

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue: 10/16

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

October 2016

Harewood Hill Climb Finale



**Chairman Peter “speeds” up the final straight in
“Snotty” the Skoda!**

Motor Sport for All

Diary

Club events over the next month or so

Autumn Autotest

Sunday, October 9th

At Maryport Business Centre
Entries to Chris Hunter

Solway Classic Weekend

Cumbrian Canter, October 15th

Solway Historic & Targa Rallies, October 16th

WIGTON MOTOR CLUB LTD

Officials

President.	Charles Graves		
Vice Pres.	Stan Glaister, Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,		
Chairman	Peter Garforth	016973 21762	petergarforth@btinternet.com
Vice Chair	Jim O'Neill	01768 870236	jimoneill023027@gmail.com
Sec/Editor	Graeme Forrester	01900 825642	gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk
Treasurer	Susan Eastwood	01697 323693	sweezyeast@gmail.com
Membership Sec	Maggy Bateman	016973 49919	wmcmemsub@outlook.com
Social Sec.:	Marian Sloan	01900 85833	mazsloan1@outlook.com
Child Protect.	Alan Jackson	01900 828428	bigwalk1@gmail.com
Equipment Officer	Graeme Mactavish	016973 44542	gmact123@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Graham	01228 534483	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Lynda Graham.	01228 534483	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
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
Paul Eastwood	01697 323693	paul.eastwood@carrsgroup.com
John Sloan	01900 85833	johnsloan02@outlook.com
Ron Palmer	01228 575153	ronpalmer777@hotmail.com
David Agnew	01946 841455	DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com
Geoff Bateman	016973 49919	geoffbateman@hotmail.com

Talking Point

Topical comment from the world of motoring

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing motor sport today is how to deal with the increasing technology which is making the vehicles we use ever more better, whether that is greater speed, grip, etc. I doubt if there are any of the dozen or so disciplines of the sport that is not effected.

If you take the slowest, but no less challenging, discipline of sporting trials. Despite being made to a controlled formula, more power and greater grip allow the cars to ascent steeper and steeper muddy hills to the extent that some cars have been flipping over backwards.

The MSA's Hill Climb and Sprint Committee are looking at the power and speed of the lightweight single seater powered by turbocharged bike engines which are dominating many events these days. They have a power to weight ratio that F1 cars would aspire to.

Next year's F1 cars will be 5 seconds a lap faster than this year. Most GP circuits are just huge areas of tarmac and concrete with a track painted on it. You just have to see how Silverstone has been ruined for other types of racing where many cars will take nearly twice as long per lap as Lewis and his pals.

Stage rally cars are more powerful and have more grip so stage times are tumbling year on year. However the number of accidents and cars non finishing is rising each year. It's remarkable that 85% of the cars on the four day Scottish Rally of 1972 finished but barely half finished the one day event of 2016.

I would contend that faster cars are not better to watch, in F1 there are few genuine passing opportunities due to the superb braking and handling of current cars. In hill climbs, hundreds of spectators used to go to Barbon to watch the top drivers power round the hairpin, tail out in the V8 powered single seaters, now the smaller bike engined cars get round it very slickly with no fuss or spectacle. Few spectators now attend the BHCC round.

In rallying, you have marvel at the skill of today's drivers in the WRC but they don't draw anything like the spectators numbers that the cars of the seventies and eighties did.

Spectators vote with their feet. Other than the BGP, the next events in the UK with the most spectators are all historic "festivals". The same with hill climbs, stage rallies etc. OK there is an element of nostalgia for those of us old enough to remember the "good old days", but there are no doubt thousands who go to Goodwood who were not born when the last race was held there.

Even the BTCC is affected. Spectator numbers have declined to about half that of when Cleland, Soper, Leslie etc were racing in the nineties. The show has got to be about good racing with no "nerfing" and lots of passing and repassing and not just about outright speed.

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

Well the dust has now settled on the **Classic & Motorsport Show** for the 28th time. Despite the bad weather the day before we had a great day. For those who were worried that the show fields would be muddy, let's put your mind at rest. The ground at Dalemain drains superbly and we have never had an issue with mud or the ground cutting up.

This was the report to the WMC committee:

- *Quite a number of cars "No Showed", mainly in the 70s/80s classes, the older cars all came! In some classes a third were missing.*
- *Dividing up responsibilities seemed to work very well*
- *The new plastic markers are a God Send!*
- *We had plenty of marshals and with John & Lynda having more helpers getting cars in was very slick.*
- *Eileen Horsfall is hoping to organise a craft tent for 2017 as we had some years back. An additional attraction.*
- *We need to think of a featured marque/model/theme for 2017 soon as we did not have one this year.*
- *The caravan has been to every show and it was old when we started! It's a classic but now needing a lot of work. The awning is now useless as well. We need a new one.*

The issue of cars "no showing" is one it is difficult to find an explanation for. OK, some people may not be well or the car is broken but surely not in those numbers. Virtually all the runners in the Rose & Thistle Run the day before turned out in dreadful weather!

It's fantastic that we have so many people willing to help both before, during and after the Show!

Any suggestions for a featured make/model/club for next year? Any motoring anniversaries to celebrate?

We need a new caravan with an awning, or an event unit> Does anyone know of one for sale?

How can we increase spectator numbers? If you have any ideas please let us know!

If you would like to join the sub committee that runs the show please let us know, we don't meet that often; perhaps once in the autumn and then in the spring.

Interesting Cars at Harewood



PG Tips

I did it.....I bought an Alfa Romeo GT. It's really very pretty, black with big teledial alloys and grey leather interior. It is also an Alfa Romeo from 8 years ago, so whilst I managed to find one that is body beautiful I've already replaced the drop links which started knocking on the way home! Not a big job and not expensive either but possibly a taste of things to come. It goes like a train and has the Q2 differential fitted which means it handles as well as it looks. I wrote those first lines 2 weeks ago, hence the present tense but in fact this is where the Alfa episode ends....because I got cold feet after realising that it was probably going to be no more trouble free than a Skoda Estelle and listed it on Ebay. It created so much interest that I had 4 offers to buy it in the first day and promptly took the best one who then paid a deposit and collected 4 days later. Yes the whole saga cost me a little bit of money but not too much and has been a valuable lesson in not tampering with my daily car and just keeping hold of my PCP car from now until forever. Ron....you were right!

Being an old romantic I surprised Trudy with a 3 day escape to the island of Sao Miguel on the Azores for our 10th wedding anniversary – which is also where we went for our honeymoon. The downside of this surprise is that the only sensible airport to get there from is Gatwick and therefore involved a long car journey. The reason I am telling you about this in a motoring environment is that the trip was really straightforward because we travelled mostly at night, however the driving standards in South East of England are truly shocking. The volume of people who drive solely in the middle lane is unbelievable! I'm not just talking about Audi drivers either...cars of every type drove for miles just sat there. At one point (10pm return journey) the middle lane hoppers managed to reduce the speed of a half empty 3 lane motorway to under 70mph by several of them sitting at 60mph whilst the inside lane was also doing a similar speed causing the rest of us intent on doing 70mph (or possibly more in some cases....not me though obviously!!!) to have to drive round them. Depressingly I saw only 1 police car on the motorway in both journeys so the chances of anyone doing anything about it is very low. It makes me wonder who the government think will enforce the up-coming increase in penalties for mobile phone use. Perhaps G4s?!

