

FC3



The Magazine of the Fairford Classic Car Club

Our 25th Year



SU fuel pumps !



October 2012

AUTUMN EDITION

WHAT'S ON

Malcolm needs to know soonest who is on for the Greyhounds.

A summary of motoring events with Club activities highlighted (proposed in outline). Check the Club **Website** and **Newsletters** for details, changes and information. If you have a question about any event, please call the Secretary, Barry Cooper 01285 851 821

FCCC	WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	WHO
	6 October Saturday	Historic Racing	Castle Combe	Circuit 01249 882 417
	6-7 October Saturday— Sunday	Autumn Meet Prescott Hill Climb	Prescott	Circuit 01242 673 136
➔	18 October Thursday	Club Bi-Monthly Natter 7 pm	The Crown at (Ampney) Crucis	Malcolm Cutler 01285 712 173
➔	19 October Wednesday	FCCC Committee Meeting 7:30 pm	The Bull, Fairford	Committee
	21 October Sunday	National Restoration Show	Stoneleigh	01775 768 661
➔	24 October Wednesday	Chairman's Run to Avebury Manor, Wiltshire . See Page 9 A response is needed soon.	Avebury, Wiltshire	Malcolm Cutler 01285 712 173
➔	31 October Wednesday	Annual Skittles Match 7 pm	Plough Inn, Alvescot, Oxon.	Mike Cox 01865 300 929
	6 November Tuesday	Autumn Leaves Run	Forest of Dean	Historic Car Rally Register
➔	28 November Wednesday	Swindon Greyhound Racing Stadium	Swindon	Malcolm Cutler 01285 712 173
➔	20 December Thursday	Christmas Lunch	The Crown at (Ampney) Crucis	Malcolm Cutler 01285 712 173
➔	28 December Friday	End of Year Run	To be advised	Bunny Lees- Smith 01666 577 275

A Happy 50th to all 1,747 MGBs (and 208 other MGs) who attended. Can you spot our Members cars? (Trish & Tony Picking, Pam & Dave Barton, Denise & Keith Handley)



FAIRFORD CLASSIC CAR CLUB

Member of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

Quarterly Magazine FC3

Autumn 2012

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Front Cover

Top - A Centurion tank greeted us at the Bovington Tank Museum on 25 July.

Centre—Ron Barker spoke at our 25th Anniversary Dinner at the Royal Agricultural College.

Bottom - A Sprite with Canberra plates at Westonbirt??? See inside.

Centrefold

Cars arrive for dinner at the Royal Agricultural College

Back Cover

The Club visits Tyntesfield on a gorgeous autumn day.



Welcome

What a busy summer it has been! The pleasant challenge has been to tuck everything into the Autumn Issue, which proved impossible. Nonetheless, adding a new regular bit, *For The Record*, seemed like a way to show just how much we do. The guest article comes from Oz and should draw a wry smile from anyone who has ever smacked an SU fuel pump (or had to listen to a mate yap on about it on a cold, rainy night). Our "Staff Writers" keep raising the bar and have given us some entertaining and thoughtful words. And Bunny and Geoff "past it"? ... never.

The Club's Annual Away Week in Devon and Cornwall was an outstanding success. The intrepid voyageurs and indeed, all of the Club, owe a heartfelt appreciation for the enormous effort and dedication from Maureen and Dave Apperley for putting this one together.

So now it's time to get the cars ready for winter and keep rolling ... into our 26th year.

Dave

www.fairfordclassiccarclub.org.uk

FC3 is published quarterly by the Fairford Classic Car Club and is free to members.

European Union, Brussels, Politicians, Legislation—just thought I would get you in a ‘fighting mood’ as you open this edition of FC3! Normally, within the historic/classic vehicle movement, such words and organisations flow past us without impinging on our hobby but, sadly, time are a’changing, and it seems that every week there is a new proposal, directive, regulation or consultation which could have a direct effect on both our ‘hobby’ and also those who work within the sector.

Fortunately, the FBHVC are actively fighting our cause and, most importantly, keeping us up to date on the progress, or otherwise, of these attacks from London and Brussels (see the latest FBHVC newsletter on www.fbhvc.co.uk, for up to date information – or ask me for a copy). However I believe that, both collectively as an active classic car club and individually, we must play our part, both by vigorously lobbying to protect our hobby and providing the FBHVC with the support (ammunition), so that they can act wisely in our defence.

To date three proposals have come to light which could have serious consequences for all owners of historic/classic vehicles, some of which I have already highlighted in earlier FCCC Newsletters and FC3, but from discussions with members, there is still a lot of confusion and questions. The following is therefore a brief précis of these proposals and an update on how FCCC is responding:

MOT Exemptions for Pre 1960 Vehicles.

Whilst there have been a few comments regarding the validity of the present MOT for classic vehicles, to date, I have not heard of any member agreeing with this exemption. Most people feel very strongly that the pre-

sent MOT should continue for all vehicles (or possibly a specific alternative test). In order to strengthen our views as a club, and send the results to the FBHVC, we circulated a Yes/No slip in last month’s newsletter (or phone/e-mail me), but sadly only 18 members (out of over 80) have responded – maybe members do not feel that strongly about this issue as first thought? There is still time!!

Taxi & Private Hire Services. Not many of us use our cars in this way but The Law Commission consultation concerning this issue could result in much greater regulation and cost if members provided this service, plus it could also put many classic hire companies/individuals out of business. On behalf of FCCC I wrote to The Law Commission expressing our reservations and received a reply, if only a standard response, saying our views would be formally taken into account.

