

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

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**The official opening of the Motor House by Trudy Harrison MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary for Transport**

Get Involved!

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Talking Point

Topical Comment from the world of motoring

The V word has been a word that has been avoided at the higher levels of motor sport in the past. The word is **V E N U E S**. Motorsport, in its dozen or so disciplines, has, by their varying nature, used many different venues to suit and it is the actual differences in those places that makes the events interesting. The problem has been that for more than a century we have used venues on a casual arrangement with the land owner, whether it is a grass hillside for a trial or a tarmac road for a sprint or special test.

There are very few venues owned by clubs in the UK, a couple of circuits, a handful of speed tracks and several kart tracks. The main race circuits and kart track are commercially owned. There are a few hill climbs where the club has lease for several years but by and large most clubs work on a year to year basis.

It is increasingly difficult to get access to the UK forests due to increased walking and cycling and even the military land is in short supply as there is more UK based training due to the pandemic.

The main circuits are of course commercial organisations and wish to maximise their profit and club level motorsport does not pay as well as track days and testing events. We have seen that Croft will no longer run rallies, rallycross or sprints. In fact the cost of hiring a circuit for a sprint is no longer economic.

Just getting venues for our own smaller events, like autotests or historic rallies, is getting harder for a whole variety of reasons. Ultimately clubs and the RAC MSA back in the day should have been looking to create smaller multi use venues, like East Ayrshire CC's Kames track. However there was a lack of leadership at the top then and as clubs could get venues on a casual basis nothing was ever done.

So if anyone knows of potential venue for events or even a long term arrangement for a venue, please let any committee member know.

GTF



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Club News & Events

Motor House Opening



A huge thank-you to [Wigton Motor Club](#) for inviting me to formally open the club's new headquarters at Moota - and to enjoy some of the classic cars on display.

The new base is the culmination of a three-year labour of love for members who have given up their time, skills and energy to develop the project to fruition.

With a meeting room, storage and kitchen facilities, and space for members to work on their cars, the new base will allow the club to continue to grow and thrive, and I congratulate everyone involved in the building of this excellent facility.

Trudy Harrison MP

It was great to see so many members turn out for this event, even though it was on a “working day” for some. It was also good to have friends from neighbouring clubs there as well.

We look forward to seeing more members at future events at the Motor House over the coming months.

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Stewart Martin 1943-2021



When two or three hundred people from all over the British Isles and abroad as well as from the immediate locality make their way for the funeral service of a person that lives in a small remote village near Kielder it is a sure sign that that person has touched the lives of many families and individuals who now have made the effort to pay their last respects.

When people like Malcolm Wilson the former WRC rally driver and owner of M Sport, Ex Works rally driver Ivor Clark, owners, dealer principals and em-

ployees from the motor trade and other businesses have set aside time to attend then it is a sure sign this person must have been rather special, that was certainly the case with Stewart Martin..

Stewart from Newcastleton in Scotland sadly passed away in hospital on Sunday 22nd August after being admitted to hospital with Covid a few days earlier, he had been double jabbed and was very careful to avoid crowds since the epidemic started so a great shock to family and those who knew him as he was expected only to be in for a few days under observation.

Stewart along with his brother Alistair, Ken Wilson (Malcolm Wilson's dad) and another friend started a small business called Teviot Motor Factors in Hawick in the early 1970s, they developed the company over a number of years then eventually sold out to a major national firm, later they started TMS motor factors which again they developed into the major firm it is today with twenty or so branches all over northern England and right around Scotland.

You are probably thinking that you never knew Stewart or that your life has never been touched by Stewart and the businesses he was involved but believe me I think you will see things differently if you read on.

In the 1960s if you wanted a part for your car if your family were lucky enough to own one you went to your BMC, Rootes, Hillman, Rover or Ford dealer where you ordered the part, a few days later when eventually it came you paid full retail price for it unless you "knew" someone in the motor trade who would give you a little bit of discount.

Motor factors were very scarce in fact the only motor factors in our area were Partco, when you went in they didn't welcome you, often they looked at you as if you had two heads and those in the garage trade didn't like them serving the general public either. No TMS, NPA, Dingbro, Euro Car Parts, Kwik Fit, Mr Clutch, or even Halfords, places we take now for granted and they hold a huge stock of parts for most cars, you can even buy parts for cars now at weekends absolutely unheard of after 12 noon on Saturday.

These days car parts are made all over the world even in China or similar places, in the 1960s China was making mainly rubbish quality plastic toys for sale in cheap outlets such as Woolworths. Nowadays with super-efficient distribution links even manufacturers and their main dealers can get genuine parts often same day or overnight from vast central distribution centres, totally unheard of in the 60s.

When Stewart and his co founders started their motor factors right from the start they sold to the general public with heavily discounted prices, business boomed and so they built up the businesses and opened more branches, this continued for many years, gradually other firms moved in too and today there is a vast choice of motor factors in every locality selling to the trade and general public alike.

Times have changed dramatically.

When Stewart got interested in something his enthusiasm was infectious, he was rather like an evangelist trying to convert others to take part and enjoy what he had found interesting. He was very good at converting and persuading people too, his brother Alastair was one person who Stewart got interested in rallying then of course this enthusiasm eventually rubbed off on Alastair's son, Stewart's neph-

ew Scott Martin when he was a very young child.

