

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 08/20

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

August 2020

Motorsport Returns!



Our first event since the lock down was a test evening at Rowrah which saw twenty cars take part in a fine sunny evening.

Motorsport for All

Club Officials

OFFICIALS

<i>President.:</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>	
<i>Vice Pres.</i>	<i>Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,</i>	
<i>Sec/Editor</i>	<i>Graeme Forrester</i>	gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Marian Sloan</i>	mazsloan1@outlook.com
<i>Membership Sec</i>	<i>John Sloan</i>	wigtonmcmemb@outlook.com
<i>Social Sec.:</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>	charles.graves@armathwaite-hall.com
<i>Child Protect.</i>	<i>Alan Jackson</i>	bigwalk1@gmail.com
<i>Equipment Officer</i>	<i>Graeme Mactavish</i>	gmact123@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Graham	jl86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Lynda Graham.	jl86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Andrew Graham	andy-lake3rec@hotmail.co.uk
Jim Crockett	jamesmccrockett@yahoo.co.uk
David Wiggins	michellewiggins137@btinternet.com
Chris Leece	chris_1lowtherview@yahoo.co.uk
John Sloan	johnsloan02@outlook.com
Ron Palmer	ronpalmer777@hotmail.com
David Agnew	DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com
Rob Grant	robincumbria@hotmail.com ,
John Holliday	johnholl403@gmail.com ,

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

Talking Point

Topical Comment from the world of motoring

Motorsport has taken some tentative steps back to taking place again, mainly at race circuits where the ability to comply with the many restrictions are a lot easier to comply with than at a temporary venue. Our sport is a very social one so not being able to chat between races or runs during what is a long day is a big disadvantage.

You cannot fault Motorsport UK's actions during this time with all sorts of initiatives and training, particularly online. Many of these things were coming but the virus has speeded up their introduction. However, for many of us this looks like a year without any competing. It is worrying to hear that some temporary venues may use the Covid to stop all future uses for motorsport. We have few enough venues as it is these days.

There are two Grand Prix coming up at Silverstone with F1 facing a lot of challenges, even for just taking place, but no doubt money talks. Lewis is hardly helping with his gestures etc. The best way to get your point over is by intelligent discussion, not by alienating people.

I can't help but feel that Lewis is a bit of a lost soul looking for a cause. The other more senior drivers have wives and kids and can't wait to get back to them between races, but Lewis has to fly off to see his celebrity "friends" in Hollywood. He doesn't endear himself by not attending awards ceremonies or promotional events. Just a few years ago, prior to the British GP, there was a big promo event in London attended by past champions and nineteen current F1 racers. Guess who was on holiday?

On the other hand, it's been great to see the other British drivers doing well and McLaren nearer the front again. I can't wait to see George Russell in a Mercedes as he surely will be soon! On a lighter note the best bit of the races so far have been the radio controlled plinths used to present the awards after the race. Perhaps they could liven it by doing some formation dancing with them!

It's great that we have a couple of events this month as things slowly resume and I hope to see many members at them. I think many people are still very tentative about getting out and about but hopefully things will gradually improve.

Again great work has been done at the Motor House and the upstairs is nearly ready for carpeting and the electrics are well under way. In addition the old hotel car park has been cleared to the autotest. Thanks to all our volunteers.

GTF

Editor: Graeme Forrester

Email: gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

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

The contents of Start Line are protected by copyright 2020

Forthcoming Club Events

AUGUST CLUB RUN. **Wednesday 12th August 4.30-5.00pm**

Starting at The Lake District Wildlife Park, Bassenthwaite, CA12 4RD

Please park in the Wildlife Park Car Park and walk down to the shop/café. Please collect the route from the assembly table near the Park entrance.

Approximately 50 miles + your return run home. No petrol is available on the route. No fee is payable. Tea and coffee may be bought from the café up to 5pm. Toilets are available.

The route will finish at the Inn on the Lake, Glenridding where toilets are available in The Ramblers Bar. Refreshments may also be bought there. Anyone wishing to have a meal there should book with the hotel on 01768482444.

Please let Charles know by email charles@armathwaite-hall.com if you would like to take part.

Motor House Autotest

Saturday, August 15th

Entry forms have been sent out

This is a non spectator event due to Covid restrictions.

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!

PG Tips

Chairman Peter Reflects On His Month

I will start with a riddle – you have 2 cars and whilst working on one you manage to successfully render both un-useable leading you to have to borrow your wife's car for a day, how did you achieve it? I know the answer because I achieved it in what I can only describe as professional level muppetry! The answer is - you dismantle one of your cars outside the garage of the other and then are unable to move it, thereby leaving the other blocked in. What led to this unfortunate incident was me discovering that the bottom of one of the front springs on my recently purchased Mercedes had snapped off at some point. I've changed a lot of springs in my time, including the springs on the Astra only a few weeks back.

I watched the very handy Autodoc channel on YouTube and figured it was standard stuff and would be a half hour job per side. Incidentally if you aren't familiar with Autodoc, they are a large German automotive parts supply company who now have a share of the UK market and they have videos of how to replace a lot of common parts on a lot of cars from the last 20 years. Each video features a Teutonic mechanic in an Autodoc uniform in a pristine workshop slowly and carefully carrying out the procedure he is doing with subtitles showing exactly what tools you need and when. It's a very calming thing to watch and makes every operation look simple – and mostly they are.....but not Mercedes W203 front springs! With the front spring and shock units off the car and dismantled I attempted to compress the new springs to get them onto the shock absorbers. Using my standard home spring compressor devices I managed to compress a spring as far as it would go and still I had another inch or more to go.

