

# THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE



MIDDLESEX  
COUNTY  
AUTOMOBILE  
CLUB LTD

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006



Richard Edwards / Paul Brown  
Ford Escort 2000cc  
Mini Tempest Stages 2006

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



# THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE

[www.mcac.co.uk](http://www.mcac.co.uk)

---

Volume: ?+5 Issue: 3

September/October 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**

13 <sup>th</sup> September	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN.</b>
20 <sup>th</sup> September	Club Night	20.30	<b>VIDEO/DVD NIGHT.</b> Latest highlights from the World Rally Championship and other recent events.
22 <sup>nd</sup> September	12-Car	21.00	<b>SEPTEMBER 12-CAR RALLY.</b> Regulations and details of this navigational event for beginners are now available at Club, from Rob Brook or on the web. Entries needed!
27 <sup>th</sup> September	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN.</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> October	Partner's Club Night	20.30	<b>PARTNER'S EVENING – VIDEO GAMES.</b> Andrew Stacey will bring along his latest games to test our skill and provide some entertainment for the spectators!
11 <sup>th</sup> October	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN.</b>
18 <sup>th</sup> October	Club Night	20.30	<b>VIDEO/DVD NIGHT.</b> Another chance to catch up with events on the rally scene.
21/22 <sup>nd</sup> October	Night trial	19.30	<b>HUNTER'S NIGHT TRIAL.</b> Pete and Malc Farmer are in the process of organising this year's event and Regulations will be available shortly. Contact Pete or Malc for full details.
25 <sup>th</sup> October	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN.</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> November	Partner's Club Night	20.30	<b>PARTNER'S EVENING – FIREWORKS AND BBQ.</b> Time for us to celebrate the exploits of Guy Fawkes with the usual fireworks on the green. John has also promised to keep us warm on the evening with some fare from the BBQ.
8 <sup>th</sup> November	Club Night	21.00	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN.</b>

11 <sup>th</sup> November	Rally	07.00	<b>THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND TEMPEST RALLY.</b> Regulations will be available shortly from Tony or check out the website. If not competing, your help would be appreciated in ensuring the success of this year's event. Contact Paul Hopkinson to offer your help, especially if you can assist with the set-up during the later part of the week..
15 <sup>th</sup> November	Club Night	20.30	<b>VIDEO/DVD NIGHT.</b> What is the latest developments on the rally scene? A chance to catch up on recent happenings.
22 <sup>nd</sup> November	Club Night	20.30	<b>TABLE TOP RALLY.</b> Test your map reading skills with a simple table-top tonight.
29 <sup>th</sup> November	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGIN.</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> December	Partner's club Night	20.30	<b>PARTNER'S EVENING – To be confirmed.</b>

## V I C E - S q u a d

As some of you may know, especially if you keep up to date with matters via the motoring press or the internet, since the last issue of the magazine was in the process of being prepared and printed, the new owners of Oakington Airfield have withdrawn permission for the use of the airfield for future events. Due to the surveys that are being carried out at the venue, they do not want any members of the public on the site. This affects all activities that used the venue, not just motor sport events, so the Saturday Market, the model aircraft users, the gun club, the driving school etc. have all had to cease activities.

Whilst we all knew that development was planned for the venue and that the use for motorsport would cease, it was always understood that there would be some notice of the termination and that we would be able to plan a 'final' event there. Because of that, the sudden withdrawal of permission, just as we were in the process of issuing the Regulations for the Bomb-Along, came as a complete surprise.

Obviously, the loss of Oakington and the enforced cancellation of the Rockingham event, due to the exorbitant fees now required for the use of that venue, mean that MCAC has suddenly lost its main sources of income. We are, therefore, urgently on the look out for alternative venues for our major events. If anyone has any ideas or contacts that can be of assistance PLEASE contact

the Competition Secretary, Peter Nathan, and pass on the information.

The loss of Oakington has also had an effect on the Oakington Challenge and it looks likely that results will have to be declared final after only the 2 events that were held. As several positions are tied on points, I will need to sort out the rules regarding ties and will then advise all the Challenge contenders of the final results.

On a rather sad note, just after Rosemary's funeral we learnt that Don Caisey, another of our Vice-Presidents, had died. I have fond memories of Don – it was his fault I joined MCAC back in the 70s, after talking to him at one of the Woodoaks PCTs. Our thoughts are with Sue, Sarah and family.

I mentioned last time that I have now taken on the role of Club Historian / Archivist to collate all the activities and paperwork for the Club and to try to keep the history up to date as we go along. However, no-one has yet passed me any newspaper cuttings, reports or anything towards this project! Please remember, if you see any reference to the MCAC or any members, let me have the article (or a copy) to add to the archives. In this context, please also dig out any information from the past that has not yet been passed on to Adrian.

