



Colne Valley Classic and Vintage Club Newsletter

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



May 2021



Inspection Time - CVCVC 2017 Classic Motorcycle Show held at the White Hart Great Yeldham

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Editor's Intro

I hope you and your families are keeping safe and well. The Increase of traffic on the roads and shops reopening could indicate that normality is gradually returning. It looks likely that our CVCVC events could commence from June, with the proviso that pubs will be open and large gatherings permitted.

A variety of features in this month's Newsletter. Stuart Black's "A Missing Chapter" tells the continuing story of the Ford v Ferrari rivalry. Roger Martin writes about his experiences on previously owning a Reliant Scimitar GTE. Last month Roger provided a photo of the obscure Bristol 450 sports racing car. This prompted me to pen an article on this model's history, the 450 really deserved greater acclaim. Mike Crees completes his History of Rolls-Royce, revealing that emergency and military vehicles used their engines for reliability, plus the history of the split company following the purchase by BMW and Volkswagen.

I enjoyed reading Chris Harman's article "It seemed a good idea at the time"...relating to using carpet under the car's wheels in snowy conditions. I have written an article on my own mishap with a Sprite louvred bonnet!

My "Future Copy" file is practically empty again, so your articles for June's Newsletter will be most welcome.

Lastly, how sad that Prince Philip died just short of reaching 100 years. The Queen's Consort for over six decades, an all-round sportsman, an interest in British Industry and he always spoke his mind. It is a passing of an era.

**Stay Safe
Chris Sharman.**

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with our Government's lockdown restrictions, being reduced. The CVCVC have commenced monthly evening meetings and lunchtime gatherings as from June. However, the Committee are monitoring the Coronavirus situation and will keep members informed through the CVCVC Newsletter and Weekly Parish Notices if there are changes to the relaxations of Government restrictions.

Jun 24 Midweek Midday Meet Up – The Crown Hartest IP29 4DH.

Jul 21 Club Evening – 7.30pm. CVCVC Classic Car & Motorcycle Show – The Thatcher's Mount Bures

Jul 28 Committee Meeting – Venue to be confirmed.

Jul 29 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

Aug 18 Club Evening - 8pm. Michael Hipperson - Ferraris, Lambos and GT40s - Halstead Football Club.

Aug 26 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

Sep 15 Club Evening - 8pm. Michael Hipperson - An Evening with Rosemary Smith - Halstead Football Club.

Sep 30 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

Oct 20 Club Evening AGM – Venue TBC.

Oct 27 Committee Meeting – Venue to be confirmed.

Oct 28 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

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
Treasurer	Martin Brown
Secretary	Geoff Broad
Membership Sec.	Roger Martin
Newsletter Editor	Chris Sharman
Webmaster	David Singer
Events Co-ordinator	Stuart Black
Committee	Chris Harman
Members	Bob Chaplin

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

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....

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.

June Newsletter

Would you please forward articles by email or post before Monday 17th May

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.

Editor's Space Filler (Until normal services are resumed)

Radford Returns

Jenson Button former Formula One Champion will relaunch the Radford Coachbuilding Company with a team of British auto experts – Engineer and TV presenter Ant Anstead, Automobile Designer Mark Stubbs and Lawyer Roger Behle.



The company will be most remembered for the bespoke Mini Coopers loved by the Beatles and Peter Sellers, amongst other 1960s celebrities. The company's origins go back to the 1950s, offering coach-built Bentleys and Rolls Royces. Radford were also involved in creating bespoke glass fibre bodywork for the prototype Ford GT40.

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The company's new cars will be created around the company's traditional motto – Design, Build, Drive.

Design is being overseen by Automotive Designer Mark Stubbs, build responsibility by Ant Anstead, Jenson Button will track test and tune each car to offer what the firm promises will be a superlative driving experience.

The first car is already in the pipeline for completion this year.

Speed Hill Climb at Stapleford Tawney Aerodrome

Reads as a contradiction, how can a Hill Climb take place on a flat airfield? The course consisted of an inclined perimeter road with a 1-10 gradient along one section. The course was in use from 1954-1964. Most events were organised by the West Essex Car Club, attracting top club drivers, Les Leston and Paul Emery amongst others. Over the years competition cars varied from 500cc single seaters to Lister-Jaguars, a F1 Cooper Climax and everything in between. The Hill Climb National Championship held a meeting in October 1958.