Proposed Roadworthiness Testing from the EU Commission. The greatest risk! For a fuller description of what this entails you need to read the article in the FBHVC Newsletter (I have a copy for those who do not access the Web). However, basically, it proposes taking the MOT from being purely a test for ‘mechanical fitness’, to one which requires tests to relate to a vehicle’s original ‘technical characteristics’ - i.e. has not sustained any change in the technical characteristics of its main components such as engine, brakes, steering or suspension. One can imagine the problems and confusion which would arise from such a test if it was



The only hope for topless here is the cars!

Howard Goodfield



I joined the FCCC in 2004 after restoring a 1972 MG Midget, this car later giving way to a 1995 MGF. Fearing head gasket problems and with my Rover 600 getting long in the tooth, I traded the F in for a new diesel MG ZT. A BSA C15 250cc and a 1971 Triumph Vitesse have also passed through the garage. This car is a 1991 Mazda MX5 brought into the UK in 1995. This V spec is automatic, British Racing Green and has a works hard top. I bought this car on the internet from a lady in Weston-Super-Mare who had owned it five years, only clocking up 5,000 miles during that time. The Mazda had a few knocks and scratches so its had a complete respray. I have now owned this car for 3 years with the only other outlay being a new radiator and a water pump in the first year. While this car is not strictly of “classic age”, the Mazda MX5 is very popular worldwide with a club membership of over 6,000. It has a promising classic future.



introduced, especially as there is reportedly no database of specifications of UK vehicles, let alone the argument of updating your vehicle to make it safer on today’s roads or replacing parts which are no longer available. Fortunately this is only a ‘proposal’ and opposition through the FBHVC and their European counterparts has already begun. It does make you wonder why such proposals are put forward on the first place. Being cynical the ‘no pre 1960 MOT’ requirement looks very much like a vote winning ploy (I joke not!) but, as our editor said recently, “... would you want to meet a classic car coming towards you, and wonder whether it had been tested, or at least inspected,

Mazda MX5

recently?” The Roadworthiness Testing proposal is even more worrying because not only has it not been thought through at all, but it begs the question — what is the Brussels bureaucrats, long term objective? Last, but not least, it is reported that the introduction of petrol with a higher percentage of ethanol i.e. E10, could be with us by early 2013 and not 2015, as previously reported. BUT, worry ye not, E10 pumps will be clearly marked (with a skull and cross-bones?) and super grade petrol will not have more than 5% ethanol (if any at all).

- Malcolm



Who Said We Were Past It?

in front of us managed to break his steering. With help, he set off back home to get a replacement car and re-joined us a little later just before we splashed through the ford near Ledbury. 25 miles further on saw us parked up at Queen's Wood Café at the top of Dinmore hill for our first coffee break.

Setting off again, suitably refreshed, we passed through Leominster and took the back road through Richard's Castle and Ludlow to our next test at Delbury Hall.

No mishaps this time and we were soon on our way to lunch, 33 miles later, at the **Inn on the Green** in Wentnor. On the way we passed near Much Wenlock and Church Stretton before climbing up the single track road over the Long Mynd with fantastic views either side and occasionally, a few sheer drops. After a really good feast at the inn we met our first set back. The field just up the road was waterlogged so we had to miss that test and drive on to Mellington Hall.

Here, on two of the drives of this stately home, we had to attempt a regularity test completing the two runs at no more than 24 mph. Not as easy as it seems.

On to Clun, where we had to abandon our second ford as the stream was running too deep and too fast. Well, this was the day that Aberystwyth and the surrounding area were flooded out and people

were rescued from the caravan park in Borth by helicopter. Another 25 miles of glorious scenery saw us turn into the drive to our overnight stop at Maesmawr Hotel. A wonderful 16th century black and white building with a warm welcome from the staff.

Now comes the part that the original contestants missed out on. We had been asked to dress for dinner in clothes appropriate to the age of the cars that we were driving and, true to form, we were not disappointed by some of the authentic and outrageous dress that met us in the dining room.

After an excellent meal the hotel staff judged the costumes amongst much mirth which, following a short speech by our chairman, was added to when the president donned a 'full head of hair' wig to replicate his state of hair in 1967, the age of the 'big Healey' in which he was competing with Bunny. Ah well! Put it down to his age.

Next morning after an excellent breakfast, we were confronted with a problem. The planned route led to Llanidloes, over the mountain road to Machynlleth and down the coast road to Borth and Aberystwyth but the coast road had been closed due to flooding, so a rapid re-route was undertaken by chairman Martin and Doreen and Dave Richards.



We kept the route by Llyn Clywedog and over the mountain road to Machynlleth but then returned by Cemmaes Road and Llanbryn-mair to rejoin our previous route just above Llyn Clywedog and down the B road from Llanidloes to Rhayader. From there we drove the old coach road to the top of the Elan valley and returned to the visitors' centre at the bottom

via the four reservoirs. After the rain the water was cascading over the dams in spectacular fashion.

