



Colne Valley Classic and Vintage Club Newsletter

The CVCVC was formed in 1989 to encourage interest in Historic, Vintage, Classic Cars and Motorcycles



July 2022



Eclectic Classic Display - CVCVC May Midweek Lunchtime Meeting – The Square & Compasses

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Editor's Intro

Life appears to be returning to normal, Club numbers have increased on our CVCVC Evenings and Midweek Lunchtime Meetings.

The CVCVC June Classic Car & Motorcycle Show held in the grounds of the Thatcher's Arms was a brilliant evening, dry weather, attractive countryside, with many members and thirty-five superb classic vehicles. To be reviewed in the August Newsletter.

May's Midweek Lunchtime Meeting was held at the Square and Compasses, a 17th century inn, highly regarded locally as a "celebration" dining establishment. There were good comments on the food, however with twenty-seven members attending the meeting, there were insufficient staff resulting in incorrect orders and lengthy waiting times. Otherwise, a good lunch.

For our May Club Evening, Peter Minter gave an informative talk on his Bulmer Brick Company. I don't think many members, including me, had realised the complexity of producing special clay bricks, or the historic significance of the Bulmer Kilns.

Great articles again this month from Stuart Black, Geoff Broad, Roger Martin and Charles Soule.

An extremely rare Guess the Car feature this month.

The Newsletter Editor position is still available, please do not hesitate to contact me if you are interested.

Stay Safe Chris Sharman

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Coronavirus

In line with the Government's requirements, the CVCVC has commence monthly Midweek Lunchtime meetings and Evening events. Members will be informed through the CVCVC Newsletters and Parish Notices if there are changes to the Government regulations.

Jun 30 Midweek Midday Meet Up – The Crown Hartest IP29 4DH.

Jul 21 Club Evening – Thursday 8pm Speaker Bob Chaplin – Mallard 126mph by Steam. Great Maplestead Village Hall CO9 2FJ.

Jul 27 Committee Meeting - Wednesday 7.30pm. The Bell Castle Hedingham CO9 3EJ.

Jul 28 Midweek Midday Meet Up - The Horseshoes Cockfield IP30 0JB.

Aug 5 CVCVC Summer Dinner - The Cricketers, Fordham Heath CO3 9TG, menu and booking details enclosed.

Aug 18 Club Evening – Thursday 8pm Summer Noggin & Natter. Great Maplestead Village Hall CO9 2FJ.

Aug 25 Midweek Midday Meet Up – Axe & Compasses Aythorpe Roding CM6 1PP.

Sep 4 CVCVC Scatter Rally – Starting from Hennesseys and finishing at Clare Country Park – See details on page 2

Club Information

The CVCVC is open to all enthusiasts with an interest in vintage and classic cars and motorcycles

The CVCVC Committee

Chairman	John Goodman
Deputy Chairman & Events Co-ordinator	Stuart Black
Treasurer	Chris Harman
Secretary	Geoff Broad
Membership Sec.	Roger Martin
Newsletter Editor	Chris Sharman
Parish Notices Editor	David Singer
Webmaster	Bob Chaplin
Club Safeguarding Officer	Julie Ingram

CVCVC Membership

Club Membership is open to enthusiasts with an interest in vintage and classic cars and motorbikes. Membership details can be obtained from Roger Martin

Website

The Club's website can be found here:

www.colnevalleycarclub.org.uk on it are pages of club and local classic car related events. There are links to other relevant sites and further information. Past copies of the Newsletter can also be found here.

The CVCVC and Electronic Media

eNewsletters

The majority of members now receive this newsletter, on a monthly basis, by email. If you receive the black and white copy by post and would like to receive the full colour edition by email, for home printing, then please contact Roger Martin.

Electronic mailings

Regular updates are sent out with reminders of lunch meetings and information on our evening speakers. Additionally, these include more details of forthcoming club events and activities. To receive these, please make sure Roger Martin has an up-to-date email address for you. Finally, please make sure that any spam filter is set to allow the email address.

