Traction Owners Club Ltd

Traction Owners Club Limited
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Monthly Newsletter **Issue 14 November 2009**

Some of you will have read some of the content of this newsletter before (in October) some of one won't have seen it. Unfortunately I have no way of knowing just how many Members received the October newsletter so I've decided to repeat what is still relevant from October and add the new news for November.

Why, I can hear you asking, do I not know who received the October newsletter and who didn't? The answer is that the BT Yahoo site that handles my email accounts sent me an error message to say that I was trying to send an email to too many recipients and that my email had therefore been rejected. Despite this I know that some Members actually received the newsletter because I had a response from one Member and I had auto acknowledgements from several others.

The outcome - after a lot of ploughing through (unhelpful) BT Yahoo help desk information and after discussions with an overseas BT helpdesk - was that I was informed that the maximum number of addressees for a single email allowed through BT's internet gateway is 50. So, having quite happily been sending ***e-FP*** to more than 450 Members for the last four months from my (half the price per month of BT) Canadian Telus account, I have had to manually separate my ***e-FP*** distribution list into 10 separate distribution lists and, whilst I am in the UK, will now have to send 10 separate emails to distribute ***e-FP***.

I did warn you in September that the October edition might be a little late but I didn't anticipate it not being received at all by some Members - I was just expecting a short delay whilst we relocated from Canada to the UK.

Apart from the technical problem that delayed the October issue I also hadn't anticipated that over 200 photographs for the 2010 calendar competition would arrive in the last couple of days of September or that I would return to find the sump of my Traction half full of water.

I had expected to be able to produce the October edition of ***e-FP*** before scooting off to Derbyshire on 3rd October to take part in the Edinburgh Trial in one of my 2CVs (which incidentally was an absolutely superb event in which we won an award), and before tootling off to Wales on 6th October in our Morgan for a week of catching up with friends. And certainly before we set off to France on 15th October, en-Traction, to celebrate two special birthdays with the Huttons and the Marleys.

Having spent a full day replacing the head gasket on my Traction I can't, in all honesty, say that I could see anything wrong with the old one. My theory is that the head wasn't torqued down tightly enough and that whilst it stood for six months there was seepage of water via the head gasket.

I therefore torqued the head down on my new copper gasket (supplied in double quick time by Chris Treagust from the Club Spares) to 45 ft lbs (instead of the 36 ft lbs in the manual) and re-torqued

the bolts with the engine hot. And I ran the engine with flushing oil (plus a special additive supplied by my local garage) for 40 minutes to try to flush any water out of the oil system before refilling the sump with new oil.

I also added a bottle of K- Seal to the radiator to guard against another gasket failure - so with fingers crossed that the bearings hadn't been damaged and that I didn't suffer a breakdown due to premature bearing failure - we set off for France.

Happily after nearly a 1000 miles I can report that the radiator level dropped not one iota during the week and the engine oil is still clean and free from any signs of water - but my fingers are still crossed.

Before turning to the TOC News I would just like to say a big thank you to all of the Members who responded to my appeals for input to the 2010 Calendar - I hope you'll like the photographs that have been selected for the calendar and the fact that some have been printed in colour.

Choosing just 12 photographs from the more than 240 received was really, really difficult - but at least I now have a store of superb photographs for future editions of ***Floating Power***. And talking about ***Floating Power*** - I still need more from you, so please take the time to sit down and write something for your magazine.

TOC News

November/December edition of *Floating Power*

My expectation is that the November/December issue of ***Floating Power*** will be posted out to you all on either Tuesday 3rd or Wednesday 4th of November. The delay has been caused by the fact that in addition to magazine there will also be a copy of the 2010 Calendar plus a reprint of the four centre pages (TOCTech) of the magazine with colour photographs and a proxy vote form for the AGM for each Member to be inserted into the same envelopes.

At this point in time there is no way of knowing how the threatened Royal Mail strike will affect deliveries but I'm hopeful that you will get your magazine in plenty of time for you to complete and return the proxy voting form to John Ogborne if you are not planning to attend the AGM in person on 29th November.

Just in case there is a delay I've also decided to attach copy of the proxy form to this newsletter so that if all else fails you can do an email response to John Ogborne at secretary@traction-owners.co.uk

Remembrance Sunday - 8th November 2009

Next Sunday (8th November) is Remembrance Sunday and Mick Popka has been asked by the Director of the Yorkshire Air Museum if the TOC could supply 10 Tractions to transport a party of approximately 20 persons, comprising a number of French WWII veterans plus the French and Canadian Attaché's, from their hotel to a reception with the Lord Mayor of York at the Mansion House on Saturday afternoon (7th November) and from their hotel to a Service of Remembrance at the Air Museum on Sunday morning (8th November).