Scott is now a professional World Rally Championship co driver, he started rallying with Willie Jarman of Branthwaite, then Mathew Wilson, several other top drivers, Craig Breen and currently Scott is part of the Works Toyota WRC team calling the pace notes and co driving for Elfyn Evans, these

two guys are right at the pinnacle of world rallying. Stewart was a great part of the inspiration for Scott.

Watching rally cars had been a big attraction in Newcastleton village since the RAC rally took to the forests in the early 60s when Works SAABs, Mini Coopers, Healey 3000s etc driven by such notables as Eric Carlson, Pat Moss, Timo Makinen, Paddy Hopkirk and others serviced in the main street or the village square even sometimes in the two local garages strung along the main street. This came about because the village is surrounded by many of the iconic forests used on RAC and other top rallies and in those days bear in mind Kielder reservoir wasn't even there, that vast area too was covered by forests and used extensively for rallying.

Stewart had his first introduction to stage rallying from inside a rally car rather than just spectating was when he sat in the rear seat of my MK2 Cortina GT in about 1971/2 with Carol then my girlfriend but since 1974 my wife navigating for me. My car was fitted with a set of full harness belts in the rear as myself and two of my mates did the International Scottish rally in 1970 three up, none of us could afford to compete on our own but with three of us sharing the cost and driving one third of the stages each we were able to afford to compete.

In those days the rally started on Sunday at Glasgow Blythswood square and finished on Thursday in Grantown on Spey, later moving to Aviemore after visiting dozens of stages all over Scotland doing hundreds of miles in the forests as well as stages at Rest and be Thankful hill climb, even Loch Lomond zoo, Botanical gardens and private grouse moors. The rear full harness belts were even occupied in later times by a young schoolboy Malcolm Wilson when Carol and I took him on the Jim Clark and Lindisfarne rallies which also used the Kielder forests and Otterburn tank ranges. Not sure what health and safety would say these days !



So with Stewart in the rear seat really enjoying the experience of competing on special stages for the first time sliding the car on opposite lock through the forests, hooking ditches with the front wheel to hold the car into the inside of a corner after many stages I rolled it end over end rather than the usual sideways roll, when the car eventually came to a halt in the trees Stewart casually remarked " It keeps you kinda busy this rallying job doesn't it "

It didn't put him off however even though the Cortina only had a single hoop roll over bar with one strut following the roofline to the rear parcel shelf,

full cages in those days were unheard of, Stewart built himself a 1293cc Mini Cooper S and won many awards with it and was well known competing in forest rallies during the later 1970s.

Stewart, Alistair, Ken Wilson and many other friends made the Scottish International part of all our families holidays and we all spent some fantastic times together, those friendships have lasted until sadly some like Stewart have passed away.

Having got heavily into stationary engines and exhibiting at various shows Stewart even introduced classes for stationary engines and trials bike competitions at Newcastleton village show, once again his enthusiasm knew no bounds, he loved the village, the local history and was obsessed trying to make it a better place.

Always laughing and having an infectious sense of humour our family and his enjoyed many holidays together both in this country and particularly in France in our caravans, our daughter Claire loved ponies and when on holiday in the New Forest after retuning from France Stewart kept telling her to persuade me to put one of the New Forest ponies in our caravan and bring it home. I think she must have been aged about twenty-five before she realised I couldn't do it because Stewart always kept insisting it would be ok if we sneaked the pony in without anyone seeing !

Claire finally did get her pony, not from the new Forest I must add and she used to compete in the show jumping at Newcastleton show, our son Andrew got his first motorised transport as a thirteen year old when Stewart arranged for me to buy a moped off one of his mates in the village. As there was no room to put it inside the horsebox as our pony objected Stewart wasn't fazed at all, the moped was tied onto the drawbar of the horsebox, Stewart of course was supervising the loading and transportation method of the aforementioned machine.

Having started as an apprentice mechanic at a garage in Newcastleton, he worked long hours in the evenings and weekends building up a tyre business selling to customers all over the borders then started a bodyshop so as not to clash directly with his former employer who did mainly mechanical repairs.

He used to buy every newish crashed Mini that Ken Wilson got in the scrapyard then bought lots of brand new bodyshells and built up the bodyshells using the parts from his stock of crashed mini parts, these little cars sold like hot cakes as its over 25 miles each way from Newcastleton to any major employer such as the woollen mills of the borders or to Carlisle and "miles per gallon" was critical to a family's weekly costs that were incurred just getting to work and back, nothing was more economical in those days than a Mini.

All the new bodyshells were collected from Ken Wilsons garage at Branthwaite near Workington and Stewart transported them the 56 miles back home on a extended roof rack rather like" Lovejoy antiques" but not on top of a Volvo estate but on top of his Mini pick up, it did look very unusual seeing a double decker Mini coming towards you with Stewart at the wheel !

He was a great mechanic always with interesting projects on the go, a friend to everyone, always thoughtful and kind, he really loved his family and helped them all develop their various careers.

He was quietly but forcefully dogged and determined in everything he did, usually in the end managing to get his own way but not in a nasty way or by trying to shout people down but simply by insisting his was the right way and continuing until he got his own way in the end !

He was a wonderful friend, our whole family adored him, he set a great example to us all and will be sadly missed by his equally lovely wife Phyllis, all his family and friends.