Club Articles

The Newsletter always requires articles, so please forward details to the editor on your vehicle's motoring experiences, event reviews, or restoration and technical stories. New feature ideas are always welcomed.

August Newsletter

Would you please forward articles by email or post before Monday 18th July
Chris Sharman,

DISCLAIMER

The views, opinions and any technical advice printed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee or Editor and should not be taken as such. The CVCVC accepts no responsibility for the results of following contributor's advice.

Future CVCVC Events

Club Evening Thursday 21st July
Great Maplestead Village Hall
126MPH by Steam with Bob Chaplin



Everyone (or almost) knows Gresley A4 4468 Mallard holds the world speed record for steam set in 1938 but why did it happen?

Get your ticket for a talk on the events leading up to the run,

the run itself held in utmost secrecy. The people involved, heroes and a villain! Plus a history of high-speed steam running which ultimately ended up at 126mph.

We will also be-bunk a few urban myths!

CVCVC Summer Evening Dinner 2022

The CVCVC invites you to join our Summer Dinner which will be held on Friday 5th August at The Cricketers, Spring Lane Fordham Heath.

Starting at 7.00 for 7.30. The cost is £32 per head for three courses, including tea/coffee and service.

Those who've been before know that it's an enjoyable evening and a chance to meet up with other club members, friends and partners over a relaxing dinner. New members are especially welcome to come and meet everyone.

Further information, menu choices and booking details are included in the enclosed flyer.

Club Evening Thursday 18th August, Noggin & Natter, Gt Maplestead Village Hall

The August meeting is traditionally our summer evening noggin and natter event, time to discuss classic cars, motorcycles and just about everything else. It's also light enough to come in your classic, just before the evenings start closing in.

CVCVC Scatter Rally Sunday 4th September

The rally will start from Hennesseys 10.30 -11.00am and finish at Clare Country Park between 14.00 & 16.00pm.

Interesting things starting at Hennesseys – car related – a performance shop which will cater for classic cars too, with more details to follow.

Clare Country Park have agreed for us to park within the park – could be an interesting couple of hours for all.

Further details to follow next month.

All entrants will need a Motorsport UK Licence free online.
George Wilder

MG at the Village

Ann and I attended the 'MG at the Village' event at the Petersfield Antique Centre at Gosfield on Sunday 29th May.

Billed as a celebration of 60 years of the MGB, all classic MGs and even other marques were welcome. Of course, we went in my MGB GT, but there were probably as many modern MGF/TFs as there were MGBs in attendance.



Cars that caught my attention were a really lovely red Rover SD1 Vitesse, a Ford V8 Pilot, a Ford Mark 2 Consul like the one I passed my test in and what looked like a nice Mark 1 Lotus Cortina that I just happened to park next to.

I subsequently realised that I knew the owner of the latter who is a friend of my eldest son and hence I knew his car was actually a replica, but a lovely one, nonetheless.



Other CVCVC members in attendance included the Seabrook's (Jaguar E-type), O'Connor's (Mini Scamp), Holders (Austin A30) and George Wilder and Richard Stanbridge (MGBs).

We left about lunchtime as the skies were darkening and shortly afterwards the afternoon's heavy rain really started so I hope that the O'Connor's didn't get too wet going home in their completely open Scamp.

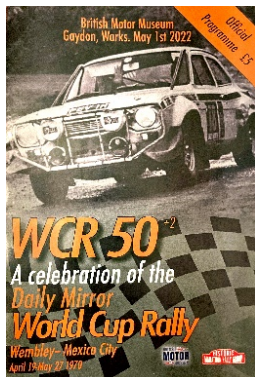
Oh, and I have to confess that I couldn't resist browsing the shop there that specialises in model vehicles, where of course I parted with some ready cash!



