

**The Magazine
of the Fairford
Classic Car
Club**

FC3

**30th Anniversary FC3
Bumper Edition**



**Norfolk Tour
Highlights**

**Summer Edition
August 2017**



WHAT'S ON

A summary of motoring events with Club activities highlighted. Check the Club **Website** and **Newsletters** for details, changes and information. If you have a question about any event, please call the coordinator or Bunny Lees-Smith (01666) 577 275

FCCC	WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	WHO
	Fri—Saturday 4-6th August	South Cerney Show STEC	South Cerney	Ken Hinton 01285 712522
	Wednesday 16th August	Aunt Sally run and event	The Fox, Broadwell Nr. Stow	David Chambers 01608 658603
	Saturday 2nd September	Oakridge Show	Oakridge	Mike Scott 01285 760315
	Sunday 3rd September	Tetbury Car Show	Tetbury	Keith Handley 01285 658450
	Sunday 10th September	GWSR Classic Vehicle Day	Toddington	Geoff Tebby 01453 883821
	Monday 11th September	Shuttleworth Museum Coach Trip	Shuttleworth Beds.	Bunny Lees- Smith 01666 577275
	Wednesday 13th September	Classic Lunch Run	TBA	Barry Cooper 01285 851821
	Saturday 16th September	Kempsford Village Fete	Kempsford	Malcolm Cutler 01285 712173
	Sunday 17th September	Sudeley Castle Classic Car Show	Sudeley Castle	Dave Chambers 01608 658603
	Monday 25th Sept	FCCC Committee Meeting	Thames Head Inn Cirencester	Geoff Tebby 01453 883821
	Saturday 7th October	Autumn Castle Combe Classic Meeting	Castle Combe	Bunny Lees- Smith 01666 577275
	Wednesday 18th October	Classic Lunch Run	TBA	Barry Cooper 01285 851821

Later this year we are planning to arrange a talk on the history of transport in Fairford entitled 'Carriages to Concord', by Edwin Cuss —and also one by Stan Dibben, who was the world sidecar champion in 1953 and worked with Donald Campbell on Blue-bird. Full details will be circulated when finalised.

FAIRFORD CLASSIC CAR CLUB

Member of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle

FROM THE CHAIR Malcolm Cutler



It is incredible to think that the FCCC is now in its 30th year and from comments made by many members, it is in 'rude' health. I hope you will enjoy reading the newspaper articles on P13 & P18/19, reporting the formation of the club and also the centre page photo in this bumper (32 page), fuller colour, edition of FC3.

The concept of a club catering for all makes and types of classic vehicles and having events to suit all members and their families, not all motoring orientated, is attracting a steady stream of new members. At the recent Atwell Wilson show a number of people approached us after viewing our 'pull out' banner and FCC joining forms, asking more about this more 'inclusive' attitude to members. A number of these people were actually NOT senior citizens!

Over the past few years there has been a lot of talk within classic car clubs (and other clubs) about the need to recruit more younger members. I agree with this and it is sobering to note that 30yrs ago many of us were well below the age of retirement (I was 40!), so what has changed in the meantime? From all accounts the interest in classic cars and motorcycles has increased quite dramatically over these years. So is it that the vehicles are now not affordable to first time buyers, is it that people just want

to look at them but do not have the time, knowledge or inclination to own them, or are we not communicating sufficiently with this age range? I do not have the answer but it would be interesting to hear your thoughts—maybe we should set up a forum on our website for this and other subjects?

Attached is the latest FCCC clothing leaflet as our supplier has made some colour changes.

And finally, a big welcome to Martin Howard to the FCCC committee.

Front Cover

FCCC 30th anniversary.

Ash & Pam Holmes newly acquired (and fabulous) Bristol 401

Centrefold

Six months after FCCC started we were invited to meet John Haynes when he and members of his classic car club spent the weekend at the Hyperion House Hotel in Fairford—much has changed!

Back Cover

Front cover of Ripples Magazine (local to Fairford & Lechlade) celebrating the FCCC 30th anniversary at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester

FC3 is published by the Fairford Classic Car

Web: www.fairfordclassicarclub.org.uk



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fairfordclassics/sets>

AMBASSADOR FOR ALL

Experiences of Driving in India

Malcolm Cutler

Jill and I recently spent a very enjoyable, interesting, but challenging, holiday in Rajasthan, India. This involved many hours sitting in the back of a car travelling be-



tween cities and inevitably we reverted back to our childhood days playing 'I Spy'. This mainly involved ticking off the list of bad driving, bikes and cars ignoring dual carriageway rules, cows playing chicken etc but also, in my case, spotting Ambassador cars as well as Royal Enfield motor cycles (and hearing them!). Whilst most of India now seems to travel aboard small Hondas and other locally made bikes and cars, Royal Enfields, once the staple two wheeled transport in the country, are growing in popularity as status symbols, with a cult following approaching Harley Davidson levels. Sadly, the poor old Ambassador is now out of production (Peugeot bought Hindustan Motors in

2014) and has been replaced on Indian roads by more modern, locally built, motors although they can still be found doing sterling service in villages, as taxis in Delhi and Calcutta and as government pool cars.



I have had an on-off association with Ambassadors since the mid 1970's when I first worked in India, where they gave me good service, but also some memorable (or not) moments – more of those later. Firstly, a short history of the Ambassador (partly thanks to some interesting facts on Ambassador production, which appeared in an article entitled 'Broken Chariots' from the India Express newspaper when we were in India).



