



# Cheltenham Motor Club

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September 2011 Newsletter



Cheltenham Motor Club's Tim Purvey and Dave Gregory at  
Ditton Priors Stages Rally in August 2011.  
Read their great 'Tales of an Impreza' article inside.

## Clubhouse at

Upper Park Street  
Cheltenham  
Glos. GL52 6SA

Tel: 01242 522590



## Clubhouse Opening Hours

Mon - Fri 6.00pm - Midnight  
Saturday Midday - Midnight  
Sunday 7.00pm - Midnight

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## Chairman's Report.

Since the newsletter in April 2011 so much has happened at the Club. This can be seen by the success of our Motorsport Cup which caters for competitors, event organizers, marshals and more and is run by Car Chairman Richard Clayton. Opening the Club for the F1 races has proved popular and Associate Member Colin Whorlow looks like a runaway winner of the Fantasy F1 championship. Just a few nights ago Phil Cork ran the last round of the Tony Brewer Summer series. The 'Winter' series is just around the corner. There is more about these championships elsewhere in this newsletter.

Early in September there was a motoring event involving club members at Woodbridge Airfield in Suffolk My special thanks to Bruce Bynorth for making all the arrangements and to all those who travelled over to make it such a success. A report and photographs are of course in this newsletter.

Our social side has been as active as ever with bar takings well up on a year on year basis. On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September the club held its second 'Wheel Ale' festival which was an outstanding success. My thanks to all those involved and particularly the hard work put in by our Steward Neil and his wife George. Thanks also to Andy Lord for 'volunteering' to write an article for the Newsletter. The Wheel Ale festival isn't just about ale, it's also about fundraising. This year, as last year, Ted Tedstone and his team put on some first class food, the proceeds of which will go to the Multiple Sclerosis charity.

I'm pleased to be able to tell you that the Club has now completed the legal process of appointing new Trustees. The new Trustees introduce themselves over the page and I hope you'll get to meet them when they are visiting the Club.

At the last two AGM's there have been questions asked about the Club's financial investments. I'm pleased to say we are in the process of re-investing an earlier investment and looking at additional investment opportunities. Committee members and Trustees alike are well aware that significant expenditure on the clubhouse is always a possibility and are of course aware of the need to have suitably accessible funds.

From what I've said and what you will see in this Newsletter, it's clear that the Car and Management committees have been as busy as ever on behalf of the Club. Your support is much appreciated as are the many positive comments we receive.

Regards  
Kevin Smith.

### What's on at CMC. Club organised events are shown below.

Events organised by other clubs that CMC members will be involved with can be found at

<http://www.cheltmc.com/whatson.htm>

Also see elsewhere in this newsletter the dates the club is open for the F1 races.

Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October.	Torque Motors navigational and event timing teach in. If you are thinking of doing the 12 car series or want to brush up on your navigation skills you really should try and get along to this. From 7.30pm.
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> October.	12 Car round 1. Sign on at CMC from 7.00pm.
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	Torque Motors. Topic TBA. Possibly a guest speaker.
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	12 Car round 2. Sign on at CMC from 7.00pm.

**Hello. My name is Richard Burdett.** I first joined CMC around 1974 in order to compete in stage rallying in a Mk1 1300cc Ford Escort. I've lived in Prestbury, Cheltenham since 1955.

I organised the first single venue stage event with Steve Atkinson which the following year moved to Down Ampney. I spent some years on Management Committee at Priory Lawn, however family and work commitments made it impossible to stay involved. Latterly I built a new Westfield kit car with a 1800cc Ford Zetec engine but sold it after completion and went back to motorbikes – they take up less room in the garage.

I follow all sorts of motorsport including MotoGP, WRC, and Autograss. I've also been to Isle of Man TT and have made many trips to Le-Mans .

I was delighted to be asked to be a Trustee of CMC and will do my best for the club and its assets.

**Hello. My name is Martin Davis.** I became a member of CMC in 1978 aged 18 and quickly discovered my limited skills as a driver by bending cars on 12 car events or being sick trying to navigate. I went on to build and drive a variety of competition Minis and Ford Escorts and spent the 1980's road rallying and marshalling.

I still crave the thrill of watching a Group B rally car screaming through Dalby Forest on the RAC Rally! Aside from driving the Monte Carlo Classic a few years ago my motorsport is now more of the spectator variety including more Le Mans weekends than the beer allows me to remember.