Kind regards
Roger Martin

A Mexican Celebration and the Late Arrival of a French Goddess

It's been a busy time at Ford Heritage recently preparing for the anniversary of the 1970 World Cup Rally at on May 1st.



As some of you may remember, I've talked to the club about this rally before and it remains the longest and most gruelling motorsport event in history covering 16,000 miles from London to Mexico City. The Heritage collection owns the winning car, Escort FEV 1H driven by Hannu Mikkola. Hannu would have been the guest of honour at the planned 50th celebration at Gaydon in 2020 but COVID caused the postponement of the event by two years and sadly he passed away in 2021. At least we could make sure that Hannu's car would be at the show and displayed in his honour. I enjoyed the preparation work which included remaking the rear mudflaps torn off by an over-enthusiastic journalist reversing over a high kerb.



Shake down drives were great fun. The Escort goes extremely well and, being designed for long distance durability rather than high speed, its simple pushrod 1830 Kent engine is in a lower 140 bhp state of tune than the usual works twin cam BDAs and is consequently very smooth and tractable. Still quick enough though as Hannu proved a few years ago when he was reunited with the car on the Goodwood rally stage and didn't hold back on getting sideways with a grin!

At Gaydon, FEV 1H attracted a huge amount of interest from a knowledgeable crowd with some very detailed questions from Escort buffs. We met some of the original competitors, organisers and one of the mechanics from Ford at Boreham who helped to build our Escort back in 1970.



There were many other cars at Gaydon that had taken part which are now in private ownership. The most represented models were four Triumph 2.5 PIs in various states of restoration including Paddy Hopkirk's car that finished fourth.



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Brian Culceth's Triumph finished second and he gave a very interesting talk on his experiences en route to Mexico – he recalled with some regret that his was the only Triumph to finish with virtually no damage, yet BL chose to scrap his car.

Other competitors included more Escorts, a BL1800, Hillman Hunters, Capri, Maxi and the very last works Mini produced by Abingdon.



However, I think the most remarkable car at Gaydon was one that took many years to get to the finish. The owner asked to park his works Citroen DS21 next to FEV 1H for a photo and we started chatting about the car's incredible story.



This DS was part of the Citroen team entry and made it to South America only to suffer terminal failure in Bolivia with a broken timing chain. The car was abandoned at a Bolivian Citroen dealer and never recovered. André Midol was on vacation with his family driving a Traction Avant for 32,000 km around South America in 2005 when he happened to call on the Citroen dealer in Bolivia and came across the stored DS looking rather tired. André had a wild idea and bought the DS, returning later to start a rebuild that was completed in 2017. His mission was that the DS should complete the rally and he followed the original route arriving in the Aztec stadium in Mexico City on April 3, 2018. The local Citroen club organised a procession of 6 DS models and a stadium party to celebrate its arrival 48 years after it was intended to cross the finishing line.



The adventures of the DS did not end after its return to Bolivia. There was no way to export a vehicle from Bolivia to France no matter how André tried to work round officialdom. Desperate, he returned to Paris and bought the cheapest blue Citroen DS he could find, shipped it to Argentina, drove to Bolivia and let's just say that the paperwork and identities for the two cars got mixed up somehow. André returned to Paris with the works DS.

**Magnifique!
Stuart Black**

CVCVC May Club Evening Talk Bulmer Brick & Tile Company



Peter Minter gave a fascinating insight to his company, commencing with a photo of an Austin 7, bought by Peter's father after the war and sold later to Peter for £15. Passed on to his sister who rolled the Austin, resulting in the car being stored in a barn for many years, but is now undergoing an extensive restoration. From the photo the nearside front tyre is down to the canvas and Peter told the story that

the car was parked in Sudbury and a constable cautioned the driver for having a flat tyre, not for lack of tread. Easy going days!

Peter also mentioned he took his driving test in a 1928 (crash gearbox) Riley.

