

THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE



MIDDLESEX
COUNTY
AUTOMOBILE
CLUB LTD

JULY/AUGUST 2006



The Bimonthly news, views and goings on of Middlesex County Automobile Club



THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE

www.mcac.co.uk

Volume: ?+5 Issue: 2

July/August 2006

CLUB NIGHT IS EVERY WEDNESDAY

AT

GERRARDS CROSS SPORTS CLUB

7 Dukes Lane, off Dukes Wood Avenue, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 7TZ
(off the A40, between the pillar box and pedestrian subway opposite The Apple Tree)

Map Reference: 176/000875½

Telephone: 01753 886610

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2 nd August	Partner's Club Night	17.30	PARTNERS EVENING – CLASSICS ON THE GREEN. Tonight, for a change, we visit the annual event on Croxley Green and have a display of Club members' vehicles on the MCAC Club stand. Lots of interesting cars – over 1,300 last year - (and a couple of pubs!) to keep you interested for the evening. Full details on page 6 or contact Peter Nathan.
	<u>Please note</u> <u>different venue</u>		
9 th August	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.
13 th August	Treasure Hunt	12.00	PHOTO GEN-IC FUN RUN AND BARBECUE. Our annual treasure hunt around Buckinghamshire, designed for all the family, followed by fun, games and the barbecue at White Mark Farm. Contact Rob Brook for details and Regulations or see the web.
16 th August	Club Night	20.30	VIDEO/DVD NIGHT. Now the WRC is back in full swing, we can catch up on the latest action from recent rounds.
20 th August	Treasure Hunt Scatter	10.15	THE PHOTO PHROLIC. Re-scheduled from 7 th May, this Treasure Hunt on Map 166 is being organised by Harrow CC and MCAC members are invited to enter. Details/regulations are available at Club or from Dennis Chrome (01582 723132) or Tony Phillips.
23 rd August	Club Night	20.30	LONDON'S BURNING? – CHARITY AUCTION. Paul Brown has arranged for 8 members to spend an afternoon with White Watch at Wembley Fire Station, on 16 th September. See full details elsewhere in the magazine (page 15) and make sure you put in your offer to support the LJMC.
30 th August	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.

6 th September	Partner's Club Night	20.30	PARTNER'S EVENING – QUIZ NIGHT. With the evenings drawing in, we retreat indoors for an easy quiz that is being put together by Andrew Stacey and Peter Nathan. They promise nothing too difficult!
9 th September	Set-Up	10.00	SET-UP FOR THE BOMB-ALONG STAGES, 2006. As usual your help in preparing for this event is needed to ensure that the event runs smoothly. If you can assist with the setting-up (even if you are competing) please contact Andy Greenland or Rob Brook to offer your assistance.
10 th September	Rally	09.00	BOMB-ALONG STAGES 2006. Regulations will be available shortly at Club, on the web or contact Kathleen Dawson. If you are not competing or servicing your help is needed with the organisation or marshalling. Please contact Andy Greenland or Rob Brook to volunteer your services. WE NEED EVERYONE'S HELP.
13 th September	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.
16 th September	Visit		LONDON'S BURNING. The lucky 8 winners of the auction will be at Wembley Fire Station trying their hand at being firemen (women) for the day.
20 th September	Club Night	20.30	VIDEO/DVD NIGHT. More highlights from the rally scene.
22 nd September	12-Car	21.00	CHILTERN 12-CAR RALLY. Details and Regulations available nearer the date from Rob Brook or on the web.
27 th September	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.
4 th October	Partner's Club Night	20.30	PARTNER'S EVENING – VIDEO GAMES. Andrew Stacey will bring along his latest games to test our skill and provide some entertainment for the spectators!

V I C E - Squad

Val extends many thanks to the Council and friends at MCAC for their concern, kind wishes and herb planter sent to her following her recent operation. We are both hoping now for positive news and a full recovery.

Somehow, I seem to have volunteered to take on the role of Club Historian / Archivist to collate all the activities and paperwork for the Club.

As you all know, Adrian has been very busy over the last year (and still is!) collating the first Centenary of the Club history and putting this into a book. He would still like to receive any information that is available concerning any activities involving members during the last 100 years.

Adrian has experienced some difficulty in piecing together some of the Club's history

because of the lack of information or the problems of collating the information after finding where the details are!

In view of this, we felt it would be a good idea to collate all the current activities as we go and keep them together for future reference.

Therefore, if you have organised an event, taken part in an event, had any correspondence on behalf of the Club, got a mention in the press or, in fact, anything involving the club or any of the members, over the last 18 months or so please let me have a copy for the records.

Of course, this is an on-going situation, so please also let me have any relevant information and/or press cuttings in the future as well.

