



Newsletter January 2024

Happy New Year to you all

Chilly Willy Run (New Year's Day)

By David P

Preparing for the event.

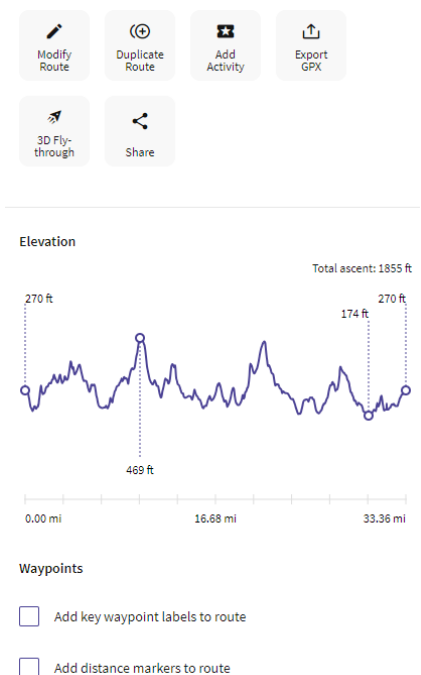
It was at the October club night that Chairman Mike asked if somebody could help with producing a route for the Chilly Willy run on New Year's Day. I thought I would have a go at that and cautiously volunteered. He had already planned that the start and finish would be at The View, Wootton Wawen so we had the start and end points already sorted, we just needed a 30 mile-ish route in between. The next stage was for Mike and I to meet up at the breakfast meeting at the BMM in October and so armed with breakfast baps, I had one but think Mike had two, we looked over his OS map whilst trying not to drip any egg on it and sort of planned the outline of a route.....

I then went away to start the detailed planning. My idea was to try to design most of the route and route instructions with just a test drive nearer the time to fine tune the details.

I have an OS Maps subscription which I use mainly for walking but it does allow me to design a road route so this was the first stage of the CW Run (See [OS Maps App | Get Unlimited UK mapping on mobile & online \(ordnancesurvey.co.uk\)](https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mobile-apps) for details). There is an annual subscription but you can have the app on up to 3 devices. Below is the route plotted using OS Maps.



It also calculates distance fairly accurately and other information, even with the option of a 3D Fly Through.



The route instructions were the next stage and I used Google Maps Street View to pick up sign posts and other useful route instruction information to put in the tulip diagrams:



Mike and Jane did the first drive of the run in around mid-November which was a good test of the route instructions. Apart from some minor tweaks it showed that a 'virtual' route could be created fairly accurately without leaving the computer screen.

Sheila and I did the run ourselves for the first time in December for some final checks. I think she just wanted some of her favourite



tea and cake at The View but I had left my wallet at home. All went well and we could print the sets of routes, hoping the ink wouldn't run out!!

Mike and Jane did the route again on 30th December due to all the rain and potential flooding problems. There was one road that was 'difficult' and they produced an optional diversion for those that wanted it to avoid it. I thought the water couldn't be too deep because it only came half way up the ducks.....



The Chilly Willy Run.

We had 20 cars / 40 people

booked in for the event which was a good number. The View looked after us really well with a space

in their upstairs room, the one with the

view! After the initial briefing the run

started at just after 11.00

The run took us through Wootton Wawen, Studley, Astwood Bank, Feckenham, New End, Spernall, Purity Brewery (closed for the day which may have been a good thing!), Little Alne and back to The View.



The only hiccup was a Road Closed sign under a railway bridge but whatever the problem was it had gone away but not the signs.

Mike had offered a prize for the muddiest MG at the finish but surprisingly the cars were not that dirty.

The pre-booked lunch was planned for 12.30 and the timing was very much bang on. See the Arden MG Facebook page for lots of good photos to show a good time was had by all.



Chairman's Comments

With 2023 now behind us, we commence 2024 a little colder and wetter as evidenced by David's Chilly Willy feature article - and a fun event it was too, with David volunteering to work up my thinking that perhaps a run around Feckenham, starting and



finishing at the View, might be something both possible and different.

Sincere thanks therefore to

David and Sheila for their fine effort and for lifting the bar in terms of route technology with all that wizzo IT stuff.

Before I proceed further, I must speak of Norman - a true friend to each and everyone of us, a fine gentleman in its most literal definition. I have been asked by Christine to thank our Club Members for the kindness and understanding extended to her and her greater family, during last year and particularly following Norman's passing. A number of us attended his funeral on 15 December and the event is featured more fully by Paul in the Newsletter. A further special thanks goes to Paul, from Christine for organising the MG cortège - some 14 of us with Paul, Norman's son, proudly



leading us in FAV.

