

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 2025/12

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

December 2025

Charity Donations 2025

We were pleased to hand over £1,000 to each of our 2025 charities, Hospice at Home Carlisle |& North Lakes and Every Life Matters.



For Members By Members

WMC Committee

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Please ensure that you contact the appropriate official on the correct email address.

Face Book: Wigton Motor Club & Wigton Motor Club Members

Forthcoming Events

Christmas Cracker Run

70 miles in the north Lakes

Fun questions

December 7th



Autotest

At Tebay

Date pending due to the M6 road works

Annual Awards Dinner

Skiddaw Hotel, Keswick

February 7th

Details to follow

Solway Rally Marshals Draw

The following received £20.

John Graham, Tot Dixon, Paul Brooks, Colin Woodall, Colin Webb, Steve Newton, Ed Parsons,
Maurice Ellison, Rachel Green and John Johnston.

Driving Motorsport Forward

Talking Point

Topical Comment on Motoring & Motorsport

Nostalgia is a strange thing. There is a famous quote that says; “If you can remember the sixties then you weren’t there”. I was reminded of that when watching the series, “Steam Train Diaries” about the North York Moors Railway. Now the last mainline steam trains were some sixty years ago so there are not many folks who have travelled on one. However, the NYMR employs a hundred people and had a thousand volunteers. There are 170 heritage railways in the UK of various sizes including five in Cumbria. So, you can assume there are many thousands of people who enjoy these railways who are too young to remember then in their day, but are drawn to them by the way they have a character and effect all five senses (lick your lips when you are near one to cover “taste”!). Something a current electric train does not.

Much the same can be said for the revival of canals and the many restoration groups that have opened up stretches that have been dormant for years.

In motor sport we have the Goodwood Revival as the second biggest event after the Grand Prix in terms of attendance. All the races are for pre 1966 cars so again the majority of the spectators and competitors are too young to have seen the cars in their heyday. It’s the same with all the classic festivals like Classic Nostalgia, which are far more characterful and interesting than the “modern” meetings at the same venues. The sight, sound and smell of Castrol R and more endearing than the efficiently fast modern race and hill climb cars.

We have just had the Roger Albert Clark Rally; the same argument applies although the cut off is the mid-eighties. Huge crowds went out to watch 150 starters throughout the UK. This was in marked contrast to how few folks were out watching the rounds of the British Rally Championship this year. The prospect of seeing iconic cars like the Lancia Stratos, TR7 V8 plus 85 Escorts and many others is obviously more enticing than seeing a dozen Rally 2 cars.

It's not really about nostalgia; it’s more about the cars in these events being more interesting to the spectators. It is something that those that run our sport need to take into account.

GTF



Editor: Graeme Forrester - gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

Contributions are welcomed - deadline the 25th of each month

The opinions expressed in Start Line are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Club

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Events 2026

Provisional List

Month	Date	Event	Venue	Organiser
January	TBA	Autotest	Tebay	
February	7 th	Awards Dinner	Skiddaw	
March	8 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
March	15 th	Autosolo	TBA	
March	28 th	White Heather Targa	Kirkbride	Rob & Eddie
April	5 th	Autotest	TBA	
April	12 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
April	19 th	Roof of England	Pennine	Graeme
April	26 th	Drive It Day	Dalemain	
May	3 rd	Autosolo	TBA	
May	10 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
May	13 th	Meander	N. Cumbria	Ron
June	14 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
June	21 st	Autotest	TBA	
June	28 th	Gallop Tour	TBA	John Ross
July	12 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
July	19 th	Autotest	TBA	
August	9 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
August	22 nd	Rose & Thistle Tour	Borders	Ron
August	23 rd	Cumbria Classic Show	Dalemain	Graeme
September	6 th	Autosolo	TBA	
September	13 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
September	26 th	Cumbrian Canter	East Cumbria	Chris L



**motor
sport
UK**

**Recognised
Club**

October	11 th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
October	11 th	Solway Targa	West Cumbria	David
November	1st	Autosolo	TBA	
November	8th	Cars & Coffee	Motor House	Lynda & John
December	6 th	Christmas Cracker Run	Lakes	Graeme
December	27 th	Autotest		TBA

At this time all the dates are provisional other than the White heather, Solway , Rose & Thistle, Classic Show and Drive it Day

Membership Renewals

The membership mojo will be asking those of you who need to, to renew your membership shortly.

