

Post-War Patter

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Monaco & Silverstone 2004

Post-war 'Nashes have been much in evidence recently. At the Historic Monaco races in mid-May there were 5 Le Mans Reps and a Mille Miglia plus an FN-BMW in the 10-lap pre-1953 sports car race. This event commemorated the 1952 Monaco GP which that year was run for

Curtis' LM, Murray Smith packed up after 3 laps and Frank Sytner's ex-Bob Gerard car did not make the start.

At the Historic Festival at Silverstone in early June there were three 'Nashes in the drum-braked sports car race. Peter Mann was driving his LM, Phil Champion was in Milly again and prospective new member Colin Percy was in his newly acquired LM. Peter packed up but Phil

beat Colin who was having trouble staying in his car – he usually races a Jaguar E Type or an MGB with full roll-cages and seat belts!

At the Goodwood Revival in September, the race for the Madgwick Cup this year will be for production sports/racing cars using BMW or BMW-derived engines of a type that raced prior to 1955. There will be a fair few 'Nashes and FN-BMWs entered for this.

Monaco, June 2004 - John Ure, in Peter Mann's ex Tony Crook Le Mans Mk II, who finished a fantastic 2nd - but look at those cross-eyed front wheels here in practice. He was apparently pushed into the barrier!

All photos with the exception of this one, courtesy of the Archives



sports cars. In 1952 there were 2 races, one for up to 2-litres, the other for larger cars, and Tony Crook finished a fighting third in the 2-litre race. This year Tony's car, now owned by Peter Mann, was driven brilliantly into second place by John Ure who also won the pre-1947 GP race in Peter's ERA. In the 'Nash, John beat Jaguar C Types, Talbot Lagos and various Ferraris and Maseratis. David Franklin finished ninth in Ken MacMaster's BMW while Phil Champion came fifteenth in "Milly" despite clutch problems and José Fernandez was twenty-first in his Le Mans. James Wood had a lucky escape after hitting the armco when a half-shaft let go on Stephen

Cars Changing Hands

There are currently 3 post-war cars being advertised for sale in the motoring press, a High Speed, a LM Rep and a LM Coupé.

Peter Jackson's High Speed (chassis 006) is a very historic 'Nash; it was the Works car used by Serafini in the 1949 Targa Florio and Mille Miglia. It was then owned and raced by Tony Crook in 1950, Lawrence Mitchell in 1951-3 and Peter Scott-Russell in 1954. Following a bad crash it was turned into a V8-engined special but was rescued and rebuilt with a LM-style body and Bristol engine in the 1970s.

The LM Rep (chassis 159) is one of the last few Mk Is made and was exhibited at both the Festival of Britain and the 1951 Earls Court Motor Show. It was purchased by John Melvin of Scotland in early 1952 and raced by him and two subsequent owners until 1956. Since then it has had little mileage added and just two more owners.

The LM Coupé (chassis 202) was completed and sold in late 1954. It has had two major rebuilds in its life and following the second was bought by Michael Parr who took it on the 1999 Merano Raid. It has recently been owned by Iain Cheyne.

Two other post-war cars changed hands in the last 6 months. Peter Mann sold the ex-Stoop 1954 Sebring which also came on the 1999 Raid. This famous car competed at Le Mans in 1955, 56 and 57. It passed through the trade and was bought by Bill Ainscough. Unfortunately, the engine that had been in it since Stoop's days (fitted in 1959) was replaced as it moved through the trade - what a great pity!

Frank Sytner sold the ex-Kenya 1953 Le Mans Mk II, which Stirling Moss has driven at Historic Monaco in recent years, to Colin Percy who made his début in it at Silverstone's Historic Festival in June.