I took Snotty for a final outing of the year at Harewood last week and it went very well – apart from an early mishap of the non-motoring variety. There I was having my bacon buttie pre-event when I felt an itch on my top lip and brushed my hand across it – only to be stung by the wasp that had landed on my bacon buttie. Worse than the pain was the swelling. My lip swole up so much that I looked deformed and spent half the day with a hand in front of it or explaining to people that I didn't normally look like that! Various people provided anti-histamine including Willie Jarman who had popped in to watch the event with his Honda race car (and Angela Jones of course!) so it did start to go down as the day progressed. I also had my revenge by killing a number of wasps during the day. Because I was running sticky(ish) list 1b tyres I got lumped in with a group of random cars of various engine capacities all of which were much bigger than old Snotty. Thankfully Snotty is a bit of a beast these days and I am relatively competent too, so I came mid class at the end of the day and had a lot of fun sliding round the corners. I was pipped for 5th place by a Porsche 944 by 2/100ths of a second which is how much I beat the Mercedes SL350 by for 6th place. There was a lot of love for the old Skoda in the paddock too, with lots of people coming up to chat...despite my deformed lip!

I would have won the 1400cc production car class and came 2nd in modified production which bodes well for next year when I intend to upgrade to modified production whilst still keeping Snotty road legal. I have sourced a 2nd hand FIA cage and I have works type rear suspension and some alloy skinned doors lying in the garage. I reckon I can shed 100kgs of weight in total which won't quite make Snotty as light as a Mini but it goes a long way towards it. I am going to keep the dashboard and heater/fan to ensure I can still see out of the car when it rains and my aim is to be able to take Snotty for a drive out when I want.....I just want to go a bit faster than I do at the moment.

Peter

Annual Awards Dinner 2017

Saturday 21st January 2017

At the Skiddaw Hotel, Keswick

7.00 for 7.30pm

Our guest speaker this year is a welcome return to

Kirk Rylands

who is looking forward to keeping us all entertained with his many motoring anecdotes.

Presentation of awards for the Club Championships and Gates Tyres Rally Awards

Tickets £30 per person, available from Marian Sloan
(mazsloan1@outlook.com) Tel: 01900 85833

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.

Maureen Doolan and John Spearman of Fletchertown
Rachel, Ken and Moray Williamson of High Lorton

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.

Memberships

All membership matters including membership cards and changes to emails addresses should be directed to:

Maggy Bateman 016973 49919 wcmemsub@outlook.com



Who knew 2016 was going to be one of those years? I didn't, I foolishly thought 2015 had been one of those years and surely after 2011, 12 13 & 14 that 2016 was going to be a quiet one.

I took the decision quite early on in the year to keep my head down, with the rash of celebrity passing's this wasn't the time for getting famous, so all those draft emails stayed exactly that.... No point tempting fate, they say everyone is famous for 15 minutes and by my reckoning I wasn't going to waste the 12 minutes I had left only to end up as a footnote in the mass cull of celebs!

So.....ooooops, I did that thing, starting a sentence with So....., which actually for a few months became understandable, the whole framework of our near history has been rocked by various goings on, so beginning a sentence with that word is an acceptable form of understated astonishment as so many famous people either died, lost their jobs, lost a public vote and then started passing on the good cheer to us the hoi polio.

So, Formula 1 has been sold to some Yanks

Let's just think about that, a country that is as engaged with Formula 1 as Mr Trumps hair is with acceptable squirrel abuse have taken control from the dwarf with the big glasses (was Bernie always that teeny?) and are going to make it work.....Well it may not be as daft as it seems. I am sure most of us agree that Formula 1 has lost its way, my bleating about the WRC is a proper fiery beast compared to how F1 has slipped into a an alternative universe almost imperceptibly. The new controllers want to democratise the sport, make it accessible to the yoofs and dare I say it mess about with it in a way that may actually work. I have become very cynical about the technical route the sport has taken. I fully support the quest for safety, anyone who has been involved in motorsport as a competitor, marshal or organiser knows only too well the harrowing effects even an accident without mortal wounding can be, to be on an event which suffers injury or worse is a terrible place to be.

But none of us go into the sport truly thinking about a failure that ends up injuring anything more than a wallet. I was asked by a non-motoring friend after a blast up a sinuous canyon road just off the Pacific Highway in California, how I wasn't put off by the drops either side, my answer was that I was only thinking of the black tar thing in front of me, I had as much intention of leaving that whether it was lined with 50 foot pillows or a 500 foot drop. You calculate and accept the risk.

So what will the Americans do? Well I think they will do what they always do, what they are fantastically good at doing, they are the greatest nation of refiners on the planet. I am sure they have actually invented some things, but in these jingoistic times I am going to go out on a limb and just say they nick a great idea and make it their own, they market the hell out of something they stumble on and turn it into gold. I base this accusation on some half facts, hearsay and sheer bloody annoyance that the Bell X1 looked suspiciously like a Miles aircraft design and that can only be the tip of the iceberg, and you know I am right, so let's just leave it there.

F1 is set for what was tipped as a revolution, it was nary a few years ago that they would have massive 18" wheels, superwide tyres, well over 1000bhp, reduced wings and ground effects, a freeing up of the rules on power plants and the need for all drivers to have moustaches, then bit by bit it ebbed away to leave us with slightly wider tyres, bigger wings and possibly the cakkiest ever safety device hooped around the drivers head! Let's face it, it's going to be just as dull as it is already.

We all know we can come up with a better solution don't we? So on the face of it letting the muscle of Yank marketing into the equation gives many a sense of foreboding, will this make our sport contrived? Will it be victim to manufacturer lead cul-de-sacs, further detached from what made it great in the first place or will..... hey hang on, isn't that where we already are?

They want to make it more accessible and exciting. Now I truly believe that the best way to make racing

exciting is to have jeopardy, I am not advocating going back to strapping a driver, a couple of wings, axles and an engine to a fuel tank like in the old days, but there is another way. The last time we had a level playing field power plant wise was when most of the field ran Ford DFV's, the motor was a known entity, yet the cars around them varied wildly at times, but that wasn't where the jeopardy came from, it was the reliability...or rather the lack of it!

We need a sport that has easily built powerful engines with an easy to regulate cost cap per unit, but lift the restriction on how long they last, same with gearboxes, people will then take risks with them, pushing them to the limit and then over them, only then will we see the mighty fall.

Mercedes, like Schumacher's Ferraris, are disgustingly reliable, boringly dependable, add in the fact they are the best means that even if Lewis throws it off the road, sulky boy Nico will be there to pick up the win yet look as if he is still about to be found out!

It's the variables that make any sport exciting, what F1 has done is eradicate the variables to the extent they have had to introduce false variables that do not fool anyone, why make tyres that artificially degrade? Why even think of bringing back refuelling? Why have DRS at all? Why have penalties for drinking from the wrong side of a cup?

The biggest variable left is the nut behind the wheel, yet they rarely fail, it should be mandatory that each race has a party on a Saturday night that the drivers must attend, then see who lack the will to be sensible, see who rocks up the next day with that taste in their mouths and kebab stains down their overalls.....

