

VETERAN CAR COMPANY Ltd



SOUTH EAST SECTION

**The Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual General Meeting
of Veteran Car Company Ltd., South East Section
held at The Hickstead Hotel, Jobs Lane Hickstead, East Sussex
on Sunday, 27th November 2016.**

Chairman: Denis Bass
Vice Chairman: Ann Wait
Treasurer: David Gibbins
Secretary: Ann Wait

Committee Members: Cressida de Little, Mark Eichner, Mike Mutters, David Ralph.

80 Members and their guests attended the Meeting

Denis Bass opened the meeting at 11:10am.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from 27 members, as listed for the Veteran Car Club of Great Britain, South East Section, AGM held immediately before.

2 Minutes of the Thirteenth Annual General Meeting held at the Hurtwood Park Polo and Country Club Ewhurst Green, Horsham on Sunday 22nd November 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated by email and on the section website. It was proposed by John Morris and seconded by Michael Doughty that these constituted a true record of the meeting. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

3 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not dealt with elsewhere.

4 Chairman's Report

My report will summarise the events we held during the past year.

Our Noggins and Natters, or otherwise an excuse for a beer and a chat at the pub is held on the first Tuesday of every month, alternating between the Bolney Stage on the old A23 and the Yew Tree at Chalvington or the Six Bells at Chiddingly. The Six Bells is not an ideal location due to a lack of space to meet and chat, and the Yew Tree has not proven to be a popular venue, so we are looking for ideas for another pub to use on the east side of our area? Please let any committee members know if you have any suggestions. Watch our website and Facebook pages for the dates and do come along for a chat.

Our first organised event took place here at Hickstead on 7th February, it was our Winter Warmer when many of us met for lunch and a film show, thanks to David Smart for helping us to relive many memories, captured on his personal film archive.

This year we tested an event with a difference, I took 16 members on a coach trip to the Hague in Holland where we visited the magnificent Louwman motor museum and on another day the Keukenhof gardens, a great time was had by all despite the heavy traffic encountered on a Friday afternoon around Antwerp.

Our first car event this year was our Spring Opener which again was held at the Bolney Stage and coincided as planned with the national "Drive it day" the event attracted quite a few Veteran, vintage and modern cars and we enjoyed some good weather travelling to and from Bolney.

In May this year we held our Main Event, this time it was a three-day event based at The Holiday Inn at Maidstone where we enjoyed the delightful Kent countryside visiting Fairbourne Carriages where we were warmly welcomed by the owners, a visit to the Biddenden Vineyard and joined the local Morgan club for

breakfast at Brands Hatch Morgans. Peter and Wendy Boulding ably assisted us with the event organisation and in particular the route planning, our thanks to them for their time, effort and expertise.

The next event in our calendar was a one day event organised by Mike Mutters and Tim Pipkin, aptly called "A Grand Day Out", we met up at Holleycombe Steam museum and took a superb country route to Parham House and Gardens where we enjoyed a picnic lunch before returning to Holleycombe, thanks to Mike, Tim and his team for a Grand day out.

Our next event was the Teddy Bears picnic held at the home of Emile and Diane Snapper at Ripley. This was a first attempt to focus on getting youngsters more involved with our old cars and our thanks go to Emile and Diane for arranging many activities for both young and old alike.

We all enjoyed a wonderful day and it even included a short drive in the Surry countryside with our veteran cars.

The next event in our calendar was the ever-popular Best of West Kent. This event, held toward the end of July each year is always a popular day out. Thanks especially to John Kemsley, Michael Thompson and Graham Pilmore Bedford for making it happen, long may it continue.

In August it was time once more for the Ashdown Amble, where the coffee stop was kindly sponsored by Guy Middleton, for which we thank him very much for his generosity. This year it was Mark Eichner who took on the mantle and organised the whole event, which was based at Bentley Wildfowl and included a very informative visit to Sheffield Park railway. We enjoyed good weather and superb routes skirting the Ashdown forest, so a special vote of thanks must go to Mark for organising this event.

As you can see we have enjoyed a busy year with many different events and so this concludes the summary of the SE Section events, and to finish the year, here we are again at our AGM, time flies when you're enjoying yourself and now we are eagerly looking forward to an exciting 2017.

Thank you

5 Secretary's Report

Preview of Events for 2017

5.1 Winter Warmer and Film Show: Sunday 5th February, 2017, organised by Ann Wait

This will follow the same format as for the Film Show this year but Austin Parkinson will be showing a selection of his collection. Austin said he has some interesting films sorted out including some very early Brighton Run Films. They are silent but of quite good quality. There will also be a couple of other films and the show will last about an hour and a half.

