



ANNUAL REPORT

In many ways 2016 was a successful year for the Polars. All of our events were dry, including a fantastic day for Thirlestane where the sun shone all day and the crowds turned out in large numbers. Unfortunately the weather and the enthusiasm of some Polars, and the Dream Rides drivers, were not matched by the amounts raised, which were less than the same events last year across the board. We have no explanation for this. The total amount raised by Polar events, not including the substantial efforts of Paul Bonsall, was £3,908.00, compared to over £5,400 in 2015. The money was donated to our five chosen charities for 2016, being James Rennie School, (lunches, Doune and Bo'ness) Smile for Life (Corbridge), Hearts&Minds Clowndoctors (Classics in the City and Polars share of NEC), and CHAS (Thirlestane Dream Rides). A big thank you to all drivers and event helpers, supporters and attendees for this result.

In addition to the Polars' events, several members helped to raise funds by joining Paul Bonsall's Gambol, and helping or otherwise contributing to Tony's events and NEC Dream Rides, as well as other Bears regions' events. The Polars' share of the amount raised at the NEC alone was £5,800.

On the social front, in addition to our lunches, some of our number went separately to the first running of the Ignition Festival at the SEC in Glasgow. Max Walker of NE Bears had an invitation from the organizers to put on Dream Rides, in a similar manner to the Carfest North and South events. As it turned out there was insufficient

response to the request for cars to take part and this did not happen. We shall see if this takes off this year. In addition, visits included the Leyburn Forties weekend, and the Historic Wheels Classic Show at Brodie Castle.

We have reason to feel satisfied with this year's efforts, barring the comparison with 2015 which we have to put down to less money about. In 2017 we will be doing the same events as 2016 but we hope for a better turnout of Polars and a better result. However, we must repeat last year's statement that if we want to raise significantly more money we need more events and more active participants. Could we ask you again please to think hard about events in your area and let us know if you believe there may be an opportunity for us to attend, have a good day out and raise some money for our deserving causes.

Dick and Pat Nortcliffe

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

We had a good turnout of 22 Polars at the Collingwood Arms Hotel for our festive lunch. Luckily the weather was reasonable, although we had quite an exciting run down on the Saturday afternoon in thick fog down the A68 and virtually all the way to Coldstream.

The hotel did an excellent lunch and there was a good selection of raffle prizes - so many that everybody got one and some got two! This raised £150, so many thanks to everyone. Chris Pollin and Claire Howie presented a cheque for £55 raised by the auctioning of a special Bear, (see photo) and we thanked Fiona Davies for her cheque for £100 raised from the sale of a car cover.

As usual we went over the year's events (see Annual Report). We then considered the 2017 calendar to decide the best dates for lunches. Sid Palmer again volunteered as organiser of Classics in the City of Edinburgh, with the knowledge that the automatic bollards did indeed work to let us out! Andrew confirmed that we had received an invitation from the organizers of Bo'ness to attend once more. This event is growing year on year and is well worth a visit.

Finally, it was decided which charities would benefit from next year's fundraising - REACT are to receive money from Thirlestane Castle Dream Rides; SACHD will get the Polars' share of the NEC Dream Rides; the proceeds from Doune and Bo'ness will go to CHAS; Smile for Life will benefit from Corbridge, and H&M Clowndoctors will once more receive the proceeds from Classics in the City. It is likely that the lunch raffle money will be divided between CHAS and Smile for Life.

With regard to attendance at Polars' events, please read Andrew Carrie's letter below.

Dick Nortcliffe

ANDREW'S LETTER

As we prepare our schedule for another year, I've been thinking. Yes I know, the combination of "me" and "thinking" sounds ominous, but bear with me (pun unintentional but appropriately Freudian).

You see, a couple of members have mentioned over the past year that, while the objective of the Club is to collect for Children's charities, and is obviously very successful at that, its function as a

"club" for its members may be becoming eroded.

