

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue: 12/13

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

December 2013

Rally Of The Tests



Steve Entwistle/Bob Hargreaves, 9th overall in the Orange Box Mini

The Year of the Volunteer

Diary

Club events over the next month or so

Festive Autotest

December 29th

At Maryport

Entries to: David Wiggins

Forms on the website.

Annual Awards Dinner

Saturday January 25th

At the Skiddaw Hotel, Keswick

Guest speaker Nicky Grist

Tickets £29 from David Agnew

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WIGTON MOTOR CLUB LTD

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Talking Point

Topical comment from the world of motoring

In recent years I seem to spend much more time on the motorways of the UK, family visits, racing and getting to airports have all contributed to these journeys. Now I have always enjoyed driving but heading down the M6 and M1 is really a fairly dreadful experience. Once you get south of Manchester and right past Birmingham it's very boring countryside and constant congestion. OK you can use the M6 toll but they seem to increase their process monthly and certainly taking a trailer down it is out of the question. Surely a reasonable charge would bring in more users and thus more income? These days we often opt to use the A66, A1M and M1 instead, it's slightly longer but less congestion and a pleasanter journey.

The standard of driving on motorways is not that high, the days of lorry drivers being "Knights of the Road" are long gone and they seem to have no regard for fellow road users. They have the nasty habit of putting an indicator on and pulling out, totally ignoring that there is traffic right behind them. It's a bit of "I'm big and you won't dare get in my way so let me out into the lane." Similarly is when you get two lorries driving side by side for miles on end. The longest I've seen is 12 miles. This creates a huge back up of traffic behind them of which the drivers seem totally oblivious of - or just don't care. Perhaps it adds some perverse interest into their dreary lives? If you happen to be towing, as I often am, you are stuck behind them in the middle lane. Very frustrating. Mind you it really is time that most of the M6 was made 4 lanes.

Services areas are another unpleasant experience. Many are well past their sell by date and the food outlets are now franchised to all the worst providers. Like many others we tend to take our own food and you see lots of people eating in their cars. If the operators had any sense they would realise that if there was decent snacks available at a fair price then people would use them. We sometimes grab a coffee but this is invariably overpriced and of doubtful quality. Personally I've always felt that the words "Costa" and "Coffee" should not be allowed in the same sentence. How they can make so much fuss about producing something that does not taste of coffee I do not know!

Generally getting food and drink on a journey can be a bit of a lottery. There are snack vans in lay bys but of course no toilets or seating. Perhaps there is a need for more "rest halts" like the famous one at Sedbury lay-by on the A66 west of Scotch Corner that ticks all the boxes. Unfortunately the new dual carriageway there means you can't access it when coming from the west.

Of course there is something worse than going down the motorway and that is flying. The whole experience from parking your car, endless queues and hanging around - and that's before you even get on the plane!

GTF



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The opinions expressed in this issue of Start Line are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Club

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Classic Column

News from the Classic Scene

Major Events 2014

Getaway Gallop

25/26/27th April

The Tour starts near Carlisle around noon on Friday, spending two nights in County Durham and finishing back in the Carlisle area on Sunday afternoon. There are group dinners on both evenings, opportunities to visit heritage locations of interest and up to 140 miles of quiet interesting roads each day.



Lake District Classic Rally

Sunday 29th June

A long established historic road rally, organised by active competitors with varied but straightforward navigation and a dozen tests. The route of up to 100 miles will be conveniently based in the Penrith area close to Jct. 40 of the M6.

Cumbria Classic Weekend

August 16/17th

Consisting of:

Rose and Thistle Challenge

Saturday 16th August

This is a low cost touring event for interesting and classic cars from 1914 to 2014 with up to 140 miles of interesting roads in the Scottish borders, Northumbria and Cumbria.

And the

Cumbria Classic Show

Sunday 17th August 2014

The biggest (600+) classic car show in the region held in the beautiful settings of the parkland at Dalemain, 1 mile from junction 40 of the M6.

Celebrating Lotus Legends and 90 years of MG

Solway Autumn Classic Weekend

October 18th/19th

Saturday: The Copeland Canter Tour

Sunday: The Solway Historic & Targa Rally



www.lakedistricthotels.net

PG Tips

The Solway rally was both excellent and a little bit sad for me. I ran the second test at Kirkbride airfield and it was a nice long flowing affair on half decent concrete with a few tight turns. As the cars went through the test there were some quite fast and spectacular old cars, properly prepared, quite rorty rally cars designed to do the type of event and well equipped and tuned. New fastest times kept coming in and then we reached the modern part of the rally, and it's fair to say pretty much every car in the modern section set faster times than even the fastest of the classic cars. That's the bit that made me a bit sad...a fairly bog standard Ford Puma is faster than a tuned and set up Escort Mexico. I guess it's a sign of the way car design has come on since the move to fuel injection, multi valve engines and front wheel drive. It wasn't that long ago when people thought going above 200bhp on a front wheel drive chassis was insanity because it couldn't handle the power – now pretty much every hot hatch on the market has more than 200bhp and the norm is nearer 250bhp.

Back in 1990 when my old Renault Alpine Turbo was built with 200bhp it was considered a junior supercar, now it would be a low ranking hot hatch in terms of power. I think the only area in which old cars do still hold an advantage is weight; other than specialist sports cars and mirco cars nothing weighs less than 1000kg and most things weigh 1200-1600 kg in the hatch and family car market,. My Renault Alpine weighed 1080kg as standard and a Skoda Estelle which was a small family car in its day, weighed 900kg...not to mention things like Minis and Hillman Imps which were even less. Unfortunately despite lower weight, the power delivery and torque of modern engines seems to make up any shortfall and the recent leaps in suspension design seal the deal in favour of modern cars.

