

# Backfire



North West Casual Classics  
Newsletter January 2024



**The North West's Leading Classic Vehicle Club,  
Established 1996**

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**Next Meeting : Tuesday 9th February 2024**

## DISCLAIMER

Views or opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the club, its officers or committee members. No responsibility can be accepted for inaccurate or misleading information within this newsletter, but every effort will be made to check accuracy before publication



**One of our club's unsung heroes, Steve's trusty Volvo 245 estate on show in St Helens town centre, in between hauling the club trailer to every event.**

## CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER



Hi All!

May I wish you all a Happy New Year for 2024

Although December is well out of the show season, there have been a few events I have attended worth a mention.

Firstly, **Boxing Day** and the Tom Barlow Memorial Gathering in Lymm. My day didn't commence well with the Austin as the battery was totally flat. It transpired that I'd left the panel lights on for a week and a jump start from my spare battery was needed. After an uneventful drive down to The Jolly Thresher, I met up with members John Cleaver and Chris Lee. A very poor turnout from NWCC, but this was made up for by the multitudes that did arrive. The pub was open early doors and the Landlord who is a very affable guy, and his staff were keen to serve tea, coffee and alcoholic drinks.

Turnout was back to pre-pandemic levels, with classics, American cars, hot rods, military, commercials and of course traction engines all in attendance. I believe both the Wheatsheaf and the Old Number 3 were also well attended. When the time came to decamp to The Barn Owl for lunch it was jump start time again, fortunately I'd put my spare

battery in the boot! A lovely lunch was consumed by 16 Members and following a third jump start, the Austin was homeward bound. After an overnight battery charge normal service has been resumed.

**New Year's Eve:** I haven't been to the Huddersfield Auto/Retro Jumble for around 7 years and thought it was about time I had another look. My friend Glyn picked me up at around 8.30am and we drove to the covered 'Old Market Buildings' in the town centre. It was £2 entry and it was rammed! I don't think there was an empty stall. Lots of auto jumble including wings and panels. Of course loads of both old and new tools. Books, toys/model railways, all things 12v electrical, metal signs and motor cycles. We wandered around for a couple of hours before wending our way home. No, I didn't buy anything but it's a good trip out!

**New Year's Day:** The 'Brass Monkeys' at the Black Swan was already very well attended when I arrived just after 10 am. However, not by NWCC members, I counted around 7 or 8 members for this bustling event. Martin the landlord served

free tea and coffee and a discounted breakfast was also available. Some vehicles had to park on the road as the car park became overwhelmed.

So it's now time for me to get a few jobs done on my cars. A little welding is required on the Austin and on the Stag too, so a visit to Chris

Dickinson is definitely in the offing. A rather annoying oil leak on the Volvo needs urgent attention, as my parking spots resemble a mooring from the Torrey Canyon! Ah, the joys of classic motoring!

***Cheers, Nigel.***



**Above: Nigel and John flying the NWCC flag on Boxing Day at the Jolly Thresher in Lymm, and below, autojumbling on New Year's Eve at the old Market Buildings in Huddersfield.**



## EDITORIAL

As we look out at the rain and short, dark days that seem to have been with us for weeks, we can leave the gloom behind for a while by looking ahead to our 2024 classic season. Our energetic events team are already compiling a packed programme of events for us to get out and enjoy, and we can at least hope for a few less washouts than we had in 2023!

It is also the season for New Year resolutions. Although I do not make them for myself, (due to my complete inability to keep them...), I am going to use this first editorial of 2024 by suggesting some for us as club members.

**Resolution One:** Like all classic car clubs we have an ageing membership (including your editor) so this year let's all approach at least one younger person with a classic car, hand them our leaflet and invite them to come along to a meeting or show. Personal contact is far more effective than scattergun advertising, and if we can initiate those conversations with potential members in our own neighbourhoods, the future of the club will be on sound foundations.

**Resolution Two :** Resolve not to "spread bet" on the events sheets

When you know realistically you won't make all of the events. Too many no-shows, make the job of our events team even harder. We know mishaps, both mechanical and personal, do happen, but Nigel and Kenny's numbers are in the front of this magazine, so if you are not attending, call them, in advance if possible.

