

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 2023/07

www.wigtonmc.xo.uk

July 2023

Super Sam



Sam Kirkpatrick was on great form at Silverstone in the Equipe Libre race against much more powerful Cobras and E types, driving round them on the bends. I rate Sam as the best Cumbrian driver I have seen in the last 30 years. It would be great to see him in a more powerful car.

For Members By Members

WMC Committee

OFFICIALS

<i>President:.</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>	
<i>Vice Pres.</i>	<i>Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,</i>	
<i>Life Member</i>	<i>Ron Palmer</i>	
<i>Sec/Treasurer</i>	<i>Graeme Forrester</i>	gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk
<i>Membership Sec</i>	<i>John Sloan</i>	wigtonmcmemb@outlook.com
<i>Social Sec.:</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>	charles.graves@armathwaite-hall.com
<i>Equipment Officer</i>	<i>Eddie Parsons</i>	eddieparsons5@icloud.com
<i>Catering Exec</i>	<i>Lynda Graham</i>	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Graham	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Jim Crockett	jamesmccrockett@yahoo.co.uk
Chris Leece	chris_1lowtherview@yahoo.co.uk
John Sloan	johnsloan02@outlook.com
David Agnew	DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com
Rob Grant	robincumbria@hotmail.com ,
John Holliday	johnholl403@gmail.com ,
Mary Parsons	maryparsons5@icloud.com ;
Tim Cruttenden	cruttsdad@gmail.com ;
Jacqui Raine	jaxr1986@hotmail.co.uk

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

Face Book: Wigton Motor Club & Wigton Motor Club Members

Forthcoming Events

July	8th Sa	SMC Car Show at Lanercost
July	9th S	British Grand Prix
July	9th S	Northern Dales Targa (H&DMC) Historic/Targa Challenge Round.
July	11th Tu	BBQ at the Motor House.
July	15th Sa	Barbon Hill Climb (LMC/KLMC)
July	16th S	Cars are the Stars Show at Holker (KLMC)
July	19th W	Committee meeting
July	22/23	Classic Nostalgia at Shelsley Walsh.
July	29th Sa	Heroes & Villains Run (FAC)
July	30th S	Autosolo
Aug	6th S	Cars & Coffee at the Motor House. 10 until 12
Aug	13th S	Blue Streak Targa (SMC) Historic/Targa Challenge Round
Aug	19th Sa	Rose & Thistle Tour
Aug	20th S	Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show

Classic Nostalgia

If you have never been to Classic Nostalgia at Shelsley Walsh then you should try and go. Think the oldest motorsport venue in the world and an event similar to the Goodwood Revival except it's for real enthusiasts driving their own cars. Lots to see and do and demonstration runs to celebrate McLaren plus some famous drivers as well. The Group B rally car demonstrations are not to be missed either.

There is a huge entry including a class for Mini Coopers which sees Steve Murphy out in his 1275GT. Keith Thomas has his Buckley in the pre 1960 class and Fred Bell is out in the Cooper JAP that won the British Hill Climb Championship in its day and I will have the MGB in the historic sports car class.

It all happens on July 22/23rd and the venue is steeped in history and has great facilities in terms of a restaurant and live entertainment all weekend. There are also plenty of trade stalls and car club displays as well.

Talking Point

Topical Comment on Motoring & Motorsport

Firstly I'd like to remind members that the closing date for entries for the Classic & Motorsport Show is August 1st. This is to allow the admin team time to sort entries, plan the field and of course to send out the final instructions and J hangers. We set a limit of 400 cars for individual entries and 400 for club entries with the first 400 of each type being accepted automatically and then we balance the rest that come in to make up the 800 maximum, thus if we get fewer than 400 from clubs there will be more spaces for extra individual entries and vice versa.

Running a show of this size and with the high standard we have, does need plenty of volunteers to make the day run smoothly. The great thing is that you can help just for an hour or two during the day and wander about for the rest of the time. In total we need about 70 marshals to cover all the jobs. One or two regulars are away this year so there is plenty of opportunities for more of you to get involved. Please email me on gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk.

I always try to get to other shows during the year, a chance to meet others enthusiasts and see how other organisers run their shows - we can always learn something new! There are more shows than ever at the present time with new ones popping up each year. However some of the more traditional ones, such as "vintage" shows do seem in decline. Those that cater for tractors and stationary engines seem to get fewer entries and fewer spectators. It may be because only older tractors are of interest but certainly there are a lot more extractor fans now than there was! (Sorry).

The cost of running a good show are quite high and most of the income comes from the gate money and there is a danger with more shows that the spectators get spread over more shows. These days there are an increasing number of individuals running shows commercially and of course their aim is profit rather than making sure everyone has a really good day. It will be interesting to see how long those shows last.

Clubs like ours are all about everyone enjoying our cars and good company and thus we hope that everyone will feel able to contribute to the Club and the events we run in some way.

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

June Committee meeting

Matters arising. CCTV, AV projector. Maryport venue agreement, Safe Guarding Offiver still needed.

Events: Rose & Thistle filling up nicely. Most people paying by BACS.

Show, Steve Fishwick will oversee the car parking marshals. Admission will be mainly by cash with the option of the card reader. Decided to make the programme simpler and less glossy. Looking for photos of the club's history. 100 year old cars wanted.

Club events: Organisers needed for pub runs and autotests. Autosolo at Maryport (now July 30th) Cars and Coffee at Lingholm on the 2nd July, BBQ at the Motor House on the 11th. August C&C will be on the 6th so as not to clash with SMC's rally.

Finances are in a good position. We can consider giving free entries to competitive events to newcomers as we did in the past. Savings account to be opened soon once we have all the required signatures. Received an apology and £100 from CBS for incorrect advise.

Membership: Steady increase each month. It was agree to up the limit on the membership programme to 1000,

Website – useful input from Dani Hope and this will be implemented as time allows.

Clothing: Not so many sales at the last C&C due to the warm weather.

First Aid course, on hold at the moment.

2023 AGM

This was held prior to the committee meeting. The committee valued to support the club members gave to them during the year.

All the existing committee and officials were re-elected for the year.

General Report

Firstly a big thanks to the committee, organisers and marshals who made things happen. Also to the monthly work parties at the Motor House. Rotation of the position of Chair has proven to be successful and will be continued.

The Motor House is a big asset and brings people together and has brought in a steady flow of new members. We got to 500 memberships and some 900 members, a figure we have already equalled this year.

The steady loss of venues for competitive events is a big worry but while the Club has a long history of competitive motor sport, we have to face the fact that the interest in our events like autotests and targa/historic rallies is on the decline while fewer of our members are doing other events like racing, rallying and speed events. Meanwhile the one day touring events get very good entries. It was noted that several new venues had been found by David Agnew which allowed us to run a revamped Solway historic rally in November.

