



Maidstone and Mid Kent Motor Club

Newsletter

April 2022



Editors Ramblings.

March and April have been busy months for our members kicking off the new season in grand style. Although Covid is still around the lifting of restrictions has enabled every type of event to take place again with out all the extra layers of procedures we have had to endure over the last two years. This month we are therefore able to include reports from across the diverse disciplines indulged in by our members. Also the lifting of restriction enabled us to present the 2021 awards to our winners in person enabling members to socialise at the same time this year.

For the first time in a couple of years and we have to thank Ben Dawson for this, we have been able to run what we hope is the start of many autosolos at Ashford Market. This was followed by the Tyrwhitt Darke Trial which for one at this time of year turned out to be a dry day. Further afield Tim Mewett and Liz Jordan have enjoyed successes in two closed road rallies.

We are now fast approaching the autotest season and kick this year with our Taster Day on the 8th May, but before that we hope to see you all at the Club's AGM this year being held in person rather than the on line one of 2021. It is being held at the Ridge Golf Club on the 2nd May the same venue as the Awards Evening. This is also a social evening so please come along and let your views be known about what you want from and how you see the future of the club.

Bruce

Up And Down The A20

- Rumour has it that John La Trobe, one of our long standing members, who has competed in just about every type of event including notably the first London to Sydney Marathon has recently celebrated his 100th birthday. In recent years, John has provided a venue for stages on the Hughes Rally and our Summer Slalom.



HAYNES

THE HAYNES GROUP OF COMPANIES



Ashford Market Autosolo 19th March

A cold and windy Saturday saw the first running of an autosolo for a few years. This time Ben and Emma Dawson assisted by Ken Greenfield and Andy Jenner ran their first event. The event was part of the Sevenoaks & District MC winter Autosolo series, so it was slightly disappointing that only thirty one competitors across six classes came to battle it out on a dry sunny but cold windy day

After much deliberation and using his drafting skills, Ben and Ken set out the course on the Friday before the event.



Teenage Austin Seven Experiences !

Having just been admitted to the OBE (over bloody eighty !) Club, it occurred to me that it is now well over sixty years since I bought my first Austin and various memories came flooding back.

Having passed my driving test at the end of the fifties I was fortunate in having the use of either my father's Wolesely 14/60 (like the police car in Foyles War) or a spare Standard Flying 9 that belonged to his employer. I soon, however, hankered after the greater freedom that owning my own car would offer. Apart from the fact friends already owned sevens, my father supported the idea as his second and third cars had been sevens, His first was a GN my mother, his then fiancée, hated it, so it was replaced with a pram hood Chummy which he called 'breezy Anna '.

An Austin Seven Ruby was advertised locally by someone who Dad knew and I ended up buying it for £25 - which was too much but dad would not let me negotiate as he said the chap was struggling financially!

It was in pretty good condition and for several months put up with my somewhat enthusiastic driving. One night, however, five up, returning from night school in the centre of Maidstone the near side rear of the car dropped down abruptly, accompanied by a loud scraping noise. Much to the amusement of my friends we came to a halt outside the door to the Wig and Gown pub. The car had become a three wheeler - but where was the wheel? A couple waiting for a bus said it had bounced over a wall on the other side of the road. The nuts were still on the studs so after retrieving the wheel the lads lifted the back of the car up, the wheel was refitted, and we were on our way. Five minutes earlier we had been hurtling, flat out, down the old, notorious, Bluebell Hill, had the wheel come off then the consequences do not bear thinking about!

