

The TRunnion

Broadcasting to LVG and the TR world

SEASONS GREETINGS



2021

Editorial ...

Thanks to everyone for reading TRunnion over the last year and special thanks to those who have sent words and photos.

This started off as a short issue but then Nick Theze sent me a mega article which I have partly edited !

After the Classic Motor Show at NEC, I suddenly felt that I must write something about SBMC because so many people are unaware of the early days when it was founded by Pat and myself. It started as an article for SBMC but then I thought it must go into TRunnion because of the TR connectionand LVG gets a mention!

Some special LVG social meets coming up, including the AMM . Hope to see many of you there . Seasons Greetings !

Chris.

What's IN ...

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The year is 1990Colin Jarry-Ryan was the 2nd Chairman of Sporting Bears Motor Club. Here he is on the Tour of England & Wales5 days in a TR2 on aeroscreens. I am only talking about this club now because a milestone has been reached and it has been mentioned on LVG What's App.

DEADLINE DATE ... for articles & photos for next issue is THURSDAY 5 JANUARY

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*Please send any TRunnion articles direct to the Editor
.....as an **attachment** !*

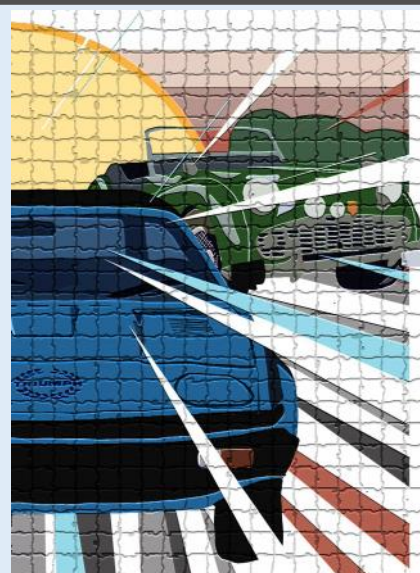
Keep the text small, if possible: TAHOMA, font size 10

PHOTOS : JPEGs of finest quality ...if possible ... please.

EMAIL direct to: chris.trunnioned@btinternet.com

Please keep Text & Photos separate.

My Publisher does not like it if pics are added to a Word doc.



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Meetings Venue Unless otherwise specified, all group lunchtime meetings are on **third** Sunday of month (from 12 noon) at The Cock Inn, Broom. Plenty of parking space behind the pub. This is a "lunchtime meeting" so food is optional. The kitchen at The Cock is very small so it would be appreciated if those intending to eat could please call: 01767-314411 so that they have an idea of numbers.

WEB SITES

TR Register : www.tr-register.co.uk
 TR Forum : www.tr-register.co.uk/forums
 LVG : www.tr-register.co.uk/group/lea-valley
 Facebook : "TR Register Lea Valley Group"
www.facebook.com/leavalleyTR

See note below Are you receiving Trunnions direct ?

Disclaimer The TR Register wish to state that, whilst we are pleased to assist our readers/members by providing technical information, this is given on the strict understanding that no legal liability of any sort is accepted in respect thereof by the club, company, or its servants. Neither the club nor its technical advisors can be held responsible for the consequences resulting from the advice given. Any products recommended are used at the owners own risk and are not endorsed by the club.

Welcome to "The Cock Inn", Broom (home of LVG)...give Nick a calland book yourself in for a lunch one day soon ? Please also remember to book in advance for Lunch at Club Meeting Sundays.

For the full Calendar of events for 2022just CLICK on the link below :-

<https://www.tr-register.co.uk/group/lea-valley/social-report/2022/02/1941/2022-events-calendar>



If YOU may be interested in joining the LVG committee to help the group continue to improve, please contact our Group Leader.

2 members will not be standing again at the Annual Members Meeting in February.

Please contact Phil if you would like to know more.

THANK YOU !

REMEMBER: Trunnions are available on the website but if you are not receiving them directly, we may not have your current email address. **If you change your email address or are not receiving TRunnion, Contact Phil via club email : trr.lvg@gmail.com**



Group Leaders' Report

Phil Sanford

The end of the year is rapidly approaching and I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year. The signs are that the year ahead will be back to normal, well the new normal! We are busy planning events for next year, even an international one, and now is an ideal time to send us your suggestions of what you would like to see or do in your TR.

The LVG 2023 calendar is on sale and is full of pictures of your TRs. If you can't make a meeting to pick one up, just let us know and we will arrange for one to be posted or hand delivered. It really is excellent value for money.

The 4th January is the 50th anniversary of the LVG and to celebrate we are holding a lunchtime meeting at the Station Pub, formerly Hotel, in Knebworth, where the very first LVG meeting took place. It is hoped that many former or long-time members will attend, along with current members, to celebrate this significant milestone in the Group's history. There will be a light finger buffet and of course a birthday cake. Please come along and swell the numbers and make it a day to remember. We will have the LVG 50-year photobook on show and you are welcome to order a copy. **Please let us know if you are intending to come along as we want to ensure there is enough food to go around.** The "party" kicks off at 12 noon and the pub can be found at Station Approach, Knebworth, SG3 6AT

Later on in January, on the 15th, we have our Annual Members Meeting (AGM) followed by our Kick off Lunch, all held at the Mount Pleasant Golf Club in Lower Stondon. The Annual Members Meeting is your chance to have a say in the running of the Group, hear the Treasurer's and Group Leader's reports and find out what is being planned for 2023. We will also be presenting the annual awards for best new car to the Group, members contribution and the photography award. At the Kick off Lunch you can enjoy an excellent lunch, take part in a 50th anniversary quiz and win a fantastic prize in the raffle.

As you know we are losing several committee members at the end of this year, so if you would like to join us and make a real difference, please contact anyone on the committee.

As usual, don't forget to check out our events calendar at <https://www.tr-register.co.uk/group/lea-valley/social-report/2022/02/1941/2022-Events-Calendar> This has recently been updated with more to be added when we get notifications of events that might be of interest to you.

Finally, please let us know if you will be joining us on the 4th January.

Phil



LVG has always
The top picture shows



Enfield Pageant of
Hills at Th

Best ever Calendar !



We invite you to buy what is probably the best value Calendar 2023. Better than last years. Pages of TRs and countryside scenes. We are lucky to be able to sell at such a low price. Phil will have some available at the December meet @ The Cock and also at the Kick-Off lunchbut we only have a limited number so ... **don't miss out, buy yours soonest ?**

If you are unable to make it to a meeting, we can post or deliver it to you. P&P : £2.00 for 1, £2.50 for 2, £3.15 for 3

Please email your order to : trr.lvg@gmail.co.uk

LVG history ...the first 50 years

Advance orders are now being taken ...contact Phil a.s.a.p.

This special photo book has been compiled by Phil Titchner from the many archived photos of LVG members at events over the last 50 years.

A unique piece of LVG history.

Cost: £27.00

Orders will also be taken at the 4th January meetingand the total order will be placed soon after this.

*A slice of LVG history
don't miss the chance,
Order your copy!*





50th Birthday Meet

Wed January 4th
Lunchtime



LVG Annual Kick off Lunch and Annual Meeting

Sunday 15th January from 12 Noon



Pete Muncer

As this issue of TRunnion is the last before the festive season, allow me to wish our regular reader (you mean someone actually reads this stuff?), a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – may you experience a TRouble-free and enjoyable 2023 celebrating LVG's 50th anniversary.

