

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue: 11/16

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

November 2016

Sun Shines on Super Solway



Archie and Richard Simmonds were clear winners of the 2016 Solway Historic Rally

Motor Sport for All

Diary

Club events over the next month or so

Hog Roast

At

Gilcrux Village Hall

Saturday, November 12th

Tickets £10

November Autotest

at

Maryport

Sunday, November 20th

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

Well we are approaching the end of the motoring year although weatherwise this autumn has been brilliant but no doubt the rain and storms will follow. It's certainly been a good year for the club with some great events and an increasing membership.

I would like to mention the hard work that goes on behind the scenes to make the Club move along so well. We are blessed with an incredibly enthusiastic committee who put in untold hours doing all sorts of task that are unseen. Graeme Mactavish for example as our Equipment Officer spends a lot of time sorting out all our equipment in the barn both before and after events.

Since the AGM we have some new officials: Susan Eastwood has quickly got to grips with the finances and bills and costs are being sorted very slickly; Marian Sloan took over the Social Secretary's role and is running a number of club nights - please support them, particularly the Hog Roast. Maggie Bateman has really sorted out the Membership Secretary's position and all those joined for the Solway got their membership pack at the event. Chairman Peter is pro active and guides us through the agenda slickly before the sandwiches and chips arrive!

Then of course we have all those who are the main organisers of our events, it is really fantastic how many more organisers we have now, whether it is for a major rally, an autotest or a pub run. There is always room for more helpers though!

I would also like to mention all our regular contributors to Start Line which make it such a great read. It gets emailed to many folk outside the Club and some of my colleagues on the MSA Hill Climb & Sprint Committee praised it, saying it was better than some national magazines while we got compliments from Simon Goldsworthy, editor of MG Enthusiast in the current issue!

The next issue of Start Line will be the final one sent out as a hard copy by post, many have now switched to email and there are less than ten getting a posted copy now. Hopefully they can move to email by the end of the year. We have also got a new DTP program so the format of the magazine will evolve over the next few months once I get the hang of it! Not having printed copies will allow us to be more flexible with the number of pages as we will not longer have to produce it in units of four pages to print.

In other news we have bought another caravan to replace the one we have had for 28 years! Indeed we decided it was an 1978 model and older than many of the cars at the Classic Show where it always appears. I won't steal Chairman's Peter's thunder as to what happened to the old "Monza", we had thought about asking Jeremy Clarkson to blow it up at next year's Show but the outcome was rather better than that!

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



If you were a fan of Special Saloon Car racing in the 60s and 70s, you will remember some remarkable cars like Doug Niven's Escort V8, the VWDFV, Tony Sugden's Skodas and Norman Hodgson's Janglia.

In the up to 1300cc class there were battles between the Minis and Imps like Ian Forrest's Drambuie Imp and Bill Needham's Coldwell Mini. At one point the Coldwell Mini ran a 1000cc BRM F2 engine but Bill also developed a twin cam version himself.

Even more remarkable is that Bill and the Mini are still competing! Bill was at Harewood in September and going well and the car got a lot of interest.

Apparently he is a cult figure in Mini circles these days and is a guest at various Mini festivals around the UK.

Bill also built four Coldwell GTs which had a Mini engine in the back and had styling similar to the contemporary Ford GT40s. These is well in the national sports/GTs races against the modified Midgets, Mini Marcos and Unipowers and the like.

Three of the GTs still exist with the other car having disappeared so it may well be lurking in a barn somewhere!



MG Cumbria

The Famous Christmas Cracker Run

December 4th

Starts at Reghed and finishes at Braithwaite

Fun, event with coffee at the start and two course meal at the finish

Entry forms on the WMC website or the MG Cumbria Face Book page

Open to any car!

PG Tips

It's all quiet on the car front this month.....Snotty still works but is having some upgrades for next year, the yellow Rapid Coupe has barely come along at all and I've resisted the temptation to sell, swap or trade in the Citigo again. The dark nights are setting in and working in the garage always gets more difficult. I have managed to rig up another light bulb to assist and I have finally got round to throwing out the 3 rusty old Skoda doors that have been getting in the way for the last year (after stripping them of a couple of useful bits) – now I just need to drag the orange Rapid wreck out of the barn of doom, strip it and send the rest to car heaven.....or hell!

With the dark mornings my journeys to work have definitely got slower, the kind of masochists who cycle to Sellafield have mostly given up and started using their cars again and everyone seems terrified to overtake. I personally know the road between Cockermouth and Whitehaven like the back of my hand now and when it's dark overtaking is easier because some of the slight bends and rises that would have prevented me going for an overtake in daylight are now clearly empty of vehicles in the pitch black. For many other commuters the opposite seems to be true and they will happily sit behind a lorry doing 40mph for miles on end. This presents a bit of a problem for me because the Citigo is not exactly a ball of fire and getting past more than one vehicle at a time takes some planning and a decent stretch of empty road. Yesterday I followed a Vauxhall Corsa VXR who hung back from a lorry doing between 35 and 45 mph all the way from Cockermouth until I finally got past both of them near Lillyhall. Who on earth buys a 200bhp hot hatch and then potters along behind a lorry? I calculated that if I had been directly behind the lorry I could have overtaken it twice in my Citigo.....if I'd had the Corsa VXR it would have been many more because the whole manoeuvre would have taken half the time and distance. Of course having been overtaken by me, the Corsa must then have gone hell for leather on the dual carriageway on the way into Whitehaven because as I turned into town he was only one car behind me. Every morning seems to be the same but with different cars and lorries....it makes the journey to work more interesting but sometimes it is very frustrating. Overtaking is one of those things that does tend to annoy people these days though and I've seen cars being flashed at and gesticulated to for perfectly safe, well-judged overtakes and of course I've also seen some real nightmares and been to a few head on accidents.....but like a lot of life these days, things get blurred and people get angry about what they see as dangerous or anti-social without considering whether what they've just seen is either of those things. It's what I call Daily Mail syndrome – one day they tell you that health and safety has gone mad and all common sense has disappeared, then the following day they are berating a firm or whoever for standing by whilst (not very) unsafe conditions led to an accident.

A friend of mine (no really.....not me....an actual friend!) has been looking for a new car and wants something racy and fast – he has no idea what he is looking for and seems to go between looking at something like a Lotus Elise to half an hour later telling me he is definitely buying a VW Golf R. I love this kind of thing and have spent (wasted!) many hours talking and texting him through his indecision with advice and opinion that he probably ignores anyway. What I have found out as a result of this though is that despite my previous declaration that Ron (Palmer) was right and PCP is the way to buy a car I fear he might be wrong. My friend found a Golf R on a contract hire basis for £2300 deposit and £220 a month....a similar PCP involved a bigger deposit and whilst you get the option to buy with a PCP, are you really going to want to buy a car you've already had for 3 years? I know I wouldn't, particularly one I've had for that length of time! Looking through their other deals, I found some not so good ones and some excellent ones. Skoda Octavia VRS - £2100 down and £169 a month, 10,000 miles a year with free metallic paint. Hmmmm.....when is the PCP up on my Citigo again!?

Peter

Laon Historique - 3rd, 4th and 5th June 2017

Andrew & I took part in the Hitorique last year and thoroughly enjoyed the spectacle. It was an entertaining 3 days of touring around the Reims region of France and seeing a spectacular array of classic vehicles.

Our road trips took us around the Somme, which provided good opportunity to visit some of the War Graves.

We are planning another visit in 2017 and if any club members are interested going to this event we would be happy to chat to them about it.

Please contact Lesley Turney on - lesleyturney@gmail.com

Link to Laon Historique - <http://www.circuit-historique-laon.com/en/>

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.

Richard Goodacre of Normanton

Liam Wright of Millom

Bob Hargreaves of Ulverston

David Lumsden

Peter Metcalf of Prudhoe

Richard Simmonds of Duns

Joe O'Leary of Edinburgh

Graham Couser of Edinburgh

Caitlin Mattinson of Workington

Russell Smith of Kintillo

David Ruddock and Paula Brown of Raskelf

Ben Blanchard of Sproatley

Martin Harwood of Keighley

Mark Burton and Zoe Wright of Seamer

Guy Wickham of Belsay

Johnathan Huffer of Edinburgh

Clive White of Chester le Street

Keith Fletcher of Prudhoe

Chris Haw of Barrhead

Paul Brook of Dewsbury

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.

