



Driving Mirror

1911-2011



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STARTLINE

Allen Harris

As a regular reader you will have read much about our Centenary celebrations, and I hope you're looking forward to the June 25th/26th weekend as much as I am. If, on the other hand, you've just arrived at Castle Combe with a vehicle to display, and you're reading *Driving Mirror* for the first time, then on behalf of the Bristol Motor Club I extend a very warm welcome to you, together with our thanks for helping us to mark the occasion in style.

We hope we will have achieved our aim of filling the paddock with 100+ cars from the past 10 decades, and I am also looking forward to meeting more past and present club members than have been seen in one place for a very long time.

We will also welcome our honoured guests, joining us for all or part of the weekend. Amongst those attending the Members' Reception on Sunday, Rob Jones, the General Secretary of the Motor Sports Association, will be presenting the exclusive MSA Centenary Award to the Club, the 21st to be honoured in this way. Some dry, warm, sunny weather would be a bonus, but I'm sure we will enjoy the occasion whatever the weather.

The timing of this celebration is particularly appropriate, as this weekend marks the start of National Motorsport Week in the UK. As enthusiasts, we understand the UK's world-leading role in international motor sport, but this promotional week serves to draw this fact to the attention of the public, the media and government. I see that through the course of the week all the UK-based Formula One

teams will be opening their doors to give an insight (carefully controlled, I suspect!) into the operations of a grand prix team. But it's just as important – perhaps even more so – to raise the profile of clubs such as ours and to publicise all the opportunities open to enthusiasts at grass roots level.

Elsewhere in this edition you can read a summary of the Club's history, but what of the future for club motorsport? Well, this year we are eagerly looking forward to the sight, sound and experience of motorsport returning to Dyrham Park in October. Over the past 100 years we've had a go at pretty much every kind of affordable motorsport, on two wheels and four. Grass track racing, gymkhanas, autotests, trials of every kind, sprints, hillclimbs – you name it: we've given it a go. We now have to adjust to a different financial climate, and over the next few years I believe we will need all our ingenuity to keep club motorsport flourishing. We have sadly lost one of our prime sprint venues, but our Castle Combe events seem to be retaining their popularity, and our relationship with the circuit is solid. We will cherish our Trials and we'll develop *AutoSolo*, both of which offer great value for money. Beyond that? Well, keep reading *Driving Mirror*!

Happy Anniversary, Bristol Motor Club members, and here's to the next Hundred Years!



Ford Focus RS (59 reg)

Ultimate green pearlescent, 328 bhp, with rolling road report, forge motorsport intercooler/actuator valve/expansion tank, 6 speed close ratio g/box, Quaife LSD, Lux I pack, leather/alcantara recaro seats, key free entry system, push button start, xenon headlamps with jet wash, rear parking distance sensors, electronic dual zone climate control, Sony 6 disc CD with dab & 8 speakers, tyre deflation detection system, ABS with EBD, ESP with wide slip mode, Thatcham Cat I perimeter alarm etc etc., absolutely immaculate 15,000 miles 1 owner FSH, manufactures warranty 'til Sept 2012.



£22,500

Derek Wheten 01291 641751 (h) 07768 461765 (m)

Free VIP Tickets!

- Free lunch with priority queueing
- Covered seated grandstand next to the track
- Radio to keep up with proceedings
- Chance to get up close with the cars and drivers

How do you get all this? Easy - become a marshal! If you're reading this before the Dick Mayo Sprint, then there's still time to volunteer by calling Tony Shearman on 01980 622078 (H) or 07990 736870 (M). If you've missed the boat, then call Bob Hart on 07799 056176 to volunteer for the Wessex Sprint at Castle Combe on 6th August.



If you're willing to forego the covered seating, then the picturesque grounds of Wiscombe Park are a great place to spend the first weekend of September. Keep an eye on the club website for details. It's a very special weekend.

Centenary Tickets

If you haven't got your members' ticket(s) for the Sunday lunchtime reception, there's still time to email or phone Phil Rumney or Allen Harris, and we can either post them to you or have them ready for you on the day. (philiprumney194@btinternet.com or 01454 318523.) If you'd like to guarantee your share of roast hog on Saturday evening, please go to the club website and book and pre-pay for a £10 ticket.



Melvyn

100 years of Bristol Motor Club, or as it was known then, The BMC & LCC. It's a fantastic achievement to not only have had guys who had the foresight in those early days of motoring for the need of a club where like-minded piston-heads could meet and compete, but to still have guys in 2011 who have the same desires at heart and work very hard for the club member to enjoy his car in whatever form of competing is nothing short of a miracle.

I've been asked by our hierarchy to write about my rallying exploits in the 60, 70s and 80s, which even spilled over to the 2000s but you won't want to read about that part of my competitive driving as it wasn't that competitive, just hair-raising, but more about that later. Before I get into my rallying history I thought it might be interesting to see what was going on in 1911, the year BMC was formed...

- A Frenchman wins the first Monte Carlo Rally.
- The first non-stop flight from London to Paris. It takes 3 hours 56 minutes. It ain't that much quicker now with all the airport security and consequent delays!
- The first Indy 500 was won at an average speed of 74.59mph (not bad when you consider what equipment

was at their disposal).

- The unsinkable? Titanic was launched - got the unsinkable bit slightly wrong didnt they?
- The first Model T Ford was built outside the USA in Manchester - I never knew they were ever built outside the US but they were also built in Ireland, Germany, Denmark, Australia and Canada. Ole Henry was way ahead of his time wasn't he?
- Woolworths, the shop of my childhood dreams with their never-ending run of sweet counters, was founded. It's a shame they couldn't hack it in the 21st century because for all their problems it was a great working family's store
- The first Michelin Motoring Guide was published and it contained information on how to change a tyre - we could do with that now! Ever tried changing a tyre with the stupid 9" wheel brace they include in the tool kit?
- Cadillac invented the first electric ignition system and the electric starter motor. Cars could now be started without the use of a handle for the very first time. I was still using one in 1960 when I couldn't afford new batteries for my Morris 8!



Right, let's get to the real deal; my rallying exploits! Now, I was never going to set the world on fire but I did manage to compete at national level and was able to mix it with the best of that time. For those of you guys who have been reading *Driving Mirror* for the past 10 years I'm sorry you have to go through all this again. To those of you who haven't I'm just sorry!

My very first introduction into motorsport was in 1964 by the late Paul Crane who was a customer at the garage where I was an apprentice. Paul was a regular and successful rally driver in his lovely Mini Cooper 88 SBF which was always presented in an immaculate fashion. Paul asked me if I would like to marshal on a rally he was organising for the Institute of Advanced Motorists. I remember going down to somewhere near Gurney Slade to set up a field telephone on a mile long track that was to act as a selective for the event. We laid the telephone line in the hedges along the track and I waited at the finish area whilst

Paul back tracked to the start to connect the phones. Imagine the scenario if you can. It's 4.00pm on a Sunday Autumn evening and I'm sat on a farm gate in the middle of nowhere. A farmer turns up on his tractor and quite rightly asks what am I doing sat in the middle of nowhere. Now, never being one who is lost for words I said in all honesty that I was waiting for a phone call. This was in 1964. There was no mobile network then and the farmer who was quite a big and mean looking buggler was just about to jump off his tractor to probably knock me off my perch when with perfect timing the field telephone sprang into life and I said "would you excuse me whilst I answer the phone." The look on the farmer's face was a picture and he was soon disappearing down the lane no doubt thinking his time had come and the men with white coats would be waiting for him when he got

The deadline for submissions for the next issue of *Driving Mirror* is
15th July 2011



back to his farm.

The rally itself was ok but watching the drivers competing and apart from just a couple of guys I thought that I could do much better than most of them. And generally I managed to achieve that but it took me several years of competing before I could really call myself a competent and reasonably quick road rally driver. I quickly sold my ex-GPO Morris 1000 van and managed to find a 1962 Mini 850, reg number 491 WTU, with burnt out exhaust valves. I overhauled the head, doing a bit of polishing of the ports at the same time, fitted a couple of spot lights with the obligatory Helphos lamp attached to the inside of the windscreen, wired in a socket for the navigator's "potty" and I was now ready to set the rally world on fire. My first rally was a disaster but I did win the best novice award on my very next event having changed my navigator for someone who could actually read a map!

