



Sporting Bears Motor Club

Driving for Charity



POLAR NEWS

No. 98 July 2017

NEWS UPDATE

Mid-summer has come and gone and Polars have had the opportunity to participate in 2 of the biggest events in our 2017 calendar. Paul Bonsall's Gambol Forth was another great success and you can read all about it in Fiona's report. Our Thirlestane Dream Rides were well supported and the sun shone as well - at least for most of the day! I also have to report that there has been a wedding and a funeral. Chris Pollin and Claire Howie came to Scotland to tie the knot - warmest congratulations to them. The sudden death of Iris Woods came as a great shock to all who knew her and our condolences go out to Tony and the family. Lots of apologies were submitted for our summer lunch but for the select band of members who did attend the get-together began out on the patio with refreshments and trying to keep cool in the shade. No formal business was done but we all enjoyed 3-4 hours of each other's company as well as a good



lunch. We have 2 events in July - the Corbridge Show and Classics in the City then in September we return to Bo'ness. There may still be time to book your space for the latter if you get in touch with Andrew Carrie asap. Finally, by the next edition of the Polar News, we may have a new Editor watch this space.

CONGRATULATIONS MR & MRS POLLIN

Chris and Claire decided to come over the Border to the Kingdom of Fife to be married. Fellow Polar Robert Daniel provided his wonderful Rolls Royce Flying Spur as the wedding car. They are excused for not attending Thirlestane this year as it clashed with their honeymoon in the States. We look forward to reading about your Route 66 trip and other adventures in a future Polar News.



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IRIS WOODS – A GOOD FRIEND AND A REAL LADY

It's with great sadness that I have to report that Iris died suddenly on Sunday 28th May 2017. A good number of current and former Bears attended her memorial communion at St Fillan's Scottish Episcopal Church on Friday 9th June. All of those who were fortunate to know Iris feel acutely the large gap that her passing leaves. She was quite a lady!

We first met Iris and Tony back in 1998, when we acquired our first MG. We were made warmly welcome to the Edinburgh MG club but it wasn't for a few years that we realised that they were also very active members of the Sporting Bears and encouraged us to join. Iris and Tony were stalwarts in their red (later British Racing Green) MGF (reg: TIW9886). With Tony in the driving seat, Iris was usually navigator "in chief", which was quite a feat as she was a martyr to motion sickness! We had many a laugh at various wrong turnings brought about by some dubious "tulip diagrams" (Iris was the one to coin the phrase "*you are the dot*", which unlocked their mysteries for us all!). Often we'd ride together, taking it in turns to be "red leader" (our MG is also red).

We went on many road trips together, venturing forth to France on a few occasions. Even though

she tended to be "queezy" on the high seas, she never put that in the way of enjoying holidays in the company of good friends.

Iris was interested in everything – the Daily Telegraph crossword didn't have a chance and she loved to discuss topical goings on. Dinner was always a time for topical debates over a glass or two of (preferably Australian) red wine. She was the only person I've ever met who never complained, was always cheerful and (not that I ever saw) didn't lose her temper. She had a quiet but wicked sense of humour and loved a giggle. You could see her raising her eyes heaven-ward at something, with a look that betrayed a glint of amusement in her eyes. Even in later years, as her health became increasingly difficult she always saw the positive side. On one occasion, on discharge from the Edinburgh Western Infirmary, her clothes went missing. Only Iris could find this hilarious, as she and Tony made good her escape from the NHS with her wrapped in a blanket in the middle of winter!

Iris and Tony were a team. Married for 62 years with three devoted children and 4 loving grandchildren. We are proud to have counted her as a friend: one we will greatly miss.

From Bill & Karen, on behalf of the Bears who knew and loved her.

NORTHERN GAMBOL FORTH



Paul Bonsall, aka Grizzly Bear, bravely decided to organise yet another touring event for Sporting Bear Members and this much anticipated tour of Northern England took place over the weekend of 5-7 May. All participants were given advance details of this year's theme for Saturday evening - a mediaeval banquet. We were also invited to design and create a shield with a personalised coat of arms which could be displayed on the car when parked up on Saturday and displayed around the dining room in the evening. This was the type of challenge that some members took very seriously (professionally printed), others less so (think Blue Peter). Mike designed ours around the Polar bear - no surprise there...