5.2 Coach trip to Holland: 26th – 29th April, 2017 organised by Denis Bass

Denis has booked the coach again, as so many people asked him to organise it again. It coincides with King's Day, a national holiday in Holland and some visits etc will be planned for then. On the Friday the Louwmann Museum will be revisited as requested. It is a fantastic museum. He just needs confirmation of names and numbers so that he can go ahead. It will be about the same cost as this year.

5.3 Spring Opener, Victory Inn Staplefield: Sunday 30th April 2017, organised by Cressida de Little

Cressida explained that, as we were split into two areas last year at the Bolney Stage, she has arranged that next year it will be held at the new venue of the Victory Inn, Staplefield. There is plenty of parking and a section of the bar will be cordoned off for those of us who wish to eat.

5.4 Main Event – More Merriment in Montreuil: Thurs 18th May – Mon 22nd May 2017, organised by Denis and Sharon Bass

There will be the option of meeting at the Premier Inn, Dover the evening before. The routes and venues will be completely different from last year so it will be a new event entirely, other than staying at the Hermitage Hotel. Costs are expected to be similar to the previous visit.

5.5 Grand Day Out: Thursday, 1st June, 2017 Organised by Mike Mutters

Once again at Holleycombe Steam Museum where there is plenty of room for trailers to be parked. There will be a circular tour round the country lanes, passing through Selbourne and stopping for coffee at Petersfield. William Metcalf, the Bentley dealer will open his showroom for another stop off. We arrive back at Holleycombe at about 2 so there will be opportunities to play on the steam train etc. It is half term so young children should be able to come and there are activities for them to join in. It is on the borders of West Sussex and Hampshire, so sits well alongside the Best of West Kent. It is an inexpensive day out, so why not join us and bring the children.

5.6 Family Picnic, Devonia Farm, Ripley: Sunday, 25th June, 2017 - by kind invitation of Celia and David Smart

Section Contact: Denis Bass

The Teddy Bears' Picnic was a great success this year but the Snappers, whilst happy to run the event again in the future, do not want to run it every year. David Smart offered to organise something. We will meet at Copthorne and leave trailer at his home. There will be a suggested route to Standing, a

National Trust Arts and Crafts House. There is room for picnics overlooking the Weirwood Reservoir. There is also a children's play area. There is the alternative of eating in a barn if the weather is inclement. He suggests digging out the grandchildren and joining us on the day.

5.7 Best of West Kent: Wednesday, 26th July 2017 - organised by John Kemsley, Michael Thompson and Graham Pilmore Bedford

John Kemsley announced that the event is still alive and well and will once again start at Chartwell. Entry forms have been sent out to those on the email list and a few have been posted. Details are on the calendar and on the flier at the back of the room. The event was started by Graham Pilmore Bedford and David Locket about 13 years ago. Although David has retired Graham has so far been taking a major role in the organisation. However, next year he is passing it all on to his two young apprentices, himself and Michael Thompson. They look forward to seeing everyone in July

Ann reminded everyone that all the information is on our website and all the latest information will be emailed to all on the email list. Please let us know of your email address or any changes that you make. As each flier now costs the section about £1 to mail out we do not send out any information by post now.

5.8 AGM: Sunday 27th November, 2017 Venue to be confirmed

As usual this will be held on the fourth Sunday of November and we will circulate more information as it is agreed by the committee

That concludes the programme for next year and we hope to see many of you at the events.

6 Treasurer's Report

6.1 Veteran Car Company Ltd, South East Section, Accounts

David Gibbins explained that these accounts cover the motoring events. The income and expenditure are about equal so that the books are balanced, subject to the management fee. There is a small entry for the charitable donations that have passed through the accounts during the year, but there are also collection boxes. We raised £408 in cash which has been passed on to the charities as well as the money collected at the Teddy Bears' Picnic which the Snappers passed on to their preferred charity – Alzheimer's Research. We have had a very successful year in terms of fundraising. A number of members have been generous with donations, including a couple of members who could not attend events at the last minute and have asked that the money should be kept by us as a donation to the section funds. We are still waiting for a bill for entry to Bentley Wildfowl Trust. We have requested this several times but it is still not forthcoming. When it arrives we will need to write it back into the accounts.

There were no questions on the accounts. Denis thanked David Gibbins in his absence for his work on the accounts throughout the year.

7 Adoption of Audited Accounts

On the proposal of Ron Clark, seconded by Ann Gibbins, it was agreed unanimously that these accounts be adopted.

