



The History of Scottish Riley Enthusiasts



Anna R Gunn MA

With W. Riley

Foreword

I am delighted and honoured to be asked to write the foreword to this History of the Scottish Riley Enthusiasts.

The benefit of hindsight clearly shows that there was a need for an organisation such as the SRE. As the story unfolds, it becomes clear that its success and strength was largely due to the encouragement and enthusiasm of the keen membership who fully supported any activities organised by the Committee.

Anna Gunn, the author, was faced with the truly formidable task of collecting and researching the history of the SRE from before its formation in 1991 and subsequent development until 2000. She then had the work of compiling and editing the information into an accurate and readable text, complete with appropriate photographs of significant events.

I was not surprised to discover that Anna has done a superb job and is to be congratulated by us all for her academic thoroughness. Not only has she given us an entertaining account but she has produced a first class record of the early years of the History of the Scottish Riley Enthusiasts. Enjoy!

Jim Dunbar.

The History
of
Scottish Riley Enthusiasts

Compiled and Edited
by Anna R Gunn MA

Acknowledgements

The work in this publication is compiled from several sources of historical information, principally from the *Newsletter* of Scottish Riley Enthusiasts, but including the *R.Memoranda* of the Riley RM Club, the Minutes of SRE Committee meetings, the Minutes of Annual General Meetings of SRE and the *Scottish Riley Enthusiast Magazine* of SRE.

Additional information has been obtained from the recollections of the members of Scottish Riley Enthusiasts. Photography has been provided by the members of SRE and from the graphics in the aforementioned periodicals. All of that assistance and those sources are gratefully acknowledged by the Compiler of this work.

Special thanks must go to Alasdair Gunn for all his endeavours on the production of the finalised documents which make up the complete suite.

The selection of passages for direct quotation has been made only by the Compiler, and comments made and interpretations given are her work alone.

Anna R Gunn

In the Beginning

Riley Clubs in Scotland before SRE

The Riley Motor Club

The Riley Motor Club was founded at a supper (held in the Peebles Hydro) for the 21 competitors (and their passengers) who drove the 21 Riley cars in the RAC London – Edinburgh Trial of 1925.

The Club grew to be the largest one-make Motor club in the world, and held many splendid social events, also mounting major motor sport competitions and providing factory-sponsored parts support for the cars of the members.

Eventually there were Highland and Lowland Scottish Centres established by the club which apparently were very successful; however, these Centres seemed to lose impetus in the late Sixties, and were subsumed into the Midland centre, which at the same time also assumed the management of Riley affairs for Northern England and Ireland.

The Riley Register

In 1959, the Riley Register had to be formed, again in the Midlands of England, to assure parts support and social events for cars of the Pre-war era. In the Seventies, the Riley Register in Scotland shared a meeting with the VSCC at the Garfield Hotel, Stepps, whose attendance was predominantly from the VSCC. In the Eighties there was also a meeting in Queenslie. However, it is from the third of the UK National Riley Clubs, that the real beginnings of SRE may be discerned.

The Riley RM Club

In 1969, the RM Club was founded in England by John Byron and James Atkinson to cater for the Post-war 1½ and 2½ litre Rileys, and by February 1970 there was a club membership of 113 people.

The RM Club produced a Newsletter and the June 1971 issue contained a request for members willing to become Area Secretaries. When the first AGM was held later that year a Committee of twelve was elected and eight area secretaries had been appointed.

Neil Ross had volunteered to become the Scottish Area Secretary and had set about contacting the other eight members of the RM Club in Scotland. By October the group had settled at the Silverburn Hotel, Newarthill, Lanarkshire and at that meeting there were six Rileys parked in the car park.

Neil remained Area Secretary until 1974 when he became Chairman of the RM Club. Neil was succeeded by Bill Harris as the second Area Secretary for Scotland, and these two were the mainstay of Riley in Scotland throughout the Seventies and Eighties.

Bob Miller became the third Scottish Area Secretary in January 1984 and has continued in the office to the present day. That same year Doug Thurston established an RM Club meeting in the North-East, and in 1987 Jim Dunbar founded the Tayside meeting.



The New Order

The infant Scottish Riley Enthusiasts club held its Inaugural Meeting at the Glencarse Hotel, near Perth on Sunday 8 December 1991. The purpose of this meeting was to elect an Interim Committee that would stand for one year when a full AGM would be called.



At this meeting Jim Dunbar was elected the first Chairman and he wrote later that he was “honoured and delighted.” He went on to say:

“It is true that I have been instrumental in organising a few Riley things in Scotland but any success has been due to the great support from you, the Riley Enthusiasts, and the team of volunteers that do so much behind the scenes. It is very rewarding to know that such work is appreciated.

Secondly, I believe that the SRE initiative is a positive statement of Riley unification North of the Border and can only lead us forward to better organisation and communication. Surely this in turn will make Riley activities even more accessible and attractive to all Riley enthusiasts.”

The fact that Jim thought he had only been “instrumental” is typical of the man’s modesty and humility but in truth it is unlikely that any such radical happening would ever have occurred in Scotland without his personal commitment, forethought and drive.

When we were very young

One has to go back to 1987 to find the antecedents of SRE, when Jim arranged to meet representatives of each of the three Scottish area meetings in the Waverley Hotel in Perth. Jim called this a “cardinal event”. Those present included Jim, Eric Stewart, Patrick Whitty, Bob Miller, Peter Bryson and Norman Glen. The remit of this meeting was to look at the future of Rileys in Scotland and among other things to discuss the possibility of a Scottish All-Riley Event. Jim envisaged this meeting as being “a very welcome opportunity to pull together efforts into an over-all Scottish Plan.”

In his report on the meeting in the *Newsletter* Jim wrote,

“I must say that I think this meeting marks a major step forward for Rileys in Scotland – for the first time representatives from the three areas sat together and discussed a combined syllabus for the forthcoming year. The issue of Pre-War versus Post-War was discussed and it would seem that barriers are being removed slowly and this has to be welcomed”

The main upshot from this meeting, and the subsequent task for the people involved, was the organising of the first of the annual Scottish National Riley Rallies. This took place in June 1988 and was based at Stirling University.

From the very first, the Scottish event was open to all Rileys, whether Pre-War, RM or BMC, and to all Riley enthusiasts.

The Scottish members were thrilled to be joined by a contingent from the Ulster Riley Club, the club that in many ways had led the way for the SRE by the incorporation of all three major Riley Clubs within their membership. They arrived in four Pre-war Rileys, almost a dozen led most ably by their Chairman Robin Cameron.

Subsequent annual meetings of Area representatives continued to be held in Perth to oversee plans for the coming year including the Scottish National Rallies.

The second National in 1989 was based at Callander. Bob Miller writing in *R.Memoranda* reported that the event had been: "well attended and voted a great success."

The third Scottish National Rally was based at Kinfauns Castle outside Perth and was held in 1990. Again Bob reported in *R.Memoranda* that it had been:

"a great success The organisation was again excellently done by Jim Dunbar and his aides and Scone Palace was an excellent backdrop for the prizegiving."

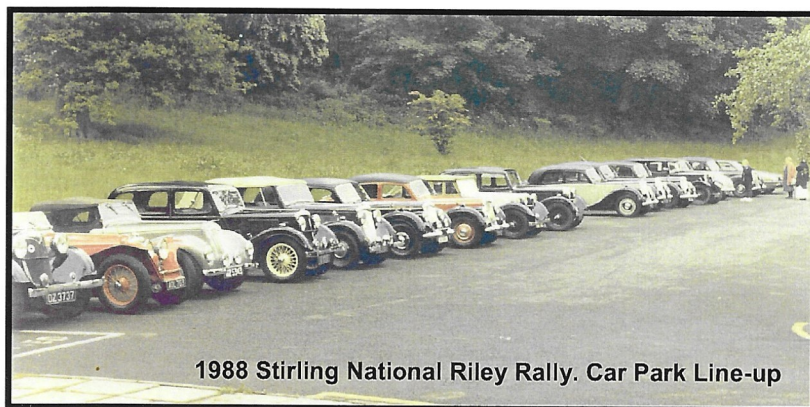
Throughout 1990 Jim could be seen working hard to address the subject of Club Liaison, a topic which had been causing some debate in Riley circles, especially in England, as seen within the pages of *R.Memoranda*, and consequently in the *Newsletter*.

Jim was able to report in his *Newsletter* that the Tayside meeting had received recognition from the RMC and that notice of Tayside meetings would now appear in *Riley Record*.

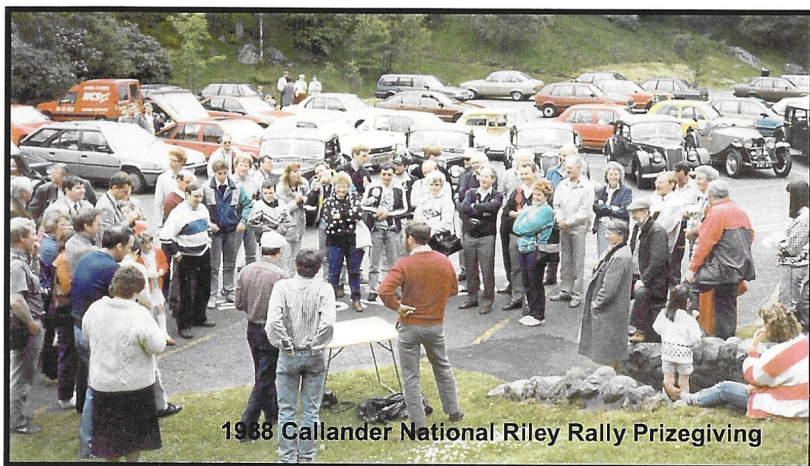
Inter-club liaison was again addressed at the Northern Weekend organised by Doug Thurston at Rosemarkie. Some time was spent discussing recent developments within the three clubs in England and discussing in general terms "where the Scottish future lies." Jim was pleased and no doubt encouraged to hear members' views and comments, and was able to re-affirm that:

"the underpinning philosophy behind the Scottish National Rally is one of inter-club liaison. I dare say that this particularly suits Scotland as many of the membership are scattered and isolated."

Things had been moving on apace in Scottish Riley Circles as can be judged by remarks Jim made in the *Newsletter*, where he was able to observe: "I believe we are now well established as a significant force in all things Riley North of the Border. Long may this continue..."



