

Tartan winners at Seagull Autotest



Wiggy's got a new toy – and not one with four wheels. A megaphone of the sort that emits an acutely annoying noise like an American cop car and which prompted Jimmy Thompson to

suggest it may find itself inserted into a dark place about Wiggy's person by the end of the day – sideways. The megaphone did, however, have the desired effect of drawing our attention to the job in hand and with cries of “last one there's a cissy” we set off for the Arena, and the first test, like lambs to the slaughter.

Yes, that's right. The stars of South of Scotland Car Club had descended on us from north of the border laden with Tunnocks tea cakes. Their motto appeared to be “Go hard or go home” so some of us thought discretion was the better part of valour and decided to throw in the gauntlet early on muttering phrases like “oh, what's the point”, “I'll get me coat”, “handbrake doesn't work” and “get the hankies out”.

All was not lost however. Our hopes for a Wigton victory were resting on David Agnew's paint job. Rumour had it that it had given him another 300hp under the bonnet of the Clio.

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Diary

Club events over the next month or so

May Pub Run

May 6th 7 pm

The start will be at the car park opposite The Auctioneer on Rosehill Industrial Estate Carlisle covering a route of 39.2 miles finishing at The Lane End Inn near Hayton Brampton.

Contact details, John and Anne Holliday, tel 01228 561251, mobile 07769035522, john.holl@homecall.co.uk

May Grass Autotest

May 20th

At Blackbeck,
Contact David Agnew for an entry
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Talking Point

Topical comment from the world of motoring

The quality of the interesting and entertaining articles in Start Line is the envy of every club magazine editor I know. I think this issue is particularly good with a variety of event reports, features and pre-views. A throw away comment by me in last month's issue about the electric car from Brampton has resulted in a superb article by Owen Roberts on the development and ultimate sad demise of the Fox. Are there any more untold stories out there?

The past year or so has seen the autotest scene really take off again with excellent entries for our monthly events. The great thing about autotests is the value for money. All you need is a car, no special equipment, competition licence, helmet, race suit etc and the entry fee is just a tenner! On our last event the drivers got between 15 and 20 minutes of competition for their £10. Compare that to a stage rally or a sprint! We are always looking for new venues and really need one in or near Carlisle.

May is also the start of the social runs on a Wednesday evening. We are trying to spread these around the county and once again we have some new organisers coming forward to run them. The first is Carlisle based, June is west Cumbria, July starts near Penrith and August will be central.

It was great to see that Kris Meeke had won the Rally of Argentina and that Elfyn Evans had taken third place in the M Sport Fiesta. It's the best result for UK crews since 2002 which saw Colin McRae's last win. It could not have come at a better time for rallying in the UK which seems to have hit an all time low in terms of the number of events and competitors while the implications of the new safety rules introduced on June 1st will be far reaching and will no doubt lead to fewer events being run. The rule that all rally marshals will have to be "trained" and "certificated" will mean there are fewer folk willing to do these jobs. People have far too much "training" in their working lives to want to undertake it in their hobby. Perhaps if we were all "certified" we could then do what we like!

The one area of growth in UK motorsport is with the big "show/demonstration" type events and we have details of some in this issue. Some of quite openly commercial events while others are run by clubs. They certainly attract plenty of competitors and spectators. The danger is that they may become too many and too much of a repeat. Goodwood has the resources to bring in ever better cars and drivers but there is not a infinite pool of interesting cars and there is a danger that enthusiasts take a "been there - done that" attitude. Rally Day at Castle Combe has seen declining attendance in recent years for that reason.

In this issue you will see a competition for free tickets to the Chateau Impney Hill Climb and this will run in the next two issues as well with new questions. Thanks to Keith Thomas for arranging it.

GTF



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The SoSCC folk were starting to look worried – as well they might. David soon dashed our hopes and put their minds at rest – a respectable, but not earth shattering, time was recorded and the Scots, visibly relieved, roared into action. Willie Keaning set off in the MX5 (with some sort of futuristic differential for those of you interested) releasing clouds of billowing white smoke which soon engulfed

the course. By the look of things he was about to suffer a catastrophic engine failure. But no – the smoke cleared and he had already finished in record breaking time. Gamesmanship - obviously. Warren, and then Kelsey, Gillespie hurtled about in the yellow Nova like something demented while we stood about grinning and clapping and inwardly sobbing.

Oh oh – my turn next. Now there is a general consensus of opinion in the Sloan household that I spend too much time talking and not enough time remembering the route. As the husband pointed out “You can’t compete with most of us but at least you could try to beat Roger Pope”. Bit harsh I thought. But off I went only to be yelled at unceremoniously by said husband in order to escape the dreaded WT by the skin of my teeth. Fairly dismal attempt after all said and done but at least I had a clean sheet.



The final section of the day was to run tests 1 & 2 together with the addition of a 360 just before the “join”. Complete chaos and confusion broke out with Edwin Cook scooping up a cone with his back wheel where it stuck like a magnet destroying his concentration – had to retire hurt. And then, Bingo! The Pope achieved his long overdue senior moment of the day and did 360s everywhere but in the right place. I have got no room to talk – my driving was up to its usual, er, high standard (yeah, alright) when I caught an infectious senior moment off Roger and my mind went blank under the barrage of instructions received at fever pitch from the husband. Jimmy Thompson was later heard to say that I was so slow he thought I was going to be the first competitor in the history of autotesting to be lapped by another driver. Cheek. To be honest, I laughed so much I thought my trousers would never dry.



The husband took a turn and made an incredibly decent job of it by all accounts (that’s what the results showed anyway) – not that I witnessed any of it – too busy gassing. I managed to miss Steve Dixon’s performance too but DID notice the new fibre glass tailgate on the Corsa – a much easier way of reducing the power to weight ratio than keeping out of Greggs. Must have been a good move as Steve won a podium position alongside the husband and the lovely, reliable as

ever, Mr Fishcake Fishwick. And yes, I missed his efforts, too.

So the Border Reivers made off with most of the prizes but they were brilliant to watch. Well deserved victories for our Scottish friends and for our chaps – the three of them saved our faces and our bacon.

A few plaudits of my own:

Best suntan: Tie between David Agnew and Roger Pope

Most exuberant uncontrolled fishtail of the day – Chris Hunter

Lamest excuse for not winning – no handbrake – Jimmy Thompson

Best joke – Jimmy Thompson

Cheeky rear wheel lift of the day – Edwin Cook (how does he DO that?)

Best haircut – Nigel Moffat

Worst breakdown of the day – Rob Iveson - snapped something suspension related on the Mini and didn't make it to first base. Reduced to travelling in style in the Cityrover while sister Megan slumped it in Steve Palmer's Ka held together with duct tape (the Ka - not Megan).

And finally: Best cake of the day – Mandy Iveson for chocolate cake and gingerbread.

Our thanks to all our chirpy marshals and organisers: James, David, Robin and Nigel – great job, lads! And not forgetting Graeme and Wiggy beavering away in the background. Have you managed to dislodge that megaphone yet, Wiggy? Just give it a quick rinse - it'll be OK for next time.....

Cheers!

Marian Sloan (aka Maz)



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.

5679- Michael Holmes – Carlisle

5685 – Ross Glen- Dumbarton

5693/94 Brian & Victoria Young – Brampton

5696 Vicky Park - Aberdeen

5680/82 – Mark Holliday & Family – Penrith

5689 Graham Warwick – Annan

5695 Leslie- Ann Scoular – Stirlingshire

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.

McRae Rally Challenge, Knockhill – May 16th / 17th



Former World Rally Champion Hannu Mikkola and long time co-driver Arne Hertz are the latest stars to sign-up for this month's McRae Rally Challenge. They won't be alone. Sharing the spotlight will be a number of rare and exotic Audi Quattro rally cars, the Group B machines that changed the sport in the 1980s for ever.