2023 has seen more improvements to the Motor House and the use of Stripe and Sum Up to assist payments all of which saves valuable time for officials. As of the end of May 2023 we are £7k up on the start of the year despite spending on promotional items.

Should we be looking at buying land? All present thought this should be our next step.



motor
sport
UK

Recognised
Club

Eccentrics – 1 v Professionals - Nil ...



Earlier In June the Classic Motor Cars team from Bridgnorth in Shropshire achieved their goal. The Aston Martin Bulldog which they had so painstakingly restored recorded a top speed of 205 miles per hour at Machrihanish in the Kintyre peninsula.

The project was cancelled before Aston Martin could make their own claim over forty years ago when the car was originally built in 1979.

The idea then was to build the world's first 200 mph roadgoing supercar, but rising costs ruled that out. And so it was left to a bunch of enthusiasts, albeit a team of skilled engineers and technicians, to finally set the record straight.

Which they did, thanks to Le Mans winner Darren Turner who was entrusted with this one-off and a chance to go for the record.

But to put things into perspective, it's one thing to drive a car at 200 miles per hour on an airfield runway, quite another to sit astride an engine slung between two wheels and do the same on public roads.



Taking nothing away from Darren with his run in the Bulldog, but just over a hundred miles due south on a wee island in the Irish Sea a number of genuine superheroes are doing just that.

Incredible to think that the Isle of Man (222 sq miles) is smaller than the Isle of Mull (337 sq miles) and yet it can host a closed road motor cycle race with a circuit lap length of some 37 and three quarter miles.

If Man is the capital of road racing, then Mull is the capital

of closed road rallying, and whilst I may fancy my chances of driving car at 200 miles per hour, there's no way I'd clamp myself on to a bike and do the same. These guys are not nutters, they are not human – they are superhuman. Gaun yersel Michael.

Courtesy of John Fife and thanks to Amy Shore for the Pics.

I love electric vehicles – and was an early adopter. But increasingly I feel duped

Rowan Atkinson

Sadly, keeping your old petrol car may be better than buying an EV. There are sound environmental reasons not to jump just yet

electric motoring is, in theory, a subject about which I should know something. My first university degree was in electrical and electronic engineering, with a subsequent master's in control systems. Combine this, perhaps surprising, academic pathway with a lifelong passion for the motorcar, and you can see why I was drawn into an early adoption of electric vehicles. I bought my first electric hybrid 18 years ago and my first pure electric car nine years ago and (notwithstanding our poor electric charging infrastructure) have enjoyed my time with both very much.

Electric vehicles may be a bit soulless, but they're wonderful mechanisms: fast, quiet and, until recently, very cheap to run. But increasingly, I feel a little duped. When you start to drill into the facts, electric motoring doesn't seem to be quite the environmental panacea it is claimed to be.

As you may know, the government has proposed a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030. The problem with the initiative is that it seems to be largely based on conclusions drawn from only one part of a car's operating life: what comes out of the exhaust pipe. Electric cars, of course, have zero exhaust emissions, which is a welcome development, particularly in respect of the air quality in city centres. But if you zoom out a bit and look at a bigger picture that includes the car's manufacture, the situation is very different. In advance of the Cop26 climate conference in Glasgow in 2021,

Volvo released figures claiming that greenhouse gas emissions during production of an electric car are nearly 70% higher than when manufacturing a petrol one. How so? The problem lies with the lithium-ion batteries fitted currently to nearly all electric vehicles: they're absurdly heavy, huge amounts of energy are required to make them, and they are estimated to last only upwards of 10 years. It seems a perverse choice of hardware with which to lead the automobile's fight against the climate crisis.

Unsurprisingly, a lot of effort is going into finding something better. New, so-called solid-state batteries are being developed that should charge more quickly and could be about a third of the weight of the current ones – but they are years away from being on sale, by which time, of course, we will have made millions of overweight electric cars with rapidly obsolescing batteries. Hydrogen is emerging as an interesting alternative fuel, even though we are slow in developing a truly “green” way of manufacturing it. It can be used in one of two ways. It can power a hydrogen fuel cell (essentially, a kind of battery); the car manufacturer Toyota has poured a lot of money into the development of these. Such a system weighs half of an equivalent lithium-ion battery and a car can be refuelled with hydrogen at a filling station as fast as with petrol.

If the lithium-ion battery is an imperfect device for electric cars, concerns have been raised over their use in heavy trucks for long distance haulage because of the weight; an alternative is to inject hydrogen into a new kind of piston engine. JCB, the company that makes yellow diggers, has made huge strides with hydrogen engines and hopes to put them into production in the next couple of years. If hydrogen wins the race to power trucks – and as a result every filling station stocks it – it could be a popular and accessible choice for cars.

But let's zoom out even further and consider the whole life cycle of an automobile. The biggest problem we need to address in society's relationship with the car is the “fast fashion” sales culture that has been the commercial template of the car industry for decades. Currently, on average we keep our new cars for only three years before selling them on, driven mainly by the ubiquitous three-year

leasing model. This seems an outrageously profligate use of the world's natural resources when you consider what great condition a three-year-old car is in.

When I was a child, any car that was five years old was a bucket of rust and halfway through the gate of the scrapyards. Not any longer. You can now make a car for £15,000 that, with tender loving care, will last for 30 years. It's sobering to think that if the first owners of new cars just kept them for five years, on average, instead of the current three, then car production and the CO₂ emissions associated with it, would be vastly reduced. Yet we'd be enjoying the same mobility, just driving slightly older cars.

We need also to acknowledge what a great asset we have in the cars that currently exist (there are nearly 1.5bn of them worldwide). In terms of manufacture, these cars have paid their environmental dues and, although it is sensible to reduce our reliance on them, it would seem right to look carefully at ways of retaining them while lowering their polluting effect. Fairly obviously, we could use them less. As an environmentalist once said to me, if you really need a car, buy an old one and use it as little as possible.

A sensible thing to do would be to speed up the development of synthetic fuel, which is already being used in motor racing; it's a product based on two simple notions: one, the environmental problem with a petrol engine is the petrol, not the engine and, two, there's nothing in a barrel of oil that can't be replicated by other means. Formula One is going to use synthetic fuel from 2026. There are many interpretations of the idea but the German car company Porsche is developing a fuel in Chile using wind to power a process whose main ingredients are water and carbon dioxide. With more development, it should be usable in all petrol-engine cars, rendering their use virtually CO₂-neutral.

Increasingly, I'm feeling that our honeymoon with electric cars is coming to an end, and that's no bad thing: we're realising that a wider range of options need to be explored if we're going to properly address the very serious environmental problems that our use of the motor car has created. We should keep developing hydrogen, as well as synthetic fuels to save the scrapping of older cars which still have so much to give, while simultaneously promoting a quite different business model for the car industry, in which we keep our new vehicles for longer, acknowledging their amazing but overlooked longevity.

