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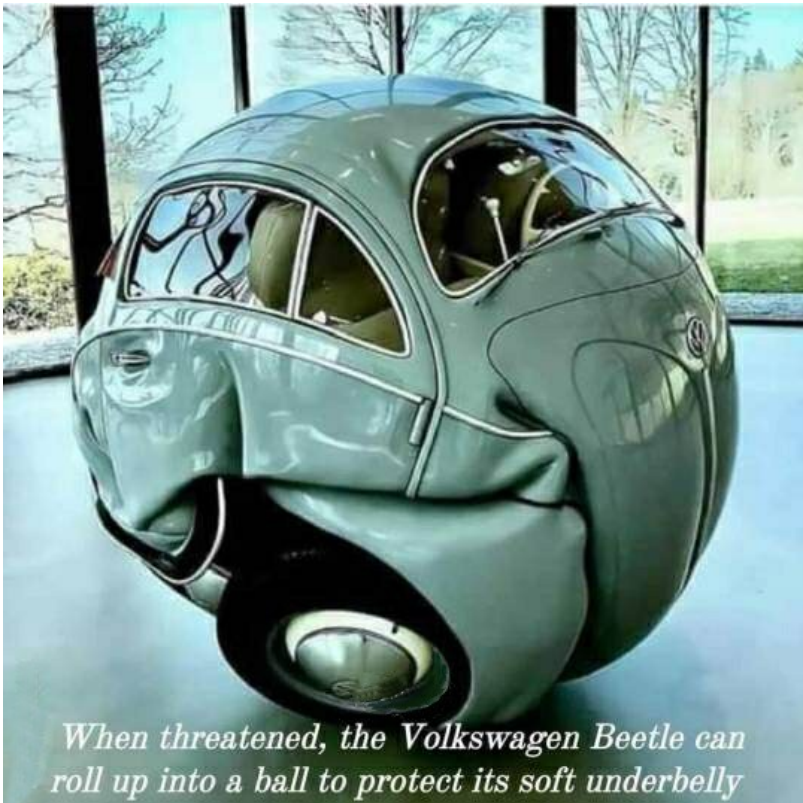
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*When threatened, the Volkswagen Beetle can roll up into a ball to protect its soft underbelly*

*March News 2021*

# Ron's Ramblings



News update in place of Ron's Ramble.

As this nightmare of this covid virus continues we find ourselves thinking "If only we knew when will this end and we can get back to normal". Well none of us know, will there be a show this year? will there be any shows this year??? I note that a good many have already cancelled so it's sit back and see, Lets just hope so.

Colin and Sec Gerry have decided that we shall have a committee zoom meeting to decide the plans for this year in April so hopefully good news will come from this meeting. We will keep you informed via our excellent web site, by Andy, check regularly for updates.

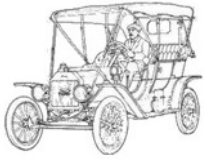
I am sad to report John B ex sec has been diagnosed with a cancer and has been going to Brighton for treatment for the past four weeks; I'm pleased to say he is still his old self and the treatment is going well so far, we are with you John and good luck.

Many members will have known Dave Taylor (Ford Zephyr Mk1) he has spent many months in hospital with a stomach problem and has had a good many operations so far, wife Sandra tells me there is no get out of hospital date for the foreseeable future; Also, Dave Fletcher who I mentioned in the last newsletter, is now being taken care of in a Bexhill nursing home. we wish you both, and anyone else who is poorly we don't know about, A sincere wish that YOU ALL GET WELL SOON.

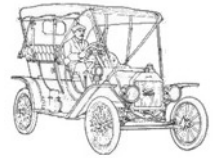
Well with other additions for the news letter I have done, and now leaving Chairman Colin to replace the Ron's Ramble.

I can only say - **You all take care and stay safe and hopefully will see you all in the not too distant future.**

**PS.** I have just received a entry form for the cuckoo fair on May Bank Holiday, Good luck to them, let's hope it will be possible. It's good they are going to try. Any one that wants a form I can print them off.



# Colin's Capers



Hello members and welcome to 2021, and what a relief to see the back of 2020.

I hope you were all able to salvage something from Christmas and the new year. Doubtless lots of plans were up-ended but I hope you were able to arrange an alternative Christmas.

2020 has, if nothing else, taught us to value all the privileges we used to take for granted.

With the promise of a vaccination on the horizon it is only to be hoped it works and the cure is not worse than the pandemic. I hope those eligible for at least their first jab has received it by the time you read this. As I write this it looks as though the restrictions will be with us until at least March and then will depend on the rate of injections successfully carried out and if it works.

I think there will be street parties if the pandemic can be eradicated and there will be an exodus to foreign parts to catch up on lost holidays. More importantly for the club I hope we will be able to continue with the Friday club nights and the highlight of the year our annual car show.

That reminds me, to hold a summer show it takes about 20 volunteers on the day to man the show, and so far I have received eight. The bottom line is if I can't get the numbers, I can't hold the show.

Now the UK has left the EU who can remember the "good old days" when preparing to take the car and family across to Europe and perhaps being the first in the street to peel back the backing to a white oval GB sticker (which is now a requirement), which you carefully position on the boot of your car. This probably was as much to impress the neighbours as Europe. Then you had the green card, which covered most of Europe) and the International Driving Permit (IDP) English driving licence, Vehicle Log Book Health Insurance and Pet Licence (for an animal not the mistress). Unfortunately no mention of Booz Cruises, but let's live in hope. Halcyon days. Well folks, the good old days are back. If you play your cards right you could have two weeks free parking for the biggest lorry show on earth at Manston airport with free meals supplied by the good folk of Thanet. Take your own toilet and paper though.

If you do intend motoring through France you might need a clean air sticker (crit'air vignette) and doubtless France will dream up other money making schemes as the year progresses.

