Triumph Mayflower Club

TRIUMPH Mayflower CLUB

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FLOWER POWER

THE TRIUMPH MAYFLOWER CLUB

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When writing to a committee member and you require a reply, please enclose a Stamped Addressed Envelope. Please note that all the above committee members fulfil their positions in their spare time and not as a full-time occupation, so when contacting them other than by letter, please ensure that you choose a reasonable time of day

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Cover: This picture of Lydd Airport is by Malcolm Root (known mainly for his pictures of steam railways in the 1950/60s) who painted it for his brother Richard who at time was a Triumph Mayflower Club member

VE Day celebrations 2020

My thanks to Kathy and Frank Russell, who sent me this photo of their Mayflower 'on parade' for the VE Day celebrations — Ed

This photo shows our 1953 Mayflower and our 1959 Austin A35, in our front garden. We felt we should make an effort to celebrate VE Day, although of course we were not free to roam in our cars due to lockdown restrictions.

Kathy and Frank Russell (1183)

Editorial

Hello fellow Mayflower lovers!

I hope everyone is safe and well, and finding living in the 'New Normal' relatively straightforward. Rob and I are continuing to shield, so our 'normal' remains as it was back in March; that is house arrest!

The re-scheduled AGM had to be cancelled, so our Chairman, John Castle, remains in post until next year. Rallies of course have been non-existent since the last *Flower Power*, but hopefully you will find the look back at some past events a pleasant reminder of what enjoyable occasions these can be.

I have to bring you some sad news regarding one of our longest serving members, William Chapman, who passed away a few weeks ago. His legacy lives on in the form of his Mayflower, which has been bought by one of our new members.

Within this issue you will find some fascinating articles, including one about the extraordinary extent of John Corley's hobbies, and Heiko Triebener recalls the trials of getting 'Lady Mary' back to Germany.

On the technical front, as promised Paul Burgess gives a detailed explanation of the two types of Mayflower fuel pump, and Rob Davies reports on his investigations into petrol, how it has changed over the years, and how impending changes could affect us classic car drivers.

Commemorations to mark the 400th anniversary of the infamous voyage of our namesake, the 'Mayflower', were also seriously curtailed by Covid-19; many planned events having to be held 'virtually'.

A fully autonomous ship bearing the same name was launched in Plymouth on the anniversary date, September 16. This futuristic vessel will be able to provide vast quantities of data, enabling scientists to "better understand critical issues including global warming, ocean plastic pollution and marine mammal conservation."

It is pretty much at the opposite end of the 'technological spectrum' to our own beloved Mayflowers, with their reassuringly simple engines and straightforward running gear.

In the next issue of *Flower Power*, Mark Smith will be telling us about more tasks he has undertaken on 'Mildred', and we will hear about 'Lady Mary', Heiko Triebener's car, having a role in a movie! Beyond that . . . I really don't know! It is down to you all to send me your articles, however long or short. This is an ideal forum for sharing your experiences, technical knowhow, etc, with your fellow members. So please, get writing!

Happy, but Covid-safe Mayflowering
Barbara

Welcome to new members

1280
1281
1282
1283
1284
1285

We are currently unable to show members details

Copy dates

Copy deadlines to send your articles for the next editions of *Flower Power* are December 30 and March 30. All correspondence should be sent to Barbara Davies by post or by e-mail.

Chairman's report

Hello all

It's 400 hundred years since the Mayflower set sail for America, in stormy seas. Funny that our own Mayflowers have also encountered a bit of a storm this year, with the outbreak of Covid-19. We've had no meets at all, so let's hope it'll be gone by next year and that we can get together once again.

The lockdown has hopefully given you time to do the jobs on your Mayflowers that you've been putting off. In my case it was an exhaust, a speedo cable and brakes. I have been lucky enough to be able to use a ramp at the small engineering firm where I worked before retiring (the company has recently manufactured some engine head studs for the club, so Paul now has some in stock).

Back to the jobs: starting with the exhaust, I got hold of a Morris 1000 one; cut the silencer off the pipework and removed the one from my Mayflower. I then lined them up on the floor and welded together the silencer from the Mayflower and the 'donor' exhaust. Next, the manifold bracket had to be cut off the Mayflower pipe, and welded onto the new exhaust.

After that I turned my attention to the brakes; then all the wheels and hubs had to be removed, cleaned and replaced. Whilst doing this, I noticed there was a wobble on the back driver's side wheel. My first thought was that a bearing had gone but I tightened up the nut, put the locking pin in and that sorted the problem.

Lastly I worked on the speedo cable: the inner cable was broken, so I had to take the lot off from the back of the dial and the gearbox end. Then I had to get out the old inner cable, and replace it with the one I got from Paul. I then tightened everything up, put the dial back, tried it out, and bingo! It worked, and that was me finished.