Thank you, Stewart you may have left, us but your presence and values will remain with us forever
Keith Thomas.

Ideas for Future Events

What would you like to see the Club do during the winter and in 2022? Let's have your ideas please.

At some point and Autojumble if there is enough interest and also a meet up for crews who took part in our County Motors stage events in the past.

Interests are always changing and WMC have always been the first to embrace new ideas. If you have any suggestions, or even more, if you would like to run an event please let us know.



PG Tips

Peter Reflects On His Month

Thank god for the new Transit vans at work – when I get into one and switch it on, it tells me to drive carefully. All these years I've got into vehicles and driven in a totally reckless manner because the voice in the infotainment unit didn't tell me to be careful! I wonder who came up with the idea, and I wonder if anyone has found a way to turn the annoying advice off yet! (I haven't)

Doune hillclimb is a marvellous place. Just outside Stirling, it is a purpose-built venue, with loads of flat space for loading and unloading, decent catering facilities and what a track. I had entered the mid-September event with Paul Eastwood in his Alfa 33 as ever. I had been to Doune back in my youth (1993 I think) and remember it being a real buzz but had little memory of the venue other than watching YouTube videos. Most of the competitors were Scottish championship regulars who'd been there many times so I wasn't there to try and win anything. The course runs through a wood and is effectively cut into the ground with Armco barrier on either side of the track in front of stone walls – the track is about 3 metres wide so not much room if you get it wrong and if you search on the internet there are some epic videos and crashes out there. It then opens out into a meadow type area and a very steep hill that then twists over a blind crest corner and into some s bends and through another small wood to the finish. Basically there aren't many minor accidents at Doune!

The track was damp first thing and I took it very gently on the first run up the hill but still experienced wheelspin and slides which set the pulse racing. Thankfully it dried up and the sun came out before lunchtime and I was able to pick up speed. The guy next to me in a similar single seater to mine crashed not far from the start line and returned to the paddock on a truck with some serious damage to his car and wheels that looked like Salvador Dali had designed them. Very sobering stuff, and he wasn't alone with a number of cars coming back down with major damage. On my 3rd run up the hill I ground to a halt on the steep section in the meadow and after initially thinking my drive chain had snapped or the diff had eaten itself, embarrassingly realised I'd basically ran out of fuel! Going up the steep section had moved what was left of the petrol to the back of the tank and the pick up pipe is in the middle. I managed to limp the car back down rather red faced and made a note to ensure it never happens again. By the end of the event I'd got my time down under 50 seconds and probably should have gone quicker but missed a gear change and really still didn't entirely know where I was going. Paul managed to take 10 seconds off his initial time and kept the locals on their toes despite having never been there or even watched the YouTube videos. All in all, a cracking day out and somewhere I'd highly recommend anyone to go – even just watching is exhilarating. That's it for me with Barry this year now – the car still works and requires nothing but an oil change and clean up over the winter – ready for spring next year.

The urge to buy a Citroen BX overtook me this month and I now have a really solid one sat in my garage! It didn't start too well though as I mulled over the possibilities and viewed many rusty wrecks on-line that required serious work. I was then contacted by a friend of a friend who offered me a 1990 TZD turbo diesel hatch that had a short MOT but had a long service history and seemed to be well cared for. The BX turbo diesel was one of the cars that started the modern diesel car revolution (that ended about 2 years ago!) providing perky performance and 40 mpg economy, something that the average family diesel car hadn't previously. I drove over to West Yorkshire with a trailer, intent on buying it, however as soon as I set eyes on it close up I realised the internet photos had flattered it hugely. It looked ok from across the car park but close up, every panel had marks and bit of

trim that were dog eared and tired. I also found a rusty hole under the sill and with only a month left on the MOT I pictured trouble and bills so I walked away. I was then lucky enough to spot a 1989 Pilot edition which had just passed an MOT following £1300 of suspension work at a specialist and snapped it up without even seeing it in the flesh. It was relatively cheap as it needs valve stem oil seals...but I know Rob Iverson (Shap garage and club regular) and he has a tool to replace them on the PSA 1.6 engine that's in the car, without removing the head. I had the car delivered through Shipley by a man called Pawel who appeared to be operating a car relay between Lancashire and Cumbria – he was cheap and efficient with a top Brian James trailer and Transit low loader. I'd made the right decision, as the car is super rare and rust free. It needs a good clean up, the aforementioned seals and a few bits and bobs of trim – it wafts nicely down the road and the engine feels strong despite the stem seals, and above all else, the seats are like sinking into your favourite arm chair. More on the BX next month.

Peter



Sam is dominant at Snetterton

Sam Kirkpatrick had a great debut in the Wheatsheaf Garage MG B in the GTS races at Snetterton. Starting third in race 1 he surged past the lighter TVRs to win and in race 2 he led from the start in a controlled drive. I am sure that people will be ringing asking Sam to share their cars next year!

Sam has already been declared winner of the MG Trophy series in the family MF ZR after an unbeaten run of wins.

From The Top

News from UK Motorsport, Regions and the WMC Committee

September Committee Meeting

It proved to be quite a busy meeting with reviewing past events and two to plan in the future.