The 'Flying Finns' will be in attendance 'with the four-wheel-drive 'supercars' that are part of the demonstrations and displays at the McRae Rally Challenge, supported by Beatsons' Building Supplies and EventScotland, a special two-day rally event celebrating the 20th anniversary of Colin McRae's World Rally Championship

win.

Mikkola was active in international rallying between 1972-93 and two years after joining Audi, won the 1983 Driver's World title achieving four wins and three second places in the revolutionary Audi quattro with Hertz.

Mikkola was always a great favourite with the Scottish crowds, especially in the days when the week long annual RSAC Scottish Rally visited all points of the Scottish compass. Competitors trekked all across the country from the Great Glen forests in the north to Glentworth in the south, and from Drumtochty in the east to Knapdale in the west. In those days, the rally was as much a test of stamina and mechanical endurance, as skill and speed.



He first won the Scottish Rally in 1972, then again in 1978 and finally in 1980 in a Ford Escort Mk2, but it was his exploits in the four wheel drive turbocharged Audi quattro that sealed his popularity with some fervent Scottish fans changing his name to 'McKkola'. He won the Scottish Rally a further twice in 1982 and 1984 in an Audi quattro - with Sweden's Stig Blomqvist ruining his hat-trick in 1983 also at the wheel of an Audi Quattro!

Hannu commented: "It's always nice to get back behind the wheel of an Audi quattro rally car and never fails to bring back special memories for me. Scotland has always been a favourite place of

mine to rally in the UK, and I have been fortunate enough to do really well there too. It's also great to support this event and celebrate a fantastic achievement in British motorsports and remember what Colin accomplished in the sport."

Mikkola won the 1981 and '82 RAC Rallies, that also swept through Scotland, and claimed victory, with Phil Short, on the 1982 Scottish International Rally in an Audi A2 quattro. He missed out on the 'world' crown to fellow Audi driver Stig Blomqvist that year – the Swede also claiming the British Open Championship title in 1983.

Various derivatives of the Audi quattro were also victorious in Scotland in the hands of Blomqvist (1983), Malcolm Wilson (1985) and David Llewellyn (1987).

The original Audi quattro rally car debuted in 1980 while the Audi Sport quattro S1 E2 that Mikkola drives at the Colin McRae Anniversary event was rallied in 1985. Between 1981-85, quattros won 23 WRC events and netted two WRC Manufacturers' titles (1982/84).

MG Live!

June 19th-20th

While 2014 was the year of MG90, there's plenty to celebrate at **MGLive!** this year as the MGA turns 60, while it's sibling F turns 20. Not to be left out the MGB GT will also be marking its 50th birthday.



The big celebration this year though, has to be **Competitions 60**. Way back in 1955 the Competitions Department was formed at the MG works in Abingdon, leading to the creation of some of the best-loved, most successful race and rally cars of the 1960s and 1970s.

Those iconic Minis that won so many rallies, the MGB that won the epic 84 hour Marathon De La Route, the land speed cars and more, were all built in Abingdon and **MGLive!** will be celebrating the achievements of these wonderful cars at this year's show with a Competitions Marquee and

more.

The biggest traders in the MG world will be on hand to help you find that much-needed part or panel, while Saturday's autojumble will give visitors the opportunity to hunt down plenty of bargains and if you're looking for something a little different then a trip to the Lifestyle Marquee where you'll find everything from jams to chutneys, through to beauty treatments.

If you're keen to get your MG on to the famous Silverstone tarmac, circuit tours are available to MGCC members at just £30. A strict limit of 50 places are available for these tours, with half of the allocation already sold.

Stunt driver Russ Swift returns to the Live Arena, joined by the Savage Skills Cycle Display team and other exciting guests across the weekend – if you've always wanted to see an MG up on two wheels, this is your chance.

As always, **MGLive!** also includes a packed programme of racing on the **Silverstone Grand Prix Circuit** with action from the club's own championships but also races from the likes of Porsche and Healey Driver's Club International also competing on track.

If you fancy getting yourself involved in some competition, why not enter the Autosolo or the California Cup Autotest? Both take place in Car Park 49 with the California Cup on Saturday and the Autosolo on Sunday. The California Cup is one of the longest-standing competitions in the Club's history and 2015 will see the Cup contested over a new course. Entry to the California Cup is exclusive to MG Car Club members, while the Autosolo has proved tremendously popular since its introduction in 2012. The cost for entering both the California Cup and the Autotest is £20.

Saturday night sees the President's International Dinner take place at the nearby Silverstone Golf Club. The event is hosted by the Club's President, John Day, and features a three course dinner, a charity auction and more – first held at the Golf Club in 2014 the event proved tremendously popular – we've increased the number of tickets available for this year's dinner, but as expected, they're selling fast, [so book now to avoid disappointment.](#)

For those looking for a more relaxed evening, the Social Marquee incorporates a fully-licensed bar with live music and a Hog Roast. The fun doesn't stop once the sun goes down, however – as the Glow Car Competition will once again light up the night. The Glow Car competition is split into two classes – ProGlow and ImproGlow. The former is for those with lights already installed on their car, the latter for people looking to have a go on the night. Entry to the Glow Car competition, as always, is free.

PG Tips

I haven't mentioned Snotty the Skoda too much recently because I didn't want to jinx anything, but as it is I don't need to say anything for things to go epically wrong! The good news is that with a week to go to the Isle Of Man Classic speed event(s) Snotty is in full working order and hopefully up to the job. Three weeks ago things were a little different however. With my new engine built and set up on JDM's rolling road I was running the new bottom end in nice and carefully when I decided that I would finally try and sort out the minor misfire that seemed to be caused by the ECU. I contacted the manufacturers and sent it off. Checks completed and seemingly no faults, however the chap at Canems uploaded a new software fix for the crank sensor circuit which is where I (I say I, I really mean Jonathon at JDM!) figured the problem was. Once safely back in my hands a bit of re-wiring was needed but the car still worked so I took it to Jonathon as I am useless with small wires and soldering. Twenty minutes later it was all done and no more misfire. Excellent I thought – I'm all set for the Isle of Man. 2 minutes later as I drove down the road I could feel a nasty vibration from the engine and then there was an almighty bang followed by some serious rattling. Behold the result –



Yep one of the fancy new lightweight forged conrods had been ejected from the engine.....through the block! After being rescued I was lucky enough to track down a replacement block and a couple of other bits I needed for an engine build...with standard rods. There we have it, 3 weeks on and the old green Skud is fully operational again. Having now investigated what happened it would appear that one of the sexy ARP bolts holding that rod in came loose which then snapped the other one that was still tight and then BANG! As the builder of that particular engine, it's a bit embarrassing, however I torqued up every bolt according to my usual procedure. The main issue being that I didn't have any knowledge of the special treatment ARP bolts need – i.e. more torque than standard and I also should have been given a special lube to use on the threads and some instructions! I have raised this with the people in the Czech Republic and they are sending me a replacement rod and the correct torque settings. So – if you're build something with ARP bolts.....check the torque settings!

On another subject – I am considering sending my recently purchased Skoda wreck....sorry....rare 120 Rapid coupe project to the Wigton barn. I have some concerns about this as I have usually referred to it as 'the barn of doom' due to the fact that no car ever seems to come out of slumber there and into use again. I know of several that have been abandoned there for donkeys years and also of Paul Eastwood's Fiesta that lay there so long it has now been scrapped (after costing him enough in storage fees to have bought a fully functioning one!). The reason behind the possible move is to replace the wreck....sorry....project with something I can use in the summer and I have my eye on just such a vehicle now but I don't have a garage for it without moving the wreck....sorry....project. So, if anyone has a good news story about how they put their pride and joy to 'rest' in the barn and then collected it and brought it back to life a few years later please feel free to let me know so I can be more upbeat about the fate of my wreck....sorry....project! Incidentally I have my eye on something very rare and roofless for the summer that has a winged arrow badge (no yawning at the back)that's another Skoda to anyone who doesn't know....I can only apologise. Peter

The Greatest Race Ever?