The August 1955 edition of Motor Sport reviewed The Romford Enthusiasts Club meeting held in June –

The RECC held their first speed event on Sunday 19th June at Stapleford Aerodrome. The course used was a torturous half mile stretch with an up gradient from start to finish. Rain fell during the day so that speeds were reduced, especially of the faster cars, although the wetness made the course more exciting and several Romford over-enthusiasts found themselves facing down-hill after the first corner. Geoff Calcott in his MG TC in a high state of tune, put up an exceptional performance in gaining FTD and his class award and in doing so beat Rumfitt's 3622cc Grenville Special and the Mercury-engined MG, (so called) of Michael Gray.

Obituaries

Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh

It was extremely sad to hear that Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh had died. He served in the Royal Navy during WWII and after marrying Princess Elizabeth in 1947 he became a major player within the "Royal Firm". He was technically minded and always took an interest in the British Motor Industry and took the opportunity to "test drive" as many types as possible including racing sports cars, buses, commercial and military vehicles. Prince Philip had owned many cars now regarded as classics – 1946 MG TC, 1954 Lagonda 3-litre Drophead Coupe, 1961 Alvis TD 21 Convertible, later upgraded to TE standard and a 1965 Triplex Scimitar GTS. In addition, there were many Land Rovers and Range Rovers.

A great loss to our Queen, the Royal Family and the Country.

Sabine Schmitz

How sad to read that Top Gear Presenter Sabine had recently died following a four-year battle with cancer. Sabine was an outstanding racing driver, the only female winner of the "24 Hours of Nürburgring" in 1996 and 1997 driving a BMW M3. Sabine came to prominence on Top Gear driving a Ford Transit Van round the Nürburgring in a shade over ten-minutes.

For those members who attended the January 2020, CVCVC Fast Women Evening Talk by Bob Chaplin, who can forget the amazing video of "The Queen of Nürburgring" racing a Porsche GP4, starting last and racing through the pack to win in torrential rain. An amazing person.

Ford v Ferrari – A Missing Chapter

Most of you will know the story, having read the books and seen the dramatised film of Ford's victory over Ferrari at Le Mans in 1966 with the GT40 and again in 1967, 68 and 69.



However, there are later chapters in the Ford supercar story and one you may not be aware of. In celebration of its centenary, Ford announced a new GT in 2002 which had obvious links to the styling of the original GT40. Powered by a 5.4L supercharged V8 with 550hp, the car surprised enthusiasts and the press with its depth of capabilities. Road and Track magazine famously declared the GT an easy winner over the Ferrari 360 Stradale and Porsche 911 GT3.



We have a GT in the Dagenham Ford Heritage collection and I've been lucky enough to drive it. The power delivery and ability to thrust towards the horizon are eye-popping although the enormous width and visibility from the left-hand side can be intimidating on UK roads.



Another GT came along in 2016 as a road and racing car. Ford were determined to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the GT40s's 1966 win in style and set about designing a car that would deliver by winning the 2016 GTE-Pro class at Le Mans and beating the Ferrari 488 GTE.



There is a big gap from 1966 to 2002 and that's where the missing Ford supercar chapter fits in. During the 1980's, I was working in Product Planning at Ford and involved in the cycle plan for future cars. We were excited to see the latest plan from the US included a "G" class code number – a rare exotic beast amongst the planned new "B" (Fiesta), "C" (Escort) and "D" codes (Granada). This was GN34, a new mid-engine sports car that was intended to provide a halo for the Ford brand and take on Ferrari and Porsche.

A V6 engine was proposed with a V8 available later. The V6 was the 24 valve Yamaha designed SHO (Super High Output) engine used in the 3.0L Ford Taurus SHO at 220hp. For GN34, Yamaha planned to increase the displacement to 3.6L and provide a more suitable 280hp. That doesn't seem much today, but the competing Ferrari 308 quattrovalvole was rated at 240hp. Prototypes were built in combination with Roush to test the running gear, using some parts from the De Tomaso Pantera. Two of these early prototype cars are still in Jack Roush's private car collection.



Alternative styling models were prepared within Ford, at Ghia in Turin and Chausson in France. This is how one version looked in 1985, working towards an introduction in 1990MY.



So... why did GN34 not make it beyond the design studio?

