



Colne Valley Classic and Vintage Club Newsletter

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



March 2023.



CVCVC Scatter Run 2022

In This Month's Newsletter

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- Shelling out, GT40 woe's
- Pictures from the past
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Editor's Intro

The weather has a last stopped raining, it's actually starting to dry out, so a drought next week? Or the snow bomb that's all over the internet?

Reviews of the January club night and mid-week meet up.

Stuart Black and the Ford Museum have GT40 engine problems.

Something different with pictures from the past.

Guess the car answer and a new poser.

Roger Martin is this month's committee member. Members letters and Gordon to finish.

Articles wanted please, put your keyboard fingers on and write something, its your newsletter, otherwise you will have to put up with my drive!

Roadworks they are everywhere at the moment! How about beating this, Janice and I are having to go the Walton on the Naze on a weekly basis at the moment. Last Thursday we had 12 sets of roadworks and one complete closure. The normal journey time is 1hour 10 minutes average. It took almost 2 hours, including sitting at Eight Ash Green for 15 minutes so how about your roadworks horrors?

Be careful out there Bob Chaplin

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Coronavirus

In line with the Government's requirements, the CVCVC has commenced 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.

Feb 16 Club Evening - Thursday 8pm, David Caulfield - The Semi-Pro Sixties. Gt Maplestead Village Hall C09 2FJ.

Feb 23 Midweek Midday Meet Up – Rayleigh Arms Terling

Mar 16 Club Evening – Thursday 8pm, Spike – Terrorism -A UK perspective. Great Maplestead Village Hall C09 2FJ.

Mar 30 Midweek Midday Meet Up – Horse & Groom Cornish Hall End CM7 4HF.

Apr 20 Club Evening – Thursday 8pm, Speaker Peter Tatum – Thomas Telford. Great Maplestead Village Hall C09 2FJ.

Apr 26 Committee Meeting – 7.30pm The Bell Castle Heddingham CO9 3EJ.

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 & Webmaster	Bob Chaplin
Committee Member	Chris Sharman
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

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, that didn't go to plan, or restoration and technical stories. New feature ideas are always welcomed.

April Newsletter

Would you please forward articles by email or post before 1st March
Bob Chaplin.

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.

Club Notices

Evening Speakers

For 2023 and 2024, the CVCVC is looking for Club Evening Speakers and recommended pubs for the Midweek Lunchtime Meetings. If you can help, kindly contact Stuart Black

CVCVC Subscriptions - Time to Renew

Outstanding CVCVC Subscriptions

A reminder to non-paying members, that the 2023 annual CVCVC renewal subscriptions were due by January 1st. Would you please forward your outstanding cheques/payments at the earliest opportunity, if not regrettably this will be the last newsletter.

Future CVCVC Events

16th February Club Evening Gt Maplestead Village Hall

The Semi-Pro Sixties A Talk by David Caulfield



The Semi-Pro Sixties is a talk by David Caulfield based on his book of the same name. Covering a period from 1961 to 1976 he takes his audience back to the time when budding musicians were forming groups and starting to play gigs in Youth Clubs, Pubs and Clubs. He raises plenty of laughs as he tells stories of

the life and times of a semi-professional musician setting out on the road for the first time.

Drawing on interviews with over fifty different musicians David details experiences from the outright funny to the downright dangerous!



These are real life experiences and illustrated with plenty of slides and pictures. Here's what some of the audience thought - Margaret D - "A wonderful talk and really funny" Linda S - "Very enjoyable talk, funny & informative" Angela B - "Very amusing and enjoyable trip down memory lane" Barbara L - "A really interesting insight into the music world of the 60s" Ken H - "A talk that invokes musical memories galore"

Speaker for Thursday 16th March

Terrorism- a UK Perspective. Our speaker, 'Spike', will take us through some of the events that could have or did affect the security of us all using his vast experience through his senior position within UK Counter Terrorism Policing.

You will have heard, through the media, of terrorism that changed our world or could have changed our world. You are unlikely to have heard what had happened 'behind the scenes' and how our security services acted to keep us safe and sound.



'Spike' has, as a Police Counter Terrorism specialist, has been at the forefront within UK Terrorism Protective Policing in keeping us

safe and sound. His talk will be enlightening and thought provoking.

We look forward to seeing you there.

During and following this talk no photographs are to be taken, no recording devices to be used and no taking of notes to be allowed

New Club Member

Welcome to Joe Newton, Joe is from Great Maplestead and owns a Jowett Flying Fox in barn condition, the Jowett owned by Joe for many years and now in the process of being rebuilt.