I live in Thame, Oxfordshire and work on all things internet in London but frequently visit Cheltenham to see friends and family. I look forward to supporting the Management Committee to protect and grow the interests of CMC and of course have a beer or two with you in the bar.

**Hello. My name is Phil Harvey.** I live in Birmingham and am currently employment as a 'Value Management Design & Development Engineer' for TRW Automotive, Shirley (was Lucas).

I was born in Cheltenham and moved to Birmingham in the early 80's. I've been a CMC Member since about 1975. I've organised single and multi venue stage rallies and was Chairman of Car Committee for a while. I've been competing in motor sport since 1975.

I started in rallying then went into racing which I still do today in a Mini. For the last few years I have raced at most of the major circuits in UK and some in Europe. I always enter as a member of Cheltenham Motor Club proudly displaying its badge and name. I average about 18 races per year. (Ed's note. The next Newsletter will have a full report on Phil's year including links to some great youtube videos.)

**Hello. My name is Les Sanderson.** I joined CMC in 1959 as a 'Junior' member and have lived in Cheltenham all my life. Through my father I was heavily involved in motorcycling, particularly at Little Rissington. I spent a number of years on the Social committee including being Chairman.

In 1982 I started the Midwest American Auto Club. Although the club no longer exists, a handful of ex members can still be found in the club on a Tuesday night. I'm also involved with the National Drag Racing Association.

Since 1998 I've suffered a series of health problems which has meant having to cut back on more strenuous activities but still manage to support the club and visit it at least once a week. It was a great honour to be asked to become a Trustee.

## **Tales of an Impreza by Tim Purvey and Dave Gregory.**

After many years of owning and occasionally rallying a mark 2 Escort it was decided to upgrade to four wheel drive with an Impreza being top of the search list. Many hours spent hunting on the internet and the disappointment of a fallen through deal on a competitive car in Somerset led us to Jason Lepley Motorsport near Newark. Jason had recently acquired a good specification bug eye Impreza from the Isle of Man which coincidentally we had been looking at on the net.

The car was a left hand drive and according to Jason had connections with the US and Prodrive. It was in reasonable condition although it had some damage to the passenger side (where else!!) consistent with having excursions into the odd ditch or two. It was on an L registration which at the time did not concern us too much and after a bit of haggling the car was ours. A week later we made a second trip to bring her back to Cheltenham.

Once back we gave the car a quick blast up a private farm track near Cheltenham and were impressed with both the power and handling. We decided to tidy the car up before our first rally and spent several months straightening bodywork, replacing the odd part, sorting the wiring, welding for sill stands, fitting new seats, water injection, a trip meter and re-spraying most of the car. At the same time we did a bit of research into the history of the car. We found pictures of the original L registered car, a blue classic Impreza on the 2005 Newton Abbot Stages, and the log book showed changes of owners after that, but then the net trail went cold until 2009 where we found pictures of the now white LHD Bug Eye competing on the Manx. No problem we thought, the car had been exported, possibly to the US, written off and re-shelled and re-imported to the IOM. We had the DVLA and MSA logbooks so it was just case of change of ownership, correcting the colour getting the car MOT'd and away we'd go: our target was a run out as course car on the Get it Sideways in April.

There proved to be just one other problem though! Following the rewiring and welding we could not start the car! Lots of discussions took place. Had we wrecked the ECU? It just did not want to fire. Stu Cameron gave us lots of advice and lent us test equipment to check fuel pressures, injectors, ignition coils and ECU voltages and all appeared OK. A change of spark plugs involved stripping out the intercooler, battery, washer bottle, air induction and working with the dexterity of a gynaecologist. We also took out and cleaned the Lambda sensor from the exhaust just in case this was giving the ECU a false reading. Why the hell did we sell the Escort - low tech and simple to work on! Finally after all this work we crossed our fingers and turned the key - she fired up instantly. From then on things went a little better. The DVLA accepted new ownership and a change in colour, the VIN number from the old car had been riveted to the bulkhead like many re-shelled cars although the correct one for the body was still in place for all to see. The MSA logbook was sent off for the change of ownership. However, a few days later came a letter from the MSA who said that we needed to have a new log book due to the shell change. They had spotted that the VIN number was not correct for the new shell even though they had previously issued a log book for the shell.