A camping trip to Scotland, with a non driving friend had been planned in order, amongst other things, to climb Ben Nevis. Possibly contributed to by the earlier wheel loss, a few days before we were due to leave there was a loud bang from the rear of the Ruby and, as they say, we failed to proceed. Arriving at work by bicycle the following day a senior colleague asked where the car was. After being told 'it's broken down' he said, 'there is an Austin seven in my garden - the kingpins are shot, and the engine is worn out but you can have it for fiver'. Once again, the ever shortening (due to frequent breakages) tow rope was once again use and dad towed the drab green two seater home. In retrospect the colour was a clue to the fact that with its chrome style radiator surround but not registered until 1936, rather large tyres on 18 inch wheels, odd electrical sockets on the dashboard and other odd clips it was almost certainly a Military Tourer, but back in 1960 I did not know of their existence! With an almost new hood and side screens it looked much more interesting than the Ruby! Being brought up on a small mixed farm with the usual scrap heap and a 'make do and mend 'policy I was no mechanic but had become a decent 'pragmatic bodger' (which I still am) so I set to and swapped over the engine and front axle from the Ruby and gave the two seater a coat of Valspar Oxford blue paint. I don't recall that the MOT was a problem and we set off from Kent for Scotland as planned. Gear changing, especially through central London, proved a challenging and noisy affair. Stopping off in north Lincolnshire for the night I checked the gear box to find it was totally devoid of oil, this was soon fixed, and the gear box was fine afterwards.

On reaching Scotland, it was apparent from the feathering on the front tyres that my guesstimate of the correct toe-in was somewhat awry - again fairly easily sorted.

Torrential rain whilst camping at Fort William rendered the gateway to the campsite impassable to all the campers except a Landrover and yes, you've guessed it - the Austin Seven, which had no trouble at all.

On the way home somewhere in Yorkshire the dynamo stopped charging, a very worn brush had disintegrated. I decided that with luck the battery would get us home but it's a long way to Kent in a seven and somewhere well north of London it started to get dark. Fortunately, it turned out to be a moonlit night and I only put the sidelights on if other vehicles were about, which in 1960 was not that often. My friend Roy lived about a mile from me and I dropped him off and then 300 yards from home the engine finally died! In the morning after nights rest it started on the handle and I was able to drive home.

Bearing in mind that we had no telephone at home my parents were remarkably unconcerned about their teenage son setting off in an untested 25 year old car with no breakdown cover, little cash, no credit card and very little mechanical knowledge!

The poor little seven had done nothing to justify the rejection it suffered a few months later when it was replaced by a rather smart looking MG PA which failed to live up to expectations most of the time and I was pleased to get an RP saloon and £40 in exchange for it.

However, I was just about to go off to College in Bath and the offer of a one lady owner A30 for £130 was a sensible option. The RP proved to be the first of many cars that my younger brother, who turned out to be a 'serial dismantler' took to pieces to restore !

Thus ended my first period of Austin Seven ownership.

Ken Kimber



Tyrwhitt Drake Car Trial 27th March



Up at 6am on a Sunday can only mean one thing,
Obviously another car trial.

Kent this time, on the outskirts of Maidstone for the nicely named Tyrwhitt Drake car trial, organised by the Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club.

With the steepest approach road to get into a site I'd ever seen I knew we were in for a good day and with 6 even steeper sections to play on we certainly were.

Picture the valley at Seckford hall but much larger, with much steeper sides and that's our playground.

9.30 start, 2 rounds before lunch then 2 more after was the order of the day.

23 drivers started including Barry Redmayne and I representing WSMC.

Hills 1 & 2 were up and overs and a nice blast towards the end but most of us only got to the 7 on the first lap but an adjustment by the organisers allowed better scores later and a chance to try the final climb.

Hill 3 had a tricky start with the wet grass about as grippy as ice but if you could get away and over the first brow of the hill then a low score could be had but fail the first part of the section and high scores were the consequence.

Hill 4 had a steep start with a triple plateau for us to bounce up which had to be attacked at just the right speed, too slow and no chance of making it up and too fast and risk using the front bumper as a plough! Ending with tight uphill finish to blast at.

Hill 5 was a tricky up and around a tree, if you mastered this first climb then you were rewarded with nice camber and up a super slippery climb at the end and the chance to gain a few points.

I couldn't master the final climb of this one all day even when it dried out in the afternoon, some hills are just not meant to be!

Hill 6 was a long sweeping left and blast up a vertical wall (it felt like that anyway)

Reversing back down was no mean feat either.

The trial had a nice, relaxed atmosphere and with the hills very well set out and simply tweaked throughout the day it made for a really enjoyable event.

As on many trials the first lap is always an important one with wet grass racking up points but drying conditions resulting in lower scores later on in the trial often making the first lap really important to get it right and no mistakes if possible.