The anniversary year activities of course begin on January 4th at the Station Inn in Knebworth, where it all started back in 1973 (I can't remember how old I was in 1973 – actually I can, but I will admit nothing) – then later in the month (15th) we have the AGM/Kick Off Lunch at Mount Pleasant G.C. in Lower Stondon. The LVG 50 Tour is currently being planned (much map-pouring) - date T.B.A., and without giving too much away, the route is likely to be heading towards Fen country – don't worry, there will be a stop at a country hostelry for refreshment. More details in a future TRunnion.

Details are now being firmed up for the first CACCC tour of 2023, returning to Dorset – the Springing Up Tour will be based at the Springfield Country Hotel near Wareham, April 27th -29th. The tour itself will be on Friday April 28th, with a 120-mile route, starting with a drive along the Jurassic Coast (watch out for old fossils – not just those in the cars). The route then heads north for a stop at an interesting pub which welcomes classic cars, and then on to Sherborne Castle. After this we will pass down the Piddle valley (I did say pass), before returning to our hotel for the now traditional post-tour dinner. The one-day Tibbles Tour will be on Sunday June 25th, finishing as usual at the "Carpenters Arms", our HQ in Harpenden, while the Falling Down Tour in September (dates and hotel T.B.A.), will be heading into East Anglia, maybe to look at some broads (the watery kind, not any other sort some of you might be thinking of).

My technique for route planning of tours involves the use of Google Earth on my Brunel Mk.1 computing engine – a very useful tool, as you can "fly" around the route determining the layout of junctions, then "land" and obtain signpost details. However there are a couple of issues you have to watch for – firstly, check how old the image date is, as roads have a habit of changing in the interim. The other problem relates to roads actually being altered or under construction when the image was taken – while planning the LVG 50 tour, I came across an A-class road, which viewed from above, apparently disappeared into a ploughed field – having "landed", the correct and current layout was revealed. So if anyone ends up in a ploughed field on the LVG 50 tour, it's not my fault!

Our trip "Down Under" in February/March is pretty much organised – although our original plan to hire a campervan in NZ has been changed. The rental cost for a couple of weeks seemed to be not far off the price to buy the van, so it will be hire car and motels instead, which will be a bit cheaper (but not a lot). NZ emerged earlier in the year from a stringent lockdown period – it appears that the Covid restrictions have encouraged the use of camping-type holidays, with consequent high demand pushing prices up. Anyway it will be good to tour NZ again, and then on to Brisbane to see the family.

Talking of price rises, a set of letters you see regularly in advertisements for classic cars on sale is "P.O.A.". (Price On Application). When we were at the Classic Motor Hub on the Springing Up Tour, the highest non-P.O.A. figure I saw was £550,000 for an AC Cobra. In the latest issue of Classic & Sports Car mag., there were a couple of Ferraris advertised, one for £750,000, but the other for 1.6 million US dollars (£1.4 million) – so my question is, at what point does P.O.A. become the standard? Presumably anything advertised in



sterling over the million mark would qualify, but maybe not if in dollars / yen / dong etc. Anyway it seems unlikely that we will see a TR marked up with P.O.A. – unless it stood for Please Offer Anything?

I happened to visit the web site for our H.Q., The Cock at Broom, recently – lo and behold, parked outside the front door is a certain green TR3A belonging to our esteemed Archivist Mr. Chidwick. However I think the car needs to be moved – the next image shows a large traction engine coming from the opposite direction, and apparently bearing down upon the TR – maybe the driver is too busy reading TR Action (he thought it referred to his type of vehicle). We will be at The Cock for the pre-Xmas meeting on the 18th, but only for a pint and a snack – the CACCC dinner is on the 17th – just can't face up to turkey with all the trimmings and Xmas pudding on successive days.

On the F1 front, the Mercedes team at long last have taken a victory this year, with a 1-2 in the Brazilian G.P. – but with George Russell taking his first win in front of Sir Lewis. Whether this means that Mercedes can take the fight to Red Bull next year, we will see. Mad Max did not have a good day, coming off second best from a "close encounter" with Hamilton – he then upset his team boss by not allowing his team mate Perez (mate?) past to claim more points in his battle for 2nd place in the championship. Verstappen's attitude rather reminds me of Ayrton Senna, somewhat arrogant and self-centred – although I guess you could say the same about many top-level sports people. Anyway it was business as usual in the final race of the season in Abu Dhabi, with Verstappen taking his 15th win of the season, and Perez just failing to catch Leclerc for 2nd in the race and in the championship.

My TR4A spent some time hiding in the garage this year, following a nasty bout of U/J-itis, so to try and avoid the same sort of situation in 2023, I have taken preventative action and ordered a new radiator from Moss. Talking with Mike Aldridge at the November meeting, his experience of radiator failure a couple of years ago sounded a few warning bells, and my car has been running slightly hotter even in cold weather recently – as the rad. is at least 30 years old (and possibly 57), maybe it is time now to take it off the "to do" list. I called in to JB Sports for a chat and to fix a date for the rad-swap, only to be somewhat confused by the sight of a van with "Red Bull Racing" emblazoned upon it parked outside – does this mean that Mad Max is going to be racing classic Morgans on his spare weekends? Not that he will have much spare time in 2023 – between March and November (39 weeks) there are will be 24 Grand Prix races, which averages out as one every 11 days – who would be an F1 driver these days? – still, I suppose the money must help. JB were dealing with another recalcitrant Morgan when I arrived – told them that they would find TR's easier to deal with.

See you in the New Year.

Pete.





Photo: Colin Wake Club Triumph

Essex Suffolk Borders Rally

Pierre Miles

The Sunday of the penultimate weekend in November was when Triumph owners had a choice of events. For the LVG of course, it was the calling of it being the third Sunday so the calling was to the Cock at Broom. For two of us however, we were diverted to a very different event, namely a 12 car navigation rally over to the east near Colchester organised by Club Triumph and in accordance with the rules as defined by MotorsportUK. This particular rally was called the Essex Suffolk Border Rally

Now you may be asking yourself- what is a 12 car navigation rally? The answer is all in the name. It is a rally for up to 12 cars that involves the crews using a number of very different methods that describe a specific route in a local area, usually using the 1:50000 Ordnance Survey maps (the pink Landranger series). On their way around the route, crews are required to observe and record roadside code boards that are then checked to verify the crews followed the correct route. Some code boards are usually placed on incorrect routes. 'Fails' are used to signify such things as missed boards, wrong route boards, boards noted in incorrect sequence, approaching check points from the wrong direction, poor driving standards noted by any on-course marshals or being outside time limits (OTL). Having said that the rally is not a race, but there is often a finish time (to allow organisers to go home, or to fit in with meal arrangements when the finish point is at a pub or a café and arriving late means missing a pre-ordered meal). To cover instances when a participant might get totally lost, crews are given sealed panic envelopes defining the finish point and possibly other information fundamental to following the route. The envelopes are all to be returned at the end of the rally, with any opened envelopes incurring more 'fails'. The winner is of course the crew that records the lowest number of fails. The time taken to complete the route is not relevant unless the outside time limit factor comes into play of course.

I will not attempt here to explain the different ways in which a route can be defined except to mention tulip diagrams, grid references, spot heights, NESW or TRBL exits from grid squares, junction road colours, clock hands and herringbones (my personal hate). Occasionally, the English language may be used especially to highlight any specific instructions, such as 'do not cross any railway level crossings' or 'do not enter grid square 0942'. Information on all this and much more is readily available from many sources including the HRCR, VSCC, HERO-ERA.

