



WINDSCREEN

The Magazine of Swansea Motor Club



October 2008

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT.

Welcome to the 'credit-crunch free' edition of Windscreen. What a mess the financial world is in at the moment. Knowing the nonsense we've had with the club's own bank while Tony Jones was away it is no surprise that the banks are in deep doodoo. Most of them couldn't organise a well-known event on the brewery steps! No wonder they can't look after people's money.

Talking of Tony Jones, it's good to see his daughter is doing well and her health is improving now they are back in the UK. It must have been a very worrying time for Tony, Angela and the rest of the family to endure.

The first round of the 2008/9 inter-club quiz took place at the Halfway Inn near Nantgaredig in September, hosted by the Jaguar Enthusiasts Club. They are new to the Inter-club quiz but set a high standard for quizzes with their PowerPoint display questions. However, technology did not guarantee success and they were third in the points total at the end of the evening. This year, the first blood has gone to the team from SHVR. They beat us by .02% at the end of the evening. The quiz attracted a good turnout from the various members; both SMC and SHVR had large turnouts to tackle the questions. JEC lost a few members to the opposition, as some members belonged to all three clubs and chose to support their normal quiz team instead. Round 2 will be our November event at Murton Rovers and hopefully will attract an equally good turnout.

The October event will be a Navigation Scatter and may beat this edition to it, so a review will follow in the next edition.

Looming on the horizon is this year's WRC Wales Rally GB. Huw Richards is the man to contact if you can help out. Please support Huw and the club if you are able.

Don't forget the Christmas party is not that far away, whether you want reminding this early or not. We intend to major on Santa's sack this year as it gets more popular every year. We will need lots of little goodies for the evening. So now is the time to lookout for all those obscure and childish treats that go down so well. When you wrap them, don't forget what paper you used. Many a member has picked out his or her own offering and has had to wait for the next year to get someone else to pick it from the sack!

Talking of Christmas, we're not far from the beginning of a new year. A time when your social committee, plan the events for the forthcoming year. If you have any ideas or specific requests, please contact Chris Gibbon or me and let us know. It's your club and we want to put on social events the members want. You may have an idea that would interest your fellow members. Contact details are in every edition of the magazine. While we're at it, what about magazine articles. Even if you don't want to be the author, it may be a subject one of us could cover for you. Let Neil or me know for the 2009 magazines.

Safe motoring, whatever the speed!

Mike Jones.

TONY BURTT- JONES 1945-2008

Windscreen is sad to report the sudden death in Tewkesbury on 5th June of Tony Burtt - Jones a former prolific member of SMC in the 60's and 70's when he lived with his family at Anderson Lane, Pennard.

Born in Bedford, his first school was Oakleigh House in Swansea followed by St John's Porthcawl. At St John's, Tony was a brilliant cricketer and footballer. At the age of 13, Tony won an Exhibition to Wrekin College in Shropshire. His time at Wrekin was very successful – School Prefect, Head of House, a star cricketer (batsman) and rugby player (scrum half) and excelling at all moving ball sports.

Following this he won an Open Exhibition in History to St John's College, Cambridge. It could be said that he enjoyed his time at Cambridge and the 1960's was a wonderful time to be there for an outgoing guy who loved socialising and all sports. He played cricket and rugby for his college where he was a very popular member and even managed to leave with a degree!

Tony then joined the Ford Motor Company on their graduate intake programme and spent time in a number of Ford departments, particularly enjoying his time in their Regent Street offices looking after the vehicle needs of Buckingham Palace, Metropolitan Police and other high profile customers; driving rather nice cars and taking customers out for long expensive lunches!

Tony had always been interested in competition driving and decided to have a crack at rallying. Over the next few years he ran a couple of rally prepared Minis, one of which was the well known Cooper S previously owned by Cardiff garage owner Norman Harvey. BTX111B was an indecently quick car, originally works prepared with no cost spared, carrying all the demon BMC tweaks of the period.

Rallying now seemed rather more important than turning up for work with Ford on a Monday morning, especially if he was rallying in Northern Scotland on a Sunday evening. The good Henry Ford did not agree with this philosophy and a parting of the ways followed.

Tony then joined a Lancia dealership in West London, the boss of which he had met through rallying. Tony's sales office at this time, repeated several times afterwards in other jobs, was a carefully chosen pub, where the regulars were also Times crosswords fans and the conversation was lively & informed, the beer good and he could sell a few cars too!