I suppose that everyone has their choice of what was the greatest race or rally. This week sees the sixtieth anniversary of what I think was a real contender for that title, particularly as it was a race that was almost a rally. It also saw the first use of pace notes.

The 22nd Mille Miglia was a motor race held on a 992.332 mile (1597 km) course made up entirely of public roads around Italy, mostly on the outer parts of the country on April 30-May 1, 1955. The route was based on a round trip between [Brescia](#) and [Rome](#), with start/finish, in Brescia. It was the 3rd round of the [1955 World Sports Car Championship](#).

As in previous years, the event was not strictly a race against each other, as the cars are released at one minute intervals with the smaller displacement slower cars started first. Each car number related to their allocated start time. For example [Luigi Musso](#)'s car had the number 651, he left Brescia at 6:51am, while the first cars had started late in the evening on the previous day. Some drivers went with navigators, others didn't; a number of local Italian drivers had knowledge of the routes being used and felt confident enough that they wouldn't need one.



This race was won by Mercedes-Benz factory driver [Stirling Moss](#) with the aid of his navigator [Denis Jenkinson](#). They completed the 992-mile distance in 10 hours, 7 minutes and 48 seconds—an average speed of 99 mph (160 km/h). The two Englishmen finished 32 minutes in front of their second-placed team mate, Argentine [Juan Manuel Fangio](#). The Moss/Jenkinson Mercedes started at 7.22 a.m. and was thus number 722. That Mercedes 200 SLR is perhaps one of the most iconic and valuable racing cars in the world.

It is owned and maintained by Mercedes and gets

used regularly. It will of course be at the Mille Miglia celebrations and later at Goodwood.

A total of 543 cars started the event, across 12 classes based on engine sizes, ranging from up to 750cc to over 2.0-litre, for Grand Touring Cars, Touring Cars and Sport Cars..

Most of the drivers drove single handed with the Italians having an advantage as they knew the roads. There was a fair bit of practicing and route learning but the British and German crews were at a disadvantage. However Moss had recruited Denis Jenkinson as his passenger. Jenkinson was a past motor bike side-car passenger champion and was suitably fearless. He was also the Continental Correspondent for Motor Sport, covering all the major European events for them at a time when racing and rallying was not covered as it later was. "Jenks" is considered to be the finest motorsport journalist ever. As they practiced the route he realised that some form of notes were needed and developed a wooden roller system with rolls of paper notes that he could scroll down. Intercoms of course had not been invented so it was a matter of shouting or hand signals

Initially, the Mercedes duo didn't have everything their own way, [Eugenio Castellotti](#) simply streaked away from the field in his privately entered [Ferrari 121 LM](#). With its massively powerful 4.4-litre engine, he had sufficient speed to do the job, but he was trying to extract more than the car had to offer. By the time the fastest cars reached the town of [Ravenna](#) on the Adriatic Sea, he was two minutes ahead of Moss/Jenkinson, but Castellotti was driving like a madman as he slide his Ferrari through the corners, his tyres leaving large black streaks on the road and enveloping itself in a great cloud of dust. However, as the cars streaked down the coastline towards [Pescara](#), the over-taxed Ferrari cried 'enough!' Castellotti had simply been pushing too hard. His teammate, Marzotto had a promising start but disaster struck when a tyre threw a tread as he was travelling at 174 mph. He was able to keep the car on the road but as he stopped to grab the spare, he noticed that it was a different size from the others, so he was forced into retirement.

Moss surged into the lead as the fastest Ferrari expired, but still there was opposition to be dealt with – this time from the Scuderia Ferrari driver, [Piero Taruffi](#). Taruffi had averaged a stunning

130 mph on the sprint down to Pescara, leaving all previous Mille Miglia records shattered in the dust of his 118 LM. But only a wafer-thin margin now separated the lead two cars as they refuelled, with Moss snatching the advantage thanks to a quicker stop. Fangio, driving alone, at this stage began to develop engine problems

The next checkpoint was in the town of [L'Aquila](#), and in order to get there, a 62.5 mile (100 km) route through the mountains had to be bypassed. By the time Moss and Jenkinson reached this town, they were leading by 35 seconds, followed by Herrmann, Taruffi, Fangio and Kling - All the Mercedes cars entered were running 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th.

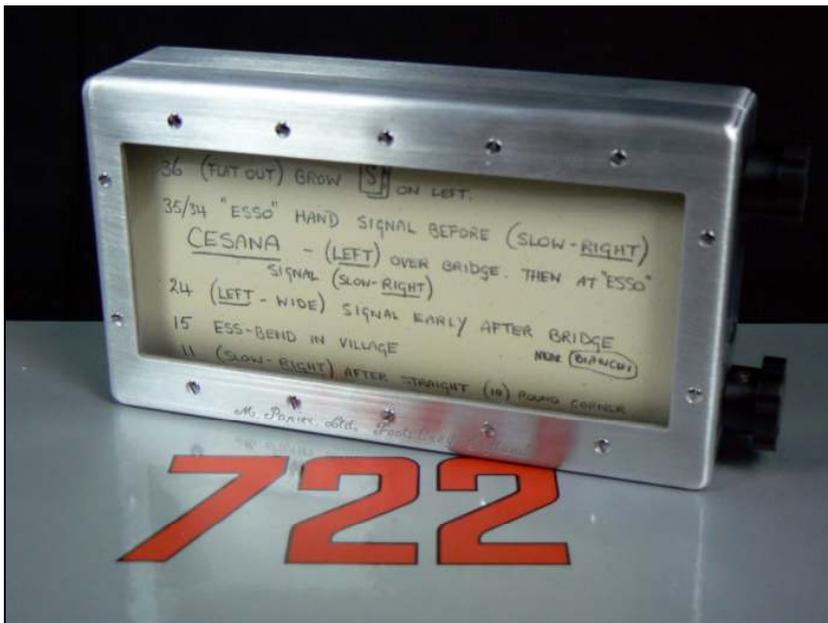
By this time, Jenkinson's map-rolling device was paying off handsomely. Moss's supreme confidence in his co-driver allowed him to slam over blind brows in absolute confidence at around 170 mph, on occasion the Mercedes actually flying for about 200 feet before crashing back on the tarmac. In that 28 second stop at Pescara, the 300SLR was quickly topped with 18 gallons of fuel, sufficient to reach its main stop in Rome



Moss became the first and only Briton and one of the few non-Italians to win the Mille Miglia outright. He won by an incredible 32 minutes. As if that was not enough, Moss also won the Index of Performance, normally the preserve of the smaller capacity cars.

The event only lasted another two years as in 1957 it was marred by two fatal accidents with twelve deaths. In more recent times it has been revived as a touring event with a few regularity sections and attracted the same type of people as Goodwood who are willing to pay a small fortune to take

part. Only cars that actually took part or very similar, can enter so these cars' value has risen dramatically, even if they were little Fiats! There is now a firm in Italy that owns many cars that are guaranteed entries and hire them out at a premium.



When you look at Jenk's roller pace notes it looks incredibly advanced for its time. Even now rally navigators are using flip over note book type papers.

GTF

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

The motoring highlight of my past month was the Flying Scotsman which is a Vintage Reliability Trial organised by the Endurance Rally Association running from 17th to 19th April. It was conceived by the creative brain of Philip Young who was alas lost to the motoring world after he succumbed to head injuries following a low speed motorcycle accident in Burma. Philip was also responsible for the Peking Paris Rally, the Classic Safari, Road to the Incas and the Alpine Trial amongst many others. Fortunately he built a good team round him and his events will continue.

