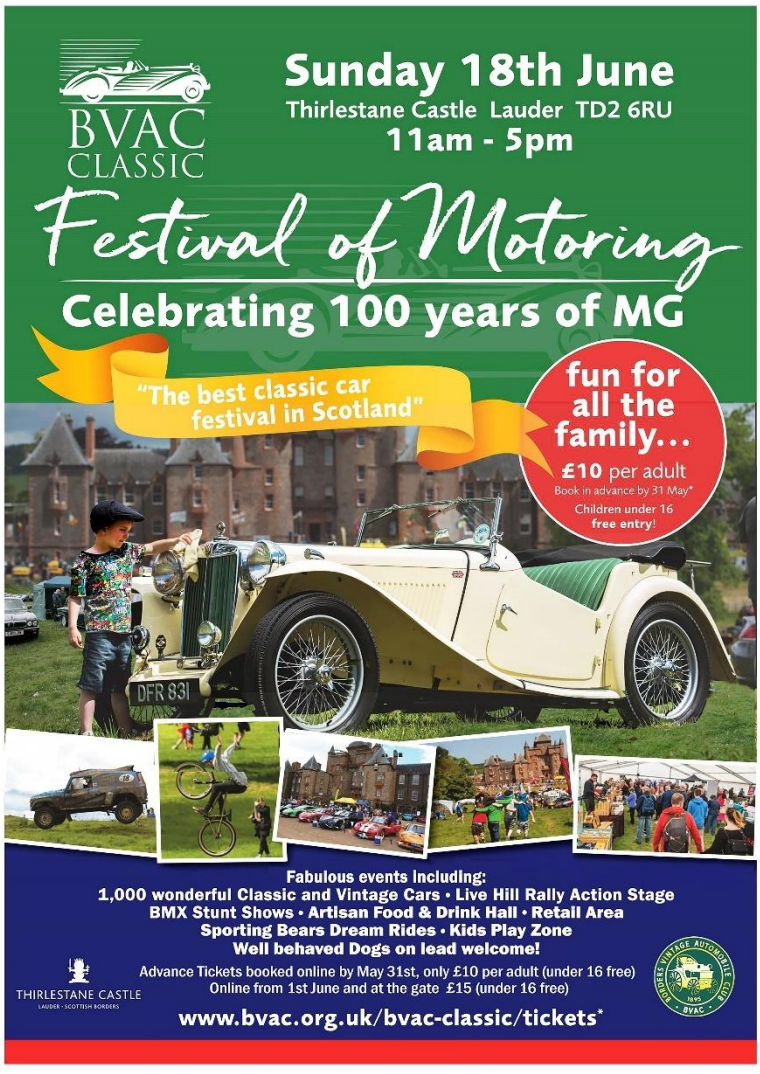


BVAC News
May 2023

Thirlestane Plans Progressing

As I write, the entry deadline is upon us, and it looks like we will have about nine hundred cars on display on Sunday June 18th, with over sixty booked for the scenic run on the Saturday. I imagine there will as usual be a few late entrants but if you haven't booked your car in yet please hurry up. The entry form is still available on the website here, but will be taken down in the next few days.

As we'd hoped, the MG marque is being well represented, about 10% of all our entries being MGs. The rest of the entries cover the usual wide range from vintage Bentleys and Rolls Royces to Italian supercars, not forgetting the everyday cars of all eras up to and including the 1990s.



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

You should all have received an email encouraging you to volunteer to help set up and run the show. If you can help in any way, please contact Chris Biggs (chrisjbiggs@btinternet.com) as he's co-ordinating the list of helpers.

April Events

The Easter Sunday Milestone breakfast meet produced a record turnout – it seems you really like the chance to get together informally with your cars for a chat in the car park or over a coffee.

Sunday April 23rd was the national Drive it Day and we were joined by members of the Edinburgh MG Club for a run from Milestone to the coast following the Tweed and crossing all the older bridges on the way. We were very fortunate that the Union Chain Bridge reopened after its prolonged refurbishment just a few days earlier. The run was mostly completed





under cloudy skies, but unfortunately the heavens opened and the wind strengthened as we approached our destination, the Pot a Doodle Do restaurant between Scremerston and Cocklawburn where almost forty of us enjoyed a tasty Sunday lunch. One shaggy passenger seemed to be looking forward to the ride!

