

Lloyd's Motor Club

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Motor
Club

Founded 1951



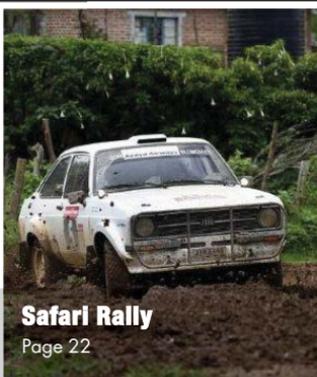
AMERICAN Nomads

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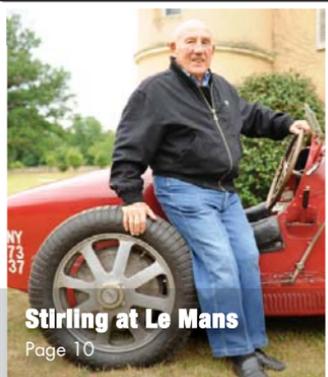
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Welcome...

Some of you may recall the public outcry several years ago when the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's funding was under threat. The RAF were left alone but hardly anyone noticed that the Army Historic Aircraft Flight lost its budget and is now absent from airshows. Ironically, the HAF's motto was "Let their glory not fade", yet fade it has.

Currently in the firing line is the Royal Navy Historic Flight, which operates a Sea Fury FB11 fighter, three Swordfish (two flying) and a Sea Hawk out of RNAS Yeovilton.

Despite the RNHF being the most visible Royal Navy recruitment tool, its funding has been extinguished. In order to continue operating these fabulous aircraft and keep alive the memory of those 6,749 great Naval operators who have lost their lives in the past, the Flight needs to raise an endowment fund of £10m – no small task in today's economic climate.

It would be a tragedy if that memory were forgotten.

Although very much the unsung heroes, the Fleet Air Arm has played a vital role in every single theatre of war.

For example, did you know that it was a Naval pilot (803 Sqn Sea Skua) who shot down the first German aircraft in the Battle of Britain? Or that one of their Sea Furies downed a MiG-15 jet in Korea? What might have happened in the Falklands without the Sea Harriers?

Historic aircraft, like old racing cars, need to be used to be really appreciated by all generations, not left to gather dust in a museum, no matter how magnificent their surroundings.

As an ambassador for the RNHF, I for one will be helping wherever possible and let us hope that with Lloyd's Naval tradition, help will also be forthcoming from The Room.

JONATHAN SUCKLING (JAS)

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Something for everyone

Once again, the Lloyd's Motor Club worked hard to offer its members and their guests a wide range of motoring and motorsport events throughout 2011, as the Club celebrated its 60th anniversary in some style. Whether members' interests were focused on Formula 1 or the latest exciting road cars, or various points in between, there really was something for everyone to enjoy.

There were six top-notch Prestige Motor Forums in the course of 2011, with record numbers of guests in attendance throughout the year. British sports car manufacturer Caterham were first up on Monday 14th February, just a few months before they were bought by Tony Fernandes (owner of the Team Lotus F1 team). Those who prefer two wheels were entertained by BMW Motorrad UK on Thursday 7th April, who provided the lucky winner of the prize draw with a full week of motorcycle training at BMW,

including a bike test. Ginetta Cars Limited were the next visitors to grace the Old Library, with LMC committee member Paul Lalimer's racing version on display outside Lloyd's, followed by Lotus Cars on Thursday 28th July. Peter Leake of Jaguar UK made a very welcome return visit on Thursday 15th September, and the year was rounded off by a Le Mans-themed presentation by Jota Aston Martin Racing on Monday 21st November, with racer Sam Hancock giving the assembled enthusiasts an exciting commentary over a lap of the Le Mans circuit.

Augmenting the Forums were four unmissable Celebrity lunches (and one Supper) in 2011; these covered a wide spectrum of motoring and military themes, starting on Monday 21st February with a Jaguar Cars lunch at Balls Brothers starring designer Ian Callum and testing legend Norman Dewis. This was followed by a rare public appearance from Audi

endurance racer Allan McNish on Friday 20th May, only a month before his huge accident at the Le Mans 24 Hours.

Renowned F1 designer Gordon Murray was our esteemed guest on Friday 14th October, and the year was rounded out in some style when Admiral Sir Tim McClement KCB OBE enthralled our lunch guests on Friday 18th November. Lord Brocket was the Supper entertainer on the evening of Thursday 26th May, holding court in his usual inimitable style in the less formal environment at Steam Bar.

The LMC was again very fortunate to be able to offer some exclusive factory visits in 2011; unfortunately numbers had to be severely limited by necessity but for those who were lucky enough to win places via one of our raffles, these events were very special indeed. We started off with our second visit to the McLaren Technology Centre on Friday 17th June, where in

addition to seeing the current F1 cars being rebuilt between races, we were also lucky enough to see the new McLaren MP4-12C road cars being assembled in the F1 factory, as the new McLaren Production Centre had not yet opened.

There followed memorable visits to our friends at Prodrive at Banbury and their near-neighbours Aston Martin at Gaydon on Wednesday 13th July, followed by our first visit to Group Lotus (and a welcome return to Classic Team Lotus) on Thursday 22nd September, which included some on-track tuition from ex-Lotus F1 driver Martin Donnelly; his inimitable sideways style around the renovated Lotus test track at Hethel in a Lotus Evora was certainly a highlight of the author's year.

By kind permission of Ross Brawn, we also visited Mercedes F1 in Brackley on Friday 2nd December; the former Tyrrell, BAR, Honda and Brawn F1 factory is hugely

impressive, being one of very few fully in-house facilities in Formula 1, and as an added bonus we saw new design team recruits Geoff Willis and Aldo Costa making themselves comfortable in their new roles.

Another treat for 2011 was an invitation for a small group of LMC members to visit the 11 EOD Regiment's headquarters at Didcot on Friday 25th November, which included a fantastic lunch in addition to the fascinating tour.

The LMC maintained its long-standing relationship with Goodwood with two exclusive track days on Monday 16th May and Monday 11th November, which as always were hugely popular with those who like to push their cars hard, well away from the glare of speed cameras. For those with a burning desire to compete on the track on an equal footing with their peers, the 15th annual LMC Karting Day

at Buckmore Park, Kent on Friday 9th September was just the ticket, with around 110 enthusiastic participants battling it out in solo sprint and team endurance formats at speeds of up to 80 mph in the course of a very exciting (but clean) day's racing.

All in all, 2011 amounted to one of the Club's most active years ever, building very successfully upon the successes of recent years; with the biennial LMC Dinner back in 2012 together with another packed events calendar currently in the works, make sure you keep an eye on the LMC website (and register on our mailing list if you have not done so already) for what we have in store for you throughout 2012.



11 EOD

(11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, RLC)



Early in 2010, the IMC Committee decided to show the club's support for Britain's servicemen and women by inviting members of the armed forces to be its guests at our regular celebrity lunches in the City. We hosted serving members of 11 EOD, among them its colonel, at each of our lunch events and also selected the regiment to be our adopted charity. 11 EOD is now the beneficiary of our fund raising activities and these amounted to approximately £10,000 in 2011 alone. The presence of serving members of the regiment at these events has been greatly enjoyed by our members and we are proud to have had the opportunity to host them. It was therefore with great pleasure that we accepted the reciprocal invitation to visit 11 EOD and take lunch with its commanding officer, Lt. Col. Adam McRae MBE, and his fellow officers at the regiment's HQ at Didcot.

30 members of the club and their guests attended a personal presentation by the colonel and his armaments officers of the extent of their global activities (mainly but

not exclusively in the UK, Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan) and how they go about their operations. This included a fascinating practical demonstration, giving the visitors a unique insight into the Regiment's bomb disposal and IED search equipment and counter-measures, 'wheelbarrow' robots and similar 'tools of their trade', and to talk to the operators (Ammunition Technical Officers and Ammunition Technicians) face to face.

At the close of lunch, Colonel McRae presented the chairman with a superb display case containing replicas of the awards made to members of the regiment during its service in Afghanistan. These include several George Crosses, Military Crosses, George Medals, and Conspicuous Gallantry Medals among others, with the names of the recipients mounted within. The display case now hangs in The Old Library at Lloyd's to the left of the dais as recognition of the bond between our community and the men and women of our armed forces in general and 11 EOD in particular.



Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement and LMC Chairman Roger Earl

On Friday 18th November, the Club had the great pleasure of hosting Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement at our last celebrity lunch of 2011, held at Balls Bros in the LUC. Sir Tim duly delivered a riveting presentation of his sparkling naval career, an experience savoured by all present and full of fascinating detail and bags of dry humour. You couldn't hear a pin drop for over 40 minutes. One of the highlights was to learn that he has the unique experience of having organized a cricket match for the crew of his 'Nuke', HMS Tireless, at the North Pole, having scraped a pitch in the polar ice.

During 35 years active service in the Royal Navy, Sir Tim had five commands: two submarines, two frigates and a Naval Task Group. One of his submarine commands was the nuclear 'attack' submarine, HMS Tireless, playing 'cat and mouse' with Soviet forces under the Arctic ice during the Cold War and shadowing Soviet nuclear-armed submarine movements. He made Admiral in 2001 and was a member of the Permanent Joint HQ delivering the UK's global military contingency plans, and serving as Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff and a member of the Admiralty Board. He was also Deputy Commander-in-Chief Fleet and Admiral of Submarines, where he was responsible for delivering a £2.1 billion annual budget, with assets of £17 billion and 30,000 people employed.

