



# **SALOP YESTERYEAR MOTOR CLUB**

## **THE FIRST 50 YEARS**

### **A BRIEF HISTORY**

by

Ian Webb

## **A Brief History of the Salop Yesteryear Motor Club**

This brief history has been compiled using only the Club Committee Minute books which have all been retained. The section below within quotations is verbatim from the first of these minute books.

“The Club was officially formed on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 1963 when 13 people gathered at the Springfield Hotel, Shrewsbury. The idea of the club grew from the inadequacies of the VSCC meeting at Grinshill which were never attended by more than 2 or 3 people. Around Christmas 1962 it was decided by 3 people that a meeting of enthusiasts interested in all forms of transport would be an idea worth following up. In January 1963 the first meeting took place at the Springfield Hotel and since then a meeting has been held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of every month.

At the opening meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> June the following were elected as officials:  
Clive Woolley as Chairman in his absence (Peter Howe deputised)  
Peter Wauchope as Secretary  
Ted Alldridge as Treasurer

It was decided that a club subscription of One Guinea a year would be fair to all people.”

Within a few months, meetings were attracting around 25 people and newsletters were being sent to about 70. The Club's early names were “The Shrewsbury Vintage Transport Club” then “The Shrewsbury & District Motor Club” followed by “The Cranks Motor Club” before the “Salop Yesteryear Motor Club” was formally adopted in April 1964. The earliest rules stipulated that the Club was open to vehicles registered prior to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1939, however within the first year post 1940 cars could be admitted at the Committee's discretion and the membership subscription was settled at 10 Shillings a year. Member's cars at this time included a 1927 Bugatti, 1933 Rolls, 1933 Morris 10/4 Special, 1927 Morris Cowley, 1927 Sunbeam 16 saloon and a Daimler Light 15 to name but a few. As Clive Woolley worked abroad frequently, Peter Howe acted as Chairman for much of the first 3 years of the Club.

In the early days events were mainly of a social nature with a few treasure hunts, but more competitive events were under discussion in 1965 and the Club applied to be recognised by the RAC to organise such events. Membership now stood at around 40. The club's first major competitive event was a Pride of Ownership (concoors) and Driving Tests followed by a BBQ at Hawkstone Park Scramble Course Car Park held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1965 which was won by Tony Hartnell in a Morris Cowley. The winner of this double event, which persisted in this format into the 80s, was awarded a trophy presented by member John Harries. In December the infamous Bogget Hunt was held for the first time, starting at 8.00pm and finishing at the Chairman's house at 11.00pm! In 1966 Clive Woolley presented the Founder's Trophy for the most points totalled for all events over the year.

As the 60's progressed the club annual routine settled down to 2 or 3 rallies or treasure hunts, the John Harries Pride of Ownership and driving test day, the Bogget Hunt and a picnic run. Typical members cars were 30's sports cars although a few post war cars were evident such as MG and Lanchester, but these could not compete on equal footing to the pre-war cars. The organisation of social events occupied a lot of effort, these being a party, a dinner and a bonfire night each year. The amount of beer and wine to obtain or the cost of the necessary bar extension always featured in minutes from those "pre-breathalyser" days. Debate continued about a number of issues, such as recruitment, car badges, the age of eligible cars, the amount that the committee members were expected to subsidise club events by, the venue, etc. One highlight for the Club was in August 1969 when a standing rally was held in front of the house at Weston Park which was attended by 30 cars and 2 motorcycles. Judging was by Tom Leake, motoring correspondent of the Shropshire Star and prize giving was made by Lord Bradford himself. This event was repeated only once, in 1970.

Membership which had peaked at about 90 in the 1960s dropped back slowly during the 1970s to around 50. The early 1970s saw a couple of difficult AGMs during which there were wholesale changes to the committees. Such was the enthusiasm for events that in September 1970 the Club put on a RAC approved night rally which started at 10pm, had a soup stop in the middle and finished for breakfast. Such was the distance that 3 OS Maps were required. In 1971 the club elected its first President, Tom Leake and in the same year a Boxing Day run was initiated which went to the Mytton & Mermaid at Atcham. Also that year the Club's Historian published for the first time a list of members and their cars, a copy of which is in the Club Scrapbook. Finding a suitable venue for monthly Noggins

proved difficult between 1972 and 1974 resulting in the club trying at least 3 different pubs before settling at the Cross Gates, Ford, its home for the next 16 years. During 1973 and 1974 the club suspended most motoring activities due to the national fuel shortages and also ceased its affiliation to the RAC. Although proposed first during 1972, it was February 1975 before the Club's first trial took place at Hawkstone Park Scramble course. These became an annual event and were even extended by having a morning session in Grinshill Quarries and an afternoon session at Hawkstone. At the AGM in 1975 the long running debate on car eligibility date was resolved with the introduction of the rule that required cars to be a minimum of 20 years old. It was at the driving tests at the Shirehall car park in 1979 that Mike Rushton had his famed "slight mishap" in the MG M Type which was to result in driving tests becoming more modest affairs for many years.

By the time the 1980s arrived, the club had a fairly established annual motoring programme of events consisting of a trial, a treasure hunt, a concours, driving tests, picnic run, the Bogget Hunt and of course standing rallies, for which a Club stand was set up at many events complete with SYMC banner. Noggins usually had some form of entertainment such as quizzes, often against other Clubs such as the Wrekin Motorcycle & Car Club, auctions, film shows etc. and the Annual Dinner Dance became quite a feature, which from 1986 included the annual prize giving, it previously being done at AGMs. There were an increasing number of Club visits to museums and other places of interest and events also started to become more child friendly as families increased. September 1982 saw the first of the Club's summer camping trips, this one being to Shell Island, but in the following years to Towyn which always included a Bonfire and BBQ on the beach. In 1987 the Boxing Day run was re-introduced and it included the first of many walks, this one being up to the Devil's Chair. 1988 was of course the 25<sup>th</sup> year of the Club and a celebration was held at the Cross Gates, Ford. In the morning members took part in a treasure hunt finishing at the pub for lunch, while in the afternoon some 45 cars gathered in the car park for an informal concours and driving tests to which many past members came. In 1989 the Club joined the FBHVC to give it a forum at a national level and still remains a member.