I competed on many local rallies and gradually progressed into the Motoring News Road Rally Championship, which was the premier rally scene akin to the British Sprint or other top National Championships and was the proving ground for quite a few guys who went on to become very quick works drivers. We had our own Nigel Rockey who had a Ford works drive, also guys who finished with works drives were Russell Brooks, Tony Pond, Andy Dawson, Tony Fall, John Taylor, Chris Slater, Will Sparrow and many more who I can't recall. It was also a hot bed for navigators and ex-MN guys were usually the first choice to sit besides works drivers. Anyone remember Henry Liddon who co-drove more or less every top driver in his day? Then there was a young guy who navigated Ari Vatanen to his World Championship and finished up a very wealthy rally and race car team owner, namely a certain Dave Richards. We also had our own

Paul White who started out navigating for Nigel Rockey and won the prestigious Motoring News Championship and the Mexico Championship in the same year, a feat never repeated. Paul went on to co-drive for Henri Toivonen who was probably the quickest driver of his era and together they won the RAC and Manx rallies. Tragically, Henri lost his life in a fiery accident in the Lancia Delta on The Tour De Course in 1986. Thankfully, Paul wasn't co-driving on that event. Paul navigated on the odd occasion for my great sadly departed friend and builder of that immaculate Escort TC that some of you guys had a look at whilst I was the proud owner. When Terry passed away, Paul placed his RAC winning cap inside Terry's coffin - a massive gesture as you don't win too many RAC caps!

I never had the pleasure of winning a MN event but I did come quite close with a 3rd overall until MN politics came into play (more about that later). Although I have some wonderful memories of rallying, far too many to bore you with but a couple do stand out and when I asked Allen Harris what bits did he wanted me to write about he just said "the best bits".

Paul Crane was organising the Bristol Rally - I don't recall if was a BMC or Tavern event - but although it wasn't a MN event, Paul had persuaded most of the top road rally teams to compete with the promise of a spectacular route using all the classic sections on Exmoor, Devon and Somerset. I was enrolled as a sector marshal and duly led a convoy of half a dozen cars with the prospect of meeting up with several more in a pub somewhere near Barnstable. Sadly, the timing was astray, probably due to my lack of organising skills at the tender age of 22, and we found that we were running out of time and were unable to man every control. Due to lack of time I quickly manned the nearest control and the antics of the crews on entering my control left a lasting impression on me and no doubt helped me in my later

career. The top 20 or so guys arrived at the control at exactly the correct speed stopping right in front of me, no small talk, "quick as you can please marshal, just sign my route card and let me get on my way," probably took 10 seconds in all. Compare this to the later runners, balls out into our control, overshooting by 20 yards, reversing back and then complaining about the siting of the control. Took at least a minute, now on average there would be about 20 time controls so the top crews have spent about 3 minutes not going anywhere whilst the also-rans have spent about 20 minutes doing the same thing. So without driving any quicker and taking no more risks the top guys have already pulled 17 minutes on the lesser rans. A real lesson for me and something I tried to emulate in my rallying career.

The week before the event, Paul asked me if I would drive the entire route at a competitive speed at the same time as the event proper to check the timing but instead of using my regular navigator I was given the task of ferrying one of the top navigators of the time a certain Martin Evans who co-drove many of the top British Leyland drivers in the ultimate machine of its day the Works Mini Cooper S. He also did the recce driving and composing what we know now as Pace Notes for all the top International Events. So to say I was a little starstruck was an understatement but Martin was brilliant and put me totally at ease and although my regular navigator was bloody good, Martin was a revelation. His map reading was impeccable and he called me down to the nearest 20 yards all done on the old 1inch OS maps. We completed the first half of the rally without any problems other than trying to gee myself up as I knew there was nothing on the end of it but Martin's constant instructions and telling me how well I was driving gave me the

The next issue of Driving Mirror will be with you during the week beginning
24th July 2011

extra impetus to drive that bit quicker.

In the early hours of Sunday morning we pulled into a layby somewhere on the outskirts of Barnstable to have a bit of a break with Martin snoring his head off within 5 minutes. We made a move after about 30 minutes and drove to the toughest part of the route; Exmoor. The weather had now taken a change for the worse and what at first was rain had now turned to full blooded snow. We arrived at a very steep "white" and managed to get about halfway up until the thick and fresh snow caused us to grind to a halt with my front wheels spinning whilst being supported by my sumpguard on the rising snow. Martin in his wisdom decided to try sitting on the bonnet of my Mini to try to improve traction. It worked a treat and before long I was climbing the hill at an ever increasing speed. I rounded a tight bend at the top of the lane to be confronted by a 4ft deep wall of snow and with no chance of stopping or even slowing down I hit the bank at about 20mph which propelled Martin off the bonnet and into the snow bank quicker than a rat up a drain pipe. He totally disappeared into the snow and I was just beginning to get worried when he reappeared looking like something from Scott of the Antarctic. I couldn't help myself and I started laughing but Martin wasn't at all impressed and after brushing himself down we continued on our way and managed to finish the route albeit without any pleasantries just route instructions. It wasn't until we found a transport cafe early Sunday morning and enjoyed a full English with a large mug of boiling hot tea that Martin began to see the funny side of things and we remained good friends for many years after and competed on a few events and even won one together.

Martin had a large influence on my rallying and although I have had the pleasure of having several top local navigators sat next to me and some of them were damn good, Martin was that class apart and his total awareness of where we were at any time did

spoil me and it did cause a bit of grief when wrong slotted by my other co drivers.

The Rally in question when my hard earned 3rd was diluted considerably was the last Motoring News event I ever competed on. It was the Rally Bristowe organised by the Tavern Motor Club. We had been seeded in the top twenty due to good finishes on events leading up to the Bristowe and we had been going very well with no wrong slots or overshoots and having caught a couple of cars (always a magic moment as long as you can get past quickly and remember to knock off your auxiliary rear light switch, a subtle mod so that your rear lights disappear from view so you do not give the following car an illuminated guide) and arrived at the halfway halt and although there were no times available we knew by talking to the other crews that we were right in the mix. The second half carried on very well and we arrived at a control on a very dusty "white" (rough as old boots farm track to the uninitiated) and who should we find handing out the times but my good mate Terry who quickly informed us that we were only the 4th car that had passed through his control. Not really understanding what was happening we carried on to the finish at unabated speed, arrived at the final control having had no more problems, so knowing that we have done quite well, I lit up my first after rally fag. The best cigarette you can ever suck on is when 7 hours of hard driving suddenly finishes and you know its been a good rally with the easy drive to the breakfast halt being the icing on the cake. And then after a well earned and reasonably digested breakfast regardless of how crap it was, and in all honesty most after rally breakfasts were in fact pretty crap, but we didn't compete for the food (I do remember some crews tucking into a full English at the halfway halt at 3.00 the morning) but I never bumped into Egon Ronay in any of the out of the way eateries that were used by the rally organisers. After a chat with all the guys from our neck of the

woods it seemed that we were the best placed local crew and we were delighted to find that we had finished 3rd overall in a borrowed from John Vickers of City Speed in Gloucester a very well used and tired looking Mk1 RS2000, up against ex works cars and semi-professional drivers. But our elation soon turned to deflation. It transpired that the "white" that Terry was marshalling on ran parallel to a "B" class road and the top dozen or so MN regulars had obviously got together before the start and decided to take the quicker route and protest that Terry's control was not manned. Now Terry was the most honest and straight forward guy you could wish to meet and if he says he was at the post 15 minutes before the first car was due then he was there. You can imagine the pressure the event organisers were under, "you've got a dozen of us against one of your marshal's word. Don't reinstate us and we will make sure this event will not be on next year's MN calendar" was, I'm sure, the gist of the conversation with the regular MN competitors. So they all had their fails removed which pushed me down to 11th which was still not a bad result but nowhere near as good as it should have been.

I never competed on a MN event again but I did compete on a restricted event (next best to a MN event) and that was stopped by the police before the halfway halt due to the number of complaints from the locals regarding the inappropriate speeds of the competitors. I wasn't too surprised, only surprised that it hadn't happened before as the road rally scene was becoming so competitive and very fast with crews even bringing their so say road cars to the start on a trailer! There were also some nasty accidents with some involving the locals. I more or less finished competing on big events just choosing to do a few local rallies and a few stage rallies (not really me, too slippery and too close to those bloody enormous fir trees for my liking) to keep my hand in but due to ever increasing business pressures it



wasn't long before I stopped competing totally and only got back into the sport when Kev started sprinting and the rest as they say is "History".

