

February 1977

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ALL MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE WELL

CLUB MEETING:- MONDAY NOVEMBER 29TH COMMENCING 8.00PM AT THE
 ALBERTA CAMBERWELL CIVIC CENTRE, INGLESBY ROAD, CAMBERWELL. PARKING
 AVAIL IN THE CARPARK OPPOSITE.

CLUB FUNCTION: SUNDAY 12TH DECEMBER THE H.C.C. WILL ATTEND THE
 M.G. CONCOURS. ALL VEHICLES WILL MEET AT THE PRINCE MARK HOTEL
 WINDERS HWY, DANDENONG AT 10.30 AM SHARP. THE PRINCE MARK HOTEL IS
 APPROX. 1 MILE OUTSIDE THE DANDENONG SHOPPING CENTRE.

<u>CLUB DATES:</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	NOVEMBER 29TH	- CLUB MEETING
		DECEMBER 12TH	- M.G. CONCOURS
		DECEMBER 19TH	- WOLSELEY C.C. CRICKET MATCH & XMAS PARTY

THERE WILL BE NO DECEMBER GENERAL MEETING FOR THE H.C.C.V. THE
 "ALBERTA" HAS BEEN BOOKED FOR 1977 BY THE H.C.C.V. FOR THE FOURTH
 WEEK OF THE MONTH.

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AT THE OCTOBER MEETING OF THE H.C.C. OUR COMING CONCOURS CAME UNDER DISCUSSION, THE VARIOUS CATEGORIES BEING DECIDED AT THE LAST MEETING BUT AFTER SOME THOUGHT BY THE COMMITTEE IT WAS AGREED THAT THERE WOULD BE AN OUTRIGHT WINNER - IRRESPECTIVE OF CLASS. AT LAST THE CLUB BADGE WAS FINISHED AND IF THE QUEUE IN FRONT OF OUR SECRETARY WAS ANY INDICATION OF THE BADGES POPULARITY THEN THE DESIGN AND FINISH ARE OBVIOUSLY A SUCCESS. AS I HAVE REPEATED IN JUST ABOUT EVERY NEWSLETTER THE NUMBERS PRESENT AT GENERAL MEETINGS SEEMS TO BE CONTINUALLY RISING AND THE OCTOBER MEETING BEING NO EXCEPTION. AT A GUESS I WOULD SAY IT WAS OUR BEST ROLL-UP OF MEMBERS AND SIX NEW MEMBERS WERE RECRUITED - TO THESE NEW MEMBERS WE WISH YOU A WARM WELCOME. AFTER NORMAL CLUB BUSINESS WAS ATTENDED TO OUR VICE PRESIDENT ASKED IF ANYONE NEEDED ANY TECHNICAL INFORMATION - HE WAS NEARLY BOWLED OVER - THE HANDS AND QUESTIONS COMING FROM EVERYWHERE AND I'M SURE ALL QUESTIONS WERE ANSWERED. OUR GUEST SPEAKER FOR THE OCTOBER MEETING WAS ROY PEPPERELL WHO IS THE TECHNICAL OFFICER OF THE CLASSIC AND HISTORIC CAR CLUB, ROY HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN CONCOURS JUDGING. THE METHODS OF JUDGING A VEHICLE WERE EXPLAINED TO US AND ONE PARTICULAR POINT NOTED WAS THAT AUTHENTICITY IS ESSENTIAL EXCEPT FOR INDICATORS ETC. THE H.C.C. HAS ADOPTED THE POINTS LOST SYSTEM OF SCORING FOR OUR CONCOURS. **THIS YEAR** WE ARE USING THE CLASSIC & HISTORIC CAR CLUB JUDGING SHEET. THE JUDGING SHEET IS DIVIDED INTO THREE MAIN SECTIONS - THESE BEING:-

- 1) MECHANICAL CONDITION AND MAINTENANCE
- 2) EXTERIOR " " "
- 3) INTERIOR " " "

EACH OF THESE MAIN SECTIONS IS DIVIDED INTO THE RESPECTIVE PARTICULAR PART OF THAT SECTION (THERE BEING ROUGHLY 20 PARTS TO EACH SECTION)

EG. INTERIOR - 1) SEAT UPHOLSTERY
 2) DOOR PANELS & TRIMS
 ETC. ETC.