After a leisurely lunch, brought about by the re-route, we returned to the original plan over Radnor Forest and

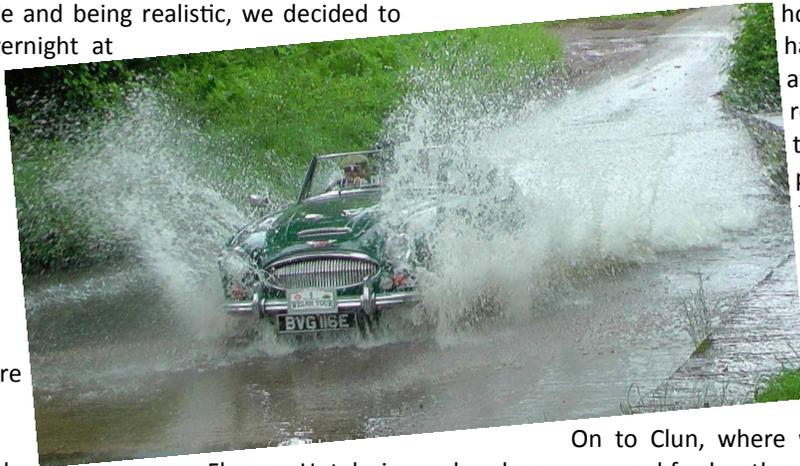


On a dry and sunny Sunday morning Bunny and Geoff set off with eleven other crews on **Cirencester Car Club's** 60th. Anniversary Welsh tour. The idea was to replicate as far as possible the first Road Rally that the club did after its foundation in 1952.

Originally the tour passed through Gloucester, Ledbury, Leominster, Ludlow, Shrewsbury and on across mid-Wales to Aberystwyth and back through Rhayader, Leominster, Worcester and Evesham to Cirencester with a series of driving tests en route.

This they achieved in 24 hours, quite a task in 1950's cars and on 1950's roads. However some of the places visited were not now available and being realistic, we decided to stay overnight at

a hotel in mid-Wales and modify the route accordingly. We were waved away from the



Fleece Hotel in Cirencester by the mayor and soon found ourselves in a field at Winstone tackling our first driving test. Not too difficult but the car

through the black and white villages of Pembridge and Eardisland and on through Le-

the first time as we convoyed back to our finish outside the Fleece Hotel to be greeted by the flag waving Mayor. (I wonder if he'd been there all the time since we left !!!) A short 'nosh' on canapés (spotted the pattern yet?) in the hotel and a few closing words rounded off a really enjoya-



ominster and Bromyard to our first test of the day in the paddock of Ian Parsons, one of our former club Chairmen, at Bishop's Frome.

As luck would have it his garden was open to the public for the weekend and following our tight tests we were treated to tea, sandwiches and cakes (can you spot a pattern developing) before we drove on through Ledbury and Tewkesbury to our final test on Chedworth airfield.

Believe it or not, it was not until we had almost finished this test that we had the first rain of the weekend so it was hoods up for

ble, and at times testing, weekend. A big thank you to the organisers and Bunny and I can't wait till the 70th anniversary !!!!!

- Geoff Tebby

Photos by Keith Norman & Bridget Lewis



Miles Wigfield writes in -

A friend of mine in Canada told me about Allen Swift in Springfield, Massachusetts who owned the same car for 77 years. He received his **1928 Rolls-Royce Piccadilly-P1** as a graduation gift from his father and drove it until his death in 2005 ... at 102. It had done 1,070,000 miles. §

Ed: *Wonder what our Club record is then? Bunny can't bid with the 1912 Chenard et Walker ... he's not French. Send in your claims ladies and gents.*



Chairman's Run to Avebury Manor

Many of you will have seen the BBC programme in which the interior of Avebury Manor was brought to life by the use of interior design to tell the story of the lives of the many owners of the house. Our visit will be a chance for you to see the results of this collaboration with



the National Trust. Uniquely, you are encouraged to touch, listen, sit and soak up the atmosphere of the various rooms and then explore the Victorian Kitchen Garden. **If you wish to join our tour please e-mail, malcolmcutler@btinternet.com or phone 01285 712173, Malcolm and Jill by Monday 15th October latest**, as we need to let the NT know about numbers. Info at <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/avebury/>

QUIZ CORNER

1. What does TVR stand for?
2. In what year did Czechoslovakia become the first country to make seat belts compulsory?
3. Why do the British drink warm beer?
4. Name the Fleetwood Mac song used as the theme tune by the BBC for their Formula 1 coverage.
5. In what film does Bond first drive the DB5?
6. The world's longest traffic jam occurred on the French Autoroute in 1980. How long was the tailback?
7. In 1977 which brand offered Mini drivers £6 a month to use their cars as mobile adverts?
8. **Photo:** What am I?



Answers on page 23

Away Week in Devon & Cornwall



Maureen & Dave Apperley

This year's FCCC Away Team we're dispatched by Central Command and lead by Major Maureen, to bring order to Northern Devon and Cornwall. The first raid by the FCCC legion (complete with classic chariots) was on Castle Drogo, which soon fell to our advance guard, victuals were taken and much learnt about the local culture. It was then onto our base at Bude, where we found very comfortable accommodation, ample food and accommodating hosts (well, we did pay for it!). Over the next days we carried out sorties throughout the region and were well-

comed to many places ranging from an Otter Park, Honey Farm, Slate Mine Caverns, Cider Maker, Fairground Museum (where much amusement was had on the local dodgems-

which took us back to our youths), and to Arlington Court where the National Trust allowed us to parade our classic chariots in front of the house. For many the highlight of the expedition



was when we came across the regions air defences at Davidstow. Well, maybe it was from an earlier age, but the amazing work carried out by the owners to reconstruct the WW2 airfield and put together such a collection of artefacts, beggars belief.

Less best said about the evening quizzes and billiards (which left the locals totally bemused), but a great week was had by all. Many thanks to Maureen and Dave Apperley for all their hard work and leadership.

