

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

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www.wigtonmc.co.uk

April 2014

Getting Set For The New Season



The novice drivers who took part in the Training Autotest at Maryport on March 16th.



The drivers who were at the Speed Test Day at Rowrah on March 23rd.

JLT MSA Club of the Year

Diary

Club events over the next month or so

Getaway Gallop

April 25th - 27th

Based in North Yorkshire

Grass Autotest

At Blackbeck, Egremont

Wednesday, May 7th

Contact David Agnew for an entry:
01946 841455 or email DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com

WIGTON MOTOR CLUB LTD

Officials

President:	Stuart Turnbull		
Vice Pres.	Stan Glaister, Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,		
Chairman	Jim O'Neill	01768 870236	elizabeth-oneill@sky.com
Vice Chair	Graeme Mactavish	016973 44542	graeme@pcxinternet.com
Sec/Editor	Graeme Forrester	01900 825642	gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk
Treasurer	Paul Gilligan	07785 293 222	pg@gvcontracts.co.uk
Memb. Sec.	Jaime Hamilton		jaime@jhbookkeepingservices.co.uk
Social Sec.:	David Agnew	01946 841455	DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com
Child Protect.	Alan Jackson	01900 828428	bigwalk1@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Graham	01228 534483	
Lynda Graham.	01228 534483	
Andrew Graham	01228 534483	andy-lake3rec@hotmail.co.uk
Charles Graves	01768 776551	charles.graves@armathwaite-hall.com
David Wiggins	016973 49488	michellewiggins137@btinternet.com
Peter Garforth	016973 21762	petergarforth@btinternet.com
Chris Leece	01768 867576	chris_lowtherview@yahoo.co.uk
Stuart Turnbull	01228711276	
David Rushton	01900 824831	derdar@talktalk.net
Roger Pope	01900 827181	rcpope@btinternet.com

Talking Point

Topical comment from the world of motoring

March proved to be a very busy month. We came back from holiday and immediately set off on Charles' very enjoyable lunch run in dry but cool weather, finishing with a great meal at the recently refurbished George Hotel in Penrith. The George is a great place to stay for the LDC or Cumbria Classic by the way as cars are parked in the secure courtyard of the former coaching inn.

Next up was the Training Autotest. It's a while since I ran an autotest so I planned some reasonably simple tests that included all the usual manoeuvres. Many thanks to David Wiggins for sorting the excellent facilities at the business centre and doing the paperwork, Steve and Jack for sorting the refreshments and to Willie for cleaning the site with his JCB. As well as explaining about the types of autotest and how to run one, the theme was to get everyone involved so everyone had a go at timekeeping and marshalling as well as competing and this created a great atmosphere. It's already produced some new organisers and some new venues.

Then we had our speed test day at Rowrah which was great fun and super value for money. We tried several times to get the MSA to give us a track licence to run sprints there but the MSA just don't seem interested which is a great shame. We had a full range of cars from vintage to very quick Sylva "Bingley Specials" of Chris and Malcolm.

With my MG hat on the month ended with the Roof of England run with a good few WMC members taking part in an oversubscribed entry.

In fact over the four weekends there must have been over 140 total entries which is a great start to the year. The Getaway Gallop is this month's big event and that has had a full entry for some time now.

The Getaway Gallop this year coincides with Drive It Day and it's also the final weekend of the Easter holiday so the Lakes roads will be busy. Thus we are doing our own "Drive In Day" at Dalemain in May. The one difference is that this will be open to all ages and types of car and you can come and go any time between 11 and 3 pm. The Dalemain house, gardens and tearooms will be open all day. A time to meet and chat about cars and events.

Remember that the Club is investing in lots of ways of getting people involved. Anyone doing their first competitive event will get a free entry and we have a wonderful array of prizes for the marshals championship.

GTF



**Editor: Graeme Forrester, Clints Cottage, Blindcrake, Cockermouth,
Cumbria, CA13 0QP. 01900 825642**

Email: gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

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Classic Column

News from the Classic Scene

In 1908 the then Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith advocated a heavy tax on motor cars saying, "A luxury which is apt to degenerate into a nuisance."

Another good quote from past times which still applies to day is; "The road to ruin is lined by petrol pumps."

The International Rally of the Jowett Car Club will take place at the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle on May 23/24th.

Plastic outer headlamp covers on old and modern cars can be cleaned successfully with toothpaste.

Healey made speed boats under the name of Healey Marine, about 1,400 were made and one is currently for sale in Cumbria for £6,000.

Members are warned of the danger of using E10 marked fuel in their cars as it may cause considerable damage over a period of time. E10 fuel is where it contains 10% Ethanol. High octane (Super Premium) will not be E10. "What Car" magazine recently did some fuel consumption tests and found that using fuel with ethanol in considerably increased the fuel consumption. Incidentally Tesco fuel is supplied by Esso.

As of this year, cars first registered, or built, before Jan 1st 1974 will get free tax. Also SORN declarations will be renewed automatically.

A survey by the FBHVC has shown that there is a huge need for apprentices for traditional skills used on vehicle restoration. Over the next five years some 900 apprentices will be needed. At the moment there are no such apprenticeship schemes in operation.

During WW1 the army bought 28,000 Model T Fords for use as scout cars and to carry machine guns. 1,000 were used in the desert where they proved to be more reliable and easy to drive in the sand than the heavily armoured Rolls Royce armoured cars.



The well known Sunbeam Tiger campaigned by Charles Graves Ron Palmer did it's last event on the North Yorkshire Classic. It is now having an honourable retirement. Perhaps at the Lake District Wild Life Park?

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PG Tips

Lots of news this month, having just completed the Rowrah test day I can confirm Snotty still works and is significantly quicker than ever before. What a cracking day it was too – bright sunshine, dry track, possibly a bit cold but it was March and an array of cars that should make every member of the club proud. I reckon there was a car there from at least 6 of the last 10 decades which is pretty good going. From race bred bike engined kitcars wearing slicks all the way back to a vintage car, through rally cars, road cars, it was an excellent display of what the club is all about. I don't think there were any serious incidents although I (and a couple of others) did try grass tracking but found it to be a bit slippery and worrying for the freshly painted bodywork on Snotty! Next stop Isle of Man...once I have sorted out the top end misfire that appeared at Rowrah and stopped me hitting peak revs by about 500. Bloomin' unreliable Ford ignition parts!

I have now officially sold Ugly the Skoda and although I haven't exactly made a profit I have sold it for more than I bought it for and had 6 months motoring out of it. I have also bought a replacement which is a similar car but white and currently sporting a very period bodykit and 1980s appendages...which I intend to take off and sell to someone from Essex! Having said that, the look might grow on me yet...I seem to recall in the dim and distant past quite liking bodykits of a certain era. More updates next month.

It looks as though the SUV market is the place every manufacturer wants to be with the sector becoming ever more popular despite no real need for 99% of the people who buy them to ever use the 4wd let alone actually venture off the black stuff. The biggest and most disappointing thing I found out recently about this market is that Porsche – famed for it's sports and super cars sold more of their Cayenne SUVs than any of the other cars they make. I realise they are probably a great SUV if you like that kind of thing but they aren't exactly what you'd call pretty or tasteful. I would take a guess that the Americans and Chinese are probably doing most of the buying in the same way that they made the taste void that is the BMW X6 a sales success against all the negative press. Porsche are now venturing into small SUV territory with something that I can't remember the name of with the intent of ramping up their sales. I would imagine it will probably be a huge success although I will be massively disappointed if anyone offers me a drive in their Porsche and it turns out to be an SUV of any description!

