



Colne Valley Classic and Vintage Club Newsletter

The CVCVC was formed in 1989 to encourage interest in Historic, Vintage, Classic Cars and Motorcycles



April 2022



CVCVC Winter Run Abberton Reservoir – Starting Line-up – Four of Fifteen Participants
 Roger Knight's Morgan Roadster, Nick Godley's MGB GT, Derek Wickes's AC Ace & Bob Chaplin's Ford Anglia Rally

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Editor's Intro

Coronavirus is still around us with the Omicron variant, but the Government relaxations on gathering restrictions has enabled CVCVC events to go ahead. Nevertheless, the Committee are monitoring the situation and will notify members of any changes to the events programme.

Many articles this month, including Stuart Black's article on high performance turbo cars he has driven. February's Evening Speaker Peter De Rousset-Hall gave his third photo presentation to the Club, unfortunately the evening coincided with the winter storm 'Dudley', plus coronavirus restrictions understandably resulting in a low turnout of members. The Red Lion in Sturmer was the February Midweek Lunchtime venue, a well-chosen pub.

Last month's Guess the Car attracted considerable interest. Surprising really since this vehicle was a prototype, never to go into production.

There were sufficient articles and features to fill eight pages this month, however, my 'Future Copy' file is really low, with Spring upon us, you must have accumulated stories during the winter on vehicle maintenance and rebuilds, plus remembering times with previous classics, that would interest fellow members.

Sunday 24th April is "Drive it Day", An opportunity to take to the roads with like-minded classic vehicle enthusiasts.

Stay Safe Chris Sharman

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Government's lockdown requirements, the CVCVC has commence monthly Midweek Lunchtime meetings and Evening events. Members will be informed through the CVCVC Newsletters and Parish Notices if there are changes to the Government regulations.

Mar 31 Midweek Midday Meet Up – Assington Country Kitchen, The Barn Assington CO10 5LW.

Apr 20 Club Evening – Wednesday 8pm. Speaker Charles Soule - Life of Lord Nuffield. Halstead Football Club CO9 1HR.

Apr 28 Midweek Midday Meet Up – Horse & Groom Cornish Hall End CM7 4HF (Pre-ordering requested- see page 2)

May 11 Committee Meeting - Wednesday 7.30pm. Halstead Football Club CO9 1HR

May 18 Club Evening – Wednesday 8pm. Speaker Peter Minter - History of the Local Bulmer Brick Company. Halstead Football Club CO9 1HR.

May 26 Midweek Midday Meet Up – Square & Compasses Fuller Street Fairstead CM3 2BB.

Jun 15 CVCVC Classic Car & Motorcycle Show, further details to follow.

Club Information

The CVCVC is open to all enthusiasts with an interest in vintage and classic cars and motorcycles

The CVCVC Committee

Chairman	John Goodman
Deputy Chairman & Events Co-ordinator	Stuart Black
Treasurer	Chris Harman
Secretary	Geoff Broad
Membership Sec.	Roger Martin
Newsletter Editor	Chris Sharman
Parish Notices Editor	David Singer
Webmaster	Bob Chaplin
Club Safeguarding Officer	Julie Ingram

CVCVC Membership

Club Membership is open to enthusiasts with an interest in vintage and classic cars and motorbikes. Membership details can be obtained from Roger Martin.

New Member We are pleased to welcome back to the CVCVC Chris Harman's son Michael, who has two modern classics: 2000 BMW 330Ci convertible and 2004 MG ZS 180.

Website

The Club's website can be found here:

www.colnevalleycarclub.org.uk on it are pages of club and local classic car related events. There are links to other relevant sites and further information. Past copies of the Newsletter can also be found here.

The CVCVC and Electronic Media

eNewsletters

The majority of members now receive this newsletter, on a monthly basis, by email. If you receive the black and white copy by post and would like to receive the full colour edition by email, for home printing, then please contact Roger Martin.