We decided that the only course of action was to bite the bullet and correct all of the details both with the DVLA and MSA by re-registering the car with the DVLA as a US import and obtaining a new MSA log book. Various forms were filled in, verification of manufacture and country of origin obtained from Subaru and after an inspection at the DVLA at Worcester and a trip to Paul Loveridge in Cinderford for an MOT and MSA logbook we were in business complete with our new Y registration number. How fortunate were we to find a Scrutineer who also had his own MOT test station! An MOT and MSA logbook in one afternoon - Thanks to Paul for all of his help in getting us on the road.

Our first event was the EMCOS at Down Ampney in late May. We sailed through scrutineering and amazingly suffered a trouble free run apart from clipping the odd bale due to the wet conditions and the unfamiliarity with left hand drive. We were very pleased to finish 8<sup>th</sup> overall.

On our second event was at Ditton Priors in August where things did not go quite so smoothly. A puncture on the first stage, a wrong tyre choice on the second wrecked the handling and dropped us in and out of a ditch and down the order. Things were getting much better on stages 3, 4 and 5 before another puncture on stage 6 and a broken front wishbone forced our retirement at the end of stage 7 having recovered to 6<sup>th</sup> overall.

Our next planned event is the Carfax at RAF Benson in November.

Tim Purvey/Dave Gregory.

### CMC Fantasy F1, 2011.

Race dates and Clubhouse opening information.

Fantasy F1 has a runaway leader, Colin Whorlow. There are still six races to go and Sebastian Vettel could win the Championship at Singapore. Colin's lead is good but not insurmountable. The other places in the top 10 change fairly regularly and the race for 2<sup>nd</sup> (currently Dave Gregory) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (Jon Smith) in the Fantasy F1 championship is very much alive.

The battle for the wooden spoon is not quite yet decided!!

Race date. (All are Sundays.)	Country	Circuit	Race Start UK Time	Club open from
25 September	Singapore	Singapore	13.00	12.30
9 October	Japan	Suzuka	07.00	Closed
16 October	Korea	Yeongam	07.00	Closed
30 October	India	New Delhi	TBA	TBA
13 November	Abu Dhabi	Yas Marina	13.00	12.30
27 November	Brazil	Sao Paulo	16.00	15.30

### Cheltenham Motor Club on Facebook

Please note Cheltenham Motor Club has a new Facebook page. Please follow the link from our website [www.cheltmc.com](http://www.cheltmc.com) or search for "Cheltenham Motor Club" on facebook. The old pages have been renamed "CMC – Driving Motorsport to You" and no longer have any connection with Cheltenham Motor Club.

### The Motorsport Cup

The aim is to promote motorsport, the name of Cheltenham Motor Club, to reward Cheltenham Motor Club members and encourage new members who compete, organise and/or marshal in any FIA, MSA or ACU recognised events. Current leaders in the 'Competitor' class is Stu Cameron followed by son Craig. Phil Harvey is in 3<sup>rd</sup>. In the 'Organiser Class, Phil Cork and Dave Gregory are battling it out for top honours with Rich Clayton in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The Championship runs until the end of December and full results can be found here. <http://www.cheltmc.com/results/msc2011.pdf>

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## **Woodbridge Motorsport Weekend - 10th/11th September.**

Fourteen members of CMC old and new travelled to the MOD Woodbridge airbase in Suffolk for a Motorsport Weekend. Many of the club regulars will know Bruce Bynorth who is stationed at the base. Bruce had mentioned some months ago that there was a possibility of us securing use of the base for a motorsport event. We were given a couple of dates when the base was available, we picked a date, Bruce confirmed it and away we go. Full use of the base for the weekend - how easy was that? All of us in motorsport know how difficult it is to acquire a new venue, many hours/weeks/months of work, writing letters, phone calls and knocking on doors normally go into obtaining a venue for motorsport and usually nine times out of ten all to no avail. So you can imagine how pleased we were when it was all confirmed.

Most of us drove up on the Friday afternoon, I'd decided to trailer my Mini to the event. I didn't really fancy a 400 mile round trip in the 39 year old car (plus I wasn't overly confident it would survive the weekend - ye of little faith). We all managed to book into the same hotel in Ipswich so met up on the Friday evening for a bit of a social. I also decided to make a bit of a holiday of it, along with fellow Club members Colin Hicks and Sheila Gidley, leaving on the previous Tuesday, doing the tourist bit on the way, visiting some interesting places en-route, Cambridge, the Imperial War Museum at Duxford and Orford Ness, ex radar & ballistics research area on the Suffolk coast, now a National Trust nature reserve.