Finally – can anyone tell me why half the monthly car mags have features about watches in them? What have watches got to do with cars? My regular monthly - Evo - has a page of unaffordable watches with little reviews next to them...and when I say unaffordable I mean often these things are 6 figures to buy. Don't get me wrong, I own a few watches and I quite like some of them and they all have one thing in common...they tell the time, which has got to be the key feature of any watch. The other thing to mention is that all but one of my watches will tell the time as well as a £200k Swiss made masterpiece, and in terms of longevity the one on my wrist right now is 23 years old and still going strong. I can only assume that if you have so much money that you have everything you want in life then the next thing to spend money on is a watch that costs more than the average house...even if it does exactly the same job in the same way as my £50 watch. In car terms it would be like buying a Bugatti Veyron that had the same performance and ability as a Dacia Sandero!

Peter

Novice Autotest Training

The Autotest at Maryport had us all back in the class room but it was really well worth it and I would like to say a big thank you on behalf of all who took part to everyone who had a part in the superb organisation of this excellent event.

A fantastic venue organised by David Wiggins allowed Graeme Forrester to explain in great comfort the difference between Autotests, Auto solos and other types of tests. Why for instance you won't get prosecuted doing handbrake turns on a council owned car park on events such as the Solway Historic Rally but at any other time you would be liable for prosecution for dangerous driving, the key is Wigton MC would have an MSA permit which over rules certain laws of the land, did you know that, I certainly didn't .

Competitors were split into four groups and two groups competed and two groups did the marshalling and timekeeping, then after the first groups had completed their tests roles were reversed so every one was able to do different jobs. This gave many people the confidence to realise they had the ability to organise events I'm sure.

The previous day Willie Jarman did a brilliant job with one of his JCBs cleaning off the very large concrete area of all the rubbish and debris that laid in wait if you slid wide on previous events held here, this is now a superb venue and it would be great if its possible to use it on many other occasions in future.

At lunchtime Steve Palmer set out a splendid lunch and refreshments for all and despite our best efforts there was still ample food for post event refreshments as well.

I am sure several other people helped but please accept my apologies for not mentioning you personally but your efforts were greatly appreciated and it was great to see new people competing and helping at their first event.

The future looks great for Wigton Motor Club and it was nice to see money was not buying success as many cars competing were MOT failures but arrived on trailers or home made towing dolly's yet did really well in the results, its the nut behind the wheel that makes the difference.

Thanks again,
Keith Thomas



Novice Autotest Results

Numb	Driver	Car	Class	N/E	Total	
7	James Thompson	Fiesta	F	E	415	1st OA
18	Stephen Dixon	Corsa	F	E	432	
16	Andrew Graham	Puma	F	E	436	
12	William Jarman	Peugeot 205	F	E	444	
4	Peter Masters	Proton Savvy	F	E	466	
31	John Sloan	Midget	R	N	485	1st Nov
6	Neal Horsfall	Mini	F	E	491	
5	Angela Jones	Peugeot 205	F	E	495	
19	David Agnew	Porsche 911	R	E	514	Most entertaining
17	Steve Fishwick	Puma	F	E	515	
9	Jack Palmer	Fiesta	F	E	519	
14	Rob Iveson	TBA	F	E	523	
1	Stephen Palmer	Fiesta	F	E	533	
33	Mark Messenger	Corsa	F	N	533	2nd Nov
28	Ron Palmer	MX 5	R	E	539	Best 17 y old
15	Keith Thomas	Special	F	E	546	
20	Roger Pope	Mini	F	N	547	3rd Nov
25	Jim Mawby	Mini	F	N	570	
27	Dave Smith		F	N	574	
11	Eileen Horsfall	Mini	F	E	598	
13	Stephen Holliday	Corsa	F	E	602	
23	Marian Sloan	Midget	R	N	632	
26	Alan Jackson	MGTF	R	N	633	
2	Nigel Moffat	Micra	F	N	634	
29	Stephen Douglas	MGB GT	R	N	636	
22	Chris Spencer	TBA	R	N	661	
34	Robert Messenger	Corsa	F	N	705	
21	John Meek	Austin 7	R	N	723	
32	David Nicholson			N	730	
8	Fiona Tyson	Micra	F	N	789	
10	Nancy Moffat	Micra	F	N	864	
3	Ian Whittaker				Ret	
24	Michael Moore	Porsche 944	R	N	Ret	
30	Rhys Moore	Porsche 944	R	N	Ret	

Brockbanks Solicitors Cross Border Speed Championship

Championship rounds:

EACC	Kames	April 13th	Regs available
MGCC	Scammonden	May 18th	Regs available
YMC	Teesside	May 26 th	
KLMC	Barbon	June 14 th	
MSCC	Forrestburn	June 29 th	
CMC	Three Sisters	Aug 3 rd	
MGCC	Anglesey	Sept 6 th	Regs available
MGCC	Anglesey	Sept 7th	Regs available
BARC	Harewood	Sept 20 th	Regs available
BARC	Harewood	Sept 21 st	Regs available
WMC	Kames	Oct 5 th	

Speed Test Day



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Speed Test Day



Peter has an excursion in Snotty



And does it again!



Peter explains rear engined handling



Phil Hallington of the start line



Steve pushes the Saxo to the limit



A racing Puma!

Saltire Rally, March 2nd, 2014

North West crews crossing the Scottish Border for the Saltire Rally comprised Tot & Maureen Dixon Mini 1380, Joe Norman & Mike Kirk 1293 Cooper S and David and myself in our trusty Cortina. This was the first NESCREO outing for Joe since he seriously injured his shoulder about 2 years ago. 41 crews assembled at the Birnam Hotel near Pitlochery and the Hotel and staff ensured we were well catered for all weekend. Most crews arrived on Saturday afternoon for scrutineering, measured mile and signing on and then an enjoyable evening of food, *drink* and, of course, excellent "craique".

Three crews came over from Northern Ireland including the consistently quick Midget pilot Noel Cochrane. Northumberland and the Borders was well represented with Archie Simmonds in the ex-Bertram Mk2 RS 2000 instead of his customary event winning Midget and John Bertram/Andy Fish in their Mk1 Mexico while Yorkshire crews included Andy Beaumont in a rare and quick 1972 Sunbeam Rapier and Ross Butterworth & Ali Proctor in Ross their 180 bhp Mexico. Plenty of Scottish crews were supporting their local event including Jim Hendry/Graham Couser, TR3; Peter/Dougie Humphrey, Mini Cooper; Thomson/Lauder, Mexico; Dixon/Millar, BGT; Donachie/Aitken, Humber Sceptre (as new); and, Campbell/Horne, Escort Mk1.

Crews were flagged away from 09.00 on Sunday and there were 18 tests and 3 regularities ahead including a long regularity with about 10 miles of superb snowy forest tracks.

Six varied tests were completed in quick succession before the first Regularity. The CoC had warned that Test 1 (a demanding ascent/descent of a quarry road with hairpins) was slippery after overnight frost on top of sodden gravel and wet rock. He was absolutely correct and going for broke we spun on one of the hairpins going up and coming back down. With that out of our systems, David proceeded to set competitive times on Tests 2 – 6 so all was still to play for. For example, Test 2 ran around the yards and access roads of a large sawmill: Ross Butterworth clocked 1m 29s; Andy Beaumont, 1m 36; Noel Cochrane, 1m 38; John Bertram and Archie Simmonds both on 1m 39; we had 1.42; Tot Dixon, 1m 47; Joe Norman, 1.48s; Jim Hendry, 1.49s; The Humphreys, 1.56; Campbell/Horne, 1.58; Dixon/Millar, 2.01; Donachie/Aitken, 2.08; Thomson/Lauder, 2.11.

