

## *A Blast from the Past. Goodwood Revival Revisited.*

*By Geoffrey 'Grumpy' O'Connell.*

*2019*

In September 2018 last year, I was alerted to a Facebook entry posted by my eldest Daughter, one Deb(by) N. Jon Chambers. By some chance she had come across a Facebook photograph of two cars racing at the 2008 Goodwood Revival Meeting. To this snapshot she had commented *"Down memory lane ... just found this bad boy of my Daddy overtaking (Sir) Stirling Moss at Goodwood Revival"*. That was ten years ago. To that Charlotte Hawthorne, my youngest Daughter, had added *"Love it. We were there that year. It was amazing. xxx"*. A third person, a Lynne Sladen Mayell, of whom I know not, had opined *"Fantastic photo that's so special as Sir Stirling stopped racing a few years ago now"*.



I sent a copy of the Facebook entry to Peter Davies, our JDC Magazine Editor, and he suggested I should devote an article to that year's September Goodwood Revival Meeting. So here goes and it is his fault I am inflicting the same on you members of the Club.

Incidentally Sir Stirling Craufurd Moss (born 1929), against whom I raced at various circuits in the 2000s, finally ceased to compete in even Class and Association events after he had what could have been a life-threatening accident. That occurred in March 2010 when he entered his Mayfair town house lift only to discover that there was no lift. He dropped three floors to the bottom of the lift shaft and for his troubles broke both his ankles as well as suffering broken bones in a foot and

achieving four chipped vertebrae. That was not so good when you are a youthful 80 years of age. Stirling was not alone in having a competitive nature. His father, Alfred Ethelbert Moss (1896-1972), who became a very successful London dentist, competed at Brooklands in the 1920s with some success. Furthermore in 1924 he enjoyed one outing in the American Indianapolis 500 in which he finished 14<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> (depending) out of the original 22 cars, becoming the first dentist to compete in that famous race. Additionally, in 1925 he raced at a number of USA dirt tracks before returning to good old 'Blighty'. In 1927 he married Aileen Craufurd whom he had met at Brooklands in 1926 – where else? – at which stage he ceased motor racing.

Mrs Moss prior to her marriage had treasured horses but having been an ambulance driver in the Royal Flying Corps during WW1 progressed into a very fine trials and rally driver, becoming the 'Ladies Trial Champion of England'.

If all that were not enough Stirling's Sister, Patricia (Pat) Ann Moss (1934-2008), was firstly a successful show-jumper and then from 1953 an extremely capable rally driver throughout the world. In that sport she met one Erik Carlsson (1929-2015), a Swedish Rally driver between 1955 and 1970, whom Pat married in 1963. Driving Saab's Erik won the RAC Rally three times, the Monte Carlo Rally twice and gained some nineteen international victories. Not without good cause he was known as the first '*rallying superstar*' and affectionately as '*Mr Saab*'. I suppose the choice of Saab cars was fairly likely as Erik was born near Trollhattan, the 'home' of the Saab vehicle production facility.

At this point in the narrative the history of the Goodwood Racing Circuit might be worthwhile clarifying. By necessity this will also involve the Duke of Richmond's who have and still do own the land on which the Circuit is to be found. Charles Lennox (1672-1723), the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Richmond, 1st Duke of Lennox and 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Aubigny was the illegitimate Son of King Charles II of England and his French mistress Louise de Kerouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth. Louise was also a '*confidant*' of the French sovereign – a spy!

He purchased Goodwood House in 1697 as a hunting lodge. His Son, Charles Lennox (1701-1750), 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Richmond is best recalled for his passionate sponsorship of the game of cricket, more especially in the county of Sussex. It has been chronicled that he was the greatest benefactor of early cricket including the single wicket gam. Apart from his own team he patronised the Slindon Cricket Club in the Arun District of West Sussex. It has been suggested that the Club was in effect a Sussex County team. Incidentally, it is recorded that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke had an arranged and most '*beneficial*' marriage when he was aged 18 and his bride, Lady Sarah Cadogan (1705-1751), was a mere 13 years old.

