

HOF TALK



The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame News Bulletin

Compiled and edited by Jeremy Cookson; additional words by Andy 'Tog' Rogers & Simon Groves

Summer 2019 - Issue 7

2019 INDUCTEES ANNOUNCED

As we all know keeping a secret is one of the hardest things to do in life and since February of this year the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame panel of selectors have had the enormous task of keeping tight lipped for five months until this year's inductees were revealed at Santa Pod Raceway's *Dragstalgia*. We are pleased to announce that this year's BDRHoF honorees for their contributions to the sport either as a racer, constructor, promoter, marshal or official, supporter or having taken part in British drag racing in any capacity, and having been involved for at least 20 years are **EURODRAGSTER.COM**, the leading European Drag Racing Web Site, **IAN LLOYD**, builder and racer of the iconic Gonzo The Great altered and project foreman at York Raceway, the **McCOY DYNAMICS** team of Angus 'Ag' MacPhail, Mick hand and Keith Parnell, great bike innovators known for their Jade Warrior; and **THE WILD BUNCH**, pioneers of UK nostalgia drag racing.

Our overseas inductee this year is **ANITA MÄKELÄ**, leading Finnish drag racer who has won three FIA Top Fuel Dragster Championships as well as two European Top Methanol titles

Their detailed citations can be found on the next five pages of this issue and their names join those whose contributions to British drag racing are considered to have been extraordinary. The Induction Ceremonies will take place at the **BDRHoF Gala Awards Dinner** being held at the historic *Oatlands Park Hotel, Weybridge* on **November 23rd 2019** when drag racing personalities and fans from around the world will celebrate the commitment shown by these, all too-often unsung heroes and the influences they have had on drag racing in the UK. We welcome them into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.



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Welcome From The Editors Chair



Welcome to the seventh issue and long overdue issue of HoF Talk, the online newsletter for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame. As you can see I have been asked to take over the role as editor and sit in the big chair of this important marketing tool for the BDRHoF - HoF Talk. First and foremost I would like to take this opportunity to say thanks to Stuart and the rest of the board members in allowing me to take on this position, and to Eurodragster.com's ace pit reporter Simon for the excellent work done on the previous issues and of course to Eurodragster.com's head honcho Andy 'Tag' Rogers for allowing him time off from his regular on line reporting duties for our favourite new portal on the web - Eurodragster.com.

As most will know my background in the sport has been varied from editing magazines, commentating and for the past 12 years managing and promoting events on behalf of the much missed Shakespeare County Raceway. Drag racing has been the best part of my life since the birth of the sport in the early sixties thanks to my father's involvement as a racer. In fact it's been an honour and a privilege to have seen the sport develop at Santa Pod Raceway, Long Marston/Avon Park and York Raceway as well as all the pop-up tracks that appeared in the seventies and still do in present day racing many of which you can read about on the 'UK Drag & Sprint Strips That Time Forgot' page on Facebook , another page edited between myself and sprint historian Clive Rooms.

I hope that this and what's to come in the future issues of HoF Talk you will enjoy. I didn't realise until researching something for another article that the very first BDRHoF Presentation took place in 2006 at the joint inter-clubs SPRC/APIRA Awards Evening in Northampton which in its own right was a historical night as this was the first time both clubs got together to present the sportsman racers with their trophies as well as the HoF 'Bootsie' trophies. We'll be looking at this ground breaking moment and other presentations in greater detail in future issues.

That said I hope that I can add my input into the BDRHoF and develop HoF Talk further while at the same time creating an awareness that a Hall of Fame in the UK and Europe does exist and will continue honouring those who have built this great sport of ours. Without them there would be no drag racing. See you at the tracks.

Jerry

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2019 INDUCTEES ROLL OF HONOUR

Ian Lloyd - A profile by Graham Beckwith

Ian was always a car enthusiast - superbly turned out, highly engineered fast cars were his passion. His first project, which took over 10 years to complete, was the restoration and rebuilding of a Mk 1 Ford Zodiac. Sporting a finely tuned 6-cylinder motor, finished in red and running on wire wheels, it was quite a head-turning street racer in the sixties.

The sport of Drag Racing seemed to fit the bill for a young man who was keen to go faster in safety and when the owner of the garage where Ian worked asked him to work on his Vauxhall Ventora to bring it up to the standard of the one Ian had just sold, the opportunity arose for him to produce a race car. He fitted the car with a Rover V8 and went on to win the PDRC Street Racer Championships with it. The car also became an early race car for Dave Warne when it was eventually sold.

The quest for quicker times had begun! It took Ian only six weeks to build the Rover V8 powered Dutton that was a real threat in both Super Comp at York Raceway and the Rover V8 Challenge rounds. First outing for the car was a meet at the old US Air Force base at Burtonwood, organised by the newly formed PDRC, where he raced the red kit car against all comers, including Pip Higham on his bikes. Having broken the gearbox, he consoled himself by doing burnouts for the crowd.....in reverse!

It was in 1968 that the birth of an idea to build a state-of-the-art Competition Altered saw Ian and a friend fly over to Detroit armed with a bundle of cash to buy the parts needed. Ian's plan was that only the best would be good enough for what he intended would be a quick turn-around race car so he could achieve the maximum number of runs. Following a discussion with Fred Whittle about building a mid-8 second car on a box chassis, those plans changed. Instead Fred built a Chrome-Moly tube frame chassis to go with the Pat Cuss fibreglass Fiat Topolino body. Power plant was to be a normally aspirated small block Chevrolet engine with the best of everything.

Gonzo the Great was debuted in 1981 and continues to be raced to this day by Ian's son, Alan. An acknowledged masterpiece of engineering, besides running and competing successfully at the tracks in UK Gonzo also toured Europe appearing at Hockenheim, The Osterreichring and twice at Le Mans.

In the early 90's the state of the track at Melboume, York Raceway, was of great concern if racing were to continue there. Ian was the first to back the 'Mac the Track' campaign and commit money to the fund. From that point onward Ian took on the role of project foreman at York Raceway organising the work parties and material deliveries whilst other campaigners drummed up sponsors and support. Ian was on site each weekend from October through to the following April as work progressed and became an ambassador and spokesman for the project, working tirelessly over those eight months to ensure the track would be ready for the new season. Effectively "Mac the Track" gave racers a further 20 years of racing at York.



In more recent years Ian was contracted by Bentley Motors in an engineering role. He is very proud of his achievements with that company, in particular designing a Dyno-Tester for them to prepare their popular 6.7 litre V8 engine to meet current-day emissions regulations, thereby enabling them to continue to provide engines for the many restored Bentley cars still on the roads today.

As a footnote, 2018 saw Ian tune Gonzo to achieve a European best for a normally aspirated SBC of 7.879 @ 154.85 mph with Alan at the wheel.

Quite an achievement.

Photo credit - Martin Drake



McCoy Dynamics - A Profile By Keith Lee

One of the important areas of Drag Racing to acknowledge is innovation - and thinking outside the box.

In the mid 1970's, three bike racers got together to form a racing team, known as McCoy Dynamics. All three made their mark on the sport, and set world records at Elvington, with spectacular performances on two - and sometimes 3 wheels.

Angus 'Ag' MacPhail is someone who is definitely able to think laterally. After a spell riding a miniature Ariel two-stroke, he built his version of a three wheeler, which featured the Triumph engine and gearbox positioned between the rider and passenger. He next built a novel Ford powered three wheeler, which featured the rider prone, in front of the engine. When three wheelers were banned from competition - due in no small part to the performance of Ag, he remodelled the bike as a two wheeler, with wide slick, to mutterings that it would never work. It did!

The McCoy machine was effectively a test bed for the unforgettable Jade Warrior, boasting a monocoque chassis, one-off 2 litre supercharged motor, torque converter transmission - and a very effective exhaust-driven ground effects system. Helped by Mick, this most unusual machine eventually broke into the seven second zone in 1985, running on straight methanol, which was a brilliant achievement.



Mick Hand was very much at the heart of the group. He and Angus would bounce ideas off each other in the search for ways to advance performance. Mick's own bike of choice was one of the early Japanese engined entries - a diminutive twin cylinder blown 250 Honda. Small it might have been, but it was the sharpest, noisiest bike on the strip, and set a world record in 1971. With massive boost, the bike eventually got down to 9.08s/158mph after extensive development work on an enlarged engine. It was a true world class achievement.

Keith Parnell was the third member of the team. Rouge et Noir, his special short stroke blown Triumph, is well remembered for winning the race to be the first European bike to run under 9 seconds, at Santa Pod in June 1975. His follow-up bike was the first to trial a ground effects system, which was then further developed on Jade Warrior. Keith himself

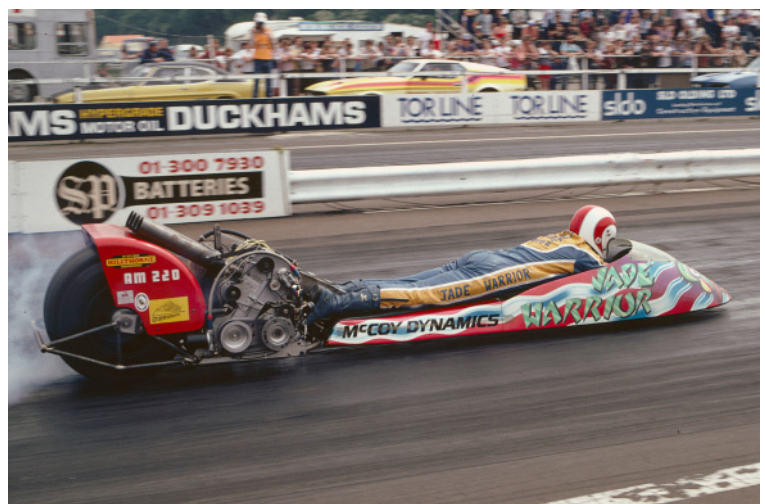
carried on in a distinguished sprinting career until he hung up his leathers at the age of 73. Bert Hopkinson deserves credit for his ongoing machining input to aid the racing efforts of the team.

