Torque Talk

WEBSITE ADDRESS:

WWW.DURHAMAUTOCLUB.CO.UK

The magazine of Durham Automobile Club

September 2016

Win a bottle of Wine – Competition Inside!!!

A real conundrum! What is this super looking little sportscar, and Brian Nolan in his 1600 Firenza on the Julie Shield Rally

Club nights July/August

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

August and September club nights:

Sept 21st	Grass Event	Venue TBC
Sept 28th	Nog and Natter	
Oct 5th	Nog and Natter	
Oct 12th	Committee Meeting	Club members can meet in the bar
Oct 19th	Nicky Porters Adventures	TBC
Oct 26th	Nog and Natter	

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

Editorial

Hi everyone,

Well its fairly clear to see that the nights are starting to get a bit longer, and as can be seen from the events calendar, we are starting to reach the tail end of the competition year, and up to now, it would appear that Durham crews haven't done badly at all. I love this time of year, not only for the colours of Autumn, but it means there is no excuse for getting into the garage and doing a bit of work, however the alternative of sitting in the sun with a cold beer is infinitely more attractive!

The competition that Nicky Porter set is obviously a bit of a stinker as I haven't received any entries at all. Because of this, I'm going to let this competition run for another month, and hopefully someone will have a stab at it.

Great to hear from Sam Simpkins who has joined the Veterans Register. For those that do not know him, Sam was a stalwart of DAC for many years, and navigated for John Pye on loads of road rallies. He was also a great organiser and served on the committee to great effect too. Also a warm welcome to Brian Nolan. He was a member in the 80's and campaigned a 1600 Vauxhall Firenza. In our various email interchanges, we both remarked on how much more difficult it was to prepare a car if you didn't go down the Ford Escort route. Italian cars like the Fiat 131 were mega expensive just to get bits for (no Ebay then!!!) and Dealer Team Vauxhall and Dealer Opel Team had the bits, but they were always more expensive than the equivalent Escort kit. I remember buying the Ford Escort Build Manual (wish I still had it actually) and they went into chapter and verse as to how to prepare an Escort, with copious amounts of pictures and all the part numbers you would need from your Ford RS dealer. However you didn't have to go down that route, as all you needed to get started was a pair of Ford Consul 375 front springs, some uprated strut inserts, a Ford van crown wheel and pinion and you were away!

Sven Smeets has got a new job as the boss man of Volkswagen's rally team, replacing the McLaren bound Jost Capato. Together with this appointment, the chief engine man has been given a place on the motorsport Board at VW. This is quite significant, as it would appear to signal Volkswagen's long term commitment to rallying, which has to be good for the sport. Some older members will remember Sven Smeets as the co-driver for Freddy Loix. Sven joins quite a line of successful ex rally co-drivers. Dave Richards, Jean Todt and the sack of spuds who briefly worked for Walkers.

The classic car world is currently getting hot under the collar about the amount of Ethanol used in petrol. My understanding is that Ethanol is very good at destroying rubber components such as fuel pipes and is pretty aggressive on things like fuel pumps and early injectors. I saw a cunning solution in Practical Classics to this which may help those who are running older competition cars. Apparently Ethanol loves water, so this kit mixes petrol with water, it separates out with the fuel floating on the water and Ethanol. You then decant the fuel leaving the Ethanol and water behind. I don't know what effect this has on Octane rating, but its maybe worth looking into. If you go down this route, PLEASE be careful as fuel is very nasty stuff when it burns (trust me – I know!) Writing this reminds me of one day in the paddock at Brands Hatch (yes – it's the 924 bit!!!) where fuel was being pumped out of a 924 (we always emptied the tank after each session and refilled with just enough for the race) by a youth with a lit cigarette in his mouth. Not only was he decanting fuel into an open container, he had three other open churns of fuel with him. That would not have been good had it gone up, especially as my car was two cars away! I don't usually snitch on people, but on this occasion I did have a word with a marshal who explained to him the error of his ways!

I appreciate that Durham has always been rally orientated but I am a Motorsport enthusiast and it was great to see Cal Crutchlow finally managing to win a motorcycle Grand Prix. Why is this special? The last British winner of a motorcycle GP was the late, great, Barry Sheen in 1981. In that year, you could buy a MK5 Cortina, Jimmy McRae and Ian Grindrod were British Rally Champions in an Ascona 400, and I was the tender age of 24! Back then, you could even get Comet price lists which were produced like a newspapers, and Bucks Fizz won the Eurovision Song Contest. Well done Cal, quite an achievement!

As some of you will know, I became a Grandad for the first time in January and Olivia is growing up at quite a rate! However, not even the best carrot and parsnip lunch was a match for the Grand Prix on the TV. Absolutely captivated, she wasn't in the least bit bothered about eating. Food – nah – there's motor racing on the box Mam! Now where do I get a pair of ear defenders and a pretend race suit for her in time for the Touring Cars next year?

