

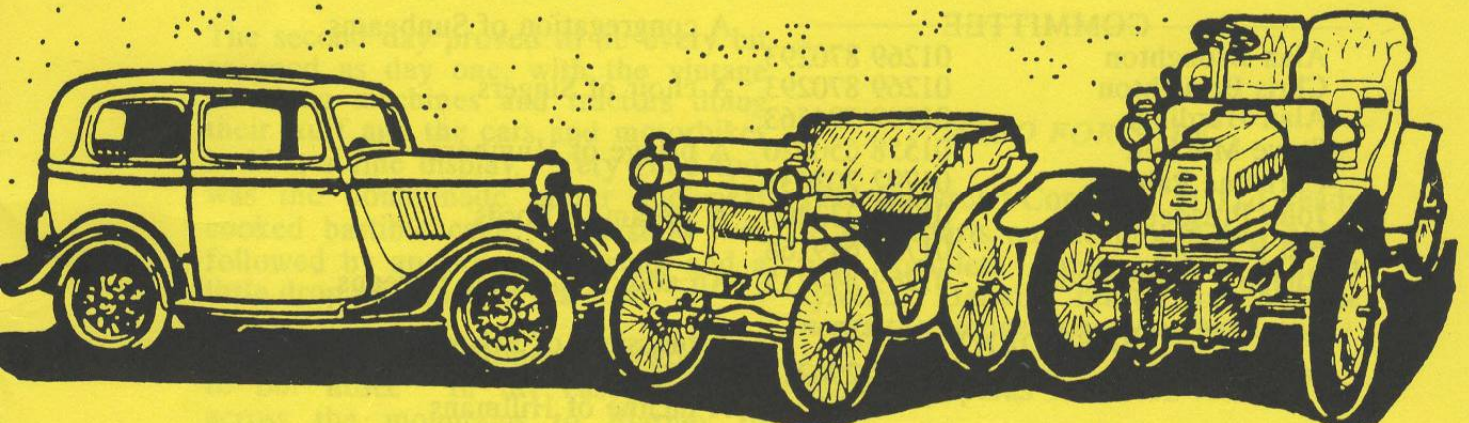
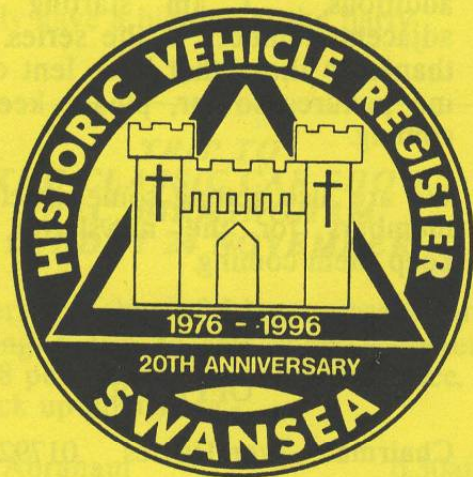
S.H.



V.R.

THE SWANSEA HISTORIC VEHICLE REGISTER

20 YEARS SERVING THE ENTHUSIAST



NOVEMBER 1996 NEWSLETTER

EDITED & COMPILED BY MIKE PALMER, MIKE EVANS & GERALD GILL.

EDITORIAL

We will shortly be considering the Club's programme for next year. This year there have been a phenomenal number of events put on by our hard working Committee. Please let them know your opinions on the events of this year, as this will help in planning next year's calendar.

My collection of early CY (Swansea) registered cars has had another few additions. I am starting to get adjacent numbers in the series. Many thanks to those that have lent or given me pictures so far, please keep them coming.

We are also getting some articles from members for the newsletter, please keep them coming.

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HERSHEY FILM SHOW

THE MOUNTIAN GATE

Friday 27 October brought some 30 or so members to the Mountain gate for a very interesting film show about Hershey Autojumble. A compilation of a number of past events rolled into a very interesting insight to this huge event. We were all well fed and watered, many thanks to Lyn Thomas, our host, for the evening.

MP

FOR SALE

1955 Citroen avant Light 15 saloon, black, good condition, complete with pipe and trilby. Offers around £5K.

Contact Mike Palmer 01792 203638

MOTORING COLLECTIVE NOUNS

A casting of Shadows
A basket of Rolls
A pregnancy of Phantoms
A lowering of Standards
An isle of Capris
A congregation of Sunbeams
A choir of Singers
A bridge of Humbers
A stream of Fords
An addiction of De Loreans
A brassiere of Bristols
A incline of Hillmans
A return of Rovers
A hail of Taxis

CHAIR BIT

Well, I am back from my wanderings in the Emerald Isle. It's no secret that I am close to retiring from my present job and actively looking to move bag and baggage to West Cork, hence the to and fro-ing on the old ferry boat. On one of the visits I took the Alvis with me to enable me to drop in at the Ramble Inn for the Thrashing Weekend. I was surprised to find, that after having no response to the Ballinghassig Run in the Newsletter, that a few members had made their own way there. They could have saved themselves some money through a Club booking, still, it was nice to see Steve Pearson and Paul & Diane Blackmore.

We had a great weekend, with the run passing through Bandon (unofficial comfort stop) and Timoleague to arrive at Garretstown in time for lunch. Here we were heartily fed and entertained. One of members, who shall remain nameless, spent the afternoon with his head buried under the bonnet of Liam Good's Rolls Royce. *Who was he hiding from or whose cameras was he dodging?*

The run back was to have passed by Kinsale, but one or two of us created yet another stop, and had a swift half at the White House before returning to the Ramble in for the usual big nosh up an craic.

The second day proved to be every bit as good as day one, with the vintage thrashing machines and tractors doing their stuff and the cars and motorbikes making a fine display. Very good too, was the home-made butter and peat cooked bastible cake. The show was followed by an evening of song and a little drop of creamy black stuff.

All too soon it was time to say goodbye to our hosts. In my case to drive across the mountains to Blarney to continue the business of house hunting and for Steve and his party, an early morning rendezvous with the ferry.

Ivor.

CHRISTMAS 1996

We will be holding our traditional Christmas Buffet on Monday 16 December at 8.30pm. We suggest that you arrive between 8 and 8.30.

Members are entitled to bring one guest, please let us know if you intend to bring any more, as we will need to collect some money off you.

Please also bring any prizes you may be able to donate to the raffle. We usually have a big one at the party.

TRIP TO THE CLASSIC CAR SHOW NEC, BIRMINGHAM SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER

Meyers Coaches of Llanpumpsaint are running a trip to this show. Tickets are £8 per person, payable in advance.

Pick up points are:-

Pont Abraham	6.30am
Swansea West	6.45am
Briton Ferry	7.00am

If you are interested, please ring Malcolm Meyers on 01267 253464.

ALSO FOR SALE

1981 Chevrolet Corvette. MOTd, ready to go. Starts on the button and has a new complete stainless steel exhaust system. Genuine reason for sale (*he needs the money to buy another Lotus!*)

See Clive Sparks Tel 01792 794798.

TAXI! TAXI!

BY ALAN AND CHRISTINE BROUGHTON

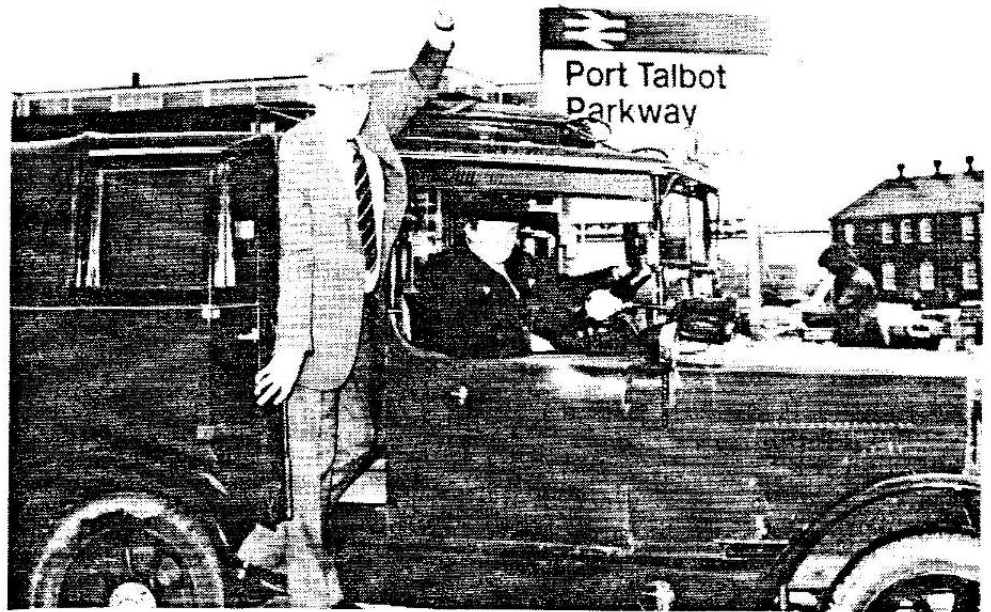
We've been rallying our taxi now for over 20 years and if I could have a pound for each question I've answered, I think I could retire now. So here is a resume of the answers and a potted history of London Cabs in general, for all those things you've always wanted to know about Taxis and have been too embarrassed to ask !.



THE NOW FAMILIAR TAXI ON THE
LLANGADOG VICTORIAN RUN, 1995

The London taxi cab is totally unique in that it is the only vehicle in the world that is designed for the exclusive use in one City. Design, construction and use are all strictly controlled by the Public Carriage Office in Scotland Yard. Those observant people amongst you may care to look around on their next visit to London and may well see a policeman with P.C.O. on his epaulets which stands for Public Carriage Office. These Officers are empowered by the P.C.O. to stop and check taxi cabs for any infringement of the regulations. But I digress. I've started several hundred years before the beginning since the story of London Cabs actually dates back to the early sixteen hundreds when, when Charles the first introduced the sedan chair. Before long, those who could not afford to buy and run their own chair soon found they could hire one from a private operator. The name "Hackney" seems to have started about this time coming from the French word HACQUENEE, used to describe a strong horse hired out for a journey. Then in 1635, Charles granted a patent to Sir Saunders Duncombe to be the sole supplier/operator of these chairs. By June 1635 the "Distressed Hackney Man" had submitted a petition asking that a hundred of them might be allowed to form a company to "ply without interference".

The day Barry Took Alan's point of view



AGENT Alan Broughton was able to give his point of view in person to TV personality Barry Took. Alan (pictured right in his 1928 London taxi) was giving the compere of BBC's Points of View programme a lift to the opening of a new British Rail parkway at Port Talbot station.

The Morris Commercial International is believed to be the

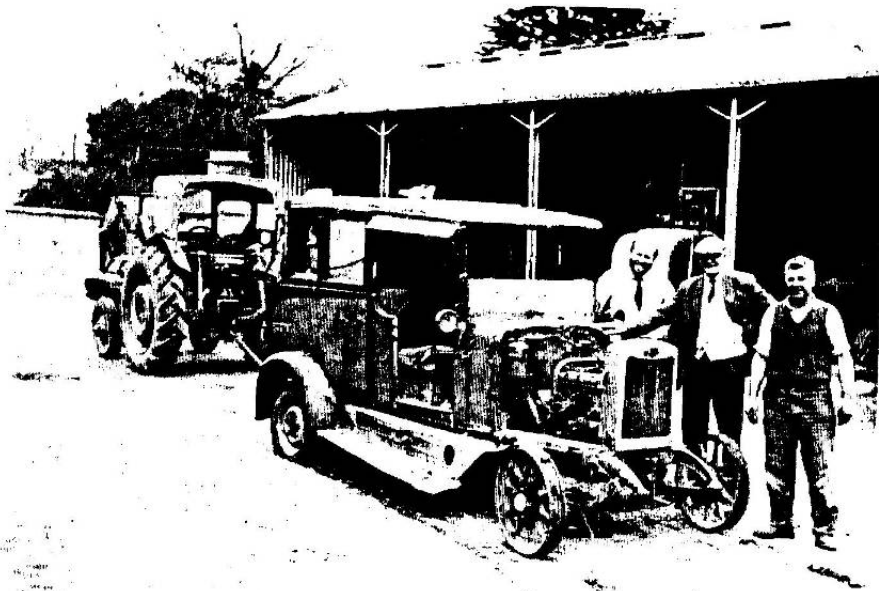
one survivor of only 840 that were built, and led the procession to the car park where Barry was performing the opening ceremony.

The taxi is the pride of Alan's collection of vintage vehicles and has won many prizes.

Then as now, the authorities would not listen to common sense, said no, and the first illegal minicab trade started. With Charles II came horse drawn coaches with proper licencing and control, such that by 1694, the number of Hackney licences was raised to 700 with an increase to 1000 by 1768, and then to 1100 by 1805. With small modifications, the basic design of a single horse drawing a single axled coach remained fundamentally the same until the coming of the railways. By the late 1800's, people arriving at railway stations with large amounts of heavy baggage required something more such that the two horse four wheeled coach known as a "growler" came into being. In the late 1890's, the first horseless cabs appeared. These were electric powered, had a top speed of 9 MPH and were known in the trade as "UMMING BIRDS", for obvious reasons.