Test 5 was a long blast on gravel with Code Boards (CBs) alongside the River Tay: Campbell/Horne, well in the groove with 1.50s; Ross clocked 1.50s+cone; Archie Simmonds, getting to grips with the Mk2 RS2000, 1m 53; Andy Beaumont 1m 56; John Bertram 2m 04; Jim Hendry, 2.05; Noel Cochrane 2m 10; we clocked 2m 11; Humphreys, 2.14; Donachie/Aitken, 2.15; Tot Dixon 2.16; Dixon/Millar, 2.17; Thomson/Lauder, 2.24; and Joe Norman 2.30. The podium places were already beginning to sort themselves out and Ross Butterworth was starting to nose ahead.

Regularity 1 was fairly straightforward with 1xITC and a CB to find Bertram/Fish dropped 2 secs; Beaumont/Merry dropped 3s; Ross/Ali, 4s; Hendry/Couser, 8s; Dixon/Millar and Donachie/Aitken on 10s; Campbell/Horne, 19s; we dropped 20s; Simmonds/Cruikshank 31s; Cochrane/McCollum 43s; Humphreys, 61s; Thomson/Lauder, 66s; Tot/Maureen 108s and Norman/Kirk 114s. A tricky farm test took us to the Edradour Distillery (an excellent and loyal sponsor of the event) where a smooth damp test around whisky barrels saw some very quick times.

After a short unsurfaced test we travelled to Test 10, the final test before lunch. This test was fast and challenging and made full use of the loose access roads of a caravan park - thankfully, both the owner and his son compete on the event (Cortina and Mk1 Escort respectively). Times remained close across the top crews but gaps were starting to open up: Northern Ireland's Noel Cochrane (Midget) scorched round in 1m 12s; Tot, Archie Simmonds and Andy Beaumont shared 1.14; John Bertram, 1.17; Ross 1.18; Humphreys, 1.20; Campbell/Horne, 1.23+cone; we had 1.22; Joe Norman 1.24. Dixon/Millar, 1.26; Jim Hendry, 1.28+cone; Thomson/Lauder, 1.30; Donachie/Aitken, 1.31s.

With lunch over, another test around the caravan park took us to the start of Regularity 2. This looked like a superb section with a long run through the forest followed by a longer run on tarmac minor roads and tight whites with 3xITCs and 3 CBs to look for. We settled quickly but within ½ mile of entering the forest our trip meter started flashing, then it went blank and then it zeroed itself! Not what you want just after the start of a long Regularity with numerous speed changes etc!! A quick “guestimate” calculation took us through a couple of tenths and then I decided to cut our losses and re-zero the trip and a stopwatch. This probably saved the day and cut our losses but we still dropped about 50 sec’s. The trip never faltered after that – *arrrrrgh!!!!*

The second half of the regularity went reasonably well until I overshot a junction – I knew it was coming up but at the critical moment I had my head down checking average speed and we shot past. Annoying but the trick is to refocus and press on – and, curiously, having got that bug out of my system the rest of that Reg went well. Bertram/Fish, 35sec’s; Beaumont/Merry, 36s; Ross/Ali, 42s; Dixon/Millar, 50s; Cochrane/McCollum, 1.09; Norman/Kirk, 1.47; we dropped 1.51; Hendry/Couser, 2.04; Campbell/Horne, 2.14; Humphreys, 3.32; Simmonds/Cruikshank 3.34; Donachie/Aitken, 4.02; Tot/Maureen, 4.27; Thomson/Lauder, 6.51s.

Two relatively short, quick tests took us back to the caravan park for Test 14 where a long test using all the access roads had been prepared. Immediately after the test we started Regularity 3 which comprised a long loop around a loch with 2xITCs before finishing at RFC3. Times dropped were Hendry/Couser who woke up and shamed us all on 4sec’s; Bertram/Fish, 9sec’s (Best O/A on Regularity); Campbell/Horne, 14s; Simmonds/Cruikshank, 16s; Cochrane/McCollum and Ross/Ali, 17s; Beaumont/Merry, 18s; Dixon/Millar, 25s; we had 30s; Tot/Maureen and Joe Norman/Mike Kirk both on 37s; Donachie/Aitken, 42s; Humphreys, 47s; Thomson/Lauder, 57s.

With daylight fading quickly and the forecast rain settling in we still had 4 tests to complete before the finish. Another blast around the Distillery car park (Test 15) and then it was time to switch on the *Poti* before a rerun of one of the morning’s farm tests. From there we had a road run to the final two tests near Dunkeld both of which we’d done in the morning. It was fully dark for these last tests and although I thought we were quick and tidy, our times were not as good as the morning’s daylight runs.

Arriving at the Finish at 6.30pm we’d enjoyed a well organised and a demanding day’s motor sport. We were both gagging for a pint and the customary dram of Edradour – objectives we quickly achieved!!

Results were published promptly and showed that Ross and Ali had won convincingly in their Mexico with 20m 32s, Andy Beaumont took his Sunbeam to 2nd 21. 53 and John Bertram took third in his Mexico on 22.03. Noel Cochrane was =4th with Sue/Tom Hynd in their Fiat on 22.13; Campbell/Horne, 7th on 23.57; Archie was 12th (his navigator performing well on his first regularity event with 24.45); Hendry/Couser, 13th on 24.57; Dixon/Millar 14th on 25.17; we were 16th on 25.30; Joe Norman/Mike Kirk were 22nd on 27.48; Tot/Maureen Dixon, 23rd on 29.05; Humphreys, 24th on 29.13; Donachie/Aitken, 26th on 30.01; and Thomson/Lauder, 28th with 33.54.

Hearty thanks to the Saltire Rally Club for organising an excellent event: it was challenging enough for the “experts” yet straightforward enough for newcomers. The event had a generous sponsor, superb documentation, excellent marshals and very accommodating landowners.

The Cortina finished in good fettle so our next outing and the Cortina’s last will be the Berwick Rally in May. So, to fend off any withdrawal symptoms from rallying and until the Cortina’s replacement is finished (later this year), we’ll be out marshalling on the Devil’s and other NESCRE events and probably take in a hillelimb or two in my old Cooper “S”.

Mike Garstang.

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

York Motor Club held the North Yorkshire Classic on Sunday 23rd March, the second round of the HRCR Autosessive Clubmans Rally Championship and Wigton members Steve Entwistle/Bob Hargreaves in the Orange box Mini sparkled on the day with a fine third place overall.

Noise check and scrutineering were held at the Tholthorpe garage premises of John Ruddock who was also test coordinator with his brother David heading up the event as Clerk of the Course. Further talent in the organising team was Simon Parson being a deputy C of the C and Suzanne Barker organising the organisers as Secretary of everything else. With the 08.30 start on Sunday it was necessary to travel down on Saturday for the formalities and we stayed at the Premier Lodge only a couple of miles from the start and left the tow car and trailer there.

The entry list was full at 60 cars in common with the Tour of Cheshire before it and the Ilkley Jubilee which will follow in the HRCR series. All the top national contenders were present and all the top ten seeds could have been contenders for a podium. Wigton club entries came from Charles Graves/Ron Palmer (15) and Nigel Griffiths (52) although other members entered under other clubs were Steve Entwistle/Bob Hargreaves (8) and Robert Robinson/Peter Mellor (46). The latter were entered in a 1983 Audi GT Coupe which is eligible from this season in class E3 Category 4, 1982-1985. Also newly eligible in category 4 was a 924 Porsche and as the season progresses I'm sure there will be more of these new cars to come.

