

End to End Singer Centennial - mainly from Heidi Clapp's Blogspot.

In August 1912, William Warn drove his 25hp Singer from John O'Groats to Land's End without stopping the engine. In August 2012, his great grandchildren, Heidi, Craig and Frank, with Heidi's husband David and Oliver the dog, recreated this as closely possible in a 1907 Singer 12/14 hp, owned and driven by Ian North, but starting at Land's End.



MONDAY, 20 AUGUST 2012 - Photo Shoot in Poole. We had a fantastic morning taking AT1907 from Corfe Castle, over the chain ferry at Studland and onto the Wimborne Road in Poole, where my great grandfather had his motor engineering business, and where the middle photo was taken before his 1912 trip. His shop is now the Towngate Gallery and Art Shop, who had kindly agreed to let us use their forecourt, the frontage being still similar to that in the original picture. And here we are, ready to create our 2012 version of that photo.

We were honoured to be met



Annabel.



John Bramwell's 10/26 and the Team.

by Annabel Levoux, George Singer's great great grand-daughter. Also by Barry Paine, who helped get this whole project off the ground, and by John Bramwell, who joined us in his 1925 Singer 10/26. Magnificent!



Ian and John B

WEDNESDAY, 22 AUGUST 2012 - Day 1 - Land's End to Cheriton Bishop.

The day started at Lands End at just after 9am. First we reconstructed the photo of 1912 outside the hotel, before moving the car so Ian could be taken with the lighthouse in the background - double verification that we were indeed at Land's End!

Kevitt and Sue Payne had come from Padstow to see us in their 1935 Singer Le



The Happy Group



Lands End 2012

Mans Longtail, and after a happy group photo, and with two of William Warn's great grandchildren and David on board, and Ian at the wheel, we set off for the open road.

After about an hour, Ian thought it was time to stop for a cuppa. A quick look under the bonnet told us the fan pulley ball bearings had decided to roll out over the road as we travelled. We got some replacements from a bike shop! This sort of re-created the breakdown suffered on the 1912 north-bound run, when the 25hp Singer conked out due to a fuel pipe breakage, which is

why the non-engine-stop run was on the return journey. Anyway, Steve looks serious as he dons his work overalls and sets-to to make the repairs. Job done and off we go again for a few miles to a lunch stop on the lay-by just past Bodmin.

Here we were joined by Simon Bishop in his Mazda and Mike (?) with his gleaming black Citroen Traction.

and they're off!



Four-up on the Open Road

By 5pm we have reached the campsite near Cheriton Bishop with no further mishaps. All feeling very chuffed that this remarkable old car (and it's mechanic and drivers) has passed the first 115 miles with flying colours!

THURSDAY, 23 AUGUST 2012 - Day 2 - Cheriton Bishop to Steeple Ashton.

During our lunch stop, at a lay-by somewhere just after Honiton, we were joined by Robert Lovegrove with his lovely 1934 Singer Nine Sports 4-seater.



Robert had also brought a SINGER banner in case there was any doubt!



After lunch, people continued to toot and wave as we made good time, whilst I ensured the oil was regularly pumped round the engine.

Then Steve had a sudden thought about the potential need for petrol, so we pulled into a filling station, where we were met by Bob and Elaine Browning with their 1953 Roadster 4ADT. It was then only a shortish run to the campsite at Steeple Ashton and a well-earned rest for all.



FRIDAY, 24 AUGUST 2012 - Day 3 - Steeple Ashton to Coventry.

Ian gives the children at the campsite a quick ride before setting off on the dot of 9 am,

heading towards Chippenham, Malmesbury and beyond. Much of the road today is single lane, so we make our presence felt on other traffic. A few spots of rain threaten to spoil the party, but just by Kemble Airfield we spy two other beautiful Singers in a lay-by, and pull in to find Cyril Verey with his Singer 9 Sports 1933 and Nick Warren with his Singer 1935 Le Mans 4-seater Longtail.

On through picturesque Moreton-on-Marsh, onto the B4455 Fosse Way, and that miracle 1907 glided and chugged its way up the steep inclines without a backward glance. And now here we are at the end of the day in Meridan, the very centre of Britain!



*Nick's 1935 LM
& Cyril's 1933 Sports*

SATURDAY, 25 AUGUST 2012 - Day 4 - Coventry to Selby.

Our first stop of the morning was at George Singer's home at Coundon Court, now a school. Barry Paine had come to meet us in his Singer Gazelle at the campsite before we left, and followed our wagon-train. And what a delight met us in this leafy glade that is Coundon Court. Jackie and John Coleman had come along with their Singer Senior 1927 2-seater with 'dickie'. John Taylor was also there with his 1926 Singer 10/26, which was 86 years old this very day. We were also greeted by Richard Hoare, previous Head



*Heidi,
Adam,
David,
Craig*

of English at the school and an avid George Singer historian.

We left Coundon Court, following the A46 until it met the A1, and by the time we had parked up by a fishing lake in a campsite in Balne, AT 1907 had done over 130 miles in the day.



Richard Hoare



The Group outside Coundon Court

SUNDAY, 26 AUGUST 2012 - Day 5 - Selby to Durham.

A slightly later start this morning and were on our way with more substantial clothing. Ian had on his leather cap with ear muffs. Fantastic morning's drive up the A19. Steve and Gill's daughters, Sarah and Katy, with son-in-law Richard, arrived with a jerry can so that we can be sure of having enough fuel to get to John O'Groats once we are past Inverness. Sarah and Katy were keen for a ride so they joined us for a few miles.