Tony Phillips

## WHAT'S ON ?

9/10th	AC Midden Vlaanderen	Tour of Flanders	(A)	BHRC
10th		Italian Grand Prix	(I)	WC
<del>10TH</del>	<del>MIDDX COUNTY AC</del>	<del>BOMB ALONG STAGES, OAKINGTON</del>	<del>(B)</del>	<del>MIDDX/AE/LC/2006</del>
10/15th	Classic Rally Association	Classic Marathon	(E)	-
16/17th	Sporting CCofN	Phoenix Road Rally	(B)	AEMC
<b>22ND</b>	<b>MIDDX COUNTY AC</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER 12-CAR RALLY</b>	<b>(E)</b>	<b>MIDDX</b>
22/24th		Cyprus Rally	(I)	WRC
23rd	Knutsford & DMC	Plains Rally	(B)	BTRDA
23/24th	BARC	Brands Hatch	(I)	BTCC
23/25th	Classic Rally Tours	The Sedan Classic Rally Tour	(E)	CRT
24th	Harrow CC	Turner Trophy Sprint, North Weald	(B)	ACSMC
24th	Torbay MC	Devonian Rally	(B)	HRCR(C)
30/1st		Welsh Rarebit Endurance Rally	(B)	Enduro
<b><u>OCTOBER</u></b>				
1st	Herts County AAC	Debden Sprint	(B)	.
1st		Chinese Grand Prix	(I)	WC
7th	Trackrod MC	Trackrod Rally Yorkshire	(I/B)	BRC/BHRC
7th	South Hams MC	Newton Abbot Audi Stages	(B)	ACSMC
8th		Japanese Grand Prix	(I)	WC
13/15th		Rally Turkey	(I)	WRC
14th	Bognor Regis MC	Regis Rally	(B)	HRCR(C)
14/15th	Chelmsford MC	Pheasant Plucker Road Rally	(B)	AEMC
14/15th	BARC	Silverstone	(I)	BTCC
15th	Bexley LCC	BLCC Stages, Longcross	(B)	AEMC
15/17th	Classic Rally Tours	The Champagne Classic Rally Tour	(E)	CRT
20/22nd		Minute Historic Rally	(I)	EHRC
21st		Bulldog Rally	(B)	MSA Gravel/WAMC
<b>21/22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>MIDDX COUNTY AC</b>	<b>HUNTERS NIGHT TRIAL</b>	<b>(E)</b>	<b>MIDDX</b>
22nd		Brazilian Grand Prix	(I)	WC
22nd		Cheviot National Rally	(A)	MSA Asphalt
26/29th		Lombard Revival Rally	(A)	.
27/29th		Rally Australia	(I)	WRC
28th	Burnham/M'head MCs	Somerset Historic Stages	(B)	BHRC/ACSMC
29th	Dukeries MC	Premier Forest Rally	(B)	AEMC
<b><u>NOVEMBER</u></b>				
4th		Cambrian Rally	(A)	BTRDA
5th	Kings Lynn DMC	Lynn Charity Stages	(B)	AEMC
5th	Salisbury & Shaftesbury MC	Palladwr Rally	(B)	HRCR(C)
9/12th	Classic Rally Association	Rally of the Tests	(E)	-
10/12th		Rally New Zealand	(I)	WRC
<b>11TH</b>	<b>SCMC/MCAC/FDMC</b>	<b>SOUTH OF ENGLAND TEMPEST RALLY</b>	<b>(A/B)</b>	<b>MSA/BRC[M/S]/MX</b>
18/19th		Great Bustard Endurance Rally	(B)	Enduro
18/21st	De Lacy MC	Roger Albert Clark Rally	(A)	.
23/26th	ERA	Lombard Revival Rally	(B)	.
<b><u>DECEMBER</u></b>				
1/3rd	IMS Ltd	Wales Rally GB	(I)	WRC/BRC
2/3rd	Chelmsford MC	Preston Road Rally	(B)	AEMC
<del>9/10TH</del>	<del>MIDDX CAC/Thame MSC</del>	<del>ROCKINGHAM STAGES 2006</del>	<del>(B)</del>	<del>MIDDX/AE/R2006</del>
30th	Sutton & Cheam MC	Longmoor Logo Stages	(B)	.

## **Pete's Patch (Ramblings from the Editor's Chair)**

As I sit here thinking of what I am going to say this issue, I looked at my calendar and realised that the year is almost gone already. I must say that it is a year that the club will not look back on with fond memories. We had just come to terms with the passing of Vice President Rosemary Williams when we were hit with the news that Don Casey, another Vice President, had also passed away. To have to write an obituary is a fairly onerous task, but for this issue I have had to request two. I thank Club President Adrian L'Estrange for his two excellent contributions with the hope that I will not have to call on his services again for many years.

We have also suffered the loss of three of our major stage rallies. The Oakington Stages and The Bomb Along Stages have both had to be cancelled because of the loss of the Oakington venue, and the Rockingham Stages has also had to be cancelled due to the ridiculously exorbitant fees requested from the new owners of the Rockingham Speedway.

So here is a request from your Council: as you traverse this wonderful land of ours, cast an occasional eye over the hedge to see if there is a disused airfield or similar lurking there that could be put to good use in February, October and/or December. Buildings on the site would be a bonus, we don't want Tony Phillips and Nigel Banks sitting out in the cold during a rally do we? Any potential site should be advised, in the

first instance, to Competition Secretary, Peter Nathan, (contact details somewhere at the back).

If you have any photographs of you in motorsport action, please send me a copy of the photograph. The more wheels you have off of the ground or the more sideways you are, the more likely your photograph is to end up on the front cover. One thing though, if you do send me photographs for inclusion, please also let me know the four W's, (who, what, where and when). I have had several comments recently about the lack of any information about the cover picture.