After a lot of head scratching I figured that, like the Autodoc mechanic in the video, I needed a professional spring compressor machine in order to get them on to the shock absorbers. That's when I sought the help of Bill Kirkpatrick at Wheatsheaf garage in Brigham who said he'd be able to sort it but not until the morning. I was thus left carless and once Trudy came home I borrowed her car to get the springs to Bill. Apparently it wasn't even plain sailing with the right kit because they are an awkward design and need a lot of compressing. With the units back it was a half hour job to get the car back up and working.....just as I'd expected it to be at the start.

Barry the single seater is now back with me and (hopefully) all ready for the Rowrah track evening. Jonathon at JDM managed to create a very solid rear wing mount from a length of alloy pipe and also fettled the front end of the car so that the front wing is low enough. With any luck by the time you read this it will still be in one piece and sat waiting for next year when I might be able to attend some events.

The whole Coronavirus lockdown has created a new phenomenon in the world of car sales – I say sales, but I mean raffles really. In recent years you may have noticed the start of this phenomenon at major airports – a stand with a Ferrari or a Porsche on it and a chance to buy a £10 ticket and go into a draw to win the car. The aim obviously is to sell enough tickets to cover the price of the car and a significant profit and one lucky winner gets a super or dream type car. Since lockdown it would appear garages all over the country have been trying to off-load stock in a similar fashion on Facebook and various other internet sites.

Last week a fairly well known company called KGM who buy and sell classic cars (they polish them and sell them on at a vast profit) put a mk2 Escort up, I've seen Sierra Cosworths, Porsche Boxster and slowly but surely the level of vehicle is sinking from what used to be unattainable supercars and dream cars to things that are fairly mundane. Yesterday a company put up a Ford Transit with back

seats in it – tickets were £5 so presumably they need to sell a few and I can't imagine who would be buying a ticket to win a new Transit van. Presumably by the end of the summer someone will be trying to raffle off a 5 year old Dacia Sandero in similar fashion if the trend continues! I guess someone is making money out of it and someone is entering these raffles or they wouldn't exist. Personally I'd rather enter a proper lottery and aim to win some cash.

Peter

Car delivery companies – a word of warning !

I was interested to read Peter Garforth's experience of a well know delivery company whose name begins with an S to deliver his new Merc. I work in a school with a large fleet of minibuses and in January I needed an additional vehicle. After a good trawl through Ebay I bought one from a very reputable dealer on the south coast who we have dealt with in the past. One of my colleagues arranged collection of the vehicle using the aforementioned delivery company and on the appointed day the vehicle was collected on time but we then received a call from the driver to say that he would not make it to Berwick that day as the traffic was heavy and he would arrive first thing next morning.

That was the last we heard and the vehicle never arrived. After plenty of fruitless phone calls I reported it to Hampshire Police who were of the opinion that it was either in a breaker's yard or a container bound for Africa on the day of collection. The delivery company were less than helpful and literally all they would say was that the courier who collected the vehicle had 100% positive feedback which seems rather the odd. The Police later advised that an innocent member of the public had been the victim of identity fraud and his i/d had been used to set up the courier account. After a bit of a tussle our insurance company eventually paid up after having initially claimed that we had been negligent.

Roll the clock forward to late June and to add insult to injury I spotted a scammer trying to sell our stolen vehicle on Ebay at a rock bottom price. He was listing over 100 vehicle using pictures of vehicles previously listed on Ebay. I reported it to Ebay and they withdrew all the listings within about 12 hours.

I have personally used vehicle delivery companies myself in the past and had never dreamt that the couriers used by the delivery company would run off with the vehicle. Proceed with caution.

Stuart Bankier

Auto Jumble



20/50 and 15/40

4 litres for £15

Contact Graeme on
gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

Team Wigton News



Team Wigton member Sam Kirkpatrick set new records when racing at the MG Car Cub race meeting at Donington last weekend taking no less than four outright wins, class wins and fastest laps driving the Wheatsheaf garage MG ZR190. This was the first time at an MGCC meeting that a driver has won four races. This marked the resumption for motor racing in the UK with strict hygiene controls in place and sadly no spectators.

On Saturday Sam did two races in the MG Trophy series for MG ZRs in his class A car, having contest class B last year. Nineteen year old Sam was in a class of his own in practice and won the 15 lap race by seven seconds. In race two it was the same story with a seventeen second win.



On Sunday, the Wheatsheaf team were in action in the Cockshoot Trophy series which is open to all types of modified MGs. In practice Sam was one and a half seconds quicker than his nearest rival and converted this to a 46 second win and in race two the margin was 35 seconds after a controlled drive at the front.

Rowrah Test Evening

With them March Test Daly lost to the dreaded virus we were able to arrange a new date for an evening event in July. The sun shone we had a full compliment of marshals and everyone had a good time. Photos by John Sloan.