In talking to Paul and his Best Man Andy, Paul mentioned he knew our son-in-law George. Andy was one of the 11 Ushers at George's wedding and it transpired that they had spilt beer together from time to time.- it's a small world and another link for Jane and I to maintain contact with Christine.

Coincidentally the Crematorium overlooked what was the Abbey Stadium Sports Ground, where well over 50 years ago I played rugby and a particular injury put me out for the rest of the season and in the process, some say, one of the many reasons I was never "Capped" for England.

Our hastily rescheduled January 2 meeting, by a week, saw the room packed and with a more open seating arrangement, which many commented worked well and will continue into February for our talk about Antarctica by Patrick Fitzgerald - see post and wrap up well!

The meeting was more of an open discussion about the shape of Club matters and the general sense of direction for 2024 in preparation for the March AGM and new Chair.

Brief talks by Martin Pleasance and David Harrison about special car experiences were both very interesting and contrasting. From my perspective they should be the start of an "Open Mic" 5 minute talks at our Natters by members about stuff of interest to us all and which perhaps widens further conversations and friendships.

As an extension of that thinking, Julia Grice has offered to speak about her Art career and Trevor of his racing exploits on Grass in crazy oversized V8 Go-Carts, which he built and regularly rebuilt.... I'll get these organised before my term ends, just in case my successor might have different ideas!

Captain David Harrison commented that over his 60 odd years behind the wheel he reckoned he's clocked up c 1.3 million miles (some in Tanks and other Military contraptions). We will be sharing a bacon bap at Gaydon soon to see whether we can model something along the lines of a "Million Mile Members Group" MMMG, whereby a number of us oldies get together from time to time to share yarns and stories, (themed partly upon "Last of the Summer Wine"). The Piston Club could be our base?

Basically, someone who has averaged 20k miles per annum for 50 years qualifies. Youngsters at that run rate might qualify as student members, once they've hit say 750k?

More will be revealed shortly, once our founding member and future Life President, David and I have eaten. With the younger Mick "the Mini" Walker the reason behind it all, I'm hopeful he'll take a key role in the Group. Alan Griffiths also qualifies - he commented back in the day he'd done 130k plus in a Spitfire (of all things) in just 3 years and quite a few thousand I reckon still on L plates. There will be many more contenders I'm sure in a few weeks, once the maths have been done.

I see AMGC taking the lead position with this crazy idea and if we chose to open it up to MGOC, we could maybe get a feature in their magazine and generate wider interest.

It's just a fun thought and forum for us veterans to reminisce, whilst we still can, about our many and varied driving exploits over many decades.

My research reveals that there are a few MM professional driving groups, particularly truckers, but nothing much for us normal folk. I've got my IT folk ready to set up some domain names for starters.

Chairman's Comment's - The Future:

There are no special events planned for February, but there's a consensus of opinion to run The March Madness on Sunday March 24, starting perhaps at "The Piston Club" - The Stag Pub. It needs organising and I'll take soundings at the Gaydon Breakfast, so we can start to "Put some rubber on the road" as my old Aussie mate would say.

Drive it Day is scheduled for April 21 and I'm thinking it could generally follow the Blossom Trail route? With spring being the start of new life, as we gather together for our pre-Run briefing, I think we should to have a moments silence in memory of our friends now passed and looking down upon us. We can share thoughts on this thinking and other Events at the February Natter - ideas and volunteers wanted!

Promotions:

Phoenix Acting Crowd - Cinderella - end of January- see advert at the end of this Newsletter.

Alcester Male Voice Choir and Guests - 50th Annual Concert - April 20 and 21 at Ragley Hall - David Tilley & Co singing proper songs! - see advert at the end of this Newsletter.

Special Birthdays:

As I try to finish this missive, whilst listening to Tony Blackburn on Radio 2, 'Sounds of the Sixties', I'm being bombarded with What's App copy messages, congratulating our former marathon Chair, Mr Paul Dunster on his entering his 8th decade of life - yes he's now 70 - another fine lad now over the hill and around the bend, so to speak. Paul, congratulations and best wishes from us all - your Arden MG friends.

Other special birthdays follow too - perhaps there's a case for a big birthday bash later this year?

Jane is 69 - she says that's apparently also special?

The Newsletter:

With Paul now 70, he's logically retiring from Editorial duties, which when combined with the loss of our Executive Editor Norman, creates an opportunity for someone to take ownership of the Title - a tough act to follow to say it mildly, but....

