

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

# Start Line

Issue 05/19

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

May 2019

## Flying Scotsman Report



Photo of Keith Graham/Sue Hoffmann by Tony North

See Elderly Utterances in this issue.

# Motorsport for All

# Club Officials

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# *Talking Point*

## *Topical Comment from the world of motoring*

It's really great that we have another three young British drivers in F1, making four in all with Lewis. However it will have come at a huge cost to their parents, I've heard mention of over £5m in the case of Lando Norris and perhaps not that much less for the other two. Plus the fact that they have lost their childhood, having spend the last twelve years with just one thing in (their parents') mind. No doubt they will have missed a fair bit of schooling as well. The personality traits and truculent behaviour of most of the increasingly young GP drivers are undoubtedly due to this. When Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Butten raced at Rowrah they came up by car or Transit with the kart in a trailer, they slept in the car and the dad was the only helper. Neither the Hamilton or Button family were wealthy but the lads got their by sheer talent Nowadays at a national meeting the motorhomes roll in, there are professional teams running the karts with mobile workshops and it can all get rather unpleasant. No wonder the non Motorsport UK side of karting is flourishing when the emphasis is on fun.

Of course it is not just our sport, it happens everywhere, think tennis with the Williams and Murray families driven by ambitious parents. In my teaching career I had parents tell me that school did not matter as their little "Wayne" was going to be a professional footballer. Of course very few did and the odd one who did, it must have been because I taught him everything I knew about football!

You also have to think about all the kids in any sport who don't make it to the level of a career. Have they sacrificed their schooling and childhood to satisfy their parent's ambition and then what happens to them? It may be that if they don't get into single seaters that the family has a business that will be able to provide a living to the lad/lass if their F1 dreams die, but many others will not. Will they go through life feeling that they are a failure?

Another worry is the way these kids are promoted via social media with names such as "Fred Boggs Rallying" or Joe Soap Racing" and the text is clearly not written by the kid but by a parent or in some cases a paid PR person. There are some wonderful PR phase that are used regularly whether at F1 level or at ten year old karting level. "***It was a challenging event but we have to take the positives from it***" actually means "we were absolute rubbish, finished well down the field but at least we did not damage the car."

Is this a cause for concern?

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

## Solway Sunset Tour

**(Pub run)**

**Wednesday, May 8th**

40 mile route

Starts at the Street Road Ends X Roads on the A595 near Wigton at 19.00

Entry fee £5 per person to include food at the finish.

Entries to Graeme Forrester on [gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk)

Entries close on May 6th at midday.

## May Grass Autotest

**Tuesday, May 14th 18.30 for a 19.00 start**

**At Blackbeck Farm on the A595 at Egremont**

**Entry fee £15 per car.**

Entries to David Agnew on 01946 841455     [DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com](mailto:DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com)

Usual classes and PCA & Autotest sections.

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# PG Tips

I've done it! Snotty is working and ready for the Isle of Man Classic but as ever, it has been a last minute job. Having been booked in to have the nasty scar I caused to the sill and rear door on the passenger side 18 months ago, the car ran like an absolute dog and misfired and wouldn't pull at all. Diagnosis was poor fuelling at revs and a new fuel pump and filter were required. The body work was duly done and a week later it went back for a final rolling road session to check health and tweak anything. I got the car back with a nice 122bhp at the wheels reading but report of a slight intermittent misfire. As I set off home that slight intermittent misfire turned into a full on catastrophic power sapping backfire inducing nightmare. I nursed the car towards home and with 5 miles to go the engine was on 2 cylinders and could barely go up a hill. It was looking depressingly like I was destined to spend another Isle of Man trip entirely in the pub (which is more expensive than racing and far more dangerous!) but Jonathon at JDM had advised me, before I set off, that the misfire was most likely down to the coil pack. The next morning I swapped the coil pack over for a spare and things were worse....that coil pack was very similar to the one on the car and clearly an Ebay special, probably made in China. Beginning to despair I dug out the original Ford coil pack and leads that I'd taken off a 1990s Mondeo in a scrap yard in Carlisle when I first converted Snotty to fuel injection, and hey presto, everything was solved. Paul Bowness is going to be so happy with this (he messaged me to congratulate me on saying nice things about the Ford Fiesta in last month's PG Tips) because what it proves is that a real 20 year old Ford coil pack and leads is more reliable than a modern aftermarket version with fancy looking coloured silicone leads. I am now in the process of tidying up a few bits and bobs before I head off next week with fellow Wigton club members Paul Eastwood in his Alfa 33 and David Wiggins in his 205 Rallye.....a car that is now so valuable in France that he will probably drive it like a bit of a girl so that he doesn't risk damaging it !

I am still married and I still don't own a Lancia 037 but I do have a house....the car I lusted after so much in last month's ramble went for a cool 770,000 EUR at Sotheby's auction – double the estimate. The Delta S4 went for 1,040,000 EUR which is staggering and shows that there are some super rich people out there prepared to buy old rally cars. I doubt either will ever really get used again which is sad. The bargain of the 3 Lancias was the Stratos which went for a measly 545,000 EUR. I guess they're a bit common in comparison to the other 2!

I finally drove a Nissan Juke this month too – some years ago Trudy really wanted one but children ruined all that because the boot space isn't too good and the interior is not exactly capacious either. The looks are very much a marmite thing but no one could deny they are at least distinctive, unlike a lot of samey bland SUVs. The Juke I had was petrol with what I'd guess was a 1.0-1.2 turbo engine producing modest sub 100bhp power. It was reasonably torquey but didn't rev well and acceleration was acceptable but no more. Inside it was very well built and equipped. Basically it's a nice car with little to report. Judging where the bonnet ended was quite hard due to the unusual shape of the front but then it had cameras and parking aids all over the place so it wasn't a problem. That's it really – funky looks (in my opinion) but lack lustre performance sums it up. What I need to try now is the 200bhp Nismo version to see if that excites me more.