The morning session consisted of three regularities and nine tests with a further three regularities and four tests in the afternoon. Lunch was taken in Duncombe Park just south of Helmsley where a total of eight good tests if a little rough in places were run. Route details were provided in advance for three regularities with the others handed in through the window at section starts. None of the instructions were difficult but the occasional not as map junctions kept you on your toes. The finish was at 5pm back at the Mercure Hotel at York where some nice cake was handed out and a good supper was served promptly at 5.30. Results were equally prompt, served up by Martin Liddle and Tyneside Computer Services. Winners were Matt Warren/Cath Woodman followed by father Howard Warren/Iain Tullie with Steve Entwistle/Bob Hargreaves in a fine third now with sponsorship from Minisport of Padiham. Top six included three Porsche 911, two Escorts and one Mini. We finished in 17th after the odd fumble but a one day event does not allow any opportunity for recovery although we had a good afternoon and pulled back five places from our lunchtime position. A well run event well worthy of a repeat visit especially as it is only 100 miles down the road.

With 34 entries David Wiggins and Steve and Jack Palmer put on an excellent Novice Autotest with everyone taking part in both driving and marshalling. Graeme reverted to type and provided classroom tuition to an attentive, well behaved class whilst coffee and biscuits were served. A robust soup and sandwiches lunch in such excellent facilities completed a grand day and it is a credit to all concerned that we can put on such an enjoyable value for money event. Give 'em what they want.

Regulations will be available shortly for the Lake District Classic on 29th June with organisation led by David Agnew and entry information from me at ronpalmer777@hotmail.com.

Rose and Thistle Challenge entries now open details also from me on ronpalmer777@hotmail.com

Ron.



DAVID YEOWART – AN ARTIST IN METAL

When Ian Smith owner of a superb sporty looking Alvis 12/70 told me he needed to go to Whitehaven to pick up his car as he had been having a brand new stainless steel four branch manifold and exhaust system made along with a new inlet manifold I quickly volunteered to give him a lift as I had heard about the guy who made such parts but never ever met him and thought this was a great opportunity.



Ian directed me to the location but you can imagine my surprise when the sign at the entrance said “Yeowart, Gill and Rudd, Funeral Directors” !!!

I drove into the location which had several different styles of buildings, the first being the funeral department offices, a neat tidy building with memorials etc on display. Further through the yard, gleaming polished hearses and limousines could be seen peeking out from their garages covered with dust sheets, some with personal registration numbers beginning with “JDY” Obviously a very professional funeral operation was being run here.

His father John I knew many years ago as a brilliant fitter who worked at the British Steel plant in Workington when I started to serve my engineering apprenticeship in 1963, John is now 76 and still working every day. He left British Steel in 1966 to run a coach business and this has sadly just closed after 49 years due to council cuts where the lowest tender gets the business for the next four years. Yeowarts coaches were always immaculate, up to date coaches, fastidiously maintained, noted for reliability unlike some of the vehicles you see on school runs these days. Short term economics don't take into consideration those who have invested in modern fleets of vehicles and giving tenders to the bottom price means only old buses are now going to be viable. A poor outlook for the future of transport for the area and a great shame for people who value high standards of equipment and service.



Ian directed me to an unusual but modern Hi tech Nissan hut style building that I was told is used by American forces in such places as Iraq and Afghanistan. It is made of corrugated metal, very fast to assemble, strong being semi circular in section like a Nissan hut but has no restriction on its length as you just keep bolting on sections and is high enough to allow vehicles to easily be lifted on garage lifts without any problem.

Inside the building I met a very jovial guy who turned out to be David Yeowart the man I had come to meet. He showed me around his workshop which is full of every type of machine you could imagine,

lathes, milling machines, TIG and MIG welders, presses, drills, sheet metal rolls, expanders, pipe benders, formers and lots of other machines I have never seen, despite being in the steel fabrication industry for many years before I left to run my own little garage business.

He showed me many special tools and jigs he had fabricated for specific jobs and these were a credit to his skill and ingenuity. This quest for excellence in machines and skill to use them had obviously been passed down to David from his father, John.

David's business "Exhaust Craft" is about half a mile away from Tom Lewthwaite the engine restorer I wrote about recently. When I mentioned this to David he told me the house next to Tom's workshop was their family home many years ago and he spent lots of his time in Tom's workshop as a kid and this helped interest him in engineering. Tom re-bored many of the engines in the Yeowart coaches in situ for them, small world isn't it.



We inspected the stainless tubular four branch manifold and exhaust system David had made for the Alvis, it is superb. Inlet manifold pipes had been machined by Ian to form an internal cone to give a venturi effect rather than a big step as previously where the manifold joined the cylinder head. David fabricated flanges and welded them up ever so neatly to form a very smooth gas flow into the engine from the two big SU carbs. When reassembled and driving the car back home Ian was amazed at the increase in power these modifications have made. Look closely at the photos and you can see each component is welded beautifully to each other and the "fishtails" where two

pipes go into one had first to have a former machined in order to press the stainless tube to the correct shape. This takes real skill I can assure you.

David was telling me he learnt his trade initially at the one of the two apprentice training centres that British Steel ran at Workington just as I did, where each year the company took on about eighty apprentices and trained them to very high standards. Apprenticeships were fantastic, you had to learn every trade with top class instructors keeping a very close eye on all your work and you attended day release at the Technical College at Workington for one day and one evening per week as well. It set up a great skills base and allowed many people to go from these humble beginnings to make a real name for themselves worldwide.

British Steel had a massive presence in Cumbria up to 1981 and in Workington amazingly employed 4,400 people at their Mossbay rail plant, 2,400 at Chapel Bank works half a mile away. They also had many more employees at their Iron ore mines at Egremont, limestone quarries at Rowrah, brass foundry at Salterbeck, coke ovens at Lowca, brickworks at Micklam and Workington docks was also British Steel owned.



Virtually all these jobs have gone and Tata Steel own what's left of the steel industry with only have a couple of hundred employees in total. David Yeowart is one of those people who started off just enjoying being able to weld but taking it to such a degree that it is now like an art form. A true artist in metal as the title says.

Keith Thomas

see www.exhaustcraft.co.uk or contact David on 01946 599911 to learn more

Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards



A big apology to David Agnew. I forgot to add an addendum in the March Start Line re the results of the 2013 Historic Challenge. Unfortunately the scores did not take into account dropping a score. This means that David was equal first in the drivers category. Belated congratulations!

March	30th	Devils Own Classic Rally	KLMC	Regs available
May	3/4th	Berwick Classic Rally	BDMC	Regs available
June	29th	Lake District Classic Rally	WMC	
Sept	7th	Durham Dales Rally	DAC	
Sept	20th	Doonhamer Classic Rally	SoSCC	
October	19th	Solway Autumn Classic Rally	WMC	

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.

David Alexander –	Windermere	Philip & Sandra Davies –	Maryport
Peter Herring –	Keswick	Michael & Aiden Huddleston –	Millom
Steven Holmes –	Cockermouth	Brian w Bradley -	Cornforth

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.



BYGONES

Anecdotes

Dave Richards navigated for **Ari Vatanen** on 24 rallies between 1975 and 1981. They won seven, came second ten times and finished third twice. All in a Ford Escort, apart from one outing in an Opel Ascona where they ranked 8th on the 1975 Scottish Rally.