Many of you will know the Ambassador was based on the Morris Oxford Series III after BMC sold the production rights and tooling to Hindustan Motors in 1956 (in

1954 the Morris Oxford Series II was similarly built and sold in India as the Hindustan Landmaster). The first Ambassadors appeared in 1957/58, and like many early motor manufacturers in other countries, a whole new city grew up around the factory – commonly known as Hind Motors – which in 2011 had a population of around 30,000. In its heyday the Ambassador was known as the ‘King of the Roads’ and in a time when very few people had a car it was a status symbol, like having a royal crown. Whilst based on the Morris the Ambassador has since been seen as the archetypal Indian car in its own right and was even imported into the UK between 1991 and 1998.

Over its 56 year life span the Ambassador has not really changed, other than some small body/trim and interior upgrades. Power plants have grown from the original 1500cc side valve engine, to the final Isuzu sourced 1800cc petrol unit with 5 speed gearbox, plus the introduction of diesel alternatives (the Ambassador was the first car produced in India with a diesel engine). With a solid rear axle, leaf spring rear suspension, basic brakes, heavy steering and weight, the Ambassador was not an easy car to drive and had few of the creature comforts we were getting used to in Europe at that time. This lack of change was largely because there were few other alternatives cars available to buy e.g. locally built Fiat 1100s and Triumph Heralds, due to India’s protectionist policy on imports. Hindustan therefore had little in-

centive to make changes over the car’s life.

My introduction to the Ambassador was in 1975/76 when almost all Indian taxis were either Ambassadors or Fiat 1100s. You got used to being bounced around over the



poor urban roads and sliding around on the plastic or, if you were lucky, loose fabric covered seats, whilst the driver swerved around the cows, motorbikes, people sleeping in the middle of the road etc. I cannot remember being in one with air conditioning and the small remote fan which was often installed in the rear was pretty useless – I even remember once being charged for this ‘air changing’ extra! However, sticking to the plastic seats did help to stop some sliding around – until you painfully peeled yourself off the seat!

Once I and my Indian colleague, took a very rough looking Ambassador taxi from Delhi’s domestic airport only to find that most of the rear and boot floor were missing (interesting watching the road go by) and the driver’s young assistance had to wedge the driver’s door shut and then

clamber in through the passenger door window. Somehow the engine did run and there were at least two gears working, but it soon became evident that the steering, braking and suspension were well short of any UK, MOT standard. Suffice to say that when my colleague was late in directing the driver to turn left (fortunately at a minor T junction) the sudden change of direction caused the steering box gears to un-mesh, the brakes hardly worked and we ended up going straight on into the hedge of someone's garden! I recall we all ended up laughing and paying the young driver and his assistant over the odds, just because they were trying to make a living.

I spent many hours travelling in Ambassadors over rough roads in North East India visiting construction and mine sites when I worked for Goodyear tyres. The weather was often very hot and my left arm is still very brown from hanging my elbow out of the window. The heat also made me very drowsy and I remember once, when fast asleep, receiving a big bang on my elbow and the car skidding to a halt. On asking what had happened I was told that the car had just missed a donkey that had wandered into the road – great, but my elbow did not miss it, having hit it on the nose! The donkey seemed OK! Another time I was again asleep when the car hit a rock and the door swung open leaving me half in the seat and half out of the car hanging from the window frame. The driver eventually

stopped, but when I tried to close the door it would not shut. On inspection we found the sill frame had fractured and the car looking a bit like a lopsided banana! Miles from anywhere we eventually found some wire and bits of metal, tied the car together and carried on with our journey – just another day travelling in India!

A few years ago Jill and I ran a conference



in Mumbai and then went down to Kerala for a break. I was initially pleased to see that the taxi to take us back to the airport was a smart, late model Ambassador. However, my first impressions of being back in a classic Ambassador soon wilted in the non air-conditioned heat, roly-poly, jerky ride and sticking seats. In-fact the ride was very similar to the 1955 Sunbeam Mk111 back home, which given the age and similar suspension layout, should not be surprising!

The world will be a poorer place without classics such as the Ambassadors and Royal Enfields, but maybe they are best seen and heard from a distance, whilst driving them reminds you as to how far car and motorcycle development has progressed over the past 40 years!

A COOL ITALIAN COMES TO MEYSEY HAMPTON

Steve Musselwhite and his Fiat 126

A bit of history first

The Fiat 126 had a tough job replacing the Nuova 500 but, in reality, it did quite well considering that it was a lone rear engine challenger in a market sector increasing affluent Europeans were turning their back on by the early 70's. It continued the



appealing boxy styling established by the Fiat 127 and looked up to the minute – even if it did not drive that way.

Fiat retained the rear-wheel drive air cooled twin cylinder initially with the 500's 600cc (23hp) engine, increasing the capacity in late 70's to 650cc (24hp). The 126 used the same 500 chassis.

126 air-cooled 652cc were produced from 1972 – 1987. and in Autumn '17 it celebrates 45 yrs of production.

1.9 million were made in total (including the Polish water cooled model



126 Bis - made between 1987-2000).

Only 229 air cooled Fiat 126's remain on UK roads.

C28 NPU

I can recall when, on a wet Friday evening in November 2015, I was scrolling through the Car and Classic web site and came across the 126 which was for sale privately with only 10300 miles on the clock. My wife Linda was at the time watching TV so I decided to ring the owner, he did not answer the phone so I left a message. He returned my call early Saturday morning. He explained that he had owned it for 25 yrs purchasing it in 1990 from a lady, who bought it new in 1985 and lived in Frinton on Sea - the mileage at the time of his purchase was 9400. He purchased the car purely for his twin daughters so that they could learn to drive, however when his daughters saw it they both immediately refused to drive it, so he parked it up in one of his garages at his home and there it remained for the 25 years with the odd exception of taking the car out to his local garage each year for its MOT and the odd trip into Colchester shopping.