The Flying Scotsman 2015 started at Oulton Hall Hotel, Leeds and over three days stayed closer to the east coast than last year. So the control allocated to us was situated between Kelso and Kirk Yetholm a 130 mile round trip from Carlisle. Our team consisted of Paul Gilligan, Ed Glaister and Mike Little plus Hamish Macleod who travelled cross country from Moffat to join us for the control which opened at 9.54am.

The weather was glorious and we were located in beautiful rolling countryside and apart from the organisers and rally cars we saw perhaps three or four other cars, one walker and one horseman in three hours. Coffee and sandwiches were taken to ward off the chill wind and we had four official cars visit us in the hour before the first competitor was due. This year we were allocated a Time Control rather than a Regularity Timing Point as last year and this gave us an opportunity to talk with the crews and look over their glorious steeds while they waited about a minute for their due time. The running order had been shuffled at the restart on Saturday morning to have the leaders coming first and the less successful taking up the rear in the order of their success the previous day. With 108 cars on the entry list there was plenty of eye candy to keep us fully occupied.

Local Wigton MC entries were Charles and Kit Graves in the 1937 Bentley 4.5 Derby Special and Keith Graham and Sue Hoffmann in their 1935 Bentley 3.5 VDP Tourer. Both crews had their share of problems with Charles and Kit having Halda trip drive failure at the start of day two after lying 11th on day one. They soldiered on despite the problem and finished 19th overall and 5th in class. Keith and Sue endured more than their fair share of problems with similar trip meter issues, starter motor malfunctions and a puncture thrown in for good measure finishing 50th and 10th in class at the finish. Gleneagles Hotel was the finish venue and there must be many worse places to celebrate the end of a pretty tough three day trial. For a list of runners and riders visit www.endurorally.com.

Overall honours went to William Medcalf and Tony Brooks in a Bentley Super Sports 'flying machine' with a total 27 mins 40 secs penalty but closely followed by Bill Cleyndert and Dan Harrison in a Ford Model A Special a mere 49 seconds behind after three days competition. And what's more another of Henry's products finished in 8th place a further 2mins 16 secs back. Values of these cars are difficult to estimate accurately unless you are getting your chequebook out but the winning Bentley could cost circa £400k while the tiddler Model 'A's cost perhaps £40 to £50k. Must pop down to Arnold Clark and order one....

Look out for this event next year for perhaps the finest gathering of pre-war cars being driven with competition in mind. And we mustn't forget our member Bob Hargreaves who did a sterling job as chief marshal on this event – he'll be able to get some sleep now.

Ron



Classic Column

News from the Classic Scene

No one got the question right last time: “The Golf GTi will be along in a second”, referred to the MG Maestro 2.0 EFi advert as it was a second quicker than the Golf for 0 to 60 mph.

This month’s puzzle: What did Fred Francis invite that many members will have (or do) own?

Nicky Porter is organising the **Butterwick Hospice Charity Drive** again this year on Sunday June 14th.

This year we are starting at the Cross Lane Farm Shop near Barnard Castle, driving over the Stang & then following parts of last years Tour de France route over Grinton Moor and the Buttertubs Pass.

The finish will be at Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle. The route is about 75 miles & is open to all cars. A £40.00 entry fee will be charged but you will get a proper Sunday Lunch at the Hawes Wensleydale Creamery with a little cheese tasting.

Entries to: Helen Kirby, Butterwick Hospice, Woodhouse Lane, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham, DL14 6JU.

Tel: 01388/603003. Email: helenkirby@butterwick.org.uk

Open Garden and Classic Car Gathering

Sunday, May 31st between 1 and 5 pm at
Crookdake Farm, Aspatria, Wigton CA7 3SH
Tel 016973 20413

No need to enter, just come and go as you please – a good excuse for a run out on what we hope will be a nice day.

All in a good cause for cancer charities under the National Gardens Scheme.
Kirk and Alannah Rylands

Lake District Classic Rally

&

Lake District Targa Rally

Sunday, June 28th

Around 20 tests and no regularities

Entry forms at www.wigtonmc.co.uk

Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards

WMC/Gates Challenge 2015

There have been no Rounds of the Challenge since the Hexham but the next Round is imminent with the “Berwick” on May 2nd/3rd. The Berwick is a well established event offering some of the best tests in the NESCR0 series and 2 or 3 straightforward regularities. Don’t hesitate while you wonder whether to enter or not, it is a Bank Holiday weekend and there are plenty of good B&Bs in the area.

Competitors continue to *register* for this year’s Challenge – we are now up to 23 crews driving some very interesting cars. I’m hoping to see plenty of Challenge crews up in the Borders on May 2nd/3rd.

Roof of England Challenge 12.04.15

Ruth and I decided to get our vintage wheels turning good and early this year so after a few outings in our neighbouring dales around Ingleton and Kirkby Lonsdale we submitted an entry for the MG Cumbria Challenge on April 12th.

After a week of near perfect Spring weather the forecast for the weekend wasn’t promising and by 10pm Saturday night heavy rain and snow was forecast for much of the day exactly where the route was likely to run. Well, we are geared up for motoring in our 1936 Singer le Mans (no heater, hood “for the use of” but only in extreme conditions) so in addition to our waterproofs we packed our *Neige et Glace* thermals – including brightly coloured *long johns* for him and salopets for her!

Light rain pursued us up to the Start at Rheged but while we were signing on and browsing the route over a coffee and mandatory bacon buttie some serious rain started to fall. Around 50 cars were listed for this Challenge with Car 0 being a 1931 Ford Model A and us at Car 1. A couple of 1950’s MGs (TD and TF) lined up behind us and they were followed by an XK150 and an MGA Twin Cam Coupe. Then we were into 1960s cars and cars from subsequent decades. It appeared that some older car owners may have elected to come in their “modern” after looking at the weather on Sunday morning.

Electing to start with the top down and the tonneau snuggled up around us, we left Rheged and went east past Penrith and then south and south east via Cliburn and Morland and after about 10 miles the heavy rain had deteriorated toheavy snow! This was proving problematic for the navigator despite her waterproof map cover so we *wimped out* and (sensibly) stopped and raised the hood. Now we could see where we were going and we pressed on through the Meaburns to Ormside where we took a hairpin right and having made the turning I rather ill advisedly said, “Are you sure?” and got the reply, “Apparently, on the odd occasion David Marsden mistakenly asks you that question when you’re in the historic rally car, you don’t speak to him for the next 5 miles!! So, shut up!!!”. I apologised, peace broke out and we went on our merry way through Soulby, some narrow flooded roads around the Musgraves before popping out near Winton and running briefly down the A road to Brough.





Now the Challenge began to unfold in earnest (well it does if you are motoring in 1930s style), with a long climb up onto the moors leading to Teasdale. More snow was falling and we plugged away before making a long and enjoyable descent to the reservoir car park at Grasshome (41 miles). A quick break, use of the facilities and a natter to some of the other crews including Clive and Penny Kennedy (Clive and his MGC gave us some serious opposition for many years in the NES-CRO Historic Rally Challenge).

We climbed steeply out of Grassholme and then took the moorland roads to the Eggleston area, dropped into Staindrop and then took some long fast roads (we must have been doing 50mph (!!)) at times - downhill with a tail wind, of course) to our lunch stop at the National Railway Museum, Shildon, County Durham (73 miles).

An excellent venue with plenty going on and a first class buffet lunch. Our youngest son, his wife and grandson Will were there to meet us and we were able to share Will's 3rd birthday cake over lunch.

We'd arrived into lunch about half way down the field (our lower average speed dropped us down the running order) so we needed to be away fairly sharply so as not to lose too much time. Our route detoured us around the busier parts of Bishop Auckland and Barnard Castle before heading for the Hamsterley Forest area (RAC Rally territory). Some great lanes and the rain started to ease a bit as we pressed on towards Staindrop. A few more entrants appeared from time to time and sailed by with a cheery wave and/or pip of the horn (we assumed they were cheery waves?!).