As I mentioned in my report in the last magazine, I am standing down as Chairman. This should have been actioned at this year's AGM but as you know, it had to be cancelled. So I remain Chairman until we hold the next AGM: If anyone is interested in taking over this role, please let us know!

I hope everyone is well and that you've not been too affected by the Covid-19 outbreak, and that we can get together again soon.

Yours sincerely
John Castle (Chairman)

Our Treasurer Paul Norton has kindly let us see two photos from his 'private collection' (as they say in Royal circles)

Mayflower mysteries

1: This Mayflower has strange studs attached to the radiator; Paul suspects this was for a cover of some sort. He also thinks the car appears to be an early model.

2: Paul thinks this photo was probably taken in the London suburbs; quite a smart area, judging by the crowd in the foreground.

Their clothes would suggest the photo was taken in the late 1940s, so the Mayflower passing by must also have been an early model. *—Ed*

Rally (nothing to...) report!

by John Banks, Rally Secretary

AS THE CLUB has been unable to hold its Annual Rally in 2020, I thought now might be a good time to take a quick look back at some from years gone by. The rallies featured are all the first in a particular decade:

2010

Picture 1 features some of the Mayflowers that attended the Annual Rally, which was held at Kelmarsh Hall, near Market Harborough, on Sunday June 27.

Pictures 2 and 3 were taken at the Northern Rally, held at Ripon Racecourse just a month later on Sunday July 25.

2000

The Annual Rally this year was attended by (wait for it) no less than 19 Mayflowers! Here are just some of them (Bletchley Park, Milton Keynes). That's the club's very own John Oaker sitting in the foreground.

1990

July 22 was the date for this year's Annual Rally, which was held at Blenheim. The group of members in Picture 5 had driven all the way from Sweden to attend the rally:

1980

A national rally was held during this year (the club at this time was still very much in its infancy) but unfortunately I've been unable to find any photographs of the event. It took place at the Cotswold Wildlife Park, Burford on July 13 and by all accounts was a great success.

Let's keep our fingers crossed that we, too, will be able to hold a successful rally in 2021 — Ed.

Letters

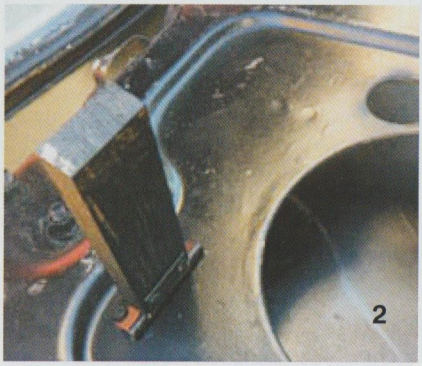
A 'totally unnecessary' job!

Dear Ed,

During lockdown, I decided to do a totally unnecessary job on my Mayflower!

Did I want to solve a problem that, to be honest, wasn't really a problem? Yes I did! The boot lid when fully open does not sit horizontal, but has quite a slope on it. This means my glass of wine falls over when I'm having a picnic. Disastrous! (Photo 1).

I know another Mayflower owner who spent a long time attempting to extend the support lever on each side, to allow the lid to open further; thus becoming horizontal. This has made it really good for picnics, etc but was quite a complex job.

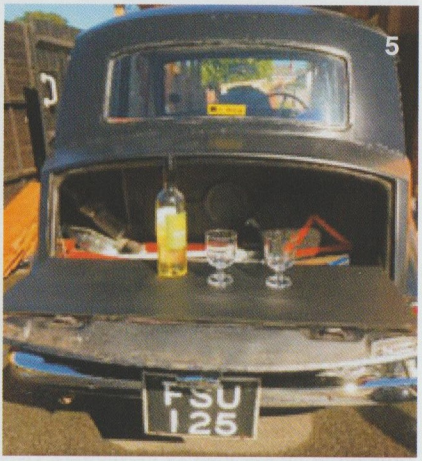


My solution was to cover the inside of the boot lid with a piece of 9mm plywood, hinged at one end; then installed two hinged support legs (Photo 2), thus setting the plywood horizontal.

A quick flick of the two legs (Photo 3) and the plywood goes back down and is held in place with a central stud(Photo 4).

