

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 2022/06

www.wigtonmc.xo.uk

June 2022

Fantastic Awards Buffet



**David Richards, Chair of Motor Sport UK presents
Club President with the award for being second in the
20121 Motor Club of the Year competition**

For Members By Members

WMC Committee

OFFICIALS

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

Face Book: Wigton Motor Club & Wigton Motor Club Members

Events of Interest

Locally & Nationally

June

4th	Sa	LMC	Barbon Hill Climb
4th	Sa	Jubilee Jaunt	
5th	S	SMC	Autotest
5th	S	NGS	Quarry Hill Gardens (Mealsgate) Cars welcome.
12th	S	Cars & Coffee	at the Motor House
12th	S	BTCC	at Oulton Park
17/18		Firth to Forth Tour	
18/19		Jackie Stewart Classic at Thirlstane	
19th	S	WCMSC	Rally Test
21st	Tu	Grass Autotest	

July

3 rd	S	WCMSC	Greystoke Stages
9th	Sa	BDMC	Northumberland Rally Festival (Brunton)
10 th	S	SMC	Three Counties Tour
10th	S	WMC	Lingholm Breakfast Meet
16 th	Sa	KLMC	Barbon Hill Climb
17 th	S	KLMC	Cars the Star Show
17 th	S	H&DMC	Northern Dales Targa
23 rd	Sa	RSAC	Scottish Rally
24th	S	WMC	Cars & Coffee at M Sport

Driving Motorsport Forward

Talking Point

Topical Comment on Motoring & Motorsport

To me it seemed as if F1 reached a new low with the Miami GP. A totally artificial track build round the outside of a baseball stadium with an artificial marina with artificial water and boats to create an “atmosphere.” Sadly, it’s all part the Liberty Media’s plan to make the sport more popular in America, which already has a number of thriving race series so do we really need three GPs in America?

The lack of run off areas destroyed a couple of cars, and any incident means safety cars, red flags or VSC. Martin Brundle’s grid walk was an embarrassment with the place filled with non celebs (or at least ones only known in the US). Why were those people there? They obviously did not know either or they would have at least engaged with MB’s efforts to interview them. . There are some very amusing video clips around of the grid walk and also the American (ex-Indy driver) who did the driver interviews who called everyone “Chuck” and asked the most stupid questions. They just proved themselves to be very stupid and does not make the USA look good in the eyes of the world. The stands looked barely half full.

It does seem that Liberty, as rights owners of F1, are only interested in on money, not the good of the sport. There are suggestions that we could have up to 30 GPs a year, which is surely too many, quite apart from having to head to dubious countries just because they are willing to pay a huge sum for a GP to make their country look “good”. Surely the logistics and time would make it impossible, would drivers and team members really want to spend so much time travelling? What about the environmental aspects? There are already several times when there is unnecessary travel for the whole circus, like having the Canadian GP between two European ones.

Do fans really want to watch that many races in a year? Sky seems to have saturation coverage with a variety of “experts” explaining the obvious for hours in end. At least C4 is in the evening, and you can time it to start five minutes before the start and switch off five minutes after the winner is declared.

GTF



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

Contributions are welcomed - deadline the 25th of each month

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

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From The Top

News from MSUK, Associations & WMC Committee

The Club AGM, the first since 2019, was held after the Cars & Coffee in May. A very slick meeting saw the committee re-elected with now 14 members. The new way of working over the past few years with a rotating chair every three months and everyone taking on roles is working well. Thanks to all those who attended.

May Committee Meeting:

This was a busy meeting reviewing past events and planning events as far ahead as October. Safety plans for the Motor House and Classic Show are being produced.

We now have a flag pole and Union Flag at the Motor House.

The Awards Buffet went very well, and David Richards was a great guest.

Drive It Day raised £1250 for our charities. 250 cars present. Will need more marshals in future years.

The First Aid course had been great, twelve qualified aiders. Looking to have a defibrillator.

The autosolo at been a well run afternoon event.

The May pub run had more than fifty folk entered.

May Cars & Coffee saw lots of new folk coming.

Forthcoming events: the various tours were popular.

Chris & Fiona were running a grass autotest on May 21st

Details of the Lingholm and M Sport Breakfast meets were discussed.

The annual accounts were explained by Chris and approved. Graeme said that the Motor House was producing both valuable savings and also a regular income.

Membership: John said we were getting a regular dozen or so new members each month.

The plans for the Classic Show were discussed, particularly organising the Friday layout teams.