The **garage forecourt** has changed over the years. Most would have a workshop and a showroom and petrol pumps. In many cases these developed from the local blacksmith's shop, gaining petrol pumps and later show rooms. Very few of these still exist. Indeed petrol "stations" are gradually disappearing. I can remember when there were five in Wigton and just in the 12 years the three in Cockermouth have been reduced to just one. It's the same with showrooms, there are now very few local dealers with sales now being concentrated in multiple franchise dealerships in out of town locations. In the other hand there are probably more independent workshops taking a greater slice of the servicing and repairs of privately owned cars.

Of course cars used to do **far fewer miles to the gallon** and had smaller fuel tanks which meant for many the range was about 150 miles between stops which could be at best a four hour journey. Thus more filling stations were needed. Until the mid sixties there were still some forecourts with several makes of fuel on sale from different suppliers.

Do you remember when many garages had **fuel gantries** that swung out from the building when need to add fuel to your car? There are very few left but I seem to think I saw one in a town in north Yorkshire not too many years ago. Can anyone tell me where?

These days the **availability of eating places** along our roads is pretty good (other than motorway service areas). It's interesting how they have changed over the years. There was a time when you were limited to "greasy spoon" transport cafes, hotels or road houses. Better roads meant many of these were bypassed and quickly died. Rally folk will remember the "Astra" south of Carlisle and another similar establishment near Kendal. Lorry parks and lorries with on board food facilities hit the greasy spoons hard while better roads meant truckers could do more miles in a day. Strangely the road houses and hotels by and large failed to adapt and many of those bit the dust. Then of course came "Little Chefs" and the like, at least you knew what you were going to get there! These have tended to drop away in the last 15 years or so but at the same time the "farm shop" type café has become very popular with many being a destination venue as well as a stopping place with farm produce and the like for sale as well as decent food. I counted six such places on the A66 between Scotch Corner and Penrith recently while there is only one roadside pub and that looks on its last legs.

There are of course, the little food vans in lay-bys if you only need a coffee and burger but I've always worried about hygiene and the lack of loos at such establishments.

HAGERTY
CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE

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0844 824 1135 and don't forget to mention your
club when you do!

RACING LINES

News from the Circuits

Some of our more senior members were in the Cumberland Centre of the **750MC** many years ago when that Club was very much involved with low cost motorsport and Austin 7 based specials in particular. The 750 MC was found in 1939, so is enjoying it's 75th anniversary this year. It now offers a range of low cost racing series but it's heart is still the self built specials.

The list of famous designers who started in the 750MC is amazing: Colin Chapman (Lotus), Eric Broadley (Lola); Derek Bennett (Chevron) and Tony Southgate who has designed F1, Le Mans and Indy cars for a number of makes), plus Gordon Murray who has been one of the most innovative F1 designers and the designed the McLaren F1 GT car and is currently making his own road car. Others famous members include Arthur Mallock (Mallock U2); Adrian Reynard (Reynard and March and Indy cars).

From time to time I seem to get involved in **tracing cars** and the people connected to them. Some years ago an MG friends in Scotland George Cooper found the chassis of a 1952 Cooper MG and was restoring it. He found it had spent some time in Cumbria and asked me to find it's history. Surprisingly I found more than that. A phone call to Ed Glaister resulted in the original body being found hanging in a barn in north Cumbria. It had been replaced with a fibreglass one on the sixties when the car had little value. The fully restored car has been raced at Goodwood and Silverstone since.

Just recently I was able to help a chap who was restoring a **Landar** (a rear engined Mini based sports racer) with the driver who raced it a Rufforth in 1972 while just the other day a chap who had bought a **Yimkin** chassis wanted to contact Ed Glaister who had raced one some years back. It makes you wonder how many old race cars there are left out there?

Apparently **Silverstone** have objected to the government giving a large grant for the proposed new circuit in Wales on the basis that it would be unfair opposition. Given that circuit hire at all UK circuits is rising annually shows there is demand and that some more competition would be welcomed by clubs and competitors.

I remember that when Jackie Stewart headed up a "new Ingliston" project 20 years ago, Knockhill objected on the basis that there was no room for two circuits in Scotland. So when we were running sprints at KH the fee went up by 20% each year.....

Healthy competition is surely a good thing.



**The face of F1 in 2014
The Red Bull RB10**

Croft 50th Anniversary

Croft Autodrome will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2014, and with a bumper calendar of high-octane outings capped by the prestigious mid-summer Nostalgia Weekend, fans will be kept entertained season-long from lights-out to chequered flag.

The circuit blasted back into action in style last week following the traditional winter lull, as wall-to-wall sunshine greeted a wide variety of racing saloons and single-seaters taking to the track to signal that Croft - together with its new race control and indoor seated dining area - is well-and-truly open for business.

Croft Autodrome hosted its first motor racing event on August 3, 1964, in the guise of the Daily Mirror Trophy Meeting for touring cars, GTs, sportscars, single-seaters and bikes. Exactly half-a-century later, on August 2/3, 2014, the sights, sounds and smells of yesteryear will be recreated when the Nostalgia Weekend roars into the north-east's premier motor sport venue. Stars and cars from eras gone-by are sure to wow crowds both on and off the track.

Now entering its fifth consecutive year, the winning blend of historic Hillman Imps and legendary Lotus Cortinas, live music, fashion displays, World War Two encampments and air shows makes the Nostalgia Weekend fun for all the family.

One of the prevalent themes during the 2014 edition of the retro-flavoured festival is expected to be touring cars through the ages, in the year that the Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship looks set to produce one of the most competitive and compelling campaigns in its long and illustrious history.

The BTCC will also visit Croft on June 28/29, when no fewer than seven tin-top champions will take to the track and race doorhandle-to-doorhandle around Yorkshire's temple of speed. Always a favourite amongst the championship's contenders, the track will doubtless set the scene for some spectacular battles and wheel-to-wheel action.

That's far from all that there is to enjoy at Croft over the coming months, however, with the BARC, BRSCC, North East Motor Cycle Club, Darlington & District Motor Club, Roger Albert Clark Rally and BTRDA Rallycross amongst others all set to pay a visit. The full season calendar can be seen below.

"This is a big year for Croft Autodrome, and to be able to celebrate our 50th birthday on the very same weekend as the first race meeting back in 1964 makes it even more special," said circuit manager, Mike Cantelo.

"The Nostalgia Weekend is a fitting event to mark this momentous milestone, and will harken back to those early days when Croft Autodrome was still in its motor racing infancy. It will appeal to fans of all ages across the generations, and we hope many of them will similarly attend some of our other high-profile meetings over the course of the campaign. Our spectators have a lot to look forward to in 2014."

Croft 2014 Calendar:

April 21	Darlington & District Motor Club Easter Sprint Meeting
April 26/27	BARC Race Meeting
May 10/11	Darlington & District Motor Club Race Meeting
June 28/29	Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship
July 19/20	BARC Race Meeting
August 2/3	Croft Nostalgia Weekend
September 6/7	BRSCC Race Meeting
September 20/21	BARC Race Meeting
October 18/19	MSA British Rallycross Championship
November 16	BTRDA Rallycross
TBC	Roger Albert Clark Rally
December 28	Christmas Stages

RED MIST

no longer young but still angry!

Consistency...now there's a word, I like how it sounds and in many areas of life, I like what it represents, you can count on it. Even the Americans spell it the same way! There's not a great deal of confusion about what it means, most people understand what it sells, it's been around for ages, its dependable.