THEN EACH INDIVIDUAL ITEM IS JUDGED IN FIVE AREAS - THOSE BEING

- 1) OPERATION AND/OR MAINTENANCE
- 2) CONDITION
- 3) FINISH
- 4) CLEANLINESS
- 5) AUTHENTICITY

EVERY PARTICULAR ITEM LISTED ON THE JUDGING SHEET IS JUDGED AGAINST ITSELF WHEN NEW. AS YOU CAN GATHER THE JOB OF BEING A CONCOURS JUDGE ISN'T AN EASY ONE (JUST ASK BOB OR HERB). THE H.C.C. ARE MOST GRATEFUL TO ROY PEPPERELL AND THE CLASSIC AND HISTORIC CAR CLUB FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE FOR WHICH WE PUT INTO PRACTICE FOR OUR OWN CONCOURS. ROY OBVIOUSLY HAS A KEEN EYE FOR A GOOD CAR - HE SERVES A SER. V.

SOCIAL NOTES

SEEMS THE SOCIAL SECRETARY WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL CONCOURS AS HE WAS HONEYMOONING IN QUEENSLAND - CONGRATULATIONS PETER & LEE AND ON BEHALF OF THE H.C.C.V. WE WISH YOU BOTH FUTURE HAPPINESS.

THE DECEMBER OUTING ON SUNDAY THE 12TH IS TO THE MG CONCOURS AT ARKONA PARK, PRINCESS HWY. BEACONSFIELD. (SAME VENUE AS LAST YEAR) NEARLY EVERY ONE-MAKE CAR CLUB IS REPRESENTED AT THIS EVENT AND TO MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES THIS IS AN IDEAL OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW MANY RARE AND INTERESTING VEHICLES OF ALL VINTAGES. THERE ARE AMPLE FACILITIES FOR THE KIDDIES AND THE HUGE VARIETIES OF "OLD" CARS WILL KEEP THEM ENTHUSED ALL DAY. LAST YEAR THE CLUB FIELDDED SOME SIXTEEN CARS FROM A TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF ABOUT TWENTY FIVE - AND IT RAINED ALL DAY! THIS YEAR WE ARE HOPING THAT ALL MEMBERS WILL ATTEND AND ASSUMING THEY WILL HAVE THEIR CARS LOOKING THEIR BEST - AS THE H.C.C. WILL BE ON VIEW TO THE PUBLIC AND OBVIOUSLY A GREAT AMOUNT OF PRESTIGE AND ADVERTISING CAN BE GAINED FROM THIS. THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY AFTER THE M.G. CONCOURS WHICH IS DECEMBER 15TH THE WOLSELEY CAR CLUB HAVE CORDIALLY INVITED US TO A CRICKET MATCH AND XMAS PARTY. THE WOLSELEY CAR CLUB HAVE MADE ENQUIRIES TO RENTING AN OVAL BY THE SEA BUT CONFIRMATION OF THIS BOOKING HAS NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED.

CLUB CONCOURS

THE H.C.C.V. HELD ITS FIRST ANNUAL CONCOURS AT DEVILS BEND RESERMOIR PICNIC AREA IN MORNINGTON. APPROX. TWENTY CARS ATTENDED AND ELEVEN ENTERED THE ACTUAL CONCOURS JUDGING. AFTER A BARBEQUE LUNCH OUR TWO JUDGES BEING BOB KENNEDY AND HERB PERKINS STARTED TO JUDGE THE SERIES MODELS. TO JUDGE AND EVALUATE A CARS CONDITION IS QUITE AN ARDUOUS TASK WITH APPROX. 60 DIFFERENT ITEMS PER CAR TO CHECK AND MARK EACH ITEM ON FIVE DIFFERENT COUNTS. ALL THE SERIES MODEL CARS WERE IN EXCELLENT CONDITION AND THE PREPARATION PUT INTO THEM BY THEIR OWNERS WAS OBVIOUS AS THEY STOOD GLEAMING IN THE SUNLIGHT. THE SERIES MODELS REPRESENTED WERE 4 SERIES IV SNIPES, A SERIES VA SNIPE AND A SERIES VA IMPERIAL. AFTER THE JUDGING ON SERIES MODELS WAS FINISHED (IT TOOK ABOUT 2 HOURS) THE MK'S WERE THEN LINED UP, THESE BEING MK'S 1,111,V. THE OLDER CARS NOT BEING QUITE AS ORIGINAL AS THE SERIES CARS BUT THIS WAS IN SOME WAYS EXPECTED AS ORIGINAL PARTS, WIRING ETC. BEING RATHER HARD TO GET. WHEN THE JUDGING OF THE MARKS WAS FINISHED IT WAS THE MOMENT EVERYONE WAS WAITING FOR - THE RESPECTIVE CLASS WINNERS AND OUTRIGHT WINNER BEING ANNOUNCED.