My very best wishes to you all for the New Year, which I hope will be a lot better than 2020, enabling us all to meet again. ***For 20/21 the committee has decided that those members who did renew their membership would not have to renew for 2021/2022.*** It costs the club about £2000 per year in fixed overheads so I would ask all members that have not paid for 2021/22 to kindly do so NOW. We are unable to claim any subsidies from central Government. So the Club is on its own financially.

*Colin Lake* (Chairman)

I am very sorry to report that club member Harold Williamson passed away recently.

Harold was a very keen member of the Hastings Trolley bus restoration and was well known within bus preservation groups and could always be found when ever there were buses on show.

The Hooe members will miss him.

On all the coach trips he was always very generous in supplying tins of Cadburys chocolates that were handed out around the coach on our trips to so many enjoyable destinations over the years.

A card was sent on behalf of the club, and our sincere condolences to Harold's family,

We shall all miss a lively kind jovial gent who was always a pleasure to meet.

# E10 petrol to be UK standard by 2021

This step which is being taken by the government has been talked about and threatened for some years, but it now seems imminent! Assuming - as appears very likely - that this does go ahead; anyone with a vehicle (**of any age**) needs to familiarise themselves with the possible consequences.

To cover everything that has been discussed about the subject is too large a topic to be covered in any but the very barest detail in this newsletter, so I've listed several authoritative links below which I recommend you study very seriously.

<https://www.fbhvc.co.uk/fuels>

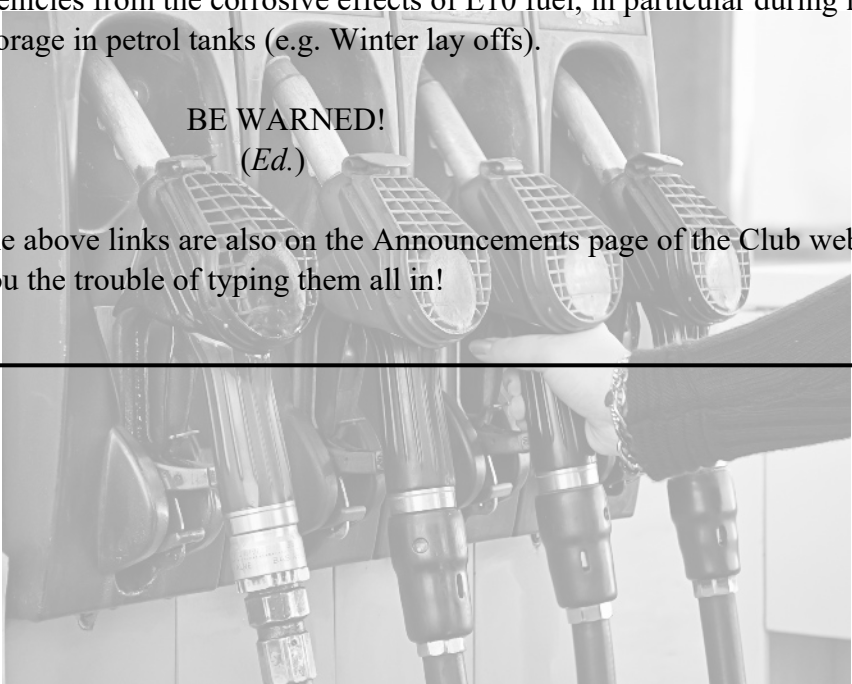
<https://www.autoexpress.co.uk/news/104126/e10-petrol-be-uk-standard-wont-work-1m-older-cars>

<https://www.racfoundation.org/media-centre/e10-petrol-to-be-introduced-in-2021>

The FBHVC link also lists several approved additives which can help to protect older vehicles from the corrosive effects of E10 fuel, in particular during long term storage in petrol tanks (e.g. Winter lay offs).

BE WARNED!  
(Ed.)

P.S. The above links are also on the Announcements page of the Club website to save you the trouble of typing them all in!



Spring cleaning time is coming up folks, and we have just the person

DAISY THE DOMESTIC



Daisy the domestic will make your house shine  
Spring clean the rooms one at a time  
Get out the Hoover it's really a must  
Vacuum the carpets remove all the dust

The lounge is first to tidy around  
Not much needed here Daisy has found  
Pump up the cushions, put furniture in place  
Daisy does it thoroughly, this is not a race

Into the kitchen the oven takes time  
Remove all the grease, the grot and the grime  
Make all the cupboards cobweb free  
Put on the kettle it's time for tea

At the sink someone's made it a mockery  
Got to wash up all this dirty crockery  
Mop the floor with a disinfectant tang  
Better get out the Cillet Bang

On to the bedroom make beds for certain  
Over to the window rearrange the curtain  
Turn the dressing table into a tidy place  
This is where ladies make up their face

Now to the bathroom, oh what a scene  
Clean up the shower, the basin, make them gleam  
Polish the windows the cleanest they've been  
It's wonderful stuff this Windolene.

Now if your house needs a good clear out  
We've got just the one – give Daisy a shout  
Your house will sparkle and look so supreme  
Just call Daisy the domestic and her cleaning team

*Gerry*

## Hooe's Old Motor Club 2021 Your Club's Annual Show Needs You

Back in September the Committee met to review how the Club can go forward into 2021 and, of course, the highlight of any Club Year – the Annual Show. Now, at this stage, none of us know if it will be possible or practical to run the Show; we shall have to be guided by Governmental advice and rulings. It might be nice to think that the vaccinations that are now becoming available will enable us all to mingle freely, but I don't think we should hold our breath on that one.

Being optimistic, the Committee is working on the basis that it will be possible to run the show, but there is a **big proviso** and that is that people power (I'm not allowed to say manpower any more it's not woke enough) is available to undertake all the tasks that go together to make the show work.

For many years we have been blessed with a great team of members who have given their all to make the Show the marvellous success it has always been. In particular the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show was an absolute stonker. But the sad reality is that we are getting older; we have had a number of deaths in the Club and other members, who for various reasons, are no longer able to provide the support they have done in the past.