After Staindrop we turned North and went up and over the fells into Northumberland. The cloud came down and the view disappeared. Last year I navigated the Course Closing car on the Flying Scotsman and we took this road on a beautifully clear afternoon with magnificent views in all directions. Not so on the 12th April 2015 and what's more the air temperature dropped dramatically – it isn't often you climb so high with the little 972cc, OHC, 2-bearing engine spinning willingly whilst barely getting into the warm zone of the temperature gauge! By contrast, with the need for frequent gear changes on some of the climbs the driver keeps nice and warm because not having a synchromesh gearbox his legs are doing something of a war dance double declutching up and down the gearbox!

Soon we were descending through a series of hairpins down to Allenheads (Hexham Rally territory now), then a smashing run along the sweeping B road to Allendale (118 miles) and a short break in the sunny square. Much chat with various folk while we dropped the now dry hood and topped up the fuel with 5litres from our travelling reserve (I should really have dipped the tank at Allendale...). The last 24 miles took us to the café on top of Hartside Pass and the now sunny route took us through the lanes via Nineheads, Nenthead and Garrigill. There were a number of stiff climbs and we had to go for bottom gear a couple of times so apologies to anybody caught out by our remarkable hill climbing ability (!). All was going well until about 400m from the top of Hartside when.....we ran out of fuel. I'm grateful to Clive & Penny Kennedy for riding drag over this section because with two cars stopped there was a chance the Sunday motorists might see at least one of us and slow down. The 2nd travelling petrol can was poured into the tank and we were quickly on our way to the finish at the Hartside Café (142 miles).

Over a cup of tea we shared "moments" with some of the other crews and reflected on a great and "Challenging" day out. Our thanks go to Graeme Forrester and his willing team of helpers from MG Cumbria and Wigton MC, and we hope they will let us join in the fun on some of their future tours.

Mike and Ruth Garstang. (Photo by Clive Kennedy)

BYGONES

Anecdotes

Duct (Duck) Tape: The idea for what became duct tape came from Vesta Stoudt, an ordnance-factory worker and mother of two Navy sailors, who worried that problems with ammunition box seals would cost soldiers precious time in battle.



She wrote to President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) in 1943 with the idea to seal the boxes with a fabric tape, which she had tested at her factory. The letter was forwarded to the War Production Board, who put Johnson & Johnson on the job. The [Revolite](#) division of [Johnson & Johnson](#) had made medical adhesive tapes from duck cloth from 1927 and a team headed by Revolite's Johnny Denoye and Johnson & Johnson's Bill Gross developed the new adhesive tape, designed to be ripped by hand, not cut with scissors.

Their new unnamed product was made of thin cotton duck tape coated in waterproof [polyethylene](#) (plastic) with a layer of rubber-based grey adhesive ("Polycoat") bonded to one side. It was easy to apply and remove, and was soon adapted to repair military equipment quickly, including vehicles and weapons. This tape, coloured in army-standard matte [olive drab](#), was nicknamed "duck tape" by the soldiers. Various theories have been put forward for the nickname, including the descendant relation to cotton duck fabric, the waterproof characteristics of a [duck](#) bird, and even the 1942 amphibious military vehicle [DUKW](#) which was pronounced "duck".

After the war, the duck tape product was sold in hardware stores for household repairs. The Melvin A. Anderson Company of [Cleveland, Ohio](#), acquired the rights to the tape in 1950. It was commonly used in construction to wrap air ducts. Following this application, the name "duct tape" came into use in the 1950s, along with tape products that were coloured silvery grey like tin ductwork. Specialized heat- and cold-resistant tapes were developed for heating and air-conditioning ducts. By 1960 a [St. Louis, Missouri](#), HVAC company, Albert Arno, Inc., trademarked the name "Ductape" for their "flame-resistant" duct tape, capable of holding together at 350–400 °F (177–204 °C).

In 1971, Jack Kahl bought the Anderson firm and renamed it Manco. In 1975, Kahl rebranded the duct tape made by his company. Because the previously used generic term "duck tape" had fallen out of use, he was able to trademark the brand "Duck Tape" and market his product complete with a yellow cartoon duck logo. In 1979, the Duck Tape marketing plan involved sending out greeting cards with the duck branding, four times a year, to 32,000 hardware managers. This mass of communication combined with colourful, convenient packaging helped Duck Tape become popular. From a near-zero customer base Manco eventually controlled 40% of the duct tape market in the US

After profiting from Scotch Tape in the 1930s, 3M produced military [material](#) during WWII, and by 1946 had developed the first practical vinyl [electrical tape](#). By 1977, the company was selling a heat-resistant duct tape for heating ducts. In the late 1990s, 3M was running a \$300 million duct tape division, the US industry leader. In 2004, 3M invented a transparent duct tape.

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The dream machine, by Maurice Chesworth,



This was how the electric car was perceived by Maurice Chesworth, in his interview with the late Jeff Harrison, who lived at Millfield House, Brampton. Jeff had long been convinced that electric power was the way forward for the motor industry. He was a talented designer who had previously created a three wheeled golf buggy (for want of a better description) for a director of the Borg & Beck/Lockheed company. He then met Peter Mawdesley, a far-sighted hotelier in the Lake District, and began a design for a three wheeled leisure vehicle

which would ferry guests to and fro between Peter's hotels where they would be recharged. The vehicle not the guests! (see inset below left) This was soon changed to the Fox One design. (see below right)

This is where the "dream team" came together. Peter Mawdesley provided the finance, Duncan Wardlow was in charge of moulding bucks, chassis production and is pictured above hypnotizing the car to behave. I was brought in to design the suspension, fabricate subframes, and develop the transmission which was manufactured by Andrew Monkhouse and Alan Walker of Complete Engineering Services in Crosby on Eden



(seen here with Peter)

A great many other generous and talented people were involved but not pictured here, including:

Alan Forsyth CBE, Marel
Alex Pagan, MLP Bodyshop
Andy Norris, Graphics
John Newton, Fibrelite Composites Ltd
Norman Stilling, Stilling Fibreglass
Prof Sinclair Gair, Napier University
Richard Fletcher, Lynch Motors
Roy Shaw, Nissan Motors Ltd

April 1998 saw the beginning of the Silver Fox, or Fox One as it later became known, a resort sport vehicle built in a large shed behind Jeff's house. It took twelve hilarious months to build, (including a quadruple by-pass for Jeff), – a sort of Top Gear challenge with the dream team substituting for Clarkson, May and Hammond.



The “dream team” - Roberts, Wardlow and Harrison (above)

The prototype was tested at both Carlisle and Kirkbride Airports and Knockhill race circuit in Fife, where it reached its design speed of 70 mph and flattened its batteries just about as quickly. Its road holding was excellent out of the box and when it was used as the course opening car at the 2000 Pirelli Rally the instant torque of the electric motors really came into its own, but I don't think the silence went down so well with the rally hardened spectators!

The specification of the prototype was simple:

Two Lynch DC air cooled motors, max power 39 Kw, max torque 105 Nm at 3900 rpm. The motors drew on 120v Hawker Genesis batteries controlled by Curtis PMC. The drive was a Hoffco-Comet CVT 13.3 to 3.33 reduction using 155/70 R13 standard road tyres on Nissan rims. The suspension was McPherson strut up front and trailing arms at the rear. Standard Nissan Micra disc/drum brakes were more than adequate for the all up weight of 680 kgs, distributed 56/46 front to rear.

Sadly, just as the vehicle was ready to bring to the market, Peter Mawdesley died suddenly on the golf course and the Fox One project was wound up when the Mawdesley family donated the car to the Lakeland Motor Museum as a memorial for Peter.

But - that was not the end. A Cobra replica was built for a joint Napier and Glasgow University project, powered by fuel cell electric hybrid and was demonstrated both at home and abroad.



At the same time a mid-engined, space-framed Alfa 156 was built with a Harrison body.