Commencing the Bulmer Brick talk, Peter showed a geological map of the UK indicating the area of London Clay formed 36 million years ago, covering an area from the Thames to the Stour Valley. Each autumn 1500 tons of clay is excavated on site for the following year's production of bricks.



Artefacts continue to be found during the excavations, previous finds include a flint hand axe, spear and arrow heads; plus, sharks teeth found in the lower levels. Bronze Age burial urns signifies the use of clay on the site, followed by Roman, Saxon and Medieval remains of pottery, brick and tile pieces.

The English family – Brick makers and farmers owned the Bulmer Site from 1795 until 1926, when the site was sold to builders George E Gray, who required bricks for developments in South Essex. Peter's father purchased the site in 1936. The business concentrated on producing high quality bricks for the London market, plus various clay fired products for the RAF's expanding East Anglian airfields. The turn of the century updraught kilns were initially closed down during the war, due to the furnace glow being visible from the air. Rebuilt with domes, glow was eliminated although Peter mentioned that one kiln was machined gunned by an enemy plane.



The Bulmer Brick Company produces 150 hand-made facing brick types – including Tudor, Georgian and Victorian. Peter explained the series of procedures to manufacture the bricks – The clay is uniquely mixed and prepared to suit its appropriate future restoration/vernacular location, the wet clay 'warps' are placed in purpose made moulds, varying in size to suit a particular contract (7000 individual moulds are held in stock). After removing from the moulds, the wet bricks are stored in open sided sheds to dry, shrinking by 12% before firing in the kilns. The bricks are strategically placed in the kiln as heat and sand to clay ratios influence the fired bricks colour and strength.

Quantity by piecework was the norm in brick making many years ago, but now quality and accuracy are required. Bulmer Bricks now emphasising the skill required to produce replica, carved and cut (rubber) bricks.

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Following his father's death in 1974, Peter took over the family business, and continually improved the facilities to increase specialist brick manufacturing, including better drying facilities during the winter months and more efficient kilns.



Peter showed many photos of Bulmer brick restoration work - Chimneys and external walls to historic buildings including Hampton Court, Kensington Palace, St Pancras and Bury St Edmunds Stations,

plus many other buildings throughout the country.



Hampton Court Barracks



St Pancras Station



Goldsmith Mansion Sudbury

Nearer home Peter was called in to supply replica decorative facing bricks for the Georgian listed Goldsmith Mansion building located in Sudbury's Market Square, completely destroyed by fire in 2015. The site clearance removed most of the decorative feature bricks, making Peter's job of recreating special bricks difficult. Fortunately, archives were available providing sufficient information to make bricks to replicate the originals.

Peter has lectured at York University and appeared in several television programmes to discuss and explain brick making.

In response to our members interest, Peter continued with further information – A few of the topics –

The business employs 20 people, including Peter's two sons and two grandsons. Brick moulds are made from local sourced timber. The average cost of a Bulmer special brick is £3.00 against a mass-produced brick costing £1.00. The availability of selected sands is a problem, along with coal. The Colne Valley Chappel Viaduct completed in 1849, used seven million bricks made from local clay excavated from Mount Bures.

An exceptional illustrated talk by Peter, shared with twenty members.
Reviewed by Chris Sharman

April Club Evening, A Talk by Charles Soule Life of Lord Nuffield Motor Manufacturer & Philanthropist- part 2

William obtained an OBE in 1918, became a Baronet in 1932, a Lord Viscount in 1934 and a Fellow of the Royal Society 1939.

With war clouds gathering on the horizon, Lord Nuffield took charge of creating a massive aircraft Shadow Factory at Castle Bromwich near Birmingham, where they would be able to draw on the existing automotive workforce for labour. The first turf for the new factory was cut in 1938, but despite much hype and propaganda, there were problems with construction, installing engineering equipment, plus labour strikes. However, when Lord Beaverbrook became Minister for Aircraft Production in May 1940, his own team took control of the factory, Lord Nuffield was dismissed and in June 1940, Spitfires finally came off the production lines. Lord Nuffield complaints to Churchill came to nothing.