We learned that Sir Tim had been second in command of HMS Conqueror when the boat was deployed during the Falklands War in 1982. Having dropped off a contingent of Special Forces on South Georgia, she then shadowed the aircraft carrier ARA Veinticinco de Mayo (the '25th of May') and the Argentine light cruiser ARA General Belgrano. The Royal Navy feared a pincer

attack with Belgrano attacking from the south and Veinticinco de Mayo from the north, so the order to engage Belgrano was sent to Conqueror from fleet command centre in the UK. On 2 May Conqueror became the first nuclear-powered submarine to fire in anger when Commander Tim McClement, Conqueror's 2ic and officer of the watch, authorised the launch of three Mark 8 torpedoes at Belgrano, two of which struck the ship and sank her. Post-war, both Belgrano's captain and the Argentine government acknowledged that the attack had been justified.

Conqueror's war did not end there. The crew of the submarine had to face Argentine Air Force attempts to locate her, and whilst Conqueror did not fire again in anger, she provided invaluable help to the task force using her sophisticated monitoring equipment to track Argentine aircraft and the like. Conqueror was decommissioned in 1990.

Today, Sir Tim is Chairman of the Appeal raising £6m to save the WWII submarine HMS ALLIANCE in the Submarine Museum at Gosport as a memorial to the 5,300 submariners who have lost their lives in the service of their country. To date the Appeal is close to achieving its target and the Club was delighted to have been able to make a healthy donation from funds raised at the lunch, which included book signing by Sir Tim of a number of editions of "Sink the Belgrano".

Other guests of the Club at this stimulating lunch included IMC member Brigadier General Mike Hickson, Director of the Royal Logistic Corp and Lt. Colonel Adam McRae, commanding officer of 11 EOD, the bomb disposal regiment.

ECURIE ECOSSE RALLY



The Scottish Highlands in early May. The odds would be against an open car with little or no windscreen and no roof. Certainly, inclement weather would pose a challenge.

Yes but not in the choice came down to campaigning LMC member Tony Pickering's 1956 US Grand Prix winning Jaguar D-type, chassis 545. The prospect of driving such a car over the Highlands' superb and largely empty roads and awesome scenery would tempt even the most reticent motoring masochist to take the risk. So 'Pick' and I took it and we were not to be disappointed.

We would be joined by fellow LMC members Tom Corfield, Max Taylor and Paul Denman. An eclectic gang of 40 plus fellow enthusiasts on this year's Tour,

including Michael Pearson (Lord Cowdray) and Sir Paul Vestey, each in their respective Ferrari 275 GTBs, Harry Leventis in his DB4GT Zagato, 'Fast Eddie' McGuire in his 1929 Speed 6 Bentley chauffeuring LMC member Paul Denman, Adrian Hamilton in a Ferrari 550, the bravura Aubrey Finburgh in his 1953 Jaguar C-type, a great mix of 1973 Porsche RSRs, E-types and the like, plus fellow Lloyd's Motor Club members Tom Corfield and Max Taylor in Tom's savage Shelby Cobra Sebring Retro, although we D-type pilots gave the latter a hard time about the soft option of choosing a closed

car. Based in Inverness, the first day's run was to the Isle of Skye and specifically the historic Eilean Iarmain Hotel for a turnaround lunch stop. It was bitterly cold and poured with rain all the way. The Scottish weather, not satisfied with such a baptism, obliged with more of the same on the way back. However, good planning in the form of multi-layered clothing, effective wet weather top dressing, gloves and visored helmets meant that with a bit of teeth gritting, the D-type crew survived and even prospered as the breathtaking scenery, copious waterfalls and legion fauna were more



than generous compensation. Needless to say, Corfield and Taylor bathed in the luxury of their warm and closed car but there is no doubt that the Pickering and Earl Team had secured the moral high ground, as had Paul Denman, perched on the top of the Speed 6 Bentley.

Oh, blessings, the second day dawned clear and dry although still cold, a welcome change for the long run up the spine of the Highlands on a straight north single-track road to Thurso. Again, magnificent scenery in an awesomely empty wilderness and a superb driving experience in both the D and the Sebring. From Thurso and skirting John O'Groats, we made for our 'farthest point' lunch at the Clan Keith 15th century Ackergill Tower on the rugged seashore at Wick, quite breathtaking and the scene of many notable film shoots, including a least one 007. That afternoon, the return journey

was equally enjoyable with lovely clear weather and the A9 from Wick to Inverness must be one of the most satisfying and fast roads in the UK.

Our final day's run was to be northeast across the Highlands to Gairloch and the beautiful Badachro Inn, the perfect lunch stop before turnaround. Thankfully, the weather again started friendly although rain was predicted for later in the day.

If the scenery had been superb the previous two days, the third trumped them – astonishingly beautiful and gilded by the sight of a magnificent stag on the ridge above, a true Monarch of the Glen pastiche. Other drivers saw a six foot wingspan sea eagle but sadly the Pickering/Earl and Corfield/Taylor teams missed that. A pity.

The return journey to Inverness was equally impelling, the more so because we

succeeded in dodging the rain which chased us all the way home. An excellent outcome.

This was our first visit to the Scottish Highlands and no more beautiful wilderness could exist on earth. The ambience, hospitality and cuisine at each of our lunch stops were a worthy match for the surroundings, the fare largely salmon smoked on the premises, fresh seafood, shellfish and crustacea straight from the sea or loch that morning, with the odd haggis and black pudding thrown in.

If they could only turn the wick up a bit and make it 10 degrees warmer, you would never want to go abroad again, although that would rather defeat the object of the exercise, as everybody else would do the same and it is the almost eerie emptiness of the Highlands that represent their special charm.

ROGER EARL



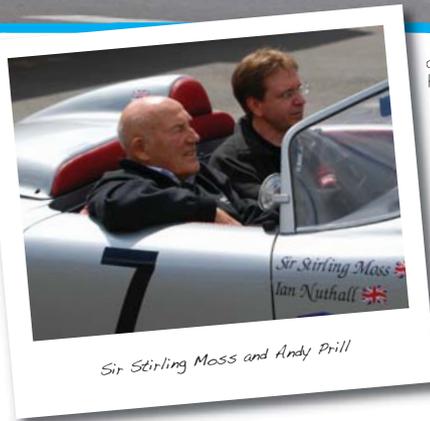
LE MANS 2011

A generous contingent of Lloyd's Motor Club members made their annual pilgrimage to La Sarthe for the 24 Hours endurance and the Le Mans Legends race that would precede it. It was to prove a memorable weekend in more ways than one.



Photographs: Jeff Bloxham

Whilst Saturday 11th June was to see the huge accident involving last May's IMC Celebrity Lunch guest and speaker, the popular Alan McNish, from which thankfully and amazingly he walked away shaken but not stirred, Thursday 9th June 2011 at Le Mans turned out to be an iconic and unique day for motorsport - the retirement from racing of the legendary Sir Stirling Moss, Lloyd's Motor Club's first VIP Honorary Member. Over 600 races (including 'Historics') and he won more than 40% of them with many more podiums to boot - a record unmatched in the history of motor racing.



Sir Stirling Moss and Andy Prill

We were there primarily of course for the Le Mans Legends race and IMC members competing included Gavin Pickering, in father Tony's Jaguar D-type, Nick Adams in an AC Ace and Stirling. This time the 'Great Man' had decided to race his new and exquisite 1961 Porsche RS61 rather than his OSCA.

Your scribe was in the pit lane waiting for him when he came in at the end of qualifying for the Legends on Thursday evening. He had made his decision whilst out on the circuit and when he returned to the pits it was to say he was not enjoying himself and that if he

continued, he felt he might give himself a serious scare. He had never raced without enjoying it and certainly had never been scared in a race car, although he had given himself a fright occasionally and did not want to start now, so he felt it was time to call it a day - but only from racing, not from the sport. To underline the point, he went on to drive up the hill at the Goodwood Festival of Speed a few weeks later. It was a momentous and heroic decision and he received a standing ovation from everybody there, including the 24 Hour pit crews - in fact, there were more than a few damp eyes around too.

On the Saturday morning, Ian Nuthall, who took over as the 'Great Man's' co-driver when I retired from racing last year (the only time I beat him at anything) and who is now looking after the OSCA FS372, went out and won class in Stirling's Porsche in the Legends race, so it was a wonderful close to the latest chapter in the greatest motor racing 'book' of all, the competition career of a certain Stirling Moss. So now we are toasting a long and enjoyable epilogue that his retirement from racing will be a happy and fulfilling one - lots of involvement in motorsport, just no longer the pressure of racing as well. As Churchill said, 'This is not the

beginning of the end, but the end of the beginning".

To round out a generally good Legends race weekend for Club members, Gavin Pickering finished 4th overall and 2nd in class against hugely competitive opposition in Ferraris, Listers and other D-types and was easily the first D home, although sadly, Nick Adams, invariably a class winner in such events, had his AC expire under him before the chequered flag was reached.



While we were at La Sarthe, one of our French friends turned up with the Bugatti Tipo 51 in which Achille Varzi won the Monaco Grand Prix in 1933, and took Stirling for a drive in it on an unmetalled road on our hostess's estate. SM found that very exhilarating and it all looked very contemporary, with plumes of dust following the car's progress.

