

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

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Start Line

Issue 10/17

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

October 2017

The Classic & Motorsport Show proved to be one of the most successful for several years



Report inside

Motor Sport For All

Club Officials

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Wigton Motor Club Ltd Officials

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Visit the Facebook page for the latest news or the webpage at
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Talking Point

Topical Comment from the world of motoring

Anyone who lives in West Cumbria will know that for the last five years it is almost the norm for the A66 alongside Bassenthwaite Lake to have lane restrictions due to ongoing road works. I was interested to read a Freedom of Information Request reply.

In the last four years there have been 49 separate occasions when the road was either restricted or closed - an average of one a month! The total number of days disruption totalled over 1,700 days. That actually amounts to over four years because there were often more than one set of road works in that stretch of road! One period of disruption actually lasted 234 days and many were between 150 and 200 days.

The usual work is on the dual carriageway section as the west bound lane is narrow and twisty and keeps getting damaged. Why not widen it and stop the accidents?

Nearer to Keswick the road has been raised by 1.3 metres to stop it flooding. I must admit that even in Storm Desmond it only got about 30cm on the road and if the lake got to 1.3 metres (4 feet) above the old road level than most of the Derwent Valley would be under water!

All this work has cost £13.5 million over the four years. What a waste! There have been demands for roundabouts at Brigham and Portinscale junctions for years due to the many accidents and delays there but Highways England do this other work instead! Such is democracy or not!

These days there are just far too many roadworks that seem to go on and on; miles of cones and speed limits when there is no sign of any work going on. Just think of the cost in terms of longer journey times and delays to deliveries. There is also the issue for haulage companies of drivers' hours. If they are held up or delayed by speed limits the journey takes longer and they can run out of their permitted hours.

Given the sort of equipment that construction companies have now, surely building new roads should be taking shorter time scales and not longer? Or is there a hidden agenda of spreading the cost (and the payment by Highways England) over a longer period? Or is it employment laws that make it better to employ 10 men for a hundred days rather than a hundred men for ten days?

GTF

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Forthcoming Club Events

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Solway Historic & Targa Rally

Sunday October 15th

Based in West Cumbria

Some exciting new tests!

Regulations have been emailed and are on the website

Cumbrian Canter

Sunday, October 22nd

Start and finish near Penrith, 95 miles

Lunch halt at a great venue. Entry forms will be mailed
and are on the website

Halloween Autotest

Sunday, October 29th

At Maryport

HAGERTY
CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE

Partners with Wigton Motor Club – please call 0844
824 1135 and don't forget to mention your club
when you do!

PDF Compressor Free Version **PG** Tips

It seems the struggle to win my battle with Car Time in Bury over their lies and incompetence interests both my regular readers! The news is that there is not much news. The body who are adjudicating it after currently mulling over the evidence I have supplied and assure me a decision is imminent. Bearing in mind the previous keeper says that they knocked down his trade in price because it needed a cam belt and their own paperwork shows it I am hopeful that I may yet get my money from Car Time, although I'm not holding my breath.

The show went very well with record numbers of cars and people attending. For the first time ever I entered a car – my yellow mk1 Skoda Rapid that I've been trying to build for several years now. Superficially, it looked 'done' and won me second prize in the biggest show class however under the surface all is not well! Various bits still need finishing and as previously reported the gear change is catastrophically bad and nothing I can get at to fix it has made any difference. This means I will be taking the drive train out to access the gear linkage and figure out what is wrong. I suspect at some point during the refurbishment the gearbox has moved just enough to slightly kink the gear linkage (even though I did support it when removing the engine and at all times until I put the engine back in) – which is a 4 foot long hollow metal pole. The only way to sort it is with the gearbox out. Damn!



I was out at Harewood last weekend with Snotty and the old Skoda went well, netting me 2nd in class and a respectable time – most importantly I didn't get stung by a wasp this year so I looked normal (as normal I usually look before anyone says anything) and didn't require any assistance from the event paramedics. The guy parked next to me in a very tidy and professionally turned out plastic bodied Ford Anglia seemed ill at ease with being beaten by Snotty and me and announced that he usually went 8 seconds quicker than he

was, before fitting a set of slicks and still failing to go faster than me! I also joined another motor club at Harewood – Airedale and Pennine whose main purpose on the day seemed to be providing Wigton members with cheap membership to their club. To explain – Harewood have a system of invites to their events and having always invite Wigton to the September meetings in previous years didn't this year. This meant that a number of us entered but were advised we couldn't under Wigton MC. A+P came to the rescue with cheap year-end membership because they did have an invite. What a carry on...particularly as I persuaded a long time internet friend and former Skoda bodger Kieran Jackson to join Wigton in order to get an entry (hello Kieran!). Hopefully things have been rectified for next year and we will be back on the guest list.

It's car review time! Has anyone ever thought about buying a high mileage Saab 9-3 diesel estate? No? Nor me, but somewhere in committee member Paul Eastwood's head a little voice was telling

Show Report

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The Classic and Motorsport Show proved to be one of the best for a number of years with a good attendance of both cars and public, no doubt aided by the good weather. Nearly all the cars entered arrived in good time although there are still too many “no shows”. Why do people entered and then don’t turn up? Answers by email!

Many of the clubs put on a great display and made a big effort to promote their marques as well.

Our team of marshals did really well to get all the cars into the field and in position. I worked out that we needed to get one car through the gate every

eight seconds to keep in schedule. Of course it’s the ones who haven’t read their instructions, displayed their hanger or looked at the map that cause delays when they stop to ask questions! Perhaps we need to make the instructions simpler!



Sadly the loos were a big let down this year. We’ve used the same firm for several years but this year they send rather more “primitive” loos. They have apologised and offered a discount for next year.

As usual the autotests proved popular with spectators and with the rides offered. Dogs are welcome and all were given a treat!

This year many of the “team” went to other shows in the region to give out entry forms and also to see if there were any ideas we could learn from.

There are always things we can do better and the team will be meeting shortly to review this year’s event and plan for 2018 which will be the 30th Show! If you have any comments, suggestions or would like to join the organisation team then please let us know. If you have contacts in any of the one make clubs who might be interested in coming, or any clubs, marques, models with anniversaries in 2018, we would love to hear from them.

One thing we will do is to make the WMC display a bit more formal so the display organisers know exactly who is coming so they can plan the theme.



him to buy one the other week and it has been my privilege to borrow it for the school run this week. To be fair to Paul, he travelled down to the midlands to buy a Jaguar X-type (again not a car on my radar but amazing value for money.....if they work properly!) but when he set off home the turbo hose popped off and the guy gave him his money back. I suspect in a bit of a panic buy moment he bought the Saab. It has done many miles – 164k and they show on the driver’s seat and many minor marks on the bodywork. The good points are that it drives nicely, the suspension, whilst a bit rattley, is compliant and comfortable as are the seats which are softer than the German rivals. It goes fairly well and it’s a lot of car for less than a grand. It has a decent amount of toys and the cup holder is a thing of wonder (for the children and me!) as it unfurls at speed from the dashboard. It handles well enough although I haven’t tried to push on in it due to children, mileage and vague respect for Paul’s property. The downside is that it’s just a little bit manky and not everything works the way the Swedes intended....but hey, it’s not a bad skip car which is what Paul bought it for.

