

International news & events



VISIT TO CITROËN'S CONSERVATOIRE

How did we manage before e-mail? The arrangements for the visit added around 300 letters to my file labelled 'Conservatoire 2006'. Was it worth it? Undoubtedly the answer is yes! We were not able to arrange the suggested visit to the factory as they had another group on that morning, however the Paris Motor Show provided an extra outing for many of the party.

On the day, we had some 40 club members from all over the UK, plus Ireland, France and Australia, arriving by car, train, taxi and air. And, as someone said, "It was like a kid being let loose in the candy store." There was no restriction on photography - as long as it was not for commercial use and cameras were freely used - except for the member who left his in the left luggage locker at the airport! A number of members offered to send me a CD of their efforts and I am looking forward to receiving them to complete my collection for the archives.

We were lucky with the weather and there was a feeling of anticipation in the car park as old friends were greeted and we discussed what we would be seeing. As we assembled, M. **Denis Huile**, the director, welcomed us and explained that our visit was to the Citroën Conservatoire, which was not a museum. It was the storage facility for the



firm's collection of cars from 1919 to date. Space is limited, so the cars are parked close together (see photos). They are taken out on a regular basis for showing at various events such as Beaulieu this year and at Citroën Car Club meetings. Next year, it is hoped, the new premises in the Champs d'Elysee will be open and an assortment of cars from the Conservatoire will be on show and will be changed at intervals.

We were then let in to see the exhibits, and Denis said that he would take us round to show us some of the highlights starting with the 1919 A type. He kindly indicated that he would not be upset if we left the group to see more of the cars which were our own particular interest. Having been told that it was present and on show, the writer immediately made for the 2CV display to check on SPP979 which had been added to the Citroën collection after 45 years as the largest scale model in the Conway collection.

The 2 hours passed all too quickly and there was a bonus for many of us when we were told that we could help ourselves to the publicity material that was on offer.

Before the event, one or two members had asked about the charges involved to visit the Conservatoire. As there were no charges and minimal expenses for the organisation I made a point of putting the Club charity box on show and asking for donations. As a result of this and the collections at other events during the year, I was able to send a cheque for £105 to the Kidney Research Foundation. (NOTE: I was pleased to receive one contribution of £5.00 after the event and I am happy to accept any more to be added to the next donation.)

As you read this contribution from the organiser of the day, it is evident that my suggestion that some other Club Member wrote the report was not taken up.

C David Conway