Right, now on to the ESBRS Sunday experience. At 6:30 am Tim Hunt and myself set off to get to an American Diner near Colchester in time for the Breakfast and the essential driver briefing. It was a wet cross-country trip but with the promise of no rain during the rest of the day. After demolishing the pancake stacks and coffee, we plotted the initial sections of the route on the maps provided by the organisers and set off, thankfully - no falling rain but the roads proved to be very wet with many puddles of unfathomable (sorry for the pun) depth. The next 4 hours or so saw us cover 70-80 miles with a few navigator errors (mainly my late calls on upcoming junctions) that required the ever patient Tim to complete some 3 or 7 point turns on the narrowest of lanes. One thing that always happens in such events is that time flies by, so we came to a point where we decided to

use one of the panic envelopes to go direct to the finish point for our roast dinner to avoid being OTL and become a DNF. We therefore omitted the final section of the route. It appeared later that most crews come to the same decision, although one of the crews did all of the route and still managed to arrive first at the pub, winning the rally in their Spitfire by scoring the fewest fails. Most crews were in saloons with the Spitfire and Tim's TR4A (odometer passing through 70,000 miles for probably the third time!) being the sole small Triumphs taking part.

Did we win? Suffice to say that we did not – but what a great way to spend a day in a TR, exercising not only the car but the brain as well. These rallies are not difficult, just pay attention to details and accept that time stops for nobody. Also that your car may get dirty on narrow country lanes the day after you have given it a thorough clean.

Pierre.



Photo: Mike Bishop

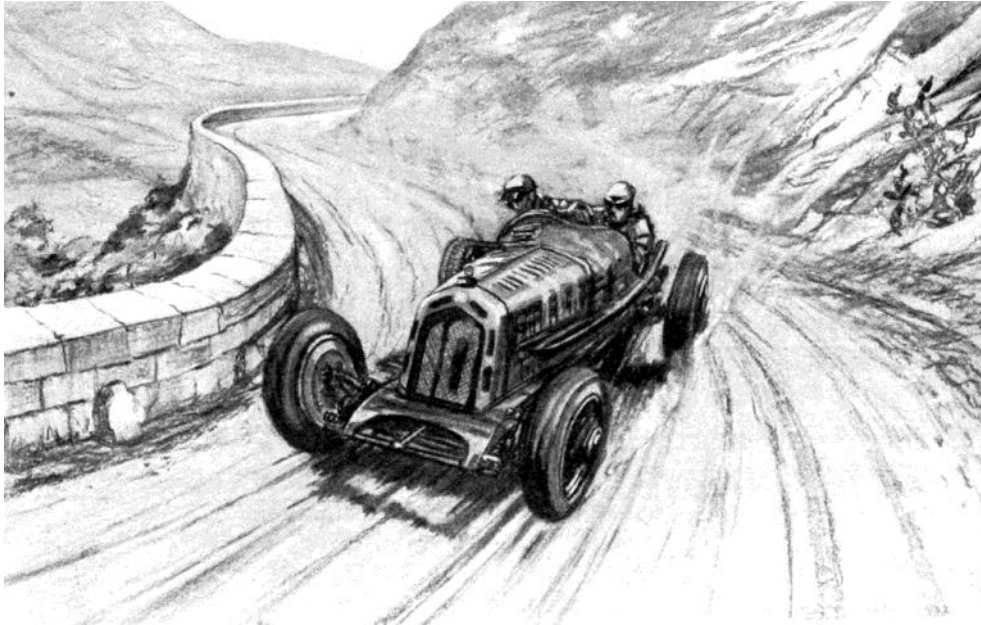
Club Triumph



*Part of the story
that begins
on page 33*



Lagonda LG45R 1936



With thanks to Nick Theze for the following article.

A trip of a lifetime, Nick tells the story in so many pages plus lots of photos.

I have edited a little but you will have to excuse layout and some white space because I didn't want to risk creating any disorder.

Have TR ...will travel

A TR drive to Sicily

Nick Theze

TARGA FLORIO

3 TRs Drive to Sicily.

The tour was planned by a group from NLG for 2020 but with Covid this was postponed and completed in October 2022.

The route and itinerary were planned with places of interest along the route. The tour was extremely appealing, especially the drive along the Amalfi Coast. My TR5 was ready and prepared for the trip.

We had a few car problems along the way, but this was a long tour and despite a threatened French petrol strike and various road closures we weren't held up and all went amazingly well.

CARS and DRIVERS

TR4 Mike North, Mike MD

TR6 Andy McConnon, Shaun Furlong

TR5 Nick Theze, Peter Russell

BRIEF HISTORICAL NOTES

The Targa Florio was one of the oldest Italian motor races in the world, together with the Mille Miglia. The race was promoted, financed and organised by Vincenzo Florio (Palermo, March 18, 1883-Epernay, January 6, 1959) a rich entrepreneur who was the owner of the family wine business. He was fascinated by the car; the new means of transport and was already well known as a participant in some of the motoring competitions from the beginning of the century.

The Targa Florio has been run, almost continuously 61 times from 1906 to 1977, except during the years of the two world wars. Only once, in 1957, the race changed from a true race into a speed trial, following the accident that led to the end of the Mille Miglia.

The Targa Florio organisers, lead by Vincenzo Florio, offered to cancel the event, however, it was decided to continue it as a race. The race has always taken place along the Sicilian roads, that cross the Madonie mountain range. On only a few occasions the race has been combined with the Tour of Sicily, which was a circumnavigation of the island, whilst in the years 1937-1940 the race was held in the Parco della Favorita, Palermo, therefore, never leaving Sicily. In 1955 and from 1958 to 1973 the Targa Florio was one of the nominated competitions in the International World Championships for sports car racing or Gran Turismo, thus assuming a significant importance as witnessed by inclusion of famous named drivers and car manufacturers.

After the 1973 race, which was marked by a large number of serious accidents and showed how the Madonie circuit was unsuitable for hosting competitions with very powerful cars, the Targa Florio was excluded from the schedule of major international races.

Since 1978 the race has been turned into a motor rally and was renamed the Rally Targa Florio.

The Madonie Short Circuit

Of 72 km in length, the race started from Floriopoli (SS.120), Continued to Cerda, Portella di Cascio, Portella di Sette Frati, Ponte Salito, Caltavuturo crossroads, Scillato, Polizzi Generosa crossroads, Collesano, Campofelice di Roccella, Bonfornello before finishing in Floriopoli. This circuit was used for thirty two races of the Targa Florio from 1932-1936 and from 1951-1977.

The Madonie Medium Circuit

Of 108 km in length, the race started from Floriopoli (SS.120), continued to Caltavuturo, Polizzi, Collesano, and Campofelice before retuning to Floriopoli. This circuit was used for twelve races of the Targa Florio, between 1919 and 1930.

MUSEALIZZAZIONE DEI CIRCUITI STORICI DELLA "TARGA FLORIO"

The Madonie Long Circuit Of 148.823 km in length, the race started from Campofelice di Roccella, continued to Cerda, Caltavuturo, Castellana, Petralia Sottana, Petralia Soprana, Geraci, Castelbuono, Isnello and Collesano before finishing in Campofelice di Roccella. This circuit was used for the first six races of the Targa Florio held between 1906 and 1911.



I had heard the history of the Targa Florio race over the years. It had always appealed to me, I hoped to go and take a look one day.

