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Beaulieu Autojumble Celebrates 50 Glorious Golden Years

Published: September 6, 2016

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Online version: <https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/beaulieu-autojumble-celebrates-50-glorious-golden-years/>





Beaulieu's Magnificent Golden 50th Autojumble.

All words and photos, except photos as noted below, by Kim Henson.

(With further photographs, individually acknowledged with grateful thanks, provided by Chris Adamson, plus two courtesy of the National Motor Museum).

Although at times the weather wasn't kind, over 36,000 attendees strolled around the hallowed Autojumble fields at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, taking in the 2,378 stands of all descriptions, on the occasion of the very special 50th annual Autojumble.

Sponsored once again by the evergreen and ever-popular 'Practical Classics' magazine, and held over the weekend of September 3rd and 4th 2016, the event had a fantastic atmosphere.

For this very special event, an anniversary exhibition was set up, and a beautifully-presented commemorative booklet was produced to record five decades of what is always the largest autojumble in the world apart from the Hershey event in the United States.

To mark the occasion many of the stallholders dressed up their stands in gold.

Some enthusiastic stallholder attendees, including David Bennett and Richard Skinner, have been to every 'Beaulieu' since the event was started in 1967 (when the 'autojumble' name was coined by Michael Ware - he too was there again this year).

The very first event in 1967 was advertised as "A day of great interest for everyone", and the same is still true today. In terms of classic car parts, it is often (usually correctly) stated that if you can't find it at Beaulieu, you can't find it...

Edward, Lord Montagu



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Lord Montagu and Jools Holland in front of the new statue of the late Edward,



Lord Montagu. (Photo courtesy of the National Motor Museum).

A very moving aspect of this year's event was the unveiling, by car enthusiast Jools Holland, of a 6ft bronze statue of the late Edward, Lord Montagu, in front of the National Motor Museum. The statue depicts the late Lord Montagu (who throughout his life was such a stalwart supporter of the veteran, vintage and classic car movement in general), dressed in vintage clothes, such as he would have worn on the London to Brighton Veteran car run, and with his hand on a Dunlop tyre. He had managed to see and approve the statue just prior to his death in August 2015.

Sadly, the statue's creator, sculptor John Cox, never lived to see his project completed, but this task was taken on by his wife Joy and daughter Jayne Meadows, both of whom are part of the family business.

The statue will remain on display to the public in front of the Museum, as a reminder of the enormous contribution that Edward, Lord Montagu, made towards classic cars and motoring in general.

Further 50th Anniversary Special Aspects

The special exhibition showcased three vehicles to evoke the spirit of the show, against a backdrop of images and memories from five decades of 'Beaulieus'. The cars included an unrestored Morris Minor Traveller (provided by Charles Ware's Morris Minor Centre), plus the superb example of the same model, self-restored by Matt Tomkins, the Project Manager for 'Practical Classics'. In addition there was Graeme Rust's wonderful Alvis Woody station wagon, restored over a ten year period using parts obtained from Beaulieu events.

The Anniversary Trophy for the best gold-themed stand went to Andy Lee, of R & D Classic Car Spares, for his amazing giant illuminated cake-topped stand. He was presented with his award by the current Lord Montagu and Lolly Lee, who each year donates a prize in memory of her late father and keen autojumbler Terry Lee. The prize is for the stand which best represents the spirit of autojumbling.



[Andy Lee won the Anniversary Trophy for the best gold-themed stand.](#)

Best Stand award went to Michael Rowe (with his fellow autojumbler Martin Bradley), of Classic Car Spares; he brought along a Rolls-Royce V8 engine which he started up every hour.

The event's media sponsor 'Practical Classics' displayed the results of its Car Rebuild Challenge, with the project's 100 year old Ford Model T being started up for the first time at the Autojumble (the rebuild had been started at Beaulieu's Spring Autojumble this year).



The 'Practical Classics' 1916 Model T Ford. (Photo courtesy of the National Motor Museum).

Another Show sponsor that proved to be of great interest was Ringwood Brewery, with a bar serving the firm's award-winning craft ales (which they have been producing locally since 1978).

'Things Galore' and Cars to Buy...

So many car components to view, so little time! Yet hunting around Beaulieu for elusive spares is part of the fun - especially when you discover the parts you need...

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In addition to the fascinating array of stalls selling vehicle components, many of these being offered at very fair prices, enthusiasts looking for a new project, or indeed a classic car in pristine condition, could search among the vehicles for sale in the Automart section. From budget-priced project vehicles to 'mint' exotica, there was something for everyone.

Vehicles on offer included very low-mileage examples of a 1972 Vauxhall Viva HC and a 1988 Austin Maestro, while for Morris Minor enthusiasts there was a unique Traveller estate, built on a van chassis and with an additional side-mounted rear door on the left-hand side (only) of the vehicle. This was priced at £28,000.

For those preferring Italian style, there was a 1976 Ferrari 308 GT4, up for grabs at £39,950.

There were many more cars for sale, of all types and ages, and ranging in price from very cheap to extremely expensive to "You must be having a (last?) laugh".

This slideshow requires JavaScript.



Attractive Austin Seven, anyone? (Photo by Chris Adamson).

Further classics were on sale in the 'Dealmart' area.

The Bonhams auction sale on the Saturday saw a huge array of vehicles changing hands, for a total of £3.1 million. The highest priced lot was the 1953 Mercedes-Benz 300S Coupé, which went under the hammer for £292,700. This car, one of just 560 examples built, was first owned by King Hussein of Jordan. By contrast, a 1964 Wolseley 1500 fetched just £1,035.



A selection of the cars offered in the Bonhams auction sale. (Photo by Chris Adamson).

On the Sunday (only) there was the additional 'Trunk Traders' section, in the form of people selling parts from the backs of their cars.



The Austin A30/A35 Owners' Club stand, also the stand operated by the Standard Motor Club and other classic car owners' organisations attracted much interest. (Photo by Chris Adamson).

I talked to a number of stallholders and buyers, all of whom said that they had enjoyed a great weekend at Beaulieu. An interesting observation from several was that mobile telephone coverage was far superior this year (thanks to a new phone mast) , and both buyers and sellers were grateful that also due to this, credit card machines operated effectively and quickly, (saving time for all, and helping sellers secure high value deals that otherwise might not have happened in cash terms, and also saving buyers valuable cash for further purchases to be made during their visit!)



Alas this year, due to another pressing commitment (in north Wales!), I had to depart earlier than I had hoped from the Autojumble, but still thoroughly enjoyed the event; just brilliant, as always. Friends who were there for the whole weekend confirmed what a great event it was.

In case you are wondering, I did manage not to buy another classic, but brought home many useful parts obtained from the stalls.

Looking ahead, for information/dates on next year's Beaulieu Autojumble (and the Spring event), please go to: www.beaulieuevents.co.uk

Beaulieu Autojumble 2016 Facts and Figures:

36,053 visitors, 2,378 stands, 243 cars for sale in the Automart and Dealmart areas, 4,000 burgers sold, and 4,000 rashers of bacon served in bacon rolls, 39,600 litres (1,398 cu.ft) of rubbish collected from the bins, 3,000 copies of the 50th Anniversary booklet distributed.