








FOGLAMP

EDITION 3

AUTUMN 2022



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Welcome to the third edition of the 2300 Club newsletter.

Welcome



We trust you enjoyed the first two newsletters. Some items you will see more comprehensively covered on our website www.2300club.org

The lead feature this time is the article from Club member Ian Grindrod, which is very readable even if you are not a rally fan. Ian adding his usual wit to any story he recounts.

We would also like to encourage you to circulate this amongst your friends and colleagues and should anyone wish to receive the newsletter on a regular basis then please email the Club Secretary stuartpye@googlemail.com to be included on the circulation list.

Best wishes

2300 Club

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IAN GRINDROD



1969 and all that.

Memories of the first Tour of Mull, The Best Rally in The World

In 1966 I became an apprentice mechanical engineer at a factory in Blackburn, Lancashire. The factory was Mullard Blackburn Limited and their main purpose back in those days, was the production of radio and TV valves. If you don't know what they were then Google it! Basically they were what warmed the telly up for three or four minutes after you had switched it on while you looked at a black screen. Oh how things have moved on!

Now this Mullard factory had a Sports and Social Club, part of which was the Mullard Motor Cycle & Car Club (MMCCC which Nero counting as Romans did would recognise as 2300) and after a couple of years, and having passed my driving test, I thought I would join this motor club to avail myself of the opportunity to buy cheap engine oil and spark plugs and the like. Never once did I know of any motor sport affinity with this club, I had no interest in any kind of motor sport and had no family connection to it either. That was until one of my best pals Art, a fellow apprentice, mentioned something called the Mullard Trophy Rally which he was going to watch the following weekend. His brother in law was the rally secretary apparently, so I tagged along to see lots of spotlights flashing through the sky and some very nice engine noises. I can't say I was over impressed. This was 1968.

The 2300 Club had run the Mullard Trophy Rally for a fair few years in and around the Lancashire, Lake District and Yorkshire Dales area, but it had become more and more difficult with PR problems that were generally due to folks from the big cities like Manchester and Leeds moving into these areas to buy retirement homes and wanting peace and quiet.



Now what transpired was that a very big cheese in both the Mullard factory and the 2300 Club had been on holiday during the course of 1968 to the Isle of Mull and thought that it would be the ideal place to run a rally, the big cheese was one Brian Molyneux. The sort of person that if you crossed paths in the factory, you were expected to touch your forelock and doff your cap. Actually that's not true, Brian was not like that whatsoever, I just put it in to show how important he was.

I had learned a little more of the rallying world during the course of the next twelve months, which is how I came to travel to Mull in October 1969 along with my mate Art, his brother in law, the Rally Secretary, who I had come to learn was called Taff Edwards, and Taff's rallying pal Tony Dutton. So after we had all finished work at 4.30pm on the Friday, off we set in Taff's Wartburg Knight, a two stroke machine of 998cc produced in East Germany. He had bought it from the local Wartburg dealership owned by Edgar Simpson, which later became a Peugeot dealership and is now a thriving Skoda dealership run by Neil Simpson, a fine rally driver in his own right. Wartburg even had a rally team that competed each year on the RAC Rally.

Me and Art in the back, Taff and Tony in the front we journeyed up to Oban in about 7 hours. Only short sections of the M6 were open in those days and no M74. We drove onto the North Pier at Oban around midnight and the ferry was tied up alongside waiting for the morning departure. Taff informed us that he had booked cabins on board to get some sleep but we quickly realised by his hasty retreat that the cabins were for him and Tony, Art and I had to sleep in the car. Shame, I hear you say but it gets worse. The following morning upon their return, Taff told Art and me to get down on the rear seat and cover ourselves with coats and jackets as he hadn't booked any tickets for us two so we had to go aboard as stowaways so to speak. You couldn't make it up!

Setting foot on the island for the first time came as somewhat of a culture shock. Being a budding navigator I of course had the latest edition of the ordnance survey sheets covering the island and off we went in search of the designated road north, the A849 from Craignure in the direction of Salen. Well where was this red road shown on the map? All we could see was a single track road that we thought should have been depicted as an unclassified road anywhere else. Lesson number one, A roads on Mull are not like A roads anywhere else. Remember this single track road ran all the way from Craignure via Salen to Tobermory in those early years and would form part of the competitive route for the rally, Salen to Tobermory was a selective in both directions as was Salen to Craignure. Our accommodation for the weekend was a self-catering cottage in Dervaig, so after dropping off some equipment in Tobermory, we went over Mishnish Lochs to Dervaig. The cottage was half way between Dervaig and the bottom of the "Hill Road", it was pink with a tin roof and made a terrible racket when it rained. It was just fine for the time we would be spending in it. It was the next door neighbour who reminded us of the PR problem that had encouraged Brian to move the rally to Mull.