That takes our total membership for 2016 up to 942

Memberships

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

Maggy Bateman 016973 49919 wcmemsub@outlook.com

Fabulous Prescott Autumn American Classic. 1/2nd October



Every year my wife and I really look forward to the Bugatti Owners Club Autumn Classic weekend at Prescott, it is one of the highlights of our year.

This wonderful venue hosts several themed weekends, French Vie en Bleu & Italian Rosso Red celebrates the French and Italian influences in spring. October sees the Autumn American Classic which is a mixture of everything stars and stripes, hotrods, Cadillac's, Pontiacs, Harley Davidson's plus the Beach Boys if you can imagine the scene. All this is happening not over the pond but deep in the lovely Cotswolds.

Saturday for Carol and me is generally a lazy day watching competitors strive to lower their times on the famous hill, or

browsing the wares on the trade stalls, looking at American cars and the hot rod culture or chilling out generally.

Sunday I try to chill out as well, I love talking to other competitors and spectators but every now and again I get summoned to get in my car by the friendly but efficient marshals to go out and attack the hill. What a great way to spend the day.

Over the years we have made many friends at this event; it's rather like a big family meeting up again. Simon Taylor the BBC commentators and journalist popped in for a chat as did Chris Drewitt another famous commentator. These guys are right on top of their job finding out what's going on in the car world during practise. They get all the information they can, which really pays off when they are filling in time if an accident or break in the competition occurs. They can chat away and keep people interested in what they are saying which is a difficult job at times especially if a nasty incident happens near them.

Saturday's weather was ok until early afternoon but then became horrendous. Torrential rain and thunderstorms caused spins or other incidents on almost every corner of the famous track at various times as drivers pushed harder and harder to put up fast times in atrocious conditions. There were one or two fairly big accidents but fortunately no injuries except to wallets I'm glad to say.

At one time rivers of water were gushing down the track and after a minor incident the clerk of the course who checks out every incident by driving up the track stopped and let a joint clerk of the course out of the course car during a massively heavy thunderstorm. This guy got a spade off a marshal and he himself dug various channels to allow the torrential rain to dissipate onto the grass. In doing this he must have been soaked right through to his skin. Marshals helped of course but this guy did a fantastic job and no further rivers gushed across the





track for the remainder of the day. Several more drivers and cars visited the Armco and tyre walls and needed the attention from the ambulance staff and recovery teams but without any major problems. The incidents were due to driver error as opposed to any problems with the track.

Medical staff always checks drivers involved in an accident, no chances are taken but when the red mist descends common sense can go out of the window.

Sunday was fantastic, it was as warm as midsummer the warm

sun shining in the apple orchards where the paddock is situated. Tribute bands played, dancers with the longest legs in the world danced (female I must add), the wall of death riders hurtled around the vertical sided wooden bowl and every now and again we got our chance to tackle the hill in perfect conditions.

I presume heaven will be something like this!

Every make of car must surely have been represented on Sunday, from an original 1959 Austin seven mini saloon and a 1968 mini traveller without the wooden sides to Aston Martins plus the original AC Cobra "Old Yella" formerly owned by Carroll Shelby. Well over a dozen Austin Healey 3000s one of my very favourite cars, Roger Penske's Chaparral, Buckler to Bugatti, Allard to TR, Morgans, Marcos, MGs, Merlin, Scimitar, Studebaker. McLaren, Ford, Alexis, Nike, Lotus, Elva, Mallock, Alfa, Ensign, Corvette, Mustang, the list goes on and on.

Our sidevalve class or "flathead" as the yanks call it had a variety of cars including several Allard's fitted with the immensely reliable side valve V8 engines as fitted to Ford Pilot car of the fifties plus countless world war two electricity generators. Each car in this class is given a handicap time which is its fastest ever time at Prescott. Whoever beats their handicap by the biggest margin wins, this works really well with everyone trying like hell especially this year as all drivers were regulars at this event.



The class was won by the what must be the best prepared Ford Pop in the country if not the world driven by current hill record holder in the saloon car class Ian Moss who normally competes in a MK1 Escort or his Hillman Imp. Second was a Ford Coupe imported from America with a "small block", 4200cc engine, nothing small about that in my book! I gather its bigger brother is over 7 litres so size is everything as they say. This car looks like a gangster's car from a Bonnie and Clyde movie although this one was built in 1936.

I managed third in class, sixth tenths of a second slower than the small block Ford Coupe, if I had pushed harder on some corners could I possibly have beaten him? This of course is where the red mist descends. Never mind there is always next time.



There are classes for every type of car at this event it's not just a Revival event. There are also two lengths of track available at Prescott, competing on this weekend means you are using the long course which is really fantastic to drive. VSCC events use the short course which omits some of the most challenging corners but they have competed on the original short course since the early 1930s so retain this format to retain the history as well as continuity with class and outright records still valid. Recently they have instigated a new event run on a Friday that uses the long course be-

cause the long track layout is so good.

Many Bugatti's, ERAs and other cars are the very same cars still competing today that set records in the 1930s. Often the cars are still owned by the same families as in those pioneer days when the members of the Bugatti Owners Club put their hands in their pockets and bought the venue with their own money. What a wonderful legacy they have left for future generations. Many of these former members were fabulously rich of course, some of their children and grandchildren are still part of the scene, old school blazers and ties and cultured accents are still present, still very active within the organisation of the Bugatti Owners Club.

Make no mistake about it this does not detract in any way from the enjoyment of Prescott, it enhances it. This venue is a must visit for anyone with the slightest interest in motorsport, it's like Wembley is to football but much more attractive.

A great place to spectate, really fabulous to race up if you are a competitor and it's even possible to drive up the historic venue on certain days in the year when the hill is opened for charity days providing you are in a car that is road taxed and insured. You don't even need a helmet or race overalls to partake. Cheltenham's Cleve Vale Rotary Club have such an event on Sunday 14th May 2017 where a maximum of 200 drivers pay £50 for two runs up the hill, £25 is for the venue running costs but £25 goes directly to charity so as well as fulfilling an ambition you are helping others. Contact organiser geoffkimber@btinternet.com directly to enter or visit Prescott's own website for details of everything else.

Entries for this event have just opened on 5th October so you have time to enter if you get your cheque away shortly. I have just posted mine as it gives Carol a chance to view the hill from a driver's angle and she really enjoys seeing the famous hill from a different perspective and it shows her just how tricky it is to drive.

Can't wait until next October's Autumn Classic.

Keith Thomas

The Rose and Thistle Run



We'd been looking forward to it for months: The Rose and Thistle Run. It sounded lovely. Then we saw the weather forecast! An unseasonably deep low was approaching and likely to be positioned right over the Borders region on the date of the Run- 20th August.

We kept checking e mails to see whether the event would be cancelled, but clearly, the members of Wigton Motor Club are an intrepid bunch. So, on the appointed day, we headed for Carlisle in Mike's quirky Bamboo 2CV.

Having never seen a tulip map before and having no way of setting the odometer,

I had some concerns about navigating the route and, when I observed one lady carefully highlighting various instructions, I was a little disconcerted. However, fortified with delicious bacon butties and our detailed route map, we duly set off.

We soon found the instructions were easy to follow and enjoyed touring 'off the beaten track' and dodging the sheep and belted Galloway cattle. Fortunately, although we passed several fortified farms and pele towers, no Border Reivers came into view.

Two hours after departure, we saw the signs for Slaley Hall. Whilst enjoying our soup and sandwiches, it looked for a while as if the weather may improve. How wrong we were!

Apres lunch – le deluge!

The roads were running like rivers; torrents poured down the hillsides. The wipers were struggling to cope. The towel for mopping up leaking water was saturated. Conversation stopped as both of us were concentrating intently. As the car only has 602cc of 'raw' power we frequently pulled over to let other, more powerful, cars pass. Everyone tooted



their appreciation. Of the beautiful views nothing could be seen.

We were relieved to reach the top of Hartside Pass and know it was all downhill to Penrith. The weather finally began to clear.

We reached Lowther with some relief.