1988 Stirling National Riley Rally. Car Park Line-up



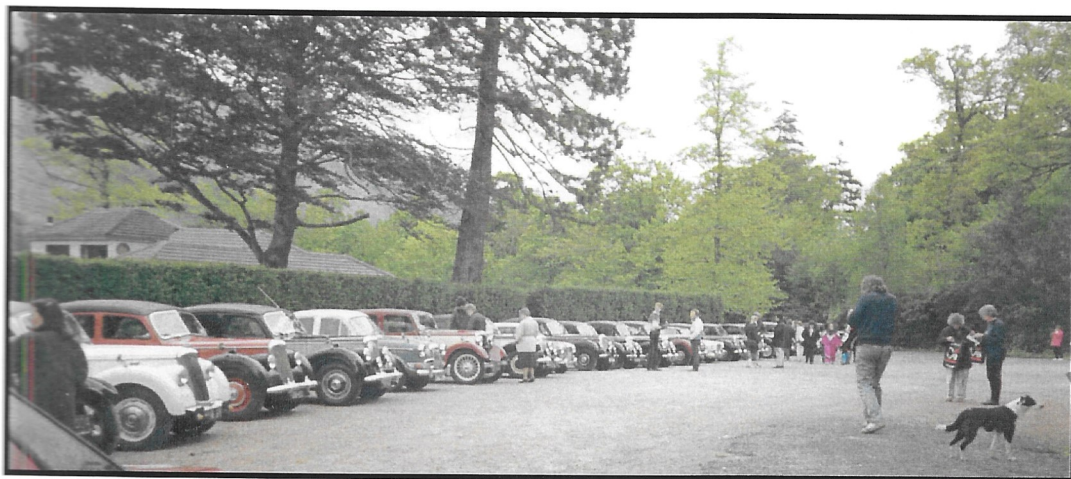
1988 Callander National Riley Rally Prizegiving



Kinfauns Castle

When we were a bit older ...

The January issue of the *R.Memoranda* contained the notice that the monthly meetings held at the Silverburn Hotel, Newarthill were being temporarily suspended as the attendance had dwindled. Members had been meeting at the Silverburn since the early days of the RM Club in Scotland in 1971; so for Bob Miller, the Scottish Secretary, this was a very unhappy occasion. Bob, nevertheless, was not a man to be down for long so in the March edition he was back with a new venue, this time in the Fenwick Hotel between Glasgow and Kilmarnock and this group was up and running in no time at all.



The fourth National was based at the Cobbler Hotel in Arrochar on Loch Long and as ever Jim's advert announced that this event would be:

"..open to all Rileys, Pre-war, RM and BMC and as a result the line up of cars will present great interest to everyone."

In June, the Committee meeting held to discuss the next National Rally took place in a double-decker bus during the Thomson Memorial Event at Stonehaven, and it was here that the Aberdeen members agreed to take on the organising of the next National Riley Rally.



In August, the first meeting of the Edinburgh group took place in the Glencairn Hotel and as Bob Mutter, one of the group, wrote in the Newsletter: "Ten happy Riley enthusiasts joined Jim Dunbar" on the occasion. For Jim this must have indeed been a very happy occasion, not only was this the formation of a fourth area meeting in Scotland but Bob Mutter agreed to take on the production of the *SRE Newsletter*, a task Jim had performed for 87 issues.

That month also saw the visit to Scotland of a party of Register members, led by David Allberry from Cirencester, touring in four Pre-war Rileys. Scottish members met them and enjoyed a meal in Kings of Kinloch Hotel in Meigle. All who attended had a very enjoyable time.



In September, the Northern Weekend again took place in Rosemarkie, and on the Saturday evening, Jim gave a talk on the future of Scottish Rileys. This venue was the ideal one, as it gave him the opportunity of addressing a large gathering of Rileyists meeting together under one roof.

He gave a summary of the results of the membership survey by the three major Riley clubs on federation issues, and expanded on recent developments in Scotland, the new Edinburgh group meeting and the shape of the *Newsletter*.

He finished with a series of overhead slides that showed the membership spread within Scotland and England of the three major clubs and then he invited comments.

Jim said he expected the response to be brief, after all the bar was open and the Saturday night get-together at the *Northern Weekend* was normally given over to pure Riley enjoyment, but what Jim actually got was two and a half hours of hectic debate some of it pretty heated at that. As a result of this debate, a proposal was made that a new organisation should be formed, to be called

“Scottish Riley Enthusiasts”.



A founding principle of the new organisation was that the Noggin Areas remained the core organisations serving the local enthusiasts, and now constituting the SRE Areas, which would take turns to share the load of organising the Scottish National Riley Rally. The function of SRE would be threefold:

- 1 To manage the SRE *Newsletter*
- 2 To oversee the National Rally
- 3 To promote closer co-operation between the three major UK Riley Clubs in Scotland.

A vote was taken and the proposal was carried unanimously. Before any further action would be taken it was agreed to seek the opinion of all Scottish members on these issues.

One of the members who responded to the canvass was Gordon McAllan from Strathaven, who sent a letter to the *Newsletter* in which he suggested that:

“... the Scottish solution of self-help and social organisation amongst the clubs is the only way forward.”

The December issue of the *Newsletter* carried the announcement of the SRE Inaugural Meeting to be held at the Glencarse Hotel. The purpose of the meeting was to elect an Interim Committee to stand for one year when a full AGM would be held. This Committee would be required to draw up a basic Constitution.

Accordingly, on 8 December 1991 a group of Riley stalwarts met at the Glencarse Hotel and duly elected an Interim Committee.



Jim Dunbar was elected Chairman of the Interim Committee. His comments on the occasion recorded in the January 1992 *Newsletter* covered everything and therefore deserve to be repeated in full. He said:

"Thanks to everyone who attended the Inaugural Meeting of the SRE at the Glencarse Hotel. I was very conscious that some had travelled considerable distances and in Rileys as well.

A minute of the meeting was taken by Norman Glen and a report will be available from the appointed Sec. Alasdair Gunn. However I would like to make a couple of points.

I am delighted and honoured to be elected the first Chairman of the SRE. It is true that I have been instrumental in organising a few Riley things in Scotland but any success has been due to the great support from you, the Riley Enthusiasts, and the team of volunteers that do so much behind the scenes. It is very rewarding to know that such work is appreciated.

Secondly, I believe that the SRE initiative is a positive statement of Riley unification North of the Border and can only lead us forward to better organisation and communication. Surely this in turn will make Riley activities even more accessible and attractive to all Riley enthusiasts.

We all have Rileys and our Clubs to be proud of, but now we have a new dimension, which I am sure we can equally boast about with renewed vigour.

So, come on everyone, get those rebuilds finished and get the roadworthy cars looking their best – and lets really advertise our great RILEY marque in the coming 1992 Rally season.

And here endeth the first lesson!"

Wishing you all many magnificent miles of Riley Motoring in 1992.

Cheers, Jim Dunbar"

Bob Miller, writing in the November issue of *R.Memoranda* reported on the happenings in Scotland and followed this up with another article in December 1991.

In this same issue Alasdair Gunn, in his article "*Scottish Riley Enthusiasts Unite!*" produced the definitive article on the founding of the SRE, which is quoted verbatim below:

"Last September, a group of Riley enthusiasts of all affiliations met at the Marine Hotel, Rosemarkie, on the Black Isle, to enjoy the Late Summer weekend organised by the Aberdeenshire Noggin group.

As on the previous year, the subject of closer relationship between the three clubs was discussed, and this year it was decided by the group that the members of all three of the national Riley Clubs living in Scotland should be consulted to determine if there would be support for creating an umbrella organisation, to be known as Scottish Riley Enthusiasts to further the cause of enjoyment of the cars in Scotland by three means:

- (1) To oversee the Annual Scottish National Riley Rally.
- (2) To manage the production and distribution of a Newsletter about the Scottish Riley scene.
- (3) To promote closer cooperation between the three major UK Riley clubs in Scotland.

A postal ballot was sent out in October to all 221 known members of the three major UK Riley Clubs living in Scotland, asking for their declarations of support, or the contrary. The returns received by the deadline set for 30 November numbered 70 in unanimous support.

One vote against has since been reversed after a misapprehension on the provenance of the enquiry had been corrected, and is now included in the 70 votes for.

At a meeting on 8 December, convened through the columns of the *Scottish Newsletter*, 15 members of all affiliations formally accepted the voting returns as indicating a mandate to establish the organisation, and voted Officers to act till the first AGM which will be in late 1992.

The Officers are:

Chairman:	Jim Dunbar (Area Sec, Riley Register and Riley Motor Club)
Secretary:	Alasdair Gunn (Member Riley RM Club and Riley Register)
Treasurer	Eric Stewart (Member Riley RM Club)
Newsletter Editor	Bob Mutter
Scottish Rally Coordinator	Doug Thurston (Member Riley RM Club)
RM Representative	Bob Miller (Scottish Area Secretary, Riley RM Club)

The mandate of these officers (in addition to operating the fledgling organisation within the objectives given above) is to produce a Constitution and Rules for adoption by the AGM.



In the interim it can be stated with confidence that:

- The organisation will accept as a member anyone with an interest in Rileys, whether or not they currently own one or are members of one of the National Riley clubs, and whether or not they have the good fortune to be born or residing in Scotland.
- The annual fee for the first year will be £5-00, for which the member will receive a copy of the Scottish Riley Enthusiasts *Newsletter* monthly, in which he will find SRE news and announcements, adverts for cars and parts, and lots of area news of events and people, among other goodies. (Get scribbling you scribes – the Editor's address is 10 Ratho Place, Dunfermline, Fife) Subscriptions are now being taken!
- SRE will not compete with the Clubs in the sale of new parts for the cars.
- SRE will attempt to urge gently new members who are not already members of the appropriate national Riley Club to join it at the earliest moment.

That is about all that needs to be said at this moment. SRE wanted to publish this news as soon after the formal inauguration as possible, as it must have been apparent to many members that something was afoot, and we are anxious to scotch (Oh!) any rumours or misapprehensions about our motives.

This is not Federation by another name. The place of SRE is subordinate to the three main clubs to provide additional specifically Scottish benefits to enhance the enjoyment of Riley in Scotland.

Less of an umbrella than a bucket, if you get my drift. Here's hoping we see many of you in Aberdeen in May 1992 to help us enjoy the next Scottish National Riley Rally – the first with the SRE flag joining the other three.

Yours cordially, Alasdair Gunn"

The Committee had agreed that something had to be published in *R.Memoranda* to forestall any misapprehensions among the officers and members of the three main Riley clubs.

If Scottish Rileyists were worried about repercussions coming from English Riley members then these worries were set to rest by a letter sent to the *Newsletter* by Manny Rosenberg congratulating the Scots:

"What a lovely idea. Forming a Scottish "Umbrella" Organisation including all the Rileys."

