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# Floating Power

November - December 2022

Official magazine of the Traction Owners Club Limited





## Honorary Life Members of the Traction Owners Club

**Dave Shepherd**  
**Peter Riggs**  
**John Gillard**  
**Tony Hodgekiss**  
**Chris Treagust**

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## Missing Magazine?

Please contact John Oates

**01629 582154**

[membership@traction-owners.co.uk](mailto:membership@traction-owners.co.uk)

## Be a part of Floating Power...

The closing date for input for the January/February *Floating Power* will be

**Saturday December 10th 2022**

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

**Bryan Pullan on:**

[editor@traction-owners.co.uk](mailto:editor@traction-owners.co.uk)

## Cover Image

*Commerciale still working for a living in France.*

*Courtesy of  
Ron Herivel*



# Editor's Epistle

Hopefully, by the time that you read this, the country will be recovering from the death of its monarch and will be settling in to the idea of having a King, after an entire generation has known nothing other than our late Queen as Head of State.

Did this impact on our lives as far as our cars were concerned? Well yes, it did, locally at any rate. A surprising number of events were cancelled as a mark of respect. Although I joined in with the general sadness at her death, I am not entirely sure that I agreed with the cancellations. Car shows are hardly uproariously disrespectful events, and the Queen's generation was markedly one that carried on regardless through tempest, blitz and much political upheaval, and I am not sure that she would have entirely approved of all of the fuss and palaver. However, that was what happened, and so we saw something of an early end to the season, with some quite substantial September events being cancelled.

I managed to get out and about, but also missed out on a couple of shows that I might otherwise have attended had I had fewer outside commitments, and better weather prospects. Yes folks, it may surprise you to know that we didn't have a significant drought up here in Lancashire and everything stayed quite lush and green throughout. Plus, in early September, after performing magnificently in a couple of quite lengthy runs with Preston and District VCC, over the Summer, the Traction decided that it was going to play silly fools again, and locked its brakes on when reversing out of the drive one day. See elsewhere for the fuller story.

Speaking of shows, I had a number of interesting responses to my piece about being charged to show your cars, and elsewhere I publish a letter written to one particular organiser, who charged the passenger in the exhibiting cars a full admission rate, whilst admitting other categories of exhibitor totally free of charge and even sponsoring (bribing?) one group to actually attend.

The cost of E5 does not seem to be falling substantially, and it would seem that attending a show other than on your doorstep, could become something of a rather expensive component to the hobby if this trend continues. I also had a letter on the subject of distances travelled to more major events such as the National, or the various rallies in France. It expresses the view that driving in France is more pleasurable for many reasons, than driving across country in the UK. The author also makes an interesting point about the lack of favourable public reaction to Tractions in the UK when out and about. I must admit that my own car rarely attracts much attention on the road, and relatively little on the show field, where the crowds tend to gather around newer machinery.

As I have said before, I guess that this is because the generation that is now taking over the hobby, was not out and about when pre-war style cars were a common, and anyone who was a child in the early 1970's is more likely to recognise a Ford Capri as a marker of that era, than a 1957 Traction, and probably even less likely to have actually come across one in their youth, other than in a film. A letter elsewhere in this magazine from Roger Grix might contradict this theory somewhat, but in my own experience it is rare for someone to approach me, even at a major show, and say that their father/uncle/schoolteacher had a Traction. The only connection many seem to make is with old war films in which either the goodies or the baddies were seen screeching up in their Citroens (see recently TV screened 60's film 'Is Paris Burning' for a good crop of antique Citroën and other French period cars in film action).

Ironically, I generally get more feedback when driving my 1940's style, but 1964 built PV 544, which although a far from familiar sight on British roads (ever) seems to strike a chord somehow with many people, albeit their random and sometimes extraordinary guesses at what it might be are always amusing, especially since hardly anyone reads the word VOLVO which is 'writ' large in chunky chrome letters on each end!



In this magazine, reports on the Brittany Rally and the French celebrations of the 5HP. Plus more about the intrepid Paris Moscow lot back in the 1980's.

Enjoy Christmas and I will see you all again in 2023.

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## Committee

The members of the committee of the Traction Owners Club are all volunteers. Please be considerate when contacting them and in the demands you make on their time. They are happy to help you but may not always be able to do so immediately.

### **PRESIDENT**

**Bernie Shaw**

**T:** 01933 274382 **E:** president@traction-owners.co.uk

### **CHAIRMAN**

**Bev Oates**

**T:** 01629 582154 **E:** chairman@traction-owners.co.uk

### **SECRETARY**

**Ian Harvey**

**T:** 01462 711248 **E:** secretary@traction-owners.co.uk

### **TREASURER**

**Tony Malyon/Cleve Belcher**

**E:** treasurer@traction-owners.co.uk

### **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

**John Oates**

55 The Knoll, Tansley, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 5FP

**T:** 01629 582154 **E:** membership@traction-owners.co.uk

### **SOCIAL SECRETARY**

Volunteer sought

Please contact the President or Chairman if you would like to take on this role.

### **HELPLINE - VALUATIONS AND AUTHENTICATION**

**Steve Reed**

**T:** 0115 911 0960 / 0044 115 911 0960

**E:** helpline@traction-owners.co.uk

### **CLUB SPARES**

**Chris Treagust**

98 First Avenue, Batchmere, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 7LQ

**T:** 01243 511378 **E:** spares@traction-owners.co.uk

### **CLUB SHOP**

**Vanessa Plumpton**

98 First Avenue, Batchmere, Chichester, PO20 7LQ

**E:** shop@traction-owners.co.uk

### **EDITOR FLOATING POWER**

**Bryan Pullan**

**T:** 07513 362202 **E:** editor@traction-owners.co.uk

### **MARKETING & PUBLICITY**

**Chris Bailey**

**T:** 07768 325924 **E:** marketing@traction-owners.co.uk

### **WEBMASTER**

**Simon Scotland**

**E:** Web@traction-owners.co.uk

### **NON-DESIGNATED**

Peter Riggs

Jim Gibson

### **OTHER VOLUNTEER ROLES (NON COMMITTEE)**

#### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

**Martin de Little**

**T:** 07951 417148

#### **REAR WHEEL DRIVE**

**Andrew Peel**

**E:** rwd@traction-owners.co.uk

#### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

**Andrew York**

**E:** social-media@traction-owners.co.uk



# President's Ponderings

It's been a strange year for many reasons, not least of which is that it is the first for some time that many of us have had an opportunity to get together and, above all, use our cars. I therefore sincerely hope your experiences have been better than mine.

My tale of woe (perhaps "whoa!" would be more appropriate) appears elsewhere but I can finally confirm the problem with the Traction was due to neither clutch nor gearbox but a failed driveshaft Bibax. It took some finding because it still retained enough integrity to appear to be intact when loaded manually but would not cope with propelling the weight of the car. Fortunately, the 5HP has remained driveable and helped maintain my faith, sanity and humour - even when the gearstick snapped off just above the gearbox whilst attending a local show a couple of weeks ago.

Now, with the season drawing rapidly to a close, there is still the Classic Car Show to look forward to and I hope to be there over the weekend to catch up with friends new and old. Looking further forward, arrangements are already well in hand for next year's calendar of Club events and, in June, the Annual Rally will take us back to the West Country for the first time in many years.

Furthermore, the oft-postponed Jersey Rally is finally scheduled for just a month before the Annual and, in view of the cooperation and generosity of both the main Sponsor, Motor Mall (the Citroën Agency), and The Westhill Hotel, I am assured it will be "unforgettable".

The CTAB (Brittany Club) have also extended their usual invitation for TOC Members to join them in July for their annual sortie but, as ever, we are guests and places are limited so please be understanding and respectful of their situation if you find yourself on a waiting list.

If you do intend to attend any or all of the above, please help the organisers by submitting your applications and paying any relevant deposits as soon as possible. Thank you.

.... And finally, have you seen the new(?) Citroën logo for 2022? Strangely familiar, perhaps.....



# CITROËN

Apparently, it is the new image for the "Electric Era" but, with its clear echo of the original 1919 image, I cannot help wonder why it was not rolled out 3 years ago for the centenary. I like it and, in my (unbiased and extremely humble) opinion, it is a lot more pleasing to the eye than "Oli", the latest concept vehicle.



One thing I can see in Oli's favour is that the inside of the windscreen will be a lot more easily cleaned than the vast expanse of that of my C4 Picasso. On the other hand, a stated top speed of 68mph means such a screen is going to collect more debris and, hence, will require a lot more cleaning than the similarly vertical screen of the 5HP

## New Members

Welcome to the Traction Owners Club to the following..

2894	Gary Butcher	Shepherdswell	Kent
2895	Kestutis Sutkus	Belvedere	Kent
2896	John Wratten	Petherton	Somerset
2897	Russell Baker	St Leonards on Sea	East Sussex
2898	David Treacher	Leighton Buzzard	Bedfordshire
2899	Clive Holroyd	Holmfirth	West Yorkshire





# Chairman's Chat

I am writing this Chat on Monday 17th. Yesterday we had a Committee meeting and our AGM. I was disappointed that so few members attended the meeting and sincerely hope it is because you are all happy with the way the Club is being managed and didn't feel you had anything to say. If that is not the case then do please get in touch with me – yes, I am still here and will remain as Chairman for now – thank you for the vote of confidence in re-electing me.

The Minutes of the AGM will appear in the January issue of Floating Power but I wish to use my Chat to highlight a few things.

Thank you to Bryan who has agreed to continue as Editor – you do a fantastic job and everyone agreed we have a first class magazine. Keep up the good work – but remember we all have a part to play in sending in articles and photographs for inclusion in FP.

After 22 years as Treasurer Tony has decided to stand down – there will be a transition period over the next few months as Cleve takes on the role – Thank You to Tony for such long service and coping with all the changes over the years. Cleve is already involved in auditing and “managing” our relationship with HMRC so the change of personnel should not present us with any problems.

You don't need me to tell you that the cost of everything is rising at the moment – this includes paper and postage and so we may well see an increase in FP production costs. It was agreed at the AGM that the Committee can make small annual increases to the membership subscription if necessary to cover increased costs.

Chris also told us that Spares costs are increasing and it is getting harder to source some parts as suppliers are closing down. We agreed to look at other French suppliers so please be reassured we are doing all we can to get parts to keep all our Tractions on the road.

If you are thinking of going on the Jersey or the annual rally next year please let the Organiser know – me for Jersey and Chris Bailey for Devon. We need to know numbers to ensure we reserve enough rooms. Chris & I would love to hear from you soon – even if it is a “probably” response.

Once again we raised the issue of attracting younger people to ownership of Tractions and the TOC. We are going to monitor the interest shown in our cars by the U25's attending the NEC. Ideas we plan to explore is a reduced online only membership for younger people and also the opportunity to link up with a local TOC member to have a ride, possibly drive, of a Traction.

Finally thank you to John, Tony and Steve who have all agreed to stay on the Committee; Goodbye and thank you to Martin de Little who is standing down (but beware Martin and his camera will still be seen at events), and Hello & Welcome to Jim Gibson who has agreed to join the Committee and is considering taking on the Social Secretary or Chairman post in the future. Also thank you to Andrew York and Steve Reed for agreeing to continue as Directors of the TOC LTD.

Don't forget there is always room for you on the Committee – just get in touch!!

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year. I look forward to seeing you at an event in 2023.

*Beu*

## Big Six Downunder Update

**You have seen bits and pieces of Kevin Taylor's Six in his regular diary, and now here are some images of his car as it stands in October 2022. If you cast your mind back to the first chapter of this saga, this is something of an improvement over the car as it stood when he started out way back. See elsewhere in this magazine for the latest progress.**



# 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.

## Northern Scotland

**ANDY BURNETT**

**T:** Andy Burnett: 013398 86290

**E:** north-scotland@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

## Southern Scotland

**JOHN WHITE**

**T:** 07960 918310

**E:** south-scotland@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

## Ireland

**DAVID SELFRIDGE**

**T:** 7729 518992

**E:** Ireland@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

## Wales

**ANDREW TWEED**

**M:** 07891 870499

**E:** wales@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

## South West

**HOWARD SPEIRS**

**T:** 01872 862386

**M:** 0797 418 7267

**E:** south-west@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

## Northern, Lakes and Borders

**BRYAN PULLAN**

**T:** 07513 362202

**E:** northern@traction-owners.co.uk

Summer meetings at monthly Breakfast Meets at the Charity Farm, 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

**GRAHAM HANDLEY**

**T:** 01661 843 493

**E:** north-east@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

## Peak

**BEV & JOHN OATES**

**T:** 01629 582154

**E:** peak@traction-owners.co.uk

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

**STEPHEN PRIGMORE / TINA O'CONNOR**

**T:** 0775 937 2242

**E:** midshires@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

## Eastern

**JASMIN GAGEN**

**T:** 01284 827 039

**E:** eastern@traction-owners.co.uk

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**

**T:** 01256 765040

**E:** surrey-hants-sussex@traction-owners.co.uk

Meetings at the Fairmile, Cobham. For dates, see contact details opposite or look out for information in Section reports.

## Kent/ East Sussex

**JOHN BARSLEY**

**T:** 01892 722749

**E:** kent-east-sussex@traction-owners.co.uk

See section report for coming meetings/events.

