. He has now set up a club and is arranging the first national event in Bologna in the Summer- details are on the events page.

Their website states: *'The verb garer in French means to shelter and therefore the derivative term, garage, is a place where vehicles are kept. Garage Traction Avant Italia, an emanation of the ASI Bologna Autostoriche federated Club, was born in July 2019 to ideally keep all the Traction Avants present on the national territory, implementing a census and registration.*

The aim is to bring together all the passionate owners of this model within a common house, an ideal garage, where to keep its historical memory. The aim is also to provide any information on conservation and restoration, and to organize gatherings and events to encourage the encounter between enthusiasts.'

Details on line at their website on www.garagetractionavant.it

Brittany Tour

Hi Everyone,

.....and A Happy New Year!!! At least as Happy and Healthy as possible!!

You will have read the update on the Brittany Tour in the Jan/Feb edition of Floating Power. *(also in abridged form on the events page of this edition, Editor)*

I have little to add at this stage, except to say that it is still the CTAB's intention to run the tour in 2021, BUT until the French Government release further information and more progress has been made with vaccinations in France; no final plans can be made.

You will be aware that at present, all restaurants; bars; most hotels; camp sites; museums etc; in France, are closed. Without special dispensation, French citizens/residents are NOT allowed out of their houses from 18h00 to 06h00.

I will come back to you when I have more news, but if you do decide to go ahead anyway and try

to book ferry crossings and hotels, B&Bs, etc; ensure that the booking is on a fully refundable/ cancellable basis.

Also take the time to check out the current Customs arrangements between the UK and France (and vice-versa), as despite the so-called "oven-ready" deal, there will be duties to be paid and, at present, certain foodstuffs, yes, even your "sarnies", may not be allowed in and out!!

Green cards will also be required, so check with your car insurance company and also make sure that you have adequate health/travel insurance.

To those already registered.... if you no longer wish to participate; please let me know as soon as possible.

All the best and keep healthy.....

Martin Nicholson

Dante Mansi

It is with regret that we announce, at short notice, the death of member, Dante Mansi. A more detailed obituary will follow in the May/ June issue of Floating Power, but in the meantime we offer our condolences to his wife and family.

Email address

Heard nothing from your Section? Have you updated your email address recently?

There are a number of members whose records either do not show an email address, or whose address in the records appears to be incorrect and rejects messages sent. You may be missing out on something if your address is not up to date, so if you have changed provider recently and not told the club, then please forward details to John Oates at membership@traction-owners.co.uk. The same goes for addresses and telephone numbers as well, incidentally.



Man's Best Friend

Laurence Acher's car meets a canine guardian at Risley Hall in 2019

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Events



It is difficult as I write this, to predict exactly where we are going with regard to an easing of restrictions sufficient to allow for events in the way of meetings and rallies. The situation is likely to be even less clear on the continent, with many European countries only rolling out vaccines at a relatively slow rate. I have

left the list of events largely intact as shown in the January/February copy of FP, with the exception of the London Classic Car Show which has been put back to June, and GTAI's new Italian meeting. Please be aware that situations are subject to change and any of these events listed could be subject to cancellation or a change of date due to local or national conditions.

Drive it Day is scheduled in 2021 for the 25th of April and the FBHVC has announced that, this year, Drive it Day will be run in support of the nationally important charity, the NSPCC's Childline®. Profits from the sale of D. I. D. Rally Plaques will be donated to the charity.

Note the postponement of the **RETROMOBILE SHOW** until **2nd - 6th JUNE 2021**

The organisers have stated the following: Faced with regulatory and restriction measures and more generally the level of uncertainty during this challenging pandemic time, we regret to inform you that the Retromobile show, which was initially planned from 3rd to 7th February 2021, has now been postponed to the 2nd to 6th June 2021 at the Porte de Versailles in Paris.

Comexposium (www.comexposium.com)

The Traction club of Italy, **Garage Traction Avant Italia**, an ASI Bologna Autostoriche federated Club, is aiming to hold its first national rally in Bologna on **June 5th-6th, 2021**, for more details please go to **www.garagetractionavant.it**

The **London Classic Car Show** will be back, outdoors but under cover, in the beautiful grounds of **Syon Park**, but now is to take place between the **25th and 27th of June**, recreating the capital's premier classic car event in all its glory. With top dealers, a host of Classic Car exhibitors and Car Clubs plus of course stunning displays and features – all fully Covid-compliant and socially distanced, the event will be one of the first classic car events to take place in 2021. It is likely that the club will be having a stand at this event, although it does clash in date terms with the National up in the Lake District. If there are any volunteers to set up and man a stand, who are not booked for the Lakes, then we'd like to hear from you..