For the weekend we had organised a series of Autotests, Precise Driving Tests and Motor Gymkhana events to take place on different parts of the airfield. All run along similar lines as our summer series events, most of the tests being run twice with the best score to count. Participants were free to choose whichever tests they wanted to take part in.

To my cost I foolishly allowed a number of the others use my car, I was beaten by other people using my car on some of the tests. Won't be doing that again ☺.

We had also invited another CMC, Chelmsford Motor Club, unfortunately due to other commitments they were unable to attend, the majority of their autotesters were competing in a championship event near Milton Keynes and others were tied up organising their own Stage Rally to be held at Woodbridge on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

After two very enjoyable days of motorsport and clearing up the venue we retired to the Sergeants mess to watch the Belgian Grand Prix, before the long trip home.

Of course our gratitude goes to Bruce for the idea and arranging the whole thing also many thanks to Ruth Bremner and Bev Dicks for doing the scoring.

Woodbridge was a long way to go, but the weekend went very well, I think it is something we can and will do again, with a venue a bit closer to home.

Over the page are some pix and an article about the history of the airfield.

Rich Clayton.



Ruth Bremner and Colin Hicks



Terry and Bev Dicks



Bruce, Kevin and Alex.



Terry Dicks



Rich Smith .....Kevin Smith



Rich Smith



Terry Dicks riding into the sunset!!



Rich Clayton



The Woodbridge crowd.

My apologies to those I didn't manage to track down pictures of.

For those of you interested in the base history. Built in 1943 RAF Woodbridge was used by the RAF during WW2 is famous for its wide runway which was originally constructed to assist damaged aircraft to land on their return from raids over Germany. The runway was 5 times the normal width and 3,000 yards long with additional overshoots at either end.

By the end of WW2 4,200 aircraft had made emergency landings at Woodbridge, 30% of the emergency landings were caused by bad weather, especially fog. FIDO (Fog Investigation and Dispersal Operation) was utilised at Woodbridge an extraordinary system. Petrol was pumped along a system of pipes along the side of the runway. The vapours were lit from a series of burners, producing walls of flame. The heat produced lifted the fog. FIDO used huge quantities of fuel, as much as 100,000 gallons per hour. Fuel was transported to Melton railway station before being piped to the airfield.

Woodbridge was also extensively used by the USAF during the Cold War as a fighter and Nuclear base, along with nearby "Twin Base" of RAF Bentwaters. The USAF pulled out a few years ago and at the moment it is being used as an MOD training facility.

The alleged "Rendlesham Forest Incident" is said to have taken place near RAF Woodbridge in December 1980. A series of reported sightings of unexplained lights and the alleged landing of multiple craft of unknown origin in Rendlesham Forest, used at the time by the USAF. Dozens of USAF personnel were eyewitnesses to various events over a 2 or 3 day period.

Some ufologists believe it is perhaps the most famous UFO event to have happened in Britain, ranking amongst the best-known UFO events worldwide. Along with the Berwyn Mountain UFO incident, it has been compared to the Roswell UFO incident in the United States, and is sometimes referred to as "Britain's Roswell". The MoD denied that the event posed any threat to national security, and stated that it was therefore never investigated as a security matter.

### **Tony Brewer Memorial Summer Series 2011.**

Many thanks to all involved in this years Summer Series, we had a total of 26 members taking part and marshalling in the series of five summer events that made up the Tony Brewer Memorial Summer Series 2011. As in previous years the series started in May with a Precise Driving test at the Racecourse, organised by Rich Preston-Smith, the event was won by Rich Clayton. The second round in June was a Motor Gymkhana, on the new venue at Burley Fields Lake, Nr Shurdington organised by Rich Clayton and convincingly won by Rorke McLean. Round 3 was the Pictorial Treasure Hunt in July, held on the Sunday morning before the British F1 Grand Prix, won by Graham Ford and Sheena Horan and organised by Dave Gregory. Round 4, another Motor Gymkhana at Burley Fields and another convincing win by Rorke McLean. Final round on 16<sup>th</sup> September. Navigational Scatter, using the Northern half of map 163, organised by Phil Cork, won by Rorke McLean and Rich Clayton.

With the best 4 scores from 5 to count the Series has been won by Rich Clayton with 96 points. Second was Rich Preston-Smith with 92 points and third place goes to Jon Smith with 89 points. Rorke's Mc/Lean had three wins which put him well up the board, but he only finished 7<sup>th</sup> in the series after starting only 3 events.