Due to covid, the original tour planned for 2020 was cancelled. When Mike North mentioned that they had a tour planned but also postponed I was fortunate to be able to join them for 2022. The tour had more cars at the outset including a Bentley but not all were able to make the start.

This is likely to be one of those “once in a lifetime” events. It is over 19 days with 5 days at a Villa farmhouse on the island of Sicily.

Targa Florio 2022

Day 1 Thurs 6th October

First stop Euro Tunnel for a lunch time train

I collected Peter en route, we loaded his bags and a few TR spares, drove a couple of miles to Sean's where Andy and his TR6 were waiting ready to go. Two minutes after leaving Sean's Andy managed to get through the lights and knew a short cut to pick up the M25 so we ended up all driving down separately. A few miles from the Tunnel we spotted the TR6 and few miles later the powder blue TR4, so we all arrived at the same time.

My first anxious moment was at the check in barrier approaching the tunnel, I had printed the ticket from the email confirmation. Our printer block printed and blacked out the code we needed to type in at the barrier unknown to me. I thought it was vehicle registration and automatic when you arrived. I was surprised there was not a number on the printed ticket. I scrolled through my phone searching for the email and code starting to stress slightly as Pete worried, we would get a different train from the others. A boarder guy strolled over laughed when he saw our printed ticket and held it to the light, he could just make out the code through the blocked-out print. This must happen often, a lesson learned, this short delay could have caused a major holdup in the summer but today it was quiet and with help was no real drama and we all made the same train.

Our first stop in France, Chamouille. A lovely first day drive though France in the sun to the Hotel du Golf de l'Ailette. We had managed to stay together with the use of the walkie talkies. I was impressed with how well they all used them. We pulled into the Hotel car park it was at this point Andy's car's bottom hose came adrift from the radiator. It was thought as a result of the many sleeping policemen on approach and through the town. The bumping had caused its entire coolant to flood over the car park, the first site christened by a TR6. The problem was very quickly diagnosed and was left until the next morning to be fixed as it was extremely hot. Pete had volunteered to do the fix so after breakfast Sean's tools came out, Mike North's boot jack and axle stand. They informed me Andy doesn't carry tools.

Day 2 7th October

Luneville, Hotel Les Pages is our next destination as it passes close by Reims and old F1 race circuit. The old pit stands next to the road and is a place many classic car owners stop for a photo. I asked if we could stop there. Mike and the others had been before and got pictures. As I hadn't, we agreed to stop. We found on stopping there were a friendly group of men painting the place and had opened a shop. One guy who came out for a chat with us had a very nice Austin Healey 3000. They were selling posters and memorabilia but unfortunately no coffee so we got the photos and went to find lunch. We did lose the other two cars here, as we pulled out, they got in front of a wave of traffic, they turned at the roundabout. We were too far behind so did not see which exit. We were too far behind to use the walkie talkies now. It was at this point I may have sworn a little but as I was now with Sean, having swapped co drivers he was thankfully extremely calm and called the others. He asked where they proposed stopping for lunch and after a google, we reset the Sat Nav, we were on our way to meet them. I find when this happens the mobile phone google maps get you back on track but a meeting place needs to be found and agreed. More on finding your convoy later.



Day 3 8th October Lucerne

We were heading now to Lucerne another nice morning, and great driving roads. The Mikes had planned routes before we went so had a very good idea of what to expect. They had been this way before on previous tours. We went via the Ballon d'Alsace a nice hill climb approx. 1171 metres, this is well known for the first official Tour De France hill climb 1905. A bright day at the top with lovely views.



At the top is a monument showing a representation of a man De-mining. The area was cleared of mines left after WW2 a pause for thought. As we got nearer Lucerne the weather was worsening but no dramas with the cars but as we approached the hotel, we overshot the turning. After a little extra tour around the one-way system, a mini spaghetti junction we joined the Mikes who were stopped right outside the hotel found first time. Sean went into register as he had organised these bookings, 3 cars and 6 adults at the Riverside Hotel. The receptionist only had reservations for 2 cars and 4 adults, seems a glitch in booking.com but after a little tension all was resolved. The very flustered receptionist managed to find a space for the car. The Mikes took the option of a 10-minute walk across town to a slightly better hotel. It's now raining quite hard. We dropped our bags into the hotel room. Andy thought he needed a coat only to find he had packed the cover of a baby stroller, with no sympathy, only much laughter he did manage to find something to wear against the persistent rain. We walked over the famous wooden bridges to meet the Mikes and to find dinner. It was a shame we couldn't get to see more of Lucerne.



Lucerne

evening stroll to find a restaurant.

4th Day 9th October

Headed today towards the Gotthard pass over the Alps, the views were now changing. The countryside and the houses are stunning and have beautiful scenery. The weather was dull and low clouds were moving nearer we got to the Alps. We did get some views, but they were limited. The road Mike had chosen was closed so we took the A2, this is the old, cobbled road. As we approached the descent it was drizzling hard, we heard Mike over the radio reminding us to take it steady. Andy and the TR6 were already speeding down just showing brake lights as he disappeared. I had the wipers going as it was drizzling quite heavily, the cobbled surface was shaking the car more than Millbrook test track. I noticed the wiper arm was missing and against protests from Peter I selected reverse and quickly went back up the cobbled hairpins to find the vital piece of my car. Peter seemed to think we should leave it and we would be ok with Rainex, really!! I knew it could not be far but after getting back up very nearly to the top and then coming all the way back down again, it was found lying in the middle of the cobbled road. I was very close to the point that I had noticed it missing. I jumped out and found it untouched. I pushed the wiper arm back on. The others had stopped further down for a look at the views and a comfort break and luckily for me the route was not busy today. Talking to Andy I explained I needed to retrieve a vital part that had been shaken from my car. We went on through the many tunnels and as we got nearer to Bergamo and hotel Ulivi the weather had improved and tonight the cars had underground parking hotels had been chosen for the car parking. Our hotel is situated by a magnificent lake and once again we set off to the town for another great meal and a few beers.



Picture from Mikes car and underground hotel parking.



Day5 10th October

Next stop is the overnight Ferry at Livorno 4pm check in. We wanted to arrive in time, so we took the faster roads but found there many cars, traffic jams, road works and crazy drivers. Unfortunately, we hit a long tail back, uphill, stop and start for a good hour the cars were getting hot. One was anxious about his clutch, but we all survived, no major issues and found Livorno.

The Mikes had heard reports that the fuel on Sicily is not great it can be low octane at best, so we went in search of fuel and came across a fuel stop that was also a lunch stop. Here, we were able to have a coffee or sandwiches, cake, hot pasta etc. It was becoming the norm to have a cappuccino at every stop.

The Ferry terminal organisation was amazing, each attendant had a whistle instead and instead words blew with wavy arm gestures. The louder they blew their whistle the better people understood what they wanted. We were singled out to board but are last onto the bottom deck garage. In my rear-view mirror Andy is coming down the steep ramp behind me and I noticed a small van behind him turning around to reverse down the ramp? I was whistled into the attendant 'position satisfactorily. I got out and realised our 3 cars were all facing the wrong way. While the cars that drove on in front of us had had space to spin around. We had driven down and were packed in very close. I was not sure at that point if we would be reversing out. To give them credit we were able to shuffle about the next morning and were able to drive out, a huge relief.

