



BVAC News

April 2020

Club Events

There are none....

You'll no doubt have heard that, thanks to the Covid-19 virus precautions, the Thirlestane show is postponed until next year and all club activities are suspended until at least the end of May. That leaves this newsletter as the only contact between club members, so I'll try to put a bit more in it than usual over the next couple of months. This month we have the concluding part of the story of classic motoring in the east, a quiz contributed by Keith Tait and another batch of extracts from an old show programme. I had intended to publish some driving routes which you could try without making contact with others, but it seems even that is being discouraged these days – what strange times we live in!

Please let me know what you'd like to see next month, or better still let me have some copy or pictures to publish. Are you self-isolating in the garage and making progress on that restoration? If so, where are the pictures? If you've been sorting out old photographs and come across one of that car you owned fifty years ago – let's see it! In the absence of a 70s-themed show we would make do with a picture of a younger you in flares and a mullet standing proudly in front of a mustard yellow Morris Marina ... or whatever? Email me at entries@bvac.org.uk

In the absence of recent events, here's a look back to Thirlestane 2016:





E10 Fuel

It looks like E10 fuel (10% Ethanol) will be replacing the familiar E5 at our pumps sometime soon. The proposal is out for government consultation until April 19th (unless that's changed due to the virus outbreak). Here's the press release the FBHVC have put out on the subject:

FBHVC position statement

On Wednesday 4th March 2020, Her Majesty's Government published a consultation on proposals to introduce E10 petrol as the standard for fuel across the UK. The lead proposal would introduce a minimum ethanol content of 5.5% for standard 'premium' fuels in 2021,

whilst - and this is important for historic vehicles - maintaining the current E5 blend in the 'protection' grade. The consultation seeks views on the proposed mechanism, definitions and derogations. It also includes a call for evidence on potential changes required to existing policy mechanisms (including targets under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation) following an introduction of E10. The consultation will run for six weeks, closing on 19th April and the FBHVC have received a formal invitation to participate in the consultation and have confirmed our intention to do so. The reasons given for considering the introduction of a standard of fuel containing up to 10 per cent bioethanol, centre around attempts to make significant savings on carbon emissions as the government makes attempts to meet its climate change targets. Typically, fuel companies currently blend petrol with up to 5% bioethanol and diesel with 7% biodiesel. The government have a target to ensure that 9.75% of all transport fuels must come from renewable sources by the end of this year under their "Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation". The government believe that a move to standardising E10 fuel will be equivalent to taking 350,000 cars off the road each year. The Department of Transport estimates that this may cut CO2 emissions for transport by 750,000 tonnes per year. E10 is of concern to historic vehicle owners because it may cause some flexible fuel hoses, seals, gaskets, plastics and certain metals critical to the fuel system to corrode or degrade. This may cause damage to fuel pumps, carburettors, seals on injectors, pressure regulators and fuel tanks that are not resistant to ethanol. The bioethanol may also dislodge particles on older fuel systems causing blockages. There are other challenges facing the roll-out of E10 fuel aside from compatibility. As published in Federation News, Issue 1 2020, we understand that the only UK refinery for the additive has closed and the environmental costs of shipping additives from other parts of the world negates any environmental benefit. The Federation note that the government, in previous consultations on the matter, have recognised that historic and cherished vehicles are not advised to use fuel with these proposed levels of bioethanol. The Federation has also advised in previous consultations of the requirement to run an alternative 'protection grade' alongside E10 for historic vehicles and we will seek to reinforce that standpoint in this latest consultation. The Federation will also seek reassurance that historic vehicle owners will not be financially penalised at the pump when purchasing protection grade fuel and that its availability will not be time limited. In September 2019, compulsory fuel labelling was introduced to ensure that consumers were informed of the contents of the fuel they were using on the forecourts, their environmental impact and a fuel's suitability for a particular vehicle. It required a new set of fuel labels which were harmonised across Europe. E10 petrol is used elsewhere on the continent and is particularly prevalent in France and Germany, where it is also offered alongside E5 grades. The same day as the consultation was announced, FBHVC Chairman David Whale attended a meeting at the House of Commons with the All Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicles Group, chaired by Sir Greg Knight, to reinforce the concerns of the Federation's members directly with MPs. The following question was posed to the Secretary of State for Transport by Sir Greg Knight, Conservative MP for East Yorkshire: "To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the use of E10 fuel on older vehicles?" Which received the following response from Rachel Maclean, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Transport): "Increasing the share of bioethanol in petrol by blending up to 10 per cent, known as E10, could provide significant carbon savings, helping us meet our climate change commitments. One of the main barriers to introducing E10 has been vehicle compatibility. Currently, around 95% of petrol cars used in the UK can use E10, but around 700,000 are not warranted by their manufacturers to use E10. This number is expected to decrease as vehicles come to the end of their life. However, some classic and cherished vehicles that are not advised to use E10 will remain in use. The prolonged use of E10 fuel in those older and classic vehicles not under manufacturer warranty can cause corrosion of some rubbers and alloys used in the engine and fuel systems. For those vehicles, the Department remains committed to ensuring that E5 is retained as a protection