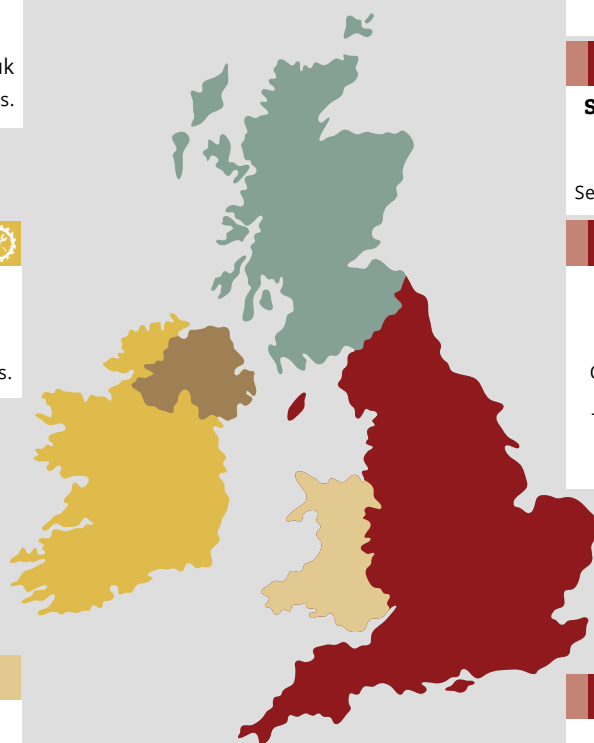
## West of England

**TERENCE MCAULEY**

**T:** 07984 689118

**E:** west-england@traction-owners.co.uk

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

Re Bryan's bit in last month's FP with regards to some show organisers actually charging participants to enter their cars, regrettably at least one show started this way up here too!! Ballater has for long had a big show of cars and agricultural vehicles, followed by a road run which led to thousands of people coming to line the streets some four deep to watch the parade. This obviously led to a massive increase of customers for local traders, thus a wide financial benefit to the town.

At the last such show prior to Covid, the idiot organizers decided to charge all the entrants a fee for taking part! We were obviously very unhappy about this, as without vehicles taking part, there is no show or parade, and let our frustration be known. This particular show has yet to start again, but if such a charge were to be levied again, I and most others will not be entering.

Well, speaking personally, it has been a fairly busy, yet unproductive couple of months. As most who know me are well aware, I have a kind of hobby now in searching for any parts which could be used as spares for Slough built Tractions. Best places are obviously autojumbles, and I travelled to three big ones recently with literally hundreds of stalls selling s/h car parts. Regrettably, many of the stallholders now consider "old" cars to be 70's and 80's models! However, having spent a lot of time, effort and fuel, my overall total purchases were - NIL. Parts for "our" cars are now extremely scarce! I did meet up with a couple of lads who were previous Traction owners, but having sold their cars they had no bits and pieces left over. Did have a call from an old friend near Liverpool who has some suitable bits, so will visit him when next in his area. Such is life, but still a good hobby.

Rallies and car show season is now at an end, so other than the odd run out in the country, my Light 15 is now back in the garage until Spring. There have been no other calls from members, so I can only assume their cars are behaving!

On a sad note, our friend, Ian Smith, (Big Smithy) is still in a care home, has been transferred to another one locally and is extremely frustrated that he is not allowed out and he is desperate to get back home. He now requires 24 hour care, and to move back home with resident carers, he has been quoted £8k a month! He is a really good and genuine man who was always willing to help others and it is so sad to see him now in this condition. He has a good and helpful daughter too and we visit him but all he wants at the moment is for us to take him away. Really sad!

This will be the last FP for this year, so Sheila and I wish to take the opportunity to wish you all every best for Christmas and for a healthy, happy and safe 2023 and beyond!

**Andy Burnett**

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

## Southern Scotland



Well, here goes for my first contribution as South of Scotland Rep!



My thanks firstly to Peter Fereday for his tenure as Southern Scotland rep and for giving me a few tips about the task. As Peter alluded to in his last article, it has been great to be able to attend a few shows and classic events after a barren couple of years.

First on my calendar this year was a charity road run from Forfar to the Grampian Transport Museum, about 60 miles north and 100 miles from my home in Fife.

The route was to take in some really minor roads and on the return we had to negotiate the infamous Cairn `O` Mount mountain road with its 14% gradients....a real test for a 67 year old car both up and down!

Down to first gear climbing and praying the brakes don't fade too much on the way down!

Still, I thought to myself, if they managed the Alps as Tour de France support cars a wee Scottish hill shouldn't hurt too much.

The run finished at Glamis Castle childhood home of the late Queen Mother and location of the Glamis Motoring Extravaganza each July, probably the largest gathering of historic motoring in Scotland.

`Celine` as she is affectionately known performed pretty well over the route and nearly £9000 was raised for charity on the day.

By the time this is read I will have received the club tools from Peter so please get in touch if you need to borrow them.

All the Best,

**John White**

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

# Section News

## Northern, Lakes and Borders

The season is coming to a close as I write this. The last events at Hoghton Tower, Southport and Wrea Green were more or less the end of the mainstream run of shows in the region, and the usually quite substantial show at Lytham in early September was cancelled out of respect for the period of National Mourning for the late Queen, along with a couple of lesser events.

As noted elsewhere, the big show at Southport in mid September appears to have been a poorly attended event (by exhibitors), which isn't surprising with a £20 entry fee.

Ian Gardner and I did the local September mid week run organised by PDVCC, this time in Ian's Normale. This was a tour of lowland Lancashire starting at Rufford, climbing up Parbold Hill, ending up at an Italian restaurant at Much Hoole, near Preston, and covering about 30 miles. Ian's car ran nicely apart from a moment of fuel starvation on a particularly steep section of road near Parbold, when balked by a driving school car.

The mid week runs tend to attract an interesting selection of cars, and offer what is becoming a rare opportunity to see some interesting pre-war machinery out on the road. A couple of examples are illustrated.



Paul Taylor has his beautifully restored Light 15 back on the road, but has experienced some battery charging issues, leading to him having to be rescued with jump leads a couple of times. Testing with a voltmeter suggests that his dynamo churns out a suitably healthy voltage and his battery holds a charge, so it has become something of a puzzle. We noticed whilst with him at St Catherine's in mid September, that he had a battery isolator device clamped onto his battery, and I suggested that, having had issues with one of these on another car a couple of years ago, he might try removing it and seeing if that makes a difference. He has subsequently tried this and had positive results, so hopefully this is a cure. If you have one of these fitted, and experience electrical issues, then try removing it for a while.

My own car has performed well over the summer with its SU carburettor conversion, but behaved very oddly whilst being shunted around to get something else out of the

garage a few days ago, and seemed to lock its brakes on whilst reversing down the drive and then again whilst doing a three point turn in the road outside. The brakes seemed to release when driving forwards and seem to be free when parked up again. Odd! I haven't investigated further as yet.



My chauffeur at the midweek run had also previously noticed that one of his front tyres seem to be wearing unevenly, but on checking the alignment, could find nothing amiss. He did, however, manage to adjust the upper ball joints and is intending to install a set of lower ball joint adjusters over the winter.

What is left to go at this year? Well not much really by the time that this lands on your doormat in early November. The second Tuesday of the month events at St Catherine's Hospice at Lostock Hall will no doubt continue as long as the weather holds out. I am not sure about the Charity Farm events, there is nothing on their website, but the various local clubs such as MMOC seem to think that they will continue over the winter. I assume that it depends on conditions underfoot to a large extent, this event being held on a field. The breakfast gatherings at the Lakeland Motor Museum in Backbarrow are ongoing, with events on November 5th, December 3rd and Boxing Day. On New Year's Day, there will no doubt be a gathering in Burscough at the Briars Hall Hotel. If anyone has any information about any other events local to them in the North West, then do let me know and I will broadcast them.

So, have a good Christmas, and I hope to see some of you in the New Year.

**Bryan Pullan**

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

## Eastern

We continue our regular gatherings at our usual haunts. We hope to organize a late Christmas Lunch for January joining up with the CCC Eastern Section, yet to have venue and date confirmed but if you are interested do let me know so I can pass on your details to David who has valiantly volunteered to arrange this event.

### Eastern Section Regular Meet Ups

8th November: The Compasses, Little Green, Essex

29th November: The Angel Inn, Larling, Norfolk

20th December: The Compasses, Little Green, Essex

**Jasmin Gagen**

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



## Peak



We had a lovely visit to the Great British Car Journey at the beginning of October.

4 Traction plus one "modern" car attended. It was nice to welcome Steve & Barbara Palmer to our local group. The Museum is really interesting as it has British Cars grouped by manufacturers and through the decades. The Founder, Richard Usher, came out to greet us and admitted loving Traction - maybe one day he will expand the Museum to cover "foreign" manufacturers.



Everyone enjoyed the visit using the Audio Guides - it even kept 2 children interested! Also a chance to have a light lunch and lots of chat..Our next meeting is on Sunday 4th December and, hopefully, will be a Christmas lunch once a Venue is sorted!

**Bev Oates**

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

## Surrey/Hants/Sussex



The 18th to the 21st of August was the British Motor Show at Farnborough airfield. Setting up day on the Wednesday was interesting when we had the most torrential downpour and had to huddle under a half-erected event tent!

However, the next 4 days were dry and attracted large crowds and a lot of interest. The stand was organised by Jim Gibson who did a magnificent job, bringing together the Citroen Car Club, 2CV GB and the Traction Owners Club.

We had an impressive collection on the TOC stand including Bernie Shaw's Clover Leaf.

It was judged to be the largest and most impressive stand at the Show. Tim Dodd-Wilson brought along his giant inflatable duck (yes the quack quack sort!).

We have since had meetings at the Fairmile in September and October with disappointing attendance. Our next meeting is on Sunday 6th November at 12.00 at the Fairmile, Cobham.

We will be holding our very popular Christmas lunch this year at The Ely, Camberley, Surrey on Sunday 11th December, details to be sent out soon to our area members. Anyone outside of our area is very welcome, my contact details are on the Section Details page.

We look forward to seeing everyone and we would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

**Philippe Allison**

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

## Kent/East Sussex

**Our KES Section**

**Christmas Lunch at Sissinghurst.**

**Wednesday 7th December 2022.**

**12 noon for 12.30pm**

For the first time since 2019 we are planning to return to the world renowned NT Sissinghurst Castle in Kent, TN17 2AB.

See [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

In the Granary Restaurant a 3 course Christmas meal with coffee £30 each.

You do not have to be a NT member to reach the Restaurant. If you are a NT member then free entry to the castle and grounds apply. Do let me know as soon as possible if you would like to attend.

Final numbers by Saturday 19th November please.

Safe Tractioning.

**John Barsley**

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

Image of Sissinghurst Castle courtesy of National Trust. See: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sissinghurst-castle-garden> for more details.



## West of England



Dear All

The section is now officially in hibernation until the spring. Stay safe. I think we are in for an "interesting" winter!

Cheers

**Terence**

*Well you won't know if you are all asleep in your caves!!!!* Editor

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

# Section News

## London



This glorious summer seems to have tempted half of London to make a Grand Tour.

In the case of Bernie and the other Thompson twin, several. Meanwhile Andy, his Traction with its cooked gearbox and vintage caravan made it safely home for the Egham show where he and Peter gave an excellent review of the Traction's many merits: See the interview at <https://youtube/OxDoxQmtcuA>

Thereafter, without any warning, Andy's gearbox crown wheel and pinion disintegrated, fortunately without damage to the casing. It's now in the good hands of Mark Harding while Andy breaks into his piggy bank.

Next to France, for a tour to the Champagne region and Paris, was new London member Mick Newton with his wife and their beautiful '51 Legere. Mick has owned the car for 30 years though the trip was his first continental Traction adventure. A great and pleasurable smooth 2000km on the lovely, and often empty, super smooth French road network. We were looking forward to meeting Mick at our recent pub get together but shortly before, a Rolls Royce reversed into his Traction at traffic lights. We're beginning to think that it's cheaper and safe to stay in France.

We, of course, are steadily working through the surprisingly large supply of wine that we squirrelled into our Traction for our return from Brittany. It was a memorably journey, firstly because from Vire, I entered Pont de Brotonne in the SatNavs. It's the nicest crossing of the Seine on the route from western France to Dieppe. A spectacular and traffic free bridge that avoids busy Rouen and the longer route over the Pont de Normandy. We however were finally "guided" along the tiniest of tracks very close to the river's edge until we were directly under the bridge. It is a magnificent structure!

Then at Dieppe Port the Police were thoroughly searching all cars. Our car was loaded to the windows in the back with a full boot and a pile of camping gear on the rear folding rack. Three serious looking armed Gendarme descended on the Traction to discuss and photograph it from every angle. They were quite apologetic about the search, helping shift the rack just enough to get a hand in the boot and take a picture. They ignored the car's inside and just chatted to Verna still sitting inside. The leader announced the search satisfactory and waved us on. All other cars were emptied of passengers and baggage for detailed search, a long business. We've no idea what they were looking for but on boarding the ferry all bags were searched, the first trip that's happened.

More recently I joined Ian and the super hospitable Moss family to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Chevronics, their well known and deservedly highly regarded Classic Citroën workshops and showroom. We in our Traction with Ian's Cloverleaf, were in pride of place in the showroom with a Traction/TOC display.

The next morning up early and away to the Shuttleworth Collection at Old Warden for their race

day and the season's closing flying display. The forecast was heavy rain.

Roger joined us with his Lt 15 in the Historic car display, the Traction's 1930s design placed us between twin cam Rileys and the shortest highest winch lorry I have ever seen.

