Durham Auto Club

NEWS LETTER

Durham Auto Club meets at:
Lambton Hounds Inn
62-63 Front Street,
Pity Me,
Durham
DH1 5DE
Tel: 0191 3864742
1st Wednesday of the month - 8.30pm

Disclaimer:
Articles and reports supplied for the DAC Newsletter are the views of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Committee or other club members.

If you have any results or reports of your motorsport outings or articles you would like adding to the Newsletter, please forward them to Andy Brown (scratmanbrown@hotmail.co.uk). I would also be interested in your comments regarding the new NEWSLETTER format and content. We are trying to keep it simple and informative but we would welcome your comments.

Committee

Current Committee

President - Nicky Porter
Chairman - Tom Hall
Vice Chairman - Bernie Pugh
Secretary - Joan Wood
Treasurer - Vacant
Membership Sec - Peter Masters
Competition Sec - Vacant
Chief Marshal - Peter Sewell
Social Secretary - Vacant
Magazine Editor – Andy Brown
Website – Andy Brown
Facebook - Mark Thornton/Andy Brown
Press Officer - Vacant
Child Protection Officer - Julie Pugh
Junior Representative - Johnny Crisp
Autotest Co-ordinator - Tom Hall

General Committee - Neil Foster
General Committee - Mick Stead
General Committee - David Pugh

The following roles are vacant on the Committee and we would like to fill these posts as soon as possible or at the AGM in 2016. If you would be interested in any of the positions below please contact Tom Hall or pop along to the next committee meeting (see Club Diary below).

1) Treasurer
2) Social Secretary
3) Competition Secretary
4) Press Officer

The Club needs the support of the membership. If you would like to join the Committee or help organise a social event or a navigational event for example, please contact a member of the committee.

Club Dairy and other Events

11th	November 2015	➢ Committee Meeting at 8 pm
12th	November 2015	➢ Rally of GB (Wales)
14th	November 2015	➢ Kingdom Stages (Crail, Scotland)
18th	November 2015	➢ 12 Car Rally – edenvalleymotorclub.org.uk
21st	November 2015	➢ Grizedale stages (Cumbria)
22nd	November 2015	➢ Autotest – wdmc.org.uk
25th	November 2015	➢ NETRC Awards night at the Stadium, Pelaw Grange, Birtley
27th	November 2015	➢ Roger Albert Clark Rally - **CANCELLED**
30th	November 2015	➢ Whitby 12 Car, Start – 8pm at Champions garage in Castleton.
2nd	December 2015	➢ Club night at 8.30 pm
6th	December 2015	➢ Classic Rally – heroevents.eu
9th	December 2015	➢ Committee Meeting at 8 pm
10th	December 2015	➢ 12 Car Rally – wcmcrallying.co.uk
14th	December 2015	➢ 12 Car Rally – maltonmc.co.uk
27th	December 2015	➢ Christmas stages at Croft

Auto Test Wheel Spin

Wigton MC Autumn Autotest - Maryport

Sunday 8th November

The torrential rain had cleaned the poor little Proton of its thick layer of mud after driving through the Cumbrian forests the day before.
I can honestly say, that I have never competed in a wetter autotest in my life. It was torrential rain from start to finish. I felt sorry for the poor marshals. The old industrial estate surface was under about 3 inches of water. It was like driving in a shallow lake. It was very impressive to watch. My car was starting to cough and splutter towards the end of the day. It was a good job no Minis turned up.
The tests were very easy and very fast. Two tests were set out, which we did twice each, then they were ran as one long test. They were reversed and repeated on the afternoon. A great day apart from the rain. Willy Jarman was a clear winner in the rally 205 GTi, followed by a MX5, then a MG Midget. Angela Jones was next in the same 205 and I was 4 seconds behind her. 17 cars turned up for a great day out.

Peter Masters

Road, Navigation and Stage Rally Round up

Malton stages

The Malton stages were held on the 1st November and ran through the classic North Yorkshire forests of Cropton, Staindale, Langdale, Spiers Bank and Dargate. The rally consisted of six stages with a second run through Langdale for the last stage.

Good finishes for the following Durham members.

Stephen Petch seeded at car 1 in his Ford Fiesta R5+, finished 2nd overall 2 seconds behind Charles Payne.

Steve Petch seeded car 9 finished 8th overall in his Ford Fiesta S2000.

Roger Albert Clark Rally - Cancelled

You may have seen this announcement below from Colin Heppenstall, rally manager.

The Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club Ltd and De Lacy Motor Club Ltd are very sad to announce that the 2015 Roger Albert Clark Rally has been cancelled due to the lower than expected level of entries received at the closing date for initial entries.

The event is unique in the motor sport calendar and has run for the past 12 years with varying degrees of success.

This has been a very difficult decision to make and we have considered all options to try and keep the event running. We realise that this will come as a big blow to competitors, marshals and fans alike, as the event has become a key fixture on the rally calendar for many. We share your disappointment and extend our thanks to all those who had entered and volunteered to marshal this year. However, this is a break and not the end of the Roger Albert Clark Rally.

