



# Woolbridge Motor Club



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August 2020



# WOOLBRIDGE MOTOR CLUB MAGAZINE – August 2020

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(Please, no phone calls after 9:00pm)

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# Editorial

Welcome to the August edition. Thanks to all of those that contributed to the issue. John Bunting is alive and well and after a month off he's sent a bumper 9Geria News. We also have a round up of the 2019/20 12-Car championship from Keith Grant plus an article about the Hardy Classis from Andy Webb.

On a personal note, I've been extraordinarily busy helping both the NHS and private sector catch up with the huge backlog of outpatient MRI scans that has built up. Until at least the end of August I will continue to work 50 hour weeks but have a holiday booked towards the end of September I am very much looking forward to. Because I've been so busy I've not had a chance to source a hillclimb car. However, my wife had recently taken on my son's VW Polo which means her Skoda Citigo is sitting on the drive with nothing to do at the moment. It will, once she's passed her test, be used by my daughter when she's home. But if things work out, it may well be forced to see how fast it can go up Wiscombe and /or around Clay Pigeon. Anyway, first I need a helmet and overalls. Watch this space.

Wiscombe is going to be quite busy in the next two months so hopefully I'll have some reports and photos to share with you soon. As I've had no photos due to the lack of events, and 3 pages to fill to make the correct number of pages for the printer, I've decided to print some more photos from last year's visit to St Ursanne. This event would have been due to take place this month (August) but of course has been cancelled, along with the rest of the European Hillclimb Championship. There are some hillclimbs taking place in Europe, mainly in places like Croatia and Slovakia which have been less affected by COVID. A shortened Polish Championship will also be starting in mid-August with one of my favourite events, the Sopot Grand Prix. If I wasn't working so much I might have considered driving there again to watch, but that'll have to wait for another year.

Well, that's it for this month. Enjoy competing/marshalling again and please send some reports or photos.

Steve Chaloner

*Cover Photo: Simone Faggioli's Norma parked in the town of St Ursanne*

# Woolbridge Calendar of Events

For full and up to date details please check the Woolbridge website

## AUGUST 2020

- 22<sup>nd</sup> Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (Woolbridge MC)
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Wiscombe park Hillclimb (Torbay MC)

## SEPTEMBER 2020

- 5<sup>th</sup> Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (Five Clubs)
- 6<sup>th</sup> Wiscombe park Hillclimb (Five Clubs)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (MG Car Club)
- 13<sup>th</sup> Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (NHCA)
- 26<sup>th</sup> Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (Woolbridge MC)
- 27<sup>th</sup> Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (Woolbridge MC)

**DUE TO COVID-19 PLEASE  
CHECK THE CLUB WEB SITE  
FOR THE LATEST  
INFORMATION ABOUT CLUB  
EVENTS**

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT – AUGUST 2020

I am writing this the day after Torbay Motor Club's Sprint at Clay Pigeon Circuit, which I attended as one of the Timekeepers. It was very nice to be back at an event and to see everyone again. Ironically the only other event I have timed this season was a Sprint at Clay Pigeon, the week before lockdown, and the weather on Sunday was exactly the same as it had been back in March, cold and wet! Fortunately, it improved as the day went on and well done to Torbay MC for running the event under the new guidelines.

So, it's our turn next, on 22nd August at Wiscombe. Entries filled up within a few days with a long reserve list, so thank you to the competitors for supporting the event. If anybody is able to marshal and hasn't yet contacted Worth Birkill, then I am sure he would love to hear from you. Under the existing restrictions, we can only allow people into the venue who are either competing, marshalling, officiating or are arriving with a competitor, all of whose details will need to be held by the Club beforehand, as you will be ticked off a list when you arrive. If you are competing at Wiscombe, please bear in mind that usually by August, something like 4,000 runs up the hill by cars and bikes would have taken place in the earlier part of the season. That won't have happened this year and the track won't have been used for nearly a year, so despite the best efforts of the Wiscombe Ltd team, it won't be in the same condition as you usually find it in at this time of the year!

Finally, on the speed event side, we heard from the landowner at Charmouth a couple of weeks ago that it won't be possible to hold a hillclimb there this year due to current circumstances, so with the help of Wiscombe Ltd, we have moved the 2 days of hillclimbing planned for Charmouth on 26th and 27th September to Wiscombe instead. Regs will follow in due course.

The Trials season still plans to get underway in October as usual, with confirmation that both our venues at Hogcliff and Crewkerne will be available. However, unfortunately the decision was taken at the last Committee meeting to cancel the Hardy Classic Trial for this year given the uncertainty surrounding the running of this type of event under the current conditions, given it requires two people to be in the car. Hopefully this event will make a successful comeback next year and if you have been out walking during lockdown and found any potential new classic trials sections, then we would be very interested to hear about them.

Talking of Committee meetings, we plan to hold our first meeting in person since March at the beginning of August, socially distanced, in the village hall in Frampton!

Sarah Forsyth

Chairman

[chairman@woolbridge.co.uk](mailto:chairman@woolbridge.co.uk)

# PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

As is now usual Sarah has produced her Chairman's Chat advising everyone of what has been, or will be happening in our field of motorsport.

Although Zoom has been very useful during lockdown it will be nice to get back to a 'personal' Committee Meeting even though it will certainly be 'socially distanced'. We shall be meeting in our village hall at Frampton which has received an extensive deep clean including some 140 chairs shampooed, polished, and sanitised. Hand sanitisers have also been installed and a new cleaning regime put in place. All this work carried out by volunteers!

