

Newsletter



In this issue ... Tributes to Michael Southcombe ... The Next Generation ... New Member Clubs ... T.R.C.M.R.C. ... Around the Clubs ... Book Reviews ... Fairthorpe Cars

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Winter 2022

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Welcome to the ASWMC Winter 2022 Newsletter

The theme for this year's end-of-year edition of your quarterly Newsletter is talent - new talent emerging onto the motorsport scene and tributes to another kind of talent, the long-serving and organisational stalwart that was Michael Southcombe, who sadly passed away this year.

'Around the Clubs' features articles from first-time contributors from Gilbern OC, Brian Gent and Chris Dennis, and Ken Davies has supplied his usual prolific output ... we hope this will provide you all with some post-Christmas reading to while away the hours between the repeats that litter the festive season's viewing. On a more serious note, the talented corporate giants on the board of T.R.C.M.R.C. show us how to take club management, brand development and management terminology to another level, with some stellar special offers to complement your preparations for the upcoming 2023 season. You will be tempted, I'm sure.

***On behalf of the ASWMC
Committee, we wish you a
Merry Christmas and a
Successful New Year!***

Rupert Barker - Newsletter Editor

The Editor's comments in this column are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association, its executive committee, or other officers.

Cover Page Photo: Class B2 stalwart, Chair of T.R.C.M.R.C. and the newest 'pin-up' of the men's toiletries market, Roger Coote, taking sprinting to another level at Clay Pigeon Raceway. (Image: Les Connett).

From the Chair ...

Association Partners:

We learned in mid-November that we had recently lost Michael Southcombe, our former Chairman for some forty years and our President for twenty years after that. He held many exalted roles in motorsport governance, including six years on the FIA World Sports Council, twenty years on the Motor Sports Council (the last ten of which he was Chairman), ten years on what was previously the 'RAC Competitions Committee, Chairman of both Speed Events and Kart Committees (5 years on each) and a few other roles at the (then) RAC MSA'. Michael also was an FIA International Formula 1 Steward. You can read more detailed tributes on pages in this issue.

After 60 years the printed version of the ASWMC Yearbook has come to a close with the 2022 edition, as it will be 'digital only' next year. The 2023 yearbook will be available to download from the ASWMC website, as it has been for some years past now, and can be 'portable' on your mobile phone or any other device that will accept and allow you read pdf files.



The yearbook isn't the only feature of your Association that is a testament to its longevity. The first Regional Association Championship (ASWMC Rally) was held in 1960 and we now have a dozen of ASWMC Championships; our original Executive Committee consisted of just three people, a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer whereas now the committee membership numbers seventeen, carrying out many other roles as well as administering the increase in championships. We are always on the look-out for new members wishing to join us ... the younger the better!

As the majority of our ASWMC Championship qualifying events will have been run by the time you read this, we look forward to our annual Presentation of Championship Awards, which might prove to be a busy 'get-together' as we have concluded the first complete season of events for a few years. That, may I remind you all, will take place on 12th February 2023 at the Exeter Court Hotel, Kennford EX6 7UX. It is the one opportunity for me to see so many of you and I am looking forward to that.

one
WEBSITE

Paul Parker
Chairman

Executive Committee Meeting notes, 4th December ...

Revised Club Development Fund conditions will be included in the 2023 Yearbook ...

Lobbying of Motorsport UK for changes to the Autocross competition licence and permit fees had not, so far, been successful ... a suggestion that the championship could run on a Clubman permit if organised under a new 'umbrella' club was rejected by the committee ... it was agreed that a letter explaining the situation in full would be sent to the Motorsport Chair and CEO ...

The Autosolo timing equipment will take longer to recoup than anticipated due to lower than predicted rental fees ... the insurance will be renewed at a 10% increase in premium ...

The Car Trial final championship round will not be held until 22nd January which will be problematic for the calculation of the Under 21 and Club Championship awards ... in future all events must run in the calendar year of the championship ...

Camel Vale MC will run their Classic Reliability Trials in forestry land ... the new forester obtained permission to use small woods that last year were described as ancient woodland ...

Marshal Assessors candidates for speed events have heard nothing more ... the Chairman has e-mailed Motorsport UK to chase progress ...

Venue Development ... if anyone knows of unused military venues please email Kevin Moore (development@aswmc.org.uk) ... please also advise any ongoing negotiations to avoid any communication clashes ... the Bath and West Showground may be available for motorsport use again ...Caerwent appears to be lost as a venue, probably due to increased military training ...

The 'Rally Recreation and Reunion Motor Club' used Taunton racecourse recently causing significant damage and harming the relationship with the organisation ... an e-mail to be sent to member clubs reminding them that 'RR &R MC' is no longer an affiliated Motorsport UK club and that their membership of the ASWMC was withdrawn ... (*actioned 10th December – Ed.*).

2022 Registrations were up 30% on last year ... additional tickets for the Awards presentation will be available at a discounted price of £10 ... the ASWMC championship applications have been submitted to Motorsport UK ... 2023 registration cards will be digital except for first-time registrants as they will be sent decals by post ...

The British Motorsport Training Trust grant has been received, although not the full amount requested ... the training department are yet to say which modules are planned for next year ... rally officials have received acquired rights ...

The Master Agreement for forestry use is still not finalised, so 2023 will continue under the existing agreement ... it is thought that any new agreement is likely to require organising clubs to fund track repairs ... there will be rallying permitted from late March to September, with limited access outside those periods ...

'Mailerlite' has resolved the email circulation problems ... recent 'cascaded' messages from Motorsport UK have highlighted the lack of circulation data ... the Media Officer will ask them to advise their circulation to avoid duplication ... the digital yearbook will significantly reduce advertisement fees for our championship sponsors and other advertisers ...

Tributes to ...

Michael Southcombe (1933 – 2022)

Motorsport UK is sad to report that it's former Chairman Michael Southcombe has passed away aged 89.

Michael completed his military service with the Tank Regiment having graduated from Sandhurst Royal Military Academy. Later through his active involvement in Motorsport he became a member and Chairman of the Association of South West Motor Clubs (ASWMC) which led to membership of Royal Automobile Club Motorsport Council.

During the formation of the Royal Automobile Club Motorsport Association (RACMSA), then based in Belgrave Square, London, Michael, in 1982, became Chairman of the new Board of Directors.

Right: The 1984 MSA Report, with Michael Southcombe's hand-written notes:

In 1988 he then became Chairman of the Motorsport Council which he skilfully guided until his retirement from the Council in 2003. During his many years with the RACMSA and later MSA, Michael was proud to have introduced the British Motorsports Training Trust and the Norwich Union Classic car run which peaked with over 2,000 entries all heading for Silverstone in that millennium year.



In 1991 Michael approached HRH Prince Michael of Kent, President of the Royal Automobile Club and Motorsport Council to introduce the Prince Michael Award of Merit recognising meritorious service within Motorsport. There have been many recipients since it's foundation, Michael himself receiving the award in 2011 and most recently, in 2021, Dr Ian Roberts, Chief Medical Officer of Formula 1.



Above, right: Michael Southcombe Royal Automobile Club President HRH Prince Michael of Kent, from whom he received the Prince Michael Award of Merit in 2011.

Michael will be sadly missed and remembered as a great friend of all the Motorsport community, particularly those privileged to have known him so well.

During his valued time as both Chair of the RACMSA Board and Motor Sport Council Michael gave wise counsel to us all with his wealth of knowledge across both National and International Motor Sport. We all looked up to Michael as a bigger than life character having both a good sense of humour but also some straight talking if he felt we needed it, as often we did!

Colin Hilton

Michael Southcombe's participation in the Association of South Western Motor Clubs goes back to its very beginnings. On 9th March 1957, at a meeting of 14 clubs, with seven additional apologies, the ASWMC was formed. One of the clubs attending that meeting was Yeovil Car Club represented by Michael Southcombe.

