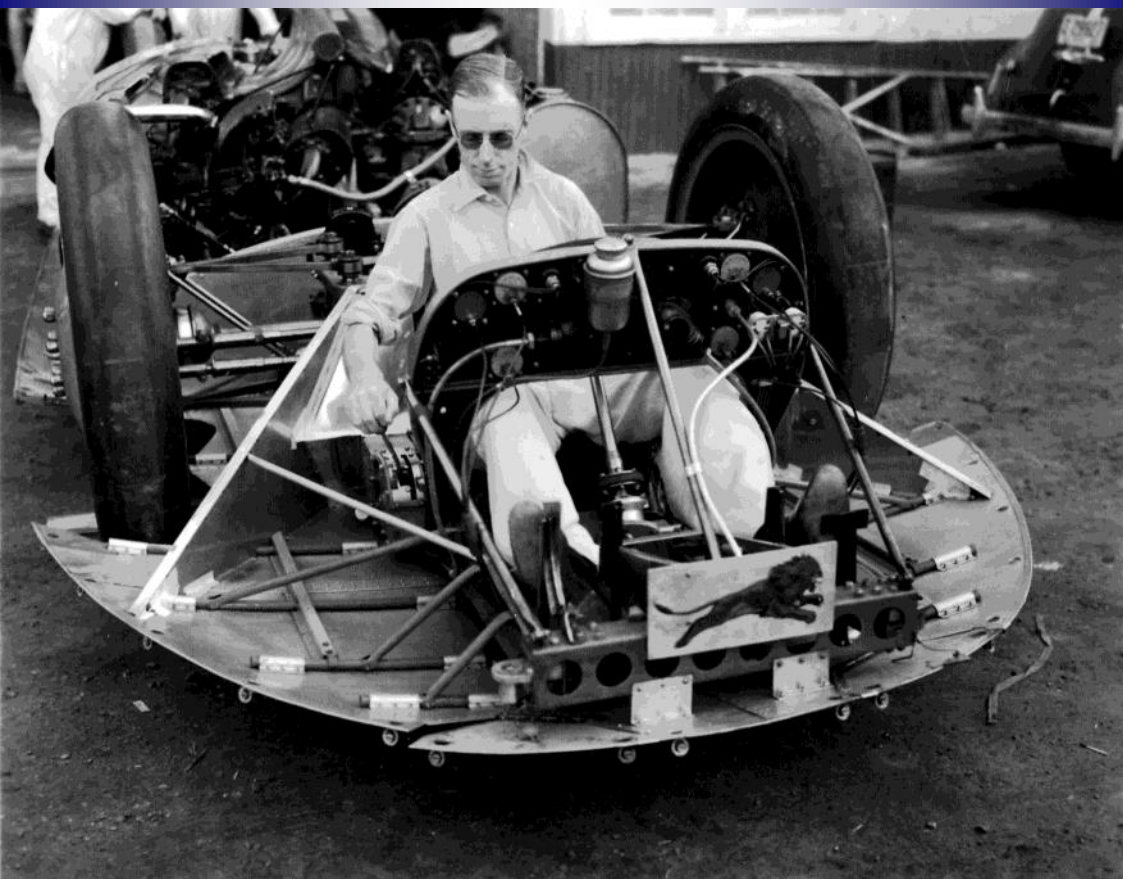




OWNERS CLUB BULLETIN



March / April 2023

RAILTON OWNERS CLUB

LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

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RAILTON OWNERS CLUB

The premier British club for enthusiasts of all
Brough Superior, Railton, Hudson, Essex and Terraplane
motor vehicles.

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The front cover photo (courtesy of Sally Railton Joslin) shows Reid Railton in the driving seat of the Land Speed Record car before its first record attempt in August 1939. The car was sponsored by California's Gilmore Oil Company which sold fuel and oil under the Red Lion brand. Their logo of the leaping lion was painted onto the nose of the car's bodywork and is also shown on the plaque in this photo.

The rear cover continues the theme of reprints from the covers of contemporary motoring journals. This example, drawn by [Peter] Crosby, is from *The Autocar* of September 23rd 1938 shows a Fairmile III with its simple chrome strip and absence of pram irons.

R.O.C. Website: www.railton.org

Changes to the user name and password for the Members' area have recently changed and we are advised by e-mail. Please contact the Editor, the Chairman or the Secretary if a reminder is required.



Railton Owners Club

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EDITORIAL

Those of you who subscribe to *The Automobile* may have seen the “Back on the Road” feature on my 1933 Singer tourer in the October 2022 issue. I was contacted recently by the author Zack Stiling asking if I knew of other possible candidate cars for future features. Knowing that the restoration of Peter Phipps’ Abbey-bodied car is nearly complete, I put them in touch and I expect to read about it in a future issue. No doubt Peter will keep us posted.

Following the Club’s difficulties arranging a meeting at Brooklands as described by the Chairman in the last issue, Peter Phipps raised the matter with a friend who is also the Chairman of the Museum’s trustees. I also mentioned it when I reported on the V.S.C.C.’s New Year Driving Tests for their Bulletin. We obviously both touched a raw nerve and as a result, Mick Jarvis & I met with the Chairman, Sir Gerry Acher in early March to rebuild the relationship. We were told about the vision for the future of the museum and shown an example of what Gerry hopes will be the future of the exhibiting style.

Closer to home, measures have already been put in place to prevent a recurrence of our communications problems and there is a general acceptance that the Museum must have closer relations with car clubs. Having missed the opportunity to join us in celebrating the 90th anniversary of a marque which is so closely associated with the circuit, we agreed that another opportunity might present itself in 2025 if Brooklands decide to mark the 90th anniversary of the Napier-Railton setting the lap record. We agreed that there should be a parallel exhibition on Reid Railton to recognise his contributions to the design of this car and many others. Time will tell if this anniversary and exhibition will actually materialise but Gerry will propose them at an upcoming Trustee Board meeting.

Neil Thorp

CLOSING DATE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MAY / JUNE BULLETIN IS 14TH MAY.

SECRETARY’S NOTES

As I sit tapping away at my keyboard on March 9th quite sizeable snowflakes are falling gently past the window and Bewdley’s riverside is slowly disappearing under a white blanket. So, for today, the unheated workshop at The Green is abandoned and thoughts turn to prospects for the summer to come.

Planning for the National Meeting over the weekend of July 21st to 23rd is now well advanced. I am pleased to say that the excellent deal negotiated with the Stourport Manor Hotel has already attracted several bookings for the Friday and Saturday nights and I begin to be hopeful that we might muster a respectable attendance to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Railton. Details, for those yet to make their hotel bookings, will be found in the Calendar entry on page 7.

The Friday lunch-time venue is still being explored with a number of country inns to be investigated – a dreadful chore I know, but someone has to do it! Depending on the final choice I will then organise one or two optional local visits en-route for the Stourport Manor where we will aim to arrive around 4.00 pm.

As already announced, we will be spending the Saturday joining this year's Classic Nostalgia meeting at Shelsley Walsh, where an exciting mix of historic hill climb competition cars is being lined up for what will be, for competitors, an invitation-only event. For this, their annual flagship event, The Midland Automobile Club promises a range of on-site attractions with live-stage happenings, music and a trade stand area as well as a full competition programme. Given the short drive from our hotel, we will be aiming to be on site by 10.00am to take up our reserved space for the Club display. To justify the attention being promised in the programme for the Railton marque and our special anniversary, I have bravely promised a minimum of ten cars. It would be good to think that members in the West Midlands area who may be reluctant to commit to the whole weekend package will nevertheless turn out this time to swell our numbers for the day at the hill climb. I will need those numbers by the end of May to secure a bloc of discounted entry passes for Club members at £15 per head – so please let me know as soon as possible if you are able to attend. For those who wish, trailer parking will be available at The Green just two miles away.

For the Sunday I am planning a gentle tour of the Worcestershire countryside – perhaps 30 miles or so – before we reassemble for a pre-arranged visit and display of the cars at the spectacular site of Witley Court. In the late 19th century, as the home of the Earls of Dudley, Witley was one of England's great country houses, rivalling even Blenheim Palace in its splendour. (Google it!) The Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) with his entourage was a frequent visitor to Witley's lavish house parties. The great house was abandoned in 1937 after a disastrous fire. What one sees today is a spectacular shell conserved by English Heritage and enhanced by restored gardens and a remarkable restored fountain which is launched regularly during summer weekends.



Untouched by the fire is the adjoining magnificent 18th century church with a breath-taking baroque interior and nearby a privately-run café with plenty of choice for a light lunch. I have persuaded English Heritage managers that a line-up of Railtons in front of the great portico of the Court would recreate a scene from the 1930s and be an extra attraction for Sunday afternoon visitors.

In the midst of all this planning I found myself back at Shelsley in early February for a “photoshoot” as the result of an approach from *Jaguar World* magazine. They had been tipped off that the Secretarial motor collection includes the rarest version of the XJS – a six-cylinder, manual transmission cabriolet, of which only a few hundred were produced in the mid-



eighties. My own, A15 BJJ, is even rarer for having been specified with the “sportspack” suspension option and rarer still for a rear seat conversion originally designed for Princess Diana. This was apparently to accommodate the two young princes in her own cabriolet, which is now in the Jaguar Heritage Collection at Gaydon. So it was that their editor and his camera man spent nearly three hours at Shelsley Walsh one February morning taking what must have been hundreds of shots of my old Jaguar under the most sophisticated of lighting. For those not tempted to buy the Spring issue of the magazine this one image gives an idea of the way in which A15 BJJ will apparently be enjoying a starring role!

