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BVAC News
August 2024

Coming Up This Month



On Sunday 11th August we'll have our regular breakfast meet at Milestone Garden Centre in Newtown St Boswells from 10am until about noon. As reported below, we had a record attendance last month, so we must be doing something right! Come along and join in the fun, whether you want to look at the cars, show off your own, chat to other members or all three. Of course, a cup of coffee or a full breakfast is available in the Greenhouse Café.

Saturday 24th August is the date for our **car treasure hunt**. It's your chance to take a gentle afternoon drive around some of the quieter Borders roads while using your brainpower and observation skills to answer puzzles and clues as you go. It should be a light-hearted and entertaining event, finishing at the Hawick home of Adrian Kendal who has kindly agreed to host us and provide teas and coffees. There will be prizes! The starting point is our usual haunt at Milestone and we aim to get the first cars off about 1.30pm, so please arrive about one o'clock or earlier if you want to take lunch in the café first. So that we have an idea of numbers for catering, please email entries@bvac.org.uk or call 01890 761710 to book a place no later than the 18th.



As well as these two events, our programme of visits to other clubs' car shows continues throughout the month starting with the Berwickshire Show in Duns on Saturday 3rd and the RNLI event in Tweedmouth on the 4th. Competing with Milestone for your attention on the 11th are both the Ford & Etal Classic Car Show in Northumberland and the Albion Vintage Rally in Biggar. For a longer trip, there's the Cumbria Classic and Motorsport Show at Dalemain House near Ullswater on the 18th and the FAVVO Rally at Ladybank in Fife on the 25th. Bookings for all of these have now closed, but if you missed the chance to enter your car, any of these will provide an excellent day out for spectators.

Contact – Editor: David Hunter 018907 61710; Secretary: Kenny Wilson 01896 849597

There is still one show you can book on our website for later in the year – the traditional end of season event at Brunton Airfield near Embleton in Northumberland

July Events

The editorial holidays meant I wasn't personally at events during July, so thanks to Kenny Wilson and Chris Biggs for reports and pictures of our July activities. These started with the club barbeque on the 6th where hosts Helen and Ken Grimes put in a sterling effort to entertain the 40+ members who turned out bringing 22 cars to Innerleithen, despite the cold and damp weather. A very good time was had by all with excellent refreshment and a wonderful effort to provide cover and seating for everyone. A picture quiz kept everyone guessing. The informal concours, voted on by the participants resulted in a deserving win for our host with his beautifully restored Jaguar XJ6 Coupé, followed by Mike Webber's Lancia and Bruce Thomson's TR7.









Dry weather was restored for Milestone the following week with at least 43 members' cars present, probably a record! The variety and quality of the cars just keeps getting better. Here are a couple of photographs, but many more have been posted on the club's Facebook page.



Not strictly a July event, but just missing the deadline for last month's BVAC News, was the Moffat Show on June 30th. Several members attended as can be seen from the pictures on the Facebook page.

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Iain Davidson

Many of you will know that Iain was taken ill at Thirlestane during the preparations for show. You'll be glad to know he is recovering and has asked me to include this in BVAC News:

> I would like to thank all the Thirlestane team who recently recognised that I was having a heart attack. Thanks to the superb organisation and forward planning I was quickly assessed on site before being rushed by ambulance to the Royal in Edinburgh.
>
> I shall forever be in their debt. Without the swift action taken by the team I wouldn't be here today.
>
> Also many thanks to all who have since contacted me.
>
> Iain Davidson

Motoring Over a Century Ago

Frank Sharp has sent me this fascinating article from a 1957 newspaper, reprinted overleaf. He writes: "The context of this is that my own grandfather was the first chauffeur to Lord Clitheroe in 1911 and my granny the head cook - shades of Downtown Abbey! Following my giving an online talk about Downham and this connection to the Lancashire Family History Society, another member contacted me who also had a grandfather who was a chauffeur and included the attach newspaper article about him. It makes an interesting glimpse into what motoring was like before the days of this boring electric genre that all look like milk floats!"