Over 12,000 Spitfires of various marks were produced at the Shadow factory. Later in the War Lancaster Bombers were assembled in the plant.

Lord Nuffield was worth £30,000,000. (£700,000,000) in today's money and generously set up the Nuffield Foundation, Nuffield Trust and Nuffield College, Oxford, in addition donated a vast proportion to charities and hospitals, deprived areas, and the military with £250,000 donated to RAF aircrew. £25,000 was also donated towards the development of Jodrell Bank Radar Station. He also donated money to the Government Borstal Services, in 1946 an internment camp adjacent to Nuffield Place became a borstal centre.

During the 1940s & 1950s Polio was a serious illness and Lord Nuffield used his factories to supply part for 700 iron lungs



respirators, distributed to every national hospital and the Empire.

He also donated ultraviolet lamps to his factories and RAF night fighter stations.

During the war, a design team led by Alex Issigonis commenced work on a Morris 8 replacement, code named "Mosquito". This was an advanced model with an American styled unitary bodyshell, torsion independent front suspension with rack and pinion steering.

Lord Nuffield himself took a strong dislike to both the Mosquito and Issigonis, famously saying that the prototype resembled a poached egg. Nuffield preferred to continue production of the conventional Morris Eight, with some minor styling and engineering improvements. He particularly objected to the Mosquito's expensive and unconventional design. Due to cost restraints, a flat floor engine was deleted and the Morris 8 917cc side-valve engine and transmission were used. Later in the prototype stage, the body was widened noticeably by the bonnet centre strip.



In 1951 The Nuffield Organization and the Austin Motor Company amalgamated to form the British Motor Corporation, providing the Morris Minor with an OHV 803cc engine. The various models were continually updated, including a 948cc engine in 1955, increased in 1962 to 1098cc. The Morris 1000 was the first British Car to reach 1,000,000. Production continued into 1972.



Alex Issigonis left Morris in 1952 to work at Alvis, but was recruited by BMC and after the Suez crisis he was tasked with designing a small economical car loosely based on the Fiat 500, resulting in the Morris Mini Minor and Austin Seven.



Lord Nuffield became Chairman of the British Motor Corporation before retiring in December 1952 at the age of 75. Taking on the title of Honorary President and still attended his office regularly and continued to advise his colleagues. Lord Nuffield died in 1963.

On his death, the ownership of Nuffield Place and its contents, passed to the Nuffield College who opened it to the public on a limited basis. It was later passed to the National Trust and is open to the public on a regular basis.



Nuffield Place typifies early 20th-century taste and thrift, revealing the home life of Lord and Lady Nuffield. Even with a fortune behind them, they still enjoyed the simpler things in life. Their home and personal possessions are just as they left them, giving visitors a true experience of how they would have lived their lives. (*pre-booking is currently required*).

Reviewed by Chris Sharman

CVCVC May Midweek Lunchtime Meeting at the Square & Compasses, Fuller Street



A dry, bright, sunny, warm and clear day. Ahead was lunch at a lovely old country pub with fellow CVCVC members. Lovely.

The Square and Compasses is tucked away in some lovely countryside and once you are getting close to the pub you are in fairly narrow and winding roads that thread between lush hedges and fields.

I had wondered if the off-road parking may be a little tight so left home in good time in case I was needed as a 'car park marshal'. A few keen CVCVC'ers beat me to it and had tucked themselves along the far edges of the car park.

Rose and I went into the pub to join the others. At the entrance door we were greeted by a sign advertising the pub's need for staff to take on most roles you would expect in a pub. When inside the pub we met the half-dozen or so CVCVC'ers who were comfortably seated. I made my way to the bar and was greeted by the landlord.

The card machine wasn't working so people using 'plastic' to pay for their meal would be taken back in time as the pub would use the old sliding credit card machines that used carbon paper to record the transaction.

