

Friends

From a bygone age

April 2009

Currently showing at Broadfield House Glass Museum, Kingswinford, is an unusual display of motor memorabilia that harks back to the golden age of motoring.

From the 1930s to the 1960s the glass petrol globe, mounted on top of a petrol pump, was a familiar sight in garages up and down the country. Used by the petrol companies to advertise their products, the globes were made in distinctive shapes with a company name or logo printed on the outside, and looked their best when illuminated at night. As pumps were modernised, most globes were destroyed so those that survived are now eagerly sought after by collectors.

The exhibition features seventeen petrol globes from a private collection and most represent companies that have long since vanished—names like Mobil, Cleveland and National Benzole. Other names like Esso and BP are still around today.

Specialist glassware, such as cat's eyes and traffic lights, made by one of the country's last remaining glass factories, Plowden & Thompson, will also be on show.

Coventry Transport Museum and the Black Country Living Museum have both contributed other motoring memorabilia making Broadfield House well worth a visit.

Petrol-Heads: Glass Petrol Globes and Motoring Memorabilia at Broadfield House Glass Museum is on from April 4 to November 1. It is open 12noon to 4pm Tuesday to Sunday and admission is free. Find the museum on the web at www.glassmuseum.org.uk



Vintage advertising: two of the petrol station globes on display at Broadfield House Museum

NEXT MEETING:

Vintage Films
Selected from the archive
by Brian Jackson
Thursday, April 16 at 7.30pm

Coventry Transport Museum

Spring Craft Fair

2nd, 3rd & 4th May
Free admission

Browse through stalls including knitwear, paintings, jewellery, handmade cards and other crafts. Live demonstrations and hands-on activities available.

Open every day 10am - 5pm
Coventry Transport Museum, Millennium Place, Hales Street, Coventry
Further information: www.transport-museum.com
tel: 024 7623 4270

Chairman's Chat

Good news – we have two new committee members. I am delighted to welcome Brian Bromwich, a highly-experienced car restoration expert well known to most of you. I am equally delighted that Terry Baimbridge has agreed to join us. Terry is to be our Health and Safety liaison officer, attending quarterly meetings at the museum and briefing the committee to make sure we all stay on the straight and narrow. Whatever we may think about Health and Safety, if we are to work on museum vehicles on museum premises we have to adhere to museum policy. I know my colleagues on the committee are looking forward to working with our new members.

My plea in the March Newsletter and at our recent AGM for more volunteers has apparently fallen on deaf ears. We have no-one able to devote just one hour a month to updating the Friends website or to co-writing the Friends blog. Just two members have volunteered for outside events. Our current dependence on a small band of helpers is severely harming our plans for future expansion. May I please ask you to reflect on the fact that what you get out of Friends depends on what you put in. Friends is YOUR organisation, run by YOUR committee on YOUR behalf. We do our best but we can't do it all, we need your help.

You can contact me on 01926 511574 or at r.dawe452@btinternet.com – I look forward to hearing from you.

Contacts

Chairman: Richard Dawe 01926 511574
Vice Chairman: Dave Stansfield
Secretary: Lesley Viggers
Treasurer: Sue Scott
Outside events co-ordinator: Richard Dawe
Committee: Brian Jackson, Stan Wilcox, Jean Wilcox, Dave Green, John Viggers
Brian Bromwich, Terry Baimbridge
Museum: tel: 024 7623 4270
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Steamer



Rarety: A 1905 Gardner-Serpollet 18hp Type L Steamer with Tulip Phaeton Coachwork to be auctioned on the 20th at Bonhams

Ardener-Serpollet was a French manufacturer of steam-powered cars in the early 1900s.

In 1896 Leon Serpollet invented and perfected a flash boiler that made steam a much more practical source of power for an automobile. The oil-fired flash boiler fed steam to a very advanced four cylinder enclosed engine similar to the contemporary petrol engine design including poppet valves and an enclosed crankcase.

Serpollet produced his own automobiles under the name Serpollet and Gardner and Serpollet until his death in 1907.

Besides being an inventor and manufacturer, Leon Serpollet became the first driver of a non-electrically powered car to hold the Land Speed Record. His ovoid steam car Oeuf de Pacques (Easter Egg) reached a speed of 75.06 mph over the flying kilometre at Nice, France on April 13, 1902, exceeding the long standing record of Camille Jenatton's La Jamais Contente. (*see also back page*)

Information from web-based Wikipedia

Dave no boy racer

You may have read in the "nationals" about Dave Stansfield's brush with a speed camera when he was on the way home from a charity car rally event last year.