Here's a little background on the Stanley Steamer referred to in the article – they were produced in America from the late 1890s until 1924 and in their early days they could out-perform petrol driven cars both in speed and hill climbing ability. The downside was the complexity of operation and the fact that you needed to top up the water every 40 miles or so. Once the more convenient petrol driven cars could match their performance, the days of steam cars were numbered.



If you fancy the challenge of steam driving, it just so happens that there's a Stanley Steamer coming up for auction in October – see here.

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50 YEARS A MOTORIST

His 'horseless carriage' puzzled the villagers



LOOKING back over the years, James Payton sees a young man, not much more than five feet tall, his slim figure broadened by a threequarter-length leather coat, worn with knee-breeches, leggings, shining boots and peak cap.

He pulls down his goggles and climbs into the driving seat of one of the newest cars — a carriage-built Stanley steamer, with folding hood and gleaming brasswork.

For 19-year-old James Payton, it is the golden age of motoring.

He drives his doctor employer on a round of Blackburn patients, with an occasional longer run to Ribble Valley villages, where the cottagers cannot understand how the horseless carriage gets along.

He hardly notices the cloud of dust that envelopes the car, even on a main road. To speed along at more than 20 miles an hour through the countryside is reward enough for the hard work a chauffeur has in keeping a car roadworthy

Precious memories

Fifty years of motoring memories bring Mr Payton to the present. They become more precious as he counts the few days left before he retires from the service of Mr and Mrs T. Rowntree, Beechwood East Park-road, Blackburn.

Seventy-year-old James, within a few months of celebrating his golden wedding, fingered a shade over his left eye today, and said: "I think my driving days are done."

He can hang on as a driver, if in name only, until his licence expires at the end of next March.

He has held a driving licence continuously for 52 years; not many men in East Lancashire have held a licence longer.

A procession of cars has carried James through the years.

He drove a Swift, a Rover, and a Ford for the late Dr Marmaduke Bannister, whose first licence was taken out in 1904

"The Stanley steamer was better—and quieter— than the early petrol-driven cars" said James.

"But it was a bit of a trouble to start it. You lit a paraffin burner, jacked up the back axle, raised the bonnet as a precaution against a flare-up of the paraffin, and sat in the driving seat for about ten minutes until the hiss of a valve told you steam was up.

"When you had enough steam to turn the back wheels, you unwound the jack and were ready for off."

The steamer had three gears, including reverse, and "would go up hills as well as any car made today."

From 1911, when he left the doctor's service, James drove a Renault landaulette—petrol was 11d a gallon—until 1915, when he joined the Army and lurched about the Flanders battlefields at the wheel of an ammunition wagon.

Back as a civilian chauffeur in 1919, he drove Mrs John Thwaites, of Troy, now a Blackburn girls' school, on scores of pleasant summer journeys to Midland spas and Southern seaside resorts.

Petrol was still only 1s 6d a gallon. It was still safer to keep to main roads.

Biggest boon

Next, James drove an Armstrong Siddeley, a MG and a Rover for the late Mr T. G. Forrest of The Meins, Blackburn.

Since 1935, in the service of Mr Rowntree, he remembers Rovers, a Chrysler and now a Daimler.

With experience of thousands of hours at the wheel, James thinks the biggest boon to the motorist was the covered car—"at least for the British climate."

THE DRIVING STANDARD OF TODAY, HE SAID, CANNOT BE COMPARED WITH THE DRIVING WHEN HE STARTED ON THE ROAD

"It's not a question of better or worse," he explained. "When I started you really had to drive. You had no pre-selected gears or gadgets. You had to put up with the full force of the weather. You needed stamina as well as skill to negotiate the twists on the narrow pot-holed roads."

But the early motorists were a true brotherhood of the road. "They stopped and helped if you were in trouble. And they drove with courtesy and consideration" said James.

Less pleasure

Much of the pleasure has gone out of motoring. Roads have been widened and straightened —and become more congested.

"There was plenty of room on the roads for a long time after I started. Dr Bannister's first car, the Swift, was registered CB20, and the guide book I have for 1914 shows that Blackburn's registration letters were still CB then."