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THE WINNERS BEING:-

- 1) WINNER SERIES SECTION:- REG HATTERSLEY
SER. VA SNIPE
- 2) WINNER MARK SECTION:- TOM MCALPINE
MARK 1 SNIPE
- 3) MOST DESIRABLE CAR:- ALAN DAY
SER. VA IMPERIAL
- 4) OUTRIGHT WINNER:- REG HATTERSLEY
SER. VA SNIPE

OUR CONGRATULATION GO TO THE ABOVE WINNERS ON THE FANTASTIC EFFORT INTO BRINGING THEIR CARS TO THE SUPERB STANDARD THAT THEY ACHIEVED. THE ABOVE CARS WILL REPRESENT THE H.C.C.V. AT THE MG CONCOURS WHERE I'M SURE THEY WILL WIN THEIR RESPECTIVE CLASSES IN THE INTER-CLUB JUDGING.

EDITORS COMMENTS:-

I HAVE HAD SEVERAL RUNNING BATTLES WITH THIS DAMNED PRINTING MACHINE (REX ROTARY 1501) AND THEN WHEN THINGS LOOK "RIGHT" THE WIFE COMES INTO THE DINING-ROOM AND SEES HER DINING ROOM TABLE, CARPET, DRESSER AND HUSBAND (IN THAT ORDER) COVERED IN INK AND PAPER AND PROCEEDS TO GIVE HIM A "BLAST"! WELL SHE BLASTED ME INTO THE SUN-ROOM (WHERE THE REST OF THE HOUSEHOLD JUNK RESTS) BUT EVEN A SUNNY CHANGE OF ENVIRONMENT WON'T PERSUADE THE DAMNED THING TO PRINT LEGIBLY. SO WHEN EVERYTHING ELSE FAILS (AND I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING FROM SWEARING WHILST JUMPING UP AND DOWN TO BEING CALM AND SERENE) I CALLED UP THE EDITOR AND PRESIDENT OF THE WOLSELEY CAR CLUB BECAUSE I RECKONED THE MACHINE WAS GIVING MORE TROUBLE THAN A WOLSELEY AND THATS A RECORD IN ITSELF!! BEARING IN MIND THAT THIS WOLSELEY BLOKE WAS ON THE WAY UP I RANG UP REG HATTERSLEY (MIGHT SHOW THIS WOLSELEY BLOKE A GOOD HUMBER WHILE HE'S HERE) ANYWAY THIS WOLSELEY BLOKE ROLLED UP IN AN AUSTIN, REG CAME IN A TRUCK, MY WIFE STARTED TO SMILE - IT MUST BE A GOOD OMEN I THOUGHT. WELL THIS WOLSELEY BLOKE PULLED THE INKING SYSTEM APART, HAD RIC AND MYSELF CLEANING THIS AND THAT WHILE HE ADJUSTED THE ARCHILLES HEEL AND THE LEFT HYPOTENEUSE AND POLISHED THE ROCKER COVER. THEN FINALLY AT LONG LAST BY GOOD MANAGEMENT RATHER THAN GOOD LUCK THE MACHINE PERFORMED LIKE A TRUE HUMBER - A REAL THOROUGHbred, THE BLOODY THING RAN LIKE A DREAM. THANK YOU VERY MUCH COMMANDER PETER RICHARDSON, FOR A WOLSELEY BLOKE YOU'RE ALRIGHT MATE AND THE H.C.C.V. OWES YOU A FAVOUR.