Into the 20th century and "MORTAR CARTS" gradually replaced "UMMING BIRDS", but these were still relatively underpowered vehicles which could not cope with the heavy loads from the railway station trade. Hence the motors and the horse drawn vehicles continued in relative harmony through the 1930's with horse drawn cabs doing the station trade and the motor cabs staying in the city. But of course they were all Hackney Cabs and subject to the same rules, which is why our 1929 has to have hay and water on board for the horse which does not exist. Most of these rules are still in force, and as the controller of a cab, I am not allowed to leave it "unattended" in case the horse bolts but am allowed to relieve myself against the rear nearside wheel in a public place. Any other wheel and it is "committing a public nuisance", by the way I've never tried it to see if I could get away with it. Some of the other rules include outside rear view mirrors only, no inside mirror. This is to stop the drivers watching what is going on in the back seat, instead of where they are going. No glass is allowed in the top rear side of the windscreen or on either side of the driver and the section in front of the driver must be opening. This is because of the London Smog when it was thought that the glass could become misted up and then obscure the view of pedestrians about to step off the pavement. Not that the driver could do a

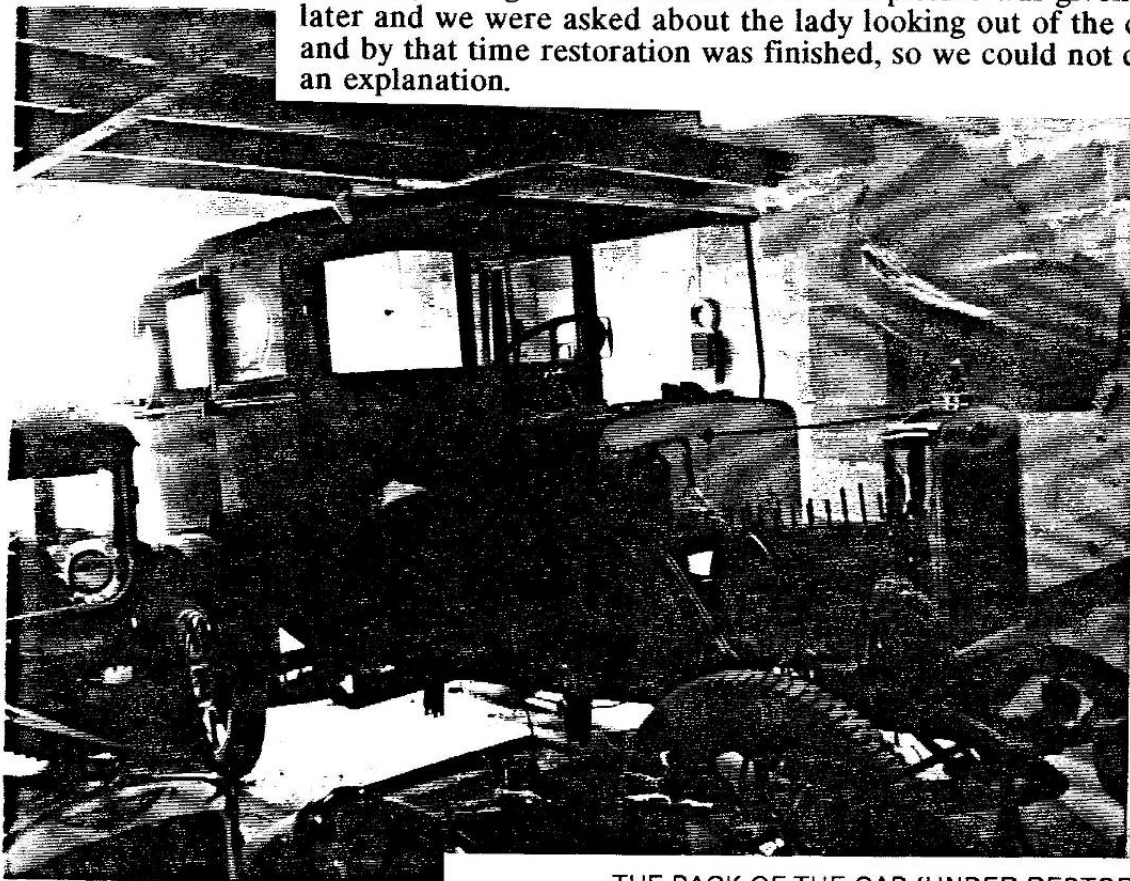
RECOVERING THE TAXI FROM A FARM ON SALISBURY PLAIN



EVERYONE WOULD NOT HAVE LOOKED SO COMPLACENT IF
THEY'D KNOWN ABOUT THE LIVE BOMBS IN THE BACK

lot about it anyway with two tons on a wet road and only rear wheel brakes! Why no front brakes? Well this is due to one of the public carriage office construction regulations which requires that a cab has to be able to turn 180 degrees within the width of a city street (you don't want cabs holding up the traffic doing three point turns to pick up a fare on the opposite side of the road). Manufacturers were unable to get the rod operated front brakes to work at the extreme angles that the turning circle required so they just did not fit them. Later on cable operated front brakes were offered as an optional extra, along with headlights and a speedometer. But most operators did not have them, speedos were not considered necessary because you can't go faster than the rest of the traffic and they are watching their speedos for you! Headlights were seldom used since city cabs rarely went outside the street lamp area. Another of the oddities of the early cabs (ours included) is their height, this again is due to a couple of P.C.O. regulations, the top hat one which states that an "average" man has to be able to sit in the back seat wearing hat and the chassis regulation which states that the "chassis must not deviate from the horizontal between the axles", put simply, it must not dip in the middle. This regulation, strange as it may seem, makes good sense when you remember that most commercial motor vehicles, buses and traction engines of that time were very heavy affairs with poor brakes. If your cab (with a straight chassis, dipping at both ends) was involved in an end to end shunt, the squashed cab would bend upwards in the middle and the passengers could get the doors open. Whereas if the chassis dipped below the point of impact the opposite would occur and the doors will jam trapping the occupants. Passenger safety was also the reason for the folding rear roof section. A lot of people have said "that's nice, it is to allow the passengers to enjoy the sunshine", no so! It's to get people out in an emergency if the doors jam. You must remember that vehicle fires were much more common then, than they are now. Again, another funny regulation, the battery was considered a fire risk and had to be outside the cab, battery box on running board, but the petrol tank was not thought to be a potential hazard so that's under the driver's seat! To be honest, it is a small tank, seven gallons for a 2.5 litre 2 ton vehicle, but then again they never operated far from base and give driver too much fuel and he'd probably sell it off! Yet another regulation states that cabs must be tested every year, this is very strict and includes the condition of the upholstery and even the angle of the little fold down seats. Also no cab over ten years old (no matter how good) is allowed to operate in London. This rule was only relaxed once, after the second world war when there was just no new cabs to be had and not enough old ones to operate. This is why a lot of 30's cabs were still in use in the 50's and why American ex-servicemen have a love of old London cabs, because they would see these quaint vehicles running around the city when they went there to see a show whilst on leave.

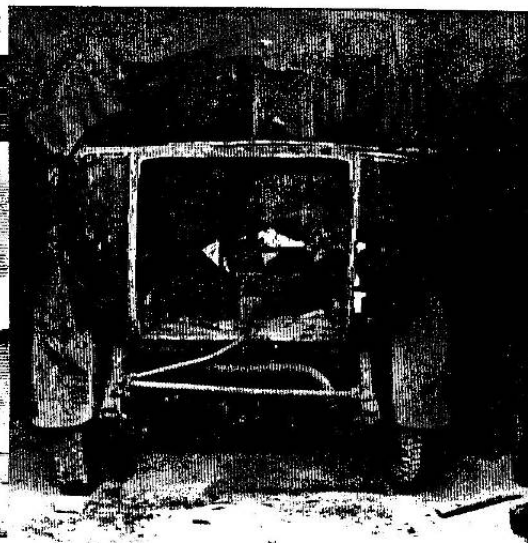
Our cab, during restoration in 1974. The picture was given to us several years later and we were asked about the lady looking out of the cab. We knew nothing and by that time restoration was finished, so we could not check anything or offer an explanation.



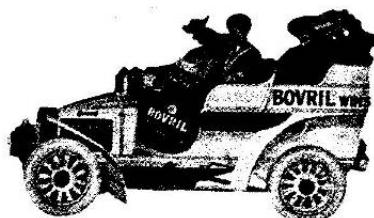
THE BACK OF THE CAB (UNDER RESTORATION) AT THE SAME TIME AS THE "GHOST" PHOTO WAS TAKEN



"MORRIS COMMERCIAL WORLD" PUBLICITY PHOTO OF A G TYPE CAB. OURS IS THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF 840 BUILT



Coming forward to the modern Metro cab of today, a long way you might say from the cabs of yesterday. But is it really? Grant you they are faster, more economical on fuel and now go further between services but don't all modern vehicles. They are still constructed to a very strict set of rules, you are still not allowed to run one in London over 10 years old and they are still very expensive, (ask Mike Palmer!). But I think that they are totally unique, very British and long may they continue.



THE BROUGHTON'S TAXI,
FEATURED IN A 1930s ADVERT FOR ROVER.



PERFORMANCE born of QUALITY

Essential to successful driving in present day traffic are powerful acceleration and easy controllability. . . The high efficiency overhead valve Rover engines with their downdraught carburettors give a degree of acceleration quite out of proportion to their modest rating. . . . To ensure that you can make the most of this performance there is the delightful Clutchless Gearchange pioneered by Rover last year. This provides the simplest possible gearchange *between all ratios.*

ROVER

1934 Models and Prices

THE TEN - from £938
THE TWELVE from £268
THE FOURTEEN ,, £288
THE SIXTEEN from £438
THE SPEED 14 from £395
THE SPEED 20 from £495



Write for Full details to
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COVENTRY
London Distributors:
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Henly House,
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PIONEERS OF THE FREE WHEEL AND CLUTCHLESS GEAR CHANGE



☺ ☺ S.H.V.R. NEW MEMBERS ☺ ☺

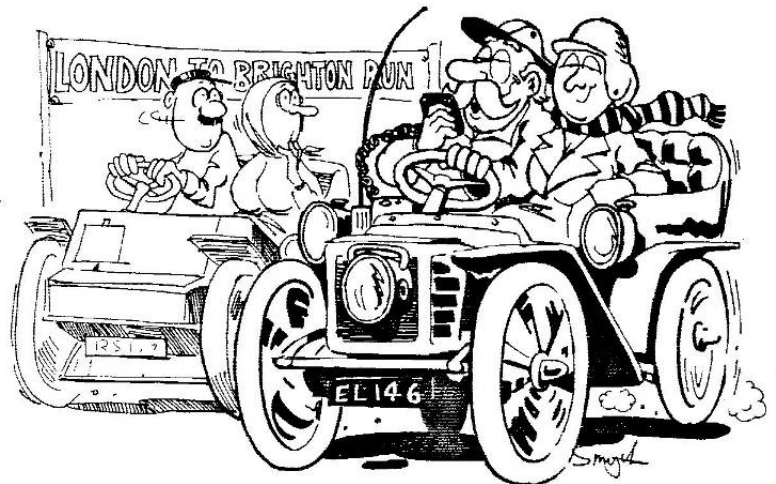
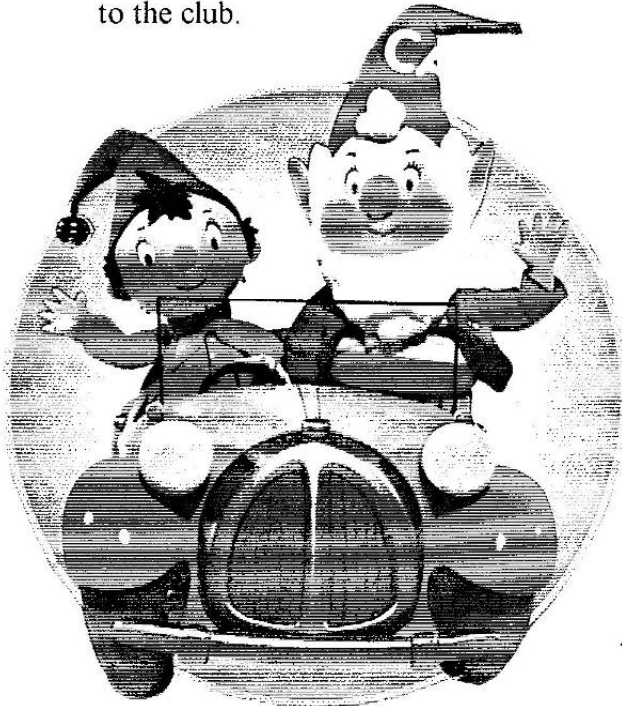
We are still seeing an influx of new members to the extent that we are in imminent danger of breaking the 100 barrier, which would be really good news. Hopefully by Christmas we may be able to announce this :-

Stephen Bartlett from Pembroke has just joined the club with his recently purchased Rover P4 100. Prior to that he had a morris 100 traveller.

John Rodgers from Mayals Swansea is a long standing member of the vintage car fraternity and is well known in the area with his late 30's Lanchester.

Mike James from Newton Swansea has also recently joined, however this is hot off the press, so we hope to find out more at the next club night on the 18th November.

On behalf of the committee and the club members I would like to welcome, Steve, John and Mike to the club.



ONE FOUR FOR A COPY, THIS HERE'S THE WALRUS, ANYONE WITH THE PEDAL TO THE METAL IN THE GATWICK TWENTY BETTER LOOK OUT FOR SMOKIES. YOU GOT YOUR EARS ON OUT THERE C'MON?

PONTARDULAIS CLUB CHRISTMAS DINNER

Mark Hamer has informed us that the Pontardulais Club Christmas Dinner and Disco will be held at the Mountain Gate Inn on the 29th November. SHVR Members have been kindly invited to participate. For further details please contact John Mathias on 01792 882369.



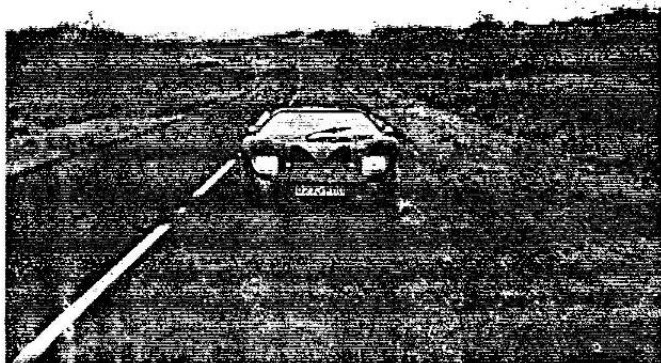
June 1988, 'Specialist Sports Car'

Man and Machine

JON MARTIN'S KVA GT 40 REPLICA

Why build an 'ordinary' Ford GT40 replica when you can create a thunderous 5-litre monster? Ted Purcell samples a 300 bhp blast down the main runway at Swansea airport in a very special KVA charger.

Out of the long, sweeping corner and onto a straight - five litres of American V8 power sweep Jon's KVA up towards a very interesting 'perspective blur' in a mere handful of seconds.



It's amazing the fervour and excitement the sight of a GT40 creates when one considers that it is almost 20 years since Ford's string of wins at Le Mans in the mid to late '60s. It must be the shape that does it. Here is sure proof of the old adage that if something looks right it usually is right.

The end result of a design, be it a Zippo lighter or Concorde, has more chance of aesthetic appeal if only the dictates of fitness for purpose, efficiency and economy are observed. Pandering to style, the addition of useless adornment, improving creature comforts or subsequent 'modernisation' invariably dilute the purity of the original concept. A classic example, of course, is the E-type Jaguar, where the later V12s had lost the original 'finely balanced lines and progressively increased bhp was no match for the increasing weight and middle age spread.

When Ken Attwell decided to make a replica of the GT40 he correctly chose the Mk 1. Ken's love affair with the GT40 started when he was a

development engineer at Ford's plant in Swansea and an example of the spectacular machine was sent to his plant for some renovation and subsequent display. By today's standards, the £30,000 or so required to buy a reasonable example in those days now seems an incredible bargain, and it was clear to Ken that the only way one could possibly be his was to make his own.

A proficient draughtsman, and with the original alongside him, he produced a most detailed set of drawings and went on to make himself an outwardly exact replica using in the main the worthy Granada running gear. Five years later and with over 300 kits sold worldwide, KVA Ltd is undoubtedly the most prolific supplier of replica GT40 body/chassis units. Representative companies have been established in Japan, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, America and Portugal. A total of ten sets of moulds are therefore spread around the world, thereby ensuring the speedy supply of replacement panels should you be unfortunate enough to encounter a wombat in the outback!

The original aim was threefold: The replica had to be at least an exact copy; the chassis was engineered to provide safe handling without being 'soft'; and the general finish and fit of body panels was to be of the highest order. If any criticism is due it would probably be fair to say that in the area of finish Ken has followed his own thoughts. The originals were, after all, racers and were hardly likely to be considered as future

concourse entrants.

