

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 2024/03

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

March 2024

Cars & Coffee

Resume on March 10th

10 until 12

Motor House

CA13 0QE



White Heather Rally 2024

Sat 23rd March at Kirkbride Airfield, Wigton

More tests - No reversing - No 360's
all flowing tests round the airfield

Regs on wigtonmc.co.uk
Entries now open on rallyscore.net

All meals and usual White Heather hospitality included

For Members By Members

WMC Committee

OFFICIALS

<i>President:.</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>	
<i>Vice Pres.</i>	<i>Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,</i>	
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Please ensure that you contact the appropriate official on the correct email address.

Major Events This Year

Drive It Day	April	21st
Goodwood Members meeting	April	13/14 th
John Peel Meander	May	8th
Getaway to Galloway	May	19th
Barbon Hill Climb	June	15 th
Spadeadam M C Classic Show	June	30 th
Durham A C Raby Castle Classic Show	June	30 th
British Grand Prix	July	5/7 th
Barbon Hill Climb	July	13 th
The Car's the Star Show	July	14 th
Goodwood Festival of Speed	July	11/14 th
S M C Blue Steak Targa	Aug	11 th
Croft Historic Festival	Aug	10/11th
Silverstone Classic Festival	Aug	23/25 th
Rose & Thistle Tour	Aug	17th
Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show	Aug	18th
Goodwood Revival	Sept	6/8 th
Solway Historic Rally	Oct	27th

Driving Motorsport Forward

What's On

March

- 6th Ferrari Film Show at the Kirkgate centre, Cockermouth
- 8/9 Malcolm Wilson Rally
- 10th **Cars & Coffee at the Motor House 10-12**
- 22/23 North West Stages at Garstang
- 23rd **White Heather Tests**

April

- 7th SoSCC Targa
- 13th Flying Scotsman Rally at Kirkbride **WMC Marshalling**
- 13th VSCC Scottish Trial at Coulter
- 14th **Cars & Coffee at the Motor House 10-12**
- 21st **Drive It Day at Dalemain 11 until 1**
- 28th **Autosolo**

May

- 4th **First Aid Course at the Motor House.**



Ferrari (15)

4th March 2024 8:00pm (Doors open at 7:00 pm)
Kirkgate Centre

Wigton MC Members discount code "Wigton" when you order online.

Category: Film

Set during the summer of 1957. Ex-racecar driver, Enzo Ferrari, is in crisis. Bankruptcy stalks the company he and his wife, Laura, built from nothing ten years earlier. Their tempestuous marriage struggles with the mourning for one son and the acknowledgement of another. He decides to counter his losses by rolling the dice on one race – 1,000 miles across Italy, the iconic Mille Miglia.

'the racing sequences are thrillingly visceral.' Iana Murray – Empire Magazine

Starring: Adam Driver; Penelope Cruz; Shailene Woodley

Director: Michael Mann

130 minutes

Talking Point

Topical Comment on Motoring & Motorsport

What do you call 144 Woke people? Gross intolerance!

It seems so sad that these days there are so many people who feel they have the right to decide what other people do, say or think? It is even getting into our hobby now.

The town of Abingdon in Oxfordshire was home to the manufacturing of MG cars from the 1920s until 1981. The local people are proud of that fact. The MG Midget was the name given to the smallest MG in the range during most of that time. In the 1930s the “Magic Midget” broke land speed records for 750cc and 1000 cc cars. In the 1970s a new pub was built in the town and named the Magic Midget. It was even opened by Lord Stokes, and has lots of MG Midget photos on the wall. The “Midget” became a very popular pub with locals and the brewery shortened the name on the sign to “Midget.”

Come 2024 and some woke folk decided to taken exception to the name, without either finding out its history, or using a dictionary, on the basis it demeans people of small stature. They never bothered to visit the pub. They started an on-line petition to have the pub name changed. Fortunately, local people and MG owners fought back with their own petition which so far has got many more signatures on it.

