

Torque Talk



NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS NOW ONLINE!!!

WWW.DURHAMAUTOCLUB.CO.UK

The magazine of Durham Automobile Club

May 2016



Nicky Porter and one time Chairman of DAC John Coxon on route to the 1974 RAC Rally and one of the Audi Team Joest hybrid sportscars – articles inside!

Club nights May/June

Durham Auto Club will now meet every Wednesday at 8:00pm at the Honest Lawyer Hotel (see address and web link below).

Honest Lawyer Hotel, Croxdale Bridge, Croxdale, Durham, DH1 3SP.

<http://www.strhotels.co.uk/honest-lawyer-hotel/>

Durham Auto club Website

<http://www.durhamautoclub.co.uk>

May and June club nights:

May 25 th	Nog and Natter	
June 1 st	Nog and Natter	
June 8 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
June 15 th	Scatter	Peter Masters (Start/finish Honest Lawyer)
June 22 nd	Nog and Natter	
June 29 th	Marshals on line course	TBC

A future events diary appears at the end of this edition of Torque Talk



Editorial

Hi everyone,

I think it's fair to say that Special Stage Rallying is facing the biggest threat to its existence ever. Natural Resources Wales has been in negotiations with the Motor Sport Association regarding a massive uplift in the cost of using the roads within the forests and to be honest, these negotiations haven't gone well. Essentially a doubling of the cost to the MSA of using the roads will make a lot of events – including the Wales GB rally unviable. This being the case, why not just move to England and Scotland? Well I have no two doubts that if Natural Resources Wales are in the least bit successful in this price hike, then the English and Scottish Forestry Commissions will follow suit. I also think that charges for using non Forestry Commission roads will also be hiked as I'm sure that the owners will want a bit of the action.

It's unclear as to how this will all play out as the deadline of early June approaches, but the signs are not looking good. It isn't even a case of pushing rallying into the "rich man's sport" category as with insufficient entries to make it worthwhile running an event, they won't be run. The knock on effect is that motor clubs which are rallying orientated will go into what I think will be terminal decline.

Fred Henderson has sent me two letters regarding this, the first one appearing in this edition of Torque Talk. These letters sum up very succinctly the current situation, and how we got here. I would urge you to read them, and it would be great if you could let me have your thoughts and comments regarding this. If you would like an original copy of these letters to put on social media, just drop me a line.

I have always tried throughout my working life to have some options or a solution to a situation or problem but on this occasion we are in the hands of the MSA. Rallying is a unique discipline and it's not just a case of crews transferring to Rallycross or circuit racing. Firstly with rallying you have a crew who both bring specialist skills and secondly there is no close combat. I think a lot of drivers would be as surprised as I was just how intense it all is on a race track. I well remember going into Gerrards corner at Mallory Park at over 90mph touching door handles, with neither of us willing to give in. I continued round Gerrards, Andy went on to the scene of the accident.

I loved my rallying days, where there were no pace notes, and it was just you and your navigator against the forest and the clock. Second hand tyres and a two wheel drive Opel Kadett 2.3 which for most of the time didn't have a limited slip differential. In those days, stages were used two or three times and they were still in good condition. You have to wonder whether today's technology has essentially killed the sport.

In Formula One, Red Bull wielded the axe to Daniil Kvyat and promoted Max Verstappen to the senior team, who duly took the opportunity to win his first F1 Grand Prix after Hamilton and Rosberg took each other out at the third corner. A brilliant achievement, especially as he didn't come through the ranks of lesser formula. The change of drives was brutal to Kvyat, and he handled the situation with dignity – even though it's the end of his F1 career (I cannot see any way that he will be retained at Toro Rosso for 2017, and no Red Bull "failures" have been taken on by other teams) However, it remains to be seen whether this is the start of a brilliant career similar to Michael Schumacher or Ayrton Senna, or the story of an eighteen year old given too much too young. One of the best F1 books I ever read was something called "The Piranha Club" which dealt with how the F1 driver market works and how ruthless it is. Definitely worth a read!

I am indebted to Nicky Porter who has provided a superb insight into his motorsport career. I had no idea that he had done so much! Grab a cup of Tea and a Hobnob or two and have a read, it really is very good!

It was disappointing that we had to postpone the second Croft Autotest; however it doesn't make economic sense to run an event at a huge loss. The lack of entries could be due to it being held on a Saturday, or because there was a Hartlepool event on the Sunday, but suffice it to say, the Committee are looking into alternative dates that don't clash, and also if a Sunday would be a viable alternative with Croft. I will keep you posted on this and also keep an

eye on the website. It has been an issue for as long as I can remember, but could you please enter events in good time so that the organisers can be sure of numbers.