I am pleased to say that I have now found employment and I'm thoroughly enjoying it (at least up to now!) I never thought that I would end up being a "till warrior" but it's good fun and you meet some very interesting people. I was chatting the other day to a gentleman who used to work in engineering. What he said struck a chord with me, as it's just the same as the current situation in motorsport. "kids today aren't bothered about how things work or how they go together, they just want to sit on their computers and play games" My love of all things motorsport sprang out of playing with Meccano and Lego, building plastic models and various radios and electronic things. My Scalextric (actually a VIP Raceway – metal tracks!) and train set were toys to learn from. How did they work, how can I make them go faster? I was rubbish at football and cricket, but I still joined in. My bike was a joke with small wheels and a basket, but it was great to beat other lads on their racing bikes in a race around White House Estate in Witton Gilbert. For me I couldn't wait to learn to drive and hopefully go racing. With the "Computer Age" have we lost the base for kids to be interested in PRACTICAL things and with it a generation of potential competitors. For those into racing games (and Colin McRae Rallying was one of the best!) what has stopped that spurring on someone to get into motorsport of any form?

Santa Claus does get it wrong! This is not a Philips Junior Sport or 5 speed racer! There was a basket on the back but "sadly it fell off!" Photo courtesy of Veloscene

Our intrepid explorer Peter Masters posted some superb photos on Facebook of his latest adventure in Australia. It will be great to catch up with him when he's back and hopefully he will be able to give us a few lines for the Mag of his adventures. I really take my hat off to people like Peter, I would never have the courage or determination to do the sort of adventures he gets involved in.

Sad to report that one of the real characters of the seventies, Dave White – otherwise known as "The Sheriff" passed away this month. An obituary by Fred appears later in the magazine.

That's it for this month, sorry if this edition is a bit light weight, best of luck if competing

Marty

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Chairman's Report

First I would like to thank Gordon, his organising team and the Marshals for a well-run and well received Wearside Classic at Nissan. The feedback from a lot of the competitors was that they enjoyed the tests and look forward to this event every year. With crews coming from all over the country it shows that Gordon has perfected a great format.

Second I would like to thank Pam for organising another Navigation event. This time it was a Treasure hunt and nine crews competed. OK Roger and I won the event but all the crews had a lot of fun gathering the items to gain extra points. Something with POLO written on it, a Pine Cone, a purple flower were only 3 of the 5 items we had to collect.

Now that we have the correct format for communicating DAC events to the members and local motor clubs, we now need to start to promote the club and our events to the wider public. The Committee are looking into areas where we can promote the club but we need your help as well. Do you display a Durham Auto club sticker on your competition car or your daily run around? If you would like a club sticker pop along to a club night.

Do you have an Intranet or a notice board at work? Are you a member of another club e.g. MG Club, Triumph club. Can you post and promote DAC information. As an example I will look at posting our club information and events on our notice boards and intranet at Nissan.

One thing that you normally don't have to consider when organising an event is the length of the grass and sheep. But our second Gymkhana had to be postponed because the fields we were hoping to use were being used for Tupping (I'll let you google that). So we are looking at another date for this event with a similar format of tests followed by a BBQ (watch the magazine, Facebook and Website for the new date).

Some of our club members have competed or marshalled at rallies where the number of retirements have been almost 50% of the entry. For example on one stage of the Pendragon stages last weekend 15 cars retired for various reasons. By the end of the event nearly 50% had retired. Stories of pot holes on some rallies being so big that they will rip a wheel off if you hit them.

There could be various reasons causing this, but are land owners, organising clubs maintaining the venues? Rising costs, lack of maintenance and multiple usage could be causing some venues to become car breakers. But surprisingly, these venues still manage to get good entries. Melbourne airfield near York has several events there every year and is known as a car breaker but they continue to get good entries. Good discussion point at a nog and natter night.

The Scottish tarmac rally scene saw a new venue a couple of years ago, the Mach Stages at RAF Machrihanish near Campbeltown. I have now heard of another new venue at RAF Leuchars an airfield near St Andrews. The Leuchars stages will be a single venue airfield rally held at the back end of October this year and has nearly filled its entry already. When we hear about the problems with forest rallies in Wales and rally venues being lost it is good to hear that some clubs are finding new venues. We could do with a few new venues in the North of England area.

Andy Brown

Chairman of Durham Automobile Club

The Honest Lawyer, Croxdale Bridge

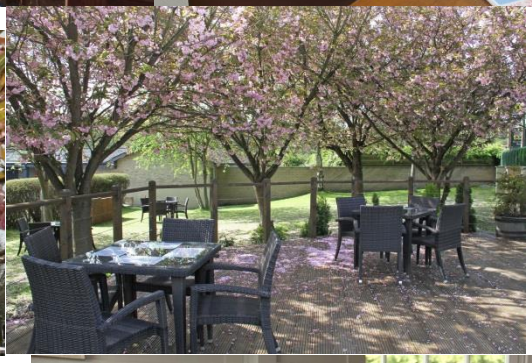
Durham DH1 3SP

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!