Friends with an environmental conscience often ask me, as a car person, whether they should buy an electric car. I tend to say that if their car is an old diesel and they do a lot of city centre motoring, they should consider a change. But otherwise, hold fire for now. Electric propulsion will be of real, global environmental benefit one day, but that day has yet to dawn.

This article was amended on 5 June 2023 to describe lithium-ion batteries as lasting "upwards of 10 years", rather than "about 10 years"; and to clarify that the figures released by Volvo claimed that greenhouse gas emissions during production of an electric car are "nearly 70% higher", not "70% higher". It was further amended on 7 June 2023 to remove an incorrect reference to the production of lithium-ion batteries needing "many rare earth metals"; to clarify that a reference to "trucks" should instead have been to "heavy trucks for long distance haulage"; and to more accurately refer to the use of such batteries in these trucks as being a "concern", due to weight issues, rather than a "non-starter".

Rowan Atkinson is actor, comedian and writer

Club News & Events

Cars & Coffee

At the Motor House

August 6th

10 - 12



PG Tips

Peter Reflects On His Month

I think my plans to buy traffic lights when I retire, and rent them out to everyone who even wants to examine a road or pavement for half an hour could be hitting a stumbling block. The norm now appears to be authorising road closures, even when both sides of the road are not blocked. There have been several round me recently including work on a pavement in Tallentire that had a 5 day closure authorised in it. This is a relatively busy through route and the work involved digging up the pavement on a corner, looking at some drains and then putting it all back together with a fantastic new pavement area (that incidentally leads nowhere and has little foot fall). The road was never fully closed as the council were working on the pavement and only ever blocked one side of the road – traffic lights would easily have sufficed to cover this, but seemingly the aim was to save money at the expense of the inconvenience of everyone around. Obviously the locals drove through or went over the unclassified hill road but as the official detour involved a 5+ mile trip on c roads it no doubt caused some trouble for deliveries, buses and non-locals. There is another one near Dearham now where United Utilities dug a hole on the side of the road a few days ago and have a full road closure in over the weekend with no one working on it. As ever the locals are driving round the cones but the mind boggles at who is authorising such things willy nilly!

In other road news, the council have finally filled in the pot hole in Tallentire that took out one of my tyres and I have submitted a claim – I wait to hear from them on that front.

We visited friends in the North East last month who recently bought an electric car and discovered a new danger from them. Wendy, the wife of the couple has always had a bit of a heavy right foot behind the wheel, accruing a speed awareness course and a few points over the years, but the advent of them buying a new MG4 electric car has thrown her into new levels of jeopardy. It's bright orange and seemingly quite rapid. 0-60 time is about 8 seconds which is faster than any car Wendy has previously had, and in a matter of weeks of having it she accrued another speed awareness course and 6 points from 2 further speeding incidents! Apparently not only is it nippy, it is very quiet and therefore the feeling of speed is deceptive. I think Wendy might be taking the train or bus to work soon if she isn't super careful. They bought it because it was the cheapest family sized electric car they could find and it does look rather good, I've seen quite a few locally now and whilst there are a few areas that are a little budget, it seems well built and superbly well equipped. As a result of the MG4, MG are once more in the top 10 for car sales in the UK which may never have happened before, or at least not in the last 40 years.

Le Mans this year appears to have been a cracking race – I was at work for half of it and in bed for another ¼ so I resisted the temptation to pay for Eurosport for 2 days to watch more of it, but I did see highlights and some live racing at night. It was everything you could want of an endurance race – lots of potential winners, some crazy crashes (yes it does make it better as long as no one is seriously injured!) and an unlikely underdog winner. It's hard to describe Ferrari as an underdog given their reputation and money, but the team who won Le Mans were very much that when you compare the many times recent winners Toyota, the leviathan that is Porsche and Peugeot who were desperate to win in the centenary year of the event. The Ferrari team by all accounts is made up of people who

would have been unemployed when the F1 team made some cuts but were thrown the endurance racing team as a bit of a project. One of the driver's was an F1 team reject and all in all it was a bit of a last-minute effort with the new hypercar formula, and they pulled it off. Ferrari haven't won or entered a factory team at Le Mans since 1965 so it is a fairly monumental win. I believe for next year's race more factory teams are joining in and it could be another cracking event, after so many years with few front running cars and factory teams. The crowd this year was the biggest it has been for many years...who knows, I might even make the effort to go over there next year or the year after. I haven't been since the mid 90s, but the new era does appear to be golden.

Finally – don't forget the BBQ at the Motorhouse on July 11th at 7pm, I will be cooking up sausages and burgers in rolls, there'll be crisps and drinks and all for £6....should be a few interesting cars as well. Pray for dry weather! If you want to come, please email me stating how many, and sausages or burgers (I can probably muster a veggie item of both if required)

petergarforth@btinternet.com



Autotest



Rally



Trials and
Cross Country

Autosolo

Sunday, July 30th

At Maryport Business Centre

Autosolos are for road going cars over a sinuous route marked by cones, they are not memory tests, no reversing or handbrake turns.
Suitable for all type of car, classic or modern.

Think of a mini sprint!

Entry forms will be emailed out.

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

As you will know most of the glossy monthly motoring magazines repeat topics for articles every year or two especially those with an historical content. I therefore make no apologies for the subject of this article appearing here although you may have seen a similar one of mine in the past.

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



The entry fee was £25, fuel for competitors was free, courtesy of Gulf, and the first prize £1000 which was a king's ransom in 1967 and the top English finisher got a free entry to the 1968 Swedish Rally. The start and finish was at the Excelsior Hotel at Manchester Airport and the event covered 65 hours almost three days with only three halts – one of 3 hours and two of one hour each. Reality was that you spent the halts working on the car so there was virtually no time for rest or sleep. Where else could you get such incredible value for money competitive motoring then or now? I recollect going to my GP and asking for some stimulant pills to help me stay awake, and reluctantly he

prescribed me some. I had never used them before or since.

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

We were seeded at number 81 (I still have the rally plate) from 120 entrants which is not a good place to be in a car with 10" wheels dragging its bottom along very rough forest roads after the passage of 80 earlier cars. Forest roads in those days didn't have the smooth surfaces generally enjoyed these days and there were none of the short sprints so common these days when high forest fees are a dominant factor.

The event started at 21.00 on Tuesday and headed into North Wales for the first five stages in Clocaenog followed by another two stages, Llanrwst and Betws-y-Coed before the first refuelling point and time control at Conway Falls – a couple of hand worked pumps supplying 120 odd cars!