The ACO invited Stirling to do a 'farewell' lap in the Porsche on Saturday shortly before the start of the 24 Hours and the

crowd rose to him - as did the marshals with some frenetic flag waving. Porsche specialist Andy Prill, preparer of the car, acted as Stirling's chauffeur for the occasion.

It was a great weekend with memories to be savoured and treasured. I am proud and privileged to have been part of it.

ROGER EARL



Project BLOODHOUND

Update



Despite the engineering and financial challenges, Project BLOODHOUND continues to forge ahead with building the world's first 1,000 mph car, as well as inspiring a generation of young engineers and scientists with the 'Engineering Adventure' of this huge record attempt.

From my point of view, 2011 has been a year of in three distinct parts. At the start of the year we announced the chassis build. We also released the 'genome' of the car (we put the engineering CAD drawings onto our website www.bloodhoundssc.com, for the world to see – probably the first time that this has ever been done for a prototype race car just starting its build). As you can imagine, this created something of a buzz in both professional engineering circles and perhaps more importantly for our education programme (now around 5,000 schools and colleges – a student population approaching 2 million). Education materials do not become much more 'real' than this. Our other big news early in 2011 was signing Rolex as our timing partner. A great company to have on board and a hugely valuable sponsorship for us. We are still looking for a couple more sponsors, to help complete the build programme and to run the car but Rolex was a great start to the year. For the middle

part of the year, I was off doing my 'day job' with the Royal Air Force, supporting air operations over Libya. A hugely intense few months, working with a fantastic team of people conducting a very successful air campaign to protect Libyan civilians – and a real reminder for me that I still have the best day job in the world. At the end of the air campaign, I was soon back in the UK to see another remarkable team of people doing something technically challenging, as the BLOODHOUND team progressed the design and build of the car.

After such a busy summer, a holiday seemed like a good idea. What I did, of course, was something completely different – a two week lecture tour of South Africa. The main aim was to deliver the prestigious 'John Orr' lecture at the invitation of the Southern African Institution of Mechanical Engineers and, being BLOODHOUND, we inevitably became carried away and did some other stuff as well. The result was a total of 24 engagements in the first ten

days, including some amazing responses from the media. The tour was all about promoting the BLOODHOUND education programme, which received terrific support right across South Africa. We had record audiences, ranging from 200 to 500 strong, and every venue was full to overflowing – we spoke to well over 2,000 people during the tour. The slightly scary thing is that every one of them is promising to come and see the car run in 2013: it is going to be busy on the desert when they all arrive together.

The desert preparation work is going very well. The Northern Cape team is just finishing off the main track – at 20 km by 500m wide, that is 10 million square metres cleared (by hand) so far. The key technical challenge has been removing the soil causeway that cuts across the Pan and making it flat again. I am going to have to drive across this area at over 700 mph, as the car accelerates towards the measured mile, so it needs to be perfect. They have

completed the precision grading work and now we are waiting with bated breath for the rains to seal the surface and finish the job. This will leave Hakskeen as the world's best race track - and it is great to see that the Northern Cape is just as excited as we are about it.

Whilst I was rushing around South Africa, the Engineering Team was busy back in the UK, and I returned just in time to witness an historic moment. After five years of effort to find the ideal 1,000 mph aerodynamic shape, the last of the details – the height of the nose above the ground – has now been fixed. I still find it

surprising that we left this until last, as I originally expected the shaping of the car to start at the front and work backwards. However, since the major problem is keeping the back end on the ground as the car goes supersonic, this was the first problem to solve. Then we had to make the fin the right size to keep the car pointy-end forwards, before completing the rear-end design details. This left the final piece of the puzzle as setting the angle of the nose to keep the front end on the ground, which I saw happen in December 2011. The final answer is that the underside of the car will be flat and the nose will be in line

with the bottom of the body, to give us the optimum lift-neutral shape.

Now it is time to finish building it, which will take all of 2012, before we set off for South Africa in 2013. In the meantime, we are just about to start our full-size rocket test programme in the UK. We have found the ideal venue and the pump rig, complete with Cosworth F1 engine to drive the rocket pump, is now ready to go. That is going to start 2012 with a bang. You can follow the Engineering Adventure at www.bloodhoundssc.com – it is going to be a remarkable story.

ANDY GREEN



The World's Fastest Warbird

I've always been fascinated by the Reno air races; they have to be the ultimate motorsport event, with highly modified aerial hot rods producing thousands of horsepower racing just 50' above the ground at 500mph.

It is both highly spectacular and highly dangerous, as we saw so tragically last year. Two aircraft which dominate the unlimited class are the P-51 Mustang and the FB 11 Sea Fury. My childhood dreams of competing at Reno may never come true but in 2010 I was fortunate to fly a P-51. Flying a Sea Fury was a different story though and had always seemed destined to remain a dream, until once again fate intervened. Ask the average man in the street what his favourite warbird is and chances are, he will answer

"Spitfire". Ask any pilot which warbird he would most like to fly and you will almost certainly be told that the connoisseur's choice is the Hawker Sea Fury. Conceived towards the end of the war and in front-line service for nearly ten years from 1947 to 1956, the Sea Fury was a development of the earlier Typhoon and Tempest. Powered by a 2,500 hp, 18 cylinder Bristol Centaurus sleeve valve radial engine, the Sea Fury has a maximum speed of 460mph which made it the fastest prop-driven aircraft ever built. Even today a modified Fury holds the unofficial speed record for a piston-engined aircraft at 547mph.

After North Korean forces swarmed across the 38th Parallel on 25 June

1950, the UN forces faced with maintaining air superiority after the intervention of the Chinese included the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm. On 9 August 1952, Lt Peter 'Hoagy' Carmichael RN was leading a flight of four Sea Furies on patrol close to 'MiG Alley', when almost right on cue, a formation of MiG 15s attacked. S/Lt 'Smoo' Ellis shouted "Break!" and the flight split into two pairs. The MiGs' speed advantage was balanced by the Sea Furies' formidable armament and

manoeuvrability, so when one of the MiGs overshot 'Hoagy' and deployed his airbrakes to try to match the Sea Fury's speed, rather than zoom-climbing away out of danger, the game was over – no other aircraft in the Korean skies could outmanoeuvre a Fury. 'Hoagy' punched the MiG full of cannon and it rolled onto its back, exploding into the ground below. The flight also damaged two other MiGs before returning to carrier HMS Ocean. A famous day for 802 Squadron and particularly for Carmichael, who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on behalf of the flight.

There are just a handful of airworthy Sea Furies today and the rarest of all are the T20 two-seater versions, originally built not to train the pilots how to fly the Sea Fury but to teach them how to operate the aircraft's complex weapons systems. Sea Fury VX 281 is flown by pilots of the Royal Navy Historic Flight and is painted in the markings of Sea Fury F.10 TF912 '120/VL' of 799 Naval Air Squadron, part of the 50th Training Air Group stationed at RNAS Yeovilton in 1949. TF912 had earlier served with 802 Squadron. Later on in its life, like so many Sea Furies, VX 281 was raced in the States where it was named 'Nuttin' Special'.

I first realised that this entry in my logbook was going to be different shortly after arriving at RNAS Yeovilton, when I was marched into the equipment store to

be kitted out with a 'bonedome', flightsuit, boots and those pigskin gloves familiar to any British military pilot. Issuing my flight gear took nearly an hour and concentrated on ensuring that the helmet was a perfect fit – once it is correctly adjusted the straps are actually sewn into place.

As the performance of the Sea Fury is more akin to a jet than a piston-engined aircraft, rather than training on a Texan as I did for the Mustang, like all the RNHF pilots my familiarisation exercise was carried out in a Jet Provost. My instructor was former FAA and top display pilot John Beattie, who was surprisingly indulgent and encouraging as I flew my first military jet. The 'JP' was a beautifully balanced aircraft and we spent a memorable hour or so practising aerobatics high above Yeovilton at up to 10,000', chasing around the





clouds as the sun started to set. It was a wonderful way to spend an afternoon but John assured me that it was just an appetiser for the treat in store.

Returning a week later, P1 in the Sea Fury was to be former Boscombe Down test pilot Lt Cdr Chris Gotke RN, or 'Goaty' as he likes to be known. My wife was going to flying with John in the 'JP' as camera ship and I was looking forward to formation flying with two of the very best display pilots in the world. The flight briefing was short but serious; our plan was to leave Yeovilton and head for Compton Abbas for a low pass, then via Godalming in Surrey to Mayfield in Sussex, scene of many famous dogfights during the Battle of Britain. We would then return to Yeovilton via Shoreham and Goodwood, before flying up the Solent, finishing with half an hour or so of aerobatics.

The first impression that strikes you about the Sea Fury is its size. I thought that the Mustang dwarfed the Spitfire but the Fury seemed as large again; just climbing into the aircraft is a task in itself and quite dangerous as the tiny footstep for the rear seat is a full stretch away from the wing, added to which you have to swap feet whilst trying to maintain your balance nearly ten feet off the ground – one slip and this dream would end up in casualty. However that was nothing compared with repeating that task after two hours in the air when you are tired and the whole aircraft is coated with oil from its radial engine.