There was more than enough competition from some very good local drivers to keep Barry and I on our toes all day but I was pleased with how it went in the morning and had a lead at lunchtime, as it dried out in the afternoon though I struggled in the seat but held on to take the class 2 win, Barry going one better to take the overall.

I'm sure if the trial was up in Suffolk, it would easily attract a full 40+ entry and would deserve to as its a great trial to drive on this picturesque site.

Oh and getting out was a pretty close thing with the poor golf just about scrabbling up the dry tarmac road, (that wouldn't have been embarrassing getting towed up the hill at all)

Many thanks to all involved and organisers In Kent, see you again.

David Holmes

Corbeau Seats Rally – Tendring and Clacton 23/24th April

Richard and I volunteered to marshal on this event 2 years ago, which was cancelled for obvious reasons. When we heard it was going ahead this year we renewed our marshalling licences on-line, did the on-line training module with MSUK and got our registration into the organisers, Chelmsford Motor Club. By marshalling it was a great opportunity to see the cars up close and at speed, as well as giving something back to our sport.

This event is a massive undertaking with 4 closed road sections around the Essex countryside on Sunday and new for this year a Saturday evening stage along the beach promenade. I think they needed about 400 marshals over the whole weekend!!

For the Saturday evening stages we were allocated a marshal post at a chicane along the beach promenade for the 6pm start. This was a good viewing place to see the whole field complete their 2 runs. We had no incidents to deal with and the only downside was that there was a really cold north wind off the sea so by the end of the 2nd stage around 8pm we were ready to get warmed up with fish and chips. There was public viewing from the roadway above the course and we were surprised by how many spectators there were.



It was an early start on Sunday so we camped nearby. Had to register with the stage commander just after 6am and be on post by 7.30am latest for 1st car at 9am. We were towards the end of stages 3/7/11 – they ran each stage 3 times. We were lucky that a local resident was happy for us to park in their driveway so did not have to carry our lunch too far.



The liaison with the residents for this event was a huge undertaking that I know Stanley Graham was heavily involved with. Where we were this had clearly been very positive with people having BBQs and lining up their deckchairs in their front garden, sitting in the church grounds and there was a large gathering outside the pub at Bradfield. All the people we spoke to between the stages seemed happy for the event to be running and not put out by the road closures and restricted access.

We had no incidents to deal with during the day but clearly there were challenging sections and breakdowns elsewhere as each time they came past there were a few less cars. No such issues for Tim Mewitt and Liz Jordan though from our perspective. They looked really fast and smooth, and a bit sideways, around the 2 bends we were marshalling at.

Other MMKMC members competing were Liam Carfrae as navigator for Darren Knights in his Mark II escort. They did not have a good day though retiring with an engine fire. Coincidentally Alan Carfrae navigated in this same car 20 years ago and it also ended up looking equally second hand!! Alan was also navigating in a Fiesta R2 on this event.

Bridge Carey was competing in his Renault Clio under the Army Motorsport Club, and was second in his class and Ben Dawson was navigating in his own Escort Mark II.

Also from MMKMC Christopher Newton and Kamila Zielinska were flying finish marshals on the beachfront stages and on Stage 5 on Sunday.

It was lovely to see so many competitors and people we know from other events having a great weekend.



Photos:

Chilly sundowner at our campsite

Clacton seafront stage

Our marshal post on Stage 3

Emma Olsen

Farnborough and District Motor Club (FDMC) Autosolo Sunday 10th April 2022

This was the first event of the year for Richard and me as we returned from our long winter sun break in Tenerife on 7th April. We were entered in our BMW 120 D, yes a diesel, as that was the only car taxed and we had tyres for.

We were happy that motorsport was able to be run again at Dalton Barracks/Abingdon Airfield. As well as the autosolo there was also a sprint organised by Sutton and Cheam motorclub going on in another part of the venue.

Last year all motorsport at this great venue was cancelled due to filming of a Tom Hanks film/series. Apparently they didn't want new tyre marks on the tarmac for continuity. I guess they also made more money than they do from motorsport clubs.

We had to be at Abingdon before 8am as then the gates would be closed. This would have meant leaving home at 5:15am so, having only just got home, a night away in Travelodge at Reading services, only 30 minutes away, was quickly booked. I am not a fan of getting up early at the best of times!