So there you are. That's a small part of my rallying career. I think I competed on over 50 rallies between 1965 and 1970 with another half dozen or so per year after that, and have so many more memories - too many to keep you guys interested unless you twist my arm - but it's been a magical rally ride with so many good, bad, sad and funny memories and although my time with the BMC has been on and off since 1964 and not as constant as in Chris Bigwood or Phil Rumney's case, I do feel an integral part of the club and a very surprised and very honoured recipient of the Clubman of the Year award winner several years ago due to my monthly moans in the mag, which seem to be well received by the majority of the members, and as long as you guys want to read them I'm more than happy to continue writing them.

My sincere congratulations to all you guys that are involved in the day to day running of the BMC. Long Live Bristol Motor Club and may it continue for another 100 years.

Cheers, Mel

Cotswold Rally

AWOL from the GWS for 2011, Mrs Nichols and I arrived somewhere just south of Redditch early on Saturday 26th March to be greeted by bacon butties and oodles of hot tea and coffee whilst joining the nine other teams to look over the classic cars that had been assembled for this inaugural event. The format of the day was simple, ten teams, ten classic cars and six 15-25mile stages over which each team would drive one of the cars before changing to their next steer for the following section of the 120 mile loop. The route itself would tour us around the northern Cotswolds starting and finishing at the Great Escape Classic Car Hire business unit and one that Julia excelled at navigating, second away in the morning and first back later on in the day, not that it was a race of course!



And the cars, well if you've followed previous 'Try Before You Buy' articles in Driving Mirror then you'll be familiar with the Jensen Interceptor that I fell in love, a car that started my relationship with Great Escape Cars. Today however the Jensen, although present, wasn't on our list of cars to drive and instead first up for us was a totally

original E-Type V12 convertible, one that appeared on this year's Brit Awards no less. A mark that has been on my personal to-do list for some time made better still on this self-indulgent occasion because I would get to drive not only this one, but also a Series 3 Coupe as well. The first, looking beautiful in white, and the second much more menacing in its contrasting black hew and Webasto sunroof packing a retro-fitted fuel injected XJS V12 beneath its long slender bonnet, more on this double act another time.

Also lined up for us was an XJ6 Coupe, not a car on any of my wish lists and I suppose therefore one that I wasn't particularly looking forward to driving and then of course caught me completely by surprise in providing a totally convincing 'I finally get it' Jaguar driving experience. You see, although the Morse and Sweeney famed MK2 3.8 that I didn't drive covered the early Jaguar years and the later XJS V12 convertible that I did, the more awkward BL years that followed. The XJ6C summarised Jaguar perfectly for me in a single cossetting yet rewarding 45 minute stint sat in its harmonious cockpit, enjoying the infamous double overhead cam six cylinder engine and finally earning respect at last.

Then there was the low mileage air cooled 911 Carrera Targa in gleaming white, serving as a poignant reminder of where Porsche's reputation for building truly great sports cars originated, before size, weight and extreme horsepower outputs became commonplace. After familiarising myself with the offset pedals and dare I say it Beetle sized proportions. I began to realise I was driving something very special indeed. On this dry day in middle England on challenging roads here was a fantastic totally capable rear engined 3.2 litre flat 6 boxer engine machine, still capable of achieving 150mph (apparently)

that never ceased to impress.

Last of the cars we would pilot could be described as the black widow of the pack injecting both fear and high levels of adrenalin into everyone who drove it, a TVR Tuscan, standing in for a second 911 that was unable to take part. This car was truly bonkers and totally awesome and before I realised what was happening had me helplessly trapped in its dangerous spider's web as we very quickly exceeded Mrs Nichols passenger tolerance levels and so rest assured I got the message and backed off.

Elsewhere teams also got to drive, or of course be driven in, a Rolls Royce Silver Spirit whilst others kept saying how surprisingly good the Alfa Spider was in this company. As with any classic car event there is always the risk of a breakdown, or in the case of TVR, death or serious injury, so a Mercedes 300SL was dutifully trailered around stage to stage just in case. In the end the trailer was exactly where it stayed as nothing at all went wrong and the day ran like a dream. Lunch at Washbourne Court in Lower Slaughter, the main reason Mrs Nichols was there, providing yet another one of the day's many highlights.

Organised by Graham Eason of Great Escape Classic Car Hire and Jamie Turner from sister company The Getaway Driver

this event was well worth attending and something to look out for in the future. It offers lots of advantages over a single day's hire, from the fantastic selection of cars driven, to the opportunity to exchange views with other like minded petrol heads and their other halves. Lunch at a suitably selected



hotel helped do the selling at home and so I have to say this event ticked all the boxes and comes highly recommended, I just hope that next time it doesn't clash with one of ours.

Matt Nichols

Verdict	2011 Great Escape Cotswold Rally
Cars	The range of cars on offer was quite superb, from the raucous V12 E-Type Coupe and totally full on TVR Tuscan right through to the Jaguar XJ6C, a car to be enjoyed best at a more relaxed pace.
Routes	Good planning coupled with some luck on the day meant that except for a hold up going into Stow the roads selected were incredibly free of traffic and able to be enjoyed to the full.
Pros	Fine selection of very well prepared cars from the 60's, 70's, 80's and 00's (TVR) driven across well chosen routes with like minded enthusiasts to share your experience with.
Cons	Clashed with the GWS. Doh!
Overall	★★★★★

1913 Weston Speed Trials

Less than two years after the Club's formation, and with hillclimbs and road trials successfully organised, open speed trials on the beach at Weston-super-Mare were the next new venture. A one mile straight-line course was used, starting at the Sanatorium end of the beach and finishing near the Atlantic Hotel. In conjunction with the Bristol run event for motor-cycles and light cars (ACU authorised) the Somerset Automobile Club also ran an event for cars, authorised by the RAC.

Once again Club Secretary Philip Grout was a prime organiser, being both secretary and clerk-of-course of the Bristol event. 125 entries were received for the motor-cycle and light car classes, over 50% being from club members, although many riders entered more than one class – local man GH Fry made 14 entries on four different machines, achieving two wins, one second, and one third place.

The meeting, on Saturday 4th October 1913, was run as a series of heats and finals for each class, with up to four machines in each race. The course was lined by around 5,000 spectators, although control was minimal and they encroached on the course, to the great annoyance of organisers and riders. Unfortunately the weather was appalling, with torrents of heavy rain from the 11.30 start through to the finish at 4pm making the sands soft and slushy. Bikes were allowed a push-off at the start (and the heavy cars were started off planks to prevent them sinking axle deep), but pools of water on the course caused belt-slip and shorted plugs for many.

In the first heat of the cycle-car class (cars not exceeding 1100cc, and with passengers not under 132 lbs.) WG McMinnies in the oddly named "Le Jaberwock de Picardie" made a bad start, overhauled the

others, but then had the engine stop dead 20 yards from the finish. After frantic efforts to restart failed driver and passenger jumped out and pushed the car over the finish line, but were just pipped by W. Welch's Singer. The final was won by FG Cox (Morgan) ahead of HFS Morgan's Grand Prix Morgan, with McMinnies third.

In the motorcycle classes, Douglas machines were the most successful lightweights, while Rudge riders also picked up several awards. Winners in the Club only classes included WW Douglas (350cc), FC Wasley, and the aforementioned GH Fry. Fastest time of the day was by George Clark (Rudge, in the 500cc class) and A. James (Indian, in the unlimited class), both recording 1 minute 14 2/5 sec., approximately 48 mph, speeds obviously being restricted by the saturated sand.

The event was repeated the following year, for the last time before the Great War, and this time the weather was fine, although there was a very strong headwind. Around 10,000 spectators attended on Saturday 13th June, now with fencing to keep them off the course, there were nearly 200 entries, and the trade press reported the event as "one of the most successful speeds events held in the West of England".

The cycle-car class was again won by Cox in a Grand Prix Morgan, from Buckingham's Buckingham, and WW Douglas's Douglas. Fastest time was Cox in 1 min 20 4/5 sec. There was one major incident in the motorcycle classes, when Bristol rider HA Owen was thrown off his BSA half-way down the course and had to be taken to Weston hospital suffering from concussion. Fastest 'bike time was by W Thornhill on a 500cc Douglas, in 68 seconds.