So while this isn't my idea - I remember exactly whose idea it was, but I'm not going to name names just in case - I think that we need to look at non-fund-raising social events, or at least, at our events as a social event AND as an opportunity to raise funds for Children's charities. As it is, we sometimes barely get time to speak to each other.

This was especially brought home to me at Bo'ness, where we were lucky to drum up enough people to put our tent up, never mind run the stand. It all turned out well, but I was worried when there was a week to go! A lot of our "regulars" were doing other things, and that's ok - people have their own lives as well!

But I wonder - how many people would come, but don't want to do the "money-collecting" thing? I know it's not for everybody, and that's fine too. Confession - I don't particularly like doing it either, but I have had to learn, in business, not to be shy. I may have slightly overcompensated, admittedly.

But even if you bring your car along and just want to socialise, it's still really helpful - there's no pressure to be "up front" if you choose not to be. The thing is, the more interesting and attractive cars we have on display, the more people we can draw within range of "the collectors" if I can put it that way. So please have a look at our programme of events in this issue, and maybe bring your car along and join us. If you want to discuss it first, get in touch with the named organiser, and they'll be happy to clarify any questions you might have.

As I say, there's no obligation, but it would be great to meet similar enthusiasts socially, not just for the purpose of collecting money.

Also, I'll take this opportunity to say thank you to all the "regulars" over the years, past and present, as well!

Andrew



NEC DREAM RIDES

Last year I decided to join the band of Polars who regularly help out at the NEC Classic Car Show, largely because the event always provides a large donation to a Polars' charity, and also because other Polars have taken part for a number of years both as drivers and helpers. Being the Polars' rep I thought I'd better show my face and see if all the stories were true. Hence a lot of this report comprises my reactions to this event as a first timer.

Having decided to try and visit some of the show on the Friday, and help on the Saturday and Sunday as flights allowed, I arrived at lunchtime on Friday and fortuitously ran into Fiona and Mike almost immediately, since their flight's baggage had just arrived in the terminal as I was picking up mine from my half hour later flight. Since they are old hands I was quite happy to tag along with them to the hotel and subsequently to the show.

For those who haven't been, the

first thing to say about the NEC Classic show is that it is on a massive scale. Five huge halls filled with virtually every marque of car you've ever heard of, club stands, parts, tools, autojumble, car auctions, food stalls and probably uncle Tom Cobley was there as well. In a way I was glad to have a job to do otherwise I would probably have spent all my pocket money!

So we went around the show and saw as much as possible, and bumped into a few Polars and friends on the way, including Laurence Hogarth and Graham Craig, and Archie Russell, who many will remember from the "Flings". We eventually made it to the Bears encampment and made our number with Kim, and received our jobs for the next day. Straight away it was good to see some familiar faces - Phil Daniels and Sarah on the desk, with Daniel being generally useful, Phil and Kendral Ellis, Chris Pollin with Claire Howie and Paul Bonsall.

I was asked if I would do



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passenger loading which seemed like a good number, mainly because no intellectual ability was required, only a knowledge of door opening, but more on that later. The Bears Dream Rides pitch is also on a grand scale, although I'm told it changes almost on a yearly basis. The main advantage over most of the Dream Rides events is that the cars are under cover and there are separate entrance and exit doors for leaving and returning cars. The whole garage area is fenced off, with the only gaps being the widely separated passenger loading and disembarking gates; all very orderly and well organized with both gates being manned continuously by Bears.

Having seen the general lie of the land we three adjourned for the day and had a convivial dinner with

Keith and Ann Borkett and Mike Webber.

Saturday was unfortunately raining but this doesn't affect the queues for Dream Rides very much, which just seemed to appear from nowhere. One thing I hadn't seen the day before was that the Bears have their own facility for rest and refreshments which proved very welcome throughout the day, although not many chances to visit. Another thing which hadn't occurred to me was that the garage railing is packed with people watching the Bears' cars come and go, particularly the star attractions such as the Pagani Huayra, which nobody seemed to know how to pronounce, (including me) it sounding generally like a throat clearing session. My personal favourite was the Jaguar 220 which I had never seen close up and running before.