In the late 80's, there were many programs competing for Ford engineering resources and investment. Ford had another promising idea to take the chassis of its Ranger pickup truck and add a carlike body to rival the Jeep Cherokee. The money went in this direction and led to the vehicle that started the massive growth in the SUV segment – The Ford Explorer, launched in 1990. It wasn't the first SUV, but was a huge success and sales volumes climbed dramatically.



The Explorer nameplate has gone on to reach sales of over 7.5 million vehicles to date and to have generated a profit

1990

of almost \$10,000 per unit in its heyday. It was undoubtedly the right decision to prioritise it over an exotic low volume sports car.



2000

However, it meant we would never get to see the intriguing prospect of a GN34 versus Ferrari 308QV showdown on the road.

Stuart Black

Scimitar Memories

Back in 1975, my main car was my MGA and my wife had an ancient 1960-ish Mini, the third of three that we had plus a fourth that I broke for spares. We had been using the MGA to tow a small touring caravan for our holidays but the arrival of our first son, Tim that year meant that our car ownership had to get a bit more sensible. Although I had put a twin-carb 1098cc engine in the Mini making it quite a Q-car, it was definitely not up to towing a caravan. This meant we were reduced to camping in a tent for our holidays as there is definitely no room for a carrycot, or much else for that matter, behind the seats of an MGA roadster.

Not being keen on getting a sensible family saloon, let alone an estate, I pondered more sporting vehicles with a bit more carrying capacity and decided that the then groundbreaking Reliant Scimitar GTE was just the car we needed. As a sporting looking vehicle with a GRP fibreglass body that would not rust like our MGA and Mini and with a Ford 3-litre engine and overdrive gearbox it would be fun to drive as an everyday car and also be quite capable of towing said caravan. And it had the oh-so sexy rear window wipe mechanism. Possibly a first, I think. So, the hunt for a decent used version was on.

However, having waxed lyrically about the then SE5 model to my petrol-head father, whose caravan we used, he promptly went and got a new one himself, so pipped me to the post in respect of GTE ownership. I wasn't sure that I liked the yellow colour that Dad had chosen but it was otherwise a lovely car and I redoubled my efforts to find one that I could afford. I would have liked one in the mid-blue that the cars came in, ideally with the Wolfrace alloy wheels that became an option on the later, but uglier to my mind, SE6 Scimitars but in the end I bought a silver one. It would have been lovely when freshly painted but it had rather lost its lustre by the time I got it but, nonetheless, I felt that I was the bees knees when driving it - a sort of poor man's Jensen Interceptor.



The Ford engine was really quite impressive and I can recount a couple of anecdotes that illustrate its torque flexibility. For my wife's first drive of the car, she went off alone as she said that she might be inhibited with me beside her. When she returned, she said words to the effect of "well, it goes like the clappers, but I couldn't get it out of 2nd gear". I realised that she had only driven it in 3rd and 4th gear, the power-to-weight ratio being such that it was quite happy to start from rest in 3rd gear! Similarly, when indulging in traffic-light grand-prix starts - go on, admit it - we all did it back then - I would start in 2nd gear, leading the boy-racer beside me at first to think he was doing well, but I could then get to not far short of 100mph with just one gear change, into 3rd, followed by a flick of the overdrive switch. I was rarely bettered on long straights.

The Scimitar pulled the caravan well, and in so doing would cruise at over 70 mph with ease before I realised the speed limit for such outfits was 60mph. The MGA had never threatened that particular speed limit! In fact, one of the few problems that I had with the Scimitar was when towing the caravan in the north-west highlands of Scotland when the car mysteriously lost 2nd gear. Our holiday wasn't impacted though as it was quite happy to tow using just 1st, 3rd and 4th gears. The odd thing was when we got home and I was pondering whether to pull the gearbox myself or drop the car into a Ford agent, I was driving it

to work one morning and 2nd gear came back of its own accord and it never failed again!

The only other problems that I had were fuel related. The automatic choke was so slow to weaken the mixture after starting on cold mornings that my fuel consumption was terrible in winter. This was quite unnecessary as when I fitted a manual cable override the car would run fine with no choke after just a few miles, instead of the ten or so required by the automatic choke. As my daily commute was eleven miles most of my mileage had been on full choke.

The other problem, that I only learned the cause of years later from a classic car magazine, was on one occasion setting off on holiday with a (rare - this is important) full tank of fuel, the engine 'failed to proceed' after about ten miles into our journey. We were in Braintree at the time and I legged it to a car spares shop to get a replacement mechanical fuel pump, which I duly fitted. Off we went but, blow me, the same thing happened again. I assumed blockage in the fuel line so pulled it from the pump and blew back into the tank, refitted it and off we went. As you can probably guess, ten or fifteen miles on it stopped again, followed by more fiddling and then some more miles covered.