The final nail in the coffin of the old cars came at the end of the test when 2 of our marshals went through in very modern hot hatches – totally standard but pampered cars – and posted even faster times, and that was without co-drivers. So there you have it...if you want to go really fast start with a modern car it will be easier and cheaper. Obviously I will completely ignore my own conclusion because I have a weird obsession with old Skodas and trying to make one of them go fast. Really I should just give in and buy a modern 1400cc car and go quicker, but that wouldn't be any fun!

On the subject of the old Skodas, Snotty now has 15" wheels and super low profile tyres....I thought the ride quality wasn't quite bad enough so the move to bigger wheels with rubber band tyres was a natural progression. There should be a nice side effect of more grip to go with the appalling ride quality!

The other Skoda – Ugly - has let me down a couple of times recently, or should I say I've let it down by tinkering with important engine parts when it has been my only fully functioning car! That led to a school run in Snotty on tyres that rubbed the wheel arches...not a nice experience. Thankfully it was marginal and I was careful and no damage has been suffered by the aforementioned arches. This leads me to why my daily Alfa Romeo was inoperable...locking wheel nuts! With the car beginning to suffer the rattly roll bar links I decided it was time to change them, only to find the locking bolts on the front wheels were stuck solid, and the key quickly rounded off. That was all ok until the next day I suffered the first puncture in about 5 years...to one of the front wheels! My nickname should be lucky. The type of nut fitted has a moving outer collar so hammering on a socket wasn't an option

Thankfully I found a very useful place on the t'interweb called Evo automotive who from only a photo of the key or nut can tell you what number the key is and provide a replacement for £14. Unfortunately the nuts had been rounded so it was £14 wasted...and a small welding job then took place to remove the blasted things. No apparent damage caused thankfully. The locking nuts have gone in the bin! Next month.....Autowindcreens and their amazing stories!

Peter

Brockbanks Solicitors Cross Border Speed Championship

Not many people know this: The turbo equivalency ratio in the MSA Blur Book does not apply to diesel cars. This makes a number of small hatches look an economic bet for a class win. For example the MG ZR TD is quicker in midrange acceleration than its 1.8 petrol cousin which is a little quicker on top speed.

Events 2014

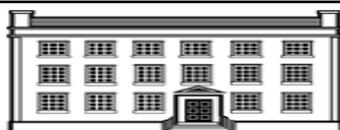
EACC	Kames	Sunday	April 13 th
MGCC	Scammonden	Sunday	May 18 th
YMC	Teesside	Monday	May 26 th
MSCC	Forrestburn	Saturday	June 28 th
KLMC	Barbon	Saturday	July 26 th
CMC	Three Sisters	Sunday	Aug 3 rd
MGCC	Anglesey	Saturday	Sept 6 th
MGCC	Anglesey	Sunday	Sept 7 th
BARC	Harewood	Saturday	Sept 20 th
BARC	Harewood	Sunday	Sept 21 st
WMC	Kames	Sunday	Oct 5 th

Welcome to the following new members:

We have pleasure in welcoming the following new members to the Club and we hope that you all enjoy our events and social activities.

Christopher Bell	of	Penrith	Steve Holliday	of	Carlisle
Steve Williams	of	Workington	Gilbert Tweedle	of	Penrith
Steve Crooks	of	Middlesborough	Les Holden	of	Wigton
Paul North	of	Appleby	Richard Utting	of	Penrith
Paul Bowness	of	Gilcrux	Alan Davis	of	Barrow
Bob Sloan	of	Dumfries	Derek McCrae	of	Dumfries
Ken and Linda Braithwaite	of	Appleby	Kevin & Gillian McGeough		
Mike Livingstone	of	Redmain			

For most of you this will be your first magazine and we hope that you enjoy it and that you will take part in many of our activities



**Brockbanks
Solicitors**

Whitehaven, Cockermouth, Maryport, Workington and Keswick (as Oglethorpe & Broatch)

Tips to Keep Mice out of Stored Cars

If you're a classic car owner, chances are that you've had to store your car at some point. Check out readers' best ideas for nipping rodent problems in the bud, ranging from D-Con and dryer sheets to sulfur and steel wool. If you're putting your car away for the winter, keep reading for ways to keep those small, unwanted guests out of your classic.

1. Tumble Dryer sheets

"I have had a 1966 Ford Fairlane 500 XL for 18 years, and I also have an acre in the country, so we see our share of mice. The best thing I've used is dryer sheets. They don't have to be expensive. I just lay them all over the interior, under the hood, in the boot, on top of the tyres – even in the exhaust pipe. Then, in the spring, gather them all up and toss them. Not only will there be no mice, the car will smell like it just came out of the dryer. Works great for me!"

"Try Bounce fabric softener dryer sheets. Mice don't like the smell, but you'll like it better than moth balls. Use them in several places in the car."

"One of the best things to deter rodents is to put multiple sheets of a fabric softener inside the car ("Bounce" is excellent!). There is a very low odor associated with the smell after taking the car out of storage, yet rodents hate this item!!! I have a car that I put in storage each winter and also have a 30-foot camping trailer that I store. I have never had one problem since I was introduced to this idea years ago, and I had many problems with rodents before using this technique."

"I've tried with a good amount of success using fabric softener sheets placed around the car and inside the vehicle. Bounce seems to work the best. I received this information from an upholstery shop that does a lot of work on vehicle interiors."

2. D-Con (Rat/Mouse Poison)

"The best (and most effective) means of removing all rats and mice from virtually any place is to place D-Con around in areas accessible by the mice and rats, but too small to be accessible by dogs, cats, or any other pets you may have. You may (or may not) detect a slight odour as they are killed off, but I can assure you will never be bothered by them again. I'm 75 years old and have used D-Con all my life, and have yet to see any signs of mice or rats beyond the third or fourth day of setting out the D-Con. I have an antique car, and I use D-Con in it while it is in storage to guarantee against any damage to upholstery or insulation in the car."