Peter

# Championship News

## Club Championship Overall

1.	Phil Hodgson	62 pts
2.	Drew McLean	61 pts
3=.	Peter Wright	59 pts
3=.	John Sloan	59 pts
5.	Jack Palmer	47 pts
6.	Geoff Rae	45 pts
7.	Roger Pope	43 pts
8.	John Holliday	40 pts
9.	Peter Masters	38 pts
10.	David Agnew	35 pts

## Ladies Club Championship

1.	Bryony Garner	21 pts
2.	Fiona Tyson	19 pts

## Autotest Championship Overall

1.	Jack Palmer	47 pts
2.	Geoff Rae	45 pts
3.	John Sloan	40 pts
4=.	Phil Hodgson	38 pts
4=.	Drew McLean	38 pts
6=.	Craig Stamper	30 pts
6=.	Callum Alexander	30 pts
8=.	Willie Keening	25 pts
8=.	Roger Pope	25 pts
8=.	David Alexander	25 pts

## FWD Autotest Championship

1=.	Craig Stamper	47 pts
1=.	Roger Pope	47 pts
3.	David Agnew	45 pts

## RWD Autotest Championships

1=.	John Holliday	25 pts
1=.	John Sloan	25 pts
3.	Geoff Bateman	24 pts

## FWD PCA Championships

1=.	Geoff Rae	49 pts
1=.	Jack Palmer	49 pts
3.	Callum Alexander	44 pts

## RWD PCA Championship

1.	Phil Hodgson	49 pts
2.	Drew Maclean	48 pts
3.	John Sloan	24 pts

## Specials Autotest Championships

1.	Willie Keening	25 pts
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## Autosolo Championship

1.	Peter Wright	25 pts
2.	Phil Hodgson	24 pts
3.	Drew McLean	23 pts

## Marshal's Championship

1=.	David Wiggins	30 pts
1=.	Mary Parsons	30 pts
1=.	Eddie Parsons	30 pts
4=.	Steve Palmer	20 pts
4=.	Maggy Bateman	20 pts

With the unfortunate demise of the White Heather Tests in March there has not been any activity on the championship front until last weekend when we had the Maryport Autotest, ably run at the last minute by David Wiggins after John Holliday had to unexpectedly stand down. We enjoyed a fine days sport charging round the cones and a total of 14 tests were run throughout the day. The weather was extremely kind with bright sunshine for most of the day, although the breeze was a bit cool.

**Results on the day were:**

Jack Palmer	Corsa	635
John Sloan	Midget	646
Drew McLean	MX5	649
Geoff Rae	Corsa	664
Phil Hodgson	MX5	691
Callum Alexander	Ford KA	692
Ian Wozencroft	MX5	705
David Alexander	Ford KA	708
Adam Wozencroft	MX5	710
Brian Bradley	Golf	723
Geoff Bateman	MGF	726
Steve Palmer	Rover 25	746
Roger Pope	Mini	748
Dave Garner	Clio	751
David Agnew	Clio	761
Craig Stamper	Saxo	770
Bryony Garner	Clio	786
James Wiggins	205	860
Ian Cowan	Escort	928

It was a good, close result with only 14 seconds separating the first 3 and the results have made some changes to the championship tables. Phil Hodgson now leads the Club Championship on 62 closely followed by Drew McLean on 61 with Peter Wright and John Sloan right behind on 59 each. Bryony Garner has taken over the lead in the Ladies Championship by 2 points from Fiona Tyson. The Overall Autotest Championship is now headed by Jack Palmer on 47 with Geoff Rae only 2 points adrift on 45 with John Sloan taking 3<sup>rd</sup> spot with 40 just ahead of Phil and Drew both on 38.

Front Wheel Drive Autotest is led equally by Craig Stamper and Roger Pope with John Holliday and John Sloan jointly heading Rear Wheel Drive Autotest. In the PCA classes Geoff Rae and Jack Palmer jointly lead the Front Wheel Drive competition with Phil Hodgson just ahead of Drew McLean by 1 point in the Rear Wheel drive section. Peter Wright is leading the Autosolo competition and the Marshal's Championship currently has 3 people heading it, all on 30 points, David Wiggins and Eddie and Mary Parsons. Our next competitive event should be the grass autotest at Black Beck on May 8<sup>th</sup>, so hopefully, weather permitting, we should have some more results to add after that.

Geoff Bateman

# From The Top

News from UK Motorsport, Regions and the WMC Committee

## **Wigton Motor Club Ltd Annual General Meeting**

20.00 Wednesday, May 15th

At the Greenhill Hotel

### **Agenda**

Apologies

Minutes of the 2018 AGM

Matters Arising

Chairman's Report

Treasurer's Report

Acceptance of the Reports

Election of Officers and Committee for 2019

Any Other Business

Sandwiches and chips will follow the AGM

Then members are welcome to stay during the May committee meeting.

The committee have been working hard over the last few months, the organising team for the LDC just about have everything read for this year's event, a lot of work is happening with the Moota project, we have Drive It Day and of course entry forms are out for the Classic and Motor Sport Show. That's all in addition to the regular pub runs and autotests and keeping the club going!

If you would like to help in any way please come along to the AGM, you can still help without being on the committee.



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# Diversions

Media rumours: With plummeting sales it could be that Autocar and Auto Express with merge later this year as interest in new cars falls and most consumers get their information on line. What Car is also seeing sales drop year by year. Motor Sport News (or Motoring News as we knew it) has seen sales fall below 10k, a far cry from the 120K in the early 80s! As it's owned by the same company as Autosport could it be for the chop as much of the content is the same? MSN no longer covers speed events, not even the British hill Climb Championship and rarely touches on clubman's motor-sport.

Remember Borgward? Well if you do you are likely to be a pensioner! In their day there were the equivalent of Audi today and has success in the British saloon car Championship with a young Bill Blydenstein who tunes and raced an Isabella. Sadly, the company bit the dust in 1961. However, it's risen from its ashes under Chinese ownership with a range of SUVs, although the concept of reviving a make that has been gone for 60 year seems strange, yet the Chinese have taken on MG and Volvo but they had a continuous production and a strong following. Sales of Borgward in Germany are reported to be slow, but the company has plans to expand the range.