The Daily Mirror's story with the headline "Old racer's 35mph fine in Model T" captured the essence of the unfortunate saga:

"A pensioner was caught speeding in a car so old it hasn't even got a speedometer," reported the paper. "Stunned 67-year-old Dave Stansfield who is 19 years younger than his Model-T Ford was snapped doing 35mph in a 30mph zone. He reckoned it couldn't go that fast so went to court in a bid to avoid the £60 fine—but ended up paying more.

Dave said: "When it was new it could do 46mph but it's nearly 90 years old now. I couldn't believe it when I got the letter. I was shocked. I'm no boy racer or Lewis Hamilton. I have great respect for the law and road safety."

Many believe that driving according to the road conditions ahead is clearly more important than allowing the speedometer to rise a few miles per hour above the limit. A Model-T doesn't even have a speedometer to check the precise speed.

"I couldn't prove I wasn't doing that speed," said Dave. "Going to court was the wrong thing. I still got three points and £138 in fines and costs."

It's just 50 years ago this month that the Standard Motor Company launched the Herald with a touch of theatrical drama at the Royal Albert Hall. A team of four apprentices had been trained to assemble a specially prepared car in an amazing three and a half minutes before the very eyes of an audience of motor agents and the media.

The publicity slogan aptly described this new light car: "a new experience in motoring".

The project was launched in early 1957 when directors decided to work towards a mass production car with greatly improved safety, parking, handling and service features, together with really modern styling and comfort.

Top Italian stylist Michelotti was engaged and his designs were welded to the engineering ideas of director of engineering Harry Webster and his team. Everything would be new except the well-proven 10 hp engine and gearbox.

Less than six months after the prototype body arrived from

Italian line



Archive Service

Archivist Lizzie Hazlehurst announces an extension of the services offered by the museum to researchers.

She said: "Our archive is a fantastic resource for anyone wanting to learn more about Coventry's transport industry, family history and British road transport in general.

"You can now have access to our archive in two ways:

"Research can be carried out in the museum's reading room or archive staff can do the research for you."

The Archive Service can also provide you with Certificates of vehicle authenticity for many vehicles registered in Coventry and Solihull up to the 1970s.

Production certificates can be provided for Humber, Sunbeam Talbot, Singer and Armstrong Siddeley models.

The large photographic resource can now be searched on the museum website and prints can be provided.

"We are always working to develop our knowledge of Coventry manufacturers. So if you have information you think may be relevant please let us know," she added.

There is a wealth of information about the archive service on the website: www.transport-museum.com/archive.

For all archive enquiries a form can be filled in online.

Turin in the December of 1957, first production vehicles were running at MIRA. Further punishing tests took place in Africa from Cape Town and over the Sahara.

By the first of January 1959 assembly lines were being laid at Canley to produce cars for sale. They were delivered by night to distributors all over Britain to maintain a high degree of secrecy. Alick Dick, managing director of the Coventry company, predicted the car would set new standards of motoring and have world-wide appeal.

Standard spent something like £5 million on the project, including new production facilities at various factories.

Herald features include:

Reversion to a separate chassis onto to which seven body units and three major assemblies are mounted, allowing a damaged part to be removed and replaced at lower cost (insurance companies quickly recognised the advantages and quoted low premiums); the Herald dispensed with greasing by using nylon or pre-packed bearings

“sealed for life” (innovative in 1959); the Herald used an adjustable steering column which collapses under severe impact after the dished steering wheel absorbed the initial shock (long before air bags); and the pressed fibre dashboard would also give way under similar conditions.

Two versions of the car were produced initially—a four-seater saloon at £702 including tax and a two-seater coupe with a price tag of £730.

Brief specification: Unladen kerb weight 16½ cwt.
 Turning circle less than a London taxi at 25 feet
 Acceleration: 20-40 mph in top gear was 12.7 secs
 0-50mph through gears 19.2 secs
 Maximum top gear gradient 1 in 12.4
 Maximum speed 70.9 mph
 Touring fuel consumption 36.4 mpg

at the Royal Albert Hall



BRILLIANT STYLING PLUS...