The Mille Miglia Model

Phil Champion has been campaigning his lovely Mille Miglia (nicknamed Milly) for 5 years now and I have often heard people say that they think it the prettiest 'Nash around. Some may assume that it is a unique car but in fact 11 MMs were produced between late 1949 and early 1953 of which 3 were near enough identical to Milly. The fact that 2 of the latter 3 were exported new to the US, and have not been seen in the UK since, obviously adds to the apparent

uniqueness of Milly. They have always been considered beautiful and nearly every MM was exhibited at a major motor show when new.

Mille Miglias fall into three groups of 3 or 4 cars each. The first group had a chassis which extended beneath the rear axle, unlike other post-war 'Nashes where the chassis was extended up and over the rear axle. This group of 4 cars can also be identified by oblong or square-shaped radiator grills rather than the more usual upright grill found on LM Replicas. The first car (chassis 115) appeared at the Earls Court Motor Show in late September 1949 and became the most famous of all MMs, winning the 2-litre class at Le Mans in 1950 and competing there again in 1951 and 52. It was raced extensively by Dickie Stoop up to 1954 and then went into honourable retirement when Stoop bought his Sebring. Originally painted carnation red for Earls Court, it was repainted dark green for Le Mans and has remained that colour since. This historic car is now owned by Alex Boswell.

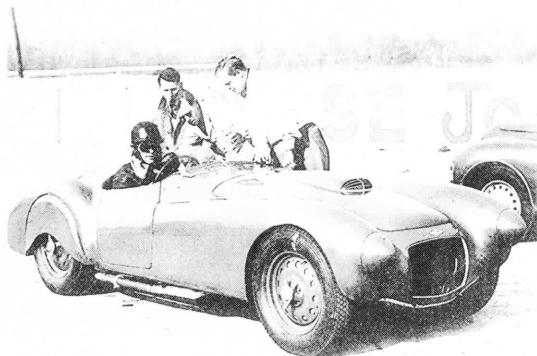
In early 1950 the second MM (chassis 117) was completed and sent to the Geneva Motor Show in March, then on to the New York Show in April. It had the underslung rear chassis like Stoop's car and a very simple oblong radiator grill. Originally painted white, it was sold to James Manfield in August 1950 who had it painted blue and used it in a couple of

Chassis 115 - The first Mille Miglia, just completed, in the Works - Sept. 1949



Chassis 115 - Dickie Stoop at a driving test - May 1953

club events in 1951. He lent it to Jack Fairman to drive at Goodwood in April 1951 whereupon Motor Sport described it as "Fairman's truly beautiful blue Mille Miglia". Then in October Tony Crook and James Manfield took it to Montlhéry for some record-breaking where Crook



Chassis 117 - Tony Crook at Montlhéry - Oct. 1951

recorded 10kms at over 120 mph with a best lap of 121.8 mph. Subsequent owners raced the car until 1961 by which time it was painted red. It now sits quietly in a small motor museum in Sussex, dreaming of past glories.

The third MM (chassis 118) was completed for the Earls Court Show in October 1950 and the following month sold via Tony Crook to a Philip Strutton. Painted maroon (a popular colour for MMs) it changed hands each year but was



used in only a few minor competitive events until purchased by Gerry Burgess in 1954 for use in rallies including the Alpine and Tulip, when it was painted white. It was then raced in different

colours by various owners up to the 1970s and is now owned and kept in beautiful condition by Frank Sytner.

The last car in the first group of underslung cars (chassis 124) was completed and sent to the New York Show in July 1951. Painted white, it was sold to Robert Yung, a Chinese-American, and raced by him and subsequent owners including Karl Ludvigsen. The car's best result was 14th at Sebring in 1953. It stayed in the US until being brought back to the UK by Brian Classic in very poor condition in 1997. He sold it to John Coombs who had it rebuilt before selling it back to Robert Yung, its original owner,

in 2002.