Sorted!!! (Photo 5)

Regards
Peter Hewitt, 1233



Triumph Mayflower fuel pump

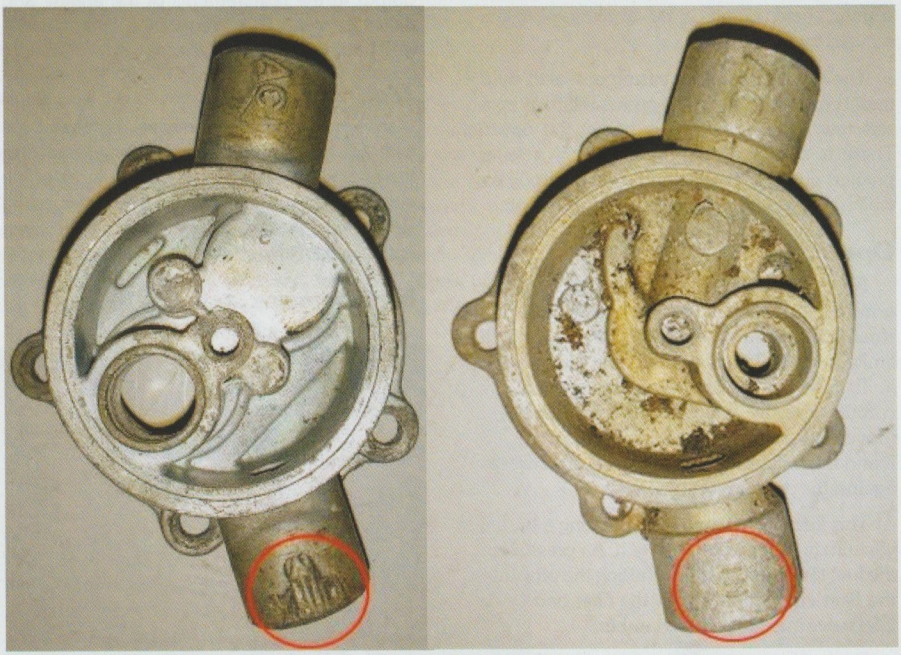
by Paul Burgess, Spare Parts Manager

THE TRIUMPH MAYFLOWER is fitted with a mechanical AC Delco fuel pump, which delivers fuel at 1½ to 2½ psi. One of two types were used, either the 'Y' type or the later 'YD' type.

These are interchangeable. Externally the YD type has 'YD' around an arrow cast into the top of the input port on the upper casting and valve seat assembly and the Y type just has 'IN' (see images below).

Construction

Basically the pump consists of two die castings, the body, which is mounted on the engine by two set screws and the upper casting. These are assembled by a ring of screws around their flanges, which pass through a diaphragm trapped between the two units. The diaphragm is supported in the centre by metal protectors to which is attached a pull rod. Two slots in the end of the pull rod engage in the end of a link,



As you will have noticed, these castings are different internally and so need the appropriate repair/service kit, although the diaphragm is common to both. The lower pump body seems to be interchangeable (it will take either upper casting), as are the filter lid and gauze.

The following information is from Motor Trader Service Supplement 350/C62. See also the Triumph Mayflower Service Instruction Manual.

restraining a compression ring located by the diaphragm protector and the body. Oil sealing washers are sometimes fitted around the pull rod. The link is pivoted on a pin passing through the body and retained by spring rings (or staking).

A more recent method of fixing is to slide the pin into the cast body within the cast channels. Two specially shaped retainers are then pressed into the channels from the flange face and

staked; the whole assembly ensures that oil will not leak past the pin. Sharing the same pivot and fitting between the side lugs of the link is the rocker arm. Washers on either side prevent side play. A small spring is trapped between the body and a projection on the rocker arm, which keeps the rocker arm in contact with the camshaft eccentric.

In the underside of the upper casting fits the valve gear. On the earlier Y type pump the valve components are individually assembled, and there are two valve plates or seats; one being punched into the body, while the other forms part of the retainer. Inlet and outlet valves on the later YD pump are formed as separate valve cage assemblies, complete with seats and springs, held in place by a retaining plate secured by two screws.

The top of the upper casing is sealed by a metal cover, and synthetic gasket retained by a setscrew; a filter gauze fits below the cover. There is also a hand primer. This is a lever pivoted on a shaft passing through the body on which is formed a lug/cam contacting the link.

Operation

For every two engine revolutions the rocker arm, kept in contact with its eccentric by the small compression spring, will move through a limited arc. As it does so it will take the link with it. To consider the operation, assume that the carburettor bowl is empty. As the rocker arm moves towards the body the link will move with it and this will operate the pull rod downwards against the pressure of the spring.

This flexes the diaphragm, creating a partial vacuum in the chamber above it. Air pressure in the fuel tank then forces fuel along the pipe into the filter chamber, through the filter and open inlet valve into the pump chamber.

Further movement of the eccentric will allow the spring to return the rocker arm and the link will be held in contact with it by the action of the large spring. This will press the diaphragm upwards; the inlet valve is now forced on to its seat and the outlet valve opens, the fuel flowing out into the outlet pipe.