**Resolution Three:** *"Ask Not What Your Club Can Do For You..."*

Many hands make light work. The committee have asked for volunteers to step up to help with running the club. If even a few members stepped up offering to take on one small task, it reduces the burden on others. This need not mean joining the committee or an open-ended commitment. It could be simply one job needing someone to run with it.

**Resolution Four:** Think before you post. Used properly, Facebook is a useful tool. Used without thought or when annoyed, it becomes something else altogether. If someone posts something you find objectionable, count to ten, resist the urge to respond, and contact the moderators who will deal with it. That is what they are there for.

Now isn't all that easier than beating yourself up for not sticking to the diet/going to the gym/walking more or drinking less? **Steve C**



Diary dates for 2024	
28/01/2024	Post-Christmas meal, Chapelford Farm WA5 3AG
21/04/2024	“Drive it Day” road run to Heskin Hall
11-12/05/2024	Blakemere Military Show (Pre-1950s only), Sandiway, CW8 2EB
18-19/05/2024	Anderton Boat Lift Show (Under discussion)
27/05/2024	Rainhill Village Gala
1-2/06/2024	Tatton Park (Early show)
08/06/2024	Hale Carnival, NWCC Annual Show, L24 4AX
23/06/2024	Lymm Transport Festival
07/07/2024	Lydiate Show
13-14/07/2024	Cheshire Steam Fair, Daresbury (Pre-1973 only) WA4 4AG
20-21/07/2024	Middlewich Show
03/08/2024	Newton Town Show
17-18/08/2024	Tatton Park (Late show)
7-8/09/2024	Avro 40's Weekend at Woodford (Pre-1950s only)
8/9/2024	NWCC Show, Burtonwood
28-29/09/2024	Victoria Park Widnes (Provisional)
06/10/2024	Wirral Bus and Tram Show, Woodside Ferry

Please treat the above as provisional advance show dates only. Some may be subject to change or cancellation. Events organised by NWCC in Blue text are definitely going ahead. Always check our web site or Facebook page before setting out for a show.

## **KEY POINTS FROM DECEMBER MEETING**

A total of 57 members were present. The club charity raffle at the meeting raised £143

The AGM was held as per usual practice as the main body of the meeting. All of the current committee were re-elected unopposed, saving Bob Holder who has asked to stand down as Press and PR Secretary. Nigel asked for nominations to replace Bob by the January meeting. Due to continued poor health Phil Stott has also asked for assistance in his role as Webmaster and Social Media Administrator. Nigel stressed that if more people step forward to help, then the load is lighter.

Thanks to Chris Lee for acting as MC for the voting.

Three nominations for club charity 2021 were received, and it was agreed to hold the vote over until January's meeting to give members time to consider the options.

The total now raised for our 2023 charity Room at the Inn is now £2115.66, a good effort by all concerned in these difficult times. A presentation of the cheque will take place in the New Year.

Thanks to Michelle and Dave for organising the buffet on the night.

## **SHOW INFORMATION**

The venue for our traditional post-Christmas meal is now confirmed as the Chapelford Farm Pub and carvery at 1pm on Sunday 28th January. The pub is on Santa Rosa boulevard in Great Sankey near Gulliver's World.

Kenny advised that he is getting lots of intentions to hold shows in 2024, but many of these have yet to confirm dates.

**The Waldron Wayfairer and a Heavy Twelve that got away: Kenny Jackson reflects on a couple of vehicles he almost bought, one with famous provenance and the other of real historic significance to our area.**

Several years ago I was tempted to bid on a couple of vehicles from the 1920s.

The first was an Austin Heavy 12, but the bidding began spiraling beyond reason, reaching idiotic prices exceeding the real value of the car by many thousands of pounds.

I later came to understand that the vehicle had been on a country estate for many years, and had been the property of a very well-known person and had passed down to their family, who were equally or

even more well known.

For those unfamiliar with Austins of this era, the Heavy Twelve was a car of real quality and astonishing durability. It went on to form the basis of the “Low Loader” London taxi, seen in period dramas to this day, and was also immortalised in Val Biro’s illustrated “Gumdrop” stories, based on his own Twelve, which have entertained children for decades, and brought them to our hobby as adults. Never was Austin’s slogan “Invest in an Austin” so appropriate.