Tony Phillips

WHAT'S ON

JULY

22 nd		Swansea Bay Rally	(B) MSA Gravel
22 nd		Castle Coombe Rally Day	(-) .
23 rd	Ross & DMC	Ross Traders Historic Tour	(B) HRCRI
29 th	Tavern MC	Fat Albert Stages, Keevil	(B) ACSMC
30 th		German Grand Prix	(I) WC
30 th		Donington Park	(I) BTCC
30 th		Coracle Stages	(B) WAMC

AUGUST

3/5 th	Isle of Man Rally Ltd	Manx International / Historic Rally	(I/B) BRC/BRC[S]/BHRC
5/6 th		Harry Flatters Rally	(B) WAMC
6 th		Hungarian Grand Prix	(I) WC
11/13 th		Rally of Germany	(I) WRC
12/13 th	BARC	Snetterton	(I) BTCC
13 TH	MIDDX COUNTY AC	FOTO GEN-IC FUN RUN AND BBQ	(E) MIDDX
13 th	Sutton & Cheam MC	Tempest Rallysprint, Bramley	(B) ACSMC/AEMC
18/20 th		Rally Finland	(I) WRC
19 th	Kidderminster MC	Bill Gwynne Rallyschool Stages	(B) 106
19/20 th		Welsh Endurance Rally	(B) Enduro
20 th	Harrow CC	The Photo Phrolic Treasure Hunt	(E) -
27 th		Mewla Rally	(B) MSA Asphalt/WAMC
27 th		Turkish Grand Prix	(I) WC

SEPTEMBER

1/2 nd		Ulster International Rally	(I) BRC/BRC[M]
1/3 rd	Goodwood RRC	Goodwood Revival Meeting	(I) .
1/3 rd		Rally Japan	(I) WRC
2 nd		Woodpecker Rally	(B) BTRDA/MSA English
2/3 rd	BARC	Knockhill	(I) BTCC
3 rd	Sevenoaks & DMC	Spotted Dick & Custard Stages	(B) R2006/LCAMC/AEMC
3 rd	Wickford AC	Marsh Tour Stages	(B) AEMC
5/8 th		Tour Britannia	(I) .
7/9 th		BP Ultimate Historic Rally	(I) EHRC
9 th		Park Systems Stages	(B) MSA Gravel
9/10 th		Yorkshire Endurance Rally	(B) Enduro
9/10 th	AC Midden Vlaanderen	Tour of Flanders	(A) BHRC
10 th		Italian Grand Prix	(I) WC
10 TH	MIDDX COUNTY AC	BOMB-ALONG STAGES,	(B) MIDDX/AE/LC/2006
10/15 th	Classic Rally Association	Classic Marathon	(E) -
15/17 th		Elpa Historic Rally	(I) EHRC
16/17 th	Sporting Ccofn	Phoenix Road Rally	(B) AEMC
17 th		Belgium Grand Prix	(I) WC
22 ND	MIDDX COUNTY AC	CHILTERN 12-CAR RALLY	(E) MIDDX
22/24 th		Cyprus Rally	(I) WRC
23 rd		Plains Rally	(B) BTRDA
23/24 th	BARC	Brands Hatch	(I) BTCC
23/25 th	Classic Rally Tours	The Sedan Classic Rally Tour	(E) CRT
24 th	Harrow CC	Turner Trophy Sprint, North Weald	(B) ACSMC
24 th	Torbay MC	Devonian Rally	(B) HRCRI
29/30 th		Elba Historic Rally	(I) EHRC
30/1 st		Welsh Rarebit Endurance Rally	(B) Enduro

OCTOBER

14/15 TH	MIDDX COUNTY AC	HUNTER'S NIGHT TRIAL	(E) MIDDX
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Pete's Patch ***(Ramblings from the editor's chair)***

My, doesn't time fly when you are a magazine editor. It seems only last week that I was putting the last issue to bed, only to find the fruits of my labour arriving at the club two days later ready to put in the envelopes and posting to the members. If you want to read your magazine earlier, come along to the club and collect it in person. You never know, you may enjoy being roped into helping the rather large mailshot!

After several months of cajoling the council to come and help clean Donna ready for the Uxbridge Auto show, things came to a head at the Club when it was pointed out that the show was the next Sunday and that Saturday was the only day left to carry out this 'spring clean'. 2 o'clock duly arrived and the cleaning crew consisted of Andrew Stacey, Brian Catt, John Wilson, Kirstin Farmer and your editor. It was at this point that we realised how long it had been since Donna's last bath!

A couple of bottles of Cilit Bang (as recommended by Peter Nathan), some Fairy Liquid, a couple of nail brushes, some cleaning cloth and a heck of a lot of elbow grease and we were off. The front panel seemed to be the worst dirt encrusted panel so that seemed a good place to start. Soon after this, we realised that Donna is in fact white and not the dirty grey that she had become of late. While up on the step ladders cleaning the top of the front panel, I happened to give the roof a bit of a scrub. Did you know that it is made of translucent plastic? No, neither did I, I always thought that it was black plastic, but no, the black was just 12 years of grime, moss and bird c**p. It is now quite light inside.

With Kirstin playing footie on the slopes of the car park and filling the tea mugs at regular intervals, the job was soon nearly done (4 hours actually!) and we could see the light at the end of the tunnel. We began by bemoaning the fact that several of the council had decided to go marshalling at Longcross and other things instead of coming and helping support our own club. We soon realised that four was about the right number, any less and it would have been a pig of a job to do, any more and we would have been getting in each other's way.

One word of warning, if you stand near Donna in bright sunlight, wear sunglasses, she positively gleams.

After all of that self praise, there is not much room for anything else. Don't forget the Photo Gen-ic Fun Run is fast approaching, it is a fun day out for all of the family, young and old. At the secret finish location (White Mark Farm), there will be fun and games followed by a barbecue. This is a great day out and should not be missed.