A pocket of air trapped in a chamber above the outlet port acts as a cushion to damp out pulsations which could give rise to an irregular supply.

This sequence of events will be repeated until the carburettor bowl is filled when the needle closes and shuts off flow from the outlet pipe. When this happens fuel is trapped in the pump chamber, keeping the diaphragm flexed in its lowest position.

This holds the link out of contact with the rocker arm, which will keep 'idling' as long as the engine runs. Immediately fuel is used, the needle valve opens, allowing fuel to flow from the pump chamber and the diaphragm to rise.

Thus with the next cycle of operation the rocker arm will contact the link again. The hand primer operated the link in much the same way. In this way the pump automatically adjusts its output to the requirements of the engine and delivery pressure is dependent only on the diaphragm compression spring.

Testing

A simple test is to remove the feed pipe where it enters the carburettor bowl and turn the engine by hand. For each two turns of the engine, a spurt of petrol (about ½ egg-cup full) should be delivered. The petrol should be clean and free from air bubbles.

Maintenance

After 2,500 miles the filter needs cleaning. Wash the gauze with petrol or blow clear with compressed air. When replacing, ensure that the gasket and fibre washer under the setscrew are in good condition. Periodically check the tightness of connections and look for leaks.

Dismantling

Disconnect unions and remove the two nuts retaining pump to engine. Clean exterior of pump and mark flanges of body and upper casing with file cut for correct reassembly. Remove screws around flange and separate flanges.Turn diaphragm assembly through 90 degrees, and remove.

Remove screws retaining valves, valve discs, springs, etc, and note their correct positioning. Remove filter cover and gauze. Remove circlip retaining pivot pin and push out, releasing rocker arm, spring and link with washers.

Reassembly

Wash valve cases or discs in paraffin, this aids seating. Assemble valves and retainer into

correct position, the inlet valve spring projects into pump chamber and outlet valve into air dome, and tighten screws. Place filter gauze on top of casting, fit synthetic gasket and filter cover assembly, fibre washer and screw.

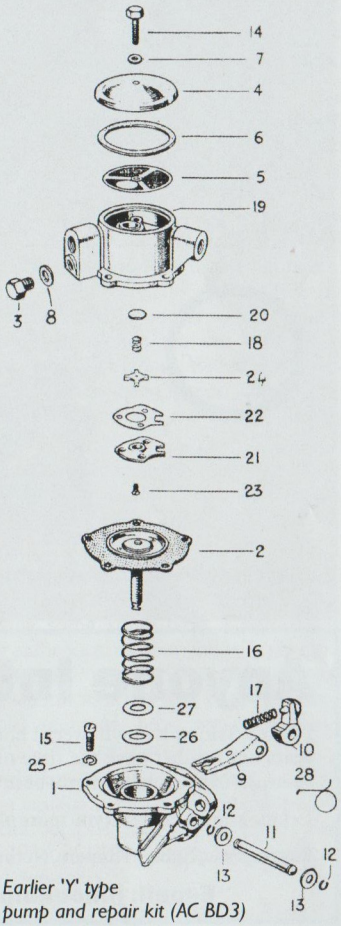
Assemble link, packing washers, rocker arm and spring in body. Insert pivot pin and fit spring rings. A rod 0.240in diameter used as a pilot for pin will aid assembly. Thread oil seal washer on to pull rod and turn washer through 90 degrees to retain. Place diaphragm spring and diaphragm assembly in position. Turn until smallest tab on diaphragm is at 11 o'clock. Press downwards on diaphragm, turning assembly to the left so that slots in the pull rod engage the forked end of link.

Finally turn one quarter turn to the left to seat the pull rod in its working position in the link at the same time aligning the holes in the diaphragm with those in the body. The tab should now be at 8 o'clock.

Push the rocker arm towards the pump until the diaphragm is level with the body flange. Place the upper casting in position as shown by the file marks made earlier. Replace cover, screws and lock washers, tightening until screws touch lock washers. Push rocker arm towards pump as far as possible, hold in this position and finally tighten cover screws diagonally and securely. The edges of the diaphragm should now be flush with the clamping edges.