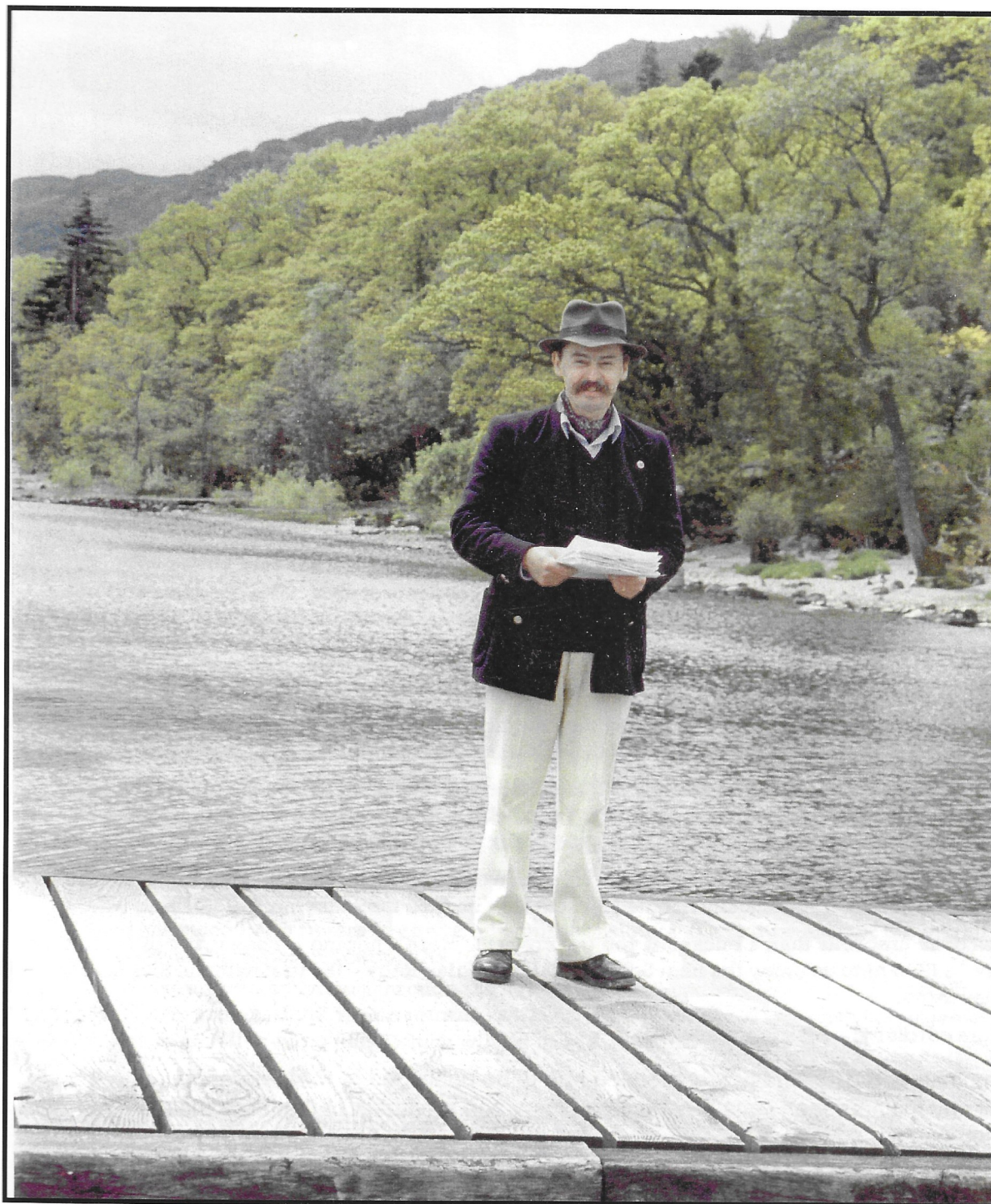
The setting up of the SRE in Scotland has led to a resurgence of interest and enthusiasm for the Riley Marque and continues to provide the membership with hours of happy motoring in great style and in grand company. As Jim would say,

"Long may it continue....."

The History of Scottish Riley Enthusiasts



Jim Dunbar



First Chairman of SRE

Now we are SRE

The Dunbar Era

Now Scotland had its all-inclusive Riley organisation and it was down to hard work for the committee to put together a Constitution. Meetings were held at Margaret and Eric Stewart's home in Dundee with comfort and largesse provided by the hosts. Eric had been Treasurer of the Tayside group and quietly and efficiently took on the office of Treasurer of SRE.

Doug Thurston, apart from assuming the role of Publicity officer, in which capacity he had managed to have SRE mentioned in seven National Magazines in the first year, took on the duty of Rally Team Coordinator for the Fifth Scottish National Riley Rally, the first to be organised by other than the Tayside Area.



Nineteen Ninety-Two

The fifth Scottish National Riley Rally was based at the Craighaar Hotel, Bucksburn, Aberdeen. The *Newsletters* of the time were full of Doug Thurston's articles bewailing the amount of work needed to organise a Rally. The Tayside group could certainly have told him this, and in subsequent years the other Areas were to make the same discovery.

Doug wrote,

"we are still beleaguered with all the points requiring action so we have had to resort to two meetings a month to keep ahead of the game".



On a lighter note, Lachlan Gray, on reflecting on how many times the team still had to meet before the big day, said:

"I am going to have a heck of a job fitting all this enjoyment into this one month".

The actual Rally in May was hailed a great success much to the relief of the Rally Team.

Manny Rosenberg wrote in *R.Memoranda*:

"That is what you call a rally. Plenty to do if you want, or otherwise. Nothing but praise is due to the organising committee. Worth every mile of the 994 miles we did that weekend".

For another member a moment in the spotlight arrived, although he did not have to travel very far for it: Eric and Margaret Stewart, while attending the Scottish Transport Extravaganza, found a card stuck under the wiper of their Riley.

The note was from the property buyer from BBC Scotland, and it transpired that the Beeb wanted to use the Stewarts' car in one of the episodes of "*Strathblair*".

The car was seen for about ten seconds in the programme, but earned Eric £100, or rather the car earned the money, - so Eric, being the soul of correctness, arranged for the car to buy itself new boot hinges and two new headlamp units.





In September, the North-East Area again held its *Northern Weekend* at Rosemarkie. At this event Doug Thurston was presented with the Elizabeth Skelly Award for the club member of the year 1992.

Introducing the award, Jim observed that:

"The highlight of the weekend for me is the opportunity to pay tribute to a member of SRE. This guy has been involved with Riley affairs for many years. He founded the Aberdeen area meeting and continues to manage their affairs. He established the *Northern Weekend*, and has run that event for eight years".

He also thanked Bob Mutter for the high quality of the *Newsletter* that had grown from a news-sheet to a magazine containing much historical and review material, and the considerable effort thus needed to maintain it.

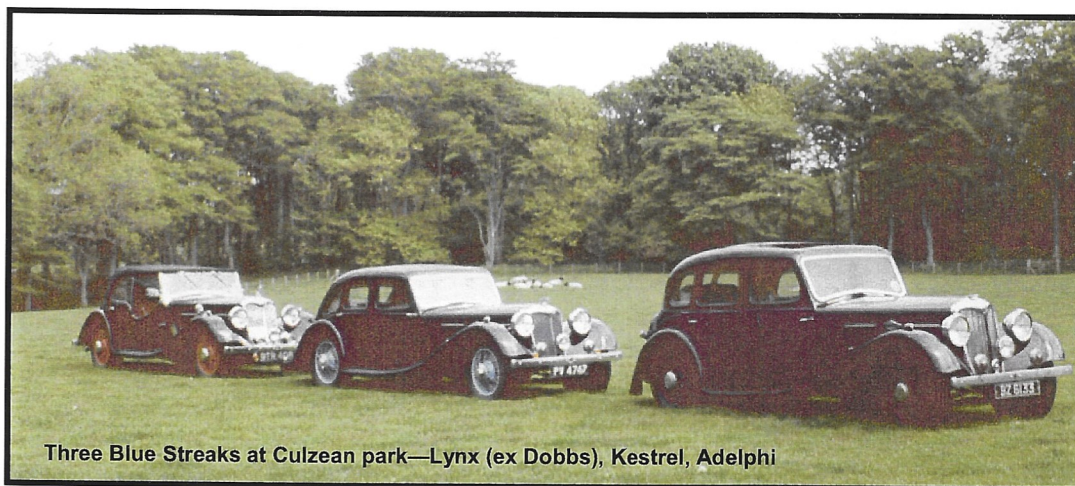
The Editor's Report stated that the membership stood at 102.

The Chairman said that he was happy to be able to say that SRE looked very strong at this moment, and that he looked forward to further success in the future.

Nineteen Ninety-Three

The future held the promise of the sixth National Rally. Adverts had appeared with snippets about the lovely Ayrshire coast and first class accommodation tempting the membership from as early as January. Troon was the venue and Bob and his band of helpers had been working hard on the organisation; so hard that Bob's news had been missing from the *R.Memoranda*, however when he reappeared it was to remark that their noggins had mainly been given over to the planning for the National.

All this work paid off as the National was in Manny Rosenberg's account: "a bloody marvellous weekend!".



Three Blue Streaks at Culzean park—Lynx (ex Dobbs), Kestrel, Adelphi

At the AGM, again held at the Glencarse Hotel, Jim, in his Chairman's Remarks, said the National had been a "splendid event".

It seemed that each area, as they took their turn at organising the National Rallies, managed to make each one seem better than the one before.

Attendance at the second AGM had risen to 23 with two apologies and the main point of concern centred on the production of the *Newsletter*. Bob Mutter was under pressure from his own work-load, so Jim Dunbar agreed to produce the *Newsletter* in reduced format for a year therefore allowing Bob to concentrate on four quarterly issues of *The Scottish Riley Enthusiast*, an upgraded periodical known thereafter as the *Magazine*. Bob, on taking on the *Newsletter* from Jim, had gradually brought it up to an eight or nine page magazine of a high standard, no wonder he was under pressure trying to produce this monthly while still trying to work and live a normal life.

The membership stood at 88 and responsibility for reminders about subscriptions was transferred to the Treasurer to help ease the Editor's load.

The Chairman also reported that the Scottish National Rallies were now well established in the calendar of the three main Riley clubs, and said that it was noticeable that the proportion of attendees from outwith Scotland was growing rapidly.

In fact the Rally at Troon had seen SRE's first visitors from the Continent in the persons of Thibault and Sabine Bigot from Holland, as well as members of Riley Clubs from England and Ulster, so the SRE's fame was spreading. The seventh Scottish National Rally was to be hosted by the Edinburgh group.

Nineteen Ninety-Four

January saw the Aberdeen group celebrating its tenth anniversary and the March *Newsletter* held the first intimation of a small group of people meeting in the Central area at the instigation of Alistair McKenzie.

Spring brought not only daffodils, but the first of Bob Mutter's bumper *Magazines*, with early notice of the May Rally. Frank Hutson was the Co-ordinator and the event was to be based at the Ednam House Hotel, Kelso. As it was to be in the Scottish Borders the event was named "*The Border Reivers*."

The Scots word "reiver" as defined by the Concise Scots Dictionary means either, "the chief male participator" in the annual festival at Duns, or, "one riding in a raid". The March meeting of the Tayside group watched video footage of our "chief male participator" – accompanied by his Reiver Lass, in an annual festival although not at Duns this time. This was the video of the 1993 Monte Carlo Classic Rally where our chief Reiver was Alex Back, (complete with kilt), a member of the Aberdeenshire group and his Reiver Lass, his wife Judy.