Times have changed since the McCoy Dynamics runners made their mark on the sport, but it has not stopped the ideas. When Mick gave up riding himself, he continued helping Barry Eastman with his turbo CBX Honda. Mick wanted to pursue the idea of a compound turbo bike, so Barry was up for a partnership in the experiment. After much hard work over the past few years, in 2018 the Storm funny bike really proved itself to be another machine to successfully demonstrate that there are alternative ways to go racing. The methanol-fueled compound turbocharged Puma-engined entry, coupled to sophisticated electronics, has been painstakingly developed, and won the 2018 Funny Bike championship. The machine has recorded best times of 6.56s/218mph, with more performance still to come.

Ag, now in his eighties, made his own notable contribution to the Storm drag project - especially with the fairing design. Completing the McCoy involvement, the pilot is none other than Keith Parnell's son Lorcan. Sadly, early in 2019, Mick's partner in the project, his old friend of more than 50 years Barry Eastman, passed away. On a happier note, it looks like the project will continue, as a fitting tribute.

The innovative McCoy spirit is what marks the team out as special, and deserving of recognition.

Photos - Keith Lee





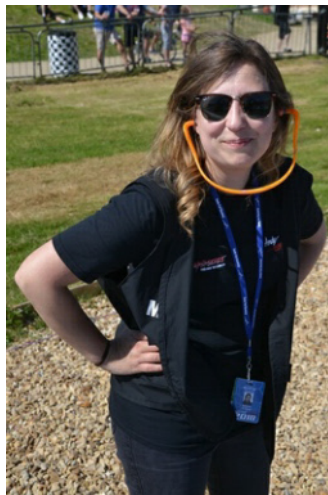
Eurodragster.com - A profile by Robin Jackson

Can anyone imagine a Drag Racing world without the presence of Eurodragster.com? It is in the nature of institutions that they are taken for granted – the very word ‘institution’ implies an immutable foundation built on rock. Yet Eurodragster.com confounds that perception. It is an institution that hangs by a thread, existing solely on the dedication of a handful of fellows who devote time and energy to the revelation of our sport in all its glories across the continent of Europe. Snap that thread and a pillar of the sport crumbles into an institutional-sized sinkhole which no social media outlet could hope to fill.



Eurodragster.com never sleeps. To the casual enthusiast, it provides an almost-daily journal of the comings and goings, happenings and proceedings of the sport – “all the news that’s fit to print”, to borrow the New York Times’ motto. To the serious student, perhaps engaged in chronicling the sport for a purpose – say, compiling programme notes for a race – it is a vital tool, a treasury of facts and data stretching back over two decades. Need to follow the round-by-round developments in a big race in another country? Eurodragster.com takes you there. (Try following a race which Eurodragster.com is not covering and you’ll notice the difference!) Need to double-check a record performance? Eurodragster.com will likely satisfy your quest. Want to discover who qualified low in Pro Stock Bike at Gardermoen in 2002? (Vesa Rautio, to spare you a search). There’s a goldmine of information concealed in the microscopic red print running down the left side of Eurodragster.com’s homepage, and its value grows more evident the more it is used.

Eurodragster.com was conceived in 1997 and published its first news item in February 1998. Lest we forget, the internet was in its infancy and one had to wait till magazines went on sale to find out race results and other news. Since then, Eurodragster.com has expanded its pioneering scope exponentially, for example listing and analysing championship points standings; archiving records and timing data; generating live webcam and video streaming; providing a racers’ online marketplace; disseminating regulations, race details, entry lists and other official information from clubs, organisers and sanctioning bodies; furnishing a direct line from racers to fans, which never existed before; delivering a focus on European drag racing for enthusiasts and followers around the world; and generally helping to draw together the diverse European racing community.



Eurodragster’s ace Pit Reporter Simon Groves and front line track side photographers Kirstie Tramm and Julian Hunt

Today’s Eurodragster.com crew is led by founding editor Andy ‘Tog’ Rogers, joined by Simon Groves, author of the compendious ‘Pit Notes’ which add so much light to Eurodragster.com’s race reports, and photographers Kirstie Tramm and Julian Hunt, with Diana Macrae and Callum Pudge providing auxiliary camera work.

It is for the ceaseless devotion of this small team to the portrayal of the European drag racing picture, and for the efforts of the few who preceded them in helping build the wealth of material that populates and underpins the website, that Eurodragster.com is inducted into membership of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.



Wild Bunch - A Profile By Jeremy Cookson



The idea for UK drag racing's Wild Bunch first saw the light of day in 1994. After many years competing separately at hot rod events, nostalgia enthusiasts Roy Wilding and John Guthrie both had visions in forming a class to cater for those slingshot dragsters and competition altered owners who were racing for fun on a budget. Towards the end of the season Roy and John presented the idea to then Avon Park Raceway promoters Goodguys UK and the class with an invited eight car field was given a chance at the season ending Night of Fire.

A partial season of events for the club was run exclusively at Avon Park the following year, which led to more new and historic cars joining the club. The first full season came in 1996 with an ambitious series of events taking place at the club's home at Long Marston Airfield. Averaging around 15 to 20 teams at any one event, the inaugural series win went to Roy Wilding and his 'Chariot of Fire' slingshot.

For the first nine years the club ran its events within the track's run what ya brung meetings but this then grew, as many wanted to also run at RAC/MSA level and at rounds held at the newly renamed Shakespeare County and Santa Pod Raceways. At these races, instead of running to the club's traditional time trial format, teams would race in bracket-style eliminations at MSA events.

In the 1990s the nostalgia scene in UK drag racing was evolving with events like the Hot Rod Drags and the Nostalgia Nationals. The Wild Bunch committee constantly came up with fresh ideas to make their class more appealing. One such idea arose from a letter written by Roy to the 'King of the Dragsters', Don Garlits, to have an annual award presented at the season's end in the great man's name. A few days later, Roy received Don's enthusiastic endorsement, and so the Don Garlits Spirit of Drag Racing Shield was born in 1996; a fantastic accolade for any individual or team who gets to be nominated, and especially for the winner. The award recognised the recipient's sporting values and virtues, dedication and achievements, all in the spirit of nostalgia drag racing.

Since those formative years, the Wild Bunch has grown from strength to strength with a fantastic line up of racers and machinery and a huge fan following. In 2001, Roy retired as Chairman to concentrate on developing his chassis building business while forging a new racing career with the Supercharged Outlaws but he will always be affectionately known to the Wild Bunch as 'Little Daddy Roy'.

In 2002 'Crazy' Chris Hartnell, owner and driver of Backdraft, the restored 'Malibu Express' slingshot dragster from the late sixties, was elected chairman, and together with partner Claire Meadows, oversaw the running of the club until the end of 2014 when he retired. Since then Claire, along with a very supportive committee, has overseen the day to day running of the club.

The Wild Bunch have come a long way during the last quarter century and ensured that nostalgia drag racing continues to thrive in the UK. Everyone who has been involved has a passion for the sport, a burning desire to go fast safely but, most importantly of all, preserving our sport's history. Even now, more vintage dragsters and altered cars are being brought back to life, while new recreations are being built. Competition with a fun element is always at the forefront of every Wild Bunch racer's mind, and it's for these reasons we have inducted the Wild Bunch Nostalgia Drag Racing Club into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.



The very first Wild Bunch event at Avon Park in 1994 to the very last Wild Bunch race at the 2017 NSRA Hot Rod Drags at Shakespeare County Raceway. Photos courtesy of Nick Pettitt & Eurodragster.com

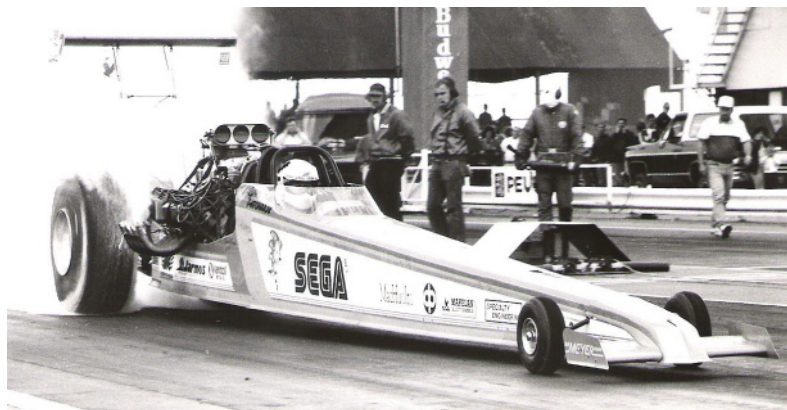




2019 OVERSEAS INDUCTEE

Anita Mäkelä - A profile by Lesley Wright

Anita spent one summer in Ohio State, USA when she was 16 years old and after that she was a huge fan of American cars, her first one being a Pontiac Trans Am. That brought American Car Shows, Cruising evenings and Drag Racing into her life and at one Street race the fastest lady got a special award, which she won. Anita says that left a spark in her soul, which is still there today.