To cut a long story short, we drove to my parents in 10-15-mile hops - my wife was terrified that it would stop in the Dartford Tunnel - and borrowed my mother's car for our holiday, whilst I left the car with their local Ford dealer. The dealer didn't diagnose the problem but simply replaced all the ignition parts without any great effect. Thinking the Ford mechanical fuel pump might not be up to the job, I fitted a Jaguar electric pump and never had the problem again.

Unfortunately, three years later my wife crashed the car on an icy bend - it was always a bit tail happy with all that power to the rear wheels and no weight in the back to put it down. She walked away but the wall she had hit demolished the front of the car and so that ended my Scimitar ownership. I would have got another Scimitar, but I then got my first company car - a Cortina, what else?! However, a friend actually bought the remains of our Scimitar and fitted a complete front quarter repair section from Reliant, so it lived to slip and slide another day.



Many years later I learned that the Scimitars have a non-vented fuel cap with a separate air inlet on the tank which routinely gets clogged up with road dirt. This results in a partial vacuum building up in the fuel tank that eventually overcomes the pulling power of the fuel pump. This is most acute when the tank is full, as was rarely the case in my ownership, so it wasn't my Jaguar electric fuel pump that solved my problem it was me usually being too poor to fill the relatively capacious fuel tank!



Scimitar GTE blue, the colour I wanted.

Roger Martin

History of the Bristol 450 Sports Racing Cars

Roger Martin's photo of the 1953 Bristol 450 Coupe in last month's Newsletter, reminded me of the time I had the Dinky Toy version, as did Roger. With the backup of the Bristol



Aeroplane Company the car division constructed a series of sports racing cars that within three seasons won their class at Le Mans in 1954 and 1955. Read on -

Following the Second World War, aircraft production was reduced and to maintain its experienced engineering workforce, the Bristol Aeroplane Company with the support of the War Reparations Board, obtained the rights to manufacturer BMW cars using the 328 engines. Resulting in the production of the high-performance BMW based Bristol 400 in 1947. Followed by the aerodynamic 401 & 403 models, luxury/sporting 4-seater saloons designed by Touring of Milan and influenced by the company's technical aircraft experience and powered by an updated 328 six-cylinder engine, producing over 100bhp and capable of 100mph.

George White the Managing Director decided in the autumn of 1952 to produce a sports racing car to showcase the Bristol Car Division. The cars were designed to race in the 1953 Le Mans 24 Hour Race, providing only eight months to design and construct the competition cars. The chassis were based on the successful Formula Two ERA 3 type, designed by Dr Eberan von Eberhost and David Hodkin, stretched and modified to take a long aluminium coupe body. The engine was the race proven ex.BMW six-cylinder two-litre engine producing 142 bhp at 6000 revs. The four-speed gearbox was located close to the rear axle. stub axles could be removed while the wheels remained in place. The wheelbase was 2470mm and the tracks 1300mm, double wishbone front suspension and De Dion rear axle. The coupe body had a long sleek body with two tailfins for high-speed stability. The fuel tanks were positioned either side of the engine, permitting neutral handling, although in reality during racing the car would flip quickly from understeer to oversteer. The aerodynamic design though was initially spoiled by the projecting headlamps and exposed oil cooler.

1953 Le Mans, Rheims & Montlhery

The two 450s driven by Graham Whitehead/Lance Macklin and Tommy Wisdom/Jack Fairman performed well averaging 95mph until the ninth hour into the race, when both cars suffered from crankshaft failure, forcing retirement. With the winning Jaguar C-Type averaging just over 100mph, The Bristol team were pleased with their general cars' performance and teamwork.



450 Coupe – 1953 Room for improvement

Later in the year at the Rheims Twelve Hour race, mixed results, Lance Maklin/Graham Whitehead retired after their car failed with clutch trouble, while the remaining Bristol driven by Peter Wilson and Jack Fairman finished fifth and won the 2-litre class.

In October the 450-team returned to France to carry out endurance runs at the Montlhery circuit. Engine power was increased to 155bhp using a six-port inlet head and three, twin-

5

choke Solex carburettors. Breaking the 200, 500 miles & 500/1000 kilometres for 3 & 6 hours at speeds of up to 126mph.

