

Cheshire Life

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Full steam ahead for Fred

A steam traction engine once owned by the late Fred Dibnah has been named in his honour. Fred Dibnah spent nearly 25 years restoring the steam engine and after his death it was bought by Knutsford businessman Michael Oliver.

Fred Dibnah's sons, Jack and Roger, drove the engine from Mr Oliver's business headquarters in Knutsford to the Church Inn in Mobberley where the Aveling and Porter steam traction engine was ceremoniously named 'Fred' after its famous steeplejack owner.

Mr Oliver said: 'Fred Dibnah is a cult

figure and a national institution so it seemed only fitting that we honoured his engineering genius by naming his beloved engine after him. We also thought it fitting for Jack to take the helm on its first excursion.

'I bought the engine to ensure its preservation so it can be enjoyed by generations to come.'

Mr Oliver is the owner of an extensive engine collection, including the only full-size Garrett Showman's road locomotive ever built, called 'British Hero'.

* To see one of Michael Oliver's sportier vehicles, turn to page 282.