A picture from a village event a few years ago of the Jowett together with my own Morris 8 van, which is also being started to be rebuilt this year. BC

Monthly Meeting Review

Andy Wright Talk

A very good turnout of members on a bitterly cold night had a talk by Andy who had served in the RAF as an armorer on Phantoms.

Andy started his talk with joining the RAF as a trainee, basic training at Halton with very basic accommodation! Then his craft training at Cosford. All the time dodging the Drill Sergeants! After his craft training, he applied to be an armorer



Ground Attack Phantom

on fast jets, so was sent to RAF Coningsby to serve on the Phantom F4's. Initially as bombing and ground attack aircraft. Andy showed the amazing variety of ordinance a Phantom



Interceptor Phantom

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could carry and how it was loaded. Then as the Lightning was being phased out, Andy and the Phantoms started a new role as interceptors, this time at Wattisham, Andy then showed the interceptor arming. He told a story of how one of the Phantoms accidentally shot down a Tornado during a training exercise in Germany, fortunately the pilot managed to tell the Tornado crew to eject when he realised, he had fired a live missile,



fortunately nobody was hurt, except the taxpayers' pockets for a Tornado! Andy also explained that two Phantom's were selected and specially painted to fly non-stop from the USA to the UK to

commemorate the Alcock and Brown first transatlantic crossing. One of the two Phantoms was discovered to be a genuine Vietnam war veteran with a very long service record. This Phantom was then reserved for exhibition use once its RAF life was finished. Andy also talked about service life in the Falklands post Falklands war at Stanly airfield. This was before the new much larger airfield was built at Mount Pleasant. The



Phantoms could take off ok from Stanly but could not land because of the runway length, The runway itself consisted of steel plates interlocked together as a result of the Falklands war bombing of the runway by a Vulcan in operation 'Black

Buck'. As a solution, a wire catching system taken from an aircraft carrier was deployed so the Phantoms could land ok. Andy closed with the reserved Phantom being



Phantom 'Taking the Wire'

installed in the RAF Museum at Hendon where he 'armed' the plane for display purposes. A very enjoyable talk.

Editors Notes My Stepson Jason is a sergeant at Brize Norton, he says the accommodation at Halton was the same when he was there some 30 years after Andy, but the drill sergeants no longer shout 'you horrible little man -or woman' anymore as they have all been reported for 'bullying' (A sign of the times!). The McDonnell Phantom F4 first flew in 1958 and some are still in active service.

Monthly Midweek Lunchtime Meeting Review

Ann and I eventually attended the lunch at Cockfield today. I say eventually as the brakes on my MGF decided to go AWOL whilst we were descending Ballingdon Hill into Sudbury - it was a slightly anxious moment as the brake pedal slowly went to the carpet and the car's retardation was somewhat gentler than expected! Luckily nothing was coming the other way so, with vigorous pedal pumping, I used the little business estate on the hill as an escape ramp where I could investigate.

The fluid was still high in reservoir and there was no evidence of leakage from callipers so we drove gingerly home and used the 4WD to go to Cockfield instead.

I counted 24 diners at the Three Horseshoes plus Leigh Sebba had called by for a drink. The food was good as always, certainly nobody complained to me. So, a reasonable turnout for a pub to the far north of our catchment area in mid-winter. Not many classics, understandably, with most country roads very wet, muddy or both.



Roger Martin

More January Mid-Week Lunch

At the January Club mid-week lunch, we were greeted on arrival by a name from the past in the shape of a large silver (well mainly) saloon car, Chris Watson's Wolseley 6/80 parked alongside a MGB GT, Keith Dunn's Gilbern and a Jaguar XJC belonging to Simon Cooper.

Most cars of the late 40s look small today but not the Wolseley at some 14ft 9 inches in length. The 6/80 was made from 1949 to 1954 alongside its cheaper relative the Morris Six. It sported



twin carburettors (the Morris only had one) feeding its 2.2 litre overhead cam, 72 bhp engine at about 22mpg. Acceleration was a leisurely 25 seconds to 60 mph.

The car was well equipped and finished with individual front leather seats, a wood fascia and door capping's as well as a

4 heater – but in this case today - just heater controls according to the owner. The 4-speed column gear-change would probably be baffling to some but worked well.