The outline route of the Solway in October was suggested.

Motor House updates: Mary was going to pain the toilets. The blocks for the boundary wall will be delivered soon. We are still looking at options for floor sealing.

Next meeting June 22nd



motor
sport
UK

Recognised
Club

Awards Buffet



Intro Page

With so many new members joining the club in recent months we are going to have a series of articles over the next few issues of Start Line outlining what we do and what we offer members.

Let's get the difficult bit out the way first. The use of motor vehicles both on and off the highway is governed by law. The Motor Vehicles (Trials & Rallies) legislation goes back many years and covered everything from competitive road rallies to road safety runs in between. The Ministry of Transport contracts the RAC (Motor Sport UK) to authorise events on the highway. Competitive events have to submit copies of the route to the Route Authorization department and also carry out PR work along the route. Part of the authorisation process is to stop several events using the same road on the same day or within a couple of weeks, hence causing a potential upset for local residents. Each police area has a volunteer Route Liaison Officer to help carry out his task and provide advice for organisers. In due course the organisers will get authorisation to run the event. In the case of touring events (Touring Assemblies) A certificate of Exemption is issued once the route has been OKed by the RLO. In the case of MS UK affiliated clubs this includes organisers insurance. All our touring events are run under this system.

The second piece of legislation is more recent and is the "Dangerous driving in a Public Place" law which was brought in to deal with boy racers charging about cars park late at night. When it was drafted it was realised that it could be applied to any form of legitimate motorsport from an autotest in a private car park right up to a race meeting at Silverstone. Thus certain authorising bodies for two and four wheels were permitted to authorise events to be exempt from this legislation. Thus any event that we run with a Motor Sport UK is fully legal.

Insurance: As a MSUK recognised club all our events are covered by their very comprehensive insurance policy. Part of the annual fee we pay covers the general insurance and there is a per capita fee for each competitor on competitive events. This is mainly for third party damage. In addition the Club takes out further insurance to cover our public events like the Classic Show and activities at the Motor House. This protects the Club and our organisers.

We will start with the static events. Broadly we run three versions.

The **Cars and Coffee** meets are informal events where you don't need to enter and turn up and leave at any time during the stated hours. Mostly these are on a Sunday morning and at the Motor House although we will be having ones at Lingholm and at M Sport in July. Dates are given in Start Line and in the mid monthly news. There is no charge to attend other than for coffee and biscuits and there is usually an autojumble stall.

Drive It Day is a national event that takes place on the Sunday nearest to St George's Day. Our Cumbrian meet takes place usually at Dalemain (we have been to other venues) between 11 and 2. Again there is no charge, and you can come and go at any time between those times. Dalemain sell food.

The **Cumbria Classic and Motorsport Show** at Dalemain is more formal as it is much bigger and more going on. Recent ones have had eight hundred cars present. Thus you have to pre enter and get a pass to get in and park in a designated spot for the duration of the show (for safety reasons). We rely entirely on members to organise and marshal the event.

Next month we will look at touring events.

White Heather Targa

2022 was planned to be a year of Stage rallies and a few Targa's. With the cancellation of the Warcop Stages which was to run at Easter the White Heather tests would also be a great day out keeping me up to speed ready for the Border Counties in May. For the targas I have my nephew Martyn Petry navigating its an ideal way of getting him a few events in the co-driving seat and some general motorsport experience and is dead keen to compete. The White Heather Targa on Kirkbride Airfield with 6 tests run three times, running was the same format as the end of last year and works really well and this time with a couple of longer tests taking over 3minutes so would be even better.

So with the yellow 206 we went, signed on etc had our breakfast ready for a fun day ahead. When headed to our first test. Cars run in groups with all 6 tests starting at the same time then following round the airfield to the next test in an anti clockwise direction. We were the first car of our group at the M-sport test which was the longest test. We did have a three point turn one section of cones but a few others did too. We turned out to be third quickest to Phil Hodgson who was 9 sec quicker than anyone. However the next ones went better with more loose or mossy grass and I could slide the car about abit, after the first round of 6 tests we had a 5 second lead.

The re-run of M-sport was where it was all lost though a sequence of passing O to N then back to O and then pass N was easy enough first time but although we got it right we dropped 15 seconds working it out. The loose tests following got a full on attack and three fastest times followed. Then on what would have been another quickest time when stopping for the finish the brake pedal went to the floor and we missed the stop astride (ten sec penalty) but more the point why no brakes and then the John Holliday at the stop line said I think that's on fire!.

