

WINTER EDITION 2022

# THE BEDFORD Legend



In this edition

O type restoration

SB ownership

Portugal and Norwich



**The Bedford Enthusiasts Club Magazine**

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MYB 33, Stuart Jones' former Safeway of  
South Petherton OB seen at our Bedford  
90 event.

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# Derek's dialogue

by Derek Mathewson, Club Patron

A very good morning to you all,

I do hope you've all enjoyed this year's show season with most events appearing to be back to normal (or even better) following the disruptive pandemic. I'm sure like me, many of you have struggled to participate in the full calendar, but lets hope 2023 will see a resurgence of interest and the enthusiasm we all need to regenerate.

Bedford values still appear to be less than I would expect and like to see. I believe we are seeing an alignment of values and most people seem to be accepting this.

I was really pleased to be able to join some of you on the recent member's visit to the David Brown Tractor Museum in Meltham. It was heart-warming to see how many had made the effort to support our club, the museum and the event itself, and I spent a very enjoyable lunchtime speaking to a member who had come all the way up from Cornwall just to attend. The very welcome and wholesome lunch was preceded by a very informative talk and followed by a film show and presentation. I don't know if it was the chance to relax and unwind after a very hectic week or the effects of the substantial lunch I'd just consumed but I must confess my eyelids did get a bit heavy a couple of times. If anyone did happen to notice, then I do apologise. I can assure you it had no bearing on the day's proceedings which I'm sure were enjoyed by all who attended.

I think I'll conclude whilst I'm ahead...and wish you all a very merry Christmas and more importantly a safe, happy and healthy New year.

*Derek.*



# Chairwoman's Chat

by Christine Thomas

Is it just me, or do some of you also wish that the pace of life would slow down?

One good thing is that we can now look forward to a very busy New Year. My year has been very rewarding as I have managed to meet some of you at events around the country.

I have also been talking or visiting you to assist in the DVLA's V5 registration procedure. This involvement gives me so much pleasure, to be able to help give an identity to an owner's treasured possession. The quality of the restorations is truly amazing and a credit to these devoted owners.

In closing, wherever you are over this season I hope that life treats you & yours with kindness.

Christine Thomas  
Acting Chair

## Membership report

by Christine Thomas

I would like to welcome the people who have joined the BEC since the last issue.

Graham Harris, Essex  
Robert Thorp, Gloucestershire  
Ton de Vires, Netherlands  
Dave Roberts, Dorset  
Martin Dunnett, Norfolk

Jack Giles, Bedfordshire  
Daniel Crossley, Somerset  
Tara Downs, Gloucestershire  
Alan Gibson, Cheshire

# Griffin Trust Bedfords by Christine Thomas

The Griffin Trust is now embarking on providing a small collection of Vauxhall/Bedford models to be available to the public to view. Below are two such vehicles. The A5 was partly restored and donated to The Griffin Trust by John William Hitchman, who named the lorry 'Billy'. The second one is a CA manual tipper used by Brighton work dept. It needs a full restoration as you can see.







# Legislation updates by Parry Davis

MoT Tests – restating the current position & what is new next year.

## **Current Position.**

All HGVs first registered before 31st December 1959 are exempt from annual testing – MoT – provided they are not used commercially & are used unladen. Items 'associated with the operation of the vehicle' are not classified as a load.

Any vehicles registered after 1st January 1960 are subject to annual testing – MoT – unless they are 3500 Kg GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT or less. Please note it is the original manufacturer's Gross Vehicle Weight that is used, not any form of unladen weight.

The responsibility for correct designation is clearly that of the vehicle's registered keeper; just because the kind person in the Post Office taxed the vehicle for you without an MoT certificate is irrelevant -it is your responsibility. If you are and remain lucky you might 'get away with it' but, and it is a big but – if you are involved in a serious incident whether it is your fault or not and the authorities check the status of all the vehicles involved and it is found that your vehicle should have been tested but hasn't been, it is possible that your Insurance will be deemed null & void and you will have been driving whilst uninsured. Today, insurance companies have teams of people whose job it is, in the event of a large claim, to find some valid reason to reject the claim.

There is a list showing which types of post 1959 vehicles are exempt from MoT – the Form is V112G and it can be downloaded from the Internet.