3. Traps

"The best killer is the Victor snap traps with the 1-inch square plastic yellow tongue. It's more sensitive than traditional snap traps with the small metal tongue. I prefer a small smear of peanut butter in a center hole. You don't want much; just enough to give off the scent. The one downside of these traps is that if they sit long enough without a mouse going for the bait, crickets (and some small bugs) can eat all the traces of peanut butter without setting off the traps because they are so light. A combination of fabric sheets, snap traps, and building inspection and maintenance will keep your classic rodent free."

"I have five classic cars and believe me, I have tried everything to keep the mice away. But I keep going back to the old faithful mouse trap. You have to keep an eye on them, but they do work. I also have a commercial pest control company put out poison. So far (keeping my fingers crossed) I haven't had much trouble or damage from the varmints. Years ago I made the mistake of putting the trap inside the car. It was nearly impossible to get the smell out of the car! Don't make that mistake."

4. Mothballs

“The ultimate prevention to mice invasion, or any other rodent invasion, is the good, old-fashioned mothball. By the first of summer the mothballs are gone. By opening up the car and taking a few rides, the smell is gone as well.”

“This is the second winter I've tried Bounce, in the car and under the hood. It worked OK last year, so hopefully it will continue to. But of course, there's that half box of mothballs spread around and under the car and in the far corners of the [old] garage, so it may be this combo that works. It sure keeps the chipmunks – destructive monsters compared to mice – out of the garage and from under the porch. “

5. Sulphur

“Garden stores sell granular or powdered pure sulphur. Mice, roaches and other vermin hate the smell. Cut an old pillowcase into 8" x 8" squares and put a spoonfull of sulphur in the center. Gather the ends and tie into a small pouch. Place these bags around areas that may have a mouse or bug problem.”

6. Steel wool

“In addition to the soap and mothballs, I put wads of steel wool inside the pipes on my modified '48 Willys Jeepster.”

7. Other tips: Tape, jacks, 'Tom Cat,' lowered visors, no covers

“Don't forget to put tape over the exhaust pipe opening and the air intake. A friend could tell you a story about tearing down an engine and finding a mouse carcass on top of a piston.”

“I maybe go a bit overboard, but I'd rather spend a few dollars and be safe than lots come spring. I put my car up on jackstands so only mice that can pole vault or jump really high can reach it. I also put lots of Bounce sheets inside and under the hood. I set about four or five mousetraps that I check every time the weather is warm enough to walk over to the garage where I keep it stored (it's only a 50 ft. jaunt, but at 20 below it seems like a mile). I also, since no pets can get into my garage, set out about six little caps of antifreeze. Most of these can be used year after year and so far have been very effective, or maybe I'm just lucky. Either way, when spring comes and everything is the way it was when I parked it, I'm happy.”

“I reproduce interiors of vehicles; a procedure I inform my customers is to purchase "Tom Cat" mice packets. These are sealed packets (6/ box). Do not open the packets but place in trunk, under seats on floor, on top of the air filter cover under the hood. If packets remain closed the bait will remain fresh, if broken it will indicate the presence of an intruder,(who will not remain within the vehicle but leave and search for water). Remove the broken packet and replace with a new sealed packet. The indication of an open packet will remind one to view the vehicle more often. Unfortunately there is no inexpensive means to totally prevent the appearance of rodents, short of obtaining a complete air tight trailer; but this process has worked to assist in keeping the unwanted guests from a restored vehicle. I also recommend that vehicles not be stored in old barns or garages that present means for rodents to have access to the interior of the building. “

“This is not a method to prevent mice from getting in, but rather an extra precaution in case they do get into the interior. Mice have been known to 'nest' behind the sun visor and cause damage to the visor and headliner. Always lower the visor to eliminate the chance for the critters to establish residence on them.”

“I learned not to cover the car because mice like dark areas to build their nests, usually out of the car's installation, hood blanket, seat cushioning material, etc. I live in Colorado and every fall mice and other critters look for a place to come in out of the cold. Anyway, I now leave my trunk and hood both open and no longer have a problem.

For more helpful hints, take a look at www.hagerty.com

Don't forget! All members of the Wigton Motor Club get a discount on classic car insurance through Hagerty International – do give them a call to obtain a quote!

Call 0844 824 1130 and remember to mention your club membership and the promotional code of CCWMC

www.hagertyinsurance.co.uk

Membership Renewals for 2014

All 60 or so members who have already paid their 2014 subscriptions will receive their membership card for 2014 in the next week or so.

A renewal form is enclosed with those who get a hard copy Start Line and will go to via the emailer to the other members when the magazine goes out.

As usual we will give two members free membership in a draw of all those who renew by the end of December. This is to encourage you to renew quickly as this makes our life a lot easier in administering the databases and getting cards posted out.

After a considerable debate the committee has decided to discontinue the paper copy of Start Line after December 2014. There are three reasons for this: a) Cost - printing and posting costs have risen hugely; b) The hard copy magazine has to be assembled, stapled, put in an envelope and a stamp and address label added. This takes time and the number of volunteers willing to undertake this had declined leaving a few committee members to do this in addition to their other tasks; c) Producing a magazine that goes out in two formats is always a compromise, the emailed version is in full colour and could be larger than it is when there is enough copy but we are limited by the number of pages we can do in the hard copy due to postage costs.

We have not taken this decision lightly but we feel it is a necessary step. Hopefully many of the people who currently have a paper copy will switch to an emailed version for 2014. **The paper copy will continue for another 12 months.** If anyone has a problem after that time then the committee will try and find a way of assisting them.

We have decided to employ someone to look after the memberships. Keeping the membership list up to date and accurate is a large task with 500 members. Jaime Hamilton is employed to do this for the next year. Our thanks go to Liz for her efforts over the past two years.