As well as being involved in that work, other work at home has filled just about every waking hour for the past months. Or is that just the way it feels?

We should have been in Malta from 14<sup>th</sup> May but their Government very sensibly closed the airport to foreign arrivals as soon as news of 'the virus' arrived. Only very recently have flights re-commenced because, of course, the Maltese economy majors on tourism. We are flying out in early August and will stay through until October. In Malta we are probably more able to isolate than in Frampton although there will be inevitable visits to local shops but we will avoid holiday areas except our favourite evening restaurant haunts which are out in the open air.

I hope all goes well with our motorsport ventures in late August and into September. The events will certainly be a different and challenging experience for everyone involved.

Until next time keep well.

Colin Pook.



## 9Geria News

For the end of Ramadan holiday on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> May out with the GTM I was trying to fit a water hose in a different position. Previously it had gone down from the header tank with the pipe passing just below floor level before entering the central tunnel. I was never happy with below floor level on our rough roads and as there was a (small) gap on top of the front of the subframe passing underneath the a/c compressor, I thought that is the way to go. Stainless pipe through the gap, but to put a hose onto it to join the pipe up to the central tunnel pipe and tighten a hose clip impossible. Nothing else for it (grrrrrr) but to drop the engine down, mark the pipe, where and at what angle to weld the extension and elbow onto the pipe and bring it into work for Peter the welder. So that's my next weekend work planned, fit it and put the engine back in again.

Our rains have started the middle of last week, so we can expect interruptions to the GTMing occasionally, but as it mostly rains in the late afternoon and night don't expect too many problems and it does make it a little cooler.

Last weekend in May and fitted my water pipe from the header tank to the main tube to the radiator inside the centre tunnel. Before lifting the engine back I bit the bullet and said its long overdue to cure the small oil weep from under the gearbox. Having dragged the power unit still in the subframe to the shaded part of my work area, the engine gearbox was removed from the subframe and up onto the workbench. Then to remove the clutch and its housing before

separating the engine from the gearbox. The weep is from an O ring seal on the selector fulcrum pivot, so fiddly to get at as the main and lay shafts have to come out, made more tricky in my gearbox as I fitted a central oil pickup and modified the selector shaft system to pass through the front of the gear casing. All I have to do now is remember how I assembled it all those years ago to reverse the process!

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June removed main and lay shaft from the GTM gearbox to allow access of the oil weeping selector fulcrum pivot in the base of the gear box. The pinion nut was tight and I had big problems finding something to hold to gain enough leverage to loosen it, but after the 9:30 tea break sussed it out and got it loose. The modification to pass the selector shaft through the front of the casing actually looks quite simple, but when I did it I had a lot of worries especially as if it all went 'tits up' the chance to find a replacement gearbox here in Nigeria would be very close to zero. Next weekend I plan to remove the selector fulcrum pivot to re-seal ready to reassemble the whole thing.

This gearbox modification was done in the late 1980s and was used for more than 3 years (before the Twinn Mini project started) in my front 1400 engine Mini to prove it had no problems. The only breakage I ever had was at a sprint event held by Kano MC that used to take place on Sunday mornings about 15km out of Kano off the Katsina Road, a quiet area away from villages so not disturbed by locals. As I ran with 10" wheels I used to take wide lines around corners to avoid ruts left by other bigger wheeled cars, or I could get beached, slowing me down on the crest between the ruts. Running wide I came to a very sudden stop, with the front wheels off the ground after climbing on top of a termite mound hidden in the grass. Luckily I had a 6mm thick sump guard. But to fit the sump guard I had to cut a hole for the modded gearbox selector shaft to stick through the front. This had hit the termite mound knocking the shaft back, shearing off the selector peg (I did not know the damage until I stripped it) jamming me in 3<sup>rd</sup> gear. The engine had a lot of torque so I was able to drive home 20km across Kano, stopping at roundabouts and junctions all in 3<sup>rd</sup> till I got home. On stripping it the sheared selector peg and a slightly bent sump guard was the only damage and the lesson learned was walk the course next time with a hammer looking for termite mounds and anything else that could attack me.

This gearbox is fitted with a plate LSD. Most that have driven a Mini with an LSD will tell you they are not nice on a tarmac road. Coming off a bend or roundabout the car would step out about 2 feet when you put the power down. If not expected it can be a nasty surprise! I know they are not normally recommended

in a GTM but this is what I have. If it's too much of a handful I'll bring back a Mini Xpin diff to replace it.

Saturday night we had a big storm, lots of rain and wind, coming outside at 1<sup>st</sup> light on Sunday, I had to clear away broken tree branches before moving my pickup. Getting to my workshop area more clearing up, the tarpaulin covering the Mini had blown off, the other tarpaulin I put up to give me some shade over my workbench was up on the roof, a little bit of the outside wall had broken bringing down the razor wire on top of it.

After tidying up a bit I could look at my Mini gearbox and refit the selector pivot with a new O ring and a little RTV sealer, replace the fulcrum arms and the selectors. Then I had to use bad language on myself, as the plonker assembling the gearbox tried to fit the main shaft before fitting the 1<sup>st</sup>/reverse gears, by the time I got the main shaft back out it was time for tea and getting hotter.