*Mike has kindly agreed to write a more detailed report on the Shuttleworth visit in the next magazine. Editor*

**Mike Wilcock**

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

## Wales

Despite gloomy forecasts during the week we had a wonderful drive to Elan Valley and back today. Almost unbroken sunshine on the autumn leaves showed Wales at its best, a fitting finale for our summer visits to this beautiful area.

Sadly we were the only TOC members to enjoy this outing, perhaps when we resume in the spring some others will venture out, it really is worth the effort for the drive alone.

For winter meetings we have been invited to attend as guests, the meetings of the Mid Wales Classic Vehicle Club (MWCVC). These take place on the 4th Tuesday of each month alternating between the Raven in Welshpool and the Horseshoes at Berriew. We meet for coffee at 10.30 and lunch is available, best to book a table though. The first of these meetings after this edition of FP reaches you, will therefore be on 22nd Nov at the Horseshoes, it would be great to see some Traction owners there. Do contact me if you need any further info.

The summer has provided many distractions from my Six project including a Morris traveller wood replacement which was supposed to be a quick job! However the hull is going off for sandblasting soon, after which, having done all the welding already I can get on with preparing it for paint. If anyone has the double pulley for the end of the camshaft (driving water pump and dynamo) I'd be eternally grateful.

Sometimes you just catch a view of a car which shows off something special about it. Here's the back end of ours as we returned to it after a coffee break on the way home from the lakes. Maybe it's just me!

Also a tantalising view of a project spotted in a barn somewhere in Wales.

Not much other Traction stuff to report, hope to see some of you soon.

**Andrew Tweed**

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





# Supplementary Brake Light

Dear Editor.

The tin cans on my front suspension have been painted as you suggested !

Fiddling, as one does with one's passion, I realised that brake light switch seemed not to be functioning particularly well and was in fact not working at all. I am unsure if the switch itself is an original fitting, but mine is a bit Heath Robinson and despite having given it some attention in the past I decided to rebuild it to see if I could improve it's operation. One of the problems was that the pedal movement was greater than that needed to close the contacts in the switch. This was simply overcome by adjusting the position of the switch and realigning the angle at which the operating linkage pulled in the lever to close the contacts. All well and good. After jamming the brake pedal down I could adjust the linkage so the brake lights came on before the pedal was fully depressed. A quick look at the brake lights to check they were showing. Success, as Ed China would say.

However I was not satisfied that the light showing was really enough, in daylight, to warn following traffic that I was slowing down. I had read in FP someone had suggested mounting a high level light on the parcel shelf. Now, I don't like drilling holes in bodywork anywhere when they are not needed so, I came up with a practical solution that may be of interest to other Traction owners.

I had in my possession a high intensity rear fog light, not the most elegant option I admit, but it came complete with mounting bracket etc. The only thing to change was the bulb to 6V. I cut a strip of 3mm aluminium just wide enough for the bracket to be bolted onto and about 150mm long. A bolt hole was drilled and, yes, the aluminium painted it black. At first I thought the



back of the rear seat was fixed to the parcel shelf but a little tugging was sufficient to slip the aluminium strip down behind so it could be seen in the boot area. Once the central position and height were gauged a couple of holes were marked and drilled so the bottom of the strip could be secured by screwing into the wooden frame on the back of the seat. Splicing into the original wiring was not a problem as the two wires to the rear lights were bound together. Someone had previously replaced an original wire from the brake light switch to the rear lights which made the job easier. The whole issue was then securely bound in insulating tape. I can now guarantee that any following traffic cannot fail to see when I put my foot on the brakes. Attached are photos that may be of use.

Kind regards, Joseph Dobson

*I have done a similar thing on my Light 15, using a motorbike brake light. My Light 15 has an hydraulic brake switch which needed an emergency stop type of pressure to illuminate the brake lights. I changed to a mechanical pedal operated switch which lights everything up as soon as I touch the pedal. Editor*



# Car Lighting Safety

Gil Keane of Better Car Lighting contacted me recently with news of a conversion kit to improve or add flashing indicator installations on Classic cars. Although his kit may not be suitable for many of our cars, the commonsense of improving your indicators and possibly also adding 4 way flashing is obvious.

Gil says in his email:

*'From the 40s until the early 60s, many British car makers equipped their offerings with flashing indicators, which was good, but which flashed white at the front, which was acceptable at the time, but these cars now have indicators that few understand, which can make them dangerous to use on public roads. Now, a simple upgrade kit allows them to use a powerful LED bulb which is bright warm white when the sidelights are turned on, but which flash bright orange when signalling. All parts needed to make the upgrade easy and effective are in the kit, which can be either positive or negative earth. Some years ago, I nearly lost a good friend when he was driving his Healey 3000 and signalling to turn right. A car wanting to turn left out of that road failed to realise his intentions and pulled out causing a major accident. It was all the incentive I needed to develop my first version of this upgrade, but it is now easier to install and more effective, due to continuous development.'*



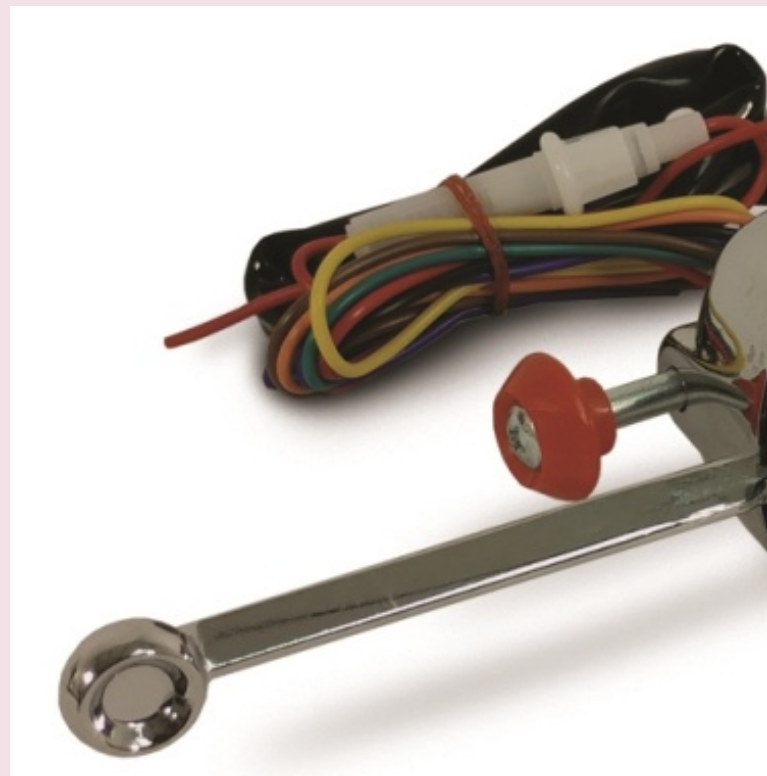
The assumption with the above upgrade is that you have dual filament indicator/sidelights installed in your torpedo style sidelights. You probably don't,

but you can buy an easily installed kit from various sources, which provides a set of the necessary sockets for around £30, and hence with some additional wiring you can install an LED unit which has white sidelights and a bright orange indicator. This, on Slough cars, removes the need for additional light units on the bumper, and maintains the original look. If you are going for LED's, then you will also need a change of flasher unit (assuming that you already have flashing indicators) to an electronic item, which can cope with lower resistances. Most will also cope happily with a combination of standard and LED bulbs.

I have yet to find something suitable to substitute for rear flashers beyond the ones which either hang below or sit above the rear bumper on small pedestals, but one member at least has replaced his original rear light clusters on a Slough car, with ones from a VW Beetle (but not the later 'Elephant's Foot' type).

Four way flashers: There are numerous kits on the market, usually providing a pull out type switch on the dashboard which is wired into the flasher circuits to provide simultaneous flashing at all four corners.

**This, in my view, is essential if you are considering venturing onto the new so called 'Smart' motorways, which are frequently proving to be**





**anything but.** My own preference is for a combined indicator and hazard switch unit which clamps onto the steering column without any drilling or other modification of the car structure. These incorporate the necessary warning light, and a lever type indicator switch, plus a pull out knob for 4 way hazards. They do mainly come in a bright chrome finish, (although occasionally can be found in black) but can be toned down with a coat of paint of a suitable colour if so desired. Various sources can supply, such as Amazon, Carbuilder.com, and from various sources on EBay. Price around £20.00. Sidelight conversion holders and suitable electronic flasher units are available from various sources, eg: Classic Dynamo and Regulator Conversions, Holdens, AES, etc.

You can also get updates for semaphore type indicators in the form of brighter LED units, either fixed or flashing, but I am increasingly sceptical about their use in modern traffic conditions. The number of motorists on the road who have seen such things in regular use, must be rapidly dwindling to nothing now.

### **Your other lights.**

Whilst attending to this, it is worth considering upgrading your other lights, notably rear and brake lights, with LED's. LED's have dual benefits. They consume less current and are brighter. Remember

to use red LED's behind red lenses, the spectrum generated by LED's doesn't always sit happily behind a different coloured lens. (However, the orange LED's used behind the clear lens on your sidelights, are okay)

An additional high level brakelight is also a worthwhile investment. (see elsewhere in this magazine).

### **Headlights.**

Obviously a low consumption, brighter headlight is a desirable modification, but the use of LED's has been controversial. Beam patterns in early conversions were poor causing dazzle to oncoming traffic and changes to the rules surrounding LED and high-intensity discharge (HID) headlight upgrades caused confusion for classic car owners. The Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency originally updated the MOT manual to state that: 'Existing halogen headlamp units should not be converted to be used with high-intensity discharge (HID) or light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs. If such a conversion has been done, you must fail the headlamp.' However, certain cars have recently been given a reprieve.

Following pressure led by Gil Keane of Better Car Lighting, the ruling has been reversed for cars made before 1 April 1986. Cars built from that date on, the manual says, will still be failed for 'light source and lamp not compatible'. However, the DVSA says: 'Vehicles first used before 1 April 1986 are not required to use type approved 'e' marked headlamps. Therefore, converting a halogen, or other headlamp on such a vehicle to use LED bulbs would not be in contravention of the regulations.'

I would still recommend caution however. Some installations have cooling fans and /or large heat sinks and might not be suitable for installation in a Traction or RWD light unit. Classic Dynamo and Regulator Conversions do a unit which is compact and a straight swap for a H4 headlight bulb which would be worth a look. Check dimensions before buying in any event.

*Please note that the Traction Owners Club have no commercial or other connection with any of the suppliers mentioned in this article. Editor*





# A Tale of Two Cits

As previously mentioned (more than once), I had arranged to attend the 100th anniversary of the production of the first Citroën 5HP with my 1925 5HP Cloverleaf, affectionately known as YP, the Yellow Peril.



The event took place in June, in France, and I had arranged to trailer YP behind the much more recent (1948) 15/6 Traction Avant, taking the opportunity to make a holiday of it and visit friends en-route. Having recently undergone shoulder surgery, I took the added precaution of engaging the services of fellow Traction and 5HP owner, Ian Harvey, as back-up chauffeur.

All went well from home in Northamptonshire to the overnight Ferry at Portsmouth but, the following day, roughly halfway between the French coast and the meeting venue, the Traction baulked on a very steep incline and came to a halt. The 15 horses made all the right noises but refused

every attempt to be coaxed in any direction except downhill, and then only because they were influenced by gravity. The cars and trailer were eventually "rescued" by a friendly tractor driver and returned to level ground, but the Traction still refused to do what its name suggested. Our priority was clearly to attend the 5HP centenary meeting which was due to start the following day, so as much as possible was transferred into the considerably smaller Yellow Peril and the Traction and trailer were placed in a safe location.



At an average speed of about 30mph - and in searing temperatures little short of 40° C - the heavily loaded 5HP completed the journey to the hotel which had been booked for the duration of the event. The combination of an open vehicle, scorching sunshine and the long distance at relatively slow speeds entailed several refreshment stops for car and occupants. By the time we arrived at our destination, a little south of Orléans in the Loire Valley, YP had already covered about 75 miles although we had only expected it to be driven a maximum of 120 miles during the whole event - and all of that was still to come.

That evening, a very welcome tram ride into Orléans City centre saw us admirably fed and watered (alcoholled would perhaps be more accurate) in a very nice restaurant on the main Square next to a splendid statue of Orléans' most famous daughter, Joan of Arc. After further refreshment and another tram ride we finally retired to our beds hot and tired but replete

and very pleased with the day's progress, despite the Traction's demise.



In view of the already mounting unplanned mileage, grease was purchased and a gun borrowed to apply it. We also had to straighten the steering tie-bar which had been taken by surprise by a speed hump rivaling anything experienced in the UK and ideally requiring Sherpas and oxygen to negotiate it. The fix was simple, a rope around the bar and tied to a tree soon pulled it back into shape when reverse was engaged.



YP continued to perform admirably over the next three days of the meeting along with more than 40 similar vehicles. Our fellow participants were not only from the four corners of France but also from Germany, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy.

There were also two other UK-based owners present. Walford Bruen had previously driven his ex-Spanish RHD Cabriolet for little more than 8 miles and had therefore taken the wise precaution of trailering the car behind a modern tow car. However, David Boyd piloted his UK spec Trèfle, Miss Buttercup, the full round trip from Redditch in the Midlands to the meeting and then back home. His only issue was excess fuel consumption which, *"due to the regular availability of petrol stations"* led him to stick to motorways or major roads on the way down!! Fortunately, on the first day somebody spotted a fuel drip and it transpired a blanking plug had mysteriously disappeared from his carburettor. Once discovered, the leak was easily cured by a nice man with a 5mm tap and a suitable screw which successfully sealed the offending orifice. Apparently, David is considering buying another car with the fuel money he saved on the return trip.