8 Appointment of Honorary Auditor

The Chairman thanked David Budgeon for his hard work, especially in finalising our accounts quickly so that they could be presented at the AGM. The Committee proposed David Budgeon to continue as Honorary Auditor. It was seconded by Clive Boothman and carried unanimously.

9 Section Representative on the Events Committee and Board of Directors.

The Committee proposed Mike Mutters for this office. It was seconded by Adrian Goding and passed unanimously.

10 Any Other Business

10.1 Adrian Goding was asked if he would like to present a report on the club to the meeting.

First, Adrian brought greetings from the South West, where he was the previous evening and thanked us for our invitation.

Financially we are in great shape in terms of finance, thanks to Clive Boothman, so there will only be a modest increase in the subs this coming year.

As a club we have had a tough year in losing Reg Long, John Landless and Ruth Moore, three ex-

presidents, a very sad turn of events. Those at the Grand for the annual dinner will have seen Peter Foubister presenting awards on behalf of the RAC. Sadly, two weeks later, we lost Peter, at the age of 63.

Thanks to the South East Section for organising the VCC AGM. A number of different members were able to attend the event. This year it will probably be a different group from the North as the venue will be York

Thanks to Mike for supporting his (Adrian's) initiative for including motorcycles on the Grand Day Out. They kept warm as they were well wrapped up.

Mark Eichner is unable to be with us today as he is attending a Dating Committee meeting, working hard to bring some De Dions through the dating process. Thanks to him for his hard work

Thanks to Mike Mutters for coming up to the Board meetings. He is one of those people who rings up and asks if there is anything he can do to help, before waiting to be asked.

Thank you to a group from the section, Denis Bass, Cressida de Little and Chris Loder who, between them, have taken on the national presence of the club on social media, i.e. Twitter, Facebook etc. It has had some presence over the last few years but hopefully this will grow now and become more cohesive. VCR There were issues with driving standards. There was an accident, many red lights ignored and a considerable amount of bullish driving. This can be dealt with. Those not driving with care may not be invited back on to the event but members of the steering group need feedback from members. If you have cars that worried you please let him know so that they can be dealt with.

The dinner at the Grand on the Sunday had a lot of effort put into raising the standards. There were some random awards given to some people, which was very enjoyable. Hopefully we can bring more people back to the dinner, where we can get back, put on the black tie and share experiences of the day. The VCC supplied a pennant to finishers. Since Sir Ray Tindle withdrew from sponsoring the event no pennants had been awarded and this seemed an excellent opportunity to put our name firmly back on the event at a very low cost. Mike Mutter helped to organise that. It was done in partnership with the RAC and we hope that we will be allowed to carry on doing it.

Rodney de Little asked how bad drivers from overseas could be dealt with. Adrian explained that they will simply not be invited back and will receive no entry forms or information. This will include people like the driver using numbers from a previous year on his car. Rodney said that this year it was excessively dangerous, especially members of one particular club. The club will be made aware of the outcomes for those poor drivers and hopefully the message will be spread to others. For example, the driver who had the accident did not believe it was his fault as there is no requirement to stop at red lights! Whilst this continues we have a problem, we must deal with it robustly. That particular person has recently rejoined the club so it can also be dealt with from a club perspective.

Bridget Doughty said that perhaps road safety should be at a higher level in the paperwork. Adrian replied that perhaps it could be included in a briefing at the RAC Reception on the Saturday evening as well.

Eileen Lawson said that on some continental rallies cars are allowed to go through the red lights.

Adrian said we can make this clear. Clive Boothman said there is a safety briefing for new entrants.

Nick Bacon recalled that there used to be policemen at each junction. Adrian said that now the cost of policemen on the route is prohibitive so marshals are used. It needs to be clear that, unless actually directed, all red lights mean stop!

John Lawson believed it was against the law for marshals to go against legislation. Adrian believed they have some mandate but he was not sure how far this went. Those at the lights are, in fact, something different from ordinary marshals and have some dispensation.

Clive Boothman said he and Adrian are to attend a feedback meeting with the RAC. Any feedback would be useful.

Ann Wait reported that foreign trailers have been a nuisance in holding up traffic

Mike Mutters said that all entrants should sign to say that they have read the rules and agree to keep to them.

Clive Boothman replied that the rules are binding and you must keep to them

Sue Clark said that there was no tannoy system in the paddock at all, so no-one knew of arrivals or what was happening etc.

Mike Sewell felt that signs were smaller than before and difficult to read or see.