Some of the people that Nicky mentions in his article are very familiar to me as they were part of the fixtures and fittings of the club when I first joined, and it's a shame that there are so many ex members that we have lost touch with – until now. The new venue launch event was proof positive that there are still ex members of the club who are still interested in motorsport and still want to be a part of DAC. To this end, I am starting the Durham Automobile Club Veterans Register. All you need to join is to send me an email with your contact details, and I will add you to the register and send you a copy of the magazine so that you can keep in touch. There are no club cards, so you can't use this as a cheap way of gaining membership and that DAC officials and competing members are exempt. Now obviously, not many veterans will get to see this, so could I ask that if you know of anyone who is an ex member of DAC, you pass on the email address that I have set up for this section dacveterans@gmail.com

There have been a few events that I would have liked to take part in – the Autotests at Croft and the forthcoming field events to name but a few, but unfortunately I don't have a suitable vehicle. To remedy this, I have decided to crack on with Project Spitfire. I bought a box of bits purporting to be a 1980 Triumph Spitfire with the thought of restoring it while I'm between jobs/retired (I'm also a member of the North East Restoration Club at Washington). However it would make a bit of a fun car to do a few events in. The down side is it's got hot and cold running rust – lots of it - and work done by the previous owner leaves a lot to be desired. The engine was particularly bad, so I have had the head converted to unleaded with new seats and valve guides and the crank has been micro polished before a full balance of the rotating parts was carried out by AMAC Engineering in Northallerton.

I have used a lot of machine shops in the North East. Some have been good and some have been terrible! I remember that one of them managed to increase the imbalance of the 924 clutch cover by drilling holes 180 degrees out! However I have always been impressed with the work that AMAC have done for me. Well worth giving them a try if you are in the market for this sort of work. Incidentally, anyone any good at making repair panels and MIG welding? Copious amounts of tea, beer and bacon sandwiches are available!

I have to say that the new website looks great and works well. I have been doing some testing and via the wonders of Facebook, some friends in faraway places (in foreign countries not at Her Majesties Pleasure establishments) have given me some very positive feedback, even though they have no interest in motorsport! Let's hope that it prompts some more members!

Passing almost unnoticed as part of the Sky F1 Coverage, details were given of how the Mercedes and Ferrari engines produce so much power on half as much fuel. Essentially there is a little combustion chamber which leads to six orifices, and when ignition takes place, the flame presses the piston at six places instead of in a conventional engine where the spark initiates a flame front (this explanation is greatly simplified!!!!) The upgrade that Renault (who wanted these F1 rules in the first place) will be bringing to the Canadian GP will include this form of combustion. That being the case, it's possible that we could get back to some racing in F1 instead of the race being decided on which of the two Mercedes drivers is in front at the end of the first lap. This is probably why Hamilton was so impetuous to get past Rosberg at the start of the Spanish GP – well maybe!

The Treasure Hunt that Pam Broome arranged last night (I'm writing this bit on the 19th) would appear to have been a huge success, with entries far outstripping places! Thanks to Pam for arranging it, sorry I couldn't make it. However if this is the sort of event that is going to prove popular in the future, we may have to look at putting a few more of these events on.

I don't know if you watch a programme on Sky TV called Wheeler Dealers, but the other week they were doing up an old Volvo PV544 which had been laid up in the owners garage for fifteen years because no one could get to grips with the twin SU carburettors. What? Were they honestly telling us that no one in the good old US of A could set up a car with twin SU's? God knows how they would have fared with the triple 2" setup I had on my old Jaguar Mk10 (another one of my cars that left for a better life in MK10 heaven!) But then I got to thinking, I wonder just how

many modern day mechanics are familiar with the good old technology of the SU? Do most now rely on plugging in a laptop into the OBD socket to be told that coil pack 2 is intermittent and the 2nd Lambda sensor is out of range? Having just rebuilt a pair of SU's for the Spitfire, I cannot but admire the elegant and dare I say it beautiful simplicity of such a precision instrument.

Don't forget that the BTCC visits Croft circuit on the 18th and 19th June. Croft is a very demanding circuit with a great combination of challenging corners. It's a great atmosphere and facilities have improved at Croft considerably!

My thanks once again goes to all those who have supplied articles and information for the Mag. All items gratefully received!

I have gone over my self-imposed limit of two pages – must try harder!!!!

All the best, and good luck if you are competing

Marty

Chairman's Report

The 2016 club events have finally started with two nights of Navigation training for any club members wishing to improve their Navigational skills. The basic skills and tips should make competing on this year's navigational events a lot easier. Young and "Old" (Young in mind as we all are) attended and even tried out their new skills on two small navigation routes. We don't mind holding more of these events if people want them. We could even include competitor and marshal roles for motorsport, including but not limited to multi venue and single venue rallying. Please let us know if this is something you would like.

The first Navigation event to be held this year will be a Treasure Hunt organised by Pam Broom. Further reports to follow but with a full entry plus reserves, it looks like the return of the navigation series will be well attended.

The same cannot be said about the Croft Auto Tests. The first Auto Test held at Croft in April had an entry of around 14 competitors. Although the weather at Croft was horrible at times the competitors had a good time and completed 18 tests. Well done to Lindsay Burnip and the marshals for running this event.

We need a good entry to run these auto tests, so when we had only 8 entries for the May Auto Test we had no alternative but to postpone the Auto Test till later in the year. We will work with Croft circuit to obtain a date which will hopefully attract more competitors. But we would recommend to all Club members to enter the club events early to prevent disappointment when the events are full or cancelled due to low entries.

Many club members have been taking part in motorsport events, too many to mention, so I will let their reports in this magazine explain how they got on.

The committee would be grateful for members to inform us what they as club members would like to see the club organise. Feedback your comments on Durham Automobile Club events you have attended or competed in.

Have a fun and safe month.