Members will recall that the Club visit to the famous Worcestershire hill climb in July arises from our disappointment at the collapse of the Brooklands based “Plan A” for the 90th anniversary meeting. So, for my **Archive piece** this time, I was intrigued to come across the following in Chairman Ken Mummery’s column for the **March 1973** Bulletin just **50 years** ago:-

“to celebrate our 40th Anniversary, The Brooklands Society has invited us as a Club to their Annual Reunion at Brooklands Track on Sunday June 24th. I quote from a

letter received from the Secretary: “Our Committee has agreed that the Railton Owners Club can attend our next Reunion on June 24th and we are very pleased to welcome them’. Now this really is quite something and we are greatly indebted to the Secretary, Jimmy Dunn, for having arranged this with his Committee”.

Apparently this event was never open to the public and the invitation from the Society, with an opportunity to take part in “Demonstration Runs”, was seen as something of an honour for the R.O.C. and recognition of the special place of the Railton name in the Brooklands annals. It would be good to think such recognition might one day be revived.

Max Hunt

CALENDAR 2023

21st to 23rd July 2023

National Meeting and A.G.M. at Shelsley Walsh

We will be celebrating the 90th anniversary of the first Railton car in conjunction with the Midland Automobile Club’s flagship Classic Nostalgia event and hill climb meeting. Our own programme will begin with the traditional informal Friday lunchtime gathering at a Worcestershire hostelry yet to be determined. Hotel accommodation has been reserved at the Stourport Manor where the R.O.C. has been well looked-after previously. The package specially negotiated for members offers a dinner-bed-and-breakfast tariff of £105 per person for each of the two nights (Friday/Saturday) based on shared occupancy of a double room. Individual bookings should be made directly with the hotel (tel. 01299 289955) where our contact is Katie Hughes; members should identify themselves when booking as part of the Railton Club party. The Shelsley hill climb is little more than 15 minutes drive from the hotel. Secure parking facilities will be made available at the Green Business Centre (just two miles from Shelsley) for those trailering their cars to the event.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

New Members

We welcome two new members this time bringing back into the Club cars we have known in the past:-

1249 Martin Zondler In der Kühweid 4, 76661, Germany.

Martin is the new owner of the 1938 Railton 6 Roadster Special which we saw when Nils Laue brought it over for the National Meeting in Llangollen in 2017.

1250 Andy Saunders. Personal details are still awaited, but Andy has joined as the new owner of the splendid Hudson Terraplane dhc featured in the Market Place section of the last Bulletin. This car was previously known to the Club when owned by Harry Lapsley from 1991 to 2012. It looks to be in fine order.



THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

In the previous edition of the Bulletin there was a piece by Neil Thorp entitled *Data Sheet Queries*. Some interesting stuff there, in particular the final paragraph mentioned the importance of tyre age with regard to road safety. I thought it might be worth checking my tyres so I learnt how to interpret the code via the internet and then went to inspect MMT's tyres. They looked perfect, loads of tread, no cracking and presumably fit for purpose.

Basically the code is of four digits; the first 2 reflect the week of manufacture in any year and second 2 digits are the year of manufacture itself – so a code such as 0821 would be a tyre made in February 2021. Easy! Then I saw I had a problem – my tyres only had a 3 digit code. Back to the internet and I was astounded to find that the 3 digit tyre code meant the tyre was pre-2000 where the first 2 digits were week of manufacture and the 3rd digit was the last digit of year of manufacture. I bought MMT in 2009 and have not replaced the “good” tyres so this was likely to be correct. Even worse, the 3 digit code was 192 – meaning the tyres dated from May 1992 at the very latest but, as an additional triangle added by most manufacturers to denote the 90s was missing, they were more likely from May 1982 – over 40 years old!

So replacement was in order. Neil recommended that I should talk to Mike Stenhouse about the best tyres for MMT. It was obvious from Mike that there was a lot to consider when choosing replacements such as car weight, driving speed, tyre size etc. I told Mike that MMT was currently running on Pirelli Cinturatos, a 1960 vintage high performance radial used back in the day by marques such as Aston Martin and Maserati. Without hesitation Mike recommended to replace the tyres on a like-for-like basis as going back to cross ply tyres would transform the handling of MMT and probably not for the better. Mike directed me to Longstone Tyres who had the 185VR16 Cinturatos I needed in stock. They highly recommended the tyres too. Longstone are based in Doncaster which is a bit far to go for a tyre change, but Longstone agreed to ship the them to a tyre shop local to me free of charge. I also bought new inner tubes which seemed sensible!

Two days later MMT went to Maidenhead Tyres for the fitting. I drove the car into the shop and every fitter promptly stopped work to come and inspect the Railton. There was some competition as to who would get to fit the tyres as well. I went off and about 30 minutes later got a telephone call. No, the car was fine I was told (I had nightmares of it falling off a hoist or something) but I was asked did I want to salvage the old tyres? No, I did not and the fitter just said fine as they were going to have to drill out the valves which were completely stuck to the rims and the tyres would probably be damaged. It highlighted what poor condition the tyres and tubes were actually in.

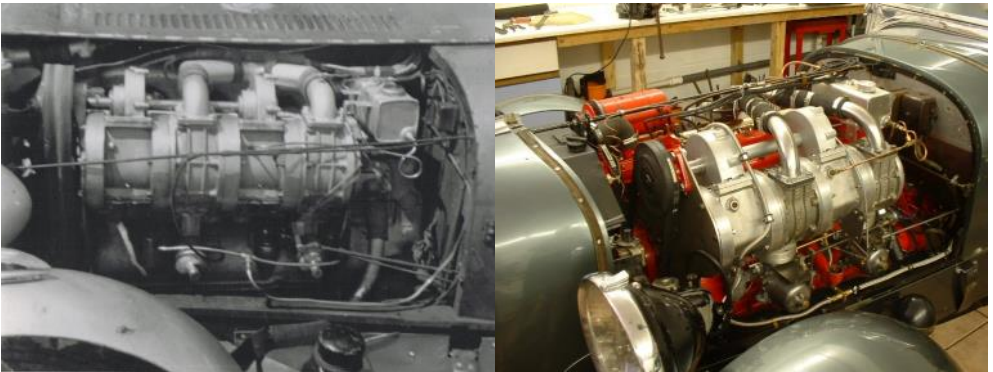
I discovered what a difference the new tyres had made when I braked for the first time back on the road and nearly hit the windscreen. The old ones must have been so hard that nearly all adhesion was missing. So a very happy ending, except that this upgrade cost me nearly £2000 for tyres, tubes and fitting. Be aware but be safe!

Mick Jarvis

CARBURETTER LAYOUTS

The picture of EPA 93 on page 34 prompts this brief discussion to which I hope others may contribute in later Bulletins.

It is further prompted by my own issues with layout on the Spikins Hudson Special. This originally had up-draught S.U. carburettors which I have re-created but this configuration is a nightmare. Fuel separates from the mixture that is in the suction chamber, in any other arrangement it then merely returns to the inlet duct upstream of the venturi but in up-draught it cannot do this and causes hydraulic lock. The “solution” is to drill a small hole at the lowest

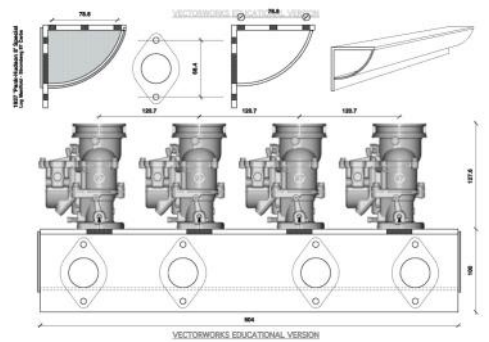


The Spikins Hudson Special inlet layout in 1938 left and as re-created in 2003

part of the suction chamber base so that the neat fuel can drain out. If draining is not adequate then the pistons suffer hydraulic lock. On my last long journey the car faltered every time I turned left at speed and puffed out black smoke. The fuel above the piston is flung to the top of the chamber when turning right so there is not an issue then! In extreme cases (slow speed tight left hand bend) it stalled and would not restart until the fuel had drained. On a hill climb I can ensure that the chambers are fully empty before I leave the start line but this is not possible during a long journey. I recently tried to reposition the carburettors to be side-draught but there is so little space to do this that it was found to be impossible so I am currently looking for other solutions to the problem.

Jim Scammell has provided data on the induction layout of the monoposto special project he is constructing (see top of the next page) which is inspired by the Napier Railton's shape.

Jim's starting point is the fitment of four brand new reproduction Stromberg 97s from Clive Prew. If by chance the engine proves to be over-carburetted, then he will step back to three after rejigging the inlet manifold. The current “log” manifold design was copied from one fitted to a US dragster with a straight-8 Buick engine. In cross section it is a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a log and is fabricated in aluminium (see CAD sketch).