1954 Le Mans

The bodywork was modified for the 1954 Le Mans 24 Hour Race with a reduced frontage and the headlamps recessed into the bonnet and wings. Despite a wet weekend, a successful race for the 450s with Peter Wilson/James Mayers finishing 7th, Tommy Wisdom/Jack Fairman 8th & Mike Keen/Tommy Line 9th, they also won their 2-litre class – 1st, 2nd & 3rd respectively. Wilson's/Mayers's class winning Bristol averaged 91mph. A Team Prize was also awarded.



450 Coupe 1954 with sleeker bodywork

The coupes were not popular with the drivers, for a long car the accommodation was cramped and the windscreen and side windows would mist over in wet conditions, resulting in bodywork changes for 1955.

1955 Le Mans

The 450 Coupes were converted to Roadsters giving the appearance of elongated Jaguar D Types, especially with the passenger seat covered over and a vertical fin located behind the driver's headrest. Although the drag efficiency increased, the reduced frontal area increased performance. The rear suspension was modified to remove bump-oversteer.



450 Roadster 1955, 150mph from two-litres



BRISTOL 450C

Team: BRISTOL AEROPLANE Co
Drivers: Peter WILSON, Jim MAYERS
Result: Seventh in the 24 Hours of Le Mans 1955

Two and a half hours into the race the Mercedes 300SLR of Pierre Levegh launched into the crowd resulting in the loss of 83 lives. The authorities decided to continue the race and the three 450s completed the 24-hour race with Wilson/Mayers finishing 7th, Keen/Lane 8th and Wisdom/Fairman 9th, plus 1st, 2nd & 3rd in their class, Bristol also gained a Team Prize. The

class winning 450 Roadster averaged 95 mph and the 450s were reaching 150mph along the Muslanne Straight. The pit setup was well organised with the 450s spending only 15 minutes in the pits during the whole race. The mechanics used multi-barrel powered spanners to change the wheels. This was years before it became the accepted way to change wheels competitively.

The teams winning prize money was donated to the relief fund for the victims of the Mercedes tragedy.

Following the tragic Le Mans Race, the Bristol Directors decided to disband the team while at the peak of their success. Three of the four Bristol 450s were broken up. The reason given that the cars were built with the sole purpose to race at Le Mans and the Company didn't want the roadsters to be reduced to running in short circuit "Clubmans" events.

Chris Sharman

It seemed a good idea at the time (but it had a flaw)

I read with interest and amusement Chris Harman's story on using carpet under the car's wheels in snowy conditions....

Way back in 1970, my tuned Frog Eye Sprite appeared to be running hot in traffic, the remedy was extracting the heat. Easy job really, obtained two 12"x4" aluminium louvres from the Essex Speed Centre in Seven Kings; cut the rectangular openings in the bonnet top with a hacksaw blade and riveted/fibreglass the two louvres in place. Not sure if the Sprite ran cooler, but the car looked cool, I think!

The louvres seemed a good idea at the time, one problem though, the louvres let in water, enough to soak the electrics making starting difficult, plus misfiring until heat from the engine evaporated the moisture. After a particular heavy rainstorm, the Sprite just would not start, so I had this great idea, to remove the sparkplugs, ignition leads and distributor cap and placed them in the oven, gas marked 5 for ten minutes. Except I was side-tracked and forty minutes passed before I opened the oven door to be greeted by spaghetti looking molten ignition leads. The sheathing had completely melted leaving copper strands and the distributor cap and screw caps well and truly cooked. The spark plugs survived though.

Fortunately, there was Wag Bennett motor factors down the road, so I bought a length of ignition lead, distributor cap, screw caps to make up five leads and re-connect to the engine. In addition, I found a "Marigold" glove, cut out holes in the fingertips and fitted the glove over the distributor cap with the leads passing through the fingers, this makeshift cover was later replaced by a waterproof Mini distributor cover. All electrics were drenched with Damp Start with no further problems.

To end the story, a couple of weeks later, my Sprite had an argument with an Austin Westminster, resulting in extensive damage to the bonnet and a glass fibre replacement from BIJO sports cars breakers in Bushey. I was still convinced under bonnet heat extraction was required but this time only one louvre was positioned, over the carburettors.

Chris Sharman

Guess the Car



Quite a large sports competition car, Dinky Toys had a version of this model, very popular. A clue for you – look at the racing colours. Answers to the editor.

