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THE OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF LANCASHIRE AUTOMOBILE CLUB (1902) LTD
CHRISTMAS 2023



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DECEMBER 2023 We are rapidly closing on another year of activity for the LAC, I think we can confidently declare it as a great success. The road events proved popular, as always, particularly the Kendal 100 which was introduced to replace the Manchester to Blackpool. So much so that this will run again in 2024 on the same theme, but with tweaks to the route to keep it fresh.

The club's support of the VSCC Bowland Rally, with significant organisational effort from PDVCC, gave LAC members an opportunity to experience a competitive road event involving timed regularity sections and driving tests. Unfortunately, the weather didn't play its part, just adding to the challenge, particularly for the marshals.

A new location for our last road event of the year saw 17 cars participate in the 3-day Welsh Classic Tour. Some superb driving roads and an excellent base in the Conwy Valley appeared to please all who took part, with much enthusiasm for a repeat next year.

Out of the car, the monthly Noggin and Natter at Mytton Fold Hotel has proved a huge success, with attendances maintained, even in these darker nights. You will all have been in receipt of notifications/links to the club's dedicated YouTube channel which feature a series of short videos of LAC events of the past and present. The final social event for the year will, of course, be the traditional Christmas gathering at the Brown Cow in Chatburn.

The club ends the year in a very sound position, with strong finances and membership now above 300. We welcome new members to the club, John Barlow, and Jim and Carol Walsh, we wish them a happy association with us.

All that remains is to wish you all the very best for the festive period, and to look forward to another full and entertaining year with LAC.

Club Officials

Honorary Club Patrons: Mike Wood and Brian Redman

President: Mrs Eileen Dyson

Committee Secretary: Duncan Hopkinson

Committee Chairman: Martin Wylie Tel 07719 362 591

Members' Representative: Andrew Ogden Tel 07989 308 797

Entries Secretary: Jeff Chambers

Competitions Secretary: Chris Lee Tel 01925 727 794 e-mail chrisee1275@aol.com

Club Information info@lancsautoclub.com



From racing to rallying, motoring's fascinating personalities and major events, the Backseat Driver Podcast is all the online automotive entertainment you'll ever need. Available every Wednesday evening on over fourteen platforms, scan the QR Code or click the links on Mark Stone's social media.

Note to all Members

If you change your home, or email address,
can you please provide an update,
with your membership number, to:
membership@lancsautoclub.com

Many thanks.

Mike Wood's model Mini collection



This fabulous collection of models celebrates a hugely successful period through the 1960s when Mike co-drove these cars alongside their very renowned drivers.

On the wooden base at rear of photo - left to right:

1. Comp number 178, HJB 656D – 1967 Monte Carlo Rally 15th overall, driver Simo Lampinen.
2. Comp number 74, ORX 707F – 1968 Tulip Rally 3rd overall, driver Julien Vernaeve.
3. Comp number 2, DJB 93B – 1966 Scottish Rally 1st overall, driver Tony Fall.
4. Comp number 185, ORX 707F – 1968 Monte Carlo Rally 4th overall, driver Tony Fall.
5. Comp number 68, 570 FMO – 1964 Spa-Sofia-Liege Rally (Marathon de la Route) 20th overall, driver John Wadsworth. The only Mini to ever finish this most difficult rally.

Centre on base

- Comp number 82, GRX 195D – 1967 San Remo Rally 4th overall, 4th in class, driver Tony Fall

Larger models, left to right

- Comp number 185, ORX 707F – 1968 Monte Carlo Rally 4th overall, driver Tony Fall. 1968 Tulip Rally 3rd overall, driver Julien Vernaeve.
- Comp number 21, GRX 195D – 1966 RAC Rally 5th overall driver Tony Fall.
- Comp number 44, DJB 92B – 1965 RAC Rally 6th overall 1st in class, driver Jorma Lukenius.
- Comp number 59, CAK 500C – 1965 French Alpine Rally 8th overall, driver Tony Fall. This was a privately entered car and Tony and I won a coveted Alpine Cup (Coupe), an achievement seldom gained by a private entry.



My purchase of this Mini was about 11 years ago. It came about because at the time myself and my wife ran a Chauffeur service for two Civic offices, Scarborough Borough Council and North Yorkshire County Council. The Inland Revenue decided in their wisdom that we could not use our vehicles for private use, so we had to purchase another vehicle.

I decided a Classic Mini would be fun, and after looking at dozens of cars we came across my current Mini, no rust or rot was a plus, and it had been built by Watsons Rally who do Honda VTEC conversions to the classic Mini. As luck would have it this car was specified with an A Series 1275cc engine in a mild state of tune. It was registered 1972, but had been built into a mint, later shell. Never satisfied, I had already hatched a plan to make changes to colour and specification. I have 'history' with Minis - in the 1970s I had a Downton 1071 Cooper S which was sold to an American who took it back to California, if only I still owned it! I replaced that with a full Works Replica 1966 1293cc Cooper S.

My plan with the current Mini was always to build a car with a lot of Works specification. Some years back the engine and transmission were rebuilt to my spec, by Calver Special Tuning, it is now 1340 cc with a special big-valve head, Calver optimum Torque cam, 1.4 Rockers cross drilled and wedged crank, lightened timing gears, special pistons and much more. The gearbox has a straight-cut clubman gear set +1.1 straight cut drop gears and a 3.65 ratio diff.

My enjoyment of the car had taken its toll on the excellent shell with too much use in winter, always a mistake with a Mini. My car was stripped at the front-end and sent to my trusted body shop, JM Watson in Norton Malton for new front panel, wings and inner panels + scuttle, some work on hinge posts, hence the slow progress and missing the Coast to Coast which I really wanted to do. I have started to rebuild everything and make some changes to electrics and various items.

A Mini is always a work in progress.