Graeme Whiting has been looking at alternative arrangements for his own car and is gathering information on alternatives. He does not particularly want to use an exhaust layout like EPA 93. A Hudson-engined single seater recently for sale on an American website has the layout shown right, which overcomes that problem.



The layout of the Indianapolis Hudson displayed in the Louwman Museum in The Hague, Netherlands is shown on the left.

It will be interesting to see what solution Graeme eventually adopts.

TED LESTER'S MEMORIES OF BROUGH SUPERIOR

Over a period of ten years Ted Lester, sometime chief engineer at Brough Superior, and member David Bingham had many conversations regarding Ted's years with George Brough. In 1999 he asked David to record his memories and David has kindly given permission to reproduce some of them in the Bulletin.

Extracts have appeared in previous Bulletins; this one includes accounts of efforts to prepare for trialling with a sidecar.



Ted Lester sitting on the first production 1925 Brough Superior SS 100 Alpine Grand Sports.

Testing for Sidecar Trials

George Brough never did anything that he had less than a 75% chance of succeeding in. With the sidecar job he set about the matter with considerable effort and, knowing the courses, we would go into Derbyshire looking for similar conditions on which to practise. We would go to places like the Old Chesterfield Road near Chatsworth and sort out all our gearing ratios. I soon had a kit in the chair, rope, sprockets, and chains, tools and parts that were liable to failure were also carried. We would sometimes spend three days over a weekend to get the outfit just right.

Being with George at the start of a trial was a wonderful experience. Everyone held him in the highest regard and would ask him how certain hills would ride, gear ratios etc. We had always pre-tested similar hills and he knew exactly what he was going to do. However George gave off an air of total confidence and would say that he never bothered about such things because his Brough Superior could cope with all eventualities. He always insisted I had the outfit looking immaculate and I must say that the job of keeping the machine clean caused you to inspect every bit of the bike and find bolts loose etc.

On one occasion we had been out on a test run and had 'happened' to call at a pub in Shardlow for a sandwich supper and a pint. I discovered that this was not a casual call and he was very friendly with the landlady. I was teetotal and just had a soft drink and sandwich then went out and made myself useful sorting out the bike after the day's efforts. George had the one pint, but unfortunately had it refilled several times! By the time we were heading for home it was dark and he was settled back in the chair taking his ease.

As we came through Beeston we passed a combination standing under a street lamp with a man looking at the engine and his family standing on the pavement. George tugged my

trousers and I leant down to hear him ask if it was one of ours. I told him that I thought so and he waved a finger in a circle for me to turn back. Well I had had enough of the day by now but I turned round.

We stopped the bike and asked what the problem was. The man said that the bike had started to run on one cylinder and a quick inspection showed a broken valve spring. George then asked where they lived and they came from Lenton. He told them to get in the sidecar and asked me to get the rope and we were to tow them home. When we reached their house the man asked George if he was George Brough and he replied that he was. After some conversation George said that we would tow the bike back to Haydn Road and the man was to phone next day.

By lunchtime I had changed the valve spring and under instructions from George had cleaned and serviced the bike. When the chap arrived by bus to collect the bike he couldn't believe his eyes. George refused any payment and the man went on his way a very happy chappie. George never ceased to amaze me with his actions.

Land's End Trial

As we were heading towards Exeter and coming past Stonehenge, the heavens opened and the rain came down like stair rods. It was almost impossible to see the road although we were quite dry as we had very good weatherproofing. As we battled along, the bike cut onto one cylinder and I said to George "What's up?", my immediate thought was "Why the hell didn't it occur an hour since when we had no rain". As we slowed, a pub loomed out of the gloom; there was a light in one of the windows. We carried on for about a mile when George pulled up at the side of the road "We are only going on one cylinder". "Yes, but we've got another one." George replied "I'm not going any further" and I asked him why not and he said "Well it's more than a spark plug" and indeed it was because a valve spring had broken. I replied "Well it won't take me long to change that". The only problem was that we hadn't got one. However if we could make Taunton on one cylinder we had an official stop where I might find a garage to obtain a suitable spring. We had a heated debate whether we would make Taunton and whether I would be able to get a spring from there anyway. Well, I argued that there were garages all along the route to Taunton and we would undoubtedly strike it lucky. There followed a silence so I lifted my poncho skirt up and pulled myself up onto a gate and lit a fag. This was with some difficulty as it was still belting down with rain. After a while listening to the silence broken by the rain I said "So we've written it off then have we?" "Yes" replied George.

In the silence I realised that George was past forty and lived a high life style not becoming to a serious competitor. He could still ride as well as ever, but not for periods of sustained effort. Even as his career drew to a close it was still rather special to be passenger to him. After a long pause I replied "Well you have given up, but this machine is going to Land's End if I have to pull the buggie there". "Well we're not going back to that pub or we will be out of time. You get in the chair and I'll get us to Taunton." "That will be of no value, if you do that we'll be disqualified."

Anyway, back to the pub we went. The publican was drunk behind the bar and some farmer types were playing cards with the landlady and another lady. Another lady was sitting on the settee knitting. They all looked disapproving of us, except for the drunken landlord who was the only one inclined to pay us any courtesy. We discovered that they only had one bedroom for rent so after discussing the matter with the landlord George nodded to me and said "It's the settee in the kitchen for you, Ted, that's your bed for the night". Well it looked alright to me considering the weather outside, and there was a roaring fire in the kitchen anyway. I was dead beat and after we had eaten supper I lay on the settee and got comfortable as I had no wish to stay in the bar.

The next morning George appeared for breakfast. "Good night young-un?" I said "Yes it was very comfortable."

"Well my room was like sleeping in Iceland. My bloody feet were five inches out of the end of the bed."

I had been woken early by the cleaning woman coming in and had a wash and brush up in the kitchen at about 5.30am. Eventually I went out for a breath of fresh air and across the road was a disused chapel that had been converted to a garage of sorts. Why we hadn't noticed it the night before must have been due to the dark and the rain. Anyway it couldn't have been more convenient and what's more there were sounds of life. I went in and there was a youth pottering about and I asked him if they had any valve springs that I could compare with for a broken inlet valve spring from an 8 hp JAP engine. He went out into a shed at the back and his father appeared and pointed to a string of valve springs hanging on a nail on the wall. Well they looked close and, following a conversation where I used the good name of George Brough, he suggested I bring the bike over and use his workshop. Well fortune smiles sometime and one of the springs was close enough so by the time George appeared I had the bike running and fully cleaned down. It was by now a beautiful morning, not at all like the previous night. He came out and found me with the bike and said "You've cleaned up have you young-un?", "Yes," I said "I got up early and kept busy until someone arrived to cook breakfast."

Two and Three Day Trial at Minehead 1929

Three weeks before the start of the trial, George came into the works one Saturday morning and asked me to get the trials outfit ready for a test run. "We're going south for a little ride on Monday. Make sure you have tools, parts and sprockets."

George knew the area quite well and we rode down to the vicinity of the coming trial near Minehead and worked our way round the various known hills. Two new hills were to be included this year and these were earmarked for special attention. Clarksham was one and Grabless the other. We cleared Clarksham but Grabless defeated us. If you were pushing an ordinary motorbike and sidecar you wouldn't have got round the corner because you couldn't get the front end up to get it round. We attempted the corner and I was thrown out of the sidecar two or three times. Eventually we gave up and took our ease sitting on a fallen tree stump. The weather had been wet for some time but on this day it was dry although

underfoot it was a very slippery sheep track on a steep hill. After pondering the situation I sketched out a frame design with a twig to alter the rake of the front wheel which would enable us to round the corner. Once round the bend we could clear the section. George agreed to the plan and said we had better get back and get started, which we did. George had arranged to meet up with Eddie Edlington at a Minehead restaurant for a meal. Of course people were in their finery dining at table when we strolled in with our oil skins and waders. George waved the menu aside and said what plain meats have you? The waitress reeled off beef, ham and lamb. "Well please take three of your largest plates and fill them with a meat selection and also we would like fourteen boiled eggs." I ate four eggs and the others had five each. Of course George washed his meal down with several refills of ale so I knew who was driving back from Minehead that night.

The first of the two hills provided quite an obstacle but was not un-rideable. However, the second hill proved to be completely unbeatable by G.B and the outfit. A quarter way up there was a right angle bend round a tree which was hemmed in by a wall. G.B. tried every trick in the book, urging me to heave the chair round the tree, but whatever we tried we could not negotiate the obstacle. We then took a break whilst we studied the problem. Suddenly G.B. urged me to help him manhandle the bike and sidecar round the tree to see if it was physically possible to get round. We shoved and tugged and, after lifting the machine on its side, worked out that a shorter wheel-base, narrow outfit was required.

Further up the same hill I was taking a severe denting trying to keep body and soul together and the sidecar wheel on the ground, whilst George thrashed on up the hill. Three quarters of the way up he stopped for a breather and I offered to take the controls with George in the sidecar. I reasoned that I would at least get to the top in one piece and he would get a rest. "Not likely young-un," said George "I've seen enough of you trying to stay in the chair." We eventually came onto metalled road and lit upon one of George's favorite signs. A pub sign. Pulling swiftly up to the front door he parked the outfit and declared a successful trip. "Well let's have a pint before we set off home." he declared. I knew the problem by now, it was how many times the pint jar was filled. I was teetotal in those days and knew that I would be driving from then on.

