

# KEMPSFORD

## CLASSIC CAR & MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Newsletter

Winter 2008

Well, it's that time of year again. Time to put our toys away for the winter and look back on another year. Perhaps it's best to draw a veil over this year and hope for better classic driving weather next year!



Ten Kempsford cars turned out for the White Horse Show at Uffington on August Bank Holiday Monday and between them scooped no less than five awards. Mike Williams' Studebaker Champion won first place in the Post-war and 1950's category, with Charlie Williams' Ford Zodiac Mk1 taking third place, and John Ockwell's Austin 10 picking up a Highly Commended award. In the 1960's group Gordon King took second place with his Wolseley 15/60, and Martin Randle came third with his Vauxhall Cresta PA.

Blenheim, was again a successful meeting, but with not many Kempsford cars. No awards unfortunately, but plenty of cars to look at and by all accounts everyone had a great time.

### CHRISTMAS GET-TOGETHER

Terry is organising a pre-Christmas get-together at the George on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Please let him know if you will be coming. Festivities start at 8.30 and food will be served, but Terry has asked me to say that there will not be a raffle. Here is a picture of the riotous goings-on at last year's event



### GOODWOOD REVIVAL 21ST SEPTEMBER 2008

BY TONY ALDEN

I was looking forward to the show at Blenheim Palace on the 21<sup>st</sup> September and the Healey was looking pristine after a week of avoiding Eastenders and Holby City when on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> I had a phone call from an old friend of mine who lives near Silverstone.



"Can you make the Goodwood Revival on Sunday? I have two free tickets."

Silly question really! He had been promised two complimentary tickets through a customer & friend of his who has an Aston Martin race preparation business on Silverstone Circuit. The owner of an ex-works Aston DB2 Mr. Olly Leyba, a *gentleman* German driver who has his car prepared by this company had two spare tickets... too good to miss. We arrived at the circuit early on the Sunday morning and went to the ticket collection office where the Germanic hero had left the tickets. We thought the least we could do was find him and thank him in person. We found him in the pits

sorting his car out but we could only talk to him over the fence as we did not have pit passes. Not a problem, Olly produced two "Team Member" tickets which let us into everywhere and anywhere we wanted to go.

The weather was fantastic and the meeting was by far the best, with the exception of the very first Revival ten years before. The range of cars and races was brilliant, and the meeting was marred only by Jochen Mass somersaulting the Lancia Ferrari D50 coming out of the chicane. After hospital treatment he was pronounced OK apart from a few bruises, which considering that he was trapped under the car was very lucky.



I found that I could get into the restricted areas quite easily and managed to walk onto the grid before the start of a couple of demonstrations, with people like Stirling Moss, Jacky Stewart, Tony Brooks etc walking around with me, very pleasant.



On the Saturday in the saloon car race John Fitzpatrick's Austin A95 was shunted up the rear by Tony Jardine in a ridiculously quick Austin A35, and the A95 rolled over coming out of the chicane. However they filled the sump with fresh oil, put more fuel in it and the A95 won the saloon car race on Sunday, but looking a bit tatty around the roof area and the A35 came second. These two were so quick they made the Jaguars and big yanks look pedestrian. The first race on Sunday was the Fordwater trophy for production sports cars 1948-1954. My hero, (a bloke by the name of Moss) since 1955 was driving Sir Anthony Bamfords' Jag XK120 which suffered

fuel problems and retired but it was good to see at the age of 77 he can still do it, (picture attached). The Richmond & Gordon Trophy was next, in the race Jochen Mass managed to roll the Lancia D50 (picture taken before the accident!). apart from that BRM's Vanwall, Ferrari, Lotus etc to me were a fantastic sight, I consider myself very lucky that I was able to see these cars when they were the very latest GP cars in the 50's with the likes of Moss, Fangio, Brooks, Ascari, and Castellotti driving them. There were four other races which were all very competitive and quite a spectacle.

If you have never been to the revival meeting you really should make the effort. It isn't just the racing cars it's the whole ambiance of the people in period dress, the circuit, the aircraft, and the cars in the car park. The Pre-66 car park is probably worth spending a day in and ignoring the racing and the circuit: you won't go to a classic car show that will better it...



**ASPECTS OF THE USE OF PETROL CONTAINING ETHANOL – Thanks to the FBHVC for allowing the use of the following article from their Newsletter**

Blending small amounts of ethanol (up to 5%) into petrol does produce a measurable increase in volatility.



**Hillman Minx spotted in Tenerife this summer**

Oil companies must ensure that fuel volatility meets specified limits (EN 228) so petrol containing ethanol will be adjusted to this specification. However, if fuel containing ethanol is mixed in the vehicle tank with purely hydrocarbon fuel an increase in the volatility of the blend in the tank can result. This may produce unwelcome symptoms of poor hot starting, erratic running including running too rich, or too lean, associated with excessive fuel volatility. It is highly probable that some Classics will be less able to cope with an unintended increase in fuel volatility, and also some time-related deterioration in performance of cooling systems. Unfortunately, it seems that not all fuel containing up to 5% ethanol is labelled as such, so the scenario of mixing two types of fuel in the vehicle tank is a realistic one, with a significant probability that driving difficulties may result.