A few miles after our lunch stop, Steve had to make some running repairs. A screw had come loose and the hand throttle was getting caught (something about it being retarded), so out came two specially selected screwdrivers and we were soon



Sarah and Katy hitch a ride

back on our way. Early arrival at campsite and nice weather = chores. Steve had been mentioning for most of the day (beware those of a delicate nature) that nipples needed greasing. Personally, I thought that was a bit more information than I needed, so while he and Ian did the technical bits, David and I lent a hand and polished the brass.



MONDAY, 27 AUGUST 2012 - Day 6 - Durham to Dunbar.

Ian and Craig set off at 9 and have warm clothes for the morning's trip, so off again up the A1 goes 1907. Within half an hour there was a quick stop - to put on waterproof trousers.



The 'Wet' Shift

After lunch Steve and I were given the 'wet' shift. Then I spied a Scottish flag, and without further ado we sailed unchallenged into the beautiful Scottish countryside - and here is the photo to prove it! And if proof is needed that we were on the wet shift, look at the inset traffic sign!

After lunch Steve and I were given the 'wet' shift. Then I spied a Scottish flag, and without further ado we sailed unchallenged into the



TUESDAY, 28 AUGUST 2012 - Day 7 - Dunbar to Pitlochry.

The day started bright and clear, and this was the view from our campsite at 7am. Then before we set off we were visited by Alec Dale from the Myreton Motor Museum, who told us we had unfortunately missed long-time Singer owner Archie Linton yesterday. Alec told us Archie's 1935 Ards TT works team car AVC 483, which



Archie used to race in the 1950s, is on display at the museum. Today's route takes us across the Forth Road Bridge, but first we stop at the Services to meet Ronnie Johnston, Singer enthusiast and ASCO's Scottish Area Rep, who has brought with him Alex Fairbairn, who worked for a Singer dealership in the 1950s. We also met two reporters from the Scottish Daily Mail, who

considered our story much more interesting than the one they were sent out to cover.



They were most interested, and wanted a '20th Century Meets 21st Century' photo of AT 1907 going through the McDonald's drive-through, which Ian and David obliged. Their headline in Wednesday's paper reads:

“The vintage car that made a pit-stop - at McDonald's”

Back to the road, and Ian again is generous with the 1907 and Alex rides with Craig and me over the bridge, followed by Ronnie.

According to a report in Wednesday's SCOTSMAN, entitled **“Bridging the Gap: 105-year-old car sets record”**, owner **Ian North**, and passenger **David Lilley**, set a record by crossing the Forth Bridge in the oldest car to do so.”



Well, he was wrong about the passenger, but wouldn't it be great if he is right about the record? The Guinness Book of Records perhaps? But first, this is Scotland, the home of whisky making, and Pitlochry is the home of Bell's Blair Atholl distillery, and it would have been rude not to pay a visit. So we did, and although none of us care much for whisky, we did try to show willing.

WEDNESDAY, 29 AUGUST 2012 - Day 8 - Pitlochry to Dingwall.

1907 GETS FAMOUS! With the articles in 'The Scotsman' and the 'Scottish Daily Mail', 1907 is getting so keen on all this attention that when BBC Scotland got in touch, a TV appearance was inevitable! So interviews were had with Ian, Steve and myself. But unless you live in Scotland you will just have to take my word for it, as you won't have seen the broadcast at 6.30 tonight.

Unbeknown to us there had been some slight difficulties with



Scenic to Inverness



Lights - Camera - Action!

1907's starting handle. I don't know what the problem was, but according to Steve, as well as greasing the nipples, he should also have been oiling the shaft.

One Day To Go? Hopefully, we will be in John O'Groats tomorrow. 872 miles completed, with about 100 more to do! Keeping everything crossed.....

Did they make it? Go to page 26 to find out!

End to End Singer Centennial *(Continued from page 11 ...)*

THURSDAY, 30 AUGUST 2012 - Day 9 - Dingwall to John O'Groats.

Ian and Craig start the day off at 9.05 this morning. 1907 looks gleaming, as Steve gave the brass a quick rub when he got up, so no water marks to spoil his reflection! Craig gives a wave and off they go onto the open road for the final leg, with the support team not too far behind.



The scenery is fabulous, and some of the hills were a bit vertiginous for 1907, but being gently coaxed by Ian, and with David breathing in, all were made in fine style, and it didn't seem long before we were only 3 miles away.



I texted my brother Frank, who says we were bound to make it now - we could push the car



from there! Too right! But we didn't need to - **the wonderful 1907 did it *his way!***

Time to CELEBRATE!! We parked up under the iconic signpost and took loads of pictures before re-creating the final piece of our jigsaw at the hotel, which has been derelict for some years. It is now being refurbished, but we are grateful it is still there 100 years on!



Thanks to Ian, to 1907, to our back-up team, and to all who have supported us with their company or good wishes via the blog. **Heidi.**

And on behalf of Singer owners everywhere, the most hearty congratulations to all involved in this fantastic achievement.

Mike H.

Ian North and Heidi Clapp's Land's End to John O'Groats Run

1907 12/14HP SINGER

AUGUST 2012



Car at Land's End Hotel



Car seen at Poole before starting



Car at John O'Groats Hotel