It is of course consistently misused in spirit, often derided, describing the mundane, the tedious, almost an insult at times, unsporting, mediocre. As if being consistent means a lack of drive and commitment, an inbuilt incapacity to go that extra mile, to raise your game for the big tilt.

We celebrate those flashes of inspiration, those magical moments, the mavericks, the exciting balls to the wall moments, the heroic, the out on a limb.

But those superhuman flash in the pans? Are they really worth our adoration?, maybe we all have them and that's why we identify with them, the sublime pass you once played in Rugby, the amazing shot you played in Badminton, the out of this world answer on that specialist subject from hell shouted at the TV, that deft flick off Scotch Corner roundabout at 2 in the morning that defied physics and would have even made Kimi raise a smile.....

All of these without a real audience, going un-noticed forever, your moment of true world beating brilliance, a spark unable to be trapped, that breath of greatness lost in the lungs of a nonchalant passer-by.

Then you have the consistent ones. We get so used to their moments of genius that it becomes a sort of crazy norm, we start to project our own inadequacies on them, we look for why they are so....consistent. They are boring automatons, one dimensional, unexciting, formulaic, cynical, conspiring, unadventurous!

Yeah, that Vettel, that Loeb, that Prost, that Lauda, that Paul McCartney....all so dull and consistent. What is it about our loathing of consistency? Why do we celebrate the likes of the late Villeneuve? Why do we deify Mansell, Solberg, Hunt, Vatanen and Pete bleeding Doherty?

All achieved far less than they should have, all lack a consistent approach that would have yielded consistent success. We tend to focus on what they achieved against self imposed obstacles rather than what they failed to achieve because of them.

This love then spreads to the inanimate....the whole mini boom in vinyl records that's happening at the moment, this crazy love affair with the inferior.....what actually does that Alfa parked on the hard shoulder in a cloud of gasses actually, truly have as opposed to the same age Volvo that has just whizzed past it? I have seen both types of car fly around at roughly the same speeds, with the same stupid expressions on the drivers faces! So what is it that says if you own one you're a true petrol head and if you own the other you somehow lack octane?

We romanticise others failings in order to feel better about ourselves that's certainly true, nobody wrote a successful book or a play or a screenplay about the terminally consistent....how boring would that be?.....ah.....see what I said there? Is it the entertainment that's lacking? Do we have a consistent need to be entertained that overrides our appreciation for success?

That's a pretty potent mix, the need to feel superior AND be entertained, but what about that nagging feeling that possibly...just possibly that say young Vettel, lets whisper it....also had an unfair advan

tage....whether it was Adrian Newey (no Mark Webber had that too) an illegal car (no Mark Webber had that too) and unfair relationship with his team mate (Mark Webber had that too, but still did win occasionally) or maybe it was something else. A nagging feeling that he can't have achieved such stellar achievements through hard, consistent, commitment. No he must have cheated.

So what we require from other people is, Entertainment, Failure and Honesty.

Basically Charlie Chaplin.

But for ourselves we crave consistency, from the time you set your alarm, to the sleep you have, to the twittering of the birds in the morning, we need consistency. No point you getting up to find the boilers packed in robbing you both of heat and hot water to wash off the consistent blend of chemicals you spread about your body to clear the stink off! No point at all to find your Cornflakes are soft and your milk has gone off cos your fridge failed. The crushing disappointment to add to the crushed vertebrae of the bridge falling just as you drove your car with a stuck throttle into the river that had dried up because you can't tell what the weathers going to be like from one day to the bleedin next!

But that's just being silly isn't it?

I have a pretty consistent life, especially behind the wheel, I drive a consistent car at consistent velocities, consistently service it, consistently use the same amount of rubber and fuel and even roads.....then comes the entertainment.

Maybe I am easily pleased, radio wise I like Radio 2, if I had DAB in the car it would be BBC6 music, I have on hand 4gb of constantly revolving music to choose from and a consistent sat nav system that takes the danger out of solo map reading and a Bluetooth system for ignoring phone calls.

That's not my entertainment....no that first starts with cruise control. Never have I owned a device that gives me all the entertainment I need so consistently.

Whatever I set it to I will then be able to experience the things we need, entertainment, failure and honesty.

Entertainment & Failure together, the wholesome joy of seeing other human beings failing to control a cars forward motion is priceless, forget the speed limit! Whether there is a max or minimum doesn't apply to the thronged masses, whether it's the pre-occupied multi tasker or the hormone invigorated, they all exhibit the same *laisse faire* attitude to consistency.

Speeding up and slowing down, whether for reasons of pride or ineptitude doesn't really matter, to pass and to pass again, each time they look at you as if it's your fault, that you are somehow goading them in their middle lane wanderings, when all along it's their failings being cruelly exposed in the brightly lit honesty of inconsistency.....FFS!

Alan the Fowl mouthed Fox

Drive In Day

Sunday May 18th

At Dalemain

11 until 3pm

Open to all types and ages of car - come at go at any time. Visit the house, gardens etc or just enjoy the craic!

Marshals' Post

Marshals' Championship Scorer: David Wiggins 016973 49488 Email: michellewiggins137@btinternet.com

Marshals' Contact David Agnew 01946 84145 Email: DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com

Remember the fantastic range of awards right down to tenth place in the Marshal's championship. The first batch of scores came from the Novice Autotest and anyone who marshals on a WMC event or one where WMC are providing a team of marshals will be entitled to points.



Cumbria Classic Weekend

August 16/17th

At Dalemain near Ullswater

The 26th Cumbria Classic Weekend once again promises a packed programme of events and attractions. The action kicks off on the Saturday (16th) with the Rose & Thistle Challenge which is a 140 mile touring event taking in some of the best roads in northern England and the Borders.

The Cumbria Classic Show on the Sunday takes place in the superb parkland at Dalemain with over 600 cars expected. As well as the cars there will be lots of club displays, motorsport displays and all action autotests as well as autojumble and trade stands. Visitors also get discounted admission to Dalemain and its famous gardens.

The special features this year are “**90 Years of MG**” and “**Lotus Legends**” and MG and Lotus clubs are especially welcome. There are special rates at local hotels or camping on the show field.

We would like to invite you to join us this year for which is regarded as the best show in the region. WMC members can enter their cars free of charge.

Entry forms and details of all the events including the Rose & Thistle can be found on the our website at www.wigtonmc.co.uk

Rally Torque

News from Road & Stage

The **Malcolm Wilson Rally** ran with its usual slick format and organisation. 98 cars took the start but only 8 were from Cumbria which must be the lowest figure I can remember. Richard & Edwin Cook were doing well but retired after stage 7.

Rally Mexico saw a super fourth place for Elfyn Evans in the M Sport Fiesta WRC after an intelligent but fast drive. Nothing changes for Kris Meeke in the Citroen though, going very quickly until he crashed out.

M Sport have already produced **50 Fiesta R5s** and are hoping to double their production facility and add a development unit as well.

It wasn't perhaps much of a surprise to hear the first round of the **British Rally Championship** has been cancelled due to a shortfall in entries. Not running the historic first cut their entry drastically and the overall cost of these events is now too high. People are switching to the non nonsense events with no frills, shake downs and press days like the BTRDA series.



Steve Entwistle and Bob Hargreaves on their way to third overall on the North Yorkshire Classic Rally on March 23rd.

Autojumble

Buy, Sell, Exchange, Give!

Free to members

FOR SALE LANDROVER FREELANDER FOR SPARES OR REPAIR



R624HAB 1795cc 1998 Freelander petrol, MOT until 21st November 2014, not taxed, vehicle has been owned by me since March 2009 and has done 96,683 miles. Headgasket, timing belt, some valves, coil pack and other parts replaced about six months ago in case we got hard frost in our rural location and hardly used since just kept as a spare vehicle and now has been replaced by a Nissan X Trail.