The promotional leaflet had proved to be popular, and we still had stock after the Show. The new warehouse ladder for the Motor House was due to be delivered in September

We had a full review of a very successful Classic Show and a few points for improvement were noted. More toilets and in different places being one.

We are looking at some autotests for the remaining months of this year so need venues and organisers.

The next Cars & Coffee will be on Sunday, October 10th.

The Lingholm Breakfast Meet was very popular and made a useful amount for the Calvert Trust

The club's finances are in a very healthy state.

John Sloan is getting the new membership system up and running which will save a lot of work in due course.

Our radios and batteries are to be upgraded

We are making plans for sustainability and continuity.

We have a very good and harmonious committee, but we are always keen to have new younger enthusiastic members. Also if you would like to run an event or have an idea for a new event, please let any committee member know.



motor
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Recognised
Club

CASK 88 Whisky ensured the revival of Bo'ness Revival.

In a period of 10 years or so the Bo'ness Revival grew from an idea mooted at a picnic to commemorate the past Bo'ness hill climbs to become Scotland's premier motoring event attracting hundreds of participants and their cars taking part in the competitive hill climbs, classic car show or various trade stands. The event also attracted thousands of spectators from far and wide, from the Orkneys to Torquay, one guy even came from as far away as Australia to drive in the event.

All these entries bring much needed revenue to the local economy, many stayed over after the weekend to visit the Falkirk wheel, Kelpies, Bo'ness steam railway and other local attractions. However two years of bad weather kept the crowds away, when Covid came it looked as if it was the final nail in the coffin of the event but fortunately a number of existing Bo'ness club members as well as some other motor club officials notably from Monklands car club decided to make one last very determined effort to keep the event going by taking the bull by the horns and organising a 2021 event.

After costing everything out it was decided if the event were to run it wasn't possible cost wise at Bo'ness itself but would have to be just a few miles away at Forestburn. The reason for this is it's a permanent venue so benefits from the ability to be granted a track licence without having to import hundreds of straw bales at a cost of thousands of pounds, toilets and other essential requisites.

Before a track licence can be granted at Bo'ness itself all bales must be in position and inspected by a certified MSUK official obviously this needs lots of money upfront and no guarantee it will be approved until the very last moment.

A lot of hard work was put in by a small number of dedicated people and against all odds they got the event sanctioned and sponsorship from whisky distillers Cask 88 helped immensely with the finances. With an MSUK permit the event was possible but still dependant on attracting sufficient entries to make it financially viable although basic facilities and toilets are already permanently there.

I decided if they had gone to all the trouble to organise the event against almost impossible odds, we had a duty to support it so a few phone calls, e mails and conversations saw several of us Cumbrians send in entries, book accommodation or in some cases buy motorhomes in preparation to competing at Forestburn, a venue none of us had visited before.



Unfortunately, John Hunter had to withdraw at last minute his lovely Riley TT replica when his partner Janice had medical issues after a car crash, John's Riley is one of the nicest looking cars in the country and is flying after some extensive engine work.

Ian Smith and Ian Wozencroft brought the Smith family Alvis 12/70 behind Woozy's motorhome to double drive after re-fitting its original engine but fully sorted now it is going like an express train.

Ian's son David was towing his Mini Marcos snugly tucked up in its new race shuttle race trailer behind David's newly acquired motorhome then completing this convoy of competitors comes Chris Spencer in a brand new motor home with

his Formula Vee Scarab race car behind. I imagine it was like the film "Convoy" I wonder if they had "Bears in the Air" etc playing on their CD players as they wound their way over the Lanarkshire moors !

Carol and I had arrived slightly earlier on the Friday evening, and we received a really friendly welcome from everyone most of whom we hadn't seen for three years due to Covid. When fellow competitor Alastair Reynolds discovered I had never been to Forestburn before he insisted on driving me around the track in his van as he insisted it takes a while to learn as it contains blind crests and brows. Kindly Tony Smith a regular marshal and competitor insisted on walking myself and my wife around the track on Saturday morning pointing out the tricky bits where most "offs" and "incidents" occurred, this I really appreciated.

The information from those guys was a tremendous help because when approaching the crests and blind brows you were acutely aware there were tight bends of varying severity just over the crests but at varying distances from the crests, thank you guys I'm eternally grateful.

The event was superb, even the weather was good which isn't always the case up on these moors and no event has had a more varied entry list anywhere in the country. From diminutive Austin 7 specials to Fraser Ewart's 6.75 litre turbo Bentley special appropriately named "The Beast", Alvis, Buckler, Brabham, Caterham, Ford, MG, Jeffrey, Jag, Fisher, Marcos, Lotus, Singer, Scarab, Morris, Porsche, Renault, TVR, Terrapin, this list gives an indication of the many marques attracted to the hill.



Being a complete circuit, the venue can get a tremendous number of runs completed in a very short space of time but unlike most venues there are several downhill sections so it's a very good test of driver, car and memory but the sheer number of bends was testing my 74-year-old brain to its limit although I have to admit many things tax my brain that others seem to find easy !

Both days ran well, organisation was faultless, the marshals and recovery crews were kept busy a few times but no serious incidents fortunately. David Smith after a neck and neck battle on Saturday for class honours had the misfortune to

have his engine break a crankshaft damper /woodruff key late on Sunday and pop a hole in the casing leaving a trail of oil on the track which the marshals attend to with cement dust. Bill Lambie snr had the width of his Marcos increase by over two feet as his offside driveshaft complete with wheel made a bid for freedom on the finish straight then achieving its aim dropped the rear of the car onto the track just as he turned into the 180-degree hairpin to come back up into the paddock.

