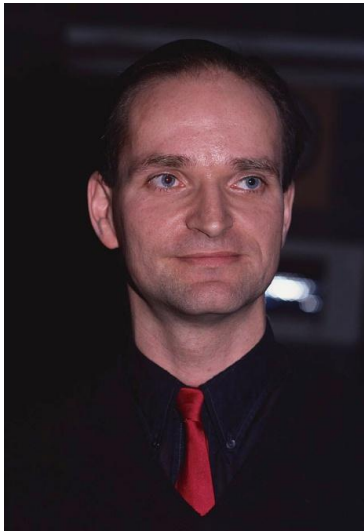




So farewell then Florian Schneider...



Kraftwerk founder, Florian Schneider has taken his last drive down the Autobahn. His death was announced earlier in May this year.

He was just a few days past his 73rd birthday.

Their 1974 robot-pop super-hit, '**Fahr'n fahr'n fahr'n auf der Autobahn**' arguably defined the decade.

How better to start a '**Transport Edition**' than with a reminder of that iconic song?

If you haven't heard the original for years, give it a listen - it has lasted extremely well.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iukUMRlaBBE#>





It's a small world.

"It's a small world," says **Will Prideaux**, Musical Director of the very fine **Peterborough Male Voice Choir** and a keen reader of **VotV**.

He contacted **VotV** with news of a recent event that seems to bear out his initial assertion.

It seems one of his first-tenors deals in used cars. The other day a car came into his possession for resale - a very sporty, very racy yellow job, looking for a new owner. Neither your editor nor Will could tell you what type it is but it looks like you could get done for speeding in it quite easily.

Well, as usual, he checked the car over and much to his surprise came across some unusual papers hidden within. On examination it turned out they were Management Committee Meeting Minutes from **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**.



So do you recognise this vehicle? Could it have been one of our CVMVC singers who owned it once? What's its history? It certainly looks interesting.

The Committee Meeting took place about 18 years ago in June 2002. My guess is that whoever stuck it away was probably impressed that we regularly had 60 or 70 singers onstage and at rehearsals.

Can you shed any light on this vehicle?

Do get in touch.

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir
Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 11th June 2002
Present: Ken Dutton (chair), David Hirst Stuart Dancer, Ralph Hunt, Roger Fiddling, Peter Dooly, Norman Brown, David Foster, Brian Shaw, Keith Fiddling, Brian Jenkins, Cyril Lawrence.

- Apologies for absence: Arthur Quensby, Eric Cooper, Peter Nancill, Eric Shaw, Thom Mordell, Clive Shaw.
- Minutes of Previous Meeting: Approved.
- Matters Arising:
 - Agreed Keith Fiddling to report back on the best interest charity account, apart from risk accounts, in which to invest the ladies' donation of £5,000 and £15,000.
- Attendance Report: May 2002

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total	Avg	%
1st Tenors	25	15	15	20	25	25	20	22					80	19	77
2nd Tenors	18	15	15	20	25	25	20	22					74	18	82
Bassmen	22	14	14	15	15	15	15	14					84	17	80
Baritone	22	17	15	15	15	15	15	14					84	17	80
TOTAL	87	61	59	70	80	80	70	71					318	17	80
%	74	82	82	79	82	84	84	84							
- Correspondence:
 - After thoroughly enjoying CVMVC's concert with Flourescences, E. Castle of Quorn had written requesting details of both choir's concerts.
 - Agreed to order Welsh hymn music.
 - The Beckingham British I...



Interesting walks for Dave and Chris

Kindly old archivist, and keen cyclist, **David Clarke**, and his girlfriend, Chris, have been in touch to talk about how they are spending their social isolation time discovering new walks round our lovely local countryside.

VotV was able to suggest they try the **Meltham Greenway** that starts at the back of **Morrisons car park**.

We recommended this walk because of the countryside but for readers of this VotV 'Transport Special' it holds even more attractions. The Greenway follows the track of the **Meltham Branch line Railway to Huddersfield**.