Nearer home the extremely woke “Friends of the Lake District” have for years objected to anything progressive in the National Park. Most of them don’t even live here, but they are now spreading their wings and objecting to the upgrading of the A66 from Penrith to Scotch Corner to dual carriageway. Now we all know of the almost daily delays, accidents, injuries or worse on that road. The “Fiends” answer is that authorities should just reduce traffic levels on the A66.

You couldn’t make it up!

My reply to them is stay in London or where ever they live , and don’t come up the A66 at all! It’s so sad that these woke folk have nothing better to do with their lives.

The membership renewal process is not completed with a very high rate of return and no less than 40 new members this year alone. No doubt once the events and Cars & Coffee get going we will see more new members and a few old ones who have so far forgotten or renew.

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

Committee Meeting Feb 21st

There is just one place left on the First Aid Course

The search for land continues.

The first radio controlled car has been bought.

Jaqui Raine is going to be our second Safe Guarding Officer.

The design of the set of promotional boards were nearly complete.

The **White Heather Targa** was all set to run on March 23rd.

Drive It Day on April 21st (12 marshals needed)

John Peel Meander, entries now open

Classic Show, There will be a Graham Martin Memorial Trophy for best car. Kids treasure hunt and other attractions. Disabled access was discussed.

First **Cars & Coffee** on March 10th. Trial of the AV presentation

Autosolo. Has to be moved as another club had moved onto our date. Now on April 28th

Awards Lunch will be a BBQ on May 12th.

Membership: plenty of new members joining. It was agreed to keep the membership fee at £20 for 2025.

It was agreed to get additional keys for the Motor House.

The Clothing advert will be updated with the latest items.

Marshalling: In addition to our own events we were doing three tests on the Flying Scotsman.

Next meeting March 20th



motor
sport
UK

Recognised
Club

Club News & Events



£28



jacket £30

sizes from small to 4 XL

davidwagnew@aol.com

**rect at
2023**

PG Tips

Peter Reflects On His Month



Well the Marcos fascination may well be over! Days before I was due to travel down to see the LM500 fitted with a fairly trick 5.3 Rover V8 it sold. The only other (lesser) LM sold a few weeks before it. The only other wide-bodied Marcos left on the market for less than £40k was a rather fetching blue Mantis. For those not up on their left-field British sports cars of yesteryear, the Mantis looks the same as an LM but was fitted with a Ford 4.6 V8 (known as Ford modular engine). The press say the Mantis was rated at 352bhp which is more than an LM but the performance figures didn't reflect it

and the Mantis was a bit heavier.

I had already arranged to be away that day, so I drove down to Aylesbury to drive it at a race car place called Top Cats racing. I took daughter Heidi with me and as soon as we arrived we could see the Mantis parked facing us at the entrance of the place and she exclaimed "you have to buy that dad!" It was an incredible looking car, like something out of a science fiction movie and firing up the big V8, it also sounded good. Then I drove it. The clutch was very heavy, the accelerator had about 12" of travel and the steering wheel meant I couldn't see the main gauges, in fact visibility all round was pretty terrible!

Top Cats is on an old airfield industrial site and speeds are limited so whilst I wasn't able to give the car a really good run out, I was able to floor it a few times and it's fair to say the acceleration was disappointing for something that allegedly weighs 1100kg and has over 300bhp. I think my Astra would probably have outrun it. I was later to discover Marcos only ever claimed 315bhp despite what press reviews quoted and someone had tested one on a rolling road recently and it had 285bhp. The owner was present and was keen to sell, but categorically stated he would not accept less than £35k which finished it for me.

It is possible to supercharge the modular engine and it's a common upgrade in the US, but over here it would set me back another 5 figure sum. Top Cats racing itself was a fascinating place – rammed full of TVRs, Marcos race cars, Lamborghinis and various American muscle cars. The 2 owners both compete in GT racing and the wife of the couple who own it, Charlotte Gilbert, is the current GT champion in a Lamborghini in the GTC class, she previously won it with a Marcos Mantis fitted with a Corvette engine.