Deadline for the next magazine will be the last Wednesday in October (26<sup>th</sup>) with the magazine being issued (hopefully) the following Week. A reminder here that this will be the penultimate issue for all you budding Club Champions to get your magazine article in to make yourself eligible for any awards.

Please try to send me something to pad out the last magazine of the year and prevent the January / February 'last minute rush' issue from being about sixty four pages to get all of the late articles in.

Lastly, in case the magazine IS late next issue, may I be the first to wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and a prosperous and safe new year.

Pete Farmer

### **Trailer for rent**

Now that you have all calmed down from the excitement of seeing the new club trailer (now named 'trailer 3'), you may be pleased to hear that the council has decided that it should be put to good use.

Club members may now hire it for a small fee, subject to the load being carried meeting with the approval of its custodian (Peter

Nathan). The trailer is 'as new' condition and we would like it to stay that way for as long as possible so no hardcore, topsoil etc please.

Hire charges have been set at £10.00 per day or part thereof, £20.00 per weekend or £40 per week. Applications to hire should be sent to Peter Nathan, contact details are in the back of the magazine.

## Chairman's Chat

I must start by paying tribute to the two Vice Presidents who have sadly died since the last issue of the magazine went to press. Elsewhere you will find obituaries to both of them. They were both real friends of the club, and worked tirelessly over many years for the good of the club. I was sorry that circumstances meant that I was not able to get to either funeral, but I know that the club was well represented.

My last report contained the words "Planning is well under way for the Bomb-Along to take place at Oakington on 10<sup>th</sup> September". This was quite true. The permit had been received, the regs were drafted and all officials had been approached and had agreed to act. Just before everything went to print we received the very unwelcome and unexpected news that the new site owners of Oakington had decided that extensive preparatory works for the redevelopment of the site were to start in August, so our event could not take place at Oakington. We decided to postpone the event as we are hopeful that we can find another suitable venue to continue the tradition of the Bomb-Along Stages Rally which has been held for the past 10 years, and which has raised over £10,000 for charity, primarily the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre.

In addition to this blow, we also think it very doubtful that we will be able to run Rockingham again this year as the site owners want a price that we cannot afford. As a result, we urgently need a new venue. We have several leads, but if anyone has any ideas, please get in touch with a Council member.

Over the summer there have been two exhibitions of the work of the club. The Uxbridge Autoshow in July and Classics on the Green at Croxley Green in August. I know that there are reports going in to the magazine, so I will not go in to all the details,

but do want to record my thanks to all those who were involved and who worked so hard to represent the club so well.

In mid August, Kevin and I went across to Radnor in Wales for the first British Baja. This was a really enjoyable and well run event. A mixture of Bikes, Quads and Off-road vehicles, all competed on the same course (but not at the same time). It was observed by the FIA for possible inclusion in the International calendar next year. If it is included, I would hope that we could take part as a club to be a part of such an interesting event.

In early September, Rob Brook, Andy Greenland, Kevin and I marshalled on a Military event at RAF Benson and Bramley. It was interesting to see the skills (and at times lack of skills) of our armed forces. We ran some of the tests in the afternoon and manned two of the controls for the night event. Rob and Andy had a well equipped hut, with lighting and seating and we had a large car park, with a full toilet block, hot soup and drinks for all (it was a compulsory rest halt). I think we need to think again about how we look after marshals.

We finished there at about 2 am. Unfortunately we had a puncture on the way home which meant we were not home until 4am. That would not have been so bad if we had not had to be at Longcross for the London Irish event. It was very pleasing to see so many MCAC crews out on the event (although sad that only one finished). Well done Gary Elswood and Andy Greenland. I hope the next edition of the Magazine will have a report on the event. MCAC ran the arrival and start and received many complements for the team.

The next big event is the Tempest, but before that there will be the Chiltern 12 Car and the Hunters, so get out and keep motoring.

**Kathleen Dawson**

## ROSEMARY JUNE WILLIAMS

(Vice-President)

14.03.33 – 22.07.06

Rosemary's first involvement with and John entered the 'London year that John joined the MCAC. result was not a feature of that navigated her future husband to winning the Navigator's Award on which her fiancé John was



the Club was in 1955 when she Run', which was also the same History relates that a memorable inaugural event! But later she success on various road rallies, the 'Experts Night Rally' in 1958 for awarded the Oakes Cup.

Rosemary joined the Club the month after her marriage in January 1959 and continued her earlier successes by winning the Southgate Cup as a driver in the same year. She went on to demonstrate her driving and navigating skills by winning the Ladies Cup no fewer than three times, in 1965, 1966 and 1969, the third time from eleven other contestants for this prestigious annual championship award.

In July 1977 Rosemary volunteered to take on the role of Membership Secretary and at the AGM in 1980 joined the Council as Secretary whilst continuing to cope with membership matters. She managed both these roles until 1987 when she resigned from the Council, passing over the Secretaryship to Mark Brumwell whilst continuing as Membership Secretary until the 1988 AGM. Rosemary was elected a Vice-President in 1987 in recognition of her long and most valued service to the Club in those key management roles.