Sitting in the cockpit the aircraft seemed to shrink slightly but the folded wings tower over you like a pair of drawbridges and the huge Rotol propeller of nearly 13' in

diameter dominates your view like a portcullis. Chris completed the priming sequence, shouted "Contact", then hit the starter and primer together. A few blades rotated then the engine roared into life, engulfing us in a cloud of oily blue smoke, which quickly disappeared in the propwash. As the engine started to warm up Chris selected the wing-fold lever to 'spread', suddenly the drawbridges were lowered and the deafening crescendo subsided as the noise was no longer reflected off the wings.

With the Ts and Ps in the green, the engine was tested at zero boost at Maximum Fine before exercising the propeller and carrying out a magneto-drop check. All this time Chris was holding the stick well and truly back with the brakes

“There are just a handful of airworthy Sea Furies today and the rarest of all are the T20 two-seater versions”

applied like he was trying to push down a brick wall. It was a staggering display of power inside the aircraft but must have been even more awe-inspiring outside as I noticed everyone instinctively back away – unleashing the full force of the Sea Fury makes the tail wheel bounce as the immense power passes through the aircraft. A quick supercharger change-over was next on the checklist, then the throttle was brought back and the signal

given for chocks away. As with every large taildragger, taxiing means weaving heavily from side to side to check that the coast is clear. It's at this point that you have to pinch yourself – hard – here you are, sitting in a Sea Fury, about to take off from an active military airbase. Chris aligned the aircraft as accurately as possible for take-off and I followed his movements on the controls. He let the Fury roll forward about ten feet to lock the tailwheel and check that we would go straight when the brakes were released, then he wound up the engine to zero boost. Release the brakes and we were moving – no matter how smoothly you apply the power the Fury swings to the right due to the massive torque from the prop' – it seemed like that great gyroscope wanted to turn us upside down. As the tail rose around 60 kts the power application was stopped for an instant then reapplied once it stabilised – once the tail is up there is only 10" of ground clearance. Around 100 kts we were airborne and this banshee was running at 2,700 rpm and climbing fast with all 2,500 hp pulsating through the airframe. We then throttled back to 4" of boost and climbed out – in less than three minutes we could easily have been at 10,000' but at full power the Fury drinks 180 gallons of expensive avgas per hour and we intended to fly more than halfway across England and back. We also had to slow down to let the 'JP' catch up, so we set 2,400 rpm, cruising at 230 kts, reducing our gallons per hour to merely 45.

It is always a pleasure to watch someone who is an absolute master of their craft. As we flew to Compton Abbas in formation, Chris and John demonstrated why they are entrusted to fly the world's

most valuable warbirds – I could only shake my head in amazement as they took it in turns to tuck in between that small gap between wing and tailfin, then rotate around each other like roulette.

The Sea Fury was a beautifully balanced aircraft and certainly not what I expected. In the same way that there is a huge leap from the Stearman to the Texan, then the same again from the Texan to the Mustang, that distance is equal if not more so from the Mustang to the Sea Fury. Its power delivery and manoeuvrability were more like a jet, yet its controls were so light and harmonised that it reminded me of a Chipmunk – I had expected heavy controls demanding both hands and feet.

One of the many highlights of the flight was the low pass at Goodwood. I have flown into Westhampnett before in basic trainers such as Stamps and Tiger Moths so Chris left that one to me. It was probably that low pass in particular which really put the Sea Fury's speed in perspective. As we were travelling at four or five times the speed of a Stampe that airfield suddenly appeared out of nowhere, so the first time I hardly had time to appreciate the view (well at least that's why I told Chris we needed to make a second pass...).

Flying back up the Solent with the setting sun reflecting off the wings would have been a perfect end to the flight but we were not finished yet. Although time was

pressing Chris kept his promise and we spent a glorious half hour practising aerobatics high above Yeovilton. It was now that I truly understood what an incredible aircraft I was flying. Trying to take photos whilst upside down looping an aircraft is never easy but it was possible in the Fury, thanks to servo tabs on the ailerons which diminish the stick and rudder forces required – just ease off at the top of the loop to avoid any 'wobble' and take the shot. The stick movements required are very small and gentle, except during roll where you use full deflection.

All too soon our time was over. The 'JP' had turned back an hour or so before as they had reached the point of no return on fuel. Unlike the Mustang, landing a Fury is not easy so was definitely best left to Chris. As he said afterwards, there's a saying that there are two types of Sea Fury pilots; those who have ground-looped it and those who will. Fortunately, Chris is the latter and after more obligatory low passes over the airbase, we landed in a graceful two-pointer.

I am extremely grateful to Chris and John for their patience and tuition. Flying the Sea Fury was a great privilege. It is an extraordinary aircraft – it roars like a banshee, performs like a jet, yet has the most beautifully harmonised controls of any aircraft – actually make that machine – I have ever controlled. I was warned

beforehand that it takes about a week before the Cheshire Cat grin disappears from your face after flying the Fury. Looking back, I reckon it only really disappears when you start to think about how on earth can you really ever fly anything else?

JAS

2012 is a major year for naval aviation, marking the centenaries of the first flight from a warship at sea, the commissioning of the first Royal Naval Air Station and the formation of the Royal Flying Corps. It is also the 70th anniversary of the Channel Dash, the 40th anniversary of the formation of the Royal Navy Historic Flight and the 30th anniversary of the Falklands War. There is no better way to celebrate these milestones than by donating to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, which is why Lord March has selected the FNHT as his designated charity at the 2012 Goodwood Revival Meeting.

Please visit www.fnht.co.uk for more information.



AMERICAN NOMADS

Richard Grant was right. I have been running with The Rolling Bones for a year or two now, racking up nearly 20,000 miles in a '32 Ford and during those adventures certain moments have burnt themselves into my memory. Outrunning twisters, tangling with hoboes and hillbilly moonshiners, driving blind in snowstorms and almost being shot (twice). Life on the road with The Bones is always one strange experience after another.

First trip last year was the 10th Lone Star Round Up in Austin, Texas, a welcome excuse for another epic road trip. The journey would see us crossing eight states from upstate New York to Texas, via Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Mississippi then Arkansas, watching the seasons change from winter through spring to summer, all in a matter of days.

When we left New York it was pitch black and freezing, staying sub zero almost all

the way to Texas. In a stripped out Hot Rod the cold seeps into your bones – no heater, no windows and no interior, just a blast of hot air every now and then through the firewall. None of that matters – you never have a bad day out on the road.

A heavy hoar frost made driving through Pennsylvania a beautiful sight – the trees looked like chrome as for mile after mile you drove through a forest of ice. By the time we rolled through Memphis with the light fading we had to find a motel fast. First choice was a dump – downtown on the wrong side of the tracks, near a bunch of truck stops, this place was too sleazy for even a self-respecting 'roach. We decided to move on down the road and later found out that we had just escaped 'Hookersville' – rooms are usually rented by the hour in that place and if you aren't buying, they bang on your door for trade. More sinister was the fact that it was three months before the corpse of one working girl – the victim of a gang shooting – was found under a mattress in the same motel. First major stop

was to visit George Poteet's car farm in Mississippi. I guess you would describe George as a Hot Rod philanthropist and patron of speed – his collection of cars numbers nearly 200 and last year he went 472mph at Bonneville.

We were treated to lunch in an old (out of service) warehouse, down by the railroad tracks, on the edge on the time-warp town of Holly Springs, complete with Ante Bellum houses where the newest building is the art deco cinema. Everyone was taken with the Southern delicacy of fried fruit pie.

So far we had been travelling south in a small pocket of clear but ice cold weather, with snowstorms above and tornadoes below. That night the storms changed direction and we had to hole up in the motel for the next morning – standing outside in the eye of the storm was an eerie experience – suddenly dead calm when a raging storm had threatened to whisk away the cars just a moment or two before. Heading through the Bible Belt was

curious; in parts of Tennessee and Arkansas in particular, the houses were desperate – tin shacks reminding me of the townships I had visited in South Africa – yet with cynical regularity the only decent buildings were the pristine churches.

It was somewhere in the middle of Gawdknowswhere in Tennessee that we ran into the hillbillies. Filling up at what looked like an abandoned gas station - made of tin – three quad bikes arrived carrying three throwbacks and a pet hog, except that we then realised that the hog was actually just the ugliest person we had ever seen. It was only 10am yet they were wasted - black sockets for eyes and a bad attitude. They were very insistent that we meet their 'Ma' back at the farm, where we could try their 'White Mule' shine but only a fool would have accepted that kind of southern hospitality. Fortunately, we outnumbered them two to one when their attitudes started to match their pig ugly faces – it's incidents like those that make you realise that travelling on your own can

be dangerous, unless you carry some sort of 'protection'. Fortunately, a 'peacemaker' can defuse just about any situation.

The San Jose Hotel was our base in Austin, the best place in town – live bands in the parking lot, right on the strip and opposite The Continental Club. Hanging out on the hotel wall each night we had a catwalk show all to ourselves – Austin is a college town full of pretty young lovelies wearing short summer skirts and high-heeled cowboy boots. As usual we attracted more than our fair share of crazies too...

The Round Up is a two day event and as expected, there was a record attendance for this 10th anniversary, with live music from Jimmy Vaughan. Best of all, there was a vendor selling fried pies. Even travelling to and from the show we seemed to attract trouble, one morning being surrounded by hoboes who appeared out of nowhere, then being held up at gunpoint by two gangsters – OK, so they were only ten and carrying water pistols but they had

attitude. The journey home was a long haul and we hit a heavy snowstorm crossing the Appalachian Mountains. We resorted to crawling along the hard shoulder, 50 feet at a time, before we had to stop and scrape the ice off the 'screen, with 18 wheelers flying past just inches away. Eventually we reached an off ramp and we had no choice to but to find the nearest motel (which looked like it could have been used in "The Shining") and once again, hole up until the weather cleared, before struggling back to New York.