(Ed's note - Having seen the amount of 'Rally' preparation that Craig has put into this rebuild, I asked him what he intended to do with the car – his response:

"Serious competition is in the past now. Classic Tours, B road blasts and track days are about it now. Although my wife has suggested driving through France and Italy when we get some time and taking in the Stelvio, she must be a sadist, all that way with a straight-cut box and drop gears. I'm looking forward to the Coast-to-Coast next year"

Racing - Beginnings

by Richard Murtha



By the late Noughties I'd moved into semi-retirement, fed up with working for my business's landlords, the local Council, the Environment Agency, the VATman and the ever-persistent thieves at the salvage yard. I soon had a bit more time on my hands... cue my original rally partner, who had spent years racing a Clan Crusader, and then a Porsche 944 Turbo, telling me that he was entering a race series with the Classic Sports Car Club (CSCC). The series was mini-enduro, 40-minute races with a pit-stop, designed for two drivers to share an entry. He claimed he didn't think he'd be able to drive for 40 minutes, so he wanted me to do my ARDS test (an MSA requirement to "prove" that you've got a grasp of the race rules and aren't a complete 'rock ape' behind the wheel) and get a race licence so I could share with him... which after a bit of grumbling I agreed to do. ARDS test was no problem so a new race suit, helmet, boots, gloves etc was purchased – along with a larger race seat as it seemed I couldn't fit in the one in the car. At this point it transpired that although my mate and I are roughly the same height (if not girth!) I have longer legs than he has. As race car seats aren't designed to be adjustable, we had to come up with padding to insert to get him closer to the pedals so we could have a compromise driving position, with the padding being removed when I took over.

After all this, we decided I should have a test session to get my eye in before the first race, so we booked a day at Mallory Park. As the day approached it really started to dawn on me that I'd never really thought about my driving – like most of us, I guess, I knew I was a driving god, and nothing much passed me on the road... but, crucially, that was on the





road. I worried that on track I might not be quick enough – how would I know just how late I could brake for a corner, what speed I could carry through it, and how would I deal with other competing traffic? On the day, my mate took the car out for a few shakedown laps, then came back in and handed over to me – which was quite a gesture of faith really – and as I strapped myself in, I prepared to concentrate like I never had before...

After a few laps I started to relax slightly and build up the pace, braking a bit later for the corners and as I learnt the circuit (pretty easy at Mallory!) experimenting a bit with different lines... then after what seemed like an age but was actually about 25 minutes I came back in to get the verdict on whether I'd be up to scratch. Fortunately, my mate reckoned that I wasn't a long way off his pace, so it looked like we would be going racing after all.

We did three seasons in the Porsche, getting to most of the major circuits in England and the track in Anglesey. Although our series (Future Classics) was well supported, we managed to hold our own, even winning a trophy on the odd occasion, and certainly enjoyed ourselves, even though some of our competitors had markedly bigger budgets than we had. We were running a 200K-mile engine in essentially a standard car that simply had uprated suspension and brakes, whereas some of the competition had remotely-adjustable suspension that cost more per corner than our car had cost to buy. They would also have a fresh set of tyres for each race, whereas we tried to make a set last a



Holding them off at Oulton Park

season. We could almost always find someone to race with, even if not for class position, and we made some great friends – CSCC are a friendly club – competitors and organisers alike. Of course, in a shared car, the real competition is with your partner – in our case my mate loved the starts so always did the first stint, with me taking over half-way through – so the standing joke was that if he was quicker than me, he'd worn out the brakes and tyres before I got in, whereas if I was quicker, he claimed it was because he's got everything up to optimum condition before hand-over!

At the end of the three years, I had a small problem with a cyst on my brain (which turned out to be benign once they'd cut a cat-flap in my skull to remove it), but DVLA bureaucracy meant that I had to abstain from driving for six months, despite my surgeon telling me I was fine to drive. My mate's finances were getting a bit strained as he'd retired as well, so the Porsche was sold and we took a break from the track. This ended up being a four-year break before the itch was too much and we returned to the fray, this time with an Alfa Romeo 75 V6 – bought as an up-and-running race car, which had been running in the Alfa Romeo Racing Championship for several years. As we worked our way through the car, it became apparent that an Alfa prepared by a heating engineer incorporated a few unusual aspects, but gradually we sorted them out. Resuming racing in the same series as we had with the Porsche, we found ourselves in the same class, so our 180bhp Alfa was



faced with almost entirely Porsche competition, all with at least 250bhp, and often much more. As before though, we had a lot of fun, and the car's handling meant that we could be as quick or quicker through the corners as anyone, even if we lost out on the straights. It could sometimes get a bit frustrating to have someone power past, only to slam on the brakes 50 yards earlier than I was intending to – it can wake you up! Wet races were even better as the lack of power was much less of a handicap, and we got some trophies in wet races.

At the end of last season my mate decided that he was “no longer feeling it” and was going to pack it in – I wasn't overly surprised. I'd noticed his enthusiasm was dropping off and it was more common for me to be quicker. It was a bit of a shame as I'd hoped for a few more years, but it was his car, and I couldn't really afford to take on the costs on my own. So, this year my racing experience has been almost all on the wrong side of the armco – which is a bit frustrating – although I did get to put something back into the sport by doing Safety Car duties at the CSCC visit to Oulton Park recently – I've done it once or twice before and it's an interesting experience.

Roll on the lottery win so I can play a bit longer!



In the 944 on Anglesey



Question? What was the last motor vehicle to have a starting handle?



Handle location easily spotted



Lada Riva

(With acknowledgement to Richard Pratt, Aldeburgh, Suffolk)

In 1908, the automotive pioneer Byron Charter died from complications related to a crank-starting injury. Following the tragedy, Henry Leland, founder of the Cadillac and Lincoln marques in the U.S. declared that no more men would die of such injuries if he could help it. He put out a call for a solution – and in 1911 Charles Kettering patented the electric self-starter for automobile engines. However, this did not put an end to the hand crank start. Incredibly they were still in use in 1998.

Well into the 1950s, a whole host of British cars still had back-up cranks, where most American sedans had abandoned the feature years before. Hillman Imps and Morris Minors maintained a crank start option until the 1960s.

A manual engine engagement feature was still useful for isolated communities and self-reliant farmers when electric transmission failed. Thus, all-terrain vehicles such as the Nissan Patrol and the Land Rover Series 111 featured a hand crank start option until 1980.

The French have always had a quirky sense of design and their Citroen GSA was the last new model to be introduced that had a starting handle – this was launched in 1979.

The French Classic 2CV, last produced in July 1990, came with a starting handle and a wooden chock for the wheels, to prevent it rolling down hills.

However, it was not the last. Models of the Russian all-terrain Lada Niva Legend had a crank-start feature all the way up to 1998.



Citroen 2CV



Austin 7



Citroen GSA

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McLarens at Shelsley Walsh



By Carolyn Taylor

Members of the Taylor family were out in full force at the Shelsley Walsh Nostalgia Hillclimb to celebrate the 60-year anniversary of Bruce McLaren founding the racing team.

Anthony and Richard Taylor were invited to take their M1B for a run up the hill.

They also invited customers with McLarens to join the fun. Best of all was David Tatham from across the Pennines, who took the M12 out of 10 years` hibernation following his father`s death. David brought it over to Autotune for as quick an overhaul as was possible in two full-on weeks - and then – he only beat the entire field of entries to blast an incredible 30.78 time and take `Fastest Time of the Day`.

