

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

# Start Line

Issue 11/19

[www.wigtonmc.co.uk](http://www.wigtonmc.co.uk)

November 2019

## Solway Beats The Rain!



Some of Tony North's Excellent photos, full report next month.

# Motorsport for All

# Club Officials

## OFFICIALS

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**Rally Championship co-ordinator      Bob Hargreaves.**

**Visit the Facebook page for the latest news or the webpage at  
[www.wigtonmc.co.uk](http://www.wigtonmc.co.uk)**

# *Talking Point*

## *Topical Comment from the world of motoring*

Lewis Hamilton may well be a brilliant racing driver but he does come over as a bit of a lost soul, and sometimes acts like a complete prat. He not happy if he is beaten and often sulks, he does not take his responsibilities of being a World Champion that seriously and infamously failed to turn up a the London preview of the British Grand Prix a couple of years ago, the only driver to do so. He's never been to the Goodwood Festival either, the only top British driver not to go.

The other senior drivers seem to settle down and have a good family life away from the racing circus but Lewis just seem to wander around the world like a hedonist seeking pleasure with no real purpose in life. When Lewis came on the scene I remember Bernie expressing the hope that he would encourage more ethnic diversity in spectators ( and no doubt more dosh for Bernie!) but he doesn't seem to have done anything in that line. He be doing so much for the sport as a whole in the UK! Wouldn't be great if he toured the kart tracks like Rowrah where his raced as a kid?

The latest PR disaster is his suggestion that we all become vegans like him and thus save the planet! Quite not the best thing for a racing driver who flies to 20 races in six continents in a nine month period in his private jet, plus his personal flights to Hollywood and his other fashionable haunts. He just makes himself wide open to criticism. You would think his PR people would have vetted his statements before they went out. I can't imagine that Toto would be over pleased.

There is a wider point though as to why so called celebrities, folk in showbusiness and professional sportsmen, seem to think that they have the right to pronounce their opinions in any matter they like. Invariably they live very sheltered and enclosed lives compared to the other 99.9999% of the population and have little knowledge or experience of real life. Lewis may wish to do away with farm animals but there many far greater intellects than him who would disagree. Apparently he had a very high protein plant based diet make for him every day. I wonder how much that costs and how it gets to where ever he is on the planet?

Perhaps he should let his driving do the talking?

GTF



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

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# Forthcoming Club Events

Wigton Motor Club

## Annual Awards Dinner

Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020

at the

Skiddaw Hotel, Keswick

7.00 for 7.30pm

Please contact Maria Quigley at the Skiddaw Hotel to book and pay for your table/  
seat on 017687 72071 or [sales.skiddaw@lakedistricthotels.net](mailto:sales.skiddaw@lakedistricthotels.net)

## Early Winter Autosolo

At Maryport Business Park

Sunday, November 24th

Regulations have been emailed out.

Final round of the club championship for 2019

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CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE

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824 1135 and don't forget to mention your club  
when you do!

# PG Tips

The RBS racing car is now off the road for the winter – tyres all cleaned and wrapped to protect them (£1000 a set means they are being treated like princesses!). I am ditching the heavy and very home-made looking dry dump set up on the engine for a funky modern swinging arm pickup and shallow sump. It is a kit designed for car applications to ensure that the oil pick up always sits in oil whatever sideways motion you have, bike engines in their bikes tend to lean and tilt rather than be violently swung sideways, thus causing oil starvation in car applications. I am also fitting a lighter more efficient single plane rear wing and tidying up the nose cone and front wing.

The Citroen BX Athena was beginning to get me down a week or so back as I started to discover its hidden depths....or should I say problems. Examining under the bonnet one afternoon I thought the inner wing looked a bit patchy and had a quick pick at what looked like a blob of underseal...that peeled off, along with a 6” patch of fibreglass covering a rusty hole, turning to the other inner wing I could see it was going to be the same and it was. Whoever bodged it had even colour coded the patches and made them invisible to MOT testers (and me). Despite many attempts at getting the heater to work I was still unable to achieve anything like hot air in the cabin and the engine was clearly in need of some TLC. Whilst bemoaning the car an advert popped up on the Citroen BX club for a red K reg one owner auto 1.6 petrol hatchback in the north east at a very reasonable price. The owner insisted it was ‘mint’, amazing bodywork and a service history with 15 stamps in it. It had an MOT fail sheet from September that included a list of welding and minor problems but at the price it appeared to be a better prospect than what I had...assuming the owner was honest and realistic of course (you know where this is going!). I wasn’t about to buy it without seeing it after my experience with the Athena so I arranged to go and view it on one of my days off during the week. The owner Chris insisted it was a fantastic car (it’s mint man, mint - he said), owned from new by an old boy and the MOT fail sheet was grossly exaggerated because it had been done by a Citroen main dealer and offered to pay my diesel money if I didn’t buy it. On arrival Chris (the owner) seemed decent enough and had a tidy Mitsubishi Evo on his drive. The car however was not so tidy and the only mint it really resembled was the type you find stuck to the carpet after you’ve chocked and spat it out! Most panels either had significant fade or a dent and the rust mentioned in the MOT fail sheet was as bad as it sounded. The engine was nice and smooth and the hydraulics worked well, the interior was also quite clean but it was far worse than Chris made out. The service history book looked impressive until I spotted that it ran out in 2008 and there were no receipts or information since then. He kept telling me he was a Ford man and if it was a Sierra it would be worth loads and people would be queuing to buy it, but it wasn’t and he hasn’t, he also repeatedly told me he didn’t have room for it and was sick of having it stuck on his drive. I made my excuses and left – predictably he laughed when I asked him if he wanted to give me cash or a cheque for the diesel. Getting back to Cumbria I messaged him to say that whilst I didn’t want the car as a project, if he got stuck with it I would offer him significantly more than scrap value for it and I would collect it and break it for parts. I received a fairly abusive and delusional message reminding me once more that it was an amazing car (it isn’t) and that I clearly didn’t want it because I had no money (I can afford £600). I replied advising him it was a fairly undesirable model of BX with no MOT in the north east of England that needed lots of work doing and he needed to reframe his expectations and then blocked him. Needless to say other people on the BX Club who were considering looking at the car no longer are and others have received abuse from Chris for questioning the ‘mintness’ of his car. Having seen the level of what else is out there I am going to persevere with the Athena and have serviced it and arranged for the welding on the inner wings. It’s actually really nice to drive and has a reasonable turn of speed to boot as well as being very comfortable – I’ve also been accosted by people admiring it at the petrol station twice now.....if only they could see the inner wings and know how annoying the heater is!