The Transfer box (IRD) and viscous coupling were replaced probably about 8,000 or 10,000 miles ago (cost about £800 plus vat for parts) but there is a transmission

noise under load which appears to be a noisy bearing or bearings in the normal gearbox so this would need attention before the vehicle was put to any serious use.

It is tidy inside and out, trim is grey velour and front seats have seat covers fitted and it has a tow-bar.

I thought it would be ideal for someone wanting spares if competing in off road type events or needing a 4x4 but the transmission noise needs to be sorted. Test drive can be arranged if anyone is interested on our trade plates and it can be inspected on a vehicle lift if desired but it will need work doing hence being sold for spares or repair. I can email more pictures if required. **£450**

Keith Thomas, Branthwaite Mill, Branthwaite, Workington. Cumbria. 01900 603073

Fuel tank wanted for Westfield, Caterham, Locost type kit car.

Also Citroen 2cv type headlight reflector or headlight complete wanted for same car

Keith Thomas 01900 603073

Black Sea Vista in Bulgaria. A few dates still free in late May, June and August:
www.blackseavista.com

Barn storage: There is a space available at the moment. Ring Graeme on 01900 825642

Oil: Fuchs Classic Oil - 5 litres for £14.95 and for moderns Fuchs 10/40 semi synthetic - 5 litres for £16.95. Ring Graeme on 01900 825642.

MG Midget close ratio, straight cut gears and box. Ring Graeme on 01900 825642

FOR SALE - Peugeot 306 Rallye, 2.0 16v 167BHP 6-speed

Standard road going car except for Peugeot Sport Group 'N' Engine and Gearbox mounts + Suspension,

v stiff car, handles like its on rails. Lightweight, make ideal Sprint / Hillclimb / Classic Rally / Fast Road car. New radiator, brakes, recent Cambelt and Tensioners. Just MOT'd and taxed. Photos by request. Only £2000 Tel: 01931 712345 / 07899 992830 Tim Oliver

Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

More Cars Than Ever On UK Roads

If you thought the roads were getting more crowded, you're actually right. It's just been announced that at the end of last year there were in fact just under 32 MILLION cars on UK roads, an increase of 436000 on the previous year, a record growth. Not only are new cars sales rising, but cars are lasting longer, with the average age of a UK car now almost 8 years. Many of us remember when very few cars would last 8 years before the dreaded rust bug sent them to the scrapyard.

Of the almost 32 million cars almost 10% are either a Focus or a Fiesta, and almost 20% were British built, although more than that were assembled in Germany.

Fiat Group "Thinking Hard" About Alfa Romeo

Fiat/Chrysler's boss announced recently that he will announce a "Complete Rethink" of the Alfa Romeo brand in May. Admitting that "a number of mistakes have been made with Alfa" he recognised that "It's important to get the next phase right".

UK Alfa dealers who must celebrate actually selling a new car it happens so rarely may be cheered, but understandably cynical. One suggested to me that the "number of mistakes" was in fact "a vast number of".

Fiat promised to go back to what Alfa was, producing lightweight, good looking, powerful rear wheel drive cars. I think a lot of Alfa enthusiasts could have told them that (had they asked) without too much "hard thinking".

What might be good news (eventually) for Alfa means sadly bad news for Lancia. Fiat bluntly said they had neither the time nor the money to do much if anything about Lancia for a long time to come.

European Car Sales Still To Recover Properly

European new car sales whilst rising slowly are still a long way from returning to the 15 million units a year achieved in 2007 and 2008. In fact they are about 3 million cars a year below that, which is the equivalent of 10 or 12 average sized car factories. Fiat are making loud noises about restricting Korean and Japanese imports, but the EU shows little interest. Ford are confident they are on plan to return Ford of Europe to a profit by the end of 2015. However Opel/Vauxhall, Fiat, and Peugeot/Citroen are all still losing enormous amounts of money with little light at the end of the tunnel.

Ford Against Vauxhall

I reported recently that Vauxhall had a new American boss who had sworn to overtake Ford in terms of UK sales for the first time ever by 2016. Whether it was anything to do with that very public statement I'm not sure, but having barely had time to get his seat warm in Luton the gentleman in question has been "promoted" to become Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Buick back in the US. I'd quite forgotten that GM still made Buicks, and I can't help thinking this brave chap has been moved to the GM "Naughty Table".

His successor has confirmed he is still aiming for the number one slot (he could hardly say otherwise so soon), but added that growth must be "profitable". How he can say this with a straight face when GM Europe, of which Vauxhall are a big part, are losing million every week I'm not quite sure. He promised that Vauxhall wouldn't achieve growth by entering into "unprofitable fleet business". That means rental and Motability basically. They all say they won't sell into these markets, but as soon as their sales slow a little there's no stopping them.

It's no coincidence that Ford of Britain's boss chose to go on the record at the same time. He spiked the Vauxhall guns by saying that Ford being number one for 37 years was an "outcome" of "doing things right", not a "strategy" to "be number one at all costs".

Ford too are worried about over-capacity in Europe, and the probable drop in Russian sales because of the current political situation is their latest concern.

Manufacturers and Dealers Struggle To Reach March Targets

March is now the most important month for UK new car sales with the new plate boosting demand. If dealers and manufacturers have a bad March they are likely to have a bad year. Forward orders were very good for most but many dealers tell me things have slowed as the month has worn on. There's enormous pressure to get every last car registered by month end (a week away as I write). One of the problems is that the car transporter fleet, which declined during the recession for obvious reasons, simply can't be expanded quickly overnight. One solution is to bring transporters in from Europe where they are less busy. One large outfit I know has brought 60 transporters and drivers over temporarily, from as far away as Lithuania!

The final results will be interesting, I'll report next month. Certainly the number of special offers landing in my in box get more numerous and more desperate, all deals "Must Be Registered in March!"

Renault and Nissan Move Closer Together

Faced with "unacceptable" financial results Nissan/Renault have announced they intend to reduce costs by £3.6 BILLION a year by jointly managing the four key functions of Engineering, Manufacturing, Purchasing, and Human Resources from April 1 (that's next week!).

For Renault in particular there is to be a focus on "Product" and not "Discount". Having cut the UK dealer network by a third in 2011 Renault are now poised to reduce further from 190 dealers to around 135. That will have reduced the dealer number by half in three years. Not surprising when Renault car sales in the UK have reduced for 8% of the market to 2% in ten years. Sorry however badly you get it wrong, that takes doing! As half the UK dealers are rumoured to be losing money currently drastic action is clearly needed.

The World's Largest Car Market

Of course it was always the US, wasn't it. Well it WAS. Not for a while now though. Around six years ago more new cars were sold in China than the US for the first time. Last year almost 22 million new cars and light trucks were sold in China, a "mere" 15 million in the US. American, Far East, and European manufacturers have rushed to set up production facilities in China, and a host of local producers have sprung up. Chinese buyers have a bewildering 647 new models to choose from made by 111 different manufacturers. Products are tailored to Chinese tastes. Many business customers employ a driver because traffic conditions are so bad, and many buyers simply haven't learnt to drive. Therefore what we consider as relatively small cars like the Audi A4 are produced in long wheelbase versions to give more rear seat space.

