



BVAC News

February 2021

Thirlestane Show Postponed Again

You will by now have heard that the committee have sadly reached the conclusion that due to the current pandemic, we will not be able to run the BVAC Classic Festival of Motoring again this year. The advice we received was that even on the most optimistic assumptions large scale outdoor events, which of course are banned at the moment, would not be able to resume as early as June. Anyone who has been involved in organising the show in previous years will know how much work and planning goes into making it happen and the effort and financial commitment starts many months before the show day. Over the last few days, I've been contacting previous entrants and enthusiasts who have been in touch via our website and it's gratifying to receive a good number of expressions of support and interest in future shows. The first enquiry for 2022 came in an hour and a half after this year's postponement was published on the website!

We are hoping that we will be able to run a smaller scale event at Thirlestane later in the year for members and perhaps invited guests. Rest assured that the committee will be working on plans for this and whatever other club activities we can restart at short notice as soon as the travel and meeting restrictions permit.

Talking of planning ahead, next year's show will be aiming to be bigger and better than ever, marking as it does the club's golden anniversary. Some big ideas are already being worked on – watch this space.



John McPherson

John McPherson sadly passed away on 5th January. John was a BVAC member for many years, and a regular attendee at club events in his immaculately turned out Jaguar. John was always willing to lend a hand and for many years volunteered to drive the minibus shuttle from the car park at Thirlestane on show day, only giving up when advancing years meant he could no longer get insurance. His gentle presence will be missed by us all. Kenny has sent the club's condolences to John's family.

Wrong Decision?

A club member (who wishes to remain anonymous) sent me this picture of a car for sale in 2006. He thought about it, but didn't take the bait. What's it worth now? At least double that, and he'd have had a lot of fun while waiting for the investment to mature!



Do you have any stories of cars you should have bought but didn't, or maybe that you bought and regretted? Or the same for selling? **We'd love to hear them.**

My own story was a sale I should never have made. As a young lad trying to get mobile on a shoestring budget, I bought a BMW Isetta 300 (bubble car) for £65, ran it for a few months until it developed an engine fault and sold it for £20. These things sell for silly money now, but keeping a car that didn't run wasn't an option at the time. It was a terrifying thing to drive with only the front door between you and the scene of an accident. The period publicity shot would cause panic amongst modern

parents – dad’s arm round the youngster wouldn’t be a substitute for a seat belt, let alone a child seat! Unfortunately, I didn’t even think to photograph most of my old bangers in those days. UUS104 is no longer registered, so I don’t suppose the only BMW I ever owned has survived.

Minor Improvement by Chris Biggs

My Morris Traveller has 41,000 miles on the original engine from new in 1970. The car’s history indicates that the engine has not been modified or repaired before. Designed to run on ‘leaded’ fuel it has been run on ‘unleaded’ with a supplement during my ownership. For some time, although running well, oil has been leaking from the head gasket and there has been a tell-tale burnt oil/burnt valve smell when warm after a decent run. I decided it was time to deal with the cylinder head and leaking gaskets.

East Sussex Minors (ESM) has long been an excellent source for all things Morris Minor and they have recently acquired the total stock of Bull Motif Spares. This makes them even better now for BMC A-series engines. They have an ‘exchange’ scheme for major engine parts all the way up to whole engine units at what seem to me to be reasonable prices. Accordingly an order for an exchange ‘unleaded’ head, fully refurbished, plus gaskets, studs, nuts and washers and a full Service kit was placed. To my surprise the whole lot arrived 36 hours later on 23rd December! I was generous in my thanks for their service. Instructions were included for my return of the old cylinder head to them in due course so that I can reclaim the deposit I paid on the scheme.



Needless to say the work did not get done until the New Year. As anticipated a few of the studs were reluctant to come out of the engine block and one was completely stuck. Some patience and a little brute force eventually removed it. How glad I was that I had purchased a full set of new studs, nuts and washers together with a full gasket set. Some cleaning up was required but everything seemed ready for the replacement head as shown in the first photograph.

Care is needed when placing the new cylinder head gasket as modern copper gaskets seem to have less thickness in them than older style ones. Gasket sealants are available to help but should always be used sparingly. Everything lined up easily courtesy of the new studs and the tightening down was done according to the workshop manual using the recommended torque settings. New gaskets were fitted as all the ancillaries were re-bolted to the Head. It all looked good - see second photo – so engine oil was added, coolant re-filled and engine turned over.

The car ran nicely once warmed up. Currently there are some bits of fine tuning to do to the choke settings and slow running of the carb' but this should be a simple matter over the first outing or two. I am waiting for some fine dry weather to take the car on a decent run to bed everything down. A full service including a rear brake strip down and clean to cure 'sticking' was done at the same time. So fingers crossed that all will be well for the new 'season' whenever that turns out to be.