In some sports eradicating the variables leads to excellence, we only have to look at what British cycling has achieved and that's despite the US refining the chainwheel to the other side of the bike. But the biggest component is still the human being, this isn't so in modern motorsport, not at the elite level.

The entertainment is often off the track, the Machiavellian outrages of the off season and inter team politics has also been diluted of late, who remembers Mr Balestre and his wacky sense of justice, the intrigue and sheer corruptness of it all, the wonder at what a new car would look like, not just what the colour scheme was like or the drivers helmet, yet I still find the best bit of a live race is the human element, before and after the race, the race, with its fantastic camerawork, amazing stream of information and switched on commentary usually has me nodding off by lap 15.

That's just not right is it? How are we to inspire a new generation of fans with such a nerdy unexciting product? They will be syphoned off by the myriad of other stimuli available to the modern youngster, but it's an ever decreasing pool. Worldwide it may be growing, but the emerging markets, once they have emerged, will inevitably shrink as people work out that the hype is just that, a massive global audience made up of only slightly engaged locals is a recipe for disaster for the sport.

That's why I am hopeful that from all the negatives that 2016 has thrown at us, one of the positives will be that F1 found its way again, that it became the pinnacle of a sport that re-discovered what made it great in the first place, because in its current form, it's a dead man walking.

Maybe then will something trickle down into the WRC. If ever was a country built on endurance, pioneering, sheer distances and graft, then America is it, if they can connect with what Rallying is really about, we may yet see its return. BTCC cars with long travel suspension and single venue mentalities are country miles away from what brought us all here, the bloody fools! FFS!

Alan the fowl mouthed fox

October's Quote

“Skoda - An Audi without the stigma!”

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

The Oulton Park Gold Cup has always been a popular event with northerners and we made a late decision to attend the Sunday of this two day meeting over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Looking back in my archives I came across ten consecutive programmes from 1961 to 1970 so it was a must attend meeting for me back then and attracted all the current top drivers of the time, Moss, Clark, Stewart, Brabham, Brooks, Gurney, Surtees, McLaren etc.



The accent is now on historic cars but the way races are shared over the two days is a little odd as the historic saloons raced only on Monday so we missed Chris Glaister driving Ed's 100e Anglia but on the other hand some of the cars which are entered for races on both days are hors d'combat after the first day's racing so the numbers are depleted for Monday. Sunday was great for weather, with no queueing and the journey time half what it was in the '60s.

There was a good number of classic club displays and Porsche fans could have spent all day just looking over their display. The paddock is open to all and we were drawn to the classic Jaguar area where we found the Gate/Farrell entourage and their E-Types all looking match fit. Their results were a bit like the curate's egg with Eddie getting a second in class and both cars suffering gremlins at various times. However frustrating that may be for them the atmosphere is good, the hospitality welcoming and the cars look great. Robert was on form although there was a suspicion that he may have had a social on Saturday night. Unusually for this far north there were a couple of racing XK150s from the CKL organisation which took our attention.

They circulated understandably behind the E-types in the Jaguar race but were good to watch nevertheless. Whilst sunning ourselves between races at Cascades a recently retired Rob Grant walked past with granddaughter in tow both very excited at the prospect of a cooling ice cream in the warm sunshine. An enjoyable day in Cheshire.



Our classics are our personal choice and we tend to know quite a lot about them and know less about other marques even if we lust after one that is beyond our reach. Into the latter category falls AC and in particular the Ace where values have soared in recent years and a friend and club member Peter McNair owns a blue Ace Bristol which is particularly desirable. Recently Peter gave me some back issues of 'ACtion' the excellent monthly club magazine which carries some good articles. Peter is national subscription secretary and a member of the club council. The manufacturer Auto Carriers were established in 1903/04 and over the years produced a wide range of transport ranging from light cars through rail cars to the iconic Cobras. Magazine articles of particular interest were the first ascent of Honister Pass from Buttermere by a motor car in May 1916. This involved two 'A-C Light Cars' one from the factory and one privately owned which made the climb on the un-surfaced gravel strewn track stopping at times for photo opportunities before descending into Borrowdale to the astonishment of the locals, a route we use occasionally on our club runs, now of course on good tarmac. Another article which caught my attention was that covering the lightweight diesel single carriage railbus introduced in January 1958. There were five A-Cs, out of a total of 22 supplied to the British Transport Commission as an experiment in cost saving from various manufacturers. Alas the lines they were meant to serve were progressively closed under the Dr Beeching cuts until the last was withdrawn in February 1968. A short life for an interesting concept from this manufacturer.

Without wishing my life away forward planning is important for some of our events and The Gallop regs. and entry forms are now available for our Trossachs Tour in May 2017. They will appear on the website in due course but if you want some sent now please let me know.

Ron



Another rarity from Harewood, a Piper GTT. Lovely car and very rare. This one is owned by Leon Bachelier who used to be a regular on the Hill Climb scene with big single seaters when based in the Channel Islands. He has now retired to Harrogate and brings this lovely car out at Harewood and a few other places.

WIGTON MOTOR CLUB

**Join us for a bit of fun!
Bring the family!**

What? - Motoring Quiz and Hog Roast

Where? - Gilcrux Village Hall, CA7 2QD

When? - Saturday November 12th 2016 at 7pm

Tickets £10 per person, payable in advance

please, from Marian Sloan

(mazsloan1@outlook.com).

Tel: 01900 85833

The Hog Roast will be supplied by Lindsay's of Cockermouth – they need to know final numbers for catering by Friday 28th October.

Please get in touch before then and let me know how many tickets you need. A vegetarian option will be available as well as dessert to finish

Winter Social Events

Is there a place of a monthly “club Night” during the winter?

If so, where should it be held?

Do you want talks, films, quizzes or just “craic”?

Your views please to Marian Sloan on

(mazsloan1@outlook.com).

Tel: 01900 85833

A Tale of Two Midgets – Part 2

Hay bales – and how to avoid them



Perhaps not the most pristine example of the British classic marque, teal blue outside, revolting shade of mustard inside, Midget number 1 has had a rather expensive year. So the husband has developed a scheme to subsidise repairs whereby I pay him £5 each time I mention his name in an article. Of course, the economic viability of this arrangement depends on him never reading anything I writeor me never mentioning him by name. So far, so good:

The year went something like this: ripped off a self-adhesive rally plate from the bonnet like you would an Elastoplast – the faster the better in order to reduce the pain level from excruciating to agonising – and see if it improved the paint job. Very effective. Tried fitting a limited slip diff to improve the handling on auto tests and, whilst we were on, chipped a tooth on first gear and had to replace the gearbox. Got it all back together and had to retire hurt from the Berwick Classic with a broken half shaft. Threw in the towel in a fit of pique and bought Midget number 2, built for the job (and therefore a more cost effective solution apparently) and set its back wheels on fire - like you do – thereby rendering it unserviceable. Reverted back to Midget number 1 and turned up at the garage to supervise repairs. Discovered I had forgotten to bring the will to live. Groan. Stood about for eternity trying to get a spanner in edgeways but the minute I sloped off to make a cup of tea, I suddenly became strategically indispensable. It appears I have hands sufficiently small enough to reach the parts that other hands can't reach..... But it all turned out rather well in the end and off we went to participate in Spadeadam's Blue Streak Rally - still on speaking terms if a little frosty.

