

Driving Mirror



1911-2011



Castle Combe's Rallyday
Photo by Jeff Benstock

October 2011

Officers and Committee Members

CHAIRMAN & WEBMASTER	Allen Harris.....	01 17 9421204
	9c Southfield Road, Cotham BRISTOL BS6 6AX	
VICE CHAIRMAN	Nick Rainbow.....	01 275 541176
TREASURER	Paul Hemmings.....	01 17 9566045
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Jill Hemmings.....	01 17 9566045
	Riverwood Lodge, Moorend, Hambrook BRISTOL BS16 1SP	
COMPETITION SECRETARY	Paul Parker.....	01 275 843478
SECRETARY	Mark Tooth.....	01 454 329231
	49 Bowling Road, Chipping Sodbury BRISTOL BS37 6EP	
SOCIAL COMMITTEE	Dave Greenslade, Rich Marsh & Andy Laurence	
PRESS & PUBLICITY	VACANCY	
MAGAZINE EDITOR	Andy Laurence.....	07825 953858
	25 Cleeve Park Road, Downend BRISTOL BS16 6DW	
AWARDS SECRETARY	Dave Greenslade.....	07966 540842
MARSHAL COORDINATOR	VACANCY	
CMSG REPRESENTATIVE	Mark Benstock.....	01 454 311712
ASWMC REPRESENTATIVE	Mark Chater.....	
COMMITTEE	Pete Hart.....	01 17 9372611
	Richard Marsh.....	(after 6pm) 07786 068830
	Phil Rumney.....	01 454 318523
	Tony Streeting.....	07801 415238
	Chris Dymock.....	(after 6pm) 01 17 9394265



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Last Month's Late Magazine

No doubt you noticed last month's magazine was several weeks late and labelled August/September. Unfortunately, the magazine order was lost somewhere between the editor and the printer and we lost a couple of weeks re-submitting the order.

You may have noticed that the magazine has been getting later in the month recently. This is because we have now standardised at 5 weeks between issues, rather than in the middle of the month. This saves money, so we can make each issue longer and still keep your membership fee low.

STARTLINE

Allen Harris

By the time you read this, the much-discussed and well-publicised Dyrham Park celebration will have been and gone. "Spirit Of The 60s" was the name we gave it, and that seems to have found resonance with a lot of people across a pretty wide field in the classic and historic movement. As I write, we've just hit a tally of 90 cars in the display, and I had a phone call from Phil Rumney, who is coordinating all the entries, to say "Better make that 100!" after the phone calls he's had today!

So any early worries about lack of support for this hillclimb-replacement event have now been replaced by a mild fear of being over-subscribed! But all along I have felt that a field crammed with cars will generate a much 'buzzier' atmosphere, even if it keeps us all on our toes trying to give them all their nostalgic runs up the hill. Of course the success or otherwise of the event is ultimately going to depend to a great extent on the weather, which was always going to be the case when we were offered the October date. But, as I said at the start, it will all be history by now!

October Club Night this year brings a Motorsport Quiz night in the hands of a new organising partnership, Matt Nichols and Chris Dymock. Both have a long-term relationship with motorsport, much of it forged in the scrutineering bay at Castle Combe, but given their stylish and intelligent contributions to these pages over the past few years, I think we can expect a challenging yet entertaining evening. I am of course completely relaxed at the prospect of my ignorance of motor sport once again being exposed for all to see!

At this point I am delighted to mention that Chris has joined the Club committee. His fascinating and varied background includes time in the RAF Reserve as a glider pilot and pilot trainer, active participation in motorcycle and

October 2011

car racing, as well as the aforementioned 13 years as a scrutineer alongside Terry and Matt Nichols. We are always pleased to have fresh thinking on the many issues we consider throughout the year, and I am sure his input will be greatly appreciated. Welcome Chris!

Our annual Navigational Scatter back in February had to be cancelled due to workload and calendar conflicts for the organisers, so the forthcoming event, on Friday 28 October, will be our only event of this type this year. It will once again be in the expert hands of Matt Claydon and Dean Hogarth and, judging by the innovative events they have given us since joining the club, this will also be one to look forward to. Even if you've never done a Scatter before you can have just as much fun as experienced crews, and I'm hoping that Nick and I will again be able to keep our novice status intact for another year. Highly recommended – put the date in your diary now!

With the longer gap between Driving Mirrors at certain times of the year, there won't be another issue before the November Club Night which will be devoted to Classic Reliability Trialling. Appropriate, given the timing of our own Allen Trial at the end of November. Pete Hart and Mark Tooth will be putting together an interesting mix of video clips from past Allen Trials and photos from other events around the county. The footage may encourage anyone who's never attempted Classic Trials to have a go; if not, it will at least help explain the enormous attraction this sport holds for so many dedicated triallists. As more and more trials sections come under threat from local authorities and other users of the countryside, Pete and Mark will be encouraging us all to keep a look out for alternatives, and using the in-car video to demonstrate what

NEW FOR 2011! CHRISTMAS CARDS

EXCLUSIVE 3D DESIGN FOR BRISTOL MOTOR CLUB BY IAIN SMYTH



Printed on 15cm x 15cm heavy card. The laser-cut 1930s race-car design is framed by a square aperture showing the message inside. Opens to reveal the full-colour club logo and the greeting “And a Happy New Year”. Sold in packs of 5 for £4.00, or 10 for £8.00 with envelopes. Available October/November from Allen Harris allen@harris-bristol.com

makes good and bad trials sections. I think it will be an interesting session – 1st November at Colstons.

Competition Secretary Paul Parker and I recently had a very congenial meeting with Graham Marshallsay, MD of Castle Combe Circuit, and were able to agree almost all the dates for our key events in 2012 – the two prestigious sprints and our AutoSolos. We're still not sure about the exact date of the Summer AutoSolo, but I'm hopeful that will be resolved by November. In addition, we have put a hold on the Sunday of the Dick Mayo Sprint weekend in June for a Summer Family Clubs day. This follows the universally positive feedback we received after our Centenary Celebration earlier this year. We will obviously have to scale it down a bit to make it work financially, but by involving a few other clubs and perhaps introducing a modest entry fee, we hope to make the whole weekend another social success for members, families and friends. Over the coming months, Dave Greenslade and the members of the Social sub-group will be

thinking about the kind of attractions that will be on offer. (See Social Natters on page 8). If you have any ideas or suggestions, please talk to Dave, or me, or any other members of the committee.

