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BVAC News February 2026

Milestone

The only club event in January was the regular Milestone Breakfast Meet on the 11th. That took place on a miserable wet morning with snow in some of the surrounding areas, so unsurprisingly the turnout was well below normal. I was one of those who didn't make it so thanks to Kenny Wilson and Mike Webber for the photos and 'well done' to those who did make it along.







Let's hope for better weather for our next date, Sunday February 8th from 10am until about noon at the garden centre in Newtown St Boswells.

 Contact – Editor: David Hunter editor@bvac.org.uk; Secretary: Kenny Wilson 01896 849597

Curry Night

Our 2026 programme of club events kicks off with our popular Curry Night on Wednesday 18 February. Our venue once again is the award winning 1953 Restaurant in the High Street, Galashiels. The 1953 offers a great choice of Indian and Nepalese dishes in spacious surroundings. If you would like to join us, please check their menu on their website - 1953restaurant.com and then advise our organisers Keith & Tricia Watson at **chairman@bvac.org.uk** by no later than 13 February so that we can order in advance with the restaurant. **Please do not book or order directly with 1953.** Payment is made separately on the night to the restaurant.

Committee Notes from Kenny Wilson

The BVAC Committee met on 14 January at Earlston Church Hall when matters were discussed including membership renewals which are now due and our treasurer Norman Burr gave a statement showing that the club's finances were very healthy and will be able to fully meet requirements in the coming year. The Committee are also considering the appointment of a bookkeeper either on a voluntary or part time paid basis in the future to administer the accounts on a day-to-day basis. Discussion also took place on revamping the clubs website and social media presence to make this more accessible and interactive.

Ideas were discussed for club monthly meetings going forward to return to a more regular programme for members. These included a curry night, potential garage visits, Drive it Day and club scenic runs and visits to places of interest. Club stands organiser Phillip Titley discussed possible list of events and rallies club will be attending in 2026 which will be notified to club members shortly...

Club equipment (gazebos, flags, promotional items) are to be upgraded to improve the club's image and encourage new members at other rallies and events. Quotes are currently being obtained for these items.

A governance and Committee subgroup is being looked at to ensure that decisions on club matters arising can be put forward to full committee to be ratified which will allow matters to be resolved more efficiently.

The Committee next meets on Wednesday 11th February and welcomes feedback from club members and suggestions for club meetings going forward.

Subscriptions

Membership subscriptions for 2026 are due from 1st January. If you have not already done so, please complete and return the renewal form sent out by our secretary, Kenny Wilson as soon as possible.

If you are paying by standing order or bank transfer, please note that the club's bank account is now with Bank of Scotland. Please change any existing standing orders from our old account at Royal Bank of Scotland to the following:

Bank Of Scotland - sort code 80-22-60 Account no. 27780368

"The Borders Vintage Automobile Club Ltd"

If you require any further information, please contact our secretary Kenny Wilson at secretary@bvac.org.uk

The 'Monte' Comes to Jedburgh

As highlighted last month, one of the start points for the rally this year was John O'Groats last Thursday and the cars stopped at Jedburgh on a dreich Friday morning. Here's a selection of the machines taking part.













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The Rotary Classic from Peter Shaw

Rotary Club of North Berwick

You are invited to join the 2026 North Berwick Rotary Classic Car Tour for classic and interesting cars of any age which is being held on Sunday 26th April 2026. Entries will be limited to 60 cars.

By way of a change, our 2026 tour will not be going to the Borders but will instead be heading west to Biggar. We changed the format of the tour in 2025. We shortened the route and omitted the coffee stop. Those changes were well received, so we will be following that revised format in 2026.

The route is 130 miles long, almost exactly the same as 2025, and we will be stopping for lunch at the Tinto Hotel, Symington, near Biggar, and again finishing back at The Marine Hotel, North Berwick.

You are of course welcome to bring your own coffee and stop when you want. Because there will be no coffee stop, the tour will start at 10.30am, and the lunch stop will be slightly longer than in the past to allow more time to linger and look at the other cars.

The charge for catering remains at £40 per head, and the suggested minimum donation remains at £75. Of course, many drivers donate more than that, for which we are very grateful.

In 2026 the proceeds from the classic car tour will be shared amongst SIMBA, an organisation which supports parents who have lost premature babies, Leuchie House, a charity close to North Berwick which provides respite care nationally, and the Rotary Club of North Berwick's charity account, which in turn supports organisations and individuals locally, nationally and internationally.

As always, your support is greatly appreciated, and I hope we will be able to welcome you back in 2026.

The online booking form can be found here.