Started off positively enough and managed to put in a reasonably presentable show to impress half the population of Brampton duly assembled in the town square. Polite, if slightly underwhelming, applause was received. Returned after lunch to the scene of the earlier mediocre performance and tried to improve ratings and viewing figures. Failed miserably.

Now we had been warned by the rally organisers in no uncertain terms about the estate agents window and the possible consequences of demolishing it. Of course it acted like a magnet. The husband's size 8s interfered with normal braking procedure by accidentally including the accelerator pedal whilst trying to negotiate a 90 degree corner. I did a bit of stamping on the JESUS pedal and a lot of panicking but it didn't help – we ploughed straight on embedding the front end of the Midget into a large hay bale with a very satisfying thwack, scattering several marshals to the four winds into the bargain. Roar of appreciation from the crowd – this was what they were after – no actual blood loss but lots of modified bodywork. Set off again only to realise the front wing and bumper were impeding progress by attempting to puncture the offside tyre. Stop smartly and jump out to further applause and encouragement, rive the bodywork about frantically whilst taking evasive action to avoid an over enthusiastic paramedic bent on administering First Aid. Roared off to complete the course amid cheers and whistles - and didn't get a test maximum. So everyone was happy – the crowd probably marginally more so.

So, a couple of days later, out came the hammer (the one which hits everything except the bit it is meant to) and the spray can. All expense spared, obviously. So now we have two fully functioning "his and hers" Midgets - one is looking good, the other is looking like the work of Satan.....no prizes for guessing.

Cheers!

Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards

Round 6, The Doonhamer Classic Rally, September 18th.

A 6am start had us quickly onto the M6 and heading north for Lockerbie with the prospect of 17 challenging tests in the Lockerbie and Dumfries area. We were joined by another 18 historic crews and 13 Targa crews representing some of the quickest and experienced crews in the area covered by NESCR0.



Among the Historics, Archie Simmonds (Midget), ably supported by Bob Hargreaves, made a return from temporary retirement and showed that his speed and accuracy was undiminished. John Bertram/Andy Fish (Mexico) and Andy Beaumont/Roy Heath (Rapier H120) were to push Archie and each other hard all day. We were surrounded by many of the WMC/Gates Challenge competitors and others including Graves/Palmer, TR4; Agnew/Jackson, 911; Slingsby/Fox, MGB; John/Marion Sloan, Midget;

David/Paul Garstang, Fiesta Mk1; Bradley/Marsland, Mini 1275; Dixon/Welsh, MGB GT; Alexander/Humphries, Viva; Fenwick/Carmichael, Golf GTi Mk1. McCausland/Dillon brought their Escort Mk1 from N Ireland, Morrison/Humphrey were down from East Lothian, Whitaker/Ellison, brought along the Cortina Lotus from Bolton le Sands and Eland/Eland were out in their Alfa.

Among the Targa entries Graham/Edminson, Puma, would go well; with Hunter/Tyson, MX5, Geoff/Maggy Bateman, 295GTi, all pushing for WMC/Gates Challenge points. Other quick Targa crews included Place/Iveson, 309GTi, McLean/McLean, MX5, Robertson/Robertson, Fiesta ST, Jennings/White, Peugeot 106, James/Howe, Citroen C2GT and Hay/ Thomson, Toyota Paseo.

Tests 1/4 took place at the excellent Start/Finish venue, Lockerbie Truck Stop, and comprised a traditional autotest on a smooth tarmac surface. The test flowed well and Simmonds/Hargreaves put down a marker with 1m02s&1m.09s, Bertram/Fish had 1m04s&1m03s, we tied with Beaumont/Heath on the first run with 1m11s but while they improved to 1m08s on the 2nd run (T4) we dropped to 1m15s, Agnew/Jackson had 1m13s&1m13s and Team Sloan on 1m15s&1m15s - both crews winning the "prize" for scoring identical times on the two identical tests!

Among the Targa entries Robertson Robertson took their Fiesta ST to 1m06s&1m07s, Kellett/Meins 1m08s& 1m06s, Jennings/White 1m09s&1m10s, Hunter/Tyson 1m09s&1m25s, Graham/Edminson with 1m12s&1m11s, James/Howe 1m16s&1m16s(!). and Bateman/Bateman 1m19s&1m18s.



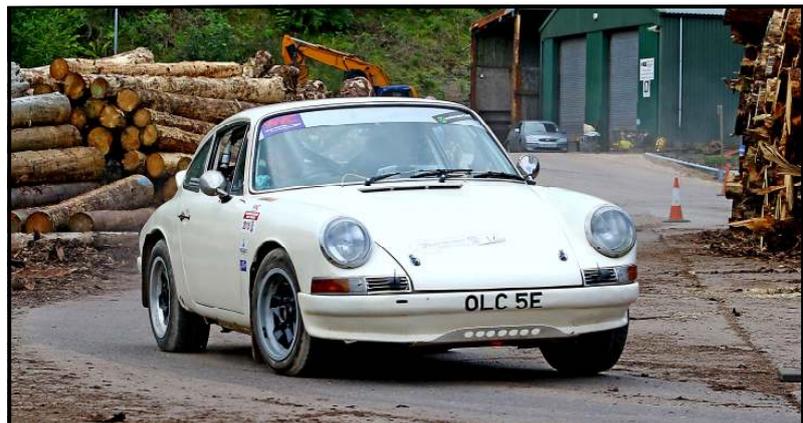


The action moved to the excellent road through Fingland Fell for Tests 2/3 and 5/6. Four runs through this excellent forest venues with enough chicanes to keep crews alert and scrub off the speed. Of the Historics, Beaumont/Heath set the quickest time through the test with 1m43s and the best times for the following crews was: Simmonds

and Bertram 1m45s, we had 1m48s, Agnew/Jackson 1m49s, Garstang/Garstang's flying Fiesta 1m50s, Team Sloan had 1m54s, Dixon/Welsh and Thomson/Lauder tied on 1m57s, Graves/Palmer and Whitaker/Ellison tied on 1m58s. Going well in the Targas were Graham/Edminson and Place/Iveson tied on a best time of 1m45s, Robertson/Roberson and Hay/Thomson tied on 1m48s, Hunter/Tyson had 1m50s and Bateman/Bateman 1m52s.

By the time crews headed for Tests 7/8 at Rammerscales sawmill, Beaumont, Simmonds and Bertram were beginning to open up a gap to the rest of the Historics; and, while Graham, Place, McLean and Robertson were scrapping for the leading places in the Targa class there were plenty of crews snapping at their heels. Rammerscales caused problems for many with WTs and big hesitations causing time losses. Agnew/Jackson's WT here forced them to focus hard for the remainder of the event and we lost a handful of time when both crew members became disoriented while circulating around the rack-saw. The problem cascaded through the Historics with Alexander/Humphries, Slingsby/Fox, Bradley/Marland, Thomson/Lauder and Whitaker/Ellison all taking WTs and heavy penalties. Meanwhile, Team Sloan nearly set the sawmill alight with a 1m46s (they're hot!!), with Simmonds on 1m48s, Beaumont/Heath on 1m50s and Bertram on 1m51s. In the Targa class, Place/Iveson and Haw/Smith equalled Team Sloan and tied on 1m46s, Kellett/Meins had 1m47s, Hunter/Tyson on 1m48s, Graham/Edminson on 1m51s and Bateman/Bateman on 1m53s.