Once again, the recovery crew swiftly collected the car and sorted things out.

Andrew Paterson put up FTD on both days in his Lotus 61 with a 50.58 the fastest of all his runs, all other classes were hotly contested but the most amazing things for me was to see Paul Neil MacLachlan and Colin McLachlan putting up times of 58.74 and 62.38 respectively in their tiny 750cc Austin 7s, times far faster than many other cars with vastly more horsepower.



Both guys were sitting on a very rudimentary chassis if it can be described as that comprising only of a couple of bits of small channel. When your backside is sitting about one inch from the ground and you have no roll over protection whatsoever, no harnesses or head restraints it must do something to your brain, possibly their brains may have been surgically removed prior to their runs, certainly the part of the brain that deals with fear was most definitely absent.

I take my hat off to these intrepid guys their exploits and fantastic times were amazing, go to you tube and there you can see a little footage of these magnificent men in their flying machines, it looks very much like brakes had been omitted from their cars as well as their brains!

Cask 88 generously provided bottles of their wonderful whisky as prizes, fittingly the skill of the distiller and the skill of the fastest drivers are very complimentary, both are at the top of their craft, this event will be toasted appropriately in various homes with affection for many months to come.

Some other unique class awards were generously provided by event secretary Alex Hazlewood, he

sourced antique BSF / BSW spanners from e bay over many months some appropriately with the pre-war "Austin" logo on them for the Austin 7 1922 to 1945 class, he then cleaned and mounted them on wood plaques using small magnets, the wood was nicely finished by Alex who learned to use a router and then finally varnished them.

What a lovely memento for those lucky or fast enough to be awarded one, well done Alex this was far away above the tasks expected of the secretary of the meeting but really appreciated by all.

As usual Billy Cater the Doune/ Bo'ness comp sec entertained everyone at prizegiving with his jokes and various quips, no wonder he is welcomed at events all over the country as he attends many events and he is as well-known south of the border and in Ireland as he is in Scotland, maybe the correct word here for Billy is Notorious !



Future plans for Forestburn if money can be found are to construct a full-length race circuit that can be used for cars, cycle events, motorbikes and athletic/ running events, a motocross circuit plus ancillary clubhouse and buildings as there are hundreds of acres available on the site which I am told is owned by the local council although I understand the Monklands club has the benefit of a 50-year lease.

Currently Monklands club run monthly track days, auto tests and production car trials at Forestburn so the enthusiasm and expertise are already there, it will be a real boost for the area if it could come to fruition and the remains of the many old coal spoil heaps could be used to re-profile the terrain without needing to import

materials thus improving the locality making it infinitely more suitable for further investment.

This deprived locality would greatly benefit from a huge job creation project and with an attractive adjoining loch currently used only by a few wild swimmers the area could be transformed and at the same time create training opportunities and job prospects.

Shotts's prison is only a few miles away this would surely be a great source of labour and much better for the physical and mental health for low risk prisoners working on a construction / landscaping project rather than sitting in a cell 23 hours a day.

The recent event was a fantastic effort by everyone, well deserving of much more support next year. If things go according to plan it is hoped there will be an event at Bo'ness as well as one at Forestburn and Doune too making up a little Scottish championship. As Barbon in Westmorland is only about 75 or so miles south of the Scottish/ English border it could even be feasible to include Barbon and have a four-venue championship as many of the cars competing at Forestburn were also at Barbon as Billy Cater the roving comp sec could confirm although that is just my idea.

At past Bo'ness events held in Bo'ness itself many more Wigton members have competed, in fact we have had regularly as many as 30 or 40 people all seated together at the local Beancross pub in Polmont with lots of us staying in the adjacent Travel Lodge or nearby Premier Inn. Both of these and also the adjacent Metro Inn are about 5 miles from the Bones venue, Forestburn is about 16 miles from Polmont so not too far away and again this year Carol and I stayed at our usual Polmont Travel Lodge so no problem with accommodation although I left my Buckler and trailer at Forestburn on Friday evening.

Unfortunately, this year the Forestburn Revival clashed with a Jaguar club event so Geoff Mansfield and his fellow Jag enthusiasts were competing elsewhere, it's very difficult to avoid clashes such as this but hopefully things can be overcome for 2022, will you be there ?

Keith Thomas.

Buckler MK5 Car 35

News Snippets

It does seem that entries for stage rallies have yet to bounce back despite there being not many events. The Greystoke Stages had just 50 entries despite a brilliant venue, great organisation and no road miles. Up in Scotland the Condor Rally a round of the Scottish Tarmac Championship has just 30 again at a single venue with smooth roads and reasonable entry fee. There must be a lot of cars sitting in garages these days!

Have you noticed how many road works signs are not collected after the work has been completed? These days it seems that every minor repair needs a plethora of signs or even traffic lights on even the least used roads. The responsibility for signs is now out contracted which is why you see guys sitting in little trucks at the side of road works doing nothing useful other than minding the signs! It's just a pity they don't take them away afterwards.