Peter

TOP MARKS FOR BO’NESS REVIVAL AGAIN

Bo’ness, or Borrowstounness to give it its full name, lies on the Firth of Forth about 16 miles west of Edinburgh and about 9 miles west of the newly opened Queensferry road bridge with Falkirk a further 6 miles to the west of Bo’ness. The suffix “ness”, which is Norse for “headland”, gives some idea as to why this ancient town has very import historical links to the Roman period as the town has a commanding view over the Firth of Forth and it marks the eastern extent of the Antonine wall and one of the frontiers of the Roman occupation of the British Isles. A Roman fortlet can still be seen on the Kinneil estate which is now a very large public park overlooked by the massive fortified Kinneil House. Competitions must have taken part in this neck of the woods for centuries, here one can imagine the Romans with their chariots competing against each other in ancient times although these days the horse power takes a different form. Kinneil House wasn’t built until the 15th century by the powerful Hamilton family but it is a very imposing residence indeed. Another famous person connected to Kinneil House was James Watt who worked on and perfected his steam engine in a building which is now a ruin lying very close to Kinneil House itself.



Bo’ness town is small with about 14,000 inhabitants but its significance in motorsport terms has been just as significant as the town was in Roman times. Initially opened in 1934 the motorsport venue was supposed to be developed into a full motor racing circuit however only the hillclimb came to fruition although this was very important and hosted a round of the British Hillclimb championship from 1946 until 1966. Many of the world’s top Grand Prix and endurance racing drivers have competed there, Ken Whar-ton, Ron Flockhart, Bob Gerrard, Dennis Poore, Tony Marsh, Jim Clark, Jackie Stewart, being just a few.

The BBC even did a live outside broadcast from there with an England verses Scotland event in 1953 with Raymond Baxter as commentator, such was its importance and popularity. Most of you will have heard of Tunnocks Caramel wafers, the biscuit which is made by the millions each week, well Boyd Tunnock the boss of the firm also competed at Bo’ness in the 1960s in his Mini Cooper. A couple of years ago he was kind enough to sponsor the mobile grandstand for the benefit of spectators when all competitors were given samples of the firm’s products. I did offer him a drive in my

Buckler when I found out about his generosity but he sent me a very nice letter back saying thank you but he felt he wasn't quite up to it these days so would prefer to spectate.

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Ecurie Ecosse, the famous private motorsport team formed by Edinburgh accountant David Murray with its headquarters in a small mews in Edinburgh, was closely involved with Bo'ness, many of the team members being regulars at Bo'ness events. This famous team went on to win Le Mans 24-hour race beating the factory Ferraris and Jaguars and were celebrated at the recent Goodwood Revival event. All the former team cars were assembled on the grid and driven by notables such as Sir Jackie Stewart the cars resplendent in the distinctive "Flag Blue" metallic paint. These cars were formerly transported by one of the world's most famous vehicles ever known, it was

built by Alexanders of nearby Falkirk on a Commer chassis powered by a TS3 3-cylinder two stroke engine. The transporter and team cars attended the Bo'ness Revival just before they were sold about four years ago, the collection was owned at the time by Dick Skipworth before being sold for £8.8 million; the transporter alone made £1.8 million!

When the team was wound down in 1971 the transporter was bought by vintage racing driver Neil Corner who owned one of the team's D type Jaguars and was used by him before eventually passing through many more hands and eventually ended up in a terrible state in the 1980s. Fortunately Dick Skipworth, one of Ecurie Ecosse's greatest supporters, bought the derelict vehicle and had it totally restored. It is now a fabulous iconic piece of motoring history. Corgi toys produced models of various Ecurie Ecosse vehicles; these are very sought after today having been out of production for many years.



This year's Revival event was way oversubscribed and every type of car from 500cc single seaters powered by Norton and other motorbike engines as raced many years ago by Stirling Moss, Bernie Ecclestone and pals through to variations of the humble Austin 7 then everything in between up to the fearsome F5000 Lola T142 of Roger Deans. The F5000 Lola wasn't the biggest engine though, Fraser Ewart's Bentley Special had 6250cc with twin turbos and David Franklins C3 Corvette had a 6300cc Turbo-charged lump under his bonnet too making the genuine 4700cc AC Cobra of Robert Bremner and a TVR Griffith 5000cc look comparatively

small.

Many famous names were in the list of entries, Richard Mallock had a MK4 model there, Vernon Williamson had a Joe Potts special; Joe Potts was a famous racer at the original events and the man to beat for FTD just after the war. After Bo'ness Vernon was going down to take part in the Goodwood Revival with his Ecurie Ecosse Imp racing car. There he got a good mention by the Goodwood commentators as he was wearing his kilt so a discussion evolved regarding the colours of Williamson tartan, a material always worn by Jackie Stewart who was also taking part in the Goodwood Ecurie

Ecosse parade.

A SAAB of Duns in Vaux but welcome entry at Bo'ness, Jenny and Alex Howells travelled all the way from Lymington with their Hillman Super Imp saloon that started its life only a few miles down the road from where it was built at Linwood. These cars were designed by Michael Parkes who was a F1 driver whom I saw racing a Ferrari GTO at Brands Hatch in 1963 or 1964 for Maranello Concessionaires on the only occasion I have been there. He looked like a film star I remember and was adored by all the ladies, the team boss Col Ronnie Hoare it is said equally admired the ladies and was very successful, not just with the Ferrari team either!

Bo'ness is for pre-1974 vehicles although in the early days "invited" entries made up the numbers and have always been great crowd pleasers. However, the MSA track licence in future won't allow some of the spectacular Escort MK2s, later Porsche models etc which is a great pity in many ways.



VSCC type cars are well represented at this event many of them driven by Wigton MC members. Ian Smith, John Hunter were driving their Alvis 12/70 and Riley TT specials respectively, other Cumbrians Dick Smith and son Adam now domiciled in Peebles had their rapid Frazer Nashes, Martin Breen his MGB V8, our man in Maryport Marcus Bewley had his familiar Triumph GT6. Lamplugh's Chris Spencer is getting faster and faster and was only 2 secs or so off FTD in his Formula Vee Scarab. Geoff Mansfield was competing in his

TR3 and his lovely Jag engined Cougar. Geoff had organised many of the other drivers in these classes into a form of championship and they are visiting other venues up and down the county such as Prescott. He was even hosting a Dutch couple on a sightseeing tour of our country, well done Geoff you are a great ambassador.