These refuelling points could be interesting places. If there was no Gulf filling station locally they set up a roadside refuelling point from a tanker where members of the local motor clubs helped out dispensing the free fuel with hand pumps. There was lots of 100 octane fuel sloshing about everywhere and heroes with lit fags hanging out of their mouths and occasionally welding taking place, sometimes a little too close for comfort. Health and safety precautions were limited to being ready to drive off swiftly if the whole lot went up. Of course the volunteer club members did not go home empty handed and I have even seen lemonade bottles filled with free petrol.

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



For '67 Mike and Peter had changed cars and had a works prepared SAAB V4 ex John Bloxham. Following their great finish in '66 they were well seeded for '67 at number 37 which in a high stepping SAAB was not so bad. Every works driver who was anybody was entered with the Scandinavians fancying their chances on the loose.

There were team cars from Porsche, Ford, SAAB, BMC, Renault and Volvo. Among crews from the north were David Thompson/Dave Stephenson, Bev Gelder/Raymond Hunt, Bob Lamb/Tony Mason, George Murray/Bob Woods, Ron Charlton/Royston Heawood, John Curtis/Norman Speight, Les Cowan/Arnold

Price and Tony Payne/Colin Briars and of course Mike and Peter and Robin and me.

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

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

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

By this time we had been on the go for three days without sleep (OK maybe a few minutes snatched

on road sections) and one celebratory pint was enough to see us off to bed.

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

Ron

Cars & Coffee at Lingholm Gardens



Barbon in June

Wigton members were out in force at Barbon on June 10th on a scorching hot day and as you can imagine the ice cream van was kept busy dispensing pleasure to us all. Robert Gate was a late entry and brought out one of his Bentleys, this one was a huge mobster special with 6.75 litre engine which weighs about 2 tons, it can certainly go but it takes a lot of stopping too ! Mike Garstang had his Mini Cooper S, it was Andy Walkingshaw first time at Barbon, he was in his ultra rapid Rally Mini, John Sloan MK2 Escort encouraged by wife Marion was getting faster and faster as the day went on, his recent session at Harewood drivers' school was obviously paying dividends.



Mark Milne was competing in the same class as myself in his Lotus 6, he had support team of dad Dickie, Chris Hodgson and Ed Glaister, neither Mark or myself had time to go and look at the times for each run as we tried to help a fellow Buckler competitor 80 year old Graham Curwen from Pilling near Preston as his A series engine Buckler had gone sick, we fought on in the tremendous heat borrowing parts from Mike Garstang, Andy Walkingshaw and others but as Graham was also driving his Formula Ford Van Damien previously owned by Fraser Graham of Workington it was decided to forget about the Buckler and concentrate on running the Formula Ford.

As I mentioned Mark or myself didn't really have time to check to see how we were doing against each other but the end of the day Mark had beaten me by 0.34 of a second, yes just over one third of a second, Dickie hasn't obviously instructed him in proper manners such as giving up his seat on a bus or generally deferring to pensioners like myself in other situations !



Well done, Mark, a class win is a nice reminder to have of such a magnificent event. Rob Grant was to be seen wandering around camera in hand so maybe he might have sent Graeme some of his excellent photos.

Organisation was superb, everyone worked their socks off and the marshals, recovery crews, ambulance staff and others were working all day in colossal heat which was really difficult at times, the organisers thoughtfully handed out bottles of water to the drivers in the top paddock to keep them hydrated which was a very nice gesture.

Chris Spencer was being cossetted as usual both by Costas his tame mechanic and of course Barbara his wife, Chris was finding his way with the different characteristics of his new full race Formula

Vee engine so look out when he finally gets to grips with it and finds the correct gearing for the hill, my wife Carol was looking after me as usual and she makes a good job of it too, I can't believe we've been married for 49 years now and before we were married she navigated for me many times in rallies such as the Jim Clark, Lindisfarne, and many other forest and road rallies too. Time flies when you are enjoying yourself !

Harry Moody and Phil Hallington were in their Westfields and Eddie Farrell and Susan came down to give encouragement as did Clive Kennedy making the trip from Hexham, Robert Gate had virtually all his family there, so it was a really great atmosphere and no doubt helped gate receipts. Neil Pilkington from Dalton in Furness has one of the best looking and best prepared Escort MK2s I have ever seen and I have seen a lot of those cars in my many rallying years, he was battling it out with a nicely prepared Sunbeam Lotus which appeared to have a Vauxhall Red top engine under the bonnet, Neils

whole outfit is superb, the car travels in a lovely race shuttle fully enclosed trailer towed by an equally lovely product from the Land Rover factory, very impressive indeed.



At the prizegiving chairman John Harden announced that the event was running at a loss with costs outweighing entry fees although they hoped to at least break even with gate money from spectators, next event is on Sat 15th July so please try and support it as either a competitor, spectator or marshal as if these events fold they won't be resurrected even though it's one of the best run events in the country. The trouble is everything has to be brought in, set up and dismantled afterwards so additional costs are incurred that permanent venues don't have to contend with. If I've missed anyone out which I'm sure I will have done, please accept my apologies.

Keith Thomas



**CELEBRATING THE GLORY DAYS
OF MOTORSPORT**

22-23 July 2023
Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb
classicnostalgia.co.uk

The 2023 Rally the Globe Generations rally from a beginner's point of view.



I've dabbled in classic car rallying only a handful of times, but this time I've got the bug.

My dad, Charles, and I recently took part in Rally The Globe's Generations Rally in March. The idea behind the event is "to bring motoring families closer together" and it certainly delivers on that promise. It was the second one of this annual event, with 2022's event touring around Cumbria (I reside in Bassen-thwaite, just near Keswick), where I enviously saw fathers and daughters, as well as other generational duos, having a great time as they arrived in scorching sunshine at Armathwaite Hall for one of their pit stops, enjoying a very quick cup of tea with scones, jam and cream. After waving them off, I quickly turned to dad and resolutely questioned why he hadn't asked me to take part in the event with him. He simply said that he didn't think I would be interested. How wrong he was!

I've had an 8+ year hiatus from getting into the Sunbeam Tiger, having experienced the ups and downs of a classic car, with breaking down en-route on several occasions and my co-driver and I having to be bailed out. Those of you familiar with this particular Sunbeam Tiger, may well have helped us on those occasions, many thanks! Then, having a couple of children and getting 'just too busy' and everything else that gets in the way. But here we are, back in the game (sort of, it's only been one rally so far!).



After pestering, and double checking, that Dad had indeed entered us into the 2023 Generations Rally, it was confirmed that we were going. Hurray! It was going to be an epic three days of sunshine and competitive camaraderie. Fast forward a few months, and I was preparing what I needed to take. I had to get a pair of driving shoes as my dear dad announced just a week before that I was 'allowed' to do the driving and he would be navigating (his first time ever). I was very pleased to be relegated from navigator to driver. I don't have a mathematical or particularly logical brain, I got D in my maths GCSE, and apparently you need both of these when navigating a rally, particularly in the regularities!