Electronic mailings

Regular updates are sent out with reminders of lunch meetings and information on our evening speakers. Additionally, these include more details of forthcoming club events and activities. To receive these, please make sure Roger Martin has an up-to-date email address for you. Finally, please make sure that any spam filter is set to allow the email address.

Club Articles

The Newsletter always requires articles, so please forward details to the editor on your vehicle's motoring experiences, event reviews, or restoration and technical stories. New feature ideas are always welcomed.

May Newsletter

Would you please forward articles by email or post before Monday 18th April.
Chris Sharman,

DISCLAIMER

The views, opinions and any technical advice printed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee or Editor and should not be taken as such. The CVCVC accepts no responsibility for the results of following contributor's advice.

Future CVCVC Events

April 28th - Horse & Groom Cornish Hall End Midweek Lunchtime Meeting

More pubs are asking for groups to pre-order food. This is helpful to the members of the group and also to the pub. You can pre-order your food at The Horse & Groom, Cornish Hall End and if you wish to do that, please contact Chris Harman (Club Treasurer) beforehand, so that he can arrange that on your behalf?

April 20th - Club Evening –

A Talk by Charles Soule - Life of Lord Nuffield

A talk recounting the life of Lord and Lady Nuffield, their early days, who they mixed with socially and politically. Lord Nuffield's influence on the motor car industry between the wars.



There will be some amusing anecdotes along the way!

Lord Nuffield with one of his original Morris Minors

May 18th - Club Evening – Peter Minter - A talk

on Hand Made Bricks by Bulmer Brick and Tile

Many of you will know of Bulmer Brick and Tile. A long established and respected business that, to this day, makes bricks and tiles by hand. Skilled workmen have been on this site since 1798.

Peter Minter has grown up and lived and worked on the same site since 1936, when his father bought the brickworks from the family of the founding owners.

Peter will talk about the history of the brickworks and the making of bricks, along with showing us slides and photographs and accompany them with anecdotes and interesting facts along the way.

Audience participation is encouraged.

Bulmer Brick and Tile is world famous and the buildings for which they make and supply bespoke bricks for renovation work include well known ones such as Hampton Court Palace, Tower of London and St. Pancras.

Peter's enthusiasm is undimmed and he has recently, along with his sons, started work on the renovation of the 1929 Austin Seven that his father bought in 1951. Peter liked the car and thought it to be a good first car for him so he bought it from his father in 1954 for £15.

Do come along to what we know will be an interesting informative and enjoyable evening with Peter and your CVCVC friends. There is car parking at HTFC so maybe give 'the classic' a run to Halstead? We look forward to seeing you there.

Preview by Chris Harman

Editor's Space Filler

Book Review - The Spitfire Kids



My daughter Fiona always gives me an outstanding book each Christmas and this year's was no exception. **The Spitfire Kids**. Before and during the war the RAF and aircraft industry was dominated by young people, many still in their teens.

The book tells the story of Britain's iconic fighter aircraft through the lives of the young people who risked everything to design, build and fly her.

One chapter chronicles the history of Supermarine from its successful Schneider Trophy seaplanes to the Spitfire prototype

K5054 and the many variants that continually improved throughout the war to maintain the Spitfire as the ultimate fighter aircraft.

The initial Supermarine Factory was in Southampton which suffered countless Luftwaffe bombing raids, resulting in many casualties. Staff continued working despite the risks and loss of lives. Design and production continued during the war, by dispersing the various departments into commandeered commercial premises throughout Hampshire and the shadow factory in Castle Bromwich.

A dedicated design and development department was established at Hursley Park to build prototypes so as not to disrupt the Spitfire production lines

The Battle of Britain was in the main actually fought and won by teenagers. The average age of a fighter pilot was just twenty years. Young people also joined up to work in the vital services of air defence, constructing radar systems, co-ordinating supplies to the bases and ferrying the new Spitfires to the airfields.

Following the Battle of Britain, Spitfire pilots took the war into enemy occupied Europe, North Africa and eventually the Far East, plus flying from aircraft carriers. The risks were always there for the pilots and ground crews.