My chance to drive this particular example came when Paul Attwell phoned and asked did I fancy a blast on a specially closed runway at our local airport? That is, if I had a couple of hours spare on the following Saturday. The distaff side of the Purcell household was understanding about the once-again broken promise to finish the decorating job in hand. It should be explained that Paul is Ken's son and has recently taken over the reins of KVA Ltd. Father Ken now takes more of a back seat in the operation but his technical influence and advice are ever present.

At the appointed time I duly presented myself at windswept Fairwood Airport. Minutes later the evocative shape of the GT40, looking even lower than I remember, appeared. Close on its heels was a Ferrari Dino 246 (more of him later). The owner and builder of the GT40, Jon Martin, unwound his 6'3" frame from behind the wheel and the tasty Mrs Martin managed to extricate herself from the passenger seat with what one could only describe as amazing grace.

Jon's aim when building the car, it became apparent, was to reproduce as near as possible the original racer. No V6 Granny engine and brakes for him! Instead Jon used a modified 5-litre American Ford '302' V8 and expensive Girling racing brakes with pukka 4-pot alloy calipers and 12" fully floating discs that would stop an express train.

In the interest of reliability, engine mods were not too extensive. Attention was mainly to heads (big valves and ports relieved), carburation (Holley 4-barrel on an Edelbrock manifold) and a Ford high performance camshaft. Hydraulic tappets were retained; the feeling was that unless one is building a 'screamer' it's a waste of money to go for 'solid'.

Balancing and ultra careful assembly were then carried out to reduce the possibility of any of the whirling and spinning innards ventilating the block. In this form the engine produces a useful 300 bhp, quite adequate when you consider you have only 2440 lb of slippery shaped motor car to propel. Mated to the engine and looking just right with its external cast ribs, is a Renault 30 gearbox. Ratios are

unaltered and provide a high, long legged fifth. The picture is enhanced by the use of three-piece Halibrand wheels, 7½" x 15" front and 9½" x 15" rear.

The nose section of the lovely body covers a nicely made pair of alloy petrol tanks. Despite the massive filler caps, they take a little care when filling as the tanks are foam filled. Looking further the knowledgeable would recognise Jaguar suspension uprights and an Escort Mk II steering rack.

Walking around the car, the excellent red paint job complemented the previously mentioned fine finish of the bodywork. Jon had opted for the lightweight version which has Kevlar panels with carbon-fibre reinforcement around wheel arches and high stress areas. The chassis frame is the latest lightweight, and stiffer, C-type.

The ruinously expensive materials in the lightweight body add another £800 or so to the base price of £2950. For this you get the bodysell jig fitted to the chassis (to ensure correct alignment), all interior panels, fascia, door interiors and wishbones. In addition you receive a list of specialist suppliers of things like door catches, correct pattern fuel caps, bushes, etc and all you could wish for in the way of technical help from KVA Ltd.

In passing it is worth mentioning that KVA have earned for themselves and the confidence of their customers the stringent German TUV approval for their GT40 replica.

Swansea Airport, who kindly allowed us the use of a runway, also thoughtfully placed a man in a huge aircraft crash tender to indicate the extent of 'our' runway and prevent the possibility of any close encounters with the light aircraft, gliders and free-fall parachutists that abound, it seems, whatever the weather.

Back to our friend with this Dino. It turned out he had never been beaten in any traffic lights grand prix and would love to notch up a 'kill' against a GT40. The result was a decisive win for Jon. From the far end of the runway, the grunt and rumble of heavy Ford iron was drowned by the magical high pitched noises that emanated from the Ferrari. As the two cars loomed larger and nearer it was clear that Jon was quite a few lengths ahead of the machine from Maranello. Later Jon told me

he was nursing a very low mileage engine and was still effectively running it in! The Dino driver did not hang around any longer. The last I saw of him, he was hurtling off towards the main road, probably set on getting his revenge on the first poor unsuspecting XJ6 he saw.

Soon it was my turn, I wound my way down in to the passenger seat and was surprised at the amount of leg room. I'm 6'2" and could barely touch the bulkhead with my size 10s. I had visions of Jon's wife disappearing in a heap down under the fascia every time he applied the brakes.

Secretly wishing Jon had installed a full six-point harness I clipped on my lap and diagonal and put myself in the hands of an unknown driver and in an obviously potent but equally unknown motor car. Once we'd thundered up and down the runway, it was clear that Jon wasn't out to impress or make an attempt on the land speed record. It was pleasant to sit back and enjoy the sensations of acceleration, braking and amazing grip as the car was turned, perilously close it seemed, to the man in the crash tender.

"Right then, have a go," Jon said. The last time I drove a car with right-hand gear change was on a practice day at Llandow circuit 20 odd years ago. Then I drove a formula junior single seater with perhaps 90 bhp on tap, a far cry from the 300 I had under my right toe right now.

Gingerly I set off, very conscious of trying not to muff any gear changes. I soon found the rose-jointed linkage to the gearbox worked perfectly and I was able to enjoy my brief tenure of this most satisfying machine. My sortie on that deserted runway revealed a car which, whilst possessing immense performance and torque, was easy to drive. The response from the steering and minor controls was reassuring and gave the impression that the beast would not bite back if one over-stepped the mark a little.

It is pretty obvious that in traffic the extreme lack of rearward vision coupled with the reclining driving position and vehicle width would call for some care when manoeuvring. The somewhat undulating and, in places, rutted surface of the concrete

runway did not reveal any scuttle shake or steering kickback. In fact, as the blurred concrete flew under the nose at speeds around 140 mph, the car felt very taut and rigid with no flapping or rattles from the very thin body panels.

Top speed in the present state of tune is reckoned to be around 165 mph, with a 0-60 time in the low 5 seconds. Without a fifth wheel or a guaranteed accurate speedometer it was not possible to check these figures but the impression one gets behind the wheel makes them seem conservative. Hard acceleration produced none of the all-too-prevalent squat associated with rear or mid-engined motors; this had been eliminated by clever alignment of the rear radius rods.

Similarly, braking, no matter how hard, did not induce any noticeable nose dive. The end of the runway comes up mighty quickly when one is travelling at speeds in excess of 130 mph, but brakes designed for speeds more like 200 mph instil great confidence and stop the car without drama in what seemed an impossibly short distance.

It would be fairly easy to copy exactly the geometry of a race winning GT40 suspension layout but it says a lot for the KVA development skills which have produced a replica racer that not only feels and looks like one but is also civilised enough to drive comfortably under normal road conditions.

I am indebted to Jon Martin who brought the car up from his home in Dursley, Gloucestershire, Ken and Paul Attwell, and Swansea Airport for whom, it seemed, nothing was too much trouble. All in all, a very enjoyable experience with a fantastic car which does everything it sets out to do.

Man and Machine

Well, it's just hammered a Dino and waits for all comers! The Martin KVA GT40 replica shows that a reproduction car really can drive in a thoroughbred fashion when built well.



NOVEMBER 3RD 1996 - LONDON TO BRIGHTON

This years Brighton run was a milestone in motoring history 1896 - 1996, 100 years of motoring.

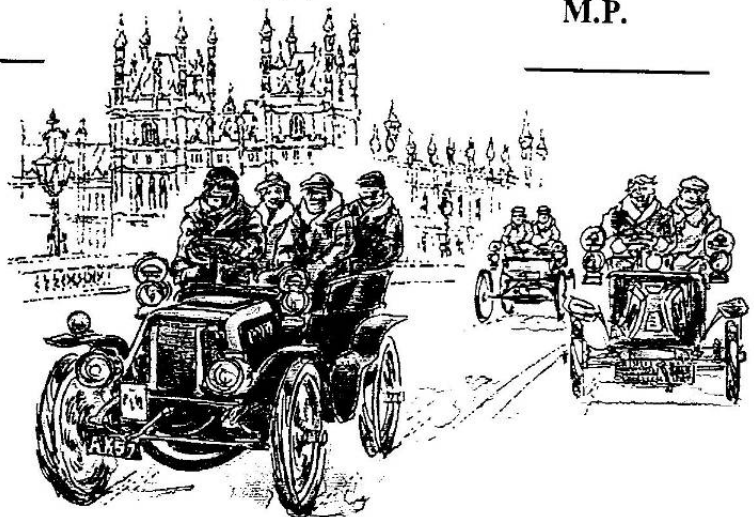
There was almost double the usual amount of entries on this year's run, some 200 or so will probably never see the light of day again, so you can imagine the interest this created. Unfortunately the spectacle created it's own problems and sadly the sheer volume of modern traffic took it's toll on the veterans, this was evident with the amount of broken down entries along the route, even a few of our local heroes suffered breakdowns, both Layton Roberts and Johnny Thomas suffered from Gremlins in the works. However, they both arrived safely along with their families and friends at Madeira Drive, Brighton, where were treated to the spectacle of Layton's three entries displayed in all their finery.

Johnny and Chris Thomas and family were less fortunate in getting both entries to the finish. Johnny's Mount failed early on in the run and he continued the journey riding shotgun for Chris on the Napier.

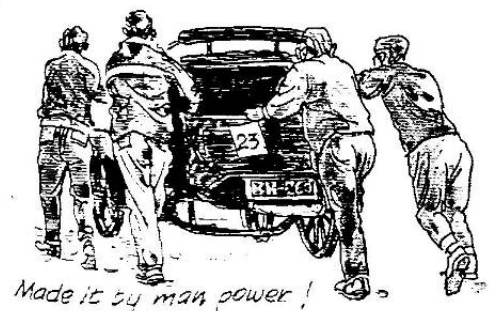
I think that the organisers should now consider closing the roads to modern vehicles for the duration of the run, as those who competed complained that with inferior braking systems, and low horsepower engines, this enjoyable historic event was becoming thwarted with danger by thoughtless modern day drivers.

However, those of us fortunate enough to attend this event will remember the spectacle for a long time and on the plus side, the amount of spectators at the start, finish and along the route just shows the support that these events justifiably get. We were joined on route by Eckhard Droese, who, you will remember, came to Kinsale with us in May in the Zeppelin BMW!!! He flew over from Hamburg for the weekend.

M.P.



J & C Thomas
1903
Phoenix



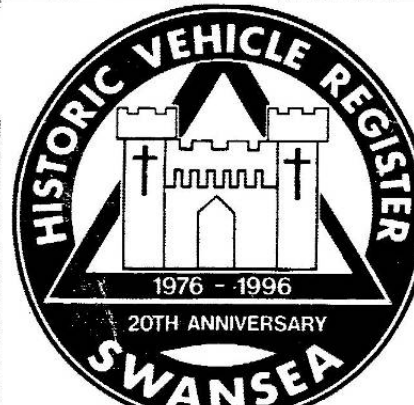


RIGHT SIR.!!!
WHAT SHADE OF PINK DO YOU INTEND
PAINTING THIS LIMOUSINE ??



MORE PICTURE'S OF
S.H.V.R.s AUTUMN
RUN.

LEE HANFORDS' IMMACULATE
A.E.C. BUS ON THE S.H.V.R.
AUTUMN RALLY.



MALVERN OCTOBER 5TH/6TH 1996

S.H.V.R. was well represented at this annual event. Some seven vehicles left Swansea on the Saturday morning and drove via Brecon and Hereford to Ross-On-Wye, where they visited the "Lost Street", which is an arcade that has been turned into a museum of shops and motoring memorabilia. Well worth a visit. From here we all drove to Malvern and stayed in a rather nice hotel with an evening five course meal. The wine flowed freely and an S.H.V.R. birthday girl got rather drunk. On the Sunday we all parked in the Malvern Showground and got progressively more and more worn out walking round the autojumble and static car display. I think we covered twice the distance trying to find people who suddenly disappeared in the crowd. Tragedy struck on the way home with the Thai Restaurant at Hay-On-Wye having closed on Sundays for the winter. Some of us were starving, others were dumb struck (sabotage by Neville we all declared). However the day was saved by Livingstone Palmer who found a rather pleasant pub near Brecon. We managed to get home in the dark using the P100s on the front of the Jag which seemed exactly the same on dip as full beam. The Morris eight behind had potted all the way to Malvern and back and seemed totally un-perturbed by the hills, rather matter-of-fact. I think Alan's got a "nitro-button" set up for the hills. Since then we have converted the Jag headlights to halogens and found that the original bulbs were set a quarter of an inch too far back resulting in the diffused beam. We now have P100 searchlights which do actually dip.

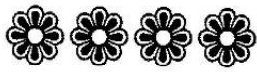
TREDEGAR PARK, SEPTEMBER 1996

Another excellent day out in blazing sunshine. Some 1500 exhibits, we were informed, were on display. This event is a bit like Singleton and continues to grow. A good day out. The S.H.V.R. Gazebo got its first outing, we even managed to put it up correctly, without a struggle (or much of a struggle).

VISIT TO PEMBROKE MOTOR MUSEUM SUNDAY 27TH OCTOBER

Neath Club organised a bus trip to Pembroke Motor Museum with some heavy socialising laid on for later in the day. The invitation was open to all interested. S.H.V.R. members met at 10:15 in Carmarthen and then drove in convoy to Pembroke where we were met at the museum by the Neath boys.

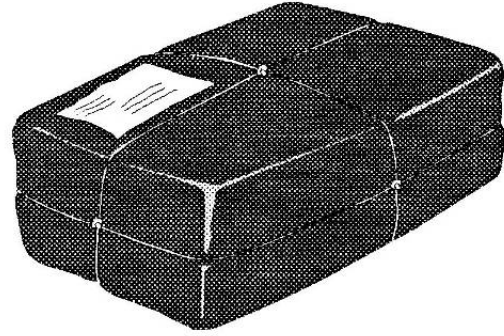
The museum is well worth a visit, there are approximately 40 vehicle exhibits, an excellent display of Corgi/Matchbox toys and a large collection of motor club badges. There is also a licensed bar and cafe. After spending about two hours at the museum S.H.V.R. members went for a short drive to St Davids. Some brave people went for a walk on the beach despite the torrential rain. The return journey took in a feeding stop at St Clears. A good day was had by all. M.P.



SHVR RAFFLE



You don't have to wrap them, but any contributions for the club night raffles would be gratefully received. Perhaps a quick rummage before Christmas might reveal something interesting. Any real goodies could be auctioned to help club funds. How about something special for the Christmas raffle on the 16th December.



ARE YOU SURE THE
BONNET STAY IS
BROKEN ????



"The car be holdin' the shed up. You can have the car, but the shed's £7,500."

Driving the

As we saw last month, a number of firms chose Wales over the years as the base from which they would both build and sell motorcycles, and a surprising number of different companies flourished to a greater or lesser degree. Wales has always been good motorcycling country, but as Vincent Kane is constantly reminding us, the shadow of poverty has always been present, and those who could afford a motorcycle once far outnumbered those who could aspire to a motorcar.

For this reason, therefore, and despite the industrialisation of South Wales, few cars have ever been made in the Principality.