Other things that are coming up:

- **The Practical Classics Classic Car and Restoration Show** is scheduled for **June 11th -13th, 2021** at the **NEC**. This has been put back from its previous April dates.
- **The Lancaster Insurance Classic Car Show, also at the NEC**, is now rescheduled for **12-14 November 2021**. The club will most likely be having a stand at this event, all things being equal.
- **The Brittany Rally** is now rescheduled and will be "re-run" in 2021, same venue; same dates, 11 -14 July. If you are interested in participating, please let Martin Nicholson know. Of course everything depends on the virus, not only in the UK, but also in France! Contact vicmarnic@gmail.com. for further details and see also, the News section of this magazine.

TOC Rallies

TOC Rallies: Our own main rallies are still rescheduled to take place in 2021. Both follow the original format at the moment, but it is likely that some form of social distancing may still be in force and details may have to change at the last minute. This will be kept under constant review.

- **The Jersey Rally** it is hoped, will still be on for **May 13th-17th 2021**, following more or less the same itinerary as was proposed for 2020, with visits to the War Tunnels, the Gerald Durrell Zoo, St Ouen Manor and the Transport Museum at Pallot. Details were in the November/December Floating Power. if you would like to book in, then please contact Bev Oates. Costs are (Half Board) £400 for a single room, £640 for a double room and the Rally Fee is £48 per person.
- We are also booking once more for the previously postponed **National Rally**, in the **Lake District** during June 2021. Details were in the Jan/Feb issue of FP. Please contact the Editor for more details and booking information, if you wish to participate.



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At Lancaster, the insurance policies we can arrange for Buildings and Contents mean you can be safe in the knowledge that your home and belongings are covered. All risks are considered and policy benefits may include; buildings cover up to £1m, contents cover up to £100,000, alternative accommodation cover as well as accidental damage cover, bicycle cover and cover for your possessions whilst away from the home*.

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or visit www.lancasterinsurance.co.uk

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Classified Adverts – Members

Small adverts are free and are for the disposal of vehicles and parts that are their personal property.

Adverts for accommodation are charged at £7.20 including VAT

Advert submission needs to include membership number.

Adverts may be edited or refused, and the Editor cannot guarantee insertion into any specific issue although every effort will be made to publish in the next issue of Floating Power.

The Editor does not accept liability for printers' or clerical errors although care is taken to avoid mistakes.

'Members' advertisements will be inserted for two issues only. If the advertisement is still required beyond this point, then it must be resubmitted to the Editor. Please notify the Editor if you wish to delete the advertisement prior to this.

Adverts can be emailed to the Editor at the address below. For members sending adverts by post, please check current editor's address on page 3.

Classified Adverts – Non Members

£20 inc VAT per insertion.

Trade Display Adverts

From 2015 trade adverts will be available in colour or black & white at 1/4 page only.

Cost of £60 plus VAT per issue.

Please note

All Cars and Parts for Sale adverts appear on the TOC website approximately one week after Floating Power is posted to members.

Please email adverts to:
editor@traction-owners.co.uk



CARS FOR SALE

FOR SALE:

Late 1955 Traction Avant 11B Normale. D engine. Restored 2004 and regular improvements since. Very good condition. Rewired, 12 volt conversion, alternator, gearbox rebuild, diaphragm clutch, EZ power steering, new tyres, fuel tank etc. Car in Guernsey. Could be delivered to Portsmouth. **£15995**
Further details from Rob Kiff: 07781138481 or rob@kiff.co.uk



FOR SALE:

Citroen Traction Avant 11BL 1938, small boot, green and black, LHD. In good running order and very good condition. Built in Paris in early 1938, 1.9 Ltr Perfo engine. 6v electrics. Restored by the last owner in Belgium in 2003. Since acquisition in 2015 work undertaken includes addition of seat belts, new exhaust system, Pilote rims repainted, new tyres, exhaust manifold refurbished and new fuel tank fitted. Annual mileage is approx 1000. Garaged and driven regularly, used for weddings. **OIRO £17,000. Contact Patrick, email pfrjones@talktalk.net or 01372 456031 (Surrey)**



FOR SALE:

1952 Small Boot Light 15
Finished in Old English White with red leather upholstery. Totally rebuilt in the early 1990s and still in very good condition. It has a sunroof and four inertia reel seatbelts. Brakes just rebuilt.
Offers on £12,700.
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Tyres - 165SR400, 185SR400 Michelin X Radial for Post War cars. 130/140X40 and 150/160X40 Michelin SCSS for early cars. Official Michelin Distributors for the UK. Mention you are a TOC member. We also balance Traction wheels for free.
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Email: sales@longstonetyres.co.uk

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ORIGINAL PARTS FOR SALE

Large collection of Traction spares available Gearboxes, Chrome Light 15 grilles, gaskets, U/J's, 12 volt starters, lights, points, plugs, bumpers, (including a rare pare of 11BL accessory ones similar to 15/6 type), set of Easyclean wheels + 1 all six for £300 as shown.



Just mail your requirements and enquiries to bryndhughes@yahoo.co.uk

PARTS FOR SALE:

Carburettor 32PBIC (Copy). This carb has done fewer than 1,000 miles so is virtually new. £50 including postage.

John Ogborne 01749 675312/07801 337187

PARTS FOR SALE:

A pair of front wings for a Light 15 . In good shape , blasted and etch primed , now in need of welding in all the usual places .
£100 ono

A bell housing for a LHD car in very good condition . £40 Ono 11D engine , Slough bellhousing and three speed gearbox complete with carb , distributor , water pump etc but no starter motor . All as removed from my big 15 to be replaced with DS 19 units .

I drove the car for some hundreds of miles before the transplant so can confirm that engine and gearbox work ok , but do need overhaul. **£1150.00 Ono**

Andrew Tweed (Maldon)
07891870499

PARTS FOR SALE:

Having recently sold my Roadster I find that I have a shed full of Tractions bits and pieces that I really need to get rid of otherwise its several journeys to the Tip!

Includes **Pair of Excellent Lt 15 Front Wings**, repaired, shotblasted, rust cured and ready to paint in your favourite colour **£450 bargain**

11D block with crank and good pistons - offers

Front and rear Hubs - offers

Virtually complete set of all the **Special Traction Tools**...offers... very rare to find **Lt 15 Rad Grill - £40.**

Dynamos, Starters etc etc .

PLUS .many other parts too numerous to mention. What do you need.

Four excellent **11B wheels Powder Coated Silver with good tyres - £200 the lot...** bargain.

No reasonable offer declined. Everything must go, preferably to keen Tractionists.

Ring David Boyd 0152789 4599 anytime. Redditch. Callers welcome.

BOOKS FOR SALE:

Citroen Great Marques of France £25 inc pp



75 years of Citroen in the UK £20 inc pp **07516 913710** clivehoskins@yahoo.com

FOR SALE:

Light 15 Roadster Jig and Wooden Butt.

This jig and butt were made in 2007 to enable the restoration of my Light 15 Roadster. It could be used on a Legere, Light 15 or with a little modification any of the other models. There is lots of it, brackets, supports, dummy doors etc. The butt was used as a pattern to make the rear body panels on an English Wheel. The main ladder frame is massive in its construction and could easily be used to straighten crashed shells. No reasonable offer refused.

Please contact me for more pictures and information. Philippe Allison.

Email:

philippe.allison@whitewaterfinance.co.uk **01256 765040** or **07899 658634**



PARTS WANTED

WANTED:

Two Lucas 1130 sidelights for Slough Big Six. I'm looking for the original Lucas-made lights, with lenses, not worried if the little red discs on top are missing, and I don't need the innards. Even one would be a start.

Nick Hall E: aghada_hall@yahoo.co.uk Tel. 07941 703179

WANTED:

My Citroen 1957 Normale has two different headlight units: Marchal and Cibie. I would like to swap the complete Cibie for a Marchal unit with the diamond shaped telltale. If anyone has parts that I can use to make up a complete Marchal unit please contact me at citroenhy78@btinternet.com

WANTED:

Urgently sought - **Rear Bench seat** (lower section) for 1950 11 BN, upholstery condition not important but wooden sub frame required or even patterns to refabricate. Please contact **Simon Martel 07973 619456 simon@warwickmartel.com**. Based in New Forest

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Club member. Hull area.
Steve Thompson 01964 533433
stevethompsonmotors@rocketmail.com

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01243 511378

Chris Treagust, 98 First Avenue, Batchmere, Chichester, W Sussex, PO20 7LQ.

Email: spares@traction-owners.co.uk

Please note, a full spares list is available on the club web site at

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TOC Umbrella £20.00

A selection of items are now available from the TOC Shop. Contact Vanessa Plumpton for further details