With appropriate apparel acquired via the internet, ironed and duly packed, we set off in the Mazda MX-5 with hood down. Trying to avoid the main roads we enjoyed a leisurely drive in the sunshine (should have packed the sun cream) and in particular being on the B7076 which runs parallel to the A74(M) but has virtually no traffic apart from the odd sports

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car doing the same as ourselves. We arrived at the Fat Lamb mid-afternoon, duly signed on then decided to reward ourselves with a drink which we took out into the garden. The wind however was so strong that after 10 minutes we were forced back indoors and joined the ever-increasing number of participants who had arrived from all of the Club's regions. In particular it was great to catch up with Mike and Caroline McSean as well as Derek and Gill Nicholson all of whom were enthusiastic participants on many of the Highland Flings. It was most encouraging that there were a number of Club members attending for the first time.

On Friday evening there was time to peruse the amazing number of auction items which Paul, once again, had managed to acquire from friends and local businesses. Remembering how little space was left in the boot I made a mental note that the very pretty Joules scarf with floral pattern would be more appropriate than the gardening fork or plastic trug. We all enjoyed the set dinner and the company of our fellow Bears before retiring and setting the alarm as we



needed to be up, breakfasted and sitting with our engines running for flagging off from 9am onwards on Saturday morning!

Paul had devised a 170 mile route which would take in stunning scenery as well as providing us with a history lesson since we were scheduled to stop at no less than 3 castles - all very different. Initially the drive proved quite challenging with single track roads, blind bends, steep hills and other traffic. I was glad I hadn't opted to do the weekend in the MGA which lacks power steering and super-efficient brakes! First stop was the partial ruin of 600 year old Bolton Castle where we enjoyed a warming cuppa and sticky flapjack before heading to Sizergh. This 750 year old castle is now in the hands of the National Trust. There was an excellent café where we enjoyed lunch before taking a walk round the colourful gardens. The only disappointment was the intrusion of noise from the nearby motorway. It was then back into the cars and heading towards Greystoke Castle (no, Tarzan wasn't in residence!). We found ourselves a bit behind schedule. However the owner of this modest "family home" came out to greet us with the warmest of welcomes. Paul had persuaded him to allow us to have a private visit where we enjoyed the most wonderful selection of home baking thanks to the lady of the house who had been up very early to



create these yummy cakes. The Great Hall had been set up with tables and chairs just for us and we were able to marvel at the centuries old needlework displayed on the walls whilst on our way to the quaint loo.

Time was now definitely against us and so we opted for a quick blast down the motorway allowing us to get ourselves into appropriate dress for the Mediaeval Banquet which featured more food than anyone could sensibly eat. I was glad that the rumour of "no cutlery" proved unfounded as we tucked into 3 courses. The roast suckling pig and quail were truly delicious. To help ease the pace of food consumption Paul, dressed in Wizard attire and with staff in hand



(featuring a flashing coloured bauble), brought us all to attention between courses and encouraged/cajouled us to bid on the multitude of items which had been donated. All funds raised were once again going towards the Rainbow Trust. How Angela managed to keep track of who the successful bidders were and the amounts I'll never know. She confidently announced that over £1,000 had been raised and would we all please settle up BEFORE going to bed...

Anticipating a later Saturday night, Paul allowed us an extra half hour's grace on Sunday morning before we were invited to take the roads east towards Durham. The navigation was simpler until we got

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into Durham itself and mistook which brown fence we were supposed to turn off before! Back on track we managed by chance to catch up with Paul himself and followed him into the back street car park which we would otherwise have had some difficulty finding. A leisurely stroll up to the Castle (wrapped in scaffolding and numerous film crew cabins occupying most of the forecourt) and refreshments were in order before embarking on the Prince Bishop for a cruise on the River



Wear. This afforded us stunning views of the Cathedral, Castle and bridges and we were given a helpful commentary as we progressed. We tied up just before the weir when we tucked into the cold buffet lunch provided. Having spent 2 days of almost constantly eating I think we didn't do justice to the spread which had been laid on.

Back on dry land at 2.30pm, it was time to say our farewells and head up the A1 back to Edinburgh. Very many thanks have to go to Paul, Ruth, Angela and all the staff at the Fat Lamb for putting together another weekend of memorable touring, socialising and fund raising which totalled £2,169.18 which goes to the Rainbow Trust.
Fiona Davies