FURY EVENTS

Drive it • Shoot it • Ride it

Obituary

Dave White (The Sheriff) 1944-2016

Though not a member in recent times Dave was an active member from the late 60s through into the 80s. An excellent Hillman Motor Mechanic by profession he was one of Life's real characters. If there was ever a story to be told, he was the one at the centre of it.

He loved to be involved with Motorsport at any price. When he was Rallying he had, for a while, Trudy Binks who went on to great things as his trainee navigator. Trudy would always talk fondly of the fact they very rarely reached halfway, usually finishing up in some deep ditch or on their roof Trudy recalled having to be rescued by her mother and father from all over the place. Dave did always say the only thing a navigator needed was to know which was north and be able to repair a dry stone wall.

Dave used to continually recount the time he took a Jump and landed on two rabbits, one under each wheel, which caused under-steering and cost yet another retirement. He helped me on several early RAC Rallies and was always the life and soul of every service area but full of useless suggestions.

After drifting out of Motorsport he continued repairing cars for just about everybody in his home town of Wheatley Hill, where he was referred to as the Sheriff. When we talk about "the good old days and things aren't like they used to be" we are referring to the likes of Dave White.

Our deep Condolences to his family and all the motorists of Wheatley Hill who will have to look for somewhere else for a garage.

Fred Henderson

Treasure Hunt report & Results Wednesday 24th August...

It was a fine warm (ish) evening when 9 crews set off from the Honest Lawyer on an 18 mile route.....Meadowfield, Oakenshaw, Willington, Stanley Crook back to Brancepeth before heading back to Meadowfield and back to the Honest Lawyer.

It was good to have a couple of 'newbies' in the guise of Stuart Leighton and Tony Cook making their Treasure Hunt debut, they seemed to enjoy it AND did not go home with the wooden spoon award, they went to our very own Gordon and Alistair! (I am sure Janelle will find a use for two new wooden spoons!!!)

There were a couple of clues that caused a bit of confusion which I will have to amend as I am running the same route for the BISHOPS RIDING CLUB on 1st September!!

Everyone made it back to the finish without getting too lost.....On the way various items were to be collected and I came home with a bonus of 3 packets of polos...

My one disappointment of the night was that I suspect every crew or almost every crew used their smartphones..Everyone got the music clue....

'On a warm summers evening on a train going nowhere' is carved onto a wooden bench... I wanted the Name of the song AND the singer.....I REALLY can't believe that EVERY CREW recognised that as the opening to The Gambler by Kenny Rogers!! –Especially when no one had it on a disc in the car to get 10 bonus points!

Come on guys (and gals) lets do it the old fashioned way next time...and do it the old fashioned way... NO GOOGLE!

Results

1st Roger & Andy (76pts)

2nd Pam & Owen (68pts)

3rd Ian & Nikki (66pts)

4th Joan & Lindsay (64pts)

5th Pete & Sue (63.5pts)

6th Steve & Briony & Family (62pts)

7th Stuart & Tony (60.5pts)

8th Tom & Co (40pts)

9th Gordon & Alistair (20.5pts)

DAC Veterans Register

Great to hear from two more ex members who have joined the Veterans Register. Welcome Sam Simpkins and Brian Nolan. I have already mentioned about Sam and Brian in the Editorial but below are a couple of pictures of Brian;s Firenza.

As stated last month, the Veterans Register is starting to fill up, but I still haven't had any contact from those members who attended the new venue event we had all those months ago. As before, if anyone can send me details, I will pester them and add them to the register.

Many thanks

Marty

Urgent Appeal:

We are in desperate need of venues to run Autotests and other club related events

If you know of anywhere that could possibly be used as a location for an event, could you let me or another committee member know so that we can make contact with them to see if arrangements can be made.

Email me at dacveterans@gmail.com or contact any committee member

Many thanks

Marty

Wearside Classic Photos

Competition

Courtesy of our President, below are two photos of a rare car. The first member to email me with make and model to dacveterans@live.co.uk will win a bottle of wine provided by Nicky. Good Luck!!!!

Competition open to paid up DAC Club Members ONLY. The Editor's decision is final.

Forthcoming Events

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

Rallies

Date	**Event**	**Location**	**Marshals**	**Radio**
Fri 30th Sept Sat 1st Oct	Rally Yorkshire		www.trackrodmootorclub.co.uk	
Sun 9th October	Cheviot Stages	Otterburn		Lindsay Burnip poshbirdincontrol@btinternet.com
14th -16th October	Mull Rally	Mull	http://mullrally.org/marshal-registration/online registration	http://mullrally.org/radio-reg/

Autotests

Due to lack of numbers, and the financial impact of this, the remaining rounds of the DAC Croft Autotest Series have been cancelled.

Thanks to Direct Car Parts for their sponsorship of the events which took place

Hartlepool & District Motor Club - Dates for 2016

1. 25/09/16 Sept Nat B/Clubman A/T (Tones Cars.co.uk) @ Seaton Carew *
2. 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

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