What this means is: that with the current number of remaining Show organisers, we are unable to go forward with the Show; there is no point in attempting to put it on in a half-baked manner – it has to work properly or not at all. Really what is needed is 8 or 10 members to come forward and volunteer to take on some of the tasks. With a full team the individual tasks are all quite manageable – **your Club needs you!**

Please believe me, the Committee is of the view that the Annual Show is now in grave danger; we are reaching out to you now to ask that you volunteer to help out. Please drop a line to me as Club Chairman on:  
[colinplake@googlemail.com](mailto:colinplake@googlemail.com) to let me know that you are available to help out.

The Hooe' Old Motor Club show is probably the best car show in the South East of England – lets keep it that way!

*Colin Lake* (Chairman)

## Memories of the 60's



In the 1960's Silver City Airways used to fly from Lydd to Le Touquet. Probably not many people will recall that name but in the 60's, first with our Vauxhall E type and later the Bedford when going on holiday, it was efficient and saved a day when one remembers we had only 2 weeks paid holiday in those

days. You will possibly have noted there is a badge showing Silver City on the Bedford grille; in 1962 I purchased a badge it still resides on the grille.

Early prices in the 1960's for one way travel were cars under 14ft for £19, over 14ft it shot up to £27 !

With the Bedford I could just get it down to 14ft, well they



never checked it, and if they did I was always ready to take the front bumper and rear steps off !!

(wages in those days were £12 a week.)

another £8 would make a big difference to the holiday budget. The ferries were only quarter the size they are now and the Silver City airline was an excellent way to



start the holiday.

I left work at 5.30 p.m and we were in Lydd airfield by 7 p.m, then up and away and in France by 8.30 p.m No waiting or fuss. Try doing that these days!

Angela was four, Colin was now 5 months old we decided to go to Switzerland and Italy in 1965 I well remember he was being sick while going over the Simplon pass into Italy

Suddenly realised it was the altitude at 6,000 ft ?? oop's

and so it continued for the next 15 years. They were all great family holiday years, covering just about everywhere on the continent. Many times over to some destinations.





Later, Colin now able to drive himself continued to use the Bedford for his own trips to France and Scotland etc, finally we bought a caravan. So the Bedford became redundant; It has many stories it could tell having been through scorching heat, storms, and lashing rain, over mountain passes, thick snow and freezing temperatures.

And now reduced to the vintage show scene, and towing the AA outfit all seems a bit of a come down, and yet .....

In 2018 we took it to the Laon Historique event in France possibly for the last time, but we just had to do it once more. We experienced appalling weather but again as usual

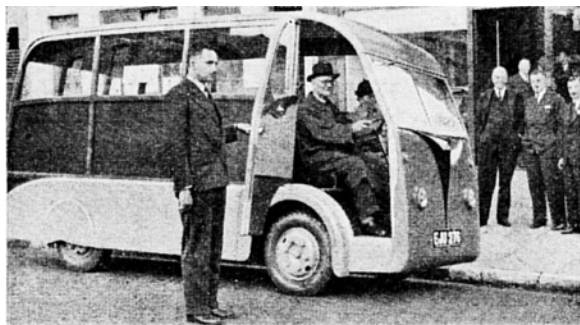
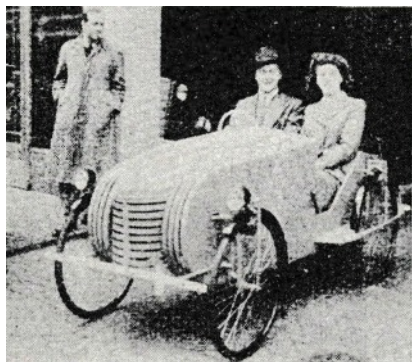
the now old lady never missed a beat. It was still nice and comfy. But we were showing our age! and so did the Bedford now there are Autoroutes! At 50/ 55 mph it was a bit painful. Lesson there, don't go on the Autoroute with an old car. On this occasion we had no choice, we wanted to get there ASAP, and we proved to ourselves that we could still do it.

Ron W



From 'The Motor' magazine November 1947: An adult pedal car. Is this where Sinclair got his idea and then added an electric motor? Do you think the passenger also had to pedal? And an electric people carrier in 1947, made by Brush. Any connection to the Brush cars from about 1912? Pictured outside Langley Motors, Eastbourne.

*W. Strickland*



# HORSELESS CARRIAGE EXHIBITION,

ORGANISED BY

SIR DAVID SALOMONS.

## Tunbridge Wells Agricultural Show Ground,

(KINDLY LENT FOR THE OCCASION),

TUESDAY, October the 15th, 1895,

FROM 3.0 TO 5.0 P.M.

### LIST OF EXHIBITS:

1. **CARRIAGE** by Messrs. PANHARD and LEVASSOR of Paris, with Daimler Petroleum Engine, shown by kind permission of the Hon. EVELYN ELLIS. This carriage is one of the type of the prize winners in the Paris-Bordeaux race last year.

2. **FIRE ENGINE**, for a country house, kindly lent by the Hon. EVELYN ELLIS, worked by a Daimler Petroleum Engine, and built by the same makers as the preceding exhibit.

*The local Volunteer Fire Brigade, under Capt. Tinné, will give a Demonstration with this Engine, in which Mr. Evelyn Ellis will probably take part.*

3. **TRICYCLE**, worked by Petroleum Motor, with electric spark ignition, shown by Messrs. de DION & BOUTON of Paris, after the design of Count de Dion and M. Bouton. The weight is about 90lbs.

4. **STEAM HORSE**, attached to a carriage, shown by Messrs. DE DION & BOUTON of Paris.

5. **TRICYCLE**, exhibited by M. GUÉDON, for the Gladiator Cycle Company of France. The horse-power is about two-thirds, the fuel is mineral naphtha, and the ignition is by the electric spark. The carboniser, in this motor, is dispensed with. The weight is approximately 112lbs. The pedals are used to start, but, when the motor runs, the pedals are automatically disconnected.