As anticipated, YP clocked up another 120 miles over a very enjoyable weekend. The itinerary included convoy drives with organised visits of chateaux and museums (belated apologies to other road users stuck behind 40+ old cars proceeding at little more than 25 to 30 mph). The days were also pleasantly punctuated with typically French "aperitifs and nibbles" receptions hosted by town dignitaries, boozy three-course lunches, boozier evening meals and the odd cool beer or few throughout the day to combat the on-going heat. *C'est la vie, n'est-ce pas?*

On the Saturday, we were invited to wear period dress. Taking our cue from Hergé's Tintin comic books, we decided to go as Dupont and Dupond, the two bumbling and identical (apart from the spelling of their names and the shape of their moustaches) detective characters. In case of any confusion on the part of those not familiar with the original French language versions of the stories, they are called "Thompson with a P" and "Thomson without a P" in the English translations. The inspiration lay in the fact that in one story the pair are depicted driving in a 5HP but, with hindsight, black suits were probably not the wisest choice for the temperatures we experienced. Nevertheless, our efforts were clearly appreciated and not only by the other members of our group as, to our surprise, our characters were immediately recognised and acknowledged by the public in every village we passed through. I have never before been asked to pose for so many photographs.



After the event, our intention had been to leisurely tow YP along the Loire Valley to spend several days with friends near Saumur then head north for a few days with more friends in Basse-Normandie before finally making our way to the port of Caen for the return ferry. It did not take us long to agree to continue the adventure in the Yellow Peril and sort out the Traction and trailer once we were further north as we would then be much closer to where we had left them.

As we set off west from Orléans it was another blazing hot day, but YP gamely motored on, uncomplaining, for a little over another 150 miles. Thinking I knew the town well, just a few hundred yards from our hosts' home in Le Puy-Notre-Dame, I ignored the satnav and confidently turned into a narrow street. At that point I was shouted at by locals sat at a bar because the road was one-way, but not in the direction I was pointing. I stamped on the footbrake ... big mistake with the pedal only operating a small transmission brake. Nothing happened until the handbrake

## A Tale of Two Cits

was also applied bringing the car gently to a halt – but, by then, at least one of the five horses had obviously thrown a shoe and damage had been done. No propulsion and no foot brake were sure signs of at least a broken half shaft and possibly worse. This time gravity worked in our favour and, with judicious use of the handbrake, we careered downhill to a “safe” stopping place from where my local friends rescued us. The rest of that day remains a bit of an alcoholic blur.

When we investigated next morning, it did not take long to diagnosis the problem and confirm the (thankfully small) extent of the damage. The differential end of the left half shaft had been sheared off by the trauma of the sudden application of the brake. Happily, the crown wheel, pinion and prop shaft had suffered no damage but the diff did need to be removed to extract the broken stub end of the shaft. As the picture shows, the crown wheel is a splendid example of Citroën's patented twin helical gears now stylised in the company's well known “Double Chevron” logo.

Despite everything there were no regrets - the drive shafts were, to the best of my knowledge, original and therefore possibly 97 years old. Furthermore, I was fully aware they were well run-in (euphemism



for already more than slightly twisted) when I reassembled the rear axle about 30 years ago. I was perfectly happy that YP had done everything asked of it, in five days it had covered over 450 miles at a little under 40mpg with negligible oil consumption and no coolant loss even though the recently restored, rad-mounted, Calorimeter registered just about “Boiling” for most of the time – and all regardless of being packed to the gunwales with a payload which probably exceeded anything André Citroën himself might have envisaged in 1922.

Normally, Le Puy-Notre-Dame stages an annual “Retro Grand Prix” in July but, because of Covid, the 2022 event will be the first GP for some time, see ....<https://grandprixretro-puynotredame.com/>..... and we were invited to return to experience it. Another very easy decision followed - leave the car there, purchase a pair of new shafts (available off the shelf!) and return at the end of July to fit them and enjoy the GP before trailering the car home.

When the time came for us to leave, our hosts kindly drove us halfway to our next destination and our other friends came down from Basse-Normandie to collect us from there.



The following day we hired a car transporter to retrieve the Traction and YP's trailer and bring them to our hosts' home where we were able to examine the car in relative comfort.

That exercise revealed the fault was actually a hardware problem within the gearbox/diff assembly and not as first suspected, clutch failure. It was clearly irreparable there and then so it was time to contact the RAC's European Breakdown Service, a long story but, in a nutshell ....

***After several phone calls which made the Spanish Inquisition seem like an episode of a light-hearted***



**TV quiz Show, the RAC sent a brief text to say the vehicle could not be repatriated. Further communications (over the next 4 days) eventually revealed their decision was based on the fact I had failed to report the breakdown within 24 hours of it happening – it's in the small print! That "small print" actually says "If you fail to contact us within 24 hours of becoming aware of the breakdown we **MAY** refuse to provide cover in relation to the breakdown."**

Having contacted them within a couple of hours of determining I could not save them money by doing the job myself I was not overjoyed with their decision but, unfortunately, time was against us. We therefore returned to the UK as foot passengers and left both cars and the trailer in France.

I do have another gearbox for the Traction but it was bought "as is" and is currently untried. It is also extremely heavy and unwieldy and, unlike the 4-cylinder cars, not easily fitted without completely removing the engine and gearbox assembly – not a practical proposition where the car was situated. I have since been offered a fully refurbished gearbox but that is located in Switzerland with a price that reflects it having been expertly rebuilt with no expense spared – and it would still need to be collected or shipped at additional cost. I can't really make a decision until I know the precise extent of the damage so, in mid-July, we made a 3-day dash back to France with a rented car trailer and a borrowed Range Rover to recover the Traction, and now it is back at home where it can be stripped down at leisure with the pressure off.

Meanwhile, I had bought the replacement 5HP shafts and fitted them with new bearings so it was back to France again at the end of July to pick up the trailer then fix YP and experience the Le Puy Retro Grand Prix .... and to finally have a bit of a relaxing break.

Refitting the replacement shaft took more effort than anticipated so the other side was left to be done at leisure back home but, with YP again driveable, we participated in the Saturday run of about 65 miles with a splendid 4-course lunch en-route. The rest of the weekend was spent enjoying the Retro GP "demonstrations" on the circuit of the closed streets of Le Puy.



The eventual return from Le Puy, again via a few days in Basse-Normandie, was very hot but uneventful and both cars are now safely back home awaiting tlc.

Meanwhile, the most recent response from RAC Customer Services suggests I might choose to involve the Ombudsman should I disagree with their decision. I feel it would be churlish not to pursue their kind suggestion but, apparently, this must be done within 6 months (what, do I really have more than 24 hours?).

Bernie Shaw



# R.W.D.

I must begin with an apology. The rumours of the demise of Manny Motashaw have been greatly exaggerated. Manny remains alive and well. An email confused me (it doesn't take much). I hope this hasn't caused too much distress to anyone.



The Citroën community spreads far and wide. I heard from Larry Lewis in Canada in early September. It appears that there are r.w.d. Citroëns in the land of the maple leaf and the USA. So yet another reason to feature a 5hp!

This picture was taken at a meeting called Rendezvous in 2017, held in Saratoga Springs, New York.

There appears to be quite a following in that area, as a Citroën specialist called Dave Burnham currently states on his website that his work diary is so full he can't accommodate any further bookings.

He has a storage barn which contains r.w.d. models amongst others. A late twenties car was at the meeting in 2016. There are images on the Citroën website showing A series cars, Traction Avant, Ds, Gs, SM, CX and an XM. Other French marques seem to attend but Citroën dominate. There was even a Panhard 24.

Now there's a bucket list car for me. Thanks to Larry for opening my eyes to activities "over there".





Regular contributor Walford Bruen has been in touch with a review of the VSCC Rally earlier this year.

'Each year at the end of March, a couple of hundred Edwardian and vintage "light cars" converge on the Metropole hotel in the Victorian spa town of Llandrindod Wells in Powys for a weekend of touring and trials. Dozens of different makes of car are represented---some names like Clyno, Swift, Palladium and Bayliss-Thomas are long forgotten. There are usually a few French cars: Renault, Salmson, Amilcar and at this year's event, just one Citroen----my 1923 B2.

Saturday's event is always a tour, usually up to 90 miles. Sunday is for trials or "mud-plugging" up slippery hills or rock-strewn lanes. Having respect for my aged mechanical components, I stick to the tours! This year's run was from Llandrindod Wells down as far as Crickhowell for a lunch stop via Talgarth then back via Brecon and Builth Wells.

Early on the Saturday, the hotel car park resonated to the sound of antique machinery as owners started their cars and carried out last-minute fettling. I set off in the B2 with my navigator and we were soon cruising along happily at speeds approaching 40mph in beautiful sunshine and surrounded by magnificent scenery.

It all seemed too good to be true-----and it was! As we neared Talgarth, the old Citroen started to misfire and lose power--with only 20bhp, there's not a lot of it in the first place. Eventually we came to an ignominious halt just outside the village of Three Cocks. Bonnet open revealed one very hot magneto! ----the insulation on the armature had broken down causing the whole thing to go into meltdown. The event organizers are used to this sort of thing and an SOS phone call had me given a ride back to Llandrindod Wells to collect my trailer and towing car, leaving my hapless navigator to look after the B2.

Two hours later I returned and the car was loaded up and we retired to the village pub for a bite to eat and a pint of Butty Bach--a brew I can thoroughly recommend.

A glutton for punishment, I'll probably sign up for next year's event but will be sure to carry a spare magneto.

Vintage cars and beer, what a perfect combination.

Some breaking news, my 2CV is finished! MOT passed but still things to tidy up. The wheels and seat covers let the side down a bit, and since passing the test the sidelight circuit feels it needs a rest, ooo how I love electrics. I mean how can you mend something which you can't see?

Andrew Peel



# Your Letters



## Expensive Six

Hi

Interesting listing on page 18 of current magazine. Particularly interesting that Bill, off whom I purchased the vehicle, also replied.

Prices seem to be reasonably stable/sensible if bought from a realistic source. As previously mentioned, the one up near me that has had the reported £27k spent on it is still available I would suggest that one is slightly overpriced. I keep meaning to visit the garage to see how much truth there is in this.

Mind you, it pales into insignificance when considering this one.

### 1953 Citroën Traction Avant 15/6 For Sale By Auction

This one has only had some £44k spent on it! I do wonder how many of these adverts have a degree of dishonesty in them.

For example this one is listed as odometer reading 67002 miles but when it had an MOT in April 2021 was shown as 6324, and never mind that in June 2008 it was reading 99083 miles.

Will be interesting to see the final price.

Regards

Dave Thornley

*£44k is an eye watering amount to spend on any car in one go, and becomes quite preposterous on a car that is probably worth less than £30k, even if in perfect condition. Like you, I wonder if this is stretching the truth a little. If you owned a car over an extended period, say 15 years, then totting up whatever you had spent on it during that timescale, could come as a shock when expressed as a lump sum! However, this is still a lot, and coupled with the obvious mileage anomalies make this a very dubious buy. Editor*

## Carbon Offsetting

Dear Editor

I see that there is a suggestion that people might like to offset their Carbon footprint for the 2023 rally. I know that it is a suggestion and voluntary. If you feel guilty about driving your car, fine, go ahead. I think that we are already penalised sufficiently for not being able or not wishing to buy an electric vehicle.

The following figures are from the RAC Foundation (Note this is not the RAC).

<https://www.racfoundation.org/data/uk-daily-fuel-table-with-breakdown>

Based on a pump price of 167.44 p per litre:

Duty 52.95 p/l

VAT 7.91 p/l

Greenhouse Gas Obligation 0.654 p/l

Total 81.5 p/l

Note: we pay tax on duty – duty is not tax, so we are not being taxed on tax (Ha Ha).

Assuming 600 miles travelled at 25 MPG this will be 24 gallons = 110 litres (approx.)

So, for the 600 miles, you will already be contributing:

Duty £58.24

VAT £30.7

Greenhouse Gas Obligation £7,20 (they don't talk about that one, do they)

Total £96.14

In addition to this, the cost of the biofuel content (assuming that 10% is biofuel) has increased the price of petrol by 3.55 p/l above what straight petrol would cost – another £3,90.

We are driving vehicles whose production and disposal Carbon footprint have already been committed.

The CEO of Polestar (Electric division of Volvo) gave a speech some time ago in which he produced comparisons for electric cars running on energy derived from various sources (typical

global energy mix, European energy mix and pure wind power).

He stated that the electric car industry should be more honest and produced figures to indicate that, if one were to scrap (a presumably modern) ICE car, and buy a new electric vehicle, one would increase his/her carbon footprint by an amount equal to driving the existing car for a further 100 – 200 000 km. (62 – 124 000 miles).

Even if our cars are only half as efficient as a more modern one, we are unlikely to run out of miles before we stop creating any sort of footprint.

Carbon offset has been criticised by Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, as being counter productive to the aim of actually reducing Carbon emission. I don't often agree with them but they do have a point. In addition, Welsh farmland is being bought up at inflated prices to be overplanted with trees and sold to industries and companies that want to add "net" to their publicity. The Forestry Commission claims to be aware of the potential problems of monoculture and of the wrong trees being planted in the wrong places and to have control of this, but I don't know if they will succeed. We also have to see that we need to be more self sufficient in food production and we can't eat trees!

