

The GBZ Newsletter

Volume 1

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Number 1

Welcome to the very first issue of 'The GBZ' which is *The Gibraltar Classic Vehicle Association's* newsletter and which we very much hope will become a regular feature. Firstly a few words about how *The Gibraltar Classic Vehicle Association* came to be...

Shortly after bringing over my Austin Sixteen, I was approached by a number of people, most of whom I had not known previously, who expressed an interest in classic cars and were interested in meeting similarly-minded folk. I must admit a certain relief since, until then, I was not entirely sure whether there was

anyone else in Gib who shared my addiction (or is it affliction?) to classic motoring. I shouldn't have worried! Within a few weeks I was convinced that there existed in Gib a nucleus of fellow enthusiasts and as time passed I was pressed to start a club that might allow classic car fans to get together. Despite putting it off again and again, I was eventually convinced by my good friends Christian Debono and Francis Mena that I call a meeting to gauge interest. This I did with certain trepidation, fearing that perhaps only the three of us might turn up but I was most pleasantly surprised to find over thirty-five gentlemen (and

a lady) had made the effort to attend. Faced with such encouragement there was no going back and a group of volunteers agreed to meet over a four-week period in order to prepare a paper that would serve as a basis for the formation of a club to look after the interests of classic car enthusiasts. This was done and at a subsequent meeting the proposals were agreed to and, after a suggestion from the floor, the working group was voted in to form the first committee.

Since then, the committee has been meeting regularly and working hard to establish the association on a firm foundation. A lot of progress has been made in a relatively short time and I must publicly thank the committee for their enthusiasm and commitment, which has allowed so much ground to be covered.

So, what does *The Gibraltar Classic Vehicle Association* hope to achieve?

The association is a representative body, which has been created to look after the interests of local classic vehicle enthusiasts. Its main aim is to

foster and promote the ownership and preservation of classic and historic motor vehicles as part of Gibraltar's motoring and transport heritage.

Our interest in these vehicles goes beyond simply messing about with life-size toys but rather an investment that future generations may one day come to appreciate and value what is an integral, if until now neglected, part of Gibraltar's heritage. Our hobby allows history to come alive; our cars are not dusty static exhibits to be admired from afar but rather working examples of the rudimentary technology that gradually developed allowing us today to travel in unimaginable safety and comfort.

Classic car owners enjoy their cars - there's no crime in that. But a great deal of our enjoyment is in the realisation that others too love old vehicles as they reminisce of happy days long gone, perhaps memories stirred up by that characteristic smell of old leather or of a not-too-finely-tuned engine. We warmly welcome anyone who might like to join our ranks, young or old and, don't worry, it doesn't matter if you don't own a classic (yet!).

John A Ferrary

Medina Sidonia

The Association's first 'official' outing took place on Saturday 24th November and attracted a good response from members who braved the grey and threatening clouds which hung over the neighbourhood.

As agreed beforehand, a second contingent led by Hector Capurro, doyen of Gibraltar's classic car enthusiasts, in his 1947 Rover 16 met up with us at Venta El Frenazo in Los Barrios and after an invigorating coffee all set off towards the ancient Spanish town of Medina Sidonia. Gratefully, the clouds soon gave way to glorious sunshine and a pleasant run along the country roads.

Alas! Disaster! Half way between Los Barrios and Medina one of our cars came to a spluttering stop on a hilly Z bend! Fortunately, Darrell Farrugia who had been detailed to bring up the rear soon had the situation under control as it was established that the car in question had run out of petrol!! In order to avoid anyone any unnecessary



'Se ha quedao sin gasolina' was the consensus.

embarrassment, suffice to say that this vehicle was a 1947 Rover 16 under the command of a well-weathered enthusiast who had miscalculated his car's fuel consumption and placed his faith on a dodgy fuel gauge. Operation Rescue was immediately put into action with leader car returning to assist the stricken vehicle while Darrell dashed to the nearest petrol station to fetch a couple of gallons of fuel. In the meantime the others benefited

from an unscheduled coffee stop and it wasn't long before the Rover was restarted and on its way.

Our stay in Medina Sidonia was a brief one but we were able to enjoy the culinary delights of the ventas in the neighbourhood (**Ed can vouch for 'El Sacrificio'**) and a pleasant day was rounded off with a reception hosted in our honour by Señora Macias Castellano, proprietress of 'Aromas de Medina', the polvorones factory we visited on this occasion. The Association has been assured of a welcome should we want to return at some future date.

Lessons learnt from this outing:

- Punctuality is crucial if we are to adhere to the timetable.
- In the interests of safety, cars travelling with us, especially of the older variety, need to remain in the convoy as any breakdowns will be picked up by the 'coche escoba' which is in contact with the leading vehicle.
- We must ensure that we have plenty of fuel to get us there and back. A spare 5 litre jerry-can might not be a bad idea. Warning triangles are a must!



A rather dispirited Hector rues over the day's events!

*A super day was had by all.
Till next time!*



A Peep into History

In 1946 a small team at Austin set to work to design a children's pedal car. It was developed with as much secrecy as any real car and was based on the Austin Eight. A prototype was built and was followed by a second car, modelled on a pre-war Austin Seven Special.



Production of the pedal-powered racing car for children was put into production in a new Austin-owned factory on South Wales in 1949, with target output of 100 cars a week. This factory employed men suffering from miner's pneumoconiosis and started up with 55 miners no longer able to work underground.

The prototype pedal car JOY 1

The racing car was called the Pathfinder Special and it was soon joined at the Austin Junior Car Factory by a roadster based loosely on the A40 Devon styling.