The Club has always prided itself on listening to competitors to hear what they wanted from the event. This is why the current format has been organised; to help reduce the costs of competing on the event. Unfortunately, even though this is what was asked for by competitors, they have not supported the concept in sufficient numbers to make the event viable.

A lot of criticism has been levelled at the club for not going into Yorkshire from both competitors and particularly spectators. The reason for this is quite easy to explain; it is the amount of litter that spectators left after the rally's last two visits to Yorkshire. Even though event officials collected it all up, the Forestry Commission would not let the event back into the Yorkshire forests.

I would like to personally thank the hundreds and hundreds of marshals who have volunteered to marshal on the event and to apologise for this very sad but necessary course of action. The main losers due to this cancellation are the many local hotels, guest houses, bars and restaurants around the route, which will lose significant revenue due to the cancellation.

I would also like to thank Sunderland City Council for agreeing to support the event in 2015. These types of events are complicated to organise and to work with a Council that wants the event to be in its city does make the process of organising the host city a lot easier.

It is obvious that the event's current format is not working and a full review of what should happen will now be undertaken by the Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club. Therefore the Club has decided that the event will also not be organised in 2016, but the club will discuss with competitors during this time if there is still a market for this type of event. Deliberations will consider whether this should include returning to an earlier format of different forest districts over three or four days, making the event a longer and harder experience and running the event every other year instead of annually.

The Club will also look into allowing all cars to do the event including modern machinery and the use of subjective route notes. Nothing is off the table during these discussions.

Whether the event returns in 2017 or 2018 the one definite positive I can confirm is that the Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club is financially sound and looks forward to the continued promotion of the MSA British Historic Rally Championship and the new R.A.C. Historic Asphalt Rally Championship in 2016, as well as the organisation of DMACK Carlisle Stages in June, a round of the BTRDA Rally Series.

And finally, if anybody wishes to have a weekend in Sunderland from 27 to 29 November I have a few hotel nights available at very reasonable discounted rates for various styles of accommodation, so please ask for more information.

Whitby 12 car

Monday 9th November

Another good event organised by Martin of Whitby. There was a panic, just before we started as one of the roads we were going to use was blocked by a car crash. Martin managed to re-route in the end to keep the event running.
The roads used were very enjoyable to drive. Lots of small lanes with grass in the middle and leaves covering them, with a smattering of mud. Mike Thornton did a good job on the maps. Don't know what went wrong, but somehow we managed to get all the code boards and not lose any time. This will probably never happen again. We kept looking in the mirror to get quickly out the way if Al and Kev caught us in the Nissan, but it never happened. I learned a long time ago to never try to race these two, whichever one is driving. Totally mad, the pair of them.
The second problem of the night was the finish venue hotel at Runswick Bay which was shut for refurbishment, so we adjourned to a hotel in Elerby. A very enjoyable night out.
The drive shaft on the little Proton is getting noisier and I have some electrical problems, which make the car loose power. Also the speedo keeps dying. Flaming electric throttle. What was wrong with a cable? This was the cars 45th event. Will see how many I can get out of it before it dies.

Peter Masters

Regularities, Historics, Classic and Trials

Rally Sierra Nevada: October 2015.

As my first rally was in September 1960, yes, 55 years ago, I now look at the Itinerary and where in the world the rally is going before we choose a particular event. Now, that the Euro is so weak we look at Europe for the best value events.

The Belgium's and the Dutch organise very good events at a much lower entry fee than UK rallies. At my age we like to compete on Regularity events in warm climates and make a bit of a holiday of it. Our days of driving in muddy damp forests in the early hours of the morning are over!! But, I enjoyed that 30 years ago!!

The current event organisers offer a 3 or 4 star hotel package which is a good idea.

A Belgium organiser sent us the regulations for a rally which started and finished in

Malaga in early October. It was a 5 day event in the Sierra Nevada and neighbouring Sierra's. That sounded very tempting so Wendy and I entered our 40 year old Mercedes-Benz 230.4 (Taxi!!) Mercedes Taxi you ask? Yes, we purchased it for £1300.00, some while ago. It's not very fast but you can guarantee that if the crew keep it on the black stuff it will be at the finish of a five day 1500 mile event.

We took the Brittany Ferry from Portsmouth south to Bilbao in Northern Spain. After the 24 hour crossing we arrived in Spain and over the next two days we drove the 500 miles south to Malaga. The old Merc trundles along at 70mph. On arriving at the start we were made very welcome at the Welcome dinner. Scrutineering was a bit lax, they never checked the Fiva documents, which had cost me about £80.00 to get!! Most regularity rallies now are timed by GPS. The organisers fit these to each car and take your credit card number, so if you take the device home you will be debited by the best part of a thousand pounds!!