JOHN BROWNE

Connolly

The Specialists

Jonathan Wood visited this well

established family business to see how leather was handled and how it should be best cared for

IF you're running a vintage Austin or a 1970 Jaguar XJS, the chances are that the hides for the leather upholstery in both cars were supplied by the same firm. For Connolly Bros (Curriers) Ltd, to use their full title, have been in the leather business since 1878 when two brothers, John Joseph and Samuel Frederick Connolly set up shop at 153 Euston Road, London, though in 1884 they moved to new premises in Charlton Street, which the company still occupies. Beginning in a small way with "while you wait" shoe repair service, it wasn't long before the brothers branched into the saddlery business and so naturally started providing hides to the carriage trade. But it was when the carriage evolved into the "motorless carriage" that the firm dramatically expanded, the liaison between the upstage world of the coach and gig and the new fangled motor car, being forged by the eldest of Samuel's four sons, Frederick Ignatius, F.I., whose friendships embraced such motoring magnates as William Morris, Herbert Austin and William Lyons, had the foresight to see the tremendous potential for the company in the motor industry. He joined Connolly in 1912 at a time when leather was practically only upholstery medium available, and 64 years later, the motor trade still takes around 50 per cent of the company's output of hides.

Samuel's other three brothers also entered the business: Joseph, Edward and Wilfred. The present chairman and managing director is Tim Connolly, who is Wilfred's son, while Edward's son David is company secretary and looks after export commitments. My guide through the intricacies of the Connolly nomenclature was Anthony Hussey, whose mother was sister to the four brothers. Anthony looks after the expanding furniture side of the business and it was he who escorted photographer Paul Williams and I around Connolly's factory at Wandsworth, SW19 to see just what was involved in the business of making a cow's hide fit to sit on.

One of the problems with hides are that they are very vulnerable to marking, barbed wire scratches and terrible fly scars are the most frequent forms of disfigurement. Indeed, plecting is used so extensively in car upholstery, so that relatively narrow areas of leather can be used, thus minimising the risk of marking. Around 50 per cent of the hides Connolly's use are imported from Scandinavia as they tend to have fewer blemishes than the "home grown" variety.

The hides arrive at the factory having been already tanned at the company's tannery in Canterbury. The tanner removes the hair, splits the hide, the top half being used by the motor and furniture trade, while the lower section or "split", is used for leather coats and the like. It is then soaked in a time-honoured solution made from oak bark or mineral myrobalsans and/or chrome. This ensures that it will not rot, dry out or crack.

Once in the factory, the hides are first inspected for any of the aforementioned marks and then sorted and graded. They are then soaked in water in a Connolly inspired machine to make them easier to handle, then shaved to the required thickness. The motor industry favours 1.3mm, while leather which is going to end up as saddles and bridles is, of course, considerably thicker.

Having thus been graded, the hides go through a wet bulging process as some have too many marks and so a thin layer of top grain is removed to create a new grain. These particular hides are subsequently given an artificially embossed grain. To restore some of the natural oils that may have been lost by the previous processes, the hides are then "wet drummed" and then put through a giant mangle to remove any surplus water.

Up until recent times, the hides were then stretched on wooden frames and dried in the open air, a traditional, though time-consuming business. Now new Italian machinery has revolutionised the process. The hides are now stretched on a hydraulically operated frame, passed through an oven, which cures the leather, and then the operation. A few are still finished in the old way.

Then comes one of the tanning processes and after drying, the hides are softened and then a second coat of protective material is applied. Then on goes the lacquer, which is being around 7000 shades to choose from. It was in that year that Connolly perfected the revolutionary Vanniel process, which allows a tremendous variation of colour shades to be achieved on leather.

Those hides which are chosen have graining embossed on them and are then prepared for use on antique furniture, which is usually treated, following a final dry, with a special oil.

Unlike the motor industry, the motor industry requires that the leather is tanned only on one side. Each hide is then cut into sections for use on every one of the car's parts, through anti-quated machinery which measures the square footage of each section. The tanner doesn't have to pay for any time, as the hides are prepared.

Connolly's automotive customers aren't confined to the British Isles, and the company supplies hides to Rolls Royce, Bentley, Jaguar, Aston Martin and many others, also provide leather for upholstery.

such Italian exotics as Ferrari and Lamborghini. In addition, they supply such extremes of the political spectrum as General Motors for use in the Cadillac and for the prestigious Zil, used by Communist party mandarins in Russia.