Meltham Branch Railway

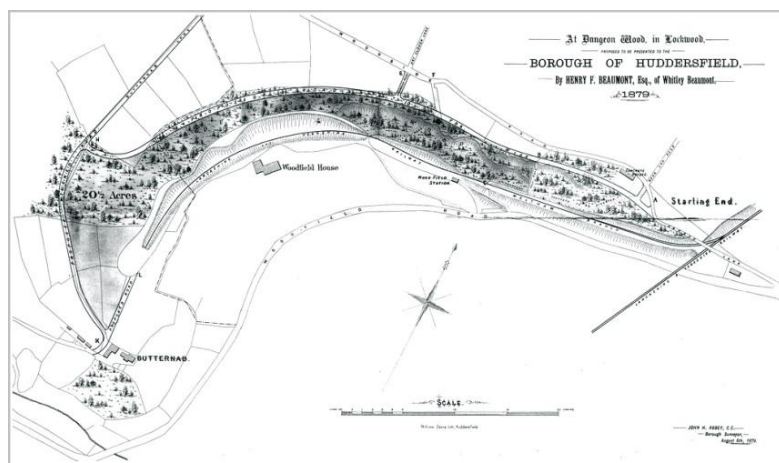
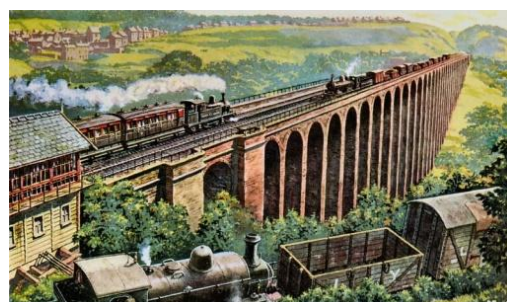
The branch line which connected Meltham and Huddersfield closed to passengers nearly seventy years ago. Freight traffic continued until 1965 when the end came and the tracks were ripped up.

That's why a bit of detective work is needed to re-imagine its original glory. A walker along the Greenway for example can still find many remnants of railway history to tickle his or her fancy.

The line was built by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company (L&YR) in the 1860s, and though it was only 3½ miles long it took nearly 5 years of construction before it was deemed safe to carry passengers.

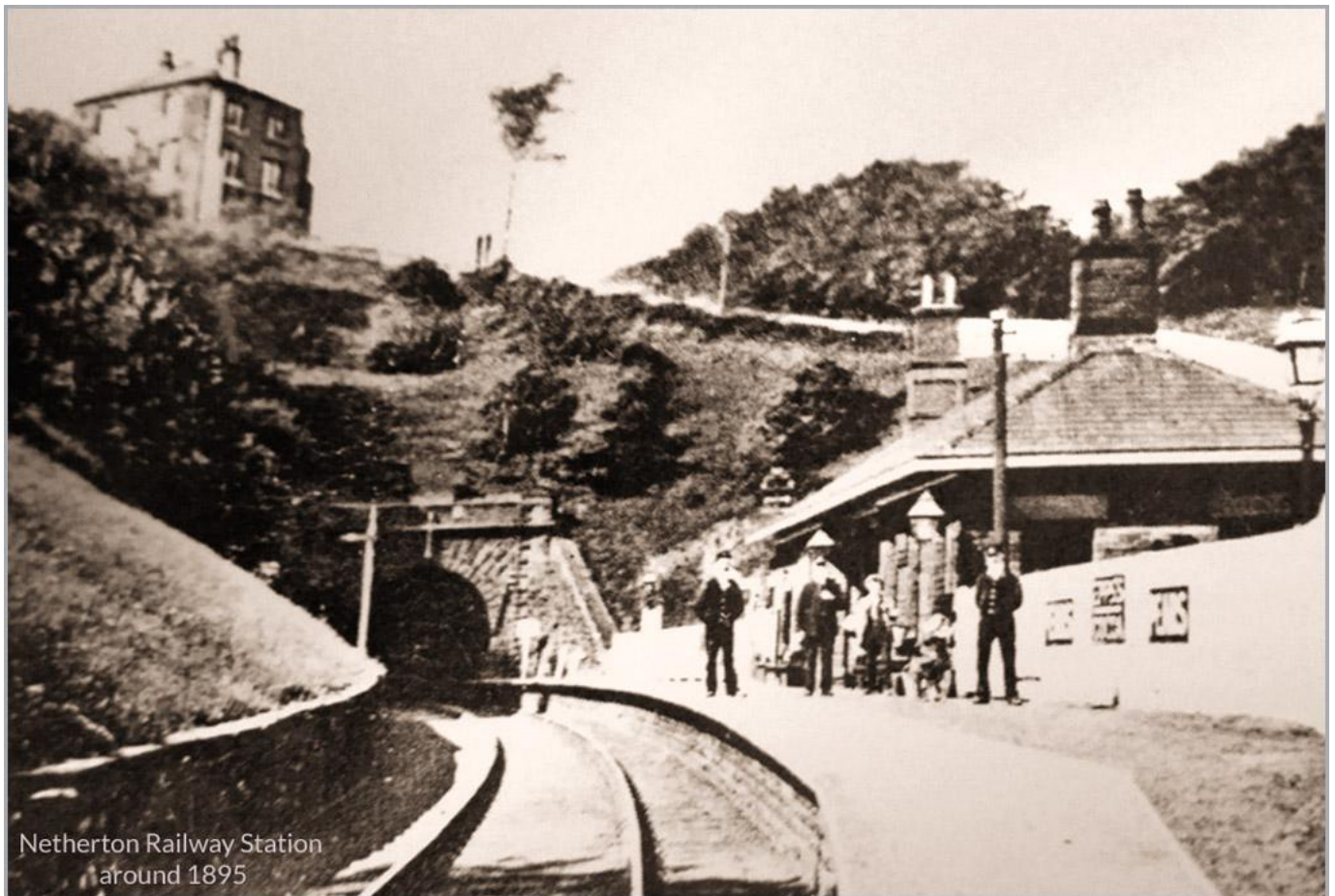
The build was beset by numerous problems - from unstable ground and landslips to collapsing tunnels and opposition from landowners - but would become a vital lifeline during the Second World War. A total of 23 crossings were needed, including six footbridges and seven streams along with three tunnels.