Looking at the pictures on the web site and considering what the owner had told me about the car, I thought it was a good idea to pop across to meet up with him at his home nr Colchester and take a look at the car – Within 15 minutes of my arrival (the journey took nearly 4 hrs !) we agreed on the price, I left a deposit and arranged for a transport

MITSUBISHI at 100yrs OLD

John Dodman

company to pick it up on the Monday and to bring it home to Meysey Hampton. The 126 was delivered safely and for the first time in ages Linda was absolutely speechless as, all along, all I had said to her was that I had purchased a small classic Fiat - I think she expected to see a 124 or a 125 or perhaps a 127 even a 128, she may of even thought of an X19 . I am pleased to say that after many months she has become quite fond of the 126 and actually drives it well.

FCCC members will no doubt recall the 126's first major run-out in last years St George's run – Nigel Godwin and myself had many laughs during the day – Wallace and Gromit !!

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Mike Cox presents the Chairman with a 30th anniversary 'long service' con-rod at the anniversary lunch.

Chairman for once was speechless!



During a visit to Badminton this year we spied a couple of unusual looking cars on the Mitsubishi stand. The first one was the Model A Mitsubishi, the first car manufactured by the company and being shown at Badminton to celebrate 100yrs of manufacturing cars.



The car was hidden in the hospitality tent but after a bit of negotiation by my son I was invited to see it, which was an honour as the car was under tight security. Unfortunately we were unable to get a copy of the notes on the screen explaining all about the car. However, the person showing us explained it was modelled on the Ford Model T—the Japanese were good at copying many other products at the time!

This car was built in 1917 and by 1922 only 4 had been manufactured in the Mitsubishi ship building yard along with

their aero engine division.

The other car of interest on the stand was the Mitsubishi L200 Pickup Truck, only one was made and it will be appearing on Top Gear at some time in the future.

Ed. Note: Further research via the Mitsubishi Motors website revealed the following information on the Model A:

“The company started production of the Model A in 1917, thus becoming the first series produced passenger cars in Japan. By 1921, a total of 22 cars, including pro-



totypes, had been assembled at the Kobe shipyard of Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. In designing the Model A, reference was taken from a car made in Europe. (Ed: another source suggests this was the FiatTipo 3). The model was built using sketches of the dismantled base car. The engine was built of cast iron, the chassis of beaten sheet metal and the interior was made by experienced horse coachbuilders using hollowed-out lacquered white cypress. It was fitted with gas headlamps, used an air blown horn and the body shell was formed from lacquered steel panels stuck to a wooden frame. The interior trim used luxury English worsted fabric.



The Model A was displayed at the Fukuoka Expo in 1919 alongside an aircraft engine also manufactured by the Kobe Shipyard. Sales of the Model A were handled by the Ote Company, Mitsubishi's first automobile sales company and a joint venture between Mitsubishi Shipbuilding and Mitsubishi Corporation. “

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Chairman meets his match during the FCCC Norfolk tour

The Little Great White Shall Rise from the Ashes



Part 3: January to June 2017

The year started with LGW's return home from a thorough scrub at the blaster and a complete coat of grey primer. The pristine MGB shell on the rotisserie was now set to launch into the next leg of the flight plan.

Refurbishment of the underside shifted up a gear. Springs, suspension and brake components were pulled apart and taken back to bare metal. This was a mix of noxious chemical baths by a mob in Toronto and lots of good ol' fashioned wire brush work in Davo's garage. In keeping with restoration tradition, removing old paint and grime revealed the odd surprise. Once the awful orange of the donor car's alloy bonnet was gone, some fairly rough metal bashing and repair revealed itself. Add one more thing to the endless *To Do List* for the preparation prior to final painting. And a few pinholes in the front of an outer sill plate. Once again the **MG Experience** website came to the rescue; a bloke in Toronto had done a sill repair to the rear, cutting the aft section off a new sill plate and he kindly gave me the unused front bit. The underside pieces and heaps of other bits were primed in grey and now sit on the shelves waiting their turn at the business end of the paint gun. They will be done in gloss black urethane (though fluorescent lime green was considered).

First job on the shell was sealing all the seams – that took longer than I thought it would! Then it was time to starting making the car white again. No way could he be anything but yeah? I painted the boot, cockpit and the panels under the wings in gloss white. I was quite happy with my first for-ay





into painting using more than a rattle can. Still, the bits that show will be left to the professional later this summer.

Parts gathering continued throughout the winter and spring when the dust in the garage became unbearable. Heaps of little bits and pieces were acquired (*and don't they add up!*) and some major items such as a new fuel tank and radiator were bought on sale. The last major parts acquisition was in England during June when Pam and I returned to Meysey Hampton for a few days then headed off with the Club's Away Week to Norfolk. The first stop on the English tour was a quick run up

the M1 in the pouring rain to **Autosparks** to retrieve the new wiring harness that had been ordered. I asked them to leave it unwrapped as I will add a few improvements before installing it in the car – a bunch of relays, two banks of modern blade fuses, LED's all over the place, daytime running lights and a third brake light mounted on the roll bar that will be capable of roasting a feral dog at



three hundred metres. As well, the brake lights will automatically flash a few times before going solid bright red. I will do my best not to be smashed from behind again! A quick stop at the **MG Owner's Club** warehouse in Swavesey went a fair way in filling up the remaining luggage allowance. One "suitcase" was actually the packing box for a complete carpet set. Removing the VAT and shipping costs certainly helped the cause.