Bargain Morris

My interest in old Morris is well known to anyone who's read previous editions of BVAC News, so an entry in last November's Morris Leslie auction caught my eye. It was a rather tidy blue and black 1935 four door Morris 8, which had been fitted with a (slightly) more modern engine. Given the non-originality, I thought the estimate of £5-6000 was a little optimistic, even though the original engine was included in the sale, but it went for £2600. I think someone got a bargain!



Remember Shows?

We can't have car shows at the moment, so it seems a good time to look back at past shows.

I was recently gifted a batch of old Morris Register magazines and tucked inside one of them was the SVVF Programme for 1979. Compared to the glossy yearbook produced nowadays, the single duplicated sheet seems quite sparse, but it's interesting nonetheless. Seven years into the existence of the BVAC, our show (Mellerstain in those days) is in its traditional slot at the start of June, and it includes the "Scottish Morris Day". There were also several shows in the area that no longer take place – Hawick (1st July), Dunbar (25/26th August) and Peebles (9th September). I wonder if any of the more senior members of the club remember visiting these shows or know anything of their history and why they're no longer in the calendar? Old photographs would be good!

Of course, we're not alone in having a long history of shows – Biggar, Strathmore (Glamis), Alford and no doubt others are shows that were still running until the dreaded virus got in the way.

THE SCOTTISH VINTAGE VEHICLES FEDERATION.
RALLY CALENDAR, 1979.

April	22	Scottish Austin 7 Club, Anniversary Run.	Club Members.
May	20	South of Scotland V.V.C.	
May	26/27	Scottish Austin 7 Club, Northern Weekend.	Club Members.
	27	Dumfries and Galloway.	
	27	Morris Register, Myreton.	Club Members.
June	2/3	Mellerstain.	Includes Scottish Morris Day.
	9/10	Kildrummy.	
	10	Scottish Western Thoroughbred Vehicle Club.	
	16/17	R.W. Thomson.	
	17	Scottish Austin 7 Club, Treasure Hunt, Edinburgh.	Club Members.
	23/24	New Byth. (Steam)	
	24	Leven.	
June/July	30/1	Bon Accord.	
July	1	Hawick.	
	7/8	Mid-Deeside, Aboyne.	
	8	Perth.	
	14/15	Strathmore.	
	15	R.S.A.C. <u>PROVISIONAL.</u>	
	21/22	Fife Historic Veh. Club.	
	28/29	Alford.	
August.	4/5	Scottish Austin Seven Club National Rally, Doune.	Austin 7s only.
	5	Garioch, Old Meldrum.	
	5	Morris Register, Picnic.	Club Members.
	11/12	Biggar.	
	11	Muir of Ord.	
	12	Historic Wheels, Elgin.	
	18/19	Scot Nat. Vintage M/c Club.	
	18/19	Deeside. Maryculter.	
	19	R.S.A.C. <u>PROVISIONAL.</u>	
	25/26	Dunbar.	
	26	Echt.	
September	2	Grampian Police.	
	9	Peebles.	
	15/16	Nat. Vintage Tractor & Engine Club.	
October	21	Dumfries & Galloway Ploughing Match.	
November	4	Dates Meeting	
	11	Scottish Austin Seven Club, Film Show, Doune.	

N.B. Scottish Austin 7 Club will officially support Fife on 21/22 July and Biggar on 11/12 AUGUST.

- FOOTNOTES.
- (1) ~~R.S.A.C. provisional dates to be resolved as soon as possible.~~
 - (2) Garioch raised the point that Alford preceded their rally by one week with subsequent abstraction of Garioch entry. Clubs would try to resolve this point between themselves.
 - (3) Sorn dates to be advised.
 - (4) S.V.V.C. Auction dates to be advised. A note should be included in the Calendar that there will be four auctions during the year, dates to be advised.

*R.S.A.C. (Sat) Sorn (Sun) same weekend August
Dates to be advised*

Talking of old shows, here are some pictures from the show at Walls on the west side of Shetland, taken when we lived there nearly twenty years ago – 11th August 2002 to be precise. In keeping with the agricultural nature of the community, the biggest classes were tractors and Land Rovers, but there was still a decent variety of cars for a remote village show.



I don't know if you can see it in the photograph, but the grey Ford tractor at the head of the line has a Berwickshire registration.

Just a Hint

If you don't want BVAC News to degenerate into a monologue of my ramblings about old cars, please let me have any views, experiences, old pictures or anything else you think might be of interest to the members. You can email me at entries@bvac.org.uk. Thanks to Chris and 'anon' for the items they've contributed this month.

All the best, and clear roads (when we're allowed to use them),

David