



National Transport Trust

For Immediate Release

Centenary of 350hp Sunbeam Land Speed Record 17th May 2022 – Brooklands Museum

National Transport Trust, in collaboration with Brooklands Museum, National Motor Museum, Beaulieu and Steam Dreams is proud to announce Centenary of Speed – a celebration of the Centenary of the last time a World Land Speed Record was achieved on a closed circuit – all future attempts made on open straights.



Tuesday, 17th May 2022 will mark 100 years to the day when Kenelm Lee Guinness, driving the 350hp Sunbeam, broke the World Land Speed Record on the Brooklands Circuit. Reaching a speed of 133.75mph.

Steam Dreams' excursion train will set off from London to steam past Brooklands slowly to allow the historic moment to be captured on camera, in a staging of the famous F Gordon Crosby painting of the 350hp Sunbeam racing along the railway straight, overtaking a steam driven express train. After being part of the historic photo, visitors will be able to alight at Woking, shuttled on vintage London buses provided by London Bus Museum, to join the Brooklands Centenary event including talks from experts and a parade of cars along the finishing straight, before returning to London by steam. [More details...](#)

Three aero-engined record breaking cars are planned to be there - the 350hp Sunbeam, Beast of Turin and Napier Railton. Several historic Sunbeam Grand Prix cars are expected, including one of the 1914 TT winning cars, the 1922 TT winning straight 8 and one of the 1922 2 litre Strasbourg GP cars

The Centenary of Speed celebration event at Brooklands will be open to the public, [tickets will be available through Brooklands website](#). Members of [Sunbeam Talbot Darracq Register](#) are bringing their historic cars to join the celebrations.

National Transport Trust initiated this celebration by bringing together several Historic Transport Preservation organisations to create a unique celebration event;

- [National Motor Museum](#), Beaulieu owns and has restored the historic 350hp Sunbeam racing car.
- [Brooklands Museum Trust](#) preserves the historic Brooklands Motor Racing Circuit
- [Steam Dreams Rail Co.](#) runs over 50 steam train trips with more than 20,000 passengers each year
- [London Bus Museum](#) at Brooklands preserves, displays and runs historic buses

This unique collaboration has been made possible through the links of a few key people involved with National Transport Trust:

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, Sir Gerald Acher – Chairman of Brooklands Museum and Allan Winn – VP of Brooklands Museum are all NTT Vice Presidents, David Buck, Chairman of Steam Dreams is a former NTT

Trustee. Leon Daniels, Chairman of London Bus Museum is an NTT Trustee. Their enthusiastic support has enabled this historic event.

David Buck, Chairman of Steam Dreams, commented *"We feel very privileged to be part of this unique historic occasion bringing together two of the most coveted mechanical inventions – the speed of a racing car and power of a steam locomotive."* He added *"passengers will be in for a treat – not only being able to be a part of the staging of the iconic Gordon Crosby painting but also to gain another perspective with a visit to the racetrack during a parade of vintage race cars on the finishing straight."*

Stuart Wilkinson, Chairman of National Transport Trust, remarked *"National Transport Trust is very pleased to have been able to play a role in bringing about this very important celebration, and is very grateful for the support of so many people and organisations. We look forward to what will be a very special day."*

[National Transport Trust](#) (est. 1965 as Transport Trust) is the national body which promotes and encourages the **preservation and restoration** of Britain's **transport heritage** in all its forms - road, rail, wings and water.

ENDS

Hi-Resolution copies of these images can be downloaded using the following links:

[Kenelm Lee Guinness driving 350hp Sunbeam at Brooklands 1922](#)

[F Gordon Crosby 350hp Sunbeam breaking Land Speed Record at Brooklands 17th May 1922](#)

[Steam Dreams locomotive Mayflower hauling a period excursion train](#)

[350HP Sunbeam at Southport 2006](#)

[Duncan Pittaway's Beast of Turin at Brooklands in 2015 with Prince Michael of Kent](#)

[Napier-Railton at Brooklands in 2018 during visit by Red Arrows team](#)

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Further information:

350hp Sunbeam



An aero-engined racing car built by the Sunbeam company in 1920, the first of several land speed record-breaking cars with aircraft engines.