Far too often these days roads are closed for the most minor work, presumably all in the name of safety. This is so annoying when a club run is using the road as happened on this year's Rose and Thistle and a long detour was needed.

Some of the standard signs used are confusing due to a lack of grammar. "Road Ahead Closed" actually means that a minor road off the one the sign is on is closed, not that the actual road ahead is closed. This could be easily sorted by making them "A Road Ahead is Closed" and the one for the actual road that is closed to "This Road Is Closed". Simple!



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Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

Chris Leece took us down some excellent roads for his Cumbrian Canter on 19th September and the forecast bad weather largely stayed away. The entry was a little depleted by two withdrawals due to poor health and a couple of no shows for unexplained reasons but it all went well. We were able to sit outside the halfway at Tan Hill Inn in warm sunlight eating our sandwiches and having a good crack with other competitors. We had promised ourselves a small libation but as the queue for drinks from the bar stretched to the door we made do with the coffee we had brought with us. Such is the popularity of Tan Hill, walkers, cyclists, motor cyclists and us guys in cars. Thanks to Chris for an enjoyable event.



Much has been written recently about Gavin Waugh after his recent passing and the crematorium had a good turnout of rally folk on September 16th to pay tribute and swop tales of days of yore after the committal service. John Fife gave a fair account of Gavin's rally days in his blog on 13th January. Worth a look if you haven't seen it. Just one story you may not have known about. As everyone knows Gavin had a gold plated sponsorship deal with White Horse Whiskey which gave him several good years of rallying with his cars prepared and run by Mike and Jim of Mike Little Preparations. All good things come to an end how-

ever and when White Horse moved on in 1976 Gavin and Mike met up with the company's publicity manager Gordon Macintosh. At that meeting the rally Avenger and the Avenger Estate service car were 'sold' to them for a one pound note each. How generous of the sponsor! The photo records the occasion.

David Seymour kindly hosted the Cars and Coffee at Lingholm on Sunday 12th September and despite there being a number of other events on that same day we attracted forty odd cars to the front lawn of the Big House. The weather was kind and the ground still firm despite recent rain and as a charity event £240 was collected for David's chosen charity, The Calvert Trust. The big attraction after coffee was a visit to David's Motor Shed which was a delight with a row of Jaguars on the right hand side and a row of Morris Minors on the left with the addition of a nice '50s MG TF. The walls were covered with the largest display of metal motor signs you could imagine plus illuminated petrol pump globes and automobilia covering all the walls. Not all of David's cars were there and soon it will be a squeeze even for such a fine motor palace. Thank you David.

A closing thought this month is that each of the above topics were covered on Facebook within 48 hours of the event whereas these reports appear several weeks later. Is the written word becoming irrelevant for such events in these days of social media?.....I wonder.

Ron.

Cumbrian Canter

Chris Leece organised a great run starting from Penrith and leading up to Tan Hill for the mid point break and then back down to the Jersey Ice Cream Farm where the ice cream was good!



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MGB Historic Rally Car- Update

Following on from the article in January's Start Line, "Plans for the winter, more power from the engine and an LSD." A Kent B717 camshaft and a 45DCOE Weber were fitted and laterally a ported cylinder head but still no LSD.



Our first event was the Motor House PCA in May where we set some encouraging times before high under bonnet temperatures resulted in a misfire and starting issues. Steering failure on the final test (The wheel had come slack from the column) meant we failed to finish.

The next event was the Northern Dales PCA in June at a disused cement works in County Durham. We had added an extra cooling fan to pull air out of the engine bay while queuing which would get a good test as it was very hot all day. We set some very competitive times initially and despite pulling the exhaust off and a wrong test (Most competitors

had at least one) were lying 5th o/a and 1st rear wheel drive ahead of all the MX5s after the first 7 tests. Unfortunately, on the 8th test the overheating problems which had gradually got worse all day resulted in the car stopping and failing to restart. We got back out again and completed another 2 tests pulling the exhaust off again and then suffering brake failure (both handbrake and footbrake) when a brand-new brake adjuster stripped sending the pedal to the floor. Another-non finish and a list of opportunities for improvement.

Next was the Blue Streak Targa Rally based at Warwick Bridge near Carlisle. The exhaust had been remounted and strengthened, new brake adjusters fitted, and the Weber replaced with the standard twin SU set up complete with heat shield. This was a multi venue rally with blind tests which tend to suit me, but we were still surprised to here that seeded at 20 we were fastest so far through the first test. (4th after everyone was through). We were slowed in the 2nd test when the exhaust got dragged off again but still set a decent time before lying under the car on a wet roadside fixing it back on. Unfortunately, it was retirement again after test 3 when we totally destroyed the exhaust system and manifold on the rough track and had to head for home.

Positives: The car is very competitive, we were 2nd o/a behind Ali Procter's 1.9 Peugeot GTi and 1st rear wheel drive again when we retired. The overheating did not return although it was a cool day with road sections between tests.

Negatives: The car sits far too low resulting in exhaust issues and damage to the underside and tank guard. It's not yet reliable and possibly needs to driven with a bit more sympathy.

Next steps are to raise the car (not easy to find higher front springs), replace the exhaust and manifold and fit an LSD.

Next target is to finish an event!

Ian Maxwell

Kirk Rylands has passed this on as relevant

Electric cars- Will they really cut our CO2 emissions or is there an alternative?

