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Shepton Show Shines! Happy Days for Enthusiasts at This Year's Footman James (16th) Classic Vehicle Restoration Show

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Kim Henson refreshes his enthusiasm for old cars at the Footman James 16th Classic Vehicle Restoration Show, Shepton Mallet.

(All words by Kim, and all photos except that of Robert Webb's Healey 3000).

Held at the Royal Bath and West Showground on the weekend of 5th and 6th November, this year's Footman James 16th Classic Vehicle Restoration Show attracted enthusiasts from far and wide. Some came in search of a new project, others were seeking components to progress their own restorations, while some went along for inspiration in terms of looking at other vehicles and chatting with their owners. This event is always a good meeting place for



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friends of like mind too!

The organisers tell me that this was the best-ever-attended Footman James Classic Vehicle Restoration Show, with trader and visitor numbers significantly up on those of the 2015 event.





Anyone fancy a wonderful pre-War six cylinder Austin to bring back to its former glory?

In addition to the commercial businesses displaying their classic car related wares, there were interesting exhibits from a variety of clubs, both single model and multi-make in their coverage. With members on hand to chat with, and with 'live' practical demonstrations of a variety of technical operations, there was something for everyone.



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The Imp Club stand featured Club members tackling major work on two cars...



Arthur Swann was on hand to answer questions from visitors to the Austin Cambridge Westminster Car Club stand.



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The KitNet.UK stand... Great cars, a fine calendar and the car they're building to enable disabled young drivers to enjoy circuit driving.



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A fast and practical classic – a rare Cortina Savage V6 estate car was one of the vehicles in the Ford Cortina Mark II Owners' Club display.

'Best in Show' award was won by Robert Webb's 1965 Austin Healey 3000 Mark 3...



Robert Webb's lovely Healey 3000 (Photo courtesy Mortons Media Group Ltd.).

In the 'classic' car park outside – always a fascinating feature of this show, were vehicles ranging from an Austin Seven Chummy to performance models of the 1980s/90s. I counted no less than four Peugeot 205s here, for example. Many enthusiasts – especially younger ones – are enjoying cars of this era, often as an introduction to older classics. Of course, it is good to see interest in the preservation of older vehicles, whether they be 100 or 10 years



old, and if the classic car movement is to survive and flourish in the future, of course it's essential that youngsters are encouraged to become interested...

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I always enjoy looking around the autojumble areas at this show, including the chilly but sunlit stalls outside, and those within the halls. Personally this year I invested mainly in polishes and cleaning materials for my own cars, but also found a lovely example of a grille badge for one of my classics, and a few other small 'gems' that came home with me.

I ventured into the auction hall, in which a wide variety of vehicles were lined up in readiness for the auction sale held on the Sunday of the Show.

Among the many vehicles here that attracted me were a rare 1959 Morris Marshal - a rare Australian version of the contemporary Austin Westminster (this sold for what seems to me a very reasonable £4,200), a unique 1946 Daimler 'woody' estate car (that attracted a hammer price of £10,000), a Chevette-based signwritten Bedford Chevanne, that looked to be in excellent condition (this one didn't sell), and a lovely, original condition 1938 Morris Fourteen/Six Series III (sold for £7,500). Fortunately (as I already have enough classics with which to cope) I didn't bid on any of the cars but it was great to see them anyway.

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At the end of my day at this Show I felt refreshed, inspired and happy in the knowledge that there are many other enthusiasts out there who, like me, enjoy the pleasure of bringing old cars back to life, and/or keeping them on the road.

Looking ahead... The event organisers, Mortons Media Group Ltd. say, "On the back of a successful weekend we are pleased to



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announce we are expanding our February (2017) show and renaming it as the Footman James Great Western Classic Car Show. There will be an additional heated marquee, a huge indoor autojumble and more classic cars on display".