

# CLASSICAL GAS

January 2006

About Classic Trials and Falcon Motor Club Events and Personalities

## Exeter Trial



*Dave Nash and Julie Fleet on Fingle in Dave's latest car. It's a Beetle floor-pan with a Torsion Bar front-end and double-jointed rear. Power comes from a Type 4 motor and the whole thing is topped off by a Reliant Scimitar body. Dave had some last minute carb problems but these were resolved and the new car gave very little problem during the event.*

*We had a very good Falcon turn-out for an enjoyable trial organised for the first time by Tim Whellock, the owner of JP's old Fugitive. It was pretty tough for classes seven and eight who had some difficult re-starts. There will be a full report next month when the results are available.*

## Murray's Direct March Hare Trial



*Last years winner Keith Pettit (Sprite) and Alun Lewis (Marlin) enjoying Water Tower on last years event.*

This years event is on 12th March under the stewardship of Arnold Lane as Clerk of the Course and Dave Nash as Secretary of the Meeting.

There will be some new sections, including a "new" track that Arnold has found.

Drive, Compete or Marshal but don't miss it.



Keith and Claire Oakes had a full and enjoyable year on the trials hills in 2005. Claire very kindly put pen to paper and you can read her story on page 2.

# Happy Trialling Days of 2005

**Keith and Claire Oakes had a full and enjoyable trialling year in 2005. This is their story.**

The year started on the Exeter Trial, fine weather, and excellent trial, clean sheet, GOLD. Could this be the year for the coveted trophy? Well, we can but dream!

13th March, Murray's March Hare Classic Trial, the Dutton did well and came first in her class. Keith received an award on her behalf. Ross Nuten was first overall, he had an advantage as he was modelling his new all in one motor bike suit and new gear makes you feel like a winner. Well-done Ross. Good weather, friendly trialers and a gentle feeling good cosy event. I loved it.

South again this time to Bromsberrow Heath Nr, Ledbury on the 20th of March to the M.G. Car Club Midland Centre. Nice event around the sticks and gives the car a work out before the Lands End. Things are looking good as Keith collects a first in class, that's three events, one gold and two firsts, but the honeymoon was brief!

The first hic cup was when an embankment jumped out hit the front near side wing and bumper at Riverton on the Lands End. I must point out I wasn't steering and it didn't put Keith off to clean the hill. Over ran line at Felons Oak it was a very small box, perhaps they were saving on the Vim? Failed Hoskin & Bishops Wood, we've never got away from the restart at Bishops, can anybody tell us what the rest of the section looks like?

We took part in four trials that were new to us in 2005, the Kyrle, Ilkley Exe Valley & Allen Trial. To be correct we did enter the Kyrle in 2004 but retired at lunch due to clutch problems.

In the Kyrle's introductory notes



it stated, our very steep hills near Monmouth will be "attacked" at the beginning of the trial. That was putting it mildly! When we had finished I felt I'd been in a war and staggered into the clubhouse in Ross-on-Wye shell-shocked! If you can imagine a metronome going at full belt, riding on the Pepsi Max at Blackpool and abseiling in a car to get from one section to another as the tracks were so steep for six hours or so. That's the Kyrle, no let up or rest. It makes the Lands End a stroll in the park! I was creamed crackerd, the Kyrle is a must do trial, what an adrenalin rush.

At the lunch break Keith found oil on the sump tray. I thought oh no! Not a repeat of last year and have to retire. Keith thought it was an oil seal but managed to complete the trial. Due to time constraints only visual checks of the Dutton were made after the Kyrle and all seemed ok (possible thought was seal leaked when hot. WRONG!!!). This was the start of an omen for the car on every trial we entered.

The Ilkley Trial took us to a part of Yorkshire we had never seen before.

We were preparing to leave for the trial at 3am when Keith opened the garage door and announced he could smell our old friend "Gear box oil". A few drops on the sump plate. I said "let's go for it", (I don't mine coming back home with the RAC), and we had to keep topping up during the trial. Perhaps more serious than first thought!