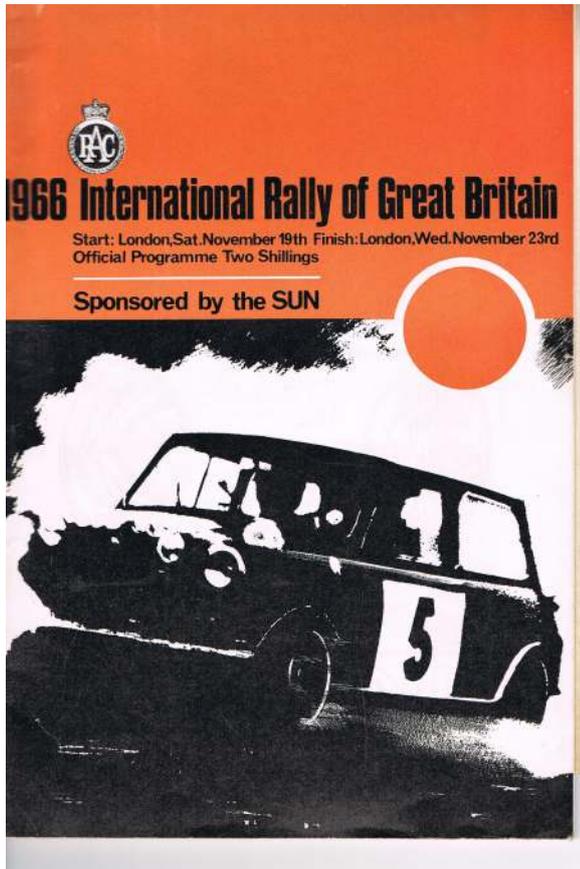
Calmed by tea and tiffin, we headed for home.

Would we do it again?

Certainly, but please – could we have better weather next time?

Gillian and Mike Telford

RAC Rally 1966



Fifty years ago Robin Murray was preparing his Austin Mini Cooper S for the 1966 RAC Rally, which ran from 19th to 25th November. Robin had previously entered in 1965 with Mike Telford but retired with mechanical problems that year. Although I had taken part in three Scottish Internationals this was to be my first of several RACs and anticipation was high. We (Car 105) were entered in the three car Treadfast Tyres Team along with Irving Oglanby/John Taylor(82) and Alf Sewell/Ray Heaton(102). Other local 3 car teams were the 'NRCC- A' consisting of Brian Mitton/Keith Billows(155), Malcolm Wright/Stuart Leitch(145), Les Todd/Tony Brunskill(122) and 'NRCC-B' Mike Telford/Peter Handy(116), Bev Gelder/Raymond Hunt(2), Frank Davies/Les Cowen(85). All were Mini Cooper or S mounted except Frank Davies and Bev Gelder who had brought along their Cortina GTs. Bev was sponsored by Tyne Tees TV which explained his number 2 seeding as the early numbers were sponsored by various media organisations generally with well known drivers. No 5 Graham Hill – Sunday Times, no 6 John Sprinzel – Daily Express. Jim Clark was entered in a Lotus Cortina by Ford. There were 146 entries

including 37 foreign crews and six ladies crews including Rosemary Smith, Pat Moss Carlsson, Jenny Nadin and Sylvia Osterberg. Works entries included three 3 car teams from BMC and one 3 car team from each of Rootes, Ford and SAAB. Rally gods filled the entry list and some indication of the quality is that Roger Clark/Jim Porter Lotus Cortina were seeded at 31, Andrew Cowan/Brian Coyle Hillman Imp at 41– both of whom were to retire and Harry Kallstrom 66 who finished a magnificent 2nd.

The Sun newspaper sponsored the event, this being necessary as the Forestry Commission were now charging for forest use, with Barrie Gill doing the numerous reports and the winner's trophy would not have been out of place on today's F1 rostrums. Cash awards ranged from £250 for first place to £20 for tenth. Each crew member received an RAC badge with a 1966 year bar, finishers in blue non finishers in white. Marshals' bars were, from memory, red.

Individual entry fees were £40 and £5 for a club team, manufacturers teams were £20. 'Each driver shall weigh at least 60kg with clothing', was a condition – most strange but we both qualified.

The 2,400 mile route started from London Airport, Heathrow at 11.30am on Saturday 19th November with crews heading to the west country via controls at Dorchester 5pm and Bristol Airport 11.30pm having covered nine stages and 38 stage miles. Things moved into Wales overnight with controls at Abergavenny 2am and breakfast at Machynlleth 8am – another nine stages and 52 stage miles. Sunday afternoon saw crews back in England at Oulton Park 4pm and after a run north up the new M6 to the Swan Hotel, Newby Bridge at 9pm. That daylight period had included only a further 6 stages totalling 55 miles including the longest stage on the event, Dovey at 23 miles. Back into darkness the local route took us via Grisedale over Hardknott Pass through Lamplugh and 'Bassenthwaite level crossing' before a control at Greystoke just after midnight on Sunday night. The Lake District stages

were Grisedale 8 miles, Whinlatter 5.4 miles, Wythop 3.3 miles, Dodd 3.5 miles and Greystoke 4.7 miles. Then via Carlisle, Moffat, Peebles and Dalnacardoch including a further 9 stages and 42 stage miles before reaching our first overnight halt at Coylumbridge, Aviemore at 2.30pm – 51 hours from the start and with 38 stages and 211 stage miles behind us.

A relatively gentle daylight run after the restart at 7am on Tuesday involved 7 stages and 43 stage miles via Lochearnhead, Bathgate, Laurieston and Dumfries to Newcastleton. Here the real entertainment started, in evening darkness, with 6 stages/62.6 miles including Newcastleton, Keilder, Redesdale, Plashetts (before the flooding), Wark and Pundershaw. A road run followed via Chollerford to Darlington at midnight. Five hard hours in the Yorkshire Forests followed before breakfast at Barnby Moor using Guisborough, Boltby, Cropton, Pickering, Dalby, Staindale, Langdale, Wykeham and Wykeham Moor -9 stages totalling 63.6 miles all in darkness. Two stages in Sherwood Forest and 18 miles of Silverstone brought the remaining cars and exhausted crews back to the finish at London Airport.



Sixty three crews (43%) were classified as finishers from 146 starters. The high attrition rate was testimony to the tough conditions and rough forest sections, with even many of the works cars falling by the wayside so it was a great credit to the privateers who coaxed their cars to the finish. Robin's car was entirely self prepared as were most of the other local cars, in fact four of our local cars had been bought new from Carlisle Dealer showrooms that year. Much credit is due to our service crews who popped up (by arrangement) at the most inaccessible places and gave the kiss of life to the weary machines. Gerry Braddock, George Rice, Colin and Maurice Nixon and Alec McGregor all provided much needed repairs and tyres and on more than one occasion they used all of their persuasive powers to scrounge parts such as oil coolers from the BMC works van – remember the BMC coach? By 1966 Minis were built with hydrolastic suspension which proved troublesome in the forest and although Robins older car had dry suspension it did collapse at the near side rear in a Scottish forest and it was necessary to hammer a wooden block into the suspension arm and put the wheel on back to front to clear the Heath Robinson repair until a replacement suspension unit was fitted.

Alf Sewell's car was a new 998 Cooper built with Group 1 mods. but as the event unfolded it developed a huge appetite for oil and experienced constant suspension problems until they were excluded as OTL. So that was it, 2400 miles including 404 miles over 63 stages. Compare that to today's offerings and be thankful we were able to experience such an event.

Local finishers were Robin Murray/Ron Palmer in 20th place, Mike Telford/Peter Handy 22nd, Bev Gelder/Ray Hunt 24th, Frank Davies/Les Cowan 36th. These three latter crews won the second club team award although sadly our other five local crews failed to finish due to many and varied problems. Finishing 20th may look quite a modest result but we were happy enough and ahead of such names as Barrie Williams, Bob Lamb, Jim Bullough, David Sutton, Roy Mapple, Richard Hudson Evans, Jack Tordoff, Chris Coburn and Gerry Birrell all of whom were held in high esteem and may even be familiar to some of the more mature readers. The only media supported car to finish was Bev Gelder's Tyne Tees TV car.