The choice is yours but please think carefully.

## **What is Changing.**

To get an accurate reading on the roller brake tester, the vehicle needs to be carrying sufficient weight to prevent the wheels from locking.

With effect from 1 January 2023 vehicles are required to be loaded when presented for Test; the yardstick is 65% on each axle but at least 50%.

However the situation regarding historic vehicles is, shall we say, open to local interpretation. DVSA have stated that a number of vehicles including tankers, furniture removal vehicles with weak floors and a number of other types cannot reasonably be loaded as above. It will be up to the DVSA Tester on the day.

If your vehicle is suitable and you can put some weight on, then this is the best thing to do. However the situation with artic tractor units if you don't have your own trailer is far more difficult; most test facilities have a loaded trailer you can hire BUT it will inevitably be loaded to suit a 44 Ton GVW modern vehicle and will probably have a long 5th wheel pin so the front of the trailer may well hit the back of your cab before you couple up.

Certainly don't leave your MoT Test until the last moment and my advice is to talk to the Test Station well in advance, I have found that Test Station personnel and most of the DVSA Testers to be helpful regarding our beloved classics.



Seen at the Eastern Counties show at Norwich was this 1970 KM tipper

## Club updates

The club has a large number of technical drawings for the TK, KM, & TM ranges which were saved from the factory when it closed and are currently stored temporarily in Northampton. We need some one who has the space and time to permanently store and make a start on sorting them out. If you think this is something you would be able to assist with, please contact James on 07740 083370



# O, what a lovely job!

By Ron Dale

I am unsure of when I developed my love of O type Bedfords but my mother said I cried when my dad traded his long wheelbase tipper in for a new Austin FFK diesel. Leaving school in 1967 I became an apprentice mechanic for a local agricultural engineers who ran an early TK with 220 engine. It originally ran on trade plates for collection and deliveries but when plating and testing was introduced it received an H reg plate. One of the earliest lorries we prepared for test was an M type with cattle float which required major repairs to brakes, spring shackles and steering etc. After failing on poor headlights we fitted a pair of new ones intended for a Ferguson tractor. They were about half the size of the originals and looked very strange! I don't remember it ever going for a second test! A couple of J types were also casualties of testing as quite a few farmers stopped running lorries at that time due to the expense of bringing them up to scratch. I recall the firms TK shedding the timing gears a couple of times, something we finally cured by using Loctite and wiring the heads of the bolts.

In 1973/4 they replaced the old TK with a brand new one with a 330 engine, but discovered that it was too heavy to be driven on a car license, so I became its driver as I had gained my class1 by then. I found it a nice lorry to drive, the 330 pulled really well although it always needed the thermostat to coax it into life in frosty weather.



By the 1980s I had changed employers and was driving Leyland lorries. I had also got married and had two small children plus a mortgage when I heard about an O type for sale. It had been rescued from a chalk quarry where it had been used to haul between two sites. I had not seen an O type for years and thought it must be one of the last, so I went to see it. Despite its poor condition, it was still more money than I could afford but when the owner said he had a replacement cab which I could have for an extra £200 plus he would give me time to get the money, I somehow became the owner of KKH547. At first I hid it away at a friend's transport yard

under a sheet, but when I eventually made space in the garden and brought it home my wife went mad at me spending money on a heap of scrap when we were

so hard up. The 28hp engine did run but the clutch had seized and the gearbox had virtually no oil but some water in it. The crown wheel was missing half a tooth plus the pinion support needle roller bearing had seized due to broken half shaft debris and had spun in its housing wearing it oval. All the brake cylinders were



rusted up, the crossmembers in the chassis were either broken or the rivets had all become loose due to flexing. The front axle was the worst as not only were the kingpin and bushes worn but the NS pin had been moving in the axle severely ovaling it. Initially, I obtained a replacement but it turned out to be incorrect so my brother and I managed to set it up in his big old pillar drill, boring it oversize until round again. We then pressed in a steel sleeve, reaming it back to match the

king pin. Chassis cross members got welded with new metal let in where required, loose rivets were drilled out and oversize machine bolts fitted. I bought the cut up remains of an O type horse box and that gave me two good springs and a much less worn, though later style steering box. The replacement cab was the best investment I ever made. It had come from a haulage company who ran a fleet of

O types in the 50s and 60s on milk can collection. I don't know the full story but the cab was obtained to replace an accident damaged one but was never used. It sat in the rafters of their workshop for years until my lorry's rescuer bought it. It came complete with doors, glass, seats, headlining, even the rubber floor mat was there! It had surface rust with some pitting around the windscreen frame but no rot. It just required the switches and gauges from the original, plus some better replacements I had found.