Test 9 was a long, fast test on the perimeter of an MoD site. Fastest crews through Test 9 were: Historics: Bertram 1m31s, Agnew 1m35s, Beaumont 1m 36s, Team Sloan 1m38s and Simmonds 1m40s; Targas: Graham/Edminson 1m32s, Place/Iveson and Robertson/Robertson tied on 1m33s, Kellett/Meins on 1m40s, Bateman/Bateman



2m01s but Hunter/Tyson suffered a WT which seriously impacted their class position.

Test 10/11 held either side of the lunch halt was another long fast test on a mixture of loose and tarmac surfaces. Beaumont's chances of a win in the Historics was put in jeopardy by a WT on T10 but in true Beaumont style he was fighting back with a very quick 1m11s on the second run (T11). Bertram was quickest Historic with 1m10s,

Onto Test 13/16 which was a large concrete surfaced truck depot. The 1st run (T13) was blessed with dry conditions but despite the rain and a very slick surface for the 2nd run some crews went faster on T16 (amazing!). Simmonds' 2m22s in the dry proved quick. Simmonds also had a best of 1m11s, Agnew 1m16s, Team Sloan and Garstang/Garstang tied on 1m17s, we tied with Brian Bradley on 1m18s and Dixon/Welsh had 1m19s. Of the Targa crews, Hunter/Tyson were outright quickest with their 2nd run time of 1m06s, Haw/Smith had 1m09s, Graham/Edmison 1m10s and James/Howe a useful 1m14s.



A ride over to the Dumfries area took us to the final 6 tests set up in pairs as 12/15, 13/16 and 14/17. These were all good sized tests but with very different surfaces and configurations. Competition remained fierce among crews at all levels in both the class and overall battles. Both Beaumont and Agnew went well through these 6 tests and pulled back significant time to minimise the impact of their WTs.

Test 12/15 comprised a single track lane with tarmac and loose surfaces, chicanes and 360 degree turns. Beaumont flew through to record 1m33s, Simmonds had 1m35s, Bertram 1m37s, we tied with Agnew/Jackson on 1m45s, Bradley/Marsland and/Morrison/Humphrey had 1.48s, Garstang/Garstang and Graves/Palmer were on 1m49 and Team Sloan 1m50s. Robertson/Robertson were quickest Targa here with an excellent 1m32s, Hunter/Tyson 1m36s, Graham/Edmison 1m37s and the Batemans had 1m50s.

Bertram made up for a modest 1st run with a wet 2m31s, Team Sloan and Garstang/Garstang improved in the wet and tied on 2m36s, we had 2m39s. Haw/Smith lead the Targas with a 2m21s in the wet, Graham/Edmison had 2m22s, Hunter/Tyson 2m23s, James/Howe 2m31s and the Batemans 2m38s.

The final pair of tests 14/17 was in a disused industrial area and comprised both tarmac and loose surfaces. Bertram was quickest Historic on 1m12s, Simmonds had 1m13s, Agnew 1m15s, we tied with the Sloans on 1m18s, Beaumont had 1m20s as did the Garstang/Garstang duo (but with a WT on their first run (T14) there was little opportunity to claw back time), Graves/Palmer had 1m21s and Eland/Eland's Alfa 1m22s. Graham/Edmison lead home the Targa crew with 1m12s, Place/Iveson had 1m13s, James/Howe 1m16s, Murray/Murray and Hunter/Tyson were on 1m17s and Geoff/Maggy Bateman 1m23s.

Food, drink and Results were all available back at the Lockerbie Truck Stop. Results were Provisional by 6.30pm and the Historic win went to Archie Simmonds/Bob Hargreaves with John Bertram/Andy Fish 2nd, Andy Beaumont/ Roy Heath 3rd, Dave Agnew/Alan Jackson 4th and we took 5th. Andrew Graham/George Edmison took 1st Targa, Daniel Place/Sam Iveson 2nd, Drew/Karina McClean 3rd, Grainger/David Robertson 4th and Simon Jennings/Clive White 5th.

Good tests, a compact route and with the many ups and downs for the competitors the 2016 Doonhamer provided for a great day of grass roots motor sport. Well done SoSCC, please do it again on 2017!



Finally, the last Round of this year's WMC/Gates Rally Challenge, the Solway, takes place on Sunday October 16th. A glance at the Challenge Points Table (Version 6) will show that there are many positions in the overall and points table that could easily change on the Solway - it should provide an exciting finale to this year's Challenge so be there.

Mike Garstang

Thanks to Tony North for the photos as usual!

More Harewood Photos



BYGONES

Anecdotes

This is a **Mini Jem**. Strangely enough it's not related to a Min Marcos, although very similar. The politics are complex!

This lovely example was competing at Harewood last month.

I chatted to the owner and said that I knew of one of the several people who had owned the moulds and made some cars. Malcolm Fell is now better known for running the Cumbria Kart racing Club at Rowrah but many years ago he was a WMC member and competed in a wide variety of events in Minis and Peugeot 205s.



In the early 70s he bought the Mini Jem moulds and made a few in Barrow before selling the project on yet again. It transpired that this car was the last shell Malcolm made. And sold to Alan Scott of Huddersfield who had a donor Mini Cooper S. The more remarkable thing is that Alan never got round to completing the car until last year - more than forty years after he bought it! It seemed to go well and looked good into the bargain!

Another interesting competitor was **Christopher England**. He has had a life time of competing in racing and speed events and was running a nice MG TF in the MGCC Luffield Championship. He has previously raced Ferraris and more recently an Austin A40 in the Goodwood Revival but rather more interestingly he has in his younger days competed in the Rest and be Thankful Hill Climb. There can't be many current competitors who can say that!



This original **Lenham Le Mans MG Midget** was also competing in outstanding condition in the hands of Mike Haigh. He found it in France in pretty good condition. A very pretty car.

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12,000 people at Bo'ness Revival Hillclimb.

Unbelievably its only eight years since a group of keen enthusiasts put on the first Boness Revival Hillclimb with help and blessing of Falkirk Council who own the historic venue at Kinneil House,



Boness overlooking the Firth of Forth. In that short space of time it has not only become Scotland's biggest historic motoring event attracting 12,000 people over the two days but its reputation is now worldwide with one driver flying in from Australia just to drive at the event.

All the money made is ploughed back into the venue, upgrading the track, footpaths, viewing areas, toilets, in fact facilities in general. The paddock has been enlarged, decent roadways provided, better parking for trailers and motor homes, erection of Armco or safety fencing, even a fantastic craftsman built stonewall in the very sensitive area near the historic Kinneil

house which is grade one listed. All in all a great asset to the locality being the result of careful forethought and planning by the hard working committee over the eight years.

It's even more amazing that prior to the first event there wasn't even a Boness Hillclimb Revival Club. In order to get away from inter club rivalry's a completely new club was formed with the sole intention of running this event.