Andy Brown

Chairman of Durham Automobile Club

The Honest Lawyer, Croxdale Bridge

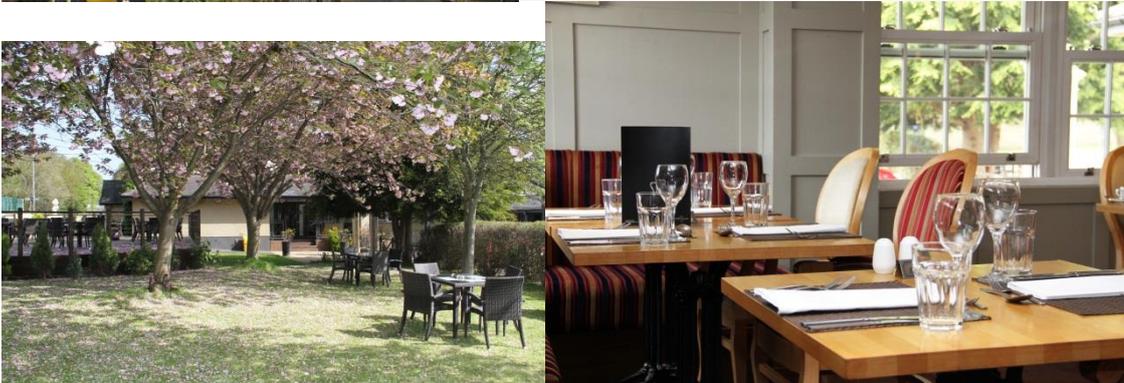
Durham DH1 3SP

The hotel's renowned AA rosette awarded Baileys Bar and Restaurant. Food served all day, offering a quality combination of locally sourced food, a relaxed atmosphere and friendly service.

Menus change seasonally, created by respected Executive Head Chef Harry Bailie, with inspired dishes and hearty classics.

Bailey's bar offers a more relaxed dining option, where dishes such as the popular Homemade classic steak burger; fish and chips served, along with an extensive selection of beers, wines, spirits. Speciality teas and coffees are available throughout the day, along with a lite-bite lunch menu.

We look forward to seeing you!



Letters to the Editor

Difficult Times

It is sad that Rallying is once again on a knife edge. It might be Wales today but it could be everywhere else tomorrow. But we cannot say that we have not seen it all coming because in order to understand the current problems we need to look at history first and then current trends and modern society.

The fundamental problem is that Motor Sport is no longer fashionable and, may I say, no longer very popular and priced out in many cases, but not all.

While in the 60s and even the 70s young people either wanted to be fighter pilots or racing drivers, as they were bombarded with stories of Donald Campbell and Stirling Moss and every month there were headlines about somebody breaking speed records, with the Monte Carlo Rally known to all. Being a pilot or racing driver was not easily achievable, so people turned to the next best thing which was Rally Driving. It was affordable and within reach of everyone and so appealed to the masses.

Those who weren't able to compete became enthusiastic spectators in their hundreds and thousands. Just look at the vast numbers that turned out to watch the International Rallies in the 70s. From these heady days it became known as the Golden Age of Rallying.

We are now struggling along in many cases using the same Club members to organise events: the same people have been running Motor Clubs and organising events for the last 40 years: and the number of competitors coming into Motor Sport who are not descendants of original competitors is very small indeed.

So, how has this situation got to its present state? While I feel it is relatively simple to understand, it is impossible, and I say again, impossible to put right.

The latest potential generation of Motor Sport people instead of being brought up at school with land speed records they have been brought up and taught how important the Environment is and when, combined with the Health and Safety culture which we all know about; the banning of conkers in the school yard, etc. So where must Motor Sport sit in the school curriculum, especially since most school teachers are predominantly Left wing and Motor Sport is very much a Right wing activity.

So, fast forward into the big wide world and it isn't surprising that some of these kids will finish up working for the Forestry Commission and some in the Police Force, etc., in fact they are in every walk of life. They are the current members of society.

I am not making any criticism of these people because many are fine upstanding citizens, but they are not Motor Sport people. Over the years Motor Sport has always had to rely to a large extent on people bending over backwards to help us but the difference is that more people were willing to provide help.

Just think of the vast and varied venues that were used for special stages on the Lombard RAC Rally for many years.

These could never have happened if the land owners were not well and truly on side, something the next generation don't seem to want to do. Think of the success of the Goodwood Festival; by and large it is down to the full-on enthusiasm of Lord March. Compare this to perhaps negotiating with the Duke of Westminster to use some of his land. I don't think the result would be the same. It must have been so simple the first day the RAC (MSA) first spoke to the Forestry Commission in 1960

The incident on the Jim Clark was tragic, but somewhere along the line it cannot be denied there is now over-kill. It is not the way forward. Once again it just demonstrates how hardly anybody is on our side. So, combine this with the lack of people entering the Sport, the average age of people who are already in it and any form of successful future is very difficult to envisage.

We are perhaps just trying to wring out the last from something that has had its day.

Fred Henderson

DAC Veterans Register

During the successful launch night event, I received a suggestion about setting up a veterans section of the club. This would enable us to keep in touch with ex members, and inform them of forthcoming events that may be of interest to them. To this end, I have set up an email address specifically for this dacveterans@gmail.com. Could I ask all members to circulate this email address to any ex DAC members, who will hopefully register. On registration, they will get a confirmation email, and copies of the latest editions of Torque Talk. It would be great if we could get sufficient registrations to make an end of year event a worthwhile proposition.