It was another memorable trip - I spent more precious time behind the wheel, we met plenty of crazies, saw some great cars and more of a great country.

Three months later I was back for the annual thrash to Bonneville Speedweek, another long haul of over 5,000 miles. 2011 was a special year for The Bones, marking ten years since Ken Schmidt and Keith Cornell started building traditional Hot Rods in a cowshed in upstate New



Photographs: Brian Darwas & Ron Hickman

York. Each car takes a year and several thousand hours to build. The plan was for the three original Rolling Bones '32 Fords plus all ten customer cars to be there on the salt for several major photo shoots. To mark the occasion we also had cult NY documentary maker Brian Darwas along for the journey.

The trip out to Bonneville was the usual cat and mouse game with the Feds. So far I seem to have led a charmed life with the cops – chasing Casey's sinister black '32 sedan we were running at around 4,000 revs in fifth when we blew by the parked Highway Patrol and State Trooper. We thought our luck had finally run out and expected to see flashing lights but...nothing, so we just carried on. It was only when everyone caught up later on that we learnt that we had actually been tagged at well over 100mph by a police aircraft and the only reason we weren't stopped was because they had set up a road block to book everyone else...that cost us a few beers.

This year was special for personal reasons too; I had always dreamed of driving a

'32 roadster to Bonneville, stripping the car and racing it on the salt, then driving home. 2011 made that dream a reality and I finally fulfilled my lifelong ambition to follow in the footsteps of those Hot Rod racers all those decades ago.

It was hard work preparing the car in near 100 degree heat under the camouflage net – we ended up swapping engines three times and transmissions twice – to be rewarded with a personal best of 128mph. Don't forget, this was in a steel-bodied car built in 1932, powered by a sidevalve engine – speed is relative and driving at anything over 100 with no windscreen is a blast in more ways than one.

The drives back East are always different – those journeys always pass too quickly; head-down, focused thrashes back home, saying "Goodbye" to friends along the way, as they go their separate ways and the group dwindles until it is just Ken, Keith and me.

Why these road trips? To quote Richard Grant again: "People wander in America

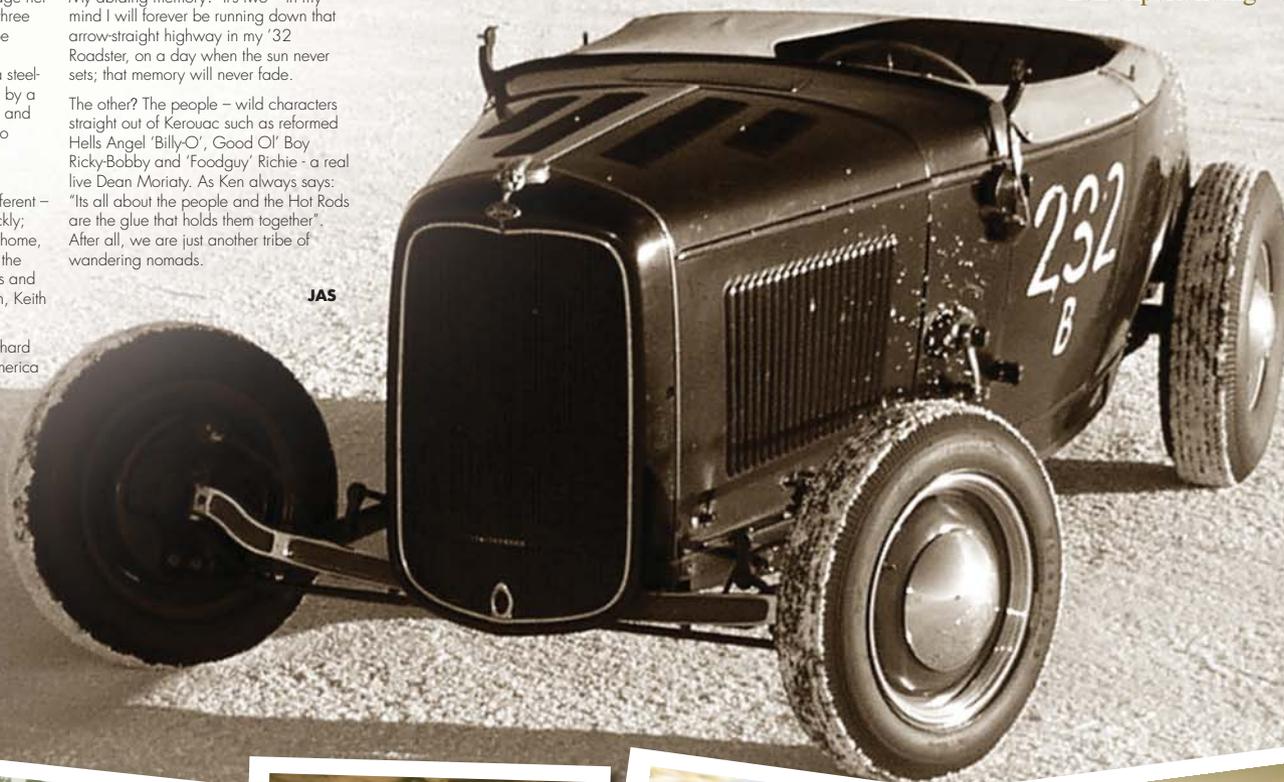
because they can; the space and the possibility exists". A philosopher once defined a nomad as: "Someone who doesn't feel stable when stationary, a nomad feels stable when experiencing velocity". If that is the case, then I guess I am a nomad at heart.

My abiding memory? It's two – in my mind I will forever be running down that arrow-straight highway in my '32 Roadster, on a day when the sun never sets; that memory will never fade.

The other? The people – wild characters straight out of Kerouac such as reformed Hells Angel 'Billy-O', Good Ol' Boy Ricky-Bobby and 'Foodguy' Richie - a real live Dean Moriarty. As Ken always says: "It's all about the people and the Hot Rods are the glue that holds them together". After all, we are just another tribe of wandering nomads.

JAS

A philosopher once defined a nomad as: "Someone who doesn't feel stable when stationary, a nomad feels stable when experiencing velocity"





Safari Rally

In Spring 2010 John Lloyd contacted us to build a Ford Escort Mk2 to enter the Morocco 2010 and the Safari Classic Rally 2011. As a company that specialises in historic car preparation this was great news for us to build a car which was quite specific for these types of events.

The rules of the car build were reasonably straightforward and set down in two sets of regulations, one from the organisers and the other from the FIA.

The cars were to be to FIA Appendix K regulation (classic) and with free roll cage/suspension design due to the rough nature of the events.

We set about designing the car based around these sets of rules. John O'Connor who runs the workshops had entered and won the Safari in an Escort and I had competed on Safari myself many times, so we both knew what a task this was going to be. We set about the bodysell design to begin with and from the outset decided not to become paranoid about weight saving, build the car as strong as possible

and ensure a good solid platform to work from.

First we sourced a Mk2 Escort in pristine condition car in Belgium and went to Bruges to collect the car, we then stripped it down to a bare shell to see if there were any repairs required, as after all the body was 34 years old.

There were only minor repairs to be done and we then started to convert the car to full group 4 specifications which was the homologation of its day, seam welding and strengthening the shell as much as possible. We then started to build a roll cage and ended up with our own unique design. We focused on the main suspension areas and built the cage into all four corners, basically reinforcing the

areas where the shock absorbers attached. All the suspension points were double strengthened with high carbon steel which we sourced from a military aircraft parts supplier. The fuel tank area turned out to be a bigger job than we first thought as we were planning on using a 120 litre tank to cope with the long distances. This meant removing the original rear bulkhead and moving it forwards into the car to accommodate the large capacity tank. We also planned on running 15" tyres and wanted to carry two rear tyres inside the boot, again these would not fit so we removed the boot floor and lowered it by 20mm and rebuilt it. This did the job perfectly but with two rear tyres, spares and 120 litres in the tank, the rear became very heavy so we re-

designed the rear shock absorber mountings to give us an extra 50mm of suspension travel. This involved raising the rear turret locations and whilst they were out we made a new set in double thickness high carbon steel.

With the bodysell complete it was then painted and the build started. Dampers were going to be the key to any success in Africa, so we worked closely with Proflex suspension which are a Belgium company and set about to design a specific damper for the event. The rules allowed us to do whatever we wanted to do with the damper as long as it looked like an original one and fitted in the original locations. We took a damper from a Ford Focus WRC '07 model and modified it to fit into The Mk2's locations. The rear was going to take a huge amount of stress with the extra weight, so we built the tube of the damper with roller bearings as well as the normal damping to stop it overheating, then used a nitrogen gas canister to take care of the shock damping. The front damper had to retain

the original stub axle to comply with the appendix K rule, we then had some front stubs made in the highest grade carbon steel we could find which we sourced in the States and welded them to the new damper. The damper was set to a "medium" setting and we built into it 18 adjustable settings for rebound, low & high speed control, so that we could fine tune it after fitting.