On the way home for good measure Heidi and I stopped off in Shropshire and drove a Maserati 4200 Gransport which was a fantastic looking coupe with a Ferrari derived V8. The engine sounded phenomenal and it was rapid, even the flappy paddle gearbox worked well with fast clunk free changes. It wasn't the convertible I'd really been wanting but I was very keen to own this car. On the way home Heidi piped up and informed me that whilst she'd liked the Maserati it just looked like a normal car

and if it didn't have Maserati badges no one would know. Yep, I thought, she is actually right and if I am only buying one expensive toy it needs to be something a bit more stand out than a 4 seat coupe even one with a Ferrari engine! I still quite hanker after a Gransport, but I need to get the right open top car for the summer first, so the search goes on! Maybe a Maserati convertible is the way forward... who knows.

One more thing I learned on my journey South is that the traffic just keeps getting worse, the road works more dense and driving standards falling ever further. It seems that deliberately undertaking on clogged motorways is now a common thing and people sitting in the middle lane for mile after mile just as common. All in all it made me glad to live in Cumbria, even if our roads are crumbling!

Peter

Drive It Day

Sunday, April 21st

At Dalemain

11 until 2

**Start the Season By Celebrating The Right To
Drive Your Classic Car!**

£5 donation per car to our charities

Jig Saw Hospice and West Cumbria Carers

**Scrutineering for Race, Speed, Rally cars,
plus helmet stickers**

At the White Heather on March 23rd from 10.30

You must book a place by emailing

contact@wigtonmc.co.uk

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

My avid reader will recall we got as far as the Raylor Rally last month in the 1978 Castrol Autosport Championship. Next along was the Aberdeen and District MC Granite City Rally on 22nd April and we stayed at the Treetops Hotel which was also rally HQ and were seeded at 7 behind Nigel Rockey, Charles Samson, Tony Pond, Andy Dawson, Andrew Cowan and Brian Culcheth. After the 08.30 start on the Saturday we had a good start on Stage 1, 2 secs behind quickest Andrew Cowan and on the second stage most top runners cleaned so a wasted effort. Stage 3 Clashindarroch saw Tony Pond move into the lead in the TR7 V8 and with us 3 secs behind. On stage 4, The Bin, we were 7 seconds off and Stage 5, Balloch Wood was cancelled for poor route definition. So after 5 stages only 3 times were to count and we were then lying 9 secs down on Pond but on the next stage all changed. The eight miles of Aultmore saw Cowan go off down a big hole, Tim Brise went a long way off with brake failure and we had terminal gearbox failure with a broken first motion shaft, so we had no drive and game over. Ivor Clark/Avenger had a good run to second in Group One behind Terry Kabby/Dolomite. The organisers got a panning with several stages not counting due to being cleaned by many and one with poor definition. We were still leading the championship but Nigel Rockey was snapping at Malcolm's heels after finishing second here to Tony Pond.

Our next event was the non- championship Weatherill Centurion Rally as Malcolm had been offered the ex-works Andy Dawson Datsun Violet entered by Oates Garage of Willington. Held in the North East on 27th May the Datsun was all new to us and there had been no seat time prior to the event. Our times on the first two tarmac stages on Albermarle were understandable off the pace and the first forest stage saw us have a time consuming (4 minute) off in the unfamiliar Datsun. Thereafter we had five consecutive fastest times and two seconds but no chance of a claw back and we finished 10th in an interesting car.