The line branched off towards Meltham, leaving the Penistone Line (Huddersfield to Sheffield) just after Lockwood station at Swan Lane. The train in the foreground in this picture by **Brian Fawcett**, is heading towards Meltham. From the **Hanson Lane Bridge** you can still see the point as the branch turns off the main line, where the artist must have stood, around 120 years ago, to paint it.



Much of the Huddersfield end of the ruined line is still accessible in Beaumont Park, up to the point where the line enters the 768 foot-long **Butternab Tunnel**.

Later on, a 1,000 foot tunnel took the line under the village of Netherton, where it emerged into **Netherton Station**, just by the tunnel exit.



Netherton Railway Station
around 1895



Then the line meandered on to Meltham. The **Morrisons** supermarket at Meltham stands on the site of the old terminus. The route fell into disuse as the cost of a train trip on the line became much greater than tram or bus fares. (A ticket from Meltham to Huddersfield on the bus reportedly cost 5d compared to 1s 2d on the train) but freight use remained viable for a couple of decades longer- mostly due to the David Brown connection.

The David Brown connection

The line continued for so long largely because of the industrial and strategic importance of David Brown. Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, the firm had begun production of tractors at Meltham Mills. During the war, the company also manufactured vital aircraft gears. Whilst other gear factories at Coventry and Derby were repeatedly bombed by the Luftwaffe, the David Brown works at **Lockwood** and **Meltham Mills** were never targeted.

It isn't true that half the Choir once worked for David Browns



It just seems that way. But certainly many a singer did get the word about the choir at David Browns (or its sister company **David Brown Gears** in Lockwood). John Radcliffe, veteran baritone, for one, told VotV that in 1957 at the age of 18 yrs, he was asked by a foreman joiner at **David Brown Tractors, Haigh Stead**, if he would like to join the CVMVC. "I took him up on his invitation and with a bit of persuasion from **Norman Dearnley**, who also worked at 'tractors', I plucked up courage and went for a test." John was still singing with the Choir until 'lockdown intervened 63 years later.



TRAIN LEAVING MELTHAM

These pictures of a train leaving Meltham with a load of tractors represented a milestone in the history of David Brown Tractors. It shows a steam locomotive pulling wagons loaded with tractors for export. This was the very first batch leaving Meltham in 1960, hauled by Stanier 4-6-0 locomotive N^o 45101, en route to Salford Docks for onward shipment to the USA.

At that time Brown's was keen to get more penetration into the American and Canadian tractor market through a deal with the **Oliver Corporation** of America.

Browns provided a variant on their 850 and 950 tractors to the Oliver Corporation to boost their US domestic range.

The export versions were painted Meadow Green and Clover White and had a distinctive radiator cowl.



This is a fully restored 1963 **Oliver 500** tractor.

This model was also made in Meltham and is essentially a rebadged David Brown 850.