Over the next years, Tony worked for several other car dealerships before moving into estate agency in Tewkesbury, selling both domestic and commercial properties in that area. Most recently he worked for a firework importing business based in Newent and, following the demise of that business, was well on the way to starting a new business in that sector when he sadly died of a heart attack.

In recent years, he'd started playing golf with a local golfing society and was proud of his occasional win and, his profound love of animals is something that friends will remember; he often said that he would have liked to have been a vet.

Tony was enormous fun socially and great company. Many will remember with affection and sore heads parties they will have attended with him or late night curries with other SMC suspects at the infamous Taj Mahalle Indian restaurant Mansel Street Swansea.

He did not live his life in a conventional way and that was sometimes not easy for his family and friends however, his intentions were always good even if the realities of everyday life often got in the way of their execution.

Tony didn't have any children and we offer our sympathies to his brothers Peter and Rick and their respective families. Rick was also part of SMC during this time and maintains the family tradition competing at most Llys-y'Fran hill climbs in an indecently quick Lotus Elise.

Ken Davies

We, as many other members do, belong to more than one motor club. One of which is SHVR, who also base themselves at Murton Rovers as we do. They are twinned with the Kinsale Vintage and Classic Car Club in southern Ireland, brought about by the twinning of Mumbles and Kinsale town. Every year since the twinning, the two clubs visit each other at home. In May SHVR members go over to Kinsale and every August the Kinsale club come over to Swansea. This year Sally and I decided to join those members of the SHVR who were crossing the Irish Sea to see Ireland for ourselves. This is a little story of the small tour we added on to the weekend.

KINSALE VIRGINS AND THE RING OF KERRY!

Having decided to join our fellow members for this year's SHVR trip to Kinsale for our first trip to Ireland. Sally and I thought it would be a good idea to stay on after the weekend rally for a few extra days and see some more of the Irish countryside.

During discussions at the club, it appeared we weren't the only ones prepared to stick it to the locals for a while longer. In the end there would be six cars staying on to play tourists and create havoc as and when the chance arose. Sally and me, Robin and Angela, Peter and Eryl, Steve and Sue, Keith and Celia and Ivor and Holly, decided to stick together and make a proper little tour out of the rest of the week. We would then come home on the Friday Ferry instead of the Tuesday like the others.

As the trip grew nearer and there were no more excuses to get out of going.

We booked the extra hotels ahead to make sure we could all be accommodated and the cars parked off the road, rather than chance it on the night and maybe get split up.

We had been very lucky with the weather for the Kinsale weekend and hadn't had the hood on other than when parked up. We really enjoyed ourselves, good company, good driving and the entertainment laid on by our hosts at the Kinsale Car Club was first class. The Irish people are very friendly, nothing is too much trouble and they treat you as if they have known you for years.

Would we be so lucky for the rest of the trip, weather, hotels, and people? Tuesday was another fine day and the cars were all kitted up ready for the off. We had to use the waterfront car park to park the cars, the street we were parked in had a weekly market in it, and so we were forced to park away from our hotel. None of us felt athletic enough to carry the luggage containing the kitchen sink etc, through the town to Ivor and Holly's hotel, the owner of which had kindly offered us the use of her carpark for the Monday night. We bumped into Bernard in the carpark, not literally, before the off. He warned us to watch out for the potholes on the route we were about to take. Stunning scenery with potholes!

Our party of six cars was reduced to five before we even got a chance to go. Ivor had done a deal and sold his car to a local couple before the off and wouldn't risk it on an extended trip. So off went the reduced number of travellers, following Robin on the road to Bantry. We were setting a reasonable pace, for Robin anyway, until we came towards a farm with a couple of donkeys in the field. Robin hit the brakes and pulled into the side of the road.

What the hell does he want with a pair of scruffy donkeys? Wrong! A small roller had fallen out of his throttle mechanism and he was unable to go any further. Enter Keith the field doctor, who administered to the patient and got it going with a suitably placed cable tie or two. He now had dirty greasy hands, because Peter wouldn't let him have any of his stock of rubber gloves! Perhaps he had other plans for them!!!

It had been our intention to drive around the Bear Peninsular, however, our enforced roadside halt had put our schedule behind. We decided to content ourselves with a blast over the Healy Pass. This had been identified as a must do, after chatting to various people who had already been there. . A narrow road, that winds up and up for a long way. And, as must, it winds down for a long way. What a great way to have fun in a car. On the climb up, it was almost possible to talk to the following cars on some of the tight hairpin bends. We were going to stop for a photo opportunity. However, the pull-in was full with a camper van and

their deck chairs. We even met a coach coming up the other side as we were descending. Luckily, it was on a slow hairpin. How they let coaches on a road like that, it could only be the Irish.