Simultaneously, funding was secured from Scottish Enterprise to develop Fox Two, and with substantial backing from Alan Forsyth, a 400 kg two seat Aixam convertible powered by a Kubota diesel engine was converted to use LPG in tandem with a single Lynch motor. The sophisticated control mechanisms were developed by Dave England, a television engineer from Byker Grove with advanced programming skills. The result was a car which would switch from fossil fuel to electric drive autonomously, use regenerative braking and or fossil fuel to recharge its battery pack, either when moving or when stationary. (F1 eat your heart out)



The performance was similar to Fox One but the fuel consumption was over 100 mpg, with the nasty diesel particulates and NOx emissions dramatically reduced and battery range no longer a problem.

Yet, whilst developing Fox Two, the indefatigable Jeff flew out to Malta to enter into talks to produce a flat-pack electric car for use on the island. On his return, we had lunch and he enthused over Malta Enterprise and insisted we fly out together the next week. "I haven't written anything down" he said, "but I'll tell you all about the deal tomorrow" That night he died of a brain hemorrhage, and the dream team ceased to exist.

The Alfa went to Ireland, the quarter scale Malta project went into the loft above the workshop; (see below left)



Fox Two went to Lancaster University and Fox One eventually went to the Complete Engineering Services personal museum, where it sits, sans batteries, sans engines, sans control and possibly sans hope. And so ends the story of the Brampton man whose vision was way ahead of its time.

If you need more of Jeff's history, you can contact me on owen@trybrid.force9.co.uk – but do it quickly before dementia sets in!

Owen Roberts

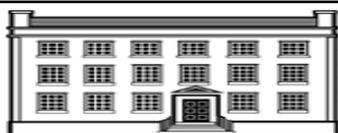
Marshals' News

We will have a full update on the marshals' championship in the next issue. As always all our events count for points plus any events to which we, as a club, are invited to send a marshals team. Thus over the next few months we have the various autotests and tours but the two major events that we need your support for are:

June 28th **Lake District Classic Rally** in the Penrith area, contact David Agnew

August 23rd **Cumbria Classic & Motor Sport Show**, contact Graeme Forrester

Please put these dates in your diary.



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RACING LINES

News from the Circuits

Jim Clark Weekend

May 16/17th

The **Jim Clark Weekend** is delighted to confirm a stunning line up of classic Formula One cars, Touring and Sports cars in which Jim Clark raced in 1965. The 50 year anniversary will be celebrated in Duns, Scottish Borders, on Sat 16 and Sun 17 May (2015). The event is being run by Club Lotus in partnership with The Jim Clark Trust to celebrate Jim Clark's second Formula One World Championship, his famous Indianapolis 500 victory, Formula 2 Championship and Tasman Championship, all in 1965. Sir Jackie Stewart and Allan McNish are joining the celebrations to raise awareness of plans for a new Jim Clark Museum by 2018.

The event is free to the public with a static display of Jim Clark cars on Sat 16 May with the main event on Sun 17 May featuring the exciting sight and sounds of the cars parading through Jim Clark's home town of Duns, with over 50 sports cars from Club Lotus. The event runs from 11pm to 4pm on both days outside the Jim Clark Museum in Duns with historic trophies, a gallery, films, interviews and Pipe Band over the weekend. The event was first run in 2013 to celebrate Jim Clark's first World Championship in 1963 attracting over 3,000 people.

Some of the unique and extremely rare cars confirmed for the event with the support of many generous owners include: two Lotus Type 25s including Jim Clark's World Championship winning 1963 Formula One car, a Lotus 38 Ford (1965) similar to the actual Indy 500 race car, a Lotus Type 43 BRM (1966), three famous Lotus Cortinas, the first production Lotus Elan and original Porsche 356 from his early career. Other cars celebrating the rich history of Scottish Borders motorsport are expected to join the weekend.

The event organisers are delighted to confirm that triple Formula One World Champion and close friend of Jim Clark, Sir Jackie Stewart will be attending the event on Sun 17 May as Honorary President of The Jim Clark Trust, with triple Le Mans 24 hour winner Allan McNish and Clive Chapman, the son of Lotus founder Colin Chapman, who are also Patrons of the Trust. Other notable attendees will include Ian Scott Watson, Jim's friend and early mentor, and former Team Lotus chief mechanic Bob Dance.

The weekend not only celebrates the anniversary of 1965 but confirms plans for a new £1.2m re-development of the existing Jim Clark Museum by 2018 announced in February through a partnership between Scottish Borders Council and The Jim Clark Trust.



Autojumble

Buy, Sell, Exchange, Give!

Free to members

MGB GT 1973 (Jan) Damask Red, tax exempt, car enhanced over recent years by Garner Restorations. Recent new bonnet, bumpers and door skins. H/D batteries and radiator. Overdrive, full sunroof, leather interior, Minilite rep. wheels, walnut dash, coil over suspension, tuned engine, electronic ign. S/S exhaust. Totally reliable and excellent condition. Offers around £6,000. Contact Tom 01946841274

For Sale: 1978 MG B Roadster, Black converted to chrome bumper. Leather seats, Walnut dash, alloy wheels. Full history file MoT to June 2015. £4,600 Can be seen in Penrith. Ring John on 01768862243

Barn Storage near Wigton: Cars £50 a quarter and trailers £60 a quarter. Ring Graeme on 01900 825642

MG B LCB Manifold £30, Weber 45 inlet manifold for MG B £50. Ring John Willis on 01900 813827

Annual General Meeting

The A.G.M of Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Will be held at the
Greenhill Hotel

On Wednesday, May 13th at 20.00

All members are invited to attend

Refreshments will be provided

Agenda

- 1 Apologies for absence**
- 2 Minutes of the 2014 AGM**
- 3 Matters Arising from those Minutes**
- 4 Reports: a) Chairman's
b) Treasurer's**
- 5 Acceptance of the reports**
- 6 Election of Officers and Committee**
- 7 A.O.B.**

Latest news on Chateau Impney Hillclimb Revival

On the 11th /12th July the fabulous Chateau Impney Hotel at Droitwich in the Midlands is hosting its first Speed Hillclimb since the 1960s when it held British Championship events. Some events start in a small way but this Revival event is certainly not small, it is exactly the other extreme. Attracting some of the most iconic cars from this country as well as cars and drivers coming from all over the world to compete, the entry list is by invitation only and entries are very highly prized indeed.

Certainly there has been much lobbying behind the scenes to get an entry just as happens for the Goodwood Revival. In fact many of the cars are regulars at Goodwood with some very special cars making their first competition appearances since the early 1930s.

One such car is “The beast of Turin” once the World’s fastest car, this monster 28.5 litre Fiat S76 pre war racing car will be competing in the Edwardian and Veteran class after a painstaking rebuild that has been ongoing for many years. It is now complete and looks and sounds exactly as its name suggests.

Another fearsome entry is the GN Caesar Special driven in period by the famous “Doc Martin” prior to 1967, it will be in the hands of Paul Martin at this year’s event. This two litre car will be fighting for honours in the pre 1940 class having been built in 1937 by Dick Caesar and initially was raced around the fields of Bristol before becoming a full hillclimb spec car.

No less the 9 ERAs or English Racing Automobiles are attending the revival, 8 are competing and the remaining one is coming as a static display. This represents almost half of the total production as only 19 cars were ever built. Made very famous by the by the wealthy Prince’s Bira and Chula from Siam and their “White Mouse Racing Team” these cars have been racing almost continuously since they were first built wherever races have been held, very often putting up fastest time of the day even against modern cars. Many are running on methanol and supercharged, producing tremendous power they need to be warmed up properly in the paddock with rear wheels lifted up on special jacks. The ear piercing rasp of their exhausts accompanied by the whine of their superchargers will be something you won’t forget for a very long time.