Preparations have already begun for this year's Bomb-Along Stages Rally on 10 September, the Chiltern 12 Car on 22 September and the Hunter's Night Trial on 14/15 October. When you have entered all of them, you can then write your magazine article and marshal on the South of England Tempest Rally. All you have to do then is book your awards night tickets from Peter Nathan and you are home and dry.

Happy Motorsport.

Pete Farmer

Deadline for the next mag is Wednesday 30 August.

Why not write your article while sunning yourself in some far off exotic location, so that you do not have to rush to meet the deadline.

***Clare can submit her account of her trip to Africa at anytime
(before she forgets what happened!)***

Rosemary Williams

It is with great regret that I have to report the sudden death of Rosemary Williams, one of our Vice-Presidents. She died peacefully in her sleep and was found by John early on Saturday morning (22nd July). A full obituary will appear in the next magazine.

Tony Phillips

Chairmans Corner

July 2006

Since my last report, we have not actually run a motorsport event, but members have been busy competing, helping other clubs to organise events and marshalling. Assisting other clubs is a vital part of our role, not least because it means that, when it comes to our events, we can call in favours.

We have decided that, as far as possible, we will support an event a month as either marshal or safety radio crews. The new club radios are certainly being put to good use. Our June event was the Abingdon Carnival. This was a two day event. We were involved on the start line for both the sprint and the rally, and various club members were manning radios. It was very hot, and by the end of the weekend, the Middlesex start crew were almost number blind having processed well over 1,000 cars. We enjoyed it, although, had it been lashing down with rain, we may not have remained so enthusiastic about the whole event. Hopefully the thank you note we received from the chief marshals will be elsewhere in the magazine. We are gaining a reputation as a club for always doing what we promise.

Kevin and I had an exceptional weekend in May. We had warm sunshine on a Motorsport event in Mid Wales. The rest of the UK had rain. The event was Y Rali Bryn Cymru. This was a round of the MSA Hill Rally Championship. Kevin was a Stage Commander on the Saturday and Sunday. As we were there early on the Friday, we rolled our sleeves up and helped put together various aspects of the final paperwork and I then assisted the initial deluge of competitors at signing on. I have never seen as many serious off-road competitors anxious to sign on before the pub got too crowded, on a hot Friday afternoon. These events are really good fun, and we will be at the next big one which is the BAJA GB on 18th to 20th August. If anyone else fancies coming to Wales let me know, although I cannot promise fine weather, it is of course in Wales. Kevin has been invited to be an event steward and I will be assisting in the Headquarters. Further details of the event can be found at www.marches4x4.com.

In early July the Essex Charity Stages was well supported by the club. Peter Nathan was a Stage

commander, with Rob Brook as his extremely active deputy. When Kevin the MSA Steward and I went through that stage (and later in the day as opening car- both course cars having given up on the very testing surfaces of the unique event, most of which takes place below sea level) we were proud to see so many club members out. Every one worked hard and many complements were received for how well the club had performed their duties on one of the hottest days of the year. Richard Edwards was very lucky to finish, having blown his gear box at the end of the last stage. He just managed to get back to the main time control, with the push power of Paul Brown. How come Paul always manages to be involved in near disasters on events?

I am writing this before the Goodwood Festival of Speed, but I know we have members marshalling there. I hope someone will write an article giving their impressions of the day.

Peter Nathan is organising a couple of exhibitions over the Summer, including "Classics on the Green" at Croxley Green. Please get in touch with him (contact details at the back of the Magazine) if you can help him in any way.

There have not been many reports from competitors giving their view on events that they have taken part in. I find these particularly interesting, especially if I have been at the event. It is fascinating to read different perspectives of the same event.

Planning is well under way for the Bomb-Along to take place at Oakington on 10th September. If you can help in any way, please let any one of the Council know. The more people that get involved, the easier the event is to run. I am sure it will be a successful day.

If you are going to be able to get away for a holiday over the summer, I hope you have an enjoyable and restful break. Take care, drive safely and keep us informed of your motoring escapades.

Kathleen Dawson

***PARTNERS NIGHT WEDNESDAY 2 AUGUST 2006 WILL NOT
BE AT THE CLUBHOUSE.
PLEASE NOTE ALTERNATIVE VENUE.***

CLASSICS ON THE GREEN

CROXLEY GREEN RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS

(from 5pm till dark)

The club has a stand for 6 cars as well as a hospitality tent showing rally videos, display boards and club banners.

This year's show is not to be missed. Last year there were 1300 cars and 200 motorbikes, including hot rods and every car you can think of from Ferraris, Porches and Rolls Royces to a 1920's bread van.

This year's show is expected to be bigger still.

There will be food stalls, ice cream van, bouncy castle as well as 2 pubs on the Green.

Bring your cool boxes, picnics and all the family, including children and have a great evening out, as well as talking to people and promoting the club.

***For further information and if you are able to help please contact
Peter Nathan 07979 817654 or 020 8906 0803.***

Please note, it is believed that the club may not be opening on this night, so if you intend going there instead of Croxley Green, you are advised to check first.