Throughout her long membership Rosemary was more often than not in the front line of Club affairs, if not as a competitor, then as an event organiser and marshal. She was just as active behind the scenes and the home-made snacks she provided from her caravan at the PCT's at Woodoaks Farm in the '70s were a notable feature of these most enjoyable days. Although she retired from active involvement she nevertheless continued to be very much in tune with Club affairs and was a periodic contributor to the *Magazine* with humorous articles describing John's rallying exploits.

Rosemary's funeral was held on 8<sup>th</sup> August at the parish church in Watlington, close to her home, at which the Club was represented by Brian Catt, Keith Chamberlain, Anne (Ryan) & Henry Emblem, Andy Greenland, Adrian & Jo L'Estrange, Christine & Joe Poxon and Graham & Pam Samuel (with apologies from Mike Hurst). The Club has made a donation to Diabetes UK in her memory.

Her support unfailing – Her contribution immense – Her passing mourned by all

The Council and Members offer their sincere condolences to John and Debbie in their sad loss.

## JOHN DONALD (DON) CAISEY

(Vice-President)

1935 – 11.08.06

Back in March 1963 a very young Don the late Helen Sharpe, who was for her on the MCAC Spring Rally. event and with it the Green Trophy, didn't qualify for any award. His whetted, he joined the Club the relationship with the MCAC which



Caisey was asked by his then boss, already a Club member, to navigate Much to his surprise they won the but as Don was not a Club member he appetite for rallying well and truly following month and so started his lasted for just over 43 years.

At that time Don was working as a research chemist at Glaxo Pharmaceuticals and his attention to detail that such employment demanded was to stand him in good stead from the word go, as a navigator in the regularity events which were popular at that time. By the end of his first season Don had amassed so many efficiency points that he was placed second in the navigator's championship by a mere four points, being forty points ahead of the next contestant. But in view of the fact that at that time in the Club's history navigators did not qualify for any event award (except on very rare occasions) he ended the season without a single cup or trophy to show for his efforts. To redress what the Committee thought an injustice in his case, he was awarded The Donegal Prize for 1964. He continued his successes, both as a navigator and a driver, by winning the Gamage Cup (Champion Navigator) in 1965, the Bell Trophy (Champion Driver – All Events) in 1967, the Alexander Trophy (Champion Driver – Road Events) in 1969 and the Bell Trophy again in 1971. In 1971 Don was a member of the award-winning 3-car Sunbeam Imp team on the RAC Rally and as such the joint recipient of the Kensington Cup.

Don was elected to the Committee at the AGM in 1967 and in 1968 he succeeded John Williams as the Club's second Competitions Secretary, a position he managed with great enthusiasm until 1979 when he resigned from this key executive post on his move to ICI in Congleton, Cheshire where he continued to work in the laboratories.

Don was elected a Vice-President in 1981 in recognition of his important and invaluable work as Competitions Secretary for eleven years.

During the time 'up north' he became involved in the new world of commercial computing and used his medical knowledge in assisting computer programmers devise software for the computerised medical equipment being developed at the time. By 1988 he had returned south, taking up employment with Baker Instruments, this time working more as a software designer but still in the medical field. On his return he volunteered to take over the Membership Secretary's role from the late Rosemary Williams (a non-Council position at that time) and proceeded to write the software needed to computerise the Club's membership records which he completed in May of that year, his system remaining in place until 1999.

On his retirement in 1998, he and Sue decided to move to Gloucestershire, to be nearer his daughter Sarah and their grandchildren. As a consequence he resigned his office at the AGM in 1999 and was presented with The President's Award for 1998 in recognition of his 23 years of executive service to the Club.

The MCAC was represented at his funeral in Cheltenham on 21<sup>st</sup> August by Adrian & Jo L'Estrange, Christine Poxon, Graham & Pam Samuel and John Williams, as well as former members George & Lesley Fowler, George Harris & Stella Chamberlain and Derek & Irene King (with apologies from Dave Baker, Keith Chamberlain, Mike Hurst, Tom Ryan and Anne (Ryan) Emblem). The Club has made a donation to 'Nature in Art' in Don's memory.

A keen competitor – A tireless worker for the Club – A good friend to all

The Council and Members offer their sincere condolences to Sue and Sarah in their sad loss.



## Is There Life after Rallying?

I suppose the thought must have occurred to most active sportsmen (and women) in all forms of recreational sport – what will I do for fun when I can no longer drive/fly/play tennis/scuba-dive etc? How will I fill those long hours currently spent preparing the rally car, driving to-and-from events; competing and fixing the thing afterwards? Many in such position slip into the administrative role within their sport or become active marshals or take up golf. However, a long time ago I discovered another passion which I could only enjoy occasionally while I was still rallying and that was sailing – yachts not dingys or tea-trays with sails. I decided about ten years ago that when the time was ripe I was going to go to a warm country with lots of sea where I could have a decent boat and spend a great part of my remaining years exploring the coasts and seas of tropical islands, warm-water ports and historic harbours. To travel at will over 4/5<sup>ths</sup> of the earth's surface is one of the last great freedoms left in this over-regulated world and I wanted to experience that life. Of course, unless one is independently wealthy one cannot simply give up everything and set off into the sunset; I had still to earn an income while still enjoying the sort of life-style I had been planning.