Many thanks

Marty

The life and times of Nicky Porter – President of Durham Automobile Club

I was born and bred in deepest Herefordshire on a farm on April Fool's day in 1943. I shared my early years with my elder brother and several cousins who had come from the home counties to get away from World War 2 bombing. My father was very keen on motor cars and motor sport. He had me driving at the age of eight, so by the time I was seventeen I was raring to get out on the public highway!!

I passed my driving test three days after my 17th birthday (1960) in my mother's Fiat 1100. My father, who had competed at Silverstone, hill climbs and even in the RAC Rally was keen to try me out to see how I went. I applied for a competition licence and entered my first sprint three weeks after my 17th birthday. My first few competitions were driving a Renault Dauphine Gordini. To this day, I don't think I have frightened myself so much as in that car. Looking back now, I am not sure if it was the car or me as a very green novice!!

The upshot of this was a Mini 850 was purchased for under 500 quid. A Downton Stage One conversion which consisted of modified cylinder head, and twin SU Carburettors were fitted for the princely sum of 30 quid!! This car was campaigned every weekend through 1961/2 seasons on the Hill Climb and sprint circuit. The 850 Mini was made redundant as soon as the Mini Coopers were announced, so father chipped in and a green Austin Mini Cooper 997cc was prepared for the 1963 season. By this time I was serving my apprenticeship at a small Jaguar dealership. This was great for me because I was taught how to tune SU and Weber Carburettors. This has stood me in good stead all my life. In fact, I was setting up some SU's the other day!! The 997 Mini-Cooper again was used every weekend up to early 1964.

In May of 1964, I was a very lucky boy. My father decided that we should get a quicker car. So, for my 21st Birthday Present (None of this 18th birthday stuff, back then!!) I was presented with a full race red and black Downton Morris Mini-Cooper 1293 "S" Wow, this was a serious car, very noisy with its straight through exhaust and straight cut gears. We entered the Castrol BARC Hill Climb Championship and finished in the top ten for the year. This car cost just over £700.00 and the Downton Conversion cost just over £300.00 and that included six Cooper alloy wheels!! Mind you a thousand quid in those days would have bought you a terraced house!! This car was campaigned through to 1975, holding several class records and even some outings around Croft in the early seventies. And guess what, I still have the car to this day. More to come about this car.

In 1965 I married Joyce from Bishop Auckland (She was a member of DAC then) and at Christmas 1966 I moved up north to West Auckland when we bought Oakley Service Station. Then it had four petrol pumps and a two car workshop. All motor sport was put on hold for a couple of years so we could get the business up and running but then in the late sixties the Mini was brought out of hiding. After a few years we expanded the workshop and were credited with a Mercedes-Benz Service Dealership in 1969. This proved a good move and still to this day we work a lot with the Three Pointed Star Marque.

Now, in November 1974 a certain John Coxon arrived at the garage for an engine tune with his 1293 Mini-Cooper "S" before entering the RAC Rally Clubman's section of the rally. Yes, in those days the RAC attracted 200 entries for the main rally and 50 entries for the Clubman's section which competed over the last couple of days. He told me that he may be a non-starter as he did not have a co-driver with an International licence and did I know anyone who would join him. It so happened that an International sprint licence was good enough for the RAC. So I was grafted

into the left hand seat and set off for the start. After the first day we found ourselves in first place with only three stages left to do on the final day. John was driving really well, but he put the Mini in the ditch and it took us a couple minutes to get out. But we still finished 3rd o/a. This finish gave John a free entry into the next year's rally. My Problem was that I was now hooked in to Rallies!! It changed my whole motorsport career and the future of our family.

Meanwhile, I had bought the Mercedes-Benz 280E Rally Car from Mercedes-Benz UK. This car was prepared for the 1975 RAC Clubman's section and John Coxon drove the car with me as co-driver. Unfortunately the big Merc broke its engine mountings and damaged its radiator. I can't remember if we finished or not!! I competed in the Tour of Britain in 1976.

Through the 1977 season, I kept an eye on the "Johnsons Rally Wax" Mercedes-Benz 450 SLC Rally Car, which was competing in the Castrol Autosport National Championship, driven by Tony Fowkes. Considering the sheer size of the car, Tony had some great results. He finished 5th o/a on the Tour of Epynt, beating several Escorts!! I had been trying to buy this car all through the season but to no avail. Then suddenly in late October I received a call from MB (UK) that if I collected the car from the Earls Court Motor Show I could have it!!! So, I went down on the train and drove the car back to West Auckland. The car was then prepared for the 1977 RAC. Meanwhile, I had managed to get some sponsorship from Doggarts the local department store. John Pye was given the task of removing all the black paint and the Gold Leaf paint (Yes, proper Gold Leaf Paint) and painting the car Doggarts Green. John Parker from Ripon put his hand up to co drive and Mike Whiley as team manager. The car now nick named "Kermit" with me driving my first proper rally, finished in the late teens in the Clubman's section.