1st/Bengt Soderstrom/Gunnar Palm Mk 1 Lotus Cortina won comfortably by 13 minutes from the Mini of 2nd/ Harry Kallstrom followed by 3rd/Tom Trana/Volvo who had won in 1963 and 1964, 4th/ Rauno Aaltonen/Mini winners in 1965, 5th/Tony Fall/Mini, 6th/Lars Damberg/Renault 8 Gordini and 6th/Ove Andersson/Fulvia. Two of the ladies drove very well indeed with Pat Moss-Carlsson in 9th and Sylvia Osterberg Renault R8 Gordini 10th. Two individual performances stood out for me apart from the winners – Tony Fall/Mike Wood Cooper S in 5th place and Sylvia Osterberg/Inga-Lill Edenring in the R8 Gordini in 10th place - an unlikely forest car. I wonder where the talented lady drivers are today? I don't remember much of the after rally party although it will have been a good one – they all were. Couldn't last the pace now. NB. Anyone interested in full entry list and results see www.ewrc-results.com.

Ron Palmer.

Club News

At the last committee meeting it was agreed that any competitors competing in event who is under 17 years of age must produce proof of age to ensure that the MSA's minimum age limits are adhered to.

Competitors are also reminded that the Signing On Declaration says that you do not have any medical condition that renders you unfit to hold a driving licence.

The Solway Rally and “The Big Pink”!

Those of you who read my articles on a regular basis will be aware of the completely disastrous year we have had with motor cars in general but Midgets in particular. If anything could go wrong, it has done – and usually in the most spectacular fashion at the most inopportune moment. So, for the last historic rally of the year, we thought the odds were that lady luck would look favourably in our direction and we would emerge from the event unscathed and in perfect working order. Of course, in order to achieve this, we would have to start off the event in that condition. And, yes, you guessed it, we fell at the first hurdle.

Senior management (ie the husband) decided we would use Midget number 2 (the one which we set on fire) but first of all we would replace the Front Line suspension which was leaking oil due to the punishment it received on the Doonhamer. Tick. Test drive and discover an unnerving vibration on deceleration. Wear on the Hardy Spicer joint on the prop shaft, apparently. You chaps out there would have already diagnosed that, of course. I thought Hardy Spicer was a Gentleman’s Outfitters but shows how much I know. Anyway, this significant part of the universal joint was next on the list to be replaced but only after a planned night out at the neighbours. A certain amount of alcohol intake was inevitably involved and a giggly walk home with only a two candle power torch beam saved me from upending myself in the ditch at some ungodly hour. This was sincerely regretted next day under the Midget.....there’s nothing like a stupendous hangover to try your patience every time you bang your head on the same exhaust bracket, is there? But we got the prop shaft apart, discovered the needle roller bearings were visible through the rubber gasket realised the job required more skill than was currently available and put it all back together again. And then the flipping thing wouldn’t start – still haven’t worked out the answer to that one – the possibilities could be endless. In the meantime, I had spent a good hour faffing about applying pink flower decals to the bodywork, much to the husband’s disgust, in preparation for “The Big Pink” charity event which the motor club was supporting on the Solway rally next day. They are still there, now seemingly spot welded to the bodywork.....

So we reverted to Midget number 1(the one which collide d with a giant hay bale on the Blue Streak) – still not a pretty sight but at least it was working. On arrival at the White Heather, the room was awash with pink in every shade – wow – what a brilliant effort made by everyone supporting Breast Cancer Care charity.

Chief Snail, Brian Bradley and his navy, Michael Marsland, were wearing matching pink tea co-sies knitted by Brian’s wife Pat especially for the event. Pink shirts appeared everywhere, a flash of rakish pink socks, a cowboy hat covered in swansdown and tinsel. And the collection bucket was rattling with generous donations – what a brilliant start to the day!

The usual deathly hush fell over the room as we frantically made our “pace” notes trying to distinguish left from right and breathing a sigh of relief/surge of adrenalin when it became apparent that there would be two tests at Rowrah Kart track – always a highlight of the event for drivers and the chance to be scared witless for the navigators.

So we got off to a good start on test 1 – not too challenging but enough to engage the brain and get warmed up. Tried to ignore the steam coming from Charles’s TR4 and took a leaf out of Archie’s book and lined up advantageously at the start of test 2 – applied slightly more concentration and a few handfuls of opposite lock on the gravel surface - survived intact. Tests 3 & 4 were tighter than they looked but we pottered around anxious not to pick up a cone under the front wheel like last time and were cheered on by “a star of the future” judging by his enthusiasm – namely the



totally edible Will Garstang. Then it was the turn of Wigton Auction mart and a dust bowl of 360's mostly in an unexpected direction – and again we went clear. Mustn't get complacent..... On to Rowrah and Test 6 in the car park with a series of 90 degree turns on a mixture of Tarmac and gravel then it started to chuck it down just as we lined up on the Kart track. The husband was re-living his karting days and former glories whilst I tried not to look scared – or scream like a girl and hang on to

every knob and lever in the cockpit. Tried to look in control at the exit but the Lamplugh lads soon detected the note of hysteria in my voice and my abandoned notes all over the floor.

After lunch the sun came out temporarily and dried off the wrong bit of Eneragus car park – a very grippy affair which would have benefitted a layer of water but we glided around as if on castors and shot off back to Rowrah. The track was drier this time so an increase in confidence produced a faster but marginally less hair raising journey – one which left me grinning like an idiot. Not so for the later Targas who had to endure heavy rain and hailstones half an hour later – the luck of the draw sadly.

The old British Steel slag heap at Workington appeared next on the horizon – a new venue for us. We set off with a vengeance with all the windows open and inhaled a ton of dust on the way round for good measure – a second faster than Archie who was struggling with a bad back. And then an old favourite at Maryport - straight into a blinding low sun. I started giving instructions at 33rpm but quickly escalated to 78rpm as I realised I was a bit behind the approaching cones coming thick and fast from all sides. Couldn't believe it – still clear. Pep talk on the way back to Kirkbride – don't cock it up on the last leg – so we nearly did. The repeat of the morning's tests went without a hitch except we beat the bogey on one and then at last we were lined up for the MSport finale. Engine misses a beat – uh oh – splutters and picks up again – off we go at a rate of knots on one of the most complicated routes of the day. Misses again, picks up again, threatens to die, misses, picks up but makes it to the finish line – and THEN gives up the ghost. Can you believe it? But we had finished with a clean sheet and we later discovered the coil had expired - crikey what next?

An excellent roast beef dinner rounded off an incredible day thanks to the efforts of all the organisers and marshals and Graeme & Chris in the "Bridal Suite" in charge of results – (you'd better ask them - but it involved a sunken bath allegedly).

The awards presentation followed with Team Sloan winning our class mainly because Archie won over all. Of course, someone always has to lower the tone. Chris Hunter asked if he could have a look at my trophies....."Come round anytime" I said "I always have them out on the bookcase...."

Cheers!

Marian Sloan (aka Maz)

PS we have raised just over £233 for Breast Cancer Care from your donations – a final figure will be published in the next issue of Start Line. Thank you to everyone for supporting the charity – we couldn't have done it without you.

Historic Specials Go Wild in the Cotswolds

By: Gary Axon



Camels, penguins, Gilberts and Turners. Ordinarily an unusual combination perhaps, but not in late August, when this unlikely grouping came together for the FSCC Historic Specials Day, held annually at the Cotswold Wild Life Park, near Burford in Oxfordshire.

The Historic Specials Day gives both the knowledgeable enthusiasts and curious day trippers a rare opportunity to see a number of scarce and often long-forgotten early kit cars and specials all in one place, and just a few steps away from the resident monkeys, wolves and snakes!

With a strong cross section of 1950s and early '60s British self-build specials on hand to inspect, even some of the kids and Japanese tourists visiting the wild life park seemed to be more attracted to the cars than the neighbouring wild life – not all quite sharing the same space, naturally!

This year's event attracted an exceptional variety of cars, with a good number of the pioneering British sportscar marques represented. These included an impressive spread of Turners, Rochdales, Fairthorpes, Ashleys and Tornados, supported by some appealing early Lotus 6 and Sevens.

Among the rarer specialist sportscars in attendance – mainly based around humble Ford Prefect sidevalve running gear – were an intriguing selection of Bucklers, including a charming AKS-bodied DD2 and Mk VI, plus a Watford Cheetah, a Dellow, Shirley MK II, and an unusual one-off 1957 Martin Ford special, fresh from its recent extensive restoration.