Away from the test jacked up to find the Alcon rally calliper was smashed off. Is it home time Martyn asked?? Into my rally bag and I had all the fittings to blank this front brake off and keep a pedal. As I set about blanking it off as fluid leaked Martyn ran off to the pickup in the trailer park when the top up brake fluid was. On his return I was blanked, cable tied up and wheel on.

To the next test with three wheel braking, when I tried the brakes this isn't good. Fiddled with the bias but it was still turning hard left!

Onto the next test with a bit of caution it wasn't to bad a lot of locking up but then the stop astride we slid through another ten second penalty. Last test of the round we got it sorted though and were 2nd quickest dropping 1 second and crawled to the stop astride.

Lunch time was a long break but nothing different we could do so opted to carry on and see if I'd get used to it..., Martyn worked out if we get the tests right and get the stop astride finishes right 'We can still win this!' I thought Your more optimistic than I am!! We were 4th at that point 26sec behind the leader.

Afternoon loop. The first of loop we were quickest by 6 sec but the next test I slid through a stop astride mid test. "Need the mid test ones right too not just the finish ones!"... Then followed another two fastest times. The final test of the day for us was the M-sport test and despite a stall we only dropped a second on a test with three stop stride lines.

Back to the White Heather for a fantastic evening meal and award presentation. Having had the issues was happy with 4th Overall 27sec off the winner and without the three line faults we had the pace and Martyn kept his clean sheet of correct tests on his fourth event.

Massive thankyou to Rob Grant the clerk of course and the whole organising committee was a great day. Thanks also to the massive bunch of enthusiastic marshals who did a fantastic job keeping everything moving and on time.

Rowrah Test

So with KM51NXX (Yellow 206) needing brakes I'd requested a slot on the WMC Rowrah test night so decided I needed to get it sorted and test them along with original plan of testing the tarmac Proflex suspension that came with KM51NXP's (White 206) Yes I have two 206 cup cars, they are now 20 year old and with the introduction of R2 and now R2turbo's they are no longer competitive in stage rallying so majority of them are now sitting in garages or doing the odd targa.

So with a old road car 206gti acquired off Phil Hodgson mainly for the calipers I set about returning the brakes to standard after getting a replacement cup car caliper was out of my budget at over a £1000 each. Once I got the 206 Gti calipers on the Mintex pads were also out of budget so 'engineer Lindsay' set about modifying 106 rally car used pads to fit the 206 caliper. These needed testing.

Now to fit suspension taking all suspension off two cars to swap them and take apart to fit tarmac from forest alter the ride height and fit them, track it and get everything ready I must be mad. The only thing I hadn't foreseen was when I finally dropped it on tarmac slick tyres was the mudflaps were all touching the ground.. Back on the stands to remove them for the night also.



Nice sunny afternoon left work at last minute to quickly throw tools and spares on pickup, car on trailer then dad & myself off to Rowrah. Jonathan Lodge met us there so we could maybe learn something for if we go closed road rallying with the 206.

20 plus cars to hopefully get 10 runs of three laps after a convoy run. I was car2 and with Dad strapped I started with 'Proflex base setting' It felt soft as it would really on a go-kart track in warm sunshine. Second run Jonathan strapped in and on lap two we were loosing power pulled off to suddenly smell brake pads.. It wasn't lack of power the brakes had

stuck on. It was the rear though not my modified pads. That was sorted and back out with another stiffer setup. We kept a record of our settings and suddenly I lost front end grip. Then noticed the track had gone into the shade and all the marshals had put on coats.. The tyres were 'Well worn!!' and I was taking two laps to get tyre grip. It came to the last run so we backed everything back to base setting and sure enough it still felt soft and no tyre grip either so we had learned what to do for a go-kart track rally! I'd got in 30 laps of seat time. The home made pads were working well so at least I have a way of finishing off the 106 rally car pads and good cheap targa brakes. It had been a good night and thanks to everyone who marshalled and organised.

Border Counties



Round three of the SG Petch ANECCC stage championship was based at Jedburgh using stages Wauchope, Riccarton, Cardrona, Craik then back to the first two. Leading the championship overall after two rounds we couldn't hang around if we wanted to keep ahead of the likes of Steve Bannister.