Many major manufacturers are cutting back the number of dealers in the UK which will mean in rural areas such as ours people will have to travel to buy some makes. Already there are just two Renault dealers in Cumbria so someone in Whitehaven must really want a Renault if they are going to travel to Carlisle to buy one. In recent years the independent Ford dealers in Cumbria have done well since the main dealerships were bought by Arnold Shark. Many customers have loyalty to their local garage rather than a particular make so it may be that some of the new or re-energised makes will step into those independent dealerships.

It's been quite amusing that since we sponsored Sam and Jack last year, I have had three requests from parents of young karters as to whether we would sponsor their eight-year-old. None had any link to the Club. I had to politely point out that the Palmers and Kirkpatricks have been active club members for many years and that the lads had already proven their ability at a high level. However, it did make me think that so many folks think that sponsoring is all about getting some cash of someone and putting stickers on your car. No so! You must work at it. You must keep your sponsor informed about your events, take your car to shows when requested and indeed take yourself to presentations and dinners where you are part of the sponsors overall image to his customers and suppliers.

Many manufacturers are now introducing "premium" brands of their vehicles, it's a good way to make a profit, take a basic car, change the outer panels and add more gizmos and then up the price considerably. The most successful being Toyota with the Lexus, although it could be said Audi hold that position in the VAG group. Citroen has the DS, although it will need long memories to see the heritage of the DS of the 60s, Nissan failed in the UK with Infinity and now Volvo have North Star and SEAT have Cupra. Of course in the seventies BL had Vandem Plas amongst their host of badge engineered cars. Rumour has it that BMW may produce a premier brand to be called Ego with the larger models being Super Ego.

GTF

## An unusual tale of how the Peak Revs rally took its place in Cumbrian motorsport.

As I was born on 2nd February 1947 I was desperately waiting for my 17th birthday on 2nd Feb 1964 so I could finally get behind the steering wheel of the family Ford Anglia 105e on public roads. Therefore this meant sitting in the driver's seat at 5 minutes to midnight with a very tolerant dad watching the seconds tick by until midnight finally arrived.

Passing my test 3 months later I was of course willing to collect grandmas, aunties, neighbours and even people who didn't want collected just so that I had an excuse to drive the car, putting flowers on relations graves was another task I willingly volunteered for.

Motorsport mainly consisted of navigating for various West Cumberland Motor Club members or marshalling on any events that were happening. I marshalled on Motoring News championship rallies and other night rallies up in remote areas like Hardknott pass or Bewcastle as well as the RAC and the Gulf Oil forest rallies in Kielder, Newcastleton and other places that were to become favourite areas of mine for the next couple of decades.

Some of the drivers I navigated for were kind enough even to loan me their cars to drive in a few club events, Gordon Richardson lent me his driving school mini for autotests at Silloth aerodrome, Bert Lowry lent me his VW Variant for autocross events the club held occasionally at Stargill farm near Oily Johnie's pub at Winscales moor and Simon Martins dad Bob was kind enough to lend me his VW Beetle at an autocross near the Metal Bridge just before Gretna Green. On reflection it was amazing just how kind people were to me being a young very keen enthusiast with not a lot of money, I will be eternally grateful to all those who were kind to me in so many ways.

I continued to navigate on many events as well as persuading my dad to compete in Motorsport in his Cortina CAO777B on navigational rallies and a few 12 cars some of which were organised by a newly formed motor club in West Cumbria named the United Steels Social Organisation Motor Club or USSO for short. This club gained lots of members rapidly after its formation because big discounts had been obtained for car parts from the Co-op garage at Brayton near Aspatria for tyres, oils and other new parts. When the coop garage closed these parts were available from Ken Wilson, Malcolm Wilson's dad at Branthwaite who also had a vehicle dismantlers business.

These circumstances were to prove absolutely pivotal In Motorsport not just in West Cumbria but it was the beginning of an era not only in local Motorsport but worldwide Motorsport for future years.

Many of us West Cumbrians were members of both clubs primarily because well over 10,000 people worked for various United Steel Company businesses among them being Workington steelworks, Chapel Bank engineering and foundry, Ogden and Lawsons brass foundry, Lowca coke ovens, Rowrah quarries, Beckermat and Florence ore mines as well as Micklam brickworks and Workington docks all these owned by the same company, all located in West Cumbria.

Inter branch events against other USSO companies saw us competing in Lincolnshire and other areas of the country, making many new friends and gave us a chance seeing how other events were organised.

A downturn in the steel industry in 1967/8 saw redundancies in the company amongst those being made redundant were all the apprentices who had just completed their apprenticeships that year, this included me having just finished my apprenticeship as a structural plater.

United Steel company offered quite a number of us from various trades jobs at their Scunthorpe plants so myself along with others accepted jobs there and some of us we went to work at Scunthorpe. A few of us traveled in my first car which was a left hand drive VW Beetle dating from 1947/8 with a split rear window bought for me for £15 by my grandma as a present. I didn't realise it at the time but this was one of the first cars built after the war and are worth a lot of money these days, I just wanted a better car but that first one gave me great service and I sold it to Andrew Ferguson of Whitehaven I believe. This forced change of job when I look back opened many new avenues in my life and certainly the widened my Motorsport involvement in a big way.

Having a reasonable job and no ties I answered an advert in Motoring News which was the motoring publication of the time read avidly every Thursday by everyone, no internet in those days, no e bay or anything similar. MN as it was known catered for every form of Motorsport and ran the countrys premier rally championship, it's rival Autosport catered mainly for racing cars and race meetings with our nearest circuits being Croft over 100 miles away and Oulton Park about 140 miles away I wasn't really interested in circuit racing.



An advert in MN for a navigator to contest some Motoring News championship rallies from a guy called a Bill Banks in Kirton Lyndsey Lincolnshire about 15 miles from my digs saw me answering the advert and me having some interesting evenings building a rather unusual rally car which was an Austin A40 Farina with a highly tuned 1293 cc A series engine, roll cage, 5.5j wheels, Goodyear Ultragrip tyres etc, this was our steed that we prepared to do a few MN rallies.