The near term tasks now include shooting the underside with a protective coating and then going over this in a medium grey while the shell is on the rotisserie. (Again, I decided not to go for that green.) After the lumpy bits are made black, on they go as well as the fuel tank. I will build new brake lines and once the underside installations are finished, it's back onto the wheels and off to the paint shop. Lots of assembly work remains after that and there will be many tempting "*might-as-wells*" along the way. If I navigate the rabbit hole carefully and, with a bit of luck and a few ice cold beers, the *Phoenix* might fly before the snow does. Will Part 4 be the closing chapter you ask? We shall see.



WHAT THE PAPERS SAID 30YRS AGO

FCCC 30TH ANNIVERSERY

Classic cars club?

30 Jan 87

A SPECIALIST club for enthusiasts of Classic Cars is being planned in Fairford, with membership open even to those who do not own one of the vehicles.

The idea has come from Mr. Peter Hands, of the Hyperion Hotel, who discovered that two of his regular customers, who live in the district, are both Classic Cars fans and thought it a good idea if they had their own club.

"If we get sufficient support the idea is to have monthly meetings at the hotel when we can have film shows and also organise activity week-ends" said Mr. Hands. "We may also arrange for car companies to send a representative down for special week-ends."

Mr. Hands believes there are many Classic Car owners in the area. "I think the potential for such a club in Fairford is enormous" he said.

Anyone interested is invited to contact Mr. Hands at the hotel.

Fairford Classic Car Club

Cars, like women, lie shamefully about their age until they reach a peak, then they boast about it - always fishing for compliments, of course - perhaps that is why the car has acquired the feminine gender!

At 11.30 a.m. on Sunday, 12 April, there promises to be a concerted oohing and aahing of admiration for a line up of old ladies at the Hyperion Hotel when classic cars between the 1940s and 60s draw up; the drivers do not have to reveal their own age!

Mr Peter Hands, the owner of Hyperion Hotel, had the idea of forming a club following the interest of local people who have cars which do not qualify for the veteran and vintage classes. "One marque

by June Lewis

clubs are limited to one manufacturer, so it was decided that a Classic Car Club would widen the scope to include the older and just plain interesting models as well", he said.

There will be at least one faithful old Morris Minor among the Aston Martins, Lagondes and Lanciase turning up for the inaugural meeting when ideas will be floated for a programme to include guest speakers, Club outings, a beaujolais nouveau run and charity fund-raising.

Fairford Classic Car Club is born. 17.4.87.



ROYAL NORFOLK DISCOVERY TOUR



Photo: Keith Handley

Maureen and I had been so looking forward to this trip and meeting up with our fellow Club members. We set off on the Saturday 10th June and made our way up to the Gorsley home of June and Rob Bevan who had kindly offered to put us up for the night. On Sunday morning June cooked us a lovely breakfast, after which we set off for Cambridge on the M50, M5, M6, A14 and arrived at the *Premier Inn* at lunchtime where we met up with others from the Club.

After a pit stop, six of us - Cutlers, Bevans, and Apps - decided to go into Cambridge by taxi (£2 each) and had a lovely wander round the centre, including **Trinity College**, built by Henry VIII, which is a fascinating place in which to study. Then a very pleasant walk along the River Cam with lots of tourists enjoying the punts etc. After the **obligatory ice cream**, we called our taxi which whisked us back to *Premier Inn* for a very enjoyable evening meal.

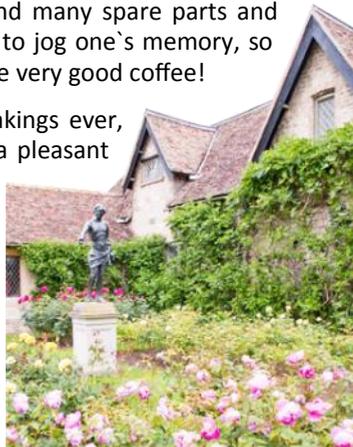
On Monday several of us visited the **MG Owners Club** premises at Swavesey, 10 miles from the hotel. There were lots of goodies to be had! Dave Barton had ordered a trunk full of stuff for his rebuild; while some decided to buy clothing, others were curious just to see the home of the MGOC. A beautiful "new" V8 roadster in red with wire wheels and a black MGA lightweight were in pride of place inside the showroom and many spare parts and accessories were temptingly displayed along the walls, just to jog one's memory, so as to get everything while there. They also have very good coffee!

Having given MGOC their best Monday's takings ever, we journeyed on to **Anglesey Abbey** for a pleasant walk around the gardens, all beautifully kept and some lovely scented roses; then a snack in the restaurant where we met those members who did not stay in Cambridge. We continued on to **West Runton** and the **Links Hotel**.



Obligatory !

Anglesey Roses



On arriving at the hotel we signed in, collected our keys, checked out our rooms and explored the hotel. It is an oldish building with some motel like rooms in an extension at the back. These of course suited those who didn't like stairs and were able to sit outside with a glass of wine before dinner. The Howards were in the loft again



(as in Wales) and they had a triple aspect view of Shire Horse Centre, out to sea with an endless panorama of windmills on the horizon and out over the golf course. The upper floors were served by a delightful lift which was probably put in by the Prince of Wales in 1870!! Dinner was at 7pm and we all enjoyed an excellent meal at one very long, wide table where we all chatted at once and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

Tuesday was a lovely sunny morning, so with hoods down we drove to the **Sheringham Museum** right on the sea front. It is home to four ex R.N.L.I. lifeboats, one of which had a very busy time during WW2 rescuing aircraft pilots from the sea, as so many didn't manage to get back to the numerous airbases around the Norfolk area. *I was stationed at R.A.F. Coltishall and also failed to make it back to base one night; but that was in an Austin 7, not a plane – another story!*



Contd. P.20



Hyperion House Hotel - 27th Se
Publisher: John Haynes making
appear positively 'slim'. 'Know
silver hair but who IS the guy i



September 1987
by Peter Hands
the bloke with
the 'strides' ?

