

## Monthly Newsletter April 2021

So we are gradually travelling back to normality in the world of motorsport, Easter Saturday saw had several members of our club out marshalling for the MCC "Pop Up Trial" . As mentioned in last month's newsletter this was somewhat of an experimental event with signing on and route etc. all done remotely, there was even an app for recording the score on the hills on your mobile phone although old fashioned score cards were still being used as well. Each section had its hand sanitising point and marshals were reminded to socially distance.

The entry for the event was lower than expected but it proved the system could work, given that this was the first event to run in this format I think the MCC should be applauded for taking the initiative. Obviously there was little of the social enjoyment side of things, cars did not have passengers which must have seemed somewhat strange for the driver to do his/her own navigating and the real downside was no one to blame but yourself if you took a wrong turning. We were treated to Geoff Westcott putting on a nice display on our section as he grappled with the outfit snaking around the trees in the woods, very entertaining.

I'm not sure technology will completely take over for long distance trials but as a taster it was thought provoking, personally I think both the old established method can run along side the new, I think they call it progress .

Talking of progress we had another zoom committee meeting earlier this month, this zoom thingy is now feeling almost normal, in olden days you had to go out on cold nights and physically meet people, often at a thing called a "Pub", now you do it from the comfort of your own home, it's not all bad but the pub did have a wider selection of ales. All the usual topics were discussed, finances, membership, events, AGM etc , will cover the events later.

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So it's over to our Club President Robin Moore

***The Ramblings of R.H.T.***

*Well, that's a new title to start with. Thirty years ago my monthly piece for our newsletter was headed, "Did You Know", and recently I have been sorting through many of my old copies and it made me realise that much of what I have previously written may not have been seen by our present day readers. Either, because they are of a younger generation, or, that circulation of the newsletter was less at the time. With the advent of email there appears to be a far wider readership, so perhaps it would not be out of place to reprint some of my previous offerings.*

*Apart from the years of the two World Wars , I cannot recall the MCC Lands End being cancelled for two consecutive years, and disappointment is very much of an understatement for all concerned. As I have previously written , it is very much a red letter day, something not to be missed. To put it mildly, I think we are all somewhat depressed with the restrictions imposed by Covid, and the question remains of what the new normal will be. Will it ever be like we were used to, or will that become part of history? Therefore I thought it might be appropriate to re print a piece I submitted for the newsletter almost 30 years ago, and which first appeared in the magazine of the Wolseley Hornet Special Club 60 years ago, written by member Tony Reed I hope it lifts the gloom a little for you.*

*RHTM.*

*Editor's Note*

*It is good to see an old LNCCMC newsletter first which I first cobbled together nearly thirty years ago in 1992 and courtesy of the Reluctant Publishing Company Ltd.*

*Reproduced here in authentic form warts and all, time constraints do not allow for digitally reworking !*

*JT*

DID YOU KNOW?

After a recent committee meeting at Blunts, Andrew Dinner popped in to collect father-in-law David Hinks. Our worthy Editor, never slow to seize a chance to pressgang for material, buttonholed Andrew for his contribution for the next Newsletter. Andrew's reply was that he had better come with something to blance the offerings of R.H.T.M.!

Andrew always writes interesting articles about his sprint car and t events he takes part in and I admire his ability to write factual materi coupled with a strong sense of humour. Different types of humour appe to different types of people and with the passing of years humour a its appeal also changes. It is not often that something written ov 30 years ago still has the same impact. There are always exception and some humorous articles become classics in their own right.

To coin a phrase, "there's a joker in every pack" and most clubs ah their Al Read. Did you know that the BBC are currently repeating sc original Al Read programmes first broadcast in the sixties? The Wolse Hornet Special Club had a member at that time called Tony Read, nicknam 'Al' because of his being a natural comedian. The article re-print here was penned by him some thirty years ago. It was written for t W.H.S.C. Magazine shortly after Al's first visit to Trefrew, driving h 1933 Wolsely Hornet Special - he still owns AD 4516, and he is still daft as ever! I have a hearty laugh whenever I read 'The Day my Hornet Stur Me' I hope you have a good laugh too.

R.E.T.M.