Looking back the John Aley roll cage was the most useful bit of kit, not only could you stuff maps between it and the roof to store them but we tested it out several times in incidents it was ultimately designed for in the 12 month period we rallied together.

Bill was a university friend of Andy Dawson later to become team manager of the works Datsun rally team and we stayed at Andy's house or rather his parents rather grand house at Cheltenham before doing the Rallye Brit-towe where I believe we first tested out the roll cage. Repairing the car seemed to be a regular feature taking up many evenings at his distinctive home where his parents had an old style windmill and were grain merchants.

Rallies in Lincolnshire saw us on some roads and tracks between the dykes I remembered from the USSO rallies but dykes in Lincolnshire are not hedges as in Cumbria but are more like small canals or very big drainages ditches, so big in fact an off here could mean the car ended up submerged under a few feet of water. Lincolnshire is very flat there are no hedges to prevent you going into the rivers or dykes so accurate map reading here is essential in a quick car. Occasionally people drowned in these ditches at times.

A trip to Wales for another MN rally this time Ludlow Castle motor clubs "Peak Revs" rally was a very memorable weekend, I thought this was a great name for a rally so marked another milestone in my Motorsport history file. I can't remember if it was this rally or another in Lincolnshire that was the terminal event for the hard pressed A40 but rolling it end over end several times rather than sideways as was the normal procedure down a narrow country lane wrote the car off good and proper as far as rallying was concerned.

Not wishing to waste what was left of the car we decided to go grass track racing or banger racing at Lincoln and this was a revelation. Here you got paid start money and cash for each podium place you managed in every heat so with Bill and I sharing the car we came home in profit on a some occasions. Anyone who had an RAC comp licence wasn't allowed to compete in non RAC events so Keith Cumberland was probably one of the those driving in those events.

We made friends with some US Airforce radar personnel who were stationed near RAF Conninsby nor far from Kirton Lyndsey and their remote building near the airfield was a great place for them to build their grass track racers. This form of racing is really a contact sport meant to please the vast crowds it attracted. Inevitably when many cars had been smashed up they littered the track and passage could be totally blocked, it was rather like taking a car to one of those car crushers at a scrapyard but not getting out before the operator started the crusher working. The little nimble A40 was very quick and manoeuvrable but was eventually trashed by a big MK9 Jag with steel channel bumpers. When the remains of the car were trailered back to Kirton Lindsey it was in a sorry state but it had provided a lot of fun and through it I had gained a lot of experience.

About the same time as this I received a job offer from the fabrication shop at the Distington Engineering works of the steel company in Workington so I moved back to Cumbria, most of the other people already having returned as they hadn't made friends as I had done.

I took on the job of comp sec of the WCMC and decided to organise a very competitive night rally rather like the ones I had been competing in rather than the tricky navigational rallies that were the norm up here at the time. I was planning to use farm tracks, white roads, airfields and quarries plus a few twisty remote roads such as over Caldbeck, Sandale, Cold fell, all timed to the second just as some of the fantastic rallies had done that I had competed in the previous year. Controls would be clearly defined by map references, no complicated navigation, the winning car would be the fastest over the special stages or "Selectives" incurring no road penalties. This rally would be called the "Peak Revs" rally, the title indicating exactly what the rally format was intended to be.

Permits were applied for, permission was given by landowners, houses on the route were visited, as it was to take place at night, Watson garage at Waverton agreed to open specially as I had navigated for the owner Wilson Watson in his Lotus Cortina previously.

More next month!



# Moota Update



April has seen a lot of progress as many of you will have seen on Face Book. The whole structure is now complete with sides, roof and windows. Next to come are the concrete floor and land drains followed by the two roller doors.

A team of members painted the lower parts of the metal structure before the concrete panels were inserted. In this photo the final panels were being fitted at the rear.



This is the front view showing where the doors are to be fitted. There is quite a large area in front of the building which will be levelled and covered in tar planings. There will also be a security fence on the right hand side.

There will be a quiet period in activity for the next few weeks as our project manager David Agnew is on holiday. However offers of help in various ways will be welcome, it is YOUR building so please lend a hand in some way. We want to create a base for the Club to the highest standards

but at the same time we have limited funds so free manpower or members who can “blag” things and raise funds are most helpful!

Currently the address is Wigton Motor Club, Moota Business Park. Cockermouth CA13 0QE. Should the building have a name? Answers by email please!



During WW11 Moota was a POW camp, mainly for Italians many of whom worked on local farms. The prisoners also created a church with wonderful artwork which was sadly later destroyed. Later the area became a hotel which held popular dances and social dinners. The garden centre was created later as was the business park using some of the former prison blocks. There were several businesses there including a garage and a butchery. The hotel was demolished around ten years ago. The garden centre has gone from strength to strength and there are six homes on the site, based on the former PoW blocks.

# Welcome

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

Tim and Elaine Smith of Cockermouth

John Haygarth of Ilkley

Mark, Evie and George Milne of Carlisle

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

**For any changes or queries about membership please contact**

**Maggy Bateman on 01697349919**

**or by email at [wcmemsub@outlook.com](mailto:wcmemsub@outlook.com)**

## Marshal Force

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

Marshals will be needed for both the up and coming autotests in May and June and them for the Lake District Classic on June 23rd. David Agnew is the man to contact for the LDC.



# Elderly Utterances

## The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say



Although I'm semi retired from serious rallying I try to marshal on significant historic events that pass within 100 miles of home and these usually include Rally of the Tests, 1000 mile Trial, Le Jog and Flying Scotsman. Fortunately there are a bunch of friends that treat these events as a social occasion and so it was to be on the Flying Scotsman in early April until Charles asked if I was good to take part. Not having competed in the FS since 2011 I confess to being a little

rusty but we found ourselves in the 1937 Derby Special at the start at Low Wood, Windermere on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April and as we were sitting outside in the weather it was a tad cool. Fortunately the social marshalling team, this time consisting of Paul Gilligan, Rob Grant and Jim Stairs carried on with their duties at Dundrennan near Newton Stewart. Our first morning consisted of a run round the southern Lakes including two tests at Holker Hall and regularities on old road rallying ground at Subberthwaite and Cold Fell interspersed by coffee at Irton Hall and two laps of Rowrah Circuit. Here we were greeted by a great Wigton Club team of marshals and a clutch of unruly spectators offering the crews sloe gin and other tempting delicacies which were of course politely refused. The spritely MGs and BMWs predictably out-performed the 'ponderous' Bentleys on the tight kart track and after a regularity over Cold Fell we took lunch at Armathwaite Hall.