Drive it Day is a fundraiser for the NSPCC Childline charity and some of you had bought the bumper plates for your car while others made cash contributions on the day. These have now been deposited with the charity, but if anyone wants to donate further you can do via the Just Giving page here.

I know that some people who couldn't make It on the 23rd are interested in the run, so I've included a copy of the route instructions at the end of this BVAC News.

Club Events for May

The next breakfast meet will be on 14th May. The usual format applies, no need to book, just turn up at Milestone Garden Centre, Newtown St Boswells around 10am and look for the older cars in the car park.

We have a garage night arranged for May 24th - join fellow members for a specially arranged visit to a specialist Classic car garage where cars are bought, sold and restored. Fraser Ewart of Grandisons Garage, Whitecraig, EH21 8NE has very kindly invited us to visit his establishment for an evening visit on Wednesday 24th May, 2023, 7pm for 7.15pm.



Whitecraig village is off to the right from the A68 shortly before you reach the Edinburgh ring road. This is a substantial dealership where a range of Classic cars are always in stock. Additionally, there are often various restoration jobs at different stages. It's sure to be a fascinating visit and well worth the journey. Drive whatever you are comfortable with – why not get together with a friend and share the journey. Although it is not necessary to formally book places for this visit it would be kind if you could let Chris Biggs (chrisjbiggs@btinternet.com) know your intention to attend so that we have some idea of numbers.

BVAC Club Display Stands at Other Shows

Details of the programme for the summer are on the website here.

The first two shows on this year's calendar are in May – Kielder on the 14th and Kelso on the 21st. Entries are now closed for these shows and Dennis Fortune will be in touch with people who have booked to confirm arrangements.

Booking deadlines for a couple of the shows have been extended so you still have time to enter:

- Bo'ness on 4th June – deadline 12th May
- Moffat on 25th June – deadline 4th May

If you have any queries about shows, contact Dennis at clubstandentries@bvac.org.uk .

For Sale from former BVAC member Murray Macdougall

For sale is a very original 1932 Lanchester 15/18 saloon. The car was bought new by an Edinburgh Doctor but spent most of it's life in a museum till I purchased it in 2009. The V5 shows 2 previous keepers.

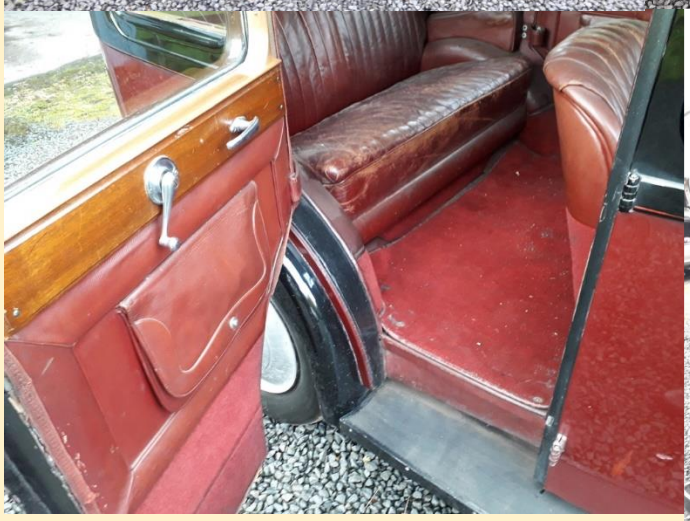
The bodywork, paintwork and interior is totally original, but over the past 3 years the 2.5 litre, straight six ohv engine has undergone a major, professional rebuild and a full rewire. The Wilson preselector gearbox works well and the car runs very well although having been unused since the rebuild began, light recommissioning of the brakes would be suggested. Some cosmetic work to the interior is needed including a new front carpet since the front floor was replaced.

The car can be inspected in the central Borders and offers are invited. I believe there are less than 20 of this model still in existence.

Contact Murray Macdougall on 0781 591 2480 or by email murraym2349@gmail.com for more information.