The SLC was then campaigned in the British National Championship 1977 and 1978 and my best finish was in a very snowy Mintex Rally. The tweaked auto gearbox proved to be a real bonus on the snowy forest roads. Its rally career came to an end in the Culbin Forest near Inverness after a very heavy landing on a large rock which was embedded in the track. This smashed the sump guard and the alloy sump. So, the car was retired and returned to West Auckland courtesy of the AA Relay!!!! The car was then repaired and I still have it and recently took it the Circuit of Ireland Deja Vu Retro event.

During 1979, we became Mitsubishi Main Dealers for SW Durham. Mitsubishi had won the Safari Rally and many other long distance rallies during the 70's so we were on the lookout for a fresh car to take the place of the retired Merc. A Ford RS 2000 was purchased for the 79 RAC and then sold. Then in 1980 Mitsubishi announced the new Lancer 1600. A demonstrator was purchased and sent to Vegantune to be prepared for the 1980 RAC Rally proper. This Lancer was used for four seasons with several class wins including the Manx International. After 1984 rallying was starting to get to expensive for us and the Lancer was sold to a man in the Forest of Dean and he still has it and now competing in historic rallies with it!!

During the late 80's I retired from modern rallies. It all got a touch too fast for me!!!

But, I still had the rally bug and in 1988, Philip Young announced the Historic Pirelli Classic Marathon to Italy and back for pre-1963 cars. Wow, that would suit me down to the ground. I had always wanted to do long distance events into Europe. Being a Mercedes-Benz fan and knowing that Mercedes had won the 1960 Monte-Carlo Rally with a 220 SE. The hunt was on to find a suitable car and by chance I was manning a classic car show stand in Brighton when a lady approached the stand saying that she had inherited a 220 from her aunt. To cut a long story short, the car was purchased for 1300 quid and prepared for the Pirelli Marathon. Over 80 cars rocked up for the start on Tower Bridge and we had a great run to Italy and back via a test on Monza and many famous European rally stages. John Parker and I finished 19th o/a and were really hooked on this historic rally stuff.

The Marathon was followed by the Monte-Carlo Challenge. This was a historic regularity rally during late January and followed the roads from the Golden Age of Rallying from the 1950's and 1960's. From 1990 until the year 2000 we competed in every one and won it outright in 1994. It was magic driving the famous Col de Turini in deep snow. This car also competed in the Tulip Rallies as well as the Liege Rome events. The Mercedes-Benz 220 SEb (the b denotes front disc brakes) has now covered over 70 thousand rally miles. Just last month and after 170000 miles the rear axle was removed and all mountings and oil seals renewed. The gear box and rear axle working parts needed no work at all. Yes, the engine was rebuilt 20 years ago and is still very strong. This has been a very cheap competitive car over the last 28 years.

However, like all sorts of motorsports, cars were getting developed and faster. On some of the shorter historic rallies we found the old Merc was just not fast enough. We needed a quicker car, what should we get? Well, how's about the Mini. So, the dust sheet was removed after 20 years and the new spare engine and gearbox (which I had purchased in 1965 as a spare) were sent off to Steve Harris in the New Forest. Steve had worked on the car back in 1964 as a Downton apprentice, did not believe that there was still a brand new unused Cooper S engine still about!! He was instructed to build the engine into a nice torquey rally engine. I did not want a screamer. Oh Boy, wow!! It was mighty fast and is to this day. I have used the Mini from 1995 until now. Yes, it's noisy but it's fast. Wendy and I drove it to Monte-Carlo last year following Paddy Hopkirk's 1964 rally route. It fair stormed up the Turini, but by the time we got into the Principality we were deaf!! The car has had no restoration what so ever apart from the mechanicals. This just shows that if a car is kept off the roads in the winter they will last much longer. I know some rally people frown at Regularity Rallies. I like them, it creates real team work in the car and on some of the roads that we have to compete on these days are so demanding that you have to drive flat out to keep an average of 50KPH up.

During the nineties the first of the Mitsubishi Evo's arrived. These proved a touch too fast for me, so my son Julian drove our car in the British Championship. He did well but we had to sell the car due to lack of funds. But, Julian had made good friends with the media and now has the best job in the world working as a TV commentator and interviewer on all the WRC rounds. The "Rally Guru" has now worked on over 200 WRC events without missing one. Perhaps he will give us a talk in December which is the only month that he is home!!

In the early naughties, Philip Young and his ERC Rally organisation announced a new 1400cc Endurance Rally "World Cup" plan. He organised the Lombard Revival Rally which followed the old RAC Rally routes around the UK. But, what interested me was the 2/3 week events into Europe and North Africa. Being a Mitsubishi Dealer we looked at building a Colt 1300 for these events. Then Mitsubishi announced the Spacestar 1300, they even offered us a big discount on a LHDrive Spacestar. This was then collected from the export department and taken to Daryl Staniforth in Thirsk who turned it into an unlikely rally car. He even managed to graft EVO 3 suspension onto it. It was not as fast as the quick MG ZR's and Peugeot's, but it was mighty strong. In the 2003 we started in the UK and finished in Athens after an interesting route through Bosnia and Albania. We finished 10 o/a and had a great time on the two week event. The 2004 rally started in Europe but spent over a week in Tunisia. We had great fun driving the desert stages, some being over 50 miles in length. I was lucky enough to go the Ford Rally School and have the great Ari Vatanen coach me for a full day. I remember him saying you must always concentrate on the longer stages; this is where the time can be made. I remembered this and set the fastest times on two off the very long stages and after two weeks of dusty roads we won the event outright after a huge fight with the Pugs, ZR's and works Daihatsu's. The Bread Van as it had now been nick named proved very strong and reliable. We ran it on 8ply Michelin van tyres without a single puncture. A great tyre but a little naughty on wet tarmac!! In the 2005 event we were given the coveted Number 1 and set off from Brooklands on a 30 hour road section to Gibraltar where we took the ferry to Morocco on our way to Dakar in Senegal. Unfortunately somewhere in Mauritania we got bogged down in deep sand

and it took us over two hours to dig ourselves out, so we dropped out of the top ten and finished in 24th place. But, hey what an experience. It's a shame that these events have now stopped.