Shaun and Andy had spun a nice little story to Peter that they were dining in the posh restaurant with a fancy wine menu and possibly with the captain too. We had booked business, so our food included a free bottle of water, a starter and main. You would have to pay for anything else you choose. Pete fell for their wind up and got upset as we queued at the counter and saw what was on offer to us. He was getting more annoyed thinking the others were dining in luxury, it was quite funny. Later Shaun admitted their meal was no better than ours but of course did not tell Peter who thought they had had lobster wine and the works.

We arrive in Palermo and drive to the Farmhouse Villa. The drive out of Palermo is extremely lively and we try to stay in convoy; we are following the Mikes with Andy extremely close behind me ... daring anybody to push in between. Driving in Italy is almost touch driving at speed never giving way and finding cars stopped and parked in the center of the road while the driver pops into a shop, crazy to say the least. Everything is done at speed with their car horns blaring at every junction, you have no idea who they are sounding off at, it was quite enlightening. I hoped I wouldn't end up at the front of the queue at the traffic light as I had seen people drive off to any of the colours and combinations.



The farmhouse Villa is huge, 6 of us became 8, we each had a bedroom and ensuite for the week. We had all the facilities we needed, even Wi-Fi. We were high up on the side of a mountain and had spectacular views with small towns reasonably close and we had choices of restaurants each evening.

Bob Grou and Lee Hutton had flown in and rented a modern Fiat 500 for the week's stay while we were on the Island. Amazingly it was the same colour combo as Andy's TR6. Bags unpacked shopping done we headed out to the nearest town for a meal and a few beers. The local towns

near the Villa were small and I imagine we stood out as doubt they had many visitors out there. The small shop owner was very friendly. The locals had very little English. Mike MD spoke a little Italian and Shaun some French, things got done and meals ordered sometimes more like a scene from *Allo Allo*. Andy cooked an evening meal one night at the villa, huge Spaghetti Bolognese which went down well with everybody.

Day6 11th October

Our first full day here, the weather was lovely we were going to drive the Targa Florio route, as you would expect it was going to be up and down round tight hairpins, the twisty roads were unbelievably dodgy as they are on the side of mountains, a very rugged landscape. Heavy storms bring down spoil, rocks and undermine the roads causing damage, roads fall away through the Armco or are just missing, with a small works barrier or cones to stop you driving over. Rocks and soil would wash across the roads and create a proper off-road obstacle and the TR5 ran aground with a horrible scrapping noise I as we tried to drive over. I managed to reverse off and try again and we made it.. The TR6 and TR4 took it in their stride.

Today was a brilliant sunny day. We really enjoyed driving and seeing the villages which looked from a distance to be precariously balanced on the top of the mountains. We motored through the countryside, the locals all turning to see us and wave. As we drove the circuit, we found the pits and parked up for Photos complete with Fiat 500.



Mike North And Mike MD had been the masterminds in the planning and were confident there was a race taking place and navigated us to places we needed to be. We reached the race circuit, and this year there was also a Ferrari meeting with every modern Ferrari ever built taking their turn driving this circuit.







So many lovely cars all taking part in the Original Targa Florio Race were meeting to sign on at the race circuit and have lunch. This Targa Florio race is timed on a regulation rather than flat out as it once would have been around the open Sicilian roads with farmers alike going about their business as usual. Our drive back to the Villa wasn't without a TR6 drama Andy excitedly using the car horn to attract attention only for it to stay on, too many smiling faces, we stopped, and somebody reached in under the bonnet and disconnected it.

The cars passed by the villa the next morning, so we got to see and hear them on their way.

Later that day Andy's TR6 received some TLC, a spare HT lead lent from the spares bag, a new plug as somebody had got lazy and fitted a short reach plug to the number one cylinder behind the alternator just to save adjusting it, a new on/off switch for the windscreen wipers Mike North's spare, a luxury fitment installed.

We stayed at the farmhouse for 5 days, it was extremely comfortable each morning having breakfast looking over the mountains sat on the patio, it was special place.

Day 11 16th October

Now we are off to Palermo to catch the ferry to Salerno. The drive through Palermo was not too bad this time, again an interesting set up for boarding the ferry, you had to park and walk into an office to get a boarding ticket even though you had a ticket pre-booked with you.



Nothing to see here! Andy's bonnet open!

A shorter crossing this time and arriving at 7.30am at Salerno for the drive up along the Amalfi coast. Andy and Shaun reminded Pete of their lovely meal always a wind up on tour.

Day 12 17th October

The drive along the Amalfi Coast was not disappointing, all 3 cars managed to drive most of the way without meeting many coaches blocking the road. I was warned that in high season there can be major traffic jams the whole way along caused by the coaches unable to pass on the tight bends in narrow streets. It was the right time of day and month, which worked brilliantly as we only came across a couple of coaches. Twisting and turning with the coast views on the left, a beautiful view. It was well worth the effort. We kept a steady pace as Andy had concerns about his injector & cavitating petrol pump. We had a scheduled stop ahead; we kept moving seeing fruit and veg stalls set out and people going about their business. A lovely memory and drive but I imagine it would be quite different in high summer.

We reached Pompeii late in the morning in convoy and followed the Mikes to park up passing other car parks. Mike MD had visited before so knew the best place to park. We paid entrance to Pompeii archaeological site and walked round the uncovered city. Approx. 2,000 Pompeians died but the eruption killed as many as 16,000. I was pleased we had the time to stop here and see it firsthand. We spent a bit longer at the car park than planned, Andy had said he wanted to nip back to the car and change an injector as he thought one was messing about, so while he went back, we had lunch and a cappuccino. We returned to the car park. The bad injector had turned out to be a hole in the injector pipe which was spraying a fine mist of petrol onto the windscreen. This could be a fire hazard and was undriveable. Unfortunately, we did not have a spare injector pipe or any pipe, Pete had sorted out spares and brought all sorts but last minute we had left the spare pipe behind, would be a sensible part to carry next time in a PI car.

The carpark was staffed by a young Guy who seemed to have contacts across Pompeii and made a call to his pal, a man soon took on the challenge to make a pipe up to get us on our way. This he did after two attempts, but this saved what was becoming an epic drive.



Andy and his Favorite man in Pompeii



Our destination tonight is Cassini Edra Palace Hotel, this will now be a motorway dash in the rain and later than expected, we arrived ok, with no car dramas. A lovely hotel as it turned out with a mountain view of Monte Casino perched right on the edge. Tonight's meal was a short walk away to a steak house where you can choose your cut of steak any size which is then cooked to your liking. This thought by some to be the best meal of the tour.



Day13 18th October

Today we drove up to look at the Monte Casino medieval monastery. The site of the 1944 WW11 battles. A very spectacular place to visit now all rebuilt. It is a very moving place, we made time to have a look around the Monastery it is huge and extremely well looked after with a peaceful atmosphere. Still showing some damage to the

stones from the historic battles. Like many of these visitor attractions there is a gift shop with a variety of items as is usual for sale, I bought some of the honey made there by the monks.

Road now to Sienna a beautiful day and a drive with spectacular views whole way, lovely Italian countryside and tunnels through the hills enjoying being in the TR5. When we reached our hotel, with inside parking again so no worries about leaving the cars and close to the center of Sienna. Tonight, we had the opportunity of an evening stroll around the sights and of course to have our evening meal. The Sienna streets have a unique atmosphere, we reflect on today's drive.



Day14 19th October

Sestri Levante via San Gimignano the town of the towers, there were approx 70 towers in its heyday, people would build these towers to show their wealth but not many survive.