The Troops

Jill & Malcolm Cutler, Jan & Mike Cox, June & Rob Bevin, Babs & Phil Hingston, Carol & Dave Chambers, Lyne & Bill Little, Liz & Dave Martin, Pam & Dave Barton, Judy & John Dodman, Heather & Graham Ash, Julie & Mark Whittering



25th Anniversary Dinner

On Fri 29th June the FCCC celebrated its 25th anniversary with a dinner held at the Royal Agricultural College. For once the weather was good and allowed the 70 members, wives and partners to put on a fine display of FCCC classics in front of the college before sitting down to an enjoyable dinner followed by a fascinating and hilarious talk by our 1st president, Ron (Steady) Barker. Ron identified that the success



of the FCCC lay in recognizing that, while

the classic cars were 'the catalyst' which brought people together, it was how the Club was run and the social activities it provided for its members that has led to its ongoing success.

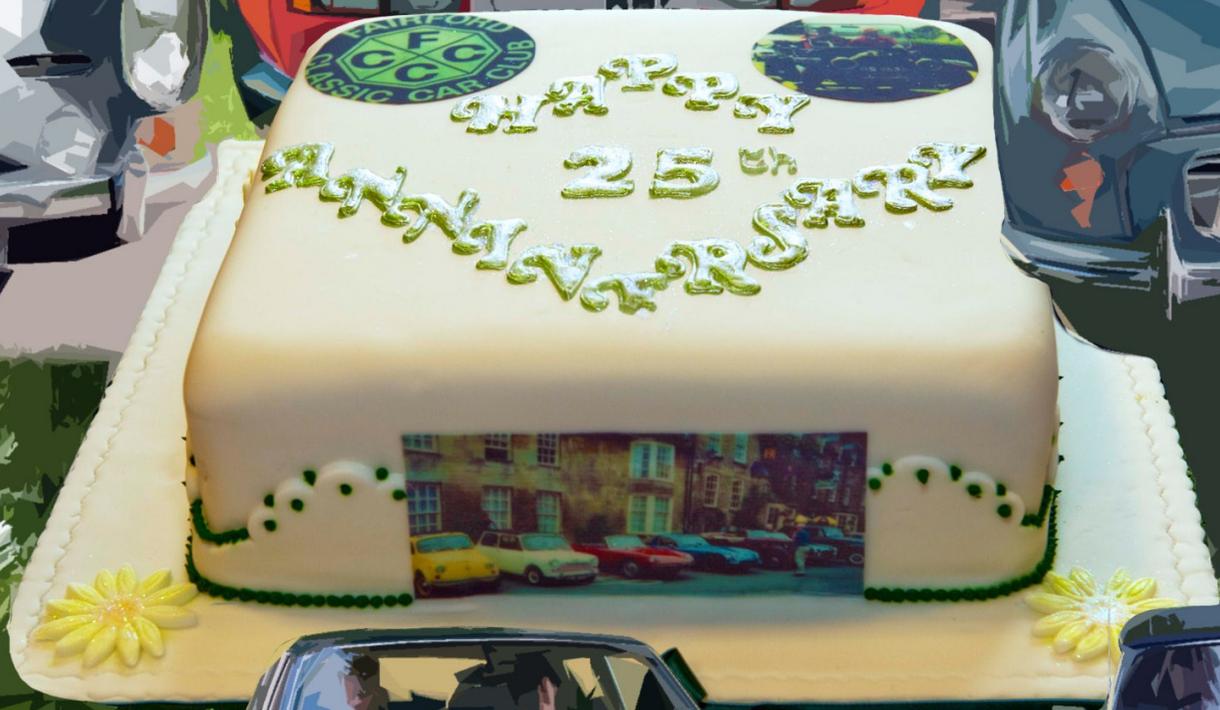


The display of photographs, rally plates, past editions of the FCCC Magazine and some press cuttings from our early events, caused a great deal of interest and happy memories.



Acknowledging our 25th year, the Club appears in *Ripples Community Magazine, September 2012* and *Classic Car Weekly, 3 October 2012*.





SU Fuel Pumps and Other Things

The 1964 Sprite on the front cover is the hero of this article. For the Autumn FC3, he was Photoshopped transported from Canberra, Australia to Westonbirt, Gloucestershire.

The disadvantage of sharing a garage with the racing MG Midget is that the demands of racing dictate that the green Midget always sits first in the “work to be done” queue. So although the red Sprite Mk111 rarely needs work, long periods of time often pass between spanner-wielding sessions on the very neat, little car.

This fact came to mind early in June when after cranking the 1098 cc “A” Series into life for a long delayed drive, a strong odour of petrol became evident. A quick look revealed an ever growing pool of petrol just forward and inboard of the right rear wheel. No fault diagnosis skills were required. The

pool of petrol was directly beneath the electric SU fuel pump; so clearly, there was a problem the “Skinners Union” device.

Now over the past 47 years of ownership of the Sprite

Mk111 since 27th November 1964 when a much more youthful owner drove the shiny new car away from Gould’s Motors, Northcote, Melbourne, Victoria - the scribe has acquired some basic knowledge of the vehicle and its maintenance. He thought that had extended to an understanding of the

operation of the electric SU fuel pump. How mistaken he was.

The scribe’s first experience with the vagaries of the electric SU fuel pump came about a dozen years into the car’s ownership. Up until then, the act of turning the ignition “on” was always accompanied by the sound of the SU fuel pump rattling away just behind the driver’s seat. It was therefore somewhat of a surprise when for the first time, the act of switching the ignition “on” was accompanied by silence.