If you know a fellow enthusiast who is not already a member it's an ideal Christmas present that will last all year!

Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show

August 23rd 2026

At Dalemain

We are looking for ideas for themes, featured marques or clubs

Also we have concessions available for “non burger” food.

Email us with your ideas

Blondie goes to the 'Big Town'

There are certain things you don't realise you really want to do until someone gives you the opportunity, so when the chairman of the Droop Snoot Group (DSG) rang me and asked if I wanted to display Blondie at the NEC Classic Car Show, it shot straight to the top of my bucket list! I think I responded in the affirmative before he had even finished asking me. As anyone who has been invited, or attended, the Lancaster Insurance Classic Car Show at the NEC attracts over 3000 cars and over 73,000 visitors and is the largest classic car show in the UK.



Blondie, as some of you will know, is my 1972 2 door, Vauxhall Viva 2.3 SL. She is one of only 2 two door models registered with the DVLA.

So there I was, flattered to be asked, but also mindful that the NEC is 200 miles from where I live in Cumbria. I certainly didn't fancy driving her down the M6, so

a quick call to my local trailer hire company secured a trailer for the duration of the show. Luckily, I had a tow bar fitted to my Transporter van last year, obviously in anticipation of such a moment.

On the Wednesday, Dinah and I collected the trailer, washed and loaded Blondie ready for an early start the next day, for her modelling assignment in the 'Big Town.'

We set off at 07.00 on Thursday for the journey south. The weather was kind to us too, as it was dry. Knowing the Cumbrian weather, I did pack shampoo, sponge, chamois, polish and copious amounts of micro fibre cloth in the boot, just in case. After a break at Stafford Services, we arrived at the NEC at about 11.30. After being directed to a rather muddy North 10 car park, Blondie was unloaded ready for the short drive to Hall 4.



As you can imagine, there was quite a selection of cars making their way to the halls, so we joined the queue. Arriving at Hall 4, we gave a wave to another DSG member who was just unloading his High Performance Firenza from a covered lorry.

Once inside, no one seemed to know where the DSG stand was, but a sixth sense must have taken over as Blondie managed to find the stand first time. There we met other DSG members who were setting up the stand.

A final fettle and polish of the cars and we were ready. All we had to do to Blondie was clean the tyres and mud flaps from the drive from the NEC car park! The stand looked great, with Blondie being joined by an HSR Chevette, the Firenza and a replica Dealer Team Vauxhall Viva HB GT.

We then drove back to Cumbria with the trailer for safe storage until Sunday.

Friday and Saturday I travelled down by train. Much more relaxing than driving each day, even if services were all running late on the Friday due to trespassers on the line!



I couldn't get over how busy the club stand was. The fact that most of us were standing by our vehicles, rather than just sitting around in groups like some other clubs, clearly drew people in. The HB was a real eye catcher centre stage, flanked on one side by the silver HSR and Silver HPF, and on the other by the gleaming Monaco White of Blondie. The stand was so busy, I only managed to visit 2 other halls!

And all too soon, it was Sunday. Another 200 mile drive with the trailer to the NEC. It's a long walk from the trailer park to hall 4 when the main hall doors are closed!

17.00 Sunday - a PA announcement that the show is now closed, at which point all the cars sounded their horns in unison. Quite an experience. Blondie joined in with her newly fitted air horns, which were liked to an HST (High Speed Train!).



Once out of the NEC, we made our way to the trailer park, along with everyone else it seemed. Loading the car onto a trailer, with others frantically trying to do the same, in the dark and wet was an experience in itself, but we managed. All secured down we set off. This time via the M6 toll to avoid the connected, and terrible surface section of the motorway around Spaghetti Junction. A good, if rather wet journey got us home around 22.30.

I backed the car and trailer in the drive and went straight to bed!

Monday morning Blondie was unloaded, dried off and put back in her garage.

A most enjoyable few days, and an event I will remember for a long, long time.

John Walton

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PG Tips

Peter Reflects On His Month

November wasn't a great month, it's never good to be fair – dark, cold and stuck between summer and Christmas, but this year was worse than most. My father finally passed away, and when I say finally, he had been in a home for more than a year unaware of pretty much anything and anyone, having been diagnosed with Alzheimers some 10 years earlier. Dementia is a terrible torture for everyone involved.

