National Motor Museum’s ‘Chatty Caravan’ inspires conversations in the community

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Author:

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The National Motor Museum tells us…

(All words and photopgraphs from the National Motor Museum).

A restored classic caravan is helping the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu to engage with the local community. The ‘Chatty Caravan’ – otherwise known as ‘Caravan for the Community’ – is a small but perfectly formed 1971 Sprite 400, and a time capsule of fab 70s styling. This joyful, mobile outreach space enables the museum’s Learning team to take to the road to promote their National Lottery Heritage Fund project ‘My Generation’.



The project seeks to engage with people of all ages, especially with those for whom a visit to the museum is perhaps not possible, to create a community archive. The aim of the ‘Chatty Caravan’ is to help inspire conversations, memories and stories linked to journeys and the social history of motoring. Having recently been showcased at a 75th Sprite Anniversary Rally event at Beaulieu’s Spring Autojumble and ‘BrockFest’ at Brockenhurst College, the caravan will be out and about this year visiting a range of community settings including a summer tour of Hampshire libraries and reminiscence visits to local care homes.

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Nina Lazarski, Community Learning Officer at the National Motor Museum says, “For a small vehicle, the caravan has a big reach. Our outreach work offers opportunities for us to share conversations, stories and connections to our museum for those who may face barriers to engaging more directly and this retro caravan is definitely a talking point.”



NMM team Sara and Nina with the Sprite 400 caravan.

The visits are made possible with thanks to the generous support of Suzuki UK who have loaned the National Motor Museum team a Suzuki S-Cross car to tow the caravan. The car was kindly delivered by Alan Honour and Paul Quartermaine (pictured below) of Suzuki UK and features printed branding from Thurston, based in Holbury. The bright ‘chatty’ design on the vehicle raises awareness of the project.



Above: Paul (left) and Adrian delivering the Suzuki S-Cross.



To hear tales from ‘Chatty Caravan’ and to follow its journey head to @chatty_caravan on Instagram.

These community initiatives form part of a wider ‘Ages of Motoring’ National Lottery Heritage Fund project which will see exciting transformations in the museum at Beaulieu over the next year.


CARAVAN FOR THE COMMUNITY
COSGROVE LODGE PARK
BRISTOL
Cheddar
A place for people to reminisce, chat & smile together.
@chatty_caravan
Heritage Fund
NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM BEAULIEU

Further information visit: https://nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/learning/community/

About the National Motor Museum

1. The National Motor Museum Trust Limited is a charitable organisation founded in 1972, which runs the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu in the New Forest. Continuing the work of the flagship Montagu Motor Museum, the Trust has a world-famous collection of 280 vehicles and associated motoring items, which are on display in the National Motor Museum.
2. The nearby Collections Centre houses and cares for a vast array of motoring artefacts, photographic images, specialist reference library and film and video library. For more information about its collection and services see www.nationalmotormuseum.org.u
3. Visitors to Beaulieu can enjoy a full day out with features including the ancestral Montagu home Palace House, 13th century Beaulieu Abbey, adventure play area Little Beaulieu, and grounds and gardens. Tickets can be bought in advance. For tickets or more information, see www.beaulieu.co.uk or call 01590 612345.
4. A full calendar of events and exhibitions is held at Beaulieu by the National Motor Museum, including Collection Centre Open Days, Classic Grille Evenings, Meet the Curator events and Transport Torques. Details are available at www.nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/events