These days, of course, there are a number of component manufacturers

cyclecar craze, which commenced around 1910, reached its zenith just before the Great War, and fizzled out in Britain around 1925. Cyclecars were very small cars often employing motorcycle engines and other cycle components in their construction, rarely shaft driven, relying more often on belt or chain drive, and with the most rudimentary steering and weather protection. They were referred to by detractors as the "wire, bobbin and fibre board brigade".

The beauty of the cyclecar from a manufacturing point of view was that its simplicity of design and construction made it possible for it to be constructed away from manufacturing centres and in almost any kind of building, a fact which doubtless appealed to Tom Norton of Llandrindod Wells. No connection with the Norton motorcycle firm, Tom Norton Ltd. were eagerly on the scene as agents, and early this century The Automobile Palace at Llandrindod Wells was offering not only bicycles, motorcycles and cars from other manufacturers, but aeroplanes as well!

They also offered a good line in brass Welsh dragon mascots, but in 1913 decided to join the growing band of cyclecar makers. The Norton cyclecar was nothing if not original, however, and unusually for the period it was shaft-driven. The bodywork was its most idiosyncratic feature, however, consisting of two separate shells - which may be likened to motorcycle sidecars - mounted side by side, with one housing the driver and the other his passenger. The front-mounted air-cooled V-twin engine gave the car something of the appearance of a Morgan from the front, but it was a full four wheeler, and employed an epicyclic gearbox rather than the lines of a Model T Ford. Alas, although Tom Norton's business flourished as a whole, manufacturing difficulties encountered with the cyclecar ensured that only very few ever reached the public. The onset of The Great War in 1914 would, in any event, have signalled the end of production.

It was to be another nine years before the next announcement of motorcar manufacture in Wales, but on February 18th 1922 The Light Car & Cyclecar devoted two pages to the 10 hp Gwalia car, made in Gwalia Works, Cardiff by Stansfield Ltd. Like the Norton, the Gwalia espoused iconoclasm, and incorporated a number of unusual features in its design. Offered with a three seater open body, and sporting a rampant

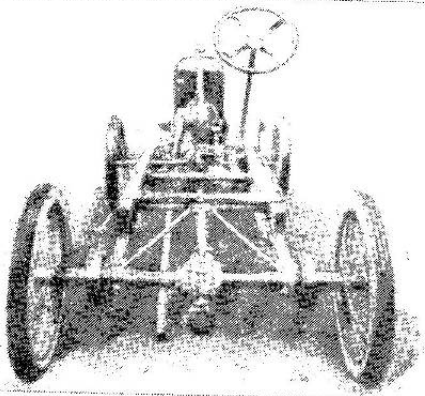
Welsh dragon on its radiator badge, the Gwalia was powered by a four cylinder watercooled engine driving through a conventional three speed gearbox with gate-change. Final drive was by shaft to an underslung worm-driven rear axle.

Where the Gwalia differed from its contemporaries, however, was in its suspension. In place of the usual leaf springs front and the rear, it was fitted with long coil springs running longitudinally down the sides of the car, the two longest being interlinked in the centre, and at front and back attached to pivoted and ball-jointed cantilever arms. The result, when a road shock was encountered, was that when the wheel and axle rose in response, the coil springs were extended and took the increased weight and stresses.

Although complicated to explain, the system was actually simplicity itself, and was said to totally eliminate pitching and rolling, and to enable the car to negotiate a four inch high kerbstone at some speed without giving the passengers any appreciable discomfort or, indeed, sensation at all. Revolutionary though the springing may have been, however, braking was by old-fashioned external contracting bands - a system long abandoned in Britain, although continued in the USA well into the 1920's. Worthy though the design may have been, little was heard of the Gwalia following the initial announcement, and by the end of 1922 the Gwalia had faded entirely away.

It was to be an even longer period - twenty-eight years, in fact - before another brave company was to essay manufacture in Wales, and even then, the Cyril Kieft's Kieft Car Construction Company Ltd, which was established in Bridgend, Glamorgan, in 1950, was only destined to stay in Wales for two years. The firm had its Genesis in the halcyon days of Formula 3 racing, building all-independently sprung 500cc Norton motorcycle engined single seater racing cars. Designed by Ray Martin, these were driven by Stirling Moss, among others.

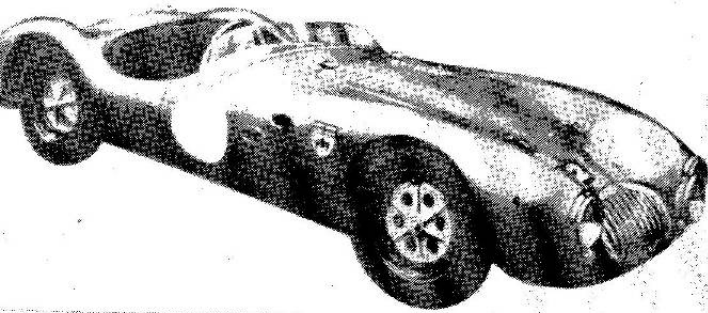
Sportscar production was limited, but included an unusual 1.5 litre M.G.



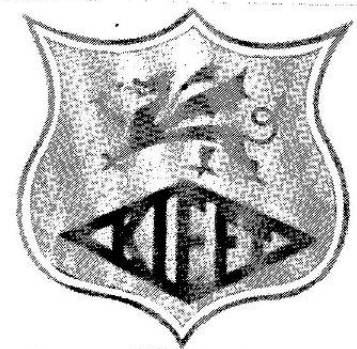
The Cardiff-built Gwalia 10 hp model of 1922.

based here, including the massive Ford engine plant at Bridgend, but these supply factories in other areas where complete vehicles are made. Perhaps understandably, the first indigenous make to be offered in Wales was little far removed from a motorcycle, and appeared at a time when the New Motoring was sweeping Britain, Europe and America.

New Motoring? Well, this was the name given by the specialist press to the

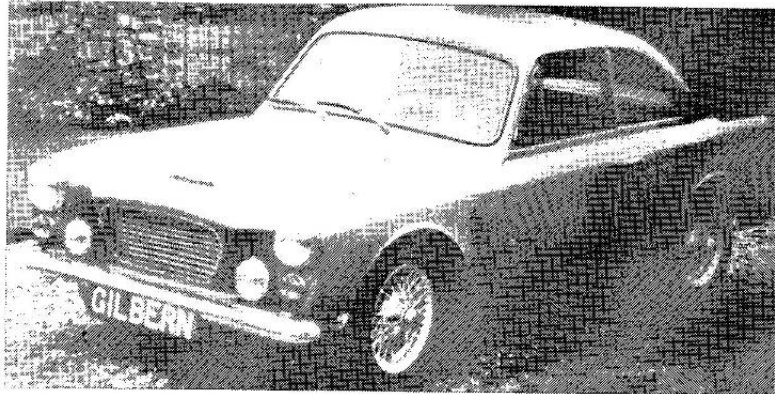


Here is the Kieft 1100 sports car of 1955 with Coventry-Climax engine.



The Kieft from Bridgend also espoused the Welsh dragon for its radiator badge.

dragon



The 1964 Gilbern BT with 1.8 litre engine.

engined type with centre steering, and an experimental sporting runabout with 650 cc BSA engine and chain final drive. Other engines used included Bristol, De Soto, and the Wooler flat-four, a really rare unit. In 1953, however, the company re-formed as Kieft Cars Ltd. at Wolverhampton, where they remained until 1956, then moving to Birmingham, where production ceased in 1961. Coventry-Climax engines were also used, and a Kieft fitted with one of these actually ran at Le Mans in 1954. Even after the company had left Bridgend, however, they continued to feature the Welsh dragon in red on their radiator badges and company literature. Appropriately for a Bridgend-based firm, they also developed a twin overhead camshaft conversion of the Ford Consul engine.

1959 saw the arrival of the next Welsh contender, the brainchild of Giles Smith and Bernard Friese. At the time, and in the early sixties, there was a gap in the British market for a moderately priced GT four seater, and the Gilbern (taking its name from the christian names of its sponsors) successfully filled that gap. As Gilbern Sports Cars (Components) Ltd, a factory was established at Lantwit, Pontypridd, also in Glamorgan, and the firm graduated from building specials to the marketing of complete cars.

Frequently these were sold in knock-down kit form, thus beating the purchase tax impost of the day, and employed a multi-tubular square section chassis with BMC (British Motor Corporation) running gear. Glass fibre bodywork, to a higher standard than was usual at the time, helped sales, and customers had a choice of either Coventry-Climax, BMC "A" or BMC "B" type engines. The BMC "B" type engine, as used in the MG "A", was standardised for 1962 and from 1963 the MB "B" engine was used.

The "Genie", introduced in 1966, was a larger model which offered a choice of 2,495cc or 2,994cc Ford V-6 engines, but still with BMC chassis components, and

by early 1966 some 500 of the original model had been built and sold. The Ford V-6 engine also powered the much-improved "Invader" model introduced in 1969, and from 1971 the Mk II version was also available as an estate car. Encouraged by the response to the earlier model, the company was expanded with the help of outside capital, some of which came from a chain of butcher's shops (A.C. of Thames Ditton and Bramham of Leeds were other makes financed by port butchers), and a Mk III wider and lower model was announced in September 1972.

It featured a revised box section frame, Ford Contina front suspension, a Ford Taunus (German) rear axle, and a 3 litre Ford 140 bhp engine. It cost a thumping £2,493 and the public's reception was only luke-warm. Exactly a year from the date of the Mk III's announcement, the company appointed a Receiver, in September 1973, and folded early the following year.

The Davrian actually made its first appearance in London, where Davrian Developments Ltd, were set up in SW4 in 1967. Development of the Davrian Imp, a glass fibre monocoque body/chassis unit, had actually begun in 1965, using Hillman Imp mechanical components, and the car was offered by its designer and builder, Adrian Evans, as a bare shell, or complete except for wheels and engine. By August 1972 some 200 had been sold, with several having been exported. The 1973 coupes used both Mini and Volkswagen engines, whilst new for 1981 was the Dragon. This one featured disc brakes all-round, and a 1.3 litre Ford Fiesta engine mounted transversely amidships.

Tyre Tracks

with



Michael Worthington-Williams

Michael Worthington-Williams was born in London in 1938. Sixteen years later he commenced writing about historical vehicle matters and has seen his name in print in every year since.

There can be very few classic and collectors' car magazines to which he has not contributed. He is currently editor of *Classic Car Mart*, and feature writer for *The Automobile* and *Old Bike Mart*. From 1968 to 1988 he was editor of *Veteran Car* magazine.

From 1976 until earlier this year he was an advisor to Sotheby's vintage vehicle department, and currently performs the same function for Brooks, the international collectors' vehicle auctioneers.

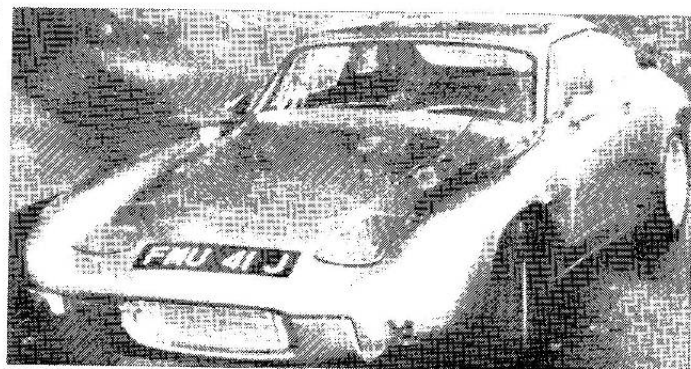
Michael is a member of a broad range of clubs, committees and societies, including the Chartered Institute of Journalists and the Society of Automotive Historians (for whom he chairs the United Kingdom chapter).

He is the author and co-author of several books on automotive subjects and a contributor to *The Complete Encyclopedia of Motorcars* and its sister volume on commercial vehicles.

Many thanks to Mike Worthington-Williams and the Editor of Pembrokeshire Life and Carmarthenshire Life for permission to reproduce the articles that are taken from those magazines.

The company moved from London to Tregaron, Dyfed, in 1976, and remained there until 1980, subsequently re-establishing in Lampeter in that year. Some sixty cars were built at Tregaron, and just ten people were employed. 1982 saw a grant of £51,000 from the WDA and a move into further new premises with planned new production. Staffing had by now increased to twenty and increased production was planned.

Sadly, however, it was not to be. In early 1983 the company, established in its new 7,000 square feet factory, went into liquidation. Its assets were acquired by Ulster businessman, Will Corry of Ballynahinch, Co. Down, and production of a new Ford engined car, the Corry Culture, was commenced.



The 1970 Davrian 875 coupe was powered by Hillman Imp mechanicals.

THE RAC LONDON TO BRIGHTON VETERAN CAR RUN

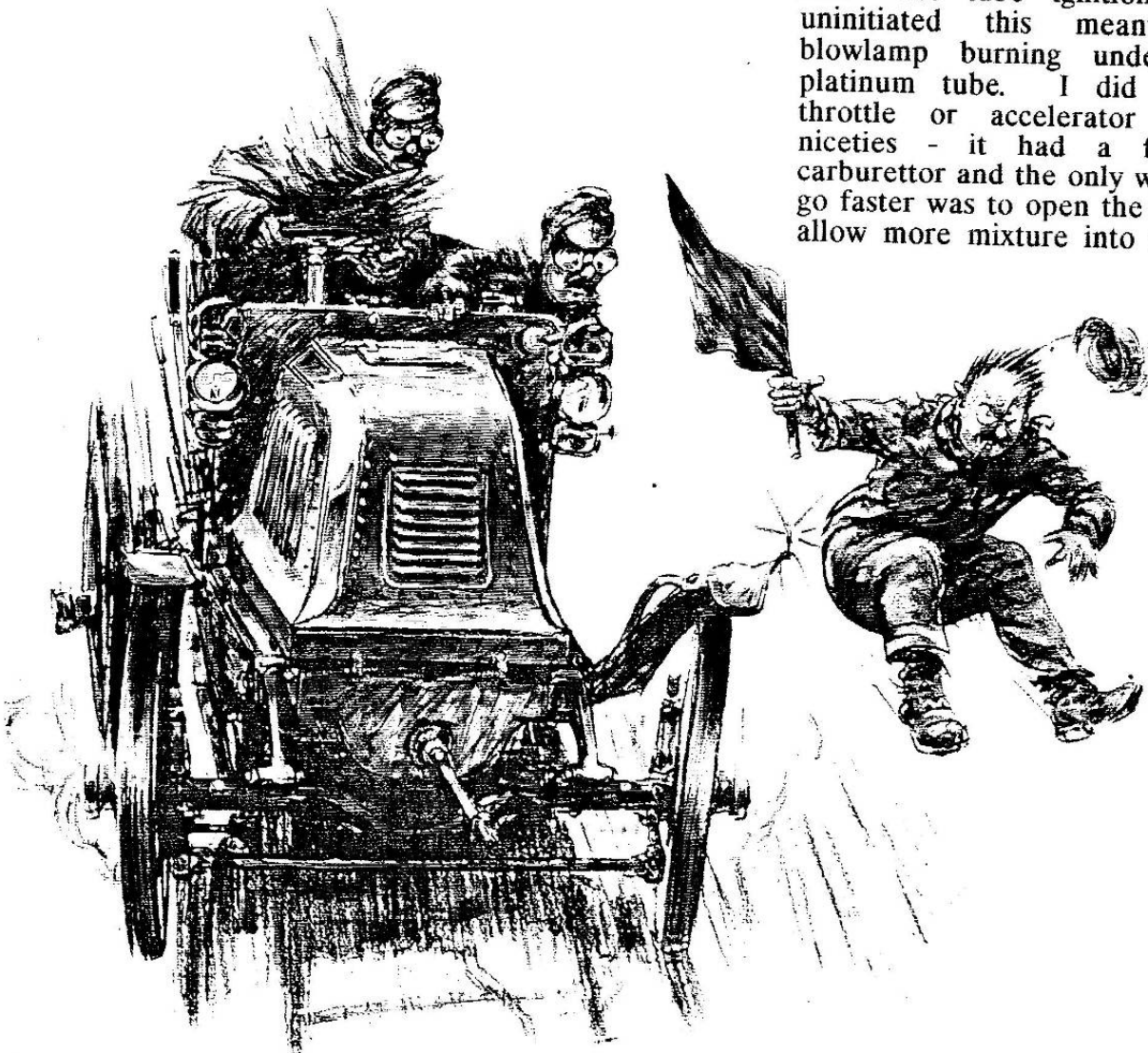
3rd NOVEMBER 1996

My wife Binks says that it takes three months of pontificating and three weeks of living in the garage to get ready for the Brighton run. I am very lucky as I have led my eldest son astray in also being an old car/motorcycle nut, what's more, his wife Eirios puts up with his disappearing over to Tirdail to "play cars with Dad"!