From The Top

News from UK Motorsport, Regions and the WMC Committee

Before March 2020, few of us knew that the word Zoom meant a great deal more than an onomatopoeic reference to speed. In the space of just over 100 days we have become accustomed to a new virtual reality, in which we can simultaneously speak with dozens of people, spread across the globe, as if they were sitting across the table. Our ability to adapt and embrace change – when forced to do so – is a demonstration of the age-old maxim that necessity is the mother of invention.

Motorsport has been at the forefront of innovation in the automotive world for over 120 years, with the pursuit of clever solutions born in the crucible of competition. That defining characteristic of our sport has attracted more than its fair share of brilliant engineers, and talented managers; and this permeates throughout the culture of the sport. Even at the grassroots level of the sport, where budgets are minuscule, the challenge that is met by every competitor is that of eking out the maximum performance from every last pound.

So we are good at adapting and being efficient. Our own ‘necessity’ has been the resumption of motorsport in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic. And the inventions that derive from this fall into two categories. Firstly, how do we operate our sport safely and viably with the ongoing situation? And second, how do we take this experience and turn it into an opportunity to reimagine so much of what we do, and build back better? Before the crisis we had already identified a perfect storm of existential threats to the sport; with the real spectre of becoming a social pariah through the gathering opposition to the internal combustion engine – and the seeming impossibility of bridging the gap between our almost universal use of the ICE and the imperative to embrace society’s expectations.

Allied to this is the fact that society’s love affair with the car as a symbol and tool of freedom seemed to be ending, becoming increasingly a utility machine with AI beckoning, and perhaps as a result a lack of connectivity to youth and subsequently an ageing community of motorsport aficionados. And aside from Formula 1, there is very little visibility in the general media, and as a result, motorsport is at risk of becoming mainstream invisible.

Last autumn, Motorsport UK declared its intention to ensure the long-term sustainability of motorsport through a bold plan of investment and sport development. Built around four pillars, this is designed to focus our resources on better promotion, helping the clubs to recruit more people into the sport, elevating our programmes of learning and development and being innovative in the formats and delivery points. As we were beginning to deploy these new interventions, so COVID-19 struck. On the 17th March, all motorsport activity ceased, with no sense of when it may resume.

We should share a sense of collective pride that the UK motorsport community has done such a fantastic job of getting back on track just 110 days after it was Hugh Chambers Build back better “How do we take this experience and turn it into an opportunity to reimagine so much of what we do, and build back better?” 5 put on hold. The need to rethink every aspect of the sport was greeted with determination and commitment by members from across the whole sport; and with leadership from Motorsport UK we gained the approval of the government to restart on the 4th of July. Since then we have seen hundreds of competitors back behind the wheel, and before long we will also have co-drivers back in rallying.

All of this would be an achievement in itself, but what is much more important is what we have learnt that can have a long-term impact on the sport. I think that we have all appreciated the potential benefits of IT, (from those Zoom calls to home shopping), and so with our sport we have adopted digital signing on, online driver briefings, pre-event scrutineering and post-event evaluations. These are all working well and beg the question “why go back to how it was before?”



motor
sport
UK

Recognised
Club

To communicate the new ways of working, we conducted a series of webinars with officials, marshals and COVID-19 officers. In the space of ten days we reached 544 people with the key details. Each year, in January, we run a series of training sessions across the UK, and yet now we have to ask if we are better off doing these with an even wider group, but all done remotely through the innovative use of technology.

No wasteful travel or imposition on volunteers' free time. As a result of the pandemic, I think it is true to say most people have been forced to reflect on many aspects of their lives, and in a wide range of areas have a desire not to return to the old way of doing things. It is this zeitgeist that has invited such a broad response to the debate on equality, diversity and inclusion. Later in this magazine, our chair, David Richards provides his thoughts on the subject, and I am delighted that Lewis Hamilton has provided Revolution with his perspective. Surely, we cannot let this opportunity go to waste to reset our perspective on what all of this means to our sport – and what we need to do to change it.

For some time now, the sport has begun to focus on ways to make it more appealing and accessible to girls and women, with important initiatives led by the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission and our own support of Dare to be Different and Girls on Track. But when females represent just 9% of our licence holders, we clearly have a very long way to go. For me, the most promising initiative that we had planned for 2020, pre COVID-19, was the tie up with TeamSport, the indoor karting leaders, in order to enable their keener racers to access a pathway into more advanced forms of karting. Together we developed the KI (kart indoor) licence for their most competitive customers across all their 33 tracks. The intent was clear; to engage their town and city dwelling customers and inspire them through the purest and most affordable form of motorsport. Equally exciting is that 30% of their customers are female!

We have to get a much higher proportion of girls into contact with the sport and provide an environment where they will be comfortable and welcomed; now we know who they are, and so with connectivity comes communication and engagement. Our plan is to create the introduction of pathways from indoor karting to the next steps along the way, like arriveand-drive Club 100, now a Motorsport UK permitted series. We also need to be innovative in how we bring more young people into motorsport. It is an easy assumption to make that we should try to bring all youngsters into karting and take them on a pathway to professional careers. But I don't think that is really the point here.

We have around 45,000 licence holders, of which less than 100 are professionals. We need to start to promote the diversity of motorsport, as in so many ways, a great opportunity for kids as young as 14 would be to compete using a low-cost secondhand hatchback, with no helmet or expensive overalls, in autosolos. They are fun, social, low cost, and run by small clubs that embody the very best of motorsport's generous and welcoming culture. Motorsport UK is fully committed to come back from this crisis stronger and more dynamic than before. We need to fight the corner of motorsport, and use all of our collective inventiveness and innovation to Build Back Better.