We took the brakes from the appendix K rules and fitted the largest homologated ones from a tarmac car which uses the same calliper as a small Cessna aircraft.

Cooling was always going to be an issue as ambient temperatures were going to be in the low 30s. We fitted a roof vent to the car and vented through the rear windows, which gave a good air flow over the driver and co-driver - the faster they went the cooler they would become. The radiator also had to be enlarged as the standard radiator would simply not cope. We cut away the original radiator mounts and increased the radiator size by 100%.

The standard core is normally around 35mm and we fitted a 55mm core from a VVV van, mounted two cooling fans and a header tank, which raised the capacity of the coolant from a standard 4.5 litres to 9.6 litres, meaning that there were no concerns in this area at all.

The engine used is a RS1800 or BDG, this is an all alloy 2.0 ltr unit using a twin cam set up with multi valve and carburettors. As most of the event was run at altitude we noticed we could not push enough air into the engine and we played around with bigger and bigger carburettors to try to improve this. Eventually we ended up with a much smaller carburettor than normal which had the effect of forcing the air in much more efficiently. We then obtained some samples of fuel and were horrified at how crude African petrol is compared to European. The fuel is not refined like in Europe and is a much lower octane. We then reduced the compression ratio and backed off the detonation as we were worried about reliability and lost some

“As most of the event was run at altitude we noticed we could not push enough air into the engine”



Photographs: Geoff Mayes

25 brake horse power compared to a UK engine but as the fuel was so poor in quality, we could not take the risk of damage.

The gearbox options were only two as the only two homologated were a four speed original from a RS2000 or a five speed ZF box. The four speed would not have been strong enough so we set about building a new ZF. These boxes now are so rare and almost impossible to find. We managed to find a Maserati turbo in France which used a similar box. Again the Dover ferry was used and I went to collect the box, we brought it back and rebuilt it using all new internals.

The axle was always going to take a lot of stress so we retained the original design but had the tubes of the axle made 25% thicker than normal, again using high grade carbon steel which we sourced from the same place in The States as we did the stubs.

The car was finished and we tested in Wales and all looked very good. We set off for Morocco and had a great event

with very little problems and finished a fantastic 4th overall after seven long days of competition based in the Atlas Mountain range.

The car was then rebuilt for the Safari Rally and very little was required apart from the normal service items. We stripped the engine/gearbox and axle and dampers as a precaution, fitted a new clutch and half shafts and packaged everything off in a container to Mombasa. By this time we had agreed to run Stig Blomqvist as well as John and a new car had been built for Stig to the exact same specification as John's Morocco car, to run as a two car team.

We arrived in Mombasa to find unusually high rainfall for the season and the roads were in a real mess. There was water and deep mud everywhere. Where there was no water or mud, there was no road as it had been washed away.

This threw up some new problems for us which we had never experienced before, as the muddy water was penetrating everywhere. The river crossings and

puddles were so deep the water started to enter the clutch bell housing and then immediately drying and setting like concrete behind the clutch cover, causing us to lose the clutch. We had to remove the clutch every night and either replace it or wash out the old ones to keep going. The mud was also oozing into the clutch release bearing and in just a few kms would rip out the inner ball bearing race and make the bearing useless. On top of this, the water was seeping into the starter motors and alternators and ripping them apart inside. This really was a new challenge for us and having used the same set up that had been used for many Safaris, we were faced with this ongoing battle and spares were starting to become low as we never dreamt of damage like this. One thing that kept us going was looking at the other teams and seeing what problems they were having; servicing in the same areas each evening we could see what other teams and other cars were going through and our problems were minor compared to some of the issues going on across from us.

After nine very long, muddy and challenging days we brought the two cars home in fantastic 3rd and 9th places overall. After looking at the video footage each day it is remarkable what an almost 40 year old car went through and how it stood up to the punishment of 4,200 kms of the hardest driving conditions in the world. Full credit to John and Stig for surviving these conditions. At the time we were all thinking "What are we doing here?" but after a few days back at base, we cannot wait to go back and face the challenge again, such is the appeal of this event.

If we return again in two years' time then we will be more than ready, the car stood up well overall and an outright victory is possible. The clutch and mud issues have already been addressed and the car will be more like a submarine next time. 2013 here we come...

PHIL MILLS



Tour Britannia 2011

Third time lucky?

Tour Britannia 2011, start at Celtic Manor and finish at Silverstone via Pembrey, Castle Combe, Badminton, the Prescott Hill Climb and a host of special and off road stages with the odd 'special test' thrown in, all in three days

Our record so far? 2009: 1961 E-type 'lowdrag coupe', broke down (disintegrating fanbelt pulley), lots of penalties, do better next year. 2010: 1950 XK120 OTS, broke down (broken throttle linkage), lots of penalties, do better next year. Are you detecting a pattern? My co-driver, Brigadier Mike Hickson, (a soldier and a racer) and myself have a simple approach, we philosophically accept the trials and tribulations of breakdowns (old cars), weather (the 2010 route was mainly in Snowdonia, for anyone who does not know, OTS stands for open top sports) and the 'professional' competitors whose timers and tripmeters are tuned to the nearest nano-something, but we do not accept self-inflicted errors.

So, our mount for 2011? Given our determination to do better the reader might expect us to have chosen a proven and

reliable vehicle with many years of mechanical fettling - well no - actually a 1954 Aston Martin DB2/4 recently

"It seemed we had been given a penalty for using a 'modern' navigational aid but we pointed out that there was very little 'modern' about the car"

retrieved from 35 years in a barn and mine for only a few months. Paintwork, not really, interior, bare, engine, still running in after a rebuild. The competition

in our class? An immaculate Ferrari 250 GTO, an ex-works Healey 3000, a magnificent DB4GT and a Ferrari 250GT Lusso amongst others.

SCRUTINEERING

So we arrived at scrutineering at Celtic Manor, still basking in Ryder Cup glory, which is why we stayed at the Holiday Inn across the road. Scrutineering complete, numbers on and ready to go, not realising that we had already collected a two minute penalty - more later. This year for the first time we had a retro-rally style tripmeter rather than relying on the odometer (timing equipment is a pair of vintage Heuer stopwatches) and two hours later, after several trips along the A449 we decided that our calibration was "good enough" - forgetting that a small error over a mile or two becomes a big error over a 25 mile section.

REGULARITY

We are in the regularity section, defined as "a form of motorsport usually conducted on public roads but sometimes including off-road and track sections. The object is to maintain precise times and precise average speeds on various sections of pre-defined route". Note the word "precise" - penalties are incurred for every second early or late at a timing point and the position of the timing points is unknown.

DAY 1

On day 1 we covered 256 miles including 35 miles of 'tests', ten in all at seven different locations - anyone who thinks regularity sounds boring think again. The routes selected are magnificent, the tests challenging and boy did it rain, always interesting on drum brakes. End of day 1, too many penalties, where did they come from?

Day 2

There was no time to worry about that, so on to day 2 when we covered 262 miles including 40 miles of tests, nine at eight locations including the Castle Combe circuit (where we also did a 'parade' later in the day). The last test of the day, at Caerwent, a former Royal Navy Propellant Factory and RAF ammunition storage facility, deserves special mention. The site is a mosaic of buildings, roads and tracks and the nine mile route comprised 97 corners with four timing points at unspecified locations which one had to arrive at "precisely" on time according to the average speeds (which changed several times over the nine miles). Fantastic, then we returned the next morning to do it again but reversing the route. At the end of day two we had more penalties and were rather further down the order than we felt was justified. We knew where we had incurred penalties on the tests and that these amounted to seconds rather than minutes, so how had we collected nearly five minutes of penalties? This was no longer a joke and since we had not suffered a breakdown or hit each other we decided, in the friendliest way, to appeal - more later.

THE END
So, here there we were, no breakdowns, no disastrous self-inflicted errors, but what about those penalties? Well, one was eliminated once the scoring had been checked and the other? It seemed we had been given a penalty for using a 'modern' navigational aid but we pointed out that there was very little 'modern' about the car, especially the navigational aids (or indeed the owner) and the penalty was removed. When we left Celtic Manor that morning we were down in the mid field. Leading overall was a splendid and expertly driven and navigated Talbot 105 Alpine, in 2nd place a very fine Lancia Fulvia 1300 and in 3rd place that ex-works Healey 3000. We were quietly confident that, with penalties removed,

DAY 3

So, day 3, goodbye Celtic manor and Holiday Inn and off to Silverstone. First call Caerwent's 97 corners the other way, then an 11 mile road test before arriving at the wonderful Prescott Hill Climb. I had driven Prescott before, being taught how to drive up the hill by an instructor who then took

three of us up in a Ford Granada Estate at about twice the speed that any of us had managed in our own rather posh cars. This time the test was average rather than outright speed but believe me, this is a magical place whatever the challenge. Finally after 184 miles and six tests we arrived at Silverstone - the brand new pit complex. Here we are told that we will be the very first competitive event to use the new complex - very special. At Silverstone we completed the track test and the 'special test' which consists of a very short, tight section which, unlike the other tests, one completes as fast as possible and against a bogey time. We knew we would incur penalties here so we just had to minimise them and the Aston was still going strong so no holding back.