After lunch we did an early afternoon wake up run over Caldbeck Common before taking in two tests in the Raughtonhead area and the Eden Valley before a tea break at Alston Station. The next regularity went well until we caught up two earlier cars which stopped before one of the many fords in the Allendale area. We could see the TC at the other side and when the two blockers moved on we attacked the ford only to have the engine cut out which cost us our first significant penalty – one minute which is an age on these events. One more test at Eastgate in Weardale run by Eddie Graham and the Hexham Club completed the day and we headed for the overnight halt at Slaley Hall where more Wigton members were on hand to greet us. We were happy enough with our progress at this stage as were Keith Graham and Sue Hoffmann in the other local Derby VDP Bentley.

After breakfast on Saturday we headed for the first regularity of the day on the Bewcastle Fells which is where I cut my navigating teeth in the '60s and the roads they chose were brilliant and included two forest sections in Kershope before taking coffee in the Grapes Hotel in Newcastleton where more members were on hand soaking up the atmosphere. After a run west across country into Galloway taking in lunch at Thornhill we arrived at the much anticipated Dundrennan Ranges where the first

TC was manned by the ever cheerful Rob, Jim and Paul who hastened us on our way. All went well through this section which consisted of 6 TCs and 6 PCs all in a frantic 10 minutes requiring accurate map reading in a maze of roads. We were really looking forward to this section which was reminiscent of our all time favourite, the Swynnerton Army camp in Cheshire. All went well for the first 5 TCs at which point we were baulked by the 1907 Itala, which had gone astray and rejoined the correct route just ahead of us, and steadfastly refused to move over or let us by. This led to significant penalties which effectively spoiled our performance for the day. That night we stayed at the lavish Trump (yes the same!) Turnberry Hotel which was a bit of an eye opener and pretty good by any standards.

Sunday was rather more relaxed as we made our way north over the Clyde and into the Trossachs and the day included 4 tests and 5 regularity sections in lovely countryside along some of the roads used on the Gallop of a couple of years ago. The Bentley was playing up a little by now as there was no charge to the battery so we were resorting to push starts from marshals and bystanders until we eventually stopped completely on the last test. Here we spent 34 minutes trying to get going so we could reach the finish which we eventually did with the help of one of those trick, instant start, slave battery devices. The Gleneagles Hotel finish was a welcome sight although any hope of a decent placing was long gone. It was good to see Keith and Sue had also finished well and honour was maintained as we managed to finish a couple of places ahead of them! An excellent evenings dinner and prize giving was unsurpassed and helped to ease the pain even if they charge for everything like a raging bull – four modest glasses of wine £50!



Anyway we had to think of getting home so a hall porter brought up the Bentley battery and placed it on the cream carpet in our room and we charged it up overnight which would be sufficient to get us home. Monday morning we left at about nine and made our way south in an orderly fashion but the Bentley had other ideas. Just south of Johnstonebridge services on the M74 the engine let go in a fairly dramatic fashion with a conrod ventilating the crankcase and doing heaven knows what other internal damage. So after a couple of hours at the roadside we were transported home on a recovery truck. To pay tribute to the

wounded Derby, it has given sterling service to Charles over the past 10 years having covered in the region of 10,000 fairly demanding rally miles and that for a 1937 car aint bad. We enjoyed the Flying Scotsman enormously but to have so many issues on one event was a bit much!

Ron.

## **Submissions Deadline**

**The deadline for article, adverts, reports and photos for the June edition is May 15th**

# Rallying Call

## Lake District Classic & Targa Rally

June 23rd

Based in Penrith

New start and finish venue

New test venues

Navigational section

Entry forms will be emailed out shortly and on the website.

Round 2 of the Protyres Historic and Targa Challenge.

2. May	5th/6th	Berwick Classic	BDMC
3. June	24th	Lake District Classic	WMC
4. July	15th	Northern Dales	H&DMC
5. August	12th	Blue Streak Classic	SMC
6. Sept	30th	Doonhamer Classic	SoSCC
7. October	14th	Solway Autumn Classic	WMC



# Social Scene

April	28th	Drive It Day
May	8th	Pub Run
May	16-18	Gallop
June	5th	Pub Run
July	3rd	Pub Run
July	7th	Breakfast Meet at Lingholme
August	7th	Pub Run
August	18th	Classic Show ay Dalemmain

If there is sufficient interest we will arrange a visit to the Alpaca Farm and also the Silloth Motor Cycle Museum .

There will be additional Breakfast Meets and we will be pleased to hear of other ideas that may interest members.

## A Good Read

It's a rare happening to come across a story I have never heard before in motoring matters but my recent holiday read was just that. "Horizon Fever" by A E Filby who had various motoring adventures in Africa from 1931 to 1935. Filby died in 1941 from malaria and the manuscripts have only recently been discovered by his family and published.

It's very "Boy's Own" and although less than 90 years ago, it was a time when the British Empire was still in sway and there was a pink strip on the globe from Egypt to South Africa and Filby used firstly an ancient Rolls Royce and then an equally ancient Ford T to do the journey with hundreds of punctures, make shift repairs and adventures. Every couple of hundred miles he would find a District Commissioner's Office where tea was served in the best china and gentlemen were expected to dress for dinner! In South Africa he organised the first car rally there.

He then drove across the Equator in a more modern Austin which is now in the Haynes Museum.

It's a sad fact that while the roads in Africa are now much better, there is so much unrest that such journeys would be very dangerous.



