Spotlamp



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Plymouth Motor Club Diary 2019

November 2019		
29th		Rover Cup 12 Car Rally
December 2019		
7th		Le Jog Comes To Werrington
25th		Christmas Day
January 2020		
3rd/4th		Exeter Trial
18th		Awards Presentation Evening Info & Booking Form In The Centre Of Mag
18th		Smeatharpe Test Day

Provisional Series Dates 2020

Scatters:

21st February,
13th March,
12th June,
9th October,
13th November.

12 Cars:

27th March,
24th April,
29th May,
26th June,
31st July,
25th September,
30th October,
27th November.

Autotests:

3rd June,
1st July,
5th August.

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10th April,
8th May,
10th July,
11th September.

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Editorial

Wind, Rain, Some More Rain and some motorsport/car related activities sprinkled here and there.

The month kicked off with a trip to the NEC for the Classic Car Show, having never been to the NEC for any sort of event I was amazed at the size of the place and it being filled full of cars made it even better. Two cars were stand outs for me, an immaculate Audi S2 on period correct BBS wheels and an Alfa 147 GTA which was tastefully modified and running far more power than original. This does mean that the past few weeks of lunchbreaks at work have been spent looking over the classifieds for an Alfa, maybe one day.

Bovington was up next servicing for the wrong Slade in the mighty Civic Type R. It was a cracking day weather wise without a drop of rain to be seen. Although it did mean seeing a time of the morning that is usually reserved for a night on the beers. I think Andy really enjoyed his first stage rally experience and he was defiantly pushing hard as was evident by the lack of brake pads left at the end of the day.

The rest of the month has been spent dodging the showers in an attempt to at least keep the cars

presentable, which is a hard task at this time of year.

Some good news for next year, I've convinced Dad to do some motorsport. So it'll be a battle of the Selleys and I'm interested to see if the skills Dad had Back In The Good Old Days are still present or whether like his hair have been lost.

Until next month, Goodbye.
Rob Selley

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PLYMOUTH MOTOR CLUB AWARDS EVENING

Saturday 18th January 2020

STARTERS

Homemade Spicy Parsnip Soup
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Fig & Goats Cheese Filo Parcels (V)
Or
Duck Liver Pate with Orange & Cointreau

MAIN COURSE

Traditional Roast Turkey with all the Trimmings
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PLYMOUTH MOTOR CLUB

Awards Presentation & Dinner

Saturday 18th January 2020 at Yelverton Golf Club, Golf Links Road, Yelverton, PL20 6BN

BOOKING FORM

Name	Starter		Main Course		Dessert	

£25.00 per person = £ :00 and email form to membership@plymouthmotorclub.co.uk

Please send remittance by bank transfer to Sort Code 09-01-51/Account No 18187317 stating name/ADD

Or by cheque to Mrs C Pearce, 8 Witham Gardens, Plymouth, PL3 6ES, made out to Plymouth Motor Club Ltd.

Tables will be set for eight persons, if you would like to sit with someone in particular please note.

Can also be booked online via the website at

Www. *plymouthmotorclub.co.uk*

Return of Award Trophies



I'm afraid its time to think about taking your trophy off the mantlepiece, giving it a good polish with Silvo and getting it back to me.

As the Dinner and Dance and Presentation is planned for January next year the engravers need to start in December.
I therefore would like them back by the beginning of December.

You can make arrangements with me or via any committee member.
My contact number is **01752 311128** (answerphone)

Thanks in anticipation
Keith Selley

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W-W-What went wrong?

In last month's magazine I was reflecting on the stunning performances of some of our club members in local hillclimb championships. It seems that I forgot someone – Adrian Lewis – the driver of the "Screaming Tangerine". Adrian wrote to our esteemed Editor to complain that even though he had had some exceptional results, I hadn't mentioned him. So, firstly, an apology to him and to say that he came second to Ian Ingleheart in both the Tillicoultry Quarries Wiscombe Park hillclimb championship and the Tyremarks ASWMC hillclimb championship (demoting Ben to third, I believe). In my defence I'd like to point out that I don't know all of our Club members and the only way I have of finding out if someone is a member is to look at the championship listings and see which club they are registered under. Moral of the story – if you want me to mention you, register under Plymouth Motor Club!

Linda & I went up to Haldon racecource last week to marshal on the Rally of the Tests prologue. I think we were unprepared for how cold it was and I forgot my decent torch. However, we got through OK and survived one car breaking down on the finish line with a holed radiator & blocking the test for a while. Thanks for the blatant Le Jog plug at the end of proceedings Rich!

Last night, John Sluman and I attended a Watergate Bay hillclimb meeting on behalf of the club to review this year's event & commence planning for next year. They are confident that the course will be longer again next year and have some other improvements in hand too – but I'm not allowed to disclose them just yet! John tells me that Westcountry Rescue have a new vehicle for next year, thanks to all of the donations that they received from local clubs and competitors.

Happening somewhat sooner than Watergate Bay hillclimb is the Le Jog reliability rally. Once again coming to Werrington Park on Saturday 7th December I'm hoping for some marshals to come along & help. Signing-on starts at 09:30, the setup cars are due at 10:45 and we should be finished by 13:30ish. Why not come along for a chat and a look at some "classic" cars and blow the cobwebs away? It's all downhill to Christmas after that!