The emailer system that the Club subscribes to allows us to communicate with specific interest groups based in the boxes ticked on the membership form, so please make sure this is completed when you send in your form. Thus we can send different groups updates on their championship, or event regulations. There is also a "local" category which includes all members with a CA postcode so that we can send them details of club nights and pub runs etc that are unlikely to be of interest to members who live further afield.

On a related matter can we ask that everyone takes great care to write their email address properly? All our event entry secretaries and the membership secretary have continuing issues with this. Email addresses have to be 100% correct in order to work. If we can't read it then it is unlikely to work. It does help if you complete all forms by typing in the details and then printing it off. Please be particularly careful with underscores as these can often disappear. Thanks for your help.



Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

Our 12th Rally of the Tests was fairly eventful and with Clerk of the Course Guy Woodcock at the helm and route wizard Antony Preston by his side the intensity of the action to be expected was apparent at the pre plotting stage. The start from Chester was preceded by scrutineering and documentation and further route information was handed out to supplement that already supplied some 10 days earlier.

If the rallies or tours you have taken part in provide a Tulip Ball and Arrow road book for the route directions and you think the same applies here, think again. Yes Tulip diagrams are used for the link sections but there is much more. In addition to the information supplied before the off there are regular handouts given half an hour before the off each morning and at other Time Controls en route. The roads used on competitive sections are generally in remote areas and can be on private land and forestry. For this year the first full day involved forest sections in Clocaenog and Coed y Brenin with a mix of tar and loose surfaces all in excellent non-damaging condition.

The prologue took place from 17.30 on Thursday evening and consisted of three regularities and one test before returning to Chester HQ for supper. We got off to a bad start following a truck and trailer down narrow roads on the wet and dark at 10mph and went astray within a mile of the start. More misery followed and when we finished the evening section we expected to be a firm last but were more than surprised to find ourselves in 14th place out of a field of 80 odd cars. So a lot of other crews must have been having a really torrid time.

Friday started with reverse seeding from the Thursday prologue results so we were 55th car at the off. The route started with a couple of Tests at Ellsmere Port Kart Circuit and then heading west into Wales and even in daylight there were some deceptive junctions amongst the maze of narrow roads in the Halkyn Mountains. A run across country through the Vale of Clwyd brought us to Clocaenog Forrest for a regularity and test. Once through the forest all cars had to be power washed to help prevent the spread of larch tree disease just after the two lapper at Glan y Gors Kart circuit. There was supposed to be a coffee halt here but such was the pressure on time that we checked in and out on the same minute and pressed on. A couple of tests and regularities took us to the next TC for a very swift cuppa (pressure still very much on) before starting the next regularity through Dinas Mawddwy - Gwyndaf Evans' home territory. This section was varied and challenging and towards the end went over Bwlch y Groes – Hellfire Pass to the English – one of the highest roads in Wales. About a mile from the end of this section as we approached Lake Vyrnwy the XK150 had a tyre blowout on the nearside rear which pulled us into the n/s gutter before throwing the car sideways across the road and down the hillside. When the action had stopped we sat for a second or two not understanding why the car had not barrel rolled all the way down



to a stream at the bottom, but here we were, thankful to be upright. We got out and were thankful for the absence of damage but there was no prospect of an early recovery and it was getting dark by now. We were fortunate that the crew of Car 51 Dilwyn Rees and Edwyn Evans - Austin Healey 3000 (apparently the last factory prepared rally 3000 built at Abingdon but never used by the works team and was it beautiful!) had stopped about a mile before our incident with waterlogged electrics and the navigator had walked down to where we were. The crew were local lads and knew the driver of the only non competing car to pass the scene, who himself had been a spectator on the rally earlier in the day, and a rescue was launched which concluded with the recovered Jag being trailered back to Dinas by about 9pm, some six hours after the incident. The spare was fitted and the other rear puncture repaired by Gareth a local bush mechanic who had also recovered the Jag back up the hillside with a



large red tractor. The Healey had by now also been fixed and continued to finish the rally albeit towards the bottom of the field.

Around this time I was feeling distinctly unwell and after a visit to Dollgellau hospital was taken by ambulance to Wrexham where I spent the next six days in the Acute Cardiac Unit before being repatriated to Carlisle by Charles. This year's 'Tests' was all very exciting and incident filled but our situation would have been helped had there been some mobile phone coverage in an area where there was none.

Mobile phone coverage in the UK is dreadfully inadequate. The MSA is currently investigating live vehicle tracking systems for stage rallies because the mobile network coverage we have is based on centres of population and largely ignores the remote areas. So the mobile companies receive more profit for less investment in a situation where the government should be insisting they provide a comprehensive coverage of the landmass.

The systems in other European countries utilise mobile networks which have been developed to cover the majority of the landmass. We were in a remote hill-top location inland from the Spanish coast last year and had excellent mobile reception. Charles and I were in a broadly similar situation in West Wales on the 'Tests' and had no mobile reception at all and the same can be said for large areas of England and Scotland. Why should we tolerate such shoddy service when subscribers pour vast amounts of money into the Mobile Phone companies where sponsorship is apparently more important than providing a decent service throughout the UK. This is a regrettable situation which MSA licence holders can read about in this month's MSA News.

So the 'Tests' was an interesting way to finish the year off and in closing I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and an enjoyable and successful 2014.

Ron

The winners Jan Ebus/Ian Tullie

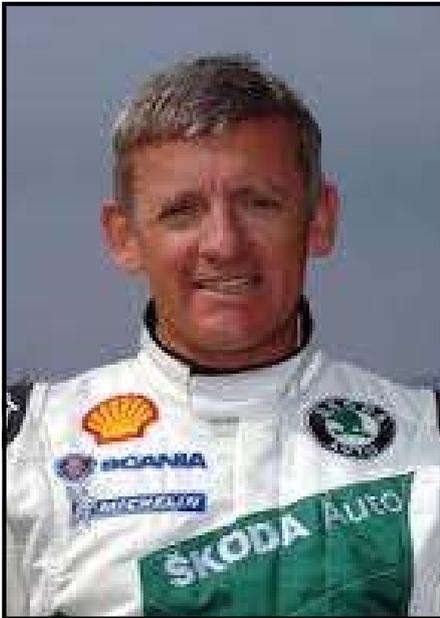
Photo Tony North



Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards

Race Retro takes place on February 21st to 23rd. This year celebrating McLaren and the MG 6R4. Certainly the best motorsport show.