Attempting to start the car without an operable fuel pump was pointless. But very soon, a simple fix was found, even when in the K Mart car park on a wet day. Find something solid, lean under the car, and strike the pump or its mounts whereupon the pump would burst into life.



The other garage lodger

These “fuel pump events” were usually rare enough to suggest that we could live with this problem especially as by then my still quite youthful spouse was even a dab hand at coaxing the

recalcitrant SU fuel pump into life. And once happily rocking away, the pump always stayed online until switched off. Nevertheless and after many years of getting by, the decision was taken to replace the pump. That replacement – a genuine BMC supplied SU product - has run trouble free for around the last 20 odd years, until now.

What to do? The easiest option was buy another replacement SU fuel pump but this time with solid state electronics rather than the industrial age contact breaker points. There was also a cheaper option and after telephone discussions

with SU Midel, the decision was taken to purchase an SU pump service kit with new seals, new contact points and new diaphragm.

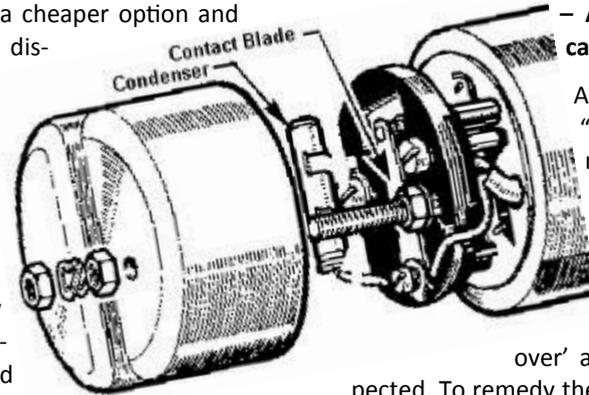
The seals were most important as they were the cause of the leak and they needed to be made from Viton, the “modern stuff” that would withstand unleaded petrol. Similarly it made sense to replace the diaphragm which would also have been suffering from its long exposure to unleaded petrol - a diaphragm made from unleaded fuel resistant material was clearly a sensible solution. Finally, why not also replace the contact points and rocker assembly which had been rocking and sparking for more than 20 years.

The repair option was also cheaper, and it offered the prospect of some personal satisfaction by conquering just another of those various challenges in life.

But after a meticulous exercise in rebuilding the fuel pump, it refused to rock and roll. In need of some more knowledge I ran the guru Mr Dodds at Sprite Parts. I also took the pump to the June meeting of the MG Car Club Canberra. I received some clues as to new avenues of enquiry but received no ground breaking solutions. The pump remained stubbornly silent.

It was clearly time for a more detailed read of that book I bought many years ago, also from Gould’s Motors, Northcote: **Sprite and Midget**

BMC Workshop Manual – A BMC Service Publication (published 1965).



Among the detail of the “trouble shooting” notes was, *inter alia*, the following: “If previous operations fail to locate the trouble, abnormal friction in the rocker ‘throw-over’ assembly is to be suspected.

To remedy these faults, and prior to assembly, it is advisable to apply a little thin film of oil to the ‘throw-over’ spring spindles at a point where they pivot on the brass rockers.”

While this might have made sense to a grey dust coated bureaucrat at the British Motor Corporation, I found it quite unenlightening when looking at what I was holding in my hand - although the underlying point that friction be minimised was useful to explore. So with a bubble of thin oil attached to the end of a sharpened matchstick and with tissue paper wrapped around all the electrical related bits, thin oil was applied. And lo, when the battery pack was applied across the terminals of the pump, it started rocking. The Earth had moved.

After several more successful applications of 12 volt D.C., the decision was taken to complete assembly of the fuel pump by bolting the solenoid core of the pump onto the diecast body of the pump with inlet and outlet valves. After assembly, the pump again pleasingly danced to the 12 volt tune. But here the joy ended as when fitted back into the car, the pump while still rocking to

its pleasant tune also still leaked fuel liberally all over the garage floor.

Houston we (still) have a problem! After several removals and refits of the pump and of the associated inlet and outlet valves, and associated seals, the decision was taken to remove the small brass filter screen on the inlet side of the pump. This would not only remove a potential sealing problem but would also allow the number of seals on the inlet side to be reduced from two to one. But in tightening the two “banjo” inlet and outlet ducts, an ominous crack was heard and the inlet “banjo” broke. The project was now delayed pending arrival of new “banjos” and another batch of seals.

So while under the car let’s look around a bit more just to pass the time. What is this - a spot of oil hanging at the base of the left rear wheel backing plate and a little more on the bottom of the left rear tyre?

Being thoroughly familiar with the racing Midget’s demands on the rear oil seals and axle hubs, I sensed this spelt trouble. We have all heard of “capability creep” and “technology creep”, well this was an example of “maintenance creep” something quite unique to classic cars. It means never start work on a classic car without an expectation

that during the course of work several new maintenance issues will be exposed.

So after another eventful week or two, Sprite has now also completed a rear end overhaul. It has two new rear axle hub bearings and seals, with new o-rings and gaskets to the axle; and the fouled left rear brake linings dictated the fitting of new rear brake linings to both rear wheels. And finally, the tired looking state of the rear wheel brake cylinders suggested they also be replaced.