Fortunately, my means of making a living have become very adaptable in recent years as the technology of the internet advanced dramatically and now I can do my work from practically anywhere I can get an internet connection. With all these things in mind I spent part of the last ten years looking for a suitable place to fulfil this dream and a few years ago I decided that it would be hard to beat Croatia. For those who don't know this surprising country, I can tell you it has a lot going for it. It has, undoubtedly, the finest coastline in the whole Mediterranean with clear blue water, thousands of islands from a few metres across to islands the size of small countries, decent wine and

food and a reasonable standard of living. It has amazing weather with hot summers refreshed by cool breezes, early spring and a long autumn when the tourists have all gone home. These are the best times – especially the autumn. The sea remains warm and swimmable until well into October. If I go on like this any more, they'll give me a job at the tourist board!

So about a year ago Agi and I decided it was time to put Operation Sails in the Sunset into action and we came here to look for somewhere which fitted our various requirements. In spite of what you hear on TV the so-called property boom is quite limited because not many of the locals actually want to sell any of their houses. The majority of foreign incomers are buying new-build apartments in Marbella-style ghettos near the towns. This means that if you can actually find a house to buy the prices are certainly not cheap but the rewards are great. Ours is a three floor building divided into two large apartments and a cellar, built on a slope of about 45 degrees with three garden terraces making up the 500 square metres of land which came with the house. We are about 75 feet above sea level and we can look straight into the small harbour from our balcony and the views up and down the coast are stunning as is the sight of the island of Brac about 8 km away straight across the water. All this beauty has one drawback, however; we have no road access to the property. We need to park the car at the bottom of the slope and climb 102 steps up to reach our castle and, of course, 102 steps down when we want to go anywhere! From the bottom of the steps it is about a three minute walk to any of five small beaches each with a different character. Some have rocky outcrops which are great for snorkelling while others are smooth gravely stretches for sunbathing and swimming. I will send Malcolm a few photos of the house and surrounds and

he can put them on the web-site if he thinks they are interesting enough.

We are now in the process of settling in; it takes time to find out how to get a telephone connected; open a bank account; buy some essential furniture and generally become part of a new community – and all in Croatian of course! Actually it's not as bad as we might have expected. Anyone under about 30 speaks pretty competent English thanks to Hollywood and Bill Gates (just think of what would have happened had Microsoft been started by say a Pole?) and so far we have had nothing but friendly help and welcome.

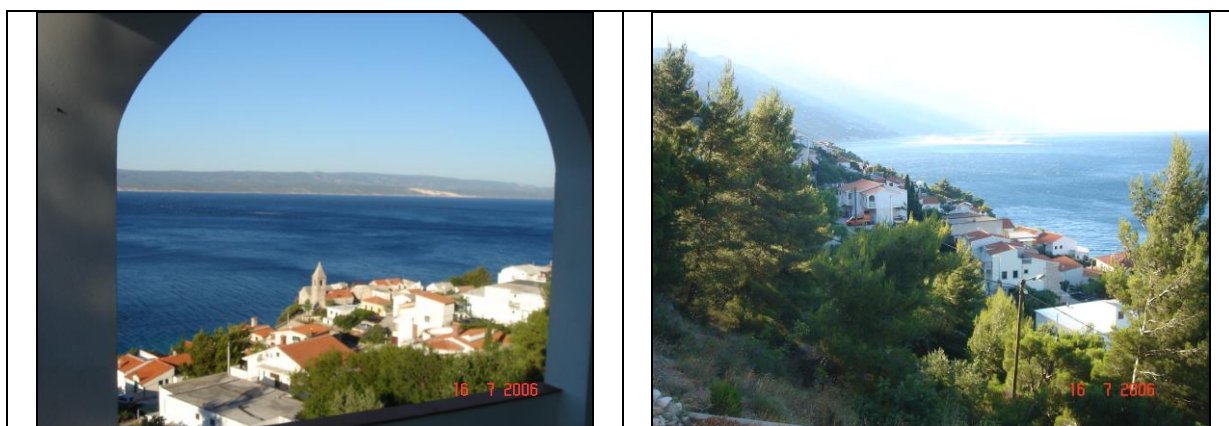
We have now been here just three weeks and I have not yet acquired the main object of the move i.e. the yacht but we have been busy looking. I think the equivalent of kicking tyres when buying a rally car when you are looking at yachts is to walk around it grabbing things to ensure they are securely attached, poke around in all the lockers looking for leaks and gun the engine a bit. We've seen a few nice ones but there are plenty still to see. I have an idea that prices might

come down towards the end of the season as potential buyers head for home and sellers face six months without any enquiries so we'll just keep looking for a while longer. We can always hire for a weekend or so just to keep our hand in.

I mentioned that our house comprises two apartments and we are living in the lower, slightly larger one. Our plan is to prepare the upper flat in time to offer it for rent next summer as a luxury apartment with three bed-rooms (for up to six people) and to be able to have lots of friends to stay outside the main season when the only rent will be a bottle of wine per day!

Probably our next visit to UK will be at the end of September because the progress on our new High Wycombe flat is rather slow and, until that is ready, we have nowhere to live in UK – but that is no hardship for the present. So, in the meantime, please accept my apologies for a few missed Council meetings and we hope to see everyone again in time for the Hunters Night Trial (probably).