Three years later Southcombe became the Chair of the ASWMC and continued in that role (apart from two exceptional years) until 2002. But forty years as Chair was not enough for him, as he continued as President of the Association for a further 20 years, retiring from the role in 2020.

In 2011 Michael was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation representing the ASWMC Lifetime Achievement Award. It read:

"In recognition of his exceptional contribution to motorsport at Club, Regional, National level and beyond over many years, including being Chairman of this Regional Association for over 40 years, with all the duties involved carried out with great presence and aplomb".



Left: Certificate of Outstanding Service

Right: Gavin Rogers collects the Targa Road Rally Championship – 1st Expert Driver award from Michael Southcombe



Service to the ASWMC was only part of his life. He was Chair of the family glove making company. He was Deputy Member of the FIA World Motor Sports Council from 1982 to 1987 and became a Full Member in 1988. He was also an FIA International Formula 1 Steward.

Southcombe was a member of the RAC Competitions Committee from 1961 to 1966 and 1968 to 1973; Sat on Motor Sports Council from 1975 and was Chair from 1988. He was also an RACMSA Steward. He was Chair of both RACMSA Speed Events Committee from 1975 to 1980 and Kart Committee from 1980 to 1985.

He was a Founding Trustee of the British Motor Sports Training Trust from 1972 becoming its Chair in 1994. He was an RAC Rally Area Organiser from 1962 to 1972 and its Steward from 1973 to 1987. Was President of Yeovil CC from 1975. He also had been a Clerk of the Course of Yeovilton Sprints and was also at one time a competitor principally in Rallies, Autotests and Trials.

'The Next Generation' ...

For many years – decades even - motorsport has been seen as the province of adult men but in the Southwest over the past few years our ASWMC Autocross organising clubs and events have taken steps to encourage many more young people, including women, into the sport. Some of them take up the story in their own words ...

I have been competing in autocross for about 14 years and always look forward to each season and each meeting, even if the car doesn't always last a full weekend. All season we have raced at lovely venues with good variety of tracks and views. Women are always made to feel very welcome in a more male dominated sport .. and so are my kids, who just love 'going racing'. It's a great community spirit. I have broken the car many times this season and there are always plenty of people that come over to offer us help ... luckily, as I just get in and drive! But I have loved the tracks, each of them very different from the previous one. I would highly recommend Autocross to any woman looking to try out motorsport for the first time.

Nina Hoare

This is my second year racing in autocross, and what a fantastic time I have had. I finished second in the ASWMC championship (just missing out on the title by one point), despite rolling my car at the Camel Vale event.

I really enjoy autocross - it has taught me so much about car control and driving on all types of surfaces, dust, grass, mud and ruts. It's really good that someone my age is allowed to race like this with quite a lot of speed involved. Every track is very challenging; some are fast and wide and you can slide the car, others are more technical and they all change from run to run, so I have to try to find the quickest way around. They have all been brilliant to drive and I can't choose a favourite.



My yellow MGZR has run perfectly all year and it's little 1400 cc engine has put up with pulling maximum revs over and over again - what a car!

Everyone in autocross is really helpful and I have made lots of friends as well, picking up loads of tips from other drivers especially from this year's champion Barry Rogers.

A big thank you must go to all the marshals who have worked in all conditions -especially the dust! – this year.

I will be seventeen next year so I can move up to a faster class. I am fitting a 1800 cc engine into my ZR and also making it a lot lighter. My sister Polly will be fourteen next year so she will be racing in the junior class with her MGZR.

I can't wait until next year for more great racing and fun family weekends away.

Luke Ashley

Well, what an end to my 2022 autocross season! Finishing as the second junior and 7th overall in the First Choice Finishes ASWMC Autocross Championship has been an amazing experience! The 14 rounds of the championship included a number of different track conditions and layouts, making for a good all round driving experience to enhance and test my driving ability.



Along the way I have grown in confidence with my driving, learning a lot to take away from this year, such as how the car handles and behaves on different tracks. I also included Autocross as one of my skills that went into achieving my Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

As one of the females competing in autocross, I have felt included by the marshals, officials and wider autocross community, who I thank for making the 2022 season what it was!

Gemma Raymond

Motorsport is a very giving sport. It not only provides us with a weekend's entertainment, it also gives us excitement, stuff to talk and write about, events to look forward to and new friends to share the fun with.

Growing up with a F1 obsessed Dad, I always questioned why there weren't any women on the grid, and a question I always asked is whether there ever will be ... sometimes I wished there was, because I thought that maybe someone could then prove adult men wrong when they say that women weren't capable of doing the job. And sometimes I wished so, simply because I wanted to see someone in the sport who was a bit like the future me.

I've always grown up around motorsport whether it's rallying or autocross. I went to my first autocross that my dad participated in at 9 months old and it just became a regular thing ever since. In lockdown 2020, the conversation turned to me starting in motorsport and it's safe to say it was something I was truly interested in ... just the thought of being your own driver and ragging a car around seemed so much fun!

*Right: Tia, just 9 months old, looking rather sceptical of Dad's claim that he'll finish third fastest overall!
(Image – Nigel Booley)*



And in December 2020 I was surprised with a Rover 200 for my birthday! This was something I never thought would happen and was just the result of a casual conversation that we had at our dining room table one afternoon!

Having just turned 13 I thought that I had 16 months to practise and become more confident in my driving abilities ... but the rules changed at the last minute and I was able to race in the year of my 14th birthday. April 2021 was my first ever event and having only driven about 20 miles around an old airfield, I was quite shook up with the whole atmosphere. After a brilliant weekend, and a few shaky hands due to adrenaline, it's safe to say I enjoyed myself!



I've now finished my second year in Autocross and I'm looking forward to the next!

Receiving 'Best Lady Driver' at the age of 14 at the final event of the year meant everything to me and just shows that women in motorsport are capable of participating and winning any award that they can imagine.

Tia Booley

Above: Tia in her MG ZR (Image – Paul Morris Motorsport Photography)

Tia Booley article reprinted by kind permission of Roy Sims (Torbay MC's Missfire magazine)

Below: 2022 Junior Autocross Drivers



ASWMC Eligibility Scrutineers ...

Please note that from 1st January 2023, John Cooper will be the ASWMC Eligibility Scrutineer for Rally, and Tony Freeman the ASWMC Eligibility Scrutineer for Speed (Hill climb, Sprint and Autocross); Andy Collard will be the Deputy Autocross Eligibility Scrutineer.

Howard West, Vice Chairman

Reminders ...

Event Regulations ...

Please help our ASWMC's championship secretaries and coordinators by ensuring that your Event Secretaries send draft copies of their 2023 event SRs before being released to competitors. Thank you.

Photography Credits ...

please include event details, location (e.g. stage or corner), car, driver/crew, the photographer (if crediting is required) and any other relevant information. E-mail contributions to newsletter@aswmc.org.uk Thanks.

ASWMC 2024 Development Fund ...

Applications need to be made in writing to the General Secretary by 31st October 2023.

2022/23 ASWMC Meeting Dates

12th February 2023 Executive Committee, SGM and Awards Presentation (Exeter Court Hotel)

13th August 2023 Executive Committee (on Zoom)

15th October 2023 Executive Committee, AGM & Council (Exeter Court Hotel)

3rd December 2022 Executive Committee (Exeter Court Hotel)

Please note: all dates and locations are provisional.

Motorsport UK Branding Guidance ...

of event and club paperwork, websites, etc., is available from Motorsport UK; e-mail brand@motorsportuk.org. Guidance and FAQs are also available at <https://mailchi.mp/ea560eadbb60/guidance-for-clubs-using-motorsport-uk-branding?e=8d21b80f3a>

Motorsport UK DBS Checking...

