

CLASSICAL GAS

July 2004

About Classic Trials and Falcon Motor Club Events and Personalities

London to Edinburgh Centenary Trial

The MCC celebrated the centenary of the Edinburgh Trial with an event rather different to the Autumn competition held in Derbyshire. The idea was to re-enact the original run from London to Edinburgh with a few gentle sections and tests on the way. Unfortunately there was some confusion over the organisation and the team led by Laurie Knight found their efforts came to nothing having spent a lot of time planning the event.

The new organisers put on a rather different event to the one Laurie had planned, running it during the working week which made it difficult for a lot of people to take part. In the end around 80 competitors signed on and enjoyed the experience despite problems with the route card and a lack of the special atmosphere that surrounds most MCC events. Falcon's and Classical Gas readers were much in evidence as competitors and marshals and Falcon's Peter Thompson won the award for best closed car.



Left - Peter Thompson arriving at the finish in Edinburgh to find he had won the Closed Car Class by cleaning all the sections and being fastest on the special test.

Right - Peter Manning was holidaying in Scotland and took time away from the family to help marshal the finish.



Catch up with Neil Bray's progress in restoring his Y type Ford on Page 2.



Peter and Jim Mountain report on their London to Edinburgh Trial on Page 4

Neil's "Y" Type

Part Two of Neil Bray's restoration of of a Ford "Y" type (part one was published in September 2003)



There was a lot of work making and fitting new panels to the body and getting all the gaps right but finally it was ready for painting.



We left Neil's Y as a rolling chassis waiting for its body. With a sound chassis what was left of the body shell was gently lifted on to it and bolted in place. Neil and his helpers then used scissor jacks and wedges to get all the gaps around the doors, bonnet etc right before the welding started.

The first job was to rebuild the rear wings and secure them to the chassis to hold the back half of the shell in the correct position. This was essential as the lower parts of the B posts were very rusty and were going to have to be removed completely and replaced by new fabricated sections. The bulkhead was next. Rust wasn't a problem; it simply wasn't there as the previous owner had removed it to create the space for a V8! Fortunately Neil had a spare bulkhead in his pile of bits and this was soon in place along with newly made toolbox panels.

The basic shell was now ready for paint preparation. It was rubbed down to bare metal, filled and painted with no less than five coats of primer ready for the colour to be applied. Here came a problem but not a technical one. Neil had his heart set on maroon but the powers that be in the Y and C club ruled that a 1937 Y had to be either Vineyard Green or Black. Searching through the paint catalogues a Datsun colour was found to be near to Vineyard Green and the decision made to paint the shell with that in two-pack.

Having sorted the chassis and the shell the time consuming work of fitting out began. A nice pair of running boards came, courtesy of Dave Tebb. They fitted perfectly and were soon painted black and fitted with the proper spec rubber. The windows were not so easy. Neil had looked at a lot of Y's at rallies and had never worked out how they went up and down without falling out and the bare shell in the garage didn't exactly provide much inspiration! A ring around Y and C club members turned up the wonderful John Argent of Hatfield. John not only let Neil look at his car, he let him take it away and dismantle it to work out how the windows operated. A truly super guy.

With the aid of John Argent's car Neil soon worked out how to assemble the windows, after freeing off the seized winder mechanisms with heat and penetrating oil and obtaining new runners from Woolies of Peterborough. John's car also revealed a lot of other detailed information about various brackets and braces that had been removed or rusted away when Neil got his car.

The next job was to tackle the woodwork. It was possible to



The Long and Short of It All

THE SHORT RAD MODEL Y - You can see that the Starting Handle hole is below the Radiator Grille, this where the name 'Short Rad' comes from. The mudguards do not fully enclose the wheelarch.



THE LONG RAD MODEL Y - Here the Starting Handle hole is within the Grille itself leading to the name 'Long Rad'. When in 1935 the price of the Two door was reduced to £100 the upholstery changed from Leather/Cloth to Rexine and the Model name Popular was created.

repair the wood surrounding the rear window but the roof rails were too far-gone and were replaced with a kit Neil managed to acquire. The detail fitting out took a tremendous amount of time, doing lots of work, but seemingly achieving very little. The door panel's were shot blasted, prepped and painted, the floor boards fitted and the gauges assembled to the dash which was then bolted in place.