I know most of you went to school - some have even passed English Exams - volunteers please - "Your Club Needs You".

Paul may be similarly mentioning his stepping aside from his Editorial duties, spanning 'n' years, where 'n' is a big number!

Thanks again from us all Sir!

To Close - My First Love:

That's about it from me, but I'll leave you with a moment of MG madness:

Since I was about 7, I've yearned for a Land Rover "Defender", having being a passenger in a long wheel version in 1959 and regularly thereafter in a Series 2.

Our son David, a Construction worker (actually featured on C4 TV on Friday night Extraordinary Extensions - he dug out and made the swimming pool etc at the Claverdon property) was guided into Defenders and has had two. Whilst they are quite amazing, as high mileage daily drivers there are better and he reluctantly defected to foreign Crew Cabs.

About 8 years ago, I agreed to go halves with him on a smart 2007 Defender, an investment at £12k he said - and it was, now worth just under £20k! He enjoys shooting and runs events with others. The Defender is gun racked and a true Off Roader.

As soon as I'd paid for the "2.4 Transit" engine to be Re-Mapped, not only did the Defender disappear off the drive, but his £6k cheque was lost in the post!

It was surely now time to get my own Defender and I've been quietly looking, encouraged by my Son-in-Law for some reason.

I spotted one that had been totally rebuilt to an amazing spec, not cheap, but a pal of mine was even more interested and genuinely wanted to go halves - he could garage it too.

I put a holding deposit on it and on yet another rainy December 28 I headed north to see the said vehicle. Logically I would have gone in Norman - our Disco 4, but no I went in Ed the Zed to give it a good run (Son David should really have been with me, but you've guessed it right - he was off shooting in my 2007 Defender!)

Jane thought I was mad in every respect and didn't fancy the 400 mile plus day out trip. Just north of Birmingham we were all down to 30mph in the frightening rain, with water across the M42. Thankfully Ed is now running on 4 new Pirelli's which coped well. I was about to abort at the next exit and return home, when a glimmer of blue sky appeared and gave me hope.

As I continued north the weather improved and with Middlesbrough in sight the sun shone.

The Defender wasn't right so I returned home alone and ready for my 72 birthday the following day.

There will be others.....

MG ZEDS - Piston Club - March 3 ZR, ZS and ZT Register Meeting - I'll be there.

Finally, nominations are still open for the role of Chair, with a signed MGOC Calendar for the winner.

Norman - Funeral Cortège

By Paul

Although Norman's death was not a shock to us the suddenness was a surprise and as you read in my Tribute last month Chris had let me know of his passing soon after. She also stated that Norman would have appreciated a convoy of MGs behind the Hearse if that was possible, of course it would be my privilege to organise a Cortège for the Funeral Procession.

I asked for interest to bring your MGs out in the depths of December and was soon overwhelmed with responses, in the end there were 14 of us (there could have been a lot more but many folk declined so as not to have too many) following on behind FAV (Norman's MGB) driven by 'Son' Paul and with the roof down.

As the coffin was to be brought back to their home (he had always said he would be leaving in a wooden box and he did), Chris was concerned about having a lot of MGs on the very busy road outside the house and she suggested waiting



The Cortège Arriving at the Crematorium with FAV in the lead

somewhere off the road. Caroline & I did a recce one day and decided Blind Lane would be most suitable and the Funeral Director agreed to slow down at the junction to allow us to pull out behind them. On the day there was a long queue of cars behind the procession but all credit to 'White Van Man' who obviously caught on to what we were doing and let us all parade out in front of them, true respect. The next obstacle was the traffic lights where we needed to turn left and it fell just right with all the procession keeping together. The same happened when we queued at a road works contraflow. The last hazzard was the Roundabout and again all the traffic stopped allowing us all to



A Fine Display of MGs to 'Pay Their Respects'

pass by unimpeded.

Graham was waiting at the Crematorium to take some photos of us arriving (Norman's whole life was recorded on film and Chris gave permission). Lech & Fred directed us to an area of the car park with sufficient spaces for us to be all together.