A full guide to the volunteers' scheme, including a list of the roles that meet government criteria for checks, is available on the Motorsport UK website; if you are unsure whether your role meets relevant criteria, please e-mail safeguarding@motorsportuk.org. DBS checking is mandatory if you hold a Motorsport UK licence and marshal at a kart or drag race meeting.

All licensed/registered volunteers will be fully funded by Motorsport UK. Non-Motorsport UK volunteers will be charged a fee of £21 GBP. Those who earn from their role will be required to cover the cost directly and this is charged at £65 GBP.

We thank you for your support in provide a safe, fun and fair environment for our sport and remain available to assist.

2022 Championship Awards Presentation ...

The 2022 Awards Presentation will take place on Sunday 12th February at the Exeter Court Hotel, Kennford, EX6 7UX (just off the end of the M5 at Exeter).

Come along and collect your award and support your fellow competitors. Award winners will have been notified by e-mail during December to ask if they will be attending; please book your ticket to help us with catering numbers. If you are unable to attend please let Pam know who will be collecting your trophy for you.

We gather at 12.00 noon for a 12.30 p.m. buffet with the presentation starting at 2.00 p.m. Award winners will have one free ticket to the event; additional tickets are £10 per person and can be booked from Pam Hartill - pamhartill10@gmail.com

2021 Perpetual Trophies:

If you haven't already done so would you please return any perpetual awards to me at 17 St Leonards, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL31 1LA, as soon as possible so I can take them to the engraver ready for this year's winners.

Award Winners' Slideshow Images:

If you haven't already done so, please send an image of your car at an ASWMC event for the slide show. Send it as a jpeg file to media@aswmc.org.uk – thank you.

Register for the 2023 Championships:

The 2023 Championship Registration form is on the website - www.aswmc.org.uk

Pam Hartill

New ASWMC Member Clubs ...

The ASWMC is pleased to welcome three new member clubs ...



Healey Drivers Club - www.healeydriversclub.co.uk – originally established in 1955 by Brian Healey and others to bring together all Healey enthusiasts with an interest in preserving and promoting the Healey marque. It grew with the support of the Donald Healey Motor Company and is the world's oldest Healey club, welcoming owners and enthusiasts of all models - Healey, Austin Healey or Jensen Healey. Ownership of a Healey is not a requirement for joining this classic car club and membership is open to all worldwide.



Somerset and Wiltshire Land Rover Club - www.somersetandwiltshirelrc.co.uk – was established many years ago as a way for enthusiasts to meet on a monthly basis and use their beloved vehicles for the purpose they were designed and built!



Classic and Historic Motor Club - www.candhmotorclub.co.uk - founded in 1977, with about 400 current members, the club aims to cater for, and promote, interest in classic and historic vehicles.

The Roger Coote Memorial Racing Club (T.R.C.M.R.C) ...

... Don't panic – he is still with us!

As word of our club is spreading, the committee have been advised by their PR consultants that this would be the most fiscally advantageous time to monetise our expanding online and media presence and optimise brand awareness.

We are therefore pleased to bring to market the first of what will be a comprehensive range of branded high-quality products. As the club was originally formed by a number of us who wished to promote the true spirit of racing (plus Gary Dawkins) it was essential that any merchandise reflected this ethos. We are therefore launching our product range with an aftershave, the design and packaging of which pays homage to both Class B2, the home of the true spirit of racing, and also Roger Coote whose name immediately conjures up the image of the classic, roguish, devil may care, gentleman racer of old.

This will clearly become an aspirational purchase with significant prestige appeal which is reflected in the price point of £85.00 for 100ml. The product will be available to purchase from our website www.lootforthecoote.co.uk which should be going live very soon.

However, the T.R.C.M.R.C committee are conscious that the current economic climate is impacting on everyone's disposal income and therefore we are offering the same product in bulk at a cost of £1.00 per litre. This can be collected from the club's production and distribution depot in Exeter, but purchasers will need to bring their own metal Jerry Can. **Please note that plastic containers are not suitable as trials have shown that the product has a corrosive effect on plastics.**

2023 Early Bird Membership Offer

In order to further mitigate costs for our members, we are pleased to announce a SPECIAL OFFER on 2023 membership fees. Rather than pay £10.00 for one year's membership we are offering a 25-year membership package at a discounted cost of £247.50 for any potential members aged 75 or older. The number of memberships available under this scheme will be limited and therefore we recommend that you submit your membership application promptly to avoid disappointment.



DISCLAIMER

Warning: May cause skin rashes, itching and temporary erectile dysfunction. If symptoms persist consult your doctor.

Trevor Parsons

Around the Clubs ...



Gilbern OC ... event reports ...

Five Clubs Hill Climb, Wiscombe Park, September 3rd & 4th

The Gilbern Class featured a fantastic entry for this event, and as Saturday dawned bright and sunny, eight Gilberts and ten 10 drivers readied for the action.

Mike Lamplough arrived on Friday very concerned due to his motorhome not wanting to go into 'drive', obliging him to stop on a hill nearing Wiscombe. He unloaded the GT from the trailer, drove it to the top of the hill and then walked back to the motorhome to try again with the unloaded trailer. It still refused to go into 'drive' but thankfully a passing tractor took pity on him and towed him up the hill. Mike then loaded up the Gilbern, the motorhome obliged this time and he continued to Wiscombe.

Last year's quickest Gilbern, Mark Jones' Mercedes-powered Genie was back with a new gearbox and back axle and although Mark started quickly his closest competition wasn't Brian Gent but a new member, his brother Chris Jones. Chris had only finished his 2-litre Honda powered Invader Mk 3 two days before the event; the car was an engine-less restoration project. Did the engine come straight out of a Honda? Of course not, it was from Chris' grass track Morris Minor racer! Having never seen Wiscombe before, his first practice run was an impressive 48 seconds. Then on the second timed run Mark shot into the 46 second bracket with a 46.96. 'Game over', or so we thought, but seconds later Chris shocked the Gilbern world by rocketing up the hill to record a 46.44 second run, beating his brother by half a second. On the third run Mark hit back with an even quicker 46.28, while Chris went a little slower, leaving Mark the class winner on Saturday. Both Mark, and Chris finishing second, beat Nigel Ellis's all time fastest Gilbern time of 47.08 seconds set in 1995.

After a slow start, Brian Gent put in a rapid 50.16 second run to take a safe third place in his usual ex-Paul Scott GT1800 and Mike Lamplough took fourth, a few seconds back, in his lovely white and red FIA GT1800; Mike had a trouble free day, taking his GT down to a very respectable 54.22 seconds.

The next 2 places were taken by Peter Swann's ex-Mike Chandler Genie, which Peter had very kindly offered to Alex Ward to double-drive. Who would come fifth - the owner or the guest driver? Alex stunned everyone by flying in a completely strange car, setting a very impressive time of 57.31 seconds, with Peter's best of 57.92 seconds good for sixth place, beating Keith Marchant (Invader Mk 3); as usual Keith was up to speed very quickly, and set a competitive 59.37 second best time.

Next was the stunning Team Hutchison FIA GT1800, which was originally built as a race car by Andy Green; John Hutchison went quicker over the day on his first visit to Wiscombe, to record a good 60.09 seconds.

I came next in my Invader Mk 1, getting steadily quicker to record 61.28 seconds, followed by the fast improving Sarah Hutchison in the GT1800 who brought her time down to a good 62.81 seconds.

Sunday dawned to light rain, which persisted all day; this made the course slippery all day, especially the start line which was like ice with everyone wheel spinning off the line. We were joined by another Gilbern, the ex-Nick Vandervell Invader Mk 3 of Ian Linnard. Unfortunately Mat Olejniczak, who had also entered on Sunday only, never made it in his Genie due to pressure of work. Nevertheless we had a record entry of 9 Gilberns for 11 drivers.