With Caroline Lodge back with me on the notes it was a pretty full attack stage with two big moments the first one I put down to finding the limit of the rock hard smooth forest track the next one was I just carried way to much speed into a corner that got

longer then nipped and when your on the outside and on the loose when it started to nip I knew had an issue! With that gathered up we continued the rest of the day with out major issue but pretty much

on our limit and trading times with R2T cars. With just tyres, spanner check and fuel at services its the way I like it. Was great to see the Border Counties back with it not being in the Scottish Championship & Covid there was thoughts the 2019 event may have been the last. So to win the class against the BTRDA regulars by over 2min was a great result for us too and in 28th Overall.

Photo by Adam Wordsworth.

Barry Lindsay



Solway History

Reading the May edition of Startline and the references in the club history article to the Solway Rally and Malcolm Wilsons' win at 17, reminded me of some photos I had taken of the rally a few years later at Kirkbride.

I was servicing for friends John Kendall/ Peter Burt who were competing in John's Avenger Tiger, I had originally thought the shots were from 1977 but now I'm pretty sure it must have been 1976. It's funny how certain things about events stick in the memory and I think the rally was either the week after or even day after, the Raylor Rally (sticker still on Malcolm's door) based in York where when I look back through my archive of magazines etc, Malcolm had finished 5th overall, the rally won by the late great Tony Pond in a TR7. I have included some of the photo's, one of which is of car one, Malcolm and John Davies in typical pose, full opposite lock, steering on the stops, John looking through the door window! Other show John and Peter in the Avenger and car 5, Robin Murray in the ex works LVX 944J. Maybe other club members will be able to identify other crews, my apologies if some should be obvious like car zero (RKS 111) and the County Garage RS 2000 but I'm not sure.

What a mixture of cars of the time including a Honda S600 complete with big wings, Cooper S and even a DAF 55. For anyone who doesn't know, search the internet to find out about the DAF variomatic transmission and you'll then understand the term 'rubber band car' which I remember being said about them at the time.

It's also interesting looking at the spectators (perhaps some club members among them), rally jacket and flares again a very much of the period dress code! One is very young in his or her baby grow but does look to be paying close attention!

I'm not sure what the results of the event were, again maybe someone can help fill in that blank.

Ian Scott

Club News & Events

Cars & Coffee
at the Motor House
Sunday June 11th
10 until 12

The Whinns Autotest
Tuesday, June 21st
Details will be emailed out

Cumbria Classic Weekend
The Rose & Thistle Tour
Saturday, August 20th
Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show
Sunday August 21st
Entry forms on www.wigtonmc.co.uk

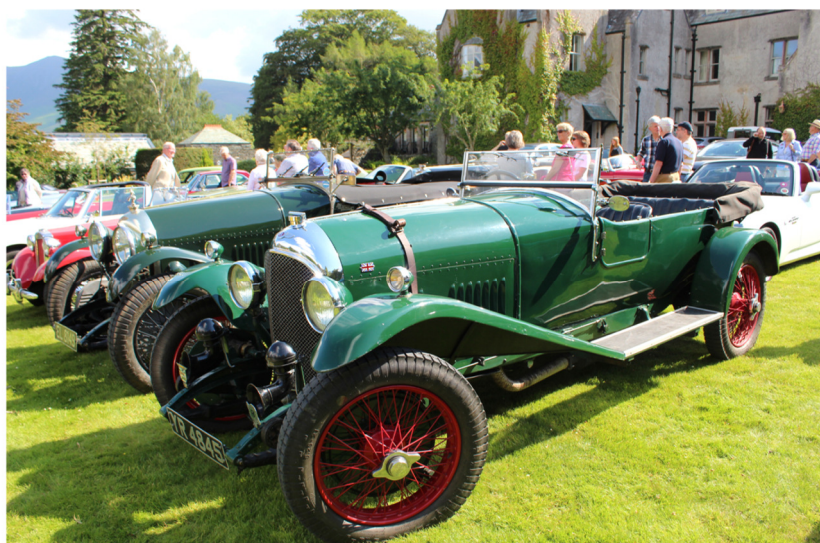
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824 1135 and don't forget to mention your club
when you do!
www.hagertyinsurance.co.uk

Two Special Car Meet Dates in July at Great Venues.

July 10th - Cars and Coffee at Lingholm, Portinscale by Derwentwater.

By Kind permission of David Seymour and family. First fifty cars will park on the top lawn in front of the House, overspill will go in the main car park. Timing 9am until 11am with an opportunity to view David's car collection after 10am. There will be a collection for David's nominated charity. The Calvert Trust



July 24th – Cars, Coffee and Scones at M-Sport, Dovenby

By kind permission of Malcolm Wilson OBE and family with timing from 10am until noon. This is a fantastic opportunity to inspect the new M-Sport Evaluation Centre and Track facilities. This is a new event for Wigton Motor Club members and their cars. You must pre-register to be able to come due to M Sport security. **There is a maximum of fifty cars.** Entry from: 09.45 - 10.30 Please email Ron Palmer on: ronpalmer777@hotmail.com with the names of those attending and car details by July 17th.