# Team Wigton

## North Yorkshire Classic 23/24 March. HRCR Clubman's Road Rally Championship Rd 2

### John Haygarth/Bob Hargreaves 2<sup>nd</sup> o/a, 1<sup>st</sup> i/c.

The event consisted of 7 regularities and 13 tests spread over a 22 hour, two day format, with reverse seeding on the first day. As car 45 from 48 we started at 15:45 and went straight into the first regularity followed by four tests, emerging in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1 second behind Darrell Staniforth and daughter Nicky, in their Cooper S. Regularity 2 followed and a timing error was made which dropped us down to 5<sup>th</sup>. Another 3 tests and then into an evening meal halt where the second half of regularity 3 was issued upon arrival. This regularity was over 75 minutes long with 9 Timing Points and was run in darkness. We had climbed one position to 4<sup>th</sup>.



First car away on Sunday was from 08:31 with the running order determined by overall position from the previous night. One or two crews were caught out by assuming as the running order was the same as the previous day – could have spent another 40 minutes in bed!! Off down the road to Thorlthorpe, a dis-used airfield, with 4 tests (fastest on 3 of them). Another two regularity's followed before a morning coffee halt and immediately into regularity number 6, starting 100 yards around the corner.

The instructions included 'Consider All Roads' which means, using white coloured roads. From the start we travelled 200 yards to the public road and a staggered junction. Straight across onto the white road, passing a few houses, turn left, past the Code Board and to the yellow where we turned right. This was the shortest route and had been agreed with the householders who were stood outside watching us travel at a sedate 15 mph average. 15 crews took the slightly longer route and missed the Code Board, 7 of them being Experts/Masters.

This was our best regularity as I had thought. Thinking as I'd done well with dropping only 8 seconds over the 6 Timing Points until I saw as Darrell/Nicky had dropped only 6 seconds. The final regularity followed with two tests to finish the event off, one being a combination of two tests used the day before. A 10 mile run back to the Rally HQ at Hawkhill, near Easingwold and the Sunday roast. There was a short delay before the results were announced, which had us finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> overall, 21 seconds behind Darrel/Nicky.

Another good enjoyable event from York Motor Club.

## Ilkley Jubilee Historic 14 April. HRCR Clubman's Road Rally Championship Rd 3

### John Haygarth/Bob Hargreaves 7<sup>th</sup> o/a, 2<sup>nd</sup> i/c

The rally consisted of 9 regularity's and 11 tests compacted into 9 hours. First car away were last year's winners Paul Crosby/Ali Proctor in the LHD Porsche 911. We literally travelled across the road from Millstones Restaurant and into a layby to start the first regularity. The first part had been handed out at signing-on the night before, with part 2 handed out as we left MTC1. With the start being an allocated time at MTC1 (we were allowed 4 minutes to travel to the start of the regularity with the onus being on the navigator to start his stop watch at the correct time) it turned into a 'plot and bash' type section. Two tests in Coldstones Quarry followed before another regularity with 6 Timing Points before the morning coffee halt. Next followed a regularity which was timed to the minute, rather than the usual second, which required a different way to work it out. This caught out 34 of the 69 entries with Crosby/



Proctor being one, who dropped a minute, but only incurred a 15 second penalty. This took us to 3 tests on Catterick Army Camp, each one over 2 minutes long. Regularity 4 was fairly straightforward, plot the spot heights, but on the Catterick Range maps that were 1:10000, then enlarged, it gave a different perspective. Then it was onto lunch at Leyburn Auction Market. A leisurely bite to eat and a quick look at the results, which found us in the lead with Howard Warren/Ryan Pickering 4 seconds behind in their Porsche 911 and Crosby/Proctor a further 21 seconds in arrears.



After lunch and it was back to Catterick for 2 regularity's on those different scale maps together with the 3 tests repeated from this morning. The first regularity caught me out twice. Just before the first Timing Point the roads we used were close to each other on the map and I followed the wrong one. The second time, we missed a well-hidden track, off to the left in the trees and had to go back for it and the hidden Timing Point. Rather than receive a 5 minute penalty for missing a control we ended up with a 1:30 control maximum which ended our lead at the top of the table. After Catterick there were 3 fairly short regularity's and then 2 tests at the Hildebrand Bar-

racks just outside Harrogate. The third and final regularity of those last three ran in the maze of roads around Darly, Birstwith, Hampsthwaite and Kettlesing Bottom. The final test of the day was the usual high speed run down the edge of Scargill Reservoir. We led the way with a time 3 seconds quicker than John Ruddock/Roger Birkill in the Mk1 Escort 2000 and overall, we won 9 out of the 11 special tests.

Crosby/Proctor won the event by 24 seconds from Warren/Pickering with Darell/Nicky Staniforth a further 11 seconds behind. We ended up 7<sup>th</sup> overall, 1m 24secs behind the winner.

Bob Hargreaves

## Jottings

If you think most car adverts are daft, have you tried reading the ads for posh watches that increasingly fill classic car magazines?

A recent Bremont advert says their watches work at 900 feet below sea level and have been tested on British shores at their headquarters at Henley on Thames. Now if I was 900 feet below sea level I think the last thing I would want to know is the time! Henley on Thames is hardly by the "shore" and I am sure the Thames there is not much more than ten fee deep anyway! "Your **Bremont is probably tougher than you are**". Wonderful! I get squashed and my watch is unharmed. I am really pleased about that! Utter twaddle. What sort of daft PR firm though that advert up?

BRM watches are actually Bernard Richards Manufacture, although they do play on vague motorsport connections—they once sponsored the Caterham F1 team. Nothing at all to do with the iconic cars, although the logo is similar Their V18 model " **has pushers and crown reminiscent of race car pistons.**" It costs £8,000. LOL

# Nostalgia

## Keith Thomas reflects

In 1960 the RAC Rally entered the forests for the first time so became a really competitive international event with speed over the forest tracks being the deciding factor, this made it one of the best rallies in the world. Other club rallies started becoming more competitive too, most started using “white” roads ( i.e. unsurfaced roads marked white on OS maps), these are unsurfaced tracks such as the Mosser to Loweswater fell road, Blindbothel white that runs between Lorton and Mosser, these rallies used farm tracks such as Stargill with the famous river crossing through the ford near Little Clifton that used to draw big crowds when rallies such as the Derwent rally passed through in later years. Airfields, MOD property, Workington Slag banks and Greggains’ quarries at Mawbray later became household words in rally circles but motor clubs had changed dramatically too. The original members were now more likely to meet as a Rotary club, motoring wasn’t exclusive any more and quite rightly those who could afford high value quality cars such as Jaguars & Rovers weren’t wanting to take them on rough tracks, those that had money and were still keen on motorsport often bought a second car, fitted a sump guard and went rallying but roll cages were still not generally used unless competitors were doing Motoring News Championship events or serious forest rallies.