Peter

# Championship News

## WMC PROTYRE CHAMPIONSHIP – after Solway (FINAL)

### Top 5 scores from 8 rounds

#### Drivers

1	David Marsden	122
2	Brian Bradley	118
3	Malcolm Mackay	110
4	John Sloan	99
5	David Agnew	87
6	Ian Dixon	66
7	David Short	49
8	David Alexander	44
9	Tom Pearson	43
10	Paul Slingsby	42
11	Ray Jude	25

#### Navigators

1	Mike Garstang	121
2	Michael Marsland	118
3	Marc Crack	113
4	Marian Sloan	99
5	Roy Heath	48
6=	Jim Stairs	43
6=	Michael Fox	43
8	Alan Jackson	35
9=	Bob Hargreaves	25
9=	Ben Jude	25
11	Callum Alexander	21

#### Targa Overall

#### Drivers

1	Phil Hodgson	119
2	Robert Short	112
3	Quentin James	71
4	Liam Charlton	69
5	Stephen Short	73
6	Bob Hargreaves	47
7	Richard Whittaker	46

#### Navigators

1	Ian Giles	117
2	Kirsty Thompson	110
3	Tom Howe	73
4	Clive White	95
5	James Greenhough	92
6	Fiona Tyson	75
7=	Geoff Fletcher	66
7=	Andrew Whittaker	66
9	Bob Hargreaves	21

#### HISTORICS

#### Class H

1	David Agnew	40
2=	Paul Slingsby	19
2=	David Alexander	19

#### Class H

1=	Michael Fox	20
1=	Alan Jackson	20
3	Callum Alexander	9

#### Class P

1	David Marsden	50
2	John Sloan	39
3	Ian Dixon	27

#### Class P

1	Mike Garstang	50
2	Marian Sloan	39
3	Bob Hargreaves	10

#### Class C

1	Malcolm Mackay	48
2=	David Short	20
2=	Tom Pearson	20
4	Ray Jude	10

#### Class C

1	Marc Crack	48
2=	Roy Heath	20
2=	Jim Stairs	20
4	Ben Jude	10

#### Class D

1	Brian Bradley	50
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#### Class D

1	Michael Marsland	50
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## TARGA

### Class T1F

1=	Andrew Whittaker	10
1=	Bob Hargreaves	10

### Class T2F

1	Robert Short	43
2	Quentin James	30
3	Stephen Short	29
4	Liam Charlton	28
5	Richard Whittaker	27

### Class T2F

1	Clive White	47
2	Kirsty Thompson	40
3	James Greenhough	35
4	Tom Howe	29
5	Geoff Fletcher	25

### Class T2R

1	Phil Hodgson	50
2	Bob Hargreaves	19

### Class T2R

1	Ian Giles	49
2	Fiona Tyson	30

## Cumbria Canter

Wigton M.C. planned this event as an autumn foray into the eastern Lakes area. Due to recent heavy rain, risk of road closures, flooding etc., organisers Ron Palmer and Chris Leece decided at a late stage to quickly re-route into the North Dales region – ‘our’ area! Lacking my usual left-hand seat passengers, I quickly found a replacement in my neighbour and friend Phil Berry, then entered us in the MGB without further delay. As a first timer, I gave Phil a 10-minute crash course in tulip navigation on the Friday evening.

The planned route was 97 miles, split as 59 before lunch then just 38 more to the finish. Starting at Penrith Rugby Club, we meandered initially north, then turned east and southwards in a clockwise loop. Taking in Langwathby then Newbiggin and Appleby, we eventually visited Brough. Next up was Tan Hill Inn, followed by Nateby, Pendragon Castle and so on to lunch in the Fat Lamb pub in Ravenstonedale. Excellent ‘light’ lunch there! Fully replete, we visited Great Asby, then Drybeck and Orton. Keeping off the M6, we used those lovely country roads up to and beyond Shap to the finish at Lowther Castle.

What a lovely Run it had been. Weather was overcast but had been just warm enough to be a ‘top down all day’ event. Phil did a super job, with not one navigational error that I spotted all day. He reckoned that his mental arithmetic has improved by leaps and bounds with the recalculating corrective mileages at each junction, due to the differences in trip meters between our and the organiser’s readings – this being a normal occurrence on almost every Run I have ever done. In fact, he had enjoyed the experience of a lovely ride in an open top sports car plus some spirited driving so much that he actually asked to come again sometime! Well I’m sure that I can oblige him, and I would like to as he had proved to be good fun and a most pleasant companion. Many thanks to Ron and Christine Palmer, Chris Leece and all the team at Wigton M.C. for all their hard work in creating the re-arranged great route at relatively short notice. It proved to be a most enjoyable day out in some of this country’s best scenery and with some challenging driving as a bonus. Well done everybody and many thanks again.

My only adverse comment is with the odd entrant who insists on driving rather slowly over those narrow roads over the tops, which of course they are absolutely entitled to do. Inevitably a queue of cars, including members of the public not partaking in this event, quickly built up behind him and, despite the best of intentions, impatience builds somewhat. A little thought and a check in his mirrors should have suggested he pull over at the first opportunity and let us all pass. He could then resume and continue at his own pace, having lost say only one minute in time and be under no pressure. In this way, he could continue to enjoy his drive while also allowing others to drive at their desired pace and enjoy their drive too. Food for thought perhaps.

Dave Sowman

# Coast to Coast

Well, it started as a suggested trip to the Classics meeting at Zandvoort in Holland in early Sept. Sadly, too few people wanted to go, so scrub that one. Then Wigton MC emailed me, and others, inviting me to participate in their first ever Coast to Coast Run, from West to East. Sounded good and I've always fancied doing an adventure sort of thing, and this looked to fill the bill. I checked with Martin Nolan whether this might be a sort of replacement for the Zandvoort trip and he thought 'yes'. Again, too few of the IDMC group wanted to tackle it, but Martin said he'd like to come and would be happy to navigate me in the MGB...brave fellow! So that was settled.

OK then, what had I taken on? Entry in as quick as poss, hotels booked at St Bees (start) and Ravenscar (finish), MGB given a wash and brush up, road atlas stuffed in, spare clothes packed and stowed, and we were ready for the off. We had opted to stay at the St Bees start as we were number 3 away, which meant going over there on the Thursday. Sadly, this meant missing the Kitchtour outing. Sad, as it turns out to have been the last ever one. However, it was a repeat of one I had been on in the Lakes a while back, so I didn't mind quite so much.

This is really a story of three parts: 1) going to the start, 2) the Run itself, and 3) then getting home. So, Part 1: Getting There. Thursday turned into a fantastic warm, sunny day weather-wise, so it was T-shirts and shorts on and hood down. At Skipton, top up tank with Tesco's Super stuff then make our way to the M6 via A65. Head for Windermere and Ambleside, after which tackle Wrynose and Hardnott passes – as we knew already that they were not included in the Run route. Cue some blockages on the narrow base roads, but once clear of those it was Go, Go, Go. Foot hard down, much wheel winding and even a wee bit of tyre squealing on those hairpin bends. Martin called the road to me as he could see it better than I could what with the sun in my eyes most of the way up both passes, but we made it to both tops, a bit excited and certainly a bit puffed! It had been quite a climb. We had to stop of course, to take a breather, let the car cool off a bit, and to take the odd photo for the record. What superb views, well worth the effort. We found the Seacote Hotel in St Bees, right by the seafront – great. A good meal, plenty of booze, then much relaxation and much mirth with the elderly geezer who, with the help of computer accompaniment, sang many of the older numbers of Martin's and my era. Actually, he wasn't bad. Along with the coach party we had a great time – and proceeded to finish our bottle of wine and more! Much relaxation, great fun and a superb view of the fabulous sunset over the sea and nearby headland, just *soooo* impressive.

Part 2: The Run. Again, this can be divided into four sections: 1) The start to coffee break (Lowther Castle): 2) coffee to lunch (Hawes): 3) lunch to tea break (Beadlam Grange): 4) tea to the finish (Ravenscar). Also, I should have mentioned that it was run west to east, was nearly 200 miles long and 31 crews had signed up to have a go at it, including a 1927 RR – which sadly never turned up, (they came in something much more modern, like a Mazda MX5). Once again it was brilliant weather, so hood down and T-shirts and shorts were the order of the day. We managed to get down to breakfast just ahead of the coach party, phew that was close but handy!