'Jones the rally drivers' were totally at home in the wet conditions (well they do come from Wales!) with Mark leading the way again with 50.33 seconds on his second timed run and brother Chris only 1/10th second slower. So, it was 'all to play for' on the third and final run - Mark delivered a stunning 49.77 second time while Chris went a tenth of a second slower. So Mark took the 'double', winning the class on both days. He also took the Ken Young Trophy for the fastest Gilbern time of the weekend with his Saturday winning time,.

Third again was Brain Gent in his GT with a time of 57.98 seconds, but fourth was a surprise. Already in sixth place, Alex Ward put in a stunning final run, finding another 2 seconds in Peter Swann's Genie to record a time of 63.49 seconds. This meant Alex overtook Mike Lamplough, and nearly won the Wiscombe Cup. He was finally the runner up, with an improvement of over 3 seconds in the afternoon.

Next was Mike with his GT with just one timed run of 64.32 seconds. Mike packed up at lunch time, as he couldn't see himself going much quicker and wanted to leave enough time to deal with his motorhome after Friday's drama - thankfully his drive home turned out to be trouble free, and the motorhome has given no more problems since.

Back to the hillclimb, and a surprise sixth was myself. My very standard Invader seem to like the conditions, and I recorded a best time of 64.47 seconds. In seventh and eighth were Keith Marchant and Peter Swann respectively, both drivers complaining of gear selection problems; Keith set a time of 65.87 seconds and Peter with a best time 67.41 seconds.

Ian Linnard was driving in his very first competition event and, after a cautious start, proceeded to take 11 seconds off his morning's practice time. In the afternoon he took another 4 seconds off his time to record a best time of 75.35 seconds. His 4 second improvement won him the Wiscombe Cup, an award first made 50 years ago to Paul Scott. Finally both Sarah and John Hutchison only practiced as, with no likelihood of improving their Saturday times as the wet weather set in for the day, they decided to withdraw.

It was fantastic seeing six competition Gilberns on display, starting with the GT that started it all in 1962, the ex-Ray Eve GT950 s/c of former club chairman Steve Arnold looking stunning after its Phil Ivimey restoration. Club President Martin Ingall brought his immaculate GT1800, which he used to hillclimb at Wiscombe, Andrew Goss his bright red ex-Nick Minute-Smith Invader Mk 3 and Ian Hazel his lovely original Invader Mk 3 he used to hillclimb. Morgan Blanks brought along his historic ex-David Ellison Genie and the quickest Gilbern at Wiscombe until the previously, the Nigel Ellis blue Invader Mk 2. Better still, Nigel Ellis was 'on display' in person, with his son steadily becoming very enthusiastic about hillclimbing; it was lovely meeting Nigel again after so many years.

Our road Gilbern display at the outside of Martini at the top of the hill, had the lovely GT1800s of Christopher Bailey, and David Burgoyne on Sunday, along with Invader Mk 2s of Gavin McArdie and Alex Ward. It was great to see so many committee members at Wiscombe although unfortunately both Phil Ivimey, and Antony Yeo failed to reach Wiscombe after last-minute issues with their Invader Mk 3s that stopped them from joining the fun.

Most of us left Wiscombe on Sunday, bare a few who camped overnight. They were last seen drinking the beer tent dry. For sure everyone at Wiscombe 50/60 had a smile on their face.

Chris Dennis

Woolbridge MC's Manor Farm Hill Climb, September 24th & 25th

For most of us this event was the last competitive hill climb of the year; four of us competed on Saturday - Alex Ward and Peter Swann, sharing Peter's early wire-wheel Genie, Keith Marchant in his Mk 111 Invader and myself in the 'Orange GT'.

We arrived at various times on Friday afternoon and set up 'Camp Gilbern' at the top of the paddock; a quick walk down the track soon revealed that the summer months had not been kind to the tarmac as there were varying amounts of subsidence, not to mention large cracks in the surface. The on-site club house was visited on the Friday night for both beer and food. For some reason both Alex and Keith decided to invest in a 'Big Boy' burger, which when they arrived were some 10" tall (25cm for our younger members) - just think of all that extra weight!

We all awoke early on the Saturday morning so as to sign on at 7.45 a.m., and then take the cars through scrutineering. The 'flavour of the day' was seat mountings, battery trays and seat belts – 'no problem', all cars passed.

The weather was hot but with a slight breeze, which bode well for a good days hill climbing. The Clerk of the Course said at the drivers briefing to "*please treat the practice as practice, as the surface is not at its best*", and off we all went.



With each run our times were improving, so with our last run we were all thinking "*this is the time for a quick one*", and as it turned out it was me, as I posted a 31.18 seconds which was not only a class win but a new Gilbern hill record, eclipsing Mike Griffith's 2014 record of 31.66.



Keith's last run was going well until he locked up going into Bridge Corner, just before the tunnel, and slid into a straw bale resulting in quite a lot of nearside front damage. As he had to drive home that evening (he had only entered for the day) the Gilbern Salvage Squad sprang into action and carried out running repairs with cable ties and tank tape.

When it came to that day's prize giving we were surprised to see Hugh Chambers, CEO of Motorsport UK, who was dishing out the prizes, and what's more he knew what a Gilbern was!

Sunday would see our club's Competition Secretary Chris Dennis joining the proceedings, on another hot, dry day. The Clerk of the Course had moved some of the marker cones in, to stop the edges of the track being torn up, so that was something else to take on board for all of us when flying up the track.

Again, everything was going well until just before our last run of the day when a motorcycle competitor came off and had to be recovered by an ambulance before being transferred to hospital - so the day's proceedings were brought to an early close.

Prize giving was going well until they said "*well that's it folks*", to which several groups expressed alarm, and cries of "*what about our class?*" to which the organisers replied "*Oh the commentator has forgotten to turn over the page!*". Extra trophies were found and tranquillity resumed for the masses ...

Our best event run times were:

- 32 Chris Dennis - Invader MK.1, 38.49
- 33 Keith Marchant - Invader MK.111, 37.96
- 34 Peter Swann - Genie, 38.29
- 34A Alex Ward - Genie, 35.73
- 35 Brian Gent - GT1800, 31.18

Brian Gent

Castle Combe Racing Club - 2023 Events Calendar

March 11 th /12 th	Marshall's Training Days
March 18 th	Members Media & Trackday
April 10 th	Howard's Day Race Meeting
May 1 st	Mayday Madness Race Meeting
June 10 th /11 th	Summer Spectacular Race Meeting
July 15 th	Carnival Race Day Race Meeting
August 28 th	Combe Countdown Race Meeting
September 23 rd	Autumn Classic Historic Festival
October 7 th	Finals Race Day



In Concorde – Castle Combe Circuit's 70th Birthday & 2022 Awards Night

When first opened July 1950, Castle Combe Circuit helped re-start post-war motor racing and went on to become one of the UK's most popular and successful motor racing tracks, hosting many memorable national and international race meetings. During the last 70+2 years many aspiring racing stars have competed on the Wiltshire tarmac including Sir Stirling Moss, David Coulthard, Martin Brundle, as well as future F1 world champions Mike Hawthorn, Ayrton Senna, Graham & Damon Hill. Not forgetting motorcycle legends John Surtees, Jeff Duke, Phil Read, Mike Hailwood and Barry Sheene.

Falling on 12th July 2020 the Circuit's 70th birthday celebrations were postponed due to the COVID pandemic, but two years later with normality restored, Castle Combe's busy 2022 season concluded on Saturday November 12th with the long-awaited Birthday & Championship Awards dinner.

The glitzy, end of season, black-tie occasion had motor racing as its principal theme. Held at Aerospace Bristol's Museum, a unique venue in Filton within the boundaries of Bristol City, the site is steeped in aviation history and, since landing on the airfield's 1-mile runway in 2003, has been home to *Alpha Foxtrot G-BOAF*, one of the Concorde airliners conceived there. And it was this example of finest 1950/60s aviation technology that provided a unique and atmospheric



backdrop for 370 guests to enjoy a very special evening, dining below the supersonic aircraft's internationally famous fuselage and delta wings, providing unique photo opportunities, with space to display 6 winning cars on the perimeter of the dining area.