6. **VIS-A-VIS**, built by Messrs. PEUGEOT of Paris, fitted with a Daimler Engine, supplied by Messrs. PANHARD and LEVASSOR, and shown by Sir DAVID SALOMONS. The weight of this carriage is 13 cwt., and is intended to run 180 to 200 miles without recharging. The horse-power is  $3\frac{1}{2}$ ; the speed on a hill of 10 per cent. inclination is about four miles per hour, and on the level fifteen miles per hour, maximum.

(The Hon. Evelyn Ellis, Count de Dion, Baron de Zurich de Nyevelt de Haar, M. Bouton, Mr. Frederick Simms, M. Guédon, and others who have kindly assisted in this Exhibition are present.)

N.B.—A few other carriages have been promised, but the shortness of the notice renders it doubtful whether they will arrive in time. It was hoped that one or two carriages propelled by electricity would also be on exhibition, but these could not be prepared by the date fixed. The carriages shown illustrate, however, the chief types in vogue, and are similar to those which won the Paris-Bordeaux Race last year, a distance of between 700 and 800 miles.

The carriages will enter the ring at 3.0 o'clock. Admission can be obtained to the Grand Stand, if any space is available after 3.15, on payment of 1/-. The proceedings will terminate at 5.0 o'clock.

An article written by Sir David Salomons and published in the "Kent and Sussex Courier," gives all information respecting these carriages and will be reprinted in pamphlet form, which may be obtained at the office of that paper in Tunbridge Wells.

Every effort has been made to collect as many carriages as possible, but as the few which are in use are widely scattered, it is difficult to obtain the loan of them, but the carriages exhibited fairly illustrate the development of this means of locomotion to the present date.

The Ground selected for this Exhibition being soft, the trial is scarcely fair, since the carriages travel admirably on a hard road.

## Why do we do these things?

On my way to work I noticed a Fiat 500 in a front garden. Several months later it was still there having not moved so as the owner was in the garden I asked what the cars fate is likely to be. He replied he intended to use it as running spares for his 500 but it seemed too good to break up. As he also had several cars in his front garden, all non runners, and two in his garage in partial state of collapse I asked if he would like to sell it as I was looking for something to do over the winter months and by an initial inspection it didn't look too bad.

Remembering this was on growing grass. After a cursory check over it looked as though it would require a new front panel, bonnet and front nearside wing, having been in an accident. There was also a 13inch wheel jammed between the passenger seat and the dashboard. Well how wrong could one be.



It goes without saying life is not that simple and when I took the sodden carpet out I was confronted with a driver's floor that was a patchwork of tin plates and the underside smoothed off with filler. Due to whoever did this, probably several times, he didn't take the carpet up so missed the point where two plates meet having never been welded in part. Then it was all downhill from there on. Removal of the front panel didn't produce any nasty



surprises, but when I removed the front nearside wing things took a turn for the worse. On removing the wing the outer inner wing fell apart and I thought the transverse spring looked a little strange. This was not only due to one of the leaves having snapped, but the bolts holding the spring in place were bent, meaning the spring was an inch out of true. Bit strange as I was towed home and it seemed ok. Getting those bolts out was



interesting as obviously they were welded in and access was very limited to get to the bolt heads through a small access panel thereby not being able to grind the heads off, so after much grinding and hammering they were removed by knocking them through from the spring side. I think that took the best part of a day. Then once the underseal had been scraped off the wheel arches it became apparent there wasn't much sound metal left, which was repeated on the other side, so both sets of wheel arches were removed and replaced with new panels. That meant the front had been finished apart from fitting the new transverse spring( and that's a story in itself and without the proper tool took another full day to fit)

The nearside door was good and needed no work to it, but the driver's door required plating and filling, a few hours work.

Both rear quarter panels were in bad shape and were too far gone to repair without lots of plates welding in and filler, so for speed more than anything they were removed and new panels fitted.

Then the engine was dismantled and revealed another shock; the bores were so worn that the piston rings were almost out of their seats, so new barrels and pistons were fitted, the clutch was on its last legs and renewed and placed on the bench whilst new fuel pipes, cables and brake pipes were fitted.

As you can see, like topsy all the jobs have been growing but at last the end was in sight. Or was it?

The last problem was bleeding the brakes which took two days to pressure the system through to remove all the air. The brakes cylinders were seized solid so new linings , shoes and springs were fitted and in all the work that had been undertaken the only incorrect parts supplied were the upper brake shoe tensioners, so these had to be modified.

The car was then shipped off to the paint shop and the 6 months work turned into about 3 years in all. The only job left to do sometime is to replace the seat coverings and under cushions as well past their sell by date.

I do not like driving this very much after all this, but it was interesting to see if I could restore a vehicle to its original specification.



And why do we do these things? Because we are masochists!!

*Colin Lake*

# **BRUCE'S WORLD OF WHACKY MOTORING**

True stories from the pioneering days of motoring.

## **Chapter 2 Mad dogs and non-Englishmen**

### **The first Gordon Bennett Trophy race**

The condition of the roads in those early days was atrocious, barely adequate for horse and cart, let alone a driver urging a ton of automobile at speed along the un-metalled surfaces, dodging bottomless potholes and fighting the wheel to climb out of ruts at break-neck speeds. If that wasn't bad enough, drivers had to contend with another adversary, animals. Free-roaming sheep, cows and wild fowl, and particularly dogs, who seemed hell-bent on chasing speeding cars with sometimes disastrous results, the animal sadly coming off second best in most contests. Those wooden spokes were unforgiving, but the dogs were equally tough. And this is one such story, so brace yourselves.