Cooking in Essex - with Paul and Richard

It was half past three in the morning when the alarm clock sounded, this was taken by the dogs to symbolise it was time for food and thus flatten me as I attempted to get up. Dragging myself out of bed I cursed myself for not trying harder to persuade Richard to let us spend the night somewhere closer to the event. After a nice stroll in the dark with the dogs and a very cold shower to cool off after the Mediterranean temperatures of the previous night it was into the car and off to meet Richard. Now I'm notorious for not waking in the morning to go to an event and Richard had warned me he'd be ringing at four to make sure I was up. By quarter past four just as I was pulling into his road the phone rang and for once it wasn't me that had lain in, well there's a first time for everything! With everyone loaded in the van we set off for the sunny coastline of Essex and our first multi-venue, multi surface event together.

Two hours later saw us pulling into services, already it was muggy and becoming obvious that it was going to be a very hot day. After clearing scrutineering and documentation we headed back and whilst Richard and the service crew got to work with such matters as tyre pressures, how much fuel we'd need between each servicing and other engine related matters of which I'm slowly starting to understand I was more concerned with seeing how much water I could store in the compartment on my door. The drivers' briefing was next and in all fairness to the gentleman doing the briefing he had a very quiet voice and we were struggling to hear what he was saying. At one point I could have sworn he said there were large piles of treated human and animal faeces on the runway but I quickly dismissed that as dodgy hearing.

At nine 'o' clock with the adrenaline pumping and with a wave and a smile we set off from service to start stage one, a hundred metres later and we were sat with the engine off chatting to our service crew coming down off our adrenaline high as we waited for the stage to start. There was a quick strategy discussion with regards to speed and what we were hoping to achieve that ended with Richard stating there was only really one

speed and we'd see how it went. I thought about this strategy for a couple of seconds and then checked my belts were tight enough.

Finally we were off and flying away from the start line with a rather impressive waggle of the tail for the first couple of hundred metres as we fought for grip. I was calling the turns, which Richard was taking in his stride and already asking for the next turns, he was three corners ahead of me once again. As we came out of one hairpin a little wide we were confronted with the huge dung heaps straight in front of us and I was wishing we'd packed a shovel. Crossing the finish line there was a horrendous noise from the back of the car and Richard started questioning the suspension, there was definitely something wrong with it. 'Will we make it through the next two stages?' I asked, to which I got the simple reply of course but I could tell there was a little concern there.

As we pulled up to start stage two we ran into Kathleen and Kevin. "Enjoy that" they asked to which the reply was "a bit bumpy but ok" "Wait until stage three" Kathleen replied "when they say bumpy they mean it." It got worse! Forget the suspension I was more concerned whether a six-point harness was enough. Stage 2 was pretty much the same as stage one and we were off on the road section to stage three. This was my first time reading pace notes to get from one stage to another but Richard seemed happy enough, his only request was for the headsets as the noise from the suspension was really annoying him.

We set off on stage three with an even bigger wiggle from the back end and roared our way through, at one point the route took on a 45 degree camber which proved interesting considering the depth of the ditch on Richards side but we held our own and headed back to services. Our service crew were once again brilliant and Michael and Paul quickly stripped off the rear suspension with Richard giving directions and I found a nice pile of tyres to sit on. Peter walked up with a cup of tea for me but the shake in my hands told him it was easier to leave it on the ground.

Stage four was the same as stage one and we were then off to stage five. Stage five was another multi surface stage and as we charged along the grass I called the 90 left at junction B and warned of the yump ahead. We flew over the yump and then hit the multitude of bumps after it, the view for the next 100 metres was sky, ground, sky, ground, sky, it's a bit hard to call the route when you can't see the track long enough to work out where you're going. With a determined effort Richard kept us on the track and we hit the paved road for the really long straight to the finish.

Stage 6 was the longest stage and as we stood waiting on the start line I decided that after the bumps of stage 5 if there was a chance this stage was to be anything the same I best find the toilet before we set off or there could be a nasty accident before we reached the end. The map wasn't the best match to the route and I was doing my best to make notes where necessary for the next time we came around whilst still navigating for Richard, not my brightest idea and the inevitable wasn't long in coming.

After hitting a particularly deep rut I lost my place and had to quickly follow the route to find myself as Richard was already asking for the next turns. Like a scene from an adventure movie the next turn was getting closer and closer and in true hero style at the last possible moment I confidently called 90 left onto short straight. The car did a sharp ninety turn to the right, ok we weren't where I thought we were. Going back to the map I prayed for a junction letter to tell me where we were whilst Richard carried on driving by the seat of his pants. The next corner was difficult to see and by the time I managed to call the ninety right we were too close and the brakes were locking up as we slid towards the ditch in front of us.

To make matters worse we stalled as were trying to get back on stage which left Richard having to work his way through the gears to find neutral and restart the car. Thankfully we passed the next junction marker and were back on track although I didn't want to think about how much time we'd lost by losing my way. The rest of the stage went smoothly. Reaching the stage finish I turned to switch the camera off only to find it gone, it must

have been a big bump to knock the camera completely off its mounting. Getting back to services we were told that the service time had been cut from an hour to half an hour to try and get the event back on time. We had a quick wheel change and the chance to throw a bit of food and a cup of tea down our throats and we were off again.

Stage 7 was the same as stage 5 but this time we knew where the bumps were and got to the finish with a bit less time airborne and not too many more bruises added to my derriere. The one thing we discovered about multi venue rallies is that you don't get regular updates of the positions; so instead of being able to continually update our strategy depending on where we were positioned it was a case of having to go all out to try and get the best possible times. To be honest I was find it much more enjoyable and in line with the mental image of rallying that I always had.