The *Border Reivers* proved well able to put together a rally to be proud of, as Jim's article in the *SRE Magazine* revealed, even if most of them hailed from Edinburgh!

Jim congratulated Frank and his team and enthused over the reintroduction of driving tests, the runs and the dinner dance and the Civic reception.



Jim Clark Museum, Duns

As always, Manny Rosenberg wrote congratulating the organisers:

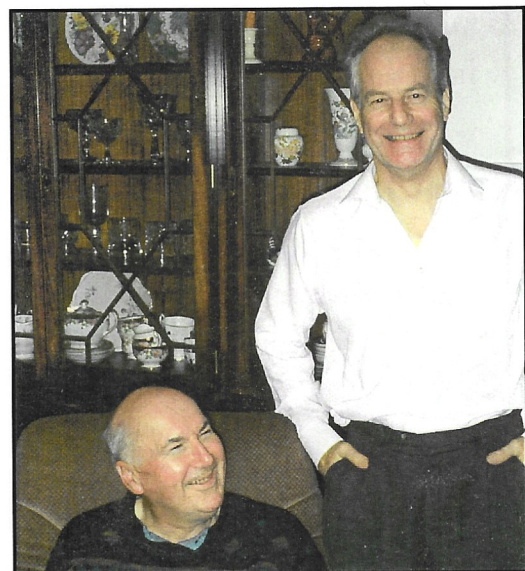
"especially as they had never run such an event before. They most certainly have not let the side down."

Jim heartily agreed with Manny's sentiments at the third AGM again held at the Glencarse Hotel. Jim, in his Chairman's Remarks, commented that:

"in the past year a watershed has been reached. All areas have now served as Rally Coordinating Team and each had brought to the event their own particular style and varied event programme and policies."

"SRE has a strong base, established record, and is capable of maintaining these standards into 1995 and beyond.....the Scottish National Rally is now a fixture in the Riley event calendar, attracting attendance from all over Britain and now and again from abroad. We can justifiably look on the SRE as a mature organisation which continues to grow."

He also mentioned the fact that Victor W Riley, the son of Victor Riley and the nephew of Percy Riley had met many of the SRE members at a gathering in the Gunn's home in Aberdeenshire. Victor had never been involved in the Scottish scene before, but had telephoned Alasdair Gunn in response to a letter Alasdair had written to the Register committee regarding the 1996 Tripartite Rally. Al had been complaining about SRE not being consulted far less involved in a prospective "Scottish" event to precede the rally.



The outcome of the meeting was improved mutual understanding and the establishment of mutual esteem between Victor and SRE. In particular it appeared that SRE were more likely to be involved in the 1996 Tripartite Rally. It was hoped that the rally would create an impetus for greater future cohesiveness of Riley enthusiasm in England. This improved mutual understanding and esteem was evident in Victor's Presidential Foreword to the *Riley Record* of December:

"During the autumn I had the pleasure of meeting members of the Scottish Riley Enthusiasts (SRE) and the Ulster Club (URC) both of whom have taken co-operation between members of Riley Clubs to an advanced stage. In contrast we are still at an early stage, we can learn much from the SRE and URC. I suspect co-operation at membership level is already well developed, and hopefully preparation for the 1996 Centenary Rally will reflect this state."



The Treasurer reported to the third AGM that the club membership now stood at 97.

On the home front Bob Mutter announced that he would have to relinquish the post of *SRE Magazine* Editor due to pressure of work. Bob thanked everyone who had assisted him with contributions and practical help. The Chairman thanked Bob for his services and presented him with a commemorative shield.

Jim agreed to continue as *Newsletter* Editor for the coming year and Aberdeen member Phil Gray volunteered to take on the *SRE Magazine* Editor's post.

Nineteen Ninety-Five

The February *Newsletter* brought tidings of the next Rally. Tayside meetings were now full Rally Team meetings, although they did take time off for their anniversary meal at an Indian restaurant – I wonder if they were looking for a theme for the Rally? April saw them anticipating an increasing workload but these guys were old hands at this game and even suggested that they were happy with their progress.

Frank Hutson had also been busy on behalf of SRE in organising things at the Scottish end of the seventieth anniversary Re-run of the classic London – Edinburgh trip of the Riley Motor Club's founders that had taken place in 1925.

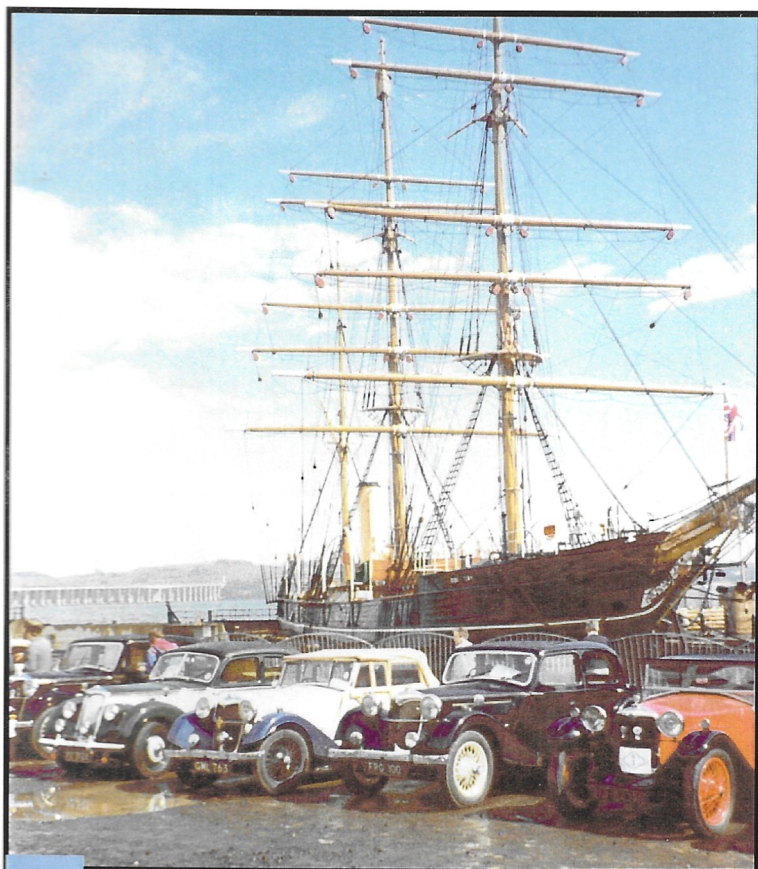
Another of the Edinburgh group, Frank Cooper, had agreed to become the Riley Register representative in Scotland. I wonder how he enjoyed being called "A dyed-in-the-wool Pre-War enthusiast."?

The eighth Scottish National was based at the Gourdie Croft Travel Inn, Dundee. It had been intended to return to Kinfauns Castle but the new owners had other ideas only a few weeks before the rally. This might have been a disaster, but with Tayside's usual efficiency that was averted.

The theme of this event could have been old ships and had nothing to do with India after all.

There was a visit to Scott's ship at Discovery Point, and later a meal on the 19th Century Frigate *Unicorn*. Norman Glen and Manny Rosenberg wrote about this fun-filled event in the *SRE Magazine*.

More fun was in store for the SRE members who went back early from the Rally to greet the participants of the London – Edinburgh Re-run.



On the Sunday morning members of the Edinburgh group hosted a coffee stop at Leadburn Inn, about twelve miles from Edinburgh, for the Re-run participants and Bill Warne, their organiser

The SRE members then escorted the Re-run into Edinburgh, down the Royal Mile, then on for a photo opportunity in Queen's Park. Later they drove back to the Peebles Hydro Hotel where the group enjoyed a meal. As Frank Cooper reported in the SRE magazine, it had been:

"A very worthwhile effort for all the participants and also for the Edinburgh group."



This was reinforced in Jim's Chairman's Report at the fourth AGM held as always at Glencarse on 22 October. Jim said that the Dundee National and the Peebles Rally had been major events that were both successful and enjoyable. He paid tribute to some notable individual contributions:

- Eric Stewart for raising £600 in sponsorship
- Frank Cooper for taking on the office of Scottish Area Secretary for the Riley Register
- Frank Hutson for organising the Scottish end of the London to Edinburgh Run
- Bob Miller for years of dedicated hard work in the Riley cause, for which the Chairman presented Bob with the Elizabeth Skelly award.

The Chairman said he felt that 1995 had been a great Riley year, however before the year was out SRE members were thinking about another great Riley event coming up in June 1996. This was the ARC Riley Centenary Rally at Coombe Park, Coventry.

Nearer home, Jim Watson, his back continuing to give him driving problems, had been finding it difficult to get to Kilmarnock in the winter. He wondered if others in the vicinity of Clelland were having similar difficulties due to the winter weather. Jim therefore proposed what he called a "Kilmarnock Extension" to take place at the Newhouse Hotel (quite close to the Silverburn as it happens) during the more inclement months of winter. The first meeting produced only three people, but they were started! As both the Edinburgh and the North-East meetings and the Tayside Anniversary meal had to be cancelled shortly afterward, you can see how perspicacious Jim Watson had been. I'd like to bet that Jim has never been called that before!

Nineteen Ninety-Six

In February came the 100th issue of the *SRE Newsletter*, and Jim Dunbar wrote that he felt

"a certain degree of achievement in having contributed to the development of SRE through the monthly editions of the *Newsletter*".

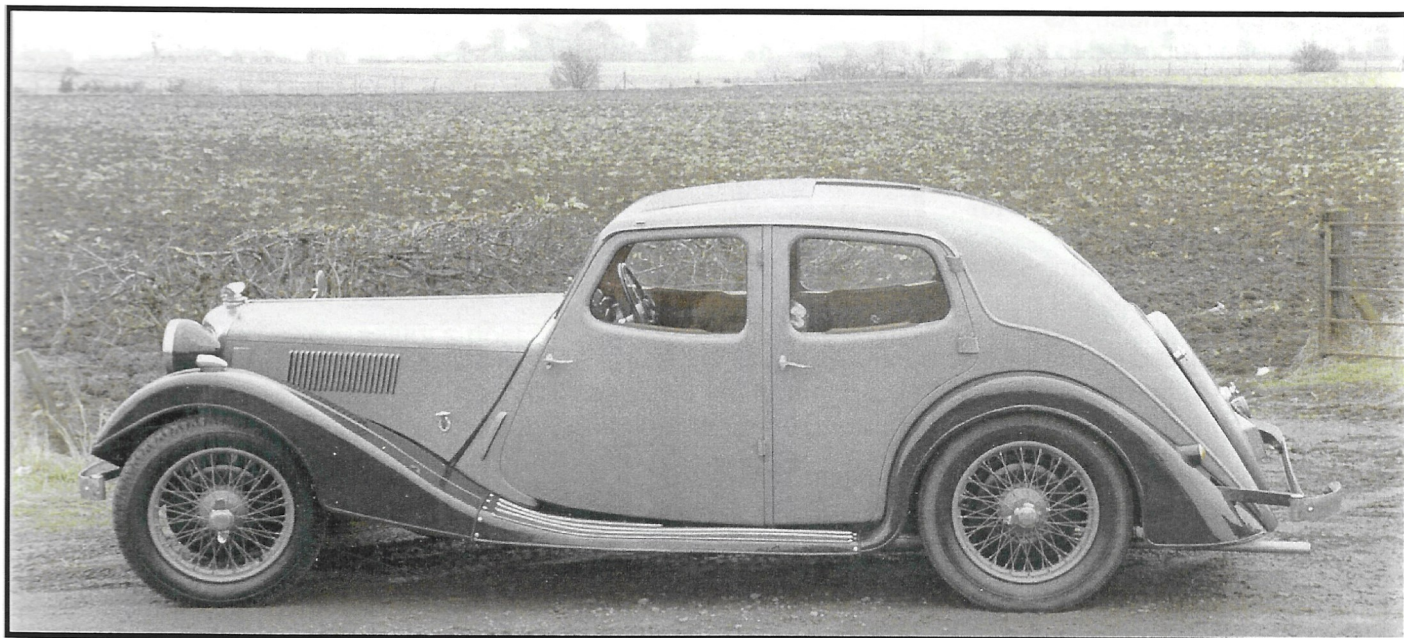
To those of us in SRE, Jim had not just contributed, but was like the ever-present cement that held the bricks together.