A lone Hamblin Cadet waved the flag for the Austin Seven-based specials that were highly affordable and popular in period, with a stunning competition Elva MK VI attracting the most attention at the event.

The Fairthorpe Sports Car Club run their celebration of specials annually. The FSCC includes the Fairthorpe Register, Turner Register, Rochdale Register, Ashley Falcon and Historic Specials Register. Check their website for details: <http://www.fairthorpescc.com/>

Article courtesy of Hagerty

Social Scene

Hog Roast

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

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

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

The club's Autumn weekend was held on 15th and 16th October beginning with the Cumbrian Canter ably organised by Eileen and Neal Horsfall. The location chosen for the start and finish of this year's event was a bit of a surprise to me as when I was last there many years ago it failed to impress. However as we arrived for the start approaching up the long drive through well maintained lawns and the beautiful setting of the lake it seemed so different to how I remembered it. The Lakeside Inn at Brayton, Aspatria was an excellent choice reinforced by the ample bacon and sausage sandwiches provided for the crews before the start.

Kirk and Alannah had all of two and a half miles to travel from home in the 1923 Bentley 3.0/4.5 and we were happy with our journey of only 17 miles. Some entrants had travelled much further with Ron and Marjorie Moore having come from Newcastle in the XK150, Peter Grange from Kendal in his Morgan and no doubt others made a similar big effort to be there. Most numerous cars in the entry list were MG and Mini with five of each, and two each of MX5, BMW, Triumph, Morgan and Jaguar. Represented by one each were Bentley, VW, Porsche, Minor 1000 and TVR. A great mix of makes and models which in my view is preferable to one marque events.

Route instructions for the 75 miles were by tulip diagrams which were accurately shown and well produced together with snippets of local information along the way. Any novice navigator need have no worries if route information is this clear and simply. The roads were quiet and interesting with the Penrith area being most distant and many of the views such as Mungrisedale in the autumn sunshine were a joy. Christine felt the length of the route was about right and perhaps preferable to some of the one day marathons. For those of us who don't enjoy cleaning off salt from winter roads this event was late enough in the year before the old cars hibernate for a few months. Club members who generally take part in our tours but couldn't make this one missed a good run. At the finish back at Lakeside the chat over a drink was good as we waited for sandwiches and chips and everyone seems to have had a good day. Many thanks to Eileen and Neal for a well organised event.

Charles entered us in his TR4 on the Solway Historic the following day. This was based at The White Heather with several tests on the airfield and attracted a great entry in both quality and quantity for both Historic(30 cars) and Targa(21 cars). Four tests at Kirkbride got things underway although with cars running at 1 minute intervals queues formed on some tests quite quickly. These thinned out as we headed for the next test in the old auction yard at Wigton before a run down to Rowrah for the test in the car park followed by one lap of the kart circuit which was very slippery due to a heavy rain shower. A soup and roll lunch was taken at Energus at Lillyhall followed by a test on their car park which usually catches out those who take a while to waken up after lunch. However all was well for us and we headed back to Rowrah for two laps of the now drying track. At this time we would have usually have headed back to Fultons scramble course test but apparently local politics have intervened and the number of events allowed here have been curtailed so we were denied this enjoyable venue.

We then tootled down to Workington and as we drove through Clay Flats towards Test 10 in Armstrongs Quarry (the Old Slag Banks?) the diff became very noisy. We had a brief look but there was nothing to see externally and as it sounded close to lurching itself we called it a day and drove very gently home.

We found the event very enjoyable and well organised with loads of efficient marshals who braved the heavy rain with a smile. Many thanks to Steve, Wiggy, Maz, Duncan, Roger and all the wonderful marshals. A full report will appear elsewhere.

Ron.

Book Review: BMC Competitions Department Secrets **By: Hagerty**

After a long absence from the bookshelves, motoring publisher Veloce has just issued a reprint of BMC Competitions Department Secrets. Including never-before published photographs and details of planned prototypes, the book is a mine of information written from an insider's perspective.

The book was written by three BMC Competition Department heads, each of whom gives a unique perspective. Marcus Chambers controlled the until from 1955 until 1961, the years when the Works Austin-Healeys were at their peak. He was brought in as the department was established, forged from the old Nuffield Competitions Committee, and oversaw the development of the team into a force to be reckoned with.

Stuart Turner was a young motoring journalist and rally navigator when he was headhunted to take over from Chambers in 1961. He takes up the story of the department at a time when the Mini Coopers were winning Mote Carlo Rallies.

In 1967, Turner left to work for Castrol, before finally ending up running BMC rival Ford's competition department. His replacement at BMC was Peter Browning, who previously had been the press officer. He led the department during the period of success by the Works Sebring MGC, but then had to deal with the BL management decision to close the department in 1970.

For anyone interested in British motorsport of the 1950s and 1960s, and especially anyone with an interest in BMC cars, this book is a great read. To have the first-hand accounts of all three Competitions Department heads is impressive, but when interspersed with personal photographs and a host of memos, the result is an extraordinary book.

Some of the content is not without controversy- the authors decided to include such items as a confidential memo from Alex Issigonis to Stuart Turner (headed 'Highly Confidential- read then burn!') detailing the illegal modifications made to rally Coopers, and assessing which would get past scrutineers. Turner noted that this simply reflected common practise of the time, and that all the teams were up to something similar. Later Browning recalls that he had to smuggle car build sheets out, when a strict edict issued on the Department's closure stipulated that they were to be burned.

All in all, BMC Competitions Department Secrets is a fascinating book, and would make a valuable addition to any BMC enthusiast's or British motor racing historian's collection.

BMC Competitions Department Secrets by Peter Browning, Marcus Chambers, Stuart Turner and Philip Young, ISBN 978-1-845849-94-8 is published by Veloce. It is available at a cost of £24.99 direct from Veloce www.veloce.co.uk or telephone 01305 260068.

Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards

Round 7, Solway Historic and Targa Rallies, October 16th.



An impressive entry of fifty two Historic and Targa cars lined up outside the White Heather at Kirkbride for Wigton Motor Club's Solway Historic and Targa rallies. This was the final round in the WMC/Gates Challenge 2016 and contenders were well represented with much still to be decided in the overall and class standings.

The first two tests were relatively short and on loose surfaces but nobody was taking it easy. Archie/Richard Simmonds, Midget, was quickest off the mark on T1 with a blistering 29s, with David Short/Roy Heath, Escort Mk2, and

Andy Beaumont/Sam Wainwright, Sunbeam Rapier HF, both on 30s. In the Targa class, Jon Hill/Mick Pears, Corsa, set the standard with 30s followed by three crews on 31s - Chris Hunter/Fiona Tyson, MX5, Joe Mallinson, Ka, and Chris Haw/Russell Smith, MX5.

On T2 it was Andy Beaumont's turn - he whizzed through the test in 40s followed by Rob Iveson/Jacqui Raine, Mini 1275, 42s and John/Marion Sloan, Midget, and Peter Metcalfe/Guy Wickham, Mini 1275, both on 43s. In the Targa class, Jon Hill/Mick Pears continued to set the pace with 39s, Drew/Karina McLean, MX5, had 41s, Daniel Place/Sam Iveson, Peugeot 309, and Chris Haw/Russell Smith were both on 42s.



Tests 3 & 4 were on the airfield's tarmac runways. These were long looping tests requiring tight lines and a sensitive use of the handbrake. On T3 Beaumont struck again with 69s and Simmonds/Simmonds, Short/Heath and Marsden/Garstang all shared 70s. On T4 Simmonds struck back with 37s, Short/Heath and Iveson/Raine had 38s and Marsden/Garstang were on 39s. Times also continued to be close among the Targa crews with Chris Haw/Russell Smith taking T3 on 70s while Hill/Pears, Hunter/Tyson

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and Mallinson all shared 71s. On T4 Graeme Mactavish/Jim O'Neill, MX5, put in a great test with 38s, Hunter/Tyson and Hill/Pears shared 39s. After four tests it was clear that the Solway was going to be a very competitive event with a variety of crews setting fastest test times.