Castle Combe Racing Club 2022 Champions:

- Formula Ford 1600 – Felix Fisher, Ray GR05
- Grand Touring – Kevin Bird, Porsche 991 Carrera Cup
- Saloon – Adam Prebble, Vauxhall Astra 2000
- Super Mighty Mini – Neven Kirkpatrick, Rover Mini Cooper
- Mighty Minis – Mark Price, Rover Mini Cooper
- Hot Hatch Challenge Winningest Driver – Shaun Goverd, Citroen AX 1650

Aerospace Bristol Filton was a totally appropriate venue as the original Bristol Aircraft & Engines Company helped post-war motor racing in the UK with versatile BAC engineers and technicians developing and fabricating tubular chassis racing cars during spare time for the burgeoning 500cc F3 series, thus spawning a cottage industry for a proprietary built racing chassis. Filton was also home to the Bristol Car Company, which developed the charismatic Type 450 (*pictured, right*) especially for Le Mans, where it won the 2-litre class and team prize in 1954 & 1955.



During the busy evening, Castle Combe's popular lead commentator, Chris Dawes, hosted proceedings and kept things flowing seamlessly for over two hours, including fundraising activities for the two nominated charities, Race Against Dementia and Wiltshire Air Ambulance, for whom over £4,500 was raised.

Providing a unique demographic, guests came mainly from the world of motor racing, including drivers, entrants, sponsors, officials, marshals, and promoters, with Aerospace Bristol's scope and reputation allowing a number of key sponsors to gain prestigious exposure. For sure it'll be difficult to follow up this success in 2023, but plans are already being hatched!

Ken Davies



Bath MC - with all our 2022 events completed, the Bath Motor Club team are forging ahead with both a full calendar of events for 2023 and plans to celebrate the club's 60th Anniversary. If you have any memories or information of past Bath Motor Club events, we would be very interested to hear from you. Contact details can be found on the club's website (www.bathmotorclub.co.uk).

The first big event of 2023 is the Festival Targa Rally, starting and finishing with tests at Castle Combe Race Circuit and using other local venues – we will need plenty of marshals, so if you are interested in helping out we would appreciate your support. Please go to the club website here - <http://www.bathmotorclub.co.uk/festival/> - to register your interest.

The club recently supplied teams of marshals for South-West events, including the Porlock test on Tavern MC's Exmoor Targa Rally, a test for the HERO-run Rally of the Tests, and a team went down to South Ham MC's Harvest Road Rally.

Club members' successes on recent events include Andrew Lowe navigating to another win on the Harvest road rally and Ben Griffin and Steve Connor (Peugeot 106) winning Farnborough MC's Rushmoor Targa, with them also swapping places for Steve to finish 5th O/A in his Puma.

AutoSolo events have been successful year, with four or five members regularly competing in various cars, and a few more coming out for selected events and many class awards have been won over the last few months. At Bristol MC's Wroughton event in September the club had no fewer than seven members competing; Dave Fooks (Puma) took 2nd in class, whilst Steve Connor managed to steer his MX5 to a class win after the tie-decider came into play ... by the smallest possible margin of one tenth! Ben Marshall in his Mk3 MX5 was not far behind and his brother Andrew was also out in his Subaru WRX.

Oxford MC's AutoSolo in October saw Dave Fooks won his class, with Steve Connor (MX5) 3rd; Steve then made the long trip to Knutsford to take a 3rd o/a and a class win at the final round of the BTRDA AutoSolo championship. More recently, Dave, Steve, Ben and Alan Wakeman competed at the EMCOS Winter Solo at the new Aston Down venue for a non-championship fun event. Although the test courses were a little on the tight side, there is a good surface and there is room to open up the course a little. An added bonus is a lovely little cafe right next to the test site! Ben Marshall had his best-ever result here with 2nd o/a, Steve finished close behind in the Puma, Dave Alan were 5th and 6th o/a respectively, the results showing all four Bath MC members in the top 6!

With the winter months being a little quieter, our members have been busy on the environmental front. Working with the clubs' partner, Co-Forest, a number of members have been visiting the site to plant new trees and help maintain those planted last year.



Left and centre: Bath MC members planting/maintaining trees near Almondsbury (images courtesy of Andy Cross); right, the cheque presentation to GWAA (image courtesy of GWAA)

After a successful year the club was pleased to present a cheque for £1000 to the Great Western Air Ambulance, raised from its Aquae Sulis Classic Tour and contribution based on the events run throughout the year.

Closing out the year, the club has run a few Treasure Hunts, 'Jogularities' and 12-car navigational rallies, all of which have been well supported and liked by newer members of the club. A full calendar of events is planned for 2023 and more details will be available on the club's website or Facebook page, nearer the time.

Keep safe and enjoy your motorsport.

Martin Moore, Competition Secretary

Monte Carlo Rally 2022 and America ...Ross Whittock's Year

2022 was a year of new experiences, starting with the legendary Rallye Monte Carlo, which offered the prospect of a 'dry' Monte for our first attempt at this classic rally.

The rally started on Thursday with some classic stages, in full darkness, over the infamous Col de Turini - all the ingredients for a spectacular night! Unfortunately, a few km's into stage 1 the gear linkage broke, meaning we were stuck in 3rd gear for the rest of the stage, haemorrhaging time. More time was dropped on the road section as we made a temporary fix of the problem but unfortunately the problem re-occurred a few kms into stage 2, again losing us more time.

Day 2 was about climbing as many positions we could to salvage some points from the weekend. On the fast, open, dry stages we picked off the non-WRC crews, putting us in position to capitalise on any misfortunes suffered by the regular crews in front of us.

Day 3's stages saw us move to the traditional tests around Sisteron, including the only stage of the rally on which we could at last experience some ice - classic Monte conditions. The first two stages of the day were dry, allowing us to push on the bumpy narrow stages but then the first run through the Sisteron stage was cancelled due to a car having gone 'off' in a dangerous position.

Day 4 was our most successful day, posting 2nd fastest over the whole loop and just narrowly missing out on some power stage points.

After the rally, my partnership with Chris Ingram ended, opening up an opportunity to go to America with Tom Williams; some of you may remember Tom's father as Richard Burns' manager.



We competed on five events in America, winning the RC2 class on every rally and securing the 3rd overall podium position. All the places to which the championship events go are different; some rallies are just too fast, with too many straights, but others like the Olympus and LSPR are similar to Rally GB – fun, 'proper' rallies with changes in tempo after every junction.

Above: Tom Williams & Ross Whittock competing in America

In March we also competed on the Rally of the Nations in Mexico, the candidate event for Mexico to return to the WRC calendar. We used a new Fiesta Rally3 but the little 3 cylinder engine struggled for power in the high altitude, resulting in us having to manage overheating issues throughout the rally. Nevertheless, it was a great learning experience to compete in those conditions.

Ross Whittock

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2022 Championship Reviews ...



TyreMarks 2022 ASWMC Hillclimb Championship



The championship had 111 registered contenders, (nine more than in 2021), 100 of whom scored. All 19 events ran as planned on their permit dates, which is a bit of a novelty in comparison to recent years.

The top three in the championship are:

1st - Andrew Forsyth;
2nd - Ben Bonfield;
3rd - Ian Ingleheart.

Above: Andrew Forsyth at the Wiscombe 5 Clubs meeting (Image: Nigel Cole).

Records were broken by both the top three in the championship and five other contenders. Awards will be made down to 10th place due to the high number of scorers.