In the early months of 1978 Malcolm was becoming hot property and Terry Oates of Oates Datsun was one of a number of teams making offers to get him on board. So much so that Oates entered us in a Group 2 Datsun Sunny in Class 5 on the Scottish which appeared in the official event programme. Unfortunately the car didn't appear from DAD as vital spare parts didn't materialise in time so the entry was pulled. Oates still has a plan to run a car for the balance of '78 and '79 from Andy Dawson with Andy as fall back driver. In the meantime Stuart Pegg (remember him as Roger Clark's co driver

er in the winning WRC RAC Rally 'Cossack Hairspray' Escort in 1976) was assessing Malcolm's

potential with an entry on the Welsh International with Pegg co-driving. They retired while lying 7th on stage 25 but not before Stuart was impressed enough to have further plans for Malcolm. Accordingly Malcolm's entry for the Scottish became an ex-works John Taylor Escort prepared by Andy Dawson's DAD Team and we ran at number 17. The entry was very strong with Hannu Mikkola, Escort at 1, Russell Brookes, Escort at 2, Markku Alen, 131 at 3, Pentti Airikkala, Chevette at 4, Roger Clark, Escort at 5, Kyosto Hamalainen, Escort at 6, Tony Pond TR7 V8 at 7, followed by Andy Dawson, John Taylor, Jimmy McRae with quality names going way down the field. Ivor Clark had Ken Wilson in the Avenger at 24 and was a strong contender in Group 1 and up for a spot of giant killing as usual. Punctures are a common issue in Scottish forests and we had two in the first few stages. Mikkola went into a lead he was to hold to the finish with Alen, Clark and Brookes haggling over 2nd place. We soaked up the punctures and set off to get amongst the leaders, no easy task among such elevated company. Ivor had two radiators fail and a fan but got it resolved until the finish. The dust was a real problem and the midges were as bad as Scottish ones usually are.

After 4 stages we were lying in 10th place and by stage 9 after some excellent 2nd and 3rd best times were up to 5th place at the lunch halt at Edzell a position we still held after 15 stages and the 53 minute supper control at Perth. The hours of darkness are short in Scotland in June but the organisers managed to fit in a further 9 stages before the Crianlarich control at 04.00. We were swapping times with Roger Clark and briefly moved ahead to 4th before reverting to 5th at this halt 6 secs behind him.



Another seven stages took us to breakfast at Tyndrum at 08.30 where the running order was Hannu Mikkola leading on 143.12, second Markku Alen in the factory 131 on 146.44 and in a magnificent third place was Malcolm two seconds behind Alen after 31 demanding stages. On the first stage after breakfast we clipped a rock and the track control arm was replaced by the service crew afterwards. Into Stage 33 Glen Righ we went off with sufficient damage to force retirement, a bitter end to a great

run. Malcolm's award was the Drive of The Rally – well deserved. Rally results were :- 1st Mikkola 2ND Arikkala, 3rd Roger Clark, 4th John Taylor, 5th Graham Elsmore, 6th Drew Gallagher and 7th Russell Brookes - great competition indeed.

These last two events were not Castrol Autosport Championship events so next month we'll continue with that series.

Don't forget to get your entry in for the John Peel Meander.

Ron

Membership

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

Welcome to new members

Roly Williams & Alison Blenkarn	of	Penrith
Andrew & Sheila Bottomley	of	Grange
Dave & Alfie Sharp	of	Hull
David Martin	of	Penrith
Matthew Sommerville	of	Dalston
John Walton & Dinah Smith	of	Lamonby
Matthew Burton & Mega Stakim	of	Carlisle
Ian Lawman	of	Hesket New Market
Kevin Barton	of	Uldale
Peter Rodgerson	of	Plumpton
John McDonald	of	Carlisle
Jennie Glover & Philip Taylor	of	Kirkbampton
Lewis Thompson	of	Carlisle
Martin Lewis	of	Carlisle

M-SPORT CAREERS



ALL VACANCIES CAN BE VIEWED ONLINE AT:

WWW.M-SPORT.CO.UK

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

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

Show News

The **Classic Show** has been going for over 30 years now from humble beginnings in Carlisle to the 800 cars we now limit it to at Dalemain. The organisation runs like a well oiled machine which more or less takes place all year. Each September we have a debriefing meeting to see if anything can be improved. Then in the autumn we meet with the Dalemain Estates folk to see if they have any issues and also agree dates for both the Show and D.I.D. the following year.



Early in the year we decide on the theme for that year's show in terms of invited marques and for any changes to the layout of the parkland. The entry forms for the vehicles, clubs and trade stands are all checked and sent out to past entrants and then go on the website.