Mick already has seven Tractions available for the Saturday and Sunday but would like to hear from any other TOC Members who could be in York with their Tractions for next weekend.

Unfortunately he needs a very rapid response to this request (including details of the driver and any passengers plus the registration number of the car) as he needs to get the vehicle details to the York council at the very beginning of this coming week in order for the necessary documentation to be prepared.

Members volunteering their services have been invited to attend the reception at the Mansion House on Saturday afternoon and have been invited to a 'roast beef and Yorkshire pud' lunch at the Air Museum on Sunday. They will also be able to visit the Museum in the afternoon and will be given a ticket for free entry to the Air Museum at a later date.

In addition Mick is organising a meal for TOC Members in the centre of York on Saturday evening.

If you are interested please contact Mick Popka asap on webmaster@traction-owners.co.uk

Classic Motor Show 2009

NEC, Birmingham - 13th, 14th & 15th November

Mick and Moira Holmes now have sufficient volunteers to man the Club stand throughout the week-end so thank you to all the volunteers. If you are going to the show don't forget to hand in the stub of your entrance ticket at the Club stand in Hall 1 as the TOC will receive a refund of a portion of the entrance fee paid for every ticket stub handed in during the show.

Also copies of the 2010 TOC calendar will be on sale, so if you are going to the show and want additional copies there is an opportunity to obtain them (at £3.50 per copy) without the normal postage fee added.

TOC AGM - 29th November

The Great Barr Hotel, Pear Tree Drive, Birmingham B43 6HS

After the debate that has been running in ***e-FP*** throughout 2009 over whether ***Floating Power*** should be produced entirely in black & white or should have some elements of colour the proxy voting form will give you your opportunity to vote on the matter.

My position is quite clear. I have proposed that in future editions of ***Floating Power*** the editor should have the option to print TOCTech in colour because I believe that it is easier to understand the photographs that accompany technical articles when they are in colour. There is no intention to print the whole magazine in colour and I do not believe this to be 'the thin edge of the wedge' but a genuine attempt to increase the value of the magazine for TOC Members.

However the decision will be yours - so please take the opportunity to make your voice heard by completing your proxy voting form and returning it to John Ogborne by 20th November.

TOC Shop

Barry Curtis, our Club Shop manager, has the opportunity to purchase a number of pairs of Traction cuff links. Would any Members who might be interested in purchasing a pair of Traction cuff links (which I'm assured are the height of sartorial elegance and the must-have fashion accessory of 2010) please contact Barry for further information at clubshop@traction-owners.co.uk

Other News

Citroën 90th anniversary celebrations

Barry Curtis writes "I offered my Traction to the local dealer for inclusion in their birthday event, as I was away on business they had the car for 13 days. When I went to collect the car they opened the doors and said off you go - with not a word of thanks. They obviously have no interest in the history of Citroën."

A shame that Barry's local dealer should be so ungracious - but I found it bizarre that the 2CV, the DS and the Kegresse are shown as examples of Citroën innovation in their latest TV advertising campaign and that the Traction is not even mentioned.

You write

AGM

David De Saxe writes to say that as he will be unable to attend the AGM at the end of November, would I kindly convey his apologies to the Secretary and ask the following questions of the Treasurer on his behalf:

(i) what is the explanation for the gross profit rate falling from 38% in 2008 to 22% this year?

(ii) Could we see an analysis of Distribution costs and Administrative expenses this year v. last?

(iii) what is the basis of valuing stock?

On David's behalf I've asked our Treasurer, Tony Malyon, these questions and Tony has prepared an answer which appears in the Nov/Dec issue of ***Floating Power***.

1936 Stainless Steel Ford

Richard Gatto writes to say that "the picture of the 1936 Stainless Steel Ford in the September ***e-FP*** is amazing. I wonder what a Citroën would look like in the same style. Maybe a photoshop wizard should have a try at generating the same effect."

'Intel' Cool Wheels

David Russel writes from the US of A to tell us about a lunchtime classic car show he recently organised at his place of work. Pictures can be found at : //picasaweb.google.com/djrussel/2009CoolWheelsIntel?authkey=Gv1sRgCKPi1cr7tbapbw# . David says "there were about 60 vehicles total at the Intel event, about 42 of them brought in under the Aegis of the Arcane Auto Society. Citroën was well represented, although with only my white légère to represent the TA line, apologies are needed for having left the hood up in the photo. People requested looks at the engine bay, so I left it like that. Basically, other than the true motorcycles, Jag's, and hot rods, the rest were "ours." Not too bad of a turn out for a noon event (1.5 hours of showing and about 2.5 hours on the ground) on a workday Wednesday.