Returning home after dark on the Sunday we were progressing North, heading for Stratford-upon-Avon, with me taking a spell in the chair when, out of the gloom, I observed a lady standing at the side of her car waving her arms and crying out for help. Unusually for George when talking to a lady, he called back "we're in the same fix as you dear" and swept past down a long hill. It was then that I realised why he heard the conversation so clearly – the engine on the Brough was silent.

"What's the matter?" asked G.B. "Can you see anything wrong with the motor?"

"There's nothing wrong with the motor" I replied, "the problem is that you didn't stop for petrol before it was dark."

"You were driving then!" replied G.B. as the bike swept down the hill.

There was no need arguing, or reminding him that he had refused me permission to stop at the last petrol pump. "What will we do now?" I asked, just as a house with three petrol pumps

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came into view. Closer inspection revealed that the house had lights on and a bungalow next door was in darkness.

"I'll take the house" said G.B., "you take the bungalow." I went with some fear of the possibility of guard dogs but the darkened bungalow windows revealed the empty sitting room. Repeated knocking on the door failed to raise anyone so, returning to the bike, I waited for G.B. Things looked hopeful as G.B. could be seen talking to someone by the light of an open door. However, hopes were soon at a low ebb when G.B. reported back that there was only a youth in the home who was swotting for examinations and he was not connected to the fuel pumps as they were owned by the neighbours in the bungalow.

Clearly we were now in some difficulty. "Well" said G.B. "if we're going to be here all night it's my turn for the chair."

"Well I'm not giving up until I'm outside 15 Byron Street" I replied.

"Then you'd better get pushing" came the quick reply.

However, G.B. was not usually one to give up easily, only when the last pint of beer was the one too many. The pump was one of those with semi-circular doors, which fold across the front when not in use. The proprietor had, reasonably enough, fixed a secure looking padlock onto the doors of not only this pump, but the other two as well. G.B. said that we were not to do any criminal damage or we could well be locked away for theft. I told him we were in a desperate state and this called for desperate action. G.B. began to warm to the task and was not to be left stranded. He called for wire cutters or a tyre lever and a hammer. I rummaged inside the sidecar and produced the required items, which G.B. took up with gusto.

"It's only a Woolworth's lock" he said. One sharp crack against the suitably wedged lever on the lock barrel and the broken lock fell to the ground. "I'm not taking the blame if we get caught" he said, "you are the one who won't be stranded". He then decided to investigate the glass container that measured the petrol. "Crank the handle young-un" he said. He then got impatient and whilst I cranked he took up the pump hose and poked his finger into the nozzle. After half a minute furious cranking the oscillating handle there was no sign of petrol in the sight glass. Nothing was happening and we were scratching in the dark. Suddenly I saw the sight glass fill and the overhead tank could be heard to be filling. G.B. immediately became more enthusiastic as the tank filled, but still there was no sign of petrol at the nozzle. He didn't know what he was doing, but continued pulling and poking in the cabinet.

"What's wrong with the bloody thing Ted" he asked. It was then when I heard a fearful rush of liquid and a blaspheming scream from a petrol-soaked G.B. who was now rolling on the ground in a pool of petrol. Jumping to his feet he proceeded to inform me of my illegitimate beginnings, by the time things quieted down two gallons of petrol had been discharged onto the forecourt. "We're not here to kill the b... weeds" shouted G.B.

Eventually we managed to tank up, brim full, with probably as much petrol spilled on the forecourt, and I was nominated to get us back to Nottingham. I settled into a fast rate of knots in order to separate us from the scene of the crime. Fortunately neither the boy in the

house, nor the lady out of petrol appeared so we were clear away. We sped along in the dark and made good time to Stratford; as we approached the Avon Bridge the threads in the aluminum exhaust cooler stripped and the pipe blew off. This woke G.B. in the sidecar "What are you doing now?" he enquired.

"Can't you hear?" I replied.

"Well that's buggered it then" came the terse reply.

We coasted to a halt at the mid-point of the bridge. The cooler had an inherent design fault in that the aluminum thread was very fine and was screwed to the outside of the cylinder head, rather than inside, where it would lock itself on due to its differential expansion.

G.B. was now rummaging in the nose of the chair and suddenly held aloft a spare cooler. "Here you are young-un, we've got a spare, get it on as quick as you can." With that he settled down in the sidecar and went back to sleep. The bridge was one of those with balustrades rather than filled sides so the wind was blowing through fit to cut a man in half. So whilst I was freezing cold my fingers were burned on the hot engine.

After a miserable struggle I managed to get the exhaust sorted and packed the tools away in the roll. I packed up the tools and swung my leg over the bike to kick it into life when I saw G.B.'s hand come out of the side-car holding a peeled orange. "Here you are, Ted, you deserve this for your efforts". I took one look at the freezing orange and told him I needed warming up, not cooling down. I took the orange and winged it into the Avon. With that I swung the bike into action and made record time back to Nottingham. We had a happy outcome as G.B. won the trial and was the only one to 'clean' the tree/wall obstacle.

Some weeks later I was busy building a machine in the factory when G.B. wandered up.

"Do you know where I have been today?" he asked. Clearly I didn't. Obviously he had been on an important mission because he was very smartly dressed in a suit, and there was no one smarter than him when he was taking Mrs. Brough anywhere. The weather was not good so I thought he wouldn't have been to Pendine. However he often used to visit Pendine with Mrs. Brough and Peggy at short notice, often setting out late at night for a clear run. It was one of their favorite places to visit.

"Well, you remember the night when we ran out of petrol? I have just got back from taking Mrs. Brough out for the day. I managed to find the garage we robbed and explained the situation to the garage owner. Fortunately he knew who I was and we came to an amicable settlement for damage to his lock and the petrol we wasted and also put in the tank. I managed to arrive with the Sunbeam's tank very low so he could sell me a full tank of petrol, about fourteen gallons, and I paid him double plus half a crown for the broken lock. He said "Mr. Brough, you can break in every week!"

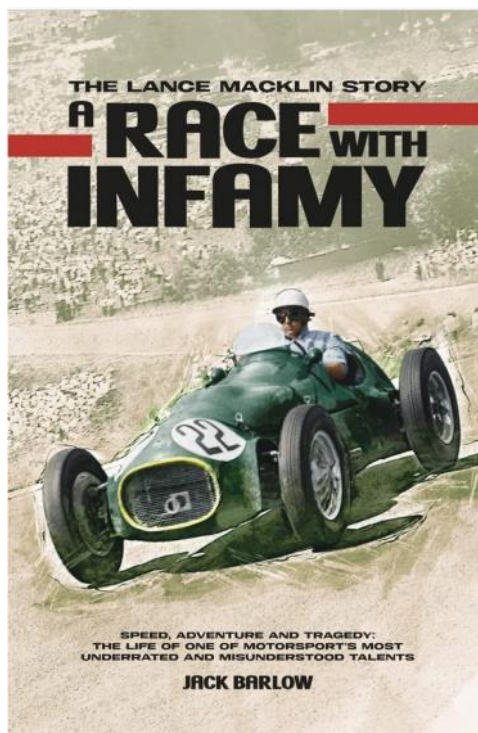
This was typical of the man and the type of action that endeared him to you. He was an honest rogue.

BOOK REVIEW

The Lance Macklin Story – A Race with Infamy

Many members will I'm sure already be familiar with the life of marque founder Noel Macklin thanks to the book by David Thirlby. His son Lance was of course involved in the ill-fated crash at Le Mans in which he, Levegh and Hawthorn were the prime players. Now the Lance Macklin story and the effect of his father on his chosen life-style can be read alongside Thirlby's work thanks to Jack Barlow. I suppose it's inevitable that reference to the crash had to be included in the title which is rather a shame when you read about Macklin the man and his exploits.

Early chapters add more to what's known already about his father and repeat the story of his rather obsessive approach to anything that he became involved with and in particular predicting gambling results at the Casino at Monte Carlo. He rented a numbers of rooms for a lengthy period, covering the walls with paper on which were inscribed all sorts of charts and detail with the daily results that the Casino published back then. People were employed to add the detail as it arrived. What he'd actually done was to create a huge physical data model and then populate it with data to build pictures with patterns created by the results. Today, computers do trend analysis and much more for us, back then it needed to be something physical. Sure enough the patterns showed not what to gamble on but what not to gamble on when patterns reached a certain point. Delighted, he showed it to the Casino manager who had his enthusiasm pretty much under control. He need not have worried. The point for Macklin was to provide the evidence to support his theory rather than do anything with it. It could be argued that this was a trait passed to his son since he proved to have prodigious natural talent comparable to the likes of Moss and Hawthorn but was unwilling to apply that talent in the ruthless way that they did.