It came with either a 35 horsepower David Brown diesel or petrol engine.



Many a David Brown 950 is still going strong. This one, on a small-holding in Dorset, hails from 1961.

It has been resprayed but to the original colours it came in from the Meltham factory.

Great Thanks

Great thanks to excellent historical research on these websites from which I have shamelessly cribbed much of the content.

Leggin' Netherton: Meltham Branch Line

<https://netherton.huddersfield.click/category/meltham-branch-line/meltham-greenway/>

Meltham Branch Line

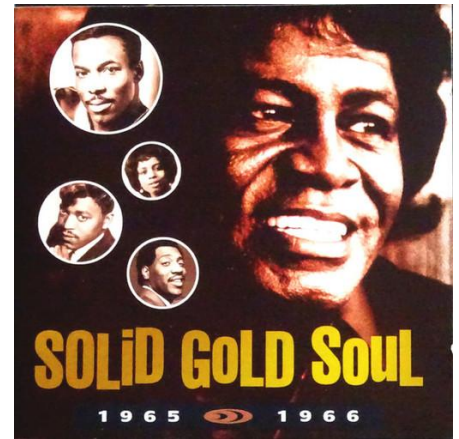
https://huddersfield.exposed/wiki/Meltham_Branch_Line

The James Brown connection

There isn't one but I don't need much of an excuse to give you this R&B classic.

As it turns out he recorded a demo version of the song when the David Brown Olivers were on their way to the USA. This video of his performance came a little later in 1966.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rq9OvaJyRc&list=PLoSoYZTkLMZfBugan3H7wJXu6J2_qJ-RO&index=1



The other James rebuilds his MGB

'Hey up John,

I've recently got a '68 MGBGT back on the road and thought you might be interested in the attached article I wrote while bored during lockdown.

*I've been trying to think of a link to music... well attached is a picture of a certain **Mr. Edward Asquith** at the wheel in Yorkshire.*

*Other than that I do sing while I'm driving it and have been blasting out a bit of **Lord Lovelace** as I sing to myself in the garage. Just been whistling 'While overhead the winter sun hung out its pale device' ... it's heading into winter down here.*

Some other (weak) choir connections - It was bought in the UK the day before the Scarborough Music Festival concert in 2018. I was in the audience at the concert but wasn't able to drive the car there because I couldn't persuade the UK insurance people to accept my USA driving license.

(We were in UK, briefly as we made the move from Peoria, Illinois, USA to NZ).

My job in Peoria was with Caterpillar, working as Director of Innovation and Strategy for the Global Research and Development Division.



Before that I worked for many years with Perkins as a systems engineer in diesel engine control systems. Now in NZ I am freelance with my own engineering consultancy

*The car now drives me to choir rehearsals in NZ with the **Orpheus Choir of Wellington.***

'DASH' the MGBGT - Reviving a practical classic

When the Asquith family moved to New Zealand, they brought with them an MGBGT. Aiming for a useable everyday classic, they set about a rebuild with the help of Kiwi experts

DEFINITELY AWESOME SUPER HORSEPOWER

At its launch in 1965 the MGB GT was hailed as an affordable and very practical sports car, but it's not often described as having *definitely awesome super horsepower*. However this 1968 MG earned that name when James Asquith and his 8-year old son were driving home soon after buying the car in the UK. James's son (Caeden, now 10) saw his dad flick up the overdrive switch – and when he felt the modest surge of road speed, he christened their new car 'Dash' (short for 'definitely awesome super horsepower').

Dash was initially garaged at James' parents house in Yorkshire, England before being shipped to New Zealand to join the family in late 2018.



'Dash' - a 1968 MGBGT pictured in North Yorkshire, England

Several MGBs on display at the British and European Car show in Upper Hutt near Wellington



Arrival at VINZ for entry inspection

KIA ORA 'DASH'

When the car arrived in Wellington in December 2018 it was taken along for entry certification. Vehicle Inspection NZ (VINZ) found some wrongly wired lamps and switches - but more significantly some poor welding repairs. As the structural problems were investigated closely, it became obvious that the previous owner's restoration needed an upgrade. 'Dash' had made it into NZ, but it became apparent that some time and money would be required to bring him up to standard for the New Zealand Roads.

The Asquith's brought the car to their new home in Johnsonville (in the northern suburbs of Wellington) and James looked over the car in detail to figure out what was next. There were lots of new parts on the car - and a very perky reconditioned drivetrain - but the chassis needed a lot of work.