"The day my Hornet stung me"

Wot ho me gay bleeders! (of Brakes of course! Ed)

No doubt me old mate (we are now on squabbling terms) Robin Moore, has told you about the day I called on him. Right, now it's my turn, this is what really happened.

Last July, my partner-in-grime and I decided to load up the "Tinroh" (Hornit) and tour Cornwall, which the R.A.C. told us is an area of barren wasteland tied to Britain by the Tamar Bridge.

First stop - we said - would be to seek out this bloke Robin Moore, have a natter, then continue. All I knew was that he lived in Camelford, 35 pubs away from Plymouth. The place derived its name from the close similarity between two halves which make up the name.

As we found out, he's pretty well known down there as the young man who drives around in a "noisy queer thing" (I knew I was on the track of a Hornet, then). Because it only took one old lady and three pubs to find out where he lived (The old lady slid gracefully under the table at the second pub, we went on alone).

Anyway, he's got more cars than I've had Sunday dinners I was British Racing Green! There's a Graham-Page Al Capone type car that you could walk through in a top hat, the Bochaton Special racing Hornet looking like a power assisted super-charged sausage, his own well-known puddle jumper Hornet MV and yet another Hornet in the corner which I gather will one day be his pride and joy - and that's a car I would like to see. Robin has the most practical engineering brain that I've ever come across - it's a pleasure to natter with him. How he finds time to run a farm as well I don't know. (Did I just see a cow with four sparking plugs?)

I haven't mentioned the odd Bentley - horse drawn Zeppelin - steam driven bath chairs and worsted concrete diesel pogo sticks that are lying around - man there are cars everywhere. Lift up a big flat stone and there's another Hornet. Naturally there's a Hornets nest at the bottom of the garden.

Just as I was about to slide a few conrods into me pocket, Robin, who had just finished adjusting the rocking chair in the kitchen to .003", comes up and says:

"How about a flip in MV?"

"O.K." says I. (Thinks: what can MV do that OD can't?)

(Robin Thinks: He's just about to find out)

I climb into his car with a smirk which, I hope said "I've done this sort of thing before y'know" when the next thing I know is I'm sitting on the floor clutching the scuttle with white knuckles (British parents y'know) as the pinion tries to climb up the crownwheel and take the car with it.

Something kicked me in the behind four times and Robin says "Top gear".

The road seemed to be full of little cars hurtling towards us backwards.

At one point in third gear I suddenly mimed a scream as the rev counter needle shot towards the red section like a matelot in Port Said - shot past and then threatened to knock the little pin off the end of the scale; but I saw he'd craftily cut the tip of the needle off so that it cleared the pin nicely (.003") as it went past. As the engine began to scream like a banshee he deftly snicked into top and it happened all over again until we ran out of Cornwall. At 2,000 feet he popped her into neutral and we coasted down to a 4 point landing. And there was the engine ticking over like a sewing machine.

The conversation afterwards went as follows:-

Me: "Did you realise how many revs you were doing back there?"

R: "Yes, I never change gear until I get valve bounce."

Me: "But I've never taken mine above 5000"

R: "Oh that's alright, Hornets will take it"

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#### THE SCENE CHANGES

A day or so later two intrepid explorers could be seen pottering along the highway clad dashingly in deerstalker and exploded bowler respectively in fine specimen of vintage machinery, when one turns to the other, delicately removes a bottle labelled Watneys from the gaping chasm in his head and says:

"You know old chap, I think Tinroh could quite safely be taken up to 6800 RPM, after all he's been doing it for years".

A big discussion followed of which the general outcome was that I knew she had a lot more to give but I'd never had the guts to try. Up until then the growl of 5000 was rarely heard and never exceeded, but as I looked along the long red bonnet as it dipped slowly up and down at a nice 40 mph I thought - well this is it!

Bottles were carefully drained and stowed, cases, bags and all the gear clewed down in the back seat and deerstalker fastened under chin and maties bowler pulled firmly down over his ears. A beautiful stretch of road loomed up. This was indeed it.

I gently brought her up to 72 mph Revs 5000, oil 60 lubs per squinch, vacuum + 4" Hg. - then foot down.

At first no surge then she slowly crept up to 5500 and the exhaust note went up half an octave to a sharp growl.