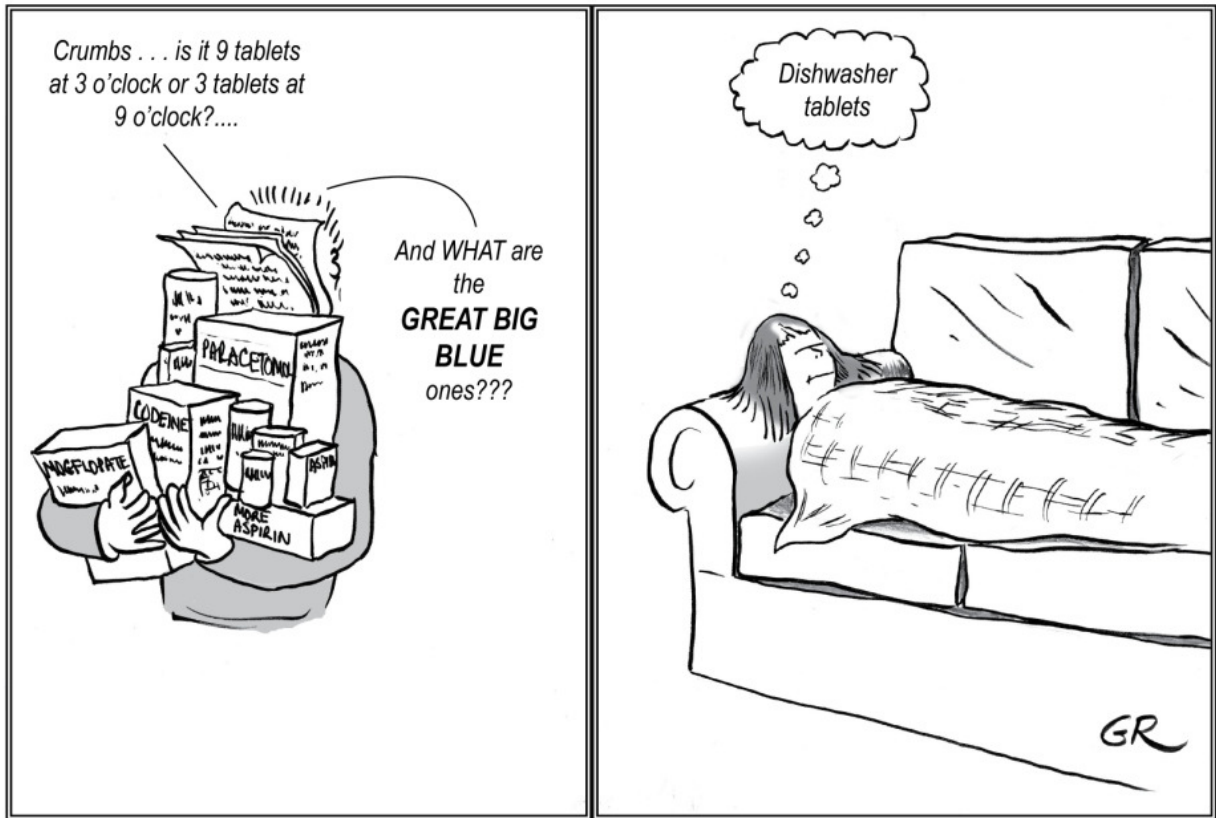
I had not been to this Crematorium before and the view as a backdrop to the Coffin is lovely and the service was held by a family friend, with of course a photo montage. Some of us went to the 'Wake' afterwards, where there was a 'last minute hitch'. They had asked for a specific part of the pub (where Norman used to sit for Sunday Lunches such that he could see and therefore keep an eye on FAV outside the window) but had located the party elsewhere, so a quick move around was needed, FAV had been carefully parked in the correct place.

Thanks to all who took part, I think we did him proud.



FAV Being Watched Through the Window

Graham's Cartoon Corner



Fiona freshly out of hospital after knee replacement surgery. Luckily, a nurse is at hand.



Be brave, Jeremy . . . it's time they all went back in the box.

Breakfast Meeting 'Festive Lunch' Report:

by Paul

When Mike announced that the Christmas Meal would be moving to the First Tuesday of the Month it was suggested that the Breakfast Meeting could also be a Xmas Meal, which was being offered at the Museum, however the only Tuesday available was the Second Tuesday of the Month. There were enough people expressing an interest in the meal, so bookings started to be taken and we managed to fill 2 tables.



To make the day even more interesting I offered to do a Tour at the Museum, I had wanted to visit the Archive but the Head of Collections would not allow me to, so I decided to talk about the 10 MGs that are currently displayed in the Collections Centre. Most people opted to join the Tour and the response indicated that it went well, with everyone finding something new, especially me. When I talked about DR2 John corrected me and explained that it was him who had purchased the original



TVR donor car, he then proceeded to give a brief explanation. He also talked about the MGF Metro Mule that his department built, I hope he will give me the details to record for the future.

It was then time to sit down for the meal and it was universally agreed to have been excellent, with very good attentive service. Should we do this again in 2024?