THIRLESTANE DREAM RIDES

Once again we had a very satisfactory turnout of helpers on the Saturday, with the pre-setting up lunch at the Lauderdale attended by a good number of Bears and some welcome volunteers from the MG club. Kate Cherry was back in the organizing role once more and all went without a hitch. Unfortunately one of the MG members had sustained an injury that morning while loading sand filled "pole cans" into the trailer at Helen Kirkness' house, and took no further part in the proceedings. Thanks for helping Dave and hope you recover soon! After lunch we made our way to the castle to set up for our 12th appearance at the Borders Vintage Automobile Club's Motoring Extravaganza. The weather was fine and the required level of work soon finished. A very welcome addition to the Thirlestane set-up was the "bacon roll window", essentially one of the windows of the Castle café which had been pressed into use as a serving hatch for the open air café, which was right next to the Bears' pitch. We were assured that this amenity would be open the next morning at 8:30 – welcome news indeed! Once again we had to have the big and middle marquees as one large

space containing booking, driver refreshments and charity spaces. The whole thing was completed to a high level since no bad weather was expected. We must extend our thanks to the caretaker Colin, who had prepared our possible requirements of tables and chairs in advance; all we had to do was pick the ones we wanted. Before calling it a day a reward was required so a ring on the cafe bell resulted in ice creams coming through the window – just what was needed to cool us down!



Sunday started out quite cloudy and surprisingly cold, given recent weather and the forecast, sending all the crew back to their cars for sweaters and jackets. We needn't have worried; after a couple of hours we were complaining about the heat. The whole setting once again looked splendid, the crowds came out, and we were in business. We did have a fairly alarming run-up to the event, with cancellations and breakdowns, but on the day we had an excellent line-up. On

Have a nice day!



July 2nd Corbridge Classic Show
contact Bob Selby email
cobragpt290s@blueyonder.co.uk
July 15th Classics in the City of
Edinburgh contact Sid email
sid@sidpalmer.co.uk
August 4th-6th Ignition Festival .
September 3rd Bo'ness Hill Climb
Revival contact Andrew Carrie
email andrew@acarrie.net
September 17th End season Lunch
– Collingwood Arms
December 3rd Christmas Lunch -
Collingwood Arms

the breakdown front, commiserations to Graham Craig (Daimler Dart) and new member Pete Myers, (TVR Cerbera) who both had car failure quite close to the event. This was particularly galling for Pete, since he had been looking forward to the event for some time and his TVR broke down on the way down from the Black Isle. The line-up had several newcomers, including Neil Murray's McLaren 650s, Mark McKail's Noble M12, Helen Webber's Jaguar F-Type convertible, Andrew Carrie's fabulous 1957 Chevy Bel Air, and Phil Ellis' Sierra Cosworth RS. We had the very welcome return of both of James' Lamborghinis, one driven of course by Graham Chappell, plus Mark Hunter in the Ultima Can-Am, and Stuart Nichol's Dodge Viper, not forgetting the lately refurbished Lancia Delta Integrale of Richard Webber. Thanks to all these and of course our regular members and cars who all contributed to the success of the event.

We were also blessed with plenty of non-driving helpers, including Graham Craig, Steve and Laura Ormerod, and George and Sheila Dodds, all coming to help even



though their cars were out of action or not required. The long distance medal for drivers goes once again to Keith and Ann Borkett, who are in danger of becoming honorary Polars. As usual, several cars paraded in front of the public in the "show ring", with in-the-ring commentary from BVAC's wandering mike; and Fiona did her usual sterling work on the mike, explaining what it was all about. Thanks also to Debbie Brownlee for her drivers' pep talk.



Unfortunately at about 3 pm the weather let us down and we had a short shower, which was sufficient to send quite a few of the public to their cars. This had the double effect of blocking the drive, and reducing the number of customers, so not good. It did stop fairly quickly but the damage was done. We also had the unfortunate demise of the Lambo Diablo, which we have since heard was due to a faulty sensor. However, we managed to send out some 70 rides, which was somewhat less than last year but still managed an increased total donation amount, and a creditable result. Top draw was, needless to say, the McLaren of Neil Murray. With son Richard sharing the driving, this car managed 9 rides in the day, equalled only by Julian Foster, in number of rides if not donations, as always buzzing around in the Messerschmitt to the delight of all who sailed in her (and helped with

the push start – all part of the fun). Also thanks to James – a creditable second with 8 rides. I am delighted that all cars went out at some point during the day. The Dream Rides event raised a total of £3,057, the rides total being topped up by public and members donations, selling bears



and badges, etc. The total will go to the React charity in Scotland as represented by Debbie, who thoroughly enjoyed her day.

We had a number of Polars past and present visit the stand including Tony Woods, Bill Niven and Helen Kirkness, who were attending with the MG Car Club. A very big thank-you to all the drivers, and all the other Polars who worked so hard before and on the day to make it a success, and enjoyable for everyone. Pat and I definitely couldn't have done it without you. Unfortunately Pat missed the event itself owing to an injured dog to be looked after at home, but was fully involved in the run-up and making sure I left with all the requisite equipment and stationery.

Dick Nortcliffe

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