Tom Ryan



**Views from Chez Tom and Agi**

## July 1st 2006.

Well it may have been July 1st, but it all started on December 10th - 11th 2005. We went to Rockingham for The Rockingham Stages Rally, as MSA radio crew Farnborough 2. Nothing new there, just another of the 41 events we did together last year. What we didn't know was that there was a prize draw for all marshals, fine, that happens at a lot of events.

The first we knew of it was when Dave got an e-mail from Dave Smythe, radio crew Difflock 26, offering to 'buy the drive off of us' so an e-mail went from Dave to Dave basically saying tell us more, don't suppose that is the words used by the Dave this end, but that's what he meant. The e-mail that came back said that I had won first prize in the marshals draw, look on the event web site, so we did and I had. Oh! we thought, that's strange we have heard nothing, so Dave sent an e-mail to the events chief marshal, he confirmed that I had indeed won the prize and it was in the post.

So a few days went by and the postman delivered a fairly large envelope addressed to me, on opening it I found that what I had in fact won was a drive in a Caterham Super Light, and a Lotus Elise. Enough to excite anybody with an interest in fast cars, but has no hope of ever driving one. Hey but hang on I can't drive, was what I said to Dave, lets see what Dave would give us for it, to which he replied \*\$^\* off you've won it you do it, only for me to say 'BUT I DON'T DRIVE', and Dave's reply was, well I bet they have two seats, lets contact them and see if they can do a passenger ride for you. So I said ok, only thing is I wouldn't be able to get in either of those cars, and if I did would I be able to get out!!!

So an e-mail was sent to Paul at U Drive Cars at Upper Heyford who supplied the prize, explaining how things are, a few days later an e-mail came back saying no problem we have switched you to the Evo7 & Subaru for a passenger ride. We then got an e-mail from the chief marshal of the event at Rockingham, saying let me know what date you are coming and I will come and say hello, I am one of the instructors there.

The Friday night before my drive we had booked a £26 room at the Buckingham Travelodge, to save having to drive there on the Saturday morning. My drive was booked for 11:00 and they asked for us to be there at least 30 mins before, for sign on and briefing. On arrival we were met by Paul (the boss) and he introduced us to the rest of the team, most of who seemed to be members of Thames & Middlesex motor clubs.

I went to the office to sign on, and whilst doing so noticed Dave's name on the list as well, but I didn't say anything to him. When they called him over to sign on as well his face was a picture, never got a camera when you need one have you? Think he was bricking it as they say, he knew nothing until then, but they had him down to drive the Evo7.

After sign on we had the briefing, some of the chav types thought it was time for a chat amongst themselves, that didn't go down to well with the instructors. We were all given a piece of paper with our names on and list of cars we were going in, in all they had six cars there for use, so there were six of us out at anyone time. They called out the names in the order we were going in and which cars. Dave and I were towards the end of the group, so we could watch some of the others, funny but some of those that chatted through the briefing were the ones that stalled the cars whilst pulling away from the paddock.

Then we got called to line up for our turn. Dave was called first for his drive in the Evo, into the driving seat strapped in quick chat from the instructor and off he went, nice and smooth, one of the few not to stall it. Then I was called for my ride in the Subaru, I got strapped in and off we went, as we went down one side I could see Dave coming up the other side, he looked as though he was concentrating hard. As we were doing our 4 laps, the instructor was talking to me and explaining his every move, gear changes, braking and left or right. As soon as I got out of the Subaru I was strapped into the Evo for my 4 laps in that. Was I disappointed when it was over, no way, more like devastated!

When our rides were over the instructors put their comments on our slips of paper, we could then have it transferred to a certificate. Written on Dave's was: 'good drive, very smooth'. Mine had on it 'Thanks for all your help over the years'.

As we were the last to go the team were on a

break when I got back, so after having a coffee and a chat with them, we made our way to the photo van to get a picture, as a memento of a fantastic day. Would we do it again, you bet we would.

Carla Penycate.

## The Donor Card Grand Turismo 2006

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual running of this event for classic and 'interesting' cars will take place on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Organised by the Historic Rally Car Register and supported by Continental Car Tours and the Masonic United Grand Lodge the run promotes the carrying of organ Donor Cards and the proceeds go to the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, which has benefited from over £23,000 raised in the last 4 years. The Heritage Motor Museum at Gaydon is the start and finish with

Paddy Hopkirk flagging the teams away on the 120 miles route through the beautiful Warwickshire countryside. For more information and an entry form please contact Valerie Gilmore on 01494 812451 or e-mail [val.donocardgt@btopenworld.com](mailto:val.donocardgt@btopenworld.com)

*A two page entry form may also be downloaded from the MCAC webpage or by contacting the editor who will post you a hard copy if required.*

## Are you Skyped?

For those of you with internet access, here is a great way to save money on your phone calls. There is a website called 'Skype, which can be found at <http://www.skype.co.uk> will enable you to talk to friends and family at much lower rates than most other telephone services. If your friends and family are also signed up to Skype then your phone calls will cost you nothing, zero, zip, less than 1p and that is a bargain in anyone's book. If they are not subscribers to Skype then first you must get them to sign up (you have to download a small file to run the phone calls). If they refuse to do this then not to worry, calls within the UK (to landlines) are only 1.4 pence per minute, as are calls to the USA and most of Europe. Calls to UK mobiles are

a little more expensive at approx. 17 pence per minute.