I removed the engine sump and cleaned out a lot of sludge. The bearing shells were fairly worn and crank pins a bit oval but I didn't want to spend any more than necessary so reassembled it. The same went for most of the mechanicals, building up with weld or making a few new bushes plus any better stuff I could find in scrapyards. I finally got it mobile and did a few runs down the private lane past our cottage. All was well until it got fully warmed up then when it was pulling it pushed the water out of the radiator. After flushing the cooling system and having the head off couple of times I discovered that number 2 bore had some severe rust pitting where water had got in.

Nothing I tried seemed to cure the problem so very disappointedly I decided to fit a diesel engine instead. Having been to Malta on holiday I had seen an O type fitted with a Perkins 6345 engine, and thought I could obtain one cheaply from a scrap combine harvester. Anyhow, while looking through some old HCVS magazines I had been given I came across an advert for a gearbox bell housing adapter for a Perkins to Bedford. Despite the advert being over a year old I rang the number which turned out to belong to Andy McCarthy who still had it but it was for a synchro box. During our conversation, Andy asked if I had an engine, saying he had a friend who had a good Perkins P6 that he was willing to sell. Next thing I knew I was away to Macclesfield with my car and trailer and back with said engine and adapter.

However before I did the engine transfer my P6 supplier found me an adapter for a crash gearbox. With the aid of my employers artic unit which had a hydraulic crane, out came the 28hp petrol and in went the P6 with a few modifications to the cab floor



and engine cover to allow access to the injection pump (years later I obtained a booklet on how to carry out all the modifications required).



In 2001, my son became severely disabled and I lost all enthusiasm to carry on the rebuild so the lorry sat in the wood and zinc sheet shed I had constructed over it for several years. Rust slowly appeared through the primer I had applied and the project began to slide backwards. Then, as my son needed to store various wheelchairs and equipment, the Bedford moved to my neighbours, I demolished the shed and replaced it with a concrete floored steel framed brick clad building. As the Bedford was coming up to 60 years old I decided that if I didn't complete it then I never would. So I set myself a target that I would work on it at least one hour each day after work. As I now had good lighting, a clean dry floor and with a space heater for some warmth I cracked on. Sometimes I got so engrossed it was almost midnight when I packed up. As it progressed and looked more lorry-like I got keener. The body that was on it when it was rescued had been removed before I purchased it but included in the sale to me was a tipper body from an A type found in a scrapyard. It was fairly rotten but survived being hoisted by hydraulic crane however on the third move it all collapsed but I salvaged some steelwork plus both sideboards. I am a poor joiner so made the front section and end door from steel. It is a little too wide but as many of these little tippers were bodied to carry as much as possible I think it looks ok. I am extremely grateful to Martin Caddy who I had never met at this stage but acquired his phone number from a magazine article about the restoration of his Bedford. Ringing him several times for dimensions and information about mounting the Weston tipping gear. I completed it good enough to rally at the now defunct Pickering Traction Engine Rally in 2009, very local to me. Since then I have driven it to as many events as possible for me as it only manages about 38 mph and mostly I can't stay overnight but it has attended the Easter rally at Kirby Steven several times, down to the AEC Rally at Newark twice plus a 9 hour trip to the 90th anniversary rally at Leighton Buzzard. I have only had a couple of problems in this time, once with fungus forming in the diesel fuel and the fibre coupling driving the injection pump split while coming up Sutton Bank but as I have always managed to limp home it means I must have reassembled it ok!



# Busman's holiday by W. K Berry

I have long had an interest in Bedford vehicles, probably sparked by a boyhood association with a small haulage company sited near my home in north Manchester whose fleet contained several O and OW short wheelbase tippers on local muckaway work, and a TA high sided tipper (JNE 311) engaged on longer distance haulage.