With the Y taking real shape it was time to bolt on the wings and other detachable panels. Most of them had come with the car and been restored but the rear offside wing had been to far gone so Neil had a new one made by Ken Arthur, a superb craftsman who was making a complete body for a SS100 Jaguar at the time of Neil's visit!

Neil kept thinking about the back axle, as although it had been fitted to the car it had not been checked. He had a spare axle, which from the outside looked nearly new, but Neil decided to do the right thing and strip and inspect it first. With tools borrowed from the Y and C club the job was started. The first thing was to spread the rear spring by welding a large nut on a gigantic G clamp tool and using this to compress it. This took forever and despite being really worried that the clamp would slip it was finally possible to undo the shackles and remove the spring. With the axle spit the crown wheel and pinion revealed a complete tooth was missing from the pinion and part of another was missing. Neil managed to locate a replacement CWP and bearings and reassemble the parts with the necessary pre-load.

The Y was now looking like a real car but oh there were so many little parts missing. Neil made a huge list and started searching. The clutch and brake pedals needed return springs. These were found during a trip to the local MG specialist where two clutch slave cylinder return springs for a Morris Minor 1000 were found to be exactly the right length. Walking round the show room Neil put his head inside an MGA to see the Pull Starter and Choke Cables would fit the Y so these were snapped up. They only had the letters C and S on them rather than the complete words that Mr Ford had but beggars can't be choosers at this stage!

By now it was Christmas time. Only a few moths to go before the Y and C clubs 2004 Welsh rally. The deal was that for the car to be his Neil had to finish the restoration and take part in the event. Will he succeed?



The A team were called in to fix the axle and finally the Y is rolling.



Michael's Musings

It's been a month of slaving away in the garage on the Dellow. Hopefully I will get the chance to get in some roof down summer motoring once it has a braking system that works! It would be nice to take it to the autotests as well.

I understand that SOD's have officially folded. I know a lot of people, including Laurie Knight's grandson, would like to know the fate of all the trophies. I wonder what's officially supposed to happen in those circumstances? I was actually a paid up member in the final years but I haven't had any form of communication.

It looks possible that David Thompson may be coming back to the area to work. It would be super to see him at our events again, hopefully driving his Troll.

Looks like insurance for road events will go up now Marsh have pulled the plug. The Alexander Forbes Scheme is more expensive but doesn't seem to involve paperwork. I think my Dellow insurance may include road cover for trials but the wording is very ambiguous.

As usual news, pictures etc, always welcome - mleete24@hotmail.com

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PETER MOUTAIN REPORTS ON HIS LONDON TO EDINBURGH CENTENARY TRIAL

As Mike Hayward reported, we ran out of petrol just after the Popham special test; the petrol gauge has never worked since I got the car in 1968. Luckily Richard Hoskin was carrying a gallon of fuel in this three wheeler. Whatever happened to him, he seemed to disappear during the night run.

I remembered (too late) that Morgan handbrakes do not work on hills, so failed at least one restart, probably more.

Later I was reminded how efficient modern cars are; the Morgan averaged only 22mpg over the whole event and only 20mpg on the way home. We would have used less fuel in my Omega which is twice as heavy, automatic and has a litre bigger engine; Peter Lawley was probably doing more than 50mpg in his hybrid Toyota.

What must it have been like in 1904?, with poor roads, poor petrol, acetylene lights, punctures, infrequent fuel, etc.

As you saw in the photo, we had one minor mechanical malady, the accelerator cable got shifted and the revs would not go below 1500, easily cured with a cable tie, but during the wettest part of the trial.

Edward Stobbs hustles his 2CV special along at thoroughly indecent speeds for 602cc and only 3 wheels. When we were following him there was no urge to overtake and when he was following us he had no problem keeping up.

Nice to see a familiar face at the finish; Peter Manning took the attached photo of us and the weather stained Morgan at the end. There were many familiar faces on route as well, all marshalling; thanks to all the officials.

On the way home I navigated & whilst taking an unplanned "scenic route" we came across this delightful road just off the A68 (see photo).

I think there ought to be a special award for masochism, both Dellow drivers would qualify; 1100 miles in a Dellow is quite a round trip.



Top Left - Peter, Jim and a dirt stained Morgan at the finish; Top Right - There were a lot of modern cars taking part, one is seen here on the Park Rash section; Bottom Left - Peter and Jim sorting mechanical problems in the rain; Bottom Right - The long and winding road home.