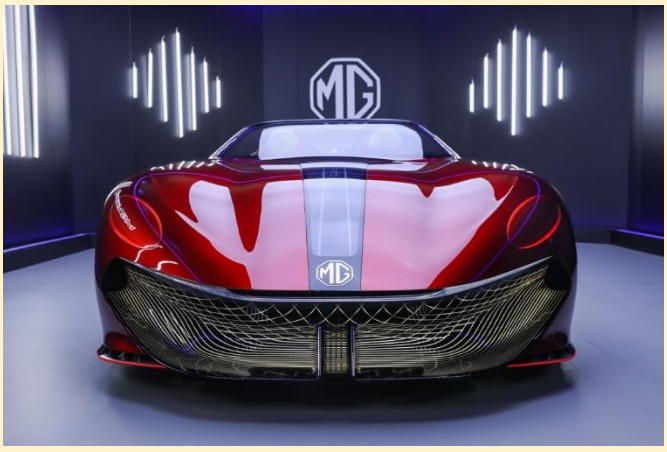








MG Returns to Sports Car Production



After a gap of several years, MG has announced a new sportscar – the oddly named MG Cyberster and, yes, it is electric. It certainly looks dramatic and promises stunning performance along with a 500 mile range. It should be in European showrooms in summer 2024.

Electric Easter Egg

I know Easter was last month! Dubbed 'L'Oeuf Electrique' (the electric egg) it was the invention of French designer Paul Arzens. Conceived in 1938, it was built during German occupation of France as a response to severe petrol rationing. The ultra-light body and electric motor made up for the





weight of five batteries which gave it a 60 mile range at up to 40mph. I'm not sure what modern crash protection rules would make of the body design and the distinctly non-collapsible steering column, but it shows the modern craze for electric cars is nothing new. Full details at https://www.prewarcar.com/monsieur-arzens-s-electric-easter-egg and thanks to Fred Magill for bringing this to my attention.

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What Motoring Used to Cost

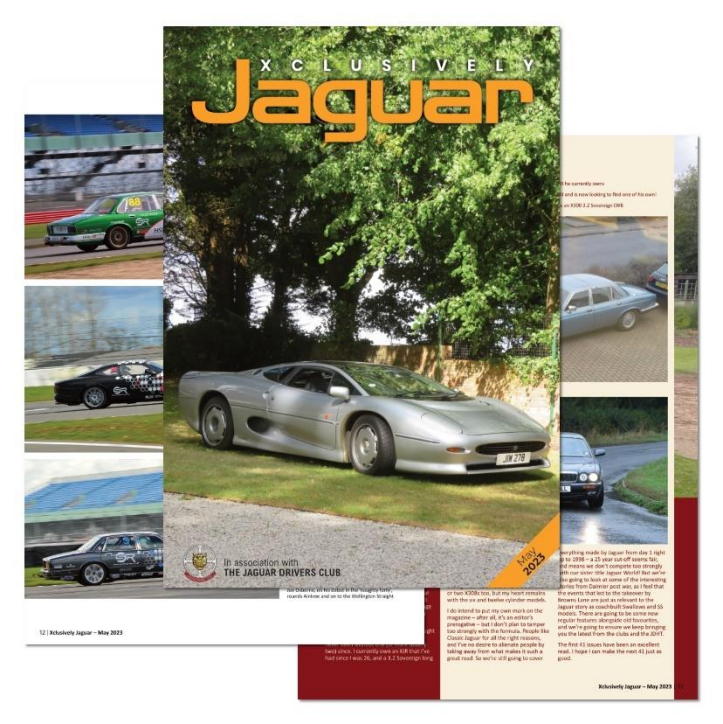
We're all aware that the cost of motoring is going up all the time, so I think this advert from around 1912 might be of interest. To give you some context – 4250 Francs was equivalent to £168 at the time or about £13,000 now. A sou (5 centimes) was less than an old halfpenny then and about 15p now. For that money, you got a two seater that weighed only 350kg and could do 37mph on its 855cc 10bhp engine.