grade, if E10 is introduced.” The FBHVC will be consulting with all interested parties and our member organisations prior to making our submission to the E10 consultation by the deadline.

Personally, I suspect some of the effects on the older models may be overstated. I’m old enough to remember a petrol brand called Cleveland Discol which was marketed in the UK up to the late 60s before being discontinued by Esso who’d bought the marque. A little research suggests it was around 15% alcohol (ethanol) in the 50s and 60s and as much as 25-30% pre-war. That seemed to have no ill effects on the cars of the day. It may be that it’s the plastic and alloy components used in the late 20th century which are liable to suffer and of course many parts in an earlier car may have been replaced over the years with whatever replacement was available at the time. If anyone wants to air their views on the subject or has specific technical knowledge to bring to bear, please let me know and I can publish them next month – email entries@bvac.org.uk.

Quiz Time

Just for your own amusement, no prizes are on offer and the answers will be in next month’s newsletter. It’s contributed by Keith Tait via Chris Biggs who’s added a little – thanks to you both. The missing words can all be filled in with makes or models of cars. In some cases you must think of the **sound** of the word.

It was a (1)..... day as the playboy with an international reputation drove along the (2)..... between Cheltenham and (3)

He was heading for London with his (4)..... for the (5) Reception and concert. As he held her hand he felt the (6)..... Engagement ring he had given her. He recalled some of the (7)..... that had made him a (8)..... in his own lifetime.

As a school (9)..... he had been (10)..... position in Jamaica's (11)..... Bay with the wife of an American politician. The republican (12)..... from (13)..... Texas, greeted him with an (14) "....." Partner, but had gone for his (15)..... 45 when he found our hero trying to get his wife into the (16)..... position.

As he drove towards the concert hall, he knew his (17)..... attitude to life was over. With this girl, life would be different. No longer would he play the wild (18)..... and make a (19).....all the girls he met. He left her at the stage door. "I'm so worried about this performance," she said. "I played so badly at the rehearsal this afternoon." "Don't worry," he replied, "(20)..... be all right on the night." "(21)..... and park the car and don't forget to pay the (22)..... the booth," she said.

It was a glittering occasion with a celebrity audience. He had already spotted (23)..... Alexandra with her daughter (24)..... , Anna (25)..... and Johnny (26).....

His fiancée gave a faultless performance from her Bach repertoire; the double violin (27)..... in D (28)..... followed by Beethoven's Choral (29).....

Her performance was a (30)..... And was met with universal (31).....