A few tears and more beers for a fantastic end to a great weekend at this wonderful venue.



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Lancastrians Abroad - Wales 2023



By John Hartley

HIRAETH, a beautiful Welsh word meaning 'a deep longing to return to Wales'. Without doubt the participants of the Welsh Classic Tour are now inflicted with a touch of Hiraeth - such was the universal enjoyment of this tour. From our base at the Ty Groes Inn, situated in the Conwy valley, the daily routes took us in various directions across North Wales. There was so much to see and enjoy that this account is not a diary of the event, but a few snapshots of the route.

Kay Hopkinson had captured many of landmarks and places of interest in a superb 'History Booklet', which was given to the participants at signing-on, along with a detailed 'Route Book'.

In the high mountains we enjoyed the classic view across the twin lakes of Capel Curig, but Snowden in the far distance kept its cloud hat on. Llanberis Pass followed, (Front Picture on the Route Book) rising to Pen-Y-Pass, then descending towards Nant Perris beneath rock faces which have become one of the most important rock-climbing areas in Britain. I remember completing one climb on a Llanberis crag, in my other life, rejoicing in the rather forbidding name of Cemetery Gates.





Further down the Pass huge slate quarries glowered over Llyn Padarn and the town of Llanberis – talk about man moving mountains, it certainly happened there. We rounded the northern end of the Snowden massif to head for the Nantlle Valley with distant views of the sea framed by the steep craggy sides of the valley. On that day our coffee stop was indeed by the sea at Criccieth, with its castle built on a rock spur jutting out into the bright and blue sea.

High moors above the wooded valley of Ffestiniog led past the vast block of Trawsfynydd, the former nuclear Power Station, and our route passed the huge expanse of Llyn Celyn and down to Bala. The next objective was the Tanat Valley, and the descent down the side of a tributary valley to the main valley floor remains one of my outstanding snapshots. It was almost sub-Alpine. Throughout, the route planners had not only excelled in providing entertaining driving, but in locating quaint country pubs, providing good food and hospitality. Another thing, there was so little traffic.

Anyone motoring in North Wales wants to visit the elegant Victorian town of Llandudno, situated on the bay formed by the two Ormes, and drive the road (Marine Drive) round the Great Orme. Remember that film of Roger Clark when this was a special stage on the Rally of Great Britain, taking the corners tighter than anyone else by lifting a front wheel over the curbs. We were also due to drive it, perhaps not so flamboyantly, but were disappointed – it was closed for road works!

The early part of our second day ran along a ridge of high ground to the east of the Conwy Valley. This provided a panoramic view of the mountains of Snowdonia. There was a cloud ceiling, but the lower parts of the Snowdon Horseshoe were easily discernible as were, in turn, the bulk of the Glyders with the jagged summit ridge of Tryfan to their right. Next above the gap of the Nant Ffrancon Pass lay the Carnedd range, finally dipping towards the sea. This must be one of the greatest views in Wales.

We just had to drive the 'EVO Triangle'. This triangular route (the clue is in the name) was used and exploited by EVO magazine as a suitable test for the exotic machines featured on its pages. It is based on two villages, Pentrefoelas and Cerrigydrudion. A good surface and





long sweeping bends certainly attract pressure from the right foot. However, some sense has to prevail as there are average speed cameras along the length of the Triangle. To be fair you can still peddle quite hard and not average 60mph. Part way round was a coffee stop at the Llyn Brenig visitor centre with a superb view overlooking the fourth largest lake in Wales.

The limestone uplands North of Llangollen were explored by way of the Horseshoe Pass and the road running between the Llantysilio and Ruabon mountains. However, another excellent lunch was in prospect at the Raven Inn at Llanarmon-yn-Ial, a delightful village in the Clwydian Hills.

We had crossed and recrossed Offa's Dyke in this section of the tour, but the crossings were not obvious, you need to follow the footpath to see it at its best advantage. It is



interesting to note that Offa was an English King who was anxious to protect his kingdom of Mercia from the troublesome and marauding Welsh. He did this by creating an earthwork bank and ditch along the westerly boundary of his kingdom from the Irish Sea to the Bristol Channel. History is full of people in different parts of the world who have followed Offa's example, with varying degrees of success.

One topic of conversation was, of course, the new 20mph default speed limit, created at a taxpayers' cost of £32 million. One question posed was – does an overtaking cyclist have to give my car a 5ft. clearance? Anyhow, for members who have not yet assimilated the new regulations they are explained as follows – Any roads which were once 30 are now 20, apart from those that are not going to be 20 but will remain at 30. If there are streetlights you must assume that the road is 20 even if the signs say 30, because, despite the signs saying 30 the road could be 20, apart from, of course, the roads (as explained above) that will remain 30. Got it???. However, how do we poor motorists know the difference between a road sign of 30 which should by default be regarded as 20, as opposed to one specifically designated by a Local Authority as 30 and signed as such? I am sure this is just the situation which would have been relished by W S Gilbert (of Gilbert and Sullivan) to create comic lyrics for one of Sullivan's catchy tunes.

Our final day followed the minor roads running inland from the A 55 Expressway towards our final halt in Cheshire. Coffee was taken at the village of Bodfari, and again our route planners took us onto high ground overlooking the North Wales coast and the Dee Estuary, country which was new to most of us. Hawarden Golf Club provided our final lunch, and what a substantial meal it was. The A55 and the M56 were nearby so it was an easy run home to Lancashire.

And what made the 2023 Welsh Tour such a success? North Wales is not a long drive away for the majority of us. Our base, the Ty Groes Inn, was in an excellent position and fulfilled all our domestic requirements. Wide expanses of countryside were available, most of it completely new to many of us. Traffic was sparse, and the road surfaces generally quite good. It is intended by the organisers, Duncan Hopkinson and Andrew Ogden, to present a Welsh Tour in 2024. I for one will be going, so I can succumb to my feeling of Hiraeth.





Connections - Chitty Chitty Bang Bang & Aston Martin

From material supplied by Nigel Bentley, courtesy of Paul Hindle.