Nuffield, the then parent of Wolseley, managed to sell 25281 of this model, mostly for export, though the most famous customer for these cars, the Metropolitan Police, managed to get through 1000 examples. The lowly poorer equipped Morris variant only managed sales of 12400 in the same period.



Speaking to the owner Chris Watson he described the car as a "keeper" as the wipers work as well so does the passenger demister and the seats sound and secure. What else could one want!

George Wilder

More Wolseley from the editor

Two pictures of the Police 6/80's the first a restored one the second an original Met Police publicity photo.



CVCVC Articles.....

Heritage Update – Shelling Out on the GT40

The saying goes that “the only difference between men and boys is the size of their toys”. In 1966 I was nine years old, fascinated by the story of Ford’s win at Le Mans and imagining the racing with my Dinky model of a GT40.



What would my nine-year-old self have said if he knew that 57 years later, I would be working on the real thing? Well, childhood imaginings can come true and I’ve spent the last couple of weeks doing exactly that.



As I mentioned in an earlier Newsletter, the Ford Heritage fleet is well on its way to its new home in Daventry, but our 1966 Mk1 GT40 remains in the Dagenham workshop due to a partially seized engine after TV filmed some fast laps around the Le Mans circuit late last year. Fortunately, it didn’t happen during recording.



Initial thoughts were that a £5 million car should have specialist care, but it turns out the GT40 workshops are full of work at the moment so our band of volunteers were asked to investigate what might have happened and started to strip its 4.7 litre V8. It’s a complex car, but the engine is a fairly basic cast iron V8 similar to that found in the Mustang of the 60s with some uprated race components. Even with the plugs out, the engine was very hard to turn over by hand so the sump was removed to check the bottom end bearings.

As the big end caps came off, we stared in horror at the common crankshaft journal for cylinders 3 & 7.



As you can see, the left half of the journal for cylinder 7 looks shiny and OK, but the surface of the right side for cylinder 3 is torn apart and rough. When we looked in the end cap, there was no bearing shell there! We found the shell when we eventually persuaded the conrod to move up off the crank – there were two shells in a sandwich sitting in the conrod. The lower shell had spun round 180 degrees and locked itself in the conrod. I’d heard of a spun shell, but never seen one. This is normally a result of oil starvation overheating the crank journal, welding the big end shell to it which sticks and rotates into the conrod.

So... At the very least we’re going to need a block strip, crank regrind, new bearings and a new conrod set. The engine and bulky transaxle needed to come out which was rather a tricky extraction. Fortunately, the heads, valves and pistons looked fine.



Next steps will be a complete block teardown and then to send the block away for flushing and measurement. We’re still investigating the chain of events but suspect some very high-speed cornering and a low oil level may have run the bearings. It has a baffled racing sump so it’s a bit of a mystery.

Incidentally, I’m hoping the Daventry Heritage Collection will be open for Car Club visitors by the end of the year. If there’s enough interest, I’ll try and book a CVCVC visit.



Stuart Black

Pictures From the past

The 2023 Mont Carlo Rally was held in January

Here are some pictures from previous years



From top left

Pre WW1 the rally started as a concourse d elegance, this proud owner showing off his new car a Darraq?

Line up on the promenade

Post WW1 The rally had now started in the format of multiple start locations across Europe and converging on Monaco, a regularity run with some timed sections across the Alps. This entry from the UK a MG started from John o' Groats

Post WW2 the rally continued in its pre-war format, in 1953 it was won by Maus Gatsonides in his Works Zephyr Mk1, note the support crew chucking cold water over the brakes.

David Brown had bought the failing Aston Martin company post WW2 and considered motor sport the way to sell cars, this DB2 an example.

Ian Appleyard in a Jaguar on the promenade.

The start of the 60's saw the first of the Scandinavian drivers appear. Erik Carlsson in a Saab 93 Bullnose powered by a 3cylinder two stroke engine. The Saab 94 powered by a Ford Cologne V4 would appear a couple of years later and carry on where the 93 left off.

The big Healy's of Timo Makinen, Paddy Hopkirk and Pat Moss had their glory days

By now the Rally was based in Monaco with stages in the Alps including the legendary Col Du Turini. Ford USA entered teams of Falcons including Graham Hill and Rosemary Smith driving. The Falcons were in effect road going NASCA cars, with the same engine as the GT40. Graham parked his in a cliff face and pronounced it 'undriveable' Rosemary took hers to a class win.