Pete Stowe

Event Timetable

Saturday	Activity	Location
09:00 - 17:00	Dick Mayo Sprint	Circuit
17:30 - 18:00	Awards Presentation	Strawford Centre
19:30 - 21:30	Hog Roast & Cheeseboard	The Tavern
20:30 - 22:30	The Straw Dogs Live	Marquee
Overnight	Camping	Camp Site
Sunday	Activity	Location
10:00 - 11:00	Static Vehicle Displays	Paddock
11:00 - 12:00	Parade Laps	Circuit
12:30 - 13:30	Members' Reception	Marquee
14:00 - 15:00	Parade Laps	Circuit
15:00 - 17:00	Static Vehicle Displays	Paddock

Date	Event
05 July	Club Night (Quiz Night)
09 July	Castle Combe AutoSolo
16 July	Centenary Display at Frenchay Museum
02 August	Club Night
06 August	Wessex Sprint
03 September	Wiscombe Park 5 Clubs Hillclimb
04 September	Wiscombe Park 5 Clubs Hillclimb
06 September	Club Night (Video Night)
04 October	Club Night
15 October	Pegasus Sprint
28 October	NavScatter
01 November	Motorsport Quiz Night
13 November	Roy Fedden Spring Trial
25 November	Bristol Pegasus NavScatter
27 November	Allen Classic Trial
06 December	General Meeting & Club Night

Allen's Potted History of BMC

Ten decades over two centuries cover the existence of what is now the Bristol Motor Club. When, in 1911, sixteen motorcyclists gathered at the Royal Talbot Hotel in Victoria Street, cars were still something of a rarity: big, heavy, and driven more often by paid chauffeurs than by their wealthy owners. Radio broadcasting had yet to be invented, and if you'd tried to explain television or the internet you would probably have been locked up! But through the fog of that November evening, these tweed-clad enthusiasts negotiated the slippery, gas-lit, cobbled City streets to meet with one aim: to further the enjoyment of their machines by bonding to form a club. They wanted to organise sporting competitions, and also to resist the law-makers who were keen – then as now – to impose regulations on motoring.

And so, after much discussion, the Bristol Motor Cycle Club came into being. They appointed a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, set their annual subscription at two shillings and sixpence (12½ pence) and adjourned to the bar for some supper. As the effect of a few beers took hold, the conversation naturally turned to what sort of events they might run. In those early days it was all about pushing the machines to their limit, either to see how fast they would go

over a short distance on a hillclimb or a speed trial, or testing their endurance over many miles in a reliability trial. Someone suggested talking to the Bristol Corporation about running a race like the Isle of Man TT around the perimeter of Clifton Downs. Another suggestion was a speed hillclimb up Bridge Valley Road. All tantalising prospects! However, there is no record of either plan being put into action when reality dawned the next day...

The first hillclimb did, however, take place the following April at Chew Hill and attracted 146 entries. A year later, with a steadily increasing membership meeting regularly at the Queens Hotel Clifton, the Club's first major reliability trial was held – 75 motorcycles and cycle-cars entered, and the event covered a tortuous route of nearly 150 miles on the public roads between Bristol and Bath.

The rest of the decade was overshadowed by the 1914-18 War. Sporting and social activities ground to a halt as members volunteered for despatch rider duties. It took a long time for the horrors of the conflict to fade and for some enthusiasm to resurface, but it became clear that the motor car was going to be the vehicle of the masses, and in 1922 the local press reported the momentous news that the club had altered its name to The Bristol Motor Cycle & Light Car Club. For a while, the most frequent events were whist drives, gymkhanas and picnics, but gradually more and more sporting events were held. In the mid-1920s, apparently undaunted by the depression and the general strike, the club persuaded Bristol Corporation to allow speed trials to be run on part of the newly-finished Portway two years before its official opening, and subsequently pulled-off a similar feat on St Andrews Road, Avonmouth.

Driving Mirror on iTunes

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<http://bristolmc.podbean.com>

In the 1930s the club was at the forefront of keeping the sport of trialling alive, running several major events every year. In 1935 came the first running of the Fedden Reliability Trial, named after the distinguished aero engine designer Sir Roy Fedden, who donated a large silver trophy of unusual design that is still awarded every year for what is now a Sporting Trial for purpose-built trials cars.

One of the more unusual events of the period was the Mendip Grand Prix de Tourisme – the brainchild of one of the club's legendary innovators, Dick Caesar. First run in 1936 on a five-mile triangular course on public roads, it was a low-speed event that observed the "no racing on the public highway" rule by restricting the competitive element to the time spent on 'pit stops'. Each lap, competitors were required to stop at a 'pit' to carry out a timed task, like changing a wheel, draining and replacing a couple of pints of oil etc., one task per stop. Drivers were penalised if they didn't keep to the prescribed average speed, and the winner was the crew with the fewest penalties and the lowest aggregate pit-stop time. The event became enormously popular, and the tactics and antics of drivers and mechanics kept the crowd lining the route enthralled and amused, from the Le Mans-type start to the fall of the flag.

This was also the era of building 'Specials' – members used their ingenuity to assemble scrap bits and pieces into racing cars, in which they were quite happy to put their personal safety second to their thirst for speed and excitement. The club responded with more and more events for its members and their 4-wheeled toys. Someone spotted the building of a new access road to Whitchurch airfield and, opportunistic as ever, the club gained permission to run speed trials on it before its official opening. For several years a speed hillclimb was held on the drive up to the privately-owned Backwell Hill House, and there was also Naish Hill, an

inviting grassy slope in the Gordano valley, which soon became a playground for the almost insatiable demands of members. But all this frenzied Charleston-era activity came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of yet another World War in 1939. Most of the younger members of the club were called-up on active service: those left behind had to be content with occasional informal social meetings.

Five long years of hardship and deprivation later, the spirit of friendly competition soon took hold again, and within a few months of VE day the BMC&LCC organised the first recorded post-war speed event in the country, a hillclimb at Naish Hill on 18 August 1945. Walter Watkins driving the Watkins-Nash special took fastest time of the day. The rest of the 1940s brought speed trials on Marine Parade at Weston-super-Mare, and car racing at Lulsgate Aerodrome, before it was adopted as Bristol's airport.

Over the years, the club has amassed an impressive collection of cups, trophies and other awards, many of which were given by motor dealers, each one anxious to out-do the others in the size and quality of the silverware. The largest group of trophies was devoted to the Bristol to Weston-super-Mare Veteran Car Trial, which first ran in 1948. It rivalled the London-Brighton run in fame and popularity, attracting many distinguished owners and drivers of cars manufactured as far back as 1898. It was very popular amongst the public too, each year crowds lining the route for the spectacle of these venerable and unusual vehicles trundling through the city streets and on the open highway to Weston. It continued annually until the mid-1960s.

The highest-profile decade in the Club's history was probably the 1950s, as a result of its initiative in converting the WWII airfield at Castle Combe into a race circuit. Feverish work by members clearing the wartime debris led to a successful pilot race meeting in July 1950, after which the club

held several National F1 and F2 meetings annually for the next five years. The events attracted entries from Lotus, Cooper, Connaught and BRM, with famous names like Stirling Moss, Mike Hawthorn, Graham Hill, Peter Collins, Roy Salvadori, Colin Chapman and Bob Gerard drawing in crowds of 12,000 or more.

The Mendip GP was revived post-war, initially on the 'Castle of Comfort' course but moving in 1951 to Castle Combe circuit. It was subsequently renamed the Mendip Petit Prix at the behest of the RAC, who were concerned that it might be confused with International GP racing!

But then in 1955 the tragic accident at Le Mans sounded a wake-up call to the motorsport world, leading to the requirement for more comprehensive safety measures at Castle Combe than the club could afford, and in 1956 the BMC&LCC had no choice but to terminate the lease. For the rest of the 50s the club relied on trials such as the John Douglas, the Chappell, the Fedden, the Allen, and the Full Moon, spiced with the addition in 1956 of another new discipline, the Bristol Rally.

Just as the 1950s were about to breathe their last, the club held a six-race meeting at Whitchurch Airport as part of the City's Goram Fair attractions in August 1959. The circuit was described in *Driving Mirror* as "...almost quite flat, and rectangular in shape." Hmmm. The main event was a Formula II race, and there were supporting races for Sports and GT cars. Apart from a motorcycle meeting the following weekend, no further races appear to have been held at Hengrove Park.