You will, of course have to have a mike and speakers to use this facility but all people have speakers connected to their pc nowadays and microphones can be bought for pennies nowadays.

Even if your friends and families do not want to subscribe then you should so that I can save money when I call you.

By the way, Skype runs in the background and also lets you know when any of your contacts come online.

## Rob's Fun Goes Sprinting....

After using the Skoda for the Pheasant Plucker Road Rally in Essex, I was talking to a Paul Hopkinson who has done the occasional sprint. "Your car would be a great sprint car. Did you know it would be in the same class as a 1400cc petrol?" It wasn't the 1st of April so I asked more. The MSA book of riddles (The Blue Book) has turbo diesels under 2.0 litres in the under 1400cc petrol class....

On the back of this I trundled off to marshal on a sprint to see what it's all about. The venue used was Longcross, where I came 7th overall last year in Richard's Mk 2 Escort, so I've got a bit of an idea of the place. Compared to rallying, the circuit was faster (No chicanes), the cars were faster (Caterham R500 performance), the cars had fewer safety requirements (Road cars) and the drivers needed less to compete (No schooling needed here) - Can you see a pattern? Absolute madness...

Next day I entered the "Abingdon CAR-nival Sprint", to be held days after my return from Barbados. The Sprint is part of a weekend of motor sports, the Saturday holds Autotests, Off-Road courses and a 2-course sprint, whilst the Sunday hosts a 100 car, 100 mile rally. All the events help raise serious amounts of money for local charities.

Saturday morning, up early-ish and off to Oxford. Really should have looked at the map before I left - clockwise around Oxford is not a direct way. (First note - In sprinting you don't have a navigator.) Arrived and met up with Paul, who'd offered to "Service" for me - Still trying to work this concept out as neither of us had anything with us except camping gear and beer. (Suppose it's obvious really, break it - start drinking)

I fixed the timing strut (2 screws into the number plate), applied the ignition cut-off label to the switch and applied the numbers. Seeded car 10 was new to me, never had this when rallying! (Lower class cars = earlier seeding) It was then off to Noise and scrutineering. As a standard car the biggest requirement was proof of Insurance as I was in the road going class. The class (10 cars)

ranged from Metro GTi's, a couple of original Mini's, 106's, a VW Bora TDi, and me. I recognised the Bora from the previous sprint (He'd won the class), and recognised about 4 others. Unfortunately, the "Road going" classes had been merged, so the Unmodified were in with the modified, the 1380cc mini being one giveaway, the chipped Bora TDi the other.

In the morning we ran on the handling course, whilst in the afternoon we were onto the acceleration and braking course. These actually seemed the opposite for me, but more of that later. First a convoy run, to show where the course goes. Then 2 practice runs and 2 timed runs, best timed run to count.

First practice, tried setting off in second gear as the car has so much torque and I wanted to reduce the number of gear changes. The first thing that hit me was how quiet the car is in competition. It's a quiet road car, but with balaclava, helmet and no navigator shouting at you, it really is a different experience to the Pug. The second thing - it's lovely to be able to switch the Air conditioning on between runs, with outside temperatures in the 30's, it was lovely to be able to compete in a comfortable car! Third thing to hit me, there's no stop line at the end where you hand your time card in. (Would have been nice to know before starting the run...)

Unfortunately, the timing equipment failed on the practice runs, so I can't say how I got on. It felt OK, but difficult to say without times.

Then first timed run. I was told I got too much wheel spin at the start (still setting off in 2nd), though it felt good inside the car. I braked slightly too early for the chicane, but good drive out. The last corner was a real struggle, being a very late turn-in, very quick and long. However - a good run for the first proper attempt. I decided 2nd gear was the right option for setting off.

Before the second run we went to watch at the chicane. Most cars were rear wheel drive, but it was clear there were 2 stabs of the braking, not just the one I'd used. No need to brake for the earlier corners, so 95+ mph

entry speed, braking and cornering, with an unforgiving bank to hit if I went off. What's the worst that could happen?

Second run - set off with a better amount of wheel spin (Very little), but left the handbrake on slightly (Doh!). Braking later (as planned) and I tried just too hard. ABS- control, but poor braking. Result, I ran wide on the chicane, marbles, lots of wheel spin - poor run. Oh well. Comparing the results I was 3rd in class, just over 1 second behind the Bora and the Mini 1380cc. 4th was over a second behind me, a Mini GT.

Onto the second course - Practice here suggested traction under acceleration was the most important. In the standard car you can sit spinning wheels in third, even in the dry. First run went well, though I was concerned I'd get a penalty for cutting one of the corners (Everyone looked to be doing it) - I was told I could only get a penalty for "4 wheels off", 2 wheels in the grass or through a cone was fine...

The second run felt quicker, but the times showed otherwise. It was only now we realised the problem - Heat. Talking to the owner of the Bora we learnt he had 195Bhp on tap in the morning, but he was also

suffering. His telemetry (Yep, that's right) showed he was also getting slower, the heat was thinning the air, hence less air into the turbo and reduced power. We were struggling more than most as the turbo compounded the problem, not to mention the intercoolers not working. (Oh, come on - it's a better excuse than Jet-lag)

I had an "alright" first timed run, the Bora and 1380 Mini were challenging for the class win, but the 1275 Mini was really closing. He was getting quicker by over a second a test, and I was getting slower. It was going to be close. All I could do was be neat, and see what happened. Comparing the times for the last run, I went 0.10 seconds quicker than my previous best, finishing 0.09 seconds ahead of the Mini and taking 3rd in class. First sprint, first trophy - very happy. In fact it was pride of place in the front of the car all day Sunday whilst marshalling on the rally.