THE END

So, here there we were, no breakdowns, no disastrous self-inflicted errors, but what about those penalties? Well, one was eliminated once the scoring had been checked and the other? It seemed we had been given a penalty for using a 'modern' navigational aid but we pointed out that there was very little 'modern' about the car, especially the navigational aids (or indeed the owner) and the penalty was removed. When we left Celtic Manor that morning we were down in the mid field. Leading overall was a splendid and expertly driven and navigated Talbot 105 Alpine, in 2nd place a very fine Lancia Fulvia 1300 and in 3rd place that ex-works Healey 3000. We were quietly confident that, with penalties removed,



Photographs: MotorsportintheUK.co.uk

Epynr



Cwmcan

we would make the top five. When the results went up we were thrilled to find that we were 1st in class and 3rd overall.

What a great event, some take it very seriously, some less so but most of all everyone has fun. As for my Aston, universally the cry was "You won't touch that bodywork will you?" and from the ebullient Robert Coucher at Octane, whose lovely XK140 goes faster than it should, "Max Taylor and Mike Hickson won the patina contest hands down in their superbly shabby Aston Martin DB2/4." Third time lucky.

MAX TAYLOR



Derek Daly 1978

Chevron Formula 2

In June 2009 an advert popped up on www.racecarsdirect.com for a 1978 Formula 2 Chevron B42. Apparently the seller had located the car in a disused petrol station in North Yorkshire and was selling it on, as the rebuild project was too much for him. The description said that all the parts were there other than the engine, which had been removed by cutting the rear chassis legs. The car had lain dismantled in the petrol station since 1980. I acquired the project for a bit more than it was really worth but enough to see off other interested parties, so a van was duly despatched to Yorkshire to collect the bits.

The Chevron was chassis number B42-78-16, which had been bought new from Chevron by an American, John David Briggs. He and his fellow American Don Briedenbach had been racing Can Am cars in the States in 1977 and decided to compete in the 1978 European Formula 2 Championship. They had met Peter Gethin during 1977, who retired at the end of that year and became their team Manager for F2 in 1978.

Briggs sold the car in 1979 to Warren Booth, who ran it in Aurora AFX (a British 'anything goes' single seater championship), and he sold it in early 1980 for a newer F2 Chevron. It was then acquired by the owner of the petrol station. The Hart engine was removed and used for another project and the remaining

parts lay around, becoming rusty and decaying for the next 30 years.

Once home, Mike Catlow, who I charged with the 'hoped for' re-build, laid them all out. A fellow restorer commented that he had seen worse, though Mike said he had not. However, we sorted it all out and decided to proceed with the rebuild. The gearbox still contained its oil from 30 years previously and the insides were still good, though the casing needed attention. Much of the suspension was in a poor

“Apparently the seller had located the car in a disused petrol station in North Yorkshire”

state but it was all there and could easily be replicated, as could some of the more rusty parts, such as the nose and wing frames. Those parts that were in good order were despatched for cleaning and re-plating. The uprights were sent for crack testing. The main aluminium tub was taken to Dennis Allread's workshop in Bolton. Dennis had been an original Chevron employee, making these cars in the '70s under Derek Bennett, the founder. Bennett was killed in a hang gliding accident in 1978 and Chevron ceased to trade in 1980. Dennis set up his own business

around the corner from the old Chevron works and still had the original B42 chassis jig.

We dropped the tub off to him at the beginning of November 2009 when he commented: "I suppose you would like this back by Christmas"? Optimistically we agreed. We eventually collected it in June 2010. 90% of the original tub was sound but a new front bulkhead and rear chassis legs were fabricated and joined to it. Other brackets that had not weathered very well were scrapped and re-made. The original bag tanks, which had only had two years' use in 1978 and 1979 were in excellent condition but were refitted with new foam. The Chevron F2 works team of 1978 consisted of Derek Daly, Elio de Angelis and occasionally Nigel Mansell. The team was backed by ICI Chemicals. An original set of Derek Daly's ICI bodywork was included with the car, even though my chassis no. 16 was not an ICI works car. Many consider the ICI F2 bodywork to be one of the nicest colour schemes at the time and probably since and so I decided that I would adopt this colour scheme. It would be an intricate paint job but luckily I was able to persuade the McLaren paint shop manager, George Langhorn, to paint the bodywork. He said that if it was possible to obtain the original paint colours, it would be better to repaint the Warren Booth body work rather than touching up the original ICI bodywork. Amazingly,

the local car paint supplier was still in possession of a very old ICI car paint manual, showing the original colour codes, so we could easily reproduce the three different colours of green used in the original design. Meantime, I had located a Hart 420R engine of the type used in the car originally and this was given to Connaught Racing Engines for a rebuild. Most other parts, such as instruments, fire extinguishers, seat belts, oil and fuel pipes are still readily available and were gradually assembled to complete the project. The two sets of original Dymag wheels were crack tested, found to be intact and were shot blasted and refurbished.

Bearings were replaced in the uprights, brake calipers resealed, steering rack overhauled and a new aluminium radiator manufactured. The re-built Hart engine was duly installed and then the completed bodywork, on which George had done a superb job, was fitted to the completed rolling chassis. The complete car was then taken to Goodfabs exhausts to have the exhaust system made. Even if the exhaust system had survived it would not be as efficient as a modern day stainless steel system and Goodfabs, who provide most of the exhaust systems for the Formula 1 teams, were only too happy to make a bespoke system for the car.

During the summer of 2010, I was invited to a party where Peter Gethin was one of the other guests. He remembered well the car and the team that he managed in 1978. John David Briggs' mother owned the Hotel Tropicana in Las Vegas and she financed the team and he said they bought as many as four chassis from the Chevron factory during the year. 1978 was one of the most competitive seasons ever for European F2 racing, during a great era, and it was therefore difficult for

the Americans to qualify at some of the races. As many as 50 cars would usually try for 30 grid places.

At the Thruxton meeting, both Briggs and Briedenbach struggled and complained that the cars were useless. Gethin then jumped in to one of the cars and set a time that would have put it on the front row of the grid, at which point, needless to say, they stopped complaining. Peter said



one of his biggest headaches was keeping Briggs fit to drive. Apparently, his mother would despatch new clothes to him from Las Vegas with the pockets full of 'recreational substances', which may have had an effect on his ability to concentrate on the task at hand. By March 2011 the rebuild was complete so a test day was duly booked at Donington, where in May the car would debut in the third round of the Historic European F2 Championship. The car ran pretty faultlessly at the test until the battery went flat as a result of an electrical fault but by that time everything had been bedded in and it would be ready to race at the beginning of May.

I completed three rounds of the Historic F2 Championship in 2011 at Donington, Brands Hatch and Dijon. The Donington meeting was fraught with problems. The rev' counter packed up in qualifying but I still qualified 14th from 29 starters.

Unfortunately the car ran out of petrol in the first race and as a consequence the fuel pump broke, which meant we were unable to start it for the second race. We eventually started it in the pit lane, so I was able to join the back of the grid and finished the race in 13th position.

At Brands Hatch, the car was jumping out of fourth gear in qualifying, then it ran out of petrol again in the first race but it went well in the second race and I finished in 8th place after starting at the back of the 29 car field.

By Dijon we had solved most of the teething problems and not least sorted out the fuel consumption. After making some modifications to the suspension the car ran well in both races. Starting 10th on the grid in race 1, I finished 8th and then 7th in race 2. For 2012, we will make some more suspension modifications to make better use of the tyres. As I become more used to the very rapid pace of the car, I hope I can move nearer the front.

Formula 2 in the late '70s and early '80s was very much the breeding ground for the Formula 1 drivers of the time and Historic F2 is becoming ever more popular as the cost of running Historic F1 cars escalates. The whole project from beginning to end was a fascinating experience, though my advice to anybody tackling the same thing would be to start with a complete car. Some of the parts that were missing were crucial to the rebuild and it proved difficult finding or borrowing specific parts in order to have replacements fabricated. Nevertheless the end result was worth the effort.

I am always delighted to see anybody from the Lloyd's Motor Club at HSCC Meetings, so please come and say hello if you are in the paddock.

HUGH PRICE



Hugh Price 2011



The Lloyd's Motor Club Members' Battlefields Group

The ten member Battlefields Group sports seven 'senior' (read that as 'adventive any way you wish') IMC members – Max Taylor, Tony Pickering, Dennis Mahoney, Richard Borgonon, Grahame Chilton, Brigadier General Mike Hickson, IMC chairman, Roger Earl, plus new 'YTS' member, Kim Taylor-Smith. Its aim is a simple one – to immerse itself in a major battlefield each year, linked with driving pleasure in the group's exotic or classic cars. A ninth member, much respected but now retired Lloyd's underwriter Colin Spreckley provides invaluable (if self-taught) expertise in finding accommodation for the group, generally delectable chateaus, to ameliorate the hardships experienced during the day, i.e. good wine, rich food and fast motoring, although not necessarily in that order. Lloyd's aviation specialist, Peter Butler, also retired, rounds out the group to a 'perfect 10'. This year was a distinctly challenging one, the entrée being the Battle of the Bulge with its centrepiece, Bastogne, and a dessert of Waterloo. Transportation was rather more sophisticated than the original Panzers enjoyed but the Wehrmacht did have somewhat different objectives. Mahoney

sported his 1973 Porsche Carrera RSR in a lovely shade of white and its 'race history to die for'. Grahame his rare Ferrari 430 1.6M Spider in stealth matt black, Tony his dark blue 550 Maranello, Max his silver grey Aston Martin Vantage V8, and Colin his supercharged Jaguar XKR – none too pedestrian a selection.