PETROL PUMP DETAILS

Fig.	*Part No.*	
1	500291	**Pump body**
	100529	**Washer,** petrol pump
2	500292	**Diaphragm**
3	52465	**Drain plug**
4	52467	**Filter cover**
5	52469	**Filter gauze**
7	52472	**Gasket,** filter screw
6	52473	**Gasket,** filter cover
8	52471	**Gasket,** drain plug
9	500293	**Link**
10	500294	**Rocker arm**
11	52483	**Rocker arm pin**
12	52484	**Rocker pin clip**
13	52485	**Rocker pin washer**
14	52487	**Screw,** filter cover
15	52489	**Screw,** upper casing
16	52491	**Spring,** diaphragm

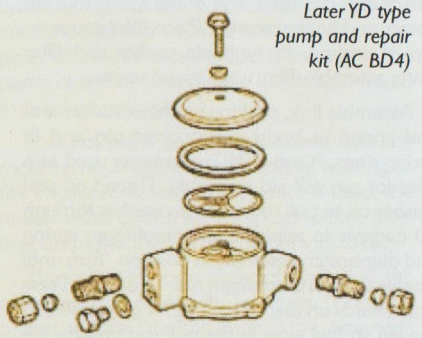


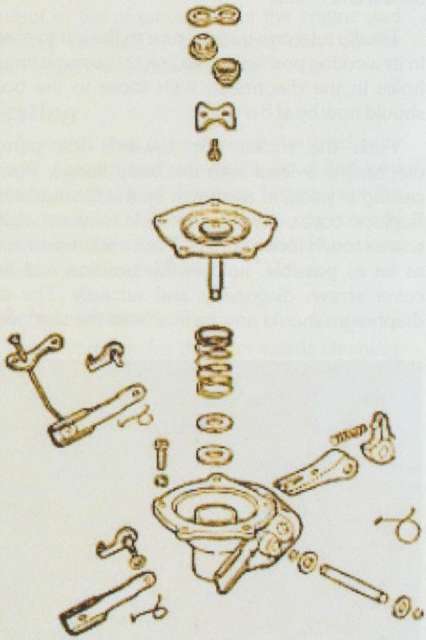
Earlier 'Y' type pump and repair kit (AC BD3)

PETROL PUMP DETAILS

Fig.	Part No.	
17	52493	**Spring,** rocker arm
18	52495	**Spring, valve**
19	500295	**Upper casting and valve seat assembly**
20	57351	**Valve**
21	57353	**Valve plate**
22	57355	**Valve plate gasket**
23	57357	**Valve plate screw**
24	57358	**Valve spring retainer**
25	57361	**Lock washer**
26	500296	**Washer,** oil seal
27	500297	**Washer,** oil seal
	100817	**Push rod,** fuel pump operation
	NH.2008	**Nut,** fuel pump attachment
	WL.0208	**Lock washer,** fuel pump attachment
	104359	**Nut,** hand primer side

Later YD type pump and repair kit (AC BD4)





Anyone Interested?

I have a Triumph Mayflower at home and have had this car for 20 years but I didn't have the time to fix it up. So I thought maybe someone in your club is might be interested in this car.

Let me know I can send you more photos.

Best regards, Egbert Kuipers, Netherlands

E-mail: jildoukuipers@gmail.com

My other life . . .

by 'Dragon's Husband'

'Dragon's Husband' (aka our General and Membership Secretary, John Corley) has another life beyond Triumph Mayflowers! Below, he tells us about his other hobbies. Oh, and happy birthday John! — Ed

I AM MARRIED to Caroline, whose nickname is 'Dragon' (her Scouting name, I believe — Ed); hence my own nickname. As you can see, I have just had a milestone birthday, and those with an intelligent mind will also note that I am a 'true' Christmas baby!

I have a 1952 Mayflower (Jean), which I purchased three years ago. When I got her home, I serviced the brakes and the engine; gave her new rear springs and new tyres, and gave the wheels a black powder coat.

Nearly all the chrome has been re-chromed and Jean has also been in a garage to have new sills, outriggers and 'A' pillars, and a total re-spray (she's now been at the garage for 12 months!).

When I was a child, my parents had a Mayflower. When my mother passed away, I was not expecting anything from her will as she lived in a home for the last few years of her life. However, an unexpected small legacy has so far paid for the Mayflower, which is named after my mum.

I also have a 2001 Land Rover Defender, which I bought five years ago. I joined a club called 'Leicestershire and Rutland 4x4 Response'. This is a nationwide club, with county divisions.

We are affiliated to the emergency services and provide help as required. So during the Covid-19 outbreak I have been delivering prescriptions and distributing PPE from the warehouse to health centres, schools, etc.

I also have a 1983 Honda CF70 motorcycle, which is my local runabout machine. Its top speed is 40 mph downhill, with the wind behind me.

My main hobby is scouting, and I have been a member since 1957. In the late 1960s I specialised in offshore sailing and eight years later I was skippering the boat. We currently have two 50ft long sloop rigged ketches, based in Ipswich.

