

Colin Jeffrey – “Life Is Good” After the Labs

My Dad started his working life as a Ploughboy, then became an Engineering Apprentice, Car Mechanic, then Aero-Engine Fitter with the RAF, Quality Inspection Manager of Prototypes, Test & UK Production for Citroen Light 15 Cars. He then moved into Electronic Engineering with EMI, Ultra and Plessey.

Why is this relevant to my life after STL? Well, most of my interests seem to have evolved in synergy with my Dad, except in a somewhat reverse order!

Although I studied and worked in the field of Electronic Engineering (designing Silicon Microchips and Cordless Telephones Systems), I have always had an interest in all forms of engineering.

During my time working at STL, Phonepoint and Nortel, I never really had the time for many hobbies except for family holidays and following various forms of Motor Sport as a spectator.

My first car was a Morris Minor, moving on to Vauxhall Viva's when I got married and started a family. A succession of family cars followed during my working career.

After early retirement at the end of 1999, I worked as an independent Technical & Business Development Consultant, then for the Office for National Statistics on the 2001 Census, part time Exam Invigilator at a local Secondary School, Market Researcher for Ipsos-Mori and as a Technical Analyst on behalf of local Tax Consultants, all of which were interesting, but not particularly exciting.

Over the years I have driven many varied vehicles: Classic Cars, Vintage and Modern Tractors, Race/Rally Cars and Karts on track days, Honda Buggies, Mini Hovercraft, Diggers, Quadbikes and a Railway Steam Engine. Perhaps that will give some insight into some of my major interests.

Goodwood

As I have said, I have always been interested in cars and all forms of motor racing, so I attended my first Goodwood 'Festival of Speed' in 1999 and a couple of years later returning to the Goodwood Motor Racing Circuit (the circuit of my youth in the 50's and 60's) for the 'Revival Meeting'.



I have been a Member of the GRRC (Goodwood Road Racing Club) since 2005 and attended every year since.

The Goodwood Revival is a three-day festival held each September for the types of cars and motorcycles that would have competed during the circuit's original period, 1948–1966.

Historic aircraft help to complete the vintage feel.

A few years ago I took a wonderful flight over Chichester and the Sussex Downs in a De Havilland Dragon Rapide, which was a 1930's short-haul biplane airliner.

Nearly everyone dresses up in vintage outfit from mods and rockers to racing drivers and just smart period clothes, it's a huge fancy dress party as well as serious racing. We usually camp at the circuit for 4 days along with friends and family.



Chauffeuring

Just about the best job I ever had, only employed for 4 days a year! For several years I was a VIP Chauffeur at the Silverstone British Grand Prix for 'The F1 Paddock Club', ferrying guests between the Hospitality, Pits and Helipads.



I drove Paul Casey (golfer), Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York (very friendly and great legs!), World Champion Jody Schechter, Eddie Jordan, the CEO of Santander and Philip Hammond MP, (then Minister of Transport), to present the trophies.

In 2008, I looked down from the roof of the Race Control Tower above the podium, to see Lewis Hamilton cross the line to win his first British Grand Prix and collect his trophy.



Great fun, I was able to watch the racing when guests were otherwise occupied and they paid me as well; although I would have done it for nothing!

The Beamish Safety & Reliability Trial

For 10 years now, I have been lucky enough to co-drive in the 'Beamish Run' with my good friend Tom Hewitson. We have competed in several different Classic Cars that he has owned a: pre-war 1939 MG SA; 1955 Austin A90 Westminster; 1948 Austin Sixteen, and a 1954 Mk1 Ford Zephyr 6, all with varying successes.



There have been a few notable incidents, most notably a brake failure in the MG SA approaching a steep downhill double hairpin bend over 'Cross Top' out of Askrigg.

The Beamish Safety & Reliability Trial was devised as a re-creation of the early road trials staged by the region's motoring pioneers. The hills and dales we now run over were once the test grounds for the then infant motor vehicle, both before and after the Great War (1914-1918) period.



The revived version of the 'Beamish Run' is for cars, motorbikes and commercial vehicles manufactured up to 1956. It is NOT a race or timed rally, but as the name suggests it is a test of the vehicles' reliability.

1940s/50s Vintage Tractors & Ploughing

My friend Tom also introduced me to his collection of vintage tractors. One day without me knowing, he entered me into a Vintage Ploughing Competition in



Northallerton. I managed to get a couple of days instruction and practice on the farm, both on the rules and the regulations, since it has to be done in a prescribed way, and also how to operate the plough, which has 9 different levers and controls to adjust. Complicated!

I was very surprised to win 2nd prize two years running at the North Yorks Vintage Ploughing

Competition (Novice Class) driving a 1946 grey Fergie Tractor.

We also drove on cross-country Tractor Runs over the North York Moors above Runswick Bay with wonderful views, then along tracks and green lanes over the top of the moors and down an extremely steep and rock strewn gully, near to 'Roseberry Topping', into Guisborough.

1974 Triumph TR6

I've saved my pride and joy till last. I was out with a friend, when we started talking about classic cars. I mentioned that I was looking for something sporty with a decently powerful engine that I could easily afford and maintain myself. He said he knew there was a TR6 for sale locally and that was it.

So 8 years ago I bought a 1974 British Racing Green Triumph TR6 Classic Sports Car. It runs well, not too difficult to maintain myself, and fun to drive, about 2,000 miles/year. GTA368N has



been to many Classic Car Shows and Events, a Lake District Tour to the 'TR Summer Ball', Teesside and 'TR International' at Harrogate and Malvern. Also Club 'Weekends Away' in Hythe, Rutland Water, Kidderminster and Warwickshire, mainly with the East Saxons' TR Register Group. I have managed our events calendar and now edit their magazine

As part of the Club's event in 2014, I was lucky enough to share the drive of the unique Triumph TS2 prototype to and from the TR Register



Offices in Didcot, to celebrate 'East Saxons' 10th Anniversary Lunch at 'The Lawn' in Rochford, Essex. In the future I plan some continental touring in the TR and also our campervan.