

# OWEN MOTORING CLUB

## CLASSIC VEHICLE GROUP

FOR ALL CLASSIC VEHICLE ENTHUSIASTS

[WWW.OWENMOTORINGCLUB.CO.UK](http://WWW.OWENMOTORINGCLUB.CO.UK)

*Polish it THEN use it !!*



(March 2020 - Issue No. 63)

Welcome to the March edition and I wish it was full of good happy news but I'm afraid good news is now very scarce. I hope everyone is keeping well and I hope we'll survive this terrible pandemic. I'll continue with this newsletter and try to fill it with classic car news other than a list of cancellations of upcoming shows and motorsport events! This month Robert Grounds has sent me an article about his Monte Carlo Historique exploits and next month I have an article from Dave Lucas about his restored 1956 Berkeley. Before all this Coronavirus stuff Derrick W and I had decided to cancel Motorfest 2020 (Chetwynd Deer Park) due to very little interest which we put down to it being too early in the year and, like me, no one can get interested in classic cars and car shows when the current weather is so awful. Stay safe everyone and hopefully we'll get through this nightmare.

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This statement was issued by MSUK this week.

*It is with regret that Motorsport UK is suspending all organising permits and Certificates of Exemption until at least 30th April 2020. This suspension follows the latest guidance issued by HM UK Government in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. This position will be constantly reviewed given prevailing information. As the National Governing Body, we would ask all Motorsport UK members to act responsibly and follow the Government's guidance during this difficult time. We thank all of our members, organisers, officials, volunteers, staff and their families for their support during these unprecedented times. We will continue to monitor the situation and will resume sporting activity as soon as we are able. We also have a responsibility and duty of care to our staff who will be working from home, so please be patient with any queries you may have.*

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New Hall Mill will cancel the Open Days on May 10th, May 25<sup>th</sup> and June 28<sup>th</sup> which means, at the moment, our planned display on the 26<sup>th</sup> July will hopefully still go ahead. They will continue to monitor the situation closely and follow government guidelines, if there are changes regarding this open day, they will let us know as soon as possible.



It was around Easter last year when I had a phone call from Peter Baker ([www.retro-speed.co.uk](http://www.retro-speed.co.uk)) saying that he'd just bought a 1954 Daimler Conquest similar to the car that my mother Lola Grounds and Nancy Mitchell had competed in the 1955 Monte Carlo Rally when they finished 17th overall. Peter

asked me if I'd be interested in celebrating that fine finish by entering the 2020 Rallye Monte Carlo Classique in his Daimler.

It was a snowy day at the end of January when we went off to Glasgow for the Start. On the way we picked up Guy Loverage in Yorkshire who was to be our navigator. Glasgow was a superb Start venue with a meal at the hotel that was the RAC Scotland HQ for many years. Guy invited Huck Sanderson for the meal, daughter of Le Mans legend Ninian Sanderson. She lent us a small fluffy bear which was a good luck mascot that her Dad had carried in his winning D Type Jaguar.

In 1955 my Dad started the Monte from Glasgow in a Ford Zephyr and he wore a kilt, so I decided to wear his kilt for the whole event. We set off at 7:00pm in the rain and were so pleased to see Glasgow square was thronged with well-wishers. Our first main Control was in Banbury and again I couldn't believe how many people turned out to see the cars. From Banbury it was off to Calais overnight and then on to Reims where all the cars from different Start points congregated.

Around 350 rally cars were assembled, and it was a treat to see so many French, Italian and German classics that we don't usually see in the UK. My kilt again created a lot of attention and I was even interviewed by French National TV. The rally is two events in one.



The Historique is competitive and the Classique is an untimed tour using the same roads. As we were untimed, we decided to leave Reims with car 1 and potter down to Valence along the rally route and watch the cars as they overtook us. I was amazed at the crowds lining the roads throughout the night.



