



# *Beyond Our First Decade*

# The Birth of the Museum



Lord Montagu of Beaulieu

The National Motor Museum evolved from the Montagu Motor Museum, which was founded by Lord Montagu in 1952 as a tribute to British Motoring achievement and particularly in memory of his father, one of the pioneers of motoring in Great Britain and the first Parliamentary champion of the motorist's cause. Within 10 years the collection numbered more than 100 vehicles. To cater for the ever increasing demand for information on motoring history, Lord Montagu created in 1961, a Motoring Library for

books, manuscripts and photographs.

The decision to found a charitable Trust was taken in 1968 in order to safeguard the Museum and the Library collections for the long-term benefit of the nation.

The Beaulieu Museum Trust came into being on the 17th November 1970. Lord Montagu made available to the Trust his vehicle and Library Collection, at the time worth in excess of £500,000, at a peppercorn rent, for a minimum term of sixty years.

Lord Montagu, through Montagu Ventures Limited, the Beaulieu

management, borrowed one million pounds from Hambros Bank in order to provide finance for both the Trust's buildings and the remainder of the Complex. This loan was secured upon Lord Montagu's personal assets. In turn Montagu Ventures Limited loaned to the Trustees on exactly similar terms sufficient funds to pay for the Museum and Libraries and related costs.

The principle objectives recorded in the Trust Deed are:-

'.....to construct a Museum and Library to house the historic vehicles and Library contents'.

'.....to exhibit to the public and make available for research and education the historic vehicles and Library contents and for preserving same as collections'.

'.....to acquire for exhibition in the new Museum and Library, books, manuscripts, photographs and other items connected with transport'.

'.....to restore and assist in maintaining the historic vehicles and Library contents'.

'.....to make available to the public historical information... by means of publications, exhibitions and lectures.'

In 1968 a Trust fund was launched with a target of £750,000 to enable these objectives to be realised and generous support has been received from both industry and individuals.

In 1972 the Beaulieu Museum Trust became the National Motor Museum Trust.

Ten years of steady progress and a look to the future are the subjects of this publication.



Victor Hemery in his Benz after his victory in the 1908 St. Petersburg-Moscow race

# The Museum Displays

The exhibition of vehicles in the Museum building is the main point of contact with our visitors, who represent a fairly typical cross-section of the general public, and are at Beaulieu to enjoy a relaxed, entertaining and agreeable day. They approach the Museum with a mild interest and, perhaps, a sense of expectancy, but they certainly do not represent an expert audience.

The nature of the audience is a major factor in determining the way in which the Museum exhibits are displayed. For the expert in motoring history, the vehicles alone would be adequate. However, to engage the

interest and the enthusiasm of the non-expert visitor, it is essential that the overall collection is presented in a lively and entertaining way.

## The First Decade

The Museum opened with a fine new building and the best collection of vehicles in Europe. The vehicles on display have been changed to reflect the continuous refining of the collection. This has produced a fresh look for visitors who come more than once during the season and released vehicles for use at events elsewhere.

A major re-display of the Motor Cycle Gallery, sponsored by Duckhams, was completed in 1980.

Additional supporting displays on motoring themes have been very limited because of restricted expenditure, but road signs, posters and period enamelled signs have been successfully featured.

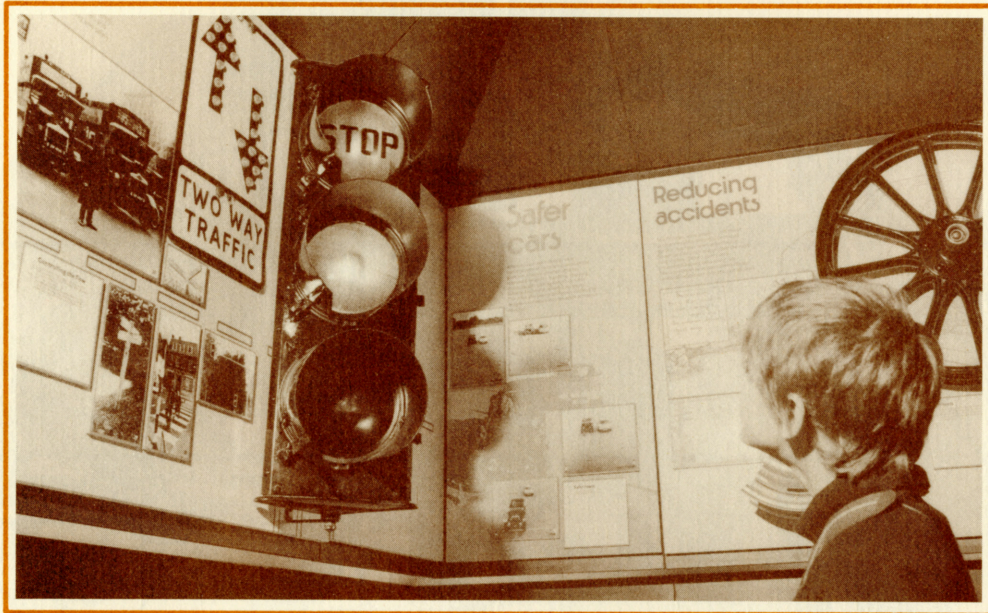
The sponsored display booths have been of a commendably high standard. As they have been re-designed and re-furbished, the close collaboration with the Museum Education Department in the development and interpretation of their themes has produced displays in complete sympathy with the Museum objectives. The Lucas and GRE display booths are two of the more recent examples of this collaboration.

Currently the display themes are:  
'The Story of the Tyre' – sponsored by Dunlop  
'Lighting' – sponsored by Lucas  
'Brakes and Transmission' – sponsored by Automotive Products  
'Safer Motoring' – sponsored by Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance  
'Aluminium In Action' – sponsored by Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance  
'Automotive Engineering' – sponsored by G.K.N.  
'Meet The Drivers' – sponsored by BP  
'The Sparking Plug' – sponsored by Champion Sparking Plugs  
'A Family At Risk' – sponsored by British Insurance Association.

## The Future

The next decade will be marked by a major emphasis on re-display of the Museum's collection, with the aim of increasing still further the visitors' enjoyment of the Museum and their understanding of motoring history. A detailed, but flexible, Display Policy has been developed incorporating provision, not only for long term display, but also for temporary exhibitions, events and activities.

This will give the visitors a much more varied museum experience, encouraging participation and activity, while allowing vehicles to be removed easily from the collection to participate in a variety of events.



*The Guardian Royal Exchange road safety display booth*