Seeking help, James met up with members of the MG Club of Wellington at the British Car Day in Upper Hutt. The show has become an annual celebration of all British and European Cars held at Trentham Memorial Park each February. There were lots of offers of support from the friendly club members manning the stand. James got chatting with Michael Anderson (Rally and Regalia Director, MGCC Wellington) who was quick to understand the situation and willing to help figure out how best to progress the project.





The car was carefully stripped down

SELECTING THE BEST PARTS

Michael connected James with Ray Hartley motors in Wellington. Ray and his crew are specialists with classic cars and have a long history of repairing and racing MGs, so when James called for help Ray was sure he could assist - and visited *Dash* to assess the project.

Ray suggested that the simplest path would be to strip down and salvage all the best components from the imported car and find another NZ chassis as a basis for the restoration.

James began the process of dismantling the donor car while Ray looked for an NZ registered BGT. A suitable chassis for the restoration was quickly acquired (from a Telescope Engineer in Lake Tekapo) and Ray's team set to work on preparing the panels and chassis for repainting.

In his spare time over the next 6 months, James continued to prepare the interior and mechanical parts for the rebuild while Ray and team readied the chassis. The plan was for Ray's team to deliver a rolling chassis for final assembly in James' home workshop.



Soda blasted and primed

The Lucas Type45D distributor was serviced with new inertia springs and an electronic ignition conversion. This was in preference to a full electronic timing system as that would have required modifications to the rev counter (it relies on a pulse from the coil LT circuit) plus James wanted the option of switching back to the points if need be - thinking of roadside emergencies in the rain!

The dashboard was also cleaned up and repainted in the original wrinkle paint finish - seen in the picture below next to the reconditioned prop shaft (with new UJ bearings.)



4

ENTERING THE GREY ZONE

The chassis was extensively rebuilt and repaired - including new floors, inner and outer sills on both sides and repairs to the firewall and heater box. The doors, tailgate, bonnet and guards were all in great shape and only required sanding, priming and preparing for paint. Grampian Grey - an original 1968 GT paint that matched the donor cars original specifications - was chosen for the respray.

Fast forward to February 2020 and, on a sunny and blustery Wellington afternoon, *Dash* returned home looking as handsome as they day he left Abingdon in the newly painted Grampian Grey. As you can see in the picture opposite, James' Son was excited to see the car home and ran out to give *Dash* a hug!

THE REBUILD

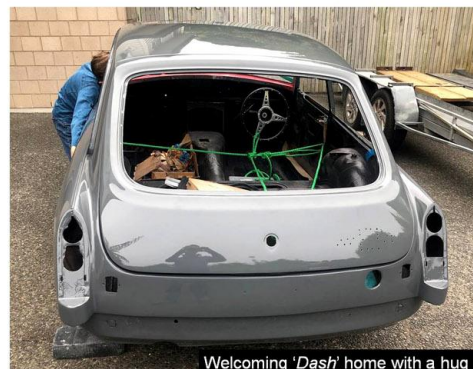
By this stage of the project most of the refurbishment work was complete and what was really required was some spare time to progress the rebuild. This was March 2020 and the news was all about Covid-19 and the possibility of a lockdown in NZ. James realized that if he could get some help with fitting the motor and gearbox, he might be able to do the rest of the work at home during lockdown. So, on what turned out to be the last Saturday before Lockdown, Ray spent a day helping James to fit the motor and gearbox back into the chassis. The drivetrain installation went smoothly but - as those that have done this will know - there's not much space to move a spanner in the area where you must tighten up the the gearbox mounts to the crossmember and onto the chassis rails. It took most of the afternoon to get these in tight!

Over the next 8 weeks work progressed at home. The fuel tank, brakes, interior, wiring harness, fuel and hydraulic lines, lights, bumpers, seals, glass, and chrome were re-fitted. It was slow and careful work but gradually *'Dash'* was taking shape. Since James is intending to use the car as a practical classic (rather than a show-car) he decided to make a few concessions to modern motoring including key fob activated central locking, a period styled modern radio, and an aluminium radiator with automatic auxiliary cooling fan. Reconditioned black leather seats with red piping and a new gear knob finished off the refreshed interior.

By early May two milestones were reached - NZ started to ease Covid-19 lockdown and *Dash* was ready to go back to Ray's garage for final commissioning and a WOF.