Had a really good day, topped off with plenty of beer (*Should you be admitting to this? Ed*). Many thanks to Paul for his support, and suggesting the idea, and thanks too to the marshals, especially the MCAC start-line crew....

Rob Brook



**You can almost see Rob concentrating so hard that his tongue is halfway up the side of his face can't you?**

## Uxbridge Autoshow 2006

Sunday 16 July

Middlesex County Automobile Club was represented by thirteen cars at this year's Uxbridge Autoshow. With the organisers being unable to find a suitable area for us to play in, the Autoshow Autotest had to be cancelled this year so all of the cars remained in pristine condition without their usual covering of fine dust thrown up by the competitors. (As did all of the exhibits surrounding our stand). Not to be outdone, Donna was also present shining like a new pin after the cleaning exercise mentioned in the last magazine. Parked next to us, with little or no demarcation line was the Peugeot Sport stand. It was interesting to note that several of the exhibits on that stand were also displaying MCAC stickers in their windows.

The cars all received lots of spectator interest and several membership application forms were handed out. We remain to see if they are turned into members in the future.

The decision not to grant MCAC a drive past in the arena was ignored and several cars turned up anyway. Because it would have caused a lot of bother and confusion had the cars been turned away, the organisers let the cars do the display.

The fact that there was no room for an autotest proved incorrect on the day as a large area was unused all day, about the right size and in the correct location was noted by the club members in attendance.



**A few of the cars on display at Uxbridge, (note Chris Keys' Pug appears to have broken down again and yes, that is a Stratos lurking at the side).**

### An Apology

The eagle eyed amongst you will have noticed that one or two errors crept into the magazine in the last issue. This was caused by a number of events coming together at the wrong time. I had just got the magazine ready for issue to the publishers when I received an email from Tony Phillips telling me not to send it as the printers had gone into liquidation. He would forward me the new address later that evening. I waited until about 10.30pm and decided that it was time for bed as I had to be up for work the next morning at 4.30am! As Tony does not have broadband and the mag is about 2Gb in size, I sent it to Malc with the request to Tony to let him have the new address to send said mag next morning. We also had to re-jig at the last moments when news of Rosemary Williams came through. In all the confusion, Malc only received half of the correct items and no cover photo. – Sorry I will try not to let it happen again.

## Dangerous Moments

This is an article that was published in the Daily Telegraph: Enjoy.

**Problem:** test car loses rear wheel, which overtakes car and races off down road:

**Best Solution:** Brake gently to keep car stable and gently pull to side of road.

**Actual Outcome:** Journalist thinks, "Someone's lost a wheel. I'll speed up and catch it." Car topples onto exposed rear brake disc which digs in and spins car into nearby petrol station.

---

**Problem:** Journalist driving Porsche 911 joins Ferrari launch for a sneaky, forbidden, two-car comparison feature. Approaches T-junction behind Ferrari at high speed.

**Problem:** Journalist with worn out trainers collects freshly restored classic car. Split sole of right shoe envelopes accelerator pedal, making it impossible to brake for rapidly approaching corner.

**Best Solution:** left-foot brake, buy new trainers, **Actual outcome:** Car crashes and is towed back to body-shop.

---

**Best solution:** mirror, signal, position, speed, gear, wait for Ferrari to move off, and then look both ways and follow.

**Actual outcome:** journalist glances down at last moment and smashes into back of Ferrari, resulting in humiliating phone call to Ferrari HQ in Maranello.

---

**Problem:** Journalist drives 700 miles non-stop from Geneva Motor Show to test car at MIRA Proving Ground and then falls asleep on high speed circuit.

**Best Solution;** Sleep, coffee, not driving.

**Actual Outcome:** Car mounts wire barriers at top of banking, removing all steering gear and suspension, whereupon journalist wakes up and attempts to 'steer' his way out of accident. Passenger soils underwear.

---

**Problem:** While high-speed testing a turbocharged Ford at Millbrook Proving Ground, fuel hose becomes detached, dousing engine and front of car in burning vapour and rendering windscreen opaque.

**Best Solution:** Stop engine and fuel pumps, gently brake to a standstill while looking through side windows, call fire brigade.

**Actual Outcome:** passenger observes blaze across windscreen and mutters, "Er, fire." Driver spears off banked circuit, up slip road and launches car over grass mound, landing in middle of roundabout, whereupon both hacks roll out of car laughing hysterically as entire vehicle burns to a crisp.

---

**Problem:** Driving Chevrolet Corvette test-car late at night around the Elephant and Castle in South London, journalist stops for strange zombie-like figure in middle of road who walks up car's bonnet and steps on roof.

**Best Solution:** Stay in car, lock doors call police and maybe social services.

---

**Actual Outcome:** Journalist shunts car forward, resulting in zombie slithering to the ground while journalist's hysterical girlfriend screams, "Kill Him! Kill him! Run him over!"

---