The 1960s brought the introduction of

the sport of Autocross. This was designed to attract newcomers to motor sport, using road cars and taking place in the relatively undamaging environment of a grassy field. The action however was fast and furious, two cars competing side-by-side, against the clock, each run consisting of two laps. Rising stars like the 18-year-old Dave Harris rubbed shoulders with established names; large crowds of spectators gathered to watch, and the *Evening Post* even donated a trophy for the event. Autocross certainly kept Bristol Motor Club in the public eye, and its popularity continued well into the 1970s.

But that decade is equally remembered for the club's next exciting venture, the hillclimb at Dyrham Park. From 1961 to 1966 there were three events each year, including rounds of the British Hillclimb Championship, which on several occasions was actually decided at the Dyrham event. But by 1966 the National Trust, who owns the property, decided that the event was incompatible with its aims because the cars "...made a terrific racket!" So came to a sad and premature end an event that is still fondly remembered by all who took part.

Ten years were to pass before the club was actively involved in a hillclimb again: the year was 1976 and the venue was a little further from home at Wiscombe Park in Devon. Bristol joined the motor clubs of Burnham-on-Sea, Taunton, Plymouth and Haldon in running what is still known as "The Five-Clubs" (even though Haldon MC no longer exists). The event runs annually over the first weekend in September, and for nearly 20 years until 1997 hosted a round of the British Hillclimb Championship. Since then the event has provided a round of the

10% Gurston Down Discount

BMC members will get a 10% discount on the entry charge to spectate at Gurston Down Hillclimb on the production of a club membership card.

www.gurstondown.org

SW Championship on one day, and various one-make and other championships on the other.

Like many classic sporting events, the annual Allen Reliability Trial derives its name from a trophy; this one was presented to the club in 1938 by the Armstrong Siddeley agent of that name at the top of Park Street. First run in its current form in 1946, the event continues to attract a full entry for the 75-mile drive around the Mendip countryside every November, taking in such classic sections as Big Uplands, John Walker, Toghill, Travers and Burlledge. It takes its place alongside other established Classic Reliability Trials in the annual calendar, and has twice won the national Trial of the Year award. It is a tour de force for the organising team who each year give weeks of their time planning the route, preparing the sections, conducting an enormous PR exercise, and recruiting and delivering equipment to the 100-plus marshals, without whom the event simply would not happen. Full marks to them all.

Through the 70s, 80s and 90s, what had previously been known as speed trials morphed into sprinting, and this has become the speed event of choice for many members. Following an initiative by the BAC Motor Club in 1976, the jointly organised 2-Clubs Sprint was born on the airfield at RNAS Wroughton, moving two years later to RAF Colerne. A second event, The Wessex Sprint, brought in the added collaboration of the SW Centre of the MGCC, and, with a major course revision in 1991, the two events continued to provide one of the best sprint experiences in the country, right up to its untimely demise – due to defence budget cuts – at the end of 2010.

Meanwhile, the BACMC had re-introduced sprinting to Castle Combe, and Bristol Motor Club followed suit in 1992 with its own event. The ¾-lap June event has become an annual fixture, the name being changed in 2005 as a tribute to the late Dick Mayo, a memorable character and a driving

force in the club for many years. In 2008 a new event at Combe, the Great Western Sprint, was introduced on a new date and to a new 1¾-lap format. This has now become established on the calendar as a round of the MSA British Sprint Championship and, as the longest sprint course in the country, has attracted something of a loyal following. Since 2002 we have also run, jointly with Bristol Pegasus MC (formerly BACMC), an annual sprint at Llandow Circuit on Spring Bank Holiday. This also runs to a 1¾-lap format as it is a much shorter circuit than Castle Combe.

In 2002 an initiative by BMC resulted in the first appearance of AutoSolo in the UK. This was a slightly modified form of what in the US is called SOLO, Autocross (very different from the UK version), or Slalom. It was conceived as a grass-roots form of motorsport that anyone from the age of 16 can take part in, and involves driving a standard road car nimbly and skilfully against the clock around a course on tarmac marked out with cones. A key innovation was that competitors take it in turns to marshal as well as drive. Now endorsed and regulated by the governing body, it has gone from strength to strength, with almost every club up and down the country running events, and championships springing up in response. As a low-cost, entry-level event there can be no better training in the fine art of car control, and in a disciplined, safe environment.

The great news for 2011 is that the Dyrham Hillclimb is to be revived following a fresh approach by the National Trust, who are now looking forward as much as the rest of us to the sight and sound of motorsport in the Park in October 2011. But what of the future for club motorsport beyond that? Who knows – could it be the time to revive Autocross in Bristol? Or even the Mendip Petit (Grand) Prix...? Time alone will tell!

Allen Harris

FI Simulator

Our FI show car was manufactured at Silverstone race circuit by Bob Salisbury Engineering, renowned in the motorsport industry for producing showcars for Williams, Red Bull, Renault, McLaren, Virgin Racing and others.



Enjoy the thrill of racing against the clock as you strive to set the fastest lap time on one of the worlds' foremost Grand Prix Circuits.

The surround sound speaker system provides an ultra realistic soundtrack and the driving experience is further enhanced by the force-feedback steering, paddle shift gear change and the LED real time information display on the steering wheel,

Finally, as you climb out of the cockpit, the Top Gear style leaderboard will show how close you were to setting the fastest lap time.



LAP TIMES	
STEVE	1:31.247
JAMIE	1:42.122
SPROUT	1:46.645
FRANK	1:50.073
MITCH	1:50.214
ROB	1:51.106
CHARIS	1:53.946
MATT	1:54.116
LUCA	1:54.331
STEVE R	1:55.187
MUNIO	1:58.070
SHARLO	2:03.267
Bobby	2:08.134
JOHN	2:10.104
DAVEY	2:11.363
STEVENO	2:12.824
MITCHELL	2:21.444
TAYLOR	2:26.596
DAVE	2:26.576
LARRY	2:42.164
SURROUN	2:49.624

Try out the simulator at the Centenary Celebrations

Motorsport on a (very small) Budget

Motorsport is expensive, right? In F1, they spend hundreds of millions each year, in GP2 they spend millions and even F3 costs tens of thousands each year. So budget motorsport is all relative. Or is it? Step up AutoSolo. All you need is a road car with a tax disc, valid MOT and insurance, a club membership card and your entry fee. Surely entry fees are high though? Not at all. £30 is an average cost to enter an AutoSolo.

Do you have what you need? Most likely. Don't you need a fast car though? Seemingly not. Entrants are split into engine capacity classes and the car doesn't make much difference. People have won classes in everything from completely standard 1300cc Vauxhall Novas and Peugeot 309s up to Lotus Elises and Subaru Imprezas. Often, the little cars can be found mixing it with the powerful cars.

How does the event function? A course is marked out on a large expanse of tarmac, often an airfield or even the paddock at Castle Combe. Cars compete one at a time against the clock, just like a Sprint, over courses of usually 50-80 seconds in length. The key difference between Sprinting and

AutoSolo is the speed. AutoSolo is entirely under 50mph, which means it's as safe as motorsport gets, both for the car and driver. In fact, it's so safe that you don't need a helmet or fireproof overalls, making it cheaper to enter. You don't need a racing license either.

Over the course of a day, competitors usually get 3 attempts at 4 different courses (actually two courses run in both directions). It's a busy day competing and brilliant fun, which is the primary focus of the events. Of course, it does get quite competitive too, with positions often being settled by less than a second. It's not uncommon for half a second to drop you several places.

If you want to get involved, it's not too late to enter our next event at Castle Combe. Entry forms are on the club website (www.bristolmc.org.uk) and if you want to talk to someone about competing, there are lots of regular competitors at most club nights and there will be many at the centenary celebrations - ask someone with a name badge to point you to one of them.

Andy Laurence



What is a Sprint? A Competitor's View

One would imagine by now that I would have an answer to this question ready to roll off of the tip of my tongue as I have been asked it so many times over my 10 years of competing, however, I have yet to come up with a succinct and satisfactory answer for all audiences. I have flitted between, "I race cars" through to launching into a half hour monologue on the intricacies and details of hillclimbing and sprinting which leaves me to watch the unfortunate recipient slip into a state of semi-consciousness.