Along with a number of people I have been looking to replace my ageing RS6 which was 17 years old, had done 230,000 miles and was still going strong but unfortunately my garage could no longer get the spares from Audi. I have continually rationalised that spending £5000 a year on parts and servicing was better than buying a new car and losing £20,000 in depreciation in the first year.

I do short journeys locally or long journeys on holiday but do need a car to tow a trailer to VSCC events and abroad. One gets used to having 500bhp and lots of grunt so I bit the bullet and bought a new RS6, which is actually homologated for towing but it is just like driving a fast computer. Everything is touch screen or push button. The only Vintage homage is having 22 inch wheel which are an inch bigger than my Alvis, although the width of one wheel is about the same as 4 Alvis wheels.

Electric did not meet my requirements but the search led me to investigate more thoroughly the pros and cons of Electric Vehicles [EV]. Using the internet and The Rare Metals War by G Pitron I discovered some astonishing facts about where we are headed.

With the Govt pledge to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 and JLR and Ford announcing they will only produce electric from 2025 it is obvious the motor industry is also going down this road.

So, let's look at the arithmetic on not only getting EVs into mainstream use but also on running them.

To generate the electricity to power these vehicles and also to heat our homes by 2040 we will need to double or possibly triple [according to the Sunday Times] our generating capacity in the UK. Currently, on average, less than 25% of our electricity is generated by renewables, we are decommissioning fossil fuel stations [42%] and no one is investing in Nuclear [14%]. It has taken us 20 years to generate only 25% of our current needs from wind and solar, [despite the Chancellor pledging £20m to off shore wind] how are we going to generate 175% or more of our needs from renewables in the next 20 years, assuming Fossil fuels and Nuclear are zero?

To manufacture the world demand for wind turbines, up to 2050, will require 3200m tonnes of steel [70% of the current world steel production] plus 310m tonnes aluminium and 40m tonnes copper. In addition, erecting them takes 15X the concrete, 90X the aluminium and 50X the copper that would be used in the equivalent fossil or nuclear plants. Either there will not be enough steel to make high rise buildings, or bridges or cars or ships for that matter or the lights will go out, our electric car batteries will be flat or our home heating won't come on.

Electric cars

Some interesting facts

The production of an EV requires more energy than a conventional car, its industrialisation is 3-4 times more energy intensive than a conventional car

In its lifetime, assuming the same power generation split as above, an EV will generate 32 Tonnes of CO2 versus 60 tonnes for a conventional car. For EVs with longer range [500 miles] they will generate 40 tonnes.

The energy consumption of an EV over its lifetime is equivalent to a diesel car.

40% of the cost of an EV is its batteries and account for 25% of its weight

The effective life of an EV is 1/2 that of a conventional car because the batteries degrade, replacement will be over £10,000.

Currently there is no recycling facility for these batteries, nor is there a mass production facility outside China, where 80-90% of demand is produced.

So, if an EV still generates around 30 tonnes of CO2 but lasts 1/2 of the life of a conventional car we would have had to buy 2 EVs for every conventional car [no wonder the car manufactures are all going electric!]

Importantly EVs contain 20-25 lb of rare earth metals which is twice the amount used in conventional cars

Rare Earth Metals

Our modern digital age demands enormous amounts of data to be processed in smaller and smaller devices at greater speed. Whether it be mobile phones, iPads, lap tops, watches, cars, electric car batteries, energy efficient light bulbs, networks, TVs, solar panels or wind generators they all rely on minute quantities of rare earth metals to make them work. In fact, without them we could not have wind turbines as the motor weight would be too great.

The irony is that extracting these metals is anything but green and their extraction is highly polluting. Once used in products their amounts are so small that recycling is difficult and uneconomic. In consequence we are on a path of continual rare metals extraction with its associated pollution.

The rare metals in question include such exotics as germanium, antimony, beryllium and niobium to name a few. The worst thing is they are called rare because they appear in very small quantities. For example, it takes 8 ½ tonnes of rock to extract 1 kilo of Vanadium, 50 tonnes of rock for 1 kilo of Gallium and 1200 tonnes of rock for 1 kilo of Lutecium. Imagine the energy required to extract these quantities.

Often these metals are found closely related to Uranium and radio- active metals so their extraction can be hazardous. In addition, copious amounts of water, purifying 1 tonne of rare earths requires 200cu m water, along with sulphuric, nitric and hydrochloric acids. This makes the industry one of the most toxic in the world. These acids are either poured into the ground or held in large lakes. Most of this takes place in China where there is little regard for human working conditions, pollution control or dumped waste.

The western world has taken the decision not to be involved in this 'dirty' rare earth extraction but export the problem to China who has positioned itself as the major world supplier.

The legacy for China is obvious; it is the biggest emitter of green - house gases, 10% of its arable land is contaminated by heavy metals and 80% of its ground water is unfit for consumption.

Other less developed countries in Africa and S America want to get on the rare earth gravy train, and are vying to exploit the associated economic boom.

With the world going 'green' rare earth production needs to double every 15 years meaning that over the next 30 years we will extract more minerals from the earth than the human race has done in 70,000 years

Green Energy

Not only do wind turbines require rare earths but Solar Panels do as well, each panel generates 70Kg of CO2 in manufacture. World demand will require an increase in production of 23% over the next few years so that 10Gw of panel power can be produced each year. This will generate 2.7bn tonnes of CO2, the equivalent of 600,000 conventional vehicles.