Skipping a number of Dukes brings us to Frederick 'Freddie' Gordon-Lennox (1904-1989), 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of Richmond, 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of Lennox, 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of Aubigny and 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Gordon. Whilst at Oxford University studying agriculture, he chucked it all in. Much to his parents outrage he became a motor mechanic at the Bentley Motors factory at Cricklewood, then a parish in the County of Middlesex. He was employed as a '*Mr Settrington*' and or '*Freddie March*'. He stuck to his guns even when his allowance was cut-off. Subsequently he became a successful Brooklands racing driver and was involved in a London car dealership selling desirable motor cars as well as being a coachwork stylist and builder. In 1935 he inherited the Dukedoms and the Goodwood Estate but had to sell the Scottish Estates to settle his Father's death duties. As a harbinger of things to come in 1936 he held a Goodwood House hill-climb for the Lancia Owners Club. The by this time 12,000-acre Estate is situated to the north of Chichester in West Sussex.

With the German question rearing its ugly head in Europe, after discussions between the Duke and the Air Ministry, in 1938 they requisitioned some farming land from the Goodwood Estate for use by the Royal Air Force. The latter constructed a three grass runways airfield. That was not too much of a problem for the Duke as he was a passionate pilot and had designed and flown a number of aircraft in the 1930s. For the duration of WW2, it has been chronicled that he served in the RAF. During the Second World War the Goodwood airfield became '*RAF Westhampnett*' which was a relief station for some 3 miles distant '*RAF Tangmere*'.

The main aircraft that used the facility were Hurricanes and Spitfires followed by Hawker Typhoons and Mustangs. In order to cope with the relatively poor drainage of the grass airfield a 3.8km/2.4-mile-long concrete

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perimeter road was constructed around the landing fields – a portent of great things to come of which more follows. On 13<sup>th</sup> May 1946 the airfield was closed as a military services establishment and reverted back to Goodwood Estates.

Post WW2 it is said Squadron Leader Frederick Anthony Owen 'Tony' Gaze (1920-2013) proposed to the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke that the airfield perimeter road would make an excellent motor racing circuit.

Australian by birth, Gaze was a student at Queens' College, Cambridge University when war was declared on Germany. Consequently, he joined the RAF. Once his training was finished, he was posted to 'RAF Westhampnett' and during his wartime service he was awarded the DFC and two bars always flying Spitfires. Post war he became a very successful racing driver competing in Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain and Europe. Whatever, after repairs to the perimeter road and the erection of some three miles of fencing, on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 1948 the Duke and Duchess of Richmond officially opened the Goodwood Racing Circuit by driving a 2-litre sports sedan Bristol 400 around the new track. The meeting, attended by some 15,000 spectators and televised on the BBC, was organised by the 'Junior Car Club'. A 'certain' Stirling Moss won the 500cc race in a single seater Cooper-JAP, his first major success in his second race meeting. Those 500cc cars were the basis for the open-wheel Formula Three (F3) racing cars adopted by the FIA in 1950.

Ever-increasing lap speeds led in 1952 to the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke inserting the now-famous Chicane after Woodcote Corner and immediately prior to the pit-straight. Despite that over the years the lap speeds just kept increasing, so much so that for the 1965 season the engines of racing cars were restricted to 3 litres. Whatever, concerns for the audience safety

led to the Circuit being closed in 1966, the last meeting of that year being a BARC event on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July. I have to add my two-pennyworth here regarding this matter. The '*paddock gossip*' was that another, if not the real reason for the closure was the fear of any adverse backlash from a catastrophic accident at the motor racing circuit that might reflect on the not-so-distant Goodwood Horse Racecourse.