Commentators Chris DeWitt and Steve Wilkinson once again did a brilliant job keeping everyone informed about each car and anecdotes about the drivers as they ascended the hill. This at times was made very difficult for them as the timing information wasn't being relayed to them all the time but one would never know from the seamless way they continued their commentaries. One never realises just how important these guys are until they go off air if a glitch occurs, their depth of knowledge and dedication to the sport deserves some form of award.

As well as the competition runs this is a great family day out with classic car show, trade stands and other entertainment. Just how important Bo'ness is can be judged by the fact that the awards were presented by no less a person than the "Queen" herself. This ceremony took place on the Sunday after the final runs and was a splendid affair. As Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth was down to open the new Queensferry bridge just down the road the task was done by the lovely young Bo'ness Festival

Queen and a superb job she made of it too, she could always be called upon in future as a reliable stand-in, especially as Prince Phillip has retired. I was lucky enough to win the Sports Racing Car class and I wasn't sure if I had to bow or not but, somehow, I seemed to manage ok on this occasion.

A wonderful event and a great credit to all the organisers especially Kenny Baird who has been involved since the start, first as comp sec then latterly as chairman. After ten years or so he is stepping down but handing over to a great team and now hopes to actually drive his cars which so often he has entered but never driven whilst he sorted out some organisational problem or did a TV interview or something similar.

Keith Thomas.

Fifty Years Ago... (when men were men)



..... in 1967 Robin Murray and I had a few International rallies under our belt – RACs, Scottish' etc - in addition to dozens of lesser events and were competing in a Cooper 1293 'S' registration number DJH999B with a fair degree of success. Ever looking for a bigger challenge we entered the International Gulf London Rally in June 1967. This was a highly regarded event run by the London Motor Club since 1951 and now under the direction of David Seigle-Morris. David was a well known tough competitor and a driver for the works teams of Triumph, BMC and Ford and in the '60s set out to make the GLR a 'Mini-Liege', three days and nights of virtually non stop motoring. There were 1350 miles on public roads and 460 miles on forest roads that's over 25% of total miles in the woods.

The entry fee was £25, fuel for competitors was free, courtesy of Gulf, and the first prize £1000

which was a king's ransom in 1967 and the top English finisher got a free entry to the 1968 Swedish Rally. The start and finish was at the Excelsior Hotel at Manchester Airport and the event covered 65 hours almost three days with only three halts – one of 3 hours and two of one hour each. Reality was that you spent the halts working on the car so there was virtually no time for rest or sleep. Where else could you get such incredible value for money competitive motoring then or now? I recollect going to my GP and asking for some stimulants to help me stay awake, and reluctantly he prescribed me some. I had never used them before or since.

The previous year 1966, Mike Telford had entered the GLR with Peter Handy in the ex Vic Elford 1500 Anglia which bore the registration VV30 and finished an excellent 7th overall. Mike had also owned an ex works Safari Anglia (ex Peter Hughes?) painted in white with black bonnet complete with wing top/scuttle mounted spotlights. Years later he recalled selling this car for buttons what would be the value now? Mike and Peter's success influenced other NRCC (Northern Rally Competitors Club) members and there was lots of local interest for the 1967 event.

We were seeded at number 81 (I still have the rally plate) from 120 entrants which is not a good place to be in a car with 10" wheels dragging its bottom along very rough forest roads after the passage of 80 earlier cars. Forest roads in those days didn't have the smooth surfaces of recent times and contained real stages. There was none of the two or three minute sprinting so beloved of latter day organisers who have their computers and forest fees to consider. The event started at 21.00 on Tuesday and headed into North Wales for the first five stages in Clocaenog followed by another two stages, Llanrwst and Betws-y-Coed before the first refuelling point and time control at Conway Falls – a

couple of hand worked pumps supplying 120 odd cars! These refuelling points could be interesting places. If there was no Gulf filling station locally they set up a roadside refuelling point from a tanker where mPDF Compressor Free Version ed out dispensing the free fuel with hand pumps. There was lots of 100 octane sloshing about everywhere and heroes with lit fags hanging out of their mouths and occasionally welding taking place, sometimes a little too close for comfort.

Health and safety precautions were limited to being ready to drive off swiftly if the whole lot went up. Of course the volunteer club members did not go home empty handed and I have even seen lemonade bottles filled with free petrol.

In Bets y Coed we had alternator failure and were fortunate to have John Taylor servicing for us in his brand new Cortina 1500 – not so new by the finish. He had the front screen (toughened not laminated) break going downhill into Ruthin and suffered some discomfort after that. Our major sponsor for some years was Treadfast Tyres owned by Carlisle based J K Innes and managed by our good friend Alex McGregor. Now Treadfast remoulds were good for no more than 30 or 40 miles in the forest and you were then down to the canvas, so we needed lots. We even had to have extra supplies sent down from Carlisle during the event. How John Taylor managed it all on his own I can't remember but without him it would have been very difficult indeed.



For '67 Mike and Peter had changed cars and had the works built SAAB V4 ex John Bloxham. Following their great finish in '66 they were well seeded for '67 at number 37 which in a high stepping SAAB was not so bad. Every works driver who was anybody was entered with the Scandinavians fancying their chances on the loose. There were team cars from Porsche, Ford, SAAB, BMC, Renault and Volvo. Among crews from the north were David Thompson/Dave Stephenson, Bev Gelder/Raymond Hunt, Bob Lamb/Tony Mason, George Murray/Bob Woods, Ron Charlton/Royston Heawood, John Curtis/Norman Speight, Les Cowan/Arnold Price and Tony Payne/Colin Briars.

After 19 stages in Wales the field was depleted by 31 cars with less than a third of the stages completed and headed through Gloucester and north to the first halt at Oulton Park after 21 hours of motoring. After 3 hours fettling we were on the way again via Dodd and Greystoke where there was a stage and refuelling point. A good combination forest and petrol! A control at the Astra Café at High Hesket was followed by nine forest stages in south west Scotland before the luxury of a one hour halt for more car servicing and breakfast if you had time, at 10am on Thursday at the Crown Hotel at Newton Stewart.

Another nine stage loop took us deeper into Galloway before heading back eastwards to a control and fuel point at Ale Moor Loch, Hawick but no halt. Any time taken at fuel points had to be regained on the road sections and they were tight enough anyway. Seven stages in Keilder were followed by a run through Hamsterley to a refuelling point at Ferryhill at a proper filling station. This was followed by the last one hour halt and control at the Flask Inn on the Yorkshire Moors north of Scarborough before the sting in the tail. This consisted of eight stages covering 100 stage miles in the classic Yorkshire forests including the longest in the rally Allerstone with a target time of 41mins 25secs which on its own was greater than most one day stage events these days. Robin recalls some concern in the long straights of this stage when a loud banging started in the car.