A fascinating read that told you stories, heroic and tragic that had previously been overlooked in other publications.

Chris Sharman

Memorable Cars - Blowers

During 30 years at Ford, I drove many different cars as part of our competitor evaluations on roads and test tracks. I recall a period during the early 1980s when Ford was evaluating turbocharging. When I was in Vehicle Eng'g, we borrowed an



eclectic mix of cars from other manufacturers which were definitely not on our usual customers' lists. There were extremes, from the supercar performance of the Mark 1 Lotus Esprit Turbo to the handling horrors of the MG Montego Turbo.

The latter was one of the worst competitor cars I drove, with unbelievable levels of torque steer that would pull you a whole lane left when accelerating unless you held on tight!

However, the craziest turbocharged thing on four wheels we had for a few memorable weeks was a Renault 5 Turbo.



It was a Mk1 with the mid mounted 1.4 Cléon-Fonte engine boosted by a Garrett T3 turbocharger. Only 160bhp, which doesn't seem much now but was then France's most powerful production car and weighed only 900kg. 0-60 in 6.6 sec.



There's not much of the original R5 left and responsibility for the rather OTT styling was given to a man who knew a thing or two about making an automotive statement. Those bulges were sculpted by none other than Marcello Gandini at Bertone, better known for the Lamborghini Countach, Lancia Stratos and many others.

As I opened the door, there were plenty of clues as to how utterly bonkers the Renault was going to be. My eyes were assaulted by an explosion of red and blue in the interior.

I turned the key. The thin firewall between me and the engine did little to suppress the mechanical cacophony as it burst into life. Off I went down the test track.... in the wet...



what could possibly go wrong? It was laggy and slow to begin with and then suddenly the turbo went on boost at about 3500 rpm with a huge rush mid corner and the little red car swapped ends very quickly on the damp track. Luckily there was

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room to spare and it took a few runs to learn the art of keeping the engine on boost and never lifting off under any circumstances. Intimidating, mad and enormous fun!

Of course, the Renault 5 Turbo was intended for motorsport and could push out up to 350 bhp in works form, battling against the Lancia Stratos, Ford Escort and Fiat 131 in Group 4. Jean Ragnotti took the pocket rocket to three Monte Carlo Rally victories in '81, '82 and '85.



Analysing these cars and others did help with future turbocharged Fords, confirming competitive engine specs and driveline layouts. It didn't save the stillborn Escort RS1700T turbo rally car though.



This car was intended to do for the Mk3 Escort what the successful Mk1 and Mk2 Escort rally cars had done to boost sales through victories on the stages. However, Ford was wrong footed by the success of four-wheel drive and the program was cancelled in favour of the more radical RS200.

Obviously, I had the chance to drive many turbocharged Fords in later years, especially Escorts when I was in Medium Car Product Planning. There's one that sticks in the mind for the step change that it brought about in the late 80s. That was an Escort test mule for a future performance car and had around 300hp and four-wheel drive. I remember E386 YVX since it recalibrated me on what was and wasn't possible in terms of acceleration, braking and grip. In contrast to the snappy little Renault, this Escort was relatively benign with less noticeable lag and a more progressive arrival of boost but it did seem to tear up the laws of physics when cornering. I was getting quicker and quicker until I realised that I could end up hitting something very fast and uncomfortably hard if I didn't ease up!



This development mule sold management on the idea of morphing a Sierra Cosworth into a compact Escort more suitable for rallying. The Escort Cosworth was born with 227 bhp in road trim and 312 bhp in Group A works rally spec.



Fun times! Stuart Black

Electric MGA

According to the press, the now Chinese-owned MG brand is enjoying record worldwide sales growth not least on the back of its battery electric (BEV models) and a UK cottage industry has also emerged that specialises in converting classic cars to electric motive power. Indeed, such is the interest in period-looking but electrically powered vehicles that one new company is actually manufacturing brand new MGB look-alike electric cars.