There is a lot of other paper work to deal with, risk assessments, safety plans, autotest permit, public liability insurance, which is an ever increasing amount and then booking loos, barriers, PA etc.

Overall there are about eight of us directly involved in various aspects of the show and more of the committee and other members get involved as we get nearer the show date. Typically we have about 70 folk signed-on on the day plus our Rotary friends in the car park.

As we have cars in action (on the autotest) we have to get exemption from the "Dangerous Driving in a Public Place" legislation which was brought in some years ago to stop boy racers flying around public cars parks. It was realised that this could apply to any motorsport events, so any events authorised by Motor Sport UK, or another of the listed organisations, were exempt. As our events are run under MSUK regulations we are covered.

The food concessions have to be booked at the start of the year. We are lucky in that we have had the same nine food and drink concessions for many years, they always pay in advance and are very reliable. We now have a number of our members trained in First Aid and we have another course coming up, we also book a First Aid team, using one of the motorsport rescue crews.

More next month.



Our theme for this year is French and German cars.

Getting started in **Autosolos**



What you need:

A road registered car.

A MSUK Club Sport licence
(free)

Autosolos are the idea way to start in motor sport.

A sinuous course between pairs of cones is laid out usually on tarmac but grass can also be used.

The pairs of cones are marked as “gates” with two other cones on their side pointing into the gate.

You are timed over the course but there are penalties for hitting cones or taking the wrong route.

During the event the course may be used several times, reversed or altered .

Clubs can choose the classes based on the size of car, age of

the car etc

Junior drivers can take part if accompanied by an adult.

Entry fees are from £20 to £30 .

Cars can have more than one driver.

On Autosolos the competitors also marshal on the tests when not competing. This makes a greater sense of involvement.

Why not have ago at the first round of our Autosolo series on April 28th.

With Wigton Motor Club



**Recognised
Club**

The future of rallying

What is the purpose of rallying?

At an amateur level it is all about fun and enjoyment. Taking part in an event against fellow enthusiasts. Like all rallying, it was rooted in events that were a test of the car's reliability and the crews' skills. As cars became more dependable the speed element became the most important aspect. For environmental and safety reasons the competitive parts of events are usually held on private land or closed roads. However club level stage rallying is in decline due to the prohibitive cost of competing and the lack of venues. Targa and road events are much cheaper and within the finances of most people but finding venues is still the biggest issue. Where clubs have fewer competing members and no venues then either the club withers or moves on to something else.

At a professional level rallying was a way of proving the reliability and then speed of your product, going right back to the 1,000 Mile Trials. However from about the 1980s the cars being used became less and less related to road cars. Manufacturers were using the sport to create an image of their car as a sporting vehicle. While Group B was not safe, it was spectacular and drew in the crowds. The early WRC cars, like Ford, Mitsubishi, Subaru etc of the 90s did at least look like road cars.

Current WRC cars with so much aero packs etc all look the same. Paint them all white and it is difficult to tell them apart.



Do manufacturers use rallying to sell cars? There seems to be little in terms of advertising based in rallying success. For example, our local Hyundai dealership is owned by the Edgar family who have been involved with racing for three generations and have three rising stars. However go in the showroom and you will see nothing about rallying.

TV coverage. This is dreadful and mainly an hour on ITV4 a few days after the event. As the coverage is funded by the three teams, only 8 cars get filmed. To the uninitiated you would not know there may be 80 cars on the event, you don't even see the size of the service area. Coverage gets really bad if several of the cars retired. There were a couple of events with just five WRC1 cars left. The filming and commentary and interviews are all poor. There is no atmosphere. We will have the BRC on ITV4 this year but is the product good enough?



Safety. Rallying seems to have had more serious or fatal accidents in recent years, where as racing has very few in comparison. The big difference is that race circuits have large areas of run off, gravel or soft walls whereas rallying has solid objects, trees or drops, at the road edge. The biggest change in all motorsports over the years is that the difference in straight line speed and cornering speed has reduced. Road holding has been the biggest overall improve

ment on all cars. Thus if a car loses grip on a corner the kinetic energy is huge as it heads towards the scenery. Rally cars now have to be immensely strong to withstand the impact and protect the occupants.