We arrived at the start of Stage 8 to find there was another hold up so it was twenty minutes standing around trying to find any available shade, at one point there were four of us huddled in the shadow of an old bulldozer. Car Zero started its engine and we all started to head towards our cars when someone pointed out it was a ten minute stage, there was no way we were boiling in the car for ten minutes so it was back to dozer hugging. We should have gone for the world record of rally crews huddled around a bulldozer; it was certainly a novel way of getting to know your fellow competitors.

Before we'd managed to finish discussing engine sizes and what modifications worked (I was quickly lost in this conversation and went back to running the stage through my head) car 1 was leaving the line and so everyone casually headed back to their cars to get ready, oh the luxury of one minute intervals in stage start. Soon it was our turn and we were off. Having done this stage a couple of hours before meant we both had a better idea of what to expect and Richard was soon up to his one standard speed, for those Trekkies out there that's about Warp 9.9 or, for the rest of us, bl**dy fast. The whole stage was going perfectly we hadn't missed a corner, the traction was great with the new wheels and we were flying along,

coming towards the finish I called a fast 45 right into the finish. I wasn't really expecting to say anything else but I was soon shouting BRAKE! We were sailing a bit wide on the left hand side and there was a rather large fence post aiming right for my side of the car, with a loud thump we impacted with the post on my door and bounced or way across the line. Richard was showing his ever-helpful side and collected up one of the finish boards for the marshals.

After some congratulatory comments from Andy Greenland at the finish line we pulled out of the way to inspect the damage. Once again it was my side that had to suffer and there was a rather large dent in the door, it was so deep it had trapped the window against the inner panel and I was unable to open or close the window. I turned to Richard and said that if I didn't know better I'd start to think he didn't like me, after all I don't think we've finished a rally where he hasn't done some kind of damage to my door, thankfully all of it minor. (When it came to the photos for our sponsorship proposal all the photos were either of the front or drivers side!) A quick temporary repair using a size nine fine adjuster tool (Richards foot) the dent had been pushed out enough to allow the window to work and it was off back to service for us to display our new war wound.

Servicing was quickly over and stage 9 saw us back on the airfield this time doing stage 1 in reverse. Richard and myself were really getting into this now and after some calculations with the times I felt certain we must have gained a couple of places so with a renewed vigour we set off into the stage. The stage passed without any incidents so saw us putting in a good time and we flew down the last straight to the finish like the devil himself was chasing us. We ended up stopping a bit after the stop board, thankfully the time keeper was a very nice man and had walked down to meet us before I could get out and walk back to him. Stage 10 was the same as stage 3 and with the new wheels and tyres there was no repeat of the earlier wiggle and we set off straight and true. The whole stage went once again without incident although Richard did seem to be playing chicken with the 45-degree camber and how steep he could take it. This was starting to look like we were going to get a really good

result all we had to do was keep the car on the last two stages.

Stage 11 was the last stage on the airfield and by now we had a really good idea of what we faced. For a short stage it still proved quite challenging and this was displayed as we came out of the last ninety right before the double hairpins around the dung heaps. Again we were a bit wide and ended up driving with the nearside of the car running along the top of the bank. Even so we still shaved another seven seconds off our previous time for the stage and the poor finish timekeeper had a little bit further to walk to where we eventually stopped.

Stage 12, the last stage, was a repeat of stage 10. This was to be our third time across this stage and I think Richard could have driven it without me. The whole stage was going extremely well, Richard had gone even further up the camber and I even had time to try and wave to Kathleen and Kevin up on the sea wall except the window wasn't playing and by the time I'd even got close to getting it open we'd passed them. We came out of the 45 right that took us across the narrow bridge and all that was left was easy open road to the finish line. That's when the car shook and a really horrendous ear damaging noise reverberated around the car. "The gearbox has gone we've got no gears and the clutch has failed" was the only thing Richard said as he battled to try and change gear and keep us moving forward.

In my usual way I engaged my mouth before my brain and suggested dropping the clutch and coasting to the finish which was now in sight. As soon as I said it I ducked sideways waiting for Richard to try and clip me around the ear but he was way too busy. We both looked at each other and then agreed that if the gearbox was dying we might as well kill it off and make the finish. With the engine screaming in frustration and the gearbox howling in pain we limped the last hundred metres and crossed the line where the whole car stopped - but we had our time. There were several suggestions about what to do but in the end we started the car with a prayer that we could make it back to servicing, fifty metres later we knew the prayer wasn't going to be answered and we pulled off onto the kerb.

This was really frustrating but inevitable and the matter was made worse when we couldn't find a phone signal. After walking around waving our arms in the air, standing on tip toe and some other interesting yoga positions we managed to get the service crew and tell them to come pick us up. This was not as easy an idea as we thought, as they had no idea where the end of the stage was and so had to try and find one of the organisers to point at the map and say "they're here". As we'd called for help we wandered back up to the start line to chat with the marshals, one of them pointed to a piece of metal the size of both my hands held side by side. This is turned out was the bottom of our gearbox casing, which Richard then offered to the marshal as a souvenir. It was at this point that the time keeper pointed out that to finish the rally we had to reach the time control at the end of the road section and the car had to be on four wheels and not on the servicing trailer.