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### **Spirit of the series:**

A series of between four and six events held throughout the winter months (October to March). Normally held on a Friday evening, if possible close to the third Friday of the month. Aimed at novices to motorsport, the events should also be an ideal first event for someone to take part as a beginner, (after some kind of navigational/map reading instruction teach-in), using an unmodified car and with no special safety requirements. Events run under a 12 car Navigation or Scatter permit. Under MSA rules competitors must be a member of Cheltenham Motor Club (see below re membership for first event) or an invited motor club. Please note for the events held on the public highway, where there is no timing you may be covered by your normal car insurance policy, 12-car events which are timed are not covered by many insurance policies. If you require we are able to arrange third party cover on the night from a specialist scheme, but in all cases the onus is on the participant to check their cover in their policy documents. Entry fee £5.00. For this type of event the use of loud or sign written competition type vehicles is discouraged.

### **Type of Events:**

The series will normally consist of a series of 12 Car Navigational Exercises. In exceptional circumstances (prolonged poor weather, unavoidable event clashes) other types of events from the list below may be used.

**12 Car Navigational Exercises** - Held on public highway. 40-60 mile route. Set route. A specified Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map will be required. The route will be broken up into sections employing different navigation techniques for you to be able to plot the route on the map. Scoring based on following the correct route, making a note of code boards and visiting manned controls at the correct time. The route will be timed at a maximum of 30mph average.

**Other events** The series may include Navigational Scatters, Treasure Hunts or Table Top Rallies. Details of these events within the Pete Singfield Series can be found at [www.cheltmc.com](http://www.cheltmc.com).

### **Entries and awards:**

To enter the event you must be a member of Cheltenham Motor Club. Four out of five events will count towards the overall Series awards (or three out of four events etc if round(s) are cancelled). If a competitor scores on all rounds then the lowest score will be dropped.

**Series Points:** 1<sup>st</sup> & Event organiser 12 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> 11 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> 10 points etc  
All starters who leave the first control but don't finish also receive 5 points.

### **Definition of classes for drivers and navigators:**

**Beginner crew:** A crew with a navigator who has previously taken part in less than 1 season of navigational events. Marked maps provided by organiser or a marked map available at the start for beginners to copy route (1<sup>st</sup> full series only). Beginners marked maps are only available to beginners.

**Novice crew:** A crew with a navigator who has never won a navigational series. Navigational sections with hints and tips.

**Expert crew:** A crew with a navigator who has previously won a navigational series or in the opinion of the organisers is sufficiently experienced to warrant being an expert. Expert route instructions.

A mixed beginner / novice or beginner / expert crew with marked maps will score ½ points for the driver.

## **Cheltenham 'Riders 2002' trip to the west coast of Scotland and Skye.**

On Wednesday August 24<sup>th</sup>, 8 motorbikes and 9 people from the Cheltenham Riders 2002 motorcycle group run by CMC Motorcycle Chairman Phil Cork headed off on a 6 day trip taking us to the west coast of Scotland and Isle of Skye. If you've not visited that area before and you've thought about doing it - by bike or car - then I hope I've put enough detail in here for you to get a feel for distances, scenery and the route we followed. Even if you're not interested in doing it I hope you enjoy the article! If you want to know more about motorcycling or the Riders 2002 group please contact me.

There were four Cheltenham Motor Club members in the group, Richard Burdett, Alan 'Doc' Day and Phil and Liz Cork. The Riders 2002 group has its roots at Cheltenham Motor Club. We rarely meet at the club nowadays due to our 1<sup>st</sup> of the month meets clashing with the club's regularly repeating events. I'm hopeful that one day a way around this can be found – which could be a change to us always meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