Other stories in the book may also explain why Invicta and other enterprises were never profitable. It seems that although the Macklins were wealthy by normal standards they were not really in same league as those in whose circles they moved. Accordingly they lived and

spent money up to an expected standard rather than to a level of what was practicable. That principle clearly helped Invicta on the way to its demise and the same is true for Fairmile Marine. The products and engineering were excellent but when war came and production had to be ramped up he simply couldn't afford the investment. In the end, the Government bought it from him at a price that didn't even cover his original investments costs.

Lance Macklin joined the Navy at the start of the war and ended up on one of his father's coastal patrol boats, serving with some distinction. There was a period at the end of the war when he spent 18 months at Reykjavik on undisclosed activities. Whether it was something inherited from his father or a skill developed by himself, he seemed to have an unerring talent for taking business decisions that left him just a step away from major success. The first of these came after leaving the Navy when a friend and former crew mate Donald Gosling asked Lance to join him by buying up London bombsites to use as car parks. He declined, saying he had other plans. Gosling was joined instead by Ronald Hobson – together they ended up owning NCP. Macklin would later bow out of Chipstead Motors and other enterprises at just the wrong moment. Where Macklin Snr was fanatical about things that interested him, Macklin Jr was the opposite, only taking things as far as he could with his natural talents rather than working at them.

If he expected help from his father to go motor racing he was to be disappointed. Undeterred he bought what was left of the Fuzzi hill climb special and set about fitting it with a Mercury V8 instead of the missing pair of JAP V Twins. He soon tired of hill climbs and entered his first race only to be told that he needed a licence and to get that he needed experience. That came in the unlikely form of entering his 1932 road-going Invicta for a race at Chimay up against Bugatti 59s, Delages and Delahayes. Seemingly out of luck when an incident in front of him delayed his start, incredibly he'd worked his way up to fourth before his battery fell out. But he'd proved he could race. Even more incredibly, he was soon back at Spa in Belgium for the 24 Hour race sharing of all things the Barnato-Hassan Bentley Special. Another fine performance brought him to the attention of the Aston Martin team who were quick to secure his services for the following year. He was on his way.

Le Mans in 1955 wasn't quite the end of his racing career but given the events that unfolded around him it's not surprising that he was never the same again. Even more distressing was the effect it had on him emotionally and the way he lost respect for his friend and fellow bon-viveur Hawthorn. While the real cause of events was the way in which races were held back then, Macklin accepted his part in the tragedy while Hawthorn did the opposite. In his book *Challenge Me the Race* he made references to driver A as the cause of the accident while not actually naming Macklin but making it clear it was him. So upset was Macklin that he instigated legal action against Hawthorn which came to an end when Hawthorn died.

As a biography of somebody who was as charming as he was talented, it's worth a read for sure. If you grew up in the post-war age when British drivers became a force to be reckoned with in international racing, this biography will be probably even more interesting.

Robin Richardson

FIFTY YEARS AGO

THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL MEETING

John Dyson had his arm twisted to identify the cars and owners shown in the Jan/Feb Bulletin cover picture.

On 17th June, 1973 there gathered on the runway of Finmere aerodrome the largest collection of Railtons hitherto seen. For recent members who might be unfamiliar, one of the prime concerns of National Meetings in those days was the importance of finding a site suitable for holding the driving tests, which formed a vital part of the meeting. Situated a few miles west of Buckingham, R.A.F Finmere, an old WW II airfield, provided this space in abundance but was totally devoid of any other facilities. The concrete runway was flanked by fields of cereal crops and was an ideal spot for members of the HFSC (Hay Fever Sufferers Club, of whom there were several) to suffer their affliction.

In addition to the cars, a member, Les Charman, brought a 1935 double decker bus after a marathon drive from Lincoln, for the purpose of mounting a display of Club photographs and other items from the archives, organised by Barrie McKenzie. Stephen Halliday had the bright idea of a group photograph, for which purpose he perilously mounted the roof of the bus and recorded the assembly after much arranging and re-arranging, as seen in the image on the front cover of the last Bulletin.

FRONT ROW, L to R.

Richard Hirst and Chris Van Essen (BYP 252, 1935 R.E.A.L. tourer, though without original wings). Happily, all three are still with us, though Chris is no longer a member. In 1973, Richard ran the Spares Register and Chris was Bulletin Editor.

Ken Mummery (DLY 419, 1936 Fairmile II dhc). He was Club Chairman for very many years. The car was auctioned in 2010 but its current owner is unknown.

Richard Baxter (AOC 710, 1934 Ranalah saloon). Richard was Club Treasurer, and the car is now with his son.

Geoff Moore (JT 427, 1933 Ranalah tourer). Geoff was then Events Organiser, and of course ran the Spares Register for nearly fifty years. JT was part of the Moore family for decades and is now with Robin Butler.

Bryan Tyrrell (MG 3628, 1934 REAL tourer, also with non-original wings). Over the years Bryan held various posts in the Club. The car was last heard of in Germany, current owner unknown.

SECOND ROW.

Robert Pancheri (KAB 331, 1937 Claremont dhc). A member for many years, he was a carver and sculptor in wood and stone – he did the Reid Railton memorial plaque, unveiled in the T&T Shed at Brooklands in 1983. Then fitted with a Perkins P6 diesel engine, the car has now reverted to Hudson power, becoming part of Pat McDonald's collection. Now reg.764 XUU it is for sale (see p. 34)

Vernon Legge (PFB 36, originally MPO 727, one of the Sargent Special tourers). A serious problem with this body was the great difficulty in lowering the hood. The car is in

Switzerland, apparently for sale but only to the right buyer.

Roger Stratford (AWJ 782, 1935 Carbodies saloon). Roger was a long-standing Bulletin Editor during the 1970s & 80s, taking over from Chris Van Essen. The car is currently for sale in Yorkshire.

Dick Barnard (CXB 199, 1936 Brough Superior 8 dhc). With the Barnard family for a very long time, it is now beautifully turned out by Bill Brinklow.

Paul Banks (CFC 122, 1935 Coachcraft Stratton saloon). Familiarly known as "Big End" Banks on account of his frequently experienced engine problems. Last heard of with John Collinge in Colwyn Bay.

Ralph Pollard (BWX 183, 1937 Carbodies Cobham saloon). Now with Geoff Tompkins.

Len Palmer (CVU 1, 1936 Fairmile II dhc). Exported to Myron Peterson in California, it was caught in the 1993 bush fires and scrapped.

Barrie McKenzie, next to Stephen Halliday's car (KMP 536, 1939 6-cyl, W&M Fairmile dhc) now with Russell Francis. Stephen, a professional photographer, was usually on hand to record Club events.

Philip (Pip) Barker (YG 9171, 1934 special tourer). Originally a Berkeley saloon, Pip built his special in the early 1950s and achieved many competition successes. Now with his son, David.

BACK ROW.

Mike (Lefty) John (CHU 574, 1936 Terraplane 6 saloon). He came by his unusual nickname when he lost his left hand and the hook he usually wore added a certain piratical elegance. The whereabouts of the car is currently unknown.

Mick Fry (EPG 807, 1936 special tourer). Created out of a Carbodies Cobham saloon, it had an inelegant fabric body and has since been scrapped following an accident in 1999.

Barry Smith (VN 7885, 1935 Carbodies saloon). A nice original car, it was in USA with Zach Brinkerhof, but was last heard of with Mike Green in Notts.

Peter Adamson (EPA 93, 1936 special tourer). Built and re-built by Peter from the remains of a Carbodies Cobham saloon, he has passed it on to his daughter, Jennifer Bateman. It is now for sale (see p. 34).

Alan Nicholls (MMG 91, 1946 W & M saloon). Alan was Vice President for a very long time, owning the car until his death. Re-registered, it was seen in the Moretonhampstead Motor Museum during the 2019 National Meeting where it remains.

Bill Drake (BYW 574, 1935 LST Replica). Bill rebuilt the car from the remains of a Coachcraft Stratton saloon he located in Warwickshire. Much campaigned in V.S.C.C. events, most recently by Anthony Fenwick-Wilson.

Bill Sutton (CNA 635, 1936 special tourer). Bill built this from a Coachcraft saloon that had been mouldering away in Church Hanborough for some years. Presently in Germany with Gerald Tschoerner.

Richard Hughes (JMD 777, 1937 special tourer). This was resurrected by Richard from a Carbodies Sandown that had been owned by 'Chappie' Russell, first Secretary of the R.O.C.. Now with P. Moore in Dorking.

John Dyson (DXX 500, 1937 Carbodies tourer). Russell Cook is the present happy owner.

Paul Thomas (Z 6201, 1935 Randalah saloon). Paul had recently sold his car to Bryan Tyrrell (see front row) so borrowed Z for the occasion. Our Editor, Neil Thorp, is the present lucky keeper.

You may possibly be interested to learn that the Driving Tests (a.k.a. “Motor Gymkhana”) were won by Chris Van Essen, with Richard Hirst runner-up, sharing a well-used BYP 252. The Standing Start ¼ mile Sprint was won on handicap by Ken Mummery in DLY 419. Despite its many disadvantages, Finmere provided the wide-open space for such ‘play time’ and we were probably lucky to get away without problems – on one occasion an over-enthusiastic local participant (we allowed such entries) succeeded in rolling his Mini. Although we had insurance, thanks to the good offices of Vice-President Tony Hyde-East and the Black Sea & Baltic Insurance Co., it was probably only of the “Jupiter Pluvius” kind. In today’s litigious environment it would be most unadvisable.