Ok plan B, I rang Rob to ask for a tow only to be told that he'd finished and was on his way home. Thankfully he made a few phone calls and Peter Nathan offered to be our knight in shining armour and tow us towards the finish, the plan being to covertly unhook just before the time control and push it across the line. As we were waiting for Peter, Ross Daniels in Car 7 pulled up to see if we were okay, I asked a huge favour and sent our last time sheet and damage declaration with them as our advanced party with the message we'd be there soon. Shortly after them another club member John Legg in car 25 pulled up with a towrope and offered to tow us to the finish. YES!!! Whilst Richard quickly hooked us up I called Rob to ask him to ring Peter and tell him we were mobile and we were on our way with big grins on our faces and whistling the theme tune to the great escape under my breath. Surely there could be no more surprises in such a short distance... I was wrong. 500 metres from the finish we were coming round a left hand turn and came face to face with a competitor heading out to stage 12, a quick bit of evasive driving meant we missed them but ran over the tow rope snapping it. Getting out to inspect the rope

and discuss our options I saw our service crew were parked up at exactly that spot waiting for us. At least we wouldn't have to push the car home but Richard wasn't giving up and after a quick reminder lesson into how to tie a reef knot we were once again on our way. Two hundred metres to go and the rope was holding, one hundred and still it held, fifty metres and a quick toot on the horn told John it was time we unhooked and pushed it across the line. With the air of joviality that had been present throughout the whole day the time keeper smiled as we pushed the car across the line and jumped in the car grinning from ear to ear at him, leaning down he congratulated us on finishing the event and announced that he had our time card for safe keeping.

We'd done it, after such a good day and such a stressful finish there was almost a party atmosphere between us and the service crew as we loaded the car on the trailer and had a quick water fight to wash up and cool off. Then it was down to the Marina for a well-earned pint and to see the final results. We'd pulled ourselves up to fifth place and third in class and even though we didn't get an award everyone was obviously pleased with the result and it just showed how well we could work as a team. Our thanks must go to John Legg for his assistance and good spirit for towing us back, even after we snapped his tow rope (for that we owe you a beer) and of course congratulations to him on their class win, to Ross Daniels for looking after our paperwork, to Peter Nathan for his knight in shining armour bit and starting to come and rescue us and of course to Rob for being the go between (yeah go on enjoy it while you can Rob!!) and of course to our service crew for battling on in such hot weather to keep us going. Our final thanks of course must go to the marshals and radio crews for standing out in such hot weather with smiles on their faces and allowing the stage to run, on that day it was certainly above and beyond the call of duty for all of them and to the organisers for what was a first class event that I'm certain we'll be going back to do again.

EASTER AT 'M' SPORT

At the 2006 Dinner / Dance and Awards Presentation back in January, I won a tour round the 'M' Sport facility for 2 on Easter Saturday, (thank you Peter Nathan), choosing John Roseblade to accompany me.

For those who don't know, 'M' Sport run the works Ford World Rally (WRC) team out of Cockermouth in Cumbria. The 'M' is for Malcolm in Malcolm Wilson.

John found a Bed & Breakfast near to Cockermouth, when we arrived and explained where we were going, the lady of the house told us she had known the Wilson family for years.

The 'M' Sport facility is at Dovenby Hall, approximately 3 miles outside Cockermouth. They have totally renovated the main buildings, which were disused, having been a mental hospital and added new, purpose built offices and workshops.

The tour of the facility lasts for 2 hours and they are held 3 or 4 times a year. They limit the numbers of the tour to 20.

On arrival, we had a briefing describing what the tour would consist of. Despite the brochure saying to the contrary, we were not allowed to take camera's or camera phones into the works.

After the briefing, we were shown the museum, which consisted of a Mk.1 Lotus Cortina, Hannu Mikkola's Safari winning Mk.1 Escort, Bjorn Waldegard's Monte winning Mk.2 Escort, one of the few surviving RS1700T Escort's and Matt Wilson's 'T Car' racing Car.

The tour of the main facility started in the sheet metal shop where the guide told us that for the first Focus, Ford provided 150 body shells for 'M' sport of modify to WRC requirements. For the current model, Ford took a different approach and gave them 150 sets of body panels for 'M' Sport to modify and assemble as required. He said that whilst this gave some benefits, it was a major job to

build shells from parts. Unfortunately, they did not take us into the shell assembly area.

He explained that the 'M' sport approach was to be as self sufficient as possible, only the spraying being sub-contracted, with the firm signing a confidentially contract.

The second area in the tour was the machine shop, which had both CNC and conventional machines. 'M' sport machine as many of the engine and other components as possible. The guide gave an example. On the Rally of France, both car's suffered 'pop off valve' failures on the same component. This was the first time that this component had failed. The failures occurred during Friday afternoon. The cause was FAXed back to base. The engineers designed a new component that afternoon using CAD (computer aided design). The machine shop machined the new parts. They were flown out to Corsica that evening which meant that both cars started the Saturday stages with the new parts fitted. This would not be possible without this 'in house' facility.

The third area was the transmission shop, where a 2006 front transmission was on show. This was designed and built by Ricardo - automotive consultants. 'M' Sport do all the own transmission rebuilds in house.

The fourth area was the engine shop with a 2006 engine assembly on a stand. The guide explained that 'M' sport took over engine design, development and manufacture when Ford sold Cosworth Engines. The 2006 engine has an aluminium block, whereas the phase 1 Focus engine has a cast iron block. A wet sump is compulsory, so the sump design is quite sophisticated to minimise oil surge.