The rolling shell arrives back home for the rebuild



Welcoming *'Dash'* home with a hug

BACK ON THE OPEN ROAD

The car was finally ready for shakedown by mid-May 2020 and around lunchtime on a crisp autumn day Ray called James to say the MG had sailed through the WOF and was ready to get back onto the open road. There'd been a scary moment when Ray first took the car for a test drive as he heard an unusual noise coming from the engine bay under braking. Luckily, this turned out to be a slight catch of the fan on part of the radiator housing so with the addition of a spacer plate all was well.

At the time of writing James has had the car on the road for about for just over a week and has done a few hundred kms in shakedown testing. It starts easily with full choke and quickly warms to operating temperature. James has been enjoying driving the car and says that "there's nothing better than the sound of the SUs breathing deeply as you blip the throttle and change down!". The handling is surprisingly taught and balanced and very predictable. It's perfectly suited to NZ main roads and keeps up easily with the modern traffic – and with overdrive engaged in top gear, the car will cruise all day at motorway speeds with the motor burbling at 2 – 2,500rpm.

As with all classic cars the project is never really finished. James is already making a list of jobs to do as time allows including work on the bonnet and tailgate panel gaps and a possible LED headlamp upgrade and the addition of rallying spotlights.

USEABLE EVERYDAY CLASSIC

So does 'Dash' live up to his name? James' Son certainly thinks so. Not only is the car a practical and useable everyday classic (benefiting from refinement including extra sound deadening, remote central locking, modern aluminium radiator and auxiliary fan to cope with any traffic jams, hands-free iPhone connectivity) – but, crucially, when you flick the overdrive switch, the B-series engine splurts into life and offers *Definitely Awesome Super Horsepower*.



May 2020 - 'dash' is back on the road



James' daughter enjoys a ride – Safety Fast!



Engine bay features a few modern parts



Restored interior – the period radio fascia hides modern electronics



A backdrop of ferns proves that 'Dash' is in NZ!