I'm thinking about my possible return for a 3 week flurry of events starting with the Wiscombe 5 clubs event at the beginning of September, Wiscombe again the following weekend for the MGCC event on Saturday with a quick trip overnight to a not far away Gurston on Sunday, finally unless I can find something else? A Javelin sprint up at Croft on Sunday, I'm really looking for 2 day affairs if possible, but it's been such a strange year I'll take almost anything that comes.

Frump frump, just heard Gurston is off, but there is a sprint at Treloy where I've not been before and looks not too far away, after a trundle down the A30 on my scale of distances!! A long drive back from Newquay to Northants on Sunday night though.

Besides the Sunday Javelin sprint I have 2 preferred double headers either at Harewood or Blyton, choices choices...

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June the local Corona Gestapo were out in force everywhere when it was time to go home from work. On at least 2 of the check points I passed they had mobile courts fining those who did not have authorising paperwork to allow them to be driving. At the 1<sup>st</sup> big check point I offered my company ID which is normally sufficient to go through. Not enough this time, the uniformed illiterate said where is your authorising letter or pass. I showed him my copy of the company's letter from Kano State Government for essential workers, "where is the original , photo copies are not valid". Dumbo could/would not accept 300+ workers could all have their own individual letter from the state Government,

so off to see the judge, a very over weight gentleman sitting on a low chair in his judge attire under a shady tree. I explained his officers would not accept the letter as it was a photocopy that was being given to all our company's employees who were required to work. Judge thought that was quite reasonable and said you are free to go, but very frustrating after a wasted 30 minutes or so, when all they wanted was a bribe, which I never give.

Sunday 21st June I assembled GTM/Mini gearbox, very fiddly with the trick selector shaft passing through the front of the casing, not helped by the central oil pick up pipe having to be jiggled under the selector shaft, the same time as you are trying to fit the layshaft, a job needing at least 3 hands and not even room for 1.

The company said I must take another week of my leave, leaving me with 4 weeks hopefully to come and play in September if our flights have resumed and your 14 quarantine rules have been cancelled.

So starting 22nd I'm having another week holiday with extra time for GTMing. It rained overnight but had stopped when I came outside, still very overcast and looking like more rain, so make sure everything can go back under cover quickly if needed. The good side is it's cooler. So crack on and by 9:30 the engine is sitting on the gearbox and the clutch housing and clutch are fitted. Just remains to borrow Abdul's (the company's truck workshop manager) "small" torque wrench, to tighten the clutch centre bolt and refit the cover before dropping it all back into the subframe. So I have to run the gauntlet of the Covid gestapo manning the check points to go into the factory to see Abdul! I decided to put the power unit back into the subframe without the clutch cover or the clutch centre bolt fully tightened, thinking rather than 2 trips to Sharada industrial area I would kill both birds with the same stone. I have to withdraw money from my local Sharada bank branch when I'm paid, so Abdul's visit was delayed until I get a bank notification.

24th June planning to re-hang the LH driver's door which is not shutting properly, then fit the door catches to the body/chassis. I'll masking tape the area to be drilled in the shell so I can mark out the catch positions. Job done a bit quicker than expected, so I also fitted the driving shaft flange bolts. Because of the LSD I have Hardy Spicer inner joints instead of the more normal Mini sliding spline joints. By the time that was done tea break was calling and my "worms" were crying out for a peanut butter Arabic bread sarnie.

25th June I tightened the clutch centre bolt with Abdul's torque wrench, refitted the clutch cover and refitted the engine mount bolts into the subframe. Next I lowered the power unit onto my little trolley and off to the GTM to lift it back in. Then just as the subframe top mounts were almost up into position the engine timing side rubber mount sheared off, that's knackered it!

But think positive, better to break now than later driving on the road and at least the timing side is easier to replace.

Next to make an order and wait 10/14 days for delivery.

Engine mounts received on 7<sup>th</sup> July so that is next Sunday's job sorted!

It was hissing down from around 3:30 and only stopped raining around 12. As the GTM is not under cover I did not go outside to play, fitting new engine mounts delayed until next weekend, did chores, cooked, watched F2 instead.

All I need to hear now is that flights are going to resume into Kano and that the UK 14 days quarantine is cancelled! Oh and the events I have in mind will be run (heard Treloy is cancelled). Then I'm good to go. Wiscombe 5 Clubs entry is in and fingers are crossed it can all go to plan. Take care.

John Bunting



The poster features a dark blue background with a faint image of a racing car. The text is arranged as follows:

- Wiscombe Park Hillclimb
- Future Events**
- 2020**
- Sat 22nd August (Woolbridge MC)
- Sun 23rd August (Torbay MC)
- Sat 5th Sept & Sun 6th Sept (5 Clubs)
- Sat 12th Sept (MG Car Club)
- Sun 13th Sept (NHCA)

In the bottom right corner, there is a pink rectangular box containing the text: WISCOMBE HILLCLIMB | PARK

# WOOLBRIDGE NAVIGATIONAL CHALLENGE 2019/20 REVIEW

With this year's 12 Car season having been terminated prematurely I thought I would give a general review from a coordinator's perspective. The winning crew of the five events that we did run having already filed their more detailed reports.

The attendance at our usual preseason meeting in September was good. We welcomed several new faces who were given an insight into the format of 12 car events, and then tackled the 'Table Top' navigational exercises laid on as practice.