On to the factual bit, sprinting and it's closely related sister, hillclimbing are collectively known as speed events, they both involve a driving a car along a tarmac course of approximately 1-2km while being timed from a standing start to a flying finish. During a brief Google search I found a good simple description for which I cannot claim credit; "at its simplest it is what the Stig does on Top Gear." (Reference <http://www.hillclimbandsprint.co.uk/>). There are classes to suit all cars from smaller capacity road saloons such as Minis and Fiestas, through sports cars such as Caterhams and Lotus Elises to full blown ex-Formula 1 powered, purpose built racing cars such as Goulds and Pilbeams. This allows people with all time and financial budgets to be competitive, trying to win class placing, class records, the coveted outright FTD (Fastest Time of the Day), or simply beat their own

personal best. Cars are timed by breaking an infrared timing beam at the start with a timing strut mounted to the front of the car to breaking another beam at the finish. All the runs are timed to the nearest 1/100th of a second, with the top three to five places in competitive classes often being decided within a single second. A day's competition generally consists of 2 practice runs and a 2 timed runs with your fastest run of the day counting.

There are sprints run all over the country, with venues ranging from outdoor kart tracks, to coned circuits set out on airfields, to a purpose built facility in Scotland to well established racing circuits. This can allow a competitor to be competing somewhere like Clay Pigeon Kart circuit one week, to Colerne Airfield the next to Castle Combe after that, and this is solely events held in the South West. If competition is your thing, there are many UK championships available catering to all tastes, from Single Make and Club Championships to Regional Championships and a National Championship, along with similar events held throughout Europe. Past competitors include some extremely well known household names that cut their teeth in hillclimbing and sprinting before progressing onto other things, for example, Stirling Moss, Alec Issigonis, and Raymond Mays.

Sprinting is a different discipline to other motorsports, sometimes viewed as a poor cousin to racing, in my opinion, because having only a single car on track makes for less of a spectacle for spectators than ten cars dicing for positions, however for a competitor it offers just as many challenges. In racing you have many laps to make your move and nurse the car through, meaning that you end up driving at 95% for the majority of the race. Sprinting doesn't allow



Simon at Wiscombe Park Hillclimb

this luxury, with less track time and a simple timed run you need to make every split second, every apex, every braking point, and every exit point count from start to finish. It's an intense short period of concentration to get every part right, to be aggressive enough, without overstepping the mark and becoming ragged, untidy and losing time.

The feeling of achieving your best time is pretty unbeatable, and let's face it the reason that we all do it. After ten years of

competing, it's been enough to keep me coming back and continuing so it must be quite a rush!

Does sprinting sound like your cup of tea? , if so please come and chat to myself or the other club members, membership to a motorclub (BMC of course), an MSA licence, a helmet and a fireproof suit are all that's needed to start though, so get out there!

Simon Clemow

What's On?

June

June 25	Dick Mayo Sprint	Bristol Motor Club
June 26	Centenary Celebrations	Bristol Motor Club

July

July 2	Ford RS Action Day	www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk
July 2-3	Reg Phillips Trophy Hillclimb	www.shelsley-walsh.co.uk
July 5	The Short Shift Quiz Night	Bristol Motor Club
July 9	Castle Combe AutoSolo	Bristol Motor Club
July 10	British Grand Prix	www.formula1.com
July 14-17	Formula Student	www.formulastudent.com
July 16	VW/Audi Action Day	www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk
July 16-17	VSCC Loton Park Hillclimb	www.vsc.co.uk
July 23-24	Midsummer & Classic Hillclimbs	www.shelsley-walsh.co.uk

August

August 2	Club Night	Bristol Motor Club
August 6	Wessex Sprint	www.bristolpegasus.com
August 7	Dyrham Park Club Outing	Bristol Motor Club
August 13-14	Caterham Cup	www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk
August 21	The Mendip Car Trial	www.mgccsw.com



With the Dick Mayo Sprint and the centenary celebrations this weekend, what do we have to look forward to in the near future? Dyrham Park, that's what! It's in a similar vein, with a speed event and a plethora of historic cars. Last held in the 1960s, Dyrham Park was a round of the British Hillclimb Championship. Owned by the National Trust, it's a park of outstanding beauty, located on the side of a steep hill. Most importantly for motorsport lovers, the impressive house at the

bottom of the hill has a driveway from the visitors' car park at the top of the hill. The ribbon of tarmac cuts through the flatter lower section and winds its way up the steep hill towards the car park at the top.

The start line is adjacent to the house with a short drag into a right hand kink that leads into a fast off-camber left hander. A short straight follows, leading into a tightening right hander as the hill steepens that flows immediately into a hairpin left from where the

A photograph of a park with a winding path, trees, and fallen leaves. The path is paved and curves through a grassy area covered with brown autumn leaves. Bare trees are visible in the background under an overcast sky.

Dyrham Park

background photo is taken. A short squirt up the next straight that traverses the hill brings us to the infamous Neptune. It's a blind right hander that continues for some time, somewhat reminiscent of Semicircle at Prescott. On the entry to the corner, the view ahead is of blue sky. Out of Neptune, the track shoots skywards up a steep hill, over a crest and to the finish.

Dyrham Park is open all year round to visit and the club has planned an outing on 7th

August for a picnic in the park. On October 2nd, we'll return to the venue for the first hillclimb there for almost 50 years. No doubt, the field will be packed with a mix of historic and modern cars racing up the hill in an attempt to set the fastest time.

If you enjoy our centenary weekend, you are well advised to join us at Dyrham Park on 2nd October. See you there!

Andy Laurence

Tarquin Walter Algenon Tythrington - known affectionately as 'Tarky' by his family - and by the sum of his initials to anyone else who met him - stands in the bay window of the master bedroom, yawns, stretches and decides to take the pressure off his struggling bladder by proceeding to let rip a fart of such magnitude as to startle Mr Tiggy, the ancient, deaf and somewhat incontinent tabby dozing on the foot of the bed. Opening the heavy drapes a little and glancing back to the bed, the already warm, early morning summer sun floods in to highlight the not inconsiderable bulk of the still sleeping memsahib, whose rhythmical snoring is gently rattling her dentures in the glass on the bedside table. "Like being back in India" Tarky quietly remarks to himself, as he fondly remembers life on the family tea plantation before having to return to the family estate in England to take up his inheritance as sole heir upon the death of his father, the late Thomas Ignatius Tythrington - also universally known by his initials.

Tarky returns to gazing out of the window to survey his estate which "stretches as far as the eye can see" although, as he wistfully recalls, this isn't nearly as impressive as it used to be, since his father was forced to sell several hundred acres to the local council for the creation of a new housing estate in order to cover his ever increasing gambling debts and monthly upkeep of a surprisingly large number of secret, illegitimate 'back stairs sprogs'; the existence of which only became knowledge to Tarky when Messrs Conceal & Scarper, the family solicitors, had to explain where such a large sum of money was 'disappearing' every month. It would certainly account for the turnover of young housemaids over the years and his father's insistence on personally training certain members of his household staff!

Still, not a time to dwell upon such matters, thinks Tarky, as his gaze wanders to the mantelpiece and the confirmation letter from the Bristol Motor Cycle and Light Car Club of his entry in the inaugural Chew Magna Hillclimb for cars, due to take place that day. At least the sale of part of the estate all those years before had left a considerable sum in the bank even after the clearing of his father's debts and, together with the income from the plantation, was more than enough to maintain a very comfortable lifestyle in the slightly shabby ancestral pile not far from Bristol and to be able to indulge in his passion for the new-fangled modern automobile - this is 1912 after all!

Swiftly clearing his morning ablutions and dressing with the help of his manservant, the ever faithful Mr Patel (who always addressed Tarky as "Mr Twaty" in an endearing attempt at one of the few words of the English language he could muster, or so Tarky was led to believe...), he descends the grand staircase and makes his way into the library where he always takes breakfast. "Busy day ahead; better have plenty of fuel in the tank!" quips Tarky in response to Mrs Craddock the cook's enquiry regarding his appetite; as he eagerly polishes off his second, overstuffed plate of kedgeree, devilled kidneys, sausages, black pudding and several rounds of toast, washed down with a large pot of his favourite family tea and a fortifying glass of porter. "You can certainly pack it away, sir" replies Mrs Craddock cheerfully, at the same time thinking that even ten platefuls wouldn't exactly fill the tank that was Tarky's burgeoning frame!