Again, this place is high with spectacular views over the valley, another very picturesque panorama, a place worth a look and a stop for a cappuccino. Many gift and chocolate shops to look at and a central wishing well attracted a lot of attention. We had a lovely day again weather-wise and a drive over several mountains. Now Andy's car is fixed what could possibly go wrong! Some very enthusiastic driving really put the cars through it by copilots, some very twisty inviting roads, hard cornering and acceleration. Andy's TR6 started being a little temperamental and did not want to go on the last few miles over the top of the mountain into Sestri Levante, the petrol pump was cavatating probably hot with petrol levels low. A short stop, a push and he is over the top and coasting down the other side. We happened to be in front, Sean was asking us over the walkie talkies to let them know when cars or motorcycles were coming up as Andy was cutting corners to keep up his speed. As we were coming down many bikers were really giving it some up the mountain laying their bikes into the corners and probably knew this road well and where the cameras are. We had not come across many cameras before on the roads. We assumed it would be a favorite road for the locals. Andy's car made it down and drove through Sestri Levante and up the longest cobbled drive you could imagine right to the top of a hill parked in front of the Grand Hotel Dei Castelli. Our hotel for the night, a luxury castle hotel with a lift down to the beach that had been cut through solid rock with linking tunnels. An impressive place, very smart and extremely comfortable. Sestri Levante itself is a lovely small town on the coast,

a beautiful place with specially 3d painted buildings, restaurants and bars. A perfect small town for a walk and a beer. Sean had visited here some years previously so was able to show us around and find a restaurant.



Day15 20th October

Drive today to Turin and stay at the old Fiat factory the famous place used in the film Italian Job. On route today we fit in a stop at Portofino, small roads lead you here where there is an underground multistory car park, as we arrive an American was getting a fine for driving his over 6 metre limit camper van there with the small winding roads, he should of got a prize not a 60 euro fine. We were able to find places and park up. Portofino is a famous place many

celebrities visit. Cruise ships moor out in the bay and bring people from the ships for some souvenirs shopping and cafes. Some up market restaurants and coffee shops and the best cup of tea in Italy, a busy little place very picturesque well worth the drive.

We arrived in Turin to find the old Fiat Factory which has been converted into a hotel, cinema and shopping mall with outlets on several levels, a large complex. Also, the Fiat Museum but unfortunately for us this was closed. The museum was situated on the second floor with McDonald's and other familiar shops and eateries. The roof the old test track, you were allowed to go up and walk around where its spectacular gardens were complete with an impressive helipad. Of course you had to pay and get a ticket.

The city was set out like many new towns it was likened to MK. They had a huge bustling mall called Eatally selling the best food and produce, deli food and wine etc. Here you could sit hail a waiter, order whatever food you wanted from the food stations, and it was brought to you. A unique experience.





As the picture above shows Andy's bonnet up as the car had lost all the steering fluid on route, Mike MD got stuck in diagnosed the problem, dropping a little more Tr fluid leaving its mark on another carpark, TRs are known for this. Having a set of metric Allen keys in my tool bag emptying the boot to get, Mike tried to tighten up the fitting but unfortunately an O ring was required. While we were parked many people walking past commented on the cars. Someone from Sweden had a TR4 for years and a man who was working at Pinni Ferrari had a GT6 and offered to source an O ring. Calls were made and a meeting at breakfast the next morning arranged, this turned out to be unsuccessful. A google search and a motor factor was located about a block away and within walking distance so O-rings were bought and fitted. The TR6 was back on the road. The car fixed, roof tour complete, we walked down the spiral car ramp which the Fiats would have used in construction to a café for a cappuccino and continued onto Macon.

Day 16 21st October

Our Hotel in Macon was a Mercure hotel, we found it clean and the staff very friendly. We arrived in the pouring rain, parked up and went inside dumped the bags and had a beer, we decided the Menu looked good so we would eat there tonight, the chef was excellent. We all enjoyed the evening as the rain came down outside. The next morning, we found the hotel had some lovely river views. We turned up in the rain so had not noticed until now a much nicer day again. As we were leaving an otter was spotted swimming along the river. Parking by the river is a prime location for the campervans to make the most of the view an ideal location. Our route today is the Mont Blanc tunnel, tolls negotiated on route and many tunnels on the way with the weather becoming showery and light rain we pressed on. The approach to the tunnel, not having driven this way before the mountains looked stunning. Toll paid we drive into the Mont Blanc tunnel and the car steams up not being able to see momentarily opening windows and fan on we follow Andy. You must accelerate hard and listen to your car as you drive the 7.2 miles through. The altitude is 1274 metres and with no car problems reported, it was just great to be crossing the Alps in my little TR5.



Day 17 22nd October

We arrived at Troyes Hotel Du Golf, again by a broad river, and had parking for the cars, a single garage for each. A nice city with interesting buildings, we walked into town, we could not resist a walk round the market, as you would expect counters of fish Lobster and plenty of fruit and veg. In town there were many bustling bars and restaurants.



We sat and had a few beers and went looking for a restaurant, discussed what we would eat tonight and after so many restaurant meals this tour so far, 3 opted for a Kentucky, 3 had what looked like another top class 3 course meal.



Our parking at Troyes each had their own garage.



A typical driving road heading now to Lumbres Najeti Hotel Du Golf.

Day 18 23rd October

Najeti Hotel Du Golf right on course today. Lovely twisty roads and a sunny Autumn morning we drove to our planned lunch stop. A nice little town. The waitress organised the various orders of baguette, cappuccino and a tea, and we fitted the car roofs as weather ahead was looking bad. Our hotel this evening was known for fancy meals. We arrived in the rain with thunderstorms predicted. We met in the bar and watched the lightening display in the distance. Our evening meal did not disappoint although it was a little bit fancy. As it was our last night we chatted about the events and sights and reliability of our cars. I was pleased with how my TR5 performed a sticky throttle at the end of a couple of days driving, but a blip of the throttle peddle it would return to normal, a spray of Mikes WD 40, we did lose tick over one day which I readjusted. The exhaust on the TR5 was bashed many times on Sicily and various speed bumps, but she took it. I have since looked underneath and the tour has left some scars. Mike Norths TR4 had no issues that were reported. Mike is obsessed with fuel consumption comparing at each filling station who had used what. Mikes TR4 as many of you know is an excellent rally replica with twin 45 Webbers which performed slightly better than the TR5 on fuel at most fuel stops by 1 or 2 litres but not all. He has his car very well organised and is tour ready at the drop of a hat. Andy and the TR6 would beat both cars on Fuel but she was a Diva very needy and required plenty of attention. She did finish the tour 3,054 miles for me but many more for Andy now living in the Fens. While his bonnet opened nearly as many times as the car doors, he will have the car well sorted for the next time and always gets the car home.

Day 19 24th October

Today we headed home, a short drive to the Calais side of the tunnel. We managed to stay in convoy and while on the tour we did at times lose each other. The best way if this happens, is to use What 3 Words. Mike North had recommended the App which I had already downloaded after hearing so many good reports of people being found lost in random places. If you do become detached from someone, they can send a reference what 3 words to the App on your phone. This will guide you too exactly where they are. Now being used by delivery companies and used by the emergency services and as post codes.