The first event of the season on **November 6th**, organised by Merv Brake and myself was based on our familiar haunt, The Chetnole Inn. The circular route to the North East carefully chosen to avoid any clashes with the forthcoming Hardy Trial. Mist on high ground made navigation tricky for crews looking for a control on the top of Bulbarrow Hill, while it was navigators 'rusty' after the Summer break that kept me entertained at my control several miles on at Okeford Common. I was located at the top of a large acute triangle, and to get the right approach crews needed to negotiate an impossible hairpin to my north. I could see the headlights approaching from the east then most wrong slotted and milled around just 60 metres to my South hunting in vain for the control. Even eventual winners Elliot and Charlotte hesitated before realising their error, approached me correctly in dramatic haste in their GTI. Last to find me were enthusiastic Beginners Lee Scraggs and Dieter Swindley who had signed up as members after attending the 'Table Top'. After closing the control, I set off to recover code boards, the heavens opened with a monsoon like downpour flooding the lanes on my return to pub for supper. Little did I know that this was the start of one of the wettest winters on record, and that would plague so many of the Club's events over the coming months.

Stephen Hall and John Locker had initially signed up a full entry for their **December 4th** event, but unfortunately damage sustained to Richard and Pete Turners MR2 on the Hardy Trial could not be fixed in time, so they non started (true example of a Clubman's multi discipline car). The remaining 11 crews were treated to an excellent event based on Bradford Abbas. In an uncharacterised navigation mistake Merv sent us in the wrong direction for 3 miles from start, so

rerouting meant we were over 7 minutes late finding the ever reliable Dick Nadin manning the first TC .Fortunately we were soon back in the groove as we skirted around Yeovilton and headed further North and West via some excellent lanes rarely used by our events. To our surprise after 2 successive 'clean' controls we managed to overcome our poor start to win at the finish! Steven and John had achieved what our 12 car events aim for, that is to find challenging roads for the drivers, and provide route card instructions set at the right level to enable **all** classes to navigate most of the controls in the time allowed; then crown the event to finish with a good pub carvery supper while results are sorted.

After the Christmas break **Round 3** took us to the opposite end of 'our patch' when Elliot and Charlotte based their January event in Uplyme. Living in Axminster, and having worked as a Telecoms Engineer for 30 years maintaining the rural Exchanges in East Devon, I have a good local knowledge of the patch, so when a hospital appointment clashed with the event I was **very** disappointed. I was grateful when Nick Jones agreed to step in as a replacement driver to ensure Merv had a ride. The incessant rain over the previous 6 weeks had taken its toll on the Devon lanes, and despite the route card warnings, the tough route around Branscombe and up the Umborne Valley meant several competitors suffered punctures in the deep water filled potholes. Lee and Dieter showed their sportsmanship when they stopped to assist Roger/ Carol Gibson change a flat on their stricken Skoda Fabia. The surviving **Pothole Dodgers** enjoyed supper back in the Talbot Arms, where Merv / Nick were declared winners, proving my local knowledge was not missed!

**Round 4** organised by the very experienced Cliff England took us back into Somerset, based on the excellent Winyards Gap Inn. An intricate route led us west toward East Devon via Mosterton then Birdsmoor Gate. Early on I made a mistake on a tight grass verged triangle, and hit a hidden kerb stone, the impact left the Amazon with poor handling and increasingly noisy front suspension as we pushed on towards Blackdown. Having rallied with Merv for many years, his ability to **Plot and Bash**, or navigate quickly on the move, has helped us gain many class awards at National level, so on leaving the tricky hidden TC above Sadbarow Farm I was surprised and concerned when he said we had to stop and sort out the next 'Herringbone 'Navigation Section as he couldn't plot it! After several minutes studying we decided the key was to use a *white* road behind Cricket St Thomas House (site of the Popular **Wildlife** Stage rallies of the Seventies and Eighties, and used on the RAC rallies of that era). After pushing on to catch up lost time down though Holditch to collect a code board then skirting south of Ford Abbey we found a control back up on Thorncombe Cross just a few hundred metres from the start of section! We continued on to cross the River

Axe heading towards Cricket, then slotted left down the smooth concrete 'white' where at the end we found a secluded Time Control manned by Cliff's daughter Kay patiently waiting, as we were only the 2<sup>nd</sup> crew to find the control. With ever worrying noises from suspension we limped over any potholed sections back to the pub, to find we were the only Expert crew to find all controls (Daylight next morning revealed a sheared n/s /f Bilstein shock bottom bolt) .

Although Cliff had provided straight forward navigation route cards for the Beginner and Novices with cut in points, the excellent 'Drivers' roads with tight/frequent junctions meant that the less experienced crews found themselves running late, so cut back to the pub in time for the excellent food on offer! The other successful crew to find all controls were Beginners Graham/Elaine Blake. Elaine has really improved in this only her 3<sup>rd</sup> season. Having really struggled in her first season, having had no previous map reading experience, she has gained in confidence and ability which only comes with practice. This despite Graham now using his more powerful Cooper S, rather than the more basic but nimble Peugeot Rallye, which was her preferred ride.