1996 was going to be a very special Brighton run as it was in 1896 - one hundred years ago - that the first organised "Motor Tour to Brighton" took place. This was organised to commemorate the passing of the Act which did away with the 4mph speed limit - a limit which, in certain parts of the country, meant that a man carrying a red flag had to go in front of any mechanically propelled vehicle.

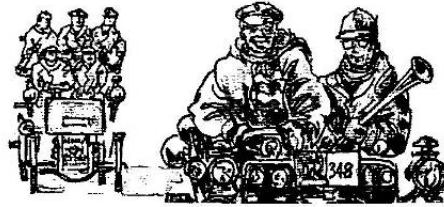
In 1896 two Léon Bollée three wheelers were first and second arriving in Brighton - it was not a race, but...! The cars started from the London Hotel Metropole (now part of the MoD in Whitehall Place) and finished at the Brighton Metropole Hotel. In 1964, when I did my first run, I had an 1896 Léon Bollée, which was the oldest of this make known and was reputedly one of the original Brighton starters. I had bought this for £600 from a man living near Bristol who had never used it! He was about 20 stone and I don't think that it would have moved him very far; I must tell those of you that did not know Binks and myself in those days, we were a good deal slimmer than we are today!

This Léon Bollée had no electrics - it had "Hot tube ignition" - for the uninitiated this meant a petrol blowlamp burning under a hollow platinum tube. I did not have a throttle or accelerator - no such niceties - it had a fixed surface carburettor and the only way to make it go faster was to open the inlet valve to allow more mixture into the cylinders.



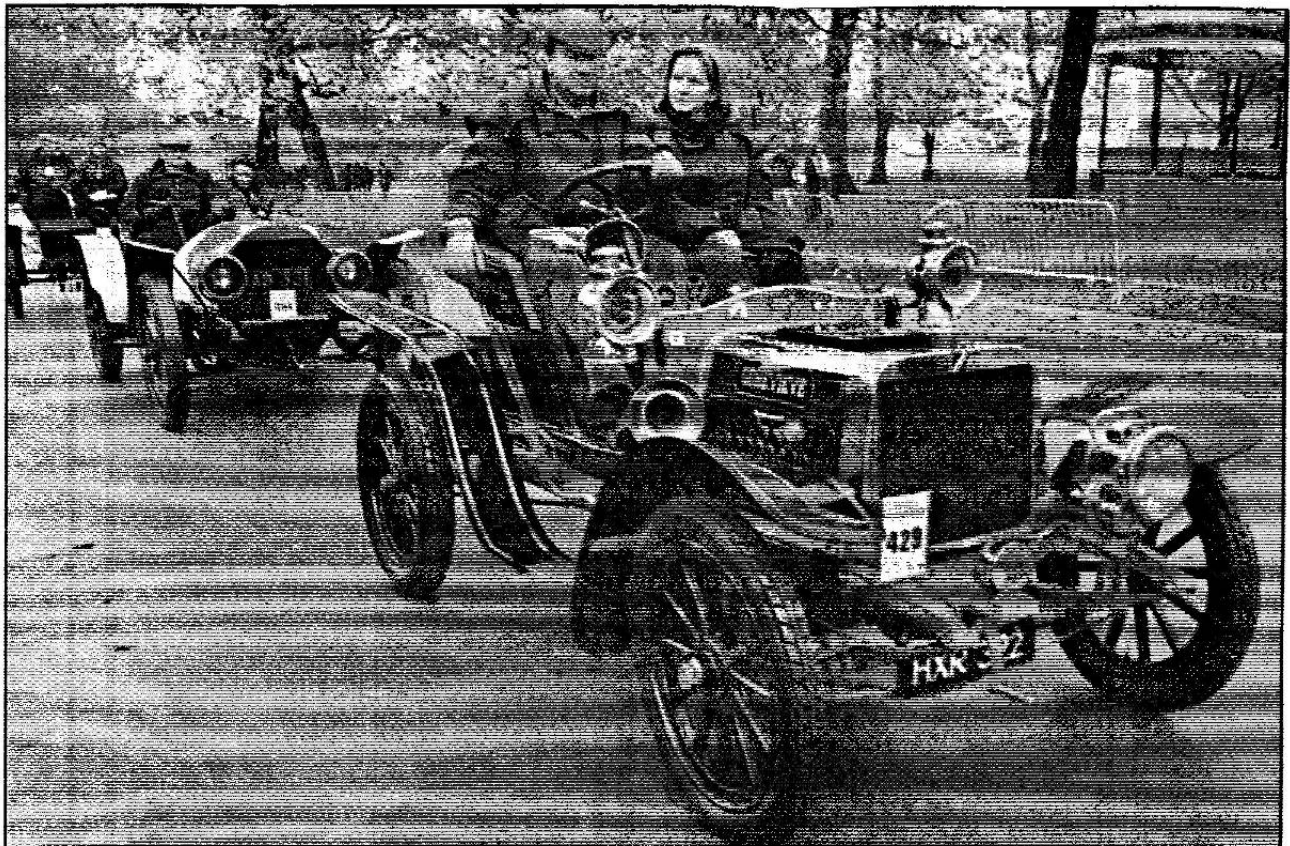
J.T.

To slow down you closed the valve and pulled the spade handle in your left hand, which pulled the wheel forward so that the belt rim rubbed against a wooden block - this was your brakes! The only one, other than an engine brake, a leather strap on the flywheel! The Ten Year Test (now the MOT) had just come in and I went to my old friend, Eddie Stephens, in Carmarthen and asked for a certificate. "No way" said Len, his mechanic. Mr Stephens rang the Ministry of Transport in Swansea and I took the machine on its trailer to their office in Cwmbwrla. The boss came out and told me to take it off the trailer - I protested and showed him a copy of an 1896 report which said "The braking system varied from feeble to nil, according to the weather". I told the inspector that the brakes were as good as when the vehicle was new! We went into the office - boss man rang Cardiff and told them, they told him to ring London. He did this and the man at the other end said "If he's mad enough to drive it, give him a certificate"! Things were different in those days!



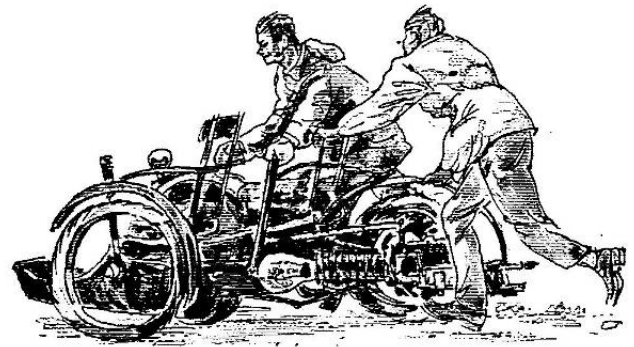
As it was a special year, I told Chris, my son, that he could drive the Napier with Binks, his wife Eirios and son, Morgan (seven months old) together with Mike Worthington-Williams who had been so helpful in helping get the Napier Gordon Bennett winner accepted by the Veteran Car Club of Great Britain. In 1995 I had made a box, so that four people could enjoy the Brighton instead of just two. As you all know, Mike W-W had a heart attack in September and told us he would have to pull out. This meant that Morgan's God mother, Cathy Rees, could come as baby sitter in the evenings and Eirios and Christo could have some time off.

Christo had lent his Phoenix to Callum and Vera MacKay, neighbours who had come on the back of the Napier in 1995



Genevieve, the best known of all the veterans thanks to its 1953 film star role. It will be taking part in the centenary with owner Evert Louwmans, of the Dutch National Motor Museum, at the wheel

and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. I had got in touch with the present Japanese owner of my Léon Bollée to try to get it back for the run, no luck, he told me it was the centrepiece of his museum and that he had never run it! That left my old faithful 1898 Rochet tricycle, which I have had since 1976, to get me down to Brighton.

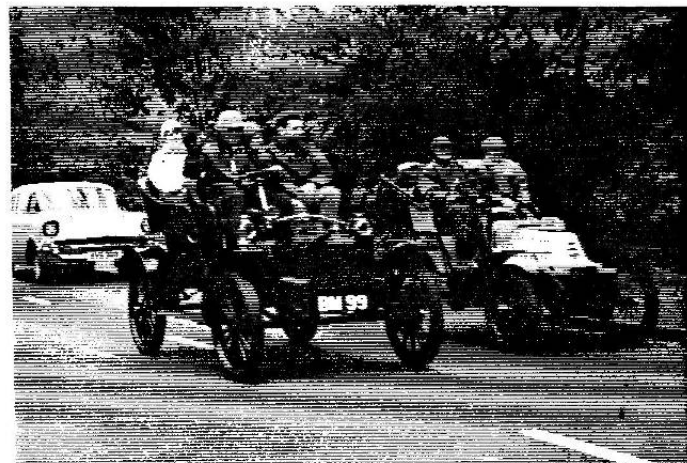
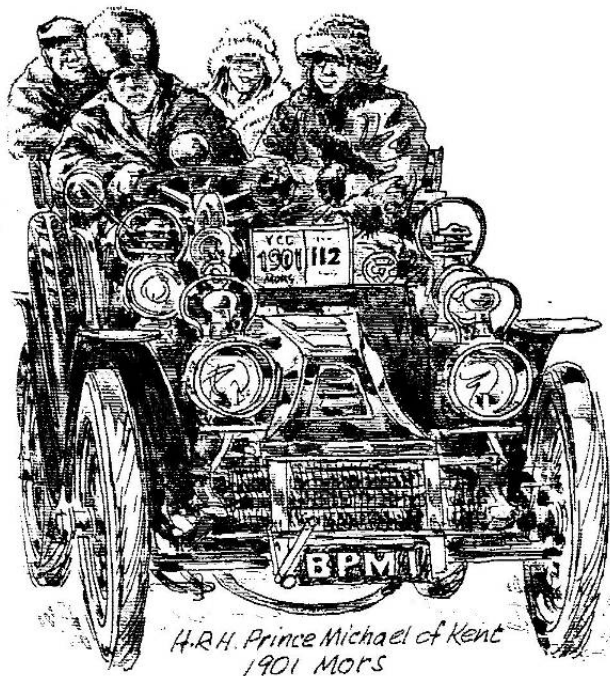


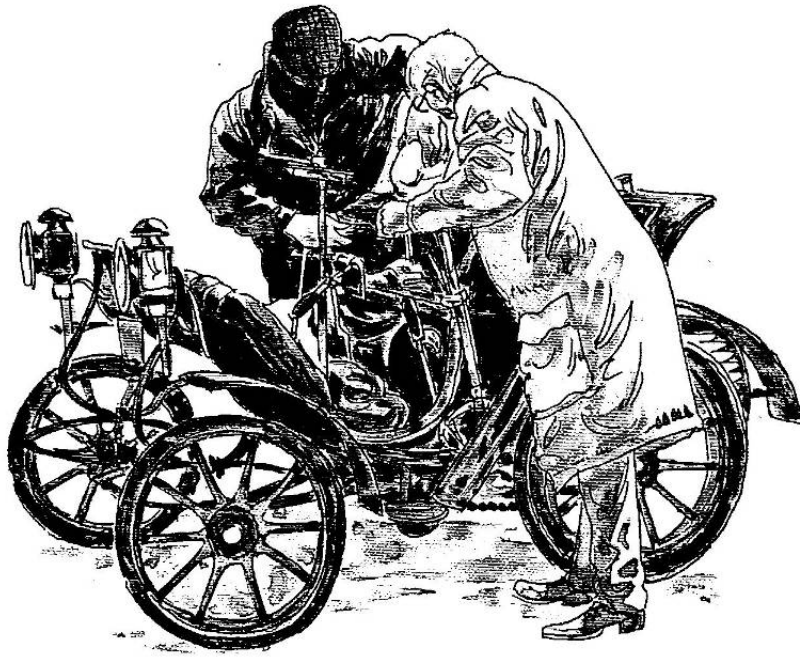
Christo and I checked the Napier over and did anything that needed doing - a leaking petrol tap and the inlet manifolds leaking; I had only just finished the gearbox rebuild in time for the Swansea MC hillclimb down in Pembrokeshire on October 13th and everything seemed OK. Chris checked the Phoenix for Callum and I did a strip down of the Rochet, I had not had the engine and transmission down for a few years, so I thought it was time. I didn't find anything nasty that I did not know about - it all went together all right. I went out and bought one of those little bicycle computers, which tells you speed and distance travelled and has a trip mileometer. I put this on and went down the road and my speed showed at the top end that I was doing 38mph!! This I knew was impossible - it was kph - what a disappointment!! I tried setting this new toy again, same result. I found that my trembler coil was playing tricks with modern technology, it was Eirios who said "Try putting some insulating tape on the handlebars before fitting the computer". I did this and my troubles were over, 24 - 25mph was my top speed as expected.

So Friday November 1st arrived, Chris in his monstrous yellow minibus, with seats for eight and baby Morgan, collected Binks and myself from Tirdail - Rochet in the back of the minibus along with all the suitcases and various luggage. We were joined by a very important member of our crew, Ieuan Gealy, who drives the minibus and trailer down to Brighton at 7am on Sunday morning. The Napier and Phoenix were already loaded on the trailer and we left at 8.45am (Not bad, fifteen minutes late), we collected

Callum and Vera on the way past and we were off to London.