In her flat later, getting supper ready, our hero sensed there was something wrong. As she took a (32).....pie from the (33)....., the feeling of moving through life together with one (34)..... Seemed to have gone. The (35).....between them had been broken." It's no good darling, I could never marry you, our whole relationship is a (36)..... You are too small for me, in fact you are practically a (37)....." He walked around the room in a daze, collecting his (38)..... Balls, his copy of James Clavell's (39)..... and his favourite records: Abraxas by (40)....., and (41)..... Espania.

Sadly he kissed her goodbye, stepped down into the street, and walked towards the distant (42).....wondering if he would ever again play a (43).....part in a woman's life?

Times Past

Continuing from last month's newsletter, here's the rest of the article which Fred Magill found about vintage motoring in the Middle and Far East from the 1950s to the 1970s. You may recall our hero has been home on leave, but is about to depart for the east again...

We move now to Bangkok in the period of 1957 to 1962 and I was lucky enough to find another Austin Nippy, in poor condition and with one wheel missing. Later, believe it or not, I was to find a Nippy wheel in a scrap yard. This was the first car in which I completed a total 'last nut and bolt' rebuild and the results were excellent and included a new body sub-frame assembly which cured the door opening problem completely. A pleasant but non-original addition was an ebonite steering wheel centre and horn button which I turned up and built in, giving a very satisfactory appearance to an otherwise rather skeletal looking boss.

Also during this period, I discovered a 1930 20/25 Rolls Royce with a rather large Rippon drop-head coupe body. This was hiding in the garage of a titled lady in Bangkok and the day I went to see it I was totally melted by this incredibly beautiful sight (you can take that either way) and willingly paid the asking price. Again the stable consisted of an Austin Nippy and a 20/25 Rolls Royce, a combination which I have not been able to better in all the years since and one

which I hope to return to again in the next few years. Will the present owners of either of my old Nippys, both believed to be in Singapore, please note!

In 1962 we sadly left Thailand and headed for a six month leave relief job in Penang. The Nippy went directly by ship and we took the Rolls with us on the fore deck of the good ship Panurhangsi, which we boarded in Bangkok. It was a splendid sight to see this lovely little coastal vessel surmounted by a Rolls Royce making stately progress down the Chao Phraya River. It was a less pleasant sight to see the Rolls lowered overside at Haad Yai on to a raft which nearly sank under her weight.

An idyllic period of rather relaxed working in Penang ensued with plenty of opportunities for vintage motoring. The highlight was a journey down through Malaya to ship the car from Singapore to Hong Kong and on to my next posting. On the way we stayed with David Morton on his estate in Johore and dined excellently with Henry Stonor on the adjacent estate. Many vintage motor cars were seen and discussed including a superb ERA rebuild then in progress.

Arrived in Hong Kong on Boxing Day 1962 and supervised the unloading of the Rolls from the ship the following morning. The first journey it made was directly from the docks to a party at Shek O which involved the unexpected discovery of a hair pin bend at Windy Gap which nearly wrote the end of the car and of my vintage motoring career. Thanks, however, to the truly noble nature of the chassis we both survived unscathed.

Another leave came up and I decided to give my wife a special birthday present which was delivered to the farm where we had taken up residence for the six months leave – those were the days! On the appointed day, I rushed Kate home to receive her present and we drove to the farmyard to see what she described as a rusty pile of outdated agricultural machinery. What she had failed to perceive, however, was the makings of a most beautiful Morgan 3-wheeler. In the event, I actually bought 2-1/2 scrapped Morgans and built from them one complete unit. The parts left over are being assembled for my second Morgan 3-wheeler, and I am in very close range of having all that is necessary.

To paraphrase the history somewhat, the Morgan eventually joined me in Hong Kong and was to be the subject of a very detailed rebuild of chassis, engine and body which was a most satisfying experience. The Morgan is very much of the blacksmith type construction and eminently suitable for local reworking. I say this in all humility and in the greatest admiration for this chassis which, in its earliest days, was perhaps the most advanced of its kind.