- * Independent suspension on all four wheels
- * Better lock than a London taxi
- * 93% visibility
- * Huge boot—and rear seat folds down to give estate car luggage capacity
- * Separate chassis
- * No grease nipples

My first sight of the car's crisp distinctive Italian lines was in the experimental department at the Banner Lane factory in the autumn of 1958. Several months

into my apprenticeship I was detailed to work in the body drawing office.

My board was next to the styling

department where a clay modeller created designs of the future.

Michelotti was a regular visitor to the studio, a distinguished figure in his well cut suit.

The following year when the old Standard shadow factory at Banner Lane passed into the hands of Massey-Ferguson the design offices and experimental were removed to the former Massey building, opposite the Standard Cinema.

Further testing and development was carried out here that resulted in the convertible, the 1200 and 12/50 models, the Vitesse and of course derivatives on a similar chassis—the Spitfire and GT6.

At Canley a purpose-built assembly hall alongside the railway line was soon completed. Here the painted bodies were received on the top floor of the building and called up by a computer system according to sales schedules. Each body was then lowered onto the assembly track below. Unlike its predecessor the Standard Ten that moved in line on the track, the Herald moved sideways on an overhead line with mechanical parts fitted from the floor below. *KD*



On April 20 world famous auction house Bonhams returns to the RAF Museum Hendon for what promises to be a notable sale of classics and collector's items. Headlining the auction is the two-seat Vickers-Supermarine Spitfire TR Mark IX, which has benefited from a zero-hours ground-up restoration to perfect two-seat TR Mark IX specification; in effect an historic warbird absolutely ready-to-fly and in truly sparkling flightline condition.

Among the outstanding road vehicles is the ex-George Milligen 1904 Gardner-Serpollet Steam (see page 2) But star of the magnificent array of vehicles will be cars from the La Vignette Collection that includes some of the best SS and Jaguar marques around. Diversity is the watchword and here are just three marques up for sale on the 20th. Just to wet your appetite.



These days replica cars are all the vogue and this example with more than a passing resemblance to the Bugattis of the 1920s (pictured left) has to be one of the most extraordinary. Under its beautifully finished red bodywork is a 1,600cc, rear-mounted Volkswagen engine. The car's cockpit is upholstered in beige leather and furnished with a walnut veneered dashboard, with cream-faced retro-style instrumentation. Further retro-styling includes a fold-flat windscreen, twin aero screens and blade-spoked wheels in the style of the Bugatti Grand Prix cars. The leather-strapped bonnet accommodates luggage. Estimated price at auction: £6,000 to 9,000.

Diversity at Bonhams



For those with a passion for three-wheelers this Grinnall has to be the ultimate machine. The Scorpion project was the brainchild of Mark Grinnall of Grinnall Specialist Cars, Bewdley in Worcestershire. Grinnall's reputation had formerly centred on his involvement with Triumph TR7s and TR8s. The Grinnall was designed to provide ultimate passenger comfort in a three-wheel design with super-bike performance. The Kevlar-reinforced glassfibre coachwork was to the design of Steve Harper while the chassis and mechanics were the work of Grinnall and Neil Williams. This trike is powered by the BMW K Series K1100 16 valve engine. Ordered new in 1995, the invoice price was £14,481 and in 1996 this vehicle was further upgraded at a cost of £1,735, the work included fitting a Micron exhaust and performance chip, carbon fibre mudguards and headlamp pods, Momo steering wheel boss and Luftmeister lightweight clutch plate. Estimated price: £4,000 to 6,000

The 1934 Motor Show at Olympia was the first year that SS Cars Ltd appeared in the manufacturers' section rather than the coachbuilders' section of the exhibition, this following Swallow's change of name to SS Cars Ltd. This was a landmark step for William Lyons, and was marked by the presence at that show of the Airline Saloon (pictured below). This new model was offered with either 16hp or 20hp engine options, the latter costing only a modest £5 extra. The Airline Saloon joined the Four-light Saloon and Tourer to complete the SS range. Tested by *The Motor* the new car achieved a genuine 80mph at the Brooklands Circuit.

all photos by Simon Clay



This particular Airline has been around the world and was once in the Tinaka Collection, Japan.

The car returned to the UK in the late 1980s and was the subject of substantial restoration work by A B Price Ltd of Studley in the 1990s. When new it had a price tag of £350. Estimated price at auction: £50,000 to 60,000

A full list of vehicles and memorabilia can be found on the web:
ukcars@bonhams.com
and automobilia@bonhams.com