Fell Side Auto Club Summer Break Car Trial

3rd July Blagill Alston

Fell Side Auto Club are delighted to invite members of Wigton Motor Club to enter their Summer Break Car Trial at Blagill near Alston on the 3rd July. Held on a rough fell side venue, the competition is suited to vehicles with reasonable ground clearance or those with under body protection. Vehicles with low front and/or rear valances may have clearance issues on sections. We aim to set up 5 to 6 sections tackled a number of times throughout the day. The entry fee is £25 with £5 of that going to the land owner. To obtain the entry details and entry form simply send a request to mykepo-cock@yahoo.co.uk

If you are not competing but would like to assist with marshalling we would love to see you. Just let us know by emailing to the above address. Any further information can be had by calling Myke on 01228 530555.

Photos of previous events at the venue can be seen on our web site at www.fellsideac.co.uk

We look forward to meeting up on the 3rd. We are assured that date has been declared summer on Alston Moor!

Entering Events

We have a full programme of events and we would ask members to do the following to make the organisers' lives easier.

Enter early: Lots of things need to be bought or booked for events some time in advance. Rally plates, finishers' awards and printing just don't happen and meals have to be booked well in advance. Also quite a few event snow get full entries so you might be unlucky and not get a place.

Entry forms: For most events we have entry forms that can be filling in on line and emailed back to the entries secretary. This is a great help but please ensure your email address is clearly printed.

Entry fees: You can pay by BACS or cheque for all our events. Please ensure you use the right account for BACS as we have two, the CBS one for tours etc and the HSBC for the rallies and shows. Pub runs and autotests you can pay cash on the day. For the £5 Classic Show entry you can send a £5 note in preference to a cheque.

Final instructions and entry lists are sent out about a week before the event. If you haven't received them then email the organiser.

Contacting organisers: We use an emailer to send out Start Line and event entry forms with the generic email address: contact@wigtonmc.co.uk; However please use the address given for the specific organiser of that event and not the generic one which is for general enquiries.

Reflections

Graeme looks back

I am sure that during the pandemic we all had time to think about what might have been. I worked out that I have written for over 30 different publications over the years, many that are no longer with us (hope it was not down to me!)

I have always been a great reader and even as a kid I was making little magazines and stories. In my teens I was very into slot car racing (the serious form of Scalextric) and made a lot of my own cars and by the time I headed to university I was making scratch built cars for other people. I had a brain-wave one day about how to make a four wheel drive car (1/32nd scale of course) and had to find a suitable car to base it on. Of course there were few options, but the Felday 4 fitted the wheelbase fine. I wrote to Peter Westbury at Felday Engineering asking for dimensions etc and he kindly send them along with some photos. The shell was fashioned from balsa laminates and the car looked and went well.

The main magazine in those days was “Model Cars,” and I wrote an article on how it was built and a bit about the actual car (once driven by Jim Clark – geek fact) did some photos and in due course it was published with the car on the cover, my first and only front cover! Then a cheque arrived!

I started doing a few more article on models and the cars on which they were based. I did one on the Perdal Anglia. Perdal Performance (Percival & Dalkin) were based at Wingrove Motors in Newcastle, so I arranged a visit. They were innovative in a rather crude fashion, when I was there, they were trying to get a Triumph Vitesse engine into an Anglia! Anyway the car I featured was a 1650cc car built from a right off which had involved the roof, so they had reversed the reverse angled rear roof supports. It was painted pink and white. I could write quite a bit about Perdal and their cars, but perhaps that is for another time. Sadly, Peter Dalkin died a few days ago.

As an impoverished student every little helped so I kept writing articles and most were published. Most were car based but my parents were lifelong caravanners, so I had a fair knowledge of that, thus I wrote some articles for some caravan magazines who used to do features on areas and the caravan sites therein. Of course it was very different to current journalism when articles can be written from the comfort of your own office and PC. Leg work was needed, making notes, taking photos with a camera with film in it etc. So an article about Sunny Silloth by the Sea probably took three days to research and write up on a typewriter (remember those). Then the undeveloped film and article were posted to the editor of the mag. The lead in times could be as much as two months for non news articles.