Dad was a clever man, he sat 4 A levels at the age of 17 and qualified as a dentist 3 years later, taking on the family business from his father only a few years further on. He had many interests – a keen gardener, historian, spoke several languages and enjoyed walking but he had 0 interest in cars. I can see some of his traits in me, particularly as I've aged, but my car obsession is not one of them, however we have some shared car history.

Growing up, my first memory of a car was the family Austin Maxi, without checking with my mother I'd say it was brown (I think a lot of BL output was brown or beige in the 70s) and as a toddler apparently I'd stand in the boot (it was a new fangled hatchback!) and fall asleep, holding on to the rear seat. My other memory of the car is being left in it for a few minutes outside Woolworths and activating the cigarette lighter then pushing my right thumb into the hole after taking the actual lighter out! I still have a small lump on my thumb to this day, having burnt the skin on it. When mum came back she was very angry I recall, and with good reason.



Following the Maxi, we got probably the only decent car my parents ever owned (you may disagree) – a Lancia Beta saloon, which was packing a classic 1.6 Lampredi twin cam putting out over 100bhp. It must have seemed like a super car compared to the Maxi. It was a bright metallic green with beige velour seats and trim. Velour was posh back in the day – better than cloth or vinyl but not as ostentatious as leather that back then was reserved for real executive cars. The Lancia was a year old when we got it from Blackburn and Price the local family Vauxhall

dealer in Berwick. I recall dad driving it every year to Edinburgh to get it serviced at the nearest Lancia dealer and enjoyed the performance of the engine, I also recall that my best friend Andrew got horribly car sick in the back for some reason!

In 1983 Blackburn and Price (not sure which one) persuaded dad that he should chop the Lancia in for a Vauxhall Cavalier. The car in question was a 1 year old mk21.3 saloon in a not very bright metallic green. The seats were also green and it had a 4 not 5 speed gearbox. When mum and dad test drove it, mum claimed that she didn't realise it only had 4 gears and the pair of them spent many years lamenting having bought a car with a 4 speed gearbox! They also regularly mentioned that the engine lacked the power of the Lancia and was a disappointment in comparison. I learned to drive in the Cavalier and it wasn't a bad car, ultimately overshadowed by the jelly mould shock of the Sierra being launched, but also more modern than the Sierra due to its FWD configuration and engine range. Notably I achieved my first motoring ticket after being caught overtaking on a double white line 2 weeks after passing my test. I had literally clipped the edge of the lines but I took my ticket and back then 3 points had no effect on insurance or anything else. The family dog Max (a rather fierce Labrador Collie cross) growled and barked at the policeman throughout the stop! Incidentally the Lancia was in rude health when traded in – rust free and with a fresh MOT. A year later though it was apparently riddled with rust and suffered the classic Lancia Beta fate I'd imagine. The Vaux

hall was a proper workhorse and to increase it's usefulness dad bought a roof rack for it. The defining moment of the Cavalier era was when dad took the recently deceased fridge to the local tip on the roof rack. Sadly for dad, gypsies had recently taken to attending the tip in large vans and dumping vast quantities of trade waste, so to fight back the council had installed a height bar to prevent anything bigger than a family car getting in. I wasn't present but I believe dad drove into the tip at about 10 mph and the fridge and roof rack were both ejected by the height bar over the rear of the car. This left some rather nasty scars on the boot as well as some embarrassment for dad! Touch up paints for odd metallic colours aren't great even now, but back in 1985 they were worse and dad was not prepared to spend money on a professional respray so our Cavalier lived the rest of it's days with us with a pair of green stripes on the boot lid.

The replacement for the Vauxhall was a 3 series BMW and by then all of us kids had grown up so they went for a 3 door and most importantly it had a 5 speed gearbox and was bizarrely badged as a 316 despite having an 1800cc engine. Apparently this was because it had a carb and they didn't want it to be seen as better than the 316i which had fuel injection but only 1600cc. I drove the BMW on and off until I left home a few years later and recall they replaced it with a red Rover 214 from the Honda era, complete with wooden dash inserts, electric windows and fuel injection. Following that they bought their first ever new car, a Hyundai Getz complete with the old Korean quirk of having the indicators and wiper stalks the wrong way round.

