

A special journey through 80 years of automotive history

James Luckhurst takes a nostalgic look back over the past eight decades, both in the archives of GEM Motoring Assist and in the wider world

1932
The Company of Veteran Motorists is founded. It's just a year after the publication of the first Highway Code. Ford moves from Manchester to Dagenham over one weekend without losing any production, at the same time as designing its first car for the European market, the 8hp model Y. Hillman introduces the Minx, a small family saloon.

1934
A 30mph limit is imposed in built-up areas by Transport Minister Leslie Hore-Belisha. Pedestrian 'Zebra' crossings are introduced, illuminated by a flashing orange 'Belisha' beacon. New drivers are required to pass a test. Morris Motors' first conveyor assembly line is installed at Cowley. Construction of the German autobahn system commences, conceived by Adolf Hitler as a productive way of harnessing the unemployed masses.

1935
There are now 35 million motor vehicles on the world's roads, according to

an international census. A 30mph speed limit is introduced for towns and villages.

1936
Morgan, specialists in economical three-wheelers since 1909, introduces its first four wheeler. Fiat launches the 500A, with full-length sunroof. Its appearance earns it the nick-name 'Topolino' while 55mpg economy makes it very popular, particularly in its home country. Ferdinand Porsche begins development and construction of prototype 'Volkswagens' to demonstrate his concept to Adolf Hitler. Fifty-four percent of families in the United States now own a car.

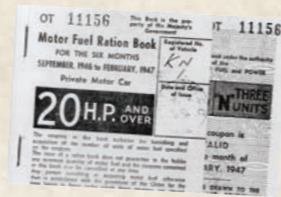
1937
800 miles of autobahn have been built in Germany at a cost of £56,000 a mile.

1938
The Volkswagen goes into production in Nazi Germany.

The British government raises the petrol tax from 8d to 9d per gallon. Morris launches the Series E 8hp

Saloon at £128, the cheapest car in Britain.

1939
Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand declare war on Germany on September 3rd. The British Government introduces petrol rationing. Petrol is exchanged for coupons allowing each motorist about 200 miles of motoring per month. There are now two million cars on Britain's roads.



1940
Car production in Britain is put on hold as most factories go over to munitions production. Enzo Ferrari leaves Alfa Romeo to establish Auto-Avio Costruzioni Ferrari.

1941
Packard becomes the first car manufacturer to offer air conditioning.

1942
Mr Theodore Porter, a joiner and organ builder from Clevedon in North Somerset, joins the Company of Veteran Motorists. 70 years later, at the tender age of 98, he is GEM's longest-serving member.

1944
Volvo introduces its first 'safety cage' for car occupants.

1945
World War II ends. Henry Ford hands over the Presidency of his company to his grandson.

1946
The British motor industry celebrates its 50th birthday. Petrol rationing for British motorists is increased by 50 per cent. Ford of Britain produces its millionth

1938: sign of the times

So the Highway Code had only been around for seven years by the time this photograph appeared in the magazine. But there's no doubting the clarity and



sense of this particular original sign, put up by a farmer to warn motorists. This particular artistic effort could be found on a road near Chapel-en-le-Frith.

car, an 8hp Anglia. The first Ferrari takes to the road.

1947
Henry Ford dies at the age of 84. David Brown buys Aston Martin.

1948
Morris introduces the Minor family car, designed by Alec Issigonis. Jaguar announces the XK120 sports car. Citroen introduces the 2CV. Rover introduces the 4 wheel drive Land Rover.

1950
The British government ends petrol rationing but doubles fuel tax. 60% of American families now own a car.

1951
Ferdinand Porsche dies, aged 75. Triumph announces the TR and Healey introduces its 100/4 sports cars.

1952
Mercedes shows the 300SL 'gull wing' sports coupe.

1953
Singer announces the SMX Roadster, Britain's first plastic-bodied production car. Only 12 are made before the project is abandoned. General Motors launches the Corvette, a radical glass-fibre-bodied roadster concept car featuring a wrap-around windshield and powered by a venerable straight six engine. Porsche introduces the 550 'Spyder' racing car.

1954
The 50 millionth General Motors car rolls off the production line. The two seat Ford Thunderbird roadster is announced. The new Jaguar D Type racing car is

introduced at Le Mans without success.

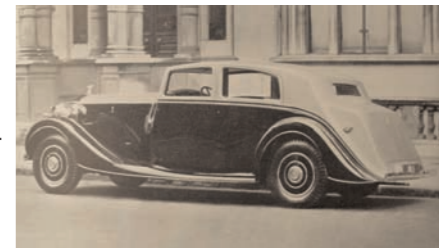
1955
The revolutionary Citroen DS19 is introduced with a futuristic aerodynamic body, self-levelling hydropneumatic suspension, power steering and braking, and automatic jacks. McDonald's opens its first drive-thru hamburger bar.