He need not have worried it was only the helmet of his intrepid navigator banging against the roll cage as he had fallen asleep. At the end of this batch of stages Mike and Peter were having spark trouble with the SAAB and we exited Ingby to find them at the roadside, bonnet up, totally knackered having lost the will to carry on. A knight in shining armour in the form of Robin dived under the bonnet and fitted a set of points and we were all on our way.

A quick blast round Croft and we headed back to the finish at Manchester.

By this time we had been on the go for three days without sleep (OK maybe a few minutes snatched on road sections) and one celebratory pint was enough to see us off to bed.

General Classification

- 1st Prize-£1,000
The Gulf Trophy
The London Challenge Trophy and an Award
Car No. 11 Co-Driver Alan Anderson
 - 2nd Prize-£500
The New Statesman Challenge Trophy and an Award
Car No. 8 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 3rd Prize-£250
The Hampshire Challenge Trophy and an Award
Car No. 4 Co-Driver Alan Nelson
 - 4th Prize-£125
The Pressburger Challenge Trophy and an Award
Car No. 1 Co-Driver Alan Anderson
 - 5th Prize-£62.50
The Newcastle Award and an Award
Car No. 1 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 6th Prize-£31.25
The National City Challenge Trophy and an Award
Car No. 8 Co-Driver Alan Nelson
 - 7th Prize-£15.625
The London Challenge Trophy and an Award
Car No. 9 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 8th Prize-£7.8125
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 12 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 9th Prize-£3.90625
The London Trophy and an Award
Car No. 12 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 10th Prize-£1.953125
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 11th Prize-£976.5625
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 12th Prize-£488.28125
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 13th Prize-£244.140625
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 14th Prize-£122.0703125
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 15th Prize-£61.03515625
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 16th Prize-£30.517578125
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 17th Prize-£15.2587890625
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 18th Prize-£7.62939453125
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 19th Prize-£3.814697265625
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 20th Prize-£1.9073486328125
The Stone Trophy and an Award
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham
- CLASS AWARDS**
- Class 10
1st-£100 Award and £20
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 2nd-£50 Award and £10
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 3rd-£25 Award and £5
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 4th-£12.5 Award and £2.5
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 5th-£6.25 Award and £1.25
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 6th-£3.125 Award and £0.625
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 7th-£1.5625 Award and £0.3125
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 8th-£0.78125 Award and £0.15625
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 9th-£0.390625 Award and £0.078125
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham
 - 10th-£0.1953125 Award and £0.0390625
Car No. 20 Co-Driver Steve Whitham Co-Driver Steve Whitham

Out of the 120 starters 47 made it to the finish, a 40% finishing rate and after their troubles Mike and Peter were in 23rd place. We had finished 14th overall with best improvement on seeding of 67 places. The only Mini ahead of us at the finish, in 12th place, was the number 21 Cooper S of Swede Gunnar Blomqvist with the others retired or behind us. Without a doubt this was the toughest endurance event I can recall in fifty seven years competition and those who took part were privileged and even today speak of it with a deep reverence. These endurance marathons can never happen again in the UK and the swift squirts of today's forest sprints are only a pale shadow of those events. How fortunate we were to be competing in those days.

Ron



Bo'ness Revival Hill Climb & Saltire Rally

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Keith Thomas's piece in the September edition described what a good event the Bo'ness Hill Climb has become with a great entry list including many from Cumbria. But the hill climb is only one part of what the event is now. There is a big classic show element on the Sunday, very similar to Dalemmain, and remarkable for the effort that some Clubs put into their displays – The TR Register, MG Club and Jaguar OC in particular, the latter going to the extent of mowing the field for their display area and decorating it with the entire contents of the local garden centre. For this they deservedly won the best club display prize.

An attraction of the event is that in addition to the show, like WMC, they organise a driving tour on the Saturday. But this year there was both a tour and a Targa Rally run by the Saltire Rally Club. About 60 cars did the tour and 25 the rally.

When Cliff McKinnon, the organiser, contacted me earlier in the year to ask if we intended to take the Triumph Italia to Bo'ness again, he said "we would like you to do the rally – about 90 miles with Tulip diagrams and a few tests thrown in".

I thought "We know all about tulip diagrams from Ron's Gallops so why not?", and promptly forgot about it.

When the joining instructions and regs came through just before the event reality began to sink in. There were to be three regularity sections and four autotests, and the route book would be provided at signing on, not before.



I pondered deeply about whether to try to explain to Chris what might be involved, or rely on the fact that she is pretty good with tulip diagrams so all would be well when I hit her with it on the day.

I chose the latter.

I have to concede that this was probably a mistake, as on reading the road book on Saturday morning there were glum faces as we both realised we had little idea how to do a regularity – in this case two timed average-speed targets over about 15 miles each on Saturday, and then one up the hill climb course on Sunday. Totally unprepared, we only

had Chris's phone as a timing device. (I hereby take back everything I have ever said about smart phones).

Nonetheless, it all started well with first autotest round the car park at the Heritage Railway Centre from whence we were to depart. We did 37 seconds against a maximum of 60 and were well placed. There had been some trepidation as we watched the early cars, (the first a full rally prepared MGB GT) doing handbrake turns around the first cone with gravel peppering every intrepid spectator.

We then had a formal send off/start in Bo'ness town centre with the Bo'ness carnival queen wielding the flag, a kilted bagpipe player to serenade us and a commentator doing a brief interview in front of a good number of spectators and not a few bemused shoppers.

The morning regularity was a bit of a nightmare. We weren't sure whether the phone timer had stopped when the light went out, we didn't know whether to stop and start the timer at the intermediate controls (and still don't) and ended up keeping an eye on the MGC ahead who looked as though they

knew what they were doing. They didn't as it turned out.

For the autocross, we were well organised and sufficiently in control of the phone timer to produce a reasonable result. Overall we only missed one control board and got all the other key points we had to identify and record. I would give you the times and penalties but we still haven't worked out how to interpret them.



That first autotest had flattered to deceive.

The next two were on tarmac but so tight that we had to reverse to get round cones on three occasions, resulting in one overtime and one just inside the limit.

The final test (on gravel) at Balmaha on the east shore of Loch Lomond was worse. The course was changed at the start, so with no time to look at the new map properly we were off round the tightest of tight turns, resulting in a double reverse to make a 360 degree cone and then missing the last one after a brief, heated domestic comprising

“LEFT!, No, LEFT!” (wild gestures accompanying). I went right.

Anyway, the tea and cakes afterwards were good, followed by a pleasant evening run back to Linlithgow interspersed with picking up a cooled bottle of something white and French at the M&S M9 services, for consumption back at the B & B.