From January through to June, the *Newsletter* was full of articles about the Coventry Centenary Rally. Everyone in SRE was catching Coventry Fever. The normal Three-day Scottish National Riley Rally had been put into abeyance for this year due to the needs of the Centenary event, though a one-day 'Feeder Send – Off' Rally in Stirling had been substituted so that the membership who could not manage to join the great Feeder pilgrimage to Coventry could at least have a day out among Rileys.

In the February *Newsletter* we read the names of twelve Australians who were planning to travel from Scotland with the Scottish "Feeder Rally" to the Coventry event. Then in March, the *Feeder* route from Rally to Rally appeared. The committee members were thanked for all their hard work in planning the Stirling one-day *Send-Off Rally*, and five members were individually thanked for their work on the route of the *Feeder*: Norman Glen, Manny Rosenberg, Mike Anderton, Frank Cooper, and Frank Hutson.

In April, Bob Miller wrote that the Kilmarnock Extension had closed for the summer, and that the South-West group were back together at the Fenwick Hotel again.

In that month's *Newsletter* there appeared an item that read almost like an Obituary: "It is sad to part with an old friend – I learned a great deal from BEL" but then in typical male fashion displaying all the fickleness of his sex, this man then commented: "I am currently courting another"



As a Riley enthusiast's wife, I have always known where I stood in the pecking line, and that was before all others, but well behind a gal called LOWie. But at least I now know that I am not alone in this. Perhaps other halves of Riley Partnerships should organise a self-help group called SRE, meaning "*Suffering Riley Emulation*".

Back to Coventry; in May SRE were told that Victor Riley would be at the Stirling one-day "*Send-off Rally*". The SRE Committee met to make the final adjustments to the arrangements for the Stirling *Send-Off Rally* and the *Feeder Rally*. The Stewarts must have been glad to get their home back to themselves after so many Committee meetings!



In June, the great day finally arrived, and Sunday 23rd saw some SRE members and the Australians in their mini-bus meeting up at Stirling University. Even our member, Hugh Ingram from Kelso, USA, was in attendance!

Jim was to comment later in the AGM Chairman's Report that he had been delighted by the turn-out of members for the Send-Off event at Stirling. The quality and the number of attendees had been very pleasing. He had been particularly pleased to see the number of overseas guests that had chosen to start from Scotland.

Jim also said that we had been honoured by the attendance of Victor Riley, who had somehow managed to dash between Scotland and Wales to be present at both *Feeder Send-Offs*.

Jim also said that the *Feeder Rallies* had required considerable effort, and congratulated the members who were able to participate in them. (That the Scottish *Feeder Rally* had required considerable effort can be judged by the fact that no report on the event ever appeared in the *Newsletter*, although a few photos did appear.)

A number of Scottish Rileys had however made the trip separately from the *Feeder*, and these solo efforts all appeared to have been completely successful. The Chairman wished to record his congratulations to all, and to say 'Well Done'



On the subject of the Centenary event, Jim said the scale of it had been unbelievable, and had apparently been unexpected by the organising committee. The Gala dinner, the display of famous cars such as the Dixon special and the Appleton Special etc. were individually great, and the task of assembling them and coordinating must have been mammoth. It had been a great job by the organising Committee, and it seemed to Jim that any future attempt to repeat such a feat would never get the same response again"

Glen Crawford, a member of the Riley RM Club and a former Editor of *R.Memoranda* was given the unenviable task of compiling a report on the Centenary Rally at Coombe park, Coventry, and this was published in the *R.Memoranda*. To quote one of his observations:

"Saturday Morning, and the cars poured in all day with registration plates proclaiming starting points not only all over the British Isles but most of continental Europe too, and memorably a big contingent from Australia and new Zealand. Although some of the longer-distance pilgrims couldn't bring their cars, it was good to meet and chat with German, Swiss, Norwegian, Dutch, Austrian, South African, American and Hawaiian members, and I know I failed to bump into the French and Belgian contingents, but they were there somewhere".

Of particular note for SRE members was the musical entertainment provided after the Dinner by none other than our illustrious Chairman and his friend Neil. Is there no end to this man's talent?

Glen Crawford ended his piece in this manner:

"To the Organising committee we say 'well done and thanks for the hard work'; to our fellow enthusiasts in other clubs both UK and international 'it was great to meet you all', what a brilliant Weekend!"

I think that everyone who attended would heartily agree with these sentiments.

In the same issue of *R.Memoranda*, Derek Allan produced some amazing statistics for the car attendance:

Pre-9 hp: 11, Pre-war: 292, RM: 270, BMC: 52.

A Footnote to this marvellous event, and one that involved an SRE member, is just too funny to leave out. This item appeared in the September *R.Memoranda*:

Centenary Rally Hangovers

Jim Watson was delighted to be awarded the runner-up prize for 'RM Open' class at the Centenary Rally. He was so surprised, however, that he contacted the Organising Committee to ask if we had any idea why so many rally-goers voted for his Triumph Herald. At this stage it was felt that an error had somehow crept in to the judging procedure. With the aid of video evidence we were able to establish the true recipient of this prize Brian Cole and I are searching for the person who compiled the Concours results When we all find him, I wouldn't like to be in his boots!"



Back home and on more domestic matters, Jim Dunbar was clearly becoming desperate to rid himself of the *Newsletter* Editorship, and was relieved when Mike Anderton volunteered for the post.

At the fifth AGM at Glencarse Inn on 27th October, there were 22 attendees and 8 Apologies. Much to his surprise, Alasdair Gunn was presented with the Elizabeth Skelly Award. In a year when so many other people had worked particularly hard, Alasdair was “gobsmacked” by this. However, in all the years of Alasdair’s Secretaryship, he had worked quietly and efficiently behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running and development of the Club.

In his role as Membership Secretary, the Treasurer reported that SRE had 91 paid-up members – even with the Membership hat on, Eric could not resist the financial aspect!

The issue of the Club’s History was raised yet again. It had first been mooted by Jack Taylor that it should be written before everybody forgot it, and the matter had been raised again annually at AGMs, receiving always the Committee response:

“There have been no volunteers. This matter is to be continued”

Finally someone had agreed to act as History Co-ordinator, with the proviso that work would not start immediately due to study commitments.

If anybody had been looking, they might have wondered if the volunteer, one A Gunn who was not Alasdair, was making a bit of a take-over bid in Rileyland, as the same Anna Gunn, in conjunction with her daughter Alison, had been thanked in the *Newsletter* by the Chairman for organising the *Northern Weekend* centred that year on Lossiemouth! Was this a case of that “monstrous regimen of women” of which John Knox had warned, getting uppity again?

Nineteen Ninety-Seven



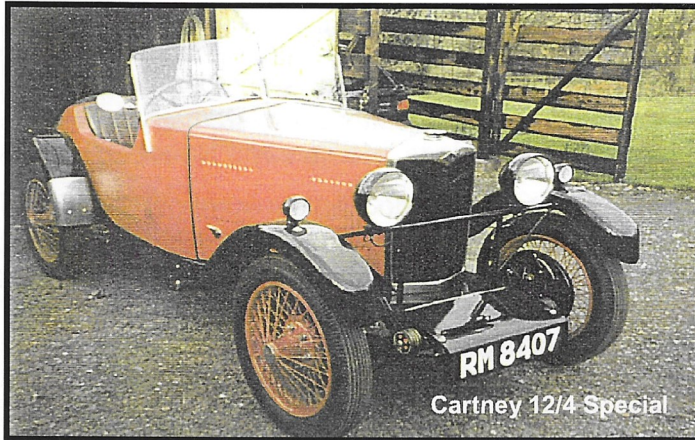
Back to the main issue! The January issue of the *Newsletter* contained as normal the Chairman’s remarks, in this case he was enthusing about the *Blue Angel*, as Noel Stone affectionately named his 9 h.p. Special. Jim commented that

“This car is truly a piece of Scottish Riley history, beginning with John Garden and his unique style of Special Building and design ...”

It is interesting to note what each new Editor brings to the *Newsletter*. For Mike Anderton, one of his big interests was Specials, so unsurprisingly an early innovation was to introduce a “*Specials News*” feature. In one of his first issues he reported on Jim Dunbar’s 12/4-engined Brooklands-styled sports-racer Special, and Mike Cartney’s ’32 12/4 Special based on a Monaco chassis. Then came articles about Frank Cooper’s and Noel Stone’s Specials, followed a few issues later by Mike writing about Peter Graham’s Specials.

At a later date Mike was to write that he admitted to a rather pronounced bias towards the older Prewar machinery, and had been hoping that correspondence from the owners of RMs and BMC models would redress the balance.

Here are two of Mike's selections of pictures of Specials from the *Newsletter*



Cartney 12/4 Special



Cooper 9 h.p. Special

But I digress.....

The January *Newsletter* also held information about the tenth Scottish National Riley Rally. This time the North-East Area were the organisers, with Norman Glen taking the Co-ordinator's role, and the event was to be based at the Marriott Hotel, Dyce, by Aberdeen. I wonder if the North-East area were the first to Fund-raise for the National. I would bet that they were the only group to organise a "Stovies Fun evening"

February's Tayside news reported on their tenth anniversary meal, where the talk was about the 'early days'.

The March *Newsletter* contained Mike's Editorial remark that apart from the Chairman and the Area Secs, no-one else had written to him. "What have I done wrong?" he asked. Research showed that this *Newsletter* contained six pages of text and one full-colour page of photographs of Frank Cooper's Riley 9 Special, and one wondered how many pages that issue would have run to if anyone else had actually written to the Editor, as the norm had hitherto been two pages.