1956
Fuel supplies are seriously limited by the Suez crisis, resulting in rationing in Britain.

1957
The Lotus Elite (Type 14) is announced, featuring a revolutionary fibreglass construction. The American Congress approves construction of the 41,000 mile Interstate highway system.

1938: we review the Rolls-Royce Phantom III

Introduced in 1936 to an awe-struck public, the Phantom III included a four-speed manual gearbox and was powered by a 7.3-litre, V12 engine. It warranted a further mention in 1938 because an overdrive mecha-



nism was added in that year. It could reach speeds of 88 mph, but at quite a price; fuel consumption was just 10 mpg. Watch out for a particularly fetching black and yellow version in the James Bond classic, *Goldfinger*.

A new Fiat 500 is introduced featuring a rear-mounted vertical twin-cylinder air cooled engine.

1958
Volvo introduces the seatbelt. Work starts on the M1 'London to Birmingham' Motorway, the UK's first.

1943: Daimler to war

Daimler armoured scout cars with their famous fluid flywheel transmission served in North Africa and Sicily with distinction. Daimler saw fit to make Good Motoring readers aware of the build quality they could expect when peace returned.



1960
OPEC (The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) is formed to give the oil producing countries more power over crude oil prices. The millionth Morris Minor leaves the production line, one of a series of 350 painted in a celebratory shade of lilac with white leather upholstery.

1961
The Cortina Mk I is introduced by Ford of Britain. The 'MOT' test is introduced by Ernest Marples, requiring that all cars over 10 years old are subjected to an annual test.

1963
The Leyland Motor Corporation is formed under Sir Henry Spurrier. The Hillman Imp is unveiled to compete with the BMC Mini.

1964
Triumph launches the 2000 family saloon. (continued on page 28)

1935 and the first edition of 'Veteran Motorist'

Supported by a raft of appropriate advertising, the magazine launched to a delighted membership in 1935. Gracing the front cover was the Henley Tyre Company, proclaiming that thrifty motorists should read the 'Tyre Way Code', available on application to the company at its London offices.

How do we choose what to put on the front cover of each edition these days? It's the editor's responsibility to identify possible themes, which are then considered by an editorial committee that meets four times a year. Sometimes we go for a straightforward but striking car image. At other times we aim to leave readers wondering about what it's to do with or what it means. Who knows, you may see a chap with a pipe again one day!



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(continued from page 27)

Despite continuing disinterest, front seatbelts are now supplied as standard in all American cars.

1965

The Government introduces a 70 mph maximum speed "as a four month experiment".
Rolls Royce launches the Silver Shadow, its first unit constructed car.

1954: helpful advice for winter road skid control

GEM has always prided itself on the quality and relevance of the safety information passed on to its members and the general public. This picture of a crash on a Kent road, published in 1954, helped make the point that even skilled, professional drivers can sometimes come to grief if they run out of time and space on winter roads. Icy and snowy surfaces increase stopping distances by a factor of up to 10, whatever vehicle you are in.



1966

Rear seatbelts are now standard equipment in all cars sold in the USA.
The Jensen FF becomes the first car to be fitted with anti-lock brakes (ABS).

1967

The breathalyzer is introduced.
Swedish motorists swap from driving on the left to driving on the right.
All cars sold in Britain must now be fitted with front seatbelts.

1968

Ford introduces the Escort range.
Rover offers the Buick-based V8 in the P6 body-shell to create the 3005.

1969

Jaguar launches the XJ6.
The new British Leyland introduces the Austin Maxi.

1970

Land Rover launches the Range Rover.

1971

Morris Minor production ends.
Jaguar reveals its V12 production engine.

1972

A record 1,900,000 cars are produced by the British motor industry in this year.

1973

The Arab-Israeli War causes fuel supply problems.
Motorists queue for petrol and speeds are restricted to 50mph to conserve national stocks and consumption.
Chevrolet offers airbags in some models

as a reaction to a rise in fatal car accidents in the USA.

1974

The last of 11,916,519 VW 'Beetles' to be built at Wolfsburg, leaves the production line.
The VW Golf, a completely new water-cooled, front wheel drive model becomes an instant sales success.
The last E Type Jaguar leaves the Coventry factory.
The US maximum speed limit is reduced to 55 mph.

1975

The requirement to use arm signals in the UK driving test is abolished.
Production of the Ford Escort MK1 comes to an end, and the Escort MK2,

with a squarer body style, arrives.
British Leyland gets a £200 million cash injection from the UK Government.
Jaguar replaces the E type with the XJS.
All American cars now come with catalytic converters in the exhaust system in an effort to cut emissions.

1976

The Chrysler Alpine is voted European Car of the Year.
Rover launches the 3500 'SD1'.

1977

Michael Edwardes takes over at British Leyland.
Porsche introduces its 924 and 928 models, both featuring front-mounted water-cooled engines and rear transaxles.