Kind regards, Hugh Chambers CEO, Motorsport UK

A Few More Rowrah Photos



Why We Drive, The Motorist Puts His Foot Down

From a Guardian Book Review by Tim Adams

I think we can all agree with this.

Five years ago I sat around a table of Google executives at the company's Mountain View headquarters in California. They took turns explaining the virtues of their prototype driverless car, in which I had just meticulously navigated the streets of nearby Palo Alto.

The coming revolution in automobiles, they suggested, which the car no doubt represented, would make transit more efficient, smarter, safer and far less prone to human error. Moreover, in transforming drivers into passengers it would free them up to do "more productive", "less stressful" things (by which the Google VPs no doubt meant: "Give them more time to stare at their phones").

At the end of the session, questions were invited. Mine was this: "Do you ever think you might be massively underestimating how much many people actually enjoy driving?" The question was met with the genuine surprise of individuals who had become inordinately wealthy believing people mostly dreamed, like them, of "efficient tech solutions" – and wanted nothing more than to have more time to look at their phones.

Matthew Crawford's thought-provoking, full-throttle inquiry is the pimped-up, 350-page version of that question. It gets under the bonnet of one of the more insidious assumptions of the artificial intelligence revolution that we are currently living through: the seductive idea that most people desire ease, passivity, "frictionless" interactions with the world of objects.

Crawford, a research fellow in culture at the University of Virginia – and a man who is currently "restoring and radically modifying" a 1975 VW Beetle using his principle of "folk engineering" – would beg to differ. He makes the case that "technocrats and optimisers seek to make everything idiot-proof, and pursue this by treating us like idiots. It is a presumption that tends to be self-fulfilling; we really do feel ourselves becoming dumber. Against such a backdrop, to drive is to exercise one's skill at being free, and I suspect that is why we love to drive."

A well-constructed tweet will never provide the satisfaction of a reconstructed gearbox.'

This is not only a petrolhead's complaint against rule-making officialdom (though Crawford reserves a special place in hell for the bureaucratic scalpers who install traffic cameras); it is also a vivid and heartfelt manifesto against the drift of our world, against the loss of individual agency and the human pleasure of acquired skill and calculated risk. It asks its readers to beware tech billionaires bearing algorithms.

Crawford's first, bestselling book a decade ago was an argument for practical accomplishment, [*The Case for Working With Your Hands*](#); 10 years on, that case becomes a rallying cry for steampunks everywhere. Not since [*Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*](#) has someone better articulated the soul-enhancing possibilities of tinkering with tools, making useful stuff work well. He quotes Nietzsche at one point: "Joy is the feeling of one's powers increasing." A well-constructed tweet will never provide the satisfaction of a reconstructed gearbox.

Our vehicles represent one of the few areas of life in which we still exercise some control.

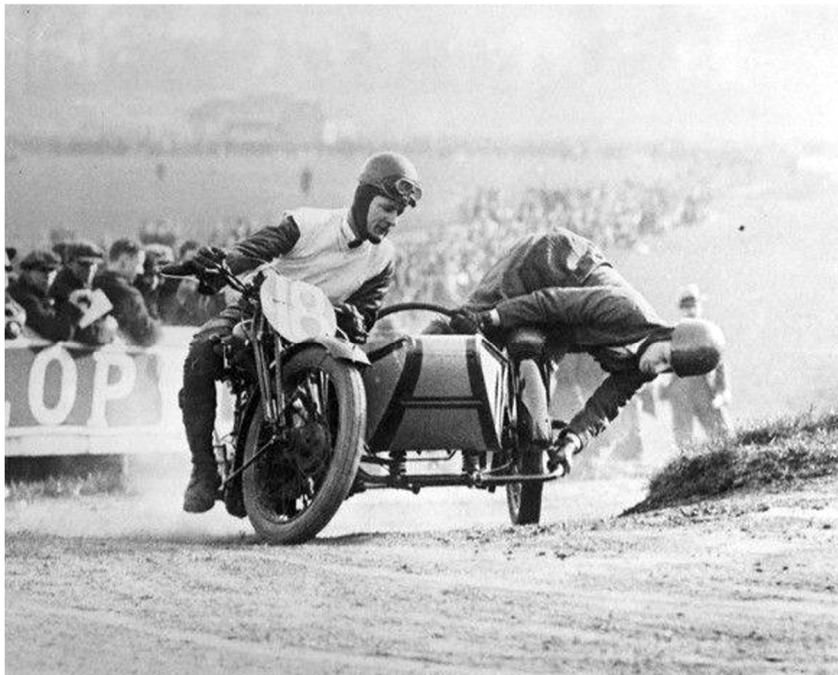
From the white noise of our current culture wars, Crawford also identifies a division that may well come to greater prominence: between drivers (and makers and doers of all kinds) and the intelligent machines that are about to supplant them. He sees a premonition of this in so-called populist protests, which are often at root an argument about shifting attitudes to road travel: the [*yellow vest movement*](#) in France was prompted by a decrease in speed limits and an increase in fuel tax, policies imposed by President Macron and his city-dwelling Metro users. In Germany, the equivalent protest against

“metropolitan elites” employs the slogan “Freie Fahrt für freie Bürger!” (or “Freedom to drive for free citizens!”).