A short drive to Wigton, collecting one code board on the way, brought crews to the Auction Mart for a big test on gravel (T5). This test certainly kept the crews focussed with no less than 3 x 360 spins and

it was the turn of Dave Short/Roy Heath, Escort Mk2, to set the pace with 54s followed by Simmonds/Simmonds and Ian Dixon/Richard Welsh, MGBGT, on 56s and Beaumont on 58s - the rest of us began to loose time and, after a good start, Iveson/Raine spoiled their morning with a WT. Among the Targa crews Hill/Pears were again setting the pace with 53s, Mallinson had 58s and Quentin James/Tom Howe, Citroen C2GT, and Stephen Short/John Turnbull, Proton Coupe, shared 59s.

The car park test at Rowrah (T6) was tight but everybody was pressing hard - Simmonds and Beaumont shared 42s and John/Marion Sloan had 43s. Hill/Pears lead home the Targa class on 42s with Hunter/Tyson and Geoff/Maggy Bateman, Peugeot 205, sharing 43s.

The first test on the Rowrah circuit (T7) was a single lap blast and the tarmac surface was wet and slippery. Most agile was Beaumont on 79s, Team Simmonds had 81s, Short/Heath 83s and David Agnew/Rose Shaw, Porsche 911, had 84s. We were going sideways from the first slight right after the start and saw most of the circuit through the side windows (felt like being back in the Cortina) but with 95s the time we time lost here would count heavily against us at the finish.



Lunch was held in the excellent dining facility at Energus and midway results showed Beaumont leading the Historics on 359s, Simmonds on 363s and Short on 364. Simmonds, Beaumont and Short were to be embroiled in a tight tussle all day but there were plenty of crews who stayed in contact with them. In the Targa class, Hill/Pears were leading on 352s with Place/Iveson and Mactavish/O'Neill on 387 and Hunter/Tyson on 393s - Hill/Pears had set up a well deserved lead and the scrap for the other podium places would be fierce

all afternoon.

T8 was on the smooth car park outside Energus. This was a classic autotest and once again it was very competitive from the off: Simmonds darted round in a superb 64s (no nonsense, just accurate, tidy and quick!) David Ruddock/Paula Brown on 65s, Short and Beaumont on 68s. Hill/Pears kept their nose ahead in the Targa class with 62s but there were four crews on 63s - Place/Iveson, Jennings/White, Peugeot 106, David/Sally Winter, Fiesta, and Alan/Lynn Hawdon, Peugeot 205, showing that there was plenty of crews capable of a good finish.



Back to Rowrah circuit for a double lap test (T9). This time it was dry and quickest Historics were Simmonds and Beaumont sharing 139s, Ruddock/Brown, Magnum, 144s, Ben Blanchard/Bob Hargreaves 145s and Short/Heath 146s. James/Howe showed their potential in the Targa class with 158s, Hill/Pears and Hunter/Tyson were both on 160s.

Across to the coast for the next two tests which couldn't have been more different. T10 was set on the smooth

gravel base of an old quarry with lots of hefty rubble to add to the excitement whilst T11 was on the familiar all concrete site at Maryport (one of the longer and more complex tests of the day). Quickest crews through T10 were Beaumont on 64s in the Historics and Place/Iveson in the Targas on 66s. On T11 it was Team Sloan with an excellent 57s and Paul/Esther Bowness in the Targa class with 60s.

A pleasant drive across NW Cumbria took us to Kirkbride for another run through T(4)/12 & (3)/13 followed by T14 which was the final and longest test of the day. By now the pressure was beginning to tell and mistakes were made on the final tests which would have a big impact on the final results. Many cars beat the bogey on T12 so its impact on the results was nullified. On T13 Dave Short would have a "moment" to be followed by an even bigger "MOMENT" on T14 which together cost him valuable seconds and probably dropped him from 2nd to 3rd O/A. T13 went to Beaumont with 67s and to Hunter/Tyson in the Targas with 67s.

T14 provided a grand finale but not for Andy Beaumont whose superb day long effort in the big Sunbeam and an almost certain overall victory ended here with a WT. David Ruddock took Test 14 with 104s with Simmonds and Metcalfe sharing 105s, Goodacre/Birtles had a great run in the big Volvo with 109s and Marsden was pushing hard with 110s. Mallinson's Ka took the Test in the Targa class on 102s with Place/Iveson on 103s, Drew/Karina McLean 106s and Hill/Pears coasting home in 107s.



As the adrenalin ebbed away, there was a mixture of smiles and frustration among the crews but whatever the feelings this had been an enjoyable late season event and a fitting climax to another WMC/Gates Rally Challenge. Simmonds/Simmonds won the Solway outright on 902s, with Ruddock/Brown 2nd Historic on 956s, Short/Heath 3rd on 962s and Team Sloan 4th on 971s. Hill/Pears took a comfortable win in the Targa class with 927s, Place/Iveson had 962s, Hunter/Tyson and Mactavish/O'Neill shared 996s

for =4th.

A good roast dinner and a welcome pint were consumed and results were quickly announced allowing crews to head home in the daylight. A big thanks to the organisers, marshals and landowners for arranging and supporting the event and I hope we can return in 2017 for another *challenging* Solway.

Mike Garstang

Photos by Tony North

Bygones



Photos of the Ford Heritage Collection at Dagenham. More pictures on our Face Book page.

When others manufacturers seem to enjoy and exploit their heritage it is sad that Ford have all these cars stored in an old warehouse!

They should be on public display and also taken out and used at events.

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DREAM GARAGE

A regular monthly feature, where members, officials and friends of Wigton Motor Club are given the opportunity to select, money no object, a collection of six cars to create their own, personal, 'Dream Garage'.....and a chance to put forward the reasons behind their selection.

Facilitated by Michael Marsland

By way of introduction, I must say straight away that this feature is not an original idea; it has been borrowed from another motor club's newsletter; and, I do believe, Wigton MC has had something like this in the past.....but, to quote Graeme Forrester 'not since last century'.....so here goes

I'm starting off the feature by picking my own six cars; so I feel I should give you all a bit of information about my background in Motor Sport.....

My interest in the Sport probably comes from my Uncle, who was a navigator of some repute in the 1960's.....who took me to see Jim Clark driving in the 1966 RAC rally.....this was followed up by visits to Oulton Park, with my Father and Uncle.....notably to see the first Formula 5000 race in the UK, on Good Friday 1969, and many other meetings in the 70's.....and ever since.....

Anyone who has ever been remotely connected with the Sport wonders how they would fare if they competed; and my opportunity arose in 1995, when I started competing in hillclimbs and sprints, and I have competed at most venues in the UK; always in MG's.....I've managed one or two class wins, and hold a few class records at various places!

I was always drawn back, however to my Uncle, the navigator....a small trophy, dating back to the '60's, which is one of my prize possessions, won on a dark night in the deepest Lake District, surely meant that I was destined to try navigation; and, in a chance conversation, I ended up under the wing of Brian Bradley.....and that brings us to the present!

So here are my six cars.....in no particular order!

1) Alpine Renault A110 circa 1973



In 1977, as a car mad teenager, I was lucky enough to be invited to stay with a French family; in the deep south of France. near the French Spanish border...Perpignan, in the Languedoc Rousillon area.

The visit affected me deeply; new music, food, and above all, strange French cars. The next door neighbour of the family I stayed with, I learnt, was a keen Rally driver; and, hidden in his garage was a formidable rally weapon..... He showed it me one day; and my life has never been quite the same since.....

OK.....it was the wrong colour; it was black, and, as everyone knows, they have to be French Racing

Blue.....but it did have the Cibies hanging off the front, and the Devil exhaust hanging of the rear; and in between, all the correct stickers.....'Elf', 'SEV Marchal', 'Alpine Renault' (Never Renault Alpine, heaven forbid), and a 'Radio Monte Carlo' sticker in the rear window; which we all listened to, non stop.....

Of course, there were other discoveries on that visit, French girls, Rose Wine, Discoteques....and the music of Donna Summer.....but whenever I see an Alpine Renault, it's 1977 all over again.

2) Land Rover Freelander 2008 to date



And now some practicality! From the moment that it was introduced, I loved the Range Rover. A brilliant concept, a handsome car that you could use for your daily commute, take off road, and use for general towing duties.....not just a class leader; it created a new class; and it was British!