Apart from processing leather in large quantities (around 10,000 hides leave the company's head office every week), Connolly's also run a renovation department under the capable eye of Ken Cole. Write for full details to him at Charlton Street, Euston Road, London NW1 1JE.

The service is a mobile one and the charge for renovating the leather in a car like a Jaguar or Rover is around £35. However, you can do the work yourself, at a cost of £7 to £9, but it's essential that you send Ken a piece of leather from the car's upholstery, snipped from an unobtrusive area. He will then have a small quantity of the correct coloured lacquer made up and this costs £2 20 per half litre. You'd use about 34 litres on a car the size of a post-war Rolls Royce. Hide Food, which costs 70p, is also required.

To carry out the process, the leather is first thoroughly cleaned with glycerine soap or a concentrated cleaner. A small brush should be used to remove any dirt that may be ingrained. While the leather is still damp, the hide food is applied, which is intended to return the leather to its original suppleness. It should then be left for 24 hours. The surface is then cleaned again and the lacquer applied. A second coat is also advisable, spraying providing a good, even finish. This work should be carried out in warm, dry surroundings, incidentally.

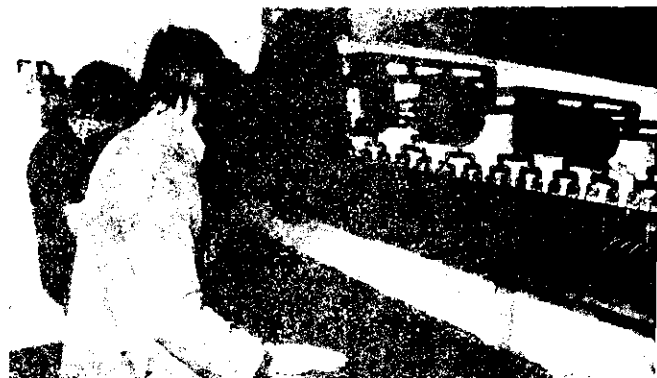
I asked Anthony Hussey what precautions you should take to make sure that your upholstery remains in good condition and he recommended that the leather should be washed with a good quality toilet soap and warm water every four months and then go over the interior about twice a year with Hide Food.

Also the company will supply hides for restoration projects, charged for the correct colouring. They cost about £45 each. No less than nine are used for the upholstery on a Rolls Royce though at the other extreme a vintage MG would use about one and a half hides.

I left this well-established family business, I must confess, in a state of some bemusement at the infinite number of processes required to make hide usable, pleasing to the eye, and long lasting. Somehow the leather seats in my MGA won't seem quite the same again.



Left, restoring the colour of a leather seat at Charlton Street. Above, the hide being automatically stretched. Below, left, familiar names; the bins contain the upholstery dyes. Below, the machine that measures the square footage of the hides.



Harry's

Hints

The saying that you learn from experience is true, but it's not the only way. You can also learn from the other chap's experience. So every month on this page I'll pass on some of the hints and tips I've learned in a working life spent in, around and often underneath motor cars. I hope you find them helpful.

As most work on classic cars involves dismantling parts, some of which may not have moved for many a long year, I'll kick off with a few tips on getting things apart.

What to do when it won't undo

RUSTED up nuts and bolts sometimes yield to penetrating oil, or one of the freeing agents you can get in aerosols, but there are always some that round off. No matter what you do, the spanner just won't get a grip. You've got to cut them or chop them with a chisel. The natural instinct with a hacksaw is to try to cut through the bolt behind the nut. But unless that's the only place you can get a blade in, it's not the best way. Better is to cut through the nut, either down the side of the bolt or straight down the middle of the bolt to cut the nut in two halves. That way you avoid damaging the panel behind the nut. Often, you'll find you can get at the nut better if you put the blade in a pad handle instead of a frame. If the nut is split pinned, try to cut so that you go through the pin.

If you can't get a blade near it, and have to use a cold chisel, again try to split the nut. It usually goes much more easily than the bolt, especially a high tensile bolt. Make sure your chisel is sharp, and use a decent sized hammer. Light blows just make the chisel bounce off the nut.

Domed headed coach bolts, the sort with a square under the head, which were used to hold wooden framed bodywork down to the chassis, can be a real pain in the neck when the wood is old, and the square turns in it. Sometimes you can get at the nut to cut it, or sometimes you can slide a hacksaw blade between the wood and the chassis to cut the bolt.