In 1987, John Haynes of Haynes Manuals fame, brought a group of his classic car friends for a weekend at the Hyperion House Hotel in Fairford. The cars ranged from his Rolls Royce through to a Jaguar engine Cougar. I remember sitting at the bar in the evening when his friends started ribbing the owner of the Cougar because it was a 'kit car'. I remarked that many cars in the 1950's—70's were often built from a kit of other makes parts in a purpose built body and I remember John Haynes agreeing, and siting his AC Cobra as one of them!!

I am not sure what Peter Hands (who with Tony Scrivens and myself started the club) was presenting to Barry Cooper. However, I do just remember that I then had a head of hair and NO, I do not still have those trousers!

Editor

Launch of classic car club

THREE FRIENDS from Fairford who made a chance discovery that they shared a mutual enthusiasm for classic cars, took part in a champagne celebration at the weekend when they saw their dream turn to reality.

Mr. Peter Hands, owner of the Hyperion Hotel, popped the corks to mark the formation of the Fairford Classic Car Club on Sunday.

Toasting the health of the new organisation were Malcolm Cutler, who is rebuilding a Cobra replica and Tony Scribens who took along his 1935 Lagonda, a Lotus from 1970, another from 1976 and a Scimitar.

The trio were joined by more than 30 other enthusiasts from Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, London, Newbury and Cheltenham who unanimously agreed to the formation of the club, based at the hotel.

Pride of place in the line-up of cars driven to the hotel was a 1912 Lancia ETA. Its owner, Mr. John Nicholson, of Lechlade, could boast that the car was not only the oldest Lancia in England but its bodywork was unique in the world.

Mr. Nicholson, who also had a 1927 Lancia Lambda on display, acquired the ETA a year ago and has been to the Lancia works to try to secure its detailed history.

"Unfortunately the records have been destroyed," he said. But he does know that the car was made mid-1912, was shipped to Amsterdam for the bodywork and then taken to the Dutch East Indies.

During the Second World War it was ac-

quired by the Japanese and used as a staff car, with lengths of rope being used instead of tyres which could not be found for the vehicle.

The Lagonda taken to the Hyperion by Mr. Scribens had been found by his father shortly after the war in a scrap yard. It then had an ambulance body.

A total of 14 cars were at Sunday's event, models varying from a E Type Jaguar to a Mini Cooper 'S', Saabs and MG's.

"It was a wonderful turn-out for our first meeting" said Mr. Hands. "Now we want to find fellow classic car enthusiasts throughout the Cotswolds and to hold regular meetings. We have already been approached

by owners of old motorcycles who said they would like to be part of the club."

MEMBERSHIP

The inaugural meeting of the club decided to have an annual membership fee of £5 and although open to enthusiasts in Gloucestershire - Wiltshire "any member will be welcome wherever they live."

Main aim of the club is for those with or without Classic Cars to discuss their interest at regular meetings, possibly monthly, with guest speakers, films and club runs.

● Membership forms and other details are available from Mr. Hands at the Hyperion Hotel, on 0285 712349.

THE STANDARD, CIRENCESTER

17th APRIL 1987



THREE YEAR OLD, Lucy Scrivens, daughter of one of the organisers of the newly formed Fairford Classic Car Club makes sure that this 1912 Lancia ETA is in gleaming condition.



Wednesday was the **Royal Tour** and we were instructed to park prettily on the grass facing the **Sandringham** visitors centre. The great variation of cars in FCCC - Morris Minor to Morgan Aero 8, created lots of interest. We all went our various ways around the Sandringham Estate and enjoyed the house where Her Majesty relaxes during all too brief holidays; the royal children have some cracking toys - electric Aston Martin etc. What a great

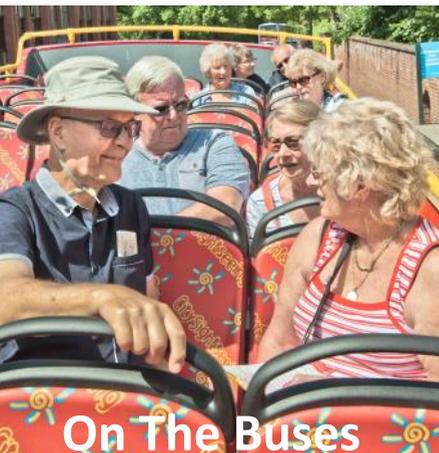
Parking on Her Majesty's Lawn

place to play between Royal duties. The **Vintage Royal Vehicle Collection** included the first car owned by the British Royal family, a 1900 Daimler Phaeton, together with an MGC GT, a huge "Woody" shooting brake and many Daimlers.

Thursday. A different form of wheels today as we caught the train from West Runton into **Norwich**, a 55 minute journey through varied countryside, mostly flat agricultural, a little sugar beet, (that used to be their main crop but much is now imported) and into Norwich Station, still one of the original grand station buildings. Many of us caught the open top tour bus around the city and had all the interesting places pointed out to us. The castle high up on its own hill houses the city council chambers. Nearby is the military museum, Colman's mustard museum and the Anglican Cathedral, plus much more. On our way back to the station we walked alongside the River Wensum and noted the huge crowds gathering for the **Take That** concert at the Norwich City Football Ground in the evening and at the station every train arriving disgorged hundreds more concert goers. On our way back from the **West Runton Station** we had to walk past **The Village Inn**, so we prudently decided to have a cool beer as it was at least another 400yds to the hotel! Here we met some other FCCC members and had a good old chat about our day out.