In 1987 her friend was working at an FHRA race office and she overheard Rune Grönlund saying his Competition dragster was for sale. She asked Simo Patoharju to become her crew chief and form a team with her. She won the last race of the year at Motopark, Finland, a great start to her career.

She then heard there was one more race that year at Santa Pod. On Sunday she ran against Tony Morris and won, but the chutes didn't open immediately after the finish line and she ended up rolling in the field. She was OK, but sore, and her new dragster was in pieces. The team built a new competition dragster and won the Finnish Championship in '88 and '89.

Anita decided to step up to Pro Comp and bought a Top Alcohol Dragster from Ken Murray and Brian Hansell in Canada. She went to the USA to make a deal with them and got her licence at Bakersfield. Jarmo Pulkkinen was a huge help to the team.



The rivalry between her Sega-dragster and Tony Donges' Nintendo-dragster was legendary and Anita finished in the top three in the European Championship from '92 to '96, gained two Championship titles and held the record for the quickest ET and fastest speed several times over this period.

Returning home on the ferry in 1996, as the FIA European Top Alcohol Champion she got to know Tommi Haapanen, whose car she drove to licence for Top Fuel and who would become her soul mate and husband. After their daughter Hanna was born she made a deal to drive Peter Lantz's Top Fuel car and was 3rd in the 1998 FIA European Top Fuel Championship. In Alastaro, Tommi and she had a bet, the loser would change

Hanna's diapers. She won! Heikki was born in 1999 and she took a year out, returning in 2000 to take the FIA Top Fuel Championship, becoming the first racer to win FIA titles in two categories. In 2003 she ran the first 4 second run in Finland.

In 2007 Tommi returned to racing and the children were growing, becoming well behaved and loving pit life so by 2009 Anita was back in the diving seat. As Anita says 'Once a racer, always a racer. Nothing beats Top Fuel racing. Especially if you can do it with your family.'

After meeting the Lagana brothers, they went to a whole new level with their racing and Anita reaffirmed her 2000 title by taking it again in 2016 and 2018. The consistency of their car was outstanding at the 2018 European Finals, running a string of 3 second runs, culminating in a European ET record of 3.870 and a personal best



terminal speed of 313.30 mph. At the time of writing, she has made a great start to defending her title, by being the Number 1 qualifier and winning the 2019 Main Event at Santa Pod and in the final setting a new European low ET of 3.842 seconds. This year she has won four of the season's six FIA races, including both events at Santa Pod, and has secured her fourth FIA Top Fuel crown, matching the championship record for the class.

Anita's 15 Top Fuel event wins are an FIA record and her vast achievements over her 30 year Drag Racing career make her more than worthy to be inducted into The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame. Yet for all the spectators, officials, photographers, journalists, crews and their families, it is for her smiling personality she brings to every race event, that makes her so deserving.

Photos - Eurodragster.com, Julian Hunt & Dick Parnham

BDRH_oF ROLL OF HONOUR 2006 - 2018

Members of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame are shown below in order of induction.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Allan Herridge* | 23. The Murty Family | 45. Dennis 'Stormin' Norman |
| 2. The Phelps Family | 24. Rune Fjeld | 46. Yvonne Tramm |
| 3. Phil Evans | 25. Harold Bull | 47. Ken Cooper |
| 4. Dennis Priddle | 26. Geof Hauser | 48. John Cliff |
| 5. John Ledster* | 27. Al O'Connor | 49. Bob Keith* |
| 6. Tony Densham* | 28. Peter & Erica Bartlett* | 50. Santa Pod Raceway |
| 7. Roz Prior | 29. Krister Johansson | 51. Rob Loaring |
| 8. Dennis Stone* | 30. Peter Crane | 52. Paula Marshal* |
| 9. Clive Skilton | 31. Terry Gibbs* | 53. Karsten Andresen & Per Andresen |
| 10. Sydney Allard* | 32. Brian Sparrow | 54. John and Lesley Wright |
| 11. John Hobbs | 33. Pete Davies | 55. Steve Woollatt |
| 12. Nobby Hills | 34. Harlan Thompson | 56. Lawrie Gatehouse |
| 13. Custom Car Magazine | 35. Barry Sheavills | 57. Pip Higham |
| 14. Ton Pels | 36. Dave Lee Travis (DLT) | 58. Stuart Bradbury |
| 15. The Page Family | 37. The Brachtvogel Family | 59. The Cookson Family |
| 16. The Read Family | 38. Tony Murray* | 60. Steve Horn |
| 17. Brian Johnson* | 39. Carl Olson | 61. Team Pegasus |
| 18. Alan Wigmore* | 40. Keith & Frances Parker | 62. Andy Robinson |
| 19. Sammy Miller* | 41. Brian Chapman | 63. Peter Lantz |
| 20. John Bennett | 42. Russ Carpenter | |
| 21. Dave Grady* | 43. Gerry Belton | |
| 22. Alf Hagon | 44. John Whitmore | |

*indicates member passed away



I don't know who was more popular Stu Bradbury or John Force photo bombing Graham & Carolyn Beckwith's picture.

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HOF TALK

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HOF diaries

Although 12 months have lapsed since the last issue of HOFTalk there has been a lot going on in the world of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame so here's our regular HOFdiaries feature to bring us up to date courtesy of Eurodragster.com.

BDRHoF does the honours

The thirteenth annual British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Gala Awards Dinner was held last November at the Oatlands Park Hotel, Weybridge, Surrey, and was enjoyed by more than two hundred attendees. New Inductees to the Hall of fame from the sport in the UK were joined by a group of ten UK and Swedish drag racing legends in an entertaining Bench Racing Session. The Gala is one of the leading motorsport presentation events in the world and the BDRHoF would like to thank everyone who made it possible.

The evening, compered by writer and former NHRA Motorsports Museum Director Tony Thacker, included the induction of five new members of the Hall of Fame, presentation of the Lucas Oil Global Achievement Award and two Lucas Oil media awards for lifetime achievements in drag racing photo-journalism, and special surprise presentation for a drag racing legend who created and has run the legendary *Pure Hell* Fuel Altered for over fifty years.

The Lucas Oil Global Achievement Award, presented for global impact in the world of drag racing, was awarded to the SFI Foundation in recognition for raising safety standards in drag racing and motorsports in general. The SFI standards applied to drag racing and other forms of motorsport have undoubtedly saved lives. Accepting the award on behalf of the SFI Foundation from Motorsport UK's Cheryl Lynch was SFI Foundation vice-president Jennifer Faye.

A BDRHoF/Lucas Oil Products special trophy went to Rich Guasco who debuted the first *Pure Hell* fuel altered in 1964 driven by the late Dale Emery who was a special guest at the 2017 gala. Rich's award joins his Roadster Show Hall of Fame, San Francisco Roadster and Custom Motorcycle Hall of Fame and membership of the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame from 2011.

The two BDRHoF/Lucas Oil Products media awards for lifetime achievement in drag racing photo-journalism were presented by BDRHoF sponsor Geoff Stilwell to Roger Gorringer and Andy Willsheer, who between them have more than ninety years combined of reporting on the sport and have been visiting the US for over forty years apiece.

The Gala day also included the fourth Bench Racing Session, sponsored by USAutomotive/*Custom Car* Magazine with British Top Fuel and Funny Car racers entertaining a packed audience with tales of their on and off track exploits back in the day. The session, which marked the publication of Keith Lee's book *Mister Six: The Story of Drag Racing Legend Dennis Priddle* was introduced by Graham Beckwith, former Santa Pod Raceway and York Raceway announcer. Racers present were Gary Page, Barry Sheavills, Pelle Lindelow, Andy Craddock, Steve Read, Brain Savidge, Stu Bradbury, Dennis Priddle, Roy Phelps and Geof Hauser.

The event would not have been possible without practical help and support from Lucas Oil, major sponsors US Automotive and Santa Pod Racers Club, and event sponsors Beech Underwriting Agencies, BUA Motorsport, Kelsey Publishing, DialAFlight, National Street Rod Association, Rat Trap Racing, Straightliners, Atlantic Fluid Tech, Chair Office, Santa Pod Raceway and Prop Portfolio. Thanks also to Shakespeare County Relics and Eurodragster.com for their support.

Photos courtesy of Eurodragster.com, Julian Hunt & Andy Willsheer



Gallery of stars of the 2018 BDRHoF Gala



The Lucas Oils Global Achievement was presented to **SFI Foundation** vice-president Jennifer Faye



Fuel Altered legend **Rich Guasco** was presented with a special BDRHoF award for a lifetime's entertainment with Pure Hell



Andy Willsheer and **Roger Gorringe** received a Lifetime Achievement award in Photo-journalism from Geoff Stilwell



The **Cookson Family** (Gerald, Joan & son Jeremy) were overjoyed with their membership to the BDRHoF.