A few words about NDMC's Chivenor Sprint on 18 September. In spite of appalling wind and rain all morning, almost everyone had one dry event run after lunch, which produced some good results for Bristol members: Class wins for Mark Tooth (Lotus Elise) and Josh Payton (Escort), and Fastest Quarter-mile Awards for Graham Wild (Elise), Josh Payton and Simon Clemow (Force PT). Congratulations to all, especially for making the journey and braving the weather!

Finally, before sitting down to write this I was just skimming through the last issue, and read again Mel's story about someone who was jailed for “reversing dangerously into a parking attendant”, and it made me wonder - is there a safe way of reversing into a parking attendant? Answers on a postcard please!



Melvyn

Having spent a lovely afternoon down at the harbourside watching the Red Arrows display at the close of the Balloon Fiesta and marvelling at their precision and total commitment to entertaining the watching crowds (the heart shape was outstanding and drew such a large applause from the crowd at ground level that it must have been heard in the cockpits) and the very next day my wife watched as they flew over the Frome Valley at the rear of our home, the first time we have ever seen the Red Arrows in our neck of the woods. So it was with a heavy heart that we heard the news that a member of the crew had lost his life shortly after a display at the Bournemouth Air Display just one week later. It's very ironic but that Saturday we drove down to our daughter's home in Hampshire and had a chat with her neighbours who were just driving down to Bournemouth to watch the air display. It was later that day that we heard the awful news that there had been an accident with a Red Arrows pilot. I suppose the only positive thing that you could take from this awful tragedy was that the pilot died doing something that he loved, but it's still a tragic loss of someone who was at the top of their chosen profession. Lets hope that this awful accident is not a catalyst for cost cutting and the demise of a wonderful and very British institution *The Red Arrows*.

So it looks like our totally out of

touch council leaders are forging ahead with their absurd pursuit of the "Bendy Bus Scheme". It's very annoying and downright frightening that a dozen or so people can go against the majority of Bristolians who may or may not have elected them into power in the first place, and do not want the Bendy Bus, but the Council are still hell bent on going ahead with a scheme that almost without contradiction nobody thinks will go any way to solving the public transport problem in and around our city. But the worst bit is that the council will have to borrow £37 million over 25 years at a true cost of £65 million. Add this to £197 million project costs and you then have a real cost of £262 million. All this for a few more buses that will not go anyway to improving moving in and around the city, but will add chaos to large and small businesses scattered along the route whilst the new lanes are installed, and then the loss of customer footfall due to the inability to park anywhere close to where they want to shop, because there is a section of road closed to all except the infrequent Bendy Bus. But the really stupid buggers have gone even further in to the depths of non-sensibility by not including Temple Meads Station or the Main Bus Station in the routes. And just to rub salt into our already financially very sore wounds they want the local business bosses to pay for it by way of a levy on private car parking spaces. It's really

out of order and again shows how out of touch our council wallies are. I hate to think what my response would be if they told me I had to pay for my 5 space car park at the rear of Motoraids. My reply would contain the biggest number of non-publisher-friendly words ever witnessed in this mag.

But that's not all. It now appears that our council wizards have now purchased the first batch of Bendy Buses only problem is that they are nine year old rejects from London (so they've had an easy life then) that are more costly to run, less reliable and hold fewer passengers. Says it all about our so out of touch and financially dangerous local councillors. I'm hoping that I will wake up one morning and find that it was just a bad dream, but the reality is that its more likely to be a bloody nightmare that wont go away until this sad bunch of councillors do.

Right, back to the real and reasonably normal world (I say normal in the loosest sense), the Lealan garage, where common sense hopefully prevails, and as it seems that the Pilbeam is going to reside for at least another year I decided to recheck all the electric supplies to the fuel pump and ignition to try to find the cause of the loss of power on the first run at the Wessex Sprint at Combe. I couldn't find anything wrong (we think it may have been a fuel scavenge problem as Kev was called to the grid quite a long time before he got off the line and we

had to run the car for longer than normal to keep the temperature up, thus using more fuel than normal) but we decided to change the relays for top of the range Bosch units just as a precaution. I also rewired the power supply for the relays directly from the battery and not via a junction box as before, again as a precaution to eliminate any voltage loss through extra connections. We also found that we had a small water leak at Combe so it's off with the exhaust manifold again (I bet you're glad its not the engine out, Matt!) to recheck all the hose connections. Kev has also said that he thinks we should lower the gear ratios slightly (are you listening Andy - yes thanks!) as at most circuits he seldom hits the rev limit in 5th (geared to 143 mph at the moment) so we will probably pull it down to about 136mph and consequently lower 4th and 3rd ratios allowing the car to rev that bit more freely and to reach max revs just that bit quicker in each gear. We've also been told on good authority that you get a quicker time if you sit on the limiter in 5th for a second or so because the cars getting there so much faster. So it looks like a steady winter's work on the car. I only hope that the last few almost trouble free sprints are the start of a good next season's motorsport.

Just reading about a Bristol guy stopped on the M32 whilst four (yes, four) times over the drink drive limit. He admitted to drinking a whole bottle of vodka shortly before setting off in his car. When in court it transpires that he has had 3 previous convictions for drink driving, but what does the sad excuse of a magistrate give him? "Community Service"! I say lock the bugger up and throw away the key because the guy obviously has no respect for the public's safety, so he should have at least received a lengthy jail sentence preferably locked up in a cell on Dartmoor with a couple of real hard nuts who have a drink problem.

Marshals Required

15th October 2011

Our friends at Bristol Pegasus Motor Club are running their annual event at Castle Combe. Many of us are competing and in order to do so, we need marshals. If you can help, please get in touch with the club.

www.bristolpegasus.com

Cheers, Mel

Social Natters

You'll be pleased to hear that a social committee has been formed to enable non-competitive events that members can enjoy. The committee aims to take members' ideas and help members make those events happen.

We need your help. Let us know what you'd like to do and get involved in the

organisation. You will not be left alone to make something happen but will have support from the committee. In exchange for your help, you'll receive tea, coffee and biscuits!

To whet your appetite, here's what's coming up soon and what you can get involved with...