**Round five** on March 4<sup>th</sup> took the action right back into our Dorset heartland, based on the Brewers Arms in Martinstown. Organised by Worth Birkill, known to many as our Chief Marshal on speed events. To us Rallyists his reputation for so many years is that of very a successful driver winning many Road Rallies in his rapid Historic Mini, also having success in Targa events in MG ZR and Corsa. Being a competent Navigator has helped in his role as Clerk of Course, on the Historic Palladwr, and Bustard Targa Rallies, so the experts knew we were in for a challenging evening. Sure enough heading west from the start up into the mist towards Hardy's Monument, Merv and I soon found ourselves wrong slotting and meeting opposing crews as we sought to get the right approach to a control on a tricky triangle, where eventually we got it right to find TC1. Out of luck down the road heading west, Brian Cookson/Cliff England had dropped the exhaust off their MG Midget, time lost refitting meant they had to cut much of the later route, as they ran close to being Over Total Time. The rest of the crews continuing on to Litton Cheney, Worth had set a trap for the unwary at TC 2, with precise plotting required to ensure correct departure. Dick Nadin was again the diligent marshal who recorded that 5 crews departed the control on the wrong road!

The poor visibility over high ground did make the remainder of the route tricky for all crews especially along the narrow single track Roman Road north of A35, (circular Herringbone navigation for Experts) before dropping down into Winterborne where we were glad to see Rodney and Haley Thorne manning a control just a few miles from the finish, where a welcome excellent supper and

drink were consumed while waiting for the results. Notable result as 3<sup>rd</sup> Expert were Steve Wellman/Bob Blows, joining us for the first time this season. Bob had judged the Regularity Timing well without any Speed Tables on board. With marshalling help from our friends from Weymouth MC, Worth had put on a well-received event, with simpler navigation for Beginner/Novice crews made a bit tougher than planned by the weather.

The following weekend Merv and I travelled north in the Amazon, along with 2 other Woolbridge crews to tackle **The Tour of Cheshire**, the premier Historic road rally of the National HRCR Championship. A very competitive daylight event with 150 miles of regularities, interspersed with 10 Tests, including 2 visits to the **Oulton Park** Rally Course. Little did we know this would be the last Championship round that would run this year!

The following week I liaised with Peter/Richard Turner the organisers of our final round scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> March. With their route planning complete, and passed by RLO, permit in hand and control positions measured and marshals secured. After several telephone calls, and some 'match making' I helped to enlist a near full entry. Then a few days before our closing date with the Covid pandemic restrictions increasing, we made the hard but responsible decision to cancel the event. 24 hours later Motor Sport UK withdrew all permits!

A sad blow after all Peter and Richard's efforts, but we plan to use their event/route as the first round of our next Navigational Challenge.

The curtailed program meant all 5 events scored, with no chance to drop worst or missed event. However, I still consider the 2019/20 Navigational Challenge to have been a success. With 35 members competing, 7 others marshalling, in addition to the excellent variation of routes/locations our 5 organisers provided.

I would like to thank Merv and Mark Dunkerley for their help with event results, and everyone for their enthusiastic support and sportsmanship.

I hope we can soon recover from the current restrictions on rallying, and put plans in place for next season's Navigational Challenge, welcoming all back, and hopefully some new faces joining us.

As a footnote, perhaps Boris's Infrastructure Investment will reach down to County Highways level, so the **potholes** can be fixed!

Keith Grant.







# BIRKETT 6 HOUR RELAY RACE FOLLOW UP

In the May edition of the magazine I recalled some earlier Woolbridge events including our participation in the Birkett 6 Hour relay race, organised by 750 MC at Silverstone. This has generated quite a bit of feedback from several members.

Firstly Charles Barter confirmed that the Datsun 240Z used by Win Percy was in fact the one he now owns and races. He also enclosed a couple of photographs of the car taken during the 6-hour relay and I guess supplied by Win with the car. One of the photos is included below and shows, standing at the rear of the car, a very young looking Win talking to Paul Hadley, with yours truly sat on the pit wall puzzling over the paperwork as usual! It looks as though the Barbers were on strike at the time!

In the June magazine Merv Brake produced a couple of photos he had taken during the race, showing Alan Kennedy in his Morgan and Colin Pook in his Escort Mexico.

Colin recalling the race asked if I could remember the name of the chap who drove a Lotus Europa in our team, but I cannot recall his name either. Charles confirms that 750 MC still run the event at Silverstone each year.

## Colin Rolls



*This is an article I recently wrote for “Restart”, the Association of Classic Trials Clubs magazine and may be of interest to some newer members, grateful thanks to Colin Rolls and Colin Pook for their inputs.*

*120, 60 and 50 years all in the same year!*



*Woolbridge, the Hardy, the MCC and ACTC*

*By Andy Webb*

It seems appropriate in the 120<sup>th</sup> year of the MCC that Woolbridge Motor Club should be celebrating its' 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Hardy its' 50<sup>th</sup> year that someone should try to recall some of this history and the inter relationship.

I hope to put together a more detailed history of the Hardy for a future article but here is a little background of Woolbridge Motor Club Ltd and its' inter relationship with the classic trialling world.

My personal interest in trialling predates this period as my father after returning from the Second World War and working for a garage in Weymouth built a trials special with his then boss. They used an Austin 7 chassis, Ford 10 engine and axle mated to a 4 speed MG gearbox with Dellow like bodywork, alas it hasn't survived but was used by them in the early 1950's on a lot of Southwest trials and always driven there and back.



Bryan Webb in the passenger seat

I didn't start my motorsport in the same way but supported by my Dad competed reasonably successfully in karting from the age of 14 until I was 30 when I joined Woolbridge and started trialling in a "dodgy" Mk 1 Escort (had a 1500cc non crossflow engine with a very low diff) before moving on to Imps and then eventually back to Escorts before the latest foray into Alfas and other nasty foreign things!