Breakfast suitably demolished, he stands in front of the huge mirror in the entrance hallway to don his leather overcoat and stops to avail himself of his chosen wardrobe. "Ah, the epitome of the English

sporting gentleman” observes Tarky as he takes in the polished riding boots, jodhpurs, silk shirt with spotted dicky bow and his best striped blazer. Checking his overcoat as he strides manfully to the door, he notes the full hipflask containing his favourite brandy in one pocket and the comforting coolness of his trusty Webley 38 in another. Well, he always carried his pistol everywhere in India just in case one of the natives went a bit ‘doolalley’ and some of ‘those people’ in the new council houses outside the main gates certainly look ‘a bit rum’ – best to be prepared in case you have to bag one of the buggers!

Reaching the garages, which had originally done duty as the stable block, he finds Dymock, the long suffering gardener, handyman, riding mechanic and sometime chauffeur, polishing the ornate brass carbide headlamps on the ‘Tythrington Special’ already parked in the stable yard.

Ah yes, the ‘Tythrington Special’ - “very special” as Dymock would often sarcastically observe, as his knowledge of the strange contraption grew. The chassis was certainly from a butchered commercial vehicle as were the axles, steering assembly and artillery wheels, together with the brakes on the rear wheels only and the chain drive assembly. The engine and gearbox would appear to have been salvaged from some obscure farm machinery and the whole lot was topped off with a well upholstered, two seat leather sofa located in front of a polished copper cylindrical petrol tank (suspiciously similar to a household water heater) and some rudimentary panels covering the engine. Painted bright green with gold pinstripe highlights and seemingly covered in several yards of polished brass tubing, it was love-at-first-sight for Tarky when a fellow member of the Bristol Motorcycle Club had conspiratorially mentioned that he might be willing to sell it to him “for the right price”.

“Ready for the off?” enquires Tarky, as Dymock hands him a pair of leather gauntlets and goggles. “Been looking forward to it, sir”

PR/Press Officer Wanted

We’re still after a PR/Press Officer.

We need someone who can help publicise our events and come up with great ways of getting the name of Bristol Motor Club out there.

If you think you can help, get in touch with a member of the committee (phone numbers on the inside front cover and email on the back cover)

Dymock lies as he remembers previous excursions with Tarky at the helm. At least he had persuaded his master to adopt the wearing of goggles since the unfortunate episode with the errant bee and the subsequent carnage as they ploughed through the local boy scout’s hut, finally ending up lodged in the wall of the ironically named ‘Rest And Be Thankful’ public house!

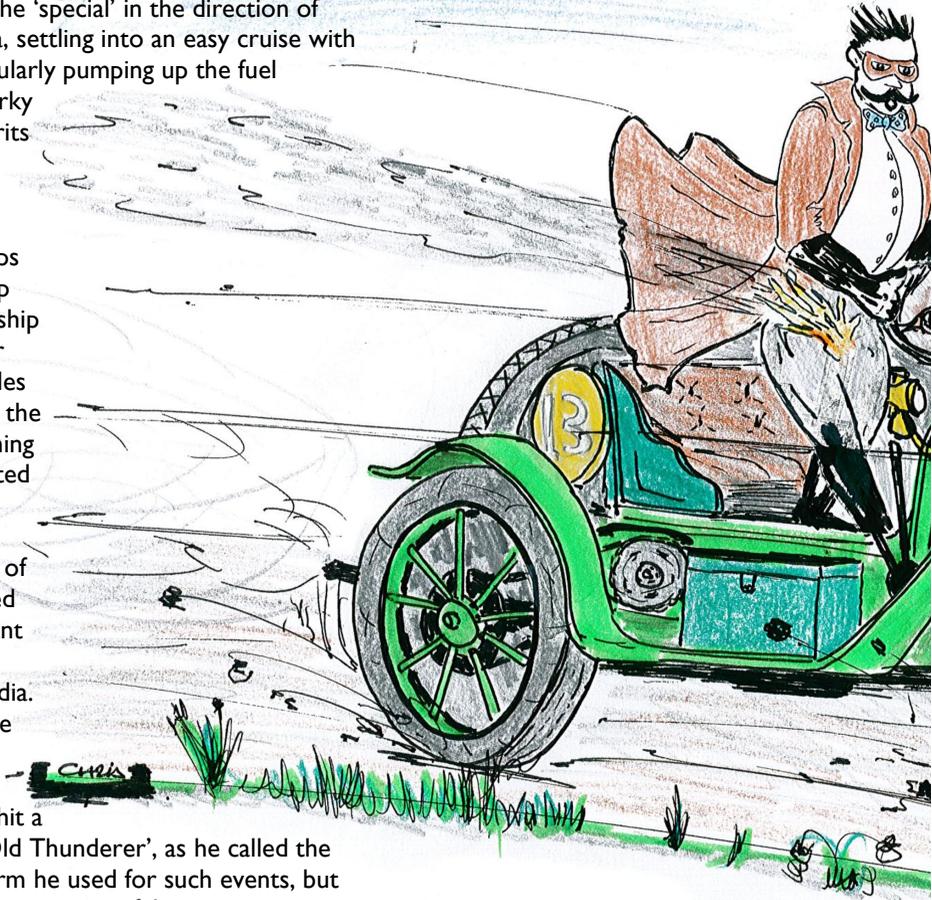
Tarky lights up his first cigar of the day, climbs aboard, checks the fuel pressure has been primed using the hand pump located in front of the passenger seat, retards the ignition lever on the steering wheel hub and shouts “swing her over man” to the waiting Dymock. A quick turn of the starting handle and the four cylinder, six litre engine ‘harumphs’ into life and settles to a slow, shuddering idle sounding not unlike the ‘chuff’ of a waiting steam locomotive.

Dymock climbs into the passenger seat and, before he has time to settle, Tarky graunches the outside gear lever into first, lets out the abrupt clutch and launches down the driveway in a cloud of blue smoke. Dymock finally gets a purchase on the seat just as they are about to reach the main gateway, only to meet the butcher’s boy on his bicycle coming the opposite way. The terrified lad makes an instant decision and

throws himself and his loaded bike into the adjacent rhododendrons, scattering brown paper parcels in all directions and causing Dymock to briefly ponder his epitaph should he be killed by a blow to the head from a pound of best chipolatas! Tarky, seemingly oblivious to the chaos, charges out of the main gate, grinds two more gear changes and accelerates the 'special' in the direction of Chew Magna, settling into an easy cruise with Dymock regularly pumping up the fuel pressure. Tarky is in high spirits as he looks forward to meeting the splendid chaps who make up the membership of the motor club and smiles to himself as the curious pitching motion created by the crude suspension reminds him of being perched on an elephant when tiger hunting in India. Of course, he had never actually managed to hit a tiger with 'Old Thunderer', as he called the ancient firearm he used for such events, but was rather more successful in managing to remove assorted body parts from a number of the native beaters - much to the amusement of the other ex-pats in the party - though not necessarily to the amusement of the unfortunate beaters themselves!

Arriving at the venue, Tarky is waved through the gateway of a farmers field that is to serve as the lower paddock and is mightily pleased with himself as he catches a cheerful

"He's here!" from a group of fellow club competitors, fortunately missing the preceding "Oh Christ..." that only a grinning Dymock hears as they drive past. Parking in their designated space, Tarky spots 'Mungo' Nichols arriving in his new yellow, Renault Race-about. "Good looking car but a bit of a brash colour for an Englishman" Tarky



The Tythrington

comments to Dymock, who is celebrating his own safe arrival with a large snifter of nerve calming whisky. Walking through the paddock to signing on, Tarky greets the Club

Chairman, Mr Harris (some sort of retired media mogul, rumour has it...), as well as 'Bunty' Benstock who is Chief Marshall for the event, 'Tick Tock' Rainbow, acting timekeeper and a number of other competitors including 'Scribbler' Laurence, 'Sideslip' Greenslade and 'Whoops-a-daisy' Taylor who has brought along his fearsome three-wheeler.

Tarky spends the hour after the drivers' briefing touring the paddock and cheerfully chatting with the other competitors, regaling them at length about the virtues of the 'Tythrington Special' and how he appears to have the only dedicated racer at the event - a view not shared by anyone else, as they are

As Dymock had previously pessimistically predicted, their first practice runs up the hill in the morning turn out to be less than record breaking as Tarky struggles to get cleanly off the line and bullies the wheezing contraption around the bends; cart spring suspension bouncing and crashing with all the control of a dingy in a North Atlantic gale! It's an embarrassed and slightly despondent Tarky that's quaffing champers at the lunch break as he explains to those around him that it's really rather difficult to control such a thoroughbred racing machine - "I mean, it's not like driving a normal car, you understand?" asks Tarky of the assembled audience that fortunately appears to be in total agreement with this particular observation.