What's On:

What's On – AMGC

Club Nights:

Tuesday 6th February 2024 - At the Golden Cross

We have Patrick Fitzgerald coming back to give us a talk on an 'Unsung Hero' with tales of an Antarctic Exploration, see flyer at the end of this Newsletter.

Tuesday 5th March 2024 - At the Golden Cross
This evening will be our AGM and as you all will know by now Mike will have completed his stint as Chairman and will be handing over the reins.

Tuesday 2nd April 2024 - At the Golden Cross

Tuesday 7th May 2024 - At the Golden Cross

Breakfast Meetings at BMM, Gaydon:

All meetings at the British Motor Museum in Gaydon, on the third Tuesday of the Month. The Museum opens at 10am and we aim to sit down, usually on the Gallery, otherwise in the Junction 12 Cafe. If you have not got a 12 month ticket be sure to tick the box to convert your booking to an Annual Membership. It is lower cost and quicker at the entrance if you pre-book online.

Tuesday 16th January 2024

Tuesday 20th February 2024 - Please note we will not be able to use the Gallery this month.

Tuesday 19th March 2024

Tuesday 16th April 2024

Tuesday 21st May 2024

Other Events:

Sunday 24th March 2024 – March Madness Run.

Possibly from the Piston Club

Sunday 21st April 2024 – Drive-it-Day.

This is the annual FBHVC Run Day when we are encouraged to get out in our Classic Cars, who would like to organise a run for this Year's Event?

What's On – Elsewhere

Z Register Meeting:

Sunday 3rd March 2024 -

The Piston Club, Red Hill, Stratford-upon-Avon

Cars at the Spa:

Sunday 16th June 2024 -

Pump Room Gardens, Leamington Spa
See info at end of Newsletter

Cotswold Caper:

Sunday 7th July 2024 -

Scenic Run starting in Chalford, Glos.
See advert at end of this Newsletter

ANTARCTIC EXPLORATION

‘An Unsung Hero’

Speaker - Patrick Fitzgerald

The story and tribute to a modest uneducated Irishman, who travelled more miles in Antarctica than either Scott or Shackleton. However without his contribution of strength, of character and fortitude; both the Scott & Shackleton major expeditions would have ended in even more dire straits.



Patrick, completed an extended General Apprenticeship (Aged 16 -24) at Automotive Products (L/Spa) and gained CEng status. However he then joined the Royal Air Force as a pilot and spent 24 years as a tactical transport pilot / instructor / examiner on the Lockheed C130K Hercules, Scottish Aviation Bulldog, HS748 (Andover) and Lockheed L1011 Tristar, all without a ‘ground tour’.

His Irish heritage led him to discover today’s topic and led him to learn so much more about the difficulties of Antarctic exploration.



Cinderella

31st January - 3rd February 2024

Methodist Hall

Stratford-upon-Avon

7.30 pm each night

plus 2.30pm matinee ~ 3rd February

There's Buttons and the Baron
There's the Ugly Sisters. Boo!
Lots of folk for you to meet,
With songs and dances, too!

Tickets.

£10.00 - £5.00 (under 16)

10% discount for 10 or more tickets

phoenixplayersstratford.co.uk



The 18th Cotswold Caper

Sunday 7th July 2024



Gloucestershire



OWNERS CLUB

A scenic drive through the countryside of the Cotswolds

Supporting: Charlie's Community Support

Start- Chalford Sports & Social Club, Chalford GL6 8LZ

For details contact – caper.admin@glosmgoc.co.uk

Price - £30 per car

www.glosmgoc.co.uk

Greetings from the Cars At The Spa (CATS) team at Leamington Rotary

We hope you are all well and looking forward to the festive season.

The CATS team and everyone one in our Rotary Group would like to thank you for your support to the event back in June. With your support we successfully raised over £4000 for local and national charities, a significant increase from the previous year. Since we started back in 2019 the event has grown year on year and this year we had nearly 300 cars on exhibition and attracted more visitors from the town and local area. The event has become one of the main attractions during the event calendar for the summer in the town. The continued success has given us the enthusiasm and commitment to organise CATS 24, which will take place on Sunday 16th June 2024 at the same location, Pump Rooms Gardens Leamington Spa. We are inviting you to SAVE THE DAY and come along and join us again for our 2024 exhibition.

This coming year we have brought on new members of the organising committee and we will have even more fresh ideas to the way in which we plan and organise and run the event on the day. We will be emailing all our exhibitors with regular updates to the plans. We highly value your input and would ask that if you have any ideas on improvements it would be great to hear you, so we can make the event an even bigger success.