Up she went - slowly - 6000, exhaust hitting the air with a sharp stacatto roar.

6500 - vibration through steering column, wind shrieking past (Downgrade slope now)

6700 will she go any higher? the exhaust is real music, I've never heard this note before - two octaves up and a shrill whine, oil pressure gauge a blurr at 45 60 lbs. Me clutching the wheel for all I'm worth absolutely streaking along.

6800 - BANG!

With a rapidly decelerating clattering noise and a stench of hot oil fumes we ground to a halt - both sitting bolt upright and stiff in our seats not daring to move.

Two pairs of eyes met.

"Two?" says matie

"Six, more likely" say I

As it happened it was only one, No.5 to be precise, with a great gaping hole in the crankcase exposing all her internals - and big splodges of oil up the road as far as I could see - This was indeed it!

We were then 90 miles (246 pubs and one off licence) from home, a couple of birds we'd promised to meet in the next town that evening and our holiday only 4 days old. The things I thought about Robin Moore and Hornets are not printable. Not only had the car gobbled out a rod but all our beer was spilt as well.

Nothing-daunted, we pushed her up on the verge, took the sump off, untied the conrod from the crankpin, scooped all the bits from the sump and then put a jubilee clip and some good old Kellogs round No.5 pin. Next the rockers above No.5 were adjusted so that the valves hardly opened and No.5 plug lead disconnected to save the sump from being blown orf, I then bunged up the hole in the crankcase with a pair of passion killers, which fortunately I had won in fair battle at the previous town the night before, (some folks collect pennants) put the sump back and away we went. All in all it took 50 minutes and we just caught 'em as they opened.

There was a vibration period at 16, 25 and 36 mph, but between those speeds she'd cruise happily all day. So we carried on with our holiday for another six days on five pots, and I think she clocked a better average than she did before.

contd.....

Post Mortem:

Apparently unless you have a Hornet Line bored, repeat, Line bored and all con rods individually trued before remettaling - keep the revs down.

Did I tell you I'm getting a Jaguar? - well I am - our cat can't cope with the mice in our house.

The Hornet? she's being line bored.

And that's how my Hornet stung me.

Yours,

'Al' Read.

OD 4516.

#### FOOTNOTE

Before the war when staff photographers were most likely to be encumbered by heavy glass plates, many magazines used artists to illustrate and capture sporting moments.

F.Gordon Crosbie was retained by Autocar magazine and his pictures, mostly charcoal heightened with white or water colours, are much sought after today. A number of his original works were released from the Autocar archives and auctioned by Robert Brooks at their sale in Monaco on 7th May 1991. The picture illustrated here, Lot no. 22 and measuring 20½" by 25" had a guide price of £5,000 - £8,000.

R.H.T.M.



Tony Read's Hornet when we first met in 1960.

This Sallow Bodied Hornet Special has its original Devon registration number but the Pico headlights are incorrect and never original equipment. The car now resides in Italy and Tony Read is deceased.



A WOLSELEY HORNET IN A WOODLAND SCENE  
F GORDON CROSSIE

Thanks to Warin Kelly for this contribution which must surely warrant a Caption Competition.

Send in your ideas for an amusing caption and receive an amazing prize in return.....



[Topical.

**A SURPRISE FOR THE DRIVER.**

This remarkable photograph was taken just as the back axle of the car had broken. Though travelling at sixty miles an hour, the driver was not hurt.

**Future Events**

Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup> of May , Northgate Sporting Trial to be held at Ashley Farm, Lifton, with thanks to Paul Webber for use of his land. The reg's and entry form are up on the club website, don't forget we will be needing marshals please, as always Mike Wevill would love to hear from you 01566 784451.

Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> of May is the date for the Launceston Trial to be held at Eastcott and Lew Woods, although a fixed venue it will be run on classic trial regulations, entry forms and reg's soon to be on the club website.

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I ventured out in the Dellow last Saturday in order to marshal for the "pop up trial" it was a tentative if somewhat sedate journey after the last outing when things went somewhat pear shaped, pleased to say the journey there and back was uneventful, long may it continue, although I feel I know something of how the driver in the photo above felt .

All for this month J.T. contributions to billjan299@gmail.com