Over the last few years I have been lucky enough to be asked to work on long over sea's events. Colin Francis was the route coordinator and he asked me to be his driver. We have driven the length and breadth of Europe from the top of Norway to the far east of Turkey on the Iranian border. We drove from the American/Canadian border north to Alaska via the Yukon and back to Calgary as well as being the 48 hour car on many events including driving through Argentina, Chile, Peru, Bolivia and Brazil. Some 9000 miles. Also I have marshalled on the Peking to Paris Rally on the Russian border with Estonia, and brought 100 cars back to Paris via Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany. A great experience. Rallies have allowed me to see the world.

So, to wrap up, I still compete a little but now like organising drives into Europe as well as the UK.

Rallying has been good to me and my family. The sport has taken me all over the world and I have seen spectacular things. I have witnessed great stories, now't like good rally stories, may be another time for that when Marty gets short of copy for his DAC Newsletter!!

Now, did you hear the story about the fishing boats propeller shaft being machined into a half shaft for a 1910 Le France Veteran car in Riga, Estonia? Another Time!!

Nicky Porter. President.



Whitby MC Autotest 25 May, at Stunt School

These monthly Autotests ran by Whitby MC are a pretty laid back affair, but good fun. Just don't take them too seriously!

After winning the last one I was almost last in this one. Did not manage as many tests for this one as more competitors turned up. Kelly, who runs the stunt school here at Teesside Motor Sports Park actually entered this one. Very entertaining to watch as she made the Mini disappear in tyre smoke!

The Fiesta of Mark and Martin was struggling with brakes as the pads were down to the metal and were wearing the discs away. Did not seem to worry them too much, as was having no power steering on account it lost all the fluid at the Croft one. Nick brought his Focus road car as he could not get the Autotest Corsa there. Andy's and Tanya's Micra was going well despite losing some important structural part, due to rust and brutal driving techniques. Al and Kev were as mad as ever in the big RWDs and very entertaining to watch. Andy's rust coloured Rover 25 was driven like it was going to the scrap yard that week. In fact that is exactly where it was going!

1st.	Andy.	Micra.	268pts
2.	John.	Tigra.	272
3.	Lee.	Tigra.	277
4.	Martin.	Fiesta	284
5.	Andy.	Rover 25.	286
6.	Al.	RX8.	296
7.	Mark.	Scamp.	298
8.	Nick.	Focus.	300
8	Kelly.	Mini.	300
8.	Mark.	Fiesta.	300
11.	Kev.	BMW.	301
12.	Peter.	Savvy.	304
13.	Tanya.	Micra.	315
14.	Dave.	KA.	323

Peter Masters

TREASURE HUNT Wednesday 18th May

WOW! What a turn out...the event was oversubscribed and we could have ran more competitive cars....

The weather cleared up and everyone had a run in the dry and agreed the Dales scenery was pretty good. It was great to see some 'old' ex club members out that we have not seen for some years! We hope they will become regulars again and look forward to seeing them at other events.

There were a number of crews who were new to this sort of thing and it is uplifting to see so many people supporting the first proper event of the re-launched DAC!

From a start at Fir Tree the route headed through Wolsingham turning off in Frosterley to White Kirkley (The BONUS question answer WAS THIN LIZZY – the band that had a hit with the Irish War song EMERALD).

From there was a left turn onto the Stanhope/Eggleston moor road and headed back down into Stanhope, back through Frosterley to Wolsingham before turning off to TOW LAW. The organiser offers sincere apologies for

missing a tulip instruction in Tow Law which caused some confusion but everyone coped one way or another and found the right route!

Tow Law, East Headleyhope, Waterhouses, Esh Winning and back to the finish at the Honest Lawyer.

The Bonus tie break questions came into play for some tied positions and the answers were:

7 vertebrae in a Giraffes neck and 3months 3 weeks and 3 days for the gestation period of a PIG!

Thank you everyone that took part, despite the tulip problem everyone seemed to have a good night.

I hope everyone that took part will also take part in PETE's SCATTER which is on 15th JUNE – starting and finishing at the HONEST LAWYER – please let myself (Pam) or Pete Masters or Andy Brown know if you are entering.... If we get enough early entries we will get a permit to run more than 12 cars!

Pam Broom

1st The Magoos – Andrew, Anne and Jenny Magee 59 points

2nd NEMO – Ian Burrows and Nikki Halliwell 54 points

3rd Peter & Sue Sewell 53 points

Wooden Spoon Award Colin & Maggie Saxton

WELL DONE EVERYONE

World Endurance Championship – Silverstone 6 Hours

An early start of Friday Morning saw me getting the train from Durham to Darlington to be collected by my Son James for the trip down to Silverstone. A stop at Leicester Forest East for breakfast enabled me to sample the worst breakfast I have ever had in my life! Despite James's assurances, a Burger King breakfast is to be avoided at all costs!!!