The addition of 5% ethanol increases petrol octane quality by about one octane number. For this reason high octane unleaded petrol (98 RON) is more likely to contain ethanol than the normal 95 RON standard or 'Premium' product. Refiners do not like giving quality away, so if ethanol is added to the standard product, the blend may be adjusted so that octane quality remains at 95 RON. Owners of high performance cars originally requiring high octane five star petrol are more likely to buy 98 RON unleaded, so they are more likely to encounter blends containing ethanol. However, given the high octane quality of ethanol, and the EU-driven enthusiasm for bio-fuel inclusion, use of ethanol in the normal 95 RON unleaded petrol cannot be ruled out. Exposure of the majority of historic car owners to blends containing ethanol is increasingly likely as time goes on.



**Who is this man?**

Ethanol in petrol increases the risk of corrosion of metallic fuel system materials. Responsible fuel retailers should employ a suitable corrosion inhibitor, but this may not always be the case. CONCAWE Report 3/08 gives a list of metals not recommended for use with petrol containing ethanol. This includes zinc, brass, copper, lead-coated steel. On this basis, many classic cars could have problems in the petrol tank, fuel pipe, carburettor and most fittings.



**I'm a bit short of pictures this time so here's a nice one of Cirencester from the air**

However, to avoid sounding too gloomy, it should be remembered that corrosion inhibitor additives are usually very effective in providing protection, and if the products used by the fuel retailers do not perform, a low cost after-market product may well become available for owners of vulnerable vehicles to use.

Other no-no materials mentioned by Report 3/08 are shellac, cork, nylon and GRP materials, plus various elastomers and seal materials. Recommended materials include Viton, Fluorosilicone, neoprene and Buna-N for hoses and gaskets (but neither of these for seals). Teflon tape is recommended in preference to alcohol based pipe and thread sealing materials. Tank lining materials used to prevent small leaks are

also not recommended for ethanol fuels. It is not currently known whether tank sealant manufacturers are able to supply products compatible with fuels containing ethanol, but their availability would certainly be an advantage. If such products are not available, their use is likely to decline and rather more traditional methods of tank repair, or even re-manufacture, may become a growth industry.



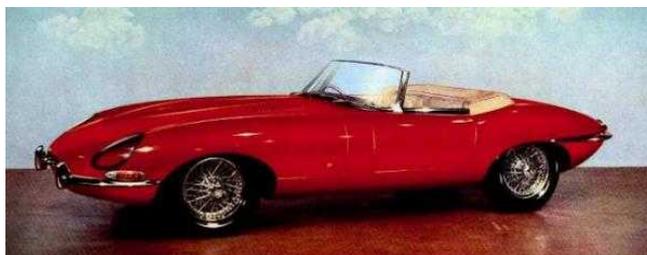
All fuel systems accumulate sediments, gums, rust, lacquer and other deposits. Generally the older the fuel system the more of such material there will be. Unfortunately fuels containing ethanol tend to loosen these deposits which then move on to plague the driver with mysterious fuel starvation problems. There have been a number of references to such problems recently, including in cars used for racing, which arguably may be more likely to be using fuel containing ethanol through the high octane route. Irritating though this problem must be, there is a finite amount of such material in the system, and after a certain time, which will be shortened by thorough cleaning,

further use of ethanol fuels will not dislodge more sediment to block filters or jets.

In conclusion, there are a number of unfortunate or negative aspects to the use in older vehicles, of fuel containing even 5% ethanol. These can be summarised as: an increased tendency to vapour lock; fuel system corrosion and random fuel starvation from dislodged deposits. These potential problems would support the view 'if in doubt avoid'. Unfortunately it seems clear that it will become harder and harder to do this, so that perhaps inevitably such fuels will become just another part of the picture of using an historic vehicle in today's World.

#### DOWNLOAD AN E-TYPE

Building, or re-building, the Jaguar E-Type is said to be fiendishly difficult. A more manageable (and cheaper!) alternative is available from Canon's range of 3-D Paper Craft models. Visit their web site at <http://cp.c-ij.com/english/3D-papercraft> and download the model parts and instructions as PDF files. Mind you, it may be better to start with a simpler project such as the Sydney Opera House, which has only six pages of parts compared with the E-Type's fifteen.



#### VESPA

I recently visited a company on the South Coast who in years gone by used to manufacture badges for Vespa owners clubs in the UK, of which there seemed to be quite a number. This got me thinking that scooters are a much overlooked part of the classic vehicle scene, and I set about learning something of the history of the first successful manufacturer.