It's true about Ilkley, glorious country side, people and of course the trial. A trial more gentle than the Kyrle not so rough but also a must do event. This was the first time I used a tulip route card (it's so easy) if thicko here understood it any pleb can! Glad we went, Keith won his class. This came as a shock to us as two hills we couldn't even get off the start line! Falcon club member Ted Holloway in his Enigma Special had to retire on the fourth section out of twenty three due to gear box problems at Dob Park Splash, and then he had a long drive back to Bexleyheath London. If we do



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the Ilkley again I think we will stop the night before and after the trial as it's a long drive home for us old pair.

Back home this time the engine & gear box were taken out, Keith found that the speedo drive core plug had fallen out!

Crash Box's Exe Valley Trial on 18th Sept took our interest as this event had Tillerton and Simms, which thought it would be nice to see them in the summer instead of winter. The ford at Tillerton was bone dry, but the section was still sticky & greasy and the restart was just as hard when doing the Exeter Trial. Simms was so different. No crowds & strangely quite, the section looked small. Keith seemed to have a fraction more time and everything went into slow motion to clean the hill. In that time I could see the famous Simms slab. Its big, its wide, its long. One of the sections is Upper Kingswell; the clue is in the name (well) it makes Slippery Sam at the top of the hill on the Lands End like a spit in a puddle. Upper Kingswell requires snorkel & flippers or an amphibian car. It was said the farmer had pumped about 1600 litres out of this moon crater.

Normans Hump has a twin sister; she is called Annie's Steep-GREAT HILL, named after the late Annie Ugalde who sadly died November 04, wife of Roger Ugalde clerk of the course. When I stopped for a comfort break, ye gods and little fishes oil leak again! (Not me, the Dutton) Recommend staying the night before if you live north of Watford, it is a long journey; we stayed the night after the event as well. When we got home this time Keith took the sump plate off, it was the plug again and he refitted the plug with Loctite. I began to think Keith was doing the Hokey-Cokey during the summer; Diffs were in and out more times than a vicar at a chemist shop.

When people phoned asking if Keith was there, I said I'd give them one guess, they answered correctly, in the garage. I would rather be a garage widow than a golfing widow. I can't see myself living on the edge playing golf.

On Sept 25th MG held their Autumn Trial at Burton Dassett Country Park Nr, Gaydon. If you

haven't been to this p.c.t its worth a visit, views of 15 miles, on a clear day Rugby cement works can be seen! Now isn't that's worth seeing. Wrap up warm as it's very exposed, like Dunstable Downs, great for kites. Near by is the Heritage Car museum at Gaydon now that certainly is worth seeing, very interesting.

The chief marshal asked the entrants if we would like to enter as teams. You know us in for a penny in for a laugh. We paired up with Roland Panes in his Marlin with Ian Johnson sharing his car. Our team "last on the line" won, thanks to the Marlin, as the Dutton can't get round those broom handles and nothing leaked!

Dutton sorted, did Edinburgh ok, no oil leak, just two punctures. I'm no help as a mechanic, but took some nice pictures though while Keith changed the tyre in the rain. The rain didn't bother me at all, adds to the fun keeping Keith's glasses clear, inside the windscreen clear, reading a route card while shouting at the top of my voice to make myself clear with directions in unclear rain/windswept Derbyshire. Is that clear?

Long wait at Clough Wood in the dark, I could sense Keith relaxing and nodding off.

When we got to the section he was flat, a navigator's job is like a sports trainer to keep the competitors winning mood, so I gave him an Imperial mint, it didn't work, and we failed. Got to the "A" boards at Litton Slack. Dont know what happened at Rakes Head and couldn't get out of a hole at Excelsior's restart box, near side rear wheel couldn't get over a large rock. Bull I' Th Thorn very slick at breakfast stop, knew what they were doing, not like Bentley Brook.

Referred to the tulip route card that was handed out at Moto services, as a couple of times I did loose the plot, which doesn't take much for me. If there is a tulip route card for Exeter 06, I will defiantly use it.

Marshalled at Gill Morrell Trial with Ross Nuten, poor chap had an old back injury that was giving him some jip. He lent his Dellow MK2 to Steve Strutt who went on to win Best Overall. Beautiful day, good fun and laughing all time, at Keith especially.

*(Continued on page 4)*



**Keith getting advise from Michael during the Kyrle lunch halt.**



**Ted Holloway in trouble in the water on The Ilkley Trial. Ted had to retire after only four sections.**



**Claire marshalled while Keith drove at Brickhill.**



**Trouble on the way home from Brickhill.**

## Michael's Musings

The trialling year has started with an enjoyable Exeter Trial although it was certainly a tough one for classes seven and eight who had a lot of restarts. Interesting to see it didn't have a full entry and the debate continues in the MCC if Class 0 is the way to go, despite last summers survey saying "it ain't broke so don't fix it".

