

May 2011 News

'Information not shared is forgotten'

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May has started on a warm note and has been preceded by an unusually dry and warm April. However, hosepipe bans loom ahead.

This update has come by way of Barry Baguley. Thank you Barry.

OUR PENSION

Just arrived is a letter from the UK HR Director regarding the option we will be given to receive a one-off increase in exchange for giving up inflationary increases. The prospect of an offer of some kind was mentioned in the December 2010 News reporting on the Trustees Forum. Now we shall be told the details of the way our pensions are built up pre and post 6 April 1997 and the Guaranteed Minimum. Also the effect if we retired before 6 April 2006. A new term has appeared Lifetime Tax Allowance LTA and an explanation will be provided as to how it may impinge upon our decision. The freephone help line number is 0800 804 8136, from abroad +44 207 017 0136

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MOTOR FUELS

Some of you may be owners of vehicles older than 10 years. All of these vehicles will be endangered by an EU Directive 2009/30/EC regarding the percentage of Ethanol to be added to petrol and diesel fuels. It will be wise to check with your vehicle manufacturer if your vehicle is pre 1993 regarding the effects of 10% ethanol in the fuel. The EU broad brush approach to pursuing their green agenda is to increase the ethanol content in fuels from the present 5% to 10% by 2013 with progressive reduction of the sulphur content. Sounds all good green objectives. However, Ethanol presents two major issues to older vehicles. First, it is hygroscopic which means water will be attracted to the fuel in your tank. This may give rise to difficult starting and vapour locks in the fuel pipes. Diesel pumps and injectors may become gummed up. The second issue is far more lethal. Ethanol attacks many of the materials used in the fuel systems of older vehicles. Seals made from neoprene, urethane rubber, polyethylene, nylon

66 and fibreglass are liable to degradation. Pipes and parts made from zinc, galvanised materials, brass, copper, lead/tin coated steels and aluminium are liable to corrosion.

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs and the All Parliamentary Historic Vehicles Group are actively pressing for solutions to these problems. As in many cases of EU interference with our way of life, our Westminster Government is unable to reject any EU regulation.

Our hope for the future in this matter lives with the fuel supply industry continuing to provide 5% ethanol fuels albeit at a limited number of pumps. Alternatively, additives which counter the corrosion and degradation caused by ethanol will hopefully be developed. Of key importance is for labelling of the fuels at the pumps so we know which fuels to avoid. Of course you could sell your vehicle and pass the problem on!

You may wish to lobby your MP. The interim report is available at Bio-Fuels link

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MULLARD HOUSE

For me the name Mullard House has a nicer ring than Philips House, both were names for the commercial offices in Torrington Place London of the semiconductor, valve, tube and passives businesses of ELCOMA. Which ever name is your preference it is reported by those who live nearby that the building is up for sale.

Some of you had cause to visit Mullard House for meetings while for others it was your place of work. Unknown to many, some historic events took place there. In the theatre or the ground floor showroom and of course in the dining room where commercial and often more notable guests were entertained. Of more importance to some individuals were the anniversaries and landmarks of their careers. John Perry has shared some such events with us in the form of pictures. Although some names come to mind, not all are recorded. Please help by emailing Tony M if you recognise people in these pictures.

Your Pictures

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THE WEDDING

The media have excelled in the coverage of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's wedding. For me it recalled the similar event in 1981. At that time I was in the thick of the Viewdata and Prestel developments.

Consequently I found myself liaising with the Central Office of Information on behalf of Mullard and Philips divisions who had viewdata products. It will seem very strange today when we look back to that time to remember there was no Internet or PCs and laptops for communications. Most information was printed and distributed through 'hand-outs' Viewdata came into its own providing means for the press from all over the world to register and gain

accreditation and for news about the event to be shared electronically. This letter said 'thank you' to all those who helped in providing kit for the occasion. In my opinion the UK Philips group owe a great thanks to Ivor Cohen, who's vision saw the potential for Mullard components and Philips and Pye TVs in the Viewdata and Teletext markets.

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PEPA

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