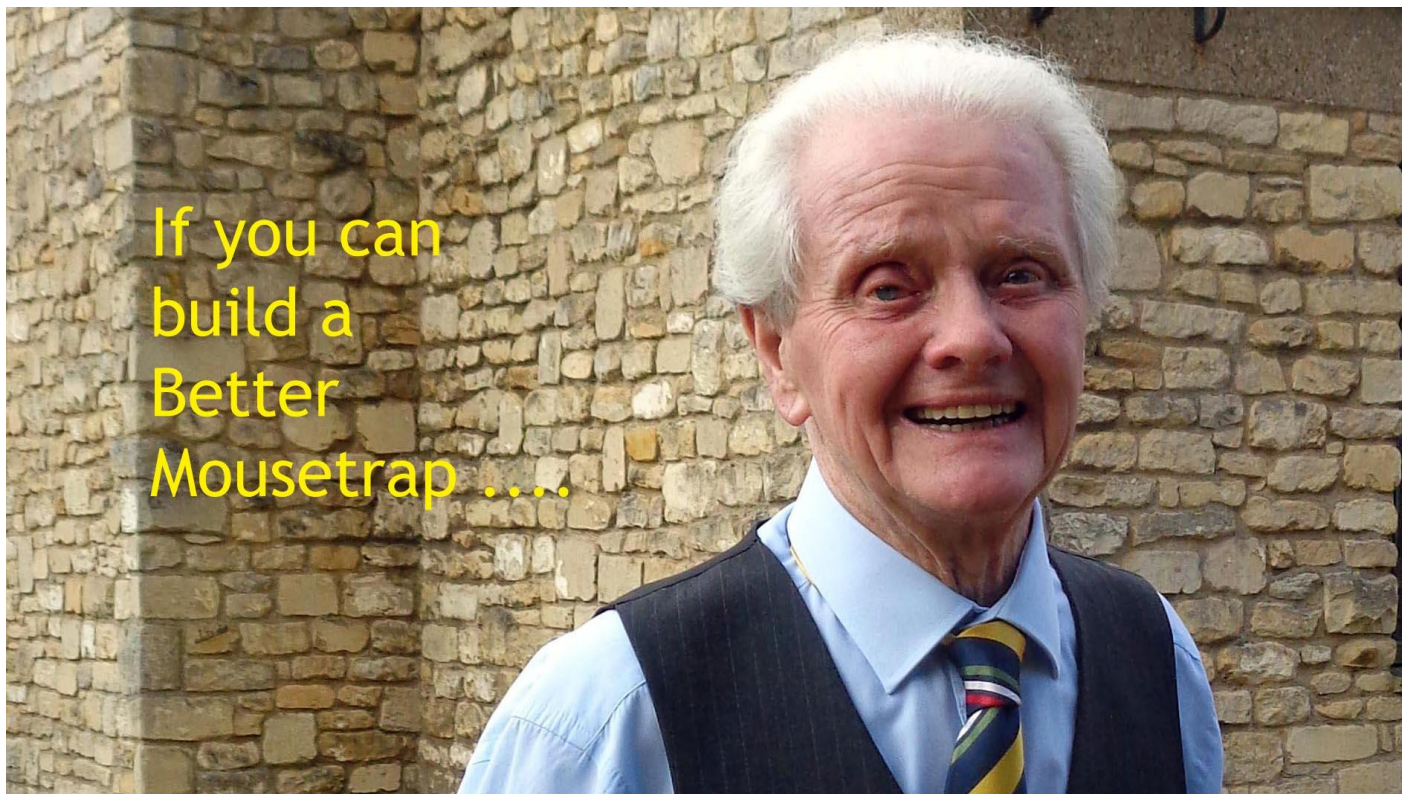


This is James's father, **Edward Asquith**, First tenor, trying out the car in North Yorkshire before his son's move to New Zealand.

Edward is something of a transport enthusiast, too. Not so long ago he got to climb into the cab of the newly restored 'Flying Scotsman'.



James and his Dad singing for CVMVC at the special 70th anniversary concert at the International Eisteddfod at Llangollen.



If you can build a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to your door: Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ken's at it again. Yes, **Ken Farr**, entrepreneur and inventor is trialling another new-idea that may have enormous potential once the development work is done.

Many of us in **corona-virus lockdown** are getting more and more stuff delivered to our homes. It's far safer than wandering round Sainsbury's, being coughed on by ignorant youth. But we might also worry about how safe the home delivery is. Maybe a **reduced-contact system** for **transporting goods and groceries** would be good.



Ken's solution:-;

The 'Drop-owt Home Delivery Crate'.

A new quick-release device automatically unpacks your groceries onto your kitchen table with minimum physical contact

It's an idea that needs some work but - who knows - first tenor, and one-time professional vocalist, who's just enjoyed his 87th birthday - might be onto a winner.

Chris Wilson and bass, **Dave Clarke**, helped Ken make his first demo video. [View it here.](https://youtu.be/VN1DrS8uWyg)

<https://youtu.be/VN1DrS8uWyg>

A professional promotional video has now taken its place.

Keep up the good work, Ken!

Just for the fun of it



This is a **Scammell Scarab**, seen recently in town. It was probably from the 1960's, too. It quite likely also had a **Perkins** Diesel engine under the bonnet. (Thanks to Andrew Chajdas for the pic.)



You might guess that the unusual name reference the wing case of a scarab beetle - slightly like that bonnet. But you would be wrong. It's a crushing together of two phrases - **Scammell** and **Arab Horse**, apparently. Scammell for the manufacturer in Watford and 'Arab horse' a vehicle developed for the railway companies to replace horse drawn delivery vehicles for local transport: hence **Sca-rab**.

This is a 'mechanical horse' done out in **Great Western Railways** livery most likely in the 1930's

Transports of delight



Also from the early sixties: take the slow train with Flanders and Swan - lovely. Their gentle song, 'Slow Train' is a nostalgic elegy to the lines that disappeared in Dr Beeching's regrettable cuts to Britain's railway network. In March 1963, under orders from Transport Minister Marples, Beeching published his report on the future of the railways, entitled '**The Reshaping of British Railways**'. He called for the closure of one-third of the country's 7,000 railway stations. Most of the cuts were implemented.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTFcN8RsJbs>



This transport Special was produced as a 'Bonus Extra' to the June 2020 Edition of VotV.

If you have any comments, do please get in touch with your editor, John Clark. It makes his day when a reader sends him a contribution for VotV.

There should be a Colne Valley Male Voice Choir angle - even if slightly tenuous. Otherwise don't worry about your writing. John is used to sprucing up readers' contributions for publication.

And do look at our website: colnevalleymvc.org.uk