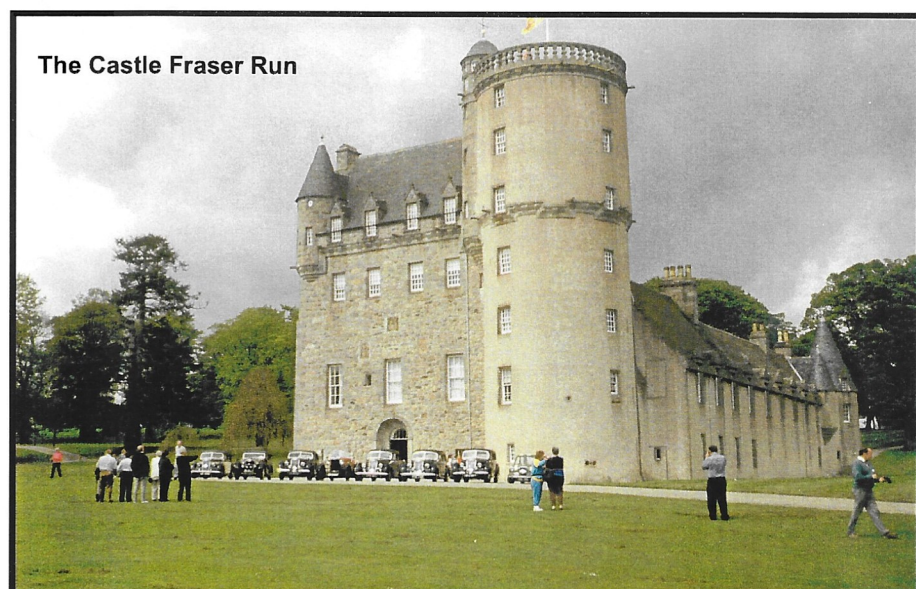
In May, Doug Thurston reported on the invitation received from the Wolseley Register to participate in a Driving test competition, where the Riley team came a very close second to the Morris team, with the Wolseley team coming third! Mike Anderton introduced another innovatory article, this time on 'Classic Car lubrication'. I read all the way through this and found no reference to either *Lagavulin* or *Balvenie*.

The June *Newsletter* carried many references to the tenth Scottish National Riley Rally, and its co-ordinator Norman Glen. Although referred to by the North-East Area as the tenth Annual Rally, it was actually only the ninth, as the Stirling *Send-Off Rally* was not deemed to be an official SNRR. Nevertheless Mike Anderton called it 'an excellent rally' and the Edinburgh group sent their 'heartiest congratulations'.

Fay Fontana wrote an article describing their journey from Braintree in Essex to Aberdeen in *Mary*, their 1929 Mark IV Tourer.

I well remember Henry and Fay arriving at the Hotel, Fay looking absolutely blue with cold.

After 590 miles, it was no wonder that they were awarded the Challenge cup for Effort, given in recognition of their faithful, enthusiastic and all-weather attendance at their fourth Scottish National.



The Castle Fraser Run

Victor Riley also had an interesting journey to Aberdeen. Gwyn and Janet Evans had driven from North Wales and had picked Victor up at Chester. All went well until near Moffat, when the '32 6/14 Alpine Tourer broke a half-shaft, and decided she would tour no more that day.

Victor was sent off to an hotel in Moffat, then on the next day he took a taxi to Lockerbie, caught a train to Edinburgh, where he changed to a train for Aberdeen. He arrived somehow under the impression that Dyce was just a couple of hundred yards up the road from the Aberdeen Joint station, so, carrying his suitcase, he ended up walking the seven miles to the Hotel. As Gwyn was later to say: "No wonder he flew home!"

But what about Gwyn and Janet? Well, they went back home with the car on an RAC transporter, arriving at 11.30 p.m. Gwyn then went straight into the garage and worked till 3.30 a.m. to replace the shaft with a spare he had in stock. After a few hours sleep they left home again, drove 376 miles in nine and a half hours and safely arrived in Aberdeen in time for the Dinner. This exploit earned them the award of the Craighaar Cup for the Spirit of the Rally, and the Committee had no difficulty in agreeing that it was well-merited as their reaction to the problem illustrated perfectly the spirit of any Riley Rally.

However, another side of the spirit of the Rally was revealed by Norman Glen on summing up his thoughts at the end of the event:

"I had one of the biggest lumps in my throat as I looked round the deserted field. It came home to me – it really was all over, almost a year's planning; matured, fulfilled and now gone".



After all this it was not surprising that Jim said at the sixth AGM that it was appropriate to present the Elizabeth Skelly Award for Effort to the member who had done most for the Club in the past year, and by common consent, that had been Norman Glen.

The sixth AGM at Glencarse was a rather special one, as Jim Dunbar was standing down from the office of Chairman. The attendance was 28 persons and there were 9 apologies.

Jim gave a rather longer-than-usual Chairman's Address, asking the indulgence of the members in permitting him to review and record what had been achieved in the first ten years of the History of Riley in Scotland that had led to the formation of SRE. At its end, he said that the future of the Club remained with the Membership and Committee under its new Chairman.

Eric Stewart delivered the Treasurer's Report, announcing that the Committee had agreed to propose to the AGM that the Subscription be raised by £1-00 from £6-00 to £7-00 for the single membership and £8-00 for the family membership. The AGM consented to this proposal. Wearing the Membership Secretary's hat, Eric also reported that SRE now had 90 memberships.

Jim then thanked Eric for his work as Treasurer and Membership Sec throughout the year.

This was followed by the *Newsletter* Editor's Report, which was duly received. Jim thanked Mike Anderton for the report and his year's work, and commented on the high quality and consistency of delivery of the *Newsletter*.

As his final duty, Jim informed the meeting that there had been only one nomination for his successor as Chairman, that being Frank Hutson, and Frank was duly elected, after which Jim stood down. Frank assumed the Chairmanship, and among his first remarks, he said that he did not intend to serve in the office longer than three years, as he believed that SRE needed a younger man in that critical post. He said he would be seeking a successor in due course.

Frank then announced that the Committee had offered Jim Dunbar the Honorary office of President of SRE, which he had accepted. This office made sure that while Jim Dunbar would be spared much of the stress of leadership, his wisdom would continue to be accessible to the Club.

Frank invited Victor Riley to present Jim with a framed Parchment commemorating his appointment. Victor did so, saying that Jim deserved the thanks of the members for his ten-year involvement in leading SRE to where it is today, and repeated that this achievement was largely due to him.

The Chairman thanked the Committee and all members who had attended the AGM and there was a closing vote of thanks to Jim Dunbar. Jim's contribution to SRE cannot be over emphasised. To say that there would have been no SRE without his foresight and determination is not to exaggerate his part in this history. Other members certainly played their part in the story, but without Jim there would have been no story and no history of SRE to compile. Most members who were there were aware that his stepping down as Chairman would bring changes to SRE. This therefore was indeed the closing of a chapter in SRE history.



Frank Hutson



Second Chairman of SRE

Under New Management

The Hutson Era

Nineteen Ninety-Eight

When Frank Hutson accepted the Chairmanship of SRE, he said his first task was:

“To thank Jim for all his time, energy and enthusiasm which he has dispensed so freely and willingly to further the Riley cause, both in Scotland and on the National scene”.

He also thanked Laura and the rest of Jim’s family for putting up with a great amount of inconvenience while Jim pursued matters “Riley”. Now Betty, Frank’s wife was about to suffer similar inconvenience as Frank set about pursuing matters “Riley”.

The April *Newsletter* contained news from abroad, no, not from Hugh Ingram, our American member, but from our own Stuart and Elma Ritchie who managed to track down Rileys in Honolulu while on holiday! The magazine showed a photo of Stuart with a superb 2½ RM Drophead coupe.

Back at home in May, the ‘Real’ tenth Scottish National Riley Weekend had arrived. It was based at the Strathaven Hotel, Strathaven. This event was hosted by the South – West group with Bob Miller and Gordon McAllan acting as Rally Coordinators.

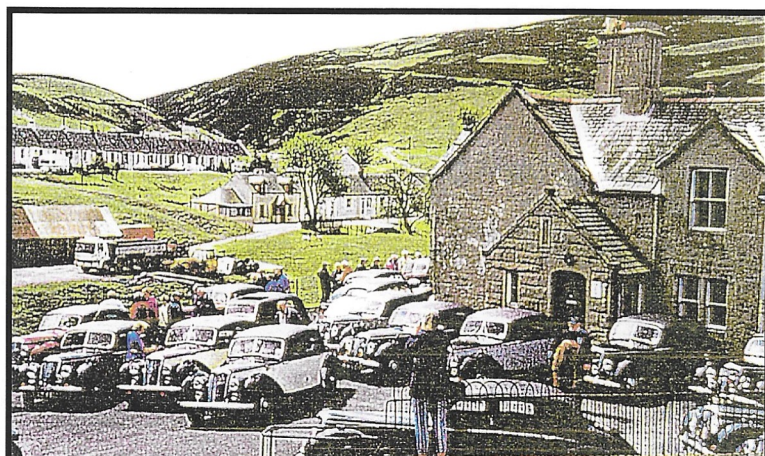
Bob in his inimitably loquacious manner gave his verdict on the Strathaven event in the *Newsletter*.

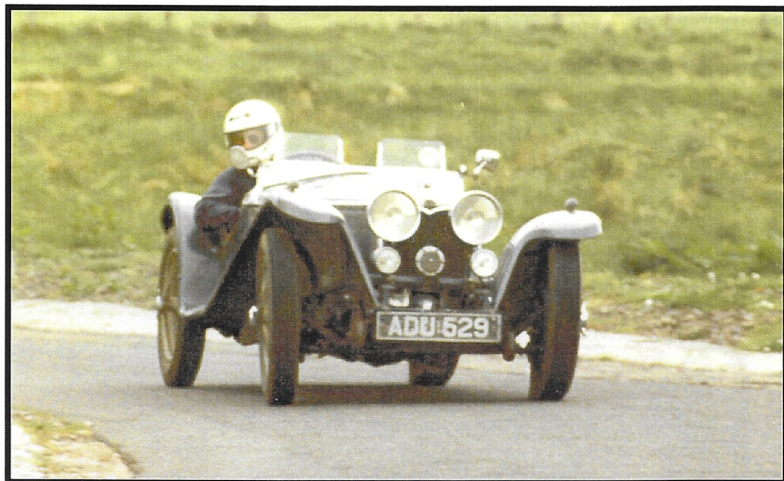
“Our weekend, I thought, went well with everything going to plan”.

To get a better flavour of this event, especially the driving experiences at the Kames racing track, one only has to read Jim Dunbar’s article from the June *Newsletter*.

“We were looking forward to visiting the Kames track in the afternoon. We picked up a passenger, Gerard O’Hare who promptly became Noel’s navigator and before he could refuse he was at Kames with us.