Many times, the crowds forced us to stop and they threw 'goodies' in through the window. We drove through the night and all day arriving at Valence by nightfall. Again, we were met by huge crowds and again the media was interested to talk to me and my kilt. It was here that the Monte finished for us and the next morning we set off for the long drive to Monte Carlo where we were treated to a magnificent meal at the Automobile Club of Monte Carlo when we arrived.

The next morning, we went up into the mountains to watch and photograph the Historique rally cars charging round the bends. It's the first time I've ever been on such a prestigious rally, it was wonderful for me travel along the roads that both my parents used so many times during their rallying years back in the 1950's.

**Robert Grounds**

I also received this e-mail from the Gemini organising team.

*Over the past few weeks, we have all been monitoring the developing situation in relation to Coronavirus (Covid-19). It is a uniquely challenging period for everyone – a time that, for many, is filled with uncertainty. Our thoughts are with all of those affected.*

*We remain committed to doing all we can to provide the shows that our exhibitors and visitors have enjoyed for more than ten years, and which have provided our caterers and traders with successful and enjoyable ways to deliver their services.*

*However, we are also acutely aware of the responsibility that this entails, now more than ever. Our prime focus must be on delivering events that provide a safe environment for everyone - our exhibitors, visitors, traders and our own staff.*

*As the current situation has evolved and considering the government's announcements this week about public gatherings and events, we understand that many of you will have concerns as to whether attendance at our forthcoming shows is advisable.*

*We hope you will understand that the wellbeing of our visitors, exhibitors and team is the most important thing. If we are not able to find a solution that will provide a safe environment for everyone, we may regrettably have to cancel or postpone some or all of our shows.*

*Given the timing, we will communicate a final decision on Motorfest 2020 (Chetwynd Deer Park) and Classic Motor Show (Catton Hall) in the coming week.*

*The Gemini Events Team*

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Derrick Wallbank sent this out,

*Due to the current COVID-19 outbreak and the latest government guide lines concerning social gatherings in public places such as pubs and restaurants, I think it would be wise to cancel the visit to the VOIJON RESTAURANT on Saturday 28th of March until the government gives the all clear, we can then re arrange this for a later date.*

*Visits to Silverstone Museum and Jaguar will be re-arranged later in the year hopefully.*

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Likewise, this was from Clarion Events,

*It is with great sadness that Clarion Events has decided to postpone the Practical Classics Classic Car & Restoration Show with Discovery. The event team have been continually monitoring the latest public health and government guidelines regarding the evolving COVID-19 situation and acting in accordance with their advice. The safety and wellbeing of our visitors, exhibitors, partners, contractors and staff is the most important factor and therefore the only action for all involved is to postpone. We are working with the NEC to find suitable options to reschedule the Practical Classics Classic Car & Restoration Show with Discovery, please bear with us as we work to secure a new date line. Tickets already purchased will be valid for the rescheduled date.*

*We will be in touch with all our visitors as soon as we have more information to share. We will keep you updated via our newsletters, website and social media channels.*

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Before the current crop of announcements and cancellations OMC received a request from Streetly Community Centre asking us to provide classic car display to enhance their existing big show day June 6<sup>th</sup>

If anyone wants to do this, providing it is still going ahead, then please contact Richard Hughes on 0121 353 8630.

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You might have heard that our competition Sec, Bob Cotterell, has had a heart attack and I understand he is making a steady recovery but still awaiting surgery. He puts on 3 good events every year, these being the Graham Hill Sprint, The Happy Landings Grass Autotest and The Bright Sparks Trial. Depending when MSUK decide that motorsport can go ahead again I've heard that Simon & Lynn Whittick are helping to organising the sprint, myself, Elaine & Barri Willmott will probably look after The Happy Landings and that means we would like someone to take on The Bright Sparks please. Likewise, the committee is looking for someone to take on the role of Competition Secretary which I'm sure Bob will gladly advise on when he recovers.