Sunday dawned fine, surprisingly given the forecast, and we assembled with all the other tour/rally cars, individual and club entries. Interest in the Italia proved immense as usual and a high point was being interviewed for MotorSport TV by what's 'is name.... the chap with the very smooth voice who does Goodwood (and the aircraft stuff in particular). There might be something airing in October.

The remaining regularity for the rally was a run up the hill climb course. We had to choose an average speed against which we would be measured, the options being 20, 24 and 30 mph. 24 mph may not sound much, but on a short course lined with straw bales and with three very sharp turns, it felt like a lot more. We came third in this one, and were pretty pleased with ourselves to do so well against the seasoned pro's, (although truth be known, we simply went like the clappers. Don't tell anyone).

In the end we finished 14th overall. Not bad for complete novices.

The event closed with awards for winners in various categories, clubs, the rally etc. The Italia won the final award: “Car of the Event Champion”. We were both delighted and honoured. Cliff McKinnon commented after that “I was delighted when I discovered that your Italia had scooped car of the event

and I think it probably embarrassed a few of the pot hunters that such a well presented, and indeed rare, car was used in the Saltire Trophy”.

We drove back to the B & B, loaded the Italia into her trailer and set off back to Cumbria happy, just as the heavens opened. Now, might we be tempted onto a WMC event.....?!



Ian Tomlinson

Club News

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It may only be October but it is time to plan our events for 2018. Indeed entry forms for the Galloway Gallop (this years just two days) will be emailed out shortly, taking place on April 21st 22nd. It's now in the capable hands of Jim and Anne Crockett while Ron and Christine will hopefully be taking part after running the event for ten years.

We've had a really great year with super events and a lot of new events and new venues as well - this is all down to the hard work of members and the dedication of the organisers.

Can we keep this up? Have you ideas for something different, or indeed reviving something we have done in the past?

What sort of events would you like the Club to run that we don't at the moment or what sort of events would you like to see more of?

Would you like to join one of the teams that run some of the events or run one yourself?

Talk, or email any of the committee.

Marshal Force

Marshals are the life blood of our activities

The **Solway Rally** takes place on Sunday 15th October 2017

The rally is based in and around the Workington area and this year we have an exciting new and different venue which is going to make the event be really good fun.

This of course means I need marshals to assist to make this event happen and be a success.

What's on offer - apart from offering a good days motor-sport, all marshals also receive an excellent free meal at the finish and the usual goody bag!

If you can help out please contact me either by email or phone at the following:

email: duncanellett@gmx.com

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Lamplugh Village Hall

"An EVENING with

MALCOLM WILSON OBE"

FRIDAY 3RD NOVEMBER 2017

Including hot 2 course meal at 7:30pm

Hear how Malcolm made the transition from local rally driver to become a top International Rally Team Owner, Car Manufacturer & who owns one of Cumbria's most successful business ventures



Photo - Dougie Macdonald



Photo - FIA - Motorsport.com

Tickets ~ Adult £11-00 ~ U18 £5-00

Don't miss out - reserve your tickets at ["bookings@lamplughvillagehall.org.uk"](mailto:bookings@lamplughvillagehall.org.uk)

Licensed Bar and Raffle

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Elderly Utterances

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The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say



The Rose and Thistle was held as usual on the Saturday of the Dalemmain Classic weekend in August. This year it was agreed to donate £10 from the entry fee of each car on the Rose and Thistle to the Jim Clark Museum rebuilding fund and with a start list of 77 cars this would amount to £770.

In the event the committee decided to round up the donation to £1000, as the target amount for the museum is in the region of £1.7m and every little helps. The existing museum building belongs to the Scottish Borders Council and they have committed £600,000 towards the

rebuilding costs. The Heritage Lottery Fund has committed £700,000 and the balance of + £300K will come from fundraising through The Jim Clark Trust. There is a very informative web site for the JC Trust which was started in 1978 by Jim's parents donating his trophies and photos for display in the lovely stone house at 44, Newtown Street, Duns. The rebuilding project is scheduled to begin next year with a forecast completion in 2019.

Jim Clark tragically lost his life in a Formula 2 race at Hockenheim on 7th April 1968 and the 50 year commemoration will take place in 7 months time centred on Duns. No detailed plans to mark the occasion have been formalised as yet but make a note in your diary if you wish to be part of this day.

This year's Rose and Thistle tour started from Houghton Hall near J44 M6 and headed north via Longtown and Newcastleton. Bypassing Hawick to Denholm and through Kelso the first leg finished with a visit to the Jim Clark Room in Duns. Following that a 16 mile run took us to lunch at Floors Castle just north of Kelso, an imposing venue with us having our cars parked in front of the castle. The return route was kept simple via Selkirk and Hawick to Houghton Hall a total of 160 miles which in some of the older cars is a full days motoring.



On Sunday 10th September I headed north to Duns again to present the club's £1000 donation to the Jim Clark family trustees. These were Doug Niven a well known former racer, and a cousin of Jim's and Ben Smith Chairman and Secretary of the Trust. The other family trustee, not with us on Sunday is Ian Calder a nephew of Jim's. We did the photographs and then a coffee before saying goodbye and heading for home, two hours each way.

Thanks to all the entrants who made the fine donation possible.

Ron

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Rose & Thistle Challenge 2017



WMC/Gates Historic Rally Awards, 2017

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Round 6: The Doonhamer Classic Rally, September 17th.

Scrutineering and signing on opened at 7.30am at Lockerbie Truck Stop so many crews had an early start on a dark but thankfully dry morning. The Truck Stop provided an ideal Start/Finish and test venue for the 47 crews who came from far and wide including Northern Ireland (25 Historic & 22 Targa).

The morning sequence of tests was one of contrasts with a couple of classic tarmac autotests used twice at the Truck Stop and they were separated by an excellent forest test (also run twice) which had chicanes and code boards cunningly sprinkled along the route. Setting the early overall pace were Chris Hunter/Fiona Tyson (MX5), Noel Cochrane/Olly McCollum (Midget) and Andy Beaumont/Andy Fish (Sunbeam Rapier) whose performance was to be applauded as the big car pushed the more nimble MX5 and Midget for the O/A FTD honours.



In the Historic class, a battle raged all day as to who would join Beaumont/Fish on the podium between Dave Short/Roy Heath (Escort Mk2), John Bertram/Louise Whitelaw (Mexico Mk1) and David Marsden/Mike Garstang (Escort Mk1). Competition was equally tight in the Targa class with Grainger/David Robertson (Fiesta ST), David Crosbie/Kelsey Gillespie (Clio) Kevin/Phillip Savage (Suzuki Ignis) all in striking distance of the Targa Podium; and, hot on their heels were WMC/Gates contenders Philip Hodgson/Ian Giles (MX5), Geoff/Maggy Bateman (205) and WMC's Stephen/Jack Palmer (Rover 25).