The entries into the 2023 Generations Rally maxed out at 75, with a reserves list for a hopeful few. The cars ranged from a 1924 Vauxhall 30-98 to a 1983 Ford Capri, to an unusual customised Chevrolet Fango Roadster and a couple of Aston Martin DB4's, with crew members as young as 13. Some competitors had taken part the previous year but the majority of cars had a crew member who had either never competed in a rally before or even been in a rally car



let alone know what a trip meter was. It was certainly an excellent opportunity to get into the sport.

We arrived at Slaley Hall in Northumberland, our base for the weekend with a cloverleaf tour ahead of us, and excitedly headed for the scrutineering area, where we queued patiently, only to find out we hadn't signed on yet and had to go to a different part of the estate, make ourselves known, collect our badges, then head back to queue for scrutineering. Luckily, we passed scrutineering, using my most gentle toe on the accelerator for the noise test (the Tiger has a deafening roar), slightly worried they might think we were too loud and send us home. Fortunately, dad has done a fair few rally's (150+) and can easily list off all the things you need to pass scrutineering with flying colours. Unfortunately for some cars who were not quite so organised and had forgotten some of the basics, such as a fire extinguisher!

Next up, a relaxing drink at the bar with Keith Graham, a fellow Wigton Motor Club member, who we had already targeted as our one and only competition for the weekend. He had competed in 2022, so did he have competitive advantage? It was going to get heated.

Day one was relatively leisurely with documentation being handed out in the morning for us to pour over and dissect in as much detail as we knew how. As I was the driver, it was up to dad to get into the details, although I tried my best to get a look in and find out where we were going. Turns out you can't figure that out from Tulip routes until you're on the road! Dad's experience filled me with confidence so I was feeling really quite relaxed.

Before we knew it, it was time to go. Off we went, with the first car leaving at 13.01 and our car 48 minutes later. The half day of driving was packed full with two tests, two regularities and a passage control section. The first test was a hill climb at Hexham racecourse. As we queued for the start line my knuckles had gone white and my legs were shaking. I was so nervous about wasting a precious second not getting off the start line, hesitating, not knowing where to go or even that I would go so fast that I'd fly off the top of the hill. It turns out I'm not as fast as I think and get confused with my left and right and ended up with a 6s penalty, and much to our annoyance, we ended up several seconds behind Keith Graham.

Down came the rain, sleet, snow between a few very brief sunny outbursts, so not the glorious weather of 2022, as we raced around Hadrian's wall country and were later rewarded with a stop at Naworth Castle for tea and scones before rushing back out to continue the day. On the way back to base, we finished with another test which was a reverse of the earlier test on Hexham racecourse. Slightly more experienced by this point, I maintained my poor performance, coming in at exactly the same time penalty as the first go. Surely the stopwatches aren't working properly. We ended the day in position 31, and Keith in position 4.

Day two was a full day of driving 168 miles in total. Coasts, castles, three tests and five regularities to keep us busy. The tiger was primed after the warm up from the day before, and I was feeling pretty confident too. Until dad suggested that perhaps he should have a go at the first test of the day on the grounds of Slaley. I realised then that I probably hadn't quite tamed the tiger after seeing how my dad was able to manoeuvre it around the course! After a successful, speedy round we decided that it made sense for dad to take the reins when it came to the tests – well he's got to have a bit of fun too! Plus, his navigating skills were about on par with my driving so we needed some element of hope! Later in



the day we stopped in Britain's most haunted castle, Chillingham, but sadly our presence had scared away any apparitions. The second test of the day was the hairiest of them all. Set on an agricultural facility, the test took us twice around the course of tree trunks and concrete blocks, farm barns and steel pillars, with my teeth gritted the entire time. By the end of the day we were exhausted yet exhilarated from the whole thing and looked forward to regaling one another with our stories over a gin and tonic.

Day 3 took us 93 miles around County Durham, with three regularities and three tests. We made our way to Raby Castle where we rushed through the most interesting test which took us through farmland and woodland before making our way to the castle for a coffee break. Seeing the herds of red and fallow deer make their way through the grounds quite literally stopped us in our tracks but was a memorable moment. We didn't have much time for the stop as we were running out of time after a mishap earlier in the morning so we were in quite a hurry, much to dad's disappointment so he didn't get the delicious honey-baked bacon butty. Later, on one regularity we got completely lost and when we realised we had missed one of the checkpoints I thought we could be really smart and take a shortcut to get back round to it. Speeding up a sin-

gle lane road, we came face-to-face with another crew who were equally lost and going in the opposite direction to us, only they nearly ended up in the tree and us in the hedge. My heart had nearly leapt out of my chest at this point and when we drove back to try and rejoin the regularity we were so late that it really didn't make any difference to our score! The last regularity was through sleet, rain and hairpins challenging us right to the very end.

At the end of day three we had a celebratory Sunday lunch back at Slaley Hall, with everyone congratulating each other on excellent and entertaining driving. We were pleasantly surprised to pick up an award for 2nd in class. Well done to father and daughter, Paul and Sophie, who won the whole event, especially with it being Sophies first ever event and first time in the rally car.

It was a truly enjoyable experience, from meeting people who I had heard about in previous conversations from my parents, visiting beautiful parts of the country and historic castles, to the competitive element where we actually came fastest in class on some sections which we were really proud of!

Dad is delighted that we didn't fall out with each other, and that he can finally chat rallies with me and know I'm actually interested to hear more. I can't wait for more events, and we've even signed up to do the Hero Challenge Three in October in the Preston area, as well as 2024's Generations Rally.

Dani Hope

Reflections

Graeme looks back at the last month

The last five weeks or so have been quite hectic considering I was on holiday for two of them!

I had two trips down to Motor Sport Valley inside a week as well. The first was to MSUK at Bicester heritage for a meeting of the Hill Climb and Sprint Committee. We meet three times a year, two by Zoom and one in person. The governing body often gets criticised but in reality, as I see it, the committees that make the rules do an excellent job. There are some very good people on our committee, and everything is debated fully. In recent years I have pushed to make it easy to get start in speed events and we have done this by having standard car classes with less PPE and also allowing teenagers to drive in standard cars. It's also great to walk round the Bicester Motion/Heritage site and see over 60 different firms there who are very welcoming.

My second trip down was for the MG & Triumph Centenary at Silverstone. A great weekend of racing, displays and meeting up with old friends. Sam Kirkpatrick was the star driver as he harried much more powerful cars around the twisty sections in the Wheatsheaf Garage MG B. Sadly, it is likely to be the last MGCC meeting as ever increasing costs are driving the true clubs out of race organisation. Even in the various MG, historic and sports car racers the majority of entrants had motorhomes, support teams and big trucks to run quite simple cars. Paul and the three grandchildren (11, 11 and 13) came on the Saturday. It was interesting the cars they wanted their photos taken with were a Gulf GT40 and a works MG Metro 6R4.