Ron Clark said it was interesting at the finish. He had to put the microphone away as people were complaining about the standard of driving along the route

10.2 Henry and Michael Doughty and the Blue Peter experience!

Members were asked to look carefully at Michael's (Blue Peter) badge

For health issues, Michael explained that he has been unable to take part in many rallies for the last two years. However, he has always managed to do the Brighton Run. This year he provisionally sent in his

entry form but, unbeknownst to her, his grandson, Henry, had written in to Blue Peter extolling the virtues of the run and invited them to come this year. This happened about 5 weeks before. Blue Peter phoned them with the idea that they would ride on the car. However, they then found out they need a licence to have their camera on the car etc. The young presenter met the family at Gaydon on the Friday before. There were about three hours of filming, then an hour and a half to train the young presenter to drive the Thorneycroft. They asked Henry how she did. He gave her 8 out of 10. When asked why not 10 he said he would see if she got to Brighton first!

It would be broadcast on 1st December on CBBC. The day was controlled by the broadcasters, including the where the cars started from. They had to wait for an hour and a quarter on Constitution Hill as the Thorneycroft (supplied by Gaydon Motor Museum) had a water leak. They stopped 24 times over the course of the run to fill up! As they had to go in convoy it was his slowest ever run. Micah explained that he has to wear a brace on his arm to enable him to drive. He pulled up on the layby near the pier and heard a loud crack. He thought it was on the car but turned out to be the spring on his arm brace! Peter Foubister was also very proud that he had been awarded a badge as well. Michael did get in some references to the VCC but he is not the editor. Young Henry managed to get publicity for the run. Henry was given a special award at the RAC Reception for getting good publicity for veteran cars. He was given awarded a magnum of Hattersley Valley 'champagne' which was given to Michael. Henry was given a very nice model of an RAC Rescue van.

10.3 Michael Edwards

He said he was very envious of the Blue Peter badge. Countryfile asked him if they could film his car. After a full day with a full crew, as it was getting dark, they drove down to the seafront and Matt Baker asked to drive it back, which he did surprisingly well.

Returning to the business of the meeting he explained that, when he bought his car he found that there are very few books about the de Dion cars. He has a soft spot for books with colour photographs in them so he decided he would write a book himself on the specifications of cars from 1899 to 1904. He had picked the books up from the printers on Monday morning and had brought some with him to sell. It is part of a bigger project to write about the history of de Dion cars and the differences between the different types of cars. The book covers the Single and Twin cylinder cars, though there are not many twin cylinder cars around, as they didn't make very many. In 1904 a fully loaded limousine bodied twin cylinder car would have cost about £870. At the time, the average price of a house in Kensington and Chelsea was £420. The book is £25, perfect time for a Christmas present!

10.4 Chris Evans

10.5 Brian Cumming explained that he had arrived before 1 o'clock for the first time and found himself surrounded by cameras, the mayor, children and Chris Evans who said, "We have chosen your car! This is for charity. Can we get in it?" There was no mention of the charity (Children in Need) but they took photos and left!

11.6 The AA Commemoration" Car Run

This year the Run is celebrating its 108th anniversary though, in its present format it has only been running since 2009. It is on Sunday 7th May, later than previous years, Sevenoaks to Hastings in aid of Combat Stress. AA1 is usually the oldest car on the run so usually starts the event. Denis has volunteers to get car and trailer from Sevenoaks to Hastings. Please contact Denis for more information.

11.7 Evening Argus Archives

The Brighton evening paper, the Evening Argus, closed its base on an industrial estate. There were over 50 four-drawer filing cabinets full of archives. A friend knew Ron would be interested and he saved all the archives for the London to Brighton Run. He has brought them to the meeting so that members may see them and then he will put them in plastic envelopes and take them to Ashwell. He also has them for the Brighton Speed Trials, which he will treat in the same way and give to the Brighton Motor Club, which organises that event.

11.8 Tam Large thanked David Ralph for his hard work in producing the Scribe's notes for the section. He was Scribe for a while and it is a tougher job than it looks. David said it works best when people send him stuff, but they rarely do. Tam continued to say thanks for the work on Facebook. He is also pleased there is no clash between the Spring Opener and the Creepy Crawly. Several of us will be able to do both this year now.

11.9 Denis reiterated that we must develop our links on the social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). We aim for many more hits and to use them to get young people on board.

11.10 Thanks

John Morris thanked the Chairman, Secretary and the committee for all their hard work on behalf of the section

12 Trophies were presented by Mrs Sharon Bass

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 12.35 pm.