On arriving in London in the Bayswater Road I had to take the Manager of our hotel for a run in the Napier - this is so that I get a good rate next year! We join other members of the VCC in testing and cleaning the cars, trikes and forecars. Some have taken their trailers to Brighton to be collected on arrival on Sunday. Binks and I meet up with some old Vintage Motorcycle Club friends from Gloucester and go to an "Old Time Music Hall" Theatre, which is underneath a railway arch at Charring Cross - great fun and good value for money - we had a meal as well!





On Saturday there was a re-enactment of the 1896 start from Whitehall Place - we went along as I had had some mugs and ties made to celebrate the centenary celebrations, we were all selling them like mad, expecting the law to say we didn't have a street traders licence! They didn't arrive, thank goodness.

Justin Otto-Jones, a solicitor in Cardiff who bought a Humber forecar from me about five years ago, had asked the six of us to join him at the Farmers Club, which is in Whitehall Court about 200yds from where all the action of the re-enactment was. It transpired that there was quite a gathering - some 30 to 40 people - a lot of old friends, VSCC and BDC members, a great party.

On Saturday evening we always go the cocktail party at the RAC. This year we were too many people, so we were at the Café Royal in Regent Street. There were 750 of us, then we were joined by our Patron, HRH Prince Michael and we moved to another room where we had a very good dinner. We were with some American members on table eight - there were six or seven bottles of wine on the table - we drank them; then the waiter said to me that he would bring me the wine bill, I told him that I had not ordered any wine!

He got his boss, who spoke to me, and I explained that I thought the wine was sponsored. He told me that two bottles of wine per table were! I told him that we were not liable - he told me that we had had someone else's wine! I said "Bad luck" and we got away free.

Sunday November 3rd, the big day. Six o'clock alarm goes - 6.30 down in garage - most of the 10 -12 cars are outside the hotel. Christo comes down and rides the Phoenix up to the front, I start the Rochet, all OK. Chris comes back down for the Napier and drives it out to get all his passengers on board. I don't wait as I am away from the start at 7.36am and the napier doesn't leave until 8.15. I drive into the park and find my place, talk to all sorts of people one does not expect to see, including Dr Sandy Lindsey with our local garage friend, David Watkins - they left Nantgaredig at 2am just to come and see all the cars! I went to the start line when I was asked and when the flag dropped I thought "I may not be the first to Brighton this year, but I will be within the first half-dozen". What a shock I had! No life in the old girl - I mean **no life!** I pulled into the side, opened up the battery box, every wire I touched was red hot! A dead short says I, I disconnect the battery, check odd wires but still no life out of the trembler coil - half an hour had gone by and I thought if I leave this old girl I can thumb a lift on the Napier - there would be room somewhere. I told a marshal "Burn it, do what you like - but get it or the ashes to Brighton!" He was quite taken aback - he said "You can't just leave it" - "Oh yes I can" I said and with that ran and shouted to Chris, jumped on and sat on the step (on the floor with my legs sticking out on the near side). This meant Binks had one leg over my shoulder and the other one behind me.

We went down Constitution Hill, then down the Mall, turned right into Horse Guards Parade and then joined the normal rout to Brighton. Westminster bridge was being resurfaced -one lane

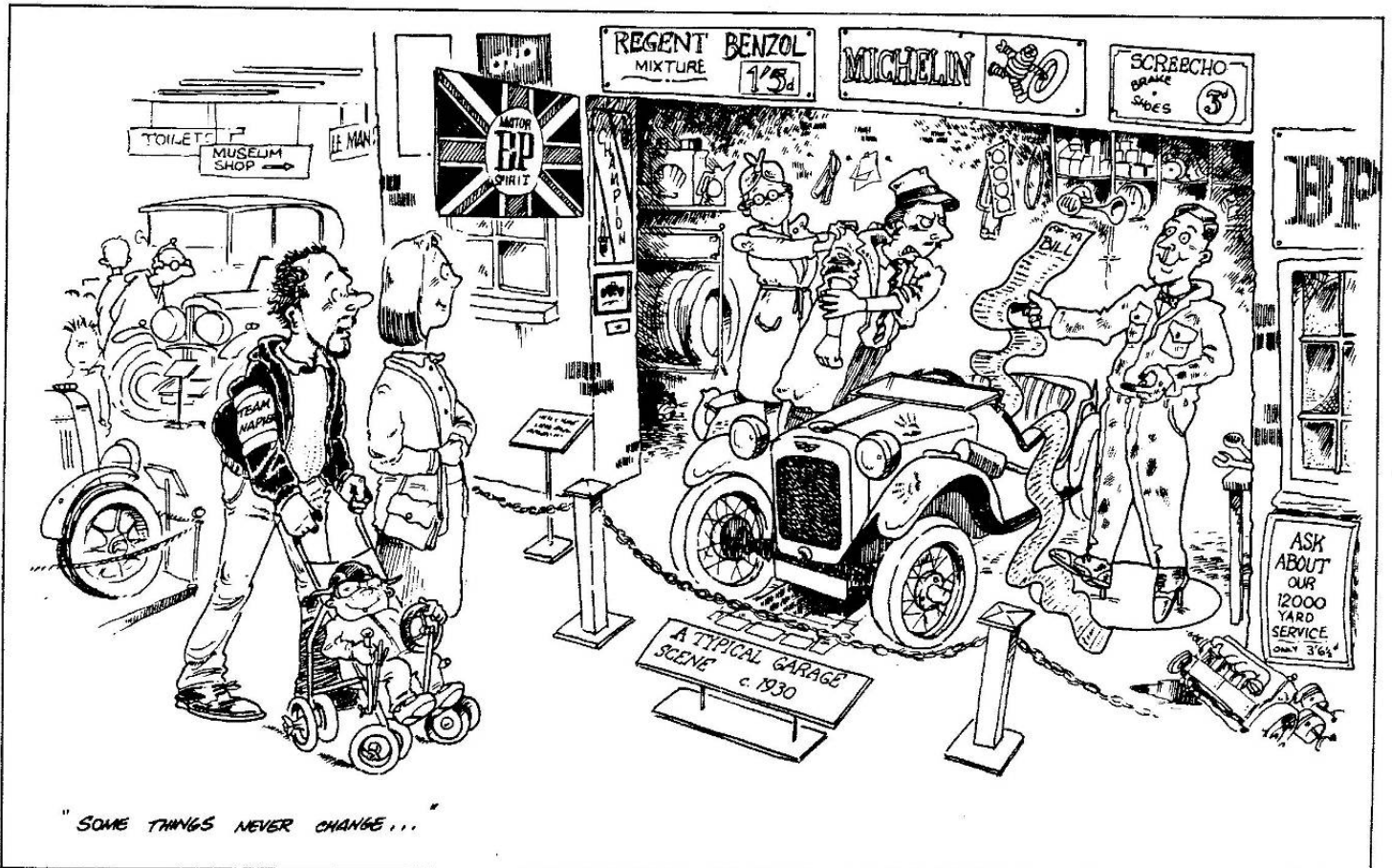
each way - first traffic jam. The next was at Brixton Hill, this was also single lane and it took the Napier over half an hour to get through - I felt very sorry for some of the early numbers, the primitive cars start first. Once clear, we started to motor, but we were not allowed to average more than 20mph for the whole journey. This year they had put a time control at the coffee stop at the George Hotel at Crawley. The second half of the run always seems to go faster - we were bowling along when all of a sudden on our off side were faces we know, Mike Palmer and friends. I wave and shout but we don't slow down - we are making up the time lost on Brixton Hill. After Crawley we leave the A23, but rejoin it after Pyecombe. Near Burgess Hill we see Arthur and Mike W-W. Mike had felt that as he had missed Beaulieu he was not going to miss the Brighton as well - so glad to see that you are on the mend Mike, lovely to see you at the side of the road.

On entering Brighton we are diverted into Preston park, where the 1896 run officially finished, we had our route card stamped and then went on to Madeira Drive where the crowds met us. Weather-wise, we had a bit of drizzle on the way but it opened up at Brighton.

The Rochet did arrive, courtesy of the RAC, at our Hotel on the following day, (sound like AA delay to me). I am sorry to say that the Phoenix also had problems, it broke the pin holding the set of gears in the rear hub. The classic words which I will always associate with this run were spoken by Chris "Dad, I didn't know that it was flat from London to Brighton!" What it is to have those litres instead of the pedals on a three wheeler.

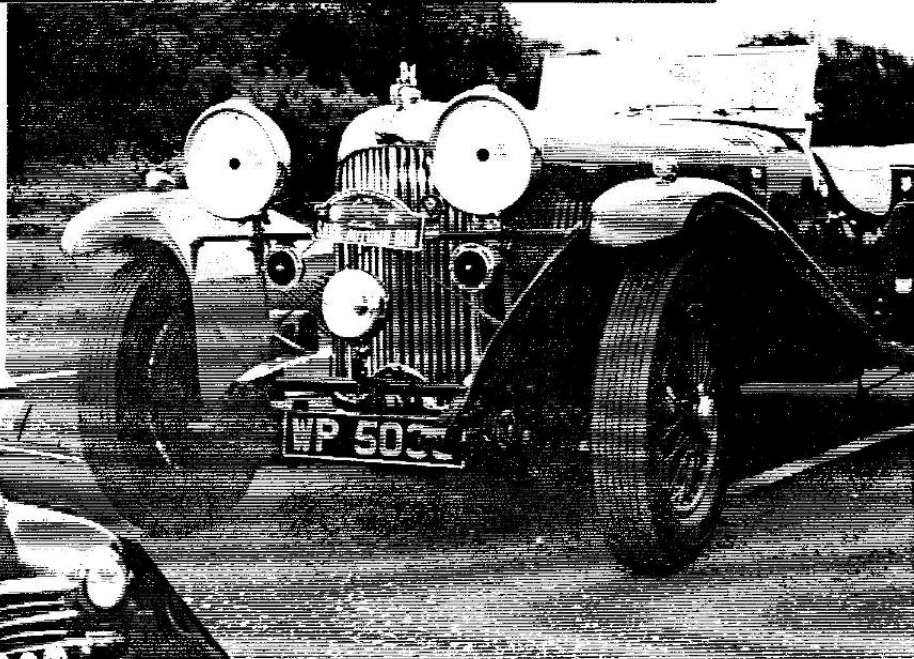
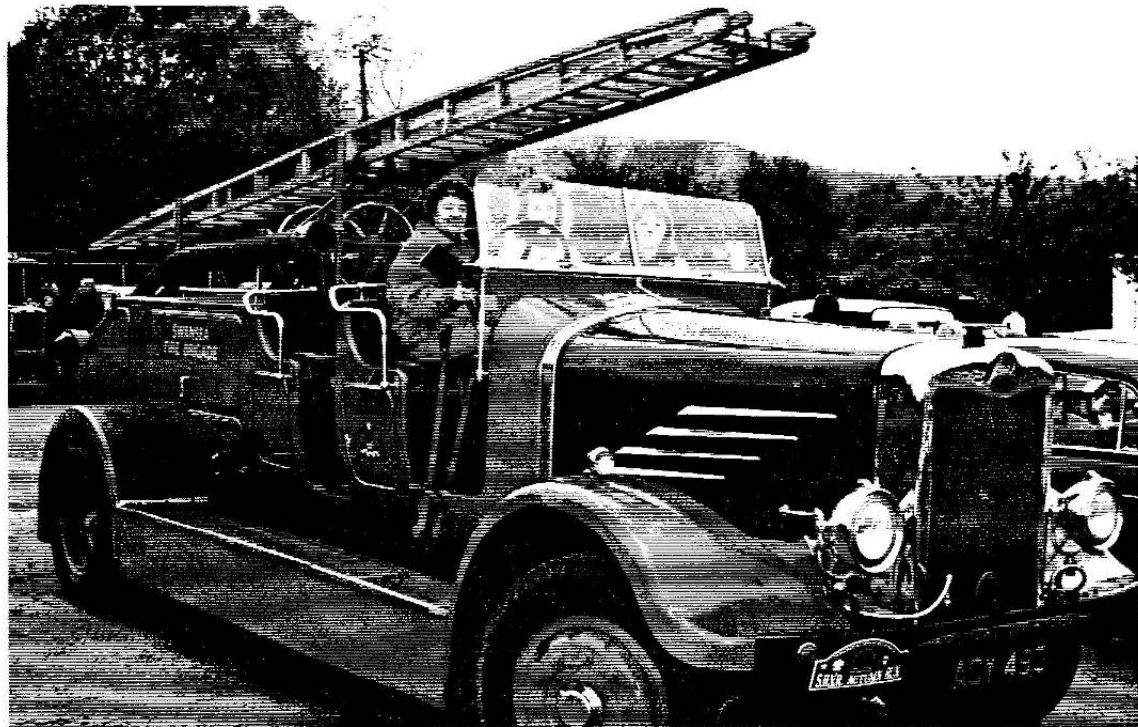
It was the first time that I have failed to get to Brighton - not bad as I have been doing it since 1964 - It was nice that three generations of the Thomas family went down on one car, especially on this the centenary.