The Tour of Mull



The chap next door was a Londoner who was very sceptical about the rally taking place on his doorstep and made his point by emerging from his house to show us his latest noise meter and was keen to point out that he was aware of the latest RAC noise regulations governing rallies. Oh dear!

Saturday afternoon came and went, with a visit to the Mishnish for a swift half at lunch time. It was here that I stood next to Anthony Hopkins at the bar, who along with other notable actors was filming "When Eight Bells Toll" on the island. He didn't buy me a drink, probably because he's Welsh. Too late now Anthony you can't have my autograph.

After completing all the usual pre event formalities like scrutineering and signing on, the rally finally got under way at 10.30pm. We were all designated to marshal the control at the bottom of the Hill Road, so after setting everything up, Taff informed me and Art that we were to be the marshals as both he and Tony had to spend their event in Tobermory. We didn't realize at the time that most of the event was controlled from the phone box at Gruline which forever more was referred to by it's phone number Aros 33X. The only reason that Taff could possibly have for wanting to be in Tobermory was that there was more than one pub there.

Anyway we marshaled the control as best we could being relative novices and it was used both as a selective finish and start. It is quite amazing to think that the rally had a competitive route around the whole island, the road through Glen More between Caignure and Loch Kinloch had been upgraded but much of the old single track road was still usable and formed yet more selective mileage. All this in the dark controlled from a telephone box, no safety crews etc. and the daunting thought that had someone had gone over the side nobody would know where. Thankfully this never happened and everyone was accounted for come the finish in the early hours of Sunday morning.

No boats ran on a Sunday so everyone was still on the island for the prize giving on Sunday evening in the lounge of the Western Isles Hotel. The awards were presented by Nathalie Delon, a French actress who was also appearing in the film. The choice went down well with the competitors. Much drinking went on in the various hostelrys into the early hours of Monday before everyone made a dash for the ferry back to the mainland. I vaguely remember six of us in the back room of the "Mish" drinking half a pint of vodka through straws !!

It was a long drive home to Lancashire, especially in a Wartburg Knight, but the memory always sticks in my head that I couldn't wait to return to this magical Isle, October 1970 couldn't come soon enough. Walking through the factory back at work on the Tuesday, I happened to meet Brian Molyneux in one of the corridors and was totally in shock when he thanked me for marshaling. I was mightily impressed, but that was the mark of the man. He later wrote a book entitled "The Best Rally In The World". Who knows where he got that title from. Get a copy if you can, but they are as rare as a sunny October week on Mull.



The Tour of Mull



Thinking back over all these years since, I have been honored to have been both a Marshal, a Steward, an Assistant Scrutineer and on a few occasions a Competitor on "The Best Rally in The World" with little success, but the best memories are from all the people I have met on the island over the years and the many islanders who have become friends, also the legacy of the number of rally drivers from the island who have started rallying themselves very successfully. In 1969 I doubt many folk on Mull knew what a rally was.



The most frightening from my point of view is the realisation that in 1969 I was 19 years old and by the time you read this I will be 73, so on that note I would just like to wish everyone on the Mull Rally the very best, and most importantly stay safe, and don't be drinking vodka through a straw.

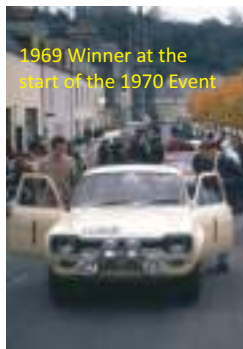
Results 1969

1st. Overall George Hill- Keith Wood Cooper 'S' LBU 410E

2nd. Overall Will Sparrow – Nigel Raeburn Cooper 'S' 397 EOE

3rd. Overall Frank Pierson – Colin Francis Cortina Lotus ARF 170D

1969 The one night event started in Tobermory at 10.30pm, with the cars flagged off by Tobermory Provost, and rally supporter, Bobby MacLeod, of the Mishnish Hotel. There were 72 entries, of which 57 started. The communications centre was the telephone kiosk at Gruline cross roads, Aros 33X, where Brian spent many hours. The new road through Glen More had recently opened, but the old road was used as a selective, as was the Craignure / Salen/ Tobermory A 848. These were only used for a few years as the selectives there were being 'cleaned' by leading crews