Then it was quick turnaround and off to our "Place in the Sun" in Bulgaria. Over the years the post-communist country has come on in leaps and bounds, all very noticeable in the cars being driven. It's now rare to see Lada, Trabants etc other than in the corners of villages. The new rich (Yuppyofs?) of Bulgaria like their cars big, black and German. Not SUVs but the big coupes, I've never seen so many Audi A8s for example. And Bulgarians in BMW driver like other BMW drivers!

And I got some motorsport in! The upmarket marina a couple of miles away hosted the start of the Premium Rally which headed to Sofia, Croatia and finished at the Hungaroring. In reality it was a super tour for the great and the (not so) good of Bulgaria is their super cars with a tiny bit of competition involved but lots of partying each night. Some nice cars though.

Back home in time to get to Lingholm and see David Seymour's latest car, a lovely early MG B. There was a great turnout despite a few showers and some lovely cars. The weather improved during the morning, and I went down to the Distington Show in the afternoon for an hour as well. Numbers of vehicles seem to be well down for some reason.

Membership

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

Welcome to new members

James Weir and Alison Weir	of	Cockermouth
Colin Denwood	of	Workington
Alan Hamilton	of	Penrith
Michael Waugh & Family	of	Carlisle
Sam & James Smith	of	Carlisle
Rachel and Robert McGarel	of	Aspatria
Steve and Mary Scally	of	Brigham
Frazer and Susan Graham	of	Workington
Walter Nann and Susan Rice	of	Bishop Aukland
Stephen and Kay Colclough	of	Penrith
James Dickinson and Katy Leach	of	Bolton
Liam Staples	of	Durham
Paul Webb	of	Carlisle
Scott and Joanna Graham	of	Carlisle

We look forward to meeting you at future events.

Many of our new members are coming by recommendation of current members. It is now so easy to join via the online membership system. There is also free membership for under 25s.

Go to: [Wigton Motor Club \(membermojo.co.uk\)](http://Wigton Motor Club (membermojo.co.uk))

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

Novice Regularity Rallying

It's been a long road to finally get behind the wheel of my own rally car. My father – also George – started rallying in the early 50s and was a founder member of Stonehaven & District MC in NE Scotland, so it was natural that I followed in his tyre tracks.

Navigating on road rallies – once for a certain David Gillanders (in, I think, a Mini Countryman!) – and a committee member for SDMC, was followed by stage rallying. I was reading the maps, or road books, on Scottish and British championship events with Ed Pirie in the Broadspeed Escort GT that Jimmy Rae had won the Scottish series the previous year.

When Ed gave up rallying for family life my stage events were restricted to very occasional outings, the most notable being with Jimmy McRae – who showed that he could win despite the co-driver! Then followed many years covering Scottish stage rallying in pictures and/or photos for several magazines including *Motoring News*, *Rally Sport*, *MotorScot* (Scottish Clubman) and *Autosport*.



But there was always the hankering to get back into rallying again, and as a driver. With support from my wife – whose only two previous forays into stage rallying (in the co-driver's seat during a Colin McRae Stages test day) had resulted in dramatic crashes – I started to search for something suitable during covid. And out of the blue appeared a 1966 Volvo Amazon 132. Built by Kevin Savage for renowned Dublin driver Frank Fennell, the car was used on a déjà vu touring assembly style event and two internationals, the Tulip and the Winter Trial, then went straight in Frank Fennell's museum.

I acquired it two and a half years ago and sent it back to Kevin to recommission ahead of its first event – Hero's aptly named 2022 Novice Trial. I was a novice driver; had never done a regularity before (and wasn't even 100% sure I knew the rules); and Rosalind knew even less. But thanks to the great on-event tuition provided by the Whyte sisters we finished, and surprisingly 21st. Had I been more switched on for the tests it might have been higher. My only previous autotest days were back in the mid-70s – in a Hillman Imp van with the back door flying up and down in a bid to improve visibility.

Luckily, my wife is a perfectionist and works with numbers professionally, so she quickly grasped speed tables, jogularity, mapularity et al. It's still all double Verstappen to me! We became friends with a couple from Derbyshire with a TR4 on that first event so we both decided to tackle Hero's longer and more difficult Summer Trial, based on the Lincolnshire town of Grantham. Exposed to some of the sport's leading drivers and a dramatic increase in regularity/navigation not to mention tests (including a thrash round a kart track) we were just hoping to finish. In the end it was 57 and 6th in class.

Living in France post-Brexit has its problems, not least maintaining your French residency. That's basically similar to the 90-day rule for UK residents now wanting to visit Europe. So, with a month's holiday in South Africa looming and my wife's work commitments in the UK we couldn't afford the time for more rallies.

This year was supposed to start with Rally Revival Cymru, a two-day Mold-based rally reviving the days of the *Motoring News* series. I was driving down the M6 for Mold, going via Blackpool to collect my wife from her office, and luckily stopped at Tebay. Seventeen texts and missed calls (no hands free in the Volvo and it's a tad noisy!) – the texts read "Stop. Go Home. Rally Cancelled." That was the

weekend when snow stopped play across all North Wales.



Along with our TR4 friends we'd decided to push ourselves in 2023 and had entered Hero's Scottish Malts in May. A 5-day 1000-mile round Scotland event, starting and finishing at Gleneagles, with overnight halts in Oban, Inverness (2) and Pitlochry. It was probably worth entering just for the experience of Gleneagles alone!

Flagged off from the hotel's front steps and almost immediately into the first regularity, over the site of the Battle of Sheriffmuir to Stirling. Great roads to drive but the day was not without problems when the Brantz started playing up with displays going off intermittently. So, there

was a lot of on the hoof timing calculations, some of which worked, some didn't.

It was the same with the tests – some worked, some didn't. A big lumbering Volvo was always going to get cuffed by the nimbler sports cars in our class. But at least there were no test mistakes. A highlight was the Rest and Be Thankful, unfortunately split into two tests, rather than the full blast to the hairpin. My only previous competitive drive on this climb was back in the early '70s on a Burmah Rally, little knowing at the time that a few years later I'd be on the organising team of a 3-day International Burmah as its press/publicity officer.

Having given up any hope of a class award – our class included the overall winners in a Cooper S and a handful of MGs – we decided to have our own Volvo battle. Our car is just 1780cc but in the class above were two more Amazons and a PV. The PV was on its maiden trip and beset with problems, so it was a 3-way Amazon battle, the other drivers being Ludovic, a Frenchman with extensive European and North and South American rally experience, and someone I knew from my stage rally days, Peter Holmes.