I must admit to being a bit concerned about going on the course as I knew that the centre main bearing in my engine was badly worn. Basically, I did not want to over-rev it and blow it up. Tom Richardson soon put me right – he clapped the crash helmet on my head and said: “Go out and enjoy yourself” and I did! The first circuit was slow and the second was much more confident. This was my first experience on a race-track and I thoroughly enjoyed it.





Noel had a shot, so did Kirsten Junker in Noel's car. Then Mike Cartney showed us how it should be done in his Special – he belted round really working the car to its full. Tom then gave us the MPH version as he squealed the tyres on each corner ... great!

I wanted another shottie, this time Tom clapped the crash helmet on my head as he said "Go on, break it in Jim!". I did my best to squeal the tyres, and I got very close to over-cooking it a couple of times but it was an experience I will remember for a long time. Gerard said afterwards that I had a permanent grin on my face – chuffed that the car handled so well and did not blow up!

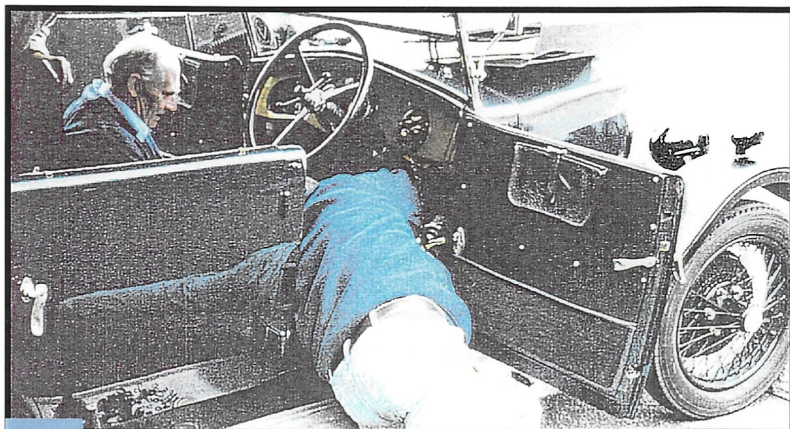
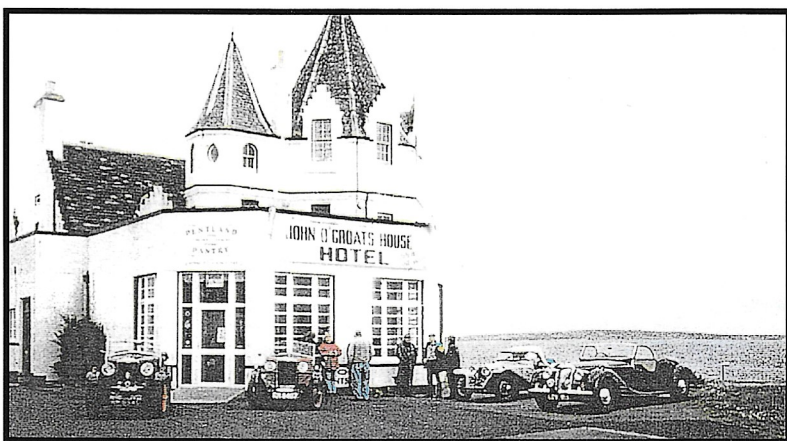
On the distaff side it would be remiss not to highlight the fact that one of the Riley Enthusiasts who gleefully raced round the track that day was non-other than the North East Area's youngest member, Kirsten Junker.

No sooner was the National over than Rileys were on the move again, this time as roads led to Gaydon, for the second Centenary rally.

Mike Anderton and Mike Cartney had organised a Feeder run from John O'Groats and six cars took off from there, one of them being a Mercedes towing a caravan belonging to Dutch Riley Club members, Herman and Henny Rouwhorst. This was particularly appropriate as the original Jan de Groot was a Dutchman.

Mike's article in the *Newsletter* reads a little like the story of the Pied Piper except rather than collecting children, the two Mikes collected Rileyists and their cars.

The resulting *Newsletter* photographs show that all the participants had a good time, although only one photo records someone tinkering with a car - while reading the accompanying text might have suggested that Fettling was the theme of the run!



The actual second Centenary Rally at Gaydon was, as Nigel Trotman wrote in *R.Memoranda*:

“Clearly a success if only in terms of numbers. Over 500 cars attended but no reference could be found for the actual number of people who were there but even wonderful Rileys cannot get very far without their drivers.”

Lynx Line-up at
Gaydon

(The ex-Fergus
McBride car is fourth
from Right)



Some Rileys and their drivers did make it to the seventh AGM on the 11th October, once again held at the Glencarse Hotel. Twenty-one people attended and there were eleven apologies.

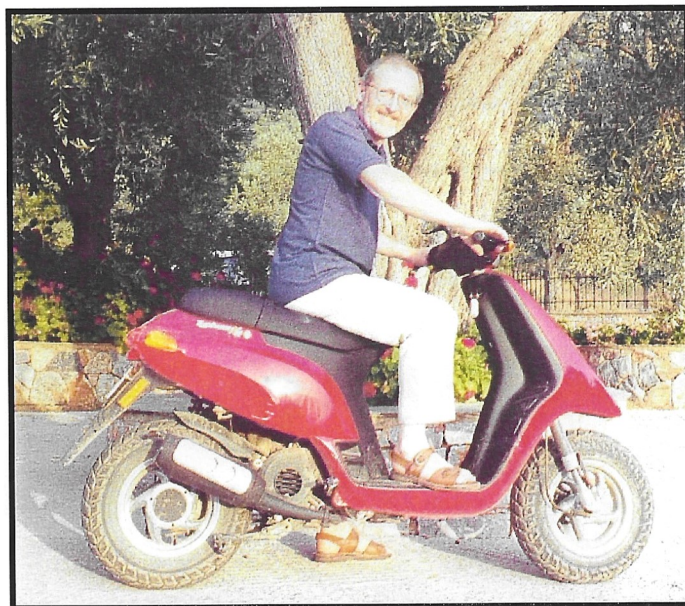
Frank Hutson, the Chairman, after discussing the year's events, announced that after two years as Editor of the *Newsletter*, Mike Anderton wished to resign from the post.

The Chairman, on accepting Mike's resignation, congratulated him on his achievements in the Editor's seat and also on the standard he had reached in the production of an excellent publication.

Gordon McAllan, of the South-West Area, volunteered (indeed Scooted) into the post of Editor, as long as he could restrict his work to the text creation and design for the *Newsletter*, and Alasdair and Anna Gunn agreed to take on the copying and posting duties.

The AGM was given early intimation of a proposed Rerun of the London - Edinburgh event of 1925. The Committee had decided to change the order of SRE Areas hosting the National Rally to ensure that the South-East Area would be “in the chair” for that year, thereby allowing members of SRE to participate in the Edinburgh end.

The Chairman then reiterated his own intention of retiring from office no later than the year 2000. Frank thanked the Office Bearers and others who gave of their time to SRE.



Gordon McAllan produced his first issue of the *Newsletter* in November and in his very first column he mentioned Rover's new 75 Saloon and noted its elegance, quality fit, finish and reliability. In subsequent issues he mentioned Alvises, Invictas, Crossleys and Ferraris.

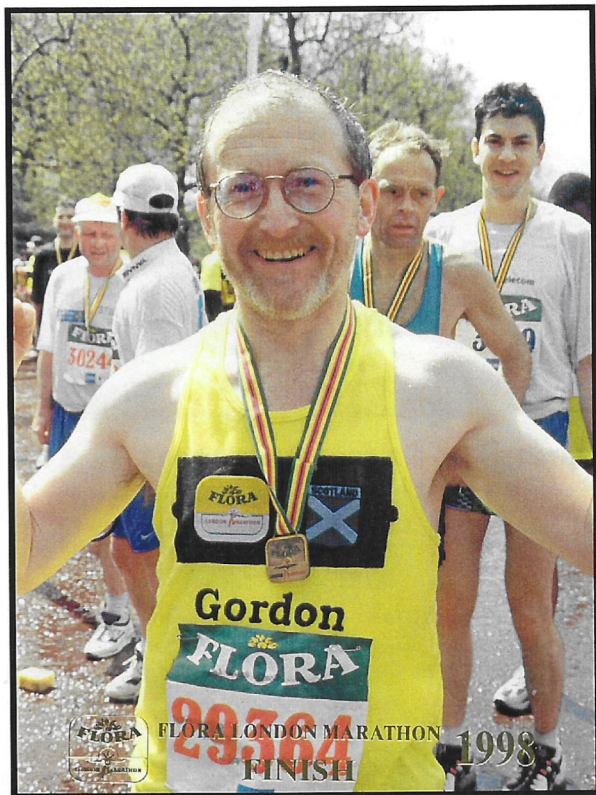
In his defence – if he needed it - he also talked about his love of Rileys – just as well, or perhaps he might have been heading for defrocking before he had got properly into the Editor's job. Certainly he appeared to be a bit of a motoring polymath!

Nineteen Ninety-Nine

The January *Newsletter* appeared and with it came the first advert for the eleventh National Rally to be based at the Pitlochry Hydro Hotel. The Coordinator, Bill Webb, was urging members to join in a

“... hassle-free, enjoyable, scenic weekend.”

February saw the Tayside group celebrating their twelfth Anniversary Dinner, while the North-East were recovering from their late Christmas Dinner, obviously things take longer to reach the north – it's the transport, you know! The Central group were planning a September trip to Taynuilt and there was talk of the Hon. President putting himself about a bit in Edinburgh.



As mentioned earlier, Gordon McAllan, *aka* The Scribe, can well be described as a polymath, - well, not only does he know everything, he also does everything. He must surely be the first SRE member to take part in the London Marathon – no, not just watching it on TV, but actually running and managing to finish!

Gordon even managed to run to Scone Palace for the ending of the eleventh Scottish National, perhaps that explains why he missed the beginning! However, on that occasion, Gordon allowed the car to do the running. It was just as well he had not used a Hot Air balloon, yet another of his interests; perhaps Hot Air is sometimes a helpful requisite in the Editor's chair?

For those who managed to be there for the entire National it was very successful.

The Chairman in his column in the *Newsletter* reviewed the Pitlochry National thus:

“The venue was ideal and the views were superb, once the Scotch mist cleared away.”

(Was Frank really referring to the weather here?)



The organisers thought the Rally was hassle-free and they must have been correct in their assessment. John Burgess had been charged by the Strathclyde area group to record their thanks and congratulation and wrote:

“Congratulations for a well organised and thoroughly enjoyable National. A great turn out of cars and enthusiasts, good things to do in beautiful surroundings and everything ran like clockwork.”

Frank in his Chairman's Report at the eighth AGM held again at Glencarse on 12th October echoed these sentiments saying;

“It really was an enjoyable experience for all those who attended”

The Elizabeth Skelly Cup was awarded to Bill Webb for his work with Tayside in organising the National Rally. The Chairman also congratulated Mike Cartney and the Central area for a successful weekend at Taynult.