Us being chased up the Healy Pass

The scenery on route was stunning. It's the only way to describe it. However, Bernard's potholes were another story. He hadn't told us the roads themselves were the potholes! They were just like a tank training ground! If you didn't hit the diff or sump, the bump-stops were flattened. I even bit my tongue on one particularly deep trough. It was cruelty to cars in the truest sense.

Our route led us around to the Ring of Kerry through Kenmare and on up towards Caherdaniel where we were to spend the first night of our tour. The Scarriff Inn at Caherdaniel is highly recommended to any of you who go to Ireland. What a view from the hotel. The view alone made up for the 'improved' roads we had braved.



The view from the hotel lounge

With scenery like this, we thought it rude not to sit on the terrace and have a drink, soaking in the sun and view. All the rooms and the dining room had this view, imagine having a house here!



Weary travellers relaxing on the terrace

The next day we set off for Dingle, after a good Irish breakfast and a last look at the view. The sun was out as we enjoyed the Coomakesta Pass running along the coast, with superb scenery all along the way. As we wound our way further along the 'Ring', we could see the next peninsula on our agenda across the water.



We need to be over there!

The undulating roads were getting better by the mile. Not, that that is better in Welsh terms. Just better in the Irish sense. As someone who suffers from motion sickness, I had been glad I was wrestling with the car, and not trying to navigate on the Irish roads. I may have been calling 'Huey' quite a lot! Hats off to the girls for their map reading and breakfast retention abilities.

We decided to book in to the hotel first and then to drive around the Dingle peninsula, as we were due to lose Steve and Sue on the following day, having to get back to the UK for Thursday. I think the cars enjoyed the chance to drive without the weight of the luggage, especially Robin's Rover. Robin had kindly agreed to put our luggage in his car to give my poor rear springs a better chance and me a better view out of the rear-view mirror. On our way, we came across some 'Famine' cottages that had been restored. It still didn't make them habitable by any stretch of the imagination. They were a lot tougher than we are.



Two cottages in one building. Compare it to your home!

On our drive, we came across a nice hotel out in the wilds for a coffee break. The barman turned out to be an avid Munster follower, and he recalled his trip to the Millennium Stadium, via Holyhead! We discussed the game and who had the better team. He thought our cars were better than our chances in the game!

Returning to the Barr Na Sraide hotel, we had a clean-up and met in the bar to plan where we were going to eat that evening. It appears every meeting or decision involves alcohol in Ireland. Who are we to disagree? Still, we found a good restaurant to disturb for our last night before swinging inland for the beginning of the journey home. Eryl soon had the waiters standing on the window ledges to open the vent windows. She was hot! Later, when she was not so hot, the poor fellow had to repeat the acrobatics to close them. At least we made them earn their money.

Sue and Steve left us before breakfast the next morning. That left four cars for the last leg of the journey. We had decided to rely on modern technology to keep us going across country, but to stay off the 'main' roads. We were taking the scenic route! With that in mind Peter and Eryl led out in the morning, with their SatNav primed and loaded. Talk about a posh Stag? With his 'tart' telling him where to go, we set off up the Connor Pass. As we climbed out of Dingle, a road sign instructed trucks, buses and wide vehicles not to pass the sign and to stop and go back. Why? It was the widest, smoothest road we had come across in Ireland! Their problem! We stopped at the summit for a photo or two and to look at the views.



Resting the cars at the top of the Connor Pass

Off we went, down off the mountain. That is when we realised why the sign was at the bottom. The road was hewn out of the rock face, a car and a gnat's wide! Luckily for those daft enough to come the other way, there was the odd passing place, however, they weren't generous and caution was the order of the day. Peter's 'tart' guided us off in the direction of Mallow (I wonder if that's where Marsh Mallows come from?), on route to the last hotel in Cashel. During our afternoon run, we lost Keith and Celia from the convoy and pulled into a roadside garage to phone him and ascertain if assistance was required. It turned out that he had needed petrol and had tooted the horn to advise me of his intentions. With a side exhaust at speed, no chance! Didn't hear a dickie bird.