Nicky Grist



We are delighted to have former WRC Champion Co-driver Nicky Grist as our guest speaker at the awards dinner.

1989 Competed in the British Open Championship with driver Dave Metcalfe, in the Vauxhall 1600 Nova developed the previous year. In this year Nicky earned his first wage as a co-driver.

Grist became a full-time professional co-driver with the Ford Motor Company and driver [Malcolm Wilson](#). Competed in the British Open Championship in a [Sierra Sapphire Cosworth](#). Also took part in a test and development programme with Ford's new 4x4 Sapphire Cosworth, consisting of three WRC events, giving Grist his first experience of a WRC event outside Britain. In 1991, he competed in six rounds of the WRC with Malcolm Wilson and the Ford Motor Company.

Nicky Grist scored 21 World Rally Championship wins. He won the 1993 WRC with Juha Kankkunen in a Toyota. In 1997 he joined Colin McRae in the 555 Subaru team and won 17 rallies until 2002. In 1999 he and McRae join the M Sport Ford team. After a disagreement he part company with McRae.

He then worked in TV but rejoined McRae for the 2006 season in a Skoda Octavia. He has a successful rally accessory business and mentoring.

Adverts

Roll bar for MG B Roadster, Never been used. Ring Harry Powell on 015395 68370, Kendal area.

Fuchs Titan 20/50 Oil, 5 litres for £14.99; 10/40 semi synthetic £16.99. Diff oil £4.99
MG B inner sills, £30 for the pair. Rear wing repair panels £10 each. Overdrive gearbox £70.
Ring Graeme on 01900 826542.



Winners All

The following members will receive their awards at the Awards Dinner

Club Champion	Angela Jones
Ladies Champion	Eileen Horsfall
Marshals' Champion	Neal Horsfall
External Champion	Bob Hargreaves
Enthusiast of the Year	TBAOTN
Field Champion	Willie Jarman
Stage Champions	Richard & Edwin Cook
New Comers Champion	Steven Holmes

Brockbanks Solicitors Cross Border Speed Championship

Speed Champion	Jim MacDiarmid
Class wins:	Colin Sutherland, Angela Jones, Harry Moody, Rob Iveson, Alex Thornton, Graham Denholm
Class second:	Peter Sewell, Willie Jarman, Steven Holmes, Mike Thornton, Les Golding
Loyalty	Ronnie MacGregor, Dave Exton,

Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards

1st driver:	David Marsden	1st navigator:	Bob Hargreaves
2nd driver:	David Agnew	2nd navigator:	Mike Garstang
3rd driver:	Tom Hall	3rd navigator:	Richard Goodacre
4 th driver:	Archie Simmonds	4 th navigator:	Steven Perry
5 th driver:	Peter Birtles	5 th navigator:	Maureen Dixon

**Could the current holders of the main trophies return
them to Graeme Forrester before
Christmas please?**

Rally Torque

Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards 2013.

Solway Historic Rally, October 20th, 2013.

Putting the kettle on at 5am on a dark Sunday morning seems to me like a solid gesture of commitment to rallying, but a glance at the dog doing his *Grommit* impersonation (you know the one, raised eyebrows and slight shake of the head) and you begin to have your doubts. Anyway, by 6am I've met David at his house and we are soon heading up the M6 to the Start at Rowrah.

This year the organisers were serving up 14 tests including a couple of runs around the Rowrah circuit with a scenic and reasonably compact route in NW Cumbria. As an established event towards the end of most Historic crews' season, the Solway had attracted a good entry of *Historic Regulars* from Cumbria, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland and Scotland – in fact, the whole NESCREO catchment area. After a couple of recent events, John Bertram from Berwick is getting to grips with his “new” Mk1 Mexico (impressive on the wet Rowrah track) and looked determined to give Archie Simmonds a run for his money – but Archie was having none of it and showed everyone the usual clean pair of heels. Watching Archie's navigator Ralph Miller contorting his 6 foot+++ frame to get in and out of the Midget was enough to bring tears to your eyes!). Tom Hall and Bob Hargreaves were not going to let the Midget and Escort have it all their own way so a great tussle was in progress. And, after some good results in the latter half of the season Dave and Nicky Agnew in the 911 would make the most of their home ground advantage and fly to an excellent 2nd O/A.

The attraction of a home event had brought out a good number of local Cumbria and North West crews including Tot and Maureen Dixon in a “new” 1380 Mini, Peter Birtles/Richard Goodacre, Edwin Cook/Adam Clark, Angela Jones/Eileen Horsfall, Robin and Stephen Murray, Charles Graves/Ron Palmer (shaking down for the Rally of the Tests), Rob Iveson/Les Golding, Paul Slingsby/Michael Fox and Keith and Carol Thomas in the venerable Buckler. From further south, Brian Bradley/Paul Makinson and out for the first time in 25-30 years the formidable pairing of Phil Wright/Ian Keywood in their ex-Donnegal 1293 “S”. From much further away, it was also good to see Graham Couser/Jim Hendry in the TR4 (usually out together in fiery Jim's TR2) and Stuart/Siobahn Bankier using their Midget instead of the Targa Nova we've been seeing them out in recently.