And then, something strange happened.....it gained weight, it got bigger; the tyres got wider.....then came the chrome, and footballers wives started driving them.....the final nail in the coffin was when Overfinch

got hold of them and turned them into mobile Gin palaces.....and I lost interest.

In about 2010, a friend's daughter asked me if I'd tow some equipment up to the Great North Run for her in connection with her business.....I'd have the use of her brand new Freelander for the weekend. For me, the Freelander is the modern day incarnation of the original Range Rover concept; but better.....I loved it, and would love one, not just for everyday use, but for hard core towing duties.

3) Porsche 911S early 1970's (pre impact bumpers)



'Never going to own a racehorse; or a fast back mid engined Porsche' as Rod Stewart sang; which always puzzled me a bit, because all the Porsches at that time were rear engined.....but there you go! I still don't want to own a racehorse.....all those vets bills and piles of manure they produce just put me off....but I would really like an early '70's 911.....no tea tray rear wing, no massively flared wheel arches.....no Dayglo Orange or Kermit Green paintwork..... I'm thinking Steve McQueen, opening scenes of 'Le Mans'.....Slate Grey, or classic Silver.....it's not too much to ask for, is it?

4) Austin Healey 'Frogeye' Sprite Circa 1960



Gosh, car no 4 already! I've participated in enough Motor Sport to know that when travelling up narrow roads at speed, you really need a car that feels like it's on your side. I've yet to drive a car that fits the bill quite like a Spridget; and as per usual in these circumstances it's the earliest incarnation that is most attractive. A lightweight 'Frogeye'....1380cc A series, straight cut box, LSD, stiff suspension and some sticky tyres....thanks very much! (And it's got to be Speedwell Blue or Old English White)

5) MGB GT Circa 1969 (pre British Leyland)

Going back to the 1970's, in particular 1976, I was in the sixth form at my local school, I was running a 1960 Morris Minor, my first car, which had clearly been MOT'd at the local blind school. It cost me £65; had 12 months MOT (!!!!!)and 4 months tax.....(I thought of it recently when I filled up the TF with super unleaded and was presented with a bill for £65.25.....)

One of my fellow students turned up in his 18th birthday present; a 1969, Tartan Red, MG BGT, with black leather, a full length Webasto sunroof.....and, the final straw, an Eight track stereo



system, complete with Elton John's 'Goodbye Yellowbrick Road' I saw the future; it was good. MG's were clearly the way to salvation, or at least to meeting girls. Morris Minor's weren't too good at that, particularly when the heater didn't work.

Of course; he wrote it off.....in the same week, I recall, as the engine blew up on my Minor, finally protesting at being driven flat out everywhere (60mph!), without being serviced.

It left me with a love for MG's that even I don't fully understand.....a 14 year relationship with my own BGT, followed by 15 years of Midget ownership, and my current TF.....anyway; one day I've got to own another '60's

BGT....on wires, with leather, a webasto.....

I'll change the eight track, but it still must be Tartan Red, Mineral Blue, or Old English White.

6)MG K3 Magnette



The raciest thing since the RAF stopped flying biplanes..... I love them in dark blue.

From a bygone time, when it was acceptable to be photographed smoking! Well, that's my six.

I reserve the right to change all, or any one of them in the future, but suspect that the Alpine Renault will always be number 1!

Next month, I've invited our Chairman, Peter Garforth, to select his six.....stand by for an Eastern bloc extravaganza!

Hagerty's Guide to Selling Your Car At Auction

By: John Mayhead

Selling a car at auction can be a quick and effective way of selling a classic car. Put the right car in the right auction and you could get a higher price than selling your car privately or through a dealer. But many owners are wary of selling a classic car at auction. They may be worried about the complexity of the sale, of selling the car for less than it is worth, and concerned that they will lose control of the selling process. Here's Hagerty's guide to successfully selling a classic car at auction.

Tip 1: Set A Sensible Reserve

Do your homework, and be realistic about your car's value. A great place to start is the [Hagerty Price Guide](#), but also check magazine ads and online classified sites such as www.classiccarsforsale.co.uk. Everyone thinks their car is special, but try to get an objective view of its real value- a good auction house or owners' club will be able to help. But above all, this is your decision: if you don't want the car to go for less than a certain figure, then stick to your guns and maintain your reserve; just be prepared to bring the car home again if it doesn't find a buyer.

Tip 2: Make it Look Good

Your car will attract bidders if it looks good in the catalogue and in the auction hall. Make sure it is clean and polished, inside and out, and don't forget the engine bay. Some auction houses offer an engine detailing service- for a few hundred pounds you may consider this a good investment,

if your car is of value. Alternatively, a roll of blue paper and an appropriate cleaner could make a huge amount of difference.

Tip 3: Make it Saleable

It is a fact that many of the bidders at classic car auctions are dealers. They want something that looks nice, and that they can sell quickly for a profit. If you're aiming at this market, make your car as saleable as possible. Put on a new MOT, and maybe get any advisories addressed. Replace trim items like damaged hubcaps, badges or mouldings. Replace any 'owner additions' and try to return it as close as possible to original: I once bought a Triumph Herald convertible that had a plywood 'tonneau' over the back seats- not everyone's cup of tea. Finally, and it sounds simple, but make sure the bonnet and boot releases work.

Tip 4: Tell the Story

Many people who buy classic cars are purchasing not just a machine, but a piece of history that has its own story. Present this in a nice format using photographs, bills and any of the car's original paperwork such as old log books or the owner's manual. Also, research the history of your car if you can, and include anything you find. A fat history file is a great thing to find at an auction, and there is nothing worse than asking for the paperwork, to be presented with an empty box file.

Tip 5: Do Your Own Marketing

Classic car auction houses will market your car as part of their services, but you can help by spreading the word that your car is coming up for sale. You could use owners' clubs, online forums or social media, or just by telling friends who are into the same cars as you. Remember that once a car is consigned to auction you may be liable for commission if it is sold before the sale, but hey- the car will be gone and you'll have money in your pocket.

Finally, we asked H&H Classic Auctions for their tips. Nick Lumby, Senior Car Specialist H&H Classics replied: "Try to make the car's appearance as appealing as possible, paying attention to the interior and engine bay as well the exterior and ensure any supporting documentation, including invoices and correspondence, is neatly presented in a history file. Be realistic about its value and make sure we are able to accurately describe the car by providing as much information as possible on its history and condition before the sale."

The National Historic Vehicle Survey 2016

By: John Mayhead

The Federation of British Historical Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) does a great job looking after all of its affiliated owners' clubs and registers. But another hugely important part of its role is to provide research into the classic car hobby. Every few years, the FBHVC produces an overview of the entire classic car industry in the UK, and the latest edition has just been published.

The headline figures are very encouraging for anyone interested in classic cars, bikes and commercials. A total of 8.2 million people are interested in classic vehicles, and there are now over a million historic vehicles registered - up from 850,000 in 2011. And what's more, over half (58%) are registered for road use.

In terms of the benefit to the economy, the FBHVC reports that the historic vehicle movement contributes £5.5bn per annum- that's the same as the cost of the annual Crossrail contracts. Again, this has leapt up: when the FBHVC reported first in 1997, the figure was £1.6bn and in 2011 £4.3bn.

One of the most striking differences is the number of miles, on average, that historic vehicles are used annually. In 2011, this was reported as 288 miles, but in 2016 this has risen to a huge 1,124 miles. This could be a result in the rise in popularity of modern classics, or a reflection of the increasing number of classic car events.

The report also detailed the most popular models of classic vehicle owned. MG tops the classic car list, with 6%, followed closely by Ford (5%) and Triumph (4%). Honda is at the top of the classic bikes list (5%) followed by BSA and Triumph (both on 3%). Massey Ferguson (3%) tops the agricultural machinery list, and non-specific LGVs and HGVs jointly top the commercials (2% each). Finally, the FBHVC have assessed that the total value of all historic vehicles registered in the UK is £17.8bn, the first time they have estimated this figure, and that it employs nearly 35,000 people- a rise of 28% since 2011.

So what does all this mean? In general, it seems to corroborate what we all instinctively felt- that the classic vehicle movement in the UK is thriving. The great thing about this survey is that it gives sustenance to any discussions regarding the hobby, especially when new legislation is proposed

Article courtesy of Hagerty

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FOR SALE: 1938. Rover 12 Black six light saloon. ("EMA") (1500cc)

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Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

Manufacturers Look To Life Without Dealers?