A History of Rolls-Royce – part 9 Emergency Vehicle Engines & the End of British Ownership

Rolls-Royce powered emergency vehicles

With their record of reliability, Rolls-Royce engines were installed in many civilian and military emergency vehicles, plus the power source for emergency power installations.



1971 Dennis F45 Fire Tender Powered by a Rolls-Royce B81 6500cc 8-cylinder petrol engine

During the last half of the twentieth century, when you heard two tone horns and saw flashing blue lights the emergency vehicle was probably Rolls-Royce powered.

Rolls-Royce and Bentley Under New Ownerships

With no finance available for future Bentley and Rolls-Royce models, Vickers decided in 1998 to sell Rolls-Royce Motors. The leading contender appeared to be BMW, who already supplied internal combustion engines and other components for Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars. Their final offer of £340m was outbid by the Volkswagen Group, who offered £430m. Surprisingly BMW did not raise their bid and the company fell to Volkswagen.

Not realized at the time Vickers did not own the rights to the Rolls-Royce name, it belonged to Rolls-Royce PLC an aerospace business close to BMW, who bought the iconic name for £40m. After much wrangling between Volkswagen and BMW, a deal was reached where Volkswagen would build Bentley and Rolls-Royce models in their spiritual Crewe factory until 2002, when after BMW would produce their own range of Rolls-Royce models in a purpose-built factory in Goodwood, with Volkswagen building Bentleys in the existing Crewe premises.

Twenty First Century Rolls-Royce Models

Volkswagen Crewe produced: 1998 – 2002

Silver Seraph and Revised Corniche

BMW Goodwood produced: 2003 onwards.

Phantom VII & VIII, Ghost, Wraith, Sweptail and Cullinan SUV.



Ghost



Sweptail (£8m car)

Twenty First Century Bentley Models

Volkswagen Crewe produced, 2003 onwards.

Azure, Continental GT, Arnage, Continental Flying Spur & Mulsanne.

Current production –

Bentayga, Continental GT (3 Gen), Flying Spur (3 Gen)



Continental GT (3Gen)

The current Roll-Royce and Bentley models share many mechanical components with their respective BMW and Volkswagen vehicles, nevertheless Roll-Royce and Bentley have continued to be outstanding luxury quality cars and despite becoming competitors, both have achieved record sales.

Mike Crees

Bits & Pieces

**How good is your vehicle recognition?
Guess the cars from the headlights –**



A



B

Introduction of E10 petrol into 95 octane petrol

Information clarified recently by the FBHVC states that from September 2021, E10 95 octane petrol will be the standard fuel. While the higher 97 octane petrol will remain E5 to provide protection for older vehicles.

The FBHVC recommends that all vehicles produced before 2000 and specific vehicles from the early 2000s, that are considered non-compatible with E10, should use the E5 "Super" 97 octane grade where the Ethanol is limited to 5%.

Further information can be found on the government's website – www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-e10-petrol

However, I am surprised that the government experts have stated that elderly cars should use 97 octane petrol due to its 5% maximum Ethanol content. I can understand the advantage of lower Ethanol volume, but elderly cars tend to have lower compression engines suited for low octane fuels. These engines take longer to burn today's petrol within the combustion chambers, with petrol vapour still igniting after the exhaust valves are opening. This causes overheating and deterioration of the valves and seats. 97 octane petrol is suited for high compression engines where the petrol mixture burns faster and is completed within the firing cycle. This recommended higher grade Ethanol petrol for elderly vehicles with low-compression engines could worsen the heat problem.

My 1936 Singer's engine has a 7.5 to 1 compression ratio designed to run on 80 octane pre-war petrol; considered a high compression for its day, but low by today's standards. Using current 95 octane the Singer runs hotter than designed, 97 octane petrol will not suit the Singer's combustion chambers or exhaust valves at all. I would assume similar period classic cars will have engine problems too.

Chris Sharman

Advertisement from Motor Sport Magazine Oct 1959 Chiltern Cars in Leighton Buzzard. Read on –

Lagonda 2-litre low chassis 4-seater, sound original order £145.

Alfa Romeo 1750cc foursome drophead coupe by Young of Bromley, unusually good condition £175.

What price now for these exotic pre-war sports cars.