However, it was quite a while ago when, to my knowledge, the first MG was converted to electric motive power. Back in 1970s California, Bob Wing's response to the then global oil crisis was to construct a battery powered electric car for him to use for local journeys. He didn't want just any vehicle, though, he wanted a convertible and the car he chose as the basis for his conversion was a 1959 MGA 1500.



After a long period of evolution Twenty Optima deep cycle batteries provided the energy source and motive power was delivered by a 20 hp Prestolite motor through the original clutch, gearbox and rebuilt back axle. The MGA survives today. It has a range of only c.80 miles but can still fulfil its original purpose for local trips, with most journeys requiring only 2nd and 3rd gear. The car achieves 25 mph in 2nd gear, 45 mph in 3rd and 63 mph in 4th on level roads.



Using the clutch is not necessary when starting or stopping, only when changing gear. Reversing is achieved via the electric motor instead of reverse in the gearbox. The MGA even has a regenerative braking capability, which apparently usefully supplements the somewhat less than ideal original drum brakes that tend to overheat on steep descents.

Bob showed his MGA at the Seattle 1979 Environmental Faire where it was also the subject of a 30-minute TV item that included a video of the car being driven to the Faire. Bob sold his electric MGA in 1999 before, sadly, passing away in 2002.

And to answer the obvious question, no, I will not be converting my MGA to battery electric propulsion anytime soon!

Roger Martin

February Club Evening – Peter De Rousset-Hall - Motorsport Photography - part 3

On Wednesday 16th February we were pleased to welcome Peter to our club evening. Outside, the weather was getting increasingly gusty and noisy. Inside the HTFC clubhouse, Peter, a great raconteur, gave us another brilliant and interesting talk illustrated with his fabulous photographs.

Our Chairman, John, and Peter 'challenged' each other a few times on 'what car / whose car / where / who's driving' and even 'who is the passenger!?' The rest of us joined in where we could.

There wasn't much motorsport during the 'COVID years' and Peter's enthusiasm for photography took him from close-up photographs of insects and bugs in his garden into the countryside around his home and then to some holiday landscapes.

This is an insect spotted by Peter in his garden:



Those who have seen Peter's presentations will know they have great photos that include an extra bit of interest such as the expression, of concentration, or, a smile, a grimace, or even a look of horror, on driver's faces. Maybe it could be a tyre nearly being pulled off the rim, headlights lighting up the suspension of the car in front, the freezing or blurring of cars or engines and propellers (yes that's right, propellers on a car), silhouettes or a stunning backdrop.

There were many cars with passengers and on a sprint meeting with some glorious vintage cars the passengers were smiling, some were waving yet their drivers were looking very serious whilst sawing at the wheel to keep the car on the track. Here you can see Dougal Cawley (the proprietor of Longstone Tyres) working hard in his GN / Ford (affectionately known as 'Piglet') at last year's Curborough Sprint meeting:



The Curborough Sprint meeting near Lichfield provided some great shots. I didn't know of that meeting but am now keen to attend to see the wide selection of motor vehicles on, an

occasionally off, the track. I think you would also enjoy that meeting.

Goodwood Revival of last year featured in Peter's presentation. We saw the Hot Rod procession and Peter showed us how to identify a 'small block (up to 6 litres) Chevy' from a 'small block Ford' engine. The Chevy engine is the most popular and has been and still is used in a huge range of vehicles; so much so that over 100 million of those engines have been built.

Peter took over 16,000 photographs at Goodwood Revival 2021 and slimmed that number down to just 100's. On Wednesday he showed us about 300 photographs out of his library of over half a million.

Thank you Peter for preparing your programme of great photographs, for sharing your knowledge, for coming to CVCVC on such a windy night, for persevering to get to us when you had to re-route because of a main road being closed by a fallen tree and for entertaining us.

We may have been small in number but were big in enjoyment.