In order to promote something you have to have a good product to sell to host cities, TV channels and also the manufacturers. At the moment the cars are too far away from road cars to be promotable for manufacturers and dealers. Does any manufacturer or dealers actively promote the rallying success of Toyota or Hyundai?

It is increasingly difficult to find areas or indeed countries that wish to host a WRC round or indeed a BRC round. Very often the benefits of having a round are grossly over exaggerated. It's not just a rallying problem. The Commonwealth Games, Tour of Britain cycle race find it difficult to get money from local or national governments. The sport has to cut its costs and finance itself.



Sustainability: Any motorsport is going to be subject to criticism where fuel is used at the point of action. Using non fossil fuels would be the answer as just about any sport or pastime uses fuel in other ways, even if it's just spectators going to football matches. We need to use longer lasting tyres, even if they provide less grip. Tyre degradation is a pollutant.

What is the answer? A new promoter. Run the WRC for Rally 2 cars, more manufacturers and cars that privateers can afford. Also the best privateers

can challenge the works cars and make their mark. Rallies should not be based in one place. The route should cover a wide area. There is no need for huge service trucks and mobile workshops. There should be MTCs in major cities and at least two spectator stage at circuits or parks each day. We need more personalities in the drivers.

GTF



Club News



ONLY ONE PLACE LEFT

First Aid Course



The club is hoping to organise a first aid course at the Motor House next spring.

It will be presented by one of the motorsport rescue units with an emphasis on motorsport first aid.

**Saturday
4th May**

Would you be interested?

Maximum group size 10

contact eddieparsons5@icloud.com to register your interest



New STOP Boards for our Targa rallies

Membership Benefits from **Wigton Motor Club**

Your membership gets you:

£10 discount off the entry fee for our main tours and rallies.

Free entry for exhibitors at the Classic & Motorsport Show

Free entry to the monthly Cars & Coffee

Free entry to the pub runs (you pay only for the food)

Start Line, our award winning magazine each month.

Wheel Spin bulletins in the middle of the month.

Active social media pages.

Access to experts in all areas of motorsport & classic cars.

Entry invitations to events in Scotland and the north of England.

Just £20 p.a. to cover all family members in one household



we're looking for Marshals

for



The White Heather Rally

Saturday March 23rd
at Kirkbride Airfield



We need lots of volunteers to help run our Historic and Targa Rally.

A full day rallying completely within the airfield perimeter
with a full meal package for all marshals.

Flying Scotsman Rally

Saturday April 13th
Kirkbride Airfield

We have been asked to run three tests on this year's
Flying Scotsman so we will need plenty of marshals.
A great opportunity to see some fantastic pre 1948 cars
driven spiritedly through the tests.

First cars will be expected at 10am and we need marshals for all three
tests which should be completed by lunchtime

If you are able to help please contact eddieparsons5@icloud.com
PLEASE STATE -WHITE HEATHER - FLYING SCOTSMAN OR BOTH

Jottings

The new F1 season kicks off this weekend. Each year it seems to be come more like a soap opera. I might be cynical but is it not all typical American hype to get more viewers? Looking at the list of events, I see China is back; why? Then we have the Gulf countries; Bahrain, population 1.46 million; Qatar, population 2.6 million and Abu Dhabi, population 1.45 million. Only Saudi Arabia has 10.4 million but had a dreadful environmental record on the creation of Dubai. The United States has paid to have three GPs, surely one is more than enough? Then we have the various tinpot dictatorships like Azerbaijan with just 10.4 million folk.

Now Manchester has a population of 2.8 million – should it not have a GP? And yet countries like Germany and France, two of the first countries of host GPs and with a long history of participation and with current teams racing, do not have races.