Members come from not only the local area but many of the officials live miles away yet spend countless hours working at the venue and it's a great credit to them all. What a fantastic legacy to pass on to future generations.

With officials heavily involved with other top events such as Goodwood Revival, Shelsley Walsh, Prescott and Silverstone the event has to be on a date that doesn't clash. Not only are scrutineer's, clerks of the course, medics and marshals from other venues but two of the most important guys of the whole weekend are Chris Drewitt and Steve Wilkinson the commentators.

These guys are fantastic, they know almost every car and regular driver, can tell you who designed the cars, their history, successes and failures of various models and anything they don't know they will be down in the paddock enquiring and making notes for future reference.

Chris Drewitt is also a top aircraft commentator and pilot, when Goodwood is on the TV his descriptions of world war two aircraft, what they are like to fly, who the pilots are at the controls and which bases they are flying from adds a whole new dimension to the air displays to millions of people. Without them and their knowledge Boness just wouldn't be the same, even their voices have a lovely tone and clarity to them

Well done guy's, keep up the good work.

Each year the event has grown, Boyd Tunnock owner of Tunnocks caramel wafers that world famous biscuit was a former competitor and sponsored a grandstand last year. This year "Event Scotland" the tourist arm of Scotland and "Peoples Ford" were main sponsors with other smaller companies helping out with the financial outlay running up to the weekend.

The fact that over 12,000 people arrived through the gates made it a financial success and hopefully gave the various companies a return on their outlay. A large classic car show plus trade stands were selling everything from motor spares to trailers, Lotus cars to toys, souvenir tee shirts, mugs, memberships of BHCR the host club plus countless other goodies.

Jim Clark's memorial museum in Duns was represented. In fact Ian Scott Watson the guy who was Jim Clarks sponsor, mentor and great friend presented some of the weekend's prizes. This



shows how highly the event is regarded by the great and good of the Scottish motorsport community.

Lovely weather each day after heavy overnight rain made the track conditions tricky to say the least, however it was great spectator viewing. A few cars were in the bales, up on two wheels or spinning around in the narrow straw bale lined courtyard through the cottages but fortunately without serious damage to drivers, cars, cottages or residents.

An extension to the paddock plus a longer track allowed twenty more cars this year to

compete, meaning 115 cars tackled the hill each run. Very few cars were alike or even similar in specification. Even the MG class had everything from a very attractive WSM bodied MG Midget driven by the equally attractive lady Lorraine Noble –Thompson to the immensely powerful MGB V8 of Martin Breen from Workington who did exceptionally well in his first time at Boness. He put up some great times and did really well to hold a massive slide through the courtyard which is captured on a photo if you go to the Facebook page of Boness hillclimb.

David Smith in the Alvis 12/70 special seemed to steal all the silverware in his group taking awards on both day not only for class wins but walking off with trophies for class records as well. He didn't even leave any silverware for his Dad Ian who was driving the same car. A bit more parental control required Ian and from David more respect please in future !

John Hunters 1936 Riley TT special one of the nicest cars at the event was going well with 2nd in class to David on both days. Lorton driver Dick Smith was only doing the Saturday event, he too was 2nd in class to his son Adam both driving their own fantastic Frazer Nash Supersports from the 1920s.

Another case of no respect for parent's.

Chris Spencers lovely Formula Vee racing car was competing for the second time at Boness and set some cracking times. How on earth does anyone make a 1967 VW Beetle sound so crisp and go so well. My beetle many years ago revved so slowly that you didn't need a rev counter you could actually count the revs as they happened. Mind you it was a 1949 split rear window model left hand drive, registration number 366MPT, quite a banger but my first car bought for £15. Worth a serious amount of money now I'm told. Why did I not keep it I wonder but that has happened to most of us I suppose. Does anyone know of its whereabouts these days?

Maryport is a town full of characters but none more so than Marcus Bewley again driving his Triumph GT6. He wasn't in the awards this time but kept everyone amused by telling them "snake" pies were a famous Maryport delicacy. He enjoyed his weekend so much he asked me to send a group photo he had someone take to be put on the Boness Facebook page. Incidentally he isn't on Facebook and has no intention of doing so he tells me. Rather perverse!

Carlisle resident Chris Hodgson competing for the first time in a speed hillclimb loved it too, although more used to driving in sporting trials cars with "fiddle brakes" and passengers that bounce you up the muddy hills. He did wonder about all the expense having to buy a race suit, special



gloves and helmet but was really pleased he did succumb and is now looking forward to doing more events in the future. Chris's son Ben was spectating, guess where he plans to be driving this time next year !

Hexham's Clive Kennedy was returning to this branch of motorsport and he too had some trepidation about having to spend a few hundred pounds on equipment in case he didn't like it. I kept encouraging him to spend money as Clive and his wife live 70miles from me so I felt relatively safe hoping against hope he would enjoy it. Fortunately he did and not only that but his wife, brother in law and other family were at the event and it was voted a success by them all so he too is planning future visits to Boness.

Thinking about it for the future, would it be possible for clubs to buy and hire a couple of race suits, helmets, gloves etc maybe from someone packing in motorsport. People could then try out the sport without spending about four hundred pounds minimum to buy them. You also need a speed licence which is probably about £80 or so, a substantial outlay just to test the water.

Historic cars need very little else but some classes need HANS devices ie head restraint systems as needed in post 78 non road cars, so either check the blue book or ask someone who has up to date knowledge of such matters.



Geoff Mansfield was driving the ex Simon Taylor Jaguar engined Cougar and a Triumph TR3 so was kept very busy swapping from one car to the other, both really nicely prepared cars, the Cougar looks like a BRM or similar type Grand Prix car of the early 1950s.

On a personal note my Buckler was going well on Saturday but with only 1172cc sidevalve engine although supercharged, a 3 speed crash gearbox and 4.7 diff it was too low powered and too high geared for that particular course . Selecting first gear cleanly at the two hairpins is not really an option.

After going well on Saturday I used the first practice run on Sunday to assess the rather slippery track conditions

caused by the very heavy rain washing mud onto the track overnight. Unfortunately in the top paddock something in my diff sheared and locked up my diff just after I set off to return down the hill from the top paddock parking area. Poor Maurice Jennings set off with me but crashed into the back of my car as my diff locked up so suddenly he had no chance to avoid a crash. Fortunately very little damage was caused to either car. My diff didn't seem repairable so I spent most of the rest of the day spectating and chatting which was a great shame but still enjoyable in the sunshine I have to say.

In my class there were only two other cars, one was Maurice's Jowett Jupiter probably with similar power to my car but the other one was by far the most powerful in the event driven by a guy called Fraser Ewart, a classic car and Bentley dealer from Edinburgh with his 1950s Bentley special.

This is fitted with a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud engine of 6.75 litres boasting twin turbo's and driven as always very exuberantly, wildly or entertainingly whichever word is most appropriate by Fraser who is a real crowd pleaser.

He rearranged the bales on each run using the tail of the Bentley to move the heavy bales with gay abandon seemingly with little damage to his car.