But there are always one or two where you can't get a blade near the nut. And these are always the ones where you can't get a blade under the wood either. So what do you do to avoid damaging the wood beyond reclaim? Some people saw a slot in the head and try to hold it with a screwdriver, but if the nut is really rusted the screwdriver usually slips. The answer is to drill down through the head of the coach bolt and use an Easyout, or similar tool made by other companies, to hold it. Easyouts are tapered left-hand coarse taps made from tough hardened steel. If you drill the proper sized hole, and hold the Easyout in a tap wrench, it really gets a grip. They come in different sizes, and are invaluable for getting out broken bolts and studs, too.

The countersunk screws which hold

brake drums can be difficult when the slot gets burred. When all else fails, try tapping them round with a centre punch placed at the end of the slot. It damages the head of the screw, but you'll need new ones anyway if the slots are bad.

Troubles with a Rover

Talking of oil pressure reminds me of a pre-war Rover I once took in part exchange. The 6-cylinder Rovers of the late thirties were good cars, and earned the title of "The poor man's Rolls-Royce" only you couldn't be too poor if you could run one. This particular example, though, was in rather a state. It looked clean and presentable enough, but the oil pressure needle wavered when you revved up, there was a harshness which was very un-Rover-like when you accelerated, and at 45mph, or thereabouts, a vibration came in which was enough to shake your teeth out.

When I tried it down the road the owner looked a bit sick, and told me he'd not long ago put in a new clutch himself. It was after that the vibration troubles started. A friend had "diagnosed" the trouble for him and told him he'd "Got the engine out of balance and knocked out the rear main". I told him I didn't think it was quite as bad as that. I had a pretty good idea what the troubles were, and he was pleased — relieved, I think — at the deal I offered.

Muck in the strainer

Fluctuating oil pressure was not uncommon on these models, and one or two others like them, which had fine wire gauze strainers on the inlet side of the pump. On the Rover you can get at this without taking the sump off because the thoughtful designer fitted the strainer to a large brass plug in the side of the sump, and reminded you in the handbook to clean it once in a while. As I suspected, the gauze was almost solid with black muck. Oils in those days weren't as clean working as they are now, but the same thing could happen today if you left the strainer long enough. On this Rover, a good clean out and fresh oil put the pressure back where it belonged.

Line up the yokes

While we had the car over the pit, one glance at the prop shaft revealed the vibration trouble. When he did the clutch, the owner took the shaft off and took the sliding spline apart. He'd put it back with the

yokes out of phase, and the universals were fighting each other as a pair of very non-constant-velocity joints. Some prop shafts have a master spline wider than the others so you can't put them back the wrong way. Others, including the Rover, have two arrows scribed on the two parts of the shaft to show how it was assembled when it was balanced. We lined up the arrows again, and the vibration disappeared.

If you've got neither master spline nor arrows, remember that the two yoke ends of the shaft must be in line when you put it together. If there are no indications to help you, the chances are there will be an odd number of splines so that there is only one position where the yokes are in line. This is the position where the whole shaft is in balance.



If you can't get two hammers to hit a taper housing to spring it, try putting a lever under it and hitting the boss dead opposite the arm.

Tap out the taper?

Now to something which nearly always slows down progress on steering jobs — getting the ball joint tapers free. The helpful workshop manual often says something like: "Remove the nut and tap out the taper." Tap it out! I've often wished I'd had the writer of the manual lying under the car with me. I'd have got him to try it. If you're not particular about preserving the rubber grease seal, you can use one of the slotted taper wedges you can buy in tool shops. But if you want to get the ball joint undone to get at something else, and want to put it back, the best way is to use a claw puller, or if you haven't got one, a couple of hefty hammers with about four-pound heads. Hold one in each hand and bring them round so they hit the side of the housing simultaneously. You won't hurt the forging, but you'll flex the boss so that the taper pops out.

Don't, whatever you do, put a block or jack under the nose of the taper pin and bang down on the steering arm particularly, as I once saw advocated, with a blunt cold chisel. You might get the taper out, but you'll mark the surface of the forging and set up a stress point which could lead to breakage later. Springing the boss won't hurt it.

Harry Carter

When you put the two parts of a prop shaft together, make sure you get the end yokes in line, as shown here.