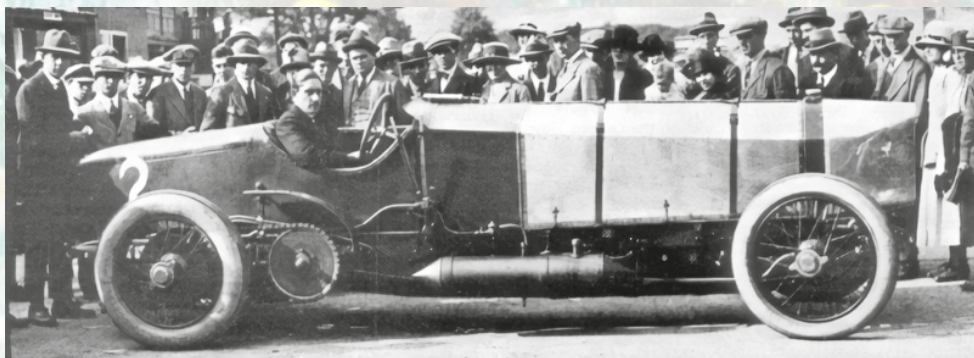
Many years ago, there was a series of programmes on UK TV that explored the connections between inventions and how one invention invariably led to another, but perhaps in a different field. This was certainly true with technological development and particularly in the rapid spread of computerisation. But what has this to do with a quirky car-based film made by MGM in 1968, and the iconic Aston Martin marque? Well, this connection was not related to any automotive inventions or developments, it was a series of connections made between people. So, here they are:



Count Louis Zborowski

The actual car, Chitty Bang Bang, was originally built in 1920 by Count Louis Zborowski, an accomplished automobile engineer, and perhaps the best-known amateur racing driver of his time. He lived at a large country pile, Higham House, near Canterbury in Kent. The son of a Polish Count and American mother, Zborowski was an eccentric gentleman wealthy enough to own and race many cars both in Europe and America. Zborowski's racing career encompassed a wide experience of marques and events, and it is at this point we have the first connection with Aston Martin - Count Louis was an early patron of Aston Martin and raced them at Brooklands and in the 1922 French Grand Prix.





Count Louis Zborowski with Chitty Bang Bang 1 at Brooklands

Setting up an engineering works in the stables at Higham House, along with his engineer friend, Captain Clive Gallop, Zborowski built a total of four aero-engined cars and called three of them Chitty Bang Bang. These were the first aero-engine powered racing cars in the world. The first of these, Chitty 1, was powered by a 23,093 cc six-cylinder Maybach military engine, typically fitted to Zeppelins. Chitty 2 was powered by an 18,882 cc Benz aero engine and 3 was based on a Mercedes 28/95 but fitted with a 14,778 cc 6-cylinder Mercedes engine. The fourth car, known as the 'Higham Special' with a 27-litre Liberty engine, was later much modified and named 'Babs'. This car was made famous by John Godfrey Parry Thomas's fatal attempt at the land speed record on Pendine Sands in 1927 where it lay buried for 42 years. Once salvaged it was painstakingly restored over 16 years and has appeared at Goodwood. Sadly, Count Louis's death predated this tragedy, with his own fatal accident in 1924. Whilst competing in the Italian Grand Prix at Monza with the Mercedes-Benz team, he hit a tree and died instantly. He was just 29 years old.

BABS on Pendine Sands



**In Aston at Shelsley
Walsh 1922**



**Count Louis in
centre with his Aston Martin**

Now we have our next connection, Ian Fleming. The young Ian was fascinated by motor racing and had watched Count Louis race Chitty at Brooklands as a 12-year-old in 1920. He was also to become a frequent visitor to Higham House, The Zborowski family home, when it was later owned by Walter Wingham, the chairman of Flemings Merchant Bank, his grandfather's bank!

Decades later, inspired by the Zborowski history, and in particular the engineering and racing exploits of Count Louis, Ian used the name of the cars (with an extra Chitty added) as the title for a children's story, popularised in the film that followed. Although in the film the name "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" came from the noise the car made, the origin of the name "Chitty Bang Bang" is disputed, but may have been inspired by aeronautical engineer Letitia Chitty, who was a contemporary of Count Louis. The noise from the aero engines would have been deafening, and even when idling would regularly backfire – 'Bang Bang'. An alternative view, apparently, is that it was a bawdy song, based on a First World War expression. The "chitty", or weekend pass, which would have to be obtained by young Officers to leave camp, and bang bang referred to



With Chitty Bang Bang III



1957 Aston-Martin DB MkIII



whatever the soldier did with his time off – art galleries, country walks etc!!

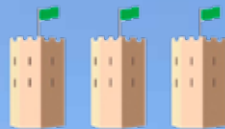
A further Aston connection relates to Fleming's time in Naval Intelligence where he was 2nd in command in World War II. During this time, one of his intelligence operations was 'Operation Mincemeat' made famous by the film 'The Man That Never Was'. One of the agents involved in this operation with Ian was St John 'Jock' Horsfall. Jock himself was a successful racing driver through the 20s, 30s, and 40s, and in 1948 won the Spa 24 Hours race in his Aston Martin 2-litre. Jock was killed competing in the 1949 BDRC International Trophy at Silverstone, but The Aston Martin Owners Club continues to hold an annual race meeting in his memory.

These 'Aston' influences would eventually feed into Fleming's 'James Bond' novels and the first introduction was the DB2/4 Mk111 (simply known as DB Mk111) in Goldfinger, published in 1959. He is reputed to have been inspired to put the car in the book by a near neighbour who owned a DB2/4 MK1. Film makers of course used the DB5 in 1964 Goldfinger production, and a legend was born.