Dad was a very sensible driver but he did finally achieve a speeding ticket around 15 years ago, and impressively doing it in a 1.3 diesel Fiat Panda at 70mph on the A595 near Wigton. Sadly his driving days were nearly done by then and with the dementia diagnosis came the removal of his licence.

Despite having no interest in cars himself, dad always supported my motor sport endeavours and persuaded Blackburn and Price to sponsor me a small amount when I first started entering speed events. I will miss him although that process started some years back when he started to disappear as the man he once was. Next month normal PG Tips service will resume, in the meantime I'll raise a glass to dad and the Lancia – definitely the best family car we ever had.

Peter

Jottings

The **Club Van** has done two events already and is proving a great asset. Over the winter it will get sign written and fitted out inside.

We'd like to record our thanks to Jacqui and Rob of **Main Street Garage in Shap** for obtaining it and giving it a full service and MoT.

A great result for Seth and Dave on the **Roger Albert Clark Rally**, not only finishing but getting a second in class. They will be reporting in the next issue. Brian Hodgson continued his adventure by navigating Steve Bannister in his faithful Escort. Sadly the results system is still not updated at the time of writing. No doubt Brian will let us know.



I've always been amazed at the speed of construction in Bulgaria, as they have tight deadlines to meet, basically they can only work outside the tourist season.

This is the team resurfacing Burgas Airport.

Perhaps we could get them to come over and do the A66? They would have it finished by Easter!

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say



Ed Glaister and I spent an enjoyable day marshalling a footpath and track crossing in Wythop Forest for the VSCC Lakeland Trial. We had ringside seats as the cars passed us on the hairpins climbing and returning from the tests. Only a handful of cyclists and dog walkers passed us and they seemed to be enjoying the event too. The autumn colours were at their best, we had plenty of food and coffee and with our car parked close by we could retire for shelter when the weather demanded. Although I have sat in as a bouncing

passenger on the Lakeland only a couple of times in recent years - once in a Chrysler with Edwin and Richard Cook and once with Mike Telford in his Model A Tudor saloon, I was quite active in sporting trials in the early 1960s in A7s and Ford specials. The photo is of me competing in the 750MC trial at Cairn Beck Cumwhitton in 1962 in UG – a special saloon I shared with Les Blair. Suitable cars were plentiful and a lot cheaper then. I'm not reporting on the event as I'm sure there will be much written by those competing or closely involved.

It's the time of year when rally men relish the prospect of the Rally of the Tests, The Roger Albert Clark Rally and LE JOG. A strong contingent of Wigton members marshalled the tests on Warcop military ranges for the ROTTs on 7th November. There were 72 entries of classics on this three day event and we saw the entry twice over the course of our day. Most enjoyable seeing the classics being driven with gusto – many by drivers in our age group.



The biannual Roger Albert Clark Rally which is now the largest forest rally of its type in Europe consists of a couple of days in Welsh forests followed by three days in the forests of Galloway, Kielder and the Borders. Our friend Brian Kinghorn is Deputy Clark of the Course of this huge undertaking which attracts a magnificent entry in the several sections of the rally. Due to other commitments I managed to watch only a couple of stages at Churnsike Lodge, Spadeadam on the final day, Monday, with Rob Grant. Fortunately the coverage on You Tube and Facebook gave regular updates as the event progressed through Wales

and up to Carlisle Airport for the local stages. This event is of course the more recent incarnation of the original RAC Rally which I first competed in with Robin Murray in 1966. The photo is of us

in the Devilla stage just north of the Firth of Forth that year.

Early December sees the annual running of Le Jog – Lands End to John o’Groats, a regularity trial which is a real test of endurance and skill on roads frequently affected by ice and snow especially as the event moves to the north of Scotland. An overnight halt will be at Gretna but before that there will be regularity sections in Cumbria some controls in which will be manned by Wigton Motor Club members.

Wishing all members and friends a Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy 2026.

Ron

Membership

WMC is registered with the Information Commissioner to hold members data.

Welcome to new members

Noah Bamber	of Kendal
Robert Chalmers	of Warrington
Richard Chalmers	of Wigton
Courtney Nelson	of Workington
Bob Angus	of Carlisle
Colin Sainsbury & Kath Beresford	of Penrith
Chris Trivett	of Preston
Jake Wright	of Lancaster
Terry & Bobby Peat	of Cleator Moor

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My Motoring Month

The start of November saw the MX5 being put away for the winter. It's going to get the underside treated with Lanoguard ready to emerge on April 1st. That might mean that the MG Bs will get a run out on a dry day.