With due acknowledgement to Geoff Moore’s (and others’) reports that appeared in the Bulletin at the time.

John Dyson

EXHAUST SYSTEMS

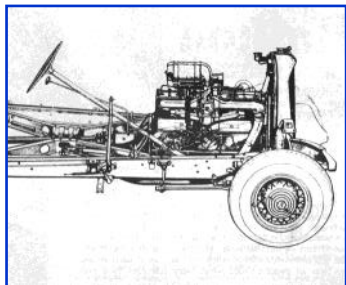
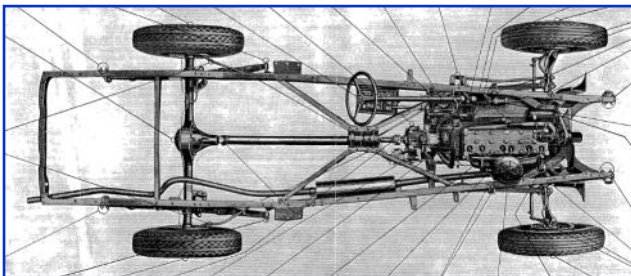
How should the exhaust system on a Railton be routed? The solution usually adopted is to use a sweeping downpipe from the exhaust manifold connecting to a silencer slung below the cruciform, up over the rear axle, then down beside the fuel tank to just below the base of the rear bodywork and finally to exit horizontally out of the back of the car.

I have had problems with this design when rallying the Ranaiah Sports saloon Z 6201. Rally routes are usually on small country lanes and can involve tight hairpin bends. When these are also on a steep gradient a simple tailpipe can suffer from grounding. Worse still, if forced to reverse to get around a particularly severe hairpin, the pipe can dig in and damage the rest of the system – I spent one Measham mid-rally break under the car trying to reconnect the silencer to the downpipe! Speaking to other Railton drivers this is not an isolated experience and in one instance the silencer was reportedly pushed up to contact the floor whereupon the carpets started to smoulder! The problem exists because, although ground clearance is greater than on most modern vehicles, there is a much longer overhang beyond the rear wheels.

John Dyson recalls that when Z 6201 arrived in 1968 it had a 'stock car' pipe emerging just before the right rear wheel under the running board, which did nothing for either its dignity or that of the driver. If the pipe were terminated too early, fumes would enter the car much to his children's distress, besides the carbon deposit and heat. This is why it was fitted with a rear outlet. This is also unsatisfactory – John further recalled that he once stuffed it into a bank, collecting a divot in the process and blocking the free flow. So perhaps a deflector is an essential option with that layout.

I decided to investigate what was done originally by examining contemporary documentation. The Hudson service manual is silent about the routing of the exhaust system and illustrates it only as an integral part of the lubrication chart. In plan view (right) it is seen to be threaded

through the chassis and to pass over the rear axle to the rearmost part of the chassis. A side elevation is absent so the outlet design is uncertain. James Fack confirms that, as originally built, every Railton



(& Essex Terraplane) had an exhaust pipe which was threaded through the rear of the cruciform cross-member of its chassis. This is evidenced by the detail (left) from the Max Millar drawings of these two models on pp. 108 & 109 of the *Gold Portfolio*. This drawing of the Essex-Terraplane's bare chassis clearly shows its exhaust-pipe heading upwards just aft of the front leg of the cruciform and the bodied Railton-Terraplane tourer on p. 108 shows the same thing.

This may well have done wonders for ground-clearance, but led directly to Michael Sedgwick's writing (in his *Cars of the 1930s*): "The closed Railtons were notorious foot-fryers": they must indeed have been, but the Railton was probably no worse than most other large 'lumps' of the 'thirties and not unpleasant in winter driving. Not that Sedgwick had any great personal experience, other than of the rather tired Cobham (FGT 835) he and Edward Montagu borrowed from the Beaulieu garage, and which appeared in *Lost Causes of Motoring*. Hudson Motors were fully alive to the situation, *vide* their glowing words on the introduction of the new ventilation system in their 1936 sales brochure. None of this, however, is relevant to the outlet pipe design as the kick-up over the back axle would have had more influence on the ultimate routing of the exhaust outlet.

Very few of the contemporary C.K. Bowers pictures of Hudsons or Railtons have the outlet pipe visible. Most of the photos are of the left hand side of the vehicle but the one of DHK 2, the Fairmile FHC, is of the right side and, as can be seen in the adjacent detail, shows no evidence of *any* pipework. Close examination by John Dyson of the images in his book *Coachcraft* came up with an "exhaust" on a Fairmile but that it is more likely something completely spurious in the image. There are a couple more odd-balls such as the special on p.36 and the Abbey bodied car pictured in the last Bulletin (where the exhaust would not have lasted very long as designed). I think these can be ignored as far as a "normal" arrangement is concerned.





The Hudson Special Sports saloon on p.69 (see detail left) shows a short horizontal discharge but there seems to be a small cut-out in the bodywork to accommodate at least half a pipe diameter. Page 53 shows the Earl Howe University saloon on which it seems to come down at an angle with a discharge that is about 45 deg.(see detail below).



My conclusion, therefore, is that normally the pipe did not discharge horizontally from the back of the vehicle but rather pointed downwards, most likely at about 45 deg. as it would have been routed from the high point as it passed over the rear axle, adjacent to the fuel tank, to as close as possible to the rear-most part of the bodywork and then been cut off more or less parallel to the ground at the lowest point of the bodyline. This design would hide the pipe completely (as on DHK 2) and also guarantee that it did not suffer from grounding.

As shown below, before (left) and after (centre & right), the Ranalah saloon has now been modified accordingly. The exhaust outlet is well within the line between the rear wheel contact point and the rear bumper so grounding is impossible, yet there is no risk of fumes collecting underneath the car.

Neil Thorp (with assistance from James Fack and John Dyson)



RAILTON 6 SPECIAL

As reported in the Membership News section, the 6-cylinder special of Nils Laue is now owned by new member Martin Zondler. This has provided a perfect excuse to print some pictures of the special that were provided to the Bulletin by the late Pat McDonald in 2018. These show some of the unique aspects of the car; of particular interest is the installation of fuel tanks in what would have originally been the rear passenger foot-wells.



A REAL HEADACHE

Rob the fitter had worked through his list of jobs by lunchtime. “What do you want me to do this afternoon?” he asked. I thought for a moment. “Get the head off the Hudson,” I replied, “it’s a side-valve so it won’t take you long.” That, as the late Gilbert Harding might have remarked, depends on what you mean by the word ‘long’.

I went out for the afternoon. When I returned Rob was packing up to go home. “What do the bores look like?” I enquired. “No idea,” he replied, “the head won’t come off – it’s stuck fast.” “Not another one!” I exclaimed. We’d been here before, you see, when the previous year the head on a David Brown 219 engine had defied our efforts to lift it from the block and had taken us a fortnight to shift. Getting that one off had taught us a few tricks, but straight away I realised that this was a very different beast. The DB head was as dissimilar to the Hudson as it could be: iron not aluminium, overhead not side-valve, and with massive water spaces a very deep and robust casting with lots of anchorage points to pull and prise from. The Hudson alloy head looked alarmingly flimsy by comparison, not helped by the evident damage from overheating at the front end below the thermostat housing. Gloomily I remarked to Rob that I had seen stronger-looking eggshells.

And so began a marathon of soaking and slugging, heating and hammering, pulling and prising, wedging and wishing and all the while taking much of the weight of the car on the engine crane via this horribly fragile cylinder head. That was the first problem to overcome – to what do you attach the thing when it has no anchor points? The workshop manual (consulted at leisure after the job was completed, naturally) suggests lifting via the plug holes, which is hardly surprising as they are about the only anchor points on the whole component. I made up lifting eyes with plug threads and fitted them into the no.2 and no.7 holes. In an attempt to spread the lift more evenly I devised a four-leg lift with an eye on a strip of bar bolted across the thermostat housing flange and one made up with a ½” BSP taper fitting in the heater take-off hole. The lifting sling was made up of multiple falls of 8mm poly rope to even the tension across all four legs.



With the crane jacked up to the point where the weight was off the front springs the real work started. Each stud was soaked with Plus Gas Formula ‘A’ (do they make any other?) which was what we had used on the DB head. I’ve no idea if it is the best, or indeed any real good at all, but what it showed was those studs which allowed the fluid to go straight down, and those which accepted none at all. The ratio on the Hudson was about 10:20 which hardly brightened the mood. Then began the tedious task of tapping the loosely-fitted nuts on each

stud to set up vibration down its length to encourage the penetrating fluid to, er, penetrate. It wasn't long before we switched to the air hammer in a vain effort to speed the job up by perhaps two pages of the calendar. It was around this time that I also realised that I would need a new set of head nuts.

Some studs started to take fluid; others that had been taking fluid stopped. By now I was thinking of possible alternatives so I started ringing round to find out if there were any serviceable heads available. An option in my mind was that controlled destruction was the only likely way of ever getting the thing off. I hadn't a clue how I would go about it without the uncontrolled destruction of the whole engine, which is probably why I never tried it.