Upcoming Events

October 4	Quiz Night
November 1	Classic Trials Evening
November 17	Charity Karting Endurance Challenge

Assistance Required

Dick Mayo Weekend A sub-committee will soon be formed to plan this event in full. As well as ideas for the weekend, we need people to liaise with other clubs, organise entries, plan the schedule for the weekend and negotiate with suppliers.

Social Committee

Dave Greenslade

Rich Marsh

Andy Laurence

Karting Endurance Challenge

17 November 2011

The event will be held at Teamsport Bristol, Avonmouth Way. 19:00-22:30 including 25 minutes qualifying followed by a 2.5 hour endurance race. 16 teams of 5 drivers will compete for honours and Bristol MC plan to win again! If you want to compete, either form a team or put yourself forwards for one of our teams, which Rich will organise. The cost is £35 per person (£175/team) and over £1000 of the money raised will go to charity. The evening is always packed full of fun and, despite the competition, it's always a good humoured affair to end the speed season.

**Contact Rich Marsh on 07786 068830 (after 6pm) or
r_marshy22@yahoo.co.uk**

SUPERCAR SATURDAY

***Supercar and Race Car Rides
plus Autosolo Driving Test
Star Guest Drivers***

The
STROKE
Association
Stroke Helpline 0845 3033 100

Castle Combe Circuit - Saturday 22nd October 2011

In support of the Stroke Association - 100% of money raised goes to charity

The ride of your life



Contact: John Williams
Tel: 01392 447363

Email: jwilliams@stroke.org.uk

www.stroke.org.uk/supercarsaturday

Mike Smith: 2011 Season

I have had a season of real highs and lows. Some success and some failures.

The opener at Combe with the GWS was planned to be with the Striker as the new Riot was on the way but far from ready for IVA. Ben Perry and I had a real scrap and which Ben won by half a second to give a good lead in the Club Championship. I had a good day as it was my first time using Avon ZZR's. I took 8 seconds off last year's time on Toyo 888's. I knew it was going to be good when I caught a Westfield near the start of my second lap of practice. At the end of the third lap he noticed I was there and promptly missed the chicane at Bobbies giving me a problem of how to leave the track safely as I had to cross in front of him to make the pit lane entrance. I just floored the throttle in second and created the required room.

We already knew we had lost the two Colerne events but to lose Llandow was a bad blow making the championship somewhat weaker. I have never gone well there but had managed some secret practice with the Riot when shaking it down and testing. There was a dangerous air of confidence in my approach which got its just desert when the event was cancelled.

I had invited Bob Bellerby from Harewood to drive at The Dick Mayo Sprint in June. I am still not sure from where my success was drawn but I managed to beat Bob for only the third time in ten years. On Sunday at the centenary celebrations Bob took my daughters AH Sprite round the circuit and I ran the Riot. What great fun. After the weekend I was a close second to Ben in the Championship. Over the weekend Bob and I planned an assault on the Harewood class record at the double header in August.

As a little variation I entered the Car-

Nival at Abingdon. I had been told it was good event and as the Striker was built to compete in a class to the same rules it was an easy choice as it is so close to Calne. Out of character I had a day of quick 'banker' first runs and messed up every time on my second timed run on both of the courses which were run as part of the event. 4 timed runs – never had that before in the south!

The assault on the class record in the North started a chain of events which lead to the kind of work not supposed to be on any competitor's plan mid season.

The Quaife dog box has been superbly reliable bit of kit. It has jumped out of second for the last two seasons but most of the venues I go to this was not a problem. With Harewood and now Wiscombe looming on the horizon it would be a problem so decided that a gearbox rebuild would be an advantage. Engine out and gearbox apart produced a list which Quaife were unable to supply without a four month wait. Remembering an advert I had seen in Motorsport News I searched for a company called Gear Reclaim which was run by an old boy based on the Isle of Man who turned round the gears in four days at half the cost of Quaife. Also it would be possible to refurb them again. I have subsequently heard bad tales about this gentleman but I have to say my own experiences were exemplary. The box went back together thanks to Alan Wilson in Foxham and works as well as ever. I decided to finish a job I left when making a repair to the car four years ago. The car has an electric water pump and this was controlled by an on/off switch on the dash. The automatic system never worked so I had it checked out by an auto electrician. Turned out my wiring was OK but the magicians at Combe had supplied me with a faulty sensor. We were testing that the engine held

temperature with a laser pyrometer when for no reason we checked the temp of the four exhausts which showed two of them well down. Two days later he returned with a compression tester which gave two low readings. BOTHER! I had an incident with a faulty cambelt supplied by Kent Cams and at this stage thought I had bent exhaust valves as this cam had jumped two teeth because Kent had made the belt too wide causing it to come out of engagement on overrun.

Head off and valves stripped.

Measurements indicated six out of eight bent inlet valves. Aldon who built the engine had 3 in stock – with my two good ones this left me with 3 sandwiches short of a picnic. The original valves were made by G and S valve of Guildford. ‘Yes we can make you more but they will be £34 each and there is a four month lead time. Can I ring you back as I think we have this problem before?’

I got Vauxhall valves from a guy called Paul Ivey in Wolverhampton at £14 each which were then modified by G and S for £2 each to be the same length as the Puma valves and they were back with me in three days. Fantastic! Only in Britain. Other side of the coin Kent Cams who had supplied a faulty cambelt which might have been the cause but was did not bother to reply – not even a refund for the cambelt or one which would work. Only in Britain.

Unfortunately the inlets were heavier at 47g each against the Puma penny on a stick

design at 42g. Experience with an Imp engine some 30 years ago allowed me to be able to shim the valves without too much bother and being able to tap into the large stock of shims at Zebedee Engineering in Calne saved time. Alan Wilson at Foxham gave lessons on timing camshafts and the engine was running again within two weeks. The SW centre of the Austin Healey Club were running a fun day at Prescott the following Sunday so at a late stage I joined and was able to have six runs up the hill for £65. Great value and the engine was good too. After one run came down the return road on a trailing throttle I blipped the engine as I approached my pit. This resulted in a huge backfire and a large flame set fire to the grass in my paddock. Doubt if I will be allowed back at Prescott. Handy having the name Smith under these circumstances. It wasn't me it was another clan member.