Grown to man's estate, a sojourn in Cornwall in the early 1980s brought me in contact with someone who owned a 1956 ex Albanian Coaches petrol engined SB fitted with a Duple Vega body which in a nod towards its previous owner had been christened 'Rosie'. His adventures - if not cider - with Rosie are themselves worthy of several articles but the relevance of this friendship was that helping him to tend to Rosie and travelling to rallies in the area led me to fancy the idea of acquiring a vehicle of my own. I was obviously viewing the prospect through slightly 'Rosie' tinted spectacles, but the desire grew until I ended up being the proud if not slightly nervous owner of a 1965 SB13 with Duple Bella Vega body which had been operated by St Austell operator Cyril Cocks. This coach (VRF 904C) was finished in a rather garish blue and yellow livery but had started life with that legendary Staffordshire operator Harper Brothers of Heath Hayes as fleet number 63, being withdrawn by them in 1970.





Sometime in its life it had managed to migrate south and was in a fair condition for its age, with that slight aroma of damp wood adding a nice patina to the travelling experience.



**VRF (left) parked in Plymouth Bretonside bus station during Cyril Cocks' ownership.**

Any vehicle owner will confirm that one of the biggest headaches is safe storage for one's vehicle and after an abortive experiment with creating space outside the house in which we were living I settled on parking the coach (which had for obvious reasons been christened Bella) in a large layby alongside the A390, a mile or so west of St Austell town centre. This layby had at one time been the actual route of the A390 before the road was widened and straightened and was screened from the new section of road by a line of trees, these affording a high degree of seclusion. With Cornwall being (at that time anyway) a law-abiding county (or should that be Duchy?), no damage was suffered during its tenure. The only jobs I did on the coach were the replacement of a few bulbs as required which was just as well given my (very) limited mechanical expertise. I used to take my sons (the elder one now your esteemed Editor) and their pals on jaunts around the area, prompting on one occasion an 'accusation' from a bus-driver colleague at Western National's St Austell depot that I was operating a bus service in competition with the company. I should be so lucky - or stupid!

A move back to Bristol in 1983 reprised the problem of what to do with the coach. When eventually I brought it back up from Cornwall I ended up leaving it in an open-air parking area near the Cumberland Basin alongside the River Avon on the western approach to Bristol city centre. This was not ideal for several reasons, not the least of which was the risk of vandalism or even theft in the more lawless environment of urban Bristol. It was also only a matter of time before authority objected to a large blue and yellow 'eyesore' offending the senses of visitors approaching the city. Ownership of the coach had now passed from being a pleasure to being a burden and I reluctantly decided that I should dispose of it before anything untoward befell it.

I advertised it for sale and received a call from someone in Yorkshire and I arranged to meet him in a layby on the A38 north of Bristol near the M4/M5 interchange. We agreed a price and the buyer left, his colleague remaining behind to drive the coach north. The first thing he asked was 'how fast does it go?' which I thought was an odd enquiry; this was, after all, a Duple bodied Bedford which was nigh on 20 years old at the time, but I replied that the coach had behaved on its trip up from Cornwall and had not shown any untoward signs.



**VRF seen whilst waiting for the deal to be done in the final hours of the author's ownership**

He drove off in the coach and I watched with a mixture of regret and relief as its blue and yellow rump disappeared from view. My fanciful dream of owning an historic vehicle had - like many good intentions - foundered on the rocks of reality.

My sighting of the disappearing coach was not, however, to be the last time I saw it. The following morning I received a phone call from the buyer to say the coach had broken down on the M5 and he was asking for a partial refund of the purchase price to go towards the cost of recovery. I was perturbed but also a bit suspicious and so I took a ride up the motorway and there, on the hard shoulder somewhere in Worcestershire sat a familiar vehicle. I was concerned but also surprised that the Police had not arranged for its removal. Anyway, I returned home and sent the buyer some money, at least he still wanted the coach. The condition of the coach provided an answer to the apparent irrelevance of the driver's enquiry about its speed. He had obviously set out to get back to Yorkshire as quickly as possible regardless of the age of the coach and had pushed it beyond its limits.

I heard nothing more about the coach and assumed it eventually reached its new home and served a purpose for some time. It was a sad chapter in its long life and I felt guilty about subjecting it to such abuse but my experience as its owner had highlighted the pitfalls of trying to look after a preserved vehicle on one's own with limited knowledge and resources. Still, it was mostly enjoyable whilst it lasted.