More than anywhere in the World currently cars in China are an enormous status symbol. With still only a tiny proportion of the population able to afford a car those fortunate enough to be in that position very much use it to show they have "arrived". Of course the infrastructure hasn't been able to keep up. Ten years ago China had about 20,000 miles of "highway" roads. Now they have 70,000 miles. But it's not enough. Traffic jams are horrendous, commuting a nightmare. A couple of years ago a convoy of coal trucks coincided with major road works on Highway 110 near Beijing. The resulting traffic jam stretched for 100 km and took ten days to clear. Roads are often badly maintained and unlit. Driver training is very poor, decent street lighting is rare.

The result is the Chinese pay a high price for their new love for the car. Even though there are still far fewer cars in China than in the US, last year just over 35000 Americans died in road accidents. In China 276,000 sadly.

To alleviate congestion in Beijing officials are trying to restrict the number of cars on the streets. You have to enter a lottery to get the necessary registration plates, then only certain plates can drive on certain days. The way around that of course (provided you can afford it) is to buy 2 or even 3 cars so you will always be able to drive every day of the week!

Paul Gilligan

pg@gvcontracts.co.uk



Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

Formula 1 pre-season testing is now over and in many ways it's asked more questions than its given answers. Some teams seem reasonably confident, some hope to manage to be able to run a full race distance and some, mostly those with Renault power, are left despondent and downhearted having had a disastrous few weeks when instead of getting to know their car and its' capabilities on the circuit they've spent a lot more time sitting in the garage trying to figure out how to get it started and then make it run for a few laps before it grinds to a halt at the side of the track.

At the time of writing the Australian Grand Prix is 2 weeks away but below, based on pre-season test results, is a tongue in cheek account of what could happen.

The cars are lined up on the grid the lights change and 10 of the 22 tootle off on their warm up lap, the rest refuse to start and there's an hours delay while the recalcitrant 12 are fettled. The next time the lights change things are better except for the 2 Caterhams which spontaneously combust and need fire marshals to sort things out. The somewhat charred remains are pushed into their garages and the doors slammed shut. After another delay the race starts, Massa in a Williams has shot towards the front but his race finishes at the first corner when Alonso rams into his rear and both cars retire on the spot. Fernando later apologises saying he'd forgotten Massa was no longer his team-mate and had just expected him to get out of the way as usual.

The remaining 18 cars carry on round lap 1 but coming down the straight both Red Bulls expire in a cloud of smoke and steam, pulling off to the side but requiring a red flag as the track at it's fastest point is now like a skating rink.

The remaining 16 cars are lined up again on the grid while marshals clean up the mess. During this interval Christian Horner is interviewed, he says he's very positive, that they've got a lot of data during the 5 laps they've managed to do in three and a half hours of practise, qualifying and racing. Viewers doubt this when, on a remote camera Adrian Newey is seen behind the Red Bull garage leaning on a pile of tyres quietly weeping.

The depleted field re-starts with the Mercedes engined cars leading the pack but after 10 laps it comes over the radio that they'll need to slow down as the 100 litres of fuel permitted (it was 150 last year) will not get them to the chequered flag. The rest of the pack close up and by lap 20 are snapping at the heels of the 7 German powered cars, which manage to keep them at bay for a few more laps before all pulling off the track and into their garages as it is now obvious there is no possibility of them having enough fuel. Frank Williams is interviewed and points out that as the number of engines and gear-boxes allowed during the year has been reduced there's no point in trundling round wearing them out and still having to stop before the end.

9 cars continue to race with the Saubers of Sutil and Gutierrez leading the way as the pit stop window is reached and first one then the other rush in for a tyre change. Their cars have been running well enough but as they stop the turbo chargers start to over-heat and can be seen glowing white hot so before the cars can pull away they sink into the melted tarmac of the pit garage apron. They are retired. Monisha Kaltenborn is interviewed and is irate at the rubbish tarmac being used by the organisers.

The race continues with Grosjean in his Lotus and Vergne in his Toro Rosso scrapping over the lead. It's all quite exciting but eventually the crowd realises that their duelling matters not a jot as whoever is second on the last lap can use his kers and DRS to catapult past and so guarantee a win. The drivers realise the same slow down, and adopt an "after you" attitude. It's more like chess than motor racing but Maldonado, in his Lotus, blood up in third, sees the gap closing, the red mist descends and he lunges for the priceless second place. He fails, and all 3 cars end trapped in the gravel. The safety car

comes out while the 4 remaining runners parade round trying to eke out their fuel not to mention being in second place and still being quick enough to avoid turbo melt-down.

5 laps to go and Bianchi Marussia leads Raikkonen Ferrari in the favoured second place, Chilton Marussia is third and newcomer Kvyat in his Toro Rosso is bringing up the rear. By now all 4 cars are on the option tyres and suddenly strips of rubber are flying off the wheels as tyres explode. For half a lap young Chilton is leading then he too punctures. He climbs out of the car, bursts into tears and is consoled by the marshals. Kimi is parked up seen to swear then jumps over the barrier and joins the queue at the burger van.

The race is over, no-one got to the end, Bernie wishes he was in a German court-room and the circus ,clowns to the fore, moves on to the next venue. We can hardly wait!

Ends

AA

Support Closed Roads

A few weeks ago we sent out the MSA's response to the Government's consultation document on road closing, or more precisely suspension of the Road Traffic Act, so as to allow motorsport on the highway. I do hope that most of you have taken the time to respond. The MSA reckon a maximum of 20 events are possible being a mixture of rallies and speed events. Publicity has been given to the prospect of a London GP and using short lengths of road to join forest sections of Rally GB in north Wales.

Realistically the possibility of lots of closed road rallies have to be slim, perhaps a couple in areas where night road rallying still takes place. Events like the Jim Clark Memorial Rally and the Tour of Mull have taken place for over 40 years while the many events in Ireland and the Isle of Man have been going for more than a century and are thus part of the local culture. Getting a new event off the ground would be extremely difficult, holiday homes, national parks etc would all object and local businesses would need a great deal of persuading that there would be an increase in turnover. It's a great pity that a lot of twaddle has been talked about lots of potential road events, invariably by folk who have never even organised a treasure hunt! I can't think of any area of Cumbria where such a rally could take place despite some super roads. The other point is that events like the Jim Clark have massive budgets and costs and rely on the national and international level competitors entering. They can never offer anything for club level competitors.

There may be more scope for speed events, perhaps based on the current "demonstration" or revival events that have popped up in recent years. There are several possible venues in Cumbria but the crunch will come when the actual cost of putting on the event is known. Again the costs may well mean that it has to be a big "public" event in order to cover costs and also to bring in revenue to the local community to offset any disruption and disturbance the event may cause.

However I still believe that this is something we should support.

What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

April

13th	EACC	Kames Sprint (BSCBSC Round 1)
13th	IDMC	Ilkley Classic Rally (NESCRO)
13th	BARC	Harewood Hillclimb
21st	D&DMC	Croft Sprint
21st	S&DMC	Tour of Hamsterley
25-27	WMC	Getaway Gallop
26/27	BARC	Race Meeting at Croft

May

3/4th	CSCC	Pirelli Rally
3/4th	B&DMC	Berwick Classic (Gates Tyres Rally Awards)
7th	WMC	Grass Autotest
10th	KLMC	Barbon National Hill Climb
11th	SoSCC	Targa Rally
14th	WMC	Pub Run
18th	WMC	Drive In Day
30-1st	BECC	Jim Clark Memorial Rally

Face Book: www.facebook.com/wigtonmc

Visit the website for all the latest news

Forum Log in: wigtonmc. Password: marshals

Please only phone club officials between 19.00 and 21.00 in the evening.

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