'Hilda' the Honda in front of my 'landy'

These boats have 14 berths each but that's pretty cosy! More often we sail with three afterguard and eight trainees. With this scheme I have visited St Petersburg, Lisbon, Dublin and Norway. I've also crossed the Bay of Biscay three times.

I usually sail once a month from April until October and once a month for maintenance from November to March.

Within Leicestershire I'm a member of my local Thurmaston group and help them with events (I also assist at county events too). Just in case I have some spare time, I am also a volunteer at the local museum looking after the exhibits: Abbey Pumping Station is a disused pumping station that has four beam engines, which the volunteers have recommissioned and run about six times per year.

This is the basis of the museum but there are also some vintage vehicles including a fleet of commercial vehicles, four fire engines dated between 1939 and 1956, and a lorry-mounted coal-fired chip-shop.

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Around the world in 26 letters

DESPITE MY BEST efforts to find a photograph of a Mayflower in Hungary or Honduras, sadly this proved impossible. So . . . I've gone with Holland (I know this is a bit of a cheat, as officially the country's title is of course The Netherlands; 'Holland' being the name of just two provinces within it).

Anyway, this photo was taken in 2010; the car belonging to Nico Poortvliet, who was new to the TMC at that time. Nico and his wife enjoyed going on local trips in their Mayflower, including on this occasion when they drove to the seaside. Looks idyllic; hopefully mine and Rob's car will be able to take us to lovely places, one of these days . . .

Letters

Unusual import markings

Dear Editor

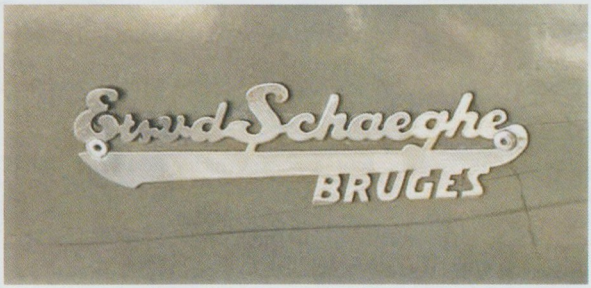
I have a question for our members, regarding the Mayflower that I recently bought. My question is this: my LHD car was registered in Bruges, Belgium, on June 11 1950.

All the glass windows say 'Belgium' — now I am wondering if it might be possible that my car, maybe for tax/customs reasons, was delivered to Belgium in parts; then assembled there, and not in England?

The car has a plaque on her back saying 'Eis v.d. Schaeghe', which presumably was the Belgian dealership. Supposedly this company went out of business long before the worldwide web came along and I haven't been able to find out any information whatsoever.

If any of our members is able to throw any light on this for me, I'd be most grateful!

With most cheerful greetings
and sincerest thanks,
Heiko Triebener, 1277



Continued from Page 11

Other exhibits include a K2 lorry, an electric milk float and an electric bread van, a 10 tonne 1940s hybrid mobile lift crane, two double decker buses, a 1983 steam roller, motor cycles and by-cycles. The list goes on!

As you can imagine, I have great fun driving all the exhibits, especially when we take them to rallies.

So if I do not immediately respond to your e-mails in my guise as TMC membership secretary, I send my apologies in advance as I just might just be off enjoying myself with one of my other hobbies.

How on earth do you manage to fit all this in?! The club is very fortunate that you have been willing to take on your committee role, on top of all your other commitments. As a footnote the members might like to know that you are now able to take payments by Paypal for membership subscriptions.— Ed.)

Lady Mary's progress

by Heiko Triebener, member 1277

AS PROMISED I wanted to let you — and all our valued members — know what has happened ever since I bought my 'Lady Mary' in Holland early March this year!

The original plan had been to travel to Holland by train, fetch the car and enjoy a lazy trip along the rivers Rhein and Main back home to Bamberg in some four days. This plan was brought to a halt by the dreadful pandemic and lockdown.

So I was quite happy that it was, after all, possible to organise hauling my sweetie to Germany on a truck. All the offices responsible for registering the car were in emergency mode at that time, doing only rescue vehicles and fire department trucks and such.

So I needed a place for her — and found master repairman Peter Marx, some 25 miles outside of Bamberg, in the middle of the most lovely countryside. Right on the first phone call he immediately knew what I was talking about, and was most enthusiastic about the chance to have a look at this rare beauty, whilst offering shelter and service.

He is experienced with British motors and had all the necessary tools, as well as endless shelves filled with spare parts of the rarest kind.

She got delivered at the end of March and it was soon evident that the trip home on her own wheels would have turned into an utter fiasco: The main problem was the dirt in the fuel tank, which had collected in her 70 years of previous life.