Set off for Harewood the following Friday calling at Aldon in Birmingham to have the throttle bodies balanced as it was a bit lumpy at low revs. Dropped the car off in the paddock at Harewood and got to Bob's for a great meal that evening with enough time for me to remind him of how well he had gone at Combe and how he should try the same approach again.

Saturday was one of those irritating wet/dry days when the track is never good enough to show what you can do. We had the unofficial British Champ in Class 2A visiting with HSA. John Palmer rarely does Harewood and had his sights on a Harewood HSA record currently held by a certain Tim Richardson. Bet that's a surprise to Tim!

Second timed runs and the track was drying. It was still damp but I knew from my testing at Llandow that damp you can treat as dry with the Avon ZZR's. I did a 63 and Bob put in a low 62 after I told him 'treat as dry' at the handover. Palmer blew his diff with a 67 and went home for an early bath. Henry Moorhouse who had taken Bob's class record put in a high 62. When it was announced

Upcoming Club Nights

4th October

Motorsport Quiz Night - Matt and Chris host their inaugural event.

1st November

Classic Trials Evening - learn more about this friendliest of disciplines.

6th December

EGM and Christmas Buffet

Fedden Trial

This year's Fedden is, as usual, on Remembrance Sunday. If you've not seen a sporting trial before, you should come and see it for yourself. If you've been to one before, we'll see you there.

Tony Streeting 07801 415238

that there would only be two timed runs there were low flying dummies from all the class except Bob and me who had a quiet smile to ourselves!

Weather forecast for Sunday was much better. Never warm and sunny (not that day of the year) but it was dry. I opened practice with a 62 which would have won the day before. Timed runs saw me do three PB's finishing with a low 61. Bob broke Henry's 60.8 record on his first timed run. Lowered it on his second and then lowered it further to 60.29 on the final run. Henry broke the new record on his second run but held it for about 20 seconds as Bob followed him up the hill and broke it again. It was great to be involved in such close competition if only as car builder and tyre/brake warmer. Henry has only got within 0.5 seconds of Bob's new record at the following meeting but we have an arrangement that I will return with the car if the record goes. There is lots more left in the car as the suspension is as it was for IA tyres and as for the drivers? By the way despite being corrected from on high I still think Harewood is the best hillclimb in Britain although Loton must have a shout.

Meanwhile, I had come across a RAW Striker with Toyota 4AGE engine being sold by the guy from whom I purchased the Riot kit. Bob is a typical of the Yorkshire breed – short arms coupled with long pockets. He has bought this ex-750 club racer for a song. We met at Tamworth Services where the handover took place. Needless to say I was

able to give him lots of encouragement with the project advising him that it did not tow as well as my Striker and therefore must be a lot heavier. At least it will stop this rude behaviour of beating me in my own car!

Wiscombe entry was submitted for Saturday and Sunday but I got a phone call to say that my entry had only been accepted for Saturday as Sunday was full. At this point I was somewhat miffed to say the least. No one to blame other than yours truly. There seemed little point in going all the way to Honiton just for one day and inevitably lose the Championship in to the bargain.

I decided to do the Odiham Chinook Sprint instead and what a fabulous event it was. 1.9 miles of flowing tarmac, some twisty bits and some very fast. Got there in 1 hour 20 minutes from Calne and drove well enough to win the class by 3 seconds from a guy who was in turn 2.5 seconds in front of the rest. It suited the car and me as all competitors had to learn the course. We had a convoy run which the HSA chairman joined. Two practice and three timed runs. Only hold up was when a Mini tried off-roading and took out a landing light. An event which deserves to do well run on an active airfield with the RAF onside because competitors make a contribution to the CO's nominated charity.

Next up will be Bristol Pegasus Sprint in Oct. Bob is coming to spoil my day again and then it will focus on the Riot. It now should pass IVA so will qualify for the road class. It does 98dbA at 8000RPM and should be OK on emissions. The other items were just jobsworth in action most of which will be put back when it passes IVA.

Next year Riot or Striker? Fancy a go at a selection of HSA events to try out some different venues Gurston, Pembrey, Llys y Fran, Anglesey, and Harewood so how about HSA with Striker and one or two Bristol events with the Riot.

Mike Smith

What's On?

October

October 4	Quiz Night	Bristol Motor Club
October 8	Audi International	www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk
October 9	Curborough Sprint	www.hillclimbandsprint.co.uk
October 15	Pegasus Sprint	www.bristolpegasus.com
October 22	Stroke Association AutoSolo	Bristol Motor Club
October 23	Autumn AutoSolo	www.oxfordmotorclub.co.uk
October 28	BMC NavScatter	Bristol Motor Club
October 29	Fat Albert Stages	www.tavernmotorclub.co.uk

November

November 1	Classic Trials Club Night	Bristol Motor Club
November 5	Tempest Rally	www.tempestrally.org.uk
November 9-13	Wales Rally GB	www.walesrallygb.com
November 13	Roy Fedden Sporting Trial	Bristol Motor Club
November 17	Charity Karting Challenge	Bristol Motor Club
November 27	Allen Classic Trial	Bristol Motor Club

December

December 6	Club Night (EGM)	Bristol Motor Club
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October NavScatter

Never been to one before? What you've been missing is a good excuse to go for a drive around some country lanes one evening before stopping at a pub for a chat over a pint before heading home. Oh, and someone wins.

You'll need an appropriate map, a pencil to scribble on it and a friend as map reading and driving are tasks that are best shared between two!

More information can be found on the club website www.bristolmc.org.uk

Beaulieu International Autojumble

If the Classic Car Show at the NEC is the showcase for finished products and associated owners clubs, then the 'International Auto Jumble' at Beaulieu must surely represent where all the hard work is done to get there. Because behind the usual Motor Vehicle, Top Gear and James Bond 007 exhibitions as well as the temporary and truly intoxicating Bonhams auction, more on which later, were hundreds of stalls containing every conceivable part for every classic car you can think of. Most stall owners being small tradesman who would normally operate out of their own garages or at best modest business units spread right across the UK. No wonder then those owners of cars in need of such components descend into Hampshire for one weekend in September every year having travelled from the four corners of Europe and beyond.