Very soon it developed into a France v Auld Alliance fight, with the more experienced crew consistently several places ahead. In fact, the only times I ever managed to overtake him – literally – was on long hill sections like the Lecht, where the sight of us effortlessly passing was invariably met with a Gallic (Garlic?) shrug. And each night the good-natured banter which always started "I do not believe that was just 1780".

But on the final leg through the glens of Angus and Perthshire his co-driver Tristan had a bad day in the office, especially over a double (or maybe it was a triple) triangle section and we went from being four places behind to finish 21st

and 7th in class, whilst they dropped back to 24th. There was barely enough time to fly back to France, leaving the Volvo with Kevin Savage to sort out the Brantz issue, and us resorting to an Allen Scythe then a ride on to get the lawns (which had almost waist high grass!) under control, than we were back in the UK.

This time it was for the Three Castles Trial, a four-day June event based on Llandudno. A new set of competitors to pit ourselves against, but again being in a class of MGs no chance of doing well. It's a great event showcasing all that's best in Welsh scenery with lunch/coffee breaks at places like Portmeirion, Lake Vyrnwy Hotel with its spectacular lake views, and a range of stately homes such as Mostyn Hall, some of which had memorable tests within their grounds. Probably the most memorable tests, however, were those around the Great Orme. Closed road and as fast as you could go.

The regularities were also great and towards the end of the rally there were zeros appearing in the results. In fact, going into the final day, we were 32nd o/a, first novice and first in class.

Then it all went horribly wrong. The day before oil had started to spray from the filler cap, covering the engine. The on-event service crew from BritAssist cleaned everything, saw nothing obvious but put on a second washer on the cap.



After the tests at Great Orme we ended back at the Prom start with BritAssist again trying to resolve the oil issue. While their efforts calmed the oil flow, it persisted all day, and by now we were running on 30 min lateness. This, of course, had to be the day we met everything on four wheels that could move. In fact we spent more time in reverse on regularities than going forward. So, by the finish we'd dropped to 37th o/a and second novice – yet, amazingly, retained the class win, beating the MGs. The car is now back with Kevin for an engine strip, and we arrived back in France to discover the heat and no rain meant the grass was very manageable.

What's next? We're back for another Hero event, Hero Challenge 3, on October 7. This one-day event is based at Garstang with a route to the north and west of there – so not far to travel.

We, and our TR4 friends (who have added an ex works replica '62 Austin Healey 3000 to the stable) may have talked ourselves into doing the RAC Rally of the Tests. We'll have to take that decision before the end of July.

And 2024 starts with the Monte Carlo Historique Rallye, starting from Glasgow to mark the 100th anniversary of that famous event's first start from the city in 1924. Before that it began in John O'Groats!!

George Topp

Example page of a regularity road book.

	Interval miles	Section miles	Landmark/Information	MPH	Inter Time (mm:ss)	Total Time (mm:ss)	For Comp Use
1	0.00	0.00	ZERO TRIP Back of Sign on Left	27	00:00	00:00	
2	0.16	0.16	Back of Sign on Right		00:21	00:21	
3	0.07	0.23	Hobbit House on Left		00:09	00:31	
4	0.36	0.59	Metal Post on Right		00:48	01:19	
5	0.12	0.71	Footpath Sign on Left		00:16	01:35	
6	0.16	0.87	Pylon on Left		00:21	01:56	
7	0.13	1.00	Flagpole on Right		00:17	02:13	
8	0.15	1.15	Green Post on Left		00:20	02:33	
9	0.21	1.36	BUCKNELL	20	00:28	03:01	
10	0.15	1.51	"Homelands Farm" on Left		00:27	03:28	
11	0.17	1.68	Junction: Give Way, Straight On Care!		00:31	03:59	
12	0.03	1.71	Red Postbox on Left		00:05	04:04	
13	0.11	1.82	Bench on Left		00:20	04:24	
14	0.04	1.86	Ornate Lamp Post on Left		00:07	04:31	
15	0.22	2.08	National Speed Limit Signs Both Sides X	27	00:40	05:11	
16	0.15	2.23	Metal Gate on Right		00:20	05:31	
17	0.22	2.45	Field Entrance on Right		00:29	06:00	
18	0.07	2.52	Wooden Post on Left		00:09	06:10	

Technical Interest

Types of Engine Layouts



Radial Engine



Inline Engine



Wankel Engine



W-Engine



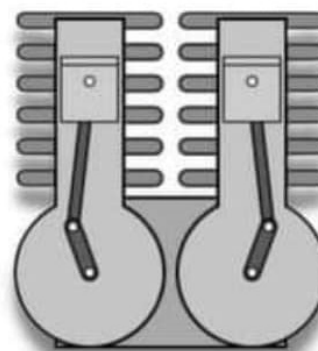
V-Engine



Flat Engine



X-Engine



U-Engine



Blame the Nissan Qashqai for the end of the world

We were blissfully unaware of a lot of terrible things in the late 1990s. Al Qaeda, Facebook, subprime mortgages, the multi-platinum boyband Blue, all of which had a significant destabilising effect on the western world for the next couple of decades. But atop this list still sits the real catalyst of our impending societal collapse, the single most damaging creation of the new millennium: the Nissan Qashqai.

Flashback again to the Nineties, a golden era for the motor car, when petrol was cheap, cylinders plentiful and microchips only really the concern of middle-aged men still living with their mums. These were the days of the McLaren F1, the Lamborghini Diablo and Ferrari F50. But also of the Renault Clio Williams, VR6 Golf and Subaru Impreza WRX STi. It was an age of ambition but also inclusivity; performance for all. And not a soft-roader in sight.

Meanwhile, in a murky boardroom in the Parisian suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt, Renault CEO and escapology enthusiast Carlos Ghosn was hatching a plan that would result, in a matter of a few short years, in a paradigm shift in automotive design, the effects of which would lay waste to the entire motoring landscape forevermore.

Renault had signed a partnership with Nissan with the objective of radically overhauling its tired European product portfolio. Initial attempts at creating another hatchback would soon be abandoned in favour of an entirely new concept: a compact pseudo-off roader. Project P32L aimed to offer the styling, presence and thereby cachet of a 4×4 within the footprint of a more conventional five-door hatch. Nonsense, clearly.

What would become the Qashqai was first unveiled to an unsuspecting public at the 2004 Geneva Motor Show, daft enough with its suicide doors and cumbersome Noughties concept styling to fool us all into thinking there was no-way the newly formed Renault-Nissan Alliance would actually build it. Two years later, there it was.

The name Qashqai seemed like a joke at our expense. The Nissan Cashcow? And so it would prove to be. The Qashqai, whose name actually belongs to some Iranian nomads, quickly began to move with a mania Nissan's rapidly revamped plant in Tyne and Wear could barely keep abreast of. There had been 'compact crossovers' before, such as the Toyota RAV4, but they didn't capture the public imagination across Europe in the same way the Qashqai did. The first-generation model sold almost 1.25 million units in Europe alone in its seven-year life cycle. Ghosn and his cronies had played a blinder, and in the process not just opened but ripped the lid clean from the Pandora's box.