No apologies for returning to this subject which I covered only last month. News has been released since then which underlines what I believe will be a transformation in the way customers buy new cars. Nothing this major will happen overnight, but I foresee a gradual but inexorable process that for new car dealers will be death by a thousand cuts.

Four bits of hard news have arrived in the past couple of weeks:

First SEAT announced they have started selling new cars via Amazon. Initially only in France, initially covering only one special edition model, but surely the thin end of a long wedge? The customer orders their new car on the Amazon website paying a 500 Euro deposit. They are then contacted by a SEAT advisor (not SEAT dealer) who agrees a payment plan and the car is delivered within 72 hours “supervised” by the SEAT dealer nearest to the customer.

Next Citroen announced they were rolling out online car sales in various markets with UK introduction scheduled for next year. The only involvement for Citroen dealers seems to be the provision of a test drive from what I’ve seen so far. Prices will be transparent and fixed at “the best price the customer could obtain from a dealer”.

Then Chinese manufacturer Geely Auto Group (who own Volvo) launch not a new car but a new car company called Lynk. Not to be confused with Lynx who make those gorgeous Jaguar C and D Type replicas. The first model code named 01 will be launched in China next year with sales in the US and Europe to follow later. Other models 02, 03, and 04 are to follow later. The car sits on a Volvo platform, much of the engineering and styling work has been done by Volvo, and to me it looks great.

Lynk products will be distributed without using any independent dealers. Customers will buy over the internet or from a small number of owned stores in strategic locations, so exactly what Tesla do. Lynk’s statement bluntly says “While the industry traditionally relies heavily on the dealership model, Lynk will interact directly with its customers.”

Then when announcing their new electric range (see below) Mercedes marketing chief predicted that not just the cars would be different, but also the way they were distributed. “We will not exclude our dealers” he said “but there will be a proportion of online sales”.

Why you may ask these dramatic changes. Two reasons I think. Firstly customers want to deal this way. Many strongly dislike the dealership experience, and are used now to buying all sorts of things online. Secondly the manufacturers who constantly seek to cut costs have longed looked enviously at the margin they give to their dealers, 15-20% of retail price on average. Of course the dealers in most cases give the customer most of that in discount of some sort. And if selling direct online the manufacturer has control of the way the cars are marketed, and car manufacturers love control!

The times they are a changing, no doubt about that.

Electric Cars Gather Pace

The recent Paris Motor Show saw two of Europe’s biggest manufacturers launched not one but a whole range of electric cars. Not available now, but over the next few years. Mercedes boss Dieter Zetsche put it simply. “We’re flipping the switch” he said announcing a whole stable of cars to rival Tesla. VW, desperate for news of clean cars to help repair the damage caused by the diesel emissions scandal showed a concept of a Golf sized electric car to be launched by 2020. Range of over 300 miles and priced close to an existing Golf makes it a very attractive proposition if they can translate all that into reality.

These very rapid advances in technology unfortunately make what was until recently thought cutting edge obsolete almost overnight. In this case hybrids. Trade bible Glass’s Guide recently predicted that with the introduction of new all electric cars coming “Within a few years hybrids could be seen as lit

tle more than a curiosity”. Hybrids are generally expensive and Glass’s sees their values “plummeting”.

Mixed News for VW

Which means it’s not all bad news, an improvement perhaps. Starting with the bad the Department for Transport has summoned VW bosses to answer questions about its “unacceptable” treatment of UK customers over the emissions scandal. The DfT believes UK owners of affected cars need to be compensated and has promised “legal consequences”

Then European sales figures to the end of September were released showing VW sales and market share continuing to fall. Most damaging to VW’s pride there is a danger that the Golf will soon not be Europe’s top selling car having held that position for many years. Ford’s Fiesta is now very close behind and catching.

Better news for VW came from China. In September VW sales there were 20% up on last September, resulting in Worldwide sales 7% up on last year. And generally Audi, Porsche, SEAT, and Skoda are doing well helping to reduce the damage.

Driverless Cars Continue To Progress

Google recently announced that it has now completed two million miles of road testing of its driverless cars. Tesla have actually put driverless cars into mass production, now fitting all the cars it makes with the necessary cameras and sensors. Drivers won’t be able to use the technology just yet, Tesla need to refine the software and there is the minor point of driverless being made legal for public road use.

No More Motorway Hard Shoulders?

Britain’s traffic levels are rising at a record pace soaring over 60 per cent over the last 20 years. And motorways were busy enough 20 years ago! To cope with this increasingly hard shoulders on the busiest sections are being turned into a 4th or 5th lane. It’s estimated that this will apply to over 20% of motorway miles in a few years. Whilst a controversial decision it seems there is no alternative with traffic growth forecast to continue.

Renault/Nissan completes Mitsubishi Takeover

This week this deal announced some time ago was completed. In April Mitsubishi announced that they had been “manipulating” fuel economy figures for hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of cars for 25 years. The share price collapsed, and Renault/Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn saw his chance and pounced.

The new company will manufacture about 10 million vehicles a year putting it on a level with Toyota and VW and ensuring a close fight for the title of World’s biggest manufacturer.

We Still Don’t Trust Used Car Dealers

A recent survey showed that only 7% of consumers have faith in used car dealers. Which means that 93% haven’t. Which puts dealers below bankers, estate agents, and insurance salesmen. Only 22% of dealer websites were thought trustworthy, the lowest score of 13 industries surveyed.

However it does seem that the results reflected long held opinions and are far removed from the current truths. Of those who had bought a used car in the last 6 months 65% trusted dealers. I have no doubt that the industry has cleaned up its act dramatically. Manufacturers’ approved used car schemes make the purchase virtually as safe as buying a new car. OK you’ll pay a bit more, but what price peace of mind? And independent dealers are having to compete.

Paul Gilligan

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



Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

Our caravan park is reached by driving along a narrow country road which happens to be part of the Yorkshire Cycleway. Now most of the many cyclists are perfectly reasonable but you do get the Frooms and Wiggins of this world who for some reason appear to think the road is closed to traffic other than themselves and refuse to ride line astern. You do eventually get passed at which point it's essential to give your screen a prolonged and intensive wash/wipe to clear all the dirt thrown up by their skinny tyres. It's a shame to soak them, if only they'd let you by it would be totally unnecessary.

Not so long ago Autosport devoted its cover and quite a chunk of the pages inside to the fact that Jaguar was returning to international motorsport. Great! The company has a proud history, Le Mans wins, successful European saloon car championships when the series was held in high regard, even F1 although results weren't much to write home about. There's lots more with record attempts, Bob Tullius in America and even the big 3.8's dominating the British Saloon series in the late 50's and early 60's with Coombs and Sopwith etc. providing the cars. So what's going to add to this formidable list you may ask.

Whisper it, "Formula E".

Now maybe I'm missing the point here but from where I'm sitting the whole thing is pathetic. The cars look like whacky racers, there's no noise, the circuits are artificial and in order to win you have to drive slow enough to retain battery life. There's even a scheme where certain drivers get a power boost if they're voted for by the spectators before the start. It seems more like motor circus than motorsport.

No doubt those in favour will tell me it's the future in which case it's a bleak one, if it's deemed necessary to go to these lengths to keep motor racing alive then you might as well not bother.

And finally we were walking along a busy town centre street earlier today when an ambulance came hurtling by, sirens blaring blue lights flashing and even by ambulance standards he was pushing on. I felt it, and another pedestrian did as well when he spoke what I was thinking, simply TOO QUICK. Anyway having gone through the next set of lights on red there was the well known dull thud which meant a he'd hit a car moving off on green across the junction.

Thankfully no-one was hurt but his manic drive came to a halt meaning that his intended patient would now have to wait a lot longer than they would have done had he just tempered the speed a little. Basically there's quick and there's foolhardy what I saw was the latter, better to arrive two minutes later than not at all or kill some-one else in he attempt to get there.

I'm sorry to say it but I clearly saw the driver's face and it was pretty obvious he was playing and enjoying going beyond the realms of common sense, not really what you want from your emergency services.

Ends

AA

What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

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 |

December

| | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----------------------|
| 4th | Sun | MGC | Christmas Cracker Run |
| 27th | | WMC | Festive Autotest |

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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