Local newspapers used to have several pages of sport and the local Cumberland News was typical with contributors for each sport. While they did sponsor a few drivers and indeed the early Tour of Cumbria rallies their motorsport coverage was limited to photos taken by their enthusiastic chief photographer Jim Turner. I was now back in Wigton, so I approached the CN and had a meeting with Bill Duckworth the deputy editor, a lovely guy who helped me a lot. Thus my weekly column started. Now in those days the NUJ were very powerful and wanted only “proper” journalists to write for papers but there was a realisation that the average hack would not have the knowledge, or the time to cover sports as diverse and Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling and hound trailing. Thus we all had to have by lines. The wrestling guy was “Clicker” and I ended up as “Wheelspin.”

There were plenty of events and plenty of local competitors so no problems with content to be put into 500 words each week. If I wasn't at an event there were a lot of phone calls to get results. Then it had to be typed up and posted first class to the CN office in Carlisle.

There were some rules as well. You could not mention a sponsor more than once, not helpful when Mike and Paul Gilligan were both out in County Garage backed Escorts for example. Each of the CN group papers had quite tightly designated areas of coverage. However they were keen to mention where crews were from. So you had to word things to suit. Hence "Carlisle crew Fred and Bob did well on the Derwent Rally which was won by Malcolm Wilson". Actually Fred and Bob were well down the top ten! Sometimes they would miss out people from outside the area when the sub editors were feeling diligent. Strangely enough the local papers still have this parochial approach.

The other issue was being squeezed out by more "important" news. This usually happened at the overlap of summer and winter sports when there was pressure on space. My reports on a rally would start with the winners and a description of the event and then a class by class review and list of the award winners. If space was tight the sub editor would look for 50 words to cut and take out a paragraph about one of the classes. Thus classes A, C & D were covered but not B. So on Friday night, before I had actually seen the article the winner of class B would be ringing me up berating me for ignoring his wonderful performance!

I was also doing some reports for Motoring News as well. Of course this was well before the internet, so we relied on the Royal Mail. You might remember that Postman Pat had a habit of going on strike which was quite a serious problem in those days. It was bad for event organisers and competitors in getting entries in etc. I was able to drive to Carlisle on a Monday evening with my article for the CN and for the nationals the article and film went by train. They were handed over in Carlisle and collected by a Motor News office boy at Euston.

More next month

GTF

The World's Most Expensive Car?



Mercedes have just sold one of the two Mercedes 300 SLR "Uhlenhaut" coupé for £115m. Making it the most expensive car sale (more than twice that paid for a Ferrari 250 GTO for year ago. It was sold in a private auction to a British buyer who has yet to be identified. The money will go to the Mercedes charity.

PG Tips

Peter Reflects On His Month

In contrast to last month, all 4 of my cars are currently working. That won't last I'm sure, but in the meantime I am confounding everyone at work by using a different car every day. The stream of almost exclusively middle aged men coming in to ask if 'that' car is mine hasn't stopped all week!

The end result of the Hadrian's wall walk that I completed in April was that we raised £2508 for the Alzheimers Trust and I'd like to say a big thank you to those of you who were kind enough to donate. The walk itself was very enjoyable – the scale of the engineering feat the Romans took on 1900 years ago is incredible. There isn't much wall to be seen at either end, but the middle section that starts near Corbridge and runs to roughly Lannercost in Cumbria is still visible and standing 8 feet tall in places. As this is generally a car based organisation I won't bore you with many more details other than to say that 4 of us made it to the finish (one quit for family reasons and another got injured), having 2 pints of beer with lunch is not a good idea when you still have 8 miles to walk up hill, and walking 17 miles on tarmac on the final day hurt quite a lot!