Liz and I left home in Cheltenham on our Yamaha TDM900/A at about 8.30am and headed off to Strensham Services to meet 5 others (Paul and Anna each on Honda Fireblades, Yvonne on a Kawasaki Z750, Richard B on a Triumph 675 Street Triple, and Alan 'Doc' Day on a Yamaha R1) who we would ride with up to our first overnight stop at Moffat. The other two members coming on the trip (Les with a factory special Aprilia RSV4 and Ian with a Ducati Monster 900S) had packed their bikes into a van and were driving up to Moffat where we would meet them. Unfortunately Les had had a small accident a couple of weeks before we left and his bike was 'just' rideable. He'd bent/damaged the footrests and brake/gear linkages. Spare parts had been ordered and would be waiting for him at our hotel in Spean Bridge. What a great guy for still coming along and also carrying people's luggage around in the van. We had a fuel stop at Sandbach Services and then onto the next stop at the excellent Tebay Services. While we were there the van with Les and Ian and their bikes in arrived. Several members of the trip unloaded their luggage into Les's van to ease their load for travelling the last 76 miles to Moffat. My bike has an all up carrying capacity of 198kg. Liz and I, our topbox and side panniers weighed in at 196kg!! Total miles for the day, about 280. This part of the trip was always going to be a bit of motorway/A road slog – and it was. When I describe the rest of the trip and talk about A roads they bear no comparison to our own A40 or other well known English A roads. The Scottish A roads we used were carrying very little traffic, were exceptionally well maintained and offered a staggering mix of scenery and exhilarating riding.

Moffat is a beautiful small Scottish town and we stayed at the Balmoral Hotel which all of us would recommend to anybody. Great rooms, safe motorbike parking, a great evening meal, great breakfast, great service. It couldn't have been well ... err ... greater! We set off on Thursday morning to East Kilbride, the home of Pierre, an old friend of husband and wife group members Paul and Anna and conveniently, a keen biker. Les and Ian were in the van and arrived at Pierre's house around the same time we did. At this point group member Ian unloaded his Ducati 900 and joined us for the ride. Quite a bit of luggage from the other group members (including us) was loaded into the van for Les to take on to Spean Bridge. Pierre led us south and west of Glasgow where we got on the Gourock ferry to Dunoon. Oh yes, I've not mentioned the dreaded weather yet. The forecast rain hardly showed itself at all. Paul had said how well Pierre knew the roads up to Fort William and how right he was. From Dunoon it was up the A815 west of Holy Loch ... and yup, saw a couple of submarines sticking out the water. We stopped for lunch at the excellent Coylet Inn overlooking Loch Ech, on to Strachan and the northern tip of Loch Fyne where we headed west on the A83 for Inverary then north on the A819 through Glen Aray to the northern tip of Loch Awe.

We then picked up the A85 passing the western pointing spur of Loch Awe and on to Connel where we stopped at the Oyster Inn (the least welcoming of places we stopped at during the whole trip). We were greatly cheered up by the appearance of Les. The parts had arrived and he'd fitted one part,

enough for him to come out and join us on the final run for that day up to Spean Bridge. We waved goodbye to Pierre who was heading back home the way we'd come. He'd well and truly shown us some of the best biking roads we could have wished for.

It was about 5.00pm when Les arrived and we were still an hour or so away from our hotel. There was some discussion as to whether we should add another loch to our tally for the day ... and we did. We took the A828 out of Connel, followed the east coast of Loch Linnhe to South Ballachulish where picked up the A82 then the B863 for the rollercoaster like ride round Loch Leven. Then it was up the A82 to Fort William and in to Spean Bridge about 7.00pm. The hotel we stayed in at Spean Bridge was up for sale and was being run by a lady who'd been widowed a year or so earlier. All in all she did a great job and the stay was excellent value for money. We were in the hotel restaurant for 8.00pm ish and relived what had been a truly superb day. Total miles for the day about 228.

Fairly bright and fairly early the next day we all set off at about 9.30am for the ferry from Mallaig to Armadale on the Isle of Skye. The 43 miles from Fort William to Mallaig matched the previous days biking for sheer excitement and stunning views. We passed Loch Eil, Loch Shiel, Loch Eilt, and Loch Ailort along the way, getting to the ferry just in time. We were fortunate that only one other bike was booked on the crossing – they only take 10 bikes!! We arrived at Armadale at about 11.15am. The weather? Brilliant!! Out of Armadale, up to Broadford, on to Sligochan and left onto the A863. The scenery, the views, the long sweeping bends just kept on coming!! We stopped for lunch at Dunvegan ... not at the Castle and Gardens but in the village at the café that's part of the 'interesting' Misty Isle Hotel!! It was here the trip took an unexpected turn!! The proprietor at the hotel told us that basking sharks, dolphins and recently reintroduced sea eagles had all been regular visitors to the coast off nearby Waterstein Head/Neist Point. 5 miles of decidedly B road later we joined the 60 or 70 other people who had also heard about this!! 90 minutes later we headed off feeling very relaxed having had such great views of the Western Isles but the only wildlife being the occasional seagull!!