Team Sloan's day came to an unfortunate and early end when they had to retire their Midget with mechanical gremlins after test 6. The rest of the field headed off to Eastriggs where a new tarmac test (run twice) allowed crews to relax (a bit) and enjoy the smooth tarmac. It was quick and open with enough chicanes and kerbs to keep us honest. WMC's Robin Murray/Chris Hodgson broke a drive shaft and retired their superb Mk1 Cooper S here after going well on the earlier tests.

Tests 9 and 10 were run either side of the picnic lunch at Cochranes. A mixture of gravel and concrete surfaces and a final 360 spin were enough to catch out some crews but most improved their times during the second run. Lunchtime results were available and showed



GATES Auto Services
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that times were very close in the historic and targa classes. WMC/Gates crews were occupying 3 of the top 4 historic places. Meanwhile, the much improved Ray/Ben Jude (TR8) were enjoying another successful event, David Agnew (911) was driving competitively but staying just under the radar, Charles Graves/Ron Palmer (TR4) were also going well - these three crews were separated by only a few seconds. Brian Bradley/Michael Marsland (Mini 1275) were having a tough sort of day but performance picked up in the afternoon when they got their second breath. David/Heidi Garstang (Mk1 Fiesta 1300) got

off to a forgettable start with a WT on Test1 but then put in a series of quick tests before lunch that brought them back into contention (their woebegone day continued in the afternoon with a WT on T12 and clutch failure two tests later but they completed all the tests and drove to the finish). Philip Hodgson/Ian Giles, Geoff/Maggy Bateman, Stephen/Jack Palmer continued to push and with Chris Hunter looking likely for FTD it was happy days for the WMC/Gates contenders.

The afternoon contained some long and challenging tests but some crews were not going to complete the event: John Bertram/Louise Whitelaw retired the Mexico with a diff problem while poised for a podium finish and Tot/Maureen Dixon retired their Mini after a mixed day of quick test results and an odd WT. Eventually, crews headed away from the Dumfries area for the final test and Finish at Lockerbie Truck Stop.

Chris Hunter/Fiona Tyson (Mazda MX5) took a hard fought Targa win and FTD O/A with 25m 07sec's just 2 sec's ahead of Midget *maestro* Noel Cochrane. Andy Beaumont/Andy Fish (Sunbeam Rapier) provided another master class taking 1st Historic O/A with 25m 43sec's. Dave Short/Roy Heath took 2nd Historic 26m 48s and we were pleased with 3rd on 27m 17s. Philip Hodgson/Ian Giles were 8th Targa on 27m 00s, Stephen/Jack Palmer 10th with 27m 13s and Geoff/Maggy Bateman 11th on 27m 57s.



Crews had a long and demanding day but the quality of the documentation and the variety of tests made for a very enjoyable rally. Many thanks to the organisers for a great day out. Hopefully, crews will be ready to do battle again on the penultimate WMC/Gates Round, the Devil's Own, October 7th.

It's good to be back in action and reassuring to have found a bit of form again.

Mike Garstang.

Photos by Tony North

Dream Garage

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For this month's Dream Garage Michael has persuaded David Wiggins (Wiggy) to delve into his years of motoring!

My Dad was to blame for my obsession with cars, he used to do scrambling and grass track racing with various BSA motorbikes throughout Cumbria and even managed to blag a ride of an AJS7R on Jurby Airfield when doing his national service. Dad took us all over to watch scrambling and we loved going to the track at Bassenthwaite best. He then started taking us to watch autocross and I remember going to watch around of the ANECC Journal Newspaper autocross in a field at Siddick in the early 70's.

My spectating coincided with Malcolm Wilson's rise to fame and Dad (and then my eldest brother) took us everywhere we could go to watch the Branthwaite Auto Dismantling orange and black Mk1 Escort (probably with Keith Thomas navigating at some point) and then "SOO" the County Garage orange Mk2 RS2000 (co driven by another hero Ron Palmer), the Total Gold RS1800's HHJ701N, FFV800S, FEV1T (not such a lucky car for MW). Then there was the Rothmans Escort STW201R (my favourite). I even remember watching that terrible Escort MK3 RS1600i on the 1982 Scottish and the highlight of the lot - the RS200 on the 1985 Lindisfarne.

As well as all that we would go to Brands Hatch to watch the Grand Prix's and the Rallycross GP's. The worst thing Dad did was to take me to Barbon and Doune for the hillclimbs which was what led to my real love of speed events.

In return for washing his car on a Sunday dad would teach me to drive in our Peugeot 304 estate (bought from JR Graham's garage on Station Road in Workington in 1974 - it was the only one I ever saw in Workington!). As dad was the Technical Manager of High Duty Alloys (Alcan) at Workington he taught me to drive on the roads around the plant, the ones we will be using on the 2017 Solway Rally. Once I'd got the hang of it, at the age of 12, he let me graduate to the estate roads at Lillyhall and then the road from the Leyland Bus Factory down to Workington Golf Club. Not very legal but it was 1979 so Mr Garforth can't do me for it now!

One day in 1982 my brother's best mate brought his totally rebuilt Mk3 MG Midget (which seems to be a theme in these articles) to show us and he let me take it for a foggy drive around Lillyhall. He looked very pale but relieved when I brought it back after 20 minutes out of his sight. That was the first car I managed to get sideways....

Later whilst working as a summer job at County Garage I had great fun delivery driving the last of the brand new Ford Capris, sideways on Coach Road at Whitehaven in a 2.8i special (the one with the diff) and the best one was half spinning a 1.6 Lazer on trade plates outside the old Studholme and Dixon Austin Rover garage. It woke up the salesmen in the showroom who stood and gave me a round of applause and they then rang Joe Blinco at the Quay St County Garage and he was waiting for me as I arrived at the dealership

Anyway here is the six vehicles I'd have in my dream garage.

1. Group A Peugeot 205 Rallye Evo 2 1300cc driven by Fabien Doenlen

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This wee car finished 12th OA on the 1990 Tour de Corse and having read about the standard car in Car and Car Conversions (who can remember that?) it was the car that I have always wanted. In 1993 I nearly bought an ex works Peugeot Talbot Sport Uk car driven by Simon Davidson for £12,000 until I found out the gearbox and zf diff was £8,500 and the driveshafts were £500 each. The car in the photo has just been rebuilt and driven by its amazing original driver (who had driven 205 T16's and then works 306 Maxi's) on the 2017 Rallye Festival Vosges in France.