Inductee **Steve Horn** accepting his membership of BDRHoF from Darren Prentice



Team Pegasus (Ian Messenger & Derek Chinn) accepting the BDRHoF award from 2007 inductee John Hobbs



UK Pro Modified racer **Andy Robinson** accepting his trophy from 2006 BDRHoF Inductee Dennis Priddle



Sweden's Top Fuel legend **Peter Lantz** accepting his Overseas award from Ian Marshall

Herbert & Beck for BDRHoF Gala

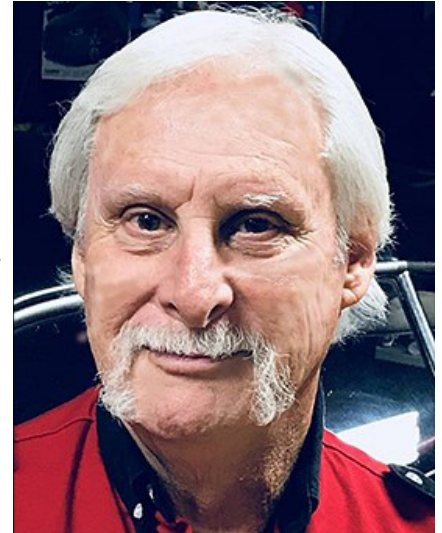
The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame has announced that its 2019 Gala will take place on 23rd November, once again at the historic Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge. The BDRHoF also announces two special guests who will be travelling from the US to attend.

Chairman of the BDRHoF Stu Bradbury said 'We have had two extremely successful Galas at the Oatlands Park Hotel which offers excellent accommodation at a very reasonable price, together with a location close to many attractions. The main focus of the event will be inducting our new members of the Hall of Fame for 2019 at the evening's dinner and award ceremony. There will be a Bench Racing session in the afternoon, and we will be announcing further details in due course'.



The special guests announced by BDRHoF are Top Fuel dragster racer Doug Herbert and veteran announcer Bob Beck with his wife Peg. Doug Herbert is from a Drag Racing dynasty that includes his father Chet Herbert who introduced roller cams and zoomie headers to the sport from 1949, and his aunt Doris Herbert, who published Drag News, the first great drag racing newspaper.

Doug himself has won four IHRA {International Hot Rod Association} Top Fuel championships and ten NHRA national events and is planning a Land Speed Record attempt to go 500mph. Following the death of his two sons in a tragic highway accident in 2008, Doug founded the B.R.A.K.E.S. organisation which saves lives by training and educating teenage drivers and their parents about the importance of safe and responsible driving.



Bob Beck has built vehicles seen in the pages of many publications and has many class wins at car shows and driving events. Peg's hot rod won at the Grand National Rod show in Pomona last January. He has also been a driver/builder in AHRA Drag Racing and US Sports Car and Sedan Racing and has announced at these events and NHRA, NDRA, VRA and ANRA drag series, including Irwindale and the NHRA Hot Rod Reunions. He can be heard on-line with his radio show Great American Auto Scene at www.gotgaas.com.

Doug Herbert said "I am really excited about being able to come over for this year's British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Gala as I have many customers and friends in the UK and Europe, and visited Santa Pod Raceway as a guest in 2010". Bob Beck said "Peg and I are thrilled to be spending a week in the UK and exploring the car scene over there as well as meeting the folks in the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame."

Hall of Fame's Santa Pod donation

The trustees of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Benevolent Fund have made the donation of a patient-monitoring device to Santa Pod Raceway. The G3H Portable Patient Monitor is battery powered and can easily be carried around. It is suitable for use in bedside monitoring in medical centres or hospitals and can print out graphs of patient readings.

Stuart Bradbury, Chair of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame and Trustee of the BDRHoF Benevolent Fund, said "This donation will be directly for the benefit of racers and of fans at Santa Pod Raceway and we hope it can help save lives at the track".

Keith Bartlett, Santa Pod owner and CEO of Trakbak Racing Ltd, said "We at Santa Pod Raceway are very grateful to the BDRHoF Benevolent Fund for their generosity in making this direct donation to our medical services".

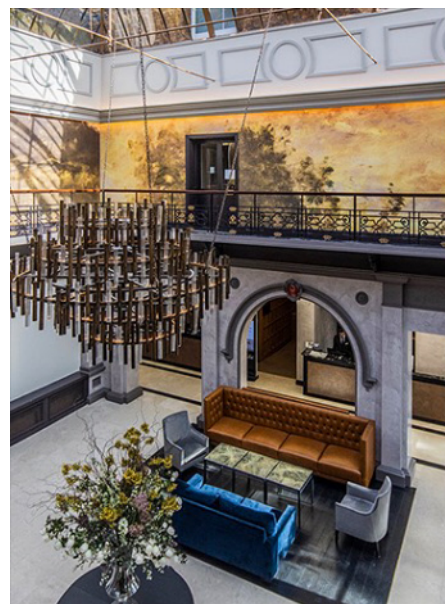
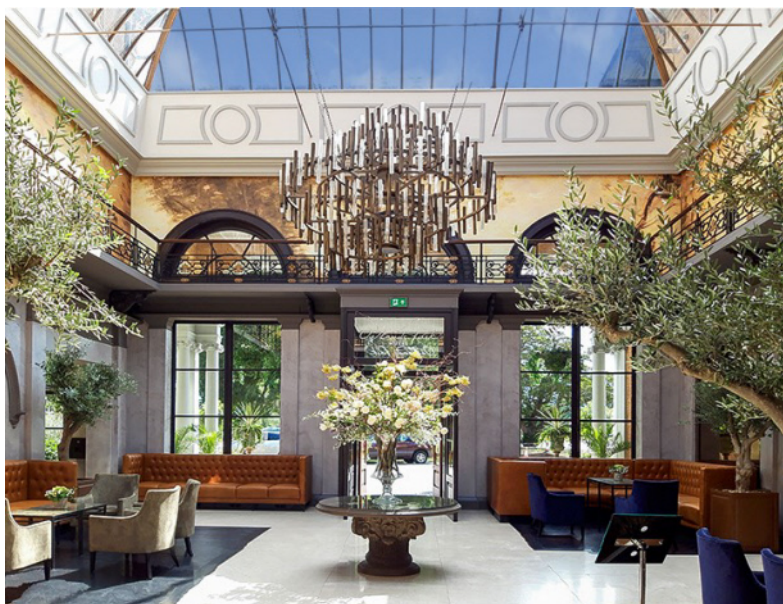
At Santa Pod's Dragstalgia event held in July BDRHoF Benevolent Fund representatives Stu Bradbury and Phil Cottingham made a formal presentation to the Santa Pod Medical Services team on the start line of this vital piece of life saving equipment.

The BDRHoF Benevolent Fund is run for Drag Racers by trustees who have had many years' experience in the sport. Trustees are: Stu Bradbury, Simon Groves, Robin Jackson, Ian Messenger, Graham Beckwith, Ian Marshall and Phil Cottingham



Oatlands Park Refurbishment

The historic Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge, venue for the upcoming 2019 BDRHoF annual gala, has recently undergone extensive refurbishment of the lobby, reception and bar area. It is also anticipated that all accommodation rooms which were not refurbished last year will be completed for this year's Gala in November.



So far there has been a tremendous demand for this years British Drag Racing Hall of Fame's 2019 Gala inductions. The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame announced in February that its 2019 Gala will take place on 23rd November, once again at the historic Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge. There will be many special guests travelling from the US to attend, with more exciting announcements waiting in the wings! We have already reserved over half the allocation of a capacity of 220 seats. This exceeds any August so far with three months to go before the big night? Potential attendees need to get in touch as soon as possible to make sure they have a seat.

Thacker gets Oatlands date

Journalist and marketing consultant Tony Thacker will again be taking control of the stage at the BDRHoF Induction ceremony. Born in England, Tony grew up loving automobiles and after many years as a journalist transitioned into marketing roles for several companies including SEMA, Boyd Coddington and the SO-CAL Speed Shop. His friendship with NHRA founder Wally Parks led to a role as executive director of the Wally Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum. Sort of retired, Tony now enjoys the three Rs; Reading, 'Riting and Racing with Ron Hope's *Rat Trap* AA/FA.

Our own Robin Jackson will be reading the citations along with other special guests. Master of Ceremonies Paul 'Oz' Wright will also be returning to frighten the living day lights out of us with his gavel and announcements.

Ticket prices for the 2019 Gala Awards Dinner remain unchanged at £70 per person. Corporate tables of 12 are available at £756. Hotel prices will also remain the same as the last two years. Double room £115.00, Single £94, both include breakfast, car parking, and use of the hotel's facilities.

To reserve tickets please email stuart@britishdragracinghof.co.uk or telephone Stu Bradbury on the office number 01933 279102 or by mobile 07931 260457 to obtain a booking form which includes the special discount room code.