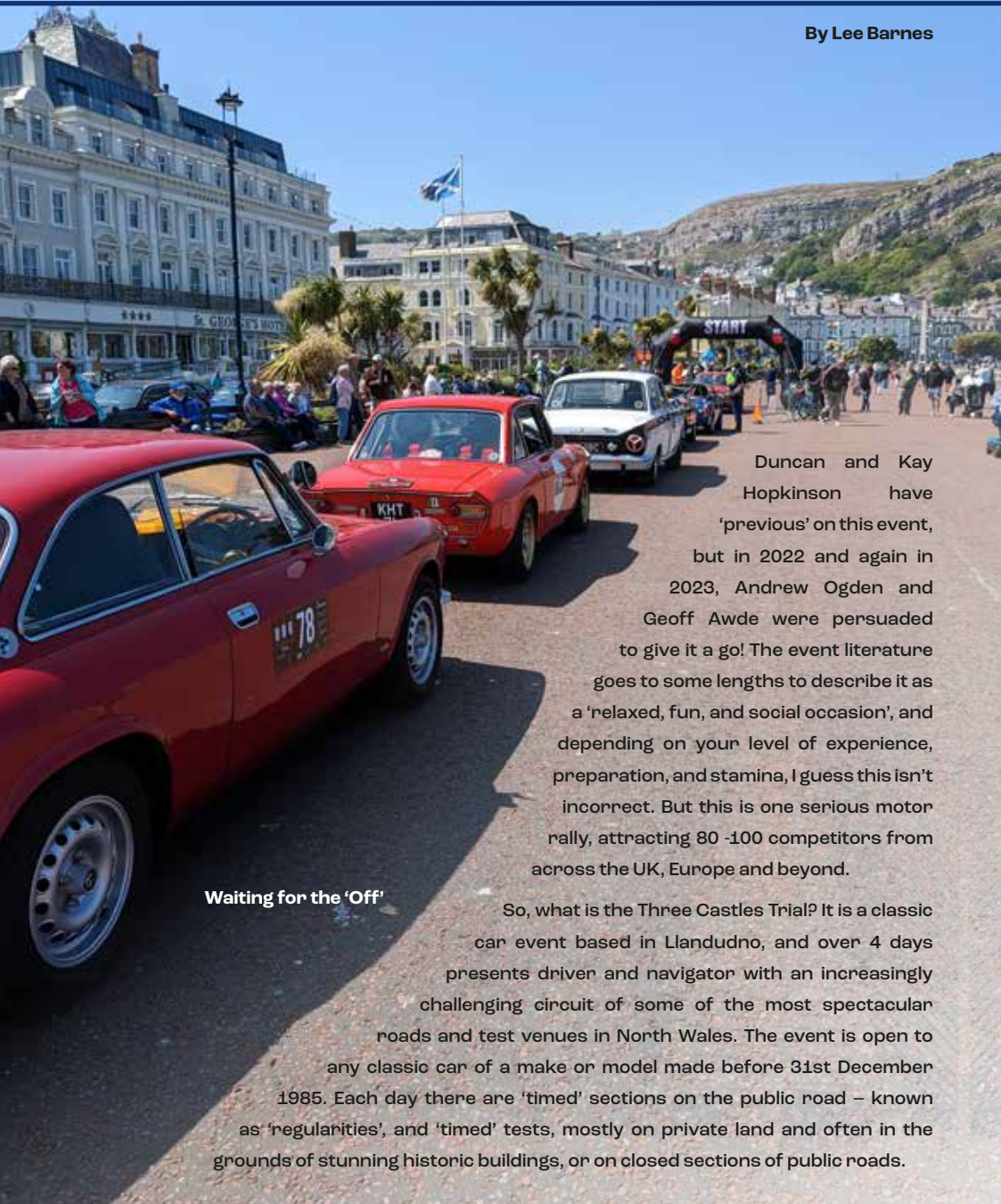


1964 Aston-Martin DB5

The 'Three Castles Trial'



By Lee Barnes



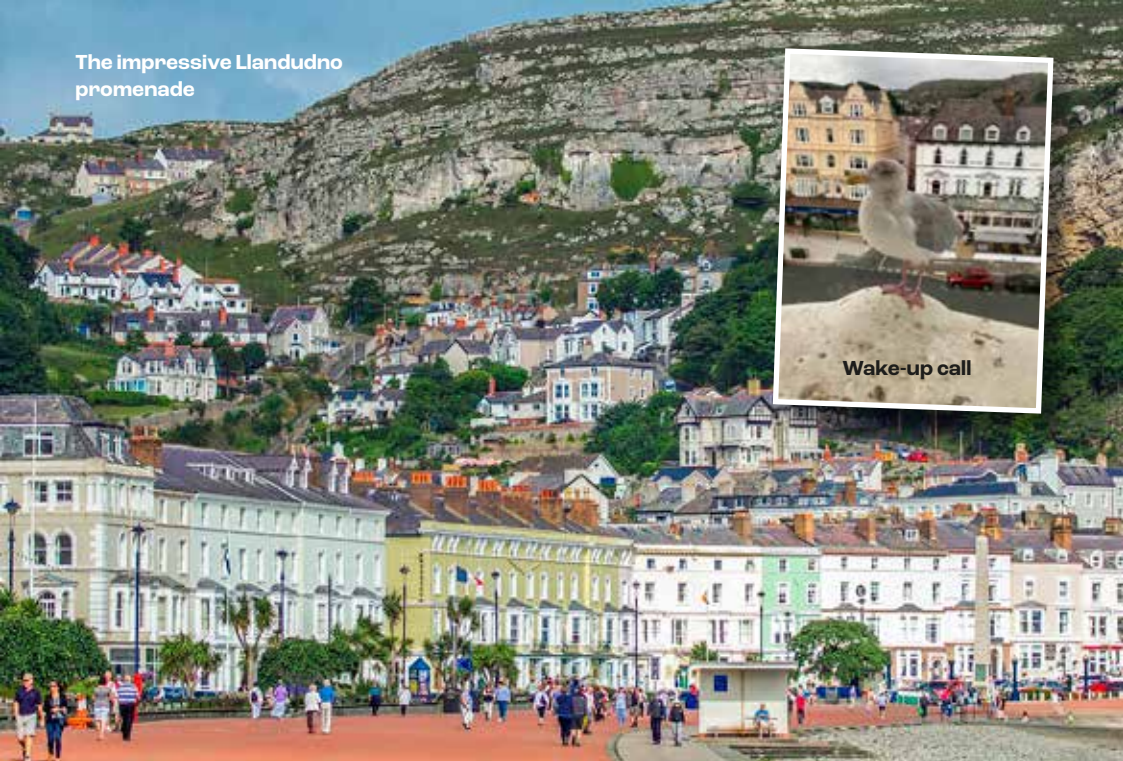
Duncan and Kay Hopkinson have 'previous' on this event, but in 2022 and again in 2023, Andrew Ogden and Geoff Awde were persuaded to give it a go! The event literature goes to some lengths to describe it as a 'relaxed, fun, and social occasion', and depending on your level of experience, preparation, and stamina, I guess this isn't incorrect. But this is one serious motor rally, attracting 80 -100 competitors from across the UK, Europe and beyond.

Waiting for the 'Off'

So, what is the Three Castles Trial? It is a classic car event based in Llandudno, and over 4 days presents driver and navigator with an increasingly challenging circuit of some of the most spectacular roads and test venues in North Wales. The event is open to any classic car of a make or model made before 31st December 1985. Each day there are 'timed' sections on the public road – known as 'regularities', and 'timed' tests, mostly on private land and often in the grounds of stunning historic buildings, or on closed sections of public roads.



The impressive Llandudno promenade



Just to add variety to the tests, two or three 'Go Cart' circuits are visited to get those tyres squealing! Total mileage each day is in the order of 170.