Woolbridge Motor Club is based in and around Dorset and was formed in 1960 by employees of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Winfrith, the Army school at Bovington (home of the tank museum) and the Army Gunnery School at Lulworth. It was actually part of the Winfrith Social Club and 15 shillings (75p) of the annual membership fee of £1 went to the social club! An ancient bridge in the village of Wool, mid-way between these two establishments, gave the club its name, and is featured in the club's badge. The first chairman was in fact an army major (Major Broderick thought to be in a tank regiment) who was moved on with his job and an ex colleague of mine at Portland (Pip Webb, no relation) from the then AUWE (Admiralty Underwater Weapons Establishment) formerly HMUDE and the Admiralty Gunnery Establishment took over the role. Besides the Admiralty there was also a nucleus of members from local government which has been sustained over the years. The club met in those days in the Social Club at Winfrith and continued to do so until 1968 when it parted company with this organisation and formed a stand alone motor club. In the early years, the club promoted road rallies, then autocross, and speed hill climbs from the late 1970's. From the road rally days of Morris 1000's, frog eyed Sprites and even Austin 16's developed the all night rally of about 200 miles starting at Corfe Castle which was eventually called the Dragon after one of the reactors at Winfrith but road Rallying soon became more difficult with police intervention and during the 70's the club grew a strong trials following and also embarked on an Autocross reputation. An annual autocross event on the Ridgeway between Weymouth and Dorchester became very popular and lucrative and was sponsored by a local brewery and later the Players No 6 cigarette brand. Woolbridge ran the National Championships for the RAC and BTRDA several times, the event included Royal Navy displays, packed bars and other trade displays.

In 1976 Woolbridge promoted its' first hillclimb at Wiscombe (jointly with the MG Car Club) followed in 1978 by a stand alone event which has continued ever since, the club enjoys a great relationship with the owners and now Wiscombe Ltd and helps sustain the venue in all aspects. Wiscombe Ltd has a strong percentage of Woolbridge members on the Board which helps this relationship. The club also ran some very successful Hillclimbs at Longleat during the 90's, an event that has been rumoured to be reinvented one day! More recently the

club has added the holiday camp site at Charmouth to its' hillclimbing repertoire which now also includes 2 and 3 wheel competitors.

The Classic Trial came along in 1970 and was called The Dorset Downs Trial and ran in the Purbecks, it developed into The Vogue Motors, The Wessex Motors, The Olds Motor Group, The MW Burrough Hardy Classic, The Hardy Classic, The Southern Counties Hardy Classic and now back to The Hardy Classic Trial.

Woolbridge continued to dabble in Road and Stage Rallying for many years but "difficult" was still the operative word. Historic Rallying was now becoming popular and several members were competing including the famous Paul Channon whose predecessors actually built a Channon car in Dorchester. Paul was more famous for his large engined bright red genuine Cobra 289 which he entered in every type of event he could, drove it to venues and probably still holds records at many hillclimbs. His rally car was a genuine twin cam MGA which many remember him sharing with Robin Maclachlan, Paul always allowed Robin to use the driver seat during the timed test parts of the event and very successful was this team! Sadly neither are longer with us but Paul's cars definitely live on. The Echo historic rally lasted many years but is now sadly only replaced by our popular winter 12 car series.

Talking of famous members I guess the most famous is ex Weymouth mechanic and garage owner Win Percy who many will remember backflipping the famous Big Cat Jag at Le Mans and also winning the national saloon championship several times. Many of us also remember him competing in Woolbridge events in his Ford Anglia.

We still have active members from the beginning, one or two joined in that first year and at least one other in 1961! I joined WMC in the mid 70's so am a mere newcomer compared with some!

Woolbridge is now one of the largest clubs in the South of England with membership hovering around the 500 mark. We have many junior and family members and continue to offer some of the best value motorsport in the area. The club prides itself in being financially stable enough to weather most storms! This is due in large to some sponsored, events in the past, many at Wiscombe and also the long lost Players No 6 Autocross championships. Also in no small part to some astute treasurers including the long serving present incumbent Merv Brake perhaps better known for his excellent computer results service and Secretary of the Hardy for many years. In spite of the large membership as with

many such organisations the club is still run by a small and dedicated if ageing band of enthusiasts based mainly in Dorset.

The club currently runs over 30 events each year; up to four weekends of speed hillclimbing at two venues (Wiscombe Park in East Devon and Charmouth in West Dorset) the Classic Trial around West Dorset in November, seven Car Trials, three Grass Autotests; similar events on tarmac are run jointly with another local club, and a winter programme of six evening navigational rallies, WMC also have a thriving four-wheel drive section of the club, which puts on a series of events during most months of the year. This section of the club organises events that have sections of varying difficulty to provide for everything from extremely modified 4x4 vehicles to modern SUV types.

In addition to our own events WMC provide marshals to help run other events, including some of the major historic rallies and a section of the MCC Classic 'Exeter' Trial each year. There is also a social calendar, involving a number of skittles matches and the Annual Awards Presentation event in December. A club magazine is published monthly and e-mailed or posted to members. In the "good old days " we helped with stages of the RAC rally and later the Sunseeker rally in the forests of Dorset, neither of which now exist in this area.