Below is some out of the ordinary work day stuff from work here at Stanford.

http://picasaweb.google.com/djrussel/Mummy09?authkey=Gv1sRgCJuNpKX10PTFmgE#

and for more information on the Mummy there is: http://med.stanford.edu/ism/2009/august/mummy-scanned.html Hard to pay attention to much with the vastly speeded-up video, but that is me pushing the gurney wearing a brightly coloured (Blue plus yellow/red/green) shirt and thinning hair at the back of the head. I'd organized the curbside delivery and transportation into the CT suite. Some folks are surprisingly 'concerned' about having a mummy in a hospital and found it spooky or worse, so the entire process was kept under wraps, as it were, until the very last minute. We had one PhD researcher (from China) show up near the CT room by accident and come over to see what all the fuss was. He poked his head in to look at the mummy and when I suggested that he go stand next to it so that a picture could be taken he got very uncomfortable, declined, and immediately left the area. It was fun to hang around and listen to the mummyologists talking and telling stories."

Cylinder Head problems

Michael Johnson (who obviously did receive a copy of the October newsletter) emailed me to say: "Thanks for the October ***e-FP***. It's really good to be getting an extra fix of Tractionism between magazines.

Having read your problems with water in the sump, I hope that you have fixed the problem. I had a similar one a couple of years ago. I had not been using the car enough – always a bad thing – and came to change the oil and found that a whole load of green antifreeze came out before the oil.

I jumped to the conclusion that this was a blown head gasket and that this would be a good moment to take the head off and take it to the nice people at South Cerney Engineering for skimming and having hardened valve seats put in. A couple of weeks later I picked it up, bolted in on to the block, torqued it down, and in this order, filled the sump with nice expensive oil of the correct grade and then filled the radiator.

As the antifreeze went into the radiator I could hear the trickle of something going into the sump. Releasing the sump nut revealed that the antifreeze was still finding its way into the sump. After a cup of tea and saying 'bother' a few times – or something like that, I realised that I would have to take the head off and look again.

So I looked, and looked and could see nothing. But eventually I saw a hairline crack in the inner cylinder block wall between the water jacket and the tappet chest. When the head was torqued down the hairline crack opened up and the coolant poured into the sump.

The fix involved totally dismantling the engine, having the crack stitched, the face of the block skimmed and the wet liner seats set parallel to the top of the head and at the right depth. Again I was impressed by the work of Sough Cerney engineering. The handbook says that with the gasket in place the wet liner should be between 0.1 and 0.05 of a millimetre. The engineer asked me how proud of the block I wanted the wet liner to be. After discussion (me having no idea, of course) he suggested aiming for 0.07mm proud. I was delighted that they were working to such fine tolerances.

I had read in ***Floating Power*** about extending the thread in the block to the full extent of the cast pips so that there was more metal for the bolt to pull on than the standard 15mm. Having dug out the article I thought that this would make some sense. Again the engineers extended the thread to about 30mm, and supplied longer bolts. The extended thread crossed over where the crack had been so I was confident in torquing the head to 45 ft lbs with a steel gasket.

The result seems to be a gas, water and oil tight engine – apart from the oil that seeps past the Well-seal on the sump and on to the garage floor! The engine now seems to pull better and as a result I've used the car more over the past year.

What's in your garage?

George Hamill says "Just a note to say that I also like the format of the monthly 'rag' and may even send some better pics of the cars that share the 11BL's garage, currently 2 Rover P4s an Alpine Renault A310/4 a BMW Z1, Saab two stroke and Porsche 928 S2 and old Mini."

November Events

Classic Motor Show, NEC Birmingham - 13th to 15th November.

Surrey, Hampshire & Sussex Borders Section - **15th November** at The Fairmaile, Cobham, Surrey. Please ring Helen Shelley for further information.

London Section - 8pm on **24th November** at The Rose of York, Petersham Road, Richmond, London TW10. Please ring Pete or Sue Simper before you go to check that the meeting is going ahead.

TOC pre-Christmas Dinner/Dance - 28th November. The Great Barr Hotel, Pear Tree Drive, Birmingham, West Midlands (www.thegreatbarrhotel.com). A very small number of tickets / rooms are still available but Members wishing to attend must contact Steve Southgate this week before the rooms are released back to the hotel (to avoid the TOC having to pay for them).

TOC Annual General Meeting - 29th November. Starting at 11.00am the AGM will be held at The Great Barr Hotel, Pear Tree Drive, Birmingham, West Midlands (www.thegreatbarrhotel.com).