Digressing, I now own a Triking 3-wheeler which is a modern vehicle and looks vaguely like a Morgan 3-wheeler but, in fact, is very dissimilar. It has wishbone front suspension, disc brakes all round, a Moto Guzzi 1000cc V twin air cooled engine and a five speed Moto Guzzi shaft drive transmission. Its performance is breath-taking and its appearance, with its little V windscreen, very much confuses the public. It is, let it be said, a very much more reliable vehicle than the Morgan and one in which you can happily undertake long high speed journeys with only the weather to contend with.

At about this time I sold the 1930 20/25 and was shortly thereafter able, by the greatest stroke of good fortune to repurchase Reluctantly.

She had been through a number of hands since I sold her to John Bowring and had done a tour of arduous duty with the Gurkhas in Brunei. For this reason, she was in somewhat run down condition but as great and gallant a car as ever.

I did what was probably an unforgiveable thing but which I really do not regret. I converted her from a close coupled sports saloon to a roadster with a folding wind screen. One can make any number of excuses about this but that was the body style I wanted for my own personal use and, as I have no intention of selling, I don't believe that this is anybody's business but mine. Obviously, had I been looking for an investment or a resale value then I should have retained the original body. As it was, the body was in poor condition and it was as cheap for me to build what I wanted as to restore.

Again it was a last nut and bolt rebuild right down to removing the mattress spring which was holding the rear brake lever in the off position. The result was fabulous. A body with very few problems and one which has given me the utmost satisfaction ever since.

Between 1976 and 1978 I went on a secondment to Saudi Arabia and decided to send my older machinery home to Scotland where it would rust more slowly than in Hong Kong. The result was that I returned to Hong Kong to an empty garage and a fully equipped workshop. Suitable cases for treatment do not grow on trees in any country and it was with some difficulty that I procured a very original but totally worn out and scruffy MG TD of 1950 vintage. The engine was seized and so I had to set out on the rebuild without being able to listen to the rear axle and gearbox – a grave disadvantage. It took two years of labour, the mechanical side amusing and pleasant and the body work boring and back breaking, to go right through it starting with a complete disassembly down to the bare chassis and then scraping that down to bare metal.

The difference between this car and all my previous attempts was that you can buy virtually any part that you want and this made a pleasant change. The result is, I think, quite pleasing but as ever I made a number of mistakes. I think the most significant mistake was to put too many under coats on the body and this has built up a rather brittle surface. Having put on approximately 20 coats, each one rubbed down, I then took the separate body panels off to a commercial garage where they were sprayed with an off white enamel and ovened. A very satisfactory finish. Particular attention was paid to instrumentation and these were all put into working order including the clock. It was a sad day when I finally adjusted the clock and decided that I had really taken it as far as I could. Truly a case when the travelling is far more amusing than actually arriving.

My latest acquisition, which is quite atypical of my other purchases, is a 1928 4-1/2 litre Bentley close coupled saloon. This was very expensive, had only 2 owners before me and has done 104,000 miles. For the first time in my life I bought purely as an investment and, again, I make no particular excuse for this. I will use the car with the greatest pleasure for a period and then will eventually realise my money with, hopefully, a capital appreciation. There is no

question of my having to do any major work on this car in its present form and my pride and duty will be to keep it in its present pristine condition.

The future? I suppose that with eventual return to Scotland not that far away, I will have to pull my horns in and rationalise. I expect that the future will be Reluctantly, the 20/25 Rolls, and one of the Morgan 3-wheelers for my normal use. Should I be lucky enough to retrieve an Austin Nippy then I guess the Morgan will have to go. At the same time, I will retain a motor cycle, I presently own a BMW 100 RT, for high days and holidays and I expect that I will retain the Triking so that Kate, her of the good hind legs, can come with me on the occasional vintage type journey to the highlands of Scotland.