Lastly, with the arrival of new “banjos” and more seals, the pump was again carefully assembled and fitted in its bracket under the car. Success - an operable SU fuel pump with no leaking fuel.

Sprite is now mobile again and has added another 100 miles to its odometer, a sizeable addition to its mileage given that over the last 10 years it has only run up some 3,000 miles.

The only question remaining is whether the fuel pump rebuild will last another 20 odd years; and will those new rear wheel bearings and seals last another 47 years?

Gaius Spritus

- Brian Weston

About the Author

Brian Weston retired from the Royal Australian Air Force after a long flying career on Hunter, Avon Sabre, Mirage 1110 and F/A-18 aircraft. The photo across shows his Sprite in 1966 at RAAF Base Point Cook (at extreme left with owner and flat cap). Number 16 Course RAAF Academy (1963-1966) graduated 13 members – 12 are in the photo with 7 owning Sprites, plus one who owned a second hand TR-2. Sprite started something with seven students succumbing to the ability of the little car to hold together in Australia’s demanding climate and rudimentary roads.

The racing Midget is shown under brakes at **Mount Panorama Circuit**, New South Wales (colloquially known as **Bathurst**). On that day, Brian reports, **“Coming out of The Elbow, the ‘A’ Series engine wound out to 8,000 rpm and pulling its 3.9 diff to almost 135 mph approaching the Caltex Chase. Yes, the front end was getting very light!”**. The car races in **Group Sb**, 1960-66 historic production sports cars. Racing Number 75 stems from his time as Commanding Officer 75 SQN flying Mirage fighters.



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Photographing Our Cars and Ourselves

How can I get a copy of my car's photo that was in the magazine or our Newsletter?

When will the photos of this activity be on our Website?

I've got some great shots from the last outing. What's the best way to share them with the others?

In response to those questions and others over the summer, we’ve been investigating ways and means to have our photographs easily accessible to members so that they can not only view them, but obtain copies. Putting a lot of photographs on our Website is not the best way to either show or make them available to ourselves and moreover, it costs to have our Website Manager do this for us. **Flickr** is a **Yahoo** web application that lets users view, upload and download photographs of the group they belong too. In our case, this would be **The Fairford Classic Car Club**.

We’re still coming to grips as to exactly how this should work but as a preview of what it could be like, we’ve set up a Club **Flickr** account and put a few images in there. For those of you with web access, enter www.flickr.com/photos/fairfordclassics/sets in your browser and you will be taken to the Club site. When we’ve got this organised the way we want, we can set it up so that only Club members can access the photos. Full details coming in the October or November Newsletter.

This method will reach 75% of the Club. **For those without the web, please rest assured you can contact the Editor for any of our photos.** Or perhaps your new best mate in the Club who can access this **Flickr** website.

MOTORING MUSINGS

Graham Young

No. 21



I am indebted to a bowling friend of mine, who incidentally once owned a very nice Lea-Francis 12 H.P., for the cartoon for a new form of AOP travel which I may well buy. The cartoon brings me to my first point.

How is it that older people can often, without any training, take a disabled vehicle onto pavements and even road without any required insurance and usually without any warning device. I would like to hear from any of m'former learned friends their views on such a driver being the subject of a claim in negligence. I see a claim arising where such a vehicle was driven badly and injures someone or causes damage to another vehicle or property. It would not be a good defence for such a person to try and wriggle out of a claim by saying "but I have no insurance". In the case of a car or motorcycle, insurance is, of course, compulsory and if a driver is involved in an accident and has no insurance and he was guilty of careless driving, the Motor Insurance Bureau stands in and meets damages for injury but not damage to property—the driver then has to meet such costs out of his pocket. If and when I have to use a



disabled vehicle I will certainly seek insurance and fit a loud klaxon.

I read that Google has "killed off Arthur Daley." Now on average car buyers use 18.2 different sources of web-based information before they choose a vehicle. Only 51% of purchasers end up buying the model they first set out to acquire.

Congratulations to the Cirencester Car Club who recently marked their 60th anniversary retracing their inaugural run to Wales. The picture of Bunny and Geoff in the Austin Healy was, with respect, somewhat marred as it showed them being waved off by the Cirencester Mayor, the Union flag being sadly upside down— surely there was no disaster for which help was needed.

Police in Swindon are conducting a campaign to seize mini-motes which are being driven badly, illegally or on pavements.

We all make mistakes so I will not crow too loudly but I did chuckle when an article by a well known writer showed a picture of a Jaguar XJ instead of a Smart Fortwo. I should think that Jaguar owners felt very displeased.

I liked the pictures of a typical gentleman from 1912 and another from 2012. The difference you were invited to sport was that in 1912 the gentleman had a Rolls-Royce and in 2012 he has a Land Rover Discovery. I'm told that the 2012 gentleman goes to Glastonbury but query if in the Discovery.

As the owner of a Riley Elf I noted an article which reported that the authorities in **Westward Ho!** Required all Minis to carry and use a mat or tray and to clear up any spilt oil which would deface the new sand coloured road surface. The heading for the article was "*Resort Too Posh for Minis*". I recall that one House we visited we were asked to have drip trays which I thought was a reasonable request and I have one in the Elf just in case.

I read with sadness of the death of Jow Tedaldi who was the last surviving member of the team who designed Britain's first jet planes, the Gloster E28 and the Meteor. I recall cycling from my boarding school to see both the Meteor and the Vampire.

Before motoring in France you should check on what equipment and documents must now be carried. It now includes a self checking breathalyser.