Chris Harman

Guess the Car Answer – Rover P6 BS

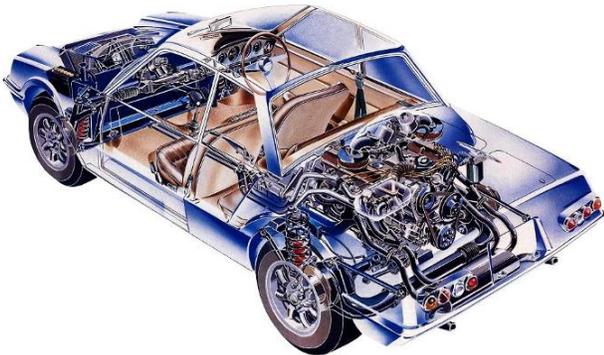
Rover P6 BS – Also listed as Alvis P6BS and Rover-Alvis P6BS.



Correct answers from Stuart Black, Philip Frogg, Chris Harman, Bob Knight, Richard Stanbridge & George Wilder



Fitted out as a Rover



Mid Engine offset for side gearbox location and one rear seat

Rover merged with Alvis in 1965. David Ernest, with assistance from Spen King and Gordon Bashford were tasked with designing a fast mid-engined Rover sports car, to be assembled by Alvis.

Good use was made of the 'parts bins', chassis and suspension was based on the Rover P6, the 3.5-litre Buick engine fitted longitudinally developed 150bhp giving the coupe a top speed of 140mph and 0-60 in 6.6 seconds.

Steering rack from a Vauxhall Viva and Jaguar E Type bucket seats.



What might have been, ugly duckling becomes a swan!

Stuart Black likened the design to a giant gawky Fiat X1/9. I think the development team looked at the Lancia Fulvia for inspiration. Either way the prototype had potential, but after the merger with British Leyland, Sir William Lyons killed the project!

Chris Sharman

Two Articles Provided by Roger Martin -

A Green Car – MG YB

An article from the latest FBHVC magazine. As author Neil Cairns says - slightly tongue in cheek but thought-provoking nonetheless.

I own a green car; it is indeed green and what follows is a bit tongue in cheek but as today huge companies are claiming to 'offset' their 'carbon footprint' (otherwise called pollution of this planet) by buying up Welsh mountain farms and planting trees. I see no reason we classic vehicle owners cannot follow suit. Whilst my car is painted green, it also has other claims to being green by being more than carbon neutral and in fact well into credit.



It was built in 1952 and the current statistics say the production of one car produces about eleven tonnes of carbon dioxide, one of the gases causing the green house effect heating up our planet. I've owned the car for 28 years and by now the CO2 produced since 1952 will have been absorbed by nature. By not buying a new car every three years I have saved the planet of nine cars, that is 99 tonnes of CO2.

The average car today doing average of 10,000 miles produces about 4.5 tonnes of CO2.

I do an average of just 3,500 miles per year, so my green car puts just over a tonne of CO2 per year into our atmosphere. The car is maintained in excellent condition and well-tuned. I use the Classic Car companies to supply me with spares and have used MG specialists for restoration work, pumping about £41,000 into the UK economy over those 28 years (and not some foreign car maker's profits).

If we do the arithmetic (11 tonnes when made, 28 years producing one tonne a year equals 9 tonnes of CO2). It means I am in credit by about 60 tonnes, (by not buying a new car every 3 years). So, like these big companies who claim to be carbon neutral by planting trees and continuing producing goods that produce CO2, I claim to be greener than them.

(I also walk, cycle, use my bus pass and ride a selection of 1950s motorcycles).

Article by Neil Cairns

Secondly,

At the weekend, my 8-year-old grandson invited me to view a model of a V8 engine that he had just completed. I was absolutely astonished at the degree of detail and complexity, including illumination of combustion in the cylinders when it was turned.



And of course, I was amazed that he could construct it at his young age (doubtless with some help from Dad). I congratulated him and told him that I have a real one waiting for when he is a bit older! I may have an inheritor for my MGs.