The Royal Chuck Wagon



On The Buses

On Friday we visited the **Muckleburgh Military Collection** near Sheringham. Again we were all lined up on the grass in front of the museum, we just hoped the tanks were not allowed to go anywhere near!! As military regalia goes this has to

be a world class collection. The proprietor showed us round the first part which dealt with Muckleburgh airfield and defence systems for the East Coast.

It shed an interesting light on the origins of the word “drone” as now applied to military and now civilian drones (yet another story!) There was so much to see – every type of rifle, light machine gun, fighting knives, bayonets, ammunition of all sizes, military vehicles from 500cc BSA up to 55 ton Chieftain Tanks. Some of the lighter tanks are in running order and can be booked for birthday treats. I could have spent two days there but Maureen said one light tank in the form of an MGB is quite enough!



A Ferret Mk II and a Saladin at Muckleburgh

We then went on to **Wells-next-the-Sea**, a very active harbour and quayside which was buzzing with activity. Jenny, Martin, Mo and myself enjoyed our lunch of hot prawns in a thick chilli sauce with warm crusty bread, washed down with a beer, in an upstairs restaurant overlooking the whole of the harbour. After lunch we took a walk along the breakwater before returning to our cars for a gentle trip back to the Hotel (via *Village Inn*)!

Saturday. Our visit today to Joe & Steve Harmer’s **Motor Cycle Museum** was an eye opener for many of us. This is a remarkable collection of M/Cs through the ages, some in working order, some just needing a bit of tinkering and others almost beyond refurbishing (never say



never) including bikes that we grew up with - the iconic BSA Bantam, Gold Star, Vespa, the mighty Vincent Black Shadow, also very rare American bikes from the 1920s. This was a great visit and Steve's mum, Valerie, provided tea/coffee and biscuits. She was hesitant to charge us £1 - what value!

After the motor cycles we drove the short distance towards **Aylsham** to **Blickling Estate**; a magnificent house with splendid gardens. The theme in the house was the 70th anniversary of India's Independence. The owner of the estate in 1930s was Philip Henry Kerr, 11th Marquis of Lothian, politician, diplomat and newspaper editor. Views were expressed during a weekend visit to Blickling by Jawaharlal Nehru and his daughter in 1938. Nehru was later to become the first Prime Minister of India in 1947.

Blickling in the Blazing British Sunshine

FCCC Mad Dogs Everywhere!



The day was very hot so a gentle walk round the house and the well-tended gardens, rounded off by a visit to the catering area where several of us were found licking the obligatory ice creams - this is a well rehearsed procedure within FCCC as most visits culminate in tea/coffee & ices!!

During the week we celebrated June Bevan's birthday at dinner with a candle in her pudding and a soft Royal Corgi toy. That evening we thanked Jill and Malcolm for a job well done as we had all enjoyed a super week in lovely weather and excellent company. Long live the FCCC!



**Maureen &
Dave Apperley**

Photos: Dave Barton

SPRING RUN (St George's Day)

Lee Aland (Jackie Hinton's navigator on the day)

A group of approximately 25 cars and their occupants gathered on a warm sunny Wednesday morning from the Trout Inn located just outside of Lechlade Glos. The day started with welcoming coffee and biscuits, taken outside on the lawns which lead down to the River Thames. For some it was their first such experience of a car rally.



ly. More importantly, it was Ken's first attempt at planning and organising such an event.

The cars left at one minute intervals and the journey began with a foray across into West Oxfordshire, via Little Faringdon and Clanfield. We passed through the small village of Bampton (perhaps, known to some as the location for much of the filming of Downton Abbey) before heading out towards Wantage and Lambourn and the rolling downs of Berkshire. The gallops of the racing world which are centred upon Lambourn were quiet although several large and famous racing stables were passed along the way. A diversion took the cars up and around the Uffington White Horse. Although the horse was not visible

there were fantastic views of the downs to be enjoyed courtesy of the sunny weather. The road around the White Horse is home to many downland sheep



who needed gentle encouragement to move out of the way!! This took us on the downward descent into our third county, Wiltshire, skirting the village of Hinton Parva. Apparently, the village does not belong to Ken!!

Our eventual destination was the Cross Keys pub in the village of Wanborough. We were able to enjoy a convivial drink in the garden whilst waiting for lunch. Lunch was outstanding and enjoyed by all. Clean plates all round!!

It was one of the days when everything was perfect, including the weather, Ken has set himself a high standard in terms of organisation, so what next Ken?



FLIGHT OF THE LANCASTER - A DREAM COME TRUE David & Carol Chambers

I have always had an interest in planes especially the Lancaster bomber. My eldest brother was a rear gunner in the Second World War flying in a Lancaster of 626 Squadron. During his short term there he managed to cram in over 70 bombing raids over Germany, shot down one fighter and managed to beat off two others. For these acts he was awarded the DFM and the DFC. When the Canadian



Lancaster flew over to this country to join the only other flying Lancaster my niece informed me that it was based at Hamilton at the RCAF Heritage Museum, which Carol & I had visited before. They were doing weekend flights [whenever the aircraft was serviceable] to help raise money to keep the museum going.

I needed no second bidding and she managed to get a flight booked last September and so we arranged to fly over and stay with her. I must stress that Carol was

not enthused at this stage but she had been on a De Havilland Dragon Rapide & in a helicopter for an hours flight over Oxford with me and thoroughly enjoyed it, so I had great hopes for this trip.