The second vehicle caught my interest because of its local history and engineering significance.

The vehicle is a Waldron Wayfarer and is the only motor vehicle known to have been made in St Helens, Lancashire by a Mr Frederick Barnes Waldron of Norwood, Eccleston Park, Prescott, with a view to establishing a new motor vehicle company.

In order to realise this idea, he started the vehicle and engine numbering at 101, thus giving the impression that many more vehicles had been made. The engine, a 1274cc sidevalve unit, was designed by Waldron who was also a director of Pilkington's Glass Company. The engine is quite unusual in that it was an aluminium crankcase casting which also included the bell housing and gearbox in the same casting, with a "wet" clutch. The body was also built in St Helens by James Smith's carriage works.

We know that Mr Waldron took the car abroad, and retained it until his death in Windle Pilkington Nursing Home in 1976.

The Wayfarer was acquired in pieces by local enthusiast Peter Relph for £100, and was restored in the 1980s. It remained in the Prescott and Formby areas until 2005 when it went for auction at Bonham's with a guide price of

£5000-£7000. The winner of the auction at that time lived in the Northampton area but its current whereabouts is not known. It still exists on the DVLA web site stating it is now on S.O.R.N.

What is remarkable about the Wayfarer is that so few parts were bought in. Mr Waldron was a chartered mechanical engineer, and seems to have made most of the smaller parts himself. The wheels are stamped "Linton Wheel Company, Warrington" and other large assemblies may have been made at Entwistle and Gass in Bolton, with whom Waldron had an association. A plate from R.E. Forster of Warrington on the seat frame suggests they trimmed the car.

It is such a pity that a vehicle with a local history and connections like this has not remained in the region. Had Waldron succeeded in establishing his car company, St Helens may have been known for even more than coal, glass and rugby.

**Kenny Jackson**

**See also:**

<https://www.motorsportmagazine.com/archive/article/june-1981/107/fragments-forgotten-makes/>

**For more information on this intriguing vehicle, pictured overleaf.**

## Images of the unique Waldron Wayfarer



## The last leviathan : Sir Henry Royce's last hurrah, the Rolls Royce Phantom Three

Introduced in 1936, the Phantom 3 was the last car Sir Henry Royce would be directly involved with, and marks a turning point in the history of this storied marque. The Phantom 3 marks the end of Rolls as a producer of chassis to be bodied by independent coach builders, and was the last car produced where the sole object was excellence regardless of what it cost to achieve, or engineering complexity. Just 737 were built, of which 650 survive and although deliveries continued into 1941, war work would end production. The company emerged from the war into a very different world, where buyers would opt for less ostentatious

quality cars, with standard bodies, and where owners increasingly drove themselves. In a time of austerity, a complex car, capable of just 10 mpg, however beautifully made, did not have a future. Like its great rival Bentley's 8 litre, and those from the great European makers like Hispano-Suiza, Bugatti, Delage and Isotta Fraschini, it would be the last gasp of a golden age. Only in America were there enough millionaires about to sustain the production of the great V12 and V16 giants from Detroit. Britain would not see another V12 Royce until the Seraph of 1998.

In common with Royce's aircraft engines the Phantom 3 had a sixty







degree V12, 7.3 litre pushrod ohv engine with one camshaft in the vee, made from aluminium alloy. Early cars had Royce's unique system of zero-lash tappets, but this lasted only 1 year. The lubrication system supplied oil at 3 different pressures dependent on where it was required, ranging from 25 psi at the crank to 1.75 psi at the timing gears. In aircraft fashion, the whole ignition system was dual, with twin coils, plugs and distributors, with "test" positions for fault-finding. A single Stromberg down-draught carburettor and twin electric fuel pumps delivered fuel at a profligate rate to the whole magnificent assemblage. A four speed

gearbox with an overdrive top delivered an estimated 180 bhp to the rear axle, which was suspended on leaf springs, each precision ground to its neighbour and with oil channels. Front suspension was a GM-inspired wishbone and coil arrangement with adjustable damping all round. A one-shot chassis lubrication system and built in hydraulic jacks were also fitted. Braking was courtesy of huge cable-operated drums and a Hispano-Suiza licensed servo, to stop an all-up weight, depending on the body fitted, of 3 tons.