2023 Award Winners:

1 st	Andrew Forsyth	Woolbridge MC	E2	2111.68
2 nd	Ben Bonfield	Taunton MC	E1	211.29
3 rd	Ian Ingleheart	Plymouth MC	B2	211.13
4 th	Stephen Wareham	Woolbridge MC	A1	209.52
5 th	Tony Wiltshire	Torbay MC	E3/B3	208.08
6 th	Steve Clarke	Woolbridge MC	A4/C3	207.62
7 th	Nathan Tuckey	Torbay MC	C2	205.88
8 th	Jack Ellis	Plymouth MC	A4	205.35
9 th	Adrian Lewis	Woolbridge MC	B3/E1	204.61
10 th	Peter Webster	Truro & DMC	C1	202.47

TyreMarks 2022 ASWMC Sprint Championship



Registrations were slightly up on 2021, with 79 registered contenders, 59 of whom scored, one less than in 2021. There were 15 rounds in the re-programmed calendar; three rounds at Treloy were cancelled due the loss of the venue, seemingly permanently. But Chivenor is back for 2023! The top three in the championship are:

1st - Martin Prescott;
2nd - Dave Greenslade;
3rd - Ian Chambers.

Above: Martin Prescott (image – Autoavia Photographic).

Eleven competitors broke records, some of them multiple times.

2023 Award Winners:

1 st	Martin Prescott	Farnborough DMC	A3	196.09
2 nd	Dave Greenslade	Bristol MC	D1	163.78
3 rd	Ian Chambers	Camel Vale MC	B2	163.03
4 th	Paul Harvey	Bristol MC	B3	160.37
5 th	Simon Clemow	Bristol MC	D1	155.76
6 th	Paul Arberry	South Hams MC	C4	136.43
7 th	Nigel Smith	Herefordshire MC	C2	122.26
8 th	Tim Monk	Bristol MC	B3	118.21

I would like to thank Mark of TyreMarks for sponsoring both our championships and hope that he will support us again in 2023.

Roy Sims
(speed@aswmc.org.uk)



Protechnic 2022 ASWMC Autosolo Championship

2022 Championship:

1st **Jamie Yapp** 2nd **Gary Ridgway** 3rd **Eddie Martin**

I have had plenty of positive comments about the ASWMC scoring system - always a hot topic! – which is regarded as the fairest, as the quickest competitor will win the championship. In other championships that are class based, a competitor could beat another championship contender without ever beating them on track.

I met with Protechnic to discuss support for the 2023 Championship on the 7th December but unfortunately they felt unable to support the championship next year. We thank them for their support in 2022 and wish the company well for the future.

Philip Turner (autosolo@aswmc.org.uk)



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1st Choice Finishes ASWMC 2022 Autocross Championship

2022 1st Choice Finishes ASWMC Autocross Champion - Barry Rogers

2nd – Luke Ashley

3rd – Terry Rooke

4th – Leo Tredwell

5th – Brett Townsend

6th – Stuart Holton

The 'Drivers' Driver – Leo Tredwell

This season has given us all a taste of what the future may hold with the unwelcome increases in 'the cost of living' and 'up and down' fuel prices. Fortunately, the majority of our seasoned competitors have continued to support the championship despite the hardships. There have been some excellent events this year, whether that is how the event ran, the venue or just the weekend as a whole - it's been a great season.

Whilst sitting down and going through the points during the year, one thing that stood out was how many Lady and Junior drivers have participated this year. There have been seven Juniors and ten women taking part, which is really encouraging. Many are still unaware that you can start driving in Autocross during the year of your 14th birthday and continue in this class until the end of the year of your 17th, so it's a superb opportunity to learn some valuable skills before starting to drive on the road!

The 2023 season is taking shape with some new venues with - we hoped - a new event for some! Early indications suggested that the Weston-Super-Mare Sandocross might return as initial enquiries with North Somerset Council 'sowed the seed' and looked promising, with Witney MC stepping up to seize the opportunity to run the event. Unfortunately the Council have very recently sent a message to say that the tides, and clashes with other events on the beach, have made this impossible to arrange in 2023, although they seem very willing to look at 2024 for the resurrection of this iconic event in the ASWMC calendar. This was always a very popular – and unique – event and thought will have to be given as to how our championship contenders – in recognition of your continued support - will have the best chance of securing an entry. More details of ongoing negotiations will become available through 2023.

Meanwhile, please ensure you are ready to apply for your Motorsport UK competition licence and register for the 1st Choice Finishes ASWMC 2023 Autocross Championship.

Many thanks to everyone that has come out and supported any of the Autocross events this year and special thanks must also go out to all those that have given up their time to marshal and ensure the events ran.

Colin Anderson (autocross@aswmc.org.uk)

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DL Motorsport Parts 2022 Targa Road Rally Championship

The last round of the 2022 Championship, the Exmoor Targa Rally, organised by Tavern, Burnham and Minehead Motor Clubs, had a full entry of 69 cars, plus reserves. Chris Woolley had damaged his hand and so could not drive (but he still came out to marshal!), which allowed Jamie Woolley to team up with Ethan Davies in car 1. They were leading after the first few forest tests before retiring with gearbox problems. This handed a good battle between Lucas Redwood and Zak Linham (Ford Sierra) and Keith and Martin Lane (Ford Ka), with Keith and Martin coming out on top by 48s after the 12 tests.

Zak Linham was the top ASWMC navigator on the day, but it was not enough to catch Jamie Woolley for the Navigators title.

Elliott Sharp was top ASWMC Driver in 4th overall, confirming his second position in the Championship.

Championship Awards:

Driver:

Navigator:

1st Overall & 1st Expert Over 1400cc	Chris Woolley	Jamie Woolley
1st Novice Over 1400cc	Gareth Andrews	Paul Hoad
1st Expert Up to 1400	John Taylor	Roger Gillard
1st Novice Up to 1400	Thomas Alderton	Tilly Burles



Congratulations to all the award winners, especially Chris Woolley who wins the Drivers' Championship for the first time, and Jamie Woolley who retains the Navigators' title.

*Pictured left:
Chris and Jamie Woolley*

Gavin Rogers

[\(targaroadrally@aswmc.org.uk\)](mailto:targaroadrally@aswmc.org.uk)



DL Motorsport Parts 2022 Stage Rally Championship

The championship successfully concluded with Bournemouth & District CC's Challenger Stages on November 13th at Bovington.

Vic Fancy

[\(stagerally@aswmc.org.uk\)](mailto:stagerally@aswmc.org.uk)

2022 Classic Reliability Trial Championship

The Championship has been successful and finished on Sunday 4th December with the last event, Camel Vale MC's Camel Trial. Most events have been well supported with near full entries although the more remote trials have suffered with slightly lower entries. Three events were cancelled due to Forestry issues in Cornwall and a lack of organisers at another club.

Brian Hampson' set of consistently high placings is a new winner in his X90, beating past winner Dave Haizelden to take the championship title, with Paul Merson in line to beat his son Charlie (last year's champion) to take third place.

The programme for next year has been finalised and I have already applied to Motorsport UK for the permit. Eight people have already registered, and/or are intending to register, for 2023.

Carlie Hart

[\(classictrials@aswmc.org.uk\)](mailto:classictrials@aswmc.org.uk)

2022 Car Trial Championship

A successful car trials championship in 2022 (other than the postponed final – now to be held on January 22nd); The final has potential for twelve different people to win - mathematically – but in reality six contenders will battle for the top three places.

We saw an increase from 10 registered contenders, with 9 scorers, in 2021 to 17 registrations, with 15 scorers, this year.

All the rounds were held on planned dates with a varying number of entrants.

I have pretty well secured a 2023 calendar with Launceston & NCMC re-joining the championship roster.

We have a well-balanced programme for 2023 which will hopefully encourage some more westerly based contenders to sign up.

I have added a reserve date for the final in 2023 – to avoid any issues with rescheduling if we postponed due to weather.