The cars were made using scrap metal left over from building real Austins and the main body parts were produced at Longbridge and shipped to South Wales for assembly, painting and trimming. The J40 had battery-operated horn and headlamps and sold for £34 8s.

A total of 32,098 J40s were built; the last one was completed in September 1971

Information Sought

Going through some old photographs the other day, Editor came across this photograph depicting G 9350, a RHD Austin Somerset. Is there anyone out there who knows anything about the history of this car and the identity of the gentleman opening the driver's door? Please drop me line or give me a call if you can help.



Letters to the Editor

Please feel free to write in and give us your comments on the way the Association is progressing and suggestions that will help us plan for the future.

**Correspondence to: The Editor, GBZ Newsletter,
c/o Francis Garage, South Barrack Road, Gibraltar.**

You may also hand in any letters or articles that you might like published to any member of the committee.

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Vauxhall Wyvern	479	18	4
Austin A40 Devon	501	12	10
Hillman Minx	505	9	5
Morris Oxford	546	7	3
Standard Vanguard	594	18	4
A70 Hampshire	648	11	8
Morris Six	671	11	8
Ford V 8 Pilot	748	5	0
Jowett Javelin	761	0	7

At your peril...

“We who drive private cars can learn much from long-distance lorry drivers – among other things, the fact that headlamps are superfluous on a clear night when the moon is at the full. On one such night not so long ago, I followed their example and found that, except at quite high speeds, I got along just as easily with only sidelights in use.

“I found, too, that a familiar and not very inspiring route took on a quite unexpected and slightly theatrical beauty.”

- *The Light Car 1949*

The Worst Car?

Member Mark Maloney has faxed a rather interesting article to the editorial offices extracts of which are reproduced below for your benefit.

Mark is the owner of that nice 2 litre Triumph Vitesse which turned up in Gib one day and which has attracted some attention. And by the way, Mark has no intention of selling his Triumph so all you hopefuls please refrain from leaving messages on his windscreen!

The chances are that you've owned at least one awful car in your motoring career – but which one? Motoring historian Giles Chapman can name a few...

First place goes to the Trabant (**Sorry Derek. Editor does not necessarily share this opinion, as you well know!**) which I tried in Hungary which laid a smoke trail like a destroyer from its 602cc two-pot, two-stroke engine and wouldn't crack 60mph. What's more its shaky body was made of Duroplast, a sort of compressed cardboard and Formica, so you daren't hit anything.

Then there is the 1980 Car Of The Year, the Lancia Delta, with its recalcitrant gear-change, body rot and rattles. But at least it was fun unlike the Talbot Horizon – inexplicably another Car Of The Year winner – which rode and cornered like a sponge and had a thrashy engine and rubbery steering.

Renault's Fuego was another dire machine. The styling wasn't too bad if you could ignore some of the exterior black plastic and it was surprisingly spacious. But it was just like the Renault 18 saloon in drag and it hardly handled like a sexy coupé.

For romantic reasons, I've a soft spot for the Triumph Spitfire, (**Sorry Francis!**) even though it handled as though it had a hinge in the middle and nearly killed me when I drove a pal's. Only with the two-

litre engine in GT6 Coupé form did the Triumph have any spit and you had to drive as if you were on a sea of ball bearings.

Peugeot's 205 was a truly great car, especially in GTI form – but the GRD diesel was a real pig. It belched smoke and having too much weight from the engine over the front wheels screwed up its handling balance. You had to wrestle with the steering. Door locks failed, the dash creaked like a ship at sea – and one I knew of was put out of its misery only when it caught fire.



Membership forms available from any committee member and from The Imperial Newsagency in Main Street .

Not all members' vehicles are saloon cars. Derek Hemmi's superbly restored Honda motorcycle, G 35865, joined us for the first time at Sunday's Safeway meet. Please remember that the Association welcomes all types of classic motor vehicles so don't hesitate in contacting us if you have an interesting classic motor, even if it is a lawnmower!

Medina pictures



Some of the cars attending the Medina Sidonia outing.
L to R: Michael Nicholson's immaculate Morgan, Hector Capurro's 1947 Rover 16, Dennis Darham's MGB, John Ferrary's 1948 Austin 16, Brian Ramagge's Rover P4, Christian Debono's 1955 Citroen 11, Mark Maloney's 1967 Triumph Vitesse, Darrell Farrugia's Mercedes Benz 380 and David Risso's Citroen 2CV. Unfortunately the Austin Sheerline and Austin Westminster had to leave early.



Gibraltar Classic Vehicle Association President John Ferrary and Secretary Darrell Farrugia with the owner of Aroma de Medina suitably flanked by Darrell's 380 and Christian Debono's impressive Citroen 11.

Thanks

The committee would like to thank all those members and friends who supported this first outing by their presence. A special 'thank you' to Tony Collado for the photographs and Darrell for providing the 'recovery' vehicle.

Safeway Meet

The Sunday meets continue to provide members with a chance of getting together and discussing the latest news and how the restorations are progressing, if at all!

In particular, we hope to keep the first Sunday of every month as the day when we muster as many of our cars and members as possible. Please try to keep the first Sundays free and join us at Safeway.



LEFT: A line up of some of the cars that turned up on Sunday 2nd December. Hemmed in between Hector's Austin 16 and Dennis' MGB you might just make out a Trabant, which joined us all the way from (ex-East) Germany courtesy of Derek

Sene. This car has been making a name for itself on the Rock as it splutters about enveloped in its very own plume of smog. Editor can confirm that driving the unassuming-looking mite is not for the faint-hearted since it has a mind of its own and is quite happy to shoot into reverse when you thought you had worked out where first was supposed to be.

A word of thanks to member Muriel Lima for keeping an eye on our cars from her stall while we slip into Safeway for a coffee.