I have a confession – even after all these years of tinkering with cars I still don't fully understand how gearboxes work. I mean I understand ratios and how larger cogs turn slower and that the gear-box transfer drive to the wheels, but I don't understand the intricacies like synchromesh. I found out how little I knew when I decided to make enquiries on how to sort out the gearbox in the Citroen GS. 2nd gear synchromesh is a known weakness of the 4 speed box and mine is almost impossible to get a clean change from. I figured that I'd tackle the gearbox first, get that working, sort the belts out on the engine and then once it was all working perfectly move on to perfecting the other million problems! I was able to find new main shafts for the gearbox and what looked to be individual cogs for sale, however on speaking to Chevronecs they advised me that there were no parts available to sort the 2nd gear synchromesh problem, but they could sell me another gearbox, but as it was second hand they wouldn't guarantee how good it was or provide any warranty. There are several places selling old GS gearboxes – in fact there are considerably more gearboxes than cars still left, but no one will give me any kind of reassurance that the boxes they sell are in fine working order! I now need to have a long think about where to go with the car. I've got the engine working nicely now and little things like the stereo, washer motor, and dash lights but I don't know if I can live with the rest of the car long term. Ultimately my problem is that I have to tinker and improve whatever car I have (with the sole exception of the brand new Skoda Citigo that I had on a PCP a few years back) and the list of things on the GS is very long and some of the things on it are expensive. The ride quality of the car is amazing – it puts the more modern BX to shame (apparently the GS has more sophisticated suspension and it also has balloon tyres) and some of the details on the car are fantastic – like the rear windscreen that curves over onto the roof and the handbrake that comes out of the dashboard, but I don't know if they are enough to persuade me to keep it and press on. Maybe I'll go for some counselling or hypnosis and see if they can change how my brain works! I am also not sure if having 4 cars is too many.....the GS and BX basically do the same job - comfy classic that bobs along but not at any great speed. With the cost of everything rocketing it's maybe time to go back to 3 cars and use them all more often. By next month I will no doubt have done something mad!



Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

After the busy rally years through the '60s there was a period of fewer events with a number of different drivers but without much of a programme. Domestic issues including the expansion of the Palmer family with two sons Garry and Justyn arriving in 1968 and 1970 and a career move to a new house in Whitehaven and my new job location as dealer accountant at County Garage on the Quay at Whitehaven meant that priorities were changed. Settled into West Cumbria I joined the West Cumberland Motor Club and Workington and District Motor Club (formerly USSO MC I think) and there were plenty of things to do, time permitting.

In August 1971 Bert Gilligan our Chairman and MD of County Garage (and father of Mike and Paul) suggested that with my motor sport connections it would be a good idea for me to drive – and rally – the new Escort Mexico recently introduced. I could only agree. So in September '71 CRM29K appeared resplendent in Diamond White with the red decals. This was an early car produced before the final spec had been settled and it was built with a branch exhaust manifold, vinyl seats, rubber floor mats, battery in the boot and a deep dished steering wheel. The first day I took it home to Hillcrest, Whitehaven my next door neighbour was seen standing drooling over the Mexico and duly ordered one the following day in Maize Yellow and so it carried on, we could sell as many as we could get. I entered some rallies with Eddie Farrell navigating and had some success. In time Eddie got sponsorship from John Myers of Myers and Bowman who supplied him an Avenger and to start with I navigated for Eddie. An early event in the Avenger (from the hire fleet!) was the 1973 Knowledale Car Club Mini Miglia rally in which the Avenger hit the remains of a stone wall and retired forthwith. I had two Mk 1 Mexicos, the second being in Sunset Red but it wasn't as good as the first one and disgraced itself by picking up a piston as we pressed on up the climb from Croasdale by Ennerdale Water. I also damaged the NSF wing when we were catching Joe Taylor also in a Mexico in dust at the top of Blindbothel heading east on some event, all part of the learning process.

In late '71 or early '72 I entered the Hexham Rally with Eddie on the maps in the white Mexico. Now this was a Sunday daylight event which was decidedly hairy (as Eddie recalls) as we encountered weekend drivers toddling down single track roads towards us. At the end there were two cars on the same minute penalties, the other one being an Avenger driven by Alan Conley. The result was decided on engine size with Alan getting the win with a size of 1598cc – I think – whilst the Mexico was listed at 1601cc so we were second. We did no more competitive events in daylight after that as there were too many near death experiences for one day.

County Garage sponsored The 1972 Mexico Rally and with Eddie's map skill we duly won that one. I did like that first Mexico and it's firmly on the list of cars I wish I still had. Eddie has a much better recall of our events together on both sides of our cars and I must get him to break into print one day. Anyway after being dealer account



ant at Whitehaven for a couple of years, I was promoted to Sales Manager and a rally Mexico was deemed inappropriate for my elevated? position so my next car was a Mk1 Capri 2 litre GT XLR complete with black bonnet and with all the options ticked – an attractive car in its day but not a patch on the Mexico.

