

The logo features a central gear with a square cutout, surrounded by a laurel wreath. Below the wreath is another gear with a central circle. The text 'British Motor Industry Heritage Trust' is overlaid on the gear and wreath.

British Motor Industry Heritage  
Trust

# COLLECTING POLICY

Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon  
CV35 0BJ

svl/April 2005

# **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The British Motor Industry Heritage Trust (BMIHT) is based on a company, Leyland Historic Vehicles, which was formed in 1975 as an integral part of British Leyland which, in turn, evolved into Rover Group. BMIHT was incorporated in 1983 as an independent charity. It was proposed to expand the activities to cover all aspects of vehicle manufacture within Great Britain and all the major vehicle and component manufacturers were invited to become involved.
- 1.2 Over 70% of all income was derived either directly or indirectly from Rover Group and all the staff have been employed by Rover Group or its predecessor companies, since the foundation of the organisation in 1975. For that reason, collecting focused on the British motor company marques owned by Rover Group. Following Counsel's advice and that of the Charity Commissioners, the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust was retained as the title for the governing body. Minor changes to BMIHT's memorandum and articles were made so that it became a subsidiary of Rover Group and carried the same VAT registration.
- 1.3 Following the division of Rover Group, the Heritage Motor Centre has come under the management of Land Rover Group, in turn a subsidiary of the Ford Motor Company. Under Ford's direction, the remit of BMIHT has reverted to encompass all British motor manufacturers.

# **2. Rationale for the Policy**

- 2.1 The Collecting Policy needs to be approved by the Trustees as part of the Registration of BMIHT / Heritage Motor Centre with The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries and to maintain credibility with the regional museums council (mla West Midlands), the Museums Association and the Society of Archivists.
- 2.2 The Collecting Policy is not a permanently fixed proposal. It should be reviewed and published on a regular basis in general terms every two years. The next review will be in April 2007.
- 2.3 Any changes to this Collecting Policy will be advised of to the local regional museum council, currently the mla West Midlands and to The Council for Museums, Libraries and Archives (mla).
- 2.4 The Collecting Policy is a guide to both the Trustees and the executive in looking at exhibits and documents which they may wish to acquire by donation or purchase. It also assists in going forward for museum grants both in Britain and Europe towards purchase. The Policy cannot be a totally definitive statement as, on occasion, items offered to the Trust may be of outstanding interest but not directly covered by the policy statement.

### **3. Collecting aims**

- 3.1 To collect, for the benefit of the nation, motor vehicles, artefacts and archive material relating to the British motor industry.

- 3.2 To collect relevant vehicles, artefacts or archive material to support the core collection from British companies, automobile agents and automotive component companies, past and present. This will mainly assist in the showing of technical, social and economic developments inspired by the British motor industry.
- 3.3 To collect other material which is of importance to the history of the British motor industry but does not fit the categories defined in Paragraphs 3.1 or 3.2, which has no other obvious home and would otherwise be lost. This must be considered as an exceptional case. A good case must be established for the merit of the material and for BMIHT being the correct repository for the material. The Trustees will take account of the collecting policies of other museums with similar interests when considering such material (Paragraph 3.5).
- 3.4 BMIHT's collection is largely formed from the vehicle and archive collections of the founding companies of Rover Group. The vehicle collection is strong in the marques Austin, Morris, Land Rover, MG and Rover and in the years 1950 onwards. Since the late 1970s, BMIHT has also collected first or last production vehicles (as appropriate) from models manufactured by the Rover Group companies. The archive collection (photographs, film, brochures and handbooks, business and technical documents) is strongest in the marques of Austin, Land Rover, MG, Morris and Wolseley. Relative to the quantity of vehicles and archive material, BMIHT has few smaller objects. These smaller objects include company trophies, models (including design models), manufacturing items (hand tools etc.), some

paintings and framed photographs and other company motoring ephemera.

- (3.4) The current scope of the progression of the collection is two-fold. First, to widen the scope of the collection to items from companies outside of the Rover Group sphere. Second, to increase the supporting artefacts and documentation for the motor vehicles in order to improve the interpretation of the rôle of the motor industry in all aspects of British life. These include current motor industry technologies and the development of technology for the future.