I went to a table and noticed that the section of the lovely timbered pub to where I was guided had seating for 20 people. I had anticipated more. 27 CVCVC diners turned up and I am glad to say that 2 found a table in another room and I 'bagged' a table for the other 5 when I saw it become vacant. As it happens, the diners leaving that table were CVCVC members who were walking The Essex Way. Fuller Street is on that route so once they had eaten I expect they too enjoyed seeing the lovely classic cars parked at the pub.

A short while later and before I had ordered food for Rose and me there was a mix up on a sandwich order of three separate servings where, the landlord told us, someone else must have taken what they didn't order. I decided to have that 'unwanted' sandwich which turned out to be a delicious and filling BLT. Rose patiently waited to place her order and all three on my table ordered fish and chips. Their food took a little too long to arrive, but the opinion of each of them was that it was lovely hot and well prepared food with generous portions.

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Once we all had our food and were tucking in, the landlord, who was now our genial host asked if we knew of anyone who would come to work at The Square and Compasses! Not surprisingly there were no takers.

The rest of the lunch was spent by all of us engaged in convivial banter and we went out into the car park to check out and wax lyrically over the other cars.

I drove home a little exhausted. I hadn't realised that being the organiser of a lunch could be stressful! At least, I thought; the CVCVC members who went will remember the experience.



Brian Gibson's MG TF & Roger Martin's MGB GT



Graham O'Connor's Mini Scamp, John Goodman's Morgan Plus Four, Chris Harman's Alfa Romeo GTV



Sunbeam Talbot 90s owned L to R – Ron Welsh, John Beardwell



Chris Watson's Ford Model 'C' & David Singer's Austin Healey 100 BN1



Si Holder's Austin A30 & Keith Dunn's Gilbern Invader

Lunchtime Review by Chris Harman

Photos supplied by Chris Harman & Roger Martin

Apologies for any members cars omitted from photo display. How often to you see two marvellous Sunbeam Talbot 90s together, plus the rare Ford Model C. Ed.

MGA to the Welsh Marches

With the worst of the Covid pandemic behind us, the classic MG events are now coming thick and fast and our first long haul event in the MGA in 2022 was the MGA Register Spring Weekend that took place in May in the Welsh Marches.

In fact, whilst only about 200 miles from Earls Colne, having gone that far we decided to make it a long weekend, driving to the Shrewsbury hotel on the Thursday and not returning home until the following Wednesday.

Having identified motorway and non-motorway route options, both the A14 and M6 looked clear when we set off from home so we used those until we could skirt the south of Birmingham on the M42 and then enjoy A-roads to Shrewsbury. I usually keep the MGA hood up and sidescreens fitted on motorways to reduce incoming traffic road noise but, such were the chilly temperatures, the car stayed that way for much of our trip.

As Ann and I are both into history and gardens, we went armed with National Trust and English Heritage membership cards, and certainly got our money's worth. On the Friday we toured locally, visiting the Roman City remains at Wroxeter, the

house and gardens of Attingham Park and the remains of Haughland Abbey. At the former, we learned that the Romans did not long use the unheated outside bathing pool that they constructed, and with weather like we had there we could certainly understand why!

When we got back to the hotel on the Friday evening the car park was full to bursting with about 50 MGAs plus a few classic and modern-classic substitutes. Most MGA models were represented; 1500s, 1600s, twin-cams, 1600 Mark IIs, roadsters and coupes. And then the socialising began as old-acquaintances were renewed for another year.



Saturday's route stayed in England, with a morning coffee stop at Clun with its picturesque packhorse bridge. Being old-fashioned, both Ann and I were looking for postcards to send home and when we saw the Clun Cafe was named The Postcard Cafe we thought our quest was over. Wrong, instead it had racks and racks of vintage postcards for sale, as well as vinyl LP albums. But the coffee was very welcome, nonetheless.