There was a real buzz about the place too, with passers-by eagerly eyeing up anything that someone else might be carrying around with them, wondering what it might be for, how rare it was and of course much they paid, bargain price or handsome sum. The interest levels were huge with as much

knowledge to be gained simply standing still and observing what passed by as making your way through individual market stalls. The same stalls that caused several jaws to drop involuntarily as individual brains struggled to comprehend the piles and piles of stuff both on show and in boxes filled to the brim. Anyone looking for something specific would have as much chance finding what they were after on top of a table, as they would hidden underneath it. Assuming, of course, they didn't first clock someone else walking past who'd beaten them to it. Two days therefore probably isn't enough time to do it all justice, as this is a bit like eBay spread over several fields without the convenience of a Google powered search engine to help with the navigation. Classic car parts that have to be found in a classic way, seek and ye shall find.

If the stalls didn't quite cut it for you then for an extra £25 investment 2 person access could be gained to the on-site Bonhams auction which started with similar 'Automobilia' to be found in the immediate surrounding area. This time beautifully catalogued and sold at a rate of around 100 lots per hour for just over 3 hours, before the auction moved onto motorcycles and cars. The higher value items were then auctioned at the more considered rate of 20-30 per hour with all lots open to online and telephone bidders at the same time. We even witnessed a bidding war between someone in Italy and someone else in Austria with no-one physically present in the marquee participating at all. The auction was a great way to spend an hour and with progress if anything slower than planned you could comfortably duck out and be sure to return in time for any items of particular interest.

One such lot was a genuine one family owned from new car, which doesn't sound

too unusual in itself, until realising it was owned from 1913, being in this case an 'Isotta-Fraschini 14-18hp FC Tourer' in desperate need of full renovation. Save for being started in 1979 it had not actually been used since 1933. So with recession looming all over Europe and with an already sturdy guide price of £20,000 - £30,000 what would this rare Edwardian relic fetch on a showery September Saturday? Well bidding was strong and the guide price came and went in a flash with the pace only really slowing once the other side of £50,000 had been reached. Then as everything ground to a halt, accompanied by a round of applause, the hammer went down and it sold for £70,000 (£78,500 including fees) with at least the same investment required again for renovation. Mrs Nichols panicking slightly as I raised my hand to snap the finale.

Which leads me onto the best aspect of this well established annual event; its wide appeal, with all the usual exhibitions included in the slightly reduced ticket price, excellent catering, busy market stalls and exciting auction a good time can be had by all. Julia enjoyed her day out and with my only

purchases being the prizes for October's quiz, there were no 'marriage testing' moments either. We tried to make the most of all aspects and it was amazing to be in the centre of high value bids one minute and the



Victorian gardens the next. This event is highly recommended and so fair play to Matt Rumney in trying to make it a BMC family outing this year as well.

Matt Nichols

2011 Fantasy F1: Singapore

Name	Driver 1	Driver 2	Chassis	Engine	Points
Matthew Norris	Sergio Perez	Narain Karthikeyan	Red Bull	Mercedes	1272
Matt Nichols	Sergio Perez	Narain Karthikeyan	Red Bull	Mercedes	1272
Marcus Rainbow	Lewis Hamilton	Paul di Resta	McLaren	HRT	1056
Keith Attwood	Lewis Hamilton	Narain Karthikeyan	McLaren	Virgin	1031
Andy Laurence	Timo Glock	Jerome D'Ambrosio	McLaren	Renault	841
Ali Perry	Fernando Alonso	Adrian Sutil	Renault	HRT	499
Dave Greenslade	Fernando Alonso	Timo Glock	Virgin	Renault	463
Julian Rainbow	Lewis Hamilton	Adrian Sutil	Williams	Lotus	430
Chris Dymock	Lewis Hamilton	Heikki Kovalainen	Williams	Toro Rosso	419
Adrian Taylor	Jenson Button	Paul di Resta	Williams	Lotus	407

Project 'Teg

Avid readers of Driving Mirror may have read about me and Jeff Benstock driving each others cars for the two Colerne sprints last year, and as with all good things that come from a chat over a pint we started off our new project for this year.

The idea was to buy a car and make it into a racer over the winter whilst keeping the budget keen and after a few hours 'on the bay' we decided an early Honda Integra DC2 would be a good candidate. Little did we know what was in store...



I found out a guy I know called Tom had a Honda Integra DC2 in his garage only five minutes from work and wanted to sell it. I went round and found a pretty bare shell on stands and the rest of the car in boxes around it. It did have a load of spares and upgrade parts and in a sudden rush to the head I agreed a deal. I rang Jeff and explained we needed a tow car for my trailer for our new car and arranged the collection. Jeff and his Dad, Mark, met me at Tom's house at teatime.

Jeff's face when he saw the car was a picture. Like a small child whose ice cream had just been scooped by a passing dog. Admittedly it did look a bit sad with a half inch of dust over it but I did try to encourage him and soon the task of loading it onto the

trailer started. Tom had refitted the rear suspension and wheels and after a bit of jiggling we got the car onto the trailer and strapped down. The plan was to move the car into Hannah's garage short term pending the rebuild, so off to Portishead we went.

We arrived around half eight and found we couldn't get the trailer near the garage so had a go at unloading the car but due to the gradient could only inch it off using alternate ratchet straps. We got it to the point where the front was hanging off the rear of the trailer and at that point I could see us having an accident and as it was dark and approaching 11pm we decided to keep our fingers and bones intact and drop the shell at my work. At around midnight we all went home with some soggy cold chips bought several hours before.

A couple of days later we had a sort through of all the boxes and tried to make sense of what we had, straight away some of the 'Carlos Fandango' body kit bits were sold to make room in Mark's garage (thanks Mark) and the shell could be assessed.

It became clear in the following weeks that the task ahead would be much more difficult than first thought so Plan B was hatched...

Fast forward towards September and an advert appeared on Pistonheads for a 1994 DC2 which was a bit scruffy but had a few upgrade bits on but for £1200 looked a good buy. A quick chat with the owner and a deal was struck, so we headed off way too early for me on a Sunday up to York to take a look. As soon as I walked up to the car I knew it was a 'wrong un' and after a quick look found the sills weren't there anymore

The deadline for submissions for the next issue of Driving Mirror is
28th October 2011

and a large amount of pudding and newspapers made up the rear quarter panels. Deal off then! The seller did look rather upset when this was pointed out, especially as he had an MOT only three weeks old!