So, on the Monday morning we set off from the warm Mediterranean through huge Olive groves for the mountains of the Sierra's. We were very rusty on the first couple of regularities as we had not done any for about three years. We only saw a couple of marshal's all day as we were being timed by GPS. Also we had several self-start tests. At the end of the day we stopped over in the old city of Jaen. At the end of day dinner they post the results for the day. We found that we were well down the field and here is the main problem with GPS timing. You don't know how you are fairing until the end of the day. When you have marshals at the end of a section they normally have the "Ideal Time" posted. This gives you a chance to compensate for your errors. This is what we call the "Fudge Factor" So, what this means you can run a little faster or slower to compensate. We found that we were running too late, i.e. to slow. The next day and for the rest of the rally we ran a few seconds early and did much better.

The route was excellent, we climbed to over 7000 feet, passed some observatories and even saw a dusting of snow on the tops. The roads are great, well-engineered and empty. On one 70 mile section we met only two cars and never caught anyone up. At the mid rally halt we stayed by the sea at Almeria.

The next day we headed back into the hills via Fort Bravo. This is a Spaghetti Western Film Set high up in the hills. Here we had a huge paella for lunch, big enough to feed all the 150 rally participants. It was over 30°c here. After a Cowboy shoot out we headed back to Malaga via Granada.

The prize giving was very good in a posh hotel on the sea front. It was good to see that an English couple, Mark and Sue Godfrey won the rally outright in their MGB Roadster. The Belgium's are very big drinkers and at every lunch halt and evening dinner there was as much wine or beer as you want. The camaraderie was great between competitors. There were about ten British crews with about forty Belgium and Dutch crews with the odd Italian and German crew.

The next morning we headed north back to Santander to catch the ferry back to the UK.

We arrived home with just under 3000 miles on the clock. We finished 22nd o/a out of 50 cars, and the car ran perfectly.

Spain is great for a motoring holiday. Unleaded fuel is under 90p a litre and Super is about 98p a litre. Hotels are good value and Spanish food and drink is about the same as the UK.

There are a few toll roads but only around the large cities. We spent nothing on tolls all week.

Nicky Porter

Guess the Make and Model competition

Nicky Porter will present a bottle of wine to the first person who can name the make and model shown below. If you wish to enter please email scratmanbrown@hotmail.co.uk with your answer. The first email with the correct make and model will win the bottle of wine.

Lakeland Trial: Sat 7th November

Vintage sports car club (VSCC)

Had a very enjoyable day marshalling this event with Mick Stead. We were sat on tree stumps for 6 hours above the tree line in torrential rain marking the cars on how far they got up our hill. The views were amazing looking over Bassenthwaite Lake. That is when we could see anything through the mist and rain.

This was held mostly in the forests of the northern lakes and several big hill climbs like Honister Slate mine road. All the cars are pre-war. Most being sports cars as the name of the club suggests. Vintage sports car club. They have to climb incredibly steep, muddy, rocky, rutted climbs. Most people with a modern 4x4, would not even attempt these hills. Many of the competing cars are worth £100,000+. Cars like Bugatti type 23 + T13, many American cars from the 20's + 30's, then all the famous British makes and lots of Austin 7's. The oldest being a 1917, 3440cc Dodge Brothers Hornstead Special. The biggest was a 1924 4500 cc Vauxhaul 30-98 Tourer. No Bentleys this year, but they normally compete.

We had one Huge American Gangster type tourer planted in 2 foot deep mud on our section. The Land Rover could not even reach the car to pull it out, so we had to resort to lots of manpower to get it moving again. All the marshals, cars and competitors were dripping in glutinous mud. Great fun and one event you have to see to believe.

Peter Masters

General and other business

Chilli and Quiz night

We held a Chilli and Quiz night on Wednesday 4 November. Over 30 people turned up to the Lambton Hounds Inn.

Our quiz master Fred Henderson read out over 30 questions which consisted of general knowledge and motorsport. Martin Hall and his team won the quiz by only a few points. Following the quiz, a raffle was drawn and the chilli/rice was dished out.

There was a great atmosphere and it allowed club members to have a catch up over a chilli and an alcoholic beverage. Unless you were like me and drinking "Full Fat Coke" ☹.

Thank you to Fred Henderson for the quiz and to Bernie Pugh, Tom and Kath Hall for organising the venue and food. Also thank you to everyone who donated prizes for the raffle.

DAC Website

The Committee have drafted the services of Peter Philips, a web designer. We are very close to promoting the new DAC website and Classic Trials website. When the websites go "LIVE" we will need you to supply us with pictures, videos, reports, up and coming events etc.
Also we will welcome any comments and suggestions for the new websites.
The new media (Facebook and Websites) we are creating will help to keep current members up to date and also attract new members to Durham Auto Club.
Also if you have any old pictures, videos, reports that you don't mind us loading into the archive area, please send them scratmanbrown@hotmail.co.uk.

DAC Facebook page

DAC Classic Trail Website

DAC Website link will provided soon.

If you have any articles or reports you would like adding to a Newsletter, please send it to Andy Brown (scratmanbrown@hotmail.co.uk)