Moving into the 1990s saw the membership holding up at around 50. Because of an imposed change of pub for Noggins, the Club night moved from a Friday to a Monday, this having little effect on the membership numbers. The summer Towyn trips now included a bike ride and families turned up often with vintage bicycles. In June 1993 the Club celebrated 30

years with a concours evening and birthday cake at the Elephant & Castle. In 1996 the bike ride idea became another local event with a 10 mile ride from the Fox at Ryton organised by George Haigh. This event continued until 2000 at various places around the County. After 17 years, in 1998 camping visit to Towyn was the last. On the competitive front, the usual events continued and a 2<sup>nd</sup> trial per year was introduced and all were reasonably supported by around 10 cars on average. The social events and trips by car and by coach all over the country were well supported.

In the early years of the new century the Club continued with its programmes of events and trips and in 2003 it celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday in fine sunny weather with a morning run finishing at lunch at the Boreatton Arms, Baschurch, for a BBQ and a display of around 35 vehicles. A Jazz band played in the afternoon, a birthday cake consumed and the company of a few past members was enjoyed. The Club was again forced to move its home for Noggins several times and in settling at the Red Lion, Myddle in 2006 it was resolved to only meet there in the winter months and make summer meetings ones that involved a pleasant run to different countryside pubs in time for an evening meal. The exception was the concours night which was held in June at the Red Lion, although from 2009 the format changed to an Open Evening to which other clubs and members of the public were invited to attend, which has proved to be very successful, drawing in 40 to 50 cars usually. During this period, interest in competitive motoring events waned and from around 2007 and for the following 4 years no trials or driving tests were held, although treasure hunts and the FBHVC drive it day continued. In 2012 the Club had to leave the Red Lion when it closed with little notice. A quick search of venues came up with Harmer Hill Village Hall, which has a lovely modern, spacious and warm room all entirely for Club use, a licensed bar and a huge car park. Unfortunately this again necessitated a change of meeting day to a Tuesday with the loss of a few members this time. In 2012 the driving tests were revived and the annual awards will again be made of trophies at the 2013 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebratory Dinner. Duncan Page organised an excellent 140 mile "Landmarks & Beauty Spots of Shropshire" run on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June as the first of the three 50<sup>th</sup> celebratory events, it being attended by 12 club members and 10 from the Shrewsbury MG Club. The third 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration event will be the Open Evening in July at Harmer Hill. For the rest of 2013 driving tests, a trial and a treasure hunt are all planned.

Throughout its existence the club has produced a monthly newsletter and since the 1970s raffles have been held at Noggins which have proved a great

help with Club finances. The Club owes its existence not just to the members, but also all of those who have served on the committee, have organised events, edited and printed newsletters and run the monthly raffle. Thanks to them all. And so SYMC enters its 51<sup>st</sup> year with a membership of around 45, and a full programme of social and motoring events. Long may it continue!

### **Club Presidents**

<b>Club Year Beginning</b>	<b>President</b>
1971	Tom Leake
1972-1974	Max Hill
1975-2002	Alan Painter
2003-Present	Peter Fisher

### **Club Chairmen**

<b>Club Year Beginning</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
1963-1965	Clive Woolley (Peter Howe, deputy)
1966	Peter Howe
1967-1968	Tony Mills
1969-1970	Peter Wauchope
1971	Steve Denner
1972-1973	Graham Lloyd
1974-1975	John Robinson
1976-1977	Peter Fisher
1978-1979	Mike Rushton
1980-1981	Lawrence Evans
1982-1983	Mike Rushton
1984-1985	John Thomson
1986-1987	Tom Kaye
1988-1989	Mike Rushton
1990-1991	Duncan Page
1992-1993	Tony Stevens
1994-1995	Jon Shanly
1996-1997	Tom Kaye
1998-2000	Mike Rushton
2001-2002	Ian Webb
2003-2005	Duncan Page
2006-2007	John Harrison
2008-2011	Richard Shuker
2012-Present	Ian Webb

## Regular Monthly Meeting Venues

<b>Club Year Beginning</b>	<b>Venue</b>
1963-1967	Springfield Hotel, London Rd, Shrewsbury
1968-1971	White Horse, Wenlock Rd, Shrewsbury
1972 (8 months)	Horse Shoes Inn, on the A5
1972-1973 (9 months)	The Bridge Inn, Minsterley
1973-1974	The Grapes, Shelton, Shrewsbury
1974-1990	Cross Gates, Ford
1990-1991	The Cock Inn, Hanwood
1991-2001	Elephant & Castle, Grinshill
2001 (4 months)	The Swan, Montford Bridge
2002 (9 months)	Fox & Hounds, Shawbury
2002-2005	Boreatton Arms, Baschurch
2005	Various
2005-2012	Red Lion, Myddle in winter, various in summer
2012-Present	Harmer Hill Village Hall in winter, various in summer

### Footnote by the Author:

The author has no first-hand experience of the first 24 years of the Club and anticipates that he will have omitted some significant events and may have miss-reported on others. Constructive criticism and correction is therefore welcomed and if there is any interest, this brief history could be revised and re-circulated. Ian Webb.