Arriving at the circuit we were just in time for the first practice session. The event covers not just the World Endurance Cars, but also the European Le Mans series. The LMP1 (Le Mans Prototype 1) cars are just incredible! A technical tour de force and with drivers of the calibre of Mark Weber and Anthony Davison, it's easy to see why the WEC is such a popular event.

Saturday morning was cold, but nothing prepared us for snow at the circuit. A whole morning was lost, but once things eased up and the circuit was swept, qualifying got under way. The Porsche's, Audi's and Toyota's traded fastest times with the Audi's coming out on top, followed by the Porsche and Toyota's. The new aggressive looking Audi certainly looked the quickest, however all three were only taking four seconds to do the pit straight! Away from the LMP1 category, there were the Ferrari's Porsche's Aston Martin's and Corvette's battling it out. The new Ferrari 488's didn't sound half as good as the 435 Italia that they replaced, however they are three seconds a lap quicker! The new Chip Ganassi engineered Ford GTs also made their debut. They sound like no other V6 I have ever heard however loudest car of the day went to the thundering Corvette's. When they go past, you feel it in your chest!

Race day was bright and sunny but a bit windy. A great battle ensued between Porsche and Audi for overall honours. The great thing about Sports Car Racing however is that there is always something going on. Fast cars are

lapping the slower ones, pit stops come thick and fast, and there are always some incidents. It's difficult to convey however just how fast these cars are. The Porsche 919 will hit over 200mph down the hanger straight, there is a small lift, brake and the hybrid system charges the battery as the car takes the corner at 160mph. The car then accelerates down to club, utilising the extra 170bhp being fed to the front wheels by the hybrid system!

Victory went to the Audi – but only for a few hours as both the Audi's were found to have skid blocks that were below the minimum thickness. Now this is where things are different to F1, Audi considered an appeal, but eventually decided that it was a fair cop and accepted the penalty of exclusion from the results.

So what is the attraction of World Endurance Sports Car racing? First of all, the cars are fast and for the most part noisy. The cars and drivers are accessible (if you order your tickets early enough!) The racing is exciting as there is always something going on – six hours went over very quickly! You have time to see the cars at various locations around the circuit. It's a very friendly atmosphere with total strangers chatting about what's going on. It's a lot cheaper than F1!!!!!!

This year's Le Mans 24hour is going to be a cracking race judging by what I have seen at Silverstone. The 18th and 19th of June could be an all-nighter!



Ferrari F488, Rebellion Racing LMP 1 Prototype, Anthony Davison – Toyota lead driver, G Tech LMP2 Class winner



Aston Martin European Le Mans Vantage, Corvette Class Winner and winner of the loudest car at the meeting!

The overall winner of the Silverstone Six Hours – at least until excluded – the Joest Audi LMP1

Bjorn Waldegard Memorial - Kenya

Bjorn Waldegard had his last Rally win two years before his death in 2014, aged 70.

He took the Historic Rally win on the Kenyan Safari Rally in 2012 at the age of 68...

Over many years OL TUKAI Safari Lodge was an overnight halt deep in the African bush. In the grounds of the Lodge, Waldegard planted a tree in 2007 and there is a plaque commemorating the event. (see attached)

Pam Broom





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We Need More Members!

Whilst our membership numbers continue to grow, it would be great if we could swell the ranks a bit further! If you know of anyone who is interested in Motorsport, please offer them membership of Durham Automobile Club. The membership form is available on the website and is very easy to complete. Membership fees are a very reasonable £12 per year for single members or an unbelievably inexpensive £15 for family membership. For that you get a MSA club card enabling you to do local events, club nights at The Honest Lawyer and a monthly copy of Torque Talk magazine – how could you possibly resist!!!

FOR SALE

This section is for the sale of motoring and motorsport related items ONLY and any transaction is between the seller and buyer.

Durham Automobile Club will not be liable for any loss, damage or injury as a result of any sale or purchase whatsoever.

If you have any items that you would like to sell, or you are looking for, please let me have details by the third Friday of the Month to be included in the next publication of Torque Talk

PLEASE make sure that all items are in good condition and full working order unless clearly stated

Ford Focus Zetec timing pins and cam locking plate	£5
Ford Focus battery – only 3 months old	£15
4 litres Mobil 3000 0w 30 synthetic oil (Ford spec)	£12
Ford Focus Zetec Haynes Manual	£5