The links to the MCC have been over many years when a lot of members have competed on the 3 classic trials and others have helped organise various sections. I believe there is only one Woolbridge member who has ever won a Triple and he did it in a genuine Ford Escort Mexico Estate which he owned from new! I personally have failed twice at the third hurdle both times in 875cc Imps, I could never seem to get Bamford and Litton in the same year except when it didn't matter! The classic Meerhay section was rediscovered by Woolbridge after at least 12 years of non use by the MCC caused by major washout and a joint action by Woolbridge (myself) and the MCC (Alin and Richard Penhale as Exeter CofC's) brought it back into regular use after much hard work and a considerable amount of hardcore. The late John Hayes was almost single handed responsible for the equipment used and a large band of helpers completed the repair in a weekend, there were holes near the start big enough to lose a tractor! Woolbridge members ran this section of the Exeter for many years but after the adjacent land changed hands it became more difficult to run as a night time section and is now only used by the Hardy. In trying to gain local support for the recovery of Meerhay I met a difficult lady who was won over by the famous and by that time aged Jack Pouncy complete with suit and tie having a cup of tea and a pleasant chat with her, he later that weekend became the first person to attempt the section after the repair on his 2 stroke AJS combo with Les Maidment in the chair! I also met a farmer (Mr Wakely) who owned some of the adjoining land and took great pleasure in recounting

how he had helped his father tow cars up Meerhay with a team of horses “before the war” and in his eighties could be seen every year driving his Ferguson up the side of the section to watch the bikes and cars all through the night!

The other MCC hill used by Woolbridge is Knowle Lane which is also an old Exeter Hill and also has a very supportive farmer now also in his eighties and still driving a Fergy!

Woolbridge now run Norman’s Hump each year and continue to support the MCC in many other ways. We have manned several other sections over the years including Stretes and members regularly help with scrutineering and course closing vehicles. From a peak in the 80’s/90’s the number of Woolbridge members competing on MCC events is once again on the up and I hope that continues. Mention should also be made of the MCC members who regularly assist on Woolbridge events especially the Hardy.

The Hardy history is an article all of its’ own but I **am** writing it, I first competed on the Wessex Motors in the late 70’s (also when I joined the MCC), ran the Olds Motor Group in 1985, got it in the ACTC Championship in 1987 after 2 difficult observation years, called it the Hardy in the 90’s and now seem to have re-inherited it since 2018 but there is a lot of detail to fill in between.

I have added a small personal touch to this article to support Woolbridge history, the MCC and the Hardy in the form of some pictures of my Ford Pop which can compete in the longest serving member category, it’s a 1955 ex competition car!

It was used in promotion pictures of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and completed the road run from Wiscombe to Bovington to commemorate this event. It would probably have done another this year if things had been different!

The pictures show it in use by Dave Croft who was the first Woolbridge owner and ran the first Woolbridge Classic trial in 1970, in the next picture it is first in the queue for Bayards (for many years the first section on the Hardy and for many years marshalled by the late John Walker of the MCC and Bristol), at this time it was owned by Eric and Myrtle Moxom who regularly used it on MCC events after doing a deal with member Craig Strong who at the time was not old enough to drive it but passengered them often. I purchased it in a state of disrepair over 30 years ago and eventually rebuilt it still with trials accessories and tuned bits. The third picture shows it on Wool Bridge during the club’s 50<sup>th</sup> year. It has attended Goodwood Revival on 10 consecutive years and sits proudly on Lavant Bank next to some very exotic equipment including last year Alan Titchmarsh’ 1920’s Bentley! It occasionally ventures into trials fields and

a few years ago was one of the only vehicles to regularly get in and out of the Goodwood Revival campsite when the rains came!

The eagle eyed among you may notice differing registration numbers and that's another story but they are all the same car and I can prove it!



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## The Hardy Trial 2020

The WMC committee met virtually recently and the Hardy was discussed, it was decided that for many reasons running it in 2020 is all too difficult so the decision has been made to cancel.

The problem involves the age of most of the key workers, PR work and support of the landowners in bringing competitors from all over the country at this difficult time.

I personally could not promise to run it as none of us know what the future holds, my position with my family is impossible to prophesy at the moment.

It may be disappointing for some of you but it is probably the best solution as we cannot cancel it last minute with the amount of work involved and would need to get organisation moving very quickly if it was to happen.

The ACTC have been informed of the committee's decision.

The date for the 2021 event is Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November, a week later than usual due to the Remembrance Sunday issue which happens periodically.

Thank you

Andy Webb

## “As It Was” .... August 1971

Our Chairman was John York, Secretary David Croft and Treasurer Doug Underwood whose day job was Bank Manager. Colin Rolls was Competition Secretary and Vice Chairman, whilst I was Magazine Editor and Publicity Officer. We had 4 Asst, Comp. Secs. in those days. Robin Ayles dealt with Rallies, Alan Kennedy tarmac Speed Events, Vic Porter Trials and Rod Wiltshire Autotests and Autocross. Our Social Secretary was Peter Stevens with his Assistant Martin Gilday. Awards were in the hands of Ray Briant.

The August magazine appeared early so as to remind everyone of our Huntsman Autocross on 1<sup>st</sup> August. I was to be Clerk of the Course and Vic Porter Chief Marshal.

In those far off days Autocross was extremely popular and the Comp. Calendar for August alone showed autocross events on 4 weekends, and on 3 weekends in September. Our own events during those 2 months were the Autocross, co-promotion of the Dunkeswell Sprint on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, a grass slalom on 12<sup>th</sup> September and our Equinox rally on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> September.