Historic Monaco Grand Prix winner Matt Grist has signed up to compete in his Alfa Romeo P3 Tipo B so he will be out to take away the honours from the field of Bugattis, ERAs and others on the newly extended course. This has been increased from its previous 550 yds to 1000yds and with long fast straights and sharp tricky corners the rhododendron bushes that claimed so many cars in the past may be rudely disturbed and attacked again after almost 50 years of peace.

The Spollon family, who can only be described as vintage car fanatics have contributed a great deal to motorsport over many years, bought the hotel and had a dream. That dream was to bring the sight and sounds of vintage and classic racing cars back to Chateau Impney. Fortunately they had the means by which they could achieve this and have done it in great style.

The course is complete, the cars and drivers are coming, the scene is set, if you want to be part of history get yourself to Droitwich just south of Birmingham on the 11th/12th July and you will be in for a real treat. Full information is available on line, go to chateauimpneyhillclimb, reduced price tickets are available and one thing for sure, it will be a fabulous event.

Keith Thomas

Win Two Tickets to Chateau Impney!

Question: What do the letters **ERA** stand for?

Email you answer and the first correct answer will get two free tickets.

Drive It Day

Drive it Day proved to be a great success with over 150 cars turning up during the three hours. There was a wide variety of cars on display from all over the region. Fortunately the sun shone although it was not as warm as of late. The collection for the Air Ambulance, in memory of Stuart Turnbull raised £454.



Many thanks to all of you who organised and marshalled on today's event, it was fantastic to see such an array of cars brought together by the efforts of the club and what a turnout. It was very sad to realise Stuart Turnbull would normally have been there to organise and greet us, he will be very much missed and very fitting that the collection was in aid of his charities.

From Keith Thomas

Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show

Sunday, August 28th

At

Dalemain

Featured marques: Bentley, Mercedes (Pagoda) and MG A

Entry forms are at: www.wigtonmc.co.uk

Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

Big New Car Sales in March

The industry heaved a collective sigh of relief when it was announced that March had resulted in a near record with almost half a million new cars registered (note I didn't say sold!) in the month to maintain over 6% growth against last year. Audi continued to be best of the prestige manufacturers with BMW and Mercedes fighting neck and neck now for second place. Land Rover were almost 30% up on last March as the new Discovery sports arrive and supply improves on Range Rovers and Sports, and Mini, Mazda and even Honda showed very useful growth. SEAT and Skoda are currently two of the biggest losers. SEAT have production problems on various models that aren't helping one bit.

However the truth may be not as rosy as the figures suggest. Note I say "registered" not "sold". It seems the level of registration of unsold cars to reach dealer and manufacturer targets was higher than ever, Also more widespread, with manufacturers who don't normally get involved in this practice joining in. Within days of the end of March my phone and inbox were busy with Fords, Vauxhalls, Fords and Fiats, but also Audis, BMWs and Jaguars. One large dealer group sent me a list of almost 50 Jaguar XFs at VERY impressive discounts, all delivery miles but registered March 31st. So bargains galore if you know where to look.

But Dealers Remain Unhappy

Within the 6% year on year growth rate it is fleet sales that are growing strongly, retail new car sales are actually down on last year, and it is on retail sales that dealers make their money. Dealers report retail demand has been weakening since late last year and continues to. Therefore a high volume of pre-registration is the only way that targets are being achieved. Dealers see the balance of power in their relationships with the manufacturer has very much shifted in favour of the latter, and there is little or nothing they can do about it. The winner of course is the customer, who can choose between a new car bargain from a dealer desperate to reach the monthly target that will earn that vital bonus, or a perhaps even cheaper pre-registered car a few weeks later.

Affinity Programmes

What you might ask are these? Well to put it simply yet another way to give a new car discount away. A manufacturer identifies a group of people that might contain a significant number of new car buyers and offers them an extra discount simply because of their membership of that group. Some are very logical, for example members of the National Farmers' Union get money off Land Rover Defenders, and members of the British Shooting Association discounts on Toyota Hilux Pick Ups.

Some are less understandable, except in the context of simply selling more cars. This week I've received a list from one manufacturer offering special deals to such diverse groups as:

Season Ticket Holders at Bournemouth AFC, Norwich City, or Warrington Wolves.

Employees of ASDA, Cleveland Police, Durham County Council, Edinburgh David Lloyd Health Club, Greater Glasgow NHS Trust, HM Prison Frankland (employees not "guests"), IKEA, Marstons Brewery and many more.

Members of Bangor Chamber of Commerce, Business Networking International, European Union of Women, Kent Police Sports Club, Round Table or Ladies Circle.

This is just a small selection, the list ran to hundreds!

How "Misleading" Are Official MPG Figures?

I've talked about this before. One of the biggest complaints from new car buyers is that the car won't remotely achieve the official mpg figures, often by a large margin. As discussed previously this is because the testing method that results in these figures is flawed and manipulated by the manufacturers.

Now Which magazine has published the results of testing 200 new cars more rigorously, and have

come up with the conclusion that on average consumption was 13% greater than the official figures. Only 3 of the 200 cars achieved the official figure or better.

The worst figures were for plug in hybrids where Which said that some mpgs were overstated by as much as 120%. However I think this unfair, because it depends totally on how much of the time the car is using electric power. I've supplied two hybrids in the last few months, both to owners who cover low miles with a commute to work of under 20 miles. Both drive to work on electric power, plug the car in, drive home after work on electric, plug the car in, and so on. While both complain that the range on electric power is less than claimed "Especially if you use luxuries like lights and wipers" said one, both are actually achieving over 200 mpg. Higher mileage users will achieve much less than the claimed figure, but they probably shouldn't be buying a hybrid anyway.

Hybrids apart the figures remain pretty shocking, but no surprise. In fact I'm surprised the average difference is only 13%, I always advise customers to use a 20% factor. An accurate and credible "Official" test is long overdue here.

Bugatti Veyron Reaches The End Of The Line

When the Bugatti Veyron was first shown in 2005 most pundits doubted it could ever be built. 1000 bhp, 250 mph in a road legal and road useable car? 0-60 2.5 seconds, 0-125 7.3 seconds. VW boss Ferdinand Piech (grandson of Ferry Porsche) proved them wrong. His critics badge him as a megalomaniac, which may have been a necessary characteristic to get this baby born. 450 have been sold in ten years at over £1M each (plus VAT!). VW have lost money on every one. The owners have to have deep pockets too, even after the purchase. A set of tyres (which don't last long if you USE the car) cost £17000. The wheels have to be changed with every 4th set of tyres, that's £45000. And on full throttle the 100 litre tank will empty after 8 minutes. That's a fuel cost of about £15 a minute.

Now the last Veyron, aptly tagged as "La Finale" has been proudly displayed at the Geneva Show. So that's it, or is it?

Rumour has it that Dr. Piesch, who is due to retire in a couple of years at the age of 80, has the ambition to do it again. Only the next one will be quicker, 288mph this time. Speed costs the next one will be £2M. Not 1000 bhp, 1500 next time, 0-60 comes down to 2 seconds exactly. Deliveries are set to start in 2016, and Bugatti already have a queue even though they haven't officially confirmed the car yet.

No More Winter Tyres?

Michelin are claiming to have developed a tyre that handles cold and snowy roads like a winter tyre and behaves like a summer tyre in drier and warmer conditions. The technology comes from their Le Mans tyre development programme. The tyre features a very clever rubber compound mix, a special tread pattern, and while Michelin say the tyre is hardly an ideal track day choice for most owners it will do away with the cost of two sets of wheels and tyres. Sounds good?