Members Letters

Hello Chris

Morris Cowley "Cybele"

I have been aware for some time that the clutch on Cybele, our 1926 Morris, has not been as healthy as it should be; specifically it is dragging and seems to be getting worse. It is at the point now where you have to stop the engine before engaging first or reverse gear and then starting with the clutch down. On the move it is ok with careful double declutching, but the whole process has to be repeated if you come to a stop in traffic.

The clutch is a double row of wine bottle corks (seriously!) running in oil. I am hoping it is no worse than a case of contaminated oil combined with poor adjustment. The worse alternative is that the clutch needs a strip down, and that is a pain as the car has a torque tube rear axle, not a prop shaft, so the rear axle has to be removed first before you can separate the gearbox from the engine.

On the plus side, the floor is wood and can be taken out, so I have stripped the floor out today, changed the gearbox oil, and adjusted the clutch properly. I also found that the floor installed by a previous owner was restricting the travel of the clutch pedal, so I have done the necessary woodworking to restore its full range of travel.



Now we need some nice sunny days to get out and enjoy some open air motoring! Hopefully I have fixed the problem, but if not I will have to turn my mind to major dismantling at some point...

Best regards

Andrew Fleetwood

Footnote -

Clutch problem is indeed fixed. A previous owner had fitted a floorboard too close to the pedals which restricted the amount of clutch travel. I made some new brackets to mount the floorboard differently, adjusted the clutch release to give a wider arc of movement and all is well..... Phew.... I didn't fancy having to remove the rear axle to get the gearbox out.....!

Dear Chris

Memories of Murray

The recent passing of dear Murray Walker reminds me of an anecdote from the early 1970s. Some members, especially those with an interest in motor sport, may well recall that in the late 1960s a new discipline named rallycross was introduced, ostensibly following the cancellation of the 1967 RAC Rally due to the prevalence of 'foot and mouth' disease although that reason is disputed in some quarters.

At the time, I was a member of Thames Estuary Automobile Club (TEAC) and this club was one of the first to introduce this latest motor sport to the masses. TEAC began with just one or two meetings at Lydden Hill circuit in Kent, usually in a relatively

low-key format of a one-day Clubmans' event, but as the sport's popularity increased the television stations became attracted for their Saturday afternoon coverage of sport in general.

So, moving on a few years into the early 1970s and the link to the late Murray Walker, TEAC was by this time involved with Rallycross Championships held over an entire weekend with the Saturday's activities devoted to TV coverage and, of course, this led to an influx of the press and media.

It is well-known that Murray was a regular commentator at, amongst other events, rallycross meetings and, as a result, he would be in attendance at Lydden Hill.

From joining TEAC, my first motor club, in 1964 I had quickly become associated with marshalling all manner of motor sport events and rallycross was no exception. Over one particular weekend in, I am sure, the early 1970s (*although the memory is a little clouded, I'm afraid*) I, and a number of my marshalling colleagues, reported for duty at the crack of dawn on the Saturday morning (*we were much younger then!*) but some of us were recently married and it became a question of finding suitable tasks for the wives, and girlfriends, while their menfolk were at the marshalling posts around the circuit.

Thus, it came to pass that Geraldine would be responsible for the media and press in TEAC's Media Centre, a.k.a. a large tent, where she was tasked with keeping the aforementioned media informed and refreshed. The responsibilities included the distribution of press armbands to a plethora of photographers although, by her own admission to this day, she recalls that she did not take this too seriously as "anybody with a Box Brownie" was admitted to the inner sanctum of Lydden Hill!!!

More to the point, she was also given the task of ensuring that the ladies and gentlemen of the press were kept fed and watered and, believe it or not, that included the provision of alcoholic beverages to those who requested it. One such request came from a bespectacled TV commentator and his desire for a G & T during the lunch break was most certainly met by Geraldine.

Yes, she had just served Murray Walker so that became her 'claim to fame' and we were able to 'dine out' on that little anecdote for a few more years. I have often wondered if Murray did the same!!

Coming up to date, in the present newsletter Chris has quoted Murray's wonderfully emotive "*I have to stop now because I have a lump in my throat*" as Damon Hill won the 1996 World Championship for Williams in Japan and it is just so fitting that this same quotation appeared on the halo of the current Williams F1 cars at the Bahrain Grand Prix.R.I.P. Murray Walker - a true legend the like of which we shall never see again.