Xclusively Jaguar from Letitia Mace

One of my subscribers recently reminded me that this is the 20th anniversary of X350, but do not fret as there is still plenty of time for us to celebrate this in Xclusively Jaguar magazine before the year is out!

From the next issue of Classic Jaguar magazine Sam Skelton will take over from Ray Ingman as editor. I have really enjoyed working with Ray and I am sorry not to be working with him in the future, however, I am looking forward to continuing to write for Classic Jaguar and working with Sam Skelton. Until I can persuade Ray Ingman to reverse our roles and write for Xclusively Jaguar magazine I will have to content myself with seeing Ray a couple of times a year on the race track!



I have now taken on the role of XJ Register Correspondent for the Jaguar Drivers Club and my first instalment appears in the June issue of Jaguar Driver. Many thanks to JDC Chairman, Roger Kemp and JDC magazine editor, Gaynor Cauter, for giving me this opportunity which I will endeavour to do justice to!

Earlier this year it was suggested that one copy of each issue of Xclusively Jaguar magazine should be lodged with Jaguar Heritage, to be entered into the JDHT archives. While visiting Gaydon in April, Matthew Davis, Managing Director of Jaguar Heritage met me at The Collections Centre to take delivery of a batch of back issues of Xclusively Jaguar magazine,

dating from August 2020. Future copies will be sent to Jaguar Heritage on a monthly basis.You will find the latest issue of Xclusively Jaguar magazine (along with all back issues) at www.Xclusively-Jaguar.co.uk Contact Letitia Mace via 07836 68 78 98 or Letitia@exclusively-jaguar.co.uk for more information

That's all this month, if you've anything you'd like to see published next month, contact me at entries@bvac.org.uk.

David

Run instructions on the next page….

BVAC Drive It Day Run

23rd April 2023

Six Bridges to the Sea

A run of a little over forty miles taking us from the Milestone Garden Centre in Newtown St Boswells to Cocklawburn, just south of the mouth of the Tweed crossing the river over the six bridges that were available for the pioneer motorists to cross the Tweed in the early years of the twentieth century.

Mileages are approximate and mileometers vary, particularly in older cars. Pay attention to the signs.

Drive carefully and try not to bunch up and drive in convoy as this makes it difficult for other motorists. Some stretches are on narrow roads and/or have poor surfaces, but when possible:

Slower cars – allow for overtaking

Faster cars – overtake when prudent

Miles	Stage	Instructions
0.0		Leave the car park turning right and right again to join the A68 SP Jedburgh & St Boswells
0.8	0.8	Turn left onto the B6404, SP St Boswells
2.2	1.4	1st bridge - **Mertoun Bridge**
6.8	4.6	At crossroads, turn right onto B6397 SP Kelso
9.3	2.5	At T junction, turn right onto A6089 SP Kelso
10.3	1.0	At roundabout, take the second exit SP Town Centre
11.1	0.8	At roundabout, turn right SP Town Centre
11.3	0.2	At T junction, turn left
11.5	0.2	2nd bridge – **Kelso Bridge or Rennie's Bridge**
11.9	0.4	At mini-roundabout, straight on
12.0	0.2	Turn left onto B6350 SP Cornhill *NB if you reach the roundabout on the A698, you've overshot.*
16.8	4.8	Leave Scotland
21.6	4.8	At T junction in Cornhill, turn left onto A698
22.4	0.8	3rd bridge, **Coldstream Bridge** , return to Scotland