Mark Hoppé

[\(trials@aswmc.org.uk\)](mailto:trials@aswmc.org.uk)

2022 Sporting Trials Championship

Congratulations to Camel Vale MC's Tom Bricknell on winning the ASWMC Sporting Trials championship for the first time. Outgoing champions John and Anne Cole, secured second place after a battle with their good friend Alan Murton.



Above: Tom at the Walsingham trial in March.

Launceston and North Cornwall had to cancel their Ron Beer trial in the middle of the cold snap, which proved to be an inspired decision as conditions throughout Cornwall and the bordering Lifton were beyond treacherous, with early rain freezing on all the roads. Our champion couldn't even drive his van off his drive!

The championship registration fee remains at just £5 for 2023 so let's try and boost the numbers further as the sport's numbers grow again. A printable registration form can be downloaded here: <https://www.aswmc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ASWMC-Registration-Form.pdf>

Finally thank you for supporting the ASWMC championship this year, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and see you at the Gold Star.

Duncan Stephens
sporting@aswmc.org.uk

Book Reviews ...

The 1958 Monaco Grand Prix – Richard Jones

Proving every picture tells a story, Welsh motorsport author Richard Jones has self-published a fascinating book taken from an idea provided by an evocative painting that captures just a brief snapshot from a hot and sunny May afternoon in the tiny Mediterranean principality of Monaco. In fact, the original Nicholas Watts painting proudly hangs on the author's study wall as both his inspiration, and a canny investment!

What was significant about 1958 was the sea change sweeping through grand prix racing. It was the inaugural year of the F1 Manufacturers championship, and the traditional configuration of front-engine cars was switching to the 'horse pushing cart' rear-engine concept, pioneered in the 1930s by Audi and Mercedes and post-war by 500cc motorcycle engine F3 cars ... but now designers were latching onto this successful principle for a fleeter, lighter, and sharper handling F1 chassis.

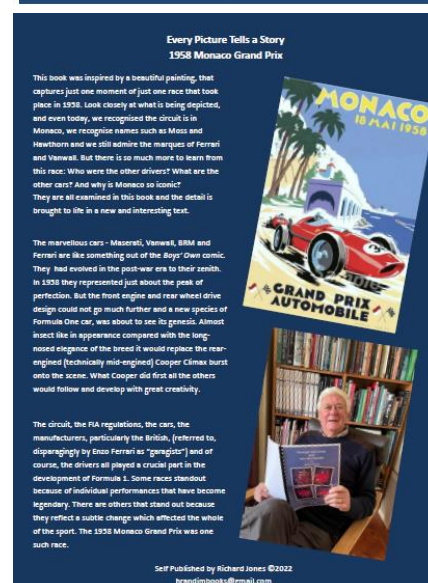
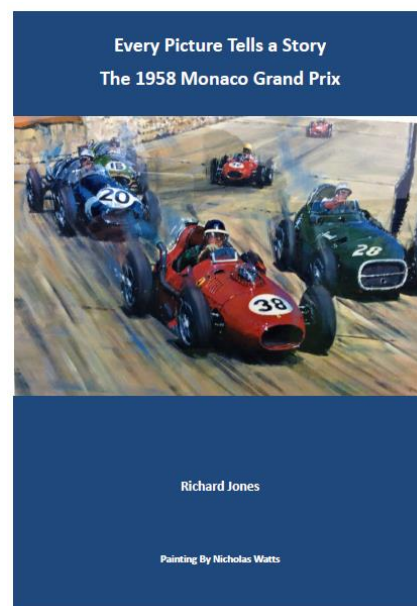
It's difficult to imagine that at the start of the 20th century, Monaco was just a sleepy fishing enclave with little money or ambition to become a chic global tax haven. This all changed when his Serene Highness Albert 1, Prince of Monaco, in collaboration with young go-getter Anthony Noghes, devised the first Monte Carlo rally with several European starting points all converging on Monaco in January 1911.

During the 1920s depression Noghes devised the idea of a road race around the streets of the principality to help revitalize Monaco's wilting economy and the first Monaco Grand Prix took place May 1929. The 1958 version of the race saw 29 entries qualifying for 16 places on the 3-2-3 starting grid.

Drivers included dashing tier-one heroes of the era together with a motley bunch of European aristocrats and wealthy or enterprising amateurs, including Bristol garage owner Horace Gould's Maserati 250F, transported in an ex-Bristol city service bus!

After a grueling 3 hours and 195 miles, it was wine-grower and sometime F1 driver Maurice Trintignant who triumphed in a Cooper-Climax, from the Ferrari Dinos' of Luigi Musso and Peter Collins. Mike Hawthorn's Ferrari took the fastest lap, and the chequered flag was waved enthusiastically by former Monegasque F1 driver, Louis Chiron, who tried but failed to qualify for the actual Grand Prix!

This well-researched and detailed book sets the scene for the race, reviews the six manufacturers competing and reports on the race and outcome. Drivers have their own 'dramatis personae', as does the mode of transport used by some to travel between races. A



stark reminder of the woeful mortality rate of drivers during that hazardous era of the sport is that of 16 drivers taking part in that race, nine would eventually die in accidents associated with motor racing.

In marketing terms, it's a well-known fact that publishing colourful images of tropical palms, period racing cars or snowy Alps helps capture people's imagination. This 52-page bijou book has two out of three of these and transported me nostalgically back to the small principality I've enjoyed visiting for the Grand Prix or Rally. It's a thoroughly enjoyable read, kick-started by an idea taken from a fine painting.

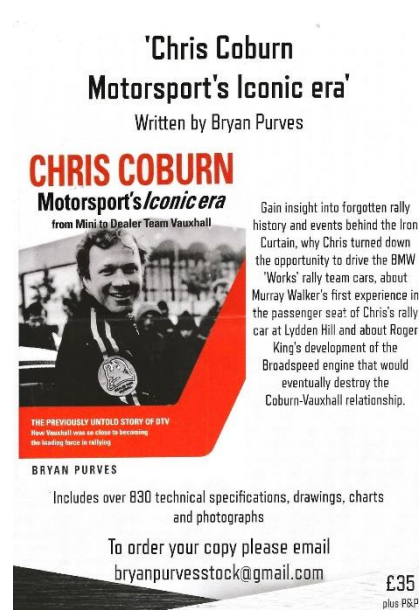
Available directly from the author - hbrandimbooks@gmail.com - the well-illustrated book costs a modest £12.00 including P&P. Payment via PayPal to the email or BACS Transfer, details on request.

Ken Davies ©

'Chris Coburn, Motorsport's Iconic era' - Bryan Purves

A comprehensive biography of the irrepressible Chris Coburn has just been published. Talented, versatile, and multifaceted – driver, entrepreneur, engineer, and skier – Coburn was a prolific mover and shaker in the world of motorsport during the 1960s/70s and instrumental in the formation of the legendary Dealer Team Vauxhall with the unmistakable 'DTV' acronym, famous for turning ordinary rep-mobile Vauxhalls - Viva, Magnum and Firenza - into international race and rally winners.

Penned by Bryan Purves after several years of painstaking research and stone turning, the well-written 650-page hardbacked book contains more than 830 fascinating photographs – many unseen – as well as drawings, charts, and technical specifications. Well indexed, the book records almost every event in which Chris was involved from 1966 – 1976 plus features on cars and people. Although Chris provided a great deal of this content from his newspaper cuttings and records, he readily admits that these only accounted for around 15% of the total content, with the remainder sourced independently by the author.



Chris, together with former DTV Manager and international co-driver Rodney Spokes, who features in the book, met at the NEC Classic Car Show on 12th November alongside the Vauxhall Firenza in which they drove to success on the 1974 Tour of Mull. The car is currently in the distinctive livery of the 1976 Circuit of Ireland Rally, on which Will Sparrow and Spokes were placed sixth.