Roger Martin

February Midweek Lunchtime Meeting at the Sturmer Red Lion

Only three classics today including the new member's Maserati. We had 18 turn up. Good service, good food, no complaints.

I believe the current management are leaving in April so we will need to check it before using again.



Geoff Broad

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CVCVC February Winter Run, part 1

Review from Roger Martin

The weather Gods smiled on the event this time with a clear blue sky at the Abberton Reservoir start.



However, the temperature was distinctly on the chilly side with only the Gibson and Goodman MG TFs and the Knight Morgan braving top-down motoring. Even the Wickes had the Ace's hood up - the first time I had ever seen it thus. In fact, the event was a bit of an MG benefit, the marquee representing no less than seven of the fifteen entrants, ranging from the V8 MGB GTs of Richard Evans and David Skinner through MGF/TFs to Martin Brown's grandchild carrying MG3. In addition, Chris and Rose Harman arrived in their CVCVC new-member son's MG ZS.



CVCVC February Winter Run, part 2

It was good to see Stuart Black's Jaguar Mark II resplendent in its wedding paint and also the Chaplin Anglia up and running again, but it was the Twitchett Military Austin Seven that caught most attention from 'Joe Public'.



The route was mostly a pleasant run through the east Essex countryside; with the only real traffic congestion interrupting progress around Maldon and South Woodham Ferrers, in the former case participants had to 'jump' a temporary pedestrian crossing traffic light that had stuck permanently on red.

The downside of the good weather was the RHS Hyde Hall finish was extremely busy so there was no chance of either collective parking or gathering for refreshments, so cars were completely scattered and tables of four were about as much as could be hoped for.

Nonetheless, I think a good time was had by most even if chaos on the A12 meant many had to take a circuitous route home. In the case of Ann and me, we returned via Woodham Walter, where we had to 'jump' another stuck red traffic light at the little bridge over the River Chelmer near Hoe Mill Lock. Thanks, as always, to the organisers, in this case John and Geraldine Goodman.

Roger Martin

Drivers with cars taking part included -

Stuart Black, Jaguar MKII; Bob Chaplin, Ford Anglia Rally; Martin Brown, MG3; Frank Burgess, Bentley S; Keith Dunn, Gilbern Invader Estate; Richard Evans, MGB GT V8;; Brian Gibson, MGTF Spark; Nick Godley, MGB GT; Roger Knight, Morgan Roadster; Roger Martin, MGF; David Skinner, MGB GT, Robin Taverner, Morris Minor; Keith Twitchett, Military Austin Seven; Derek Wickes, AC Ace;

Further photo can be viewed on the Colne Valley Website

Review from Chris Harman

Not long after storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin had caused havoc in our region members of CVCVC joined in on the 'End of winter' run organised by John and Geraldine Goodman. The run was a re-run of the one held in 2020 at which the strong winds put many off from joining. The 2020 run did go ahead but we couldn't get into the grounds of the finish point due to storm damage. Maybe our 'End of Winter' Run should become a 'Mid-Winter Run' as the weather could well be milder

Back to 2022. We had a good turnout of 15 classic, future classic cars and modern cars.



With a complement of navigators / passengers. There were three youngsters who went along to keep granddad and grandma company.

The start venue was the visitor centre at Abberton Reservoir.





Outside it was breezy, not too cold and, maybe for some, a little bleak but inside we all got together and enjoyed each other's company, great hot drinks, bacon butties and cakes.



We met up at 10am and started on our way at around 10.30. Detailed instructions for our route were provided. I really enjoy seeing the east Essex countryside and the villages and hamlets and this outing gave us those aplenty. Fairly empty and dry roads gave us time to savour the onset of spring. Some tree blossom and a few daffodils enhanced the journey.

After about 35 miles of driving we arrived at RHS Hyde Hall Gardens.