Section 1: Started at 0903 hrs (oh boy, that's early for me!) heading generally east in a big S-shaped route through the Lake District, taking in Cleator, Lamplugh Cross, past Loweswater and Lorton Vale, these being areas of the Lakes I really didn't know but can now say they are great. Then it was over Winlatter Pass and join the A66 to Penrith at Braithwaite, then A6 to Lowther Castle for coffee. Great coffee and the scones were massive – and scrumptious!

Section 2: Continuing south through Shap we took the B6261 to Orton. Now I've done this road once before, when it was cold, wet, raining hard, just under the cloud base and so dark at midday that I had full headlights on. But I had noted it as a really good driving road. So, recognising it, I inevitably dropped a cog put my foot down and told Martin I was 'going for it...'. Hmm, what a fab drive that was and, judging by the grin on M's face after it, he too enjoyed the experience. Anyway, we carried on through Swaledale towards Leyburn and Thwaite and eventually down Buttertubs into Hawes for lunch at the Creamery. I must have been fairly shifting along Buttertubs as I managed to scrape the exhaust on the road in one of the dips. Normally the B doesn't bottom out as the rear is set rather high, meaning that I must have been moving quite quickly. All was well though and we had had a lovely drive over many excellent roads in this Dales section of the route. Lunch was

sandwiches, chips, salad and coffee, just what was needed to rejuvenate the inner man after that exciting and hard-working section.

Section 3: Now, it was over the river and along the yellow road north of the river and parallel to the A684. We visited Askrigg, Carperby and Castle Bolton and so into Masham. No, we didn't stop for a Black Sheep there, no time and I was driving...so no drinking – yet! After Skipton-on-Swale it was a choice of route, either straight up Sutton Bank or follow the prepared map section along byroads to the south. This looked much more interesting so along it we went. I remember passing Kilburn, Byland Abbey, Wass, Ampleforth and Sproxton before re-joining the A170 to take tea at Beadlam Grange near Helmsley. Here we had a welcome cuppa, and slice of cake to put back some of the energy we had just used along those interesting and quite challenging byroads.

Section 4: The final bit. Basically, use the A170 through Pickering, past Matthewson's Garage and Auction Centre in Thornton-le-Dale as far as West Ayton. Then up the Forge Valley towards Hackness, just to get off the busy A road. Somewhere in here we missed a slot we couldn't find, so cut our losses and found our way onto the A171 and headed for the finish at Ravenscar. Book into Raven Hall hotel there, freshen up, hit the bar (again!). A great meal with all the others, much banter, storytelling, catching up with old friends, etc, plus hitting the wine bottle – again! Also saw another superb sunset, this time over Robin Hole and the hills above it. And so to bed, tired but happy to have completed the event...zzzzz

Part 3: Homeward Bound. After yesterday's 200 mile or so journey, we had a late, rather lazy breakfast then said our goodbyes. Another lovely day beckoned but it was quite chilly and windy, so the hood stayed up to begin with. We backtracked our yesterday's route towards Hackness and down the Forge Valley, emerging out at Thornton-le-Dale, where we visited the Matthewson's Auction Centre – gee, what an incredible place. An hour and a bit were spent there, ogling lots of intriguing and fascinating exhibits, not all of them cars. Many readers will probably know the place, so no more about it, but I'm glad we stopped. I have Martin's catalogue, to show you just what we *didn't* bid for! From there it was a main road run home, apart from a diversion onto less crowded roads via Rufforth to Wetherby, arriving back during the afternoon on another hot sunny day. I think the car had had enough as it was making some rather alarming clonking noises in the transmission department (have since discovered that both propshaft u/j's were failing fast, probably they were the original ones fitted when the car was new in 1970 – both now replaced and all is currently ok). Arrived home sometime during that afternoon, tired but happy.

Well, I had hoped for an adventure and, boy, did I get one! The weather simply couldn't have been better, and the company was first class, Martin navigating well, proving to be great fun and a good companion. The route was good apart from rather a lot of main road work towards the end, but we had been using many byroads and had probably had about enough exercise for one day by then. Many of those roads in the Lakes and the Dales were just so lovely, both for their scenery and their driving demands, I simply loved it all. And, when you have a car set up well and you get to know it, you start driving it properly. Often you can then drive it quite hard yet safely, and it seems to 'come alive' so to speak, and it metaphorically 'talks' to you (known as 'feedback' I believe), such an exhilarating state to be in – and we were in it much of the time! Brilliant! Martin clearly seemed to have enjoyed himself too and I don't seem to have put him off – good. It was a pleasure to share this experience with him. Would I do it again? I don't know as another time would of necessity be different and I don't want to spoil the memory. Oh sod it, 'course I'd love to..... Many thanks to all at Wigton MC on an excellent first effort at this challenge. Well done them.

Dave Sowman

# From The Top

## News from UK Motorsport, Regions and the WMC Committee

At the WMC Committee meeting the insurance details for The Motor House were agreed along with wider ranging cover for the committee/directors. A risk assessment will be done on the building and suitable signage put up.

The outline of our main events for 2020 was agreed.

David Wiggins is organising the November autosolo and we will hire a loo for that event and the December one.

Our charity donations for 2019 will be made in January .

Reports were received on the Coast to Coast and the Canter which were brilliant events. Chris Leece will be running the canter in 2020.

Membership continues to increase. Renewals will go out in early December.

Arrangements for the Awards Dinner were agreed.

David updates the meeting on building progress at The Motor House and all the Club's equipment was now contained there. We are still looking for a plumber amongst our members to install the toilets and sinks.

## Important Notice

### Entry forms

This year the standard of completed entry forms for all types of events has in many cases been dreadful! The information contained there is vital to the smooth running of the event and in the case of rallies it also has a legal aspect under the RTA. The amount of time our entry secretaries spend trying to make an email address work because they are poorly written is a waste of their time.

If possible please pay by cheque as then that links to the entry form. We do accept on line payments but as entries secretaries don't have access to our bank account they can't get a record of the fee being paid.

**Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.**



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sport  
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Club

# Autumn Classic

The last big event at Prescott, that picturesque motorsport venue in the Cotswolds, certainly lived up to its name “The Autumn Classic,” There isn’t an event in the country that attracts a more varied selection of cars. Participants on that weekend can compete in a speed hill climb, a non- competitive parade, show their vehicle in a demo run or display their various slants on automobile beauty in the classic show area. Motor clubs as well as individuals are encouraged to exhibit their cars and a great many do so, there is something for everyone to see and do.



Someone dreamed up the format just over ten years ago, since then it has gone from strength to strength, the speed hill climb is vastly over-subscribed with prospective entrants but choosing who can run and who gets a rejection must be a nightmare task.

It is a wonderful track to drive with lots of challenging corners, the facilities are superb and with a variety of entertainment of all descriptions going on over the weekend it attracts many people even those whose veins don’t constantly flow with petrol.

Cars varied from some basic and quite honestly frighteningly simple machines to the most exquisite Bugattis where every single component is a work of art. Hot Rods with enormous amounts of chrome and even more enormous horsepower, historic racing cars abound, these included the ex F1 McLaren of David Coulthard though this was a static exhibit as it takes an army of people to actually fire one up initially needing all kinds of equipment connected up to prime oil and other systems. They say a photo is worth a thousand words so I’ll save a thousand words here and post some photos.

This year Graeme Forrester and I were sole Cumbrian representatives as far as I’m aware, Graeme in his familiar red and white MGB looking for all the world like the “works” cars from the BMC teams of the 1960s/70s competing in the sports car class. Other similar liveried cars in the Big Healey class looked like the ones Timo Makinen and Pat Moss used to drive when I watched with envy on the RAC Rallies in the 1960s.