Day after day the routine was the same: last half an hour or so of the afternoon was the soaking and hammering session, interspersed with regular attempts at prising, wedging and chiselling. My poor screwdrivers! We ran out of Plus Gas so I started making up all sorts of solutions involving various other penetrating oils, petrol, diesel and almost anything else I could think of. By now we weren't soaking the studs so much as drowning them. Finally we were down to about half-a-dozen really reluctant studs to concentrate on while regularly dosing all the others. Then came a wet Friday when in my absence my foreman Martin took it upon himself to go on the attack; he worked on it all day and ended up using a set of tree-felling wedges where gaps had started to open up. Come knocking-off time the head wasn't off but it had risen an appreciable amount. After that it seemed plain sailing compared to what had happened before and a couple of days later I had the head (still in one somewhat bruised piece) hanging free on the crane, seven weeks after we started.

The most surprising thing (apart from the survival of the head itself) was that many of the studs were still dry and that therefore the penetrating fluid had had little visible effect (see right). The damage to the head looked repairable so I took it to Fred Meredith at Malvern Rebores who set about building up the wasted areas, especially the burnt and rotten section below the thermostat housing. Fortunately the alloy was readily TIG-weldable and Fred did a miraculous job before skimming the face. I cleaned off the dross and where the land of the thermostat gasket face was poor I built it up with JB Weld and then skimmed it flat. The 30 stud holes were carefully enlarged by 1/32" to clean them out and give greater clearance. I scraped the block thoroughly and emiered the corrosion off the studs before coating them with graphite grease. Copperslip cannot be used against aluminium because it develops bi-metallic corrosion – and we'd had quite enough of that, thank you. A die nut down the threads and new nuts and all was ready for reassembly. Time will tell if it works or not!



Allan Lloyd

CORRESPONDENCE

From Toby Sharp

This old photo, brought to my notice by James Fack, shows an early Railton Terraplane Ranaiah tourer BPA 839, first registered 13 Dec 1933; it appeared in a recent Bonhams catalogue.

It is believed that the man standing alongside in the photo is the late Sheffield owner Malcolm Bishop, aged 17 at the time; it was his first car. Bishop went on to run Spurr Cars of Loxley, South Yorkshire, dealing in American classic cars. BPA 839 was last heard of in 1958.



From Jan Roosenburg

Regarding the letter from Peter Adamson, I too thought that it could be from the Anglo-American Bastard idea. However, that does not make sense when we consider among others later bastards such as the AC Cobra, the Allard, the Sunbeam Tiger, the Facel Vega and even Italian sports machines such as De Tomaso, Iso Rivolta and Bizarinni, all of which seem to show excellent appreciation, in case of the Cobra with the sky the limit.

Meanwhile, Frazer Nash, Lagonda, H.R.G. and, best known to us, Invicta all used Meadows engines, a maker mainly of truck and marine engines. In its day I believe the Railton was well

regarded, got very good press reviews and was fast for its type of car, proof of which is the use by the Flying Squad of Scotland Yard. Post-war articles are also always positive and, as I have often recounted, my experiences versus Bentleys and Lagondas, to name just two, have always favoured the Railton.

Maybe it is because our Railtons were never advertised like this Ultima Evolution, with a 6.2 litre GM engine. (Apologies to woke owners for this sexist joke).



From John Fack

In the last Bulletin writing about tyre choice, you mentioned you reduced "camber" but I guess you meant castor. *[John is quite right, I meant to refer to the castor angle, NOT the camber angle. Ed.]* Jerome reduced castor on the Brough Alpine GS – which is of course a 1936 chassis with better front axle control – from around 6.0° to 2.5° which not only lightened the steering but also improved the handling.

Regarding tyres, the best tyre by far for handling, steering and grip in the wet and dry are Michelin Pilote 600x16 and they even look like the tyres on DPA exiting the paddock at Brooklands – which is a bonus. However, they are now an eye-watering £385 each, but at least you only have to fit them once since they last very well indeed, and the transformation of the car remains a pleasure long after the pain of the price is forgotten.

[Read about Mick Jarvis' experience of fitting new tyres on p. 8]

From Jan Roosenburg

Some thoughts on improvements

Although I am in general much in favour to keep our Railtons as much original as possible, I have made a number of changes that I felt improved my experience, especially as I have been driving in events for the past twenty years and not all roads in some far-away countries deserved to be called a road (see right). The tendency in the Pyrenees or Alps to get the water to the boiling point was getting to be tiresome. A small fan in front of the radiator has been added which operates on a thermostat, resulting in us never getting over 80 degrees, excellent and creating much jealousy among a variety of Lagondas and Packards.

The shock absorbers are another major improvement. These were specially built by SPAX for another Railton owner, I ordered them and they make a world of difference. We added a blade to the rear suspension to bring the car up, it still has a 180 litre fuel tank from its Peking to Paris days, which I have no intention of ever removing, but which does add weight to the back. Brakes are all original, but I have them fully checked every year and this leads to an occasional drum replacement, something I strongly recommend every owner to do, being able to brake really enhances your driving pleasure.

The engine and steering are all original, in fact whereas it has been rebuilt a couple of times, it is the original engine the car was delivered with in 1936. We are probably all familiar with the second gear problems and the naughty habits of the circlip. I resolved this by getting a 1939 gearbox from Al Saffran in Arizona, which fits perfectly but has a stronger second gear. When I bought the car, it had a dry clutch. After experiencing major problems with this when a wrong size plate had been installed without my knowledge, I reverted to an original Hudson wet clutch, corks and all, which works great. We strengthened the doors by installing



adjustable steel bars inside and added a fog light in front and a variety of rear view mirrors, most helpful. Completely unoriginal but very popular with gawking tourists is the Lalique Quail on the radiator cap. As this is my favourite quarry to pursue (and consume) it is appropriate and has given the car its nickname: *The Quailton*.

The interior is mainly original, except for the dash. I replaced the clock with a rev counter, installed a better Smith temperature gauge and replaced the ignition/lights switch from Lucas, which had a tendency to catch on fire, with a cheap copy which does not work great and is a project in progress. I added an indicator switch on the ashtray and a Laycock overdrive is installed with a light on the dash. A couple of 12V lighters keep my phone and my navigator's cigars going. Lastly I added a switch for the headlight dimmer, as the foot operation caused major cramping. Probably the change which caused the most comfort was installing radial tyres. Having seen much admired vehicles in various events which on close inspection (by me) were equipped with power steering and/or power brakes with discs, I feel what I have done are just improvements but do not substantially make it less of a Railton.

[I agree power steering and disc brakes are a step too far – one may as well drive a modern car. One thing I have done to Z 6201 is to add a second speedometer (electronic but with an analogue dial) which resides in the driver's glovebox so it can be readily hidden or removed if required. This gives a steady reading unlike the original unit which swings wildly. This is important when driving on our roads which have lots of speed cameras. It also incorporates a main beam and direction indicator lights. The signal is GPS derived so very accurate once I suppressed the spark plugs! Without suppressors it worked only for short periods. The receiver is fitted unobtrusively on the front apron. – Ed.]

From James Fack

The photo on p. 4 of the last Bulletin proved that I was wrong to state, in the very same Bulletin, that *'these Talbots had radiators, bonnets & scuttles that were lower than those of any other large-engined English touring-cars of the 1930s'* (other than the Speed Series Alvises, and the (Jaguar) S.S.1s).

That is, if one can accept that the S-type Invicta was a touring-car and I'm not all that sure that I can! Behind its 'saucy' ultra-low radiator was a body that didn't include any sort of boot (mind you, one can also say that about any pre-1935 R-T or Railton tourer!). Much more importantly, it really wasn't any sort of a proper basis for either saloon or drop head coupé bodywork - the very types that the majority of 1930s punters desired more than any other.

And whilst the R-T tourer had no boot space either, it was at least announced alongside a 4-door saloon, whilst a drop head coupé swiftly followed. Noel Macklin had already lost a fortune on the Silver Hawk, the Eric Campbell and the Invicta - and he wasn't about to lose any more of his own & his friends' money on the Railton-Terraplane, if he could possibly help it! And, as we now know, everybody involved with the first of the Anglo-Americans actually made money.

The S-type Invicta, on the other hand, found only 77 buyers during its three years of production – i.e. a rate of just one car per fortnight – and how was anybody ever going to be making money doing that?

H.T. LEAD DUCTING

In my effort to improve both the state and appearance of the engine of my Fairmile Coupé I had to make a new H.T. lead duct to mount above the cylinder head and distribute the leads to their respective spark plugs. The one fitted to the Railton when I bought it matched much of the rest of the car; bodged, knackered and tatty. (see right)



I didn't want to disturb the existing leads as they looked to be in serviceable order and the ends are soldered on, so I wanted something that could be assembled around the existing set without disconnecting them at either end.