I navigated for a few years for a guy called Gordon Richardson in Hillman Imps, we often started a rallies such as the John Peel, Eden Valley, Trio or Tirril at 10.30pm, covered probably a 200 mile rally route over Hardknot and Wrynose passes, lots of farm tracks and white roads before finishing at 6.30am at a hotel for breakfast. We then returned to Workington, then after a sleep washed the car, removed the sump guard and spotlights and on Monday morning it would return to its proper job as Falcon School of Motoring car. In it dozens of people the following week would wonder why there was a map light screwed onto the dash or a socket for a Poti map magnifier whilst they learned to drive and pass their driving test around the streets of Workington.

I had to be very careful not to brace my feet against the bulkhead in this car if I felt we were late in braking as the dual controls were still connected on my side, surprisingly very few people ever missed their lessons because of mishaps on Saturday nights although it caused us a bit of midnight oil at times on Sunday nights to get the car into shape for Monday mornings.

Keith Thomas.

## Diversions

I see Mercedes Carlisle have opened their new multi million pound showroom just off the by pass. They are advertising “an exciting customer experience”. I wonder what would happen if you went in and asked for one? LOL . PR people do come up with some daft statements!

Sadly it’s the manufacturers that want these glass palaces built but ultimately it is the customer who has to pay for them. Have you ever though about the cost of heating in the winter and air conditioning in the summer? Not very environmentally friendly I would think.

# Inside The Industry

## Paul Gilligan has his say

UK new car sales in the vital March month again dipped against last year, but only by 2.4% which is a better result than many expected. How much this result was “helped” by the pre registration of unsold vehicles to boost the numbers is of course a matter of intense speculation.

In fact retail sales were only 2.8% down on last year and large fleets actually bought a few hundred more than in March 2018, but sales to small businesses were a whopping 45% down. All the signs are that small businesses are keeping their cheque books well under control in a time of great economic uncertainty, and our own experience suggests they are postponing car purchases but going ahead with new vans that actually help grow the business.

For the year to end March figures are similar, total 2.4% down, retail and large fleet about even, small business 41% down. In all this there were of course winners and losers. Biggest loser was Ford who had a disastrous month falling from over 50000 sales last year to under 41000 this resulting in a market share of under 9% and almost being overtaken by both Vauxhall and Volkswagen. Ford’s No 1 position in the UK has been the case for almost 50 years now but looks like that era is coming to an end.

Looking at the quarter particularly dismal news for Alfa Romeo 30% down, Audi 13% down, Citroen’s DS Division 49% down and Nissan 16% down. Volvo and their dealers must be ecstatic to be 39% up in a slightly declining market.

At the top end of the market figures are all over the place, Bentley are about static, Jaguar 16% up, Land Rover static, Maserati 37% down, McLaren 34% down, Porsche 41% down.

One survey showed dealers received around 11% less new car enquiries in the month so they did well to manage the sales reduction to only just over 2%. However there is evidence emerging that retail customers are turning to used cars that they perceive as offering better value and involve taking on smaller borrowings. This time last year 41% of motorists surveyed said they were considering buying a used car as their next purchase, now it’s 49%. Not surprisingly those who will go for a new car next is down from 42% to 34%.

UK car production is also well down, 17% down on last year with the full year forecast now down to 1.3M cars, less than the Czech Republic makes.

### **Who Marries Who?**

The enormous cost of developing electric, hydrogen, and self driving cars is forcing a new era of consolidation in the industry. Many are forecasting there will be a series of mergers and acquisitions over the next few years. Ford and VW are moving closer together, Peugeot/Citroen/Vauxhall/Opel boss Carlos Tavares has openly admitted to being open to other “opportunities” with a takeover of Fiat/Chrysler rumoured as the next target. The Peugeot family, still major shareholders, have declared themselves in favour of this idea. There’s a feeling that Tata are disenchanted with their ownership of Jaguar Land Rover now it’s losing money and either M. Tavares or Kia/Hyundai rumoured as possible new owners. Toyota and Suzuki are beginning a joint venture with Toyota producing Suzuki badged versions of the RAV 4 and Corolla, giving Suzuki access to Toyota hybrid technology, while Toyota will use Suzuki’s small car internal combustion engines. For Europe the Suzuki versions of the Rav 4 and Corolla will be produced in Toyota’s UK plants.

One industry executive has pointed out that because of the enormous cost of developing new aircraft there are only two major manufacturers of large civil airliners in the World, Boeing and Airbus. Given that the motor industry now faces similarly vast investments why he suggested should the end result be any different?

### **Breaking Speed Limits To End?**

From 2022 all new cars sold in Europe will have to be fitted with a device that mans the car will know what the speed limit is on the road they are on and will not permit the driver to exceed that limit. There will be an emergency feature that the driver can use to override the system but it’s thought that a black box will be fitted that will inform the insurance company whenever this is done.

The industry is expecting a significant sales boost in 2021 as drivers seek to get the last new cars which don’t feature this “improvement” and those who now make a living by altering engine management systems to pro

duce more power will have another profit opportunity by offering to get around the speed limiting devices.

Until all this happens the risks of being caught speeding seems to vary dramatically depending on where you break the limit. Last year Wiltshire police prosecuted 1190 motorists for speeding while the neighbouring Avon and Somerset force caught almost 200,000! Some Chief Constables seem determined to catch those who drive beyond the limit, some think it simply doesn't matter.

### **Ford Shaking Up Their European Business**

Ford has lost money on its European operations for most of the last 20 years. And it's rumoured that the car side of that business had posted losses almost every year with only the vans actually turning a profit.