Such emotions, Crawford suggests, should not lightly be dismissed; our vehicles are part of our identity because they represent one of the few areas of life in which we still exercise some control: “These [political] movements are partly a response, at once spirited and rational, to a creeping colonisation of the space for skilled human activity.” He describes his own experience of that skill in a lifetime of adventures on the road – the successes and failures of coaxing junkyard engines to life, the lost camaraderie of Sunday morning mechanics – and sees in its demise a wider metaphor of our relation not only with machines, but with power. “We seem to be entering a new dispensation. Qualities once prized, such as spiritedness and a capacity for independent judgment, are starting to appear dysfunctional. If they are to operate optimally, [we are told] our machines require deference.”

No doubt, as Crawford understands, there are environmental arguments against our attachment to the combustion engine. His book, however, remains a powerful (and enjoyable) corrective against that wisdom that suggests the unchecked march of all-seeing tech monopolies – ravenous for data, trading attention for distraction – is essential to human progress. In the past two decades, we have already given over much of our ability to navigate the world to black-box algorithms; as that journey accelerates into a smart machine future, we would be advised to look out where we are going.

- *Why We Drive: On Freedom, Risk and Taking Back Control* by Matthew Crawford is published by Bodley Head (£20). To order a copy go to guardianbookshop.com. Free UK p&p over £15



Any you thought rally navigators took risks!

Classic Column

News from the Classic and Historic Scene

And think of all that money he saved by not buying new cars!

This person had a great start in life, an early exotic present.

Mr. Allen Swift: Born - 1908 - Died 2010

This man owned and drove the same car for 82 years.

Can you imagine even having the same car for 82 years?

Mr. Allen Swift (Springfield, Massachusetts) received this 1928 Rolls-Royce Piccadilly-P1 Roadster

from his father, brand new - as a graduation gift in 1928.

He drove it up until his death last year... At the age of 102.

He was the oldest living owner of a car that was purchased new.

Just thought you'd like to see it.

Rolls Royce Phantom I 1928

It was donated to a Springfield museum after his death.

It has 1,070,000 miles on it, still runs like a Swiss watch, dead silent at any speed and is in perfect cosmetic condition.

82 years - That's approximately 13,048 miles per year (1087 per month).

1,070,000 that's miles not kilometres.

That's British engineering of a bygone era

I don't think they make them like this anymore. [Thanks to Bill Sykes for this.](#)



Welcome!

Welcome to the following new members and we hope that you will enjoy our events and social activities.

Martyn and Hazel Taylor	from Haverigg
Jason Sheffield and Claire Thirwell	from Frizington
Colin and Liz Birkbeck,	from Penrith
Ralph and Margaret Clark,	from Southport
Chris Glaister and Christabel De Graauw,	from Penrith

For most of you this will be your first magazine and we really hope that you will enjoy reading it.

Marshal Force

Marshals are the life blood of our activities

Forthcoming events:

Motor House Autotest ,

August 15th

Contact Steve Fishwick or John Holliday

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

In any sport an opportunity to compete on an International level is an attractive proposition, to pit yourself against better opposition and often to travel to new territory - but of course you generally have to take part in lesser club events beforehand. Having started navigating at a local level and purely by chance in 1960 I found there was always a demand for someone who could read a map and it was a great low cost way to get into the sport. In 1960 I did six events with four drivers in an Austin 7, Ford Anglia, Minor 1000 and a Riley RME 1.5. John Butterworth from Burgh by Sands had the Minor 1000 XRM721 and for 1961 he upgraded that to a Black MGA VGJ69 in which we did three events before closing the year out with another change of car to a Riley 1.5 YAO437 and another three rallies. I also fitted in a further event in a Frogeye Sprite with Barrie Docker.

In 1962 I competed in 10 rallies seven of which were with John Butterworth in the Riley 1.5 before he bought a 997 Mini Cooper 102HRM from Howard Lace the BMC dealer in Kirkoswald and our first event in this was the Stocktonian in mid September when we had an early bath after damaging the rear suspension against a dry stone wall. Such was the learning process of moving from rear wheel drive to FWD. I recall going to Watsons of Waverton with John in the Riley 1.5 for new tyres and they talked him into trying Michelin X radials instead of the traditional crossplies already on the car. After they had been fitted we set off in the direction of Wigton and after two bends John decided these X s lurched too much, were dangerous and not at all to his liking and we returned to Watsons to get a set of crossplies. After a session with Wilson Watson John was talked into keeping the Xs and in time he adjusted to them as did we all. Also in 1962 I competed in two other rallies with a real wild character called Cowen Scott in a Mini Pickup which he preferred driving to his Healey 100/6. We acquitted ourselves well in the Mini but there was always a strong smell of fuel, burning clutch and brakes in that small cabin, not good for a queasy tum.



1963 started with a couple of minor events in John's Cooper but after these he packed up motorsport and got married. In March that year I went three up in Irving Oglanby's Victor Estate with Laurie Keen also on board. Irving was a Wigton greengrocer and had been a motorcycle competitor before taking up rallies. His brother Stan had the pub just a few yards from Irving's shop. This Westmorland Night Rally with Irving was the first of twenty four events we did together over 1963/4 a really enjoyable partnership which yielded lots of success including a win on the NDMC Hunter Cup. After five events in the Victor Estate (I remember there was a green curtain fixed between us on night events to reduce navigator's lamp glare) Irving upgraded to a 998 Mini Cooper reg no 1258BB in July which was a nice well balanced car. In addition I did a club



rally with George Rice in a Sprite bringing my total of events for the year to sixteen and I could have managed more such was my appetite for rallies.