There is so much to see and do at this event, I chose to spectate on the Saturday and compete on Sunday in my usual supercharged Buckler MK5 but Graeme competed on both days.

I was competing in the Flathead class against the many Allards and American engine V8 cars although three other Bucklers were also competing. “Flatheads” has nothing to do with the shape of our personal heads sitting on our shoulders but refers to the cylinder heads on our cars, they are ” flat heads” because there are no valves in the cylinder heads at all just basically a flat chunk of metal bolted to the top of the cylinder block, the valves are in the engine block these being known as

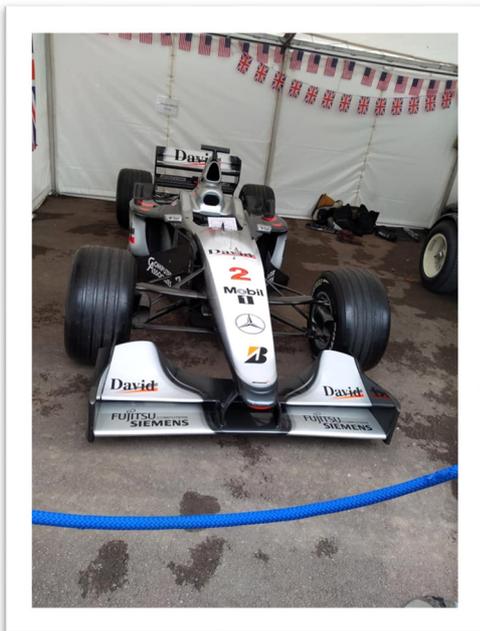
sidevalve engines.

After signing on and attending the competitors briefing at 8.15 cars begin their practise runs up the hill at 8.30 providing they had been passed by the scrutineers who come around the paddock just as they do in most events.



After checking my helmet last year at this event my scrutineer handed it back to me and said” that one goes out of compliance at 31st December so you need a new one for 2019”. That was the first I had ever heard of it as my helmet wasn’t that old and was bought brand new from the manufacturer’s internet company, at the time it was good value but had evidently been old stock. It was indeed out of compliance but at least I had a whole six months over the winter to get a replacement. Having failed this simple task to get a new one over the winter and just a couple of days before my first event of 2019 it resulted in many phone calls and me rushing about the county before obtaining a suitable one.

Scrutineers are very experienced people, these same guys officiate at all the major events in the country but are very helpful people nevertheless, they know all the rules and regulations but are not there to prevent anyone having fun and driving to the limit of their ability, they just try to ensure we are as safe as is reasonably possible whilst doing it. However at Prescott they have the facility of an inspection pit should they deem it necessary situated directly in front of scrutineers own hut, it must be very intimidating if your car arouses suspicion as to its track worthiness and has to be subject to an inspection such as this.



Another Buckler guy obviously hadn’t been told by his scrutineer his helmet would be out of date for 2019 so when his was rejected by the scrutineer mild panic set in, no helmet, no drive, £125 entry fee plus cost of B & B plus travel expense, it all adds up doesn’t it?

To see if he could be allowed to run in a different batch of cars so that he could borrow my helmet I accompanied my friend Simon Ambrose to the paddock office where the people are so helpful. “Come with me” a lovely lady called Fiona Rogers said and took him off to a back office, mmm I wonder what’s going on in there I thought to myself! After a few minutes all was revealed, ahh perhaps better phraseology would be more accurate if I say all became clear. Simon re appeared clutching a helmet, he had been loaned one from the race driving school that is based at Prescott; that’s exactly typical of the helpfulness of the whole team of organisers, officials and marshals, they are a wonderful bunch always trying their very best to make everyone’s event a pleasurable one.

Prescott luckily was having dry weather because much of the country wasn’t, and on Sunday it was glorious, sitting in the warm sunshine in the lovely paddock among the fruit trees we were being entertained by various artistes, singers and musicians and many people jiving to live bands it was really great to see.

Graeme put up some impressive times in his quick MGB, I was quite pleased with my times although I was trying out some much wider and larger diameter tyres than normal to alter the rear axle ratio slightly. Only having a 3 speed gearbox even a close ratio one means my car has big variations between the gear ratios, it is either on the rev limiter for much of the time in a lower gear or it’s not on the cam if I change up to the next gear so one has to strike a balance between the two.

Keith Thomas

## An Interesting Car and a Cautionary Tale



One very interesting vintage car looked magnificent although when I first saw someone pop a lighted blow torch under the front of the car it looked very disturbing. It turned out to be a Stanley steam car and its owner was putting light to a mixture of petrol and diesel twenty minutes before he planned to drive up the hill so was preparing to get up steam.

I mentioned to the owner that my mate Alan Smith who helped me build my Buckler had a small factory at Maryport making special type piston rings for steam and vintage engines and many people regard them as the most superior product its possible to buy for this application. I said they call Alans rings Clupet's piston rings to which he remarked "they are the best and that's exactly why this car is fitted with them" a great recommendation for Alans

workmanship, well done Alan you should be very proud.

After the event was completed and in the dry which was a big relief, we had just finished loading the car onto the trailer when it started to rain just as we pulled away for the 250-mile journey back to Cumbria.

The further north we drove the weather got progressively worse eventually conditions were horrendous, visibility was really poor, wind and rain buffeted our V70 Volvo estate, so I just sat tucked in behind a big articulated truck at a safe distance.

Coming up the motorway according to the illuminated overhead signage the M6 was to be closed between junctions 34 & 35 so not too onerous or a cause for significant delay on our homeward journey. Arriving at junction 34 I was happy to let the artic be the pathfinder as the M6 is the link between Scotland and southern England so letting him find the way through the diversion via Carnforth etc appeared to be a great idea of mine. When we turned off at junction 34 there were dozens of signs and hundreds of cones, loads of floodlights all signalling the end of the motorway and the way onto the diversion.

My sat nav started screaming at me of course to turn around to retrace my route back to junction 34. Thinking that my wife who was my rally navigator and I have to say a really good one too was fast asleep sitting beside me I was quite content listening to the radio, munching my way through another packet of jelly babies and following the tail lights of the artic.

Eventually I thought to myself it was a bit of a torturous diversion just to miss out one section of motorway assuming we that we would just run up the parallel A6 that was the main road before the M6 was built but still a decent road. Obviously, the powers that be had decided for some reason a more involved diversion route was essential.

Imagine my surprise when after quite a period of time the streetlights were suddenly very bright indeed, I really took notice at this point of the surroundings and looked at the various signs that had suddenly appeared. I thought something was amiss when one sign said "Freight" and another said "Cars." At that point I realised I was almost ready to board a ferry to Ireland, I was on Heysham Docks. The M6 is of course the main north to south route up the west side of the country but also to Ireland although to go to Ireland it means travelling due west from junction 34 on the M6

At this point my wife isn't asleep but is now asking where we are as our arrival time showing on sat nav isn't just before midnight but is now showing 1.10am! My mistake of course especially as Carol wasn't really asleep" just resting her eyes" she tells me!

So I had to explain the diversion was rather a long one in fact a very long one but the moral of the story is don't follow the truck in front unless you know where its destination is.