We then pressed on to Ludlow for a spot of lunch, which was where we saw two of the very few other classic cars that we noticed on the trip. The first was a very early split-screen Morris Minor and the other was a Bentley that was undertaking wedding duties.



Our last stop of the day was at the very picturesque 13th century Stokesay Castle, after which it was back to the hotel for the gala dinner that evening. At the meal we found ourselves sitting next to a couple from Pembrokeshire who, to my astonishment, remembered me and my originally Pembrokeshire registered MGA taking part in the first Pendine Dash event that was held there way back in 1992!

Sunday's tour took us into Wales, where the weather was typically...er... Welsh! Our morning coffee stop was at the Lake Vyrnwy Hotel, which overlooks the lake and, fortunately, the rain held off just sufficiently for us to enjoy the view of the lake.



After coffee we drove beside the lake and up the minor single-track road towards the Cynllwyd Valley viewpoint on the way to Bala. It was on this road that a car coming the other way either could not or would not manoeuvre to let three MGAs past and I had to get out of my car and find some roadside verge that was firm enough for us to reverse on to and permit passing. Complicating matters further, about a dozen impatient motorcyclists couldn't wait for us to finish and so weaved through and around the manoeuvring cars, some almost coming to grief in the process. As a biker myself, I was quite ashamed of their attitude.



When we finally got to the viewpoint, the weather had really closed in so what was billed as a beautiful view towards Snowdonia turned out to be just a view of low cloud. We then turned back eastwards and descended the 'Hellfire Pass' to Dinas Mawddwy. The main stop in the afternoon was Powys Castle with its terraced gardens and stunning views but whilst the weather had by then improved, we didn't really have the time or the energy to do it all justice.

Guess the Car



On the Monday and Tuesday Ann and I were back on our own, when we visited Ellesmere and Chirk Castle to the north of Shrewsbury and then Ironbridge and the Blists Hill Victorian town and industrial archaeology museum to the south.



It was by the famous 1779 wrought iron bridge that we saw another Morris Minor - they seem to be everywhere - and also a Triumph Herald. At the museum we were reminded just how far transport has developed over the last 200 years when we saw a lovely one-horsepower Shire being harnessed, although the springs on the Victorian carts looked remarkably similar to the rear ones on my multiple horsepower classic MGs !



We completed our c.700-mile tour by returning home the same way we had driven there, the only difference being we topped up with super unleaded petrol on the M6, at a whopping cost of 199.9p per litre - ouch !!

Roger Martin
May 2022

August Classic Shows

Castle Hedingham 21st August – Classic & Vintage Car Show.
Lavenham 28th August - Lavenham Classics – 2022.
Further information & booking details available on the CVCVC Website.



This striking coupe had a manufacturing lifespan of twenty-two years under three ownerships. I can remember admiring the launch photos way back in the sixties, very angular compared with the usual curvy body styles. Have you any idea? Contact the editor with your answer.

Members Letters

Dear Chris

Best & Worst Cars

The correspondence relating to the best and worst cars got me thinking about my first real company car a Vauxhall VX4/90.

Up to that point I had a company pool Ford Cortina, OK as far as it went and particularly OK as a car someone else was paying for. My direct boss died on a business trip abroad and for some time I reported directly to the MD who was very busy



and when I said my car is up for replacement he said 'get what you like – within reason'

The VX4/90 was a terrific car, powerful and comfortable. A single overhead cam 2.23 litre 4-cylinder engine

putting out 122 bhp. I really liked the overdrive on third and top operated by a switch on top of the gear lever. As I recall, for the 70s a well-built, reliable car.

However. Nostalgia being what it is, are my memories of the car and the publicity for the car getting mixed up? As a young manager waiting for my VX4/90 to be delivered - about 3 months back then – I sat and read the brochure over and over, how could I not have been seduced by the images? I vaguely remember a long-legged blond in the passenger seat after I got the car.



It was a great car though.

Regards Geoff Broad