At Calais a few nipped into duty free for a browse before we were called to the train. As we were all on the same train again, we were able to chat, Andy's TR6 had developed knocking noises so a stop was arranged at the garage just after the tunnel. We fill up and check the TR6 over. It was Jacked up wheel removed so the vital parts checked, nothing was coming adrift so we were all off home via the infamous M25, an hour delay but homeward bound after a long tour.

There was a day in Sicily, the first time in years I felt a long way from home, stuck with my car and knowing I had 8 days of driving to get myself home. It was a strange remote feeling quickly passed and all forgotten now it was great to be home after an epic drive.

The Triumph is back in the garage waiting for a wash and the exhaust to be straightened out.

Thanks to Mike N, Mike MD, Andy, Sean and Pete.





www.sportingbears.org.uk

SBMC—the Early Years

Chris Glasbey



Sporting Bears Motor Club
Classic and Sports Cars Driving for Charity



SPORTING BEARS SMASH £3M

The Sporting Bears Motor Club have surpassed the £3 million mark in money raised for children's charities

The Sporting Bears Motor Club have surpassed the £3 million mark in money raised by their activities for children's charities.

The club's patron, Mike Brewer of the TV show *Wheeler Dealers* announced the amazing milestone at the show, 30 years after Sporting Bears staged their first Dream Rides event. Over £264,000 has been raised

by Sporting Bears so far this year. Each year the club attends up to 50 events across the country where its members and volunteers take guests on dream passenger rides.

'It's an amazing achievement,' Mike told us. 'Ten years ago this weekend they raised their first million pounds, so a further two in another ten years shows a fantastic level of growth. It's brilliantly

humbling being their patron, attending events with them and seeing the positive impacts that they are having. They are turning up with their cars in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, polished, ready to run and full of fuel, and they take people out for an amazing journey – and the money they raise all goes to charity. It's mind blowing. I'm here as a patron for the club, and as

much as I'd love a drive, I'm chained down to the halls. If I could pick one of the cars? I've got my eyes on that Porsche 911 SC parked down there, but there's this lovely Lotus Europa. It's so low you can skirt under the parking barriers. It's the world's first free car parking car!'

Chairman of the club, Alan Moss said, 'In 1989 Chris and Pat Glasbey formed a unique car club, the Sporting Bears, with the aim of raising money for charity. In 1992 we appeared at the NEC classic car show for the first time, and the concept of "Dream Rides" was introduced.

'Since then, we have continued to support children's charities at this and many more events that are held across the UK.'

■ Sporting Bears' stars, pages 20-21



Sporting Bears ...the early years

I feel I should write a few memories down since there are very few "Bears" members remaining from the time the club began and many of the photo archives from those early days were taken and never returned.

My wife, Pat, and I prepared for the launch of Sporting Bears Motor Club in September 1989. I already had experience in event organising and as a joint leader of a local group of the TR Register + a few years on the TR Register committee in the early 80's.

Why the Bear in TR logo ? I imagined the TR3 to be a sporting "Noddy car" and the Bear was going to be popular with children. I know Darryl at "Racetrations" and at the time I based the SBMC logo on the Racetrations letterhead, substituting Darryl's head for the Bear. Permission was granted with a smileand talking of smiles, the Bear's smile had to be approved by Pat. Originally a line drawing, the logo has been modified over the years.

The strap line under the name was: *Classic and Sportscars – Driving for Children's Charities*. The agreement was also that they would be charities in the UK and it was hoped that the assorted classic car owners would make SBMC their second club.

I sent a Press Release to all the classic publications of the day and they all gave us a few lines on their club pages. Raising funds whilst having fun on classic car events was the theme.

The initial first months of the club attracted a number of classic sportscars, the majority being Triumph TRs. This is not surprising because I had persuaded many TR friends to join the cause and classic fun whilst fundraising and amongst a variety of cars appealed to them. As a second club, this was never intended to cause any issue with the Camb Followers Group of the TR Register. Although I can't apologise, I have in November 2022 just heard that a number of members did actually leave the group, causing some concern. I admit to being one because now I was launching a national organisation which was to take much of my spare time. Lea Valley Group helped to support Camb Followers on some of their events.

Amongst the early members we formed the first Committee, meeting at our house and Chaired by Duncan Jolly. Thank you for helping the launch Duncan and soon after that we had our second Chairman, Colin Jarry-Ryan (a TR2 man from NorwichI knew him from many years of organising the TR Register – Lake District Tours). Colin worked for Norwich Union and when they were clearing out some old computers and printers, he managed to acquire a huge printer and some floppy disks. I can't remember much more about that but very useful for the time.

Now I was seeking sponsorship or support from companies. I visited the offices of Lancaster Insurance, a new company at that time and linked with the MG Owners Club. I spoke to Roche Bentley who was pleased to promote SBMC in their club magazine. Lancaster agreed to print a batch of Membership and Information Formswhich gave us a professional image.

Malcolm Nash produced a newsletter for his regional MG Club and he volunteered to edit our first club newsletters. Our events manager suggested we might organise a Toy Run for children in hospital. We

planned this for December 1990 and after collecting a large number of toys, filling my company van to the brim, the day was scheduled for our classic car meet at IWM Duxford (more bears also filled the cars). We set off for the planned delivery to Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge. I can't remember how many cars were in the convoy but I know we had a police motorbike escort and we didn't stop at all. The police stopped other traffic to give us priority!

Pat and I organised a Tour of England & Wales (some 5 days). Hotels were booked but also we stayed in University accommodation at Aberystwyth and Lancaster and included in the tour was a drive up Shelsley Walsh Hillclimb and a lap or two of Oulton Park Racing Circuit

Malcolm Andrews took on the role of Exhibitions Manager and Pat and I helped him set up our first stand at the NEC Classic Car Show in May 1990a one car stand featuring Robert Goodchild's 1936 Lagonda LG45R. We were there to make people aware of SBMC and also to fundraise for Children in Need (later we were to help smaller charities) It was hard work "selling" the Prize Draw raffle tickets. Prizes included Balloon Flight, Track-day experience and more.

Children in Need was to be our charity for the first 3 years of NEC shows and Pat and I were amongst a group of "Bears" who went down to Elstree Studios twicejust hoping to also be seen on TV. The 3rd year we delivered our cheque to BBC Cambridge.

November 1991 saw us returning to the NEC with another one car stand, this time featuring the famous ERA racing car called "Remus"which just happened to be in Sporting Bears colours , a blue car with yellow wheels.

Talking of club colours, some of you will remember yellow as the main colour for shirts and club marquees at shows, with blue as the secondary colour. This was later reversed since it became apparent various insects were drawn to the yellow at our outside events. At this point I would like to remember Heather Mitchell who looked after club regalia for many years and hosted many committee meetings with husband Colin at their home. Heather's lunches were always the best reason for the meeting!

It was after our first SBMC Classic Car Show at Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshireorganised by Mike Norton, Malcolm Andrews, Andy Mitchell and team. Hundreds of assorted classic cars attended, TVR, MG, Jaguar and a host of TRs from Camb Followers and Lea Valley Groups. There was a funfair for kids and craft stalls and much more ...and we raised a lot for local charities. We were also responsible for the clear up the following day and I can remember my contribution was to go round the site collecting litter. Wimpole Hall was the stage for several years and an extra attraction was an Autotest that we staged in the next field.

Probably into the third year of SBMC, we were in need of another Chairman and I approached Colin Mitchell at Wimpole . He considered it for a moment and at our next committee meeting he took up the post, which he held for many years. Thanks Colin.