The original Qashqai hit its insipid brief to perfection. It was economical, affordable, practical and boring, with no rational justification for its existence. And in that, it was also the progenitor of a curious epiphany that ordinary folk had not realised they were about to have. For what the Qashqai did was convince a world of unquestioning saloon and hatchback drivers that what they really needed in their lives was a boil-washed faux-by-four. Two decades later, it's an idea that still hasn't gone away, that has spread, virus-like, to preoccupy the minds of buyers and therefore designers for every major car manufacturer in the world.

The Qashqai was a sea-change for the worse. Like all SUVs/soft-roaders/whatever, its excessive mass and tall centre of gravity meant it handled hopelessly compared to the hatchbacks it failed to better in terms of practicality or, indeed, off-road ability. Fuel economy was also hampered by the increased weight and drag inherent in any such design. All it had in its favour was what motoring journalists quickly chose to refer to as a 'commanding driving position', meaning an extra inch or so of seat height and marginally improved forward visibility. That last, and the amorphous and highly debatable

‘desirability’ that came with such disingenuous off-road status, struck an inexplicable chord.

A groundswell of copycat product followed in the Qashqai’s wake, and with it a near-universal acceptance from Joe Public. The industry quickly dug in and every conceivable small and medium-sized hatchback was soon available with a jacked-up ride height, a stupid name and bigger price tag. There are too many to list today, besides which, every trunk road, residential street and car park attests to the fact. But Volkswagen serves as a useful exemplar, with the ascending scale of Taigo, T-Roc, T-Cross, Tiguan and Touareg, the meaningful difference between the first three only really determinable by clairvoyants and VW press officers.

Meanwhile, the saloon was quietly being put to the sword and even the ubiquitous city car earmarked for extinction. Ford of Europe announced in April of this year that it is dropping the three-door Fiesta, a car that has been keeping the regular British motorist moving for 45 years. What are people buying instead? You guessed it...

What the Qashqai did was land upon a winning formula that simultaneously ruined the car industry while deftly accelerating mankind’s premature demise. Creating a fashion for large, inefficient cars as the spectre of global warming morphed into climate change and a full-blown climate crisis, Nissan was running gleefully onto the fist of Fate. And everyone else simply followed suit.



Now in its third generation and grown unrecognisably from the dumpy little novelty act of 16 years ago, the Qashqai continues to shift hundreds of thousands of units worldwide each year as just another generic lifestyle statement alongside the scores of identikit products it has inspired. Today, SUVs account for roughly half of all car sales in Europe at precisely the moment when everything they represent – excessive size, consumption and emissions – has become plain wrong thinking.

The public gets what the public wants, and it wanted the Qashqai. But almost two decades in, this hollow edifice of style over substance has at best set the evolution of the car back for generations, at worst created an existential crisis from which it will never recover. With fuel in increasingly short and pricey supply, the appetite for internal combustion all but lost and the path to electrification effectively enshrined, the ubiquity of the SUV is as ridiculous as it real. Up a blind alley and running out of time to reverse, we have the Qashqai to thank.

Courtesy of Hagerty.

Marshals' Post

Just a reminder that we need 6 more marshals for the Blue Streak Targa, SMC's main event on August 13th. This test is north of Brampton. Eddie Parson's looks forwards to hearing from you! eddieparsons5@icloud.com

Again we need loads of Marshals for the Show on the 20th. Drop Graeme a message on gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

Motor House News

The CCTV is installed and just needs activating fully and the AV system will be installed this month. This will allow us to have videos playing and also to do instructional programme

We have the Cars & BBQ coming up on the 11th and then the August Cars and Coffee is on the first Sunday of the month this time.

Many of you will have seen the feature on the Club on the current issue of **Cumbria Life**. We will have copies of it to be displayed in the Motor House.

Autojumble

Many items come and go without hitting these pages as we match sales and wants by email. There are some MG B parts in the Motor House at the moment. Several front wings, both new and used, and six with wheels with knobbly tyres on.

We also have a stock of **race/rally competition numbers** at just £1 per digit.

WMC Clothing continues to fly off the shelves. We do carry a certain amount to stock in the Motor House as samples and we put in orders depending on demand. We even have dog coats which the best dressed canines are wearing this year.

Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

I've spent today watching the British Touring Car Championship meeting from Thruxton circuit. It's fair to say most of it was entertaining but the most obvious fact was that the least professional classes of racing, the minis, were head and shoulders above the others when it came to spectator value. Strange that the multi million pound teams with their technically advanced machines can't hold a candle to the little cars which have been around for over 60 years. I'd like to bet no more than 3 or 4 BTCC cars would be more valuable than the entire mini grid, it's a bit like Carlisle United giving Manchester City a sound thrashing in a football match.

Moving on, a couple of points regarding F1. First, at Monaco Leclerc in his Ferrari blocked Norris in his McLaren going through the tunnel during final qualifying so that the McLaren driver lost what was potentially his best lap which could well have moved him up the grid for the race, a vital advantage on this narrow track. Quite rightly Leclerc was penalised and lost 3 grid places for his misdemeanour, but Norris gained nothing from this as the Ferrari was still ahead of him on the grid. How about if this happens again then the two cars involved swap places at the race start? Seems fairer to me.

Second, the race strategy used by the Alpine team in the Azerbaijan race. Basically their only hope of achieving any championship points involved going to the very last lap of the event before making their mandatory pit stop to change tyres. This was done in the hope that a safety car or red flag would give them a pit stop without costing them any time and therefore moving them into the lower positions in the top ten where they would gain something to show on the points table. The safety car or red flag didn't happen so the end result was that almost half the field were trapped behind the two Alpines for a huge chunk of the race, forming an orderly queue and only being "allowed" to race during the last few miles. Ridiculous!

Never mind, I think anyone who watches the Silverstone Grand Prix live In July is in for a treat. You see, the trials to select the British Athletics team for the world championships are taking place on the same weekend and we've opted to be in the stadium in Manchester. I just hope you'll all be grateful as you watch a race that will no doubt go down in history as one of the greatest.

And finally it's been interesting to read and hear about the problems which are starting to rear their heads regarding the proposed rush to electric cars taking over our world. Apparently we, up here in the forgotten land of peasants, known as the North have one public charging point per 85 cars, much worse than the ratio in the sainted South. There are problems with battery manufacture and tariffs not to mention where the income lost from petrol and diesel sales will come from. Chickens coming home to roost I think, ironic when we're being led by headless examples of the breed when it comes to the future of vehicle planning.

Ends
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