Roger Grix

*We did actually suggest Carbon Offsetting for the 2022 National Rally, way back in 2019/20 when the details were put together. Whether anyone actually did, I do not know. Perhaps anyone who attended that rally who did, could get in touch.*

*I know that there is now some controversy over buying land to plant trees allegedly for carbon capture and one report recently suggested that one of the best absorbers of carbon was a piece of uncultivated grassland! As regards electric cars, I suspect that the attractions of the 'cheap' day to day motoring that these cars are claimed to offer (once you have taken out a mortgage to buy one) is being severely dented, with soaring electric bills and the Government seeking ways to tax said vehicles. I think that the drop dead date for IC cars will end up being extended for many reasons, including political ones. Editor*



## Charging for Shows

Dear editor

With regards to your topic on charges for entering shows, I attach a copy of a letter sent to one of our local shows committee on behalf of Mid Wales Classic Vehicle Club. We certainly do not think that the driver or passenger should have to pay a charge to display our vehicles.

Avril Griffiths

'To Berriew Show committee and organisers,

Firstly may I start with congratulations on a great show.

However, as a member of the Mid Wales Classic Vehicle Club and along with some of our members who attended the show on Saturday, we were concerned that the passenger in the vehicle was charged an entry fee.

This is the only local show to charge a passenger, it is usually the exhibitor and one passenger free entry, as without exhibits you would not have a show.

We all spend a lot of time and money on these exhibits and the fuel to get to shows.

(I personally along with my husband and several friends came specially from Shrewsbury show for the day, at which we all attend and camp for free as exhibitors).

The biggest discrimination though was the fact that the tractors, trailers and passengers were all getting in with no charge and also the fact that the tractor club are given a donation to attend. There was only about 50% of the tractors belonging to the club but they all got in with no charge.

Many of the MWCVC members were unhappy with this arrangement and some will not be attending again (some had travelled quite a distance).

The discrimination between the cars and the tractors we feel should be addressed making things fair to all and both clubs.

Please could you give this some thought to future shows.

Regards

Amanda Gould (MWCVC Vice Chair)'

Roger Grix also writes:

'In light of your comments in your editorial introduction, I did actually pay £12 to enter (the Rotary Sherborne Show). I agree with you that it is all the wrong way round with £5 for visitors and £12 for entrants.

I have mixed feelings about it as the show was great fun with lots of interest from generally knowledgeable people. As the money raised goes to worthy local charities, I chose to treat it as a charitable donation rather than an entry fee.

Whether I will attend further events on this basis I do not know.

By contrast, the entry to the Gillingham and Shaftesbury show (from which you published the photo in this issue), was not only free for exhibitors but 2 tickets per entry were available meaning that my wife and I could attend the show free – a saving of £36 on entry costs.'

*It seems to be a trend, and in some cases is probably the result of organisers trying to make up for two lockdowns of lost income. However, in doing so, many of them seem to have lost the plot. This is rather like (as my wife said recently) charging performers to play or sing in a concert. I wonder if, given that high values for classics are often publicised in the media (eg: TV programmes such as Bangers and Cash) the perception is growing that if you have an expensive classic, then a charge to exhibit is not going to worry you unduly. However, costs apart, there is a principle at stake here. You are the show, and I hope that once the classic motoring public get over their new found freedom after two years of intermittent lockdown, that reality will set in, and those organisers who try it on with a substantial charge for exhibitors, find themselves with empty fields. As a post script, the recent September show in Southport tried to charge exhibitors £20 whilst admitting the public for free (it was in a public park). Cars were few, and I believe that they were so desperate for entries, that they were ringing round on the day to try and get people to come and exhibit. They were, however, still trying to charge these 'volunteers' £20. Needless to say, it appeared to be a fruitless exercise. Editor*

## Lion's Historic Vehicle Rally

Hi Bryan,

Today, I took the Traction to the Rotary Historic Vehicle Rally at Sherborne School. I first visited it in 2015 and there were some lovely vehicles on show. Since my car hit the road, I have been threatening to go there with it, but this was the first time that I have made it.

My main purpose was to raise a bit of awareness about the Traction. The car attracted a lot of interest and a surprising number of people whose father/uncle/ schoolteacher used to have one as well as many compliments on the car.

I was in Group 4 which is "Post War Cars", along with some XK Jaguars, a DB2, a couple of Bentleys – see the attached list.

I am not sure what their judging criteria are, but you can imagine my disbelief when my car was selected as "Best in Class".

The judges clearly have good taste.

Regards,

Roger (Grix)





# Bailey's Banter

I very much enjoyed my day at the British Motor Show at Farnborough. I know it was a four day event but one day was all I could spare. Had dogs been allowed in we would have gone back on the Sunday with ours. But they weren't so we couldn't.

There were lots of Citroens there – well done **Jim Gibson** for getting such a good turnout. Many models were represented but Tractions outnumbered them all. I'm sure mine was not missed.

The Panhard et Levasseur club was also in attendance. I must thank **Richard Vick** for letting me sit in his Panhard PL17 and have a look under the bonnet. What an amazing car. Everything was different to normal cars as well as to Tractions. One example being the way the engine is mounted. No convolute springs here – oh no, just use the exhaust pipes as engine mounts! Brilliant! Of course you need a light weight engine for that to work.



The story of the PL17 was, coincidentally in Classic Monthly. I thought I knew quite a bit about the PL17 but it turns out there was more than just the saloon. An estate car and a convertible were offered for sale by the Aguttes auction house in June. They would certainly make those little 850cc engines work hard.

According to Wikipedia about 2,500 estate cars and 300 cabriolets were built. I had no idea.

Also on offer at that sale was a Traction Avant. Not just any Traction Avant – a 15/6 semi-decouverable. In fact, apparently the only 15/6 semi-decouverable. A semi-decouverable is a body type that has a soft top over the front seats, with fixed rear bodywork. In other circles this may also be known as a Sedanca.

The conversion was done by AEAT who made many full decouverables on both 4 and 6 cylinder cars. They also made the big-boot conversion well before the actual big-boot came out. I am not sure if there was only one semi-decouverable Traction Avant, or only one 15/6 semi-decouverable. From Olivier de Serres' book "Traction Avant coupe cabriolet decouverable" I understand that the only example now known about is this 15/6.

The question is not why was there only one – but why was any made at all? What is the point of this semi-decouverable body style? The driver and front seat passengers get to have an open top if they choose – but not those in the rear? Why would you pay to have your car modified this way? Nevertheless, the car looked very good. The opening front roof was the same cream colour as the fixed rear part. The lower part of the car seems to be black. The car has a nice leather interior and one of the aforementioned big-boot conversions.

I do like the way AEAT did that big boot conversion, retaining the original boot lid with the spare wheel on the outside. Of course, Citroen could not do that as the idea of their big boot was to do away with the old-fashioned external spare wheel.

Under the bonnet it looks a little scruffier than the other 6-cylinder cars I'm used to seeing – they all seem to be scrupulously clean and shiny. Not this one.







Don't get me wrong, it just looks used and that's nothing to be ashamed of. There are two more carburetors than I was expecting. Instead of the standard single twin choke Solex, there are three single choke carbs.

The job of the carburettor is to create the correct air-fuel mixture. Air and fuel molecules have different masses – a good way of separating them is to send them round bends. This is how centrifuges work. One reason for adding more carburetors is to reduce or eliminate bends in the inlet manifold and to give an equal path length feeding each cylinder. This improves the chance that the mixture and the volume of gas entering each cylinder is the same which is good for efficiency and driveability.

The single (albeit twin choke) carb on the standard 15/6 is very close to cylinders 3 and 4 but a long way from the others. A triple carb arrangement - assuming they are properly

balanced - should be ideal with each carb placed midway between the inlet ports of adjacent cylinder pairs. This would achieve minimal bends and equal lengths. The only way to achieve a straight line is one carb per cylinder – 6 of them, all perfectly balanced of course. Balancing carbs is hard enough on a twin carb set up, I imagine triple carbs would be more challenging and 6 would be very hard indeed and a triple carb arrangement is a good compromise.

But none of this applies to the 15/6 because the 6 cylinders are fed by a 4 branch inlet manifold. There is no chance of balancing anything! This explains why these three carburetors are spaced as far apart as they can be, with a large balance pipe connecting them.

The front carb is opposite the single branch that feeds numbers 1 and 2 cylinders, another is opposite the single branch that feeds 5 and 6 at the back. The carb in the middle is feeding 3 and 4 which each have their own branches. So, this three-carb arrangement is making the best of a bad job.

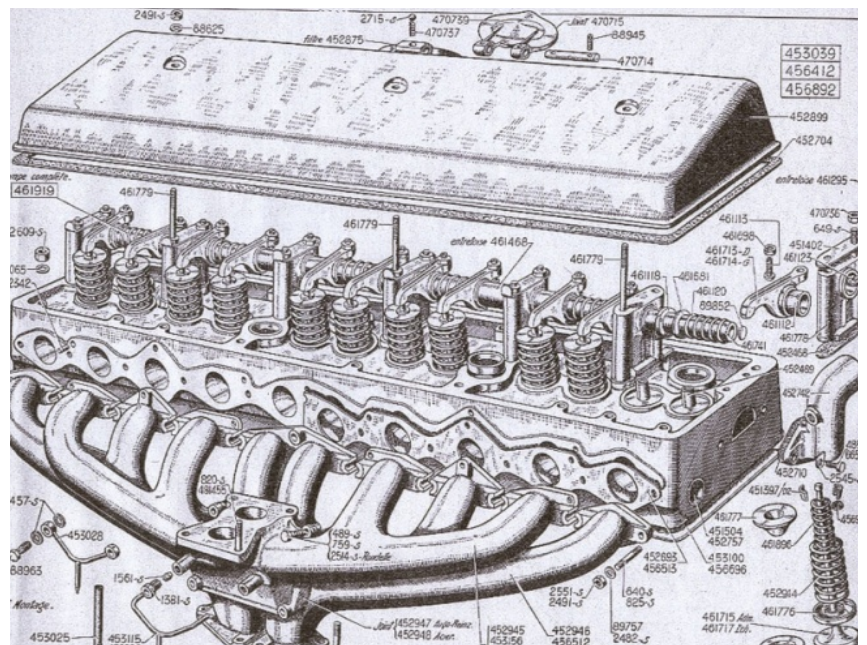
That is a bit unfair – I have no cause to say the standard 15/6 breathing arrangement is bad – just compromised and the triple set up is much better.

This supposes the air can get into the carbs in the first place. The photo shows what look like covers on each inlet – I have never seen that before. What are they and how does the air get past them?

Unusually for me, I have hardly driven my Traction in the last couple of months. The explanation is that I have spent most of the time elsewhere. The C-word is gone and, whilst I certainly do not want to revert back to the silly travel schedule I had previously, there is a bit of a backlog of face to face meetings to chew into.

As well as not driving it, I have also not been working on it. Any time I have spent spannering has been focussed on the Chrysler as we chose that car as our conveyance to the Goodwood Revival.

This was my first visit to the event – a Christmas present from my son. He and I donned appropriate(ish) clothing for a '59 American land yacht – imagine a cross between Frank Sinatra and the Blues Brothers – and we had a great day watching the racing.







The Goodwood Revival, if you do not know, is a recreation of the heyday of the Sussex motor racing circuit which closed to mainstream racing in the '60s. It's all about the BRMs, ERAs, Coopers, Ferraris and Maseratis of the grand prix days and the GTs and saloon car such as Minis, Cortinas, Ford Galaxies, E-Types and DB4s. What is singularly missing from this list is any kind of Citroen, let alone a Traction Avant.

That is not to say there we no Tractions there. As we walked along the side of the track we were pleased to see **Rob and Carol Kiff** driving the other way in their 1937 Roadster – one of the two that recently completed the Cape-to-Cape. Carol, Rob and the car all looked to be in great condition.

Rob and Carol had secured a place in the track-side pre-'66 car park. Our Chrysler was parked in the more remote pre-'66 car park

(note to self - must research the options for next year's parking). Near our Chrysler was a very nice looking big boot Slough Light 15. I hope the owners had as good a day as we did.

Apart from those two, there was no mention of Citroen at all.

There was a celebration of the Austin 7's centenary. Many examples were paraded around the track and left on display. The commentator reeled off the number of car manufacturers that started by making 7s under licence – BMW and Nissan being the most notable. Citroen had, by the time the 7 came along, already launched his little 5CV, taking no inspiration from the Austin 7.

Did any Traction ever race at Goodwood – in period – or ever? I don't know. Dr William Sellers may be a familiar name to some. He raced a 1937 Roadster which he had found in a French scrapyard in 1972. Being a pre-war car it was recognised by the VSCC and raced in their events at Silverstone amongst other locations. It was fitted with twin SU carburettors and got through many gearboxes – both 3 and 4 speed. I believe he still has this blue roadster and maybe still campaigns it in VSCC events.