For the next year 1964 Irving and I did 10 events in the Cooper and one in his shop car – the Victor – and clocked up some good finishes including three second places, two thirds and a couple of fifths but alas no wins. In May '64 we took part in our first International, the Scottish, which started in Blythswood Square, Glasgow at the RSAC a prestigious building with superb facilities and an elaborate start ramp in the street outside the front door. We were entered as Team Cumbria along with Mike Telford/Peter Handy and Alf Sewell/Laurie Lancaster all in Minis. Our team support was a Trojan Van (top speed about 45mph) crewed by Geoff Benson and John Johnston. This event was certainly the most enjoyable I had experienced up to that point and started on Monday 18th May and finished on the Friday back in Glasgow where we had a boisterous after rally party, perhaps the last time any rally finished there, barrack room damages being a major consideration. After a day or so of concentrated forest stages the Cooper's clutch began to slip. We approached the works team for

advice and all they could offer was for us to try and reduce the amount of oil from a leaking main bearing seal getting onto the clutch plate. Copious amounts of Fullers Earth were bought and a hole drilled in the top of the bell housing. Via a rubber pipe and funnel I blew this stuff into the bell housing for the rest of the week and we actually finished but in a lowly place. My throat required much lager in the evenings to keep it lubricated and if drugs had been in vogue in those days I would have looked like a heavy user. The photographs are of us on the way home from the Doonhamer and in Ae Forest on the Scottish. Note the lack of spectators and advertising on the car. More to follow next month.

Ron.

Devil's Lock Down Tests

Courtesy of Kirkby Lonsdale MC

I heard about the plans for an event due to take place at Rowrah kart track from the chatter on Facebook...it does have its uses. Initially I thought it was going to be a rally time trial where full license and helmets would be required but it was actually being run as an autotest. The organisers from Kirkby Lonsdale MC were well known for putting on good events such as The Devils rally so my interest increased. I had been gradually improving (?) a Mk2 More Door escort and this looked an ideal proposition. Due to the Covid pandemic there were to be no navigators, hmmm, I usually rely on Marian shouting directions and other such words of encouragement so this too would be a new experience. The regs were a bit longer than normal due to Covid but there wasn't anything that couldn't be managed



like the requirement for hand sanitisers, gloves, face masks ,etc . The entries were due to open on a Monday morning at 9am with a maximum of 50 entrants. Chatter on the interwebby indicated that it may be popular as there had been no motorsport anywhere in the country for three months, so I started my application just after 9am. Luckily the software recognised me from a previous rally entry form and it sort of autocompleted the spaces with my details. Good job I started on the dot as the event was full by 8 mins past 9 and I was entry number 36 or thereabouts.

The escort had sat for three months without moving or being started but it fired up third turn, still couldn't go anywhere as the mystery of the slowly deflating tyre had struck again. Always a different wheel. As some of the tests were to be run on the loose I decided to use the steel wheels that I had been fettling over the lockdown period. Bought some Vredstein tyres fitted to the steel wheels but now the steel wheels would not fit on the hub as the Minilites that came with the car required longer wheel studs which meant that I would have to change the studs or fit wheel spacers. The latter seemed the simpler and cheaper option, of course I also had to buy open ended steel wheel nuts. By now I was running a little short on time so only managed a couple of runs on the local roads before the event so had no idea of how it would handle or stop on the loose.



All of the test paperwork was sent out in advance including the tests diagrams and signing on sheets. There were to be 18 tests in total run in groups of three tests repeated twice with changes to the layout between each group of three tests. The first test looked like it was on the loose above the quarry pond.....did I just say I had no idea of how it was going to handle on the loose? Just tootle around for the first test and don't make any errors....aye right, when the 5,4,3,countdown starts that goes oot the windae, as they say over the border. At least having copies of the tests meant

Racing Around The Show Ground



Virtually all the current racing circuits in the UK are ex airfields of parkland where existing roads have been developed. The only purpose built circuit built since the War was Rockingham which proved to be a financial disaster and a place that few drivers enjoyed.

The only track that does not fit the above pattern is Knockhill which was part quarry and part railway line set on a God forsaken hillside.



However, Scotland had another unique track at Ingliston which had a thirty year history from 1965 to 1995. The first racing took place at Ingliston on 11 April 1965 and it fast became recognised as one of Scotland's top motor-sport venues. The first race was almost 10 years before Knockhill in Fife opened in 1974. Ingliston became infamous for its tight corners and plethora of obstacles such as trees and buildings close to the track and was therefore considered to be more hazardous than other similar facilities in the UK. There were extensive spectator facilities including a 5000-person grandstand which was built around the southern part of the track and thus named 'Arena'.



Ingliston was and is the Royal Highland Show and is remarkably like Stoneleigh where Race retro is held. A network of roads and buildings place large areas for displaced and agricultural and equestrian events. Three things made the circuit unique. Firstly, that it was short and twisty, secondly the facilities in terms of stands, restaurant, toilets etc were way ahead of any other circuit at the time and thirdly that the spectators were very close to the track.