However, first a story about my Dad as a boy, and his sheep dog, Glen. A Casual attitude to dogs on the road existed in bygone days. Few cars ever appeared, they were outnumbered by horse-drawn vehicles and bicycles, so not surprisingly a noisy car belching smoke excited dogs to the chase. Most dogs were free to roam at will. (Poor Old Will.) Glen was a typical sheep dog, independent, and enjoyed nothing better than roaming the neighbourhood seeking out horse dung to roll in and then return home smelling like, well, HORSE DUNG! Dad would hose him down after which he would escape to the roadside and seek out another dollop of "canine number five". Consequently, when the family went motoring, he was consigned to the outside of the family car, positioning himself between the front fender and the engine hood with his paws firmly planted on the headlight bar, embracing the lamp, and barking incessantly. No red flag required here, Dad's approach was heralded by Glen, both by sound - and scent.

But back to France, (oh, didn't I mention that before?), and a memorable race on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 1900. Road racing was still banned in the UK, but the French revelled in the sport, with nonchalant disregard for safety of both drivers and the public at large.

The French became the envy of the world, their racing escapades inspiring an American Newspaper magnate to propose an international event bearing his name, GORDON BENNETT. A beautiful trophy was commissioned and rules were



drawn up. Bennett was eager to end the French monopoly of Motor racing, and the first “Gordon Bennett Trophy” race was staged on French soil from Paris to Lyons, some 353 miles, (that’s half way to Scotland from London) unsurprisingly won by a FRENCHMAN.

It was a competition between National teams, with no more than 3 cars per country, and the winning nation having to organise the following year’s event. The idea was resurrected some 70 years later for the Eurovision Song contest. (There is nothing new in this world). This race was also significant in being the first in which each nation had their own racing colours. France Blue, Germany white, Belgium yellow, and the United States red. Later England would come in with, you guessed it, racing green. So THAT’S where those colours originated. (Remember that, it might be in the next quiz.)

The French selected Panhard’s, driven by their 3 famous racers, Charron, de Knyff, and Girardot. The popular French motor car firm Mors were disgusted they were not selected so they put forward their own non-competing entrant, driven by Levegh. Belgium was represented by Jenatzy in a Bolide, Eugene Benz in a “guess what” for Germany, (in white remember), and two Wintons for the United States driven by Alex Winton, (surprise, surprise), and Tony Riker, the first American cars ever to compete in Europe.



What a shamble the start was! The Benz withdrew due to tyre problems, and Riker’s Winton was not ready in time. That left 5 starters plus the rogue Mors. To the embarrassment of the official French team, Levegh streaked ahead in the Mors and soon built up a 30-minute lead over the Panhard’s with the Americans a distant last. (this is getting exciting, isn’t it. Hey, where’s the dog I hear you say?).

Then one by one the cars fell victim to various problems. De Knyff and Jenatzy (Panhard’s) retired, as did Winton in his Winton, while Levegh in his Mors was beset with mechanical problems, and Girardot got lost near Orleans. (Obviously holding the map upside down. My wife does that!)

That left just Charron in the lead, with his trusty mechanic Henry Fournier working overtime. They had earlier hit a gutter and bent the axle, so H.F. had to trickle oil continuously onto the chain. With just 10 miles to go the fat lady had hardly cleared her throat when it happened. Charron, powering down hill at 60 mph, yes 60mph, was suddenly charged by *the hound from hell!*

Tough as a rhino's hide the intrepid beast, froth foaming from his jaws, went for the front wheels, (bad mistake), and finished up jammed in the steering, sending the Panhard veering across a field, mud and turf flying, and eventually skidding back onto the road.

Fournier jumped out, changed his pants, then levered out the hapless dog at a safe distance and restarted the engine. The collision had broken the water pump from it's mountings and poor old Fournier had to hold the pump drive against the flywheel to keep water circulating, *as well as* oiling the chain for the last 10 miles, wow, what a hero, tough as boots. Charron cajoled his Panhard into Lyons, winning ahead of the Mors and saving face for the French team. Meanwhile Gordon Bennett exclaimed "Sacra bleu" and made a mental note to find another American car for the following year.

The Gordon Bennett Trophy remained a fixture for the next five years, and was superseded by the French Grand prix. Two years later our immortal British driver Selwyn Edge won the event driving a Napier in BRITISH RACING GREEN. (hooray!)

Oh, the dog you ask, did it recover? Did it hell, it was as dead as a Dodo, well, what do you expect, a happy ending? Now, wasn't that exciting. "GORDON BENNETT" I hear you exclaim.

*Foot note: Gordon Bennett was a very rich American Newspaper Magnate and entrepreneur who was inspired by motor cars and racing. He was paramount in instigating the sport of Motor Racing, and his name became synonymous with anything amazing, hence even today people will exclaim 'Gordon Bennett' to some unusual occurrence. So now you know where that expletive comes from. (Please don't ask me for the origin of 'my giddy Aunt'.)*

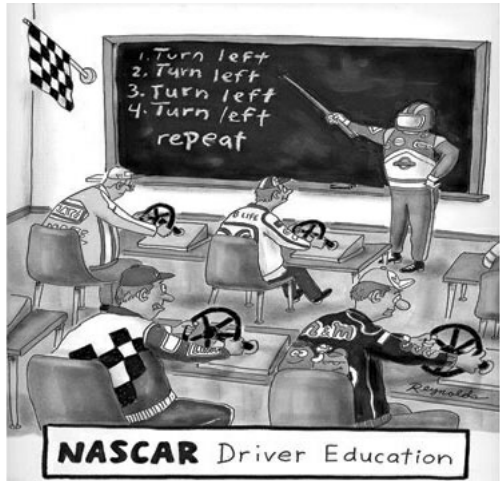
*Selwyn Edge was born in Australia and became one of Britain's most famous racing drivers of the Edwardian period, promoting the Famous English Napier Car.*