I've continued to have a big clear out and that's my aim for over the winter. I've got another box of trophies I've unearthed which will go in the bin. Back in the day every event had awards and then there were flourishing championships, Cumbria had Stage rally, Road Rally and Field (Autotest & PCT) and I found one for a FWD class in the Field Championship plus many more from that era for event or class wins. Happy memories but sadly no point in keeping them. In the bin they go.

I'm doing the same with books, I've listed a load of MG books in the WMC Face Book page and you should get a list attached with his mail. All proceeds to charity.



I went to a salvage yard sale recently near Wigton. The sort of place that appears on Henry Cole's TV programmes. All sorts of junk, building materials and a few signs and cans. I avoided buying anything as I have enough junk of my own! There was one "home-made" car that intrigued me. It had an Austin engine which may be newer than the very solid chassis. Any ideas?

Much effort going into the getting the Christmas Cracker Run up and running. A day spend going round the route, including an excellent light lunch at the Borrowdale Hotel. The road book is

now complete and the quiz questions sorted. This event started off 20 plus years ago as an MG Cumbria event but we opened it up to all cars as MG numbers fell, and it's been a WMC in recent years.

During my steady tidy of the garage and workshop I've realised how many tools I have that I've never used. You buy sets of spanners, or socket sets, and I reckon 75% are sizes you never need. The same with screw drivers, you buy a set of 20 and realise that the 6 that you use most you already have three of each! That's of course apart from the legendary 10mm socket which you can never find!

Again, the same scenario with power tools. Moving to a house and garden that needed a lot of work 30 years ago, I bought several drills, saws and sanders, all running off the mains. Then about ten years ago came rechargeable battery powered tools. Much lighter and now cables but I now have six different chargers for the different tools and I play "Happy Families" getting the right battery to the right charger. I've learnt my lesson and any I buy now come from Lidl and I've got two batteries so one is always on charge. Then each power tool comes in a nice black case that are all identical, so labelling is the next task.

Graeme

Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

Have you ever noticed that when an all-electric car is being advertised on the television it seems to be travelling across a wide open landscape such as a savannah or desert or maybe up a mountain pass. Why? They're the very type of environment least suited to such vehicles as charging points will be a bit thin on the ground. Could we have them under the trade description act?

A second point, we regularly use the A66 to Scotch corner and over the last few years have noticed quite large chunks of the single carriageway sections morphing from 60mph to 50mph limits. These often seem to start as temporary alterations when there are ongoing road works, but after these have finished the 50 signs become a permanent fixture. You just hope that as time goes on single carriageway 60's doesn't vanish altogether, and more to the point that the 50's don't drop down to 40's and we all end up driving at an ever more sedate pace.

I've just spent a couple of weekends watching the festival from Brands Hatch and the Walter Hayes trophy from Silverstone. Both of these events cater for Formula Ford cars of various ages and provide motor racing entertainment that puts a modern Grand Prix to shame. Racing is to put it mildly intense with scraps going on throughout the field. Races are short and cars are from various constructors, many of whom went out of business decades ago. The best way to understand what goes on is to go to You Tube and look up Walter Hayes Grand Final 2025. The whole event lasts less than 20 minutes and I'll guarantee it's impossible to see a better motor race.



There's a photo accompanying this article which I found in an ancient magazine in the loft. It's particularly significant to what I've been writing about above, so I'll give you a bit of time to try and decide why it's important and provide the answer for you next month. I reckon you'll need the driver, car and event to be 100% successful. By the way it's not the first winner of either the above events.

I was recently doing a bit of research about the race circuit at Silloth which closed in 1982. I'd always been aware of it but hadn't realised it hosted rounds of the British Motor cycle championship as well as club level events. I also hadn't understood that racing there ended after Gary Hislop a 19 year old Scot ear marked for fame and fortune in the sport was killed there in a freakishly slow accident. His elder brother Steve used to act as his mechanic but took up racing himself the following year and ended his career with 11 TT wins and two British Super Bike titles. He too died in tragic circumstances in a helicopter accident in 2003 after retiring from competition.

Ends
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