Eric Stewart gave his final Treasurer's report as he had decided to stand down from this office. Eric had served in this capacity since the inception of SRE. Wearing his Membership Secretary's hat, he reported that the membership stood at 107 members.

Frank thanked Eric for all his work on SRE's behalf and again reiterated his own determination to resign as Chairman in 2000.

Twenty members had attended the AGM.

Two Thousand

January brought a new look to the *Newsletter*. This was not a total deviation from what had gone before, but was just enough to have helped the membership to realise that they and the *Newsletter* had moved into a new Millennium.

Plans were afoot to make the Millennium Rallies never to be forgotten events. Some Rileyists were planning to go to Alice Springs in Australia. An intrepid member of SRE and his wife, Frank and Ruth Cooper, were planning to take part in a Riley Expedition to the Arctic Circle in Norway in June.

For Scottish members, the National Rally hosted by the South-East Area of SRE was going to be special in its own way, as the Sunday of the event would join up with the Riley Motor Club's London to Edinburgh Celebration Run.

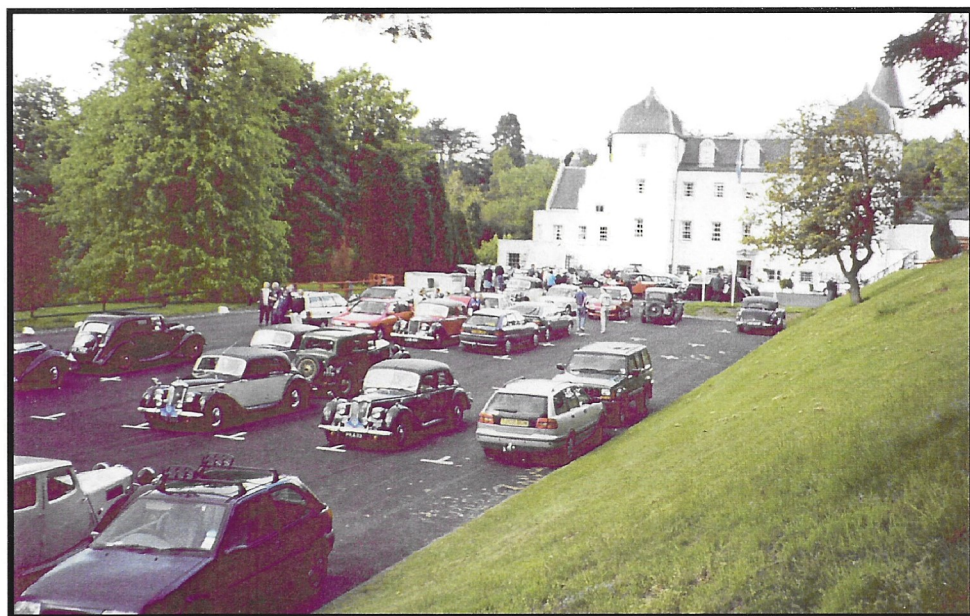
Finally, in June, the big event arrived. The twelfth Scottish National Riley Rally was based at the Barony Castle, Eddlestone, Peebleshire, a most impressive building in Revival Scots Baronial Style.

The Rileys looked excellent parked with this building as backdrop.

An innovation introduced by the Edinburgh group was a Charity Auction held on the Saturday evening and £140 was raised.

Another first was the attendance of Beat Fischer, the President of the Swiss Riley Club who brought best wishes from the Swiss Club.

Victor Riley also attended and gave a short address.



That the Millennium year Rally was indeed special, could be gauged by Frank's report in the *Newsletter* where he wrote:

"Some 61 Rileys finished up in Holyrood Park on the Sunday afternoon and what a proud sight they made. I would venture to state that this is probably the greatest number of Rileys seen in Scotland, in one place, since the war."



The South-East Area had certainly provided SRE with a Millennium Rally to be proud of, - and an extract from Jim Dunbar's article in the *Newsletter* seemed to sum it up perfectly:

"As Honorary President of SRE, I must congratulate Frank Hutson, his Rally Committee and the Edinburgh area for the outstanding work they put in on our behalf this year. I know this Rally was special because of the 2000 celebrations, and because of the link with our RMC colleagues and the London - Edinburgh Run. Every National is a huge effort, but the sheer numbers of Riley folk and the large number of cars to consider made the task this time even greater.

.....in all our SRE days and before, I have never seen so many Rileys assembled in one place. I may be wrong, but I heard figures like 64/63/66 A truly great display of Rileys of all kinds and Rileys that had travelled so far. As one of the founders of SRE, it gave me particularly great pleasure to see such a display, which reflected so much the philosophy and *raison d'être* of Scottish Riley Enthusiasts."

The July issue of the *Newsletter* brought congratulations from Frank Hutson to Frank and Ruth Cooper for having successfully completed the epic "Arctic 2000" event. This was such an historic epoch - making grand adventure that it surely deserves to be recounted here in full from the article Frank Cooper wrote in the *Newsletter*, entitled "*Beyond the Arctic Circle*":

In 1934, Rupert Riley and Gordon Barrett took their Riley Nine KV3092 from Bergen through Norway and the north of Finland to the edge of the Arctic Sea.

This epic journey was the inspiration for David Allberry (then Register Secretary) in 1997 to suggest leading a group of pre war Rileys to the Arctic Circle and on to the North Cape of Norway in the Millennium Year, a very ambitious plan: over 3000 miles in 15 days over largely deserted roads. The sort of challenge worthy of our Riley cars!

On 4th June 2000, ten Rileys arrived at Bergen and began their journey north. Few of us were prepared for the sudden darkness, length and frequency of the tunnels, or for their bends and gradients. Nor were we prepared for the hair-raising hairpin climbs and descents of the mountain passes, or for the 25ft snowfalls.

The wonder of the vistas, snow-capped mountain peaks, deep blue fjords and tiny hamlets far below took our breath away - as did the mountain air!

All ten cars reached the Arctic Circle on 8th June and six cars arrived at the North Cape on 10th June, 1550 miles from Bergen.

Our return was via the coastal fjord route, of immense bridges, twelve ferries, more tunnels and breathtaking scenery, to arrive in Bergen on 19th June. Four cars arrived together, after 3249 miles in fifteen days:-1929 Tourer; 1936 Kestrel; 1936 Continental; 1937 Continental (ourselves).

Ruth and I were proud to have been part of an adventure that had all the ingredients of a 1930's motoring expedition and was worthy of the Riley tradition of engineering and enterprise.

Group mechanical problems: a broken half shaft (fixed next morning); cylinder head; magneto drive; crown wheel; gearbox; big end; and one car left the road - but all came home! Our sincere thanks to our fellow travellers for their encouragement and good company, and to David Allberry for his initiative, his faultless organisation and relaxed leadership.

It was hardly surprising when, at the AGM, Frank Cooper was awarded the Elizabeth Skelly Cup for the SRE member who had made an outstanding contribution to Rileying that year.

The Ninth AGM was held on 15th October for the first time in the Royal Hotel, Dunkeld. At this meeting Frank Hutson stood down from the position of Chairman and Mike Cartney was elected SRE's third person to hold that office.

Frank Hutson, in his final Chairman's Report thanked the Committee members for their support and encouragement. He particularly thanked Margaret and Eric Stewart for the use of their home for Committee meetings. He ended his report by saying:

"I have enjoyed my time over the past three years as Chairman, but as I have stated previously, I feel that it is not a good thing to remain in office indefinitely. A fresh mind, fresh ideas and enthusiasm for the club and Rileys in general is required and when we come later this afternoon to elect my successor I am sure we will have the right man for the task ahead. It has been a privilege to serve Scottish Riley Enthusiasts as Chairman, following in the footsteps of our illustrious President and I look forward to remaining on the committee as the South East Branch representative.

I wish you all success with your Rileys, in whatever state they are, in the coming year."

Frank Hutson had served the club well in his three-year tenure of office as Chairman. He and Betty had attended as many events as possible and were good ambassadors for SRE.

It is interesting to note that when Jim Dunbar was Chairman, as early as the first Scottish National Weekend, he experienced a certain degree of embarrassment. His RMA, GSV 209, broke down before he had even reached the assembly point at Bankfoot, and he suffered the ignominy of arriving at the event on a tow-rope behind Norman Glen's Scimitar. He also went home by trailer from the fourth National at Arrochar when BEL 131 suffered a similar fate.

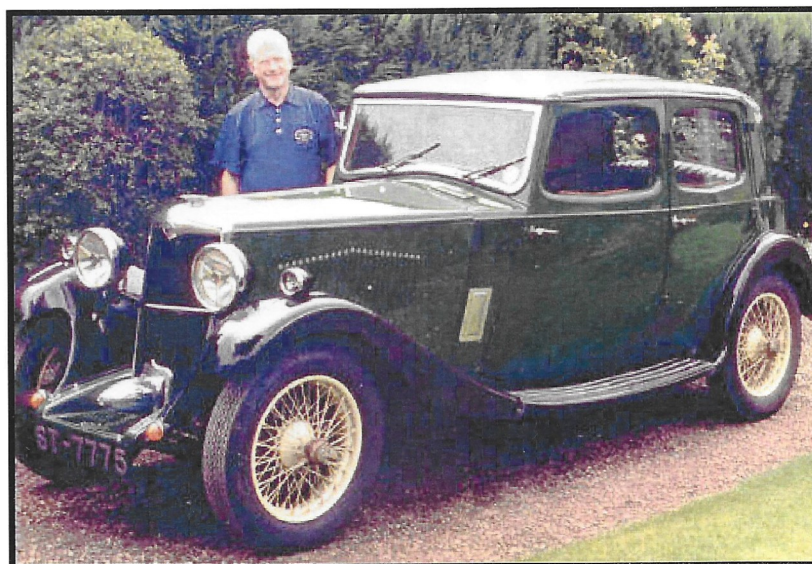
Frank followed in this tradition throughout his term of Chairmanship when his Mentone suffered repeated internal difficulties. Should SRE have handed Mike Cartney warnings about the "poisoned chalice" which he had so willingly accepted?

The year 2000 had indeed provided SRE members with many happy memories to cherish and with the end of Frank's term of office as Chairman, another chapter in the history of the SRE had come to an end.

What lies in the future is as yet unknown, but if SRE continues to flourish as it has done since its inception in 1991, then members in Scotland can confidently expect to continue to enjoy Really Magnificent Motoring through beautiful scenery, in the company of like-minded enthusiasts.

As Jim would say:

"Long may it continue"





The History of Scottish Riley Enthusiasts
by
Anna Gunn

This Volume is one of a uniform suite of six Club Histories published by Scottish Riley Enthusiasts. It is an overview of the development of the Club until 2000. The others cover the same period, and are related from the perspective of one of the Club local Areas.

The other Volumes are entitled:

The History of the South-West Area	by Bob Miller
The History of the North-East Area	by Anna Gunn
The History of the Tayside Area	by Eric Stewart
The History of the South-East Area	by Frank Hutson
The History of the Central Area	by Mike Cartney

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