

Monthly Newsletter August 2020

Don't shoot the messenger, might as well get the bad news out of the way, first the Edinburgh Trial destined to run in October. Despite sterling efforts by Mark Gregg and his team it has been decided to not run it this year. This is a bitter pill for all those involved, having put in so much ground work along with creating a "paperless" entry and scoring system, the positive to come out of this for the MCC is that the systems created can be used for the Exeter and Lands End events.

Our own Tamar Trial also has an October date but having spoken to several of the committee members there is little enthusiasm for attempting to run an event which could well be cancelled due to happenings outside of our control along with the monumental task of creating a virtually new system to run it. To highlight some of the issues, firstly we can tick the box for online entries. Actual signing on would not happen, as with scrutineering, this avoids close contact and no use of paper. Once the event is underway there would not be any kind of score cards at the hills, the marshal on the hill would need to radio to a strategically placed control car somewhere close to the section where the score would be recorded on a lap top or tablet, so the club would need to purchase a device for each section, not cheap.

The start/ Breakfast venue at Tresmeer is temporarily closed with no actual date for re-opening as yet set, the use of the Frog & Bucket pub is again out of the equation so we would have no finish venue. Getting enough marshals would be a real challenge, what with social distancing and being suitably computer savvy, then what happens if a car or motorcycle is stuck on a hill? Even if they give the thumbs up signal it doesn't mean they can get going again without assistance.

Moving on to the David Ayers sporting trial in September, the news here is not much better. This event is normally part of a 2 day trial run in conjunction with Camel Vale's Robin Alexander trial, the concerns are that after doing some ground work with competitors to judge interest there may not be sufficient entries to make the event viable. The committee will need to make the final decision on both events when they have their next meeting, things might

change but I for one will be very surprised if either event runs, I'm sure some people will see this as a negative attitude, or is it just realistic ?

Enough of this doom and gloom, over to our Club President Robin Moore :-

Alvis and the other lady in my life, part 3.

It wasn't long before the 'Doc' started to make his mark, and it was due to his enthusiasm and drive that the Southwest area of the A.O.C. founded its own Alvis day. The first of these events was very much a Roger Filer-Cooper gathering held at the old wartime airfield at Eggesford near Winkleigh in mid Devon. Roger also to manage a fly-in by a Percival Provost powered by the 9 cylinder Alvis Leonides radial engine. Roger never did anything by halves. From this event supported by a small but enthusiastic number of southwest members South West Alvis Day grew stronger year by year and developed into a weekend not to be missed, attracting members as far away as the Midlands, London and the Home Counties.

Eggesford was a one-off, the following year the event was held at Newton Abbot racecourse. Led by Roger, this became a team effort with involvement of many of the committee taking on specific tasks. By this time we had become more organised with a refreshment tent, also other facilities for dealing with admin etc. I remember it being a very hot June day and rather tiring to work in, but it proved a great success. This, once again was a one-off venue although S.W.A.D had become firmly established, but it was time to think about a more suitable and permanent venue, and one that was slightly better placed geographically for the wider membership. It was decided to settle on Sherborne Castle and its gardens which would provide the space and all the facilities required, with the advantage of having use of the Orangery for our own catering arrangements. Also there was the added attraction of the Castle being open for guided tours for those who needed respite from the proceedings, there being an ideal area on the approach drive for timed driving tests, and other activities. Adjacent, was a very large level area of grassland for parking. In all it proved to be the ideal venue to which we were welcomed and returned to in successive years. On occasions a formal dinner would be arranged for the Saturday evening before the event on the Sunday.

True to form as my Riley friend Brian predicted, Roger Filer-Cooper moved on to the next challenge. He was highly qualified and well respected in medical circles and became involved in dealing with serious accident trauma and procedures, and in setting up a specialist unit.

For relaxation Roger was a railway and model enthusiast, and constructed a OO gauge layout of Halwill Junction, which I'm told is on display at Okehampton. He unfortunately died in his early sixties, but he certainly left a legacy.

To be continued RHTM

The Turner household gained a new member of the family some five weeks ago, a four and a half year old Collie, despite being totally deaf he is otherwise your typical collie, basically too darn energetic. This has meant a serious rise in the walking tempo. Each day Vivien and I try to think of new places to walk, a couple of weeks ago our walk took in Oozes Water or Scarsick to some, this hill was first used on the Launceston trial and then adopted by the MCC for the Lands End and also used on the Tamar, the hill is no 'stopper' but works well as a special test. Being in mid July we were badly prepared for our walk expecting it to be dry, what we were met with was ankle deep cow poo, it turned out the local farmer moves his herd of cows along the track each day turning it into a half decent although smelly section.

A few days later we had to travel down to the west of the county so took in a walk down 'Bluehills', I was impressed by the repair work by the MCC maintenance team, although the walkers using the hill that day were probably totally unaware of what happens there every Easter . A friend of ours commented "did John really ride his Lambretta up there?" to which the answer is Yes I did, despite feeling like I was about to have a heart attack. Nobody said it was going to be easy.

All for this month J.T.

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