Photos courtesy of Oatlands Hotel & Bev Bradbury

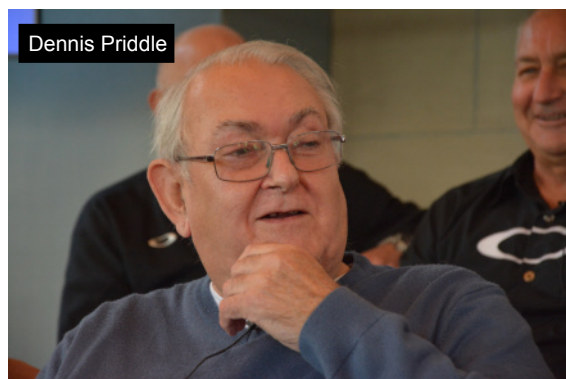
Bench Racing highlights the opening of BDRHoF Gala

Words by Andy 'Tog' Rogers, Eurodragster.com; photos courtesy of Julian Hunt & Eurodragster.com

The Bench Race at the 2018 British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Gala served as the official launch of Keith Lee's excellent new book *Mister Six: The Story of Drag Racing Legend Dennis Priddle* and as well as Dennis himself the Bench Race panel comprised those who were there at the time and so had an association with him either on- or off-track: Gary Page, Barry Sheavills, Pelle Lindelöw, Andy Craddock, Steve Read, Brian Savidge, Stu Bradbury, Roy Phelps and Eurodragster.com sponsor Geof Hauser.



MC Graham Beckwith opened proceedings by asking Dennis on his thoughts about being the subject of a book. *"I'm immensely proud"*, said Dennis. *"I didn't want to do it but I was put under pressure by my wife*



and my daughter. My daughter put me seriously under pressure - she said I owe it to my grandchildren. It has been a long road; I can't believe the effort which Keith and Annie have put in. Annie put in so much time checking that the facts were right. Keith made a list of all the things he wanted to ask me and over two years he asked me each question half a dozen times to check that I gave the right answers.

"I have tried to be honest and thank those I should thank. I have always tried to be a private person, if I was a miserable bastard people would steer clear of me and it worked!"

"It's a chance to remember the people who helped me along the way who are no longer with us and we remember them today."

Geof Hauser, who worked with Clive Skilton, said that Dennis and Clive were the best of friends off the track but had a good rivalry on it. *"It was fifty per cent circus and fifty per cent racing"*, said Dennis. *"We were in the entertainment business. Clive and I had an unwritten rule not to overdo it, to set limits to our nitro loads so that it didn't spiral"*.

"It cost us way more to race than it did in the US", said Geof. *"Every box which came from the US was like Christmas, parts to carry on the battle."*

Roy Phelps mentioned old suspicions that races were fixed. *"I can assure everybody that when they get side-by-side it's competition"*, he said. *"We seem to have drifted away from the core of racing - the best thing we could do is to get rid of timing equipment. It's first to the line! The tension has been lost. The commentator used to control the crowd but now it's the anticipation of the ETs. It's who crossed the line first!"*

Andy Craddock said that there weren't many Fuel cars when he and the Frontline team started. *"Dennis' cars were always immaculate and he was always there with good advice"*, he said. *"I watched Dennis and Clive race then in my twenties I had the opportunity to race against them and it was mind-blowing."*

Graham asked Brian if Dennis had been a hard taskmaster. *"No"*, he said, *"but I look back on it and it seems it was every other weekend. I had a marriage break down over it but I look back on it with great fondness."*

Graham then asked the panel how Dennis had inspired them. *"When you first go up to Santa Pod you aspire to racing a Fuel car"*, said Gary Page. *We bought cars off Dennis and we were in awe of him. Rune has learnt from Dennis, he's a miserable bugger! Dennis and Clive and Bootsie were the leading lights. You can only aspire to be anywhere near Dennis."*

"When I first started Dennis and Clive were there and that's who you wanted to be!", said Barry Sheavills. *"His cars were beautiful with their workmanship and engineering. Dennis was my inspiration. I was able to buy one of his chassis and the engineering was superb. This book launch could not be better for someone in European drag racing..."*

"Tor Line have a lot to answer for!" interjected Dennis.

"...I always aspired to be a Junior Dennis Priddle. If you started in the Junior ranks then you looked at who you wanted to be and that was Dennis."



"I don't want to go on without mentioning Bootsie", said Dennis. *"Some of our races were phenomenal. We ran at a Firework meeting and the instruction was "Put a show on". Go hard off the line and then click it off. That wasn't going to happen! I got sideways and got off it then Bootsie was back on the throttle. When we got to the other end we were in hysterics. Bob Phelps told us "If you do that again you're not coming back here again!"*

"I rest my case!", said Roy. *"There's a lot goes on behind the scenes which nobody knows about."*

Steve Read said that Dennis' and Clive's duels inspired so many people when he started going racing. *"I got introduced to Prid when Dad bought the Quatermaster", he said. "I have raced on my own dollar and that is mentored by Dennis - he proved you don't have to have a lot of money. We had a lot of laughs, Dennis taught me what you could and couldn't do and the most important thing was never give up. I'm proud to be his friend and to have crewed for him."*



Steve Read



Pelle Lindelöw

Pelle Lindelöw said that he was Dennis' favourite Scandinavian driver. *"I liked the way you prepared the car and your ethos", said Dennis. "Dennis had a different way of qualifying", said Pelle. "That was when you qualified first and I screwed up!", said Dennis. "It was going to be Harlan Thompson or I who ran the first five and we qualified together. We had a new clutch pack in the car. I did the burnout, came back and I screwed up - I didn't put it in low gear. It didn't do the new clutch a lot of good. I ran 6.8 and Pelle ran 6.0 and I had him in the first round. We looked at the clutch and we would have given up but the deal with the promoter was that if I didn't do what I said I wouldn't get paid. So we put it back together and ran a five! Pelle's little daughter who must have been about seven went and picked a posy of flowers and after the race she gave them to me and said "I picked these to give to you because I thought you'd lose!". "She is now forty one", said Pelle.*

"It was good fun", Pelle added. *"We considered Santa Pod our home track because we had been there so often. It was as close to America as you could come. When we were talking about marking fifty years of racing in Sweden at Tierp I wrote to Dennis and said we'd like to celebrate it. The next day he replied that he had booked the flights and booked the hotel! People really enjoyed it, and now they want to know about next year for the fifty one-year celebration!"*

"On occasion I wondered why I was standing between the cars on the start line", said Stu Bradbury. *"You'd get bits flying and some of them hit you, but I wouldn't have been anywhere else. Most of my memories are what went on after a race. I remember run-ins with Tony Nancy and Jack Bynum who had a cracked block and blamed me for it! So many things went on". Graham asked Stu if he had ever had a go on the track. "I had a go a couple of times", he said. I had a go in the John Woolfe Racing Scout. Dave Riswick lent me his helmet and it was round the side of my head at half track and all the way round at the finish. I couldn't see but I didn't want to go into the corn field because Ernie Braddick would charge us for it. There are a lot of characters, some with us and some not, and they just made the sport."*

Dennis was asked from the floor what the "Boat story" was. *"The first time we went to Sweden in 1968 it took two nights on the boat", he said. "The next year we went from Hamburg. They had problems in Sweden with moonshine and it got a bit raucous at Anderstorp and they banned spectators at drag races for a number of years. The next time we went with Tor Line and we had assisted passage. This boat was much quicker, carried about eighteen hundred people like a mini cruise liner. A trip to Sweden was an adventure, the majority of us got off the boat out of our brains!"*

"My boys were volunteers but I wouldn't have them sleeping in tents or eating in greasy spoons. On the boat they were introduced to smorgasbord. You would not believe how much marinated salmon one person could eat. We'd go in when the smorgasbord opened and stay until they threw us out!"

Graham asked Roy to describe his behind-the-scenes work. *"I was there from day one", said Roy. "In 1982 Santa Pod went bust and I was challenged to bring it back to viability. At that time I had to deal with governing bodies and I had to learn to be a politician. You had people telling you what you could do. The RAC were a hindrance, backed by the FIA who were a hindrance, the NHRA were not interested and it was a long time before they came over here. It was a constant battle, the number of times I was on the phone and I was told we would lose our track licence."*



Stu Bradbury



Andy Craddock

Andy was asked from the floor about mismatching wheels on his Pro Fuel Dragster. "We were using a unit on an industrial estate", he said. "It was empty on Sundays. One day we started the car up on the ground, Steve Clark told me to blip it. The road was concrete so it had good grip and off I went down the road. At the end of the road there was a T-junction, I hit the kerb which knocked my foot on the throttle and I went through the fence."

Geof explained how he ended up working with Clive Skilton. "I first got interested when I was working as a paper boy delivering Hot Rod and Car Craft and seeing the cars", he said. "When I was fifteen I went to stay with relatives in Canada. I hitched a hundred and twenty miles to my first drag race. I knew about Santa Pod but I was fifteen and had no way of getting there, but in 1969 I went on a Lambretta. I was also into making models and I would customise Airfix kits with big wheels. I wanted to get involved and I started to help Alan Wigmore. We would race at different airfields. Alan took

me for a ride in Itzaviva, I was sitting on the floor hanging on to the roll cage whilst he drove down the road.

"Phil Cornish and I grew up together, he knew the Beadle brothers and Don was crewing with Clive. I got involved with working on the car."