2. 2017 M Sport Fiesta



This picture is of the test car I was so lucky to get some passenger rides (courtesy of my hero Malcolm W) in November 2016. The noise outside is unique and inside to me it sounded like a Group B Audi S1. To have this, the first of the Cumbrian built 2017 WRC cars would be more than a dream and at least it wouldn't have to go far for a service!

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3.2003 Renault Clio Cup Race Car



Generally I hate Renaults but this LHD track car with sequential gearbox has to be the most fun track car I've driven. Back in 2002/2003 I managed to get four corporate hospitality days at Palmersport in Bedford and although I did manage to blow up a Formula palmer Audi (the telemetry meant there was no hiding a 5th gear to 2nd gear change – oops), I also managed to win a driver of the day trophy the week after Matthew Wilson won an identical trophy which is in the M Sport Museum. I was also the fastest customer driver of the Clio in 2003 and will never forget going past the pits with two wheels in the air and the instructor screaming for me to go faster. A brilliant car and Palmersport is the best driving experience anywhere, if only it wasn't £1,500 a day L

4.Mark Higgins 2014 Subaru WRX IOM car



Apologies for the photo, but after Mr Garforth sold me the idea of doing the Isle of Man Classic in 2014, who did I end up parked up with on the street in Ramsey – Mark Higgins practising for his 2014 attempt to beat his 2011 fastest car lap of the TT course. He had Harry Hockley, some TEG sport guys and others I didn't know with him but the craic about the 2011 "incident" at the bottom of Bray Hill, where they had thought about tie wrapping the passengers wrists together so he couldn't pull on the handbrake when he got scared was great. Plus tales of Metro 6R4's and how dangerous

they were/are. I'm not a Subaru fan but that car sounded great, was immensely fast and is one of those competition cars which could be driven to and from an event.

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5.1959 Porsche 356 Carrera GS 4 cam



As a teenager in 1983 my parents took me to a place called Lodi in the Napa Valley in California to see a long lost elderly relative of my mothers who had emigrated from Millom to California before WW2. Anyway we arrived at his house and outside was parked a Porsche 356 just like the one in the photo. I didn't think it belonged to my mum's cousin, but when it came to leave, I asked him about the car which turned out to be his and would I like a run in it! The sound was so unique, a really revvy motor and before I knew it we were doing 100MPH down the empty main street and then through red traffic lights. No bother he told me, his best friend flew the Police helicopter and they wouldn't bother him. The journey ended with a tour of the vinyards he owned.....

6. JD Classic's Ford Transit XJ220



A 1989 LWB semi high top transit van, with rust, a copy of the Daily Mail etc on the dash and the chassis and running gear of a Jaguar XJ220 underneath. I saw this for the first time at this year's Silverstone Classic in the pit garage under the Wing building and also literally smoking around the track access roads. A super tow car....

As we go to press **The M Sport team** lead both the WRC Drivers and Manufacturers championships with three rounds to go. A fantastic achievement against fully manufacturers supported teams in what has been one of the most hotly contested WRCs of recent years. Really punching above their weight! The M Sport team has three consistently quick drivers so invariably get two of them in the top points positions. Indeed it seems if all three drivers are now hot properties for other team! Let's hope the success continues on the remaining rounds.

We don't tend to hear so much about **M Sport's Bentley team** in GT3 racing but I see they have now made over 500 starts throughout the world and made some 26 cars which regularly get outright, class and championship wins in many continents. A new car is being developed for 2018 season. Another Cumbrian success!

Ron and I were able to meet up with Malcolm Wilson recently and be driven round the test facility at **Dovenby**. What a fantastic track to full FIA standards. I had seen the plans when the planning enquiry was happening but what it is in hard tarmac is outstanding and very much bigger than I anticipated. The new buildings are going up any time subject to weather. It's just such a pity that the track cannot be used for events as it must be the best circuit to be constructed in the UK for decades. A shame about the NIMBYs, perhaps we need to all go and buy houses in Dovenby!

There does seem to have been fewer **MAMILs** (Middle Aged Men In Lycra) about this summer thank goodness. Last year was dreadful on country roads where they seemed to ride without being aware of other traffic and only interested in their time over a certain route. Whether the interest bubble has gone, or perhaps they have been arrested by the Fashion Police! It's good to see that the Government is reviewing cycling laws though.

Stage rallying seems to be continuing on its downward trend with fewer events and fewer entries each year. Even with fewer events some rallies have been called up as they have not been getting enough crews to be viable. The cost of preparing a car and entry fees are now way beyond what an ordinary salary can afford. At the same time the number of rally cars for sale on line seems to increase by the month. The big increase though is for retro rally cars and replicas which are collectors items and are only displayed or used for demonstration events.

At the top of the tree the **British Rally Championship** is now struggling to get other series to share events with them and with the BRC getting 30 to 40 cars at best, this is not viable for the event organiser. The BTRDA and British Historic Championship don't want to follow the BRC cars due to the tracks being so heavy rutted. For the same reason many marshals are unwilling to go in the forests due to the potential damaging drive out after the event.

Will **closed road events** be the answer? I'd like to think so but selling the concept to the people who live on the route is a real challenge. The demographics of rural dwellers has changed dramatically in the last 30 years with more and more "Escape to the Country" type folk moving in who are unlikely to be receptive to their road being closed for six hours while rally cars rush.

Some real challenges lie ahead.

Marian Sloan reports

Forthcoming event on the social calendar – put it in your diary!

Motoring Quiz and Hog Roast at Gilcrux Village Hall

It's always a bit of a dismal month, November, so how about joining us for a motoring quiz followed by a Hog Roast, prepared for us by Lindsays' of Cockermouth? The event will be held at Gilcrux Village Hall starting at

7pm on Saturday 25th November

and the price will be around £10 per person. There will be a vegetarian alternative if you would prefer and also tray bakes to finish off.

A bit of fun is guaranteed! More details to follow in next month's Start Line or contact me by email to add your name to the growing listlast year's event was such a success that this time we are going for the whole hog.....get it? Groan

Cheers!

Marian (mazsloan1@outlook.com)

Inside The Industry

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Paul Gilligan has his say

You Read It Here

Some months ago The Times newspaper declared war on diesel vehicles, and has continued to campaign against them since. A couple of weeks ago their lead editorial was titled “Dirty Dinosaurs” and attacked a leaflet published by the National Franchised Dealers Association which tried to put both sides of the argument. The Times stressed the fact that until this month diesels have only been tested in laboratory conditions so real world emissions were much higher. They never mentioned of course that the same applies to petrol engine. Whilst admitting that diesel engines do in fact emit 20% less than CO2 than petrol The Times said this fact was negated by diesel engines being heavier and more powerful than petrols. Yes a typical diesel is slightly heavier because the block and head have to be stronger to handle the higher compression ratio. But to say they are always more powerful is simply rubbish. Take the Ford Fiesta, Britains best selling car. If you choose diesel you can have a power output of 120ps. Or for petrol 100, 125, or 140ps. Now as far as I’m aware 125 and 140 ps engines are more powerful than 120? Or does the Times know something I don’t? The same applies to just about every car on the market, VW Golf for example diesels 150 or 184 ps, petrols 110, 150, 220, 245, or 310.