How would a Traction fare on the track? Probably not well. I say this despite seeing Minis (the old type) dicing with E-Types and Galaxies on almost equal terms. Almost but not quite – the old adage "there's no substitute for cubes" won out in the end. The Mini works because it's nimble, the Galaxie works because it has power. It seems that a Frenchman named Peter Eppendahl – who raced under the name "Peterson" was of a similar view. Rather than attempt to be competitive in an under-powered, weak-gearboxed 4 cylinder car, he raced a "Quinze" – registration 457 AE 69. I mentioned above the sub-optimal inlet manifold on the 6-cylinder engine and he addressed this with much attention to porting (apparently consuming 4 cylinder heads and 400 hours in the process), a new cast inlet manifold to which he attached 3 SU carburettors. After more time spent fettling the carburettor needles the car was apparently quite quick



– “coming on cam at 45 mph and reaching 87 MPH – in second gear!” The car was lightened – fibreglass bonnet, 2CV seats, no bumpers - and competed in the “Circuit de Vitesse” in Marseilles (in 1955 I believe), coming 9th. After that M. Eppendahl returned to Lyons and gave the chief of the local Gendarmerie flying squad a blast round the city streets causing said Brigadier to shout out “incroyable” and begging Peterson to go even faster. Then the Gendarmerie (unaware that the big boss was a passenger in this hooligan machine) set up a roadblock and briefly arrested the driver before they were made aware of their mistake. This car went on to compete in further races until 1957 when the engine’s bearings finally gave up.

A car like that needs some attention to safety. My own seatbelt fitting exercise generated some correspondence from several people who have made more of an effort to raise the height of the top mounting. If you recall, I just added a long nut to the top door hinge bolt. A higher fixing requires an extension bracket which then needs welding to the B-post. I think that if you do that, there is probably no need to use the top hinge bolt at all – just weld a new plate at the right height. My next move will be to replace my cheapo static belts with retracting belts and stalks.

And so, a quiet winter lies ahead for my Traction. If I can focus my attention, I can do some of the jobs on the to-do list before things get busy for it next year. The TOC has rallies to Jersey and Devon. I’m organising the latter – if you want to go, let me know!

And please let me know soon as we will be opening up the invitation to our European Traction owning friends in the Traction Universelle and Traction Avant Netherlands Clubs. It will be a great weekend - the scenery is fantastic, and the Lyn Valley classic will be fun. I wouldn’t want you to miss it!

In case you are thinking about those steep, hairpin type hills that are common on the north coast of Devon, fear not. Of course they must be treated with respect but I’ve done them in my Traction several times and you need have no fear. Neither on the way up nor on the way down. It’s all about knowing they are coming and being prepared. Going up, stay in first and going down slow before it starts to get steep.

I will leave you with an interesting statistic that **John Oates** (your membership secretary) shared with me at the AGM. According to the DVLA, 48% of pre-1957 water cooled Citroens registered in the UK are on the road – i.e not on SORN and therefore insured and presumably roadworthy whereas 67% of TOC members’ cars are not on SORN. One could interpret that to mean membership of the TOC increases the probability that your car is roadworthy by 40% - that seems like a bargain to me.

Chris Bailey

3rd January 1951.

#### Unbiased Opinion

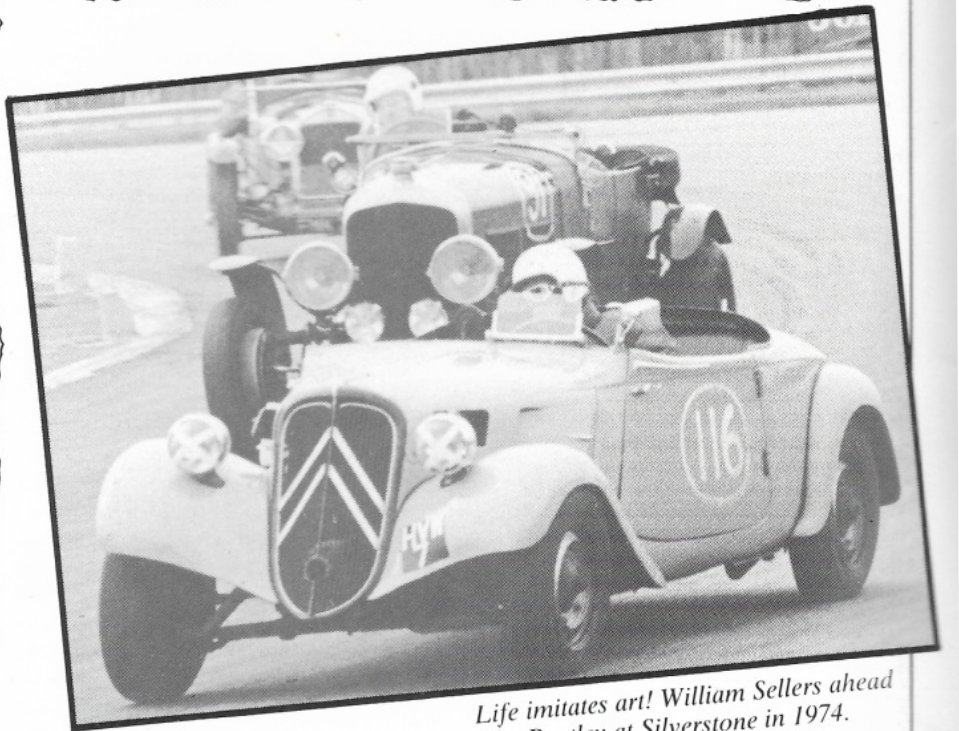
I SHOULD like to support Mr. Stanley Sedgwick in his praise (“The Motor,” December 20) of Russell Brockbank’s cartoon which appeared in your issue of November 8.

As an owner of both a 1930 supercharged 4½-litre Bentley and a 1948 “Light Fifteen” Citroen, I was most amused, but the last paragraph of General Upsett’s letter (“The Motor,” December 13) made me laugh even more.

The Citroen is a wonderful car—in my opinion, by far the best of its class and price group—but it simply cannot be compared with a “Blower 4½”—even on corners.

Henley-on-Thames.

ALAN ELLIOTT.



Life imitates art! William Sellers ahead of a Bentley at Silverstone in 1974.

# Big 6 Downunder

I have had problems recently with the gearbox. I could change into 1st and reverse but not 2nd or 3rd. I thought it was something I had done refitting the half shafts. I put a call out for advice and received an email from Phillippe Allison. Through his knowledge and patience I was able to follow his direction on how to check what was causing the problem. I first checked the gear change inside the car to see if the two springs under the dash were broken, they were fine and working correctly. Phillippe pointed out that there is a small link between the two gear shafts and that if it is only slightly out of alignment it would lock up. I disconnected the two gear rods in the engine bay and it was then possible to manually shift the gears and to find the sweet spot which I assume is neutral. I then adjusted the links to the gear change and after a few hours tinkering things dropped into place. So a huge thankyou to Phillippe for his invaluable help.



I have finally sorted the leaking brake cylinder. On the rear I had fitted two new cylinders previously and it turned out that the rear driver's side was missing a seal. A quick trip to the brake & clutch centre resulted in a couple of 1" replacement seals. I have started to bleed the system but only one cylinder at the front has a bleed nipple so I will look to replace the others. Following a recent trip to Canberra I picked up a set of hub caps. They needed a good clean so armed with fine wire wool a cloth and my trusty Purple chrome cleaner I set to work. It's amazing what a good clean can achieve. I am not looking for concours. Too many of my friends in the UK spent years making sure every nut and bolt was correct but then refused to use them. One in particular spent ten years doing up a froggy Sprite and after completion drove it once or twice before selling it to a buyer in Japan. I appreciate there is a place for concours vehicles but I don't have the funds and aim to drive the car if and when it is ever finished.

Along with the hub caps I also picked up a replacement rear brake hub as the original had a triangular piece missing from the outer section. Thanks Bob for coming up with a replacement. I also had the rear brake shoes relined as they were almost down to the rivets.



I have removed the front brake hubs several times. To remove the brake drum you need a mandril which works on the bearing and not the drum itself. I had borrowed one from Bob but realised I will need my own in the long run. I approached the engineering company who did the re-lining of the engine to see if they could make one. It wasn't cheap but is a work of art and will be put to good use.



I have installed the two inner wings which is a straight forward job although a couple of the captive nuts did not fare well. I have also started to prepare the front windscreen. I have replaced all of the rubbers and some of the tiny screws that hold the screen together.





I struggled to get the rear brake drum back on after replacing the brake shoes which had been relined. I adjusted the shoes using the brake adjuster and set the shoe bush to the narrowest setting but to no avail. I realised the hand brake cable would not move and was seized. The cable is held in an outer sheath and this was kinked in a couple of places. The cable was in good condition and after soaking in WD I was able to get it to run freely. The driver's side is also seized and one of the adjusters is badly worn.



The passenger side handbrake cable and the small piece of the outer sheath that had to be removed. The picture on the right is of the small collet that is thinner on one side to allow fine adjustment of the brake setting.

Kevin Taylor



*I would agree with your comment about concours cars. Much as I admire the tenacity of the owners, too many cars are restored to better than original and then are not used simply because the owner is afraid to get them dirty or stone chipped. We have a local member of a multi make car club who drives the most perfect Volvo Amazon that you have ever seen. One hint of a raincloud, and he makes a dash for home. Editor*



# Brittany Rally 2022 (In Normandy)

At the end of the Brittany rally in 2019, the usual cry of “à l’année prochaine!” went up. Little did we know that it would be three years before we could meet for “apéro” again. So, the first thing to say is that it was jolly good to be back. Enfin. Usually, at the end of these rallies, some unsuspecting rally virgin is selected to write the report on the rally, but we seem to have run out of those. So Martin de not so Little descended from his great height to pick on me as virgin-substitute. Not totally convincing!

As I start to write, I wonder for whom this is intended. Those on the rally presumably know what went on. Those that didn’t probably have no interest at all in what went on, being rather more keen when reading FP to get answers to questions like “why is my clutch stiff?” or “why don’t my brakes work?”. However, by tradition, you are stuck with a rally report. The Rally was based at the Camping du Lac, near Jumièges, in Normandy. So, a bit of a schlep from the normal hunting grounds in Brittany. Jumièges is well known for its ruined abbey, which oddly we didn’t visit.

## Day 1

I can rattle off the travelling of Day 1 quite quickly as I have no memory of it, not through advancing years, but because I wasn’t there. We had gone to stay near the rally site a couple of days earlier so, while the convoy was toiling 250-odd kms from the start near Falaise to Jumièges, we were having a leisurely lunch at “La petite Flamme” in Jumièges (highly recommended if you are ever in the area). I don’t expect there would be much to report in any event, the journey is just something to get done.

Martin Nicholson, our organizer/godfather and Vicky (fairly godmother?) were there to see the rally off. An opportunity to say thank you Martin for many years of shepherding your disparate flock on these rallies.

Things came together of course at the pre-dinner “apero” on the campsite. Now a much anticipated rally tradition. Pastis and Kir Royales have a wonderful way of raising the tone and the volume. Dinner at the “Base de Loisirs” campsite was really rather good – rare fillet steak all round (or some cunning French variant) went down very well.

A word about the campsite. This was next to a lake with various watersports possibilities, but particularly a “beach” for swimming. Something very welcome at the end of a hot day. Particularly on the 14 July “Bastille Day”, the water was noticeably warmer by the evening. Nothing to do, I’m sure, with the thousands of excited children splashing about all day.



## Day 2

One welcome development in recent years has been the provision of an organised breakfast on the campsite. This saves endless faffing about. 7.30 is a bit early though, but that is the new regime.

Anyway, off we went for a boat trip round Rouen Harbour. Our guide was very enthusiastic and, in French, presented us with more facts than can be decently digested early in the morning. The take-home message was that Rouen has lost out to Le Havre for the modern container traffic, and apart from the odd grain ship, the main industry was now guided tours round the harbour. We did get to see Flaubert’s summer house though.

Lunch was a picnic at a local micro-brewery.

On a rather warm day, there was limited enthusiasm for the guided tour. Adrian Phillips did go and described it a “mildly interesting”, hence not provoking a late rush for the second tour.

This was a day for enthusiast guides, as we then went to the Seine River museum, just by the rather impressive Pont de Brotonne, where we had a good hour of facts about the history of the river from earliest times. Flagging wasn’t the word!

Back to the campsite for “apero” followed by dinner at a lovely little bistro in Duclair along the river.





**Day 3**

This was the day which started by getting all the Tractions (30 odd) over the Seine on one of the seven little ferries that shuttle backwards and forwards along the river, all entirely gratis. It is done eight cars at a time with a 15 minute turnaround, but all seemed to be done quite quickly.

Time for a coffee stop at La Bouille, very pretty (une des plus belle villages, etc, etc). Seems that every French writer, artist or thinker had spent some time here according to the boards put up by the Mairie. Next stop was Le Bec-Hellouin with its monastery, castle keep, and a really very pretty village full of Norman half-timbered cottages (une des plus belle villages, etc, etc) And so to lunch, swim and siesta. However, we weren't done yet. A guided tour of Pont Audemer beckoned. It was a hot day, so we were somehow guided to a bar in the shade and a couple of refreshing panachés.

Back via another ferry, but not before a visit to a "Musée de la Vie Rural et Materiel Militaire et Agricole". This was billed for 6pm, which at the end of a long day was pushing it a bit, so there were those who had previously sloped off for a shower and a snooze. This musée was described by Adrian as "very exciting", but then he has a thing about old military vehicles.

Lovely dinner, but at 8.45, rather than the booked 7.30. Restaurant folk not best pleased.

The ferry, incidentally did a couple of 360 donuts in the middle of the river to celebrate the Tractions - quite a sight.