While we waited for our stray to catch us up, the traffic started to build up and backed up beyond our parking spot. Still, it was nice and hot in the sun, so we switched off the engine and settled down. While the discussions were taking place, I had left the engine ticking over. That's when I found out that the Kenlowe fan wasn't working!! Keith and Celia soon drove up to meet us and we pulled out into the traffic jam to continue on our way. As the traffic began to move off, the Marlin decided not to co-operate. Worse, she decided not to go any further. I had to wind her into the side of the road on the starter motor. I wasn't about to get out and push was I? Some of the happier souls tooted the horn as they passed, but by then I had my head under the open bonnet.

The rotor arm had been rubbing the centre post for the carbon brush and had only been firing by tracking across the rotor arm, which in the heat and ticking over for some time, it had decided not to continue doing so. How to clean everything up? My appeal for some nail varnish remover looked to be in vain, Sally never carries the stuff. Enter 'four cases' Jenkins, Eryl had some, which I was allowed to use whilst being reminded that if she hadn't brought the kitchen sink I would have been in trouble. Point taken.

The last night was spent in another nice little hotel adjacent to the ruins of the 'Rock of Cashel', which was the seat of the Kings of Munster for many years. We had a walk around the town, but decided on a restaurant near to the hotel. The guy that owned it was a real character and would no doubt have been able to sell sand to the Arabs! Good food and a good time, it was the perfect end to a wonderful holiday.



The Rock of Cashel, home to the king's of Munster

All that was left for us was a leisurely drive back to Rosslare and the ferry home. Was the company good? You bet. Was the Kinsale weekend worthwhile? Definitely. Would we go back? Certainly will! The only fly in the ointment? It rained when we got back to Wales!!

Mike and Sally Jones.

Diary Dates 2008

Our next Social is the second round of the expanded Inter Club Quiz versus the Jaguar Enthusiasts Club and the Swansea Historic Vehicle Register. It will be our 'home' round so will take place at Murton Rovers on **Wednesday** 19th November from 8.00pm. Light refreshments will be provided.

December 10th will be the Christmas Party. Cost this year will be £5 a head with 14 and unders free. **Please** let Chris know if you are coming so that she can plan the catering properly – 01792 232644 or e-mail chrisjibbon@btinternet.com

Odds and

Our front cover this month shows Mike Griffiths from Trident Engineering competing at Llys y Fran in July 2007. Mike has been a long time supporter of the Welsh Sprint and Hillclimb Championship and this year has been crowned champion. Congratulations, Mike.

December also sees the Wales Rally GB visiting the local forests and SMC will be running the shake-down stage at Penllergaer again. Huw Richards will need assistance on the 3rd and 4th so if you can help contact Huw on 01792 527978.

Denzil Price celebrated his 80th birthday on October 22nd and was delighted to receive visits from Alun Morgan and Stuart Phillips.

ELECTRIC RACING CAR TO ENTER THE SPEED HILL CLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP IN 2009

The Bee Four electric racing vehicle (ERV) is being developed in conjunction with Martin Ogilvie, the former Lotus F1 designer, with the intention of winning the British Speed Hill Climb Championship in 2009. The ERV - code-named the "Watt 4" - is an all-electric 4WD vehicle, capable of producing 700hp or 520kW. Partners in the project include Oxford University and MIRA Ltd (the Motor Industry Research Association).

The Bee Four electric racing car will be driven in the 2009 season by Graeme Wight, a two-times former British Speed Hill Climb Champion, who has held outright records at Doune, Loton Park, Prescott and Shelsley Walsh.

The Bee Four is part of a business plan by Bee Automobiles to produce a range of electric production cars. The business will be further funded by private equity.

Robert Allender is taking part in the Swansea BHF charity Santa Run on the 14th December over a distance of 2km.

The British Heart Foundation is a charity close to his heart since his triple by pass just over a year ago. Rob would like to thank all of you who supported him last year and hopes you'll sponsor him again this year.

Either catch Rob at the club on a Wednesday or if you want to send a cheque you can make it out to BHF and send it to Rob at 50 Trallwn Road, Swansea, SA7 9XA. You can see details of the event at:

http://www.bhf.org.uk/get_involved/take_part_in_our_events/event_display.aspx?e=3320

We are already planning next years hillclimbs at Llys y Fran on May 10th and July 19th 2009 and at the moment have the Lotus 7's and MG's competing in May and the Sevenoaks DMC and Club Alpine Renault, celebrating their 20th anniversary, for July.

There is a shortage of people suitably qualified as Clerk of the Course at the moment so if any of you are interested in training for this vital role please let me know.

..... Ends

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Jeremy Smith

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