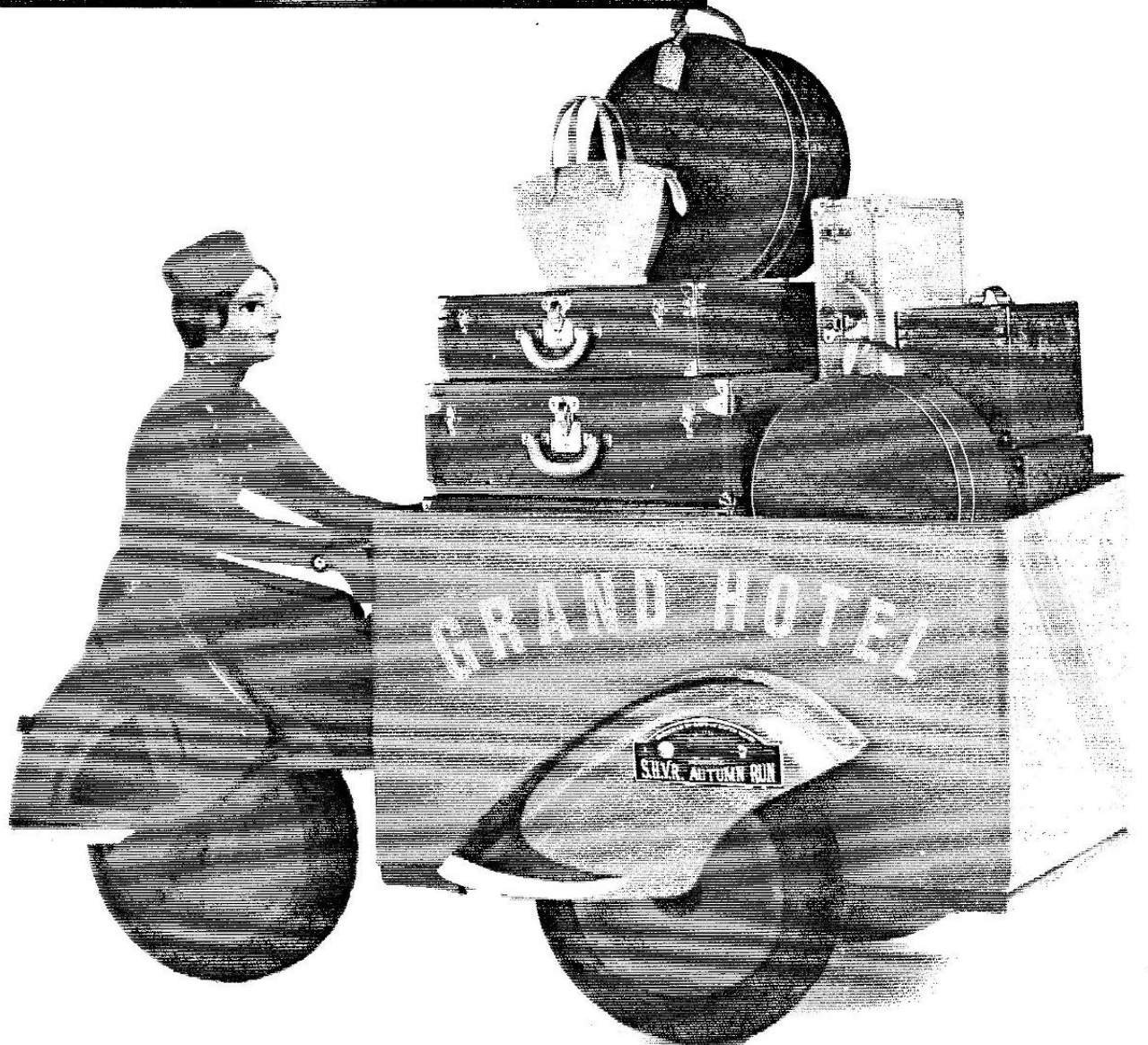
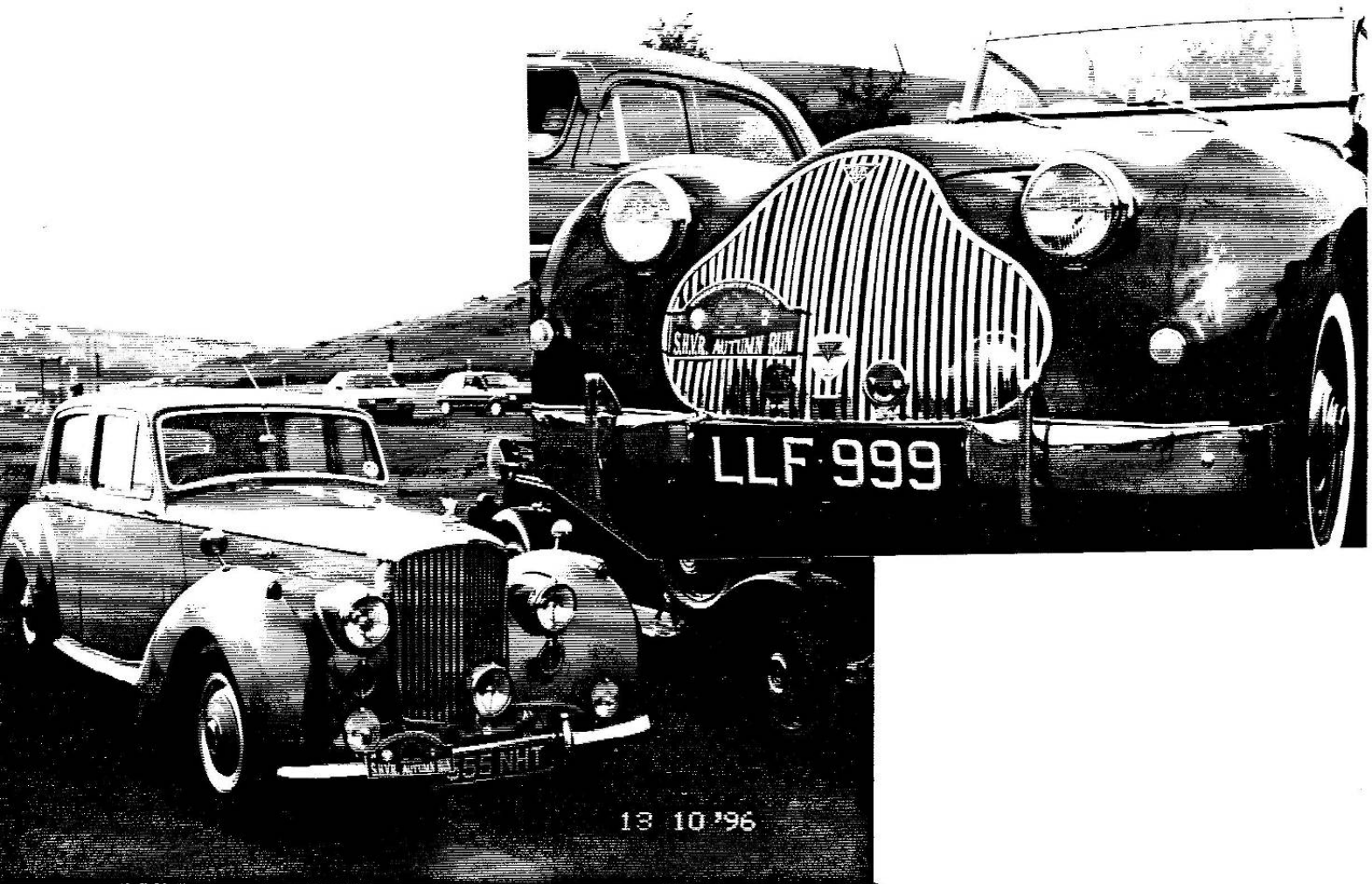
JT



"SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE..."

MORE PHOTOS OF SHVR'S AUTUMN RUN

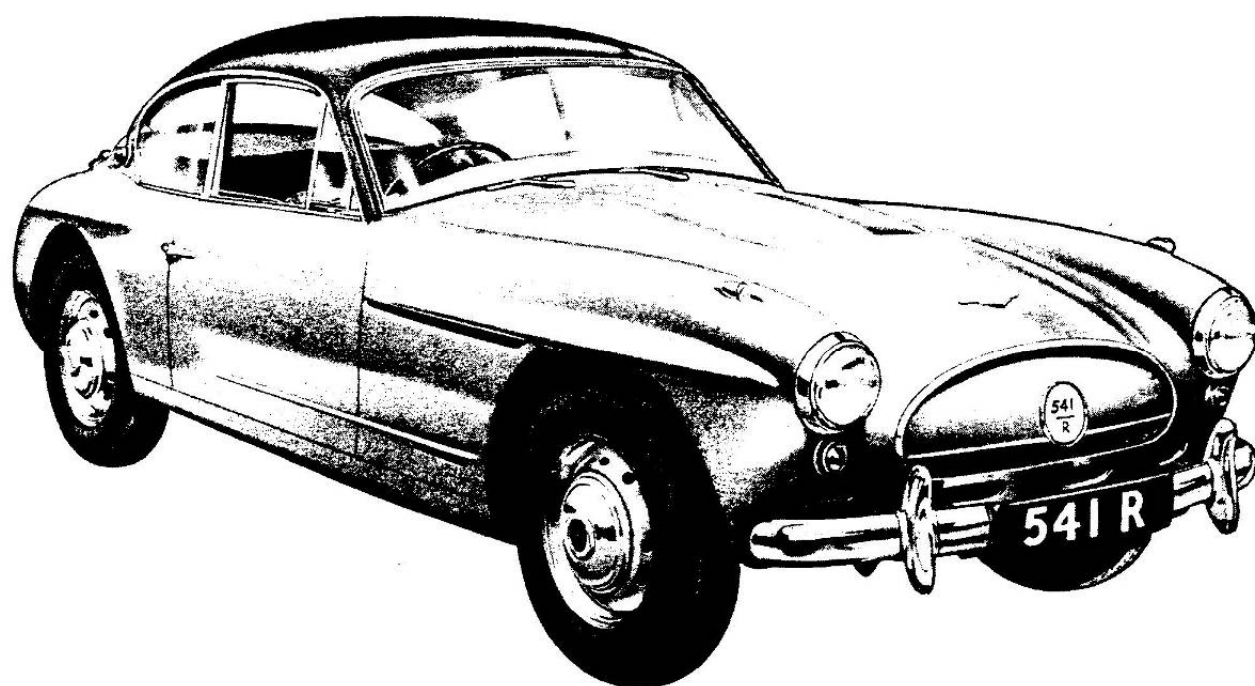




(continued from the October SHVR Newsletter)

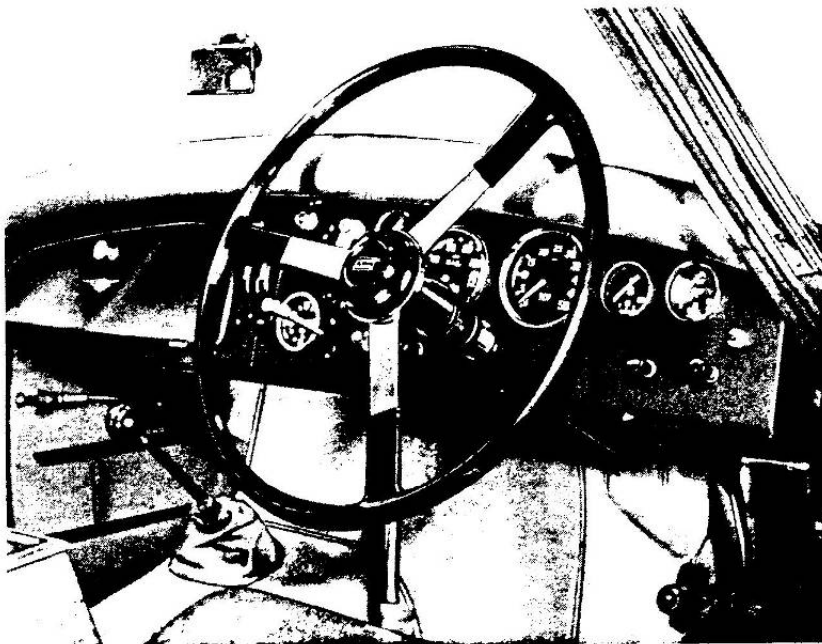
Launched in 1949, the Jensen Interceptor Cabriolet was greeted with enthusiasm by top executives, and those who could afford the price tag of £2842. Here was a car that offered fast, powerful and luxurious motoring in the 100mph class, would reach 70mph from a standing start in under 18 seconds, carry three abreast in the front seat, thanks to the central gearlever being offset, and return over 20mpg. When "The Motor" road tested an Interceptor in 1952, complete with Laycock-de Normanville overdrive, they summed up by saying, ".... the Jensen Interceptor Cabriolet can best be described as a delightful car for the man who likes to travel far and fast with little effort"

Although the Interceptor would continue to be listed until 1957, Jensen were forging ahead with a new model, and in October 1953 the 541 appeared. This was a sleek, low-built four seater with a long rounded body, wrap round rear window and thin pillars for maximum visibility, and a long bonnet which swept down to the wide oval grille. An ingenious driver controlled pivoted blanking plate fitted in the grille aperture performed the same function as a normal radiator blind, but in a more aesthetically and aerodynamically effective style. The 541 created considerable interest when it was first seen, but did not immediately go into production, and it was not until after the October 1954 Earls Court Motor Show, at which it was revealed that the steel body had now been abandoned in favour of a glass-fibre-reinforced plastic body, that the first production 541 was ready for sale.



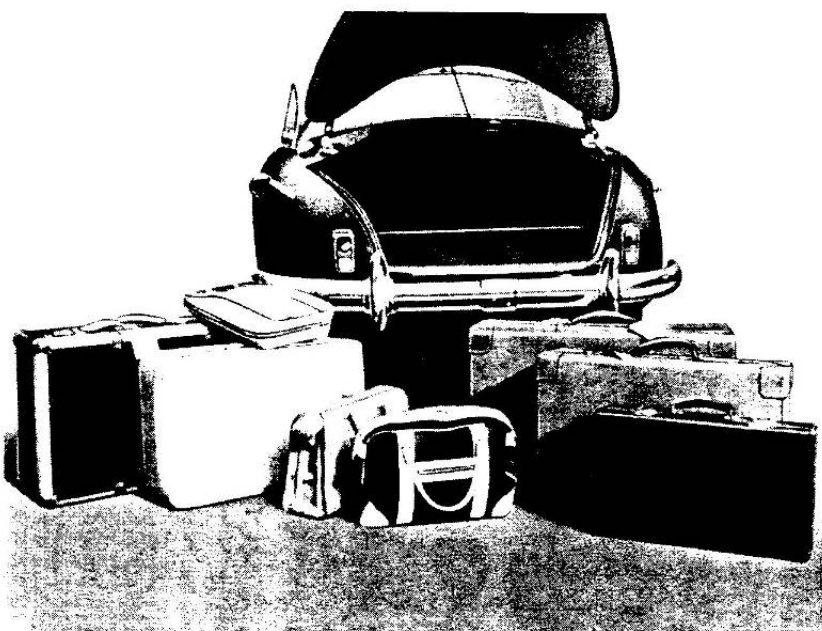
541 'R' series saloon

Everything is to hand for the driver of the 541 'R' Series saloon: in the restful comfort of the deeply-upholstered, finest quality hide seat the Jensen owner has all controls at his finger-tips and an uninterrupted view of the comprehensive range of instruments. Safety and ease of driving are assured.