20/5/82

More from the Archive

Finally, we come to the last of the four programmes from early BVAC shows kindly donated by Jim Swanston. By 1980, the ninth show, the programme ran to 48 pages (and cost a whopping 20p!), matching the growth of the show in its first few years. The club had acquired some big name sponsors for the show, although I doubt if we could attract breweries and distilleries to sponsor a car show these days. Not only was it a car show, but we had a Spitfire, a helicopter and aerobatics from Richard Goode displaying his Pitts Special. Incidentally, Richard went on to compete with this aircraft later that year in the World Aerobatic Championships in Oshkosh, USA, coming 17th out of 42 entrants, so I'm sure it was a very professional show.



There was a special display area for club members' cars with 21 entrants varying from a 1917 Ford Model T to a 1958 Austin Cambridge. I recognise three names of current club members – David Steel (Austin 7 Pearl), Arthur Fairbairn (Alvis TA21) and Robin Wild with the MG TD which I believe he and Daphne still own. The club also put on a 'Special Exhibit' of work in progress (see below). There are some very interesting machines – where are they now?

As well as the age categories, there were one-make displays of Alvis, Bentley, Morris, Wolseley and Morgan cars, but there weren't car club stands as we know them today.

Given its size, I can't reproduce the whole programme, but here are a few extracts you may find interesting.

THE BORDERS VINTAGE AUTOMOBILE CLUB

MELLERSTAIN

1980

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HISTORIC VEHICLE AND FLYING DISPLAY

SUNDAY 8th JUNE 1980

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 20p

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

- 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. DISPLAY OF VETERAN TO POST-WAR MOTOR CARS, MOTORCYCLES AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLES, including Alvis, Bentley, Morgan, Morris and Wolseley Clubs.
Borders Vintage Automobile Club RESTORATION EXHIBIT.
STEAM LORRY RIDES and Children's Roundabout.
EXHIBITION OF VINTAGE AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY by Borders Vintage Agricultural Association.
TRADE DISPLAYS of New Motor Cars and Commercial Vehicles.
FLYING CARD MODELS of the Super Pitts Special plus many others on sale.
- 11.30 a.m. THE JUDGING OF THE CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE will commence.
- 12 mid-day onwards CONTINUOUS PARADES of Veteran to Post-War Motorcycles and Motor Cars including One-Make Parades.
- 1.30 p.m. AEROBATIC DISPLAY by Richard Goode in the Super Pitts Special.
- 2.00 p.m. PARADE AND LINE-UP of Entrants in Dress with Vehicle Competition.
- 3.00 p.m. FLYING DISPLAY by R.A.F. Air Sea Rescue Sea King Helicopter.
- 4.00 p.m. FLYING DISPLAY by R.A.F. Battle of Britain Flight Supermarine Spitfire Mark 9.
- 4.15 p.m. SLOW MOTOR CYCLE RACE.
- 4.45 p.m. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS by Lady Binning. Line up of Prize-Winners.

BORDERS VINTAGE AUTOMOBILE CLUB

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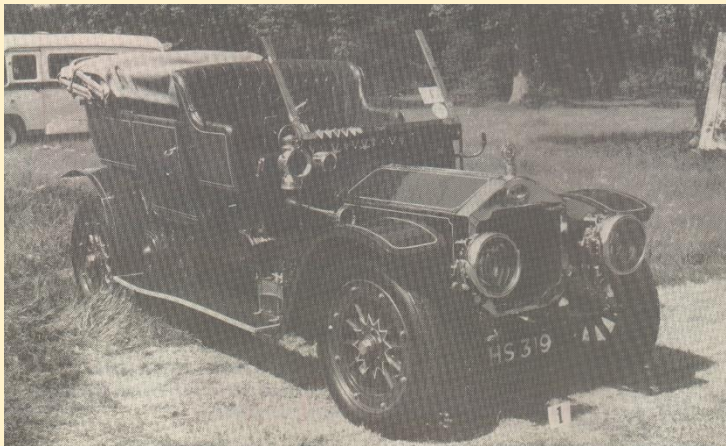
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1909 Albion 24/30 Model A6, owned by Mr J. Morrison, Glasgow.
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All the best, and keep safe!

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