There was not quite a full entry as other solo's going on that same day at Debden and Kemble. Also a few last minute drop outs with sickness and Covid.

We had a great day with really nice sunshine and light winds, which is not at all usual at Abingdon. The tests were a good mix of fast, flowing sections and a few twisty bits. FMDC always seem to achieve a good mix in the space available on the concrete runway.

The electronic and automatic timing and rolling marshal changes worked perfectly all day, making for a very enjoyable event and a chance to catch up with competitors we have not seen since last year.

The overall winner was Kraigy Haughton in his MX5 and Keith Petit was second, also in an MX5 instead of his usual Sprite. Richard was really happy with a 3rd in class after close competition all day with Bryan Cherrett in his first event in his BMW. Richard was 19th overall. I was 6th in class and 26th overall and happy with this having not driven a car for 3 months! There were also good results from several juniors which is great to see.



Our next Autosolo event at Abingdon will be part of the Abingdon Carnival on 11th June. The solo is organised by Dolphin Motorclub and will be a round of the ACSMC and FDMC championships. This is normally another good weekend with a sprint also running on Saturday and Abingdon Carnival Stages rally on the Sunday. We plan to camp there all weekend and hopefully marshal on the rally. Fingers crossed for more good weather.

Emma Olsen

Photos:

Emma preparing for next run

Emma in action

FTD Kraigy Haughton



Corbeau Seats Tendring and Clacton Rally.

Tim Mewett and Liz Jordan competing on the Corbeau Seats Tendring and Clacton Rally finishing a creditable 17th overall and 4th in their class behind two Darrians and a 2.5 litre Escort. Liz said “We ran with these cars on this event as we have a Duratec. Had to change suspension at first service, cope with back axle problems and nurse the gearbox to finish”. This follows their success on the East Riding Stages, where they came 22nd Overall and first in their class.



Club Officers

<i>President</i>	Lyle Cathcart
<i>Chairman</i>	Liz Jordan
<i>Treasurer</i>	Andy Jenner
<i>Secretary</i>	Bruce Jenkins
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Tom Thompson
<i>Chief Marshal</i>	Dennis Usmar
<i>Club Championship Coordinators</i>	Des & Helen Crocker
<i>Website</i>	Des Crocker
<i>Social Media</i>	Lloyd Covey
<i>Sustainability Officer</i>	Emma Olsen
<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>	Janet Barlow
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Bruce Jenkins

2022 CLUB FIXTURE LIST

Event	Clerk of Course	Secretary of Meeting or Contact	Date
12 Car Rally	Liz Jordan	Toby Groves	21 st January 2022
Annual Awards Evening	Liz Jordan	Lyle Cathcart	15 th March
Tyrwhitt Drake Trial	Tom Thompson	Bruce Jenkins	27 th March
Autosolo Ashford Market	Ben Dawson	Andy Jenner	19 th March
Annual General Meeting	Lyle Cathcart	Liz Jordan	3 rd May
Autotest Taster Day - Otham	Richard Olsen	Bruce Jenkins	8 th May
Evening Autotest - Headcorn	Brian Sharpe	Andy Jenner	18 th May
Evening Autotest - Otham	James Muir	Andy Jenner	1 st June
Evening Autotest - Headcorn	Jim Pullar	Andy Jenner	15 th June
Evening Autotest - Otham	Lloyd Covey	Andy Jenner	29 th June
Mike Jordan Celebration Tour	Liz Jordan	Liz Jordan	2 nd July
Evening Autotest - Headcorn	Ben Dawson	Andy Jenner	13 th July
Lydden Co-pro Sprint	Steve Castle / Tony Perrett	Simone Cornish	16 th July
Evening Autotest - Otham	Liam Carfrae	Andy Jenner	10 th August
Combined Ops Show	Tim Mewett	N A	13 th & 14 th August
Wings All Day Autotest -Headcorn	TBA	TBA	21 st August
Kent Forestry Targa Rally	Dave Clark	Toby Groves	17 th September
Autumn Slalom	Andy Jenner	Hilary Jenner	25 th September
Brian Lewis Trial	Andy Jenner	TBA	30 th October

B.D. Engineering

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