So over we went, had another look at the museum while we waited for the Lanc to fly in. I was dosed up with antibiotics as I had managed to contract a severe bacterial infection. We went for a briefing session with the flight engineer and were joined by two Americans who were also to fly with us. So that made four fee paying passengers, one pilot, one co-pilot one flight engineer and one crew member making a total of eight on board. At the briefing session one of the Americans was quiet and took in all the information, the other couldn't wait to show he knew it all and how inferior the Lancaster was to the wartime American machinery. His first interruption was to declare that the B17 & B24 bombers carried the heaviest bombload. The pilot immediately put him down stating that the Lancaster carried the heaviest bombload of any WW2 plane whilst the American planes used up poten-

tial bombload by having defensive guns covering the whole of the plane . He went quiet but piped up again by saying that the American planes had superior range only to be put down again by the pilot pointing out that only the Lancaster could deliver its cargo to Berlin.

So we boarded the plane – it looked magnificent, shining in the bright sunshine. As we boarded the flight engineer told the Americans that as they were oversized they would not be allowed to go up on the flight deck since the bulkheads in the bomber only had a small opening and you had to be reasonably slim and flexible to squeeze through, but they could observe from the central gun turret. This was great for us , it ultimately gave us over an hour up with the pilot & co-pilot.

The Merlin engines were started up one at a time and whole aircraft rattled like a tin can. I took off my ear defenders to find

to no time heading for Toronto. Can you imagine our “Jobsworth’s” in this country allowing an eighty year old plane to fly at under 2,000ft over the centre of a major city. Hats off to the Canadians for letting the public share the spectacle as we circled just below the tip of the CN Tower. Now we headed out over Lake Ontario to fly over the Niagara Falls which were in full spate. A few circuits round there and we headed back to base. Eventually, the



crew relented and the Americans were told they could go forward if they felt they could manage it and so, red faced, puffing and straining, they were shoe-horned through the tiny opening in the bulkheads .

We were then strapped into our seats for a very smooth landing followed by a photo shoot with the crew and fellow passengers.

We had both enjoyed a wonderful not to be forgotten experience – as I have told several people over and over since!!



how loud the sound was – it was impossible to talk, it sounded like you were standing next to a machine gun. We taxied out to the runway and were airborne in next

NC 500 — AROUND SCOTLAND PART II

Martin Howard

Before leaving our B/B on the Thursday having enjoyed a lovely full breakfast, the land lady gave us some interesting information about Durness and the connection with John Lennon of the Beatles and not to miss visiting the Smoo Cave which is one of the largest sea caves in the UK. As the weather was overcast and very windy we decided to spend a short time looking around the village as one of John Lennon's auntie's had lived in Durness



and he had spent many holidays here, as it was his favourite place having spent his younger days on the beach. We discovered that she was buried in the local cemetery, and on our visiting the village hall discovered a small garden dedicated to him with three large vertical granite slabs inscribed with a few words from one of his songs (photo). The weather did not improve and began to rain, so we set

of to drive the 70 miles east to Thurso to our next stop over. Over the Kyle of Tongue causeway and on past the Dounreay Nuclear facility in the distance. On arriving in Thurso the weather had improved so we had a chance to look around the town and the museum, which we found very interesting with a special exhibition all about Dounreay and its history (worth the visit) before returning to our B/B for the night, having had a very nice meal in the pub overlooking the harbour and the ferries port to Stromness.

The next day Friday our drive was to visit the Castle of May, the holiday home of the Queen Mother.

En route making a short detour to Dunnet Head lighthouse the furthest point north on the main land. On arriving at the castle it struck us how small and very much her own home it was, close to the sea looking to the Orkney Islands with Hoy in the distance. We spent an enjoyable few hours walking around the castle and gardens before driving on to John O'Groats for a brief photo opportunity. Our drive now turned south, hugging the coast though Wick with the road twisting and turning across the Caithness landscape. Our landlady had recommended we stop just outside Wick to visit Whaligoe Steps, used in the 19th century by the fisherwoman to haul up the creels of herring landed in the harbour below to the road. Our route then continued south through the Berriedale Braes, where the road drops at a

gradient of 13% over 1.3km, before turning on a hairpin and rising equally steeply and onto Glospie and our next over night stop. That evening we enjoyed a fish and chip meal at the local restaurant.

Saturday. Having passed Dunrobin Castle (the home of the Duke of Sutherland) the previous day it was agreed that we make a



short drive back and spend the morning on a lovely sunny day going round the gardens and the impressive Castle, the most northerly of Scotland's great houses and the largest in the Northern Highlands with 189 rooms. Dunrobin Castle is also one of Britain's oldest continuously inhabited houses dating back to the early 1300s. This was well worth the visit. (photo)

Having enjoyed a coffee and cake in the castle café we continued with our drive south to Inverness making a detour onto the Black Isle to Fortrose to see the dolphins. Unfortunately we were unlucky as the tide was in the wrong direction. Then on to our final B/B next to Tomatin Distillery near Inverness, and the end of our drive around the NC 500. Celebrating in the

evening with a trip to Fort George, as we had booked tickets to see the Fort George evening tattoo. Ending a wonderful journey seeing some of the most breathtaking scenery you will find anywhere, and meeting some lovely friendly people. On the Sunday we left the NC500 to drive to Edinburgh for a few days stop before heading for home, having enjoyed being with our good friends Eddie and Gill Phibben.

Anyone planning to do this trip I would recommend you take as long as possible, as there so much to see and do, and you will enjoy it.

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NO PRIZES FOR SPOTTING THE PROBLEM



NOT SO MUCH TAPPET CLATTER THIS TIME! MIKE COX

Well, it's that time of year again when I am usually persuaded to write a few words about all things mechanical, often about things going on in the garage, e.g. lawn mowers and Riley's spring to mind. Sad to say I hope my readers will not be disappointed but due to various reasons I have not been as active in mechanical things over the past few months as I have been before. Hopefully things will improve shortly.