The mid 60's saw the Mini's of Altonen, Makinen and Hopkirk winning, that was until the French disqualified them on dubious lighting measurements to ensure a Citroen would win

Lancia Fulvia, FWD light and with a 1.6 V4 saw Sandro Munari win in 1972

Porsche 911 first winning in 1967 with Vic Elford, as more powerful versions appeared more wins, very popular for non-works teams through the 70's.

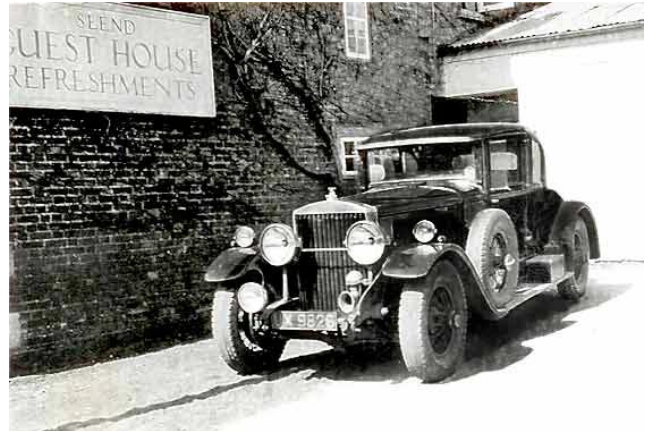
The Alpine A110, the perfect car for the Monte, rear engine rear wheel drive, feather light and an engine from a Renault 16 breathed on by Andre (the sorcerer) Gordini. Gordini got 155 BHP out of it.

The MK2 Escort, one of the great rally cars, however the Monte is one of the few events it didn't win. In 1979 Ford built three special 'Tarmac' Escorts especially to win, they would have, except for the legendary 'pile of rocks'

The Lancia Stratos, one of the most spectacular rally cars, a design concept by Bertone, built by Lancia with a Ferrari Dino V6 in the back complete with sequential gearbox. The Stratos would dominate for years. An up-and-coming French driver also drove a Stratos, Michelle Mouton

The Audi Quattro, first 4wd rally car, Driven by Hanu Mikola, Stig Blomquist, Michelle Mouton and Walter Roule. The Quattro dominated the Monte into the Group B years when they were banned as being too fast.

Guess the Car Answer



Doble Model E

This car was the furthest anyone got with a practical usable steam car. It was the brainchild of Abner Doble, had a four-cylinder compound steam engine integral with the rear axle, used a flash boiler and could produce steam to drive off in a minute. The radiator was part of the condenser to convert exhaust steam back to water. It was capable of 90 mph with acceleration to match, amazing performance for its time and in complete silence! However, Doble was an utter perfectionist and could not stop tinkering with the car so no two were the same and only 40 or so were produced before the company went under.
BC

Only one correct answer well done Phillip Frogg

This month's Guess the Car.

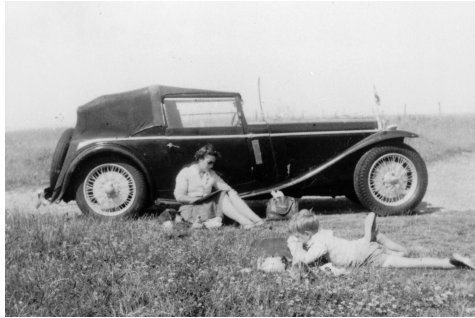
A double answer this month What is this? And which ground breaking SCI-FI film featured CGI versions?

Meet the Committee Part 2

Meet the Committee - Roger Martin

I am the club Membership Secretary, a position that I have held for ten years following me joining the club in 2008.

I am known for my enthusiasm for MGs, a marque that I was introduced to at an early age when my father bought a pre-WW2 F-type Salonette when I was just 18 months old. I can hardly remember that car but I do have many fond memories of the K-type Magnette that Dad traded it in for just before my 5th birthday. I have been an MG enthusiast ever since.



Young Roger by his Dad's MG K-type Magnette

Indeed, my first car had to be an MG and I celebrated leaving school by purchasing a P-type MOT-failure for £47.10 shillings and cut my DIY car maintenance teeth rebuilding its steering box so as to reduce the MOT-failing six inches of play at the steering wheel. I also gave it a hand-brushed lick of red paint that enabled me to sell it for £120 two years later, the funds realised permitting the purchase of the MGA that I still own today.