That guide book lists as "bad" all roads leading from Blackburn, except the new road to Preston. And it shows you could have bed and breakfast at the White Bull for 3s 6d.

James strolled round Mr Rowntree's 2½-litre Daimler as he looked back on his life on the roads.

He patted the ridged radiator and said: "This is one of the finest cars I have ever driven." He pondered for a moment, and added:

"Only one car could compare with it. My old Stanley steamer I'll never forget that car.

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Times Past at Abingdon

Our MG Correspondent, otherwise known as Chris Biggs, has found this picture taken, I guess, in the 1980s as the newest car seems to be an MG Maestro.



MGs of many ages lined up by the old factory entrance in Abingdon on Thames. The current MG Car Club building sits on part of the plot formerly occupied by the Pavlova Leather Company - another long-disappeared part of Abingdon's former industrial history.

Beautiful Bugatti



Fred Magill's researches on the internet turned up this picture taken in the late 1950s in the French seaside resort of Arcachon. Any of the cars parked here would be a classic nowadays, but look closely at what's next to the little Renault 4CV at the foot of the picture. It's a Bugatti type 57 Atalante, one of only 17 made in the late 1930s and surely a contender for one of the most

dramatic cars ever. You can read the accompanying article on PreWarCar.com.



Some of you may know of the Atalante that was found in a private garage in Newcastle upon Tyne in 2008. Built in 1937 for Earl Howe, it had laid undisturbed for 48 years and was auctioned, fetching almost £3m. Wikipedia has the full story here.



Xclusively Jaguar Magazine August 2024 from Letitia Mace

August heralds the start of a new year for Xclusively Jaguar and on the 11th of this month we celebrate the 16th anniversary of Xclusively Jaguar and the 4th anniversary of the first issue of our printed magazine! How time flies!

Jaguar and Daimler parts feature strongly in this issue, as we take a close look at some super impressive welding from Swallows Racing – I'd be proud to have one of their exhaust units on my car! The Swallows Racing signature plate is a nice finishing touch that will advertise the product for itself every time the car is put up on a car lift!



Sticking with the parts theme, Xclusively Jaguar has a large number of (mostly) XJS parts listed on our ebay account (www-xclusively-jaguar-com). The majority of these parts are new old stock; in their original packaging and in good condition. Please do contact us direct if you have any questions regarding these items. XJS enthusiasts need not fret – we are not breaking the V12 XJS facelift coupe featured on the same page as our parts list! We just saw it as a convenient photo opportunity when it arrived on a trailer, courtesy of Cheviot Classics, who will be joining us as sponsors from this month.

Feedback from another magazine editor, in praise of our June 2024 issue:

> *Hi Letitia,*
>
> *I just looked at your June e-issue. Wow!*
>
> *It is not only that I liked the way you utilized the material that Simen produced, I was impressed and a bit astonished. In a way you made more out of it than I did, not least showing so many photos. I know Simen is mighty proud as well, he now wants to write more in our magazine here.*
>
> *It is a great benefit indeed that we could use material from each other's sources.*
>
> *I am highly impressed by your publication of a monthly magazine, in addition to your website.*
>
> *I know how much time, responsibility and concern it takes. And the great dedication …*
>
> Åsmund Lindal, Editor of Jaguaren (the Norsk Jaguar Klubb magazine).

As a final observation; in August 2010 the cover picture for our newsletter was Nigel Webb competing in his XK120, as seen in this month's Looking Back feature. In August 2024 Nigel Webb returns to our front cover, this time competing in his C-type at Monaco!

So much for looking back, but what about the future? On page 33 of this issue, Chris Holbrook, one of our readers in the USA asks "where next for Jaguar ……..?"

Amongst all of this there should be some good reading!

You will find the latest issue of Xclusively Jaguar magazine (along with all back issues) at https://www.xclusivelyjaguar.org/

Contact Letitia Mace via 07836 68 78 98 or Letitia@xclusivelyjaguar.org for more information or if you have any problems accessing the new website

Until next month, Happy Motoring!

---oOo---

That's all for this month.

Clear roads,

David

entries@bvac.org.uk