We were soon into the thick of it, with the passenger waiting area generally being completely packed with people. Unfortunately, as at Thirlestane, the early rides can be very delayed by the traffic entering the show. There seemed to be no solution to this but eventually it did clear and the rides were thick and fast. Jan Wright, who is in charge of passenger loading, and incidentally comes all the way from Guernsey every year to do the job, had things well under control. There's a great deal of shouting involved in order to announce the rides being ready, but it seemed to have the desired effect, and was quite good fun when my turn

came. The system with regard to checking in the passengers and summoning the drivers, generally by phone but sometimes involving a "runner" was working very well, although of course there were some awkward moments.

This may sound very naïve but the other thing I hadn't realized was the amount of variation it is possible to achieve by the manufacturers, in the relatively simple task of providing a means of opening a car door. This ranges



from no means at all except by the driver, to normal pull out handles, concealed push buttons, small recessed levers at the bottom of the door, etc. So now I am a fully clued up door opener. Every day a school day!

Saturday was busy the whole day through and it was a very well deserved dinner where we were joined by Mike and Helen Webber. Sunday was more or less a repeat of Saturday although it did appear to take a bit longer to warm up. Unfortunately the flight back to Aberdeen is either too early or too late on a Sunday, so I'd opted for the early one and left midway through the afternoon.

All in all I had a very enlightening and enjoyable weekend. My congratulations to Andrew and Kim, and all the others in Midland Bears and around the country, who help to make this event go so well. Any Polars who haven't been should definitely give it a go.

Dick Nortcliffe



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WHAT'S NEXT

March 19th Pre season lunch – Collingwood Arms,

April 16th Doune Hillclimb – Requests for donations

May 5th – 7th Ye Northern Gambolle Forth – social weekend contact Paul Bonsall, email enquiries@fatlamb.co.uk

May 13th & 14th Ingliston Revival (possible)

June 3rd & 4th Thirlestane Castle - Dream Rides (Setup 3rd)

June 18th Mid Season lunch - Collingwood Arms

July 2nd Corbridge Classic Show - Requests for donations contact Bob Selby email

cobragpt290s@blueyonder.co.uk

July 15th (provisional) Classics in the City of Edinburgh contact Sid email sid@sidpalmer.co.uk

August 4th – 6th Ignition Festival – SECC Glasgow (possible)

September 3rd Bo'ness Hill Climb Revival contact Andrew Carrie email andrew@acarrie.net

September 17th End season Lunch – Collingwood Arms

December 3rd Christmas Lunch - Collingwood Arms

AUCTIONED BEAR

The little bear, sporting a Sporting Bears T-Shirt, which Claire auctioned has left the country! Baz Firth e-mailed to say that it has flown all the way to Alabama to welcome in his best friend's baby girl.



CAR NEWS

Andrew Carrie has finally succumbed to his desire for a piece of American automotive history. He is now the very proud owner of a 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air, 5.7 litre V8 with column change auto and a big bench seat. Handles like Bambi on ice but has a huuuuuge fun factor until you reach the petrol station! He will be asking Mike Webber to redesign the garage area at Thirlestane this year to accommodate it.

Another new car in the Dream Rides line-up this year will be Phil Ellis's latest acquisition. It's a Ford Sierra RS Cosworth, 2,000 cc giving 380 BHP and a 0-60 time of 5 seconds. Groups of young guys will be queuing up for a ride. Chris Pollin had his Westfield on the market so we are delighted that it has stayed in Polar hands. Brian Hunter now has the keys but it is unclear whether or not the Nissan GTR is on the way out of his garage.

Contact Information

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AND FINALLY...

Mike Webber has had a successful operation for a heart valve replacement. We hope he continues to recover and is back behind the wheel soon.



Have a nice day!

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