

# Newsletter



Member of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

Off to a good start with our 2019 lunch runs. Thanks to Mike and Helen Scott for organising it.

The next one on the 20th. March and with the variable weather we are getting - "Hood Up" or "Hood Down" will be a last minute decision. Meanwhile - Martin's Minor has appeared in print and from the photo alongside it looks as if you can lean into the corners even in a Minor.



## What's Coming Up

**Key:**

- ⇒ Club event
- ◇ Club attendance as a group at a motoring or other event
- Everything else of interest. These items are shown for information only.

If you have a question, call **Bunny Lees-Smith, Event Coordinator, 01666 577 275**

**IN THIS ISSUE**

- ◆ **Future Events Reports**



Exit left - the Minor

March		
⇒	20 FCCC Lunch Run	Geoff. 01453 883 821
•	22 - 24 Classic Car and Restoration Show at the NEC	website
⇒	27th. Skittles Evening at The Plough, Fairford	Malcolm 01285 712 173
April		
⇒	6 Visit to Formhalls Vintage & Racing	Bunny 01666 577 275
⇒	7 FCCC AGM & Founder's Day Lunch Run	Geoff. 01453 883 821 Malcolm 01285 712 173
•	7 Coffee & Classics, Bibury Motor Hub	website
•	14 Cirencester Car Club "Corinium Run"	website
•	22 Coleford Carnival of Transport	website
⇒	23 FCCC St. George's Day Run	Ken Hinton 01285 712 522
•	28 Drive it Day, Bicester Heritage Scramble	website
•	28 Classic Motor Hub	website
•	28 Fiennes Restoration Open Day	website
⇒	29 Fairford CCC Committee Meeting	Geoff. 01453 883 821
May		
•	3/4/5 Donnington Historic Festival	website
⇒	8 Historic Engine Co visit	Peter 0746 352 2244
•	5 Wheelnuts at Stroud	website
◇	5 Motor Hub Coffee and Italian Classics FCCC visit	TBA
⇒	11 Visit to Cotswold Wildlife Park	Martin Howard 077603 14903

### Presentation by Stan and Mark Dibben - 15th Feb

The club was privileged to have the opportunity to have an evening with one of our local motorcycling heroes, Stan Dibben, ably assisted by his son Mark. Stan, who is now in his 93rd year, won the 1953 Sidecar World Championship alongside Eric Oliver on their works Norton outfit. But, whilst this may have been his best known achievement, Stan has lived an amazing and adventurous life in many other fields of sport and business. Following a miserable time at boarding school he joined the Navy (although he had wanted to go into the Royal Air Force), following which time his passion for motor bikes led him into the retail world and then to working with BSA where he ended up as one of the skilled engineers selected to hand build Gold Stars. He then joined Norton as a test and development engineer, spending many hours, days and weeks testing bikes at MIRA and on the roads around the midlands. It was at MIRA where he was asked (commanded!) to ride with Eric Oliver to test suspension changes on his 'outfit', a job he did so well that Oliver instructed him to be his 'passenger' (a word Stan hates - for good reason) for the World Championship series, resulting in them winning the championship in 1953.

Stan then worked with Reynold Chains before leaving to help organise the logistics for Donald Campbell's world land speed record attempt with Bluebird in Australia. His recall of Donald Campbell's 'management' of the record attempt and Mark Dibben's research into how the event was financed and the monies spent spoke of a different age! Stan eventually worked with NGK for 25yrs, successfully expanding their share of the market in the UK, where he was not afraid to take on the big players e.g. refusing to sell Halfords a million plugs as he realised they would lower the prices and potentially ruin NGK's technical and quality reputation.

I would recommend you to put the name Stan Dibben in Google and you will see a number of U Tube videos of him, including one entitled 'No ordinary passenger'. They make sobering viewing!

Our thanks to Stan and Mark for giving us a thoroughly enjoyable and informative evening presented, as one member stated, in a refreshingly old fashioned, non pc, manner. On Stan's suggestion we asked for donations to the TT Riders Association charity and are very pleased to report that we have just been able to send them a cheque for **£100**, as collected on the night.

Malcolm Cutler.

**OWNER'S Q&A...**

**IS THE MINOR AN EASY CAR TO OWN?**  
As you know, mine has been modified and is a very easy car to live with. It looks standard from the outside but is subtly different under the skin.

**WHAT'S THE APPEAL OF THE MINOR?**  
Now all the major work's been done, it's easy to maintain and is great fun to drive. Its' a real 'Q' car and people are surprised at how well it drives.

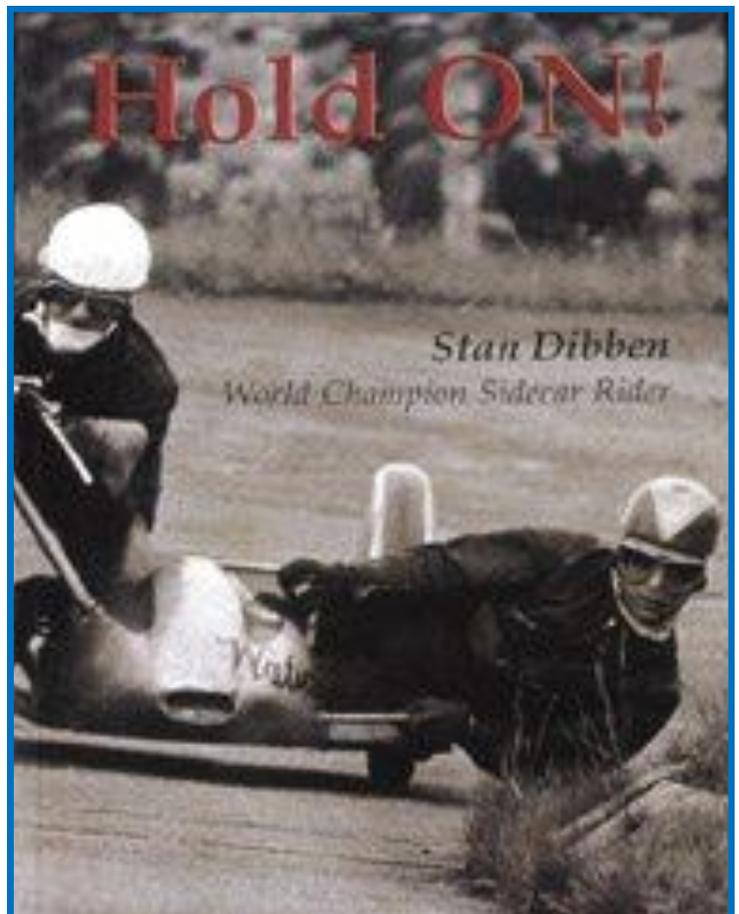
**WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST JOB?**  
That has to be stripping the car down before it was repainted. Building it back up again and fitting a lot of new parts was great experience though.

**WHAT SORT OF REACTION DOES THE CAR GET WHEN YOU'RE OUT AND ABOUT?**  
We've recently returned from a 1600 mile trip around Ireland and it certainly got a lot of attention over there. We lost count of the folk who told us tales about Minors they knew in the past.

**WOULD YOU EVERY CONSIDER SELLING YOUR MINOR?**  
Over the years I've owned lots of cars that are now considered to be very desirable classics and am satisfied with the Minor, so the answer to that is a very big no.



Martin in print



Stan in action