**Day 4**

Le retour, some 210 kms back to Bagnoles de L'Orne. Alex and I went a little off piste in the morning as we remembered that we had left the passports, etc, in a drawer in the gîte. Fortunately it was only about 40 minutes in, so back we went, via two ferries. To catch up, we went for a blast of autoroute, windscreen and windows open, going as fast as our 4 speed box would go, it was a noisy affair! So successful was this plan, that we arrived first for lunch. There were tales of déviations and route barrées from others, but everyone at last appeared.

On another hot day, we were glad of the picnic under the marché couvert. Martin and Vicky reappeared to make sure that we had been behaving ourselves. As ever, we cried "à l'année prochaine!", but with perhaps a little less certainty this time.

So there you have it. "à l'année prochaine!" indeed.

Terence McAuley



## Drive It Day 2023

Save the Date - Due to the successes of 2021 and 2022, the next Drive It Day & Ride It Day will be on Sunday 23rd April 2023. FBHVC will soon be launching the sale of new Drive It & Ride It Day vehicle plates. All variants will be available to purchase very soon. Once again, all profits from the sale of fundraising vehicle plates will be donated to Childline® so they may continue to run the vital service they provide children and young people. Childline® offer a 24 hour service and aim to be available for every telephone call or online contact received. This support network is a hugely vital and necessary service and can almost be classed as an emergency service for the most vulnerable. For any child or young person in desperate need of help, Childline® counsellors are there to assist. (Verbatim: FBHVC news)



## Importing a Car

It appears that following Brexit and probably influenced by the problems now arising with Northern Ireland, the NOVA procedure has changed again. There are now more options depending on VAT status or whether an individual or a company in particular for Northern Ireland. However HMRC have provided a clear explanation at <https://www.gov.uk/importing-vehicles-into-the-uk/telling-hmrc>. It remains the case that in a form of policing role DVLA will not register an imported vehicle until the NOVA procedure has been correctly completed. (Verbatim: FBHVC news).

## Members' Classified ads:

I have been approached several times recently by members wishing to advertise a non Citroën car, and sometimes a modern vehicle. We have obliged in most cases, but feel that, really, advertisers are extremely unlikely to generate any interest in a non Citroën classic car advertised in the back pages of what is a very specialist publication dedicated to liquid cooled pre-and immediately post war Citroëns. We suggest that it would be more productive to advertise on one of the free specialist websites such as the Car and Classic one, rather than advertising in the back pages of Floating Power. Similarly, we will be declining any adverts for modern cars, whether of Citroën or any other manufacture. Ads for Traction cars, RWD Citroën cars and commercials, and anything Traction, RWD or likewise related such as spare parts, books, etc. are all welcome.

## Traction Prices

The articles on Traction values struck a chord with the Citroën Classic Owners Club Of Australia, and these have now been reproduced in their regular magazine 'Front Drive'. I am still interested in collecting data on prices achieved in Citroën Traction sales, so please do keep your feedback rolling in again.



68 Australia's National Magazine for

### Traction Prices

Insurance brokers and general car enthusiasts. Hagnerty recently approached the Traction Owners Club in the UK with the aim of including Traction in their database of classic car values, and as a result they have proposed a series of prices as a starter for ten, which have been reviewed by the Committee.

This below was their initial suggestion.

- Condition 1: could use daily, sold and usable, not projects
- Condition 2: nice cars, might be able to win a local show, would either be very good daily users or reasonably nice cars to keep for hags days and holidays.
- Condition 3: as good as you're realistically likely to find in the real world, nothing wrong with them, could win at a Citroën event potentially
- Concours: If cost is no object and you want the very best for a collection, this is where it would sit.

DANGEROUSLY PROPOSED VALUATION TABLE					
MODEL	CONDITION 1	CONDITION 2	CONDITION 3	CONCOURS	
7A	Saloon	£8,000	£14,500	£28,500	£38,000
7B	Saloon	£8,000	£14,500	£28,500	£38,000
7C	Saloon	£8,000	£14,500	£28,500	£38,000
11B	[11B] 115	£8,000	£13,500	£27,500	£38,000
11B	[11B] 115	£8,000	£13,500	£27,500	£38,000
15A	[15A] 4	£12,000	£19,000	£35,000	£48,000
11CY	COMMERCIAL	£10,000	£15,000	£29,000	£32,000
11CY	HANDMADE	£10,000	£15,000	£29,000	£32,000
11CY	Engel	£25,000	£35,000	£55,000	£80,000
11CY	Convertible	£45,000	£80,000	£100,000	£150,000
15A II	Saloon	£14,000	£22,000	£39,000	£50,000

Bryan Fuller, the TOC Editor tries to keep track of real world prices for Traction in the UK and he does report on what

Being difficult on Traction pricing is a difficult task. As you will probably know, the market appetite for pre-war and





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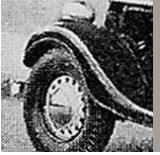
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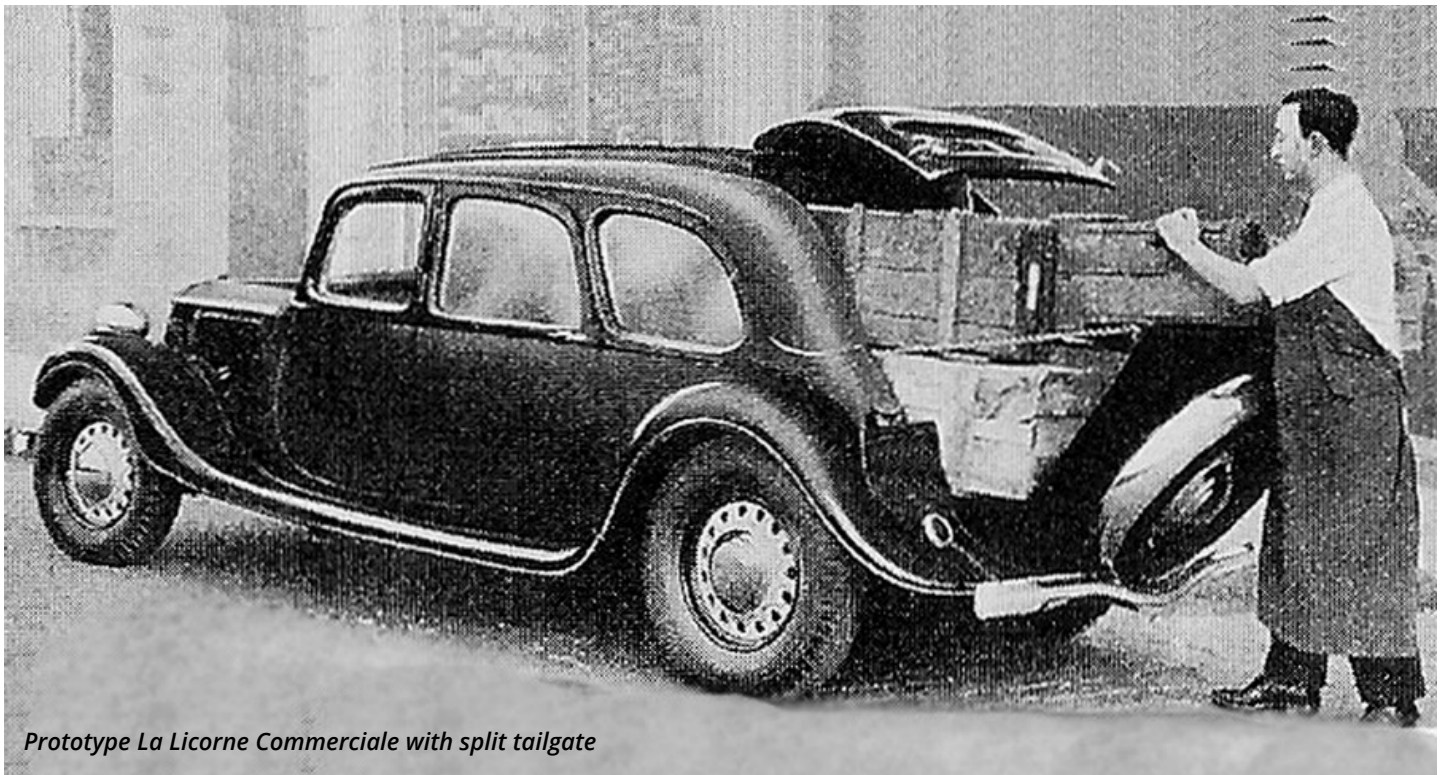
# Mythical Unicorns



## Mythical Unicorns

*This article originally appeared in the SAHB times Autumn Edition, 2022, authored by Andrew Minney, who explores two not-so-mythical La Licornes. I am grateful to both Andrew and SAHB Times editor, Malcolm Bobbit, for allowing us to reprint this article, which adds an interesting further chapter to the several articles that we have published previously about the Licorne cars.*

As with Citroën's ill-fated but now legendary V8-engined Traction Avant 22CV, two models from La Licorne – a Commerciale and a Familiale - have achieved near fabled status. La Licorne began life in 1901 when Jean-Marie Corre established Sté Française de Automobiles Corre. The La Licorne appellation was adopted in 1907, and thereafter the marque was known for its solid touring cars. From 1937, the Citroën connection was established when that company's bodies were embraced for the smaller models, along with its 1,628cc (9CV) and 1,911cc (11CV) engines. To muddy the waters Citroën-bodied La Licornes could also be specified with La Licorne engines of 1,450cc or 1,841cc.



*Prototype La Licorne Commerciale with split tailgate*

A sole La Licorne Commerciale version, possibly a prototype sharing the Citroën's body configuration, was constructed and then abandoned. The Familiale fared a little better with at least one example being produced, though unfounded rumours suggest as many as five were actually built. One must consider whether the Commerciale and Familiale were one and the same car, the latter manifestation having the upper section of the tailgate welded up, thus leaving the bottom half to open as usually found on Citroën's own Familiale and standard Berline variants.

The history of the Familiale is interesting since it was registered 29DU4 on 13th August 1938 to André Emile (Debourdeau) Vaillant of Dijon, this remaining until 17th July 1953 when the vehicle was last seen. During this time, the main change to its appearance was the colour, initially black, brown or green, then white or cream at some point post-WW2. There is no indication as to the reason for the colour change, apart from a post-war fresh start coming into play. A luggage rack was eventually mounted on the boot lid (though pictures of the car show it as having the spare wheel attached to the boot lid in similar style to that of the Citroën Traction Avant) followed by a larger type rack fitted to the roof. The car was first seen in the parking area in front of the Old Palace of the Dukes in Dijon before the building was used for municipal purposes as well as serving as the City Hall. Curiously, the car was parked in exactly the same location throughout the period 1939 to 1953.

André Emile Debourdeau was born on 2nd March 1911 in Dijon's maternity hospital, his father's name being unrecorded. He was adopted by Leon Vaillant (1885-1963) and Juliette Josephine Chantoiseau (1884-1963) on March 29th. Coincidentally Leon

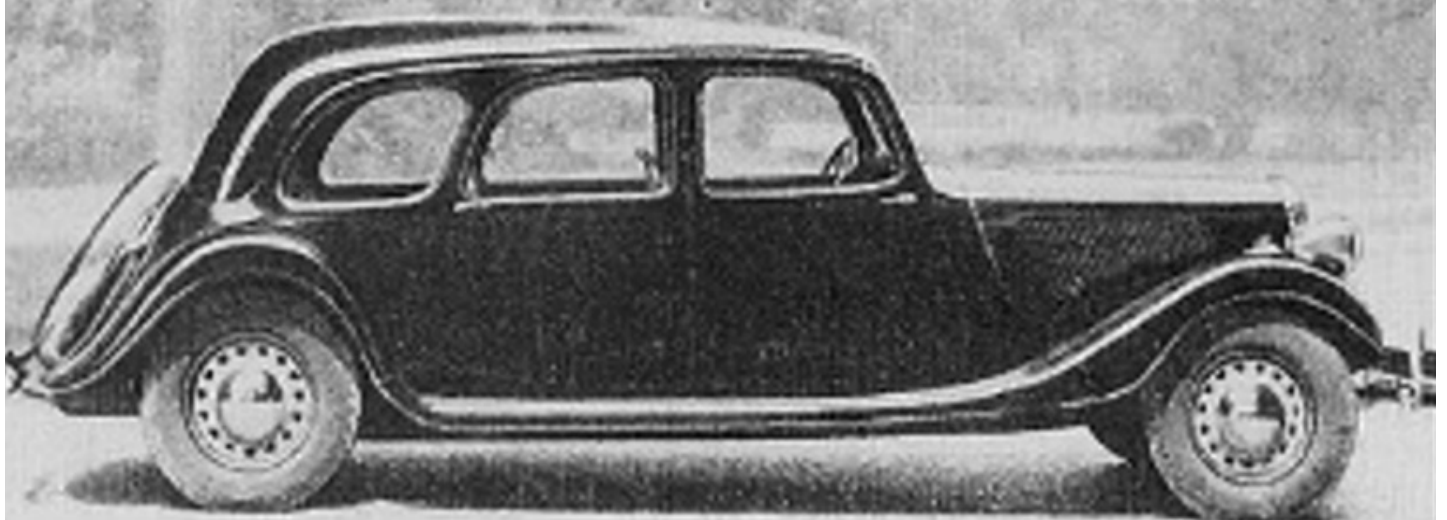


himself had been adopted (which is possibly why he adopted André) by the Jacquernard family who worked in the saddlery business in Dijon at 10 rue d'Auxonne. André joined the business of his adoptive father, who had taken over the business from his adoptive family, and from 1936 started a taxi and chauffeur company.