Every aspect of the Phantom 3 is geared to silent power and total refinement. At idle they are

virtually silent, and can accelerate in top gear from 3 mph to a maximum of up to 100 mph (depending on the bodywork fitted) on a massive wave of torque.

To achieve all this mechanical excellence, virtually every part of the car was made in-house, including most of the electrical system.

All this came at a price, and the unclothed chassis would cost you £1900 which in 1939, would have bought you 6 houses. Bodywork would cost a further thousand on top of that. It is ironic that great rivals Bentley and Royce should have both ended their careers with huge, overly complex designs that were commercial failures despite all their superlative (if

somewhat uncompromising) engineering.

In launching the Phantom 3 Rolls had over-reacted to the threat from rivals such as Bentley, and the cheaper (by comparison) offerings from Detroit. But huge production costs driven by Royce's obsessive perfectionism regardless of cost, and a demanding servicing regime were not good decisions in a world already threatened by war. The Phantom 3 taught the Directors that the best is often the enemy of the good, and that in future, even they would have to acknowledge commercial reality to survive in a changed world.



**Field Marshall Bernard Law Montgomery's personal Rolls Royce Phantom 3, with its rather curious forward-tilting windscreen design**



## Getting it right: how one XJS was recycled into a classic Jaguar streamlined coupe that looks dead right.

I don't know about you, but I have always been a bit wary of kit cars and "neo classics" styled to look like 30's cars. Sometimes they get it right, but then some are simply horrible. At one end of the spectrum there are self-build kits which don't pretend to be anything other than a means of recycling a dead Spitfire or Sierra into a new life as a fun roadster. The Marlin, Locost and Spartan all do this and give lots of fun per pound. Then there are the likes of the Sabre Royale and the JB Falcon, which make a fairly good fist of being in proportion, and if well done, can be quite handsome. The RM Gentry

however, never quite looked right to me, as the front axle always seemed to be in the wrong place.

Oddly, some of the worst examples have been the most expensive. The Panther de Ville may have been hand-crafted, but was horribly proportioned, while for full-on Liberace Bling, the Excaliber redefined the term hideous. The Suffolk SS however was a pretty accurate and beautiful recreation of a Jaguar SS100, and the various C and D type replicas from Lynx, and Proteus, would fool all but an expert.

Getting the right wheel size for the arches is key to getting this type of



vehicle right, as is setting back the radiator between dumb irons for vintage car replicas, and please, no MG Midget doors for the hapless owner to have to wriggle through!

This beauty caught my eye recently, when it was retailed by the Real Car Co. In North Wales, and is a handsome evocation of a thirties aero-style coupe, but with some XK 120 coupe thrown in.

Built in 2017. It uses 1989 XJS 3.6 mechanicals on a custom space frame, with all mechanicals overhauled before fitting.

It retains the XJS auto box and PAS for ease of driving, and the vented servo disc brakes. The body is fibreglass, but is very well made with good shut lines and a high standard of finish throughout.

The interior is beautifully trimmed in red leather, with a burl walnut dash and new instruments and a correct XK-style steering wheel.

Overall, a fine effort in the spirit of what it seeks to evoke, but without being a slavish copy of anything, and with a lot of class. You can enjoy video of it in action at Real Car Co's website.



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**Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/groups/northwestcasualclassics](https://www.facebook.com/groups/northwestcasualclassics)

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/NWCasualClassics>



Back Page Beauties: This stunning creation is a modern take on art-deco era coachwork by Classic Auto Rebuilding Service of Wisconsin. A 1937 Rolls PIII with a Rippon Brothers body that was beyond saving was used to create what is termed an Aero Coupe, using Marchal lighting, stainless side mouldings and an authentic Lalique glass mascot on the original radiator shell. Jeeves might describe the “Night Violet” finish as “somewhat sudden” but it is certainly striking. Based on a 1935 rendering by Jortovic in “Road and Track” , it sold at Sotherby’s in 2012 for \$473,000.