Is Diesel Dead

For over 30 years now the proportion of Britain's new cars being diesel powered has increased. Technology has transformed the wheezy asthmatic offerings of the 1980s into the smooth quiet and powerful engines we now have available. Over a million new diesel powered cars were sold in the UK last year. Now concerns over air quality mean that local authorities are clamping down on diesel. Boris Johnston has announced that the London Congestion Charge area will become an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in September 2020. Any diesel car that doesn't meet Euro 6 emission regulations Mandatory from this September, will be charged another £12.50 on top of whatever the Congestion Charge is then, so the total will be at least £24. The London borough of Islington now charges an extra £96 a year for a Resident's Parking permit if your car is diesel, even Euro 6 diesel.

As an aside, I wonder what happens to all that money?

What the authorities are trying to do is cut the emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). Transport For London claims that diesel cars will by 2020 account for 18% of the city's NO₂ emissions, petrol cars only 3%. However it isn't that simple. While diesel NO_x emissions are higher, because their fuel consumption is lower CO₂ emissions are about 20% less than petrol on average. Without a significant proportion of cars being diesel there is no chance of the UK hitting its agreed CO₂ target.

So new car buyers need to make a careful choice. Certainly a Euro 5 diesel doesn't look a good idea.

Diesel residual values are already sliding, and cars that aren't Euro 6 may be very difficult to sell in a few years time. At current depreciation rates it's reckoned only people covering over 14000 miles a year save money by buying diesel, that figure could rise considerably soon.

British Sports Car Makers On A Roll

Whilst Bentley are still keeping their luxury SUV under wraps at Geneva they showed their "design study" Bentley Six. In essence a smaller and much sportier version of the Bentley GT. Looks stunning, 600 bhp, 200 mph, 0-60 3.8 seconds. There seems little doubt it will be in production soon. Having seen what M Sport can do with the GT, this smaller lighter car should be a winner on the circuits to once the Dovenby magic has been applied.

Meanwhile Aston Martin are testing their DB11 to be launched next year. Aston's technical partnership with Mercedes means AMG's bi turbo 4 litre V8 is available as well as the venerable V12, and perhaps more important the car will have Merc's electronics to drag Aston's infotainment system into the modern era.. The car should be shown at Geneva next year.

Finally McLaren's road car division seems to be doing a bit better than their F1 department. They are busy readying the "entry level" 570 S model. Entry level because it's only £143000. It seems a positive bargain when compared to the existing McLaren 650S. That's £195k, does 207 mph and 0-60 in 3.0 seconds. Spend £50k less and your 570S will be 3 mph slower flat out and 0.2 seconds slower to 60. McLaren says they won't compete because the cheaper one is a sports car, the dearer a supercar?

F1 Whinge

Once again I'm going to stray into motor sport territory. Because I'm VERY angry. I'm still an avowed F1 fan. Rarely miss watching a race live, F1 is pretty well the only reason I pay Sky TV an excessive amount of money every month. Like many I've watched aghast as the French and German GPs have disappeared to be replaced by a clinical track with empty grandstands in some far flung outpost where the people know or care little about F1, but the government wants the glory and publicity a Grand Prix brings, and is prepared to pay whatever Bernie asks for the privilege.

Now however the vertically challenged billionaire has gone too far. He proposes to next year replace the Italian GP with a new one in Baku in Azerbaijan. No I hadn't heard of the place either. It's a former Soviet state with lots of oil and a dreadful human rights record. And no motor sport heritage as far as I can see. But that combination works for Bernie in Bahrain so why not?

I've been lucky enough to go to Monza for the GP on three occasions in all. The place is pure magic, it has an atmosphere that is absolutely unique and the quality of the early autumn light through the trees just...special. And then there are the Tifosi, a million times more enthusiastic and knowledgeable about F1 in general and their beloved Ferraris in particular than anyone in Baku I'll bet.

Bernie says the Italian GP is "financially a disaster and Baku will be "a great replacement". Great for his bank balance perhaps, but not for anything else. If he ditches Monza, that's it. I'm out. People say watching snooker is quite exciting, perhaps that's the answer?

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Charles Graves/Ron Palmer on the Ilkley Jubilee Rally

Photo by Tony North





Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

It's sixty years ago on the 26th of May that Alberto Ascari crashed to his death at the Vialone curve Monza. To this day the cause of the accident remains a mystery, there are numerous theories as to what went wrong but the fact that only three days previously he'd crashed through the straw bales during the Monaco Grand Prix and ended up in the harbour may very well have had some bearing on it. Also you can't help thinking that the Lancia he usually drove and Castellotti's sports racing Ferrari in which he died had throttle and brake pedals reversed could have made a difference. We'll never know, but what's certain is that Ascari was an intensely superstitious man and it's this aspect of his character which I'll concentrate on.

Now we all know lots of drivers have good luck charms or rituals which range from "lucky underpants" to always getting into a single seater from the same side but what I've been reading shows some took it to extremes with Herman Lang's wife going to races equipped with a horse shoe, hammer and nails which she fixed up over his pit. Mike Hawthorn had to wear a bow tie, green jacket and always fold his socks down twice. Peter Collins was lost without his comforter, a child's seaside bucket and spade while Nuvolari couldn't do anything without his golden tortoise and yellow jumper. Mrs. Caracciola always had a real live monkey called Anatol at the races, I wonder if it falling ill and dying of natural causes would have forced Rudolph to hang up his helmet.

I must also put my hand up to a brief dalliance in this area when my daughter, about three at the time, drew a funny little figure who was her imaginary friend "Sammy". Anyway it was quite amusing so a tin of Humbrol came out and he was carefully copied, only about four inches high, onto the front of the rally car who now became "Sammy rally". It didn't work out as at the next event Sammy decided he preferred sliding along on his roof rather than his wheels which ended my association with mascots, charms call them what you will.

Returning to Ascari. His father Antonio another successful driver was named after Saint Antonio of Padua and Alberto discovered that both men had died when they were thirty six years and ten months old, Antonio in a crash at Montlhery on 26th July 1925 which was the same day of the month Alberto died at Monza. The saint and Alberto also had a date in common with the racer being born on the 13th of June the date the saint died. Now you might have noticed that 26 is double 13 and there seemed to be numerous links to the saint and this number as it was the total of lines in his prayer which one had to say 13 times to receive one of his 13 pardons. Considering this it's hardly surprising that once when Alberto say down for a meal and counted those round the table he refused to start until there were 14 present. They dragged in an urchin from the street.

Alberto was also terrified of black cats and the story goes he once collected his team-mate Luigi Villoresi from the railway station. On the short journey to the hotel a black cat crossed the street in front of them and Villoresi was sound asleep when they got to their destination after Alberto found it necessary to make a massive detour.

During those final days of May 1955 the list of strange occurrences started to mount up. First the car which ended up in the harbour was race number 26, the day both father and son died. While driving on the 26th Alberto wasn't wearing his lucky blue helmet and shirt. Apparently he seemed depressed and complained of aches and pains, a possible legacy of the previous accident. Whatever the cause it's interesting to know that Antonio lived for a total of 13463 days his son for 13466 but of course it would have been 3 less had he perished in the Monaco accident, maybe having survived the fatal anniversary and realising he'd passed the number of days his father had lived he thought the "monkey was off his back" and he could relax. Who knows?

Ends.

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What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

May

2/3rd		BDMC	Berwick Classic
2/3rd		A66CC	Olivers Mount Hill Climb (BSCBSC)
6th	Wed	WMC	Pub Run
8-10		WMC	Gallop
10th		SoSCC	Targa Rally
13th	Wed	WMC	AGM at Greenhill
20th	Wed	WMC	Grass Autotest

June

3rd	Wed	WMC	Pub Run
13th	Sa	LMC	Barbon Clubmans Hill Climb (BSCBSC)
18-21		MGCC	MG Live! at Silverstone
24th	Wed	WMC	Grass Autotest at Whins Farm
27th	Sat	MSCC	Forrestburn Hill Climb (BSCBSC)
28th	Sun	WMC	Lake District Classic Rally (Gates HHRA)
28th	Sun	WMC	Lake District Targa Rally (Gates HHRA)

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

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