MGA touring Norway

Following university, I decided to pursue a career in the then emerging world of computers and initially considered combining my interests when I was offered a trainee position by Rover in Solihull. However, impending marriage and the prospect of a cheap company mortgage lured me into the financial sector where I remained for almost 40 years until I retired.

Down the years I have also acquired an MGB GT and a Midget, which together with my MGA have now been completely restored. I also have an MGF - my one and only ever new car purchase, in 1998 when newish used MGFs commanded

8 higher prices than new ones! More recently, whilst searching eBay for Dinky toys, I impulsively bid on and won an abandoned ZA Magnette restoration project that I am currently completing.

I do not slavishly restore my MGs to concours or original condition as my main interest is enjoying driving them, especially long-haul touring, so I aim for reliability and safety in modern traffic conditions. For example, in my MGA, I have enjoyed trips not just in UK and Ireland but also as far afield as Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Italy and Spain.



MGF in South of France



Letters to the Editor

Bill Williams

Bill was a CVCVC member, drove a Morris 8 Tourer and/or a Daimler 250 (Jag mk2/Daimler). I last saw Bill last summer driving a mobility scooter in Gt Bardfield. This happened to him last Friday as reported by the local Probus Club

"Bill Williams. I want to tell you a story (sounds like Max Bygrave's - remember him?) June (his wife- aged 90) was driving them slowly to Finchingfield in their Toyota Auris when she was hit full face by a beam of sunlight which blinded her momentarily. She pulled hard left to avoid any oncoming traffic but the car ran up a bank and hit a critical point which tipped the car over on to its roof. Both were left dangling upside down by their seatbelts. Passers-by called the emergency services who all attended quite quickly (Fire, Police and Ambulance) They had to be cut free and after a scan at Broomfield were allowed home and they are walking around as if nothing had happened. Absolutely amazing.

I will leave you with that good news so keep warm and watch carefully when you are driving.

George Wilder

February Newsletter

A most enjoyable read, I particularly liked Geoff Broad's '*Nostalgia is not what it used to be*'. The article based on his early 1960s motoring days with a 1934 Singer Le Mans. I can certainly relate to Geoff's experiences on maintaining and running a pre-war Singer. Common to most Singer sports cars, my 1936 Singer also suffers from a rattling gear stick, once the gearbox oil has warmed up and the engine reaches 2500 revs the rattle starts, quite annoying, but surprisingly no passenger has ever commented on this noise. I have tried several methods of damping the rattle with rubber O-rings and insulating tape wrapped around the base of the stick, with limited success. At some future point I intend to strip down the gear selector linkages and check for wear. However, after 40 years and 20,000 miles, I can almost accept the rattle.

Regarding Singer flywheels working loose from the crankshaft, this was another common fault unknown to me at the time in 1981 when I reassembled the engine. With no workshop manual or knowledge, I just reused the original four BSF bolts to secure the flywheel back to the crankshaft, locking the bolts re-using the multi-tab washer bent up against the bolt head flats. *I know reusing fasteners goes against all sound engineering principles, but in this instance it worked.* As Geoff mentioned, Loctite even with new HT bolts doesn't always secure the flywheel. To be able to carry out this bolting up operation on the roadside within 45 minutes was remarkable.

I can appreciate Geoff's affection for his Singer Le Mans, in fact Geoff owned and restored another Le Mans a few years ago and I have owned my Singer Sports for 50 years. When first produced during the mid-thirties, they were the equal to the MG Midgets.

Thankfully, these days Singers are served with good spares support, plus with two specific clubs, the technical knowledge is available for providing generally trouble-free classic car motoring.

Chris Sharman

9 A good and eclectic read, as always.

The article on BEVs is thought provoking and matches our own experience. We use ours purely as a home charged shopping trolley. Calculating the fast charge cost leads to a price per mile that is virtually the same as our Range Rover. The last time the latter was used was for an 8-hour, 400-mile round trip to Cheshire which would have taken about 12 hours in the BEV.

It's also interesting to remember that around 50% of the ICE fuel goes to the government versus 5% on electricity.

Scratching my head on the mystery car. It looks American but the grille shape doesn't match any of the marques that I can recall. Best guess I have is an Hispano Suiza, possibly bodied in the US?

Peter DeRoussett-Hall

To club members, here is a super old CVCVC video to watch, enjoy and they were great times!