Another memorable weekend and an enjoyable one. Keith Thomas

# The Curse of Number 13

(Or the joy of the Coast to Coast)

It was only the 19<sup>th</sup> September but now seems an age ago we set off in glorious sunshine from St Bees on Ron's mystery tour across the country to the Raven Hall Hotel , Ravenscar. Having spent the week previous replacing the exhaust manifold gasket on the MGB registration APY38G, which resulted in the carburettors picking up pieces of dirt and requiring a complete strip down and balancing. I was looking forward to this trip with more than a little trepidation. However, in retrospect there was nothing to worry about the whole way across, "Apy" as she is affectionately known never missed a beat. In fact following the TLC to the Carbs fuel consumption had improved from the normal 25mpg to a fantastic 36mpg, I was more than 'appy. What seemed like no time since we set of we had negotiated the Lake District, having passed Loweswater and climbed Whinlatter we arrived at Lowther Castle for morning coffee and the biggest scones I have ever seen. Normally this would have done me till evening but no, Ron then sent us on our way via Kirkby Stephen and the Buttertubs to Hawes for lunch at the Wensleydale Cheese factory. From here we had a gentle run down Wensleydale to Thirsk from where I was looking forward to a good blast up Sutton Bank. Alas no just as we got to the steepest park we joined a queue crawling up behind a fully loaded tipper truck, it was to be less than walking pace in bottom gear all the way to the top. Fortunately we soon passed the offending wagon on the fast roads down to Helmsley and on to Beadlam Grange for afternoon tea. By now a chill had set in but we were determined to complete the run with the roof down, so it was off again heading ever eastwards through Pickering and Thornton Dale passed Matthewson's saleroom where Bangers and Cash is filmed, and up through the Forge Valley skirting round Scarborough then north passing Harwood Dale forest to eventually arrive at Ravenscar.

Whilst everyone else was to stay for the night and enjoy an after trip dinner, Christine and I had to turn around and head straight back home to Gretna as we had guests booked in at the Guest House for B&B. Everything was still running sweetly until just outside Haydon Bridge I had just said to Christine, at this rate I shall be able to get back for a pint. Why did I open my big mouth as not 30 seconds after this I pressed to dip switch and everything went black. From the lights of the cars behind us I could just see the reflection of a Lay-By sign 200 yards in front of us so we quickly pulled in and phone the AA. An hour and a half later one of Glendinning's of Prudhoe trucks arrived. Oh yes the fuse has gone says he following a complete search of the recovery truck we were told sorry I don't have any of that type of fuse. A bit of chewing gum paper wrapped around the old fuse failed to work also. Only one thing left drive the MG onto the truck, (I may not have had lights but the car would still drive). So at midnight and many pounds (£) lighter we arrived home in Gretna. On the Tuesday following the event I had the car checked over by an auto electrician to find out that the fault was not only the fuse but the actual dip switch unit and how much was a replacement.....£13.00 (including VAT and postage)

So from now on can I hope we will not to run at 13.

John Ross

Following on from theC2C we have just completed the North Coast 500 round the top of Scotland, (though not in the MG) which we can thoroughly recommend. It is our intention to do this again in the opposite direction a little earlier in the year so we can take "Apy"

# Team Wigton News

## WMC Teams Excel at Spa



Two of WMC member's cars took on the finest of Europe at the Spa 6 Hours Event and came up trumps.

Robert Gate and Eddie Farrell travelled to a very wet Spa on the weekend of 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Sept. and came away with accolades.

Robert entered PEE 22, his 4.2 E Type, in two events and came home with a 1<sup>st</sup> in class in the HSCC, 70's Road Sports event and a 2<sup>nd</sup> in class in the Jaguar Classic Challenge 60 minute race

despite having to start from the pit lane following an aborted petrol stop in the 20 minutes between the two events.

Eddie's entry, his 3.8 E Type, beat all entries in the Jaguar Classic Challenge 60 minute race and came in 1<sup>st</sup> overall whilst driven by David Coyne. This result was especially sweet because Eddie's car was in Class F and had some potentially more competitive cars finishing behind him and also the event was held in the pouring rain.

What a way to finish the season.



## Team Wigton – Toby Cook – Autotest – Update no. 3



So ..... two BTRDA, MSUK Championship Autotests done – three to go.

Work has also been great – but hectic ! After WRC Rally Finland it was off to WRC Rally Germany for nine days, at the end of August. Four days later it was off to North Wales for Autotest number 3.

1<sup>st</sup> September, Caernarvonshire & Anglesey Motor Club event at Trac Mon circuit on the Anglesey coast. A fantastic venue I've not been to before, with three great tests laid out on the roads around the old buildings above the circuit. The views across the coast line were stunning in the sunshine, and there was also bike racing (which the Clerk of the Course referred to as "organ donors"! ) to entertain us as well. Most drivers found a

couple of bits in the tests a bit tight, but we're always up for a challenge – I did collect a couple of penalties but by the lunch break had managed a very surprising 30 second lead in the class. I say surprising, as the driver in second place was the very experienced Lee Matthews (he used to compete against my Dad in the 1980's) driving a 2.0 litre Corsa against my 1275 Micra. The afternoon saw two more laps of the three tests and I extended my lead to win the class.



Logistics are still proving to be a challenge though. We stopped at a friend's place (fellow Autotester) near Shrewsbury for the weekend. So, I drove down from Cokermonth on the Saturday and my parents came up from Kent with the motorhome and Micra. Went to Trac Mon and back on Sunday, then Monday I headed back north, parents went back south ! I was back at work Tuesday.

Now.... the Micra has proved to be very reliable, but I guess that's relative to how many events you do and how hard you push ! So, after Anglesey, and a couple of phone conversations with Dad, we ( or I ! ) decided that Dad should do a gearbox rebuild, before the next Autotest, Hartlepool & District Motor Club

on 15<sup>th</sup> September (no probs, he is retired !).

Logistics were going to be interesting for Hartlepool as well. The Friday and Saturday before the Autotest, I was away in Scotland working on Matt Edwards car for the last round of the British Rally Championship, The Galloway Hills Rally. The rally went well and Matt came home 3<sup>rd</sup>, to win the BRC title back to back. A great result for Matt and M-Sport ! However, I didn't leave Castle Douglas till 9pm on the Saturday.

The Hartlepool event is probably the oldest event in the calendar – the main organiser, Bob Clouston, has been running the event for 43 years! The other half of the organising team, Chris Langan, was another autotester who used to compete against my Dad back in the 1980's, he drove a Sunbeam and my Dad drove his infamous RS100E – proper big saloons!



I have done the event before but at Seaton Carew. This year we were back at the traditional Middleton Grange shopping centre in the middle of town. It's a bit like an amphitheatre and always draws a big crowd.

So just two tests all day with four runs at each before lunch, and the same again in the afternoon. The day didn't get off to a good start for me – the Micra stopping on the first test with fuel pump problems. So, I had a max on test 1 – car fixed and drove hard to end just 14 seconds behind Murray Walker (1800 Nova) for 2<sup>nd</sup> in Class. I did collect a couple of 5 second penalties on the way, but had fastest time on 9 out of 16 tests – that's Motorsport! The new gearbox was 'spot on' – thanks Dad.

So....next is Whitchurch Motor Club event back at Demon Tweeks on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September. Then the day after I'm in Llandudno for Wales Rally GB.

Then the last event of the year is The Ken Wharton International team event – where I'll be driving as the England Reserve for the Saloon Car Class. So, look out for my next update.

TC.