Roy said to Geof that magazines did it for him too. "My dad used to go to London and come back with armfuls of magazines", he said. "They inspired me to build my Plymouth pick-up."

Graham asked each panel member whom they would take for a ride in a Two Seat Dragster. "Someone from Formula 1", said Barry, "because they think that's the ultimate. I'd want them to experience what we experience."

"I don't think they look down on us", said Dennis. "We put on a show in Luxembourg for Goodyear and I met Denny Hulme and John Watson. Denny would only get in my car if he had the rotor arm out of the mag. He said "You're not starting that thing with me in it!"

"We had a match race between a Formula 2 racer and Lee Anders Hasselström", said Pelle. "We had a press conference then at Mantorp the Formula 2 car started eight hundred metres back in the pits, a flag man flagged Lee Anders as he came past and Lee Anders caught the Formula 2 car in ten metres."

"I would take my son Tom to show him what his old man used to do", said Andy. "I wouldn't mind being taken for a ride myself in a modern Top Fuel car."

"Anyone who sits in a Top Fueller as a passenger must have less brains than anyone who wants to drive one!", said Dennis.



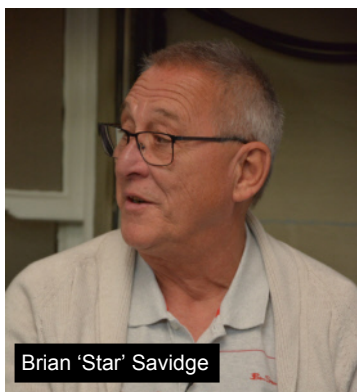
Barry Sheavils

Steve said that he would take his wife Heather, aka The Banker. "You can't describe it and I would like her to know what it is like", he said.

"It would be me!" said Brian. "I have a 1932 Roadster which I run in Run What You Brung and I would love to take my grandson."

Stu agreed that he would take the passenger seat himself. "I would love to have a go just one time", he said. "Having seen what these guys do it's something I'd love to do. But I've had my fun and those days are gone. There is no place on Earth like being between two Fuel cars. You have to experience that if you can."

"I have driven the things and I have worked on the things but it's still a buzz every time I go on the start line", said Gary. "There are lots of people who have been disrespectful who I'd put in a car, or Mark Hawkins who owns the Funny Car so that he knew what it



Brian 'Star' Savidge

was like."

"I remember sitting in a Fuel car looking at the two bearings on the back of the blower", said Dennis. "You look either side. The most phenomenal buzz you can have is to do a proper burnout in a Funny Car with handfuls of lock. The sheer joy of doing a burnout, the motor going through absolute torture and it's under your right foot."

"We were asked to do a race at Surfer's Paradise", said Steve. "Everyone was trying to make their cars hook up, we left out set-up on ninety per cent nitro. I did a 150-metre burnout, backed up and did it again. I trashed a set of tyres down to the canvas but people realised the power of the cars". "Sod the racing, just do burnouts!", said Dennis.

Dennis was asked about the first Six and in the course of his reply got on to one of the subjects about whom we all wanted to hear. "I wouldn't have said I knew it was a six", he said. "Sometimes you can tell you've done a good run or the car's working.

"People ask how difficult the car was to drive. I felt that in my day you could put anyone in the car and that if they did what you told them then they would run close to you in a few runs. Well, I put Maggie Philbin in the car and I proved categorically that you couldn't do it. I told her that the car had 2000 horsepower and she said "I've got an 1800 Escort". I was convinced that you had to get in it, stomp it, count to six and pull the chute but I proved that wrong. We must have screws loose, what makes you want to get in one of these things?



Gary Page

"I have had some trouble in my time with boy racers. They say to me "How fast have you been then?" and I tell them two hundred and fifty miles an hour - but a hundred miles an hour in a second and they just can't compute it. Someone said "If you understand then no explanation is necessary. If you don't understand then no explanation is possible"."

Graham asked the panel members for a favourite story. "Vic Hammond, you had to walk away from him because your sides were hurting from laughing", said Gary. "He worked in film and told us that he was on a set and two people came running past. "What's the matter?", he asked and the reply was that two lions had escaped from a set. "Which direction?" he said and the reply was "Well they ain't f*****g chasing it!". Tony Boden would never take cigars off us because we always set him up with exploding cigars. We were in a restaurant and loaded one up and persuaded the governor to give it to him. The powder was a long way down and it took a time but it went off and went all over his face and we were all rolling on the floor."

"Going to Sweden was non-stop laughter", said Barry, "but one story from here was that we used to stay in the Nag's Head. We stayed there a lot and I got to know the landlord and landlady and they used to let me use their room. The crew were all in one room and I was in a double which was nice but there was no toilet. One night the crew put a wardrobe in front of my bedroom door, I got up to go to the toilet, walked out of my bedroom and walked straight into the wardrobe. The door shut behind me!"

"I was strapped in behind the start line waiting to run and I was watching Liv Berstad in front of me", said Pelle. "She went through the finish line and I pulled my chute! That's how deep you concentrated."

"I was in the car and I could hear a rattle behind me", said Andy. "I tried to communicate it to Steve Clark but in the end I had to shut it down. There's no sign language for "There's a rattle behind me!"

"We raced at Le Mans and we travelled with the Stones", said Steve. "We had CB radios. Dennis Stone radio'd "Do you want tea?". "I said yes and twenty tea bags came out of his window and flew back towards us. On another occasion we got back to the hotel after a race and Prid decided to have a party, in my room. There was no music but Dennis' C30 had good speakers. We couldn't hear the music so we drove it through the box hedges to get it closer. I told them "I'm a tree surgeon, I'll fix them". In the morning we were fast asleep and there was banging on the door. The carpet, which had been white, was black because people had bits of track on the bottom of their shoes, the walls and ceiling were red from wine. We tried to do a bunk but Prid got caught and had to pay out of his prize money. We chipped in for him and he ended up with more!"

"Dennis' 6.04 was a major highlight", said Brian, "and Roy gave us Garlits' car to run Dennis' motor, that was a privilege. Dennis was on the show circuit in Germany and Barry and I would take turns to go out there. Dennis broke a blower belt and did some damage so I had to take some parts, I got to customs and had to explain. Where we did the burnout was unauthorised". "They cut off a padlock to get in!", said Dennis. "They just didn't understand. They wanted us to do a burnout in one street and there was a drainage ditch across it."

"I drove Liam Churchill's Funny Car when he had a back problem", said Geof. "I qualified with a 7.3 and I was racing against Dennis in the first round. I was on the start line beside Dennis and suddenly I couldn't hear my engine. I thought my engine had stopped, I could only hear Dennis' engine because his exhausts were pointing straight at me. I beat Dennis but I touched the centre line. I thought "I hope no-one saw that!" but unfortunately they did so Dennis won the race and went on to win the event."



Geof Hauser

Roy told of an invitation to take eight cars to Bologna in Italy. "We stopped for a comfort break in the Alps", he said. "Daddy Stone had everything to make a cup of tea in his van. He said "This tea doesn't taste right". We had to tell him "We're on top of a mountain, water boils at a different temperature"."

"Bob and Roy Phelps built the toilets at Santa Pod", said Stu. "When one filled up they would dig another. One night we had a drink and music and then our guitarist disappeared. We went looking for him and we could hear his voice: "Help, help". We went into the men's toilets, he wasn't in there but we could still hear him. We went in the ladies' and we found him in the pit. He went in there to be sick, his false teeth fell out and went into the pit, he leaned in to get them and he went in with them. I don't know if he found his teeth and if he did I don't know if he put them back in."

"We raced at Le Mans, the most phenomenal place I ever raced", said Dennis in closing. "Six thousand people, hanging off every lamp post. We were staying in a hotel and asked the manager for a proper French restaurant. He organised cabs, we drove for miles and pulled up outside a galvanised metal shed. One end was partitioned off with formica tables.

But we had a superb meal and with racers there it was getting a bit raucous. There was a wedding there and the bride came in and said "You are having so much fun, can we spend some time with you?". That's one of the more savoury stories I can tell."

HOF people

These are stories about BDRHoF members and what they have been up to recently. Send your stories to quartermilenewsmakers@yahoo.co.uk so that we can include them in the next issue.



BDRHoF member **Robin Read** says that his new dragster will be named *Spirit of Le Patron* in tribute to his later father, Pro Comp racer, BDR&HRA and BDRA chair and British Drag Racing Hall of Fame member Jim Read. "My Crew Chief Mark suggested that it would be a lovely idea to pay homage to my father and this is what we thought appropriate," said Robin. "The new car will have Dad's old race number PC31 guesting within the artwork and will also be running billet aluminium cylinder heads, which were commissioned by dad from Bertie Hopkinson in 1989 shortly after he succumbed to a heart attack. These cylinder heads have never been run in anger, only having done an engine warm up at the workshop. Robin ran the 'Little Car' at Dragstalgia but the potent Daimler engine went bang at three quarter track due to a disconnected crank trigger wire to the magneto. Robin's best pass of the weekend was a 6.884/197.60 mph.

Prior to the start of the season BDRHoF member and multiple ACU UK Top Fuel Bike champion and record holder **Steve Woollatt** announced a new sponsorship deal with GSF car parts who supply parts, accessories, batteries, tools and oils in their large chain of stores and also on-line. "It's great to be associated with such a big company", says Steve who went to win Santa Pod's Festival of Power.