To get you into the 'rhythm' of things, and after scrutineering, there is a half-day 'prologue' over a 50–60-mile route. This is a 'taster' - a sample of the full Trial with just one 'regularity' covering some 15 miles, and one 'test' at Gwrych Castle. This is a stunning location, built in the early nineteenth century, but today probably most widely known as the recent UK backdrop to the reality television programme, 'I'm a Celebrity!' The Prologue makes a useful primer for novice crews like Andrew and Geoff, and a 'refresher' for more experienced teams to polish their skills. The results have no impact on the 3 days that follow, so the atmosphere is intended to be relaxed, but for most - competition is competition and times are very much traded.

Rally HQ is the imposing Imperial Hotel overlooking the splendid Llandudno promenade. The promenade, normally closed for anything other than service vehicles, becomes a hive of activity for the scrutineering process, and the start and finish point for all event days. Scrutineering is taken very seriously, and there's always an element of nervousness whilst the vehicles are carefully examined, not only for total roadworthiness, but for specific rally safety regulations, including noise! Andrew's Alfa was very close to falling foul of the noise limit in 2022, a very understanding official allowing a few less engine revs to meet the 92db limit. Significant exhaust modifications for 2023 saw it come in at 84db! Only when in possession of the 'PASSED by Scrutineer' ticket are you able to collect the necessary route books from HQ, and navigators Kay and Geoff can begin to absorb the finer details of the route information and test layouts.

So, the morning breaks, the seagulls are annoyingly loud, and this is Day 1 of the event 'proper'! Timing is everything, so synchronising whatever timing device you are using in the car with official 'Rally Time' is an important routine each morning, along with breakfast of course. Counted down from beneath the 'starting arch' there is a relatively leisurely road section of a dozen miles, or so, to the first regularity or test. Day 1 would present 4 tests and 7 regularity sections.

On the face of it, regularities may sound a little boring – following a route book at speeds ranging from 18 – 30mph over sections of between 5 and 20 miles, what's the challenge? Well, the intermediate time controls can be at any point after 2 miles into a section, and every second outside your due time is a penalty point! The 'clock is ticking' during your control stop, requiring some safe catching-up to be performed as soon as you are released. Add to this the country-lane obstacles that appear when you least want them – tractors, milk tankers, caravans, oh



At Gwynch Castle to start Prologue test



Duncan at Scrutineering



Compulsory ground sheets on the Prom

– and wildlife! Experience is key to a good performance, but luck plays its part, and they do say 'you make your own luck'! Duncan and Kay have experience in abundance on regularities and, all things being equal, they do tend to do very well.

The tests are, shall we say, exciting! The manoeuvres come thick and fast, so a clear understanding between left and right-hand seat is crucial. Generally, they involve negotiating a basic slalom course and reacting appropriately to 'stop astride', 'stop in box' and directional instructions – easy really, but you are giving it 'max'. Time taken beyond the 'Test Minimum Time' becomes your penalty, perhaps Wales's own rally ace, Elfin Evans would struggle to achieve a zero! Additional penalty points are available for those 'messing' up the grass, taking out cones, or frightening the marshals!

The pace on the event is full-on, but coffee and lunch stops provide a much needed break and are set in some stunning locations, they are a feature of this event, and the quality of the catering is exceptional. As mentioned, each day sees the navigation and driving challenge ramp-up, and Day 3 is intentionally tough, with 9 tests and 6 regularities coming 'thick and fast'. The highlight for most crews that day is the series of regularities on the Marine Drive around Llandudno when the toll road is closed to the public. Whilst the whole event takes place on good, solid surfaces, it can be hard on the cars, or should we say, some crews too. A team of breakdown and recovery vehicles are always on hand and make every effort to keep



Below: Test - no pressure!

participants in the rally, even working through the night if necessary.

Duncan's MGC and Andrew's Alfa GTV appeared to run faultlessly, completing the final run down Llandudno promenade where a good crowd of spectators had gathered to see all the cars return. There appears to be a sense of relief coming from many of the competitors as they finally park up and climb out of their rather less shiny cars than when they began the event. As always the crews have driven by or visited three castles in Wales but have been driving that fast or concentrating that hard that they cannot remember them when asked by people after the event.

All that remained to enjoy was the 'Awards Dinner' in the Imperial Hotel, and a few drinks!

Three Castles Motor Club
 Three Castles Trial
 8th - 10th June 2023

Three Castles Trial 2023
 Day 3 Road Book
 Friday 9th June 2023

Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order
Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time

LLEWENI AIRFIELD - TEST 3.6
 BY RACE MANAGEMENT OF NICK SKIDNEY-WHITE

TEST COMMENTS: Red Patented, 1700 CC Club
 Length of Test: 1.40 miles (2.25 km)
 Test Maximum Time: 2.000000 mins
 2.000000 mins - 2.000000 mins

TEST INSTRUCTIONS

Notes: Orange Arrowhead
 A: Station Order Left
 B: Station Order Left
 C: Station Order Left
 D: 1st Check: Keep Right into WESTGIRL
 E: 2nd Check: Keep Right at 10/11
 F: 3rd Check: Keep Right, Turn 90° Anti-clockwise
 G: 4th Check: Turn 90° Anti-clockwise
 H: Stop on the Bus, Use on Marshall's Signal
 I: 1st Check: Keep Left at 10/11
 J: Stop on the Bus, Use on Marshall's Signal
 K: 2nd Check: Keep Left into WESTGIRL
 L: 3rd Check: Keep Left at 10/11
 M: Stop Arrowhead
 N: 1st Check: Keep Left into WESTGIRL
 O: Station Order Left
 P: Station Order Left
 Q: Stop on the Bus, Use on Marshall's Signal
 R: Stop Arrowhead

IF YOU REAP A MAXIMUM AT CHECKS 'H' or 'K' FROM YOUR NEXT CHECKPOINT, YOU MAY ADVISE IF YOU ARRIVE ON THE NEXT AT A SPLIT-SECOND'S NOTICE TO BE DISQUALIFIED.
 AFTER STOPPING EXTRA FUEL LINE FULL FORWARD TO STOP AGAIN AT MARKERS.

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THREE CASTLES TRIAL

Exploring Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way



A Driving and Hiking Holiday (with some Guinness)



By Bev and Frank Pollard

Back in 2017, Frank and I spent just a week on Ireland's West Coast – around the middle area between Dingle and Galway. At that time, we were driving my VW Beetle, I was still working, and a week's holiday was not nearly enough to appreciate this very special place. We promised ourselves to go back but work and family stuff and other 'commitments' (like getting married and buying a house!) sort of got in the way. Then of course there was The Pandemic! So, fast forward to 2023- we finally got around to planning our return, this time with me retired and Frank driving a Ford Mustang 5 litre V8.