# Welcome

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

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

Noel Cochrane

Jim Hendry

Paddy Jones

Mike Cook

Alan Hunter

David Ruddock

Alex Willan

Martin Thomas

Richard Whittaker

Joe Harwood

David Byrne

Ian Eland

Russell Robertson

Myles Gleave

Oly McCollum

Findlay Wyatt

Tony Longstaff

Ross Blyth

Chris Stokes

Paul Brown

Glen Fothergill

Steve Turner

Andrew Whittaker

Geoff Fletcher

Stephen Byrne

George Eland

Wayne McDonnell

Hugh Gleave

## Marshal Force

**Marshals are the life blood of our activities**

**Our main event this month is the afternoon Autosolo on November 24th . Please contact David Wiggins**

**Members are also marshalling on the:  
Roger Clark Rally, the Lakeland Trial and LE JOG**

# Classic Trialling

Classic trialling is one of the oldest forms of motorsport competition, starting originally in the early 1900's on motorcycles, it quickly attracted motor vehicles also and was seen by manufacturers as an excellent way to publicize their products. Manufacturers such as MG, Morgan and Allard to name a few entered teams. In 1906 The Motor Cycling Club ran the first London to Edinburgh Trial of 391 miles won by a Vindec Special motor cycle. Trialling has developed since with long distance trials of 250 miles or more for bikes and cars, one day trials of around 50 to 60 road miles again for bikes and cars and vintage trials for pre-war vehicles.

I prefer my competitive motor sport at a somewhat sedate speed so was originally tempted to enter my home built JC Midge into grass based autotests and PCT's where due to its light weight, excellent Triumph based turning circle and rear wheel drive and did very well. My interest in trialling was kindled when a club member bought a trials prepared Skoda Estelle that had been very successfully campaigned in Association of Classic Trials one day competitions. There are 8 car classes in trialling and the Skoda runs in Class 4, rear engine rear wheel drive up to 1300cc. Class 4 is the only class that is cubic capacity limited, The decision was made and I started looking for a suitable vehicle, eventually sourcing a 1089cc Estelle in Anglesey. There were two issues with it though. Firstly the capacity of the engine was not about to set the trialling world on fire and secondly it had swing axle rear suspension. Number one was resolved with the purchase of a 1289cc Skoda Rapid engine and the second by fitting the full trailing arm suspension set up, again from a Rapid.



Classic trials involve a road route which connects competitive sections along the way which can be up hill, rutted, twisty, muddy, wet, rocky or a combination of some or all of these. One day trials mark the section from 12 to 1 and forward motion from the start line must be maintained, scoring being when the car comes to a halt then the next score is counted. Due to the differing abilities within different classes restrictions may be applied such as minimum tyre pressures or a Restart where the vehicle has to come to a halt at a specific point then move forward without any rearward movement. Long distance trails are not marked as it is a case of either cleaning or failing a section.

Awards are given for cleaning every section, a Gold, one failure a Silver and two a Bronze. A Finishers Certificate is give for all that complete the competition. Vintage trials mark their sections from 1 to 25, bottom to top.

Due to the nature of competitive sections there are certain aspects of car preparation initially that are necessary and that is the raising of suspension, underbody protection of vulnerable components such as sump, exhaust and brake lines and the fitting of a tow point, a 1.75kg AFFF fire extinguisher and a spill kit. Also an additional carburetor return spring or springs must be fitted, battery secured adequately and any tool boxes fixed properly. It is usual to carry two spare wheels that also need securing and in some cases they must be in a certain position to satisfy regulations.

I am currently on my second Skoda Estelle, the first having finally succumbed to terminal tin worm. I obtained a rolling shell and transferred all the bits over. Trialling puts severe wear on components not found in other forms of motor sport. For instance the differential unit in the Skoda takes a lot of side to side movement from the pull of the drive shafts leading to wear of the planet wheels on the diff cage and eventual failure. Having had three failures I now run a 3 series BMW diff unit and drive shafts, not an easy modification but worth the effort. The ends of the rear shock absorbers usually sit below the bottom of the trailing arms leading to damage from rough sections. Newly designed and fabricated mountings sorted that. There have been numerous other modifications applied in addition to those that I got from the original car I had seen. There have also been failures but ideas have to be tried. I wanted to modify the engine and make it suited to revving higher than normal. I was advised that twin springs from a Rover Vitesse V8 would fit and allow higher revs before valve bounce. Er no. The information was wrong having purchased them. Then I was told by a Skoda aficionado that Mini 1275cc springs would fit. With a very slight machining of the valve spring cap they did. However I then had two

rocker failures which turned out to be the springs becoming coil bound, not evident when the engine was on the bench. I finally found by research that A series race springs had less coils but were up rated from standard and did the job! The standard Skoda Jikov carburetor is not suited to the rigors of trilling so I initially fitted a side draft SU carb on a fabricated 90 degree mounting to the original carb position. This worked very well but I wanted a side draft carburetor to breathe directly into the manifold. Having built my JC Midge on a Triumph base I happened to have a Triumph inlet manifold for a single side draft Stromberg carburetor sitting under the bench.

What luck when it turned out that the port spacing was virtually identical. All that was needed was to make up a mounting plate drilled for the Skoda studs and to get the Triumph manifold welded to it. A further short adaptor was made to get the SU HIF carburetor sitting at the correct angle. It worked very well but eventually I bit the bullet and went the route of bike carbs from a Honda Fireblade bike. They also work well but I do occasionally get the engine dying momentarily on very steep hills which may be fuel starvation or flooding, I am not sure which. It may be a consequence of the carbs being used in a different position to that of the bike, in line instead of across. Something else to look at and develop.

There are not many types of vehicle in my class, mostly being Beetles with the occasional Skoda Estelle. Others that are very occasionally seen are Renault 8 and Hillman Imp. At present, apart from Class 7 which caters for vehicles modified beyond a certain limit and cater for Baja type Beetles and, amongst others an Imp with a full Beetle rear end including engine, the largest class tends to be Class 5 which in recent years attracts Suzuki X90's. These are available for the mid hundred and with a further investment of a few hundred more are extremely capable trials cars.

The only truly local one day trial is run by Fell Side Auto Club, The Northern Classic Trial, every February, a round of a national championship for bikes and cars. Further trials take place around the Durham Dales and Yorkshire Dales and then mostly in the South and South West. Many one day trials run a Class O which is designed for those new to the sport or for vehicles of a slightly more delicate nature. The term classic does not refer to the type of vehicle or bike but of the age of the sport. Any suitable vehicle or bike are welcome so long as they are not 4x4 and run tyres that conform to the correct specification.

Trialling, a sport that challenges firstly the ability to prepare and run a car for the specific rigors of the sport and then the ability to get the very best out of the vehicle by learning to drive to the varying conditions.

Myke Pocock

## **MG Cumbria**

# **Christmas Cracker Run**

**Sunday, December 1st**

70 miles, starts at Rheged

Coffee and shortbread at the start,  
two course meal and coffee at the finish.

Entry fee £40 for two people

Entry forms are available from Graeme Forrester,  
[gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk)

# Elderly Utterances

## The Voice of Experience!

### Ron Palmer has his say

Those members living in the Carlisle area will have received a 'Census rehearsal document' along with residents of three other local authority areas in England and Wales – Ceredigion, Hackney and Tower Hamlets which allegedly represent a good cross section of society. I wonder at which end Carlisle sits? No suggestions thank you! The next full census takes place in 2021 and I'll be surprised if the real thing proves to be as lengthy as the rehearsal document which should take 20 to 30 minutes to complete – it seemed longer. It's quite clear that big brother hasn't already got enough of our innermost secrets as this time they want the rest, be aware – they even ask how many cars in the household. Could it be that some members may not answer this question totally truthfully?

I was in our local electrical equipment wholesalers the other day and whilst waiting to be served I picked up a booklet extolling the business potential awaiting electrical contractors who will wake up to the huge number of EV charging sockets required in years to come. Apparently there are grants available to install EV charging points at places of work. Domestic wall pod charging stations start from as little as £494.88 plus VAT including a 4 metre charging lead plus of course the labour to install them. I imagine most new build properties will have them included as standard. Its interesting that James Dyson has pulled the plug, (sorry) on his EV development programme after allegedly investing £2billion in the project.