Those who attended the skittles match seemed to enjoy a good night's competition and the usual good meal that we have come to expect. This time the overall trophy i.e. the highest score over the evening, went to one of our most regular players and someone who, to the best of my knowledge, has been with us from the very first skittles match at the Plough in Alverscot – well done Tony Picking.

The other thing I must do is to give you the answers to the quiz I set in the Winter '16/17 edition of FC3. I think most of you were completely baffled by the questions as I have not had any comments regarding the answers, even from my most loyal reader!! So here they are:

1) What are the missing letters in the names of two car manufacturers – **ZastVa** and **ZaporoZHets**

- 2) Which car company made the M21/M22/M24 – **VOLGA**
- 3) How many wheels (not including the steering wheel) did the Tourette have – **THREE**
- 4) When did Skoda start producing cars – **1925**
- 5) If Plein Ciel is open, what is closed – **SIMCA ARONDE**
- 6) What is the engine capacity of the NSU RO80 – **994cc**
- 7) Name one of the three men who produced the Marauder – **GEORGE MUNCHIE, PETER WILKS, SVEN KING**
- 8) Who designed the Frisky – **GORDON BENSON**
- 9) Which high ranking Air-Force officer attempted to produce the Fairthorpe – **AIR VICE MARSHALL DON BENNET**
- 10) Who produced the P1, J2, K2 and M1 – **ALLARD**

How many, I wonder, did anyone get?
Ed: It will have taken quite a lot of research. Next time (yes Mike, I am sure there will be a next time) we will do it as a prize quiz.

Referring back to the last FC3 and the mice problem, I am glad to report no sign of the little 'so and sos' this year. Maybe they have packed their bags and gone off to someone whose cheese is more tasty than that I put out for them. I also think that Father Xmas is deaf as I didn't get the Aston Martin I asked for!! *Editor: Try a bigger stocking this year!*

LETTER WRITTEN BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON FROM SPAIN TO WHITEHALL AUGUST 1812

(Not a lot changes!)

Gentlemen,

Whilst marching from Portugal to a position which commands the approach to Madrid and the French forces my officers have been diligently complying with your requests, which have been sent by HM ship from London to Lisbon and then dispatch rider to our headquarters.

We have enumerated our saddles, bridles, tents and tent poles and all manner of sundry items for which his Majesty's Government holds me accountable. I have dispatched reports on the character, wit and spleen of every officer. Each item and every farthing has been accounted for, with two regrettable exceptions for which I beg your indulgence.

Unfortunately the sum of one shilling and nine-pence remains unaccounted for in one infantry battalions petty cash and there has been hideous confusion as to the number of jars of raspberry jam issued to one cavalry regiment during a sandstorm in Western Spain. This reprehensible carelessness may be related to the pressure of circumstances, since we are at war with France, a fact which may come as a bit of a surprise to you gentlemen in Whitehall.

This brings me to my present purpose, which is to request elucidation of my instructions from his Majesty's Government so that I may better understand why I am dragging an army over these barren plains. I construe that perforce that it must be one of two alternative duties, as given below. I shall pursue either one with my best ability, but I cannot do both:

- 1) To train an army of uninformed British Clerks in Spain for the benefit of the accountants and cop-boys in London, or perchance:
- 2) To see to it that the forces of Napoleon are driven out of Spain

A REVISED HISTORY OF POWER STEERING - as dis- covered by FCCC

Malcolm Cutler with 'assistance'
from Bunny Lees-Smith

At the recent Hunters Fete a demonstration was given of the advanced two humanoid power steering 'retrofitted' to Bunny Lees-Smith's 1929 Wolseley—see photo taken by Steve Bakmand. The 1955 Sunbeam Mk 111 has a similar problem but I have found with the help of the elbow and door arm rest, a single humanoid power steering action suffices. I have also recently fitted a more up to date electric/hydraulic system to my Jag Mk2 and it has transformed the car—especially with its smaller diameter wood rim wheel.



These 'inventions' made me start thinking about the history of power steering and I think the following article I found on Wikipedia (also reprinted on Facebook). Would be of interest to FCCC members—maybe I should add the Wolseley power steering invention to Wikipedia

The first power steering system on an automobile was apparently installed in 1876 by a man with the surname of Fitts. Little

else is known about him. The next power steering system was put on a Columbia 5-ton truck in 1903.

Robert E. Twyford, a resident of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, included a mechanical power steering mechanism as part of his patent (U.S. Patent 646,477) issued on April 3, 1900 for the first four wheel drive system.

Francis W. Davis, an engineer of the truck division of Pierce Arrow began exploring how steering could be made easier, and in 1926 invented and demonstrated the first practical power steering system. Davis moved to General Motors and refined the hydraulic-assisted power steering system, but the automaker calculated it would be

too expensive to produce. Davis then signed up with Bendix, a parts manufacturer for automakers. Military needs during World War II

for easier steering on heavy vehicles boosted the need for power assistance on armoured cars and tank-recovery vehicles for the British and American armies. Chrysler Corporation introduced the first commercially available passenger car power steering system on the 1951 Chrysler

Power Steering—Contd.

Imperial under the name "Hydraguide". [The Chrysler system was based on some



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Power Steering—Continued:

of Davis' expired patents. General Motors introduced the 1952 Cadillac with a power steering system using the work Davis had done for the company almost twenty years earlier.

Charles F. Hammond, an American, born in Detroit, filed several patents for improvements of power steering with the Canadian Intellectual Property Office in 1958. Most new vehicles now have power steering, owing to the trends toward front wheel drive, greater vehicle mass, and wider tires, which all increase the required steering effort. Heavier vehicles as common in some countries would be extremely difficult to manoeuvre at low speeds, while vehicles of lighter weight may not need power assisted steering at all.

FAIRFORD, LECHLADE
AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES

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May 2017