This goes hand in hand with the longer term development of the vehicle collection in terms of motor cars that are significant in the history of the British motor industry, both historic and new models and of the archive collection as the best and largest archive of technical and corporate documents, photographs and film relating to the British motor industry. The desire to collect new material will, as a matter of course, be tempered by BMIHT's ability to adequately display, store and conserve such material.

- 3.5 In all instances, due account will be taken of the collecting policies of other museums with an interest in motor vehicle history, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication within collections. Other major collections currently include:

National Motor Museum at Beaulieu: a collection of 250 exhibits which tell the story of motoring from 1895 to the present day in a social context. It contains many special displays which portray how the motor car, as it was on British roads, has influenced our lives.

Coventry Transport Museum: a collection including 170 motor vehicles, 200 cycles and 80 motorcycles representing Coventry's unique contribution to the world's road transport.

Donington Collection of Single Seater Racing Cars at Donington Park: a collection of British racing cars as they were on British racing circuits.

National Museum of Science and Industry at the Science Museum, London: a transport collection which includes motoring items of exceptional technological or scientific value.

- (3.5) Jaguar–Daimler Heritage Trust, Coventry: the Jaguar company collection of vehicles and archive material specifically related to the history of the Jaguar, Daimler and Lanchester companies.

The Haynes Motor Museum: an example of a privately owned or inspired collection with the focus on the individual machines rather than an overshadowing common theme.

## 4. Criteria for collecting

- 4.1 The criteria for the acquisition of an item for the collection can be classified in four main areas:

- i. Historical interest
- ii. Technical interest
- iii. Social impact
- iv. Condition and usability

Any acquisition would naturally take account of the item's working life as an object of research, public interest and enjoyment.

- 4.2 When collecting items for the archive collections, including photographs and printed ephemera, BMIHT will be guided by both the *Code of Practice on Archives for Museums in the United Kingdom* and by the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts' *Standards for Record Repositories*.

## 5. Exclusions to the permanent collection

5.1 Vehicles that do not meet at least two of the criteria and other artefacts which do not meet at least three of the criteria will not be accepted into the permanent collection. Archive material will need to meet any two of the three criteria, 4.1 i to 4.1 iii.

5.2 BMIHT will not acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any work of art or object unless it or its responsible officers are satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the specimen in question and that in particular it has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned in violation of that country's laws. This includes the United Kingdom.

5.3 Loans do not form part of the permanent collection but will continue in BMIHT with the approval of the Technical Committee to the Trustees for either of the following reasons:

5.3a The item proposed for loan is an item which we would like to form part of our permanent collection.

5.3b The item proposed for loan is not an item we would wish to gain title to but would benefit in the short term from its public interest or its use in a contextual display.

All loans are subject to a formal loan agreement, on a fixed-term basis and are reviewed at regular intervals during that period.

## **6. Items of particular interest**

6.1 Whenever there is significant achievement or revision of technologies, design, manufacture or vehicle model range it is important that agreement should be sought with the Board of the company in possession of the items in order that it can be acquired by BMIHT.

6.2 Once it is known that a vehicle is to go into or out of production, then an order should be placed regarding this donation to BMIHT against the first or last chassis number, indicating the particular specification required by BMIHT. Where there is variance of engine or body style on a particular model, a choice should be made taking into account vehicles and engines already held by BMIHT.

- 6.3 Prototypes, racing and development cars should be preserved when such vehicles have completed their useful life. Management of such vehicles can be undertaken by BMIHT, the ownership of the vehicles remaining with company until such time as deemed fit by the Board of that company. This decision is to be taken on proposal of the Technical Committee to the Trustees.
- 6.4 Other items which could be covered in this way are de-commissioned industrial machinery/furniture (offices)/records/ledgers/signs and examples of old and new technology eg: wood patterns, stereo lithography etc.
- 6.5 It is known that advertising agencies hold large quantities of film and photographic stills which relate to the collections that the Trust own. There are also numerous corporate and technical documents relating to those companies which were previously part of the British Motor Corporation, British Leyland and Rover Group which are now with private individuals. A particular effort should be made to recover such material wherever possible.

## **7. Approval**

- 7.1 Approval is sought from the Trustees that they accept and will implement the above Policy as part of their responsibility for maintaining and progressing the collection of vehicles as well as other artefacts and archive material relating to British motor manufacturing companies.