Nearer home the BTCC is struggling for numbers this year as economic pressures bite and fewer drivers can raise the £400,000 needed to buy a drive. It's not just the BTCC, other series also have a drop in numbers as they rely on pay to race drivers. Sadly over the years racing has come to rely on the basis of "the clowns at the circus pay to perform" rather than the show being good enough to attract enough spectators to allow starting money and prize money to fund good grids with a wide variety of cars entered. That was always the case in the great days of club racing at the likes of Croft and Ingliston where there were really entertaining meetings.

A recent feature on the BBC news was about cars getting bigger and not fitting in parking spaces and there are a couple social media pages of photos of badly parked cars. Someone with too much time on their hands has made a table of the "culprits" in the photos and the top three are Range Rover, BMW and Mercedes followed by other big SUVs. I have some sympathy as even with the Octavia some spaces can be a bit narrow and if there is a fairly deserted car park straddling two spaces is reasonable if the have a big SUV with big doors.

Cars will continue to grow due to EVs. Due to the size and weight of batteries they have to lie flat in the bottom of the car to get the centre of gravity low to aid handling. At the same time, the size of the battery is not fully dependant on the size of the car, so small cars need only slightly smaller batteries than a typical mid-sized SUV.

It seems no one wants a second hand EV with trade in prices showing a huge loss on three or four years. I heard a tale recently that a customer went into a Nissan dealer to swap his Leaf for an ICE and the salesmen went and hid in the toilets!

GTF

Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

My cousin Alison, a single lady in her seventies fits most people's definition of a "green aware" sort of person. She won't fly anymore, she adopts retired greyhounds and lavishes them with love and attention during their final years, she has locally grown vegetables delivered weekly and walks wherever possible to help save the planet, and yet she recently appeared in "Auto Express" magazine, and I quote.

"The main deterrent is (an EV's) unknown lifespan as neither batteries or complex software are known for their longevity. If an EV is junk, years before it's ICE equivalent, that is hardly ecologically sound either."

So there we are, my eco warrior, dog loving, tree hugging cousin sees problems in EV's which the so called clued up modern whiz kids can't. I think she'll stick with her seven years old VW Caddy (ideal for greyhound transport) for the foreseeable future.

I was recently in a model shop and spotted a model which caused me to shout out "it's the Frere car", my wife jumped and the shop owner obviously thought a lunatic was on the premises. "Hm" you may think but let me explain.



When I was a child my literary diet consisted of the "Beano," "Dandy," and "Tiger" comics plus the annual offerings of either the "Broons" or "Our Willie". Yes "Black Beauty", "Treasure Island" and various "Biggles" books had been bought, and ignored, and I suspect my mother, an avid reader was beginning to despair at her sons inability to concentrate for more than five minutes on anything that didn't have pictures and speech bubbles.

Now one day, aged about twelve I was on my way home from school and was in Thurnams stationery and book shop in Lonsdale Street Carlisle, (now long gone more's the pity). Looking round, a book caught my eye, a book with a beautiful red, number 11, racing car on the cover. It was "From Starting Grid to Chequered Flag" the autobiography of the late Belgium racing driver and journalist Paul Frere. I thumbed through it, lots of writing and a few photographs, I was hooked.

That night Mother was delighted to give me the necessary 3/6d (17.5p to younger readers) so I could buy a BOOK. The next day after school it was mine, and I devoured every word in it especially the final chapter covering his victory at Le Mans in

1960 sharing a Ferrari (the one on the book cover) with Olivier Gendebien. That Christmas there were more books "The Fast Ones" by Peter Miller and "Champion Year" the story of Mike Hawthorn's 1958 Grand Prix season, and the seeds of a lifetime of reading were well and truly sown.

I've still got those books plus hundreds of others and I treasure them all, but if the house burnt down and only one could be saved, well Paul Frere's would have to be it. I was a very lucky lad the day I spotted it, as it was the key to the door that opened and gave me a lifelong passion for motor sport.

Oh yes, do you really need to ask if I bought the model? I doubt it.

Ends AA.