The London to Brighton Run of the Historical Commercial Vehicle Society is one of the best - perhaps, the best - of the year's events along the Drive. Around 200 vehicles are entered, covering a wide range of both historic periods and commercial functions. While the Pioneer Motorcycle Run stipulates a pre-1915 build for participants in its event, membership in the HCVS is available for any commercial vehicle more than 20 years old. This is much to the good, as it means that each succeeding generation of motor vehicles "qualifies" for preservation as soon as its commercially useful life expires.

The Society, which was formed in 1958, currently has around 3,000 members who between them have more than 7,500 vehicles. There are 15 classes of vehicles, encompassing various grades of lorries, vans, buses, coaches, fire engines, taxis, tractor units, steam wagons and tractors.

A look through the official programme provides a list of names of famous motor manufacturers, some of whom are still with us, but many which are not: Bedford, Ford, Leyland, Dennis, Guy, Morris, Austin, Commer, Bristol, AEC, and Foden.

Held each year on the first Sunday in May, the HCVS Run has a fair chance of having good weather. If it's sunny and warm, then the day is very pleasent and you can stroll around at your leisure. By comparison, the Veteran Car Run takes place in November, and so even if it's dry, it will be cold.

The HCVS Run starts from Crystal Palace Park in Bromley, South London. Entrants set off between 7-00 and 9-00 am. There is a half-way halt at Broadfield Stadium in Crawley, and vehicles arrive in Brighton from 10-30 am onwards.

The day in Brighton is about getting there, showing off one's vehicle, and waiting for the judges' inspection. Because, yes, there are lots of prizes, trophies, and cups to be competed for each year. There are 15 class winners to be decided and 20 odd special awards to be made, such as the Best Leyland on the Run, and The Best Vehicle from the County of Sussex.

I was interested to see that there is an award for The Best Restoration by a Society member of limited means. Restoring a commercial vehicle must be a pretty expensive business - or hobby, if you know what I mean. Some vehicles are individually owned, others belong to preservation societies, others to museums and businesses. Even the fuel costs to run a full-size oil tanker back and forth must cost a bit - even if the tank is empty!

Each year there is an overall winner for what is modestly known as the Concours d'Elegance.

2014 Event: 53rd HCVS Run, Sunday, 4 May

HCVS Photo Gallery

HCVS 2008 Photo Gallery

HCVS website