These brown particles, originating from the dissolving inner coating of this marvellous piece of industrial craftsmanship (made from steel of an astounding quality unknown in our modern days) consistently and annoyingly blocked the fuel supply by clogging the fuel pipe, fuel pump, and carburettor.

After thoroughly cleaning the tank several times, replacing the fuel hose, cleaning the carburettor again and again, and provisionally installing an electric fuel pump (this only for the time until the replacement for the broken mighty tiny rocker arm would be delivered — thank you so much Paul!!!), she ran beautifully.

After fixing some minor and major other issues, I was finally able to register her on April 30. She got the number plate BA-TU 50 H; the 'H' indicating a historic vehicle. On May 5 I took her home and have enjoyed driving her every day ever since, as long as nothing is broken . . .

Peter did a fantastic job fixing all those little and big things that needed to be done but three other problems were solved by my dear colleague Wolfram Hauser, a viola player in my orchestra.

Firstly, the second horn was so badly broken that honking would literally slow down the entire car, because it sucked so much electricity. A horrible short circuit had melted the inside and Wolfi spent three entire days (and nights) to make it a perfect 'major third' with number one again.

Secondly, a previous owner had glued a large rear-view mirror on top of the original. When applying second gear, your hand would always collide with this superfluously added mirror, damaging its ball mount. So Wolfi carefully cut away the extra mirror, found the original glass entirely undamaged, cleaned it and repaired the ball mount.

Thirdly, it soon became evident that the supply of spares from the club was blocked due to lockdown, so we wouldn't know when the new fuel pump would finally arrive. So in the meantime, Wolfi constructed an enhanced rocker arm from a 3D printer, which actually worked — but not for long.

Before starting experiments with stronger filament materials, the spare fuel pump arrived and the unloved electric replacement was sent to retirement.

As well as driving her around the most beautiful town of Bamberg and the just as lovely countryside surrounding it, we did one longer trip in June. This was to celebrate her 70th birthday on June 11, with friends near Munich.

Apart from the problem with the fuel tank, major issues have been the clutch and gearbox linkage, the Clayton extra heater, the alternator controller and the starter motor. Thankfully, after adding some oil to the steering and gearbox, both have been silky smooth ever since.

Right now, after running joyfully for some two weeks, she is in the sanatorium again: cylinder number. three refused to work and it turns out she needs a new head gasket (which Peter will fit soon).

For the upcoming winter season, I plan to ask a specialist to look after the upholstery of the leatherette front seats, as some stitches are severely dissolving. Also, some protective underbody work needs to be done. She just hates standing around and I would love to let her out into sunny and dry winter days!

In the short time she's been in Germany she's had a little movie appearance as the escape car of a secret agent. I was playing for my chamber music ensemble and the major German vintage car magazine *Oldtimer Markt* did a photo shoot for an article in one of its next issues.

Wow! That's quite a 'Baptism of fire' into the world of classic car ownership. Hopefully we'll hear more about the photoshoot and movie in our next edition. — Ed.

WANTED YOUR CONTRIBUTION

Any stories about Your Restoration, Your trip to a Rally, Your day out, Your Mayflower —

Please send them to the Editor

Petrol is changing! — information you need to know

by Robert Davies, Website Editor

PETROL, THE STUFF that comes out of pumps, it's all the same . . . isn't it? Well no, and hasn't been the same stuff over time either.

Should we be concerned about the latest changes to the amber nectar that keeps our Mayflowers purring? (Okay, perhaps not purring, but chugging along nicely.)

Let's take a step back to look at petrol itself: in *Flower Power* No. 79 (Spring 1996), a report written by Dr Cathryn Hickey, Technical Fuels Manager at Shell UK. She explains that petrol is a blend of over 300 different chemical compounds, which can vary widely.

It should have the correct octane level to prevent 'knocking' (sometimes known as 'pinking'); strong cleaning power to prevent build-up of carbon and the correct volatility to ensure good acceleration and first time starting.

The Octane Rating

The octane rating was established in 1929 and petrol was rated on a scale of 0-100 (known as its 'research octane number' RON). In the 1920s, petrol had an octane number of between 50 and 60, whilst four star had a rating of 97 (the 'star' rating system having been introduced in the 1960s).

Classic cars designed to run on lower RON values could run quite happily on higher ones available in the 1990s, although carburettors would need an appropriate adjustment.

Lead (Tetraethyl lead)

Lead (Tetraethyl lead) was added to the petrol we knew as 'four star' to provide the correct octane rating but it also acted as a lubricating barrier between the exhaust valves and their seats (soft seats).

Up to 1967, 1 gram of lead per litre was added to petrol but due to environmental concerns during the 1960s and 70s it was gradually reduced, until 1986 when the maximum level was reduced to between 0.4 to 0.15 grams per litre. British Standards in the late 1990s stated that 4 star should have a minimum of .05 grams per litre.