With a great day's sport in prospect we were all keen to get underway and the first test was a one lapper of the smooth (and wet) Rowrah circuit. Archie put his stamp on the event from the outset with a blistering 72s, John Bertram and Charles Graves (who showed total commitment in the XK) chased him round on 81s, Dave Agnew on 82s, Tot Dixon on 83s, Phil Wright on 84s, Paul Slingsby, Brian Bradley and ourselves on 85s, Goodacres/Birtles (about to have one of their best events of the year) on 86s, Robin Murray on 87s, Rob Iveson on 88s, David Alexander started cautiously on 92s and Keith Thomas persevered in perhaps the heaviest of the rain to complete a 94s lap.

Test 2 was new to most if not all of us. It comprised quite a long test on what appeared to be an unsurfaced “car park” with some hints that it might have been an ex-MOD or similar site in the past. You could see very little of the test from the start so navigators were going to be heavily involved. The surface was wet throughout and grip was at a premium, especially on road pattern tyres! Archie set the pace again on 138s but the pack were now baying at his heels with “Bertie” Bertram on 140s, Tom Hall on 141s, Dave Agnew on 145s, Phil Wright on 146s (why did I encourage him to come out of retirement !?!), Charles Graves going well on 147s, Goodacre/Birtles on 148s, Rob Iveson on 151s, we had 152s, Paul Slingsby on 155s, Robin Murray on 159s, Brian Bradley on 161s, Edwin Cook on 162s, Angela Jones on 166s, Keith Thomas on 190s and David Alexander mesmerised by the intricacies of all the little roadways on 243s (where did you go!?!).

Tests 3 & 4 followed and were relatively short tests followed but a number of the leading crews beat the bogie. After a good start to the event both Phil Wright and Paul Slingsby had a wrong test (WT) on the smooth tarmac at Energus and on the Solway WTs are going to seriously undermine your position in the final classification.

Test 5 was at Broughton Moor Quarry and having been quickest on this Test for the last two years the Cortina Crew were hoping for a good result. Although we tied on 110s with the flying Amazon of Goodacre/Birtles it wasn't going to be good enough – Archie flew through this fast and tricky test (steep gravel climb to an open quarry test and then a steep descent to the finish) and recorded 101s! Dave Agnew was closest on 106s, Tot Dixon got it hooked up on 109s, Tom Hall had 111s, Bertie was on 112s, Phil Wright on 113s (apparently touched 4th gear just before the 90 right on the descent!), Edwin Cook on 114s, Angela Jones on 116s, Charles continued to push the XK hard on 117s, Paul Slingsby in his MGB also had 117s, Keith Thomas hurled the Buckler up and down the gravel slopes in true 1950s “trials-style” with 119s, David Alexander had a good 121s in his standard Viva and Rob Iveson had 150s.

The persistent rain of the early morning had settled into showers but fortunately most of them seemed to blow either side of us for much of the rest of the day. The run through to lunch included a long concrete test on an old industrial site at Maryport and second run at the smooth tarmac test at Energus (where most crews beat the bogie). We overshot a cone on the Maryport test and the long reverse back onto the correct line cost us at least 20s (time we can't afford to give away in our old girl). Anyway, a good soup and sandwich lunch was taken in the excellent facilities at Energus and we had time to compare experiences (of the rallying kind, of course) with Couser/Hendry while we had our break.

The Results team were hard at work during lunchtime and the half way results were available before we left for the afternoon's tests. The results showed Archie with a solid lead on 549s, Bertie on 576s, Dave Agnew on 578s, Tom Hall on 580s, Goodacre/Birtles going really well on 589s, Tot Dixon on 596, Edwin Cook and ourselves on 613s, Robin Murray on 641s, Angela Jones on 642s, Bankier/Bankier going well on 658s, Couser/Hendry smouldering on 659s, David Alexander on 726s, Brian Bradley on 734s, Rob Iveson on 741s, Paul Slingsby and Keith Thomas on 784s and Phil Wright on 852s having had a second WT.

The afternoon for us was going to be about catch up and there was no room for errors. “The Flying Amazons” (Goodacre/Birtles) were 24 seconds up on us so that had to be our target. A relaxing cross country ride took us to Wigton Auction Mart where the big cindery car park hosted Test 8 - a fast flowing test. Tom Hall showed his autotesting skills with a brilliant 47s, Phil Wright showed that he hadn't forgotten his 1970's apprenticeship in autotesting with 48s (I suspect there's more to come!), Tot Dixon pushed them both with a 49s, “Bertie” had 52s, Angela Jones also showed the benefits of autotesting with a neat 53s, Dave Agnew on 56s, Brian Bradley took his Mini to a good 58s, Goodacre/Birtles lead the big cars round with an excellent 59s, Archie gave us all a chance with 60s (I suspect he'd clouted a cone?), Edwin Cook had 61s, Charles/Ron hauled the XK round in 62s, David Alexander got the Viva working with a tidy 63s, Paul Slingsby had 65s, we overcooked a couple of cones to share 67s with Robin Murray, Rob Iveson was on 77s, and Keith Thomas cruised round in 111s.

After T8 it was evident that a number of crews were going really well and also that competition for the overall and class positions was going to be closely contested. A short run to the outskirts of Wigton presented us with a smooth, short and very fast tarmac test where a number of the leading crews beat the test bogie.

So, competition for the top places moved on to Kirkbride where the Brothers Goth (yes, that's Goth not Grimm!) lined us up for three tests with T10 and T12 using the same layout and T11 using a long run-out along the old runway with chicanes, lines astride and a 180 turn before repeating the outrun in the opposite direction. Tot Dixon and Archie shared fastest time on T10 (46s) but the pack was close on their heels. “Bertie” was quickest on T11 (75s) from Dave Agnew and Tot Dixon on 76s - Tot now getting the feel of his recently built 1300 Mini and Dave putting in the first of a num

ber of quick times to stake his claim for a good result at the finish. T12 saw David Agnew share the fastest time with “Bertie” and Phil Wright on 46s while Archie chased them round Archie in 47s. Goodacre/Birtles were still going well in their Amazon on 52s and we started to claw back time with a solid 49s. Interestingly, the quickest time across T10 and T12 (the same Test layout) was 46s and that time was achieved by two Minis, a Midget, an Escort and a Porsche 911- that’s what helps to keep Historic Rallying interesting for competitors, spectators and sponsors alike and provides the raw material for all those great action photographs taken by the likes of Tony North.