Having successfully got ourselves back on to the A850 we followed it around until it joined the A87, at which point it had been decided we would take in the A855 'northern loop'. At about 5.30pm we stopped for refreshments at the oh so quaint Duntulm Castle Hotel. The sun was shining and the view north towards the Isle of Harris in the Western Isles took our breath away. Lashings of tea and coffee later we reluctantly headed for Portree where we'd hoped to have a meal in the Sea Breezes restaurant recommended by Pierre.

We saw more people in Portree than we had seen anywhere at all that day!! It was chaos. We ended up having fish and chips off our laps sitting on a wall overlooking the harbour. Mind you, they were darn good fish and chips!! So, Portree to Spean Bridge, 99 miles and the sky looking full of rain. After making a bit of a dash to Broadford for petrol having been told the garage closed at 21.00 we found it was open 24 hours a day! We filled up just before 9.00pm and still had 74 miles to go.

By the time we got to the Skye Bridge it was cold and dark. It got colder and darker with occasional rain showers as we moved along the unfamiliar twisting roads that lay ahead. We still managed to maintain a steady pace as we worked our way back to the hotel arriving feeling pretty tired at about 22.40. For two stretches of the ride back we were able to follow a car for some 20 miles or so which made it easier each time but none of us are in a hurry to repeat that bit of the holiday!! Total miles for the day, about 275.

/conts (and pictures) over page



6 of us at Strensham ready for the off.



Enjoying the view on Skye.



CMC members Alan Day, Liz Cork, Phil Cork and Richard Burdett.



Two good reasons for going to the west coast of Scotland/Skye?

1. The Scenery (A great pic by Richard B).
2. The roads. In this case the superb A855!!

Friday morning and Les was first up and out fitting the second part that he needed to get his bike in to tip top condition. Ian stayed with him and we headed off for the day having made arrangements to meet up with Les and Ian asap. We headed north from Spean Bridge on the A82 passing Loch Lochy, Loch Oich, Loch Ness and Urquhart Castle car park .... where we glimpsed a view of the castle and Loch Ness .... but sorry, no Nessie!! Just a few minutes after we arrived Les and Ian arrived and we headed off to Drumnadrochit where we turned off onto the fantastic A831; this was one of Richard Burdett's favourite stretches of road of the whole trip!! A great lunch stop at The Slaters Arms in Cannich (where, conveniently they had the F1 qualifying showing) and on the road again to Beauly for another leg stretch and an ice cream! Out of Beauly heading south on the A833 and into Drumnadrochit, back down to Invermoriston on the A82 and right onto the A837 until the left turn onto the A87 road to Invergarry. This put us on the route we came back from Skye on and I have to say it was a much more enjoyable ride this time round. We then went up to Fort Augustus and people spent various amounts of time at the Caledonian Canals '5 locks' before heading back to Spean Bridge, stopping on the way to visit the touching and thought provoking 'Commando Memorial'. We went to the Spean Bridge Hotel for dinner and ended up at the Old Station Restaurant for a nightcap or two. Total miles for the day, about 180.

So, that took us to Sunday and the end of the planned part of the trip. Richard Burdett was up early and on the road by 7.00am!! He did the 488 mile run back to Cheltenham in one go ... other than petrol stops of course!! The rest of us got away about 10.00am. Les and Ian packed their bikes in the van and had a very leisurely trip back to Cheltenham. Paul, Anna and Yvonne headed off to see Pierre and then on to stay in a friends house in Dumfriesshire for a couple of nights, arriving back home on Wednesday. 'Doc' headed off to visit an old friend in Lancashire and Liz and I headed off to Moffat and another night at the excellent Balmoral hotel.

On our way to Moffat we checked out the Ben Nevis cable car ride. The 'pods' were disappearing into the clouds so gave it a miss ... though we have been told that even when cloudy the pods do sometimes go above them when the view is pretty amazing. We came back through Glencoe where the weather was clear and we went up the Glencoe ski lift for a great view. Total miles for the day, about 190. We checked in to the hotel at about 5.00pm and booked dinner for 6.30. We got to our room and found that highlights from the days F1 GP at Spa were being shown from 5.30-6.30. A quick change out of biking gear and we had just started to watch the F1 when Liz found out the days MotoGP race from Indianapolis was being shown from 7.30-8.30!! We managed to fit in the F1, the evening meal, and the MotoGP!! We then visited the Star Hotel (famous for being the world's narrowest hotel) for a couple of beers and headed back to the Balmoral.