I regretted selling my first Classic, a Triumph Renown and how often I hear others regale their audience about lost favourite vehicles. I was pleased to read of a 80 year old Swindon man who sold his 1952 Sunbeam 500 S7 45 years ago and regretted it from the very next day. His son finally tracked it down and gave it to his father as a birthday present.

Citroen's name has been put up on the Eifel Tower— marking 120 years since the Tower was built and recalling 90 years of Citroens. The last time the Company did this was between 1925 and 1934 in the days of the Cloverleaf C4, C6 and Rosalie models. That display is recorded in the Guinness Book of records for the World's largest advertising sign with 250,000 light bulbs and 600 metres of power cable. The sign was used by Charles Lindberg when coming in to land in 1927.

BMW and Toyota are linking up to "crack the electric car challenge". Many feel electric cars are a "good thing" but are concerned as to the initial cost and difficulty of charging.

At the moment I gather that the cost of insuring a car can be less for certain females as opposed to same age males. This is because research shows many females are safer and have fewer claims. The EU is requiring that this distinction be done away with from 21 December 2012. I find this ruling strange as the risk has been assessed and the charge is then imposed taking the risk into account. Why ignore the fact for the sake of consistency based on very strange "logic"?

Finally, good news for two wheelers. Royal Enfield bikes are being made in India where "pukka bikes" are being sold at takeaway prices. Which reminds me that at the wonderful Churchill show, I was tempted to buy an ex-Army 250cc BSA but my friends on the day felt that Pam would not be pleased. I knew that the advice was sound but it did remind me of my time in Germany where such a bike was my personal transport and where I was taught to ride by a former member of the Royal Signals White helmets team. Happy Days!



-Graham

TAPPET CLATTER

Mike Cox

Well, as you can see, I didn't get the sack so I'll keep my fingers crossed and see what gems I can come up with this time.

Before I do, I can confirm that my old lawn mower still thinks it's in the first flush of youth again and following the previous bodge, has mowed the lawn back and front about ten times. Thanks to all who enquired after its health. I have not, as yet, received any request for the mod on anyone's Jaguar or Porsche etc !!!

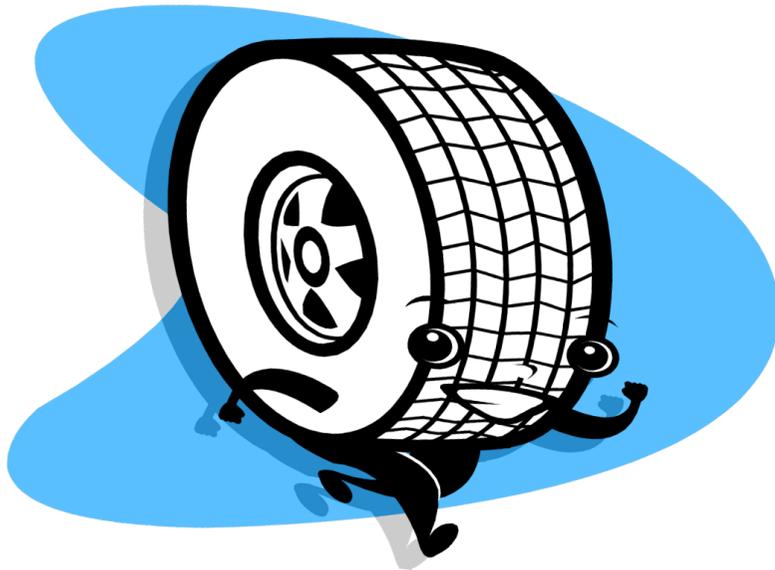
Our Skoda required 2 tyres fitting a couple of days ago. This I think was partly due to chasing Porsches etc during the "away teams" visit to Cornwall. nuff said!!

I was interested to read about references to categories of Fuel Efficiency, Wet Grip and Noise as we have been suffering from an increase in tyre noise. I inquired further, and was told that this is mainly due to negative camber on the rear wheels which tends to wear the inner section of tread slightly faster than the outer edge of tread which in turn gives the inner edge of the tyre a slightly smaller dia than the outer edge. I think we must be talking fractions of millimetres. This in turn makes the rear wheel try and



prescribe an enormous circle and obviously the car being driven in a straight line creates a very small amount of slipping and scuffing hence the noise which gets louder as the tyres wear. I think that's what he said and hope you can follow the line of thinking. It must work as the tyre noise on our car has disappeared. Another gem next time!

- Mike



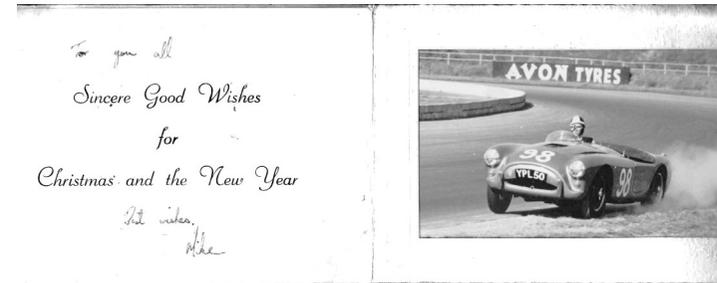
PS: Janice says thanks to everyone who has expressed their best wishes and speedy recovery following the accident to her shoulder and hand.