I came up with the arrangement as shown in the photographs below. The tube is 32mm o/d stainless steel with a wall thickness of 1.5mm and with the slot and holes arranged with exactly the same spacing as the previously fitted (and damaged) fibre tube. However, to enable the design to work the entry slot and the exit holes have to be at 180° rather than 90°



so the tube can be laser cut along the centre line. This allows the leads to be laid out along the tube and placed in their respective holes without having to be threaded through. To provide some measure of insulation, the inside of the tube is lined with two coats of an American product called Liquid Tape (available on the internet from that well-known shopkeeper Mr Bezos). Having laid the leads along the tube and out through their respective holes using small cable ties to bring order to an otherwise chaotic mess, the two halves were held together temporarily with insulating tape. The clamps are stainless steel exhaust clamps again easily available on the internet (eBay this time), and instead of the bent tin brackets fitted under the head nuts as on the original, I made a pair of supporting pillars out of the two redundant "rocker cover" supports by shortening them and tapping an 8mm hole down the centre to take the clamp bolt, as shown. These pillars need to be 2" in overall length. This gives a clearance between the bottom of the tube and the tip of the spark plug terminals of a good ½" which I deemed to be the minimum necessary. The exit holes were then fitted with grommets to finish the job.

As can be seen in the adjacent picture, it's possibly not the neatest way of doing the job but it's a lot better than the cruddy fibre tube and tin bracket arrangement as fitted when I bought the car.



I made a couple of minor mistakes in the design of the tube, 35mm o/d tube would be better than the 32mm I used. My H.T. leads are the 6.7mm cotton-braided type sold by most of the vintage parts suppliers and laying 9 of them plus the L.T. lead into the tube was a tight squeeze. I also based my pillar length on the original tin bracket length but a combination of a different clamp design and the fact that the tube is no longer made of insulating material (now the complete opposite!) meant that the tube lay too close to the plugs, so I had to make spacers and use longer bolts to achieve the necessary 1/2" clearance.

Allan Lloyd

There has been some interest expressed from members who would like a similar fitment for their own car and it is likely that a small batch will be procured. Please contact Mike Stenhouse if interested in obtaining one. The more who join the cheaper it will be.

MARKET PLACE

For Sale

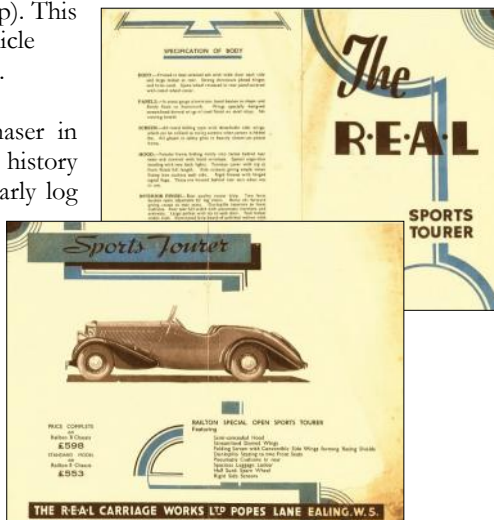
Owing to Peter's ill health, the Adamson family is regretfully parting with their cherished Railton R.E.A.L. tourer BVU 563. (see p.33 top). This presents a unique opportunity to acquire a vehicle exhibited at the Olympia Motor Show of 1935.

Apart from the name of the original purchaser in Manchester, the car has a fully documented history and comes with an original sales brochure, early log book and other supporting documentation mainly covering its rescue and restoration. The car was portrayed on the Bulletin covers in Nov/Dec 2021 and Jan/Feb 2019. It may be viewed at "The Green" WR6 6SA

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There are currently three cars for sale on CarandClassic.com. One is the blue Claremont dhc advertised on page 34 and the other two are, right, AWJ 782, the blue 1935 saloon which was in the long term ownership of Roger Stratford. Asking price is £14,500 and it may be viewed in Richmond, Yorkshire



and, left, an immaculate-looking 1939 Claremont dhc FUV 68. which was a long term resident in the Jersey Motor Museum. Asking price for this is £68,000; it may be viewed in Kent.



AL 1422, a look-alike to AWJ 872, is for sale by John Knowles in New Zealand for \$NZ 75,000. andv7327@gmail.com

For Sale

Also for sale by the Adamsons is the 1936 Railton Special EPA 93. This is inspired by the Light Sports Tourer, with the rear bodywork being an exact copy. The engine is moved back in the frame to give good weight distribution. It has a standard 4.2:1 axle giving maximum acceleration. Fitted with four S.U. carburettors and a free flow exhaust system, it is very fast. Currently with a V.S.C.C. "Buff Form" and a brand new MOT certificate. It was featured in the Bulletin in May/June 2020.

Also may be viewed at "The Green", WR6 6SA

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For Sale

1937 Railton Claremont Drophead Coupé, 764 XUU

Finished in Oxford blue with blue leather interior and grey roof. It has been in storage for approx. 5years since it last started so is in need of some recommissioning.

Price: £15k o.n.o. May be viewed in Kensworth, Beds.

Contact: Richard McDonald 01582 936616; ricadon@hotmail.com



CLUB SHOP – AVAILABILITY AND PRICES

	Price	U.K. Postage	ROW Postage
R.O.C. Car Badge	£35.00	£1.32	£1.65
R.O.C. Tie	£10.00	£1.25	£1.43
Embroidered badge (approx. 3 inch wide)	£5.00	£0.70	£0.90
History of the Railton	£3.00	£0.70	£0.90
Land Flying – The Terraplane by James Fack	£8.00	£1.25	£1.65
The Lost Coachbuilder – Atcherley by James Fack	£9.00	£1.25	£1.65
Railton & Brough Superior Gold Portfolio (Brooklands Books)	£17.50	£3.50	£7.00

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: Contact the Secretary, Max Hunt. Telephone: 01299 401135.

E-mail: secretary@railton.org

PAYMENT BY CHEQUE: Cheques (sterling only) for the total including postage should be made payable to to “**Railton Owners Club**” and post with your order to: Max Hunt, Secretary, Abberley Cottage, 7 Dowles Road, Bewdley, Worcestershire DY12 2EJ.

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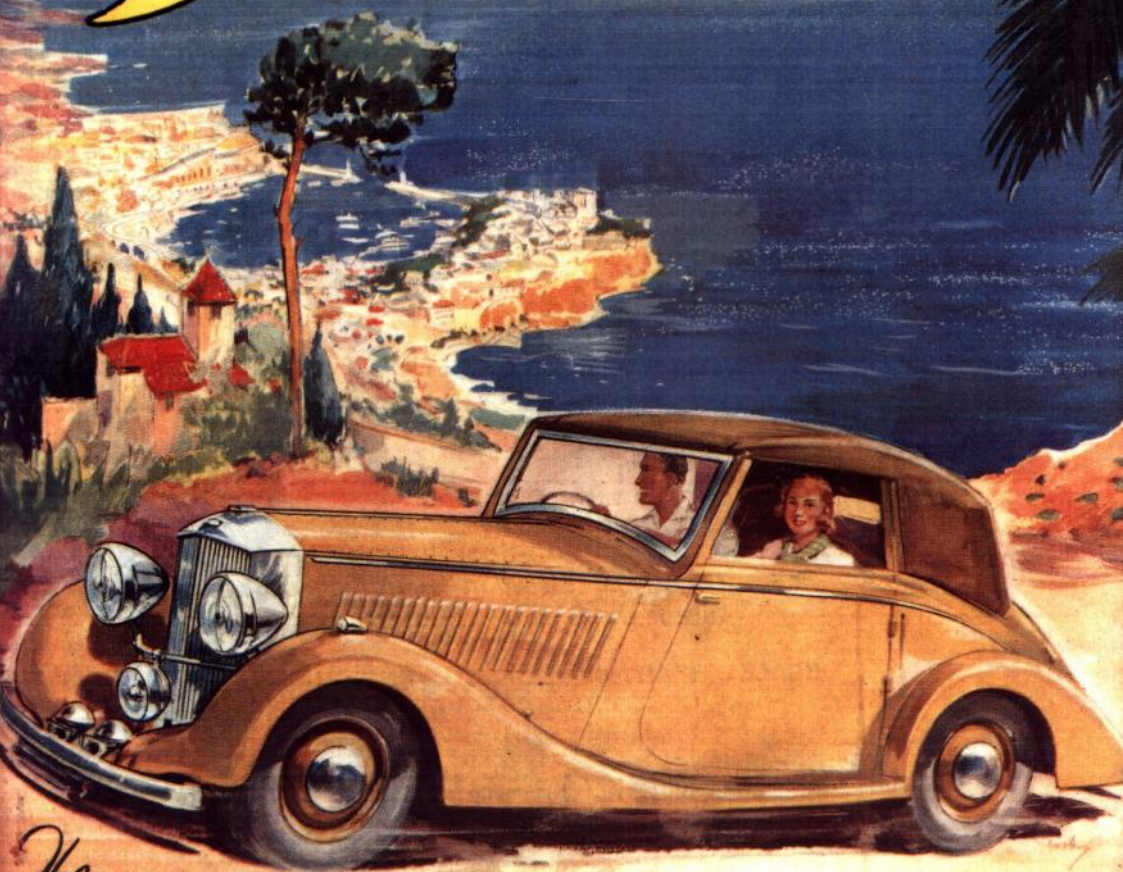
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