The shock announcement prior to Santa Pod's Dragstalgia and the National Sprint Association Shootout was the retirement of the legendary *Hobbit* drag bike of BDRHoF member **John Hobbs**. "John Hobbs is one of the legends of drag racing, and the Hobbit, his supercharged double Weslake, notched up many race wins during a spectacular career", writes drag bike historian Keith Lee. "After an original retirement in the early eighties, John was persuaded to pull the bike out from under his workshop to enjoy a much extended second lease of life for the 1700cc machine". From the very first Dragstalgia event in 2011, John and the Hobbit have been the star attraction on two wheels but the good news is that John will still continue to campaign his blown 500 Triumph *Olympus*, which he faithfully recreated back in 2012. John built the original Olympus way back in 1967 and sold it to a Swedish racer in 1971 after setting the World Standing Kilometre record in 1968. With 44 years of long racing history behind it the Hobbit made its final full pass at 8.431/161 mph. One of the best runs of its illustrious career. John Munn, who also rode the Hobbit from 1980-1982, was also in attendance from his home in Australia. Mentioning Olympus John took an unfortunate tumble off the bike. After a strong launch against the wheelie bars the bike reared up for a second time. As the front wheel hit the deck again it pulled the bike to the left leaving John no choice but to bail out 200 foot down track. John quickly got up to a resounding round of applause from the big crowd. Earlier John ran a 10.10/136 which turned out to be a tenth quicker than the original bike had ever run.



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We were pleased to hear that after the New Year announcement that York Raceway would not be open for the foreseeable future, it would be opening its gates again but under the new name of Melbourne Raceway. Having been under the control of BDRHoF members **The Murty Family** for over 40 years, a deal to run a single lane eighth mile sprint had been achieved by BDRHoF sponsor Trevor Duckworth and his Straightliners organisation to prove to the current land owners that there is indeed continued interest in continuing running drag racing and sprint events at the Yorkshire venue. With a weekend set aside in August racers, fans and curious spectators showed their support in their thousands to have drag racing back in the north where it belongs. Should all go to plan, the current target is to have a new two lane (initially eighth mile) track ready for 2020.



BDRHoF member and UK Legend **Dennis Priddle** made his now customary visit to Santa Pod's Dragstalgia in July where he not only took part in our own BDRHoF Legends' signing sessions, but also worked on the nostalgia Funny Car of Paul Harris who was competing with the Dodge Omni bodied Chi-Town Hustler previously campaigned by Troy Martin. The *Mister Six* tribute body in honour of Dennis' involvement in British and European drag racing wasn't in a position to make its debut at the event but Paul is very much focused on securing his racing licence before attaching the much-awaited debut of the Chevy Monza body, styled by Darren West at Power Race Graphics, and which was unveiled at last November's BDRHoF Gala, will be at a suitable Santa Pod event when Paul and the team are fully satisfied with the current set-up. At Dragstalgia Paul finished the event with a best so far 7.377/144 mph half pass.

Besides recent wins in the European Top Fuel championship reigning FIA Drag Racing Champion and soon to be BDRHoF inductee **Anita Mäkelä** was the centre of a rare treat for *Autosport* readers; a multi-page profile focusing on Anita's career in our sport, and in general 'Women in Motorsport'.

BDRHoF inductee **Ian Lloyd** and son Alan continued to race their iconic *Gonz The Great* Fiat Topolino altered in Wild Bunch at Dragstalgia had a great weekend running several personal bests with a string of sevens, the best resulting in a 7.788/166. With a career running at some of the country's best known tracks its pleasing to see *Gonz* running quick times as it used to in the 1980s against such well known popular altereds *Strip teaser*, *Paranoia* and *Dorset Horn*.

It was good to see the Tre-Kroner Plymouth Arrow nostalgia Funny Car at Dragstalgia which last covered Santa Pod's quarter mile in 1980 in the hands of BDRHoF member **Harlan Thompson** and car owner Knut Soderquist. Now in the hands of Erik Wallinder and Anders Molund from previous owner Johnny Nilsson the car carries so much history it's hard to know where to start! Built and raced by Ed 'The Ace' McCulloch as one of the famous 'Revellution' creations the car was rebodied with the Arrow and raced on the American circuit under the American Home Shield name with Ed still at the wheel before being purchased by Knut and repainted in the Tre Kroner colours. Having run a best of 6.3 in the states Knut and Harlan debuted the car at Santa Pod and Mantorp Park in 1980 where it won the Swedish



event and set a new class track record. The car was later sold and passed through several owners. Now in present day Funny Car fan Johnny Nilsson built a recreation so that they could celebrate 30 years of the Tre Kroner name at Mantorp Park in 2009. With the project started in America the car made its debut at Bakersfield in 2009 resulting in a 6.34; the very same numbers Harlan ran 30 years earlier. Now in the hands of Erik and Anders the Tre Kroner Arrow ran several sixes in nostalgia Cannonball competition at Santa Pod resulting in a 6.791.

Celebrating his 25th anniversary with the Backdraft slingshot dragster was former Wild Bunch chair 'Crazy Chris' Hartnell. Not only was this occasion a celebration to remember but it was also doubly joyous with the **Wild Bunch Nostalgia Drag Racing Club** announced as one of the five inductees in to the BDRHoF on Friday of the Dragstalgia event at Santa Pod. Wild Bunch co-ordinator Claire Meadows managed to gather in the pits all the drivers and teams who were present to make the prestigious announcement at dead on midday to coincide with Eurodragster.com's announcement on the web. Although it's 50 years ago when Chris' dragster first graced the British drag strips under the name of Malibu Express today's current spec car Backdraft suffered from an incurable oil leak but Claire said 'it was awesome to have it back at the track again as well as our nomination into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.



Emulating BDRHoF member **Dennis 'Stormin' Norman's** success on the drag strips in the UK as well as in America Gary and Matt Norman had their tribute bikes out at Dragstalgia. Dennis was one of the leading runners in the 60s and into the seventies on his twin-engine Triumph; one of the early 9 second bikes. But one of his true accolades was qualifying for the sport's first ever Top Fuel Bike Eliminator in 1970. Not here but in America at the prestigious NHRA US Nationals thanks to Santa Pod's Bob Phelps. After that trip Dennis made the first ever bike burnout at Santa Pod and the rest is history. However Gary's 1700cc Norton Conquest 2 suffered from engine problems while Matt, riding a replica of his grandfather's US spec bike ran a troubled 14 second pass towards the NSA Shootout.

Photos courtesy of Mike Burrowes & Julian Hunt

HOF tributes

Remembering those the sport has lost

Sparky Perry

We were very sorry to hear from Land Speed racer Geoff Stilwell of the death of his crew chief Sparky Perry. Geoff writes: Twelve months ago I had just bought the Kuhl & Olson Land Speed car and was introduced to a friend of Bill Schultz. His name was Sparky Perry. I had no idea who Sparky was but he was Bill's right hand man! Sparky had been a Top Alcohol tuner and had run a Top Alcohol Funny Car. Sparky and Bill were the nucleus of the 7707 Land Speed Team. Their knowledge was just amazing and I stood in total awe of Sparky, who totally understood how to tune an Alcohol motor.

We had numerous set backs with the motor but he kept the faith, although I am sure he wondered how on earth he got involved in the project sometimes. So confident was he about the motor that we never test fired it. Just clicked it over a few times. We got to Bonneville and Sparky told me to get in the race car. The motor was turned to get oil pressure, then it burst into life. We all had tears in our eyes... It really was a testament to his abilities. The motor sounded amazing.

On the fifth pass he told me that I "Had to get after it", that is get my foot down in the early part of the run. I went through the third mile at 265 mph, having already run 251 mph and that meant I had the record at 258.697 mph. Little did any of us know that Sparky was actually quite ill. Never once did he moan about it. Not Once. But sadly at 7.00 pm Los Angeles time Sparky passed away. Words just fail me, because I cannot find the right words to say "Thank you" to Sparky. So on behalf of the 7707 Salt Shaker land Speed team: "Thank you Sparky. Not only will you be missed, but so will your humour, your wit and your skills. God bless my friend.



Bunt Willcox

We were very sorry to hear the death of Bunt Willcox, original team member of Dick Sharp's Dorset Horn Wild Bunch Altered due to illness. Dick writes; Although it was expected, the end was much earlier than expected. A blessing for Bunt but a shock to his family and friends. We'd been good mates for over fifty years, many good times, great racing, holidays, parties, and, of course, lots of Jack Daniels. Our thoughts are still with Dinah and sons TJ and Josh and the rest of the family. As Micky Moore said, he'll be up there now with Vic Hammond and Phil Cornish drinking heaven dry. RIP mate, you'll be sorely missed but never forgotten.

Barry Eastman

We were very sorry to hear from Lorcan Parnell of the death of former drag bike rider and co owner of the 'Storm' Funny Bike team Barry Eastman, who passed away in hospital last February aged 68. Lorcan writes: Barry's friendship with Mick Hand extends back over 50 years to when they completed their apprenticeships at the same company and started going sprinting. After racing their own bikes, Mick helped Barry with his Honda CBX Funny Bike Tokyo Express through the 1980s and 1990s, before building the unique Storm Compound Turbo new age Funny Bike together. Now, though, our thoughts are with Barry's family, wife Debbie and daughter Sarah. Barry met Deb through drag racing and we are sure that the drag racing community will want to join us in sending our love and sincere condolences.

