

Rufus - Claiming Historic Vehicle Status:

By coincidence I have recently purchased two abandoned kit cars that had been parked up in their respective garages since 1997. The first one was Mungo my Lomax 224, purchased in 2021, who had been in his garage near Edinburgh since the death of the original owner builder. The second was Rufus my NG TA Pullman, purchased in 2023, who had been in his garage near Birmingham Airport since the second owner lost interest and decided to sell him twenty six years later when his mother wanted her garage back.

During their confinement both cars had accrued Historic Vehicle Status which can be claimed for cars that are over forty years old since the last 1st of April. Historic Vehicle Status allows the owner to claim Free Road Tax. Another perk of having Historic Vehicle Status is that you can also claim for the car to be Exempt an MOT Test if the car has not been significantly modified in the last thirty years, Mungo was modified in 1990 and Rufus in 1991.

Checking the DVLA internet blurb revealed that to register a car as Historic you have to go to a Post Office that deals with vehicle tax, clutching a current MOT and a Form V112: this implied that you cannot register a vehicle as Historic unless it is currently roadworthy.

Further research revealed correspondence that conflicted with the above so in October 2023 I wandered along to my local Post Office and had a chat with the Postmaster, a very helpful chap. I told him that I wanted to register Mungo (the Lomax 224) for Historic Vehicle Status. He told me to bring my V5C in and he would do it for me. When I took the V5C in the Postmaster made some handwritten changes, stamped it and said that he would send it off to the DVLA. To be honest I was a bit doubtful as I still hadn't finished his restoration and he wasn't taxed, insured or MOT'd.

Some three weeks later I received the new V5C and Mungo was now officially an OAP with a years free road tax (as confirmed by a DVLA Check). Later that afternoon I took the V5C for Rufus (the NG TA) to the Post Office to claim his Historic Vehicle Status and again received a new V5C stating Historic Vehicle Status some three weeks later.

Summary:

If you are restoring a car that's eligible, but not yet ready for the road etc. then it appears there's nothing to stop you claiming Historic Vehicle Status (and free road tax) now.

Notes.

To claim for MOT Free Status you have to take your V5C and a completed Form V112 (Declaration of exemption from MOT) to a Post Office that deals in Vehicle Tax. You must also have insurance for the car although you don't need to take a copy to the Post Office as all car insurance is now logged on the DVLA website by the insurers.

If you want to transfer number plates on or off a vehicle then (if the number is not on a 'Retention Certificate') the donor must have a 'proper MOT issued within the last eighteen months and the recipient must have a valid 'proper' MOT regardless of whether it holds Historic Vehicle Status or not.