Please contact Marty Hall 0191 388 3442 martinhall49@gmail.com

Forthcoming Events

A future events diary appears at the end of this edition of Torque Talk

Rallies

Date	Event	Location	Marshals	Radio
Sun 5 th June	Jim Clark Reivers Forest Rally	Kelso	Lindsay Burnip marshals@jimclarkrally.org www.jimclarkrally.org	Norman Halcrow n.halcrow@bcs.org.uk
Sat 25 th June	RSAC Scottish Rally	Dumfries	Laurence Ferguson lajferguson@btinternet.com	Norman Halcrow n.halcrow@bcs.org.uk
Sat 2 nd July Sun 3 rd July	Mach 1 Stages	Campbelltown	Keith Cowan Keith.cowan1968@btinternet.com	Lindsay Burnip poshbirdincontrol@btinternet.com
Sun 7 th August	Tyneside Stages	Otterburn		Lindsay Burnip poshbirdincontrol@btinternet.com
Sat 13 th August	Grampian Stages Rally	Aberdeen	www.grampianstages.co.uk	
Fri 19 th and Sat 20 th August	Ulster Rally		www.ulsterrally.com	
Sat 10 th September	Galloway Hills	Castle Douglas	jjbwallace@tiscali.co.uk	
Sunday 11 th September	Pendragon Stages	Warcop		Lindsay Burnip poshbirdincontrol@btinternet.com
Fri 30 th Sept Sat 1 st Oct	Rally Yorkshire		www.trackrodmotorclub.co.uk	
Sun 9 th October	Cheviot Stages	Otterburn		Lindsay Burnip poshbirdincontrol@btinternet.com
14 th -16 th October	Mull Rally	Mull	http://mullrally.org/marshal-registration/online registration	http://mullrally.org/radio-reg/

Autotests

Regulations will soon be available for the Croft Autotest on the 2nd July. Please get your entries in as soon as possible.

The events are being sponsored by Direct Car Parts who have put up some very generous prizes. First overall is a £25 voucher, and first in class will receive a £10 voucher to be used at Direct Car Parts shop in Framwellgate Moor.

Grateful thanks are due from DAC to **Direct Car Parts** for their support of this series.

Future dates for Croft Autotests are:

2 July 2016

1 October 2016

Hartlepool & District Motor Club - Dates for 2016

1. 12/06/16 June Nat B/Clubman A/T (Cars.co.uk/Practical Car & Van Hire) @ Seaton Carew * (Poss. British Champ Date)
2. 17/07/16 July Clubman A/T & PCA (Tones Cars.co.uk) @ Seaton Carew
3. 28/08/16 Aug Clubman A/T & PCA AFW (b/h) (Practical Car & Van Hire) @ Seaton Carew
4. 25/09/16 Sept Nat B/Clubman A/T (Tones Cars.co.uk) @ Seaton Carew *
5. 23/10/16 Oct Clubman A/T AFW (Practical Car & Van Hire) @ Seaton Carew

AFW = all forward

(Events marked * are possible Association Autotest championship dates)

KEITH PATTISON MEMORIAL SPRINT (BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY 30th MAY)

The regs for the Keith Pattison Memorial Sprint, are now published and available to download on The York Motor Club Web site, and with an entry fee of only £110, represents excellent value for money. The event, held at Blyton Park, North East Lincolnshire on Bank Holiday Monday 30th May, will include 2 practice runs and up to 6 timed runs. Entries are limited to 70, and as the event will be a round of 5 Championships, and 4 Regional Associations, we expect the entry list to fill up quickly. If you want to enter, the regs and entry form can be downloaded from the York Motor Club website, or from the Entries Secretary, Stuart Cariss (linartdch@btinternet.com or phone 01904 738631 or 07860 522488). The entry form can be filled in online and emailed to the Entries Secretary. Or printed off and posted. Payment is via BACS (preferred method) or cheque.

Marshals are also required for the Sprint; please contact John Roberts for more info.

DAC DIARY

All events are either confirmed or are in an advanced state of organisation. However events may be subject to cancellation/re-arrangement at short notice.

April 27 th	Nog and Natter	
May 4 th	Navigational Training	Andy Brown (bring map 88, pencil, rubber and torch)
May 11 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
May 14 th	Croft Auto Test	see website for Regs/entry form
May 18 th	Treasure Hunt	Pam Broom
May 25 th	Nog and Natter	
June 1 st	Nog and Natter	
June 8 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
June 15 th	Scatter	Peter Masters (Start/finish Honest Lawyer)
June 22 nd	Nog and Natter	
June 29 th	Marshals on line course	TBC
July 2 nd	Croft Auto test	see website for Regs/entry form
July 6 th	Nog and Natter	
July 10 th	Auto Jumble and Car display	Pam Broom
July 13 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
July 20 th	Treasure Hunt	TBC
July 27 th	Nog and Natter	
Aug 3 rd	Regularity	Nicky Porter date TBC
Aug 10 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
Aug 17 th	Nog and Natter	
Aug 24 th	Grass Event	Venue TBC
Aug 31 st	Nog and Natter	
Sept 4 th	Wearside Classic	Nissan see website for Regs/entry form
Sept 7 th	Nog and Natter	
Sept 14 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
Sept 21 st	Grass Event	Venue TBC
Sept 28 th	Nog and Natter	
Oct 1 st	Croft Auto test	see website for Regs/entry form
Oct 5 th	Nog and Natter	
Oct 12 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
Oct 19 th	Nicky Porters Adventures	TBC
Oct 26 th	Nog and Natter	
Nov 2 nd	DAC Members Video Night	TBC
Nov 9 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
Nov 23 rd	Table top Rally	Gordon Dundee
Nov 30 th	Nog and Natter	
Dec 7 th	Nog and Natter	
Dec 14 th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
Dec 21 st	Quiz	John Nicholson
Dec 28 th	Nog and Natter	

Officers and Committee Members 2016

Please do not pass on these details to any third party without the persons' permission

This list will be updated as and when necessary

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Disclaimer:

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