

# SPECIAL

## GOODBYE

This is the 43<sup>rd</sup> and last newsletter that I will be producing for the **PAGODA RADIO CAR CLUB**.

After 14 years helping to run the club I am hanging up my stopwatch and microphone and handing over my side of the organising to **Brian Mills**. I am grateful to him for agreeing to take over. It is a comfort to know that I have left it in good hands.

I am sure most of you will know that I am retiring from the police in April. My actual retirement date after 30 years service is the 10<sup>th</sup>. **The last meeting of the 98/99 Winter Season, on the 11<sup>th</sup> April, will also be my last meeting.** I cannot carry on helping to run the club because I am moving away from the area.

It has been a great pleasure for me to have been involved with the **PRCC** since it started way back in **1985**. Those who have only recently joined will probably not know how it all started. The building had been erected by Kent County Council as a Youth Club and they were looking for activities to support. At this time both Ian and I had 2 sons who were interested in radio controlled cars but there was nowhere local to race them. We approached the Manager of **The Pagoda**, as the centre was called (that's where the name came from!), and asked him if we could race there. He thought we could do it indoors, until we gave him a demonstration. He quickly changed his mind!

At first there were only about 7 or 8 of us and we "raced" on Wednesday evenings in the car park by street lights. It was quite exciting, especially in the winter. There were quite a lot of breakages when the plastic got cold.

Apart from my sons Martin and Mark and Ian's lads Adrian and Mark, there was Steve Andrews and his brother John and 3 or 4 others. **Thanks for sticking with us over the years Steve.**

Apart of course from Ian and myself, Steve is the only founder member still racing (and still winning - not quite so often but still enough to keep everyone on their toes).

It wasn't until 1986, I believe, that we constructed our first track, under what is now the tarmac area. The track we have now is about the 6<sup>th</sup> version.

I have no idea how many members we have had over the years but it must be hundreds! I believe our peak years for members were during 1992 and 1993 when we rarely had less than 42 to 45 drivers racing (I seem to recall one meeting with 51 drivers in attendance - it was indoors in Hugh Christie's small hall - and it was chaos!!!).

When I look at how well we are organised now, with Dave Mills wonderful timing program, indoors in the warm and think back to those dark, cold nights, timing races with a stopwatch and recording by hand on a bit of paper, I realise how far we have come. (I also remember it being a lot of fun - and it still is!).

It has been a conscious decision by Ian and me, not to ever allow the racing to get too serious. If it isn't fun and enjoyable there is really no point in doing it - is there? Try and remember that, when you don't do as well as you thought you were going to - or you lose a wheel on the last corner of a race! This is one of the reasons why we have no written rules and have never got involved with BRCA invitation meetings. They take it all far too seriously.

**Although I am leaving I intend to keep in touch.** I hope that Brian will be able to Email the meeting results to me wherever I end up living (I've sold my house at Heathfield but haven't yet bought another one!) My sons still live in this area so I will be coming back to visit. I will make sure some of the visits coincide with race meetings.

**I would like to wish all of you the very best for the future, not just the drivers but the Mums and Dads who have given us their support as well. I hope you continue to give Ian and Brian the same support you have all given me.**

## WINTER SEASON MEETING DATES

Attached to this newsletter are the dates for our **Summer Championship Meetings**. Please note that the first meeting of the season is a practice session, for the benefit of those who have never raced on the track before.

## SPRING MEETING

By popular request Ian and Brian will be organising another of our Spring Meetings on the tarmac at Hugh

Christie. If you have any ideas for novelty races make sure you contact us at the next meeting and pass on your ideas.

Brian will probably do another newsletter before the meeting to let you know what is happening.