Before taking us into the main workshops, he took us into the boardroom which overlooked the workshop. There were 4 of the 2006 cars, two just returned from the Corsica Rally and two being prepared for the Argentina Rally. It was explained that these cars and the area round them was 'out of bounds'

The guide told us that the 'M' Sport tyre bill alone for Swedish rally was £40,000, just in case any of us had ideas of running a WRC car.

As well as the works cars, there were two earlier Focus and two Fiesta cars. With these cars, we could do anything apart from sit in and start the cars. One of the Fiesta's was a Super 1600 car and the other was a Fiesta group N car. There were two engineers present to field questions.

One of the Focus cars was stripped and on stands. We were able to look closely at the body shell to look at the standard of preparation; the location of the electronic black box's and how the body shell was cracking under use (the car was built in 2003). The front suspension and steering rack from the car was laid out on the bench.

A sump guard was on the floor, this looked thin considering the low ride height of the cars, with very little bracing. On one of the subsequent events, Marcus retired after

driving over a rock, breaking an oil cooler line.

The comparison between the two Fiestas was interesting with the different levels of modification but both were built to the same standard of detail.

As with the Leyton House (ex March) formula 1 facility that I visited some years ago, everything was tidy and spotless, like a hospital, a great contrast to my garage!

After the tour, it was back to the shop where we had the briefing for coffee. John bought a mechanics suit for his daughter and was served by Malcolm's mother, who said that she knew the family that we had stayed with. It's a small world.

All in all, a very interesting visit, thanks again to Peter Nathan for the idea.

Mike Trim

From: Farnborough2
To: kathleen.dawson2
Sent: Tuesday, June 13, 2006 1:35 AM
Subject: Abingdon.

A **BIG** thank you to you and your members, who helped us out at Abingdon at the weekend.

Sorry it was such short notice, but it was our first time as Chief Marshals and we were relying on others a lot to guide us. Something we know now was a mistake. We had offers of start & finish crews from at least two other clubs, but they just didn't, or couldn't, get their act together, so when we were told MCAC could do it we were quite relieved to say the least, so once again thank you.

Dave & Carla Pencyate.
Chief Marshals.
10th Abingdon Motor Sport Car-nival

(Editor's note: Full e-mail addresses withheld to protect privacy)

John McKerrell
24.8.1940 – 30.06.2006

John McKerrell's death of at the end of June has left the UK rallying fraternity without one of the more colourful characters of our sport. John started rallying in the late 60s and competed in the Motoring News Championship most notably with Mick Briant in a Ford Escort RS and he won the navigator's award outright in 1974 and played an important part in Mick's 1975 championship win. Mick Briant recalls that he was an outstanding navigator, feared and admired in equal measure by the Welsh fraternity. Mick was able to secure the championship in a highly-underpowered car courtesy of John's sheer brilliance at reading the maps with supreme accuracy – even in severe fog. Mick was even accused of cheating by fellow competitors but openly admits that it was John's skills that allowed him to drive on the edge at all times, regardless of weather and terrain. John also co-drove Brian Addison in 1971 RAC Rally in a standard production Volkswagen Beetle to a notable finish of 104 out of 250 starters.

Having built up a successful Traffic Signals operations company in the mid 1980s, John decided to try out his driving skills. He quickly gained recognition for his exploits in a Maserati.

I first met John in 1986 when he campaigned a De Tomaso Pantera at single venue events but persistent mechanical problems often robbed him of a good result. We became close friends during 1987 when at the beginning of the season I got a phone call from John saying he would like to buy my entry for an event at Avon Park. I was driving a Mini Cooper S at the time and had entered this event as the first of the season and the entry had filled up quite quickly. He explained that he had just bought Ian Donaldson's Metro 6R4 and wanted to do a rally in it as soon as possible and would I co-drive for him. One nana second later and the deal was done. A second overall first time out was an excellent result. We went back to that venue in October of that year to take a first overall.

The following year John became more involved with sponsorship. As a member of Hampton and District Motor Club, he sponsored club events and co-sponsored the HDMC Connells-Keyearl Rally Championship.

The Metro 6R4 was a familiar car on the southern rally scene which got the reputation of one of the most rallied Group B cars by the mid 90s.

I will always remember John for his generosity and hospitality to friends. His generosity even extended to lending his car to others, even his employees. All of these people have said that they consider themselves extremely lucky to have met John. His wisdom on many knowledgeable topics including the MSA rules and regulations were also to be admired. Sadly however in 1993 he suffered a blackout in the paddock during an event at Watton and consequently was unable to drive for a year or so whilst medical examinations were carried out. In the meantime he asked me to drive his car on the Wallasey Promenade Stages in order to allow his then regular co-driver Steve Burtenshaw to score championship points. I duly repaid him with a 2nd overall to Clive Faine in a similar car. Later that year happily John had recovered sufficiently to co-drive in the 6R4 at Bovington; again we were rewarded with a second overall.