The 350hp Sunbeam was one of the most significant Land Speed Record cars, holding the record on three occasions. It was designed by Sunbeam's chief engineer Louis Coatalen and built at the company's Wolverhampton works during 1919 and early 1920. Power came from a specially built 18 litre Sunbeam V12 aero engine. Transmission was via a four-speed gearbox and drive shaft.

Famous drivers such as Harry Hawker, Rene Thomas, Jean Chassagne and Kenelm Lee Guinness raced the car with mixed success. It was Guinness that succeeded in controlling the powerful car on the bumpy Brooklands track, driving it to its first Land Speed Record, achieving 133.75mph at Brooklands on 17th May 1922.

Captain Malcolm Campbell purchased the car from Sunbeam in 1923, undertaking the first of several rebuilds, and repainting it in his famous blue livery as it became the latest in his line of cars to carry the name 'Blue Bird'. In September 1924, Campbell claimed the Land Speed Record with a run of 146.16mph at Pendine Sands. He returned to Pendine the next year and on 21st July became the first person to break the 150mph barrier with a new record of 150.76mph. The car is owned by National Motor Museum, Beaulieu who recently completed a full restoration.

Napier Railton



An aero-engined racing car built in 1933, designed by Reid Railton for John Cobb, and built by Thomson & Taylor. It was driven by Cobb, mainly at the Brooklands race track where it holds the all-time lap record (143.44 mph) which was set in 1935. Between 1933 and 1937, the Napier-Railton broke 47 world speed records at Brooklands, Montlhéry and Bonneville Salt Flats. Powered by a 24 litre W12 cylinder Napier Lion aero engine producing 580 bhp, the car is owned, exhibited and run by Brooklands Museum.

Beast of Turin



Fiat S76, later also known as **Fiat 300 HP Record** and nicknamed "**The Beast of Turin**", was built in 1910 by Fiat specifically to beat the land speed record held in those years by the Blitzen Benz. Its 28 litre engine delivered 290 hp. Painstakingly restored by its owner, Duncan Pittaway, who was awarded Restorer of the Year by National Transport Trust in 2015.

F Gordon Crosby - artist [see Wikipedia entry](#)

Frederick Gordon Crosby (1885 – August 1943) was an English automotive illustrator. He worked for the magazine *Autocar* for most of his life. His illustrations and paintings reflect the excitement and glamour that surrounded the birth and early development of the automotive industry.

His 350HP Sunbeam painting was published in the 22nd February 1929 issue of *Autocar*, no. 18 in a series "Meteors of Road and Track".

He died in August 1943 in Surrey and it can thus be assumed that his work is now out of copyright. The image available here was recently scanned from the original 1929 publication.

Mayflower steam locomotive



Built for the London & North Eastern Railway, 61306 Mayflower is one of two surviving B1 Class locomotives. The B1's were designed as mixed traffic locomotives capable of hauling express passenger trains as well as freight traffic. As powerful, go anywhere engines, the B1's worked across most of the UK rail network from East Anglia to Scotland.

Mayflower was built in 1948 by the North British Locomotive Company in Glasgow but was delivered post-nationalisation and acquired the number 61306 by British Railways. She was first allocated to Hull Botanic Gardens Depot followed by a spell at Hull Dairycoates Depot before being finally transferred to Low Moor Depot, Bradford. She was the last B1 in service, her final trip was hauling the 'Yorkshire Pullman' from Leeds in September 1967.

Mayflower was immediately purchased for preservation and was initially based at Steamtown in Carnforth. She carries the early British Railways apple green livery as she was originally given when delivered in 1948. Mayflower has two cylinders, 6 driving wheels, a firebox grate area of 30 square feet and can operate at 75mph.

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