

Nick D's Day Out @ Audruicq Autojumble 28 February 2010

Nestling in the hinterland of the Pas de Calais between Calais and Dunquerque is Audruicq, a little town typical of many in the area and unremarkable for the British cyclemotorist apart from the last weekend in February when the salle polyvalente plays host to the Tacot Club Calaisien's annual autojumble. It's been a regular event on my calendar for several years and this was the second time I'd taken a stall in an attempt to clear out unwanted garage crap - sorry, treasures - and sell them to the French.

Last year was a winner and this year was no different with many of my models and car accessories finding new homes, some to the dealers when I was setting up on the day before the event. Unlike similar events here where dealers are often aggressive in their bartering, I found the local breed pleasant to deal with and made some useful contacts for future reference.

I'd made the trip with a friend in a camper van so after setting up, we found the local LeClercq and a bar where we succumbed to the delights of the friterie opposite a very convivial bar in the town centre. The rain drummed on the van roof all night but the bottle of red wine assured a good night's sleep.

The hall opened its' doors to the public at 0900 and trade was brisk from the off. Unfortunately temptation seemed to beckon at every stall I looked at and it would have been easy to spend my takings as soon as they hit my pocket. I managed to limit my expenditure to three panniers for future projects and found several parts for another friend's Solex restoration. My stall was augmented by a Wisp for sale, the property of Mike Hele who was visiting for the day. I met the guy who ended up the winner of my Peugeot BB at Sars Poteries 2009 and he assured me that he's progressing with the restoration. It won't be there this year but SP2011 is a distinct possibility.

The photos give an idea of the temptations on offer, a blue 1975 Solex 5000 at €500 and a 1965 3300 at €450 both competently restored by members of the Solex Club Spirales. The 3300 was successfully re-homed but the 5000, the nicer machine in my opinion, was still there when we left. Maybe €500 is a bit steep for a 5000 no matter how good a condition it's in. Members of the same Club are known for the inventiveness of their creations and the yellow twin-engined 3800 caused a stir. Badged a 7600 and sporting a two-metre aerial, it was a marvel of Heath-Robinson style engineering. Other stalls offered a variety of Solexes and Mobylettes - a barn-find AU32 rubbing shoulders incongruously with a superb Velocette, a far from special Speciale 98 with more duct tape than saddle and some other reasonably tidy Solexes.

The Tacot Club is primarily a car-related outfit and has a different theme each year. This time it was the 1960s and there were some mouth-watering vehicles on display including a Renault Estafette camper and a Panhard to get the editor's juices flowing. Had I been weaker-willed I could have blown a substantial part of the day's takings on a Mobylette Cady in running order for €140 and the siren voices of three so-called "mates" did their best to ensure that I did just that but, being in a relatively new relationship where "Don't bring back any more mopeds" just might mean "Don't bring back any more mopeds or else" I mustered all my willpower and walked away from it.

A furious drive back to Dunquerque saw us on the 1800 sailing where we pronounced the day a resounding success despite the French being able to resist the charms of the Wisp.

Nick Devonport



A non NACC step-thru' on offer



Centre display 1960s theme



Mobylette AU32 dans son jus



Rat-look Speciale 98 and Solex



Rear engine.



Solex 5000 80500



Sports mopeds



The best 2x2xfar



Tidy 3800 seeks good home

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