By now our second Editor, Angela Norton, was in post and she launched the newly named "Bear Facts" newsletter which was published quarterly, costs being covered within the membership fee. B & W initially and sized A5colour and A4 was to come years later.

The membership was growing and the majority owned classic sportscars + a few saloons and some modern sportscars. Our next major tour was in the Highlands of Scotland and looking a year ahead, Pat and I journeyed up to Edinburgh in the TR3A to meet Philip and Sally with their Alfa Romeo Spider (the boat tale one, type as featured in the Mrs.Robinson film?!) We planned the route and checked out places to stay ready for the tour the following September. Unfortunately the TR suffered clutch failure, so we sat by the riverside and waited for the AA to arrive. The recovery truck arrived and he took us for a 50 mile ride to Kingussie and a garage that enjoyed working on classic cars. Hopefully the leaking fluid problem could be sorted ready for morning. That evening as we enjoyed a pub meal, there was relief as we heard the distinct sound of the TR. The mechanic had fixed it and was driving it around the hills on road test. A year later, another 5 day tour of Scotland, all classic sportscars with a couple of modern TVRs and included a planned visit to Knockhill Racing Circuit. Several laps here on a wet afternoon but we had the track to ourselves and I remember a TR5 spinning off and bringing mud onto the circuit.

Day tours seemed to be the best to get larger numbers involved and some of these had up to 60 cars. They became the "Classic Bear Runs" and one of the first started at "The Patrick Collection" in Birmingham. For this tour I was also able to include a drive around the Lucas Test Track with its banked corners. The idea of these tours was that each entrant was to obtain sponsorship for a Bear that they would carry in their car. It worked and some forms came in with pledges of around £200!

Key members of SBMC at that time were Mick Bryan and Hugh Jackson who were both volunteers at "The Patrick Collection" and friends of the manager, Graham Drew. I had a meeting with Graham and he was pleased to form a link with SBMC, to help us and also promote the Collection. We held two AGMs there and a couple of tours started and finished there. Graham even took time out to drive the route with me to complete a tour plan.

It was thanks to friends and family that we had enough marshalls to run the "Classic Bear Runs" and I must give Steve Chant a special mention . He and wife Jane helped to marshall control points on many Bears tours, including Loton Park Hillclimb which I was able to include as part of a Shopshire borders tour. Steve was also Mick Bryans right arm in the planning of SBMC dream rides and I know he is still very much involved today.

Sadly we lost all the archive photos from the early years. The person who took on the PR role sometime in the 90's then had a falling out with his wife and vanished before one of our committee members could retrieve the photos. A mystery that the photos were never recovered but that was all many years ago.

Amongst the classic cars of the day was one supercar, a red Lamborghini Miura. I can't remember his name but the owner lived in the village of Nobottlea familiar name when addressing newsletter envelopes.

Most of us will remember Mick Bryan who served as Exhibitions Manager from 1992 for many years. He launched the idea of Dream Rides at the NEC, although I have heard that Graham Drew proposed some of the Patrick Collection cars be used for a dream rides idea with donations to be given to the Patrick Trust. The owner of the P.C. then withdrew the offer ten weeks before the Top Gear Classic Car Show ...and Mick sprang into action and found 14 cars to take part in that first year of "Dream Rides". Favourite cars of the time for me were the AC Cobra in BRG (7 ltrs) and the equal roar of a Metro 6R4 Rally car.

Too much to recollect. Times were changing and some members were selling their classic cars and buying modern sportscars.

After 8 years, Pat and I took the decision to resign from the Committee and I duly took the equipment and files to the next meeting. The atmosphere was strained and we took a 3 year break from the club.

Congratulations on raising £3 million so far and best wishes to the Sporting Bears of today. The club may have changed in format over the years but the aim to help children's charities in the UK has grown stronger. Pat and I are proud of your involvement today and may Sporting Bears continue for many years to come.



Launch of the Lotus Elise on SBMC stand at NEC. Nigel Mansell, Colin and Chris.



Charity cheque presentation with Stirling Moss



Pat with Barrington Bear presenting a cheque



Letter from Brian a Founder member Lea Valley Group

Dear Ed,

50 Years On...

Whenever contemplating anniversaries I am always reminded of the opening lines of my old school song "40 Years On" and I wonder if either of the other two Dover Grammar School 'Old Boys' in LVG remember it:

*Forty years on, when afar and asunder
Parted are those who are singing today,
When you look back and forgetfully wonder
What you were like in your work and your play -*

Stretching it to 50 years, I have spent much time recently looking back and trying to remember the early members and their cars although I have no early newsletters or photos to aid my failing memory. I have mentioned a few in my previous TRunnion ramblings earlier this year so I won't repeat them. I don't think many of us were in the habit of taking photos of our cars back in the 70s when we were mostly young, single, carefree and wearing flares and flowery shirts. TRs were just a way for the impoverished to get 100mph performance for next to nothing so the cars were not in great condition and most served as everyday transport. The earliest photos I have of my first TR3A (which was at the inaugural meeting) were taken in 1974 and scanned and printed in TRunnion #20142. These only exist because at the time I was keen on monochrome and could develop and print at home. However, I may have colour photos amongst my slides of the same period if only I could work up the enthusiasm to dig them out from under the eaves. I believe it may appear in some shots of cars at early TR Register AGMs and Standard Triumph International Rallies, either in its Aubergine or pale blue Hammerite livery! Maybe others have photos of their cars from the 70s which would be good to see.

One topic of discussion at the November meeting was how much the nature of meetings has changed over 50 years. In the early days, it was largely men-only, tyre-kicking, tinkering under bonnets and swapping parts with talk very much focussed on keeping the beasts running. When I took Lynda to her first LVG meeting at the Crooked Chimney, Welwyn in 1975 she was one of very few ladies present but thankfully that did not deter her and she has accompanied me to many local and national TR and classic car events and race meetings since. We missed out on most of the action after the crankshaft in my TR3A broke in 1988 until we got the car restored in 2007, by which time the group was much less 'gender-biassed' and obviously now also has a much wider age-range. Whilst some of us are approaching (some may say 'past') our sell-by dates, I think there are real benefits to be gained from a more mixed demographic but it is up to younger and newer members to get involved in running the group and organising and supporting the events that they want. That's how it worked in the past and has to be done if the group is to survive and progress in the future.

I must confess to agreeing with Pete Muncer's comments in TRunnion #202210 regarding F1, the FIA, Red Bull and Mad Max. The sport is a shambles and when I asked Pete as we were leaving The Cock after the November meeting if he was going to watch the final Grand Prix I suppose it should have come as no surprise that he said "No, it's a waste of time". When someone with as much enthusiasm and encyclopaedic knowledge of motor sport

is turned off by it, there is something clearly wrong. However, some of us will probably continue to watch next season, partially out of curiosity to see what mess the organisers can get into but also to see whether George Russell will get his first World Championship or Lewis Hamilton will finally get his eighth. I do hope Mad Max doesn't dominate again and I have diminishing respect for Red Bull as a team although the attached photo proves I was Number 1 there once ('The First Run' 1st January 2012).

Finally, Lynda and I would like to wish you and Pat and all TRunnion readers a very Happy Christmas and we look forward to seeing many new, old and ex-LVG members at the Station Pub on Wednesday 4th January.

Brian Chidwick



'Hammerite Horror' (with friend Colin driving)...



...and a few days later, after spring hanger failure



*Oh ****! How do I get to work in the morning?*



Damage looks minor but proved terminal