As I mentioned last month, our Awards Presentation Evening is on Saturday 18th January at Yelverton Golf Club. Please join us for what is always a fun evening, booking details are elsewhere in this magazine or else you can book online from our website. Talking of booking online, one proposed new idea for Werrington Park hillclimb next year is the ability to purchase spectator tickets in advance online – watch this space for more details! Another new idea is that wrapping of tyres with "cling film" will be outlawed (at least for all ASWMC championship contenders) from next year. It seems that guidance has been issued from Motorsport UK that it will be banned by them in the near future. Better ask Santa for some reuseable tyre wraps for Christmas!

Lastly for this month, I'm sure you've heard that one of our longest standing members, Malcolm Tuppen, passed away last month. Always a font of motorsport (and other) knowledge, Malcolm provided me with much good advice when I started in the club and, it seems, many to many others too. He was also, for a while, part of the team who ran Werrington hillclimb and was Clerk of the Course for some years. Team Locke would like to pass its condolences on to his wife, Linda, and daughter, Angela, and the rest of his family.

Werrington 2020 stickers are now available, email me or call me on 07850 743951 if you would like some.



More news next month ***Peter Locke***



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The Herald TURNING THE CLOCK BACK ON PLYMOUTH

Tuesday, October 29, 2019

LOOKING BACK





Russell Ham racing on Hemerdon Mine track and (left) Mrs J M Hussell at the wheel of her Triumph TR3. (Inset) Cover of the Plymouth Motor Club magazine with 'Sam' Crocker at the wheel at Hemerdon

PLYMOUTH MOTOR CLUB

The ultimate pit stop...

CHRIS ROBINSON recalls how a tungsten mine at Hemerdon doubled up as a popular motor sport venue

IN September 1958 a new challenge opened up for the tungsten mine at Hemerdon, as the Plymouth Motor Club secured permission to stage 'The Allen Trophy Driving Test' at Hemerdon Mine. Some 16 competitors took part in two runs of eight tests, driving on a variety of cambers and gradients. The main sports event was won by Mr GS Edwards driving a Dellow (a little like the MG midget, these cars, manufactured by Ken



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There had been an earlier 'hill climb' assault on Hemerdon Mine by the club in the summer of 1955, conducted with the permission of ECLP (English Clays, Lovering Pochin Ltd.)

The venue proved to be popular with the club and in July 1961 it was reported to the club's committee that they had been given permission to use the mine 'whilst the Agents continued to negotiate the sale of lease of the site.'

Although health and safety precautions were somewhat in the infancy, Basil Tye of the RAC agreed to look over the mine site with a view to it being used as Hill Climb venue. The following summer, PMC's first Hemerdon Hill Climb was staged. Entry to the event was £1 but, it was reasoned, expenses were high, especially with regard to insurance.

Winners that year were Mike Lane in a modified Mini, Norman Brooks in his Austin Healey was second, while Sylvia McGregor won the Ladies Award in a Triumph TR2, with a time of 30 seconds, less than four seconds off the time of the fastest man.

The next year saw another event at Hemerdon and by 1964 the number of competitors rose to 59, John Grafton becoming the first to break the 24 second barrier. A number of cars cut the bottom bend very tightly and one observer commented that had he taken the bend any tighter he was have gone through the factory rather than around it. Meanwhile the gorse bushes at the top of the course were said to have taken quite a clobbering.

An additional Hemerdon Climb was held later in the year and numbers were up again, however the unofficial use of the course by go-karts was threatening to compromise the club's licence.

The 1966 climb was cancelled but the following year the RAC approved an extended climb at the site. This too proved popular and at their first meeting of the New Year, in February 1968 the question was asked whether the Club could gain full control of Hemerdon. However, club member and local garage proprietor, Ken Haskell informed the meeting that 'the mining company had the lease of the mine and that it was shortly to be renewed again ... there did not appear to be any hope that PMC could obtain it.'



The following year Hemerdon's managing agents, D Ward & Sons, wrote to the club stating that henceforth the key to the mine would be kept at their office and should be returned after each meeting. Curiously the club was also requested to 'dump one of the old cars lying around up there into the pit specified on the map.'

Despite this extra security provision a bath went missing from the site and PMC were blamed. The club agreed to respond by pointing out that 'they were not the only persons using the hill and could not be held responsible for others.'

In January 1971 the club's Anon trial at Hemerdon was cancelled due to the icy conditions, but the popularity of the events continued and there was a discussion about allowing spectators, but the RAC said it would be expensive to 'enclose them.'

April 1972 witnessed a more than members only event as the band of the Royal Marines played, enlivening activities that included Chris Inch almost equalling the climb record.

Over the next couple of years the club were told that they would need to have an ambulance in attendance for future events, the club also experimented with polystyrene bales, rather than straw bales, but it was agreed that the former constituted a greater fire risk. Other issues included drivers going through Hemerdon Village too fast and a conspicuous lack of helpers for the Hill Climbs.

Most serious of all the issues however was the fact that in 1975 it was announced that drilling was about to start up again at the mine. That summer the club received a letter from Paul Williams to say that 'PMC would not be able to use Hemerdon again as several shafts had been reopened and it would be too dangerous ... however if the exploration work came to nothing, the club would be welcome back.'

Thanks to Plymouth Motor Club for the pictures, the story has been adapted from their records and appears in my forthcoming book on the story of metal mining in the Plymouth area.

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