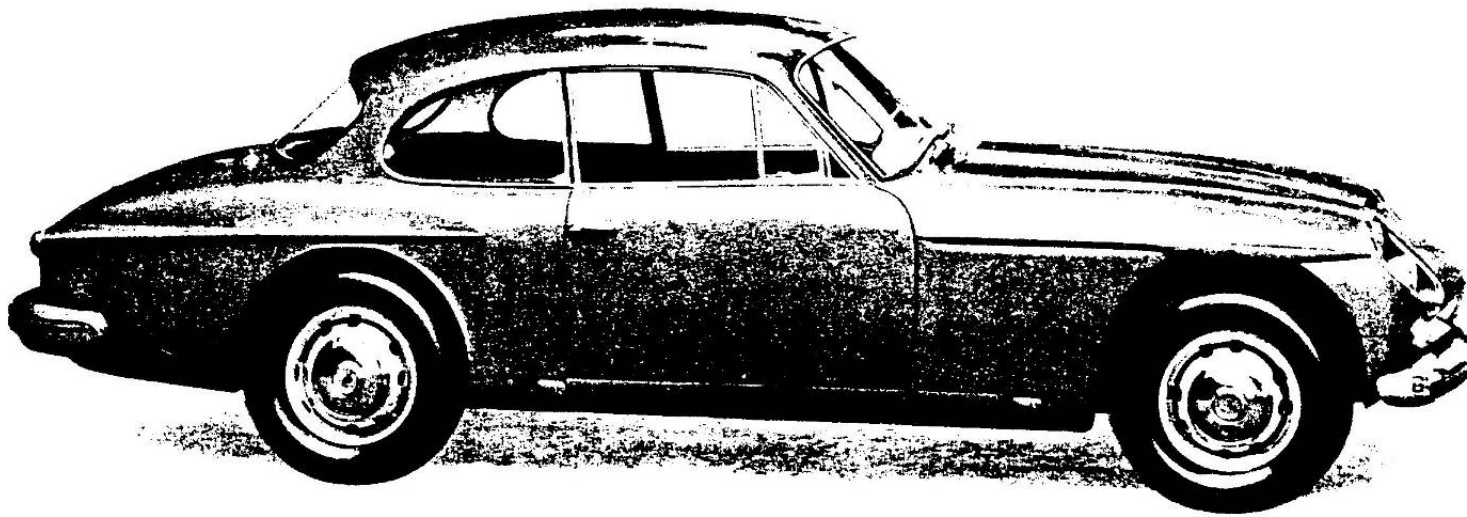


Like the Interceptor, the 541 employed the 3993cc, 130bhp Austin engine, with triple SU carburettors, and had a top speed comfortably in excess of 100mph for the standard model, but the optional high compression engine coupled with overdrive gave the car a potential maximum speed of 116mph whilst returning an average fuel consumption of over 20mpg. In 1956 a de luxe version of the 541 appeared with the high powered engine and overdrive now fitted as standard. This model was also one of the first British cars to be fitted with Dunlop disc brakes all round. A year later the 541R was announced with rack and pinion steering replacing the earlier cam and roller type, and the chassis tubes increased to 5" diameter. Twin SUs were fitted initially, but by 1959 the company reverted to using the triple carburettor set up on the R model.

The Jensen 541 'R' Series was designed as a car eminently suitable for high speed touring and to this end was provided with a luggage boot of extraordinary dimensions for this type of car. There is ample space for luggage for four persons and such items as golf clubs can easily be accommodated. Truly this car is a combination of speed, beauty, comfort and utility without rival amongst the industry's finest products.



The look of luxury . . . the promise of power



JENSEN CV-8 GRAND TOURING SALOON

Other commitments entered into by Jensen around this time included the production of a 24cwt commercial vehicle called the Tempo, which featured front wheel drive. Also, the company was contracted to BMC to produce the bodies for the Austin Gypsy, an all-terrain-type vehicle which eventually sank without trace after a sales collision with the Land Rover. In 1959, Jensen were taken over by the Norcross Group and the following year the company secured a contract with Volvo for the painting and trimming of their P1800 sports coupe, made famous when it appeared on television in the series, *The Saint*, as Simon Templar's car.

The Jensen CV-8, announced in October 1962 and styled by Eric Neale (who had designed a replacement for the Austin A40 Sports which was rejected by Leonard Lord in favour of the Healey 100), was a very attractive and purposeful looking two-door sports saloon. Power came from a Chrysler 5.9 litre V-8 engine which produced 330bhp at 4800rpm, although by 1964 Chrysler's new 6.2 litre engine had been adopted for the CV-8 in Mark II guise. Standard equipment included a radio with twin speakers, reversing lights and two-speed wipers. Torqueflite three-speed automatic transmission came as standard providing excellent and effortless performance through the gears, with a 0 - 60mph time of under 8 seconds, and a top speed of around 130mph. The CV-8 was also the first car to be fitted with driver-controlled shock absorbers as standard.

Meanwhile, Jensen had been involved in the production of the Carroll Shelby designed Sunbeam Alpine sports car, known as the Tiger, for the Rootes Group and later Chrysler, the new owners, but the model was dropped in 1967. A GT version of the Hillman Imp, code-named Asp, was also considered but this never materialised and so the company now had to rely on their new Interceptor as virtually the main source of their income.

Further face lifts and modifications to the 541 ensued, and in October 1960 a restyled body some four inches wider and providing a useful extra inch or so interior headroom appeared as the 541S. A honeycombe mesh grille with radiator blind replaced the earlier oval flap and four-speed automatic transmission was standardised; seat belts were also fitted. The facia had also been redesigned on the 541S and this model also featured the luxury of a factory fitted radio. I do remember, however, that at the time it was extremely difficult to get good reception on the radio due to earthing problems with the glass-fibre body.

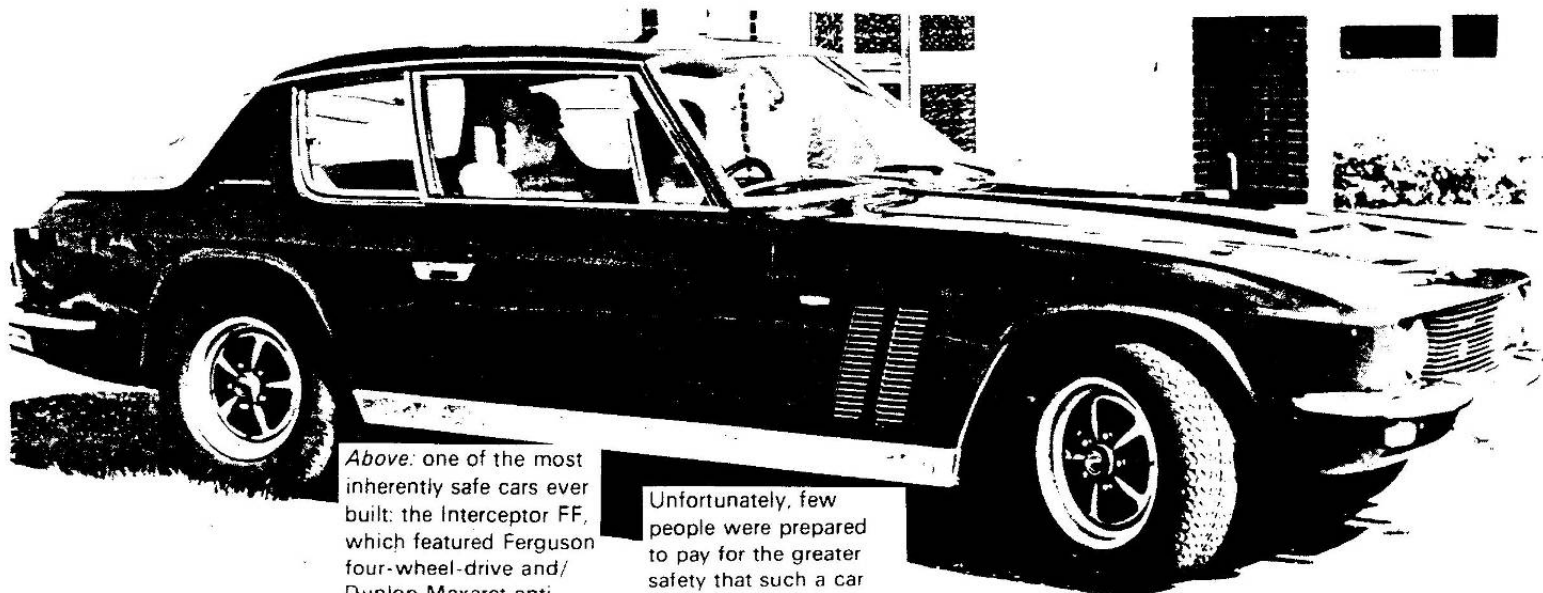


THE PURPOSEFUL LOOKING FRONT STYLING OF THE CV-8

The Interceptor was launched in October 1966, and whilst the running gear was based on the latest CV-8, the completely new body had been styled by Touring of Milan and built initially by Vignale in Italy, although production was soon transferred to West Bromwich. A four-wheel-drive version of the Interceptor, designated the FF, was also available built under Harry Ferguson patents and incorporating a Dunlop Maxaret anti-skid braking system. This was the first production saloon with four-wheel-drive and was named "The Car of the Year" in 1967 by "Car" magazine.

This was also the year in which Richard Jensen gave up the Chairmanship of the company and finally retired from the board in 1967, his brother Alan had retired as an executive director some four years earlier. Norcross, who had taken control of Jensen in 1959, sold out to merchant bankers William Brandt in 1968, and two years later, Kjell Qvale, a wealthy Californian car distributor, acquired a majority holding in the company.

Whilst the Interceptor and its stablemate the FF were extremely stylish and well built cars, both of which caused a sensation when they were launched, they were expensive and necessarily had to compete in the exclusive market place with the likes of Aston Martin and Bristol. Inevitably, sales were insufficient to financially support the company, and the loss of their contracts with other company's to supply bodies and design work did not help matters. A possible solution to Jensen's problems at this time came with the appointment of Donald Healey as Chairman, bringing with him the idea for a sports car now that the Austin Healey he had designed in collaboration with Austin had been discontinued in 1967.



Above: one of the most inherently safe cars ever built: the Interceptor FF, which featured Ferguson four-wheel-drive and Dunlop Maxaret anti-lock braking.

Unfortunately, few people were prepared to pay for the greater safety that such a car offered



THE INTERCEPTOR AND 4-WHEEL DRIVE FF WERE LAUNCHED IN 1966

The Jensen-Healey arrived in the Spring of 1972 as an open two-door two-seater sports powered by a four-cylinder Lotus designed engine of 2 litre capacity producing 140bhp at 6500rpm. The four-speed manual gearbox came from the Sunbeam Rapier, and the suspension layout was from the Vauxhall Viva. Unfortunately the car was beset with numerous teething problems, characteristic of under-development, and quickly acquired a reputation for unreliability. All this, together with the oil crisis at the time sealed the company's fate and a receiver was appointed and all production ceased in 1976. Most Jensen models are now much sought after by enthusiasts of the marque, particularly the last Interceptor III SF 7.2 litre, and the fixed-head coupe version of the Jensen-Healey.



The best job for people who think that they are paranoid is driving a taxi - Then they really will have people talking behind their backs.

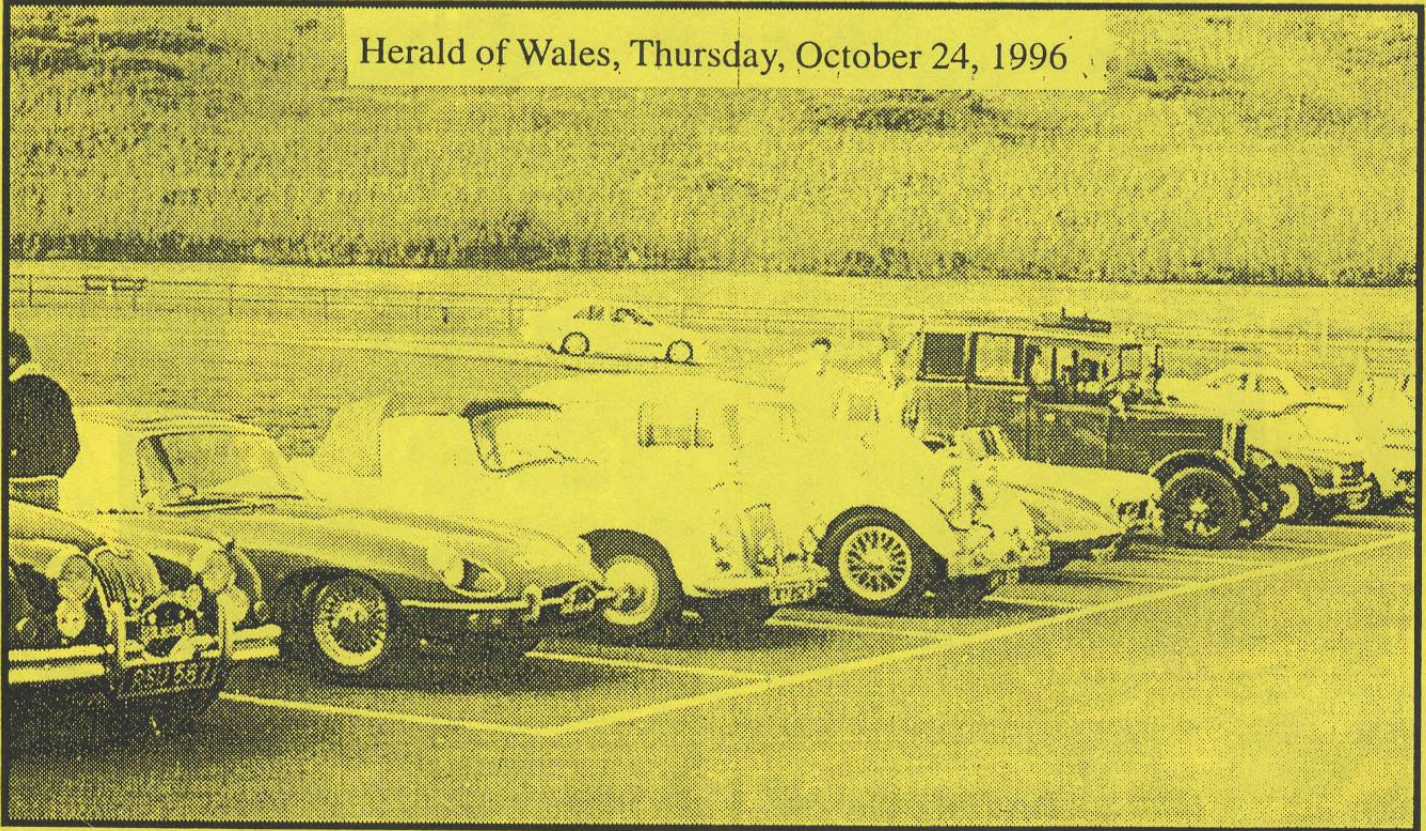
SELF EMPLOYMENT

Now that I work for myself, I find the greatest difficulty is when I phone in sick. I don't know whether or not to believe myself !



Wheels of history

Herald of Wales, Thursday, October 24, 1996



NO THIS isn't a picture from days long gone, just an enviable line-up snapped at Bracelet Bay car park near Mumbles by an eagle-eyed Herald reader recently. The collection of vintage, veteran and classic cars was just a small number of the 91 vehicles that took part in Swansea Historic Vehicle Register's annual autumn rally. The event spanned two days and attracted entrants from all parts of Britain. A good number of enthusiasts brought their vehicles over from Ireland especially for the event. When this picture was taken the driver's were resting during a run which took them all over the area. Wherever they went the vehicles didn't fail to turn heads. No doubt for some of those who spotted them the sight revived memories of a time when transport was an altogether less hurried affair.

A POEM FROM THE BROUGHTONS

With S.H.V.R. on his shroud
He looks so tired and old
As he stood before the man of fate
For admission to the fold
"What have you done" St Peter said
"To gain admission here?"
"I've worked with Palmer, Sir" he said,
"For many a good long year"
With that the gates swung open wide
St Peter rang the bell,
"Come in", he said, "and grab a harp"
"You've had your share of Hell!"