Indeed, sitting either in the Arena stand or at South Stand, a fast right hander onto the back straight you could see about half the track and at South Stand the cars effectively passed by twice.

There were three variations of the track, the early one was about three quarters of a mile long and had a tight right at South Stand and short straight back to the Arena. In 1968 the track was lengthened by 600 yards with South Stand now being a fast right onto the back straight which led to the hairpin and then to a tight right onto the previous track back to the Arena and Clock corner. There was a further variation when a building was erected near the Esses the track was straightened to avoid it.



Initially only 12 started were allowed but that was increased to 16 on the longer track. In its heyday crowds of 10,000 were the norm and a few national championships ventured north and there were well sponsored events with guest drivers. Such was its success that not only was there prize money but also travel money for competitors from further afield.

The general financial slump in the 90s saw things drop away while there was demand from the MSA for more Armco barriers until the

whole circuit was surrounded with virtually no runoff. Mind you this was probably justified as on one occasion a car veered off the back straight into the toilet block which was fortunately unoccupied! Often at least a dozen short races were held with most cars getting two races. There was usually a huge diversity of cars taking part which you never see known.

The Royal Highland Show was held each June so there was no meeting in June and all the Armco etc had to be dismantled after the May event and then put up again before the July one, this all added to the cost.

Ecurie Ecosse supported most meetings, firstly with the Ecosse Climax single seater which they built for the Formula Libre races from the remains of the Cooper Monaco that Jackie Stewart had destroyed. They also built two Ecosse Imp single seater to initially Formula 4 regs and these did well on the tight track. In the later days David Leslie would bring the Ecosse C2 Le Mans endurance car which was quite a site battling against the Mallocks and Chevrons in the sports car race. David also drove the development Swift single seaters in various forms and was a regular winner in the Libre races.

I started racing after the racing had ceased but it must have been really exciting. I did do quite a few sprints then when I was doing the Scottish Sprint Championship. I had great battles with Dick Swindalls in his Elan and at Ingliston the Midget had a slight edge and I reckon I still have the classic class record there. The sprint layout was based on 0.9 of lap starting from the Arena but there was also a later version that used more of the other roads at the south end of the site which was used for a British Championship round.

More recently there was an Ingliston Revival run by the people who do super car drives there. The track started at the Esses and with some additional chicanes due to the lack of Armco. It went down the back straight, round the hairpin and along the straight to hairpin right back on the straight and down around the hairpin for a second time to the finish. Despite an effort to have a car show and attractions the event did not get enough spectators and was not repeated.

GTF

A quiz question for the history buffs: **Jim Clark only raced at Ingliston once. What did he drive?**

you could mark them up at home. There were no tight 360s and no reversing so that was helpful. A few lengths of gaffer tape meant that the clip board holding the test diagrams could be affixed to the dash in case the memory faded at some point.



A couple of days before the event the seeded list came out. There were several entries from afar afield as Wales and Southern England. Many of the entrants were regulars on the national Historic rally scene. There were 21 Historics (pre 1985) entered, three minis in their own class and the remainder moderns. Three entries were listed as Wigton MC members; David Agnew in his Porsche 911, Aiden Gregory in his Ford Ka and me in the Mk2 escort. Several other regular attendees of WMC events had managed to get entries; Andy Beaumont in his Sunbeam Rapier, Brian Bradley in his Golf

GTi, David Alexander in his Fiat Uno, Graeme Cornthwaite, Terry Dixon and Tom Hall all in historic Minis, Bob Hargreaves in his BMW compact and Phil Hodgson in his MX5. Of the historics there were three Porsche 911s, 8 Mk2 escorts, a Sunbeam rapier, Volvo Amazon, Triumph 2000, Lancia fulvia and an Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint. This may have been the biggest and most expensive collection of cars to enter an 'autotest'.

The event was held on a Monday morning which dawned dry and bright....damn I though a little rain may even things up a bit....but there again not having a LSD in the escort may have been more of a hindrance. Scrutineering took place with social distancing in mind as the driver stood away from the car while it was scruted.

A small socially distanced group of three (with David Agnew and Graeme Cornthwaite) had a walk around the tests. The first test was indeed above the kart track (and pond) on loose gravel. The route had been carefully designed such that there were no sharp turns likely to lead to a visit to the pond. The organisers had also kindly provided direction arrows to aid the drivers. The second test was interesting in that it started on tarmac but facing down a one in four or five hill...with a hairpin left at the bottom of the hill. Gulp! The remainder of the test followed the kart track. The third test started on the track and went via a series of 90 degree turns through cones around the pit parking area plus a bit of loose to add interest. Changes to the tests involved running different patterns and running them in the opposite direction. The organisers had made best use of the area and laid out good looking tests, now all I needed was for the car to hold up as it was about to take its first real tests...literally.

Historics ran first and I was number 17. Anyone of a certain age who went to watch karting at Rowrah in the 70s will know the significance of this number as it was local ace Terry Edgars karting number. I knew it well as I had followed it around Rowrah from behind many times. The car in front of me was the beautiful Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint of Howard Warren from Leyburn. I applied the usual rule of keeping at least two cars distance from the car in front when a rear wheel drive car exits the start line....especially on the loose. But I also thought it's a 1959 car in lovely condition he will treat it with sympathy easing it gently away from the line....ye gods, he gave it the full beans and dropped the clutch so it squatted briefly then shot away leaving two rows in the gravel you could have planted taties in. I still find this hard to believe but on the second test (downhill 1 in 4ish on tarmac) he did exactly the same leaving two black marks and still got around the hairpin at the bottom.