We chose to sail from Holyhead on Anglesey - just a couple of hours drive from where we live in Lancashire. The express crossing to Dublin takes just over two hours, everything was well organised, and embarking was easy. This was despite extra security checks of every vehicle due to all ports being on alert for an escaped prisoner from Wandsworth prison, dressed in his chef's checked trousers and tunic!!

Having already visited Dublin a few times we wanted to drive straight to our first destination. A good tip for anyone doing the same – on disembarking, do follow the signs for the tunnel and pay the toll to go under the city. Our SatNav took us through the centre and the traffic was horrendous. Actually, we think that our SatNav must be more Scottish than Irish as it detoured to avoid tolls everywhere!

We had decided not to follow The Wild Atlantic Way 'religiously', but to use it as a guide for exploring most of the Coast, and also detouring inland to drive some of the highly recommended circular routes and mountain passes. Consequently, we'd booked 2 cottages – one in the south in a lovely coastal village called Glenbeigh, and one right in the north at



Kerrykeel. This not only worked out very good value for money, but also allowed us the freedom to switch plans around according to weather conditions. It also meant we made use of the many welcoming local hostelrys where the Guinness, the food and the 'craic' were excellent!

The Wild Atlantic Way is extremely well signposted by the eye-catching 'WAW' signs and sculptures, and the roads are fabulous----no potholes and with specific passing places/half lanes for agricultural vehicles which are used sensibly and courteously so you can overtake.

Highlights of this 'Southerly half' of our trip were definitely:

The Ring of Kerry and Valencia Island – this is a spectacular drive through prehistoric looking geology and is very lush in greenery and lakes, but avoid the horse and carts taking tourists around Killarney National Park. Their ponies and our 'Pony' didn't mix!

Then there was **The Ring of Beara** along gorgeous coastline, and you simply MUST detour to take the most westerly cable car in Europe over to **Dursey Island**. Frank described it as a milk float on a zip wire, but the laugh we had when it broke down and they had to send for the 'man with the magic spanner' from Skibereen made a good day into a great day. We also noticed that the cars on Dursey Island had no tax or insurance discs like they do on the mainland - just a note like "Dave's car....postvan on Tuesdays " on the windscreen. Precious!

Also of note in this section was **The Cahah Pass** with its tunnels cut through mountains and **The Gap of Dunloe** – not for the faint hearted and definitely not for motor homes as they'd have no roof left!

Our second cottage was up in Kerrykeel on the northerly tip of Ireland (but still in the Republic). However, on the drive up we started to notice an abundance of extremely fine cars. We'd unexpectedly got onto the same road as the annual Irish Cannonball Supercar Race! There were many Mustangs like ours, but also Porches, Ferraris and Lamborghinis aplenty, all raising millions for children's charities ---- and they were very good humoured with us being alongside!





Highlights from our 'Northerly section' of the trip would have to include:

The drive up to **Fanad Head Lighthouse** and The Great Pollett Arch, and then the **Inneshowen 100km Loop Drive**, which is a stunning and very winding circular route off the WAW, across clifftops and around the peninsula.

And of course, you have to brave the most northerly point of Malin Head where we had both thunderstorms and spectacular rainbows to greet us. It certainly was the wildest part of the WAW that day!

Also worth mentioning is a drive through **Killybegs** – Ireland's biggest fishing port, which is clearly thriving. Bustling and both industrious and colourful - a sharp contrast to the fishing ports we've seen in Scotland and Cornwall over the past few years.

Our ferry journey home was longer and rougher than we anticipated as we were being forced back to England by Storm Agnes. Unfortunately, we both also brought back a very unwanted souvenir.... COVID! This meant we had to miss The LAC Welsh Classic Tour we had booked on. Never mind, another year hopefully!

All in all, we would highly recommend The Wild Atlantic Way to anyone who enjoys driving. The roads are fabulous, the scenery stunning, the hospitality of the locals renowned and the Guinness is "a meal in a glass" as they say.

One last tip – You'll need a good road atlas that has place names in English and Irish (they can be VERY different) and remember speed limits are in kilometre - although, I don't think we saw one speed camera, and hopefully none saw us either!



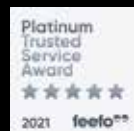


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The Classic Car World

MG TF - On the wain



By Tony Wood (Blue Butts CHEQUERED FLAG)

The world of classic cars has seen some notable changes in recent years. As the years pass, enthusiasts and collectors alike are witnessing a significant shift in the popularity and demand for Classic Cars. The market in recent years has been strong for the likes of Jaguar E Types and Big Healeys, and in the higher echelons the Aston Martin DB5s and 6s, which for some were always unattainable. At present there remains a significant interest in such cars. Earlier cars, such as those from the 1940s and 1950s are proving a little more challenging to sell, and certainly those with names that are almost unheard of to today's buyers such as Humber or Singer, or even Riley, are now certainly proving a little more difficult. Enthusiasts of cars from that era are in many cases now looking to move their cars on, and today's buyer is looking for something that drives more like a modern car in terms of performance and handling.

One reason for this shift is the changing tastes of collectors. Younger buyers are entering the classic car market, and they tend to have different preferences. The designs, technologies and features, or lack of them, of cars from the 1950s and earlier may not attract these new buyers. Drivers of today's new and more recent cars with modern technology are seeking ease of use and performance, more in line with what they are used to driving every day.

Moreover, the maintenance and restoration of these older vehicles can be costly and time-consuming and many of today's buyers have little or no mechanical knowledge as their modern car simply goes to a Service Centre for work to be carried out. Finding replacement parts and skilled mechanics who specialise in cars from earlier eras has certainly become trickier. The cost and effort required to keep pre-1960 Classics in running condition have discouraged potential buyers. Furthermore, even taking an older car for something as basic as an MOT Test can prove more difficult as the technicians of today don't always understand older mechanicals,





and the failure rate on a Test for a Classic car can be troublesome because the tester isn't used to older technology.

On the flip side, classic cars produced after 1970 are enjoying an increase in popularity. This shift is influenced by several factors.

Firstly, cars from the 1970s onwards are still in people's minds. It may be that a parent or other relative has had such a car, and therefore they are more easily remembered and hence more desirable to today's buyer.

Secondly, these later models often come with modern features such as power steering and improved safety standards such as ABS compared to their older counterparts. This appeals to a broader range of today's buyers, including those who want to enjoy their classic cars as daily drivers as some people do, and this can mean they are now exempt from ULEZ charges in various towns and cities.