The La Licorne continued to be owned by André Debourdeau (Vaillant) until 17th July 1953 when it passed to another (unrecorded) custodian.

*La Licorne Familiale: was this constructed from the sole Commerciale prototype?*

*Despite their poor quality, these rarely seen images sourced by the author have been included owing to their historic importance*



At the same time the Familiale was given the new Dijon registration 2AY21.

What of the Familiale itself? If the Citroën 11BL body of its aborted Commerciale model had been used together with the 11CV Citroën engine that was designed for front-wheel drive, since the La Licorne was rear-wheel drive, it would have been necessary to turn around the engine and mate it to a La Licorne gearbox. In common with other models of the marque (Rivolis and Normandies), the car was right hand drive. It would have cost around £458 ( a little more expensive than a Citroën BL Familiale) when the average price of a British car was approximately £400, and therefore not economically priced.

As for André Debourdeau, he married Marcelle Yvonne Lefrancois in Dijon on 12th February 1949, the couple divorcing on 24th November 1954. André died in Dijon on July 23rd 1983 at the age of 72.

*As we have noted in previous articles about the Licorne cars, based on the Traction Avant range, the fundamental differences were that the Licorne cars, although using a Citroën Traction upper body shell, were mounted on a chassis, rather than being unitary in construction, and had rear wheel drive, thus negating the main fundamental advantages that the Tractions had technically over other cars of the period. Visually, the main difference was a slightly higher stance and running boards, which were of course, absent on the standard Tractions.*

*SAHB stands for The Society of Automotive Historians in Britain. The principal purpose of the SAHB is to encourage research, recording, compilation and publication of historical facts concerning the worldwide development of mechanically powered road transport and all related topics from inception to the present day.*

*The SAHB exists for all those of amateur or professional status who are interested in any aspect of motoring history, whether or not they are UK resident. The Society produces a quarterly publication: SAHB Times, an annual journal: Aspects of Motoring History; plus a comprehensive Membership Directory which assists in information exchange networking.*

*Go to <https://www.thesahb.com/> for more details of membership, etc.*

*Editor*



# Paris-Moscow-Paris 1984, Part 4

## 12th Day 28th July – Leningrad to Novgorod.

Departed Leningrad for Novgorod. We have a lovely drive, passing quaint wooden houses, very pretty, and notice women outside doing their washing in big tubs of water. Generally the women pause in their work to wave as we go by. We are surprised at how quickly the landscape has become rural with very little traffic. We pass horses towing carts loaded with hay slowly ambling along.

Our first surprise as we arrive at the Novgorod campsite is to be shown to individual wooden huts, each big enough for two people, complete with bulging straw mattresses. At first glance the huts look idyllic surrounded as they are by a grassed area bordered to one side by a little stream. However, most campers, ourselves included, decide not to trust the straw mattresses and pitch our tents alongside, much to the amusement of the guards who are stationed, one by each car throughout the night!

Novgorod itself is anciently picturesque but extremely poor. However, its splendid architecture appears to be undergoing some sort of renovation programme, so perhaps there are plans afoot to bring tourist money into the town. Today, even though we do our best not to draw attention to ourselves, we are openly stared at as we walk around. The dress of the local women, for the most part, appears to be the babuska headscarf, tied at the back of the head. The look is completed by floral print dresses, belted around their waists. Consequently, those of us wearing bright dungarees, or jeans and t-shirts, inevitably look out of place. Some of our younger members take advantage of the demand for black-market Levi jeans and sell of their spare pairs at a handsome profit.

As instructed, we turn up later at the local hotel for dinner where we eat fried fish. Here we are allowed to buy bread and cakes from a sort of 'shop' on the second floor of the hotel where we are served by jolly rotund women wearing white overalls and again, the trusty headscarf. We take a bus back to the campsite where again there is much confusion over petrol coupons before we can fill up. What a crazy system!

## 13th Day 29th July - Novgorod to Kalinin. Mileage 88,265

Preferring the local hotel to the campsite and its wooden huts, some rallyists are late to arrive at the starting point this morning. There are a few grumbles as we wait, impatient to get going on today's journey which we know will be a long one. Eventually we are all assembled and set off along what turns out to be unexpected good roads. Good progress is made and we feel justified when the

convoy is halted for a picnic lunch. Josie offers us English Cheddar from her trailer-tent fridge, a little taste of home. On arrival at Kalinin we are required to stay in yet another Hotel which, this time, turns out to be not unpleasant, despite the vagaries of the plumbing which issues dark brown water into the bathtub and the drain for the tiled shower is installed an inch or two above its rightful place allowing water to run out under the door and into the hallway.

Tomorrow is the big day. The high point of the trip. Moscow! Tonight the bar is a lively place, a cosmopolitan band of happy, vodka sampling rallyists whose excitement is building to a slightly drunken fever. The French contingent is singing loudly while downing Russian champagne, bought for £5 a bottle. One of the young members of the Dutch Team begs Graham for a Traction T-shirt which he promises to send on our return.

Clearly our enthusiasms are not shared by members of the secret police who are not particularly adept at keeping themselves secret. Most of us are by now, are on nodding terms with them and sincerely hope they are enjoying their excursion which must be a change from their normal routine. A representative from Intourist informs us that we must show more discipline. We receive a lecture. He is also keen to emphasise that we must stay in line while we are travelling. Logistically, it is no simple task to keep such a huge number of vehicles together. We all travel at different speeds and on a drive lasting between five or six hours we all need breaks at different times and for different reasons. However, we've all become adept at the gallic shrug and leave Intourist to worry on our behalf. We are aware, however, what they are really hinting at. We know that several of the more inquisitive members of the party sometimes take mini detours down the occasional unguarded side-road. This behaviour causes our minders a lot of anxiety, not to mention shouting and arm waving, when they realise that one or two vehicles have mysteriously gone missing.

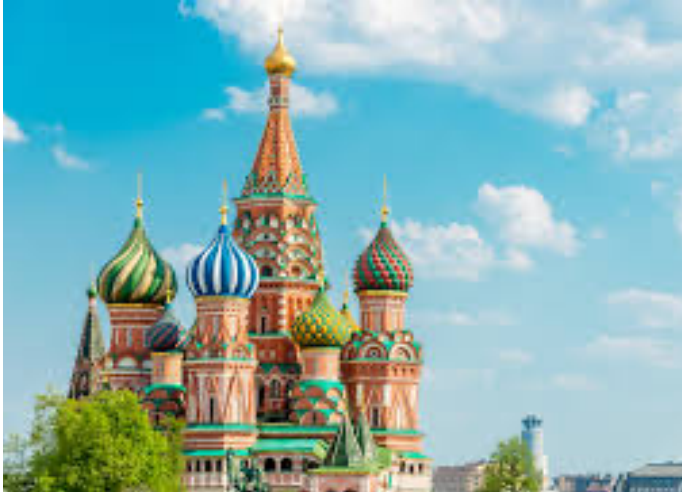
## 14th Day – Kalinin to Moscow

We depart Kalinin in pouring rain but not enough to dampen our spirits. We are all smiles, thumbs up, a happy, laughing, joking, travelling circus. Just outside Moscow we halt on the motorway to group up. Our minders are nervous but we are determined to arrive at Red Square in triumph. To drive through the city in convoy and arrive in Red Square has been our long held fantasy and we are determined our entry will be triumphant. However, we later learn that our planned gathering in the Square has been forbidden by the authorities. What are they worried about we wonder? Deciding that nothing is going to stop us and thinking there is not much they can do to prevent so many cars arriving en masse, we go ahead with the plan and all



park up in a semi-organised fashion on the cobbles of the big empty square. It is not long however before we are hurried off but we are happy that our expectations have been met.

### **31st July. Rest Day in Moscow**



An escorted tour of the city including a view of the Kremlin. Once again we are amazed at the exquisite architecture, pictures of which we have seen many times, swirling turrets topped with golden domes. We can hardly believe we are seeing it for real. But it seems we have no time to go into any of the cathedrals and instead are ushered back to the motel for dinner which is consumed quietly and not with our usual raucous enthusiasm. Often we are not really sure what we are eating. Tonight, I suspect that the rather misshapen lump of grey meat is boiled heart, from what sort of animal I have no idea. Bread is solid and cut into thick heavy slices. It has a slight vinegary taste but not unpleasant. Yogurt seems to be a common accompaniment to most meals.

In the evening we all gather in the foyer of the motel and sit where we can. Someone produces a fruit cake and we all tuck in. Someone else produces a guitar and eventually the mood starts to lift.

### **1st August Rest Day in Moscow**

Graham and I decide not to avail ourselves of the joys of the official 'Soviet' exhibition and instead wander around Moscow alone. Here we visit several stores, one a beautiful bakery with many different breads for sale, belying the impression that only the heavy vinegary bread is available. Then there's the marvelous GOM store. What a delight! A glass-topped aviary with walkways on each level. As tourists we are allowed to buy goods that the local people are not allowed to purchase. We are often asked if we wish to pay with dollars. We have no dollars to offer, only local currency and this is always greeted with a sigh of disappointment.

It is getting late by the time we leave Red Square to head back. Before leaving the motel we enquired about public transport to get us back and the friendly receptionist told us where to find the bus station. We find it easily but on showing the waiting drivers our destination which the receptionist had written down for us, they all shrug and turn away in a manner we can only describe as hostile. In this atmosphere of non-cooperation we wonder what to do next but luckily a Dutch traction is passing at that very moment and we flag him down and hop gratefully into the back seat. We all agree that the Russian people are not how we expected them to be. Before our trip began, I imagined the population to be united in their communist existence. While not expecting them to be waving the red flag at all opportunities, I thought, even if poor, they would be proud and happy with their lot. Instead we found them to be downright miserable. They seem depressed and oppressed. In most capital cities there is usually a lightheartedness, an atmosphere of expectation, but not here. People scurry along with heads down, not making eye contact even with each other. Their clothes are dull and dreary and their expressions blank and cold.

Our feelings are borne out later when the evening meal is served so late, deliberately it seems, by uncommunicative waiters knowing we are booked on an excursion at 7pm. Even Serge is unable to hurry them or give an explanation as to the lateness of the meal. We are worried about missing the bus to take us to a performance of the world-famous Cossack-dancers.

We arrive in the nick of time and find our seats to much tutting and scowling from Russian theatre goers, just as the performance is about to begin. But it was well and truly worth it. The performance was breathtaking, the dancers displaying enormous physical stamina in routines requiring them undertake the famous knee thrusts from a crouching position with arms folded high above their chests. Impressive is hardly enough to describe such a feat. We clap and stamp and shout and whistle. Spirits are definitely lifted, even more so as we travel through the city on the return journey, magically lit up in the dark night.

Graham and Susan Bradley

*The current set of relations with Russia deteriorates ever more substantially, even as I edit this diary. I wonder when, if ever, in our lifetime, a journey such as this will be either possible or desirable. Editor*

# Events



Most of the 2022 season's events are done and dusted, so it is now time to start reporting next year's events. However, still to come in 2022 is the **The Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show**, with Discovery+, which brings together a great array of classic car and motorcycle clubs, together with many individual and Trade exhibits. The venue is, as always, the NEC, and dates are the 11-13 November 2022. Club members save £4 off single-day adult tickets or £2 off other ticket types by quoting the club code N22CC437.

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Early in 2023, again at the NEC, is the **Practical Classics, Classic Car & Restoration Show**, on the weekend of the 24 March. Hailed the 'friendliest of car shows', the show attracts over 28,000 visitors across 3 days, and brings together all aspects of classic motoring. From live restoration projects to pristine classics. It's a weekend all about rusty barn finds, concours quality classics and everything in between. For the first time ever the TOC plan to have a Stand at this Show.

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It's off to Jersey in May 2023 for **The TOC Jersey Rally**. (11th -15th May). Numbers are limited, due to the nature and size of the island's roads, so book your place as soon as possible. Contact Bev at [chairman@traction-owners.co.uk](mailto:chairman@traction-owners.co.uk) for more information.

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**The 2023 TOC National** is back down south again, meeting as usual during June, and based this time in the West Country in the Barnstaple area. The format will be similar to 2022, with Sunday's organised event being a day at a major car show in Lynton and Lynmouth. Details were in the September/October magazine. Please contact Chris Bailey on [marketing@traction-owners.co.uk](mailto:marketing@traction-owners.co.uk) or 07768325924 if you would like further details and to express an interest. If you are already thinking of coming along, then please get your deposit/application form off to Chris as quickly as possible.

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## CTAB Brittany 2023

Next year's rally will be held from Friday July 14 to Monday July 17, 2023

Thanks to Raymond Horvais, the venue is at the Camping de la Récré (The Lake of the Three Priests), 29290 Milizac. Camping de la Récré offers us a room with a capacity of 130 people where we can have our meals and breakfasts. Numbers of places available are increased on 2022. The maximum number from TOC will be 45 people and 22 cars. It will be first come, first served. (30 have already applied) Contact Martin Nicholson [vicmarnic@gmail.com](mailto:vicmarnic@gmail.com) for details ad bookings.



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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.

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**m.tebbett@icloud.com or 01684-563315**





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**Rob@kiff.co.uk**



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**Email bryndhughes@yahoo.co.uk**  
**Tel: 07858109859**

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**m.tebbett@icloud.com.**  
**or 01684-563315**



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**Email: spares@traction-owners.co.uk**

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

**www.traction-owners.co.uk**

**WANTED:**

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**m.tebbett@icloud.com**  
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