# Odd Stuff

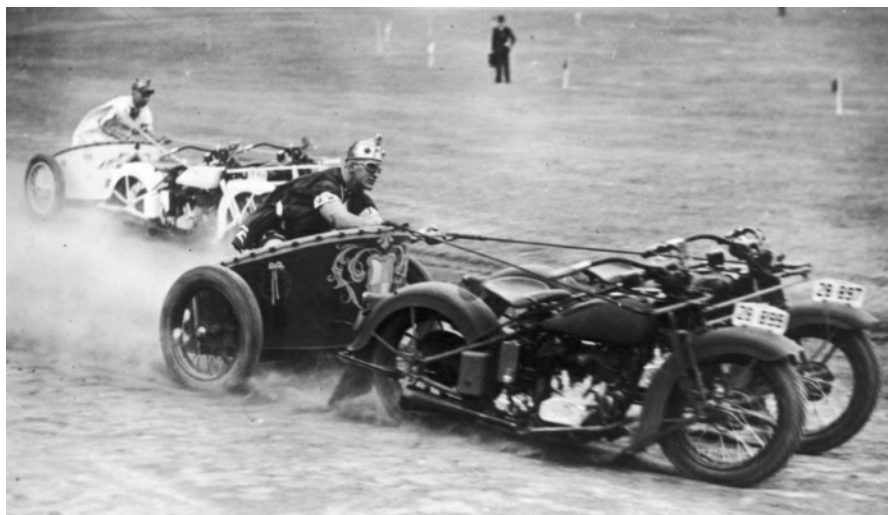
**REMOVE YOUR FRONT TIRES FOR  
BETTER HANDLING IN THE SNOW**



**THE EDGES OF THE WHEEL WILL DIG  
INTO THE ICE GIVING YOU PRECISE STEERING**



**NASCAR Driver Education**





## WAR TIME MEMORIES

I was six when the war started so I'm well placed to remember the war years and I was 11 when it ended. I was lucky in many ways, my parents never showed any stress or panic, I was bought up on a farm so we didn't really know the hard rationing everyone else experienced in the towns. There were plentiful eggs, milk, rabbits, chicken, just about everything was available plus we also had a meagre ration allowance. My cousin Rita also lived locally, our school was approx. two miles away and we walked to school by ourselves every day, rain, snow, nothing stopped us going to school no matter how thick the snow was. Winters were very much harsher than those we know today, the heating at school consisted of a small coke fire in the middle of the class room and that was it! No matter how the weather was we were never allowed to go early, we were allowed 1/3 pint bottle of milk which everyone looked forward to; during the winter it was quite normal that the milk would freeze, so the milk monitor

(one of us for the week) would put the crate on top of the stove. The milk was so frozen the ice would lift the card board top up about one inch above the bottle this was always a source of amusement. School dinners, - there was no choice, no one ever complained and we all ate well and enjoyed it with never any fuss, sometimes the cook would allow us to have seconds if there was some left over.

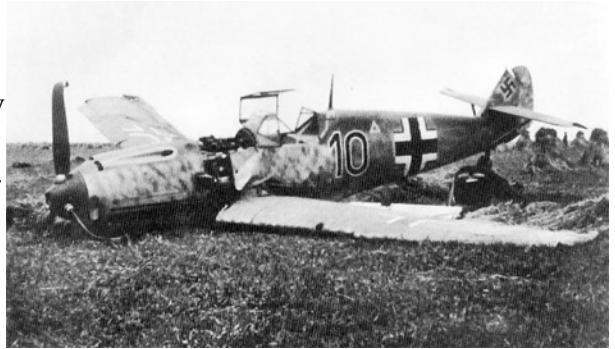
School in those days was strict we all respected the teachers and always called them Miss or Sir to address them and there was no talking in class. A dread for all kids was the nit (flea's) nurse who came to visit the school every 6 months and combed through your hair.

I well remember walking home in 1940 and the air battles were going on above us and the sound of machine gun fire was normal. We somehow just got used to it, and at night the drone of aircraft heading either to or from London. Our danger was any stray bombs that had been released. At night search lights were scanning the sky and barrage balloons were hanging in the sky around larger towns.

We did have an Anderson shelter, but Dad had also built a shelter on a bank under a large oak tree. We spent a few nights there when things got a bit too close. One night a large 500 kg bomb dropped about 1/4 mile away in a corner of a wood; going to school next day there was this enormous crater but

no other damage was done, and life carried on as normal. Every day for many weeks the air battles were going on night and day. We collected a lot of silver paper strips which were dropped I now know to disrupt our radar. Lone stray German bombers would pass over with smoke trailing either with engine trouble or had been hit; these were the danger as they would jettison their bombs when turning back which would fall anywhere. I remember seeing this on two occasions. A number of bombs dropped around us but with no serious damage except I recall one fell in the middle of the road about half a mile away blocking the road for a few days.

We were going to dinner one day crossing an open area when two Messerschmitts came over very low (500ft) and one fired his guns, - trust me, you will never see about 20 kids shift so fast. Simply to frighten us, they certainly achieved that, that was their aim all over Kent and

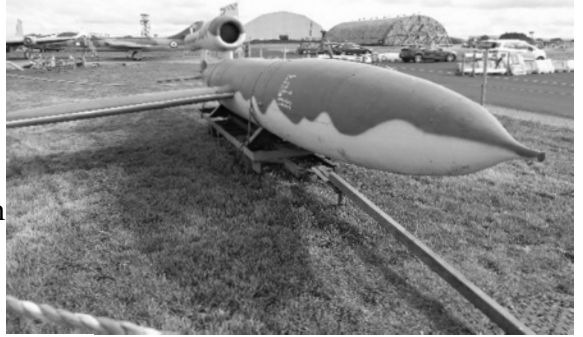


Sussex, and dropping bombs on towns. Eastbourne town centre suffered one day. Just quick marauding terror raids, their aim was to frighten. For a short while I was sent to live with my Aunt for hop picking, for some reason she lived close to Sevenoaks approx. 25 miles from London. At night for weeks there was a large orange glow in the sky, during this time London was burning at the height of the blitz I now know.

At this time we spent a good few nights in a communal air raid shelter up the road beside a large factory complex.