Our annual marshalling stint on Le Jog comes round in early December when we have volunteered to marshal on the section from Brough to the overnight halt at Gretna. This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this demanding event which I'm sure you know runs from Lands End to John O'Groats and this year has attracted around 90 entries as I write. It's not quite as demanding on competitors as it used to be when Charles and I tackled it in 2011, as competitors get a little more sleep these days. Any car built pre 1986 can be used so put it in your calendar next year if you fancy the challenge.

Also worth a look will be the Roger Albert Clark Rally – 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> November which has a superb 200 car entry and it will be interesting to see how many will be able to run. These numbers are getting back to the fields run on the old RACs of the 1970s which made for great spectating (and competing!). Local Cumbrian entries are Steve and Tony Graham Lancia Fulvia, Paul Fry and Mike Steele Escort 2.0 and Steve Egglestone/ Brian Hodgson Escort 2.0. Plan your viewing in the border forests and don't forget your coffee flasks and pork pies.

The Birmingham NEC Classic Show is in my diary for Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November with entrance and train tickets kindly organised by Rob Grant. The Saturday of the Show will have an extra interest this year as the Rally of the Tests which takes place that weekend will be calling in for a timed test in one of the Show Halls. There's always something new to try but sadly we will miss 'Tests' entrants Charles and Andrew in the XK150 doing a pirouette on the polished surface as hopefully on that day I will be attempting to scale Dub House, Honister once again on the Lakeland Trial after being unfit to do so over recent years.

My thanks to all entrants on the Wigton MC's tours this year. The four events Christine and I were involved in organising attracted a total of 169 cars giving an enjoyable motoring experience to 338 members and guests, proving the increasing popularity of this enjoyable motoring pastime.

Ron.

# Rallying Call



**Petter Solberg retires from rallying after Rally GB, here seen following his WRC2 class win with Dave Richards and Malcolm Wilson for whose teams he drove for during his successful career. Petter is a great ambassador for the sport and this year had taken his road show around Europe. Son Oliver looks to be following in his footsteps!**



# Social Scene

**Wigton Motor Club**

## **Annual Awards Dinner**

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

at the Skiddaw Hotel, Keswick

7.00 for 7.30pm

Please contact Maria Quigley at the Skiddaw Hotel to book  
and pay for your table/seat on  
01768772071 or [sales.skiddaw@lakedistricthotels.net](mailto:sales.skiddaw@lakedistricthotels.net)

Cost £30.00 per person.

Special Club Bed and Breakfast rate £100.00 per room"

## **Autojumble**

**Storage:** There are two spaces left in the barn near Wigton at £5 per week per car . This is suitable for long term storage mainly. Contact Graeme on [gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk)

**Fuchs Silkolene 20/50 oil :** 4 litres for £15. Filters £3.00 Red rotor arms £6 each. Contact Graeme on [gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk)

**The Club has a good supply of race and rally numbers at 50p per digit. They are stored at The Motor House so please contact any club official to buy some.**

# Inside The Industry

## Paul Gilligan has his say

### Hard Questions Asked About Electric Cars

For a while now it's seemed that those favouring a switch to electric cars could do, or say, no wrong. Now what I would call more balanced views are being expressed. Let me say again that I believe electric to be an expensive blind alley and that the real answer is hydrogen powered fuel cells.

Recently it's been revealed that the testing methods used to provide official figures on the actual range electric cars are flawed and exaggerate range by up to a third. Vehicles are tested in a temperature maintained at 23C which just happens to be the temperature at which lithium ion batteries perform at their maximum. It certainly isn't the normal temperature in Cumbria though! Tests are also carried out with heating and air conditioning systems switched off, no lights, no wipers, no music system or navigation. As an example the Nissan Leaf has an official range of 168 miles, real range is said to be around 125 miles. Less of course if it's being driven in dark, wet, cold conditions.

A Swedish study has concluded that because of the CO2 emissions resulting from the production of Lithium Ion batteries electric cars are in fact more polluting than petrol over their whole life.

One of the interesting things about the development of electric cars is that companies with no car manufacturing history have been attracted into the market. First was Tesla of course, but both Apple and Google are also involved. And of course in the UK Sir James Dyson committed £1 Billion to the development of an electric car to be built in Singapore close to the world's largest electric car market in China. Over 500 engineers were recruited and Dyson proudly announced they'd developed a "fantastic car". Then harsh realities dawned and this week brought the bad news he's closed the programme saying he "can no longer see a way to make it commercially viable". As a GM boss said when discussing Tesla said "These guys are very good at inventing things. But making cars in big volumes at low cost with high quality is the hard bit. We've been doing it for 100 years now and we've got to be quite good at it".

China as above is the world's largest market for electric cars, but perhaps not for long. The Chinese Government recently announced that it was switching subsidies from electric to hydrogen powered cars with a target of a million of these on Chinese roads within 10 years. The Japanese Government is taking similar action with a target only slightly lower in the same time frame. Meanwhile Hyundai have announced a partnership to build a green hydrogen ecosystem complete with refuelling **infrastructure across Europe, and at the same time revealed a new full size hydrogen fuel cell powered truck with a fully loaded range of about 250 miles.**

**New UK tax rules covering charges to company car drivers will give a further push to electric and hydrogen cars. These will be a big part of the fleet industry switching from petrol and diesel, what they switch to remains to be seen.**

### Successful London Trial for Driverless Cars

Early this month a fleet of driverless cars completed a week long demonstration around the private roads of the London Olympic Park. The cars used were hybrid Ford Mondeos and although in each car there was a driver ready to take over if required, it's reported that with up to 20 cars in use for a week this was never needed. Impressive indeed and tangible proof of the progress being made.

Now there are fears the arrival of driverless cars might not bring universal benefits. It's being suggested that they could become so cheap to operate that this would encourage people to use them more and avoid public transport. One proposal to avoid the possible environmental consequences is that all driverless cars should be zero emissions and that car sharing be encouraged if not made compulsory.

In addition it's clear that driverless technology is far from perfect yet. A software upgrade now allows Tesla owners to "summon" their cars from 200 feet away using their smartphones. However videos posted on social media by these owners show that things just aren't always working right yet. Cars are shown mounting kerbs, almost colliding with other parked vehicles, driving away from their owners rather than towards them, and causing other drivers to make emergency stops.

### **UK Road Deaths Not Reducing**

Final figures for 2018 UK road casualties have now been released showing a very marginal reduction in deaths against 2017. In total last year 1784 people died on UK roads, 44% were car occupants, 26% were pedestrians, 20% were motor cyclists, and 6% were cyclists. Most disappointing of all over a quarter of those who died in cars weren't wearing a seat belt. This has brought calls for more severe penalties to be imposed on people caught not belting up, I'd have thought the penalties were crystal clear? Between 2010 and 2014 speed was a factor in an average of 24% of road deaths, last year this was down to 18% so some progress there.

Concern has been raised that there was a rise of over 5% in the number of older people (60+) killed. This has resulted in calls for "refresher training" being made compulsory for older drivers and riders and perhaps even retesting.

### **September New Car Sales Disappoint**

On the face of it the fact that UK new car sales (registrations!) in September for the new 69 plate were 1.3% up on last year might seem good news. However last year a lot of registrations were moved out of September into August because the cars didn't comply with the new emissions and fuel consumption reporting regulations which came into force on September 1<sup>st</sup>. So in fact not a good result. Pure electric cars more than trebled their sales for the month and are well over double for the year. However these are still tiny numbers, 11300 for the year representing only 1.3% of sales and balanced by a big reduction in the sale of hybrids now the Government subsidy has been reduced.