## Editor's Corner

by Howard Berry

Many thanks for the positive feedback received about the last issue, and as you will see when you read through this issue, Mick Bowers' article about the restoration of his QL has resulted in another article in the same vein. We are so used to seeing these lovely restorations out on the road but the stories of the blood, sweat and tears spent to get them into that condition in the first place is fascinating and well worth reading so please, please keep them coming. The editorial pot is once again empty so with the onset of the festive season and possibly a few extra days off work, now is the perfect opportunity for you to put pen to paper (or if you prefer, finger to keyboard) and get those articles flooding through to me.

Talking of the festive season, on behalf of the Committee of the Bedford Enthusiasts Club can I thank you all for your support over the past twelve months and wish all of you a very merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2023.

# Rally Report

by Carl Lemon



For one reason and another I had not been to The Eastern Counties Vintage Show at Norwich Showground since 2018. This show has always had a large number of Bedford's attend and since 2016, with help from the organisers Julie and Gary, our club has managed a great line up.

Sadly, this year I didn't get as involved as I should have and also could not get there until late afternoon. Just to make things worse after a nice sunny day it started to rain around an hour before I was ready to leave home. Shortly after pulling off the drive, club trailer in tow, it stopped raining and started pouring down. This was how the journey was all the way to Norwich ensuring that my nicely polished AWD was absolutely filthy.

Arriving at the showground I was shown to a space that wasn't quite big enough for the trailer, the gazebo and my lorry. Shortly Gary turned up and found a spot for us next to the public gate. This was ideal and as it was now more of a drizzle my partner and myself set about putting up the gazebo. The rain of course got worse, and the wind had now picked up so much that we nearly lost the gazebo. After

what seemed like a very long struggle it was finally up, although by now it was dark. We had gained a coach on the club stand and been given the space opposite for smaller lorries and vans.

A bright start to the morning and we quickly set about putting up a display in the gazebo, parking other Bedford's on the stand and sorting out the trailer. Saturday has always been fairly quiet at this show, but we still had a reasonable number of people showing interest. Sunday saw more vehicles turn up and a very busy day for sales and enquiries and great weather to boot.

This really is a great show which not only has vehicles but also a hall full of stalls, (craft as well as transport items), tractor pulling, auto jumble and a bar.



Part of the Bedford lineup included these two fine looking TMs, B923 UBM and PBH 559W

HEW 370F, one of the KM's which Marshall of Cambridge fitted with TL cabs.





# Andycam in Portugal by Andy Ballisat

This edition of the Legend sees a selection of photographs taken by our intrepid photographer when he visited the Algarve during the summer of 1996.



This TJ is at the promenade in Faro and the Airtours plane flying over is just about to touch down at Faro Airport.

Just a few yards away from the beige TJ was this green example owned by the local authority.



This tidy looking CF was a Stallholder's van at a market in Quarteira

# Reader's Drives

**Member:** Jeffrey Sproston **Member No:** 308

**Location:** Frodsham, Cheshire **Vehicle Details:** KYX 782D, 1966 RLH



Seen hard at work undertaking the duties it was purchased for is Jeffrey Sproston's 1966 RLH KYX 782D. The family business of C. W. Sproston Lime Ltd does exactly what it says on the tin and provides lime spreading services around the Cheshire area. The Bedford is a rally regular and one of a number of vehicles preserved by the Sproston family.

# Wordsearch

by Graham Bourne

W	H	N	M	M	R	Q	S	O	H	L	E	D	J	V
N	T	D	J	E	N	F	F	Y	A	L	H	R	I	K
W	A	B	M	R	R	S	N	T	G	C	O	X	F	E
M	A	M	O	C	R	C	Y	A	D	T	V	Z	T	T
U	O	I	R	U	D	Z	E	R	A	E	T	Q	U	F
C	N	J	R	R	G	E	O	D	A	U	H	A	M	O
B	C	O	I	Y	U	F	N	R	E	N	S	E	S	R
M	R	H	S	A	D	A	R	D	T	S	I	T	A	C
N	O	I	E	E	M	S	S	U	O	A	D	E	I	Y
R	T	N	B	V	O	U	L	V	L	D	S	R	N	N
O	A	O	A	Y	R	C	L	E	A	S	G	I	A	R
L	D	L	E	I	V	O	E	F	R	F	R	E	C	O
G	N	I	G	L	V	L	L	I	A	O	N	R	S	H
I	A	A	T	O	O	C	K	E	N	D	A	H	I	T
L	M	D	N	A	L	Y	E	L	T	E	E	O	N	K
L	N	S	C	A	M	M	E	L	L	N	C	H	I	N