The Second-Hand car markets

If one assumes that the life of a modern car is up to 20 years then by 2050 all 60m cars in Britain should have been replaced by electric, apart from a few classic and historic vehicles. On average 2m new cars are sold every year in the UK but about 8m second hand cars are sold so the second-hand market is 4 times that of the new. The majority of these traded cars are 9+ years old which means the average price paid is around £6700. This is in line with the depreciation estimate of a car being worth only 20% of its new value after 10 years.

The reason is probably obvious, not everyone can afford a new car. EVs are more expensive when new but the batteries may only last about 5-10 years, so by the time they would come within the reach of a second-hand buyer they could be poor value. Depending on what you read, motor manufacturers think batteries could last 20 years but others think 5-10 as their capacity degrades. Buying a second hand EV could be difficult as buyers may be misled regarding its useable battery capacity and left with a hefty bill of £,000s to replace the batteries in a car which is not worth it.

According to the BIMTA around 20% of used cars are exported from the UK to developing countries which will give the UK the opportunity to export the battery recycling problem, as it has the battery production problem.

The chances of replacing all conventional cars with electric is therefore a political pipe dream as it is most likely the public will struggle on with their conventional cars, unless electric cars become cheaper, last longer or can be easily recycled.

An alternative

We don't really need driverless cars, or ever more complicated cars which tell us we have drifted over the white line, are WIFI enabled, have cameras in every corner and sensors in every orifice. My wife's 1952 Morris Minor is on its 3rd engine, has recycled seats from a Metro, disc brakes and steers where you want it to go. It is a recycled car with little rust because it has been looked after. [It was Viscount Lindley's first car]. It gets us from A-B maybe a little longer than a modern but it is easy to fix, has not a computer or any electronics in sight.

We should stop building all these modern disposables electronically controlled, unsustainable modern boxes on wheels and concentrate on making spares for cars 20 years + old so we can keep them on the road. Cuba managed! These vehicles generated their CO2 in production 20+years ago. Let's find some technology to capture their exhaust emissions, or use hydrogen powering existing IC engines rather than raping and polluting the earth still more in the name of 'Going Green'.

In the words of David Attenborough 'we should not waste a thing' but the Green policies of our Govt are flying in the face of this advice.

Mark Hayward March 2021

Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

I love Croft circuit, yes it's out on a limb regards the quality of racing it attracts, yes there aren't many meetings per year and yes it doesn't attract spectators. At a recent BARC event there were less than 20 cars in the spectators parking area and our tickets were numbered 10 and 11.

On the plus side plenty turn up for the BTCC weekend and until recently the Nostalgia event pulled in a good crowd, sadly that's now cancelled, presumably because drivers from down South can't bear the prospect of venturing to the far North for a race, gentlemen you're meant to be enthusiasts! All you've done is change the "North of Watford" idea to a "North of Oulton Park" one.

Ruth and I attended a race meeting earlier this year and got to chatting to a father and son team competing in a Citroen endurance race. They were bemoaning the fact they'd had to drive 250 miles to take part. Poor devils, we pointed out we do 100 more when we go to spectate at Brands Hatch, even more at Lydden which we did once just to tick a "been there" box. We pointed out that Croft our local track was 80 plus, Knockhill and Oulton even further and they're all the ones we think of as easy to get to, and remember that's just as spectators. They saw our point!

Anyway Croft does have it's drawbacks as well as it's pluses. Drawbacks first. In a modern world they should be able to take spectator payments by card. Recently we stood and watched a family of 4 turned away as they didn't have enough "readies" for their admission. Will they be back? I doubt it. This was made to look even more ridiculous when I asked for a programme. "Sorry only available to download from the internet!" Now if that's not double standards, what is?

As of now they've also decided to stop running stage rallies and rallycross events. Sad, but the claim is they've just spent "zillions" having a new track re-laid and can't afford to have it ruined by having cars leaving and joining it at odd angles and breaking it up. I suppose they have a point but it's nevertheless a kick in the teeth for rally and rallycross fans, many of whom are locals and can no longer use "their" venue.

Pluses include it's great to watch at. From the top of the grassy knoll at Clervaux corner you can see half the circuit, and likewise from the Sunny corner bank. It's a good track with plenty of overtaking opportunities and provides exciting races.

It's quiet enough, the car park attendants become personal friends and the girl in the burger van gives us a wave even though we don't buy her produce.

And finally, and this is a personal one, it's a Second World War airfield, 6 Group (Canadian) Bomber Command. To walk down the secondary paddock, the old main runway and also the old "Railway Straight" and think of what happened there in the 40's, not to mention reminiscing about Bruce McLaren et al tearing up it in the 60's and early 70's gives me goosebumps - worth the admission even if the racing usually isn't from the top league.

Give it a try in 2022, maybe a few more spectators will keep it viable in future years.

Ends

AA.

Events of Interest

Cars and Coffee

Sunday, October 10th from 10 until 12

At the Motor House

CA13 0QE

We are delighted to be having a display of motorsport art by
Andy Armstrong in the Motor House for this event.

BBQ

At the Motor House

Sunday, November 28th

12 until 2