Diesel sales continue to decline now accounting for just over 25% of the total for the year against almost 32% last year, but I do think diesel demand has steadied at just over 20% of the total and should remain there until and unless sales of electric and hydrogen cars really take off.

Looking just at figures for the year so far due to the August/September distortion not many significant manufacturers have a lot to smile about. Citroen are 2.5% up on last year but their DS brand wipes that out by selling 38% less than 2018. MG are almost 40% but tiny numbers. The only volume manufacturer to get a really good result was Volvo 18% up year on year. Ones hurting are Subaru -23%, Honda -18%, Fiat -15%, Mitsubishi -14%, Nissan -12% and Ford and Audi both -9%.

Of course all the above numbers are registrations not sales, and there is evidence of a very high level of pre registrations in September. This has had a downward effect on the values of other cars under 12 month old which are principally ex rental and ex dealer and manufacturer demonstrator vehicles. Retail prices for cars from pre registered to 12 months/12000 miles old are 7% less than they were this time last year. Petrol cars of this age were selling on average for 24% less than new retail price last October, now it's 38% off new retail!

### **Citroen UK Boss Makes Dealer Problems Clear.**

In a frank interview Citroen's UK MD Karl Howkins has made the problems his dealers face clear. The average UK Citroen dealer makes a profit of only 0.1% of turnover, so breakeven effectively. Almost half the dealers are currently losing money. Mr Howkins admits that to make a profit in their existing properties they must take an additional franchises. And even then he expects a gradual reduction in the number of UK Citroen dealers.

For what it's worth I think he's completely correct, and what he says applies to almost every other franchise as well. I continue to be amazed when I see dealerships announcing new multi million pound property developments. Of course they're only doing it because the manufacturers they represent are forcing them to, which given that those manufacturers would off the record agree with Mr Howkins is shocking.

## Formula 1 Can Be Cheap, Or At Least Value

Figures recently show that last year Mercedes once they had accounted for income received from the FIA, sponsors, and other teams that use their engines actually spent less than £40M on Formula 1 last year. It's estimated that they achieved TV coverage with "Advertising Value Equivalence" of \$3.7 BILLION! Sounds a good deal to me?

Paul Gilligan

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# Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show 2020

August 23rd

It might be a long way off but planning will be starting soon. We are asking for your help. We would love to see more people willing to help with the event so why not volunteer?

We have each year, some featured makes or models and in the past we have picked those with anniversaries but this can be counter productive in that other people will be doing the same as with Minis this year. So suggestions please! If you have links with a one make/model club please see if they are interested.

## Nostalgia

In my recent efforts to collate and collection all the items I have relating to WMC and take them to The Motor House, I came across some old road books, the oldest actually being for the 1976 Derwent Stages which was run by Workington & DMC under Clerk Bill Henderson. It was certainly an epic event including farm tracks, forests and airfields.

The list of stages was: Oldside, Stubsgill, Startoes, Acrewalls, Bowthorn Farm, Lowther Forest, Stargill, Hobcarton Forest, Setmurthy, Silloth Airfield, Kirkbride Airfield, Hadrians Camp, Carlisle south which I think was Great Orton Airfield, Kirkbride, Silloth, Wythop Forest, Setmurthy, Ewanrigg, Oldside, That made 21 stages in all! It started at the Carnegie Arts Centre in Workington. The epic route was well over 200 miles as the final petrol was at 208 miles!

Our new home at **Moota**, also has some history. The rather infamous hotel there was the scene of much enjoyment prior to the drink driving laws where revellers enjoyed trendy chicken in the basket and Black Forest Gateau. Workington DMC had their awards dinner there for a few years in the late 70s and early 80s. Tony Mason was the speaker on one occasion.

In the second half of the 80s we used it as the start and finish for the Allerdale Forest Stages. I remember going into the ballroom to set up documentation early on the Sunday morning to be greeted by the smell of dead beer and dank smoke! Yuk!

The nearby Clints Quarry was used as a stage on the early Solways when the quarry was still active. I remember the manager asking me if we could avoid hitting the explosive cabinet! We also ran a couple of single venues there. That was long before I came to live nearby and I've walked the stage and wondered how on Earth we dared to run with the steep drops at the side of some sections!

More recently we used the former hotel car park as a test on the Cockermouth Revival Rally.

Now we have our own place on the Moota Business Park.

Things go round!

# Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport



It was nice to read the report last month about the revitalised Jim Clark centre in Duns. I haven't been yet but it certainly looks a vast improvement on the previous one which was basically only about the size of an average family lounge, and really wasn't big enough to do justice to all Jim Clark achieved.

As you can see there's another Clark museum in Carlisle, granted it's a good deal smaller than the real thing but it works pretty well. The models on the wooden plinths are really just about as far as 1:43 goes regards detailing, and were made for me about 20 years ago by one of the leading modellers in the country. They weren't cheap to commission then so goodness knows what they'd cost now, I dread to think. All the others have been amassed over the years but there are several gaps still to fill. I'm very keen to find top quality examples of the Reivers 'D' type and Lister Jaguars and I'd also like a DKW which was an Ian Scott Watson car Clark raced very early in his career. I've got the Elan, Sunbeam Talbot and Porsche 356 but they're in the reserve cabinet with other bits and bobs and am currently waiting for the Elite he raced at Le Mans which is just about to be released by Sparks. Hopefully it'll come up to their normal high standards of detail and finish.

As I said above, the collection has taken years to get together but it's still exciting when something new appears. I can recommend picking a favourite race or rally driver and seeing what you can put together, it's quite good fun.

## **Moving on.**

I'm starting to think about car swaps again as my current one has just turned two and the garage has started contacting me reminding me of this fact, to be honest I find a bit annoying as I'm quite capable of making up my own mind. When you look at things logically of course the whole issue of car swaps becomes a bit daft. I've got a perfectly good vehicle with 20K miles on it and in a year or so someone will want to relieve me of a chunk of money to change to something similar but with zero miles. If past experience is anything to go by the amount it will cost will be roughly the same as we spent last year having the back garden totally remodelled, new paths, raised beds, fences, lawns etc, new drainage as well come to think of it. We also added a new summerhouse and believe it or not the total was as I said above about what I'd expect the car swap to be at three years old. Now the garden will last us 'til we die off, the car will last another 36 months or so before the process begins again, which if you're honest hardly seems like the bargain of the century. Maybe we'll just hang on to it for a few more years.

And finally, I was reading somewhere about Austin Healey 3000's. A really "hairy chested" sports car of days gone by or was it? Power 117bhp, 0 to 60 11.7 seconds, top speed 115 mph. Modern day Golf (not even a GT let alone a GTI) Power 130 bhp, 0 to 60 9.1 seconds, top speed 130 mph. I guess we must have some seriously rose tinted spectacles.

Ends. AA.

# What's On

## WMC events and other events of interest

### November

8-10	NEC Classic Show	
9th	VSCC Lakeland Trial	VSCC
21-24	Roger Clark Rally	RACRC
24th	<b>Autosolo</b>	<b>WMC</b>

### December

1st	Christmas Cracker Run	MG Cumbria
8-11	LE JOG	HERO
30th	<b>Festive Autotest</b>	<b>WMC</b>

Visit the Facebook page for the latest news or the webpage at  
[www.wigtonmc.co.uk](http://www.wigtonmc.co.uk)

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