Apparently the second car away, the 911 of Paul Crosby, also shot off the downhill start line but gravity and speed was too much to prevent a bit of a ding as the Porsche hit the plastic barrier at the bottom. Didn't slow or stop him though.



I managed the first test on the loose with a bit of accelerator and arm twiddling to get me around and managed to stop on the stop astride.....all was going well so far. Test two with the downhill start was a bit more novel and I eased it around the tight hairpins before using the working handbrake to get around the next hairpin left onto the kart track. I drove as quick as I could around the track, it felt a wee bit slow and as you may have guessed when I came to use the handbrake for the next hairpin it was ahead of me...yep it had been on a bit since the last hairpin...doh. The third test started on the track and left it via a 180 hairpin

around a cone close to the garage area then through a series of 90 degree turns through sets of three cones. I had some concerns regarding the length of the escort compared to the midget but never hit any....not trying hard enough.

Brian Bradley must have been trying hard enough as he managed to modify the front of his Golf on the exit to the chicane. Phil Hodgson had some gaffer tape (really?) to make good a repair. Phil was going well, lying around 11th overall when his diff and half shafts made a bid for freedom from the torture that he was giving them. At least one other car broke a half shaft, there were a couple of surface changes which may have stressed the units. David Alexander was trying out his new Fiat Uno but it began to misfire badly so he didn't finish the last few tests. I also had a chat with Phil Jobson from Brampton who brought his paddle shift, Millington engined escort. What a machine, what a noise but these tests were probably a bit too tight for it to be let loose.

There was enough time to have a crack, at a social distance, with friends old and new so it worked out very well for a start back into motorsport. I really enjoyed driving the Escort and the car survived intact so that was a big plus for me even though I was well down the field in 33rd place (but second in class; historics under 1600cc). David Agnew finished 29th OA and Aiden Gregory was 38th. The event was won by Steve Retchless in an RS2000....he put a new engine in the day before the event. His total time for the 18 tests was 17mins and 45secs....I was two minutes adrift.....more power and skill required.

Motorsport mugs sponsored the event and there are pictures of all of the cars on their web site. Results were processed by Rally Roots and were available live on the day for those seeking inspiration.

John Sloan

Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

According to an article which appeared in the 'I' paper on the 16th May the following are a series of targets set by our government, it's goal being to future proof the road network.

Every motorway service station should be equipped with at least 6 ultra fast electric vehicle charging points within the next three years. This is up from 2 at the moment. These new ones will be capable of adding 100 miles of range in 10 minutes charging time.

The above will be the first stage in the plan to have 6000 high powered charge points across England's motorways and A roads by 2035. These will be ultra fast, but electric vehicles currently on the market are not compatible with them, so we'd better get started on some that are as it's only 15 years away.

Bear in mind that that's only 6000 chargers and that currently there are about 40 million cars on the road. Now I may not be the greatest mathematician in the world but if you work it out that means 6660 cars per charging point and I'd hazard a guess more than that figure use filling stations on motorways and A roads every day. What's more a quick "slurp" at the pump takes considerably less than 10 minutes, so it looks like there might be quite a queue.

You can't help thinking it's going to be as well organised as PPE procurement has been, thank goodness I'll either be dead or pushing 90 so probably too old to be involved in the mayhem which is bound to ensue. By the way, I wonder how many stops dear Mr Cummings would have to make in an electric Discovery on his round trip, apparently it only took one in a fossil fuel burner.

Some drivers seem to be taking all this simulator racing very seriously indeed. We've already had Daniel Abt getting the sack from Audi for letting an experienced computer racer take his place in an event and then claim any success was his, and Lando Norris having a major falling out with Simon Paganaud who allegedly intentionally caused him to crash so Paganaud's team mate could win a "pretend" Indy race. Initially I thought it was all a joke, but no, they were deadly serious about it all. You really can't believe it can you?

Having said the above it's maybe a good thing they are serious, because the way things appear to be heading in F1 there certainly could be great problems ahead. First of all the world's economy appears to be suffering from Covid as much as the world's people. Not good for sponsorship or for manufacturers sinking millions into racing projects.

I know they're only allowed to spend £150 million a year but even that's a tad more than I've got in the bank and it still seems a pretty substantial amount to me. Thinking about it logically that can't include drivers wages because if the top teams paid a usual retainer then their racing budget would make them the poorest on the grid.

Williams looks in a sorry state, Renault really can't justify motorsport spending when they're borrowing from the French government and Mr Haas is rumoured to be pretty fed up of throwing millions into a bottomless pit and getting nothing in return. McLaren are paying people off by the hundred and Aston Martin, the joint title sponsor of Red Bull, seems about to implode, I reckon in this particular case my meagre bank account would probably win, come to think of it.

So there we are, if you're an F1 fan make the most of whatever happens this season because the future could look very dark indeed.

Ends

AA.

What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

August

12th Evening Tour by Charles Graves

15th Motor House Autotest

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

M-SPORT
CAREERS



ALL VACANCIES CAN BE VIEWED ONLINE AT:

WWW.M-SPORT.CO.UK

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

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