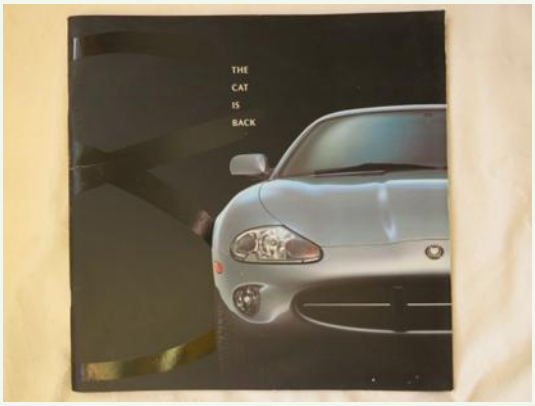
VSCC Scottish Tour

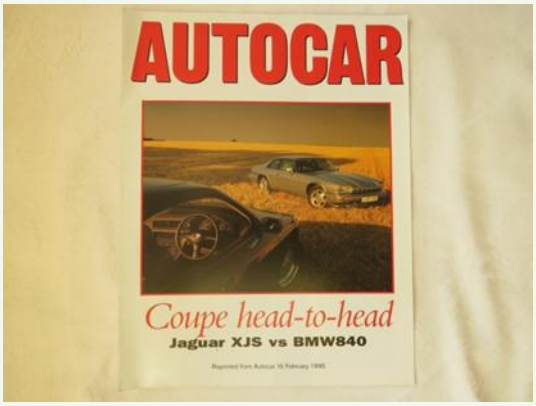


The Vintage Sports Car Club's Scottish Tour takes place in the Borders this year, based on the Mansfield House Hotel at Hawick on the 8th and 9th of May. There will be runs to Duns on the first day and Langholm on the second. More details can be found on their website here. Whether you have an eligible car and wish to take part or just come along and spectate, it should be an interesting couple of days.

Jaguar Memorabilia

Letitia Mace has a range of Jaguar brochures and road test reports for sale, covering various models from the 1990s and more recently. The full list can be downloaded here.





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On the Web

Also from Letitia, this article on the Peter Mallett Racing website has a fascinating article about the Morgan Motor Company who 'never got the memo' that you don't need a chassis anymore and are still building cars using traditional skills.



Morris Leslie



Classic

Saturday 21/02/2026 – 11:00

Date: 21/02/2026

Time: 11:00 GMT

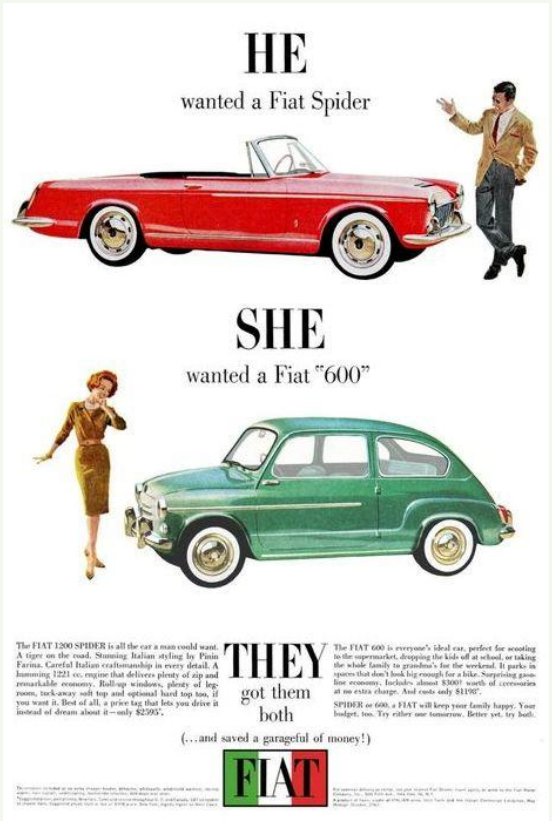
Location: Errol Airfield

Whether you're looking to add a classic to your garage or are looking to rehome one you don't need anymore, you may be interested that Morris Leslie's next auction of classics is taking place later this month. More details on their website here.

More Nostalgia…

Here for your amusement are more examples from Fred Magill's seemingly inexhaustible collection of period adverts and press reports. Apparently, a Sapphire Limousine "Sweeps off like an angry Duchess". How many seconds 0-60 does that equal? I somehow don't think Fiat would get away with their sexist advert these days!





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THE SUNDAY EXPRESS LONDON APRIL 20 1958

Into the back please, James



WHAT fearsome creatures lurk behind the roadside hedges? What slavering-jawed, scaly-backed monsters crouch ready to pounce? I don't know, but I am sure lots of week-end motorists do.

What else can explain these nose-to-tail, seven-or-eight-car convoys which creep huddled together at 20 miles an hour along the country highways?

I will defend to HIS dying breath the right of any driver to travel as slowly as he likes. But whatever hidden perils lurk behind the trees I loathe his lack of consideration in closing right up behind other slow cars and not allowing space for a faster motorist to overtake.