Monday morning and we're on our way home. We were passing through Alexandria just north of Glasgow when we saw a 'Factory Outlet' signposted. It was about the right sort of time for a leg stretch so we worked our way through the suburbs and then we saw it!! Not your average 'factory outlet'!! It was in an incredibly grand building that turned out to be the home of the Argyll car company from 1899-1932. For those of you with internet access have a look at Argyll on Wikipedia. You'll see that there was a revival of car manufacturing there in the 1970's. Regrettably that didn't last long. The factory outlet looks to be going the way of the Argyll car company but what a place for a stop. Lots of photos and memorabilia from Argyll cars and absolutely amazing architecture. Suitably refreshed we headed for home. We arrived home mid-afternoon having added another 280 miles to the trip bringing the total to somewhere around 1438 miles.

Phil Cork

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## The Second Cheltenham Motor Club Beer Festival 2011

### An article by Andy Lord.

On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2011, Cheltenham Motor Club hosted its second annual "Wheel Ale" Festival - "This Wheel's on Fire". Once again the aims were simple and in no particular order: **R**aise a glass or two of good beer, **R**aise some good cheer, **R**aise funds for charity, and further **R**aise the profile of the club. So let's see how each of the four **R**s panned out.

On the beer front, 20 glasses of different beer could be raised - **R** number 1 met - though, as your author discovered, raising all twenty would give rise to quite a thick head on Sunday morning. A couple of beers had travelled from all the way from the highlands of Scotland.

The first beer to sell out (by a good margin) was BG Sips from the Blue Monkey brewery in Nottingham; at 4%, this was a pale hoppy beer with a nice balance of tropical fruit. The winner of the Beer of the Festival (as voted by the punters) was Citra from Oakham Brewery in Peterborough; at 4.2%, this was another pale gold beer, with intense citrusy hop flavours. These were also my two favourites, both scoring a perfect 5/5 on my increasingly unintelligible score card.

The beers available included four presented by the Cheltenham Home Brewers, two bitters, a mild and a porter. All four were "full-mash", and not only did they bear absolutely no resemblance to most people's perception/memory of home-brew, they were, in my opinion, superior to many of Gloucestershire's commercially produced ales.

**R** number two, **R**aising good cheer. As seems inevitable at beer festivals, good humour is always in plentiful supply; and Saturday was certainly no exception. Even the thunderstorm, torrential rain, and, at one point, hail stones the size of small marbles, didn't dampen the drinkers' spirits. I think the weather was fated given the combination of the event's name and this country's health and safety culture; after all, "Wheels on Fire" present all sorts of unacceptable hazards!

**R** number three, to **R**aise money for charity. This year the main charity was Multiple Sclerosis: the Salvation Army also had collection buckets. All profit from the splendid hot food (which included the best beef curry I've tasted) went to MS, as did 100% of the donations for beers from the Cheltenham Home Brewers. The proceeds are still being counted as I write this, so stay tuned for the final tally

**R** number four to further **R**aise the profile of the club. That this **R** was also satisfied was, I think, perfectly demonstrated by the unexpected appearance of a marvellous vintage Bentley. During an owners club meet, a real-ale loving Bentley owner (reversing the beards-and-sandals stereotype by sporting a splendid handlebar moustache) glanced through CAMRA's Good Beer Guide, and, having found the Club listed, decided to pop along. At least one member of the CAMRA National Executive was also spotted (this time conforming to the more familiar stereotype). The event once again presented a great platform to promote the motorsport side of the club.

So, all **R**s in all, the event was, without doubt, a huge success; certainly worth all the effort put in by Neil, George, the committee, and the many and various friends co-opted/bribed into helping both during the event and for the set-up and take-down. Many thanks to all of you - you rock! I'll see you next year for more of the same please.

# Cheltenham Motor Club Wheel Ale Festival. 17<sup>th</sup> Sept 2011



I'm very grateful to Caroline and Alan Graham for letting me use pix from their album. Phil C. Ed.  
The complete album can be seen by following this link.

<http://smilebox.com/playEmail/4d6a59334f4451354e6a52384e6a41324d5467784d54593d0d0a&sb=1>





There was a surprise visitor to the Motor Club/Wheel Ale Festival. A gentleman in his 1929 Bentley 4 ½ litre were in town for the 23rd International Motoring Weekend and him and his car ended up at CMC!!.

The others in the pictures below are of course regular visitors!!  
What a cracking good day it was.



Cheers  
Mr Chairman!!