Just as we thought the project would never get off the ground Pistonheads came to our rescue when VI13KCR appeared in the classifieds, advert included the classic 'wife forces sale' line! The car was complete except the engine was out and the sump off due to oil starvation caused by the owner not checking it. The guy got that far and then gave up...

Once again Jeff and I left early morning with trailer in tow down to Southampton to see the car, it was spot on and came with every bit of paperwork including the original bill of sale! It was obvious from the debris in the sump the engine was in a bad way but after a bit of haggling we loaded up and headed back towards Bristol with 'Teg 2' on the trailer.

A few days later I stripped the engine to find No 1 big end had been flattened and turned in the conrod. The crank wasn't bad but as we had a fully rebuilt engine from Teg 1 I wasn't too worried, but after taking the sump off that engine to check it and finding debris in the sump, I stripped it to make sure it wouldn't blow up when started up. Good job too, it seems Tom had not only stored the engine with the lid off but after measuring everything I found No 4 bore 50 thou oval which would have caused a failure almost immediately. So the original block was reused and bored to suit the oversize Hi-comp pistons, rods, crank, bearings etc from the Teg 1 engine which was all new or checked OK. After deciding to use the original head too, that was refreshed and refitted along with a new cambelt, tensioners and full gasket set.

After putting it back in minus the A/C, the nervous time to turn the key arrived (after priming the oil system) and with relief it started immediately and sounded sweet.

So after warming it up and a quick road test it was up to the MOT and then the post office... it's legal!



Two weeks later the Rossolo arrived so after quickly running the engine in since the refit it was time to stretch the engine for the first time, unfortunately Jeff couldn't do the event but it ran really well except for an oil leak from the filter housing which was easily sorted.



Even better was the result, a 1st in class on it's first outing, and 5th overall. It really showed how good these cars are out of the box. It's since competed in more AutoSolos and me and Jeff have had great fun in a new car but it seems VI13KCR will be off to pastures new at the end of the season as we are looking for a new project for next year, something soft top, RWD and sporty... now where did I put my hairdryer?

Dave Greenblade

1945: The First Post-War Event

“**B**lowers whining, ‘specials’ crackling ear-splittingly, multi cylindered racing engines being warmed up in short air-tearing bursts, cars of all sorts and sizes dotted about the parking areas, old acquaintances of all kinds and shapes rushing up to greet one another again, a starting line for eight hundred yards of as near flat-out hustle as the drivers dared and a record time of 56 seconds waiting to be broken, such was the setting last Saturday for the first event under an R.A.C. permit for car competitions for nearly six long years, and the start of the post-war era.”

So Autocar magazine described the scene at Naish Hill on 18th August 1945. It’s impossible to imagine now just how everyone felt after the traumas and uncertainty of WW2, finally ended just three days earlier on VJ Day, but the Club, galvanised by the enthusiastic Dick Caesar, quickly ushered in a new era of British motorsport with a hillclimb at one of its pre-war venues.

Naish hill had first been brought into use by the club in 1937, and the 56.0 second course record stood to RA Macdermid (MG), set in 1938. The course was as used pre-war:

“Naish House hill is a grass-grown road winding up the southern slopes of the Gordano valley in two sweeps along the hillside to the ruins of Naish House, and spectators have excellent views of all but a few yards of the course, which overlooks Portishead and the Bristol Channel. From the start, just above the paddock gate, the drive runs comparatively straight for some 200 yds. to a swinging right-hander: thence it winds slightly among a few fir trees for another 150 yds. to the left-handed corner. This, like the others, is of about three-quarters of a full half-circle and gives drivers a good opportunity to tail-slide if so inclined. The latter half has banks on each side, a fact of

which a few people made voluntary or involuntary use, employing a sort of Karussel technique. For here a fast right-hand curve leads to 300yds. of almost straight, ending in a bumpy right-hander of bare earth and then a straight run up to the finishing line. The whole length is some 800 yds., and the gradient is very consistent, averaging about 1 in 10.”

Preparations in the summer of 1945 involved liberally placing straw bales at various danger points, and removing some molehills on the final bend.

Entry, for both spectators and competitors, was restricted to Club members and to members of the two invited clubs, West Bristol Motor Cycle & Light Car Club and the recently formed Bristol Aeroplane Company Motor Sports Club. This didn’t prevent a crowd of six or seven hundred onlookers lining the hill, or there being competitors from as far afield as Leicester and Sussex among the 25 motor-cycle and 35 car entrants. The weather was fine, although it became overcast and dim before the end of the day, and all vehicles were run singly up the hill, with car and motorcycle classes alternating.

First up the hill – with the distinction of being the first post-war competitive run – was John King in a 1021cc Standard saloon, in a time of 78 seconds. Familiar names appearing in the car classes included Dick Caesar in an Alvis, Gerry Millington’s AC Special, Dennis Poore (R-type Midget) and Bob Gerard (Riley Sprite). Len Parker decided to use snow-grips on the rear wheels of his 3.5-litre SS, and was the first sports car to dip under 60 seconds. In the racing car classes Walter Watkins broke the existing record with a 52.0 sec. first run time in his 996cc Watkins Nash Special. Bob Gerard then came to the line in his 1.5-litre

supercharged ERA, but stopped at the first corner with a loose carburettor needle.

On his second run Watkins, using the bank on the outside of the left-hander, lowered the record still further, to 51.6 sec, while Gerard, his ERA now fixed, recorded 52.6 sec. on his first successful climb. Ken Baillie-Hill (1.5-litre HRG) was fastest sports car (53.0 sec, and third fastest car overall), and Parker next best sports car. Other car class winners were Ken Burgess (Morgan), Raymond Way (Frazer-Nash BMW) and DF Allen (Austin 7 Special).

There were no untoward incidents among the cars, but in the motorcycles George Naris parted company from his machine - a last burst of throttle towards the finish line coinciding with a steering wobble - although both rider and his touring Velocette crossed the line together. Frank Evans on a 350 Velocette almost reached the top of the four-foot banking in the middle corner, electrifying the onlookers, not to mention an uncomfortably close photographer. Evans and Ray Moore (350 racing Velocette) were class winners, but it was Peter Falconer, making

smooth and clean climbs, using just a foot or so of the banking, who was fastest of the bikes, and also overall fastest time of day, with 48.6 sec. on his 500 Triumph Speed Twin.