Both Vespa and Lambretta had their origins in Italy's decimated aircraft industry at the end of World War II. General Corradino D'Ascanio (who designed the Agusta helicopter) was asked by Fernando Innocenti, owner of a metal tubing business, to design a simple and robust vehicle to meet the demand for low cost transport. He specified that it must be easy to drive for both men and women, be capable of carrying a passenger and offer protection for the driver's clothes. D'Ascanio's step-through design made the machine acceptable to women riders, for whom mounting a

traditional motorcycle would have been unseemly. For decades female pillion passengers rode side-saddle. The chain was eliminated and the engine was moved to the back wheel and contained within a cowling virtually eliminating the risk of oil and grease stains on clothing. A further cowling at the front offered some protection from road dirt and the weather. I was also one of the first monocoque vehicles ever

Innocenti was not impressed. He wanted a tubular steel frame which he could make in his existing factory. The two quarrelled and D'Ascanio took his design to Enrico Piaggio, for whom he had worked before the war. Piaggio saw the potential in the design and took out a patent, and brought the first model to the market in Spring 1946.



The prototype, designated MP5, was nicknamed Paperino by the workers, the Italian name for Donald Duck which it was thought to resemble. When Enrico Piaggio saw the second prototype, the MP6, and heard its little 98cc two-stroke engine he declared, "sembra una vespa!" (Its like a wasp) and so the name was born.



Vespa, of course, is the Italian for wasp. Later a three wheel version was introduced for the commercial market including the auto-rickshaw and this was named Ape which is the Italian for bee!

Meanwhile Innocenti had developed a more conventional design employing a tubular steel frame which he launched a year later than Piaggio, under the name Lambretta.

The launch at the 1946 Milan Fair was not a great success. Piaggio had set up a production line to manufacture the Vespa in quantity but the Italian public was slow to accept the strange looking new vehicle. The first 50 machines were slow to sell and sales did not take off until payment by instalments was introduced. Sales went from 2,500 in 1947 to 60,000 in 1950. Two years later the Vespa got its biggest ever sales promotion when it appeared in the film *Roman Holiday*, ridden by Gregory Peck and with Audrey Hepburn sitting side-saddle on the pillion.

This was the start of a long career in films and as unlikely celebrity transport. Carry Grant, Britt Ekland, Dean Martin, Sarah Jessica Parker, Stephen Spielberg, Tiger Woods, Raquel Welch, Jamie Oliver and Gwyneth Paltrow are all Vespa riders. More surprisingly, so were John Wayne and Donald Rumsfeld.

Vespas appeared in dozens of films across all genres from *Alfie* (both the original with Michael Cain and Jude Law's remake) to *Quadrophenia*. Other notable films were *Absolute Beginners* (David Bowie and Patsy Kensit), *Avanti!* (Jack Lemon and Juliet Mills) which had both the Vespa and the Ape in it, Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg), *Revenge Of The Pink Panther* (Peter Sellers) and many, many more.



A little known fact about Vespa is that for 3 years from 1958 to 1961 the produced a four wheel car. It was manufactured by ACMA in France. The reason for this is said to be that Fiat had threatened that if Piaggio built cars in Italy Fiat would start making scooters! Designated the Vespa 400, it was essentially a two seater with luggage space behind the seats which could be fitted with an optional cushion to accommodate a couple of small children. The seats were little more sophisticated being tubular frames with cloth upholstery

suspended on elastic. Doors were hinged at the rear and there was a cabriolet with a fabric roof which rolled back from the top of the windscreen to the top of the rear engine cover. The engine itself was a two cylinder, two-stroke air cooled unit of 393cc with a compression ratio of 6.4:1. Power (if you can call it that!) output was a meagre 18 b.h.p. but weighing in at only 375kg that was enough to allow *Motor* magazine to achieve a maximum speed of 51.8 m.p.h. during their road test in 1959. Acceleration was timed at 23.0 seconds for 0-40 m.p.h. and fuel consumption was 55.5 m.p.g.

Over the years the design of the scooter was improved and new models introduced. In 1947 the Vespa 125 introduced rear suspension; the headlamp was moved up to the handlebars in 1953. Two years later the more powerful 150 GS was introduced. In 1968 the Vespa 125 Primavera became one of the most popular of all. Vespas came in two sizes: large frame (125 to 200cc) and small frame (50 to 125cc). From the large frame Vespa was developed the PX range which was produced with 125 and 150cc engines up until 2007. The small frame machines evolved into the PK range in the 80's, although Piaggio continued making the older small frame design for export to Japan up to 1995. At its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1996 more than 15 million Vespas had been sold, more than any other manufacturer.



But by that time the company was in real difficulties. Asian manufacturers were taking market share with cheaper machines, cars were becoming less expensive, and two-stroke engines were being withdrawn around the world because of environmental concerns. Vespa responded with the ET which was lighter and more aerodynamic than the PX and had automatic transmission. With rapidly increasing traffic congestion in cities the ET was a great success, and the option of a four-stroke engine allowed Vespa to re-enter the US market in 2001.

With its elegant lines and classic styling the Vespa is an Italian design icon. It is interesting to reflect that broadly similar post-war conditions in Germany and Italy brought forth such different solutions: the short-lived bubble-car in Germany, and the ubiquitous Scooter in Italy.

#### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

April 7th      Kempford Classic Car & Motorcycle Club, The George, Kempford



#### **CONTACT:**

If you have any stories, photos or information you think ought to be included in the next Newsletter, or would like to comment on anything in this edition, please contact me, Alistair Kennedy, as follows:  
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