Maryport was the next Test and a pleasant cross country ride took us to the test venue where the same layout of cones used in the morning was run in the reverse direction. Tom Hall took it from Archie with Dave Agnew close on his heels. And, then we were all back at Rowrah where two laps of the damp circuit run in the reverse direction to the morning one lapper provided a grand finale to a super day’s motor sport.

Archie flew round Rowrah in majestic form to record 147s, Tot Dixon shared 151s with Goodacre/Birtles (a superb time for the Amazon duo – well done), Charles Graves went very well on 152s and Dave Agnew kept the pressure on with a cool 153s. Elsewhere, “Bertie” had 155s, Brian Bradley a good 158s, Rob Iveson rescued his day with 159s, Angela Jones and ourselves tied on 160s, Paul Slingsby brought the MGB home in 164s, Edwin Cook was on 166s, David Alexander 174s, Keith Thomas had a good run in the Buckler for 179 and Phil Wright/Ian Keywood, after a good afternoon, fell foul of the red mist and took a WT (“*What chicanes...!?!).*)

Archie took another well earned victory on 1047s but 2nd, 3rd and 4th were separated by 3s with Dave Agnew leading home Tom Hall by 2s and Tom just 1s ahead of “Bertie”. Tot Dixon had enjoyed a good run in his “new” Mini and will no doubt have identified a few tweaks to make it even more competitive in 2014. After many years of supporting his son David in successful Subarus and Evo’s, Phil Wright together with his navigator Ian Keywood were pleased with their return to rallying (even though the darker arts of Historic rallying were unfamiliar to them). Charles Graves and Keith Buckler both demonstrated just how quickly a well driven 1950s competition car can go. There were many tales of *daring-do* whilst results were being processed and a real buzz of conversation over the excellent the steak pie tea.

My apologies to the Targa entries and other competitors that I haven’t yet got to know but I do tend to concentrate on the Historics because that’s the Challenge that Dave and I are competing in. However, first home in the Targa class (and 2nd FTD) were Hill/Pears, Nova with an excellent 1048s, with Farrar/Phillips, Puma, 2nd on 1065 and Graham/Todd, Puma, 3rd on 1133s.

The organising team and their great band of marshals must be congratulated for putting on another very enjoyable Solway Historic. I’m sure it’s exhausting work, but they should know that their efforts are appreciated by the competitors – and, as you can see from the close test times, the Solway was very competitive thank you!

For various reasons the Solway brought our rallying year to a close. As we loaded the Cortina back onto the trailer we couldn’t have been more satisfied with the old girl. She’s given us sixteen consecutive seasons of very enjoyable and fairly trouble free Historic Rallying. There has been no let up this year and we’ve tried hard all season: we’ve had all four wheels off the ground many times, we tried some tests at Berwick on two wheels and we even ended up with only three wheels on our wagon during the Doonhamer. It’s about time our old girl was pampered a bit and rejuvenated - there are plans afoot so, hopefully, we’ll be back for another full season of NESCRE events in 2014.

Best regards,

Mike Garstang.

Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

My Favourite Time Of Year

Not because of the fat chap in the red suit, and although I am partial to all those extra calories on offer in December that's not the reason either.

My enthusiasm is that manufacturers and dealers spend most of December trying to find ways to get somewhere near the ambitious sales targets they set this time last year. For dealers they have the added burden of hitting manufacturer targets which mean big financial rewards, so big these can in some cases make the difference between profit and loss for the year.

The result of this is that December is THE time to snap up a four-wheeled bargain, and this covers almost all sectors of the market. I'm supplying a new car at just over £100k just now, it should be arriving with the dealer about December 10th. The client said he would prefer it to be registered in January 2014 as he thought it would then be worth a bit more when he came to sell. It took a while to explain that he would lose a manufacturer registration bonus of £3000, plus about the same in reduced dealer discount, so it would cost him over £6000 to wait. All to help said manufacturer and dealer get one car nearer their 2013 targets.

Large dealerships like to reduce used car stocks before their year end as that makes the Balance Sheet look better, so there are bargains to be had, particularly in near-new and pre-registered vehicles, all of these will be a year older in just a few weeks so need to go now.

Hopefully we'll supply lots of bargains in the next few weeks, gift-wrapping extra!

Cosworth Powers Ahead

Celebrating it's 50th anniversary this year this legendary British engineering company has just announced that it's creating 280 highly skilled jobs in advanced manufacturing. Cosworth has very limited exposure to motorsport now (they will have retired from F1 at least for a while by the time you read this). Their focus is now on engineering engines and other components for limited production high performance vehicles. In particular Cosworth see an opportunity in the requirements of the new generation of hybrid supercars.

One of the recent projects Cosworth handled was the engine for the Aston Martin One-77 which sold for the bargain price of £1.2 Million + VAT. I've somehow got involved with the resale of one of these, quite fun, and a learning experience. Looks like it will sell for more than new price, but I'm absolutely not allowed to discuss.

Toyota Gets Richer

After a rough time dogged by product recalls and natural disasters in Japan Toyota are back on course and getting even richer. They have just raised their profit forecast for the year to next March 2014 to £10.5 BILLION. They expect to sell over 9 million cars and trucks to achieve that. Must make unpleasant reading to the senior suits in the European operations of Ford, GM, and Peugeot/Citroen who are used to LOSING Billions of Pounds and Euros.