**With best regards
John Goodman**

PS

On reflection, I guess that this famous (infamous?) weekend was definitely in the early 1970s as it was the height of the 'troubles' in Northern Ireland and we, and many other TEAC members and personnel, were required to vacate our hotel in Canterbury at an unnecessarily inappropriate hour on the Saturday night due to one of the all-too-frequent bomb scares.

Hello Chris

Sticking SU pistons

I read your article on the sticking pistons in the SU's. I always use 3 in 1 oil in the dashpots of SU's and have not had any problems.

I expect you have your own cleaners/routine for carburettors but, I thought I would mention that, I use an appropriate aerosol such as the one provided by Frost Automotive (who supply really good car products (I have used their underbody paints for many years)). The spray works really well on the inside and outside of carburettors in cleaning off the petrol 'glaze' and any oily residue.

[Frost Carb Cleaner - Carburettor Aerosol \(500ml\)](#)

**With best wishes
Chris Harman**

Receiving Chris's email, I remembered I had an aerosol in the garage called ADD-IT Carb Cleaner purchased from Moss many moons ago. similar to the Frost product.

As it happened the SU dashpot pistons started to lock up again in the raised position, leading to an afternoon thoroughly cleaning the dashpots and piston/spindles with ADD-IT Carb Cleaner. Afterwards the dashpot spindles were lubricated with 3 in 1 Oil, resulting in the pistons lifting and descending quicker than I can ever remember! Ed

Gordons Goings on May 2021

It is beginning to look a bit more promising for some motoring activity, but it does depend on everyone playing their part and that can't be taken for granted these days. I see the government are going to let us have covid test kits free of charge. Where did they get the £145 billion to pay for them in the first place? And guess where they were made? Which explains why the results are not very reliable. Not all businesses are suffering!

Our friends in Spain have been waiting patiently for their jab, have at last had their first one and are booked in for the second before the end of April, which means after all the hype here, they will get theirs before us after all! Hopefully, Spain will get on top of it so we can get out there.

We were sorry to hear about Penny Berry. She was a good artist, as well as a lovely lady and was a customer of ours for years. I didn't make the connection until we joined CVCVC.

I am sure Murray Walker was responsible for my interest in Formula One and I'm sure I am not the only one who was sad to hear he had passed away. I remember him wandering around Brands Hatch paddock at our club meetings in his leathers. His enthusiasm for motor sport at all levels never diminished. I can remember the races from Monaco back in the day when that was about it for Formula One on TV. Makes today's coverage a bit more acceptable. I remember having a dinky toy Maserati racing car and later a much more handsome Vanwall.

I saw the comment of the Harris Matchless in the last Newsletter and we have a member in the Hadleigh club, who lives in Colchester who has one. It doesn't come out often! Another member who has since passed away had one, but it was always difficult to start, but that may have been down to too much tinkering!

At last, we can take the old cars and bikes out for a run around as these restrictions lift, without being rebuked by the local constabulary. Visits to distant relations are looking on the cards, even if only for the day. Not sure I'm ready for an overnight stay myself, even if we do get jab two.

I'm struggling to find replacements for the Bridgestone SO2 tyres for the 911. It's not been a problem before. They have performed very well on the road and the track, but they are getting a bit worn and while they are OK on the road, not really good enough for another track day. Its looking like they are not made anymore, and I've been recommended Pirelli 6000 tyres. Anybody used them? The thought of a track day this year may be a bit optimistic.

The bike clubs may be able to start some limited activity in May, particularly as the landlord at our meeting place, The Alma, Copford has made a lot of outside seating available. Having made us very welcome in normal times, it would be good to give him some support if we can, without breaking the rules.

You might think Lewis was very lucky to win the first Grand Prix, but Verstappen still has to curb his enthusiasm. He should have realised that Lewis would put his car in the exact position so that if he was to be overtaken, the overtaking car would have to get all four wheels off the track. Even if you aren't a Lewis fan, you have to say that was a stunning piece of driving, under very demanding circumstances. Something you wouldn't have learned that from a "racing instructor" in the UK! And something Verstappen will remember next time!

The entry list for Le Mans is out and there is an optimistic group of over sixty reserve teams who will get to set a time in case any teams drop out. That is what you call optimism.

Moto Gp has started this year just as exciting as last year even without many spectators. I'm not a Rossi fan but he qualified 5th for the first race. And of course, Alonso is back in F1. World Super Bike doesn't start until May at Aragon. Shame I can't get there!

Gordon Levett