Second Group

The fifth car (chassis 161) is 'Milly' and was the first of the second group of 4 MMs, all nearly identical. AFN dispensed with the underslung chassis and used a standard rear-end as on Mk I LM Repls, the production of which had effectively ceased by this time. They also standardised use of the upright

LM-type grill which resulted in a slightly higher nose than on previous cars. Milly was built in late 1951, in time for that year's Earls Court Show. It was finished in maroon and sold to F. Wyndham Hewitt and Jack Drewett, chairman and managing director respectively of Chalwyn Lamps Ltd. (Jack Drewett's

Chassis 161 - 'Milly' at concours d'élégance at Val d'Esquières - Aug. 1952



Chassis 118 - J. Twentyman at Prescott - June 1953

sons, Christopher and Richard, have both owned post-war Nashes; Richard currently owns a LM Mk II). Wyndham Hewitt used the car mainly in France and won the Aix-Madrid-Aix rally in 1952. Obviously the French too thought the MM "formidable" because Milly also won a concours d'élégance at Val d'Esquières on the French Riviera. Later owners were Betty Haig, Richard Drewett himself and Bill Clarke in New Zealand. Phil Champion bought it from Bill in 1998.

The next car (chassis 163) was completed in January 1952. Painted black it was shipped to the US and has remained there ever since. For the last 40 years it has been owned by Frank Twaits who raced it in the 1950s. The seventh MM (chassis 165) was completed in February 1952 and painted cream. It was purchased by Len Potter who used it in the 1952 Alpine



Rally. He also entered it for Mike Hawthorn to drive in the British Empire Trophy on the Isle of Man and the 100 mile sports car race at Boreham. In both races Hawthorn, in only his second year of competition, drove brilliantly and impressed everybody. After just 6 months the car was sold to Harry Sutcliffe who used it in rallies including the 1953 Alpine. It was later owned by Lionel Stretton and is now with Julian Majzub.

The last car in this second group (chassis 168) was completed in April 1952. Painted maroon it was exhibited at the 1952 Turin Motor Show, then shipped to the US and sold to Stuart Donaldson who also owned the LM Rep that won the 1952 Sebring 12 hour race. Chassis 168 is now owned by Bob Schmitt of California who set up and maintains the internet web site for mainly post-war cars. Bob purchased the car nearly 30 years ago in Honolulu. It had front-end damage from a road accident and was in poor shape. The car has been slowly coming back to life and Bob now plans to ship it to New Zealand for final completion ahead of the upcoming Raid in February 2005.



Chassis 168 - The car now owned by Bob Schmitt, at the Turin Motor Show - Apr. 1952

Chassis 165 - Mike Hawthorn driving his socks off in the British Empire Trophy, Douglas, Isle of Man - May 1952 (note woman falling out of window)

Third Group

The third and last group of cars are sometimes known as Mk II Mille Miglias. The group consists of two very similar cars built with a wider body than previously plus a final car which was different again. All three used Austin back axles and Austin bolt-on wheels rather than BMW-style knock-ons.

Chassis 166 - Prescott - Jul. 1953



The first two were completed in June/July 1952 and

were the last cars built on the Mark I A-frame chassis used by all models since 1948. Both were originally painted maroon. Chassis 166 was sold to a Mr Orr in London and then on to Jack Broadhead, who entered it in the 1953 Goodwood 9 hours, the 1954 British Empire Trophy at Oulton Park and other events. The car is now in Germany. Chassis 167 was sold to Joe Little of Aberdeen. It has had some light competition use down the years, is now owned by Tom McWhirter and can be seen at the Moray Motor Museum in Elgin, Scotland.



II 200-series chassis. Painted red it looked like a more shapely version of a Targa. It was shipped to Allan Soderstrom in Sweden, whose family still owns the car today. It came briefly to the UK for a tune-up in 1994 and this highly original car was examined by Sandy Burnett, who wrote about it in Gazette 104, December 1994.

Chassis 184 - The last Mille Miglia, featured in Autocar - Mar. 1953

The Targa Florio model was announced in August 1952 at a price of £3000 which undercut the MM by £500. Unsurprisingly, only one more MM was ordered compared to 14 Targas; this was chassis 184. It was completed in February 1953 and was the only MM built on a Mk





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