Back home Dad was exempt from military service as he was needed for food production and was under the control of the milk marketing war board. He worked during the day from 6am to late at night milking 50 cows by hand twice a day with Mum helping and all the necessary work that had to be done to boost milk production. There was no electric but they did have milking machines that were run by a stationary engine. We had no T.V. (never heard of it!) A radio just about worked providing the batteries were good. That was my job every Sat morning on my bike going to the nearest garage, collect two and take back two batteries.

Dad, especially during the harvest time he with others would work until 11 pm during the summer; pay was about on average £3 per week for most families. He also had to be in the Home guard or Aux Fire service, he trained in the fire service Sunday mornings. Army camps were stationed in all the woods around the area mainly Canadian. We had identity cards which we had to show if we went very far on our bikes as the lanes and roads would have road blocks with armed guards, they were sometimes standing unseen, they would step out with rifle in hand and shout HALT especially when it was dark, we then had to show our identity cards and quizzed on where we lived and where we were going. At night they would frighten the life out of you.



Various Aircraft German and English crashed around the area in 1944, we then lived in Groombridge Place and all the kids knew the sound of aircraft engines we all knew who was friend or foe.

One night a strange sound could be heard no one could understand, this was the start of the doodle bugs (the flying bombs), soon we got used to them passing over approx. every two hours. We had a unit of searchlights and Bofor guns based on the hill above us, all the guns opened up in an effort to shoot them down. Our danger was the hot shrapnel raining down, it was important to be under cover. At school we were told to get under our desks for a period until it was clear, if the engine stopped that was the time to dive for cover.

Life went on as usual. We had no aircraft able to keep up or catch them so the trick was apparently getting above them and dive, this I witnessed with a Spitfire diving down he fired with the 20mm cannon shells ripping through the trees and across the church roof smashing and tearing the tiles off we found some of the spent cases after which were still very hot. Some witnessed an aircraft putting their wings under the V1 wing and tilting them off course but I never witnessed that, (Jean tells me she did).

Very soon newer aircraft were able to keep up with them namely the Typhoon, Mosquito and later on the Spitfire and others also became common, they were by then all fitted with 20 mm guns instead of the .303. One night

Dad dragged me out of bed to show me a crashing German bomber that had been hit spiralling out of the sky with flames and sparks trailing behind crashing about a mile from us. Next morning all the kids were at the crash site collecting bits of Perspex to make rings, the art was then to get a Red-hot poker and make a ring the smell was horrific and not too popular indoors; but our rings and other bits made excellent street credit at school, we all used to show our recent trophies. Bits of shrapnel, aircraft bits, 20mm cannon cases,



.303 cases, were all very easy to come by not forgetting the bits of Perspex and the Perspex rings !! all good for swapping and school credit.

1945 We moved to Edburton below the Devils Dyke near Brighton at harvest time, by then I was nine. In the evenings was told I was going to drive the tractors picking up the sheaves of wheat for stacking, so I would drive from shock to shock into late evening, the conversation went like this - “Dad I’m going up the road to play with my mates” “NO you’re not, we need you to drive the tractor”, and that was it during haymaking and harvest time.

We also had two Land army girls living with us for some time until they found lodgings locally. We never had seen an Orange or a Banana or ice cream or chocolate, sweets were on ration until 1953, I cannot remember getting any, but we did get bottles of concentrated orange juice and cod liver oil and malt occasionally.

One day a B17 fortress crash-landed in a field about a half mile away, a great bit of flying and a great decision on behalf of the pilot sliding across the large field and crashing into a wood. There were 50 mm cannon shell on belts Dinghy’s oxygen bottles and bits of aircraft everywhere across the field the props had sliced through trees approx. 18” thick before stopping. I now know they were part of a raid to Schweinfurt ball bearing factory in southern Germany, they withstood a terrible battle and losses only to have many of them run out of fuel on the way back, I now know too of a number that went down in Sussex.

1944/5 I well remember watching hundreds of Lancasters, Halifaxes Dakotas, in fact anything that could fly towing gliders at about 2,000 feet. We waved sheets to them and in turn many flashed their lights as they went over. (I now know this was D-DAY). The doodle bugs were now stopping to come over and the sky was regularly used by all sort of friendly aircraft. No more army units, tanks and lorries had all gone that were stationed around, everything seemed so quiet. Large squadrons of heavy bombers could be seen all very high leaving vapour trails on most evenings. Later on we had two German and two Italian prisoners they set up and lived in the barns, I always found them friendly they worked alongside everyone else as normal. I also went rabbiting with a ferret on the downs, I then went down to the pub and sold them for 2 shillings (10p in today's money), there was always a good market for a rabbit.

In the hot summers we all enjoyed a swim then, it was on our bikes down to the local river which was about 4 miles away. Cows were on one side and we would be the other side we used our bikes all the timem it was the only means of transport. We almost lived on them and had to learn to do our own repairs and punctures.

1945 the war ended and somehow I had a large union jack I found a long pole and erected it in the garden, every village had a party to celebrate and I had an Ice cream for the first time!!! I also did a paper round at 1/9d a week it was about 4 miles, oh lucky me, never ever saw a car. The first time riding in a car I remember was when dad hired a taxi to get a job at Hawkhurst, we moved to Hawkhurst in 1948 and we never moved again. Life settled down to be normal. Bear in mind too there was no easy means of communication ie no telephones etc; we as kids were on our own and no one bothered too much about us.

It makes me sad to hear schools are closed because of a little snow or some other pitiful reason and they have central heating etc, what has this country come to.??? In this namby pamby world. Or the entire area would be closed down because of a gas leak that might easily be found. We in our generation find all this hard to understand.

End of story .

*Ron W*

Did you know there was motor racing along King Edwards parade sea front Eastbourne in 1923. I have a old programme that says it all; see scanned copies all of which are on the web site.

The interesting bit are the entries, some well known and other names have long disappeared see

the copy dated Sat July 7<sup>th</sup> 1923

I was a member of the Eastbourne & district Motor cycle club, in fact I still am as a Honorary member, being competition secretary for 18 years and a committee member for 30 years, while riding Motor cycle trials on BSA, Greeves, Montesa, and finally Yamaha, around the South east



I still have a original badge.