<https://youtu.be/4EPNPmfN0-Y>

Rob Davies

From the CVCVC Website

The club Website has a Contacts page and the club has received the following enquiry:

To whom it may concern,

I contribute a monthly series to The Automobile magazine entitled Back On The Road, about cars which have recently been restored. I am currently gathering material for 2023 and would like to invite members of the Colne Valley Car Club who have recently completed a restoration to submit their cars for consideration. As a rule of thumb, The Automobile's cut-off date is 1960, but there is scope for flexibility. Anything we feature must have been photographically documented, with some 'before' and 'during' photos. We have no need for hundreds of pictures, but 10 or 12 showing the restoration at various stages would be useful. As I must travel to see the car, all submissions must be in Britain, unless the owner is able to supply their own professional-quality photographs. There is no arbitrary rule, but we would prefer to feature cars which have been recently completed, e.g. within the space of the last 12 months. Lastly, I would just stress that I am only able to feature 12 cars per year, so as appreciative as I am for all submissions, I may not be able to feature everything that comes my way. I would be very grateful if you could convey this message to your members, e.g. through the club's magazine, and I look forward to hearing about some interesting projects in the course of time. Yours faithfully,

Zack Stiling

I suspect this is a syndicated letter to all car club websites but if any CVCVC member is interested please contact the editor.

Monte Carlo Rally cont.

Editors space filler

Following on from the Pictures from the Past,

When I was restoring my own Anglia 123E I did a talk for the CVCVC, This was back in the days we were at the White Hart.

The talk started with the history of the Anglia 105E and some of the very considerable competition history of the Anglia. To find some suitable pictures I was trawling the internet and found this.



To my amazement I was looking at my own Anglia taking part on one of the Historic Monte Carlo rallies it had competed in, this one the 1997 event. When I purchased the Anglia (or what was left of it) I quickly realised it had been used for rallying, the sump guard was a bit of a give away plus the holes where a roll-cage had been. In the rear window were a lot of rally plates including three Historic Monte-Carlo rallies.

So how had the Anglia gone from it's condition in the 1997 event above to the total wreck I had had purchased? In 1998 it had been purchased and then used for stage rallying, when it was fitted with the roll-cage and taken from 1200cc to 1500cc. However whether in its above condition, or later, the rear wheel arches had been boded with fibre-glass matting. This had failed and allowed water and mud to enter the front spring hangers and completely filled the rear chassis rails and rear crossmember with mud. These had rotted out and the fragile rear spring hangers had disintegrated. Anglia rear spring hangers were always an issue anyway, due to a design fault of a double skin open to the elements. The owner had simply stripped the car of all its rallying goodies and sold it on as a restoration project!

If you follow Car SOS, in the original series Fuzz and Tim rebuilt an Anglia, Fuzz re-shelled the car as in his opinion the original was 'too far gone' that shell was perfect compared to mine, however 12moths of welding on a spit solved that and the car is now a CVCVC regular. BC

Gordon's Goings On

Gordons Goings On March 2023

March already? Good job I managed to dig the garden before this latest batch of frost. Still there is little point in sowing anything when its so cold, so patience, (not my finest point). My dad won most of the local flower and vegetable shows when I was a lad, and he watched the weather and the calendar this time of the year, so that everything came along in time for those. We were only allowed to eat anything from the garden with his permission!

Its time to get the cars sorted out for the year. I have been getting the 911 out when I can, and it will be having a check over, a service, and MOT shortly, so its ready for a track day or two. Still waiting for the Porsche Club programme to come out. We have friends on Anglesey we haven't seen for a while.

Then it's the turn for the Passat, in readiness for a trip to Spain before too long.

The bikes are not so urgent, but an oil and filter change for my 125cc Varadero is lined up. I have had one ride-out this year so far, although with an ageing membership, we had to postpone it for week, to get a warmer day, which worked out well. There is another lined up for February, so let's hope this frost goes away before that.

Not a good start for the UK with poor car sales, British Steel,(or should that be Chinese?) going bust, not to mention the Battery factory, and of course the failed launch of the rocket full of satellites.

As comedian John Bishop said at the time, Cornwall needs a motorway, not a space station!

No wonder there is no money for the strikers!

This month should see the launch of the new generation of F1 cars, as well as some of the new Endurance race models. The endurance cars will be made, based on a formula restricting the power, you do wonder why manufacturers get involved.

And there is some controversy about the FIA leadership, not that any of this would interest the BBC.

Mind you, it was interesting that the hazards and the costs of Lithium mining made Countryfile recently.

And at least we should be able to watch some good bike racing on other channels.