Apart from thoughtlessness it is downright silly. Watch a chauffeur. He hates driving bumper to bumper, for he has to clean the car. More mud and dust is thrown up from the car in front than ever comes from any other source.

I am feeling very chauffeur-minded at the moment. I have been testing the Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire Limousine, a very grand brother indeed of the ordinary Sapphire.

It is one of the few cars being built today for those people who believe that the true pleasure of driving consists of not doing any.

I soon discovered that if I owned it, the chauffeur would spend most of his time in the lap of luxury at the back, behind the sliding glass partition. For this car is fun to drive.

Glass-walled

It is big, of course. Sitting in the front you half expect a voice from the rear to bellow: "Only five more downstairs."

In this glass-walled world of the chauffeur there is plenty of comfort. The splendid leather-covered seat is not adjustable, but somehow it seems to fit any size of driver.

There is no interior mirror. You cannot take surreptitious peeps at the goings on of the gentry and entertain the servants' hall with rollicking anecdotes.

Oddly enough this car has a four-speed steering column change. It is the first I have been fond of. It is neat, smooth, and polished.

I drove off, accelerating to leave behind the taxi I could see in my wing mirror. By the time I discovered that the taxi was really the blunt end of the Sapphire dwindling to the horizon I had found out what remarkable acceleration this limousine has, considering it weighs the best part of two tons.

After a while I went above stairs and stepped into the back. Stepped is the right word. It is a most comfortable car to enter. And for five people in the passenger compartment, there is spaciousness, a separate heater, silence, good visibility, and any amount of soft living.

Back in the driver's seat again, and speaking very firmly on behalf of the chauffeurs' union, I would adjure Armstrong Siddeley to pay attention to one infuriating point. The car is so silent that the loud tick of the passenger clock and the chatter of the other on the dashboard are worse than any Chinese water torture.

The road holding and suspension of this car are what they should be, although I drove about with a most unchauffeurly restraint.

Fast, vivid

This is no car for giving performance figures. It is enough to say that it is as fast and vivid as any back-seat driver would desire. The fuel consumption—as if you would care—is between 14 and 16 miles a gallon.

FOR THE TECHNICAL: Engine, six-cylinder, overhead valves; capacity, 3,435 c.c. B.H.P.: 125 at 4,700 r.p.m. Suspension, front, independent, coil spring; rear, semi-elliptical.

PRICE: £1,910. Total, including tax, £2,866 7s.

WILL IT GET THROUGH THE LODGE GATES? Length, 17ft. 8in., width 5ft. 8½in., height, 5ft. 11½in.

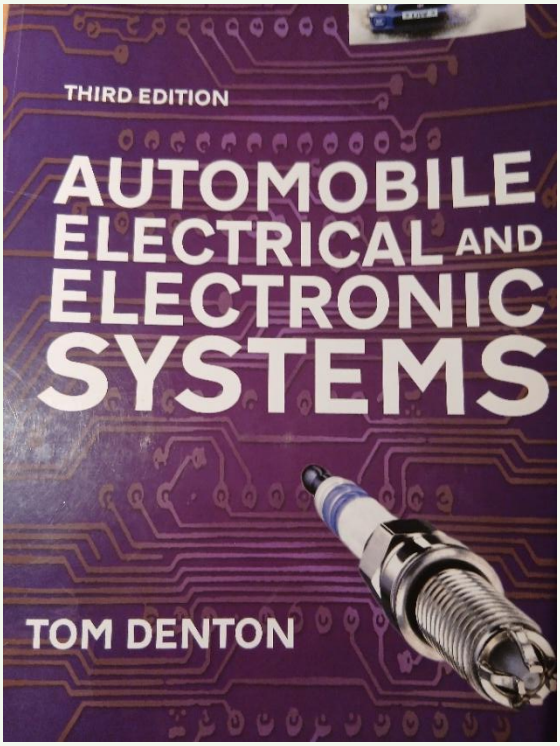
ROBERT GLENTON tests the Sapphire Limousine

GLENTON'S SCORE CARD

	Pts. (Max. 10)	Comment
Engine	10	*Hardly a murmur.*
Steering	7	*Somewhat heavy.*
Acceleration	8	*Sweeps off like an angry duchess.*
Suspension	10	*Red carpet progress.*
Cornering	9	*No roll worth mentioning.*
Comfort	10	*How the rich live.*
Finish	10	*No rough edges.*
Gearchange	9	*Steering column but smooth*



Can you use this?



This hefty book might be useful to someone maintaining a 1990's classic as it goes into great detail about the sort of electronics found in cars of that era. Free to someone who can use it. Email the editor if you're interested.

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That's all for this month, do let me have anything you'd like to see in next month's edition – local motoring events, pictures or full articles all gratefully received.

Clear roads,

David

editor@bvac.org.uk