*Ron W*



*The scans of the entire programme referred to above have been reproduced at more than original size for easier reading in a PDF file viewable from the club website ([Event Archives page](#)); the quality and size of the original do not allow for readable printing in this newsletter as shown by the 'tasters' on this page, which had to be reduced in size to fit! **Ed.***

### PARTICIPATING CLUBS.

EASTBOURNE AND DISTRICT.  
BRIGHTON AND HOVE M.C.C.  
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB.  
KENT AUTOMOBILE CLUB.

#### OFFICIALS :

Clerk of Course.  
F. S. AITKEN.

#### Judges.

W. H. GRINSTEAD. P. ELLISON.  
C. LEWIS. A. A. JEMPSON.  
Conn. C. J. KNIGHT. A. E. KETT.

#### Starters.

A. A. JEMPSON. E. A. FIRRELL.

#### Timekeepers.

A. T. GOLDSMITH. F. POOLE.  
H. V. WARREN. H. PARK.

#### Secretary of Meeting.

H. V. WARREN.

#### Chief Marshal.

A. D. STONHAM.

Competitors will be raced in pairs in numerical order, and timed independently.

### Special Awards.

PRESENTED BY  
EASTBOURNE CORPORATION.  
SILVER CUP. Secs.  
Fastest Time of the Day  
SILVER CUP. Messrs. CAFFYN'S, LTD. Secs.  
Fastest Time by Car  
SILVER CUP. Messrs. PARKINSON & POLSON Secs.  
Fastest Time Amateur Motor Cycle  
SILVER ROSE BOWL. Messrs. LOCKWOOD. Secs.  
Fastest Time Amateur Combination  
SILVER CUP. Messrs. MANSFIELD, LTD. Secs.  
Fastest Time Amateur Cycle Car or Light Car  
SPECIAL PRIZE. Messrs. VINALL'S. Secs.  
Fastest Time Eastbourne Club Amateurs  
SPECIAL PRIZE. EASTBOURNE CORPORATION. Secs.  
Second Fastest Time Eastbourne Club Amateurs  
SPECIAL PRIZE. EASTBOURNE CORPORATION. Secs.  
Fastest Time Eastbourne Club Members  
SPECIAL PRIZE. Messrs. MANSFIELD, LTD. Secs.  
Second Fastest Time Eastbourne Club Members

ALSO

THE CAFFYN CHALLENGE CUP FOR CLASS 14 ;  
And 19 SPECIAL CLASS PRIZES in addition to  
MEDALS presented by Eastbourne & District Motor  
Cycle Club.

## Hibernating

WITH the passing of September 30th more than 250,000 motor-vehicles are laid up for the winter according to official estimates. This involves the Treasury in a loss of more than £1,500,000 in licence duties and petrol tax.

## Firth of Forth Bridge

THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER will be invited to open a new road bridge now being built across the Firth of Forth at Kincardine.

## Eight-cylinder Riley

A CAR which will not be seen by the public until the Motor Show opens is a new saloon-bodied eight-cylinder Riley of 18 h.p. to sell at £450.

## No Blue Buses for London

LONDON will not have blue buses. The rumour, which is denied by London Transport, was due to the running of a blue and gold bus between Wimbledon and Kingston. This bus had been lent for experimental purposes by the makers, whose own colours are blue and gold.

## A Petition

To support the Minister of Transport's proposal to de-restrict certain roads in Birmingham, the Society of United Motorists are compiling a petition in favour of the proposal and require signatures.

## A Curb on Jay Walking

Three miles of road from the junction of Whitechapel High Street and Commercial Road to Bow Bridge are to be equipped along its entire length with pedestrian barriers. There will be pedestrian crossings with studs and beacons at regular intervals, and traffic lights at every road crossing of importance.

## Speeding to Catch Monkeys

A "SPECIAL Circumstance" for not endorsing a licence in a speed case put forward by the defendant was that he had received an urgent telephone message from his bird and pet shop that 100 monkeys had escaped from their cages.

## A 10-h.p. Talbot

Several years ago one of the most popular cars on the road was the 10-h.p. Talbot. Now, we understand, it is intended to include a 10-h.p. model in the Talbot range for 1936. Apart from this newcomer there will be considerable changes in the remainder of the range. The appeal will still be to that large section of the motoring public which prefers cars of the semi sporting type.

## This Law Business.

A MOTORIST commits an offence in not reporting an accident, even if he does not know that an accident had occurred. This is the ruling of the Leeds Stipendiary magistrate.

## The old clock tower at Steyning, an old-world village beneath the South Downs.



## No More Record Attempts.

At a dinner given in his honour, Sir Malcolm Campbell said that now he had reached the 300 mark he would give up further attempts with provisions. If a foreign country beats the record in the near future he will attempt to regain it.

## Special Police for Mersey Tunnel

The Mersey Tunnel is to have its own police force of eighteen men, who will be drawn from employees of the river ferries who have been thrown out of work owing to the decrease in ferry traffic.

## Revise Magisterial Courts

Motor users are now finding themselves again and again in the hands of the police. It is of vital importance that they should be tried by a tribunal whose members at any rate have the faculty of understanding and who are guided by one who is learned in the law. Magisterial courts should be the subject of some immediate inquiry and revision. This view was put forward at the National Road Transport Conference held recently at Southport.

## The Jaguar

A NEW S.S. car known as the "Jaguar" is announced. This has a 2½ litre overhead-valve engine, with a tax of £15.

The ultra-low lines of the S.S. I and S.S. II models have been abandoned with this series. Saloons and a competition model are available from £385.

## Road Construction

A GRANT from the Road Fund has been made towards the cost of widening part of the Colwyn Bay-Abergele road. Portions of the road have already been widened and a viaduct is nearing completion.



SO, ... HOW'S YOUR DAY GOING?