AEC

DAF

HINO

MERCEDES

THORNYCROFT

AUSTIN

DODGE

LEYLAND

MERCURY

VAL

BEDFORD

EAGLE

MAGIRUS DEUTZ

MORRIS

VOLVO

CHEVROLET

ERF

MAN

SCAMMELL

COMMER

FODEN

MANDATOR

SCANIA

# Club Merchandise

The club has the following items of merchandise available for sale.

Item	Colour	Sizes	Cost (incl P&P)
Novelty mug 'I fix Bedfords'			£7.25
Mug with BEC logo			£7.75
Bottle opener keyring			£4.95
'Keep Calm, fire up the Bedford ' sign	Black/white		£11.45
Mouse mat with BEC logo			£4.95
BEC ballpoint pen			£2.00
K, M, & O type workshop manual on CD			£11.45
Polo shirt with BEC logo		M L XL 2XL	£18.00
Fleece with BEC logo	Grey	L XL 2XL 3XL	£26.00
Fleece with BEC logo	Burgundy	L XL 2XL 3XL	£29.00
Waterproof jacket		Made to order	£41.00
Beanie hat with BEC logo	Black		£7.50
Baseball cap with BEC logo			£8.75

To order any items of merchandise, please contact  
Christina Robinson, 124 Manning Road, Moulton, Northampton, NN3 7HJ  
Tel: 07592 524736 or email [bearsscd567@gmail.com](mailto:bearsscd567@gmail.com)  
Please make cheques payable to Bedford Enthusiasts Club.  
Orders can also be processed through the BEC website,  
[www.bedfordenthusiastsclub.com](http://www.bedfordenthusiastsclub.com)

New to the merchandise range are these unbreakable mugs - ideal for when you're banging around in the workshop struggling on something other than a Bedford!

£10.00 including p&p



# Club Spares

The Club has a large inventory of Bedford spares available, including mechanical, electrical and body parts for a wide range of Bedford models and engine types.

## SELECTION OF PARTS IN CLUB STOCK

New tyres suitable for rear axle - all stored under cover

9.5R 17.5, 8.5R 17.5, 245/7R 19.5

Selection of filters including Crosland 620,491,965

Rascal fuel tank sender / brake light switch

KM brake chambers

TK cow catcher bumper. Very straight but will need a shot blast

300P fuel pump with vacuum pump

New long reach 300P oil pump

Used injector pump and six injectors 300D

TK etc. 16 inch wheel spit rim

TK etc. old stock recon 4 speed gear box

A selection of windscreens

For more information on the full range of spares, please contact James Robinson, the Spares Officer

Tel: 07740 083370 or email [j.robinson@able-assist.co.uk](mailto:j.robinson@able-assist.co.uk)

If you have any Bedford spares for sale or for free or if you hear of a stock clearance, please call James as the BEC is always interested in expanding the range of spares available. Please be aware that the BEC cannot be held responsible for the condition of any spares sold.





# You still see them everywhere!



Many thanks to our Maltese correspondent Vincent Schembri for sending this picture of a TK he caught in Tarxien . The owner uses the lorry in connection with his mosaic tile cleaning and repair business.

Proof that you still see them everywhere!

Submissions of written or photographic content are always welcome for inclusion in the Legend and should be sent to the Editor using the details below

**Email: [thebedfordlegend@gmail.com](mailto:thebedfordlegend@gmail.com). Post: 7 Donaldson Drive, Cheswardine, Shropshire, TF9 2NY**

**The cut-off for items to be included in the next edition of the Legend is 10th February 2023**

Prints and slides can be scanned in if sent by post. Please enclose an SAE if you want material returned after use. The Editor cannot guarantee that submissions will be used and articles may be edited due to space restrictions.

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**For enthusiasts of Bedford and associated historic vehicles.**