Neil has got his Capri back together and it looks even better than before its inversion. All we want now is the 2006 calendar which is still not available.

I am still separated from my cars so have been spending a lot of time experimenting with different things on the Internet, including live reports from the passenger seat of Simon's car when I have passengered him. Only problem is that with my head stuck in a Blackberry I don't get to help pump the tyres up!

As usual news, pictures etc, always welcome - mletee24@hotmail.com



Michael Leete

*(Continued from page 3)*

Dutton is no good at tight turns; she simply has little turning lock (may be rectified in the next few months and I will be a garage widow again). The course on hill 8 was drying out fast, as most competitors were getting to zero by the lunch break.

When altering the posts I said to Ross, "Keith won't be able to get round them, it's far too tight." "Sorry" he said. I replied "leave it Ross, Keith won't even get round the tree to the altered part of the section" More laughter from the both of us.

Just got onto the A5, guess what? Car trouble, no it wasn't oil. Steve Strutt stopped to assist and they came to the conclusion that a wheel could fall off! We crawled home and it amazed me that some drivers can't handle a slow moving car in front of them.

A tractor or pony and trap yes, but a small car it seemed to confuse them, they over took at dangerous places. It turned out to be a bolt on the steering arm on the near side wheel, more garage widowing.

Our last trial of the year was organised by the Bristol Motor Club "The Allen" on 27th Nov and very well run too. The weekend before had severe frosts and very cold all week. 26th had Bodmin with hundreds of cars stranded in snow. So, I dressed like Scott of the Antarctic, but I need not have worried, it was a lovely day, sun in the afternoon. The start and finish was at the Cross House Inn Doynton. The pub staff looked after competitors and efficiently, nothing was too much trouble for them.

The Musketeers from the Falcon Club were marshalling at "Henry's Hitch". We knew John and Dot Parsons were there as we saw them at a petrol station on our way to the start. The other partners in crime were Mike Pearson and Verdun Webley.

All was going well, sections not to demanding or car damaging, but there always a sting in the tail, boy did we get stung, and it's called "Big Uplands". It gives you a clue when queuing starts, as we got nearer, cars disappear round the corner, then cars come back round the corner, with the occupants laughing there heads off. Then it was our turn,

as we left the start line and trundling round the corner a nightmare awaits you. The hill slopes steeply from left to right and a Grand Canyon rut from bottom to the top on the left. The same is for the right except for the canyon has now turned into San Andreas Fault with peppered bomb craters. Have you ever seen farmers with tractors spraying wheat fields? The tractor wheels are as tall as a small bungalow, that's the wheels you need to clear the middle. You've guessed right, we bottomed out. I had to keep bouncing to get back down the hill, kept getting stuck in the bomb craters! We stopped at beautiful Chew Valley Lake picnic site and had a superb lunch. When we finished our last hill in the dark and back at the finish we had another nice meal.

Were you wondering about oil leaks? That's fine thank you, but the carburettor doesn't like the cold. She coughed and spluttered on the way to the trial, until the atmosphere warmed up, and she did the same going home, as the evening got colder, should have put some gaffer tape on. We or I should say I decided that we take the A429 from Cirencester to the Fosse Way at Halford instead of following the A429 to the A46, bad decision. The car stalled at staggered cross roads as we pulled out. I never jumped out of the car so fast to push the Dutton and Keith to safety. Glad I had my fluorescent orange jacket on!

A few miles further down the road I knew there was another bad cross road, as we neared to it I shouted "keep the revs up Keith" Yeah, Yeah was his reply. It can be a bit nerve jangling at times being a passenger; because if you do say something, the answer is "do you want to drive?" but I have control of the remote for the TV. The Allen trial reminds me of a smaller version of the Edinburgh. Looking forward to the Exeter 2006 for another year of fun, laughter and meeting the barmy army of trialers.

Food for thought, I was looking up a word in the dictionary and came across "Dog in the manger" the definition is, "one who prevents others from enjoying what he himself has no use for" Does this describe walkers about our sport, namely cars?