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Now for some good news, after months of planning and two days of laying out spectator areas and stages the Jasper's Bakeries Historic and AGBO rallies



finally went ahead at Weston Park. This could be the last motorsport event in the UK for a while and we were lucky that the MSUK announcement didn't come out before our event. Entries were low on the Saturday for competitors and spectators, but Sunday made up for this. Not sure when the

de-brief meeting will be held but in the meantime our Chairman issued the following statement on FB.

*Owen Motoring Club "Jasper's Bakeries" AGBO Rallies Team. All departments played an absolute blinder, we as a club were on a knife edge not knowing whether this was going to happen, five months work and right up to the very last minutes of set up on Friday night we were unsure. Cancellation could have grounded the club financially for a long time. Luckily both days ran, we thank all competitors for sticking with us, no one pulled entries for the reasons we thought relevant at the moment. A difficult two days to organise this year, then the weather & park conditions were not going with us. A special mention to all set up personnel, exceptional stage set up in all areas.*

*Additional damage to the park is a problem this year caused by weather conditions and incidents, and some trailers being loaded / un loaded in a no go area, causing severe damage to plastic recently laid in the grass by Weston Park outside the trailer parking area. This is going to cause a very expensive nightmare. BUT, with all that is going on around us at the moment everyone seemed to enjoy both days, we have received many great comments for both rallies. Looks like rally de brief could be a long time coming with what we all have to face during the next few months. Competitors, thank you all for your very valued support, OMC rally team you are all amazing. To all the marshals & radio teams that did join us over the weekend, we thank you all. Finally, we have to thank Mark Jasper, proprietor of Jasper's Bakeries for his amazing support of our events, we hope to see you all again next year, that is if they let us out by then!!!!*

Anton Bird, Club Chairman.

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## 2020 Preliminary OMC/Local Classic Car Show Calendar

(Red denotes events we have or are hoping to have a club stand at and all dates are now provisional depending upon the Government Announcements together with MSUK)

### APRIL

18<sup>th</sup> Pride of Longbridge (Cofton Park)

19<sup>th</sup> Chetwynd Deer Park Show

26<sup>th</sup> FBHVC 'Drive It Day'

### MAY

1/2/3<sup>rd</sup> Donington Historic Festival

3<sup>rd</sup> **Catton Hall Show**

3<sup>rd</sup> Middleton Hall Classics

9<sup>th</sup> Curborough B/Fast Meet

10<sup>th</sup> Happy Landings (grass a/test)

### JUNE

6<sup>th</sup> Streetly Comm Centre Show

7<sup>th</sup> Middleton Hall Classics

7<sup>th</sup> Historic Rally Fest (Weston Pk)

13<sup>th</sup> **Rugeley Parish Fete**

13<sup>th</sup> Curborough B/Fast Meet

21<sup>st</sup> **Graham Hill Sprint(Curborough)**

### JULY

4/5<sup>th</sup> Llangollen Transport Festival

5<sup>th</sup> Middleton Hall Classics

5<sup>th</sup> **Lichfield Cars in the Park**

11<sup>th</sup> Curborough B/Fast Meet

26<sup>th</sup> **New Hall Mill**

### AUGUST

2<sup>nd</sup> Middleton Hall Classics

8<sup>th</sup> **Canwell Show**

8<sup>th</sup> Curborough B/Fast Meet

31<sup>st</sup> Oakamoor @ Curborough

### SEPTEMBER

6<sup>th</sup> SVR Classic Car Day

6<sup>th</sup> Middleton Hall Classics

6<sup>th</sup> **Himley Hall Show**

12<sup>th</sup> Curborough B/Fast Meet

13<sup>th</sup> Tony Matthews Tour (HRCR)

20<sup>th</sup> Ernest Owen PCT

### OCTOBER

4<sup>th</sup> Middleton Hall Classics

10<sup>th</sup> Curborough B/Fast Meet

18<sup>th</sup> Bright Sparks Auto-solo

18<sup>th</sup> **Aldridge Transport Museum**

### NOVEMBER

13/14/15<sup>th</sup> **NEC Classic Show**