

The Post-War Frazer Nash



The 3-litre Ferrari of Lord Selkirk, but with Luigi Chinetti doing almost all the driving, took the lead early on the Tuesday morning after the retirement of the almost identical Ferrari of Lucien Farret and went on to win by the rest at an average of 84.2mph (135.4mph), just under ten miles ahead of the 3-litre Delage of Lawrence Jones. All went well initially for the Finlay Nash, which lagged in second place, wary that clutch problems developed about eight hours before the finish and it was decided that Killington should drive solo for the remainder of the race without using the clutch pedal. After all,



Seen here after *A. J. Klingman* and *Norman Colpitt* had floated third at Le Mans in 1924 are on the left of the photograph W. H. Abington, with *Norman Colpitt* next to him. *A. J. Klingman* is fourth from left. *Abby* was delighted with the result, which gave *A. J.* an immense boost in interest and a life in motor.

This is the plaque awarded to R.D. Millington, Norman's father after they finished third overall in the 1949 Le Mans 24 Hours race and entered after the war (note the 'Sub A' Award described as 'second class apprentice').

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The Post War Program: Needs, Development and Commitment: a 1950s

The legend of the Frazer Nash sports car of the early post-War period is inextricably linked to the brilliant BMW 328s of just a few years before. Another sumptuously presented book from Palawan Press tells the story of the sophisticated cars built in Isleworth, West London, utilising (mainly) BMW-based straight-sixes.

Palawan Press needs little introduction to **Classic Driver** readers. It publishes definitive, superlative-quality books in limited editions. As with others in the catalogue, the new **Frazer Nash** volume comes in a slipcase and every page oozes high production values. This time, however, there is little photography of cars in ownership today – a trademark of other **Palawan** titles. Instead, the book concentrates on the convoluted relationship between **Bristol**, **BMW** and the **Aldington** family that begat the post-War company, its ensuing development, and the individual history of each chassis built thereafter.

And what a history many of them have. **James Trigwell**, the **Frazer Nash Registrar** and a **Trustee of the Frazer Nash Archives**, co-authors the book with well-known motoring writer **Anthony Pritchard**. The result is a well-set-out homage to the legendary card index first compiled in the 1970s to track each chassis.

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The interior of the left-hand drive Coupé is sporty

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Although Fraser Nash cars were widely used for many years, by 1954 the competition in the 2-litre class of major events was very intense. In short British cars they faced the lighter British powered Coopers (even Tony Crook had donated the marque for a very potent and sleek Cooper-Bellotti) and Talbots, plus the Maserati AM6S owned by Glyn Engineering and driven by another former Fraser Nash man, Roy Salvadori, an international racing flyer (and the fully sorted Bristol 450s, in addition to the Italian Ferraris and Maseratis and the French Gordons).

ATN were also commendable for DEX and their three-cylinder, two-stroke boxer engines were of exceptional merit. They were spacious; they went exceedingly well and handled beautifully. But they were very



1939 • The First War in our front



Run here as their pits shortly before the start of the race are the three African Nubians, who are by far the best in the world.

expensive and did not appeal in significant numbers to the British public. Tony Steele drove a Rover-Porsche (the name meant 'upper class' or 'well above average') for AJS in the Production Touring Car race at Silverstone in May and won the 1000cc class at 64.55mph (103.28kph); it was an impressive performance, but the opposition in the class was feeble. Morris Minor and Standard Eight took second and third places.

For much of the time the Le Mans race was run in rain and it was the setting for a wonderful battle between the 80-type Jaguars and the latest 4.5-litre Ferrari Tipo 350. Peter cars. A Ferrari team had no bid, but would have been disqualified if Jaguar had lodged an appeal. The British 4.500 took seventh, eighth and ninth places (first three in the 12000cc class) and the French Nash entries were by no means diagnosed, even if their days as class winners were over.

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The **Targa, Le Mans**, the **Tourist Trophy** and the **Mille Miglia** all feature, as do stars such as **Stirling Moss**, **Tony Brooks**, **Mike Hawthorn** and **Roy Salvadori**. There's even a section on the **Frazer Nash 'Targa Florio'** ordered by the actor **Errol Flynn** for his wife, Hollywood actress **Patrice Wymore**.

After a history of the marque detailing its significant moments, chassis history and profiles of the leading 10 'Nash drivers, a section showing reproductions of catalogues, road tests and press descriptions completes the picture.



Unlike other stories of 1950s motor racing, the history of **Frazer Nash** is a strait-laced and simple one. The company was clearly professionally run, made very well-engineered cars for serious buyers and knew exactly when to stop. The last **Frazer Nash** (a **Continental Fixed Head Coupé**) appeared in both the 1957 and 1958 **Earl's Court Motor Show**, first in red than repainted white. By then, the cars were too expensive and

lacked the performance the market expected for the money. **AFN's** British agency for **BMW** finished in 1959, but it went on to develop its **Porsche** concession profitably until the Stuttgart company bought the **Aldington** family's remaining shares in 1988.

It's another superb **Palawan** book; essential for owners and **Palawan** collectors alike and a fine treatment of one of Britain's most significant marques.

Text: Steve Wakefield

Photos: Palawan Press

***The Post-War Frazer Nash** book is available in two editions:*

Clothbound Edition

Limited to 500 numbered copies, bound in black buckram with foil blocking on front and spine, encased in a green buckram slipcase with foil blocking on spine. £300 plus Postage & Packing.

Leatherbound Edition

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