On a Historical Note ... the Healy Question

A few issues back Barry pondered the identity of the very nice duo tone 'Warwick' Healey shown on the front cover. I believe that this is most likely one of the earlier Abbott's with the separate driving lights before they were replaced with triangular air vents and more powerful headlights. The Abbot had a more 'corpulent' body than the Westland, which also had cut away doors. The Tickford was the fixed head version. In the 1950's when my father owned and raced a Healey Silverstone, GJU 716, one of his close friends owned an Abbott because he had a large family and used it for touring. My memories of the car are of a more spacious and opulent tourer than the sporting Silverstone with its Riley 2.5, 'high cam' engine. It had impressive performance for its time.



As I wrote in an earlier FCCC Journal, my father's ownership of GJU 716 finished soon after the incident in the 1960 6hr Relay Race, at Silverstone, where he hit a concrete filled oil drum! Subsequently GJU 716 finished up in a car collection but has recently returned to the tracks with a new owner. I was reunited with her at the Goodwood Revival meeting a couple of years ago.



Interestingly, and with some pride, I learnt that she is referred to in the Healey circles as the 'Cutler Healey'. I still have to take up the new owner's offer of taking the Silverstone out for a 'spin'!

One of the photos I have of GJU716 is of my father cornering in front of an AC Ace at Silverstone. When Charlie Todd saw this photo he immediately recognised the AC (YPL 50) as being driven by his old friend Mike Spence who went on to race with Lotus in F1 and sadly died testing the Lotus 56 Gas Turbine car at Indianapolis in 1968. Subsequently, in an old book of Charlie's, I found a Christmas Card, from Mike Spence to Charlie, with a photo of the AC.

- Malcolm

The back of the Christmas card reads: #7050/15 Peterborough Motor Club Race Meeting, SILVERSTONE, September 19th 1959. No.18 JG Cutler

(1) Trevor Wilkinson. (2) 1969 (3) Lucas makes the refrigerators. (4) The Chain (5) Goldfinger (6) 109 miles (7) Levi (8) Photo - Hindustan Motors logo

Quiz Answers:

FROM THE SEC

Barry Cooper

Now I happen to know that quite a number of Club members are avid readers of the Honest John feature which is published in the *Daily Telegraph* each Saturday. Motorists write in with queries on the widest range of motoring topics and John always manages to provide them with an answer. One letter recently which particularly caught my eye was from E.W. of Hunstanton. I could quite easily have identified with him had it not been for the fact that he referred to himself as 'old'! In "car years" he said, the car he owned would be considered to be even older. He drives it, he explained, not because the car might be termed a classic but because he does not have a tax-payer funded pension and he simply cannot afford to replace it. Used cars appear overpriced he said, considering their limited longevity and high cost of maintenance. He bemoans the fact that car manufacturers no longer produce a truly basic model, bereft of high-cost extras and straightforward to maintain. Honest John's answer was to mention the Romanian *Dacia Duster*, also built in South America, Russia and India, and recently released in the UK. It has no air-conditioning or radio and is fitted with wind-up windows. Sounds very much like the average cherished motorcar our members enjoy driving except for the fact that there is also no spare wheel supplied. It is yet to be seen whether the Duster will be able to match some of our members' cars for longevity. I suppose that it will depend on where the Indians obtain their supply of steel.

All of which set me thinking about automobile life expectancy – Then and Now. We keep hearing don't we, that modern day motor vehicles become uneconomical to repair if and whenever some bit of electron-

Do they make 'em like they used to?

ic equipment becomes US; due not only to the high cost of a replacement part but also the astronomical garage bills. Isn't that why we like to own classics? Easy to work on at the weekend and, in the main, easily sourced and reasonably priced spare parts. My question is: Just when was it that manufacturers ceased to build cars to last? I cannot believe that the likes of William Morris, Herbert Austin or even Henry Ford were making cars which had any sort of built-in obsolescence factor. True, they had to build a car which they knew their customers could afford but the cars were well engineered and probably less prone to rust away in the manner of their post-war equivalents. Of course one cannot entirely blame car makers, if the quality of the steel they used left a lot to be desired. Or should we? Did the Lancia engineers realise that the steel they were using was suspect but then cynically press on regardless? The motor industry, just like the aircraft industry in the post war period, changed for the worst when it was the accountant rather than the engineer who called the shots.

I am reminded of that British Leyland fiasco back in the late 70s when recently I rediscovered my copy of a Programme of Events which I had bought at Abingdon on the occasion of the MG Car Company's Golden Anniversary celebrations. Emblazoned on the cover is the proud claim: "*Our First Fifty Years*". Spread over nine days, the celebrations included a Grand Firework Gala, a Pram/Beer Race, a driving Gymkhana, a Football Match, two Grand Jubilee Dances, an Aunt Sally Competition, an American Barbecue, a Darts Competition, a Race Meeting at Brands Hatch and a Grand Carnival through the streets of Abingdon. All of

these events took place over the period 1-9 September 1979. On 10 September, Michael Edwards, the then "Big White Chief" of British Leyland announced the closure of no less than thirteen plants with the loss of 25,000 jobs!

Anne and I had driven to Abingdon on the Saturday in our 1965 Midget, mixing with countless numbers of MG employees and their families, proudly celebrating the MG Marque but woefully unaware of the bomb-shell which would explode the next day.



- Barry

A caption contest!

Send your entry to the Editor.
We'll publish the responses in the Newsletter.



FOR THE RECORD Snapshots of Club Activities



Just having lunch

Hunters 28 July



Thruxton 19 August



A few Good 'Ol Boys went to Goodwood ... twice



Michaelmas Run 30 September



Steam & Vintage Rally South Cerney 4-5 August



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