Ford has been slow to move to SUVs rather than "conventional" cars. SUVs now represent one third of European new car sales, but only 20% of Ford's sales because they simply don't have a full range of SUVs available. Now they are reviving the Puma name for a Fiesta based SUV to slot in between the Ecosport and the Kuga. A new Kuga's on the way and Ford will offer a top end SUV by once again importing the Explorer from the US. The slow selling and unprofitable B-Max, C-Max and Ka+ models will be dropped. Ford are also dramatically reducing the volume of cars they supply to the rental industry at enormous discounts, which is partly responsible for their reduced market share.

Concentration on SUVs has transformed the fortunes of Peugeot and Vauxhall in particular, so Ford are pinning all their hopes on doing the same. If this doesn't work rumours continue to circulate that Ford may sell their European car business to VW and continue as a van seller only.

### **Carlos Ghosn Sage Continues**

Having only recently been freed on bail ex Nissan/Renault/Mitsubishi boss Carlos Ghosn has now been re-arrested in Japan. Fresh charges have emerged suggested that he used company funds to pay for his divorce lawyers and the purchase or lease costs of private jets used largely for personal rather than company business. It's also said that a Nissan internal audit has revealed that the Nissan importer in Oman received a \$15 Million "reward" for sales performance on Mr. Ghosn's instructions, and that \$5 Million of this was diverted to a company in the British Virgin Islands controlled by Mrs Ghosn. Said company then used this "windfall" to buy a luxury yacht for the use of Mr & Mrs Ghosn. They deny all charges so the case rumbles on and the lawyers get richer.

### **Electric & Hydrogen Power**

London's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) is now operational with drivers of all but the least polluting cars and vans facing increased charges to drive in central London. One effect has been an increased interest in electric cars with 60% of UK motorists surveyed now saying they would consider electric power for their next car purchase.

Both my regular readers will know that my own opinion is that Hydrogen not Electric is the way forward. I was thereof pleased to see that Audi have appointed a new boss who has made the re-starting of their hydrogen power research one of his very first actions. Audi expect to offer customers hydrogen powered cars as early as 2021 and are using Hyundai technology to speed the process up. Audi's reasons are that they are concerned about the availability of the natural resources required for building a massive number of batteries every year, lack of recharging infrastructure, and that they fear pure electric cars simply won't satisfy customers' expectations in real world use. They expect their hydrogen cars to have a range of almost 400 miles and a refuelling time of 4 minutes.

Meanwhile Toyota have offered all other manufacturers access to their hybrid technology by freeing up almost 24000 patents they hold, some of which are so new they are still pending. Almost 2400 of these cover hydrogen fuel cells. Other technology will be made available by Toyota on a fee based system so they're not being entirely charitable!

### **The Full Monte**

So that's used up my space allocation in Startline. For those who want to read the Full Monte version, around twice the length or more, that other clubs get please email me as a gratifying number of members already have

Paul Gilligan

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# Andy's Armchair

## Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

Just thought I'd cheer my reader up by reminding her/ him that as of 2022 their new car, whether it's a Dacia Sandero or a Ferrari 812 Superfast, will be flat out at 70 mph if the latest EU initiative is passed when voted on in September. NO! I hear you shout we'll be brexited by then so we needn't worry. Well think again, "Fred Carno's" circus aka the House of Commons, have confirmed that UK vehicle standards will be aligned with Europe whether we're in or out. So there!

Needless to say the blithering half wits responsible for the above have no knowledge of motor cars, as if they had they'd realise that in one stroke of a pen they've basically sealed the fate of Aston Martin, Maserati, Lamborghini, Bentley, Rolls Royce, Porsche etc. They'll also be upsetting the rich and powerful, so maybe they'll amend the above allowing vehicles costing in excess of one hundred thousand pounds to be exempt, and become the only ones allowed to use lane three of the motorway, with us peasants being fined a huge amount if we dare to cross the line and hold up those people who really matter. Might be an idea to buy a classic that's flat out at 70 but costs a fortune just to spoil the party.

Just in case you're asking "Why" about the above idea then let me tell you it's for your own good, so you'll be safer on the road. According to what I've read the population of our "festering" isle is some 66.85 million people and during 2018 a total of 1770 unlucky souls were killed in road accidents. Now not all of those would have been as a result of high speed so after you've taken them into consideration I'd suggest that more people succumb by doing DIY, boozing, or even drowning in the bath, maybe ladders will be banned and snorkels made mandatory in anything above 3 inches of water. You certainly wouldn't put such stupidity beyond them.

Well I feel better for a moan so now I can move on to something important. Isn't it strange how things work out? It seems only yesterday that I was singing the praises of the up and coming Herr Vettel in this august publication. I had him marked down as a coming "great" to join the Nuvolaris, Fangios, Clarks etc. What a nit! It now appears he's certainly up to the job in a car that's far ahead of the opposition, but once the pressure mounts he can't cope and the mistakes start to mount up. Last year was strewn with unforced errors and now young Leclerc has arrived at the prancing horse we're seeing more of the same with poor Seb being firmly put in his place by his new teammate. Let's be fair if he wasn't a four times champion the trap door to Formula E would be opening before him. Maybe he'll get the benefit of the doubt but if young son Mick turns out anything like his dad Michael then Mr. Vettel could be staring retirement squarely in the face.

That's it for now time to get excited about the start of the BTCC otherwise known as the dodgems it's always good entertainment.

Ends

AA



# What's On

## WMC events and other events of interest

### May

- 5th Hethersgill Vintage Show at Carlisle Airport.
- 8th Solway Sunset Pub Run. £5 per person to cover refreshments.
- 14th Blackbeck Grass Autotest
- 15th WMC Annual General Meeting
- 16-18th The Geordie Gallop
- 26th SoSCC Targa Rally

### June

- 5th Pub Run
- 9th KLMC Barbon Hill Climb (Nat B)
- 10th WCMC Grass Autotest.
- 16th SMC Grass Autotest
- 19th High Harrington Grass Autotest
- 23rd Lake District Classic and Targa Rallies.

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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