The car park was nearly full. We weren't the only ones taking the cars out for a run; I saw a Jensen Interceptor and spoke to the proud owner of a Morris 1300. Most of us called into the café which was heaving with people so we ended up being separated from our fellow CVCVC'ers. Another hot drink, some cake and then we each made our way home.

It was a good day.

Chris Harman

Members Letters

Hello Chris

Ref. Stapleford Tawney Airfield. Have been interested in reading the articles about racing on this circuit. In the late 1950s I used to race here too but representing the locally based Acme and Zeus Cycle Racing Clubs. It could be quite hairy in mass-start racing!!!!

Have good and not so pleasant memories of racing in this area, one of which was racing down hill on the open public road to east of the airfield between Stapleford Abbots and Passingford Bridge, crashing out, being patched up in bar of local pub before being transferred to Epping hospital for further repairs. The bike was also out of action for a few weeks!!!!!!

Best wishes Brian Gibson

Hello Chris

The 'Guess the Car' pictured is a Rover P6BS/ P9.

I actually didn't know the answer to this month's head scratcher, but it is featured in this week's Hagerty Newsletter, so you should get a few surprisingly correct answers this month I would guess!

Alan Butcher's 'Pass your motorcycle Driving Test' book reminded me of a book I had from 1926 - 'How to ride a motorcycle' which had similar drawings and for the one of 'how to negotiate a left-hand turn' it recommended leaning to the right and pushing the bike to the left, mmmm, an interesting manoeuvre. I wonder whether the number of motorcyclists declined in 1927, but maybe increased again in 1928 when the riders recovered from their injuries?

Regards Richard Stanbridge

Gordon's Goings On April 2022

It has been a rather depressing month news wise, so here from the CVCVC Newsletter archives from January 2004 is a light-hearted article from Gordon Levett, chosen by the editor.

The Wall of Death

Some of you may know that The Wall of Death in the UK began in Boxford. In 1929, Mr George "Tornado" Smith imported the first wall from the USA. He was living at the time at the White Hart in Boxford and included in his act at the time, a lion. There

are photographs of the pair of them in the White Hart pub. The lion was eventually buried on the site.

George Smith "Tornado" with his pet lion

A couple of years ago, a Wall that is currently in use at various events around the

country, including sometimes the Henham Steam Rally in Suffolk, was set up at the White Hart and put on show for couple of days and the owner gave a very interesting talk at a later CVCVC Evening Meeting, I had to go. I don't know much of the history of the Wall. I believe it toured Europe, but in the early sixties it was at Southend in the Kursaal Fun Fair. I remember in the mid-sixties taking Julia on the Road Rocket to see the show but it wasn't running that day. Some of our club members had been to see the show at Southend. I have seen the current show several times over the last few years and any of you who have not seen it really ought to make the effort, very impressive. And without doubt very skilful and of course potentially very dangerous.

Fast forward to November 29th 2004. Mr Richard Asprey, "The Black Baron", gave us a good insight into what it was like and what character "Tornado" was. He was asked to join the Wall by Tornado when he was just seventeen in 1961. He was given five weeks tuition and made his first appearance in Whitsun that year. The Kursaal Fortune Teller blessed his boots and during almost ten years he never had an accident, although he did see others come to grief. Four shows an hour and twelve-hour days with no breaks, an occasional cup of tea and "a biscuit if you were lucky". And all for £10 a week. He had previously been earning £1-50p at a local motorcycle shop! At the end of the season, he was offered a job at the Kursaal at £15 a week. The next year when "Tornado" offered him £12 he

said no. They eventually came to an agreement and the "Black Baron" rode at the weekends. He rode with Tornado and a lady called Yvonne Stagg.

Yvonne Stagg riding the Kursaal Wall



His visit to us was proceeded by an article in the Daily Telegraph on November 27th titled Death Stars and he had also been in demand by the press and television on the Monday. I got a signed photograph and had a brief chat. A lovely chap and I wouldn't be surprised if he has a go on the Wall of Death next year. *More to follow Ed.*

Gordon Levett