1978

GEM starts offering breakdown recovery for its members.
Ford introduces the Fiesta, its first front-wheel-drive small family car.
The Mercedes Benz S-class becomes the first production car with ABS.

1979

Rolls Royce Motor Company is sold to Vickers for £38m as part of the Rolls-Royce engineering group.

1980

The rear-wheel drive Ford Escort Mk2 production comes to an end to make way for the new front-wheel-drive Escort Mk3.

1981

John DeLorean launches the DMC-12.
The Mercedes S-class gets an airbag.

1982

The Dutch firm, Gatsometer, introduces its first mobile speed traffic camera.
Having built 8,563 DMC-12s, the DeLorean Motor Company's factory in Northern Ireland shuts down.

Always thinking bike, always thinking biker...



Rarely does an edition of Good Motoring go to press without one or two useful items for motorcyclists. A review of this BMW bike and sidecar was published in 1994. In 2006, retiring editor Derek Hainge was treated to a VIP tour with a convoy of police motorcycle outriders, giving readers a rare glimpse into this exclusive world.

1983

The Company of Veteran Motorists becomes the Guild of Experienced Motorists (or GEM for short).
Front seatbelt use becomes compulsory in the UK.

1984

Renault releases its Espace, the first MPV.

1985

Chrysler buys AMC and takes over production of the Jeep range.

1986

The first speed camera is introduced, in Friendswood, Texas.
Volkswagen takes a 51% share in Spanish car makers SEAT.

1987

All new cars sold in the UK must now be fitted with rear seatbelts.

1988

Enzo Ferrari dies in Modena, aged 90.
British Aerospace buys the Rover Group.

1989

A tougher motorcycle test is introduced.
Wheel clamping begins in London.
Rear seatbelt use becomes compulsory for children.

1990

Following Czech approval, VW establishes a partnership with Skoda.

1991

Rear seat belts, if fitted, must be worn by all occupants.

1993

Aston Martin introduce the DB7, with sleek, modern bodywork, strong six cylinder engines and Jaguar XJS underpinnings.

1994

European crash test standards, later to become EuroNCAP, begin.

1996

The Museum of Modern Art in New York places an early E-Type roadster on permanent display.
Jaguar introduces the V8 powered XK8 as a replacement for the venerable XJS.

1998

VW announces the New Beetle.

1952: suits you, sir!

As well as offering topical features, news, reviews and road safety advice, Good Motoring has occasionally put itself at the cutting edge of fashion, too. Take



this smart gent's beret from the Christmas gift guide of 1952. It was billed as the perfect headgear for the gentleman who enjoys the open road in his convertible!

1999

Aston Martin becomes part of Ford's Premier Automotive Group, joining Jaguar, Lincoln and Volvo.

2000

BMW 'sells' Rover and MG to The Phoenix Group for a token £1.

2001

Renault Laguna II becomes the first EuroNCAP 'five-star' car.
Under the ownership of BMW, Rolls-Royce moves production from Derby to a new, purpose built factory next to the old Grand Prix circuit at Goodwood, West Sussex.
BMW releases the 'NEW MINI'.
A new licence-plate numbering system is introduced.

2002

Finnish sausage heir Jussi Salonaja is caught driving at 50mph in a 25mph zone. This results in a salary-based fine of more than £120,000.

2003

A hazard perception test is added to the driving test.

1972: caught in the act

We're intrigued by the circus characters and family members on this front cover!



It becomes illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving.
Production of the 'Beetle' finally comes to an end at VW's Puebla plant in Mexico.

Arthur Chirkinian, a competitor in the San Francisco to Miami Gumball Rally, is clocked at 242mph in a 75mph zone in Texas.

2004

Production begins on the Aston Martin Volante.
24-year-old Russian multimillionaire Nikolas Smolensky purchases Blackpool-based TVR for £15 million.

2005

MG Rover goes into administration. Thousands of jobs are lost.

2006

Nissan announces that its new Qashqai car will be built at the company's Sunderland plant, with the cars being exported worldwide, including to Japan.
TVR finally closes its doors.

2007

The Bentley marque enjoys continued success under the parentage of Volkswagen and its newest model is the company's fastest ever production car - the Continental GT Speed.

2008

Auto Express magazine crowns GEM Britain's 'best breakdown provider'.
Ford accepts an offer by Tata Motors for the purchase of Land Rover and Jaguar.

2009

The town of Swindon abandons the use of fixed speed cameras.

2010

Once again, GEM tops the Auto Express table of breakdown providers.
A Swedish driver is detected speeding at 180mph by a camera in Switzerland, leading to a fine of £538,000.

2011

For the third time in four years, GEM is the Auto Express magazine best breakdown provider.

2012

Abbie Tipler buys her first year's breakdown cover from GEM Motoring Assist. At the age of 18, she becomes GEM's youngest member. GM