At the end of the meeting, Leicester garage owner Bob Gerard was allowed an unofficial third run in the powerful ERA, which couldn't be given more than a moderate amount of throttle anywhere or for any length of time, and improved to 49.0 sec to show what might have been - quicker than Watkins, but not Falconer.

A successful and satisfying day, and a new era of British motorsport had begun.

Pete Stowe



Bored, bored, bored... I recently took Lynne to Lansdown Racecourse near Bath, as she had spotted an advertisement for a Sunday flea market and which, although not being something that particularly floats my boat, might offer an outside chance to pick up some interesting Automobilia to add to my ever burgeoning collection of priceless automotive treasures - or "tasteless crap" as Lynne often refers to it, somewhat unfairly...

However, no such luck for yours truly and, after a couple of hours of wandering around in not exactly tropical conditions and a few minor purchases by Lynne, we decided to call it a day and join the surprisingly long queue to leave the racecourse car park.

I'm still not sure why it took over half an hour to get out of the venue or why there was an equally large queue of cars trying to get in, given that it wasn't particularly busy and the access was more than capable of two way traffic but, I'm pretty sure we wouldn't have accepted anything like it at a BMC event and Lynne certainly didn't take kindly to my observation that somebody should publicly execute a couple of the organisers, there and then, as an incentive to the others! (I really don't like waiting in queues, in case you hadn't noticed...).

Which brings me to my opening line. Not just bored with sitting in some idiots unnecessary traffic snarl up but, more worryingly, being truly bored with all the other vehicles in the queues. There really was not a single vehicle in sight that stood out or could be remotely called interesting or even stylish; just a sea of amorphous machines that looked like they might all have been regurgitated by the same computer programme regardless of which manufacturers badge was nailed on them - truly disturbing!

A few days later I was thumbing through the latest issues of some mainstream car magazines and a couple of threads started to shed some light on this dilemma.

After careful reading of what the various manufacturers are suggesting is in the pipeline for the near future, the first item to stick out was the current trend for either 'retro' styling or 'evolution not revolution'. Is that it? Is the best idea these megabilliondollar manufacturing giants can come up with is either raiding their back-catalogue of yesteryear or a mild makeover of their existing range?

Let's take a look at Volkswagen for example. Volkswagen's latest ideas are the 'Bulli' and 'The (New, New) Beetle'?

The Bulli is the name they've given to a modern, much smaller, pastiche of the old (45mph flat out) campervan. Brilliant, just what the world's been looking for, something that resembles a miniature bus but seats fewer people than the 60s original! Uhhh, Volkswagen, you've already got something that does that, it's called the Touran! And, on the basis that the Bulli will inevitably have a very small engine as it's only the same length as a Polo, but still have to lug around up to six adults, it's unlikely to be any faster than the asthmatic, original road clogger you end

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<http://bristolmc.podbean.com>

up behind on every holiday in Cornwall!

The (New, New) Beetle is the latest incarnation of the Golf based blobby thing introduced in 1999 that failed to ignite the same levels of (misplaced) passion that the original Hitlermobile engendered in the post war, car starved “we’ll drive anything” audience and, later, the drug addled hipsters of the flower power 60s. ‘The Beetle’ (car naming even lazier than design at VW...) looks pretty much identical to the previous one but with the roof line lowered by a couple of inches and a greater slope to the windscreen to create, according to VW, “a sportier looking Beetle”?

Well done VW: just what we were begging you to produce. Not! And there was the rest of the world thinking that a sportier Beetle was called the Porsche 911...

Talking of Porsche, they have just unveiled the next generation 911 and what a lazy effort that has turned out to be! I can only assume they must be thinking of running some sort of “spot the difference” competition with the outgoing model because, in all honesty, you really can’t tell them apart! It’s almost a case of “why bother”?

However, this year’s prize for back-catalogue raiding must go to Morgan who, despite having ceased any sort of design process shortly after the end of global hostilities in 1945, decided to trawl through their old blueprints and come up with the blinding idea of remanufacturing their original three-wheeled bathtub from the 1920s! At a stated asking price of thirty grand a pop, who on earth is going to buy something so archaic? (Oops, turns out Morgan have over 500 confirmed orders to date, which only goes to show what I know about such things!)

Ford looked like they were about to unleash something a bit fresh and tasty with their ‘Evos’ concept but, no, no such luck. It’s just a showcase for Ford’s future design architecture with “certain design elements”

of the Evos to appear (watered down, no doubt) in various models in the future. Which is a shame, as the Evos resembles a beautifully styled, two door coupe version of a Mitsubishi Evo X! Apparently Ford reckon they wouldn’t shift enough of them as coupes traditionally aren’t big sellers. Well, not if your previous efforts were the Probe and Cougar, I suppose...

However, as far as I can see, the second, and biggest by far, reason for such a mountain of grey porridge on our roads is the entrenched mentality of the mainstream car producers for a “corporate identity” to their entire ranges. Take a look at any of the manufacturers current crop and any of their range looks just like all its siblings with the only differentiation being the % scale used on the office photocopier – must save a small fortune only having to pay a junior administrator and not a designer!

All the major manufacturers are doing it and the net result is when you look at the cars in the queue at the traffic lights next chance you get, all you really see is A Ford, A Vauxhall, An Audi, A Renault etc; you really do lose interest in which model it may actually be. Where’s the creativity? Where’s the excitement?

I was chatting to matey Steve about this depressing state of affairs and he went on to suggest he knew of someone who might be able to give me an insight into how car designs are arrived at? Given Steve’s previous, uhm, ‘unique’ observations on various subjects over the years, and knowing the sort of people that exist in Steve world (although not actually knowing the people themselves, your Honour...), I was more than a little dubious about what he was going to set in motion? “Leave it to me” says Steve as we part company, “I know somebody who use to do a lot of investigative freelance work for The News Of The World until recently, I’m sure he can help.” Oh dear...

A few days later and a padded envelope containing one of those small tapes



used in Dictaphone machines turned up in my post: no letter or any accompanying note, hmm. What follows is a transcript of the tape which, amazingly, turned out to be a somewhat scratchy recording of Range Rover's Design Department meeting for the new Evoque SUV!