With two cars are on the track at the same time to keep the event flowing smoothly Fraser was running directly about twenty seconds before me. On almost every run I was red flagged and sent back to the start whilst the marshals swept up the straw or rearranged the bales further up the course caused by the tail of the massive Bentley hanging out so much.

Fraser was grinning from ear to ear each time I pulled up behind him in the top paddock. He loves it and the crowd love him.

Come to think of it that is probably the reason my diff failed, my car had twice as many starts as Fraser did!



He gets a few strange looks when coming to the event, he tows either his very rapid full race Frogeye Sprite which he was also driving in another class or his sons MG Midget with a solid A frame behind his Bentley special. It looks very strange a car with no driver only 3 feet behind the Bentley. His wife I gather brings the motorhome and another car in the race shuttle type trailer, its' like a wagon train arriving !

Many other people tried to rearrange the bales but every other car bore witness to its

excursion on its return to the paddock some much worse than others.

We met some really interesting people, one guy came up to see me and had just imported a Buckler from New Zealand having just sold a Stangulinni Formula Junior car to an American as it was eligible for the Monaco historic races. No doubt he would have a bit of loose change left after that transaction !

Many friends old and new including Ken & Glynis Rudkin, Marion & John Sloan, Dave Agnew & family plus countless others came to say hello, it was so frustrating with track conditions and weather near perfect to be sitting out the event. In desperation I drained out the oil in the diff hoping the errant tooth would drop out to allow the diff to function for the three remaining runs but to no avail.

At home the following day we fitted a spare axle with a 5.5 ratio diff and stripped out the naughty diff. A 3/16 dia cross pin retainer had sheared allowing the cross pin to jam the diff pinion but no apparent real harm appears to have been caused so that was some consolation.

Another great event, organisation was superb, the organisers try to improve on anything brought to their attention, no resting on laurels for those guys.

Already everyone is really looking forward to next year it's that sort of event and a friendlier crowd it's impossible to meet.

Fastest time on both days was set by Andrew Patterson in a really nicely prepared and superbly driven Lotus 61 with a 1600cc Ford engine.

With every sort of car from Austin 7 to Stutz Speedster, vintage Bentleys, Cooper, Marcos, Mallock, Porsche, Healey, TVR, Cobra and countless others this event attracts them all. The entry list was oversubscribed but with entries on a first come first served basis it is possible to get an entry if you get in early. Why not give it a try next year?

Keith Thomas.

Rally Torque

News from Road & Stage

Every rally car contesting an **MSA National or Regional forest rally championship event** in 2017 will have to carry a 'Tracking cradle'. This will be fitted inside the car and will need to be hard-wired into the electrics. There should be a one-off cost of £75 for the cradle, wiring and aerial. As for the Tracking module that will only be available to rent, at a cost likely to be 45 quid plus VAT per event, every event. On the plus side, competitors should be able to download the data for up to 30 days after reach rally, and who knows, this might help them improve their own driving skills. Forest charges: MSA have had to negotiate a new three year deal starting next year and Rob revealed that such a deal has been reached with Forest Enterprise. But instead of the almost customary cost of living increase next year, the cost per mile charge will increase by 5%. It will increase by a further 5% in 2018 and again in 2019. That's a 15% increase spread over the next three years. There is still no agreement in Wales.

On a positive note it's great to see that progress is being made on the **M Sport Evolution Centre**, although the NIMBYs are not wanting working hours to be extended in order to complete the work on time.

Next year's **WRC cars** could be 2 seconds per kilometre faster thanks to the new regulations which allow greater aerodynamic packages on the cars which will allow faster cornering. The problem is that if the front spoiler is damaged and comes off due to an accident, which is quite likely, the car will fly off the road at a greater terminal velocity. Toyota will be making a return with the new Yaris based car.

Marshals Needed!

Solway Rally on Sunday 16th October

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We met quite a number of Wigton members last weekend at Goodwood. However is it really the cars that are the only appeal of the event - see attached photo.

It is a long way to go but what a selection of cars to look at. I prefer the Le Mans Classic as the same number of people are spread over a much larger area.

Stuart Bankier

Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

So You Think You're Driving?

As the debate over driverless cars goes on many people say to me that they aren't looking forward to this, that they actually still enjoy driving. Sometimes I say, but I don't believe anyone enjoys driving on the M25 in the rush hours? In any case driving has changed out of all recognition since the older ones amongst us started on the roads, some would say it's not really driving any more.

Let's take a look at a typical journey, and compare that to the same thing in the 1950s or 60s. Our pilot rises early to begin a long trip. It's winter and snowing lightly. As he and his passengers walk towards the car he "plips" the remote control which opens all 4 doors and the tailgate, no tiresome walking round to admit passengers and luggage. Once installed in his seat he starts the engine which of course fires immediately, no messing around with that choke thing. Then he switches on the heated front and rear screens, heated seats, and sets the climate control to a comfortable temperature, which will be achieved quickly as modern engines warm up much quicker than older designs. If it's an expensive car there will be 4 zone climate control enabling each passenger to choose their ideal temperature.

No need to have spent time last night planning his route, he simply pops the destination post code into the sat nav and Joyce the Voice will politely guide him also taking him to fuel stations and refreshment stops along the way if required. 50 years ago of course no post codes existed in the UK, never mind sat nav! Neither did he have to check his tyre pressures yesterday in preparation, the TPMS (Tyre Pressure Monitoring System) fitted to his car checks for him. It's still dark and still snowing but no worries, the headlights and wipers come on automatically. Our driver knows it's 3 miles to the main road which of course will have been gritted. Very few roads were gritted 50 years ago. Those 3 miles may be a little tricky but ABS (Antilock Brake System), TC (Traction Control), and EPS (Electronic Stability Programme) are there to assist, and the car may well be 4WD.

Once on the main road sat nav guides him to the motorway (no motorways until the late 1950s). Great visibility is provided by the powerful Xenon headlights and no need for him to remember to dip them when there's something coming the other way, HBA (High Beam Assist) sees the that chore. On the motorway he sets the CC (Cruise Control) to 69mph (honest!) to stay legal. Of course he can then think nostalgically about those far off days before the 70 mph limit was imposed, but in fact he'd have been very lucky to have had a car that could comfortably exceed it then. He's grateful he paid the extra for ACC (Adaptive Cruise Control), which "sees" cars or trucks pulling out in front of him, automatically slows his car to suit, and speeds up again when the lane clears.

Then to the serious business of making a few business phone calls while his passengers read their daily newspapers on their tablets and argue over which of about 100 radio stations available on the DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) radio is best. Of course motorway driving can be very boring and it's easy to nod off, but the DFW (Driver Fatigue Warning) avoids that. And should he lose attention for a moment and wander a little the LDW (Lane Departure Warning) beeps into action. He's also assisted from making a mistake when changing lanes by BLIS (Blind Spot information System).

So the journey passes without incident. Because even at a steady 69 mph his car achieves over 60 mpg (about double what a typical car would have done 50 years ago) there is no need to stop for fuel, good job as a gallon costs more than 10 times as much as in the 1960s.

Journey's end is a crowded city centre and finding a parking space isn't easy, the downside of there being so many more cars and vans on the roads these days. Eventually he finds a slot that looks just big enough, quite a challenge for many drivers. However using the PAS (Park Assist System), including 360 degree cameras and front and rear park sensors, the car neatly parks itself with no input from the driver.