“Hostilities started at the Chateau d’Urspelt in Clervaux, an inspired Spreckley find”

Missing this time though were Mahoney's lovely Lancia Aurelia B20 and the Kim Taylor-Smith Ferrari 250 Tour de France (TdF) of last year but teeth were gritted and survival achieved.

Hostilities started at the Chateau d’Urspelt in Clervaux, an inspired Spreckley find, close to where the Panzers had launched their surprise attack westwards aiming for Antwerp in December 1944. The

Chateau had been largely destroyed during the battle but has been meticulously rebuilt since as a superb and charismatic hotel and restaurant. A very tasty place to stay.

Day 1 tracked the Panzers' progress from Clervaux, west along Skyline Drive to Wiltz Castle, then on to St Vith for lunch (us, not the Panzers), all of them names and places featuring strongly in the battle.

The afternoon saw the flotilla follow the Panzers' progress to Malmédy where 80 American prisoners had been massacred (the field behind the museum remains kept to this day as sacred ground), then on to Stavelot and the site of the fuel dump destruction (as featured in the film 'Battle of the Bulge'), the day finishing at La Gleize with its memorable museum, featuring a knocked out King Tiger.

Day 2 was allocated to concentrate on Bastogne, the crucible of the battle, made famous by General Anthony MacAuliffe's one word response "Nuts" to the German's invitation to surrender, also the site of the George S Patton Memorial. The Bastogne sector was also the scene of one of the 101st Airborne's finest episodes, in particular Easy Company's defence of

their freezing foxholes deep in the forest near Foy, immortalised in the film and TV series 'Band of Brothers'.

Easy Company's positions are hard to find, being deep in the forest, well off road and almost completely unmarked. Only intensive research and much poring over contemporary battle maps revealed their location, finally tracked down in an Earl/Pickering recce some months before during their Spa 6 Hours weekend in September 2010. It is a very satisfying piece of history when found as they are largely as left in 1944/5, being so remote and out of the way of tourist and other untutored interference. The success of this foray was underlined when, some three months later, a phone call from IMC member, Charlie Miller, who was in the general area with motorcycling friends, generated sufficiently accurate instructions for him and his team to locate them too.

A visit to the huge German War Graves Cemetery at Recogne, the other side of Foy, was a humbling experience, the Panzers and their support groups having suffered enormous losses during the battle and requiring up to six fallen to be buried per headstone. The day's end now approaching, we rounded out with a visit to the magnificent American Star Memorial at Mardasson, on the outskirts of Bastogne, all States and units involved in the Battle of the Bulge being memorialised thereon.

The Battle of the Bulge and Bastogne now behind us and once again an Allies' triumph, the route back was to take in the Waterloo battlefield, an area of particular

expertise of Brigadier General Mike Hickson. After a long and exhausting climb to the top of the Lion Mound, 275 steps, something of a challenge for the older and rounder members of the group, Mike gave us an hour long and very detailed lecture of how the battle was won and lost, dispelling some long held

“We watched an abbreviated version of the MGM film starring Rod Steiger as Bonaparte and spent some time in the museum”

misconceptions. An open sided bus then shuttled us around the area with a visit to the crucible of the battle, Hougomont Farm, failure to capture which had been the foundation of Napoleon's defeat. We watched an abbreviated version of the MGM film starring Rod Steiger as Bonaparte and spent some time in the museum, before setting tracks in the classic fleet for Ploegsteert, the last resting place of one of England's greatest rugby players, Ronald Poulton Palmer, captain of England killed in 1915, then Poperinge, scene of several of the shot at dawn tragedies, as well as our annual visit to the 'Last Post'

ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres, (played out seven days a week, 52 weeks in the year in honour of the 1914/18 fallen and the 55,000 Ypres sector 'no known grave' names).

On the way to Menin, we also stopped to visit a unique grave, that of Captain Noel Chevasse, an RAMC medical officer - unique because this incredible man won two VCs in the 1914/18 conflict, one on the Somme and the other at Paaschendaale where he was killed, as well as an earlier MC. Chevasse, the son of the Bishop of Liverpool who had promoted the construction of its Protestant Cathedral, was the only man to win two VCs in the Great War and his headstone is the only one worldwide to have two VC emblems displayed on it. It is an intensely moving experience to stand before it.

After the 8pm Menin Gate Ceremony, this year particularly memorable for being the first time uniformed officers of the Northern Ireland Constabulary and the Republic of Ireland Garda had stood side by side to honour the dead – another step forward in the process of reconciliation of the people of Ireland - we repaired to our lovely little Chateau Hotel in the centre of Poperinge for a memorable final and very gourmet dinner. The end of another memorable trip, exercising both our cars and digestions before slipping through the Tunnel sous la Manche for a safe return to Blighty. Next year's chapter promises to be Colditz and Nuremberg and points in between.



2011 GINETTA CHALLENGE

What a year it has been, after the initial excitement of the new car and the first few practice days the reality of the task hit home when a week before the first race I ran out of talent at Snetterton at the exit of Riches, the first corner after the start/finish straight. Slick tyres are wonderful until they let go, on the throttle in fifth gear the car swapped ends and I collided with the new barriers on the inside of the track. Fortunately there was a fibreglass specialist on site and in return for a very reasonable sum they worked until four a.m. to repair the car so I could be out on track first thing the following day, confidence slightly dented. After another test day at Oulton Park the moment of truth arrived but only after I got through several security checks

to get to the car; the Formula 3 and British GT races certainly brought a new level of crowds and numbers of people in the pits and paddocks, space was certainly at a premium!

Having performed mechanically faultlessly until that point, the car needed a push start to get out of the assembly area for qualifying which did not bode well. Sure enough halfway around the lap, the engine died. I pulled off and was just about to get out it started again but sadly this was short lived and I spent the rest of the session watching from the sidelines. This meant I would start both races dead last in a field of over 30 cars. The field was made up of mainly G40s but to add to the excitement there were also ten G20s, which, whilst faster in a straight line are slower in

the corners as they are lighter but on road tyres. I had an amazing first race and made it up to 13th before my enthusiasm got the better of me and I spun on the penultimate lap to finish 17th. The second race was almost as much fun with 18th position the reward for all the practice.

Then came the Snetterton round and the opportunity for some friends from the market to attend. The new circuit layout has improved matters for spectators although it is still a rather windswept circuit with not a lot of shelter. Not my finest round with the highlight being surviving a first corner spin, avoiding a pile up and somehow not collecting the barrier. A day at Donington followed with

my team mates and I giving passenger rides to Catlin's guests who were brave enough to jump into the passenger seats whilst we put in some valuable practice for our round there later in the year.

The two rounds at Brands Hatch, one on the little used GP circuit, were both challenging weather-wise but mainly notable because Tiff Needell took to the celebrity car. He was slightly put out not to be challenging at the front and finished 7th to my 11th in the first race and I am not sure why but he did not take the start in the second. In the second race, the commentator gave me the benefit of the doubt and suggested I was tipped into a spin approaching Druids, the second corner, in the first lap melee. I am not convinced but either way I hit the barriers hard enough to bend the suspension and feature in the following months "Crash" on Motors TV.

After a welcome summer break we found ourselves at Rockingham for a wet weekend's racing on part of the oval and infield circuits. The wet tyres are superb but the wall of water kicked up by 30 cars made visibility rather poor, I survived the first race to take 11th but unbelievably frustratingly on the last lap of the second race, one of the few cars on slicks lost control passing a backmarker ahead of me on the banking when he ventured off the dry line and his car collided with mine sending me into the wall at higher speed than I care to admit too. The circuit safety team were superb, Ellis Clowes and my insurers were faultless and with their help my team managed to re-shell the car in time for the round at Donington three weeks later. I also have to admit to being thankful to Ginetta that the safety shell is 50 times stronger than the regulations require. Needless to say the incident also featured in the following month's edition of "Crash" too.

At Donington the poor weather continued, my competitors had clearly been mistaken in thinking they could drive like touring car drivers and I was pitched into a spin in both races on the first lap. In the first minding my own business down through the famous Craner Curves I found myself half in the gravel trap but fortunately a kind marshal pushed me out so I could finish the race. In the second all but one car, that of my team mate John Saunders, were on slicks when the heavens opened, he laughed whilst the rest of us tried desperately hard just to keep the cars on the black stuff. After my first corner contact I managed to salvage 10th in the G40s.

The final round was on the new track at Silverstone: the new pit complex is absolutely amazing and the track superb. Sadly an over enthusiastically tightened wishbone coupled with the wrong choice of tyre ruined the first race but the second was huge fun with close fair racing enabling me to end the season on a high.

I finished 12th in the championship of thirty G40 competitors but still with a mountain to climb in 2012 if I am to get closer to the front as the front runners have been in a slightly different league to both myself and my fellow competitors who have stepped up from Caterhams at the same time. My team mates and I were taught a new driving technique in the last few weeks of the season which I would like to try and perfect next year, funds allowing, which should close the gap hopefully. Finally a huge thank you to my Sponsors this year; Catlin, JLT, Re, Clyde & Co and BW Interiors without whom this would not have been possible and equally to my team Trackcars who have worked so tirelessly to ensure the car was spot on every time I stepped in.

"The field was made up of mainly G40s but to add to the excitement there were also ten G20s,"

Photograph: Jakob Ebrey

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