"Glad to see we're all here after last night's 'Design Inspiration' visit to Spearmint Rhino, he he he. And, hey, nice designer stubble Marcus!"

Slightly slurred: "It's not designer stubble, I didn't leave the club 'till an hour ago and couldn't be arsed to go home"

(Sounds of coffee being poured, etc.)

"Well, you all know the brief by now: we've got to come up with a new vehicle that will appeal to WAGS and Yummy Mummies (sounds of sniggering in the room) and on a budget that wouldn't buy me a new kitchen. Any ideas?"

(Sounds of scissors and cardboard being used in the background)

"I could phone my mate over at Porsche if you like? They don't do a lot to get their new models out and, don't forget, they hold the current world record for the least amount of work done by a car designer for a new model at 3 hours 22 minutes"

"Thanks for that Simon, we'll hold it in reserve if the creative juices look a little dry this morning"

(More sounds of scissors and sticky tape in the background)

"I suppose we could import that four wheel drive monstrosity from Hoo Flung Dung Motors in China that we spoke to at the Beijing Motor Show last year. It's bound to be cheap and all we would need to do is add our grille and logo and sell it as a 'bold new design direction for emerging markets' type idea"

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LATEST NEWS: Due to other project commitments, our visit will now take place in January/February. Confirmation of date expected by next Driving Mirror. Contact Chris Dymock on 0117 939 4265 (evenings) or estimating@intoheat.co.uk

(Sounds of somebody throwing up)

“Okay, another good thought there, Quentin. Good, keep them coming people”.

“Anyone see that new bird in Corrie last night?”

(The next 45 minutes of the tape are a general conversation about all the ‘fit birds’ in Corrie, Emmerdale and Eastenders)

More sounds of sticky tape followed by: “Bob? BOB, what ARE you doing?”

“I’ve been toying with an idea, what do you think?”

“Christ alive, that’s bloody stunning, what did you do?”

“Easy really, I’ve stuck photos of the Freelander onto cardboard, made a three dimensional model and then lowered the rear side windows and pulled down the rear of the roof line to give it a ‘sporty’ look!”

“That’s what I’m talking about people; inspirational thinking!”

Bob continues: “the best bit is, the body mods are minimal, everything underneath is standard Freelander so no additional manufacturing costs and we just alter a few bits of the interior plastics to make it seem like a different model. I reckon

we could knock it out at a premium price and charge loads of dosh for all the tasty ‘tart it up’ extras that everybody will want!”

“Excellent, wonderful”

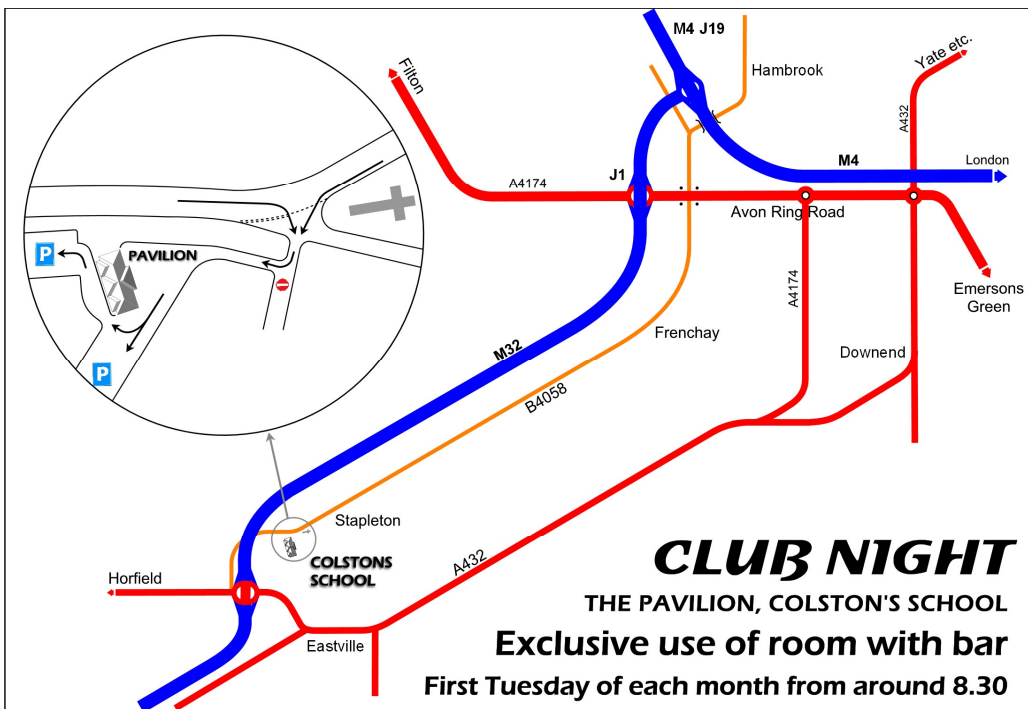
“And, how about employing that ‘Posh Spice’ as a design consultant to get the message across to the target market sector? She’s bound to come onboard for a free car and a bit of cash; just the endorsement that’ll sell it!”

“All I can say is; British design innovation at it’s very best, I think we’ve got our winner, people! And a new world record at 2 hours 45 minutes! Well, the pubs have just opened so let’s start the weekend early and toast Bob’s impending promotion. The first round’s on me!”

The tape ends here; and so does my faith in anything new on the car design horizon...

Footnote: Range Rover currently have 18,000 orders for the Evoque, which is more than 50% of their entire sales of all models in 2010, well done Posh!

Chris Dymock



COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EMAIL ADDRESSES

Pete Hart	peter.j.hart@btinternet.com
Paul Hemmings	paul@phemmings.freemove.co.uk
Chris Dymock	estimating@intoheat.co.uk
Richard Marsh	r_marshy22@yahoo.co.uk
Paul Parker	britishsprint@paulparker.f9.co.uk
Mark Benstock	benstock.mark@yahoo.co.uk
Nick Rainbow	nick-rainbow@freeola.com
Phil Rumney	philrumney194@btinternet.com
Tony Streeting	tonystreeing@talktalk.net
Mark Tooth	mark.tooth@tiscali.co.uk
Allen Harris	allen@harris-bristol.com
Andy Laurence	andy@andylaurence.co.uk
Dave Greenslade	dave.greenslade@o2.co.uk