UK Sales Battle Continues

October saw another steady rise in UK new car sales with the main interest in the German prestige manufacturer battle. Audi bounced back selling 2200 more cars than BMW and now 11000 ahead for the year. However I still wouldn't bet against BM, they have a habit of registering enough unsold cars in December to edge ahead. The real interest is Mercedes, last October they were 3400 cars behind BMW, this October only 150 cars lower. That's some rate of progress.

My regular reader will remember that about this time last year I'd been at a meeting **with** a senior Merc Corporate (Fleet to you and I) Sales guy. He made it clear that they had mistakenly allowed BMW and Audi to outsell them, and they would do whatever was required to correct that. Since then they have been as good as their word with a stream of new model launches and VERY sharp pricing driving this very rapid rise in volume.

Tokyo Show Goes All electric

The Tokyo Motor Show opened earlier this week with Nissan and Toyota going head to head. Nissan are committed to electric cars, but progress is slower than planned, a lot slower. Nissan had targeted selling 1.5 million electric cars a year by 2015. They now say that might not happen until 2020, which is not what you call a near miss. Toyota meanwhile think the future lies in hydrogen fuel cell power, and intend to launch such a car in 2015. However their ambitions are perhaps more realistic, they are expecting only a few thousand European sales a year to start with then "several thousand a month" by 2025.

How all this is to happen with no hydrogen refuelling infrastructure in Europe hasn't been explained yet. The development costs of all this with only a small number of sales to pay for it all must result in enormous losses, but (see above) Toyota at least can afford it.

Nissan and Toyota both announced that by the time of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games they would have "autonomous" cars capable of driving themselves in volume production. These cars have steering, braking, and acceleration controlled by on-board computers, cameras, and satellite links. Hopefully they won't make all this compulsory!

Sad Death Of The Cygnet

2 or 3 years ago Aston Martin announced they were to produce a new city car to be called the Cygnet. Aston owners, they reasoned, would like a small car which would be easy to park when they nipped to the shops or the pub, and which could safely be left in the less desirable parts of town. And of course (although they didn't shout about this bit) this car would dramatically cut Aston's average CO₂ emissions per car. Aston said they would sell 4000 Cygnets a year.

Sad to report this ugly duckling never got the chance to grow up. Rich Aston owners in most cases got rich by being pretty clever people, footballers excepted as usual. Perhaps they realised the Cygnet was actually not an Aston Martin but a Toyota IQ with something meant to resemble an Aston radiator grille nailed to the front end and a comprehensive leather job on the interior. Oh and a few Aston Martin badges scattered around. Then however much they had in the Swiss Bank Account they might not have missed that the most expensive IQ is £13000, the Cygnet is (or rather was) over £30k.

Perhaps Aston owners don't nip down to the shops, why bother when both Harrods and Fortnums have such good delivery services? Popping down the pub equally unlikely I think, and people who never go to the less desirable parts of town by definition are unlikely to park there.

The Cygnet failed to get anywhere near the projected 4000 sales a year, Try 150 units, and most of those registered by Aston and their dealers. You can now get a very low miles one for about half new price, but still more than a new IQ so few takers. When this industry gets it wrong it's normally not a small error!

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Andy's Armchair

**Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at
motoring and motorsport**

The history of Formula 1 is littered with “privateer” drivers who bought a year old car from the factory, painted it up and then generally trailed round at the back bulking up the entry and having a bit of fun. There were of course exceptions with Rob Walker and Lord Hesketh springing to mind but the likes of Lunger, De Vilotta, Rebaque, Anderson, Bonnier, Lovely, Merzario etc. generally accepted their role as bit part players and got on quietly with the job in hand.

Now of course things are different, the privateer no longer exists or so at least we are led to believe. If that is the case how do you define someone racing in Formula 1 with very little experience or previous success, not a lot of talent and virtually no hope of even picking up a point let alone getting on the podium or winning. In all honesty anyone who follows the sport can name at least half the grid who are simply there to make up the numbers and get in the way, oh and of course pay to run the team so the serious players can have a race. On the one hand you've got those drivers competing and then a substantial gang of callow youths with “stacks of dosh” paying for the right to call themselves Formula 1 drivers. All they are doing is basically hiring someone who often produces uncompetitive cars to let them have a nice play. Like it or not chaps you are not professional drivers working at the top of the motorsport tree, and mixing it with the best in the world. If you were they'd pay you, usually, poor Kimi, not the other way about. Those boys have earned the right to be there and you're the modern privateer, which is fair enough, but please stop pretending you're anything like a serious works driver.

Changing the subject.

I've just seen that Silverstone appears to be up for sale. From what I've read the circuit made a 3.3 million pound loss and the whole “caboodle” is only valued at 10.8 million so it could be sold for about that figure. When you consider the pit and paddock re-vamp known as “the wing” cost nearly three times that amount to build you can't help thinking there's something sadly wrong with business plan at the moment. It's actually starting to get a bit worrying, Silverstone dodgy, Mallory on life support, Croft still struggling with noise issues, and yet on the other side of things a reputed 250 million pound being chucked at building a new circuit near Cardiff. Lets hope the fans in South Wales are keener on racing than rallying because from all accounts that's why they've had to move the WRC rally north to find spectator interest. That's OK because there's no problem using different forests it's a lot harder shifting a circuit.

I'm no accountant but whoever's doing the aforementioned could save themselves 240 million and also hold the British Grand Prix for the next 15 years by buying Silverstone. It makes sense, they could call it Cymrustone if they liked – everyone's a winner.

Ends

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What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

December

9th	Mon	HERO	LE JOG. we are marshalling at Gretna.
28th	Sat	NAC	Christmas Stages at Croft.
29th	Sun	WMC	Autotest/PCA at Maryport. Regs on the website

January

19th	Sun	D&DMC	Jack Frost Rally at Croft
25th	Sat	WMC	Annual Awards Dinner

February

21st-23rd			Race Retro at Stoneleigh
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