Twenty copies of the Coburn book which they took to sell on the NEC stand very quickly sold out to enthusiasts!

In 1969 Chris was one of the founder members of the International Rally Drivers Club and the 17th person to join, becoming a active member of the inaugural IRDC Committee. Chris and his partner Jackie now live near Goring on Thames where he is just finishing the lengthy restoration of his HRG which was 'written off' in a road accident back in 1962. The pair spend the winter in Jackie's home country of Switzerland where Chris still skis with aplomb, although he reckons, he is not as fast downhill as before he turned 80!

Sadly, the final pages of the book contain Chris's own touching epitaph to author Bryan Purves who lost his battle with cancer and died just before the book was self-published by Brown Dog Books earlier this year. His widow Liz is now selling the initial limited run of just 150 copies at £35 + UK P&P £5.00 (tracked & insured). This unique and truly excellent motorsport tome is worth at least double this in reading value alone as well as being a unique addition to any motorsport book collection.

To order and receive payment instructions to obtain a copy of; Chris Coburn, ISBN:978-1-83952-402-8, please email bryanpurvesstock@gmail.com.

Ken Davies ©

Fairthorpe – doughty and versatile sports cars for all disciplines!

The 1950s and 60s provided a fertile post-war market for kit cars and specials with fibre glass being the principal material of choice. There were probably over 20 UK manufacturers, some better known than others, trading from railway arches and small workshops including the most successful of all, Lotus! Other proprietary companies included: Ashley Laminates, Auto Kraft Shells, Dellow, Falcon Shells, Heron Plastics, Speedex and Fairthorpe, who were probably among the foremost second division manufacturers.

In the sometimes-chaotic kit car world, Fairthorpe was quite well organized and manufactured from premises in Chalfont St Peter from 1954 to '61, then later Gerrards Cross 1961-64 and then Denham 1964-73, all within a small Buckinghamshire footprint where they produced their charismatic range of sportscars.



Founded by Air Vice-Marshall Donald 'Pathfinder' Bennett, a distinguished pilot, navigator, and founder of the RAF's Pathfinder Force, the Fairthorpe name originated from his family home in Toowoomba, Queensland. 'Don' Bennett and his wife Elsa were keen rally competitors, coming eighth on the 1953 Monte Carlo Rally in a Mark VII Jaguar. He also drove a Jaguar XK120, with son Gary, on that year's RAC Rally, starting from Hastings. In 1958, driving a fledgling Fairthorpe Electron, Bennett competed in both the Monte Carlo (*left*), and RAC rallies with son Torix, as well as Prescott hill climb.

Fairthorpe's first car was the rear-engined Atom (*right*), a two-door fibre-glass mini-car, offered with a choice of rear-mounted BSA or British Anzani motorcycle engines, 250cc to 650cc. In 1957 the Atom was replaced with the Atomata, aka Atom Major but despite its similar moniker, the new car bore little relation to its somewhat ugly duckling predecessor. Although more conventional in appearance and fitted with front mounted BSA 650cc engine the Atom Major offered the Standard 10 engine as an option, but at more than twice the price of the Atom it didn't sell particularly well.



In 1956 Fairthorpe developed a model which symbolized the product range of small British car manufacturers of that era. Designed by Fairthorpe's works' manager John Green – later to race a sportscar called the Darren – and Ken Lowe, who established his own eponymous company manufacturing engine cooling fans. Called the Electron, it used a Microplas Mistral body and 1098cc o.h.c. Coventry Climax engine. It was fast with good roadholding, but the cost of the Climax racing engine proved a drawback.

The solution was to offer customers the cheaper Standard 10-engine Electron Minor, available either factory-built or as a kit, going directly head-to-head with mass-produced sports cars, such as BMC's Sprite/Midget and Triumph's Spitfire. The car proved a popular option and about 500 Electron Minors were sold during its production run. In addition, three further models were introduced from 1960 to 1963 - the 2+2 Electrina and Rockette, both with Triumph engines from the Herald and Vitesse respectively, together with the short-lived Zeta, which used a tuned six-cylinder Ford engine from the Zephyr/Zodiac range.

In the late sixties and early seventies, Fairthorpe excited its loyal aficionados by introducing a new range of cars designated the TX series, innovatively devised by Don Bennett's son, Torix. With a fastback coupé style, the cars were again fitted with Triumph Spitfire and GT6 engines but with rear suspension modified to Torix Bennett's own design. Launched in 1970, Fairthorpe's last car was the TX Tripper with a style that blended sports car with beach buggy on steroids.

I was introduced to Fairthorpe early in my motoring career when a friend, Ted Purcell, built an Electron from a kit. As a talented designer and mechanic, Ted introduced his own styling for the rear-end which eschewed the curvaceous Sprite Mk1 style and adopted a Kamm-style tail complete with Cortina Mk1 rear light clusters (*right*). The powertrain was Ford 1600 crossflow engine and gearbox, fitted with free-flow exhaust manifold and single downdraft Webber.



Thanks to a low ratio Ford differential, 0–70 mph performance was dynamite, but it soon ran out of puff and its independent rear suspension made the wheels tuck-in at awkward moments! Consequently, it was exciting to drive and far better autotesting, hill climbing, sprinting, and rallying than it was circuit racing. The Electron/Ford's competitive potential however was often

blighted by fragility, with suspension or transmission breakages a common cause of retirements. During this time, we were frantically competing in all sorts of club motorsport every weekend and the Fairthorpe proved a versatile and cost-effective steed.

At the 1962 Motor Show in Olympia Fairthorpe exhibited its newly launched 1600cc, Triumph Vitesse engine Rockette, and following a convoluted part-exchange deal, I found myself owning the motor show car registered 7144 MX in 1969. With a longer wheelbase than the Electron the Rockette's smooth 6-cylinder engine delivered 70 bhp on twin Solex carburettors. The rear axle was Standard Ten and I changed several drive shafts, broken during auto-testing, but the Standard Ten banjo type diff' made this quick and easy.



As well as my daily driver, I used the Rockette extensively for a miscellany of motorsport, including representing Wales in the Ken Wharton Aldermaston autotests, but car and driver were hardly competitive against the well-sorted Spridgets of Northern Ireland's fiercely competitive A team. After 18 months' ownership the Rockette was part exchanged for a 1600 Porsche 356B and my life moved just a bit faster! Ted kept his Electron a few more years and experienced several more annoying competition retirements!

The Fairthorpe company founder, Air Vice-Marshall Donald (Don) Bennett, CB CBE DSO FRAeS, was a truly talented, versatile, and well decorated aviator. Born in Australia in 1910, Bennett joined the Royal Australian Airforce aged 20, before moving to Britain on a short-term RAF commission. Within a year he was promoted to flying officer and made a remarkable pilot with a natural aptitude for navigation. He also qualified as a commercial pilot and flying instructor, as well as writing *The Complete Air Navigator* in 1935, which was, for many years, the accepted manual on air navigation.



Wishing to extend his flying experience as widely as possible, in 1936 he joined Imperial Airways flying between London, Paris, and Cologne, and later Southampton to Alexandria and South Africa on the flying boat service. At the outbreak of war in 1939, Bennett worked on the Atlantic Ferry Service, piloting American aircraft to Britain before re-joining the RAF. In 1942 he was commissioned to form the Pathfinder Force, an elite group established to find and mark targets for Allied night-time bombing raids. A year later, he was promoted to Air Vice-Marshall, the youngest person to hold such a high rank at that time.

In a demonstration of supreme versatility, Don Bennett left the RAF in May 1945 and contested the parliamentary seat of Middlesbrough West, as Liberal Party candidate. He was elected unopposed, but two months later was defeated in the 1945 general election. He stood at three further by-elections and subsequently campaigned well into the 1970s for a more independent Britain outside the European Economic Community. He died on 15th December 1986 aged 76.

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