TOC Classifieds

TOC Quick Links

TOC website:	www.traction-owners.co.uk
TOC spares hotline email:	spares@traction-owners.co.uk
TOC helpline email:	helpline@traction-owners.co.uk
TOCtech email:	toctech@traction-owners.co.uk
TOC membership email:	membership@traction-owners.co.uk
TOC magazine email:	editor@traction-owners.co.uk
Nicholas Greene's TA Forum:	http://tractionavant.forumcircle.com/portal.php
Oliver de Serres' videos of the Traction:	http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=nxrI-vvDMWE http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=sNK-nfL0skE http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=svVchPE6Zi0
Classic French numberplates:	http://www.classic-number-plate.com/french-classic-plates.html
Cliff Sykes' video of the 2009 TOC Annual Rally :	http://www.traction-owners.co.uk/social/2009/Float-In-Power/2009AnnualRallyvideo.htm
Club Belge des Anciennes Citroën:	www.cbac.be

Tailpiece

And to finish - a few real life reports furnished by my next door neighbour in Canada which shows that we do not have the monopoly on 'intellectually challenged' individuals here in the UK:

SEARS

We had to have the garage door repaired. The Sears repairman told us that one of our problems was that we did not have a 'large' enough motor on the opener.

I thought for a minute and said that we had the largest one Sears made at that time, a ½ horsepower.
He shook his head and said, 'Lady, you need a 1/4 Horsepower.'

I responded that 1/2 was larger than 1/4.

He said, 'NO, it's not. Four is larger than two.'

We haven't used Sears repair since.

MCDONALDS, SURREY

My daughter and I went through the McDonald's take-out window and I gave the clerk a $5 bill.

Our total was $4.25, so I also handed her a quarter. She said, 'you gave me too much money.'

I said, 'Yes I know, but this way you can just give me a loonie ($1) back.'

She sighed and went to get the manager who asked me to repeat my request. I did so, and he handed me back the quarter, and said, 'We're sorry but they could not do that kind of thing.'

The clerk then proceeded to give me back $1 and 75 cents in change. Do not confuse the clerks at McD's in Surrey , B.C.

BURNABY

We recently had a Burnaby taxpayer call the city's Traffic Dept. to request the removal of the DEER CROSSING sign on the Barnet Highway. The reason?

"Too many deer are being hit by cars out here! I don't think this is a good place for them to be crossing anymore."

VANCOUVER MALL

My daughter went to Pacific Centre mall food court and ordered a taco. She asked the person behind the counter for 'minimal' lettuce.' He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg lettuce.

VANCOUVER AIRPORT

I was at the airport, checking in at the gate when an airport employee asked, 'Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?' I replied, 'If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?'

He smiled knowingly and nodded, 'That's why we ask.'

PORT MOODY

The stoplight on the corner buzzes when it's safe to cross the street. I was crossing with an intellectually challenged co-worker of mine who asked if I knew what the buzzer was for. I explained that it signals blind people when the light is red.

Appalled, she responded, "What on earth are blind people doing driving?!" She was a probation officer in Port Moody, BC

COQUITLAM

The following happened at a good-bye luncheon for an old and dear co-worker who was leaving the company due to 'downsizing.'

Our Manager commented cheerfully, "This is fun! We should do this more often."

Not another word was spoken. We all just looked at each other with that deer-in-the-headlights stare.

SURREY

I work with an individual (a clerk at the City of Surrey‘s Court House, no less) who plugged her power strip back into Itself and for the sake of her life, couldn’t understand why her computer System would not turn on.

BURNABY

When my husband and I arrived at an automobile dealership to pick up our car, we were told the keys had been locked in it.

We went to the service department and found a mechanic working feverishly to unlock the driver’s side door. As I watched from the passenger side, I instinctively tried the door handle and discovered that it was unlocked.

‘Hey,’ I announced to the technician, ‘its open!’ His reply, ‘I know. I already got that side.’

And really to finish - an incredibly un-PC joke - sent to me by our very own Dr Yves Haft:

The Ferrari Formula 1 team fired their entire pit crew yesterday.

The announcement followed Ferrari’s decision to take advantage of the UK Government’s Youth Opportunity Scheme and to employ youngsters from the Gorbals.

The decision to hire them followed a recent documentary on how unemployed youths from the Gorbals in Glasgow were able to remove a set of wheels in less than 6 seconds without proper equipment, whereas Ferrari’s existing crew could only do it in 8 seconds with millions of euros worth of high tech equipment.

As most races are won and lost in the pits, Ferrari thought they would have an advantage over every other team, and Prime Minister Gordon Brown went on record as saying ‘this is a bold move by the Ferrari management which demonstrated the international recognition of the UK under New Labour’.

However, Ferrari got more than they bargained for.

At the first practice session the Gorbals pit crew successfully changed the tyres in less than 6 seconds, but within 12 seconds they had re-sprayed, re-badged and re-sold the vehicle to the McLaren team for 8 bottles of Carlsberg Special, 50 ecstasy tablets and some photos of Lewis Hamilton’s girlfriend in the shower