Additionally, younger buyers often have nostalgic connections to cars from the 1980s and 1990s. These are the cars they grew up with, and they now have the means and desire to own and restore them. The emotional attachment to cars from this era is driving up demand and prices.

The classic car market is undeniably evolving, with a clear divide between pre-1960 classics and post-1970 models. While the former is facing challenges in finding buyers and maintaining interest, the latter is enjoying an increase in demand.

As the classic car market continues to shift, it's essential for both collectors and investors to adapt to these changes. Whether you're passionate about classic cars or considering them as an investment, staying informed about the changing trends and preferences within the market is crucial. In this evolving landscape, it's the post-1970 Classics which are currently taking centre stage, but the future may well hold its own surprises for the world of classic car collecting.

Will the teenager of today, for whom their world revolves around a Smart phone or similar, still have an interest in cars in thirty years' time, when their age group will be the buyers, or not as the case maybe? We can already see the difficulty in attracting younger members in to motoring clubs. Has it always been the case?

Maybe the future will look very different to that we have all grown up with and enjoyed!



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A Brief History of The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs - FBHVC

By Adrian Dean

Introduction:

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) has played a significant role in advocating for the interests of historic vehicle enthusiasts in the United Kingdom. Its history can be traced back to its establishment in the late 1980s, with the primary aim of promoting and protecting the interests of the historic vehicle movement.

Founding and Early Years:

The FBHVC was officially founded in 1988 as a response to growing concerns among British historic vehicle enthusiasts regarding potential threats to their hobby. At the time, issues such as proposed legislation, roadworthiness testing, and environmental regulations posed challenges to the preservation and enjoyment of historic vehicles. In response, several historic vehicle clubs and organisations came together to form the FBHVC, uniting under a common umbrella to collectively address these challenges.

Objectives and Activities:

From its inception, the FBHVC outlined key objectives that guided its activities. These objectives included representing the interests of historic vehicle owners and enthusiasts to government bodies, fostering co-operation among member clubs, and promoting the positive aspects of the historic vehicle movement.

The FBHVC engaged in various activities to achieve its goals. These activities ranged from participating in consultations with government agencies to organising events and campaigns that raised awareness about the cultural and heritage value of historic vehicles. The federation also worked towards creating a supportive legislative and regulatory environment for historic vehicle preservation.



Influence on Legislation:

One of the FBHVC's notable achievements over the years has been its impact on legislation related to historic vehicles. The federation actively engaged with lawmakers to shape policies that balance the preservation of historic vehicles with contemporary regulations. This included efforts to exempt historic vehicles from certain aspects of modern legislation, such as emissions standards and roadworthiness testing, recognising the unique nature of these vehicles.

Relationship with Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens:

The FBHVC has maintained a close relationship with the Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens (FIVA), the international federation for historic vehicle organisations. This collaboration has allowed the FBHVC to extend its influence beyond the UK and participate in a global community dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of historic vehicles.

The partnership with FIVA facilitated the exchange of information and best practices between the FBHVC and historic vehicle organisations worldwide. It also provided a platform for the federation to contribute to international discussions on matters affecting historic vehicle enthusiasts. This collaboration emphasised the FBHVC's commitment to being part of a broader movement that transcends national borders.

Advocacy and Public Awareness:

Throughout its history, the FBHVC has been actively involved in advocacy efforts aimed at promoting the positive aspects of historic vehicle ownership. The federation recognised the cultural and historical significance of historic vehicles and sought to convey this message to the public. Through various campaigns and events, the FBHVC aimed to build public understanding and appreciation for the role of historic vehicles in preserving automotive heritage.

Challenges and Adaptations:

Over the years, the FBHVC faced evolving challenges, including changes in government policies, environmental concerns, and shifts in public perception. The federation demonstrated adaptability by continuously engaging with stakeholders, staying abreast of legislative developments, and adjusting its strategies to effectively address emerging issues.

Summary:

Today, the FBHVC remains a vital force in advocating for the interests of historic vehicle enthusiasts in the UK. Its ongoing efforts contribute to the sustainability and growth of the historic vehicle movement, ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy and appreciate these automotive treasures.

In conclusion, the history of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs reflects a proactive and dedicated approach to preserving the heritage of historic vehicles in the United Kingdom. Through strategic advocacy, collaboration with international partners like FIVA, and a commitment to public awareness, the FBHVC has played and continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape for historic vehicle enthusiasts.

Postscript:

At the AGM and Conference held on 14th October 2023, David Whale Chairman of FBHVC, reassured the meeting that FBHVC is broadening contact with high-ranking politicians of all parties. Indeed, this is a continuing activity, but the forthcoming general election has made it even more important to communicate the objectives of the FBHVC at the highest political levels. FBHVC will be publishing a manifesto in 2024 which will be shared with all major political parties.

Further details are available at <https://www.fbhvc.co.uk/history>



Events Calendar 2024

Lancashire Automobile Club (1902) Limited

The LAC is on the web at

www.lancsautoclub.com



DATE	EVENT	VENUE	COMMITTEE MEMBER
FEBRUARY 2024			
FRI 23 RD FEB 19:00 FOR 19:30	THE 122 ND ANNUAL DINNER DANCE & PRIZE PRESENTATION	MITTON HALL HOTEL, MITTON, WHALLEY	MARTIN WYLIE martin.wylie@talktalk.net
T.B.A.	122 ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	WHALLEY GOLF CLUB	honsec@lancsautoclub.com
APRIL 2024			
SUN 21 ST APR	ST. GEORGE'S "DRIVE IT DAY" RALLY	CAFÉ LAZIO TO BLACKBURN NORTHERN SPORTS CLUB	CHRIS LEE
MAY 2024			
SAT 18 TH MAY	FELLSMAN CLASSIC TOUR	CAFÉ AMBIO, JNC 36 M6 - VIA S. LAKES TO KNOWLE GREEN	ANDREW OGDEN
JUNE 2024			
SUN 16 TH JUN	KENDAL 100	WHALLEY TO KENDAL	CHRIS LEE
JULY 2024			
SAT 13 TH JUL	THE 32 ND COAST TO COAST CLASSIC TOUR	MORCAMBE TO SCARBOROUGH	CHRIS LEE
DECEMBER 2024			
13 TH – 15 TH SEPT	WELSH CLASSIC TOUR	GROES INN CONWY VALLEY	DUNCAN HOPKINSON ANDREW OGDEN
T.B.A.	CHRISTMAS PARTY	VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED	EILEEN DYSON

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