This flat-racing track was established as far back as 1802 by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Richmond, Lennox and Aubigny (1753 -1806) initially for the amusement of the officers of the Sussex Militia of which he was a Colonel. The course originally known as '*The Harroway*' became so popular that the meetings held between May and September were titled as being held at '*Glorious Goodwood*'. Without doubt it is acknowledged as one of, if not the most picturesque racecourse in the world.

Thankfully, as matters were to turn-out some 27 years later, the Circuit and the Pits were well-looked after and the track remained available for sprint meetings and for the circuit testing of racing cars. Very, very sadly during one of the latter, Bruce McLaren (1937-1970), a New Zealand racing driver and race-car designer, was killed whilst testing a McLaren M8D Can-Am car.

The rear bodywork came adrift which caused the vehicle to spin off the track at the Lavant Straight and smash into a flag station bunker. He was hurled from the wreckage and lost his life there and then. Stirling Moss, a competitor of mine at three or four race meetings years later, had almost lost his life competing in the F1 Glover Trophy race on an Easter Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1962 at Goodwood. He was driving a Lotus 18/21 powered by a 1.5 litre, V8 FWMV Coventry Climax engine. He and the car crashed off the circuit at St. Mary's Corner. He was in a coma for in excess of a month and remained partly paralysed for

some 6 months thereafter. Subsequently he retired from top level motor racing.

On the death of Freddie 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of Richmond in 1989, his son Charles Henry Gordon-Lennox (1929-2017) inherited the Estate and became the 10<sup>th</sup> Duke of Richmond, Lennox, Gordon and Aubigny.

He possibly earned some notoriety in the early 1960s when he and his wife adopted two six-month-old girls who had black African Fathers and white British Mothers. In some quarters of society his Son advised that *"it was considered an outrageous thing to do"*. How life has changed! He and his wife moved from Goodwood House into a smaller house

on the Estate in 1994/5 and his heir Charles moved into Goodwood House in 1995, having taken over the reins of the Estate in 1994. Charles Gordon-Lennox (born 1955) did not *'officially'* become the 11<sup>th</sup> Duke of Richmond, Lennox and Aubigny and the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Gordon until his Father's death in 2017. However, Charles had been working very hard to re-establish the motor racing custom of his Grandfather. With this as his objective, in 1993 he established the *'Festival of Speed'* and in 1998 he bought back circuit motor racing with the creation of the *'Goodwood Revival'* Meeting.

*'Goodwood Festival of Speed'*. Established in 1993, this annual hill climb of 1.86km/1.16 miles in length is held in the grounds of Goodwood House. It is spread over three days - from Friday to Sunday - and takes place in late June or early July. The dates are chosen to ensure the event does not clash with Le Mans or the UK Formula 1 race. Attendance is now by *'advance ticket only'* policy with the daily turnout restricted to 150,000 people per day.

*'Goodwood Revival'*. The three-day festival meeting commenced in 1998 and is staged between Friday and Sunday in September on the original Circuit (3.8km/2.4 miles).

The reincarnation of the *'old'* course was achieved after a long battle with those opposed to the reopening of the facility.

Competitors are selected by invitation-only and have to enter road/racing cars (and motorcycles) that would have performed in the *'old days'*, between 1948 and 1966. The restoration of the Circuit was carried out as authentically as possible to recreate the original Circuit, pits, race paddock and Grandstand. However, to gain the necessary track licence from the *'RAC MSA'* governing body there had to be the addition of acoustic banking to assist in deadening the engine and exhaust noise, gravel traps, run-off areas and an Armco safety barrier around the outside of the track. Even after all that, racing is only allowed for a maximum of five days a year and those are monitored by Chichester District Council placed listening devices to ensure the allowable decibels are not exceeded.

To evoke the spirit of the *'days of yore'* spectators are encouraged to dress in period clothes and no modern vehicles are allowed within the circuit – that is apart from emergency and safety vehicles. Here again attendance is now by an *'advance ticket only'* scheme and daily numbers are also limited to 150,000 people a day. The Revival Meeting is accompanied by historic aircraft based on the aerodrome within the circuit. Post WW2 the airfield was brought back in to operation in 1951.