RESULTS 1969 OF MULL RALLY 1969					
TOP 10 FINISHERS					
Pos.	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	CAR	REG. NO.	TIME
1	George Hill	Keith Wood	Cooper S	LBU 410E	1:00:00
2	Will Sparrow	Nigel Raeburn	Cooper S	397 EOE	1:01:00
3	Frank Pierson	Colin Francis	Cortina Lotus	ARF 170D	1:02:00
4	John MacLeod	John MacLeod	Cooper S	410E	1:03:00
5	John MacLeod	John MacLeod	Cooper S	410E	1:04:00
6	John MacLeod	John MacLeod	Cooper S	410E	1:05:00
7	John MacLeod	John MacLeod	Cooper S	410E	1:06:00
8	John MacLeod	John MacLeod	Cooper S	410E	1:07:00
9	John MacLeod	John MacLeod	Cooper S	410E	1:08:00
10	John MacLeod	John MacLeod	Cooper S	410E	1:09:00

Photo credit: Tom Coffield

The
Tour of Mull

AMT

We are delighted to have a full entry yet again for this year's AMT. Many regulars and one or two new faces on the entry list will make for a very interesting line up on the day.

We have a special guest joining us on the day, Starting at car 0 will be Neil and Arlene Calvert in their famous historic championship winning Lotus Cortina. Celebrating running as a course car for us on the Tour of Mull for many years. This car has an incredible history at the hands of Neil and Arlene who have kept the car in top competitive form since Neil purchased it in 1994. And will be plain to see if you get a chance to have a good look around the car on the day.

A nice memory was, when Neil and Arlene did the course car role on Mull the Marshals never went short of sweets. Arlene seemed to have a bottomless tub. I am sure they haven't changed in all these years and the AMT marshals will be treated the same. It's not too late either if you would like to marshal on the event please get in touch with Simon Bibby 07866900501.

We will yet again be awarding the FAB Award for the best presented car at the event. This will be secretly judged throughout the day, with judges enjoying talking to owners and seeing what goes into presenting some of these cars. Late in the day a shortlist is made and the winner announced at prize giving, at the end of the event. If the winner isn't in attendance the next worthy winner from the shortlist will get the prize.

It was deemed a success last year so we will be putting on again a 'Take one and pass it on' vintage camera which will be relayed from the start to the end of the event by the entrants and the marshals. Just like a table camera at a 90s wedding should tell the story of the day through the eyes of the participants. If it comes your way please use it, enjoy and pass it on to the next marshal or crew on the event.

Everyone at the 2300 Club would like to send their best wishes to Rod Brereton following his recent illness.

"We were all shocked to hear the news about Rod, and wish him a very speedy recovery" said chairman Neil Molyneux. He has been the cornerstone of Pendle and District Motor Club for decades, but his influence spreads much wider than that. Motorsport throughout the North West owes him a debt of gratitude that is impossible to repay. He has been a good friend of the 2300 Club over many years, firstly as a competitor on the Tour of Mull, and then as the organiser of the now-legendary pre-Rally pub quiz. More recently Rod has been instrumental in setting up the online entries system for the Andy Mort Tour.

We all look forward to seeing Rod out and about again, and we would also like to send our best wishes to his wife Diane and the family.

We have only a small clue as to what the boys are planning for the special tests at the end. Rest assured it will be very entertaining. See you all on the 22nd.



AMT



The Andy Mort Tour



Promenade Stages 40th Year, An Inside Story.

Earlier in the year Wallasey Motor Club approached Cliff Simmons, a 2300club member, to amend the maps originally created by the late Dave Read for this year's event. Cliff agreed and after he had completed his work the organisers asked if he would like to come down and watch the rally action take place. Cliff's response was "If I am coming to watch I might as well marshal". That is when he roped me in. I must admit I knew nothing of this rally, only that it was a single venue, likely to be a cone dodging affair. How wrong was I!

A few days before the event due to an unexpected setback our role changed. Knowing our previous course-car experience the organisers asked us if we would help out in the 0 car. They had a driver John, but needed a co-driver and an extra set of eyes. Cliff responded with "Yes, no problem. We will get there early and help set up if you like." (Cliff is one of life's special volunteers, annoyingly above and beyond)

On Friday evening the event got underway just 8 minutes late in front of a bumper crowd. After a member of the travelling community who had barged his way into the stage just 25 minutes before the first car was due, saw sense and voluntarily left the stage with his caravan in tow. You couldn't write it!

