

Lakeland Motor Museum



Media Pack



Much more than just a motor museum!



Campbell Bluebird Exhibition



Head down memory lane to the Lakeland Motor Museum and feast your eyes on a unique collection of more than 30,000 exhibits including 140 classic cars and motorbikes, all carefully assembled over 50 years.

Nestled in the scenic Leven Valley and open seven days a week, the Museum isn't just about cars. The entire collection is presented in a social context, with a host of rarities to awaken some special motoring memories.

Having relocated to Backbarrow from its former home at Holker Hall in 2010, the museum is one of Cumbria's most popular paid for attractions.

It's also a highly popular meeting point for classic vehicle clubs from around the country.

Just a few of the Museum's star exhibits include...

1• 1930s Jaguar brings vintage glamour:

The rare SS Jaguar 100 is a sporty two-seater and is regarded as one of the most eye-catching Jaguar cars ever made. This particular car was tested by the Motor Magazine in May 1937, then by Autocar in the same year. It also completed the 1937 RAC rally, helping to win the manufacturer's team prize.



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2• 'AFRICAR' - a car for Africa

Created by former journalist and photographer Anthony Howarth, who spent a lot of time in Africa in the 1970s, Africar was designed as a vehicle that could cope with some of the world's roughest terrain. Made from plywood and using Citroen suspension and engines, Mr Howarth constructed three cars – a pick-up, a station wagon and a six-wheeler out of his Lancaster based site, Africar International Limited (AIL)



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3• The coolest of police cars:

The 1960 MGA Roadster on display was one of around 50 supplied to the Lancashire Constabulary for traffic patrol duties around the county.



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4• The home-built aeroplane:

The 1936 Le Pou de Ciel – or 'Flying Flea' – was one of the first home-built aircraft. Its French creator Henri Mignet wanted to create the flying equivalent of the Ford Model T, which would enable people to afford an easy-to-fly aeroplane.



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5• Legendary motorbike collections:

The glory days of the British motorcycle industry are displayed with examples of Norton, BSA, Ariel, Vincent and Velocette. The Museum also has an incredibly rare collection of rarely seen AJW motorcycles from the 1920s and 30s. The Museum's Isle of Man TT Tribute exhibition also features racing bikes used by the 'Morecambe Missile' John McGuinness.



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6• Vintage Vespa with royal connections:

The Museum is the proud owner of a Vespa Sportique which once belonged to the Queen's younger sister, Princess Margaret. With its wasp-like shape and curved bodywork, the 1963 Vespa Sportique is the epitome of the classic Vespa scooter.



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7• The first modern bicycle:

Dating from c1885, the Safety Bicycle was introduced as a 'safer' alternative to the Penny Farthing and is part of a collection of over 60 two-wheelers covering the last 130 years.



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8• Campbell Bluebird Exhibition:

Following a £10K facelift in 2025, the museum's Bluebird exhibition celebrates the racing careers of Sir Malcolm and Donald Campbell and features full-sized replicas of the 1967 Hydroplane Bluebird K7, 1939 Powerboat Bluebird K4 and 1935 Bluebird Car. Alongside these is the original 1996 Bluebird Electric 1, a 1954 Land Rover owned by Donald Campbell plus hundreds of other memorabilia and an audio-visual presentation.



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9• Vintage pedal car collection:

It celebrates over 110 years of childhood joy and make-belief – often made using similar materials to the marques they represented.



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Step back in time: The Museum's home in the picturesque Leven Valley was a cradle of the Industrial Revolution. It reflects South Lakeland's contribution to woodland industries, gunpowder manufacture, iron smelting, charcoal production and the making of ultramarine pigment, often remembered as 'Dolly Blue' and exported throughout the British Empire.

The museum's main showroom is built around what used to be the carton filling and wrapping department of Backbarrow's famous "Dolly Blue" mill complex.

Some of the more unexpected items on show include painstakingly recreated period shop window displays, collections of female fashion clothing from the 1800s to the early 1970s, and the story of the Women's Land Army. There really is something for everyone at the Lakeland Motor Museum.



The Essentials

Just 20 minutes from both the M6 motorway and Central Lakes (Bowness), the Lakeland Motor Museum is open daily (except Christmas day) from 9.30am.

Adult entry is £13.25 (anyone over 16). Children (aged 5-15) are £7.90, while under 5s go free. A family ticket (2 adults and up to 3 children) is £36.00.

Group rates also available for 20+ people.

There is a free quiz for children, as well as a riverside café with home-made cakes and snacks.

Visitors can also buy combined museum and boat tickets, including a trip on a vintage 'steamer' with Windermere Lake Cruises. We also offer combined ticket deals with Lakes Aquarium and Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway.

Well-behaved dogs are welcome. Photography is allowed.

Media Enquiries

For further information and hi-res images, please contact: Samantha Marsh, Cumbria Tourism: smarsh@cumbriatourism.org / 01539 822 222

You can also visit our website www.lakelandmotormuseum.co.uk

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