Ian King writes: Barry was one of the nicest, unassuming and happy people it has been our pleasure to call a friend and whilst remembering the great times we shared together will miss him very much. Our deepest condolences go out to his wife Debbie, daughter Sarah and his family and many other friends. Godspeed Barry...



Björn Mårtensson

We were shocked and very sorry to hear of the sudden death of Swedish Top Fuel Dragster racer Björn Mårtensson after suffering a heart attack 6th August. A statement from his team reads; It is with tremendous sadness that we must unfortunately announce that Björn 'Nitrobear' Mårtensson is no longer with us by the consequence of a myocardial infarction. We light our candles and give our thoughts to Björn's family. Of course, for the team, this is an incredibly emotional and sorrowful tragedy.

Björn took part in several FIA European Top Fuel Championship races over the last few seasons, but no one had any idea that the recent Summit Racing Equipment Internationals at Tierp Arena would be his final runs. Rest in peace Björn.

Pete Crane Spirit of 76 Award

The Pete Crane Spirit of 76 award is presented for outstanding achievement or contribution to Nostalgia Drag Racing in the UK. To acknowledge those involved in any aspect of Nostalgia racing from racers to admin staff, crew members and anyone else involved in running or shaping the nostalgia racing scene of today. Presented and selected by Pete himself, we would like to congratulate this year's winner: Roy Wilding.

A summary of Roy Wilding's 35 Year Drag Racing Career would make reference to his affable, unyielding and dedicated approach to racing. Roy Wilding has become one of today's established and more better-known drivers from all walks of British Drag Racing and has been involved with just about anything and everything! Roy began racing 35 years ago in his



V6 Ford Pop Hot Rod which was driven from the back seat and could achieve 98 mph in 14.9

seconds and that was just the beginning. Approximately 30 years ago, 14 year-old Mark Luton (now Roy's Crew Chief) began helping with Roy's first dragster, a 322ci Nailhead Buick which went on to achieve 131 mph in 11.001 seconds despite running on Kelly Springfield "Pie Crust" slicks.

From there, Roy went on to build and race car after car with the ET's tumbling on each attempt. One of the more notable cars Roy built and drove was a restoration of the Hemi Hunter dragster, which was originally owned by Gerry Andrews (who ran top fuel in the 1970s). Roy installed a 392ci Chrysler engine and 2-speed box in it and ran an impressive best of 183 mph at 8.001 seconds on methanol before the car changed hands. Moving on, Roy built his Chariots of Fire slingshot which he still drives today. He has achieved a very respectable 199.1 mph in 7.16 seconds and insists the car has more to give.



After building race car after race car for friends and customers alike, Roy opened up "Roy Wilding Nostalgia Race Cars" which is still churning out cars like nobody's business today. Roy actually restored three of the famous British Altered's; *Paranoia*, *Hellzapoppin'* and the *Thunderbird* car which we're looking forward to seeing sometime soon. Roy's own current project is a Competition Altered with a 426ci Chrysler Hemi and 3-speed Lenco, running with a 14:71 blower. This is being built for Roy, Mark and the crew to have the experience of running a blown alcohol car.

Recently with the help of drag racer Chris Round, Roy even surprised himself with the speed in which he could work producing a complete rolling dragster chassis from raw materials within 28 hours! Throughout all this very productive time Roy also continued with a full-time job, and currently works at Futura Design concept car builders. In addition to contributing to the Nostalgia drag racing world, for the last 6 to 7 years Roy has been actively involved and driver for the S & K Racing Team, competing in Super Pro ET. This is just a small glimpse into the commitment Roy has to racing life and a career that has led to him being known as a prolific chassis builder and renovator.

In addition to this, Roy has actually been instrumental in founding several race classes that we're lucky enough to have running this weekend. Roy started the Supercharged Outlaws, along with fellow racer John Guthrie, he also began the Wild Bunch in 1994 and he was even one of those that badgered Santa Pod into starting up the Slingshot Showdown class. Even today, Roy is still well known around the pits for being on hand to advise and assist anyone and everyone that he can help.

Roy always had a soft spot for Shakespeare County Raceway and over the years offered help in the form of materials, man power and just about anything else he could to support the track and was instrumental, along with Brian Gandy and Jerry Cookson, in building the transit van jet dryer.

Roy is a true stalwart of the sport and from Pete and all of us here at Santa Pod, we'd like to thank him for his contribution to the sport which simply wouldn't be the same without him!

HOF team

About the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame is a not for profit organisation that was established in 2006 to recognise significant contributions or achievements in the sport of British drag racing. It is run by volunteers and the twelve Selection Panel members include club & track officials, promoters, former racers, journalists and fans with a long background in the sport. They convene annually to nominate candidates for inclusion into the Hall of Fame. Eligibility for induction into the British Drag Racing Hall Of Fame is extended to any person who has driven, piloted, owned, designed, built, maintained, prepared, promoted, officiated, supported or taken part in any capacity connected with British drag racing. An inductee must have been retired for a least three years or must have been engaged at the top level of his/her area of British drag racing for at least 20 years, or made a recognizable and significant contribution to the sport. Inductees are characterized by their desire to win, mastery of their own particular field and courage to innovate..

British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Selection Panel

Stu Bradbury – Former Santa Pod Raceway Chief Starter and Hall of Fame Chairman.

Keith Bartlett – Santa Pod Raceway CEO and FIA Championship Promoter

Philip Evans – UK delegate to FIA Drag Racing Commission and Chair of Motorsport UK Drag Racing Committee.

Robin Jackson – MSA British Drag Racing Championship representative and Santa Pod Raceway Press Officer.

Jeremy Cookson – Former Shakespeare County Raceway Promotions Manager and UK Nostalgia enthusiast.

Graham Beckwith – Former Santa Pod Raceway and York Raceway Commentator and now event MC.

Ian Marshall – Santa Pod Racers Club Chief Starter.

Phil Cottingham – Spectator Representative and Former Carter Motorsport Marketing Manager.

Ian Messenger – Former Bike Racer & BDRHoF Website Administrator.

Darren Prentice – Santa Pod Raceway Track Manager.

Andy Rogers (Tog) – Eurodragster.com news editor.

Keith Lee – Photo journalist, former bike racer, Santa Pod Raceway commentator and BDR&HRA committee Member.

Drag Racing History Consultants – **Nick Pettitt** and **Keith Lee**

The BDRHoF also presents the Mopar Performance Lifetime Achievement Award.

British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Limited

In September 2016 a Limited Company was incorporated to place the BDRHoF on a corporate footing. The management of the BDRHoF is carried out by its Management Board which looks after strategy, finance, commercial, marketing, sponsorship, press & public relations, membership liaison, international liaison, events and general secretary duties. The Directors are listed overleaf:

Stu Bradbury – Honorary Chairman
Bev Bradbury – General Secretary and Treasurer
Simon Groves – Company Secretary and Membership Liaison
Ian Hart - Sponsorship Liaison
Robin Jackson – Press and Visitor Liaison
Nigel Payne - Transport liaison

Advisers: **Phil Cottingham** (outdoor events), **Phil Evans** (special motorsport liaison) **Julian Parsons** (audio visual), **Andy Wheeler** (social media and special projects), **Jordan Payne** and **Ruaridh Hart** (Junior Drag Racing liaison) and **Lesley Wright** (publications).

The Board meets regularly to discuss issues associated with finance, operations and structure. For convenience meetings are usually held at the Oatlands Park Hotel (the Gala Awards Dinner venue) and major topics have included the Gala Awards Dinner and increasing promotional activity.

BDRHOF Benevolent Fund

In March 2016 the BDRHOF Benevolent Fund was created as registered charity no. 1167197. The BDRHOF Benevolent Fund is run for drag racers by trustees who have had many years' experience in the sport. Trustees are: **Stu Bradbury**, **Simon Groves**, **Robin Jackson**, **Ian Messenger**, **Graham Beckwith**, **Ian Marshall** and **Phil Cottingham**.

Racers or officials who through injury have fallen on hard times may be invited to apply for grants. Money raised will also go to the Air Ambulances local to UK drag racing tracks, and their medical facilities. All money raised by donation goes to charitable grants.

A collection was organised at Dragstalgia this year as part of the BDRHoF presence at the event. There will also be collections at BDRHOF events and through corporate giving by sponsors.

Help Required

If you would like to help the BDRHoF we are should welcome assistance with event management tasks such as journalism, script writing, programme producing, liaising with sponsors, and more besides. In working for the BDRHoF you will have a chance to network with legends of drag racing around the world and enhance your CV skills base. Contact stuart@britishdragracinghof.co.uk.

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Sponsors

The BDRHoF could not exist without the support of its sponsors. Three levels of sponsorship are available - Partnership, Primary and Regular/Event sponsorship. If your company would like to join these supporters please contact stuart@britishdragracinghof.co.uk

Items for sale

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame has a range of branded items for sale. You can find details on www.britishdragracinghof.co.uk/shop/.

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