



FACEL VEGA HISTORIQUE (1939 – 1964) AMICALE FACEL VEGA

Jean Daninos started his career in 1928 at Citroen working on the design of coupe and cabriolet versions of the famous Traction. In 1935 he moved into the aeronautical industry with Morane-Saulnier and then Bronzavia. FACEL S.A. was founded in 1939 under the name " Forges et Ateliers de Constructions d'Eure et Loir " Facel was first involved in supplying the aeronautical and automotive industries. When they regained possession of the Dreux factory after the war in 1945 Facel concentrated on the motor industry supplying either bodysHELLS stamped out and assembled to the customers specification or fully-built vehicles both luxury cars and utilitarian models. By 1955 with the disappearance of Talbot, Delahaye and Bugatti FACEL was the only remaining French manufacturer of luxury cars with the FACEL-VEGA.

Facel's first model, the VEGA, was shown at the Paris Motor Show in 1954. It was an elegant and luxurious coupe powered by the 4528cc V8 DeSoto Firedome engine coupled to a Pont-à-Mousson 4-speed manual gearbox with synchromesh. At the end of 1955 the VEGA became the FACEL-VEGA and the FVS coupes had engines varying between 4527 and 5798cc. All these engines (DeSoto, Plymouth, Dodge or Chrysler) were provided by the Chrysler Corp. Only slight alterations were made to the general shape including wrap-round windscreens, two round headlights one above the other at the very end of the wing, a vertical radiator grill and wider air intakes.

The luxury saloon, named the Excellence, was introduced at the Paris Salon in 1956. The absence of a pillar between the front and rear doors provided easy access to the rear seats. This model also had a V8 engine and in the last cars it was in excess of 6 litres. Only 153 were made.

In 1958 the FVS was replaced by the HK500 with a 5907cc engine and either the Pont-a-Mousson manual or a Chrysler automatic box. Disc brakes were fitted as from the end of 1958 and in 1959 the engine size was increased to 6267cc. Its "grande routiere" qualities, its sheer power and luxury finish made the HK500 an outstanding success both in France and abroad. Several famous racing drivers of the period such as Stirling Moss and Maurice Trintignant used them for their personal transport. They were sold world-wide and 1959 saw a record 75% of the production exported.

Still in 1959 the Facellia was introduced at the Paris show. It was 100% French sports car built to compete against Italian, British and German models. The engine was a 4-cylinder twin overhead cam of 1647cc producing 115hp SAE at 6400rpm. The first cabriolets were delivered in March 1960 and these were followed by two other body types, a 2+2 coupe and a 4-seater coupe. As the first engine, the FA, proved highly unreliable many modifications had to be made for the Facellia F2 introduced in 1961. In addition to the mechanical alterations some changes were also made to the body: new door handles and Megalux double lamp clusters specially made for Facel by Marchal.

The Facel II replaced the HK500 at the Paris show in October 1961. Although it kept the HK500 chassis and mechanical elements it was slightly longer but much lower. Indeed the Facel II must be considered one of the most beautiful cars produced since the end of the War. It sported Megalux lights and the powerful V8 engine could propel it to around 250km/h (150mph) enabling it to claim to be "the fastest 4-seater coupe in the world"

At this time of continuing post-war economic difficulty you were not allowed to import anything which could be made in France but permission was eventually obtained from the Government Industrial Production Authority to import the Volvo B18B 1780cc engine to replace the Pont-a-Mousson unit which had been in the Facellia. A new model, the Facel III, was presented to the press in April 1963. The body shape was heavily influenced by the Facel II.

A final model, the Facel 6, saw the light of day in May 1964. It had an Austin-Healey straight six engine with 2852cc. The Facel III body was carried over with a few modifications to accommodate the larger engine. The main difference was in the finish: leather upholstery throughout, Nardi aluminium and wood steering wheel and wire wheels. Only about forty of this last model were made before the factory closed forever on October 31 1964.

The production figures in the table below are considered to be the most reliable available. They differ from the figures usually published (3033 cars produced) as a close scrutiny of the factory documents shows that a certain quantity of Facellia chassis numbers did not lead to a car being sold.

AMICALE FACEL-VEGA

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Membre de la Fédération Française des Véhicules d'Epoque (F.F.V.E.), affiliée à la Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens (F.I.V.A.). Membre du Club des Marques

MODEL	Total production	Convertibles
FV et HK 500	849	11
Facel II	184	
Excellence	153	
Facellia	1050 (approx.)	620 (approx.)
Facel III	624	192
Facel 6	44	7
Total	2900 (approx.)	

The Amicale Facel Vega was founded in 1975 and today has 645 members including 150 outside France. Members own more than 820 cars.

The aims of the Amicale are to maintain and keep alive these prestigious cars which were created by the "Forges et Ateliers de Constructions d'Eure et Loir", to make known the fascinating story of this industrial adventure , to safeguard this technical and human heritage and most importantly to enable the fans of the Marque to meet and enjoy each others company.

The Amicale's main activities are:-

- To re-manufacture specific parts which are no longer available
- To publish an in-house magazine "Son Excellence" with three issues per annum. It contains articles on historical and technical matters and also the current activities of the Amicale together with many photographs and period documents.
- To organise two outings per year: the Whitsun Rally and the Autumn Tour.
- To take stands at various Classic Car shows: Retromobile in Paris, Coupes de l'Age d'Or in Dijon, Rallye des Clubs de Marque, Salon Epoqu'Auto in Lyon...
- To safeguard Facel's technical heritage by acquiring original documents and historic objects.
- To collect precious human records of everyday life in the original Facel company through contact with ex-employees.
- To protect the Facel-Vega brandname which belongs exclusively to the Amicale.

The Executive Board members for the period 2017-2019 are:-

- President : Gérard DUFOUR
- Vice-Presidents : Xavier LESIEUR (Treasurer) - Olivier NAVEAUX (Communication)
- Other members : Hervé OHEIX - Alain RAGAULT - Michel REVOY

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