The appeal of this event started to dawn on us. The large open flat expanse of the promenade made a great spectacle. A rally arena like no other, more like a closed road event. Wait, it is a closed road event! This year is celebrating its 40th running and using the council owned link roads with long straights and roundabouts, using the street furniture and islands made for infinite stage setups. There were six in total for this event, all run twice. Just one setup on Friday night, and run twice in the dark with a very short break. An evening of non stop rally action.

**PROMENADE
STAGES**

Saturday we felt the sting of the 5am alarm, this was going to be a long day with 10 stages. We would need nourishment for such a big day, so McDonalds it was. Arriving in New Brighton for 6am we looked at each other sheepishly as the equipment team had got there 3 hours earlier and were almost ready to go. That's dedication for you. Although we did manage to help put up some barriers as the road closure came into play.

As the sun came up it became more apparent that today would see even more spectators, Bouncy castles, car club displays with a festival atmosphere slowly building. We were impressed. We knew then it was going to be a good day.

The rally got underway on time without any drama with the hundred or so volunteers all in their correct places. As we drove the 1st stage we came through the finish boards and up to time control and to our surprise we were greeted by another 2300club member Mark Wilkinson, his dad Frank and daughter Amelia.

We then took marshalling positions while the next two stages ran. The action was fantastic, on dry grippy tarmac, causing a few mechanical failures which had to be pushed to safety.

This same procedure of run round in the 0 car checking the stage setup and safety, then marshal the next two stages carried on all day with a short break mid day for the parade of special cars. These cars were some of the previous winning cars from over the past forty years. It was great to see, a twin engined Scirocco, Renault 5 turbo , 6r4s and more. What a fantastic line up and all on display for the public to see.

This got us thinking about the rich heritage of this event. There have been some very famous crews who have competed on this stretch of tarmac over the years including Alister McRae, Kris Meeke, Gwyndaf Evans, Toni Gardemeister and many more. We were lucky enough to meet one of the founders using the promenade for rallying. He told us he was involved in using the promenade for a stage of the 1974 RAC rally and this probably paved the way for the first Promenade Stages Rally. Sadly we didn't get his name, we just met him on the show field, among the many thousands of spectators. It was a pleasure to meet him and listen to his stories.

As the day went on we got thinking about the volunteers that have all come together to make it happen. We realised that most of these people we have seen before. So many familiar faces we've come across on the many rallies that we have attended over the years. These same people are giving their time on any given weekend at rallies nationwide.



**PROMENADE
STAGES**

On this event there were some tough jobs, like the start and stop crews who were setting a car off every 30 seconds with hardly a break all day. They did their job flawlessly and without a fuss, life's special volunteers, heroes of our sport!!!

It has been announced recently that the current organisers are stepping back from running this event after 40 amazing years. Leaving the door open for another club to take it on. Fingers crossed.

It was a long but very enjoyable day on our first promenade Stages. Let's hope it's not our last.

By (Flint) Graham Ryding 2300 Club



**PROMENADE
STAGES**



The John Easson Award

Since our last edition of Foglamp we have opened this year's entries to find the next winner of the John Easson Award. Entries opened on the 1st of September and will close at midnight on the 31st of October. If you know a junior rally driver or co-driver please make them aware of this award. The £5000 cash prize fund could really help get their 2023 season off the ground. See our website for more details. www.2300club.org

Since the last edition of Foglamp our current winner Ioan Lloyd has competed in three more rounds of the British Rally Championship, with one more round to go. This hasn't been without drama.

Starting the Grampian Forest Rally with a serious fuel leak, not making the first stage but finishing the event to jubilant scenes on the bottom step of the podium. Setting a pace which was close enough to challenge the JBRC front runners.

Rali Ceredigion proved more straight forward, although the opening stages at night were tricky, Ioan and co-driver Sion Williams got through them ok. Sunday's stages were described as "brilliant" by Ioan, where making the right tyre choice, got into a good rhythm and notched up a few fastest times, finishing the event 13th overall and 3rd JBRC.

The Trackrod Rally Yorkshire saw this pair back in the forests, and looking to build on their previous results. They got off to a flying start on Friday night finishing 2nd JBRC. But their promising start evaporated in the 1st stage on Saturday morning when they lost a wheel after the studs sheared suddenly. The pair couldn't go any further resulting in a DNF on the score sheet.

2300 Club are looking forward to the next round, The Cambrian Rally based in Llandudno at the end of October. Fourteen 2300 club members will be out marshalling the Penmachno stage, and are all looking out for Ioan & Sion who will hopefully be on a charge through the forest stage. This will round off the Junior British Rally Championship for Ioan Lloyd. We will keep you informed on the website, social media and here in the next issue of Foglamp.