Then The Times goes on to say that manufacturers should be “disqualified from continuing to sell diesel cars” and instead forced to produce only hybrid, electric or hydrogen powered models. Battery powered cars the newspaper tells us “produce no exhaust emissions at all”. Whilst this is technically true it is only properly correct if the electricity used to recharge the batteries comes from wind or solar power, which is of course not the case anything like 100% of the time. Meanwhile the car itself is zero emissions but the power station that generates the electricity for the recharge certainly isn’t.

So if you want the TRUTH about this issue or indeed any other motoring matter I’d suggest you keep reading this magazine and don’t bother with The Times.

Manufacturers Go Electric

The recent Frankfurt Show was dominated by manufacturers announcing their push to launch more hybrid and pure electric cars. VW will by 2025 offer a hybrid models for all of the 300 different cars they currently produce, and 80 will be offered as pure electric.

Porsche announced that they would launch a pure electric sports saloon within 2 years priced at under £70000 so aimed directly at the current Tesla Model S. Performance and range will be similar to the Tesla with a maximum of 310 miles before recharge is required. 80% recharge can be completed in 15 minutes compared to 40 minutes for the Tesla. Doubtless this sort of technology will feature on cheaper models elsewhere in the VW Group before too long.

Honda will offer hybrid or pure electric power on all new models offered in Europe, and Mercedes will offer this choice on their entire range by 2022. The electric Mini was unveiled at the show, due to go on sale in 2019.

Someone needs to get the recharging infrastructure sorted quickly!

Supercars Certainly Aren't Dead!

Those who worry that electric cars will take the fun out of driving will be pleased that Frankfurt also saw the launch of lots of new models with internal combustion power, many high performance versions. Star of the show was undoubtedly the Mercedes AMG Project One supercar. Powered by a turbocharged 1600cc V6 as is Lewis's Sunday drive assistance comes from four electric motors so in total 1134bhp is available. The engine is closely linked to the F1 unit but running on street fuel revs have to be limited to "only" 11000 rpm, still a record for a road car engine. 0-60 comes in 2.5 seconds with 4WD providing the traction and the car is limited to 218mph. Mercedes have been proud to announce that whereas the F1 engine has to be rebuilt after 4 or 5 races the road version is good for 30000 miles. What the rebuild then costs hasn't been mentioned!

Priced at almost 2.3M Euros PLUS VAT over 1000 people have applied to buy one, but Merc are only building 275 and have carefully selected those lucky enough to be allowed the privilege. Owning a fleet of Mercedes trucks or buses is rumoured to be a big help, as it is said is being called Hamilton with a Christian name beginning with L.

Where Will September New Car sales End Up?

I'm writing this with 5 days left for manufacturers and dealers to sell, or at least register, new cars for September, the second highest volume month of the year. Signs are that sales are not as strong as they would like and desperation is starting to creep in. Early last week one of the prestige German manufacturers increased their discounts to us on one of their larger models from 12% to 16%. Only 3 days after that 16% became 20%! I'll report fully next month but currently I'd say only massive pre registrations will see the number of registrations the industry wants.

Paul Gilligan

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Andy's Armchair

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Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

If you sat someone down who wasn't a fan of motor sport and asked them to watch Hamilton drive his GP Mercedes around Silverstone at record speed and then do the same thing with Marquez on his Honda Moto GP bike I guarantee they'd find Mark a lot more impressive. The angles of lean, the obvious involvement of the rider, with knees and sometimes elbows rubbing on the track all make it seem so much more dramatic compared to the car where all that can be seen is a helmet which has barely room to lean in the tight confines of the cockpit.

The thing is of course they'd assume not only was the bike more dramatic but also that it was more rapid, so I guess they'd be quite surprised to be told the car was in fact almost half a minute per lap quicker (1.26.60) than the bike (1.59.941). In other words after 4 laps racing Lewis would be just about to lap Mark. Makes you think!

Talking of Lewis he's now being lauded for establishing the all time record for Formula 1 pole positions. It makes for good TV blather but really doesn't hold water when you consider it took 201 starts to achieve the 69 poles, a strike rate of 2.91 races per leading grid slot. (At this point regular readers will have a shrewd idea of what's coming next). Jim Clark (you were right) managed 33 poles from 72 starts which is 2.18 races per pole, so there's little doubt that Lewis still has a fair way to go to beat Clark. There are probably other drivers as well who I don't have the details for, maybe someone else could work them out.

In closing this topic I can't help mentioning the old point that if Baghetti had retired after he'd won the first Grand Prix he drove in, the French race of 1961, he'd be the most successful driver of all time which he patently wasn't. It just goes to prove statistics can be manipulated, so H M Government please take note, we're not all daft and don't believe the drivel we're fed.

I've just re-read the above and can't help returning to the lap time issues I started with. Fresh from the iPad I've found out that Michael Dunlop has ridden round the TT circuit on the Isle of Man at the eye watering average speed of 133.393 mph, a lap time of 16 minutes 53.929 seconds for a distance of 37.75 miles. Now I don't know about you, but anything north of 120 mph in a straight line gets a bit "iffy" as far as I'm concerned so what a lap at the speeds mentioned above would be like is utterly beyond my comprehension. Of course you've then got to ask would a car be quicker? If Lewis knew the course well enough would it mean he could be approximately 25 % quicker like he is at Silverstone. If it was so then it means he could achieve an average lap time of about 12 minutes 10 seconds, which would be pretty impressive to watch through an on board camera. What the top speed over the mountain would need to be to achieve this would presumably make it impossible, so we'll just have to use our imagination.

Finally I was reading about an historic racer having a very bad crash at Zandvoort in a 701 March F1 car. The poor chap seems in a very bad way and could well succumb to his injuries. I noted from the article he was 61 and began saying things like he's too old, asking for trouble etc. 'til I realised he was considerably younger than me. Guess who'd be in the car like a shot if the opportunity ever arose?

Ends

AA

What's On

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WMC events and other events of interest

October

- 7th KLMC Devil's Own Classic (Clubmans) Gates Rally
- 15th Solway Historic & Targa Rallies (Gates Rally)
- 21st SDMC Stocktonian Historic (Cancelled)
- 22nd Cumbrian Canter Tour
- 29th Halloween Autotest \ (note new date)

November

- 25th Hog Roast and Quiz
- 26th November Autotest

Visit the Facebook page for the latest news or the webpage at
www.wigtonmc.co.uk

M-SPORT CAREERS



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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