Shell, and presumably other major suppliers, blended a 'Low Lead' 97 RON petrol in the late 1990s, which had 0.075 grams of lead per litre. This seemed to sort the problem of being suitable for older cars but as our Club Historian Stephen Coulman found out, whilst writing an article for *FP* No. 96 (Summer 2000), its availability was somewhat patchy.

Helpfully, an excerpt from a FBHVC (Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs) newsletter was published in the very next *FP* (Autumn 2000), showing just 40 garages across England and Wales (only one in the whole of Wales! — Ed) stocking the low lead four star.

Lead Replacement Additives

The use of the low lead four star was always going to be a stop-gap and personally I can't remember ever seeing it for sale (not that I had a classic car at the time). Lead replacement additives were the way forward for many classic car owners, after withdrawal of 4 star in 2000.

In *FP No.* 132 (Spring 2010), there was another article taken from a FBHVC newsletter; this time giving the results of a review into Lead Replacement Additives which it had carried out during 2000. It tested all those on the market at the time and those it 'passed' were allowed to carry the FBHVC logo.

In 2010 the Federation found that many of the originals had been withdrawn from sale but at the time there were still four of those it had tested and passed still on offer. Mayflower drivers probably all have their own favourites, although a note of caution from the article: do not mix lead replacement additives.

There is also a product called 'Tetraboost', containing Tetraethyl lead: this enables you to convert unleaded petrol to four star by adding the lead yourself. A retailer on e-bay claims that 95 octane unleaded can be converted to 97 octane 4 star with this product. Perhaps not the best environmentally-considerate method, but if it allows classic cars to run . . .

E10 or E5?

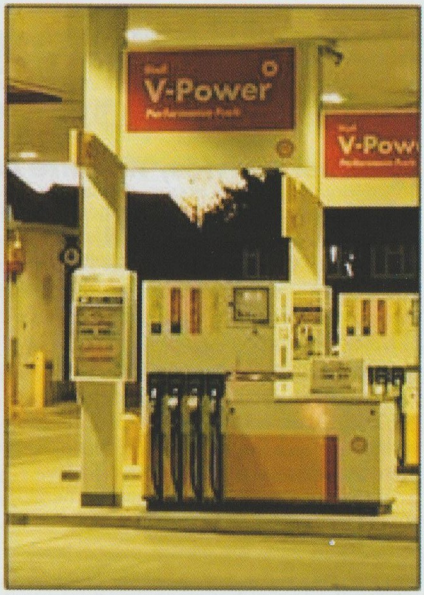
Now, we've managed to make adjustments over the years to ensure our cars continue to run on fuel they can safely use and is less harmful to the environment.

You may remember a 'News Article' on the website earlier in the year, warning that on March 4 2020 the government had made a proposal that the standard petrol across the UK would be 'E10'. The idea was that this would help the government to meet its 'Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation'; a measure which would be equivalent to taking up to 350,000 cars off the road each year, thus saving up to 750,000 tonnes of CO2 in the same period.

The reason the move to E10 would achieve this is that it involves substituting 10 per cent of the petrol for bioethanol — a good move again for the environment, with bioethanol being a renewable source.

However, and here is the sting in the tail for classic car owners, according to the FBHVC in their March press release E10 CAN cause some flexible fuel hoses, seals, gaskets, plastics and certain metals critical to the fuel system to corrode or degrade. This MAY cause damage to fuel pumps and carburettors.

However, a possible solution has been put forward by the FBHVC. It has proposed that E5 (which is the petrol currently widely available in the UK, containing just 5 per cent bioethanol) be retained for use by classic vehicle owners, with the name 'Protection Grade' being given to it (with E10 being the fuel on sale for all modern cars).



This has been taken seriously by government and Rachel Maclean, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Transport) said in the House of Commons: "Increasing the share of bioethanol up to 10 per cent, known as E10, would help us to meet our climate change commitments." She continued to say that for around 700,000 vehicles E10 would not be compatible. This number would reduce as the vehicles reached the end of their life. However, some classic and cherished vehicles for which the use of E10 is not advised, would still remain in use. She maintained that "the Department remains committed to ensuring that E5 is retained as a protection grade."

What isn't known is whether the 'protection grade', or E5, will remain widely available (four star leaded petrol being only available in a small number of garages, and I'm sure it disappeared completely within a few years). The other unknown is whether E5 will cost more than E10, because of the economies of scale.

We shall all see soon enough, as the change is due to take place in 2021.

Latest Regalia Range

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(Some great Christmas presents here, if you want to start dropping a few hints! Ed.)

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