It is interesting to carry out a few mathematical calculations in respect of the daily attendance earnings for entry only - that is not including spectators spending revenue. To so do I am assuming the maximum daily numbers of spectator's reaches 150,000 and that the ticket prices per person are as they are currently at £59 for the Friday and £79 for Saturday and Sunday. These figures result in a Friday gross take of £8,850,000 and for the weekend a daily sum of £11,850,000.

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As previously '*carried-on*', I had raced at Goodwood many times in the 1960s and was fortunate enough to be invited to compete in the September 2008 Revival Meeting. My chosen steed was my Arnolt Bristol Bolide, about which I wrote in the November 2018 issue of the Magazine. My particular race was the '*Fordwater Trophy*' event for '*Production-based sports cars in the spirit of the early Members Meetings, 1948-1954*'.

The original reference and photograph to my overtaking Sir Stirling Moss shows the car involved to be a 2 door 1954 Alfa Romeo 1900 CSS (Coupe Super Sport). My recollection of that long-ago weekend is that Stirling was listed to drive an XK120 owned by Anthony Bamford – the Chairman of JCB Excavators. However not only may that vehicle not have been available and or broken down during the weekend.

Furthermore, the policy of the Goodwood Revival by that time had subtly altered to '*encourage*' the owners of an entered car to allow a professional racing luminary to share the drive. Yes, to share the drive! Whilst on that theme it appeared to be notable that any circuit accidents were more often than not whilst the vehicle was in the hands of the '*guest driver*'. Fellow competitors in my race included: Duncan Rabagliati, Roddy McPherson and of course Sir Stirling Moss.

One other matter of some note was that this 2008 Goodwood Revival Meeting was attended by the Sir Jackie Stewart (born 1939) who had '*in tow*' Frederick '*Fred the Shred*' Anderson Goodwin. The latter was '*just*' still the Chief Executive of the Royal Bank of Scotland. RBoS was at that time a sponsor of the Revival Meeting but that was not to last very much longer due to Fred entering a bidding war for the Dutch firm of ABN Amro. He won the battle but late in 2008 he announced his resignation and early in 2009 RBoS declared a loss for 2008 of a

whopping £24.1 billion, said to be the largest annual loss in UK corporate history. Yes, he who was described by those who should be in the know that he was '*the world's worst banker*' had overseen a £24.1 billion loss. To add insult to whatever it became apparent Goodwin was entitled to an annual pension of £693,000, later revised upwards to £703,000. After much hue, cry and negotiation RBoS stated that this had been reduced to £325,000 from a previously renegotiated £555,000 - after he had able to draw a tax-free lump sum of £2.7 million.

You may require a headache pill or five after inwardly digesting this matter. A knighthood he had received in 2004 '*for services to the banking industry*' (Oh hoho!) was 'cancelled and annulled' on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012 by the Queen on the advice of her Majesty's Government and the Honours Forfeiture Committee.

Up until 2008 one benefit of what was a rather costly, some four days arriving, competing and departing to, at and from the Goodwood Revival Meeting was that there were no entrance or race fees. However, it would appear, subsequent to the loss of the RBoS sponsorship from 2009 that would-be competitors were '*invited*' to indicate the size of a contribution they would make towards whatever - or some such carry-on.

In conclusion of this saga it is not generally known that Jackie Stewart had an older Brother, James "Jimmy" Robert Stewart (1931 -2008) who in his early years seemed to have a promising motor racing career. He made his Grand Prix debut with a Cooper Bristol at the 1953 British Grand Prix. However, after a serious crash at the 1954 Le Mans and another at the 1955 Nurburgring 1000km sports car race he decided to retire from the sport.

Time for me to sign off. *Grumpy G.*