Driverless cars? Seems to me we're more than halfway there already.

VW Woes Continue

Following being found out for cheating emissions test VW have already set aside a mere \$10.2 BILLION to settle law suits in the US. Now they've been hit by claims in Germany totalling at least another \$9.1 BILLION from investors who've seen the value of their VW shares plunge as a result of the company's cheating. Share values initially dropped by 45% and are still down 28%. Two German states have large investments, the state of Hasse claims to have lost 3.9 M Euros and is seeking recompense.

VW have set aside 16.2 BILLION Euros to cover the claims, it now looks like that won't be anywhere near enough and it's time to wonder if even a company as rich as Volkswagen can actually pay these bills?

Real MPG Figures Now Available

Linked to the VW scandal, many fleet and private buyers have become increasingly fed up with the difference between manufacturers' official mpg figures and those achieved in real life. This is important to the individual with one car doing say 8000 miles a year, but a fleet manager with 100 cars doing 25000 a year faces a much bigger problem.

Now at last realistic figures are available. Go to www.emissionsanalytics.com. This company has completed on road testing of over 60000 model variants. On average they say real economy is 29% worse than the official figures, some cars are more than 40% adrift.

A recent survey of fleet managers said that only 5% were seeing 95% of official figures, with around a third seeing shortfalls of 11-20%. Peugeot/Citroen have just issued "real world" mpgs, between 30% and 40% worse than their "official" figures.

Anyone who saves a sensible sum of money on the basis of this information is welcome to send a donation to my favourite charity which is my beer account at the Boot & Shoe Inn Greystoke!

September Pre Registration Activity Builds

As I write we have about 10 days of September left. The second most important month of the year for new car registrations (I nearly said sales there!). Many dealers expect the pre registration of unsold new cars to represent over 20% of cars registered in the month. If this is the result almost 100,000 unsold cars will be registered in September. Add to this the deals offered to rental companies as month end approaches and you will see a mountain of metal available to the discerning buyer at bargain prices.

Less New Car Dealers In The Future

New car dealers are caught in an unattractive trap. Manufacturers demand ever higher standards in terms of the property facilities required. One industry report recently said that "premium" manufacturers typically asked for a dealer to invest between £8M and £20M in property to represent their franchise. In my view this is simply not sustainable going forward. I spoke to one large dealer owner recently who has greatly expanded his collection of dealerships over the last decade. He has invested heavily in expensive showrooms as the manufactures he represents have demanded. He

told me his turnover is double what it was 10 years ago. His profit is less than it was then? Changing customer behaviours and expectations mean that simply less new car dealers are needed. Customers do a great deal of research on the internet, many have pretty well decided what car they want before they go near a showroom. Servicing requirements have dropped, many cars now go for 2 years or even more before a service is needed. And independent service centres can provide this at well below main dealer prices, and protect the manufacturer warranty.

One recent survey made the following assumptions (all reasonable in my view):
5% reduction in volume for other manufacturers as a result of Hyundai and Kia expanding their sales.

Internet price comparisons reducing profit margins by £125 per car.

Service profits reducing by 10% due to reduced service requirements and competition from independents.

The result would be a reduction in dealer profit on turnover from the current measly 0.6% to a loss of 0.2%.

Expect to see far fewer multi million pound showrooms in the future, and perhaps spare a thought for those who've been forced by manufacturers to build them?

Paul Gilligan

pg@gilliganvc.co.uk www.gilliganvc.co.uk 07785 293222



**Richard Hargreaves superb
Escort Mk2 at Harewood**





Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

It's all happening on the F1 front with Jenson announcing what amounts to his retirement, even though there are vague mutterings about a come back after a year off. There's the wholesale take over of the business (hard to call it a sport to be honest), by some American firm called Liberty Media which will in all likelihood herald the demise of the bold Bernie who'll no doubt leave having trousered another billion or so, and finally Phillippe Massa announcing his retirement, something which might have made the headlines if the two matters mentioned above hadn't been announced.

The takeover one is the most interesting with a sum of nearly £7billion being quoted, all of it vanishing down the throats of people outside motorsport and none down those within it. There's also still the possibility of the European Commission having an investigation covering the above as some shares are apparently owned by a group who shouldn't have them but as it's only a paltry 70 million pounds worth it'll no doubt get sorted out. The big worry is that Liberty are linked to Virgin Media so it doesn't take a lot of imagination to see any prospect of free viewing vanishing pretty quickly. Never mind, we all survived just reading about it in the 60's so we can no doubt do the same again.

Moving on to JB. Now ever since he muttered that he'd not be driving next year everyone has been trying to decide whether he's a "great" or not. He isn't. Very good no doubt, but he managed to win one championship in a car that was so much better than the opposition for half a season. The second half they'd all caught up so when things were equal he was regularly beaten only just hanging on to a slender points victory.

Looking at past champions Jenson, as far as I'm concerned, fits in the Mike Hawthorn, Graham Hill, Denny Hulme, type of champion class, all wonderful drivers but not in the same league as the Sennas, Schumakers, Prosts, (note I've not even mentioned himself). Whatever, I wish him good luck in the future and thank him for entertaining us all so well for so long.

It was interesting watching Monza and then whizzing over to BT Sport to watch the MotoGP from Silverstone. Now Monza is my favourite track and so it's a special event but thanks to Lewis making a mess of the start the race fell a bit flat. OK but nothing special, almost but not quite failing the "nodding off" test on occasion to be honest.

MotoGp on the other hand was one of those races where you had to watch it but you almost felt scared to do so it was so stressful. It started with an accident which looked dreadful but thankfully wasn't as bad as it appeared. The re-start heralded an event which had you on the edge of your seat, heart pounding and a thumping bad head at the end. The result was first Vinales on a Suzuki, Crutchlow on a LCR Honda, and Rossi on a works Yamaha. To put things in perspective that's the F1 equivalent of Perez winning in a Force India, Grosjean second in a Haas with Vettel third in a Ferrari. What's more there were no flukes, breakdowns, stupid pit stops or tactical fuel and tyre saving effecting the outcome. From start to finish a hundred percent flat out commitment totally on the ragged edge racing. Maybe Liberty Media are investing in the wrong product.

What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

October

9th	Sun	WMC	Autumn Autotest at Maryport
9th	Sun	TMSG	Cheviot Stages (Otterburn)
15th	Sat	WMC	Copeland Canter
16th	Sun	WMC	Solway Historic and Targa Rallies (Gates HRA)
22nd	Sat	StMC	Targa Rally
22/23rd		D&DMC	British Rallycross GP at Croft
27-30th		MSA	Rally of Wales (WRC)

November

3-6th		HERO	Rally of the Tests
5th	Sat	VSCC	Lakeland Trial
12th	Sat	WMC	Hog Roast
20th	Sun	WMC	November Autotest at Maryport

Visit the website for all the latest news

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

[Catch up on Face Book](#)

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

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WWW.M-SPORT.CO.UK

To apply for any of these roles, please download an Application and Medical History form from the website and forward it to:

Rozalyn Howell, M-Sport Ltd, Dovenby Hall, Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 0PN