The first timed run after lunch mirrors the morning's dismal practice performances and with only a single run left it's a highly motivated, if slightly squiffy, Tarky that's lined up for a final shot at club glory. "It's do-or-die time Dymock!" announces Tarky as he sparks up another fat cigar, causing the increasingly uneasy riding mechanic to think to himself "yes; you do and I'll die!" and to begin quietly muttering, "Dear

Lord, graciously receive this soul of thy servant and repentant sinner..." just in case there wasn't a priest handy when he needed one later.

On the start line, Tarky decides that

a spot of Dutch courage is called for and pulls out his hipflask, unscrews the stopper and is just about to take a decent swig when Dymock notices that the starter is in the



all aware of the history of the special and how the previous keeper had been an 'absolute wizard' for offloading it for such a healthy price!

throws of flagging them off. “Look out - go, GO!” shouts Dymock above the noise of the engine, causing a startled Tarky to drop the open hipflask into his lap and floor the throttle. They leap off the line in a welter of noise and smoke and roar along to the first set of open bends, with Dymock pumping furiously to keep the fuel pressure up as Tarky saws away at the steering like a demented helmsman.

To the surprise of all the spectators, the special seems far better balanced than its previous attempts and it's quickly onto the steeply climbing section of the hill before a sharp left hand bend which opens onto a long straight sprint to the finish. Tarky takes a moment on this steep section to adjust his soaking trousers and nearly misses the turn which he enters by frantically heaving at the wheel, inducing the back end to breakaway and the ‘Tythrington Special’ scribing a perfect scything arc around the bend and positively rocketing onto the final straight. ‘Ruddy marvellous’ thinks Tarky, letting out a whoop of joy which immediately releases his glowing cigar to drop down his overcoat and ignite the, by now, large amount of brandy soaking his crotch.

Tarky instantly reacts to the conflagration by springing upright (fortunately keeping hold of the steering wheel) which crushes the small bolt acting as a throttle stop and allows the Guzzle & Paylots carburettor to fully open for the first time. The engine takes a deep breath and the ‘bitsa’ contraption charges forward harder than anyone ever thought possible.

The extraordinary sight of the ‘Tythrington Special’ thundering across the

finishing line with steam pouring from the radiator cap, its driver standing up and seemingly trailing smoke and fire from his backside and with a maniacally grinning mechanic vigorously punching him in his groin, presumably in an attempt to beat out the flames (as Dymock would later claim), brings the finish line crowd to a stunned silence highlighting the bellowing exhaust note, above which could be clearly heard a blood chilling shrieking that later led the finish line officials to question whether the car was fitted with a supercharger, as it had just won its class and set fastest time of the day!

Meanwhile Dymock, by now in an enhanced state of concern for his own self preservation, spots his opportunity to abandon ship and perfectly times a leap into a fast approaching duckpond, neatly tackling the blazing Tarky who happens to be in his way and bundling him from the car to hit the water like a human meteorite - later earning him an award from the Humane Society and a fat bonus and generous pension for life from an ever grateful Tarky! What happened to the ‘Tythrington Special’? It was last seen disappearing into the distance to be later declared a total write off by Dymock who had been sent to retrieve it, as it had apparently plummeted into the local quarry. Which was just as well, as a bruised and barbequed Tarky had decided to give up racing cars and concentrate on something a little more sedate instead. Strangely, rumours persisted for a number of years after that something resembling the ‘Tythrington Special’ was doing sterling service hauling quarry wagons...

And that, dear reader, is the true story of the 1912 inaugural Chew Magna Hillclimb that ultimately became the BMC legend we all know of as - ‘Tarky the Hotter’! Honest...

Chris Dymock

Upcoming Club Nights

5th July

The “Short Shift” motoring quiz.

2nd August

6th September

Classic Trials evening.

2011 Fantasy F1: Canada

Name	Driver 1	Driver 2	Chassis	Engine	Points
Matthew Norris	Sergio Perez	Narain Karthikeyan	Red Bull	Mercedes	639
Matt Nichols	Sergio Perez	Narain Karthikeyan	Red Bull	Mercedes	639
Marcus Rainbow	Lewis Hamilton	Paul di Resta	McLaren	HRT	525
Keith Attwood	Lewis Hamilton	Narain Karthikeyan	McLaren	Virgin	521
Andy Laurence	Timo Glock	Jerome D'Ambrosio	McLaren	Renault	465
Ali Perry	Fernando Alonso	Adrian Sutil	Renault	HRT	251
Dave Greenslade	Fernando Alonso	Timo Glock	Virgin	Renault	235
Julian Rainbow	Lewis Hamilton	Adrian Sutil	Williams	Lotus	211
Chris Dymock	Lewis Hamilton	Heikki Kovalainen	Williams	Toro Rosso	208
Adrian Taylor	Jenson Button	Paul di Resta	Williams	Lotus	206

FRENCHAY CAR SHOW AND FETE

Bristol Motor Club have been invited to display a group of cars on Saturday afternoon 16th July 2011, to celebrate the club centenary. It would be good to have cars representing each discipline; Autosolo, Sprints, Trials, etc. The show normally attracts about 150 cars and many spectators, so would be good to promote our club. If you would like to display your car or can give a hand to erect the club gazebo please contact Mervyn Walters.

01275 834129 or maureen.mervyn@tiscali.co.uk

See The World's Fastest Car!

1000mph is the target and you can see the car and meet the team.

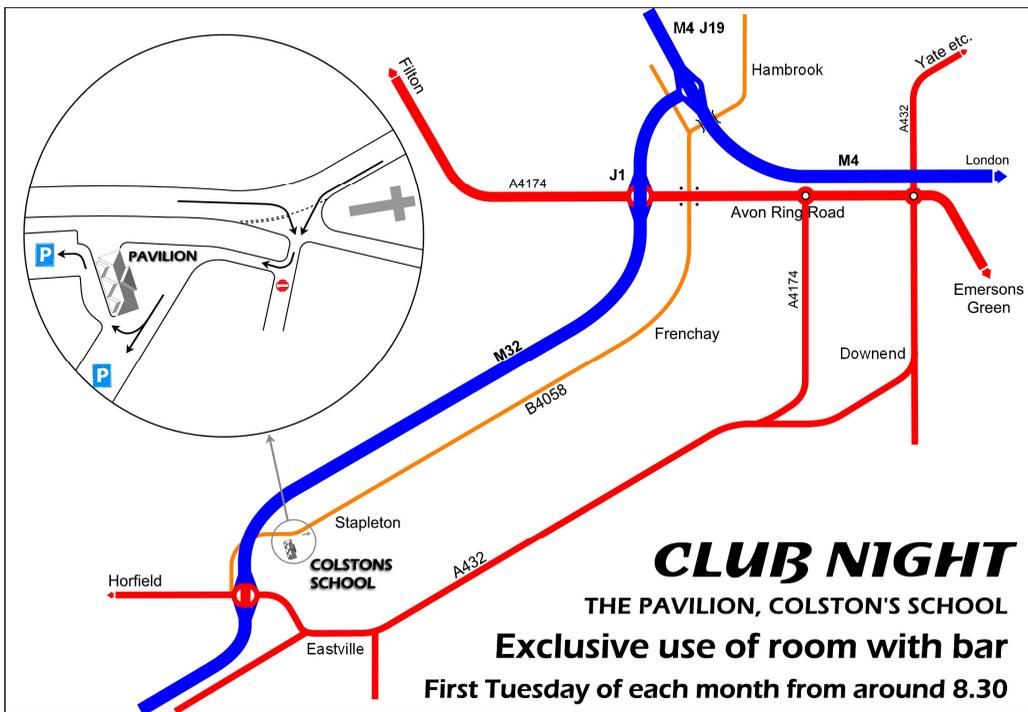
Our visit will encompass a **technical presentation** of the project to date, meet the team, a workshop visit, and a **simulator drive** (BMC record: 1033 mph, Matt Nichols).



£30 per head, including **membership** of the Bloodhound SSC 1K Supporters Club **for the length of the project** and a chance to **win a trip** to see the car run in **South Africa**.

Date: Weekend in September, exact date TBC.

Contact Chris Dymock on 0117 939 4265 (evenings) or estimating@intoheat.co.uk



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