22.7	0.3	Turn right onto A6112 SP Duns
24.4	1.7	At crossroads, turn right *NB there is no sign at the junction, but you are joining the B6437*
27.5	3.1	Turn right onto unclassified road SP Ladykirk & Upsettlington
28.4	0.9	Turn left SP Ladykirk & Norham *NB straight ahead is a dead end*
29.0	0.6	At crossroads turn right onto B6740 SP Norham
29.3	0.3	4th bridge, **Ladykirk & Norham Bridge**, leave Scotland again
30.1	0.8	In front of Norham Village Hall, turn left SP Norham Castle
32.9	2.8	In front of white house, turn left SP Horncliffe
34.1	1.2	At end of low wall, turn left SP Union Bridge, Paxton and Chain Bridge Honey Farm
34.6	0.6	5th bridge – **The Union Chain Bridge**, return to Scotland *NB take care – the width restriction is enforced by stone bollards which make no allowances for careless drivers!*
35.7	1.2	At T junction, turn right onto B6461 SP Paxton & Berwick
37.9	2.2	Leave Scotland again
39.6	1.7	At T junction, turn left onto A1
40.5	0.9	Turn right onto A6105 SP Berwick & station
41.2	0.7	At T junction turn right SP station, then straight on through two mini-roundabouts
41.6	0.4	Straight on through two roundabouts, then pass to the right of the Town Hall and turn right into Hide Hill. Keep to the main road as it turns right again into Bridge Street then left into Bridge End
42.1	0.5	6th bridge - **The Berwick Bridge,** bear left off the bridge, following the main road
42.4	0.3	At T junction, turn left
42.9	0.5	At roundabout, go straight ahead, SP Scremerston
44.1	1.2	Turn left, SP Scremerston & Pot-A Doodle Do, then immediately left again, SP Cocklawburn Beach & Pot-A Doodle Do
44.9	0.8	Beyond the entrance to Borewell Farm, turn left into Pot-A Doodle Do and park in the car park. If heading for the beach, continue past the entrance and take the next left.

A Bit of History

The six bridges you have crossed have centuries of history between them. In the order you have crossed them:

1. Mertoun Bridge, east of St Boswells dates from the late 1830's. It has a toll house at the end of it and was originally built with stone piers and wooden arches. The wooden parts were soon washed away and replaced in 1839-41 on raised piers. This still wasn't effective and the present stone arches were added in 1887.
2. The Kelso Bridge or Rennie's Bridge was built in 1800-03 replacing the 1754 bridge which had suffered two collapses in 1756 & 1797. Before that, there had been a ferry at this point. The architect, John Rennie, went on to design Waterloo Bridge in London. There's a toll house at the NE end of the bridge and tolls were collected until 1854 when they were abandoned after the local population rioted.
3. The Coldstream Bridge was designed by John Smeaton, architect of the Eddystone Lighthouse and built between 1763 and 1767. It has been improved, strengthened and widened in stages between 1787 and 1961. It has a plaque marking a visit by Robert Burns in 1787, and at the Scottish side there's a 'Wedding House' – the eastern equivalent of Gretna Green. It's a listed building in both Scotland and England – the southern half was listed in England in 1952 but it wasn't until 1971 that Historic Scotland listed the northern half.
4. The Ladykirk and Norham Bridge does just what it says, joining the Scottish village of Ladykirk to Norham in England a mile upstream of the imposing Norham Castle. The present structure dates from the 1880s although there was an earlier wooden bridge.
5. The Union Chain Bridge has numerous claims to fame. When it was built in 1820 it was the longest wrought iron suspension bridge in the world and the first vehicular suspension bridge in the UK. The Menai suspension bridge in Wales was started earlier but did not open until after the Union Bridge. It was designed by a naval officer, Captain Samuel Brown who proved its strength to a sceptical audience by riding across it on the day it opened in a carriage towing twelve carts. Now, it is the oldest suspension bridge in Britain carrying road traffic. It has just reopened after a multi-million-pound refurbishment.
6. The Berwick Bridge or Old Bridge was built between 1611 and 1624 and until 1928 carried all road traffic heading south from Berwick. It replaced a wooden bridge which had been badly damaged by ice. It is built of local Tweedmouth sandstone and its prolonged building programme was beset by delays and cost overruns. Sounds familiar? It is currently restricted to one way light road traffic and is suffering from structural problems so may be pedestrianised in future.

Modern Tweed Bridges

In the last century, there have been three more road bridges built over this stretch of the Tweed. The first was the Royal Tweed Bridge in Berwick. Built of reinforced concrete and opened in 1928, the northernmost arch was at the time the longest concrete span in the UK. It carried the A1 road until the Berwick By-Pass was opened in 1984 and necessitated the building of a new bridge about two miles upstream. The third modern bridge on this stretch of river is Hunter's Bridge which carries the A698 round the outskirts of Kelso and was opened in 1998.