John had a reputation for smoking and drinking which was often the talk of the service areas. However he was the only man I knew who could have a heavy session into the small hours but wake up as bright as a button the next day, ready and able to go. His favourite tippie was a scotch and coke now known as a "McKerrell". But of course during an event it was only Coca Cola he was drinking! I did manage to upstage him at Avon Park when he was navigating for me in my Darrian. We rigged up an old plastic Teachers bottle (filled with cold tea of course) with a feed tube to the passenger seat and presented it at scrutineering. When asked by the scrutineer what it was I said it was a co-driver aid. Ah, they said, John McKerrell's co-driving for you then - no problem!

There are probably more anecdotes about John and his crew during these days than I can remember but the main memory is of his razor sharp analytical skills to maximize advantage out of any imprecise regulations in order to save a result yet at the same time always enjoy the whole experience of rallying whatever the result. We once trailed all the way down to Pembrey only to find that the car had slipped its cam belt timing whilst on the trailer. By the time we worked out what the problem was it was too late to start; however the day was still enjoyed with help and assistance given to other competitors whilst quaffing a few drinks in the van.

His other interest was the use of the English language and the derivation of words and he could always stand his ground in any debate.

John's driving career finally ceased in 1996 but he still managed to co-drive. He was quickly called upon by Mick Briant to coach his son Ben's entry into national and international rallying due to his highly disciplined and professional approach to co-driving. He suffered no nonsense. He also teamed up with old friend Russell Hale over the Monteberg and Longcross stages. However in 2004 John underwent a triple heart by-pass and a diagnosis of lung cancer a few months later curtailed many of his rallying activities. Yet true to form he was out in February this year at Goodwood. He re-teamed with old friend Sarah Johnson. Realising that John was still struggling with his health, Sarah wanted to thank John for lending her his Metro during the 90's. She thanked him in the only way possible – by going rallying together. Apparently he hadn't lost his touch and they finished a creditable 2nd in class and the pair had planned another outing later this year.

For the last six years he was busy with his new career working at West Sussex County Council as a traffic officer and with his many years of

traffic signal experience, he made a significant impact with his colleagues and was instrumental in many of the revised road systems in the East Grinstead area. Once again John's inimitable character and openness won him many friends. When the time came to lay John to rest there wasn't a dry eye in the packed chapel. I will miss his wit, kindness, generosity and the ability to enjoy life to the full and I will certainly drink a "McKerrell" or two in his memory. Looking to the future, John's old crew are talking of writing a diary of their exploits as it is clear that many wish to keep the memories alive and share those with others. The account is apparently tentatively entitled: 'McFish – Tall Tales, Warts and All. I am reliably informed that this will be a strictly honest account, no exaggerations.

Our thoughts go to his wife Carol, sister Sheena and his two daughters Christa and Natasha by a previous marriage.

Peter Keel

Photo Genic Fun Run

Fun for all of the family, bring the dog along!

Sunday 13 July

Starts at Pinkney's Green (near Maidenhead)

Contact **Rob Brook** for details and entry forms

Cheap days motor sport with social and food

Championship Update – 16th July 06 (*Late! - Ed*)

The championship tables have been handed over, I am now responsible for keeping them up to date and accurate. Many thanks to Kevin Dawson for his hard work last year, hopefully I can do a similar job. After checking through the tables the current leader-boards look like this:

(* denotes not having marshalled and/or written a magazine article)

<u>Off-Road Driver:</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Events</u>
Rob Brook	37	3
Peter Cox	9	3

<u>Road Rally Driver</u>		
John Roseblade	7	1*

<u>Road Rally Co-Driver</u>		
Peter Cox	7	1

<u>Stage Rally Driver</u>		
Richard Edwards	102	5*
Graham Samuel	30.5	4*
Paul Oldfield	9	1*

<u>Stage Rally Co-Driver</u>		
Paul Brown	102	5*
Tony Phillips	17.5	3
Sarah Owen	13	1*

<u>Night Trial Driver</u>		
Pete Farmer	42	3
Mike Cawthra	18	1
Rob Brook	18	1

<u>Night Trial Navigator</u>		
Andy Greenland	47	2
Lara Cawthra	18	1*
John Brook	18	1*

I am currently updating the non-competing championships and will give an update next time.

As the championship tables were not updated for sometime during the handover, I'm holding an amnesty. Until the end of July, retrospective claims in all championships will be allowed. New claim forms will be available on-line shortly.

I welcome anyone wanting to claim electronically, just include the web-link of the results and entry list in the usual manner if using this method.

Rob

London's Burning?

Fancy an afternoon with White Watch at Wembley, on 16th September 2006?

Paul Brown has managed to arrange for 8 Club members to spend the afternoon with White Watch at Wembley Fire Station. The afternoon will consist of getting everyone into uniforms, followed by an various demonstrations from simple hose-laying (including a race between the participants) to the equipment carried by the Fire Rescue Unit, including the cutting gear and method used for lifting a car off a person. There should then be a spot of grub, followed by a further demonstration of hose-laying up the tower and fighting fire whilst carrying the Breathing Apparatus. Finally, there will hopefully be a practical demonstration in the use of fire extinguishers and then Certificates of Attendance will be issued.

To select the 8 lucky participants, a Charity Auction, in aid of the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre, will be held at the Club on Wednesday 23rd August. If you would like to take part, but cannot make the 23rd, bids can be made prior to the auction night either by phone, text or e-mail to Paul Brown, Andrew Stacey or Peter Nathan. Obviously, anyone wishing to bid should bear in mind that they will need to be fit due to some of the more strenuous activities.

Tony Phillips