Membership of the club cost £1.00 and was under the wing of Treasurer Doug Underwood. In the August Magazine Doug penned a letter referring to the preparation of the Club's accounts ready for the AGM on 8<sup>th</sup> September. He said his letter was in no way an attempt to anticipate any future decisions of the Committee or of members at that meeting but wished to raise pertinent points enlarging on what the accounts would show. The Club Membership fee was £1.00 but the Club Magazine alone cost £2.00 per head to produce and circulate! Advertising revenue received reduced the net cost to 73p leaving 27p to cover general expenses of running the Club.

A concerned Treasurer? Well, what has changed in 49 years?

There followed a report on the Dunkeswell Sprint run on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June. Alan Kennedy had offered me a drive in his Morgan 4/4 while he would co-drive and also compete in his Lotus Cortina. Comp. Sec. Colin Rolls was in his recently acquired Austin Healey 3000. The only other WMC Member was Nigel Pow from Bristol driving his ex-Janspeed 1293 glassfibre Morris 1100. Practice consisted of 4 laps of the mile-long circuit. Unfortunately, during Alan's practice, the Morgan cried "enough"

with clutch failure. So the Lotus Cortina became a shared car in a class of RS1600s, Mexicos, 1650 Anglias and a 1220 Climax engined Imp. I managed to lead the class on the 1<sup>st</sup> runs but Alan spun the Lotus on the final run and I had to settle for 2<sup>nd</sup> 0.06 seconds behind the Imp. In Colin's class his standard Healey was joined by 14 other cars including AC Cobras, E Types and a 4.7 litre Turner. Not a very fair contest but he improved during the day by over 7 seconds!

"Special Correspondent" (No, I can't remember who he was either) reported on the 10 members regularly competing in the Speed Events circus. His reports took in Dunkeswell and Gurston Down where Paul Channon's AC Cobra, Paul Hadley's 911 Porsche, Colin Rolls' Healey and Tony Potter's Healey Silverstone were active. Paul's Cobra dominated the Sports Car class as usual.

Alan Kennedy, our RAC Scrutineer, produced a very useful article detailing safety measures checked at Scrutineering.

Each month during summer Judith Jesty wrote "The Autocross Scene" reporting on WMC members competing in that aspect of the sport, August was no exception and she chronicled the exploits of members in the following list:

Judith Jesty 999 Cooper S, Eddie Truman 1200 Anglia, Dave Angel 1297 Escort GT, and 1100 Mini S, Carol Angel 1293 Cooper S, Nick Jesty and Ian Cornwall Autobitz 1293 Mini, Tony and Dee Scourse 1311 Mini S, Keith Edwards 1500 Anglia, Ron Kingman 1500 Anglia, Alan Pearce 1650 Anglia, Ron Anderson and Win Percy Volvo 122S.

WMC Autocrossers were a bunch to be reckoned with in 1971 and brought home countless trophies, including those for FTD, each weekend during the season.

Freda Brake reported on the club's Dragon Rally run back in May and Part 1 of her article appeared in the August Magazine. The start was at Ron Anderson's Lulworth Garage and some 40 competitors had entered. WMC members included Ron Anderson and Ken Cushen (Volvo), Freda Brake and Jack Astley (Saab) and Andy and Mark Birkill (Mini).

Lastly, on page 36, the Club Secretary published the official notice of the AGM which would be held at the Black Dog, Broadmayne at 8pm on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September. On the Agenda – Membership fees... of course!



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FINAL CLOSING DATE  
FOR THE ***SEPTEMBER 2020***  
EDITION OF THE MAGAZINE  
WILL BE  
**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August**

ALL COPY TO STEVE PLEASE

Email: [magazine@woolbridge.co.uk](mailto:magazine@woolbridge.co.uk)

## Woolbridge Motor Club - APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Membership Secretary - 5 Shortlands Road, Upwey,  
WeymouthDorset, DT3 5NE

e-mail [membership@woolbridge.co.uk](mailto:membership@woolbridge.co.uk)

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS



I hereby apply for membership of Woolbridge Motor Club Ltd.

Membership runs for 12 months from the date of joining

Title Surname Christian Name

Address

Town

County

Post Code

Other competing or participating family members at the same address, (full names)  
(only one copy of the printed club magazine is sent per household):

1

2

3

4

Tel No: (landline):

Tel No: (mobile):

E-mail address

Age if under 23

Some entry fees are cheaper, some annual trophies are for the under 23's

Main motorsport interests:

	No. required	£.p.
Membership Fees – Full membership (over 23)	£ 15.00	
Junior membership (ages 18 – 23)	£ 5.00	
Other family members (each, ages 14 - 17 can drive in some events subject to parental consent and supervision)	£ 2.50	
Club decal (internal) 20cm x 5cm	£ 0.35	
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Total £

I wish to pay by i) PayPal (treasurer@woolbridge.co.uk) ii) Internet banking  
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For payment methods ii) or iii), you will be sent the appropriate form or details.

The monthly magazine is normally sent as a pdf by email. Please tick the box if you would like a posted version.  A supplementary charge may be introduced for this.

I undertake to comply with the Rules of the club (see website or ask for a copy of club rules). I shall not drive in any part of a competition which takes place on the public highway unless holding a valid Motor Vehicle RTA Licence for cars (other than provisional) and am acquainted with and agree to be bound by the General Regulations of Motorsport UK

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