Ron

May Autosolo

- | | | | |
|----|----------------|------------|--------|
| 1 | Craig Stamper | 477 | 1st OA |
| 2 | Tot Dixon | 484 | 1s F |
| 3 | David O'Connor | 504 | 1st R |
| 4 | Mark Humphries | 516 | F |
| 5 | Paul Grierson | 517 | F |
| 6 | John Holliday | 518 | F |
| 7 | Peter Masters | 528 | F |
| 8 | David Agnew | 538 | R |
| 9 | Lee Mashiter | 583 | R |
| 10 | Tim Cruttenden | 607 | F |
| 11 | | | |
| 12 | Nigel Moffat | | R |
| 13 | James O'Neil | | R |
| 14 | Jim O Neil | | R |





Sir Jackie Stewart Classic

Thirlstane Castle

June 18th/19th

**Includes the BVAC Classic Show on Sunday
Sprint both days.**

Several WMC members entered

Autojumble

Items for sale or wanted

20/50 Silkolene oil for classics. 5 litres for £25 for current stock, next order may well be in the £35 region. Contact Graeme on gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk





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Tyres are new and never used. Purchased in error, I use these happily on my MGB Roadster but they're not suitable for the GTV8.

Cost: £170 for all four.

Delivery: I'll drop-off across West Cumbria or Collect from Whitehaven.

Contact: Alan via email at ajb3462@gmail.com



Membership

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

Welcome to new members

Robin and Julie Benn

Robert and Sheila Harwood

Andrew Singleton

Sidney and Margaret Thompson

Peter Ratcliffe & Hetta Morath

Roy Kissick

Neil & Haedon Mcquire

We hope that you enjoy reading Start Line and the Mid Monthly News plus taking part in our events.

Lamplugh Jubilee Jaunt!

June 4th

Entries must be forwarded please to enable the food to be ordered.

Entries to: kendall.bruce@sky.com

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Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport



My lifelong love of motor sport began in the late 1950's and with the recent death of Tony Brooks the last link to that era has been lost. Just think of the drivers he raced against, Fangio, Moss, Ascari, Hawthorn, Musso, Castelloti, Collins, Behra, Von Trips, etc were some of the bravest men ever to venture out onto the track. The short list above emphasises that point well when you realise of the nine named only two reached a proper retirement from racing, even Mike Hawthorn managed to meet a violent end racing Rob Walker along the Guildford bypass a matter of a weeks after he announced the end of his competition career.

I've always felt that Brooks was an underrated talent and should be regarded as one of the very top drivers of his era with only Fangio and Moss being

ahead, and only marginally so, of the racing dentist. You can't help wondering just what he might have achieved had he not retired at such an early age, he was certainly talented enough to be a champion himself and would have been at his peak when Brabham and the Hills, Phil and Graham, we're writing their names on the Formula 1 Roll of Honour. It's a shame the name Brooks isn't on that list.

Naturally one thought leads to another and you get to thinking of other names which should be listed as World Champion and several spring to mind. Gilles Villeneuve who died almost exactly 40 years ago at Zolder is an obvious candidate. Totally committed behind the wheel his faith in his own ability was legendary. Most drivers of his era regarded him as in a class of his own and a champion in all but name. I read recently that not long before he died Niki Lauda was reduced to tears when talking about the loss of Gilles. I don't think he was alone in his opinion of the fiery little Canadian.

Another is of course Ronnie Peterson who most people would agree should have been the posthumous world champion of 1978. He'd signed as number two for Lotus, and as a team player had dutifully trailed round as Mario Andretti's "rear gunner" for most of the season until he died at Monza in September. I have no doubt the bold "Ronald" was quicker and not only defended Andretti from attack but took many points from potential challengers.

Another failed champion, and the antithesis of Peterson is Didier Pironi. He was of course Villeneuve's so called teammate in 1982 at Ferrari and went against team orders to steal a win from Gilles at Imola. After Villeneuve's death the championship was almost done and dusted until Pironi himself crashed at Hockenheim and was so severely injured he never raced again. It's more than ironic as his accident was a virtual carbon copy of the one in which his team mate had died a few weeks earlier.

There are others, Froilan Gonzales has a strong claim as does Luigi Musso, both hugely capable. Dan Gurney had the talent but never the car and Carlos Reutteman the skills but not the ability to deal with the pressure that being favourite put upon him.

Needless to say I've left the most obvious one to last. Stirling Moss. Surely one of the top 5 drivers of all time, he could make anything in any conditions a winning car. Racing, rallying, record breaking, he had the lot and made it look so easy, often beating world class drivers in superior cars and confounding them in the process. A true champion in all but name and one who will remain remembered long after many others who were a lot luckier than him are forgotten.

Ends AA.