



The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame News Bulletin Summer 2016 Issue II

Compiled and Edited by Simon Groves; additional words by Phil Cottingham and Brian Taylor; on-line version by Nigel Holland

2016 INDUCTEES ANNOUNCED

The British Drag Racing Hall Of Fame in association with Beech Underwriting Agencies and US Automotive continues into its tenth successful year and is pleased to announce the 2016 intake. The 2016 inductees, in alphabetical order, are US dragster builder, driver and overseas pioneer the late Bob Keith, engineer, crew chief and race car builder Rob Loaring, Santa Pod Racers Club Secretary the late Paula Marshall and Europe's first permanent drag racing track Santa Pod Raceway



Bob Keith







Paula Marshall

Their detailed Citations are published in the next three pages 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 fabulous Sheraton Skyline Hotel, Heathrow, on November 19th when drag racing personalities and fans from around the world will celebrate the commitment shown by these all too often un-sung heroes and the influence they have had on drag racing. We welcome them all into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.



Welcome to the second issue of HoFtalk.

In the twelve months since the first issue we have seen the BDRHoF hold the best drag racing social occasion ever in the UK and one that legends are flocking to.

In 2016 we are raising the bar even higher and have a fabulous line up announced so far with many more to be announced still.

The nostalgia scene in the sport has never been stronger and vehicle counts are up all round. So don't miss the chance to mingle with the leaders of the sport on 19th November!

Send any contributions to <u>simon@britishdragracinghof.co.uk</u> Also available in pdf form at http://www.eurodragster.com/news/features/HOFtalk/HOFtalk 02.pdf

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Bob Keith – Profile by Brian Taylor



Although perhaps not so well known as some American drag racers, semi-professional Bob Keith played an instrumental role in establishing the sport in Great Britain. But his drag racing exploits started like many Californians back in the day when his father gave him a cherry 1940 Ford as his 1955 graduation present. That led to the next 20 years of his life being spent at drag strips across the USA driving a variety of vehicles. His influence on drag racing across the globe leaped to a different level when in the early 1960s he became one of the first American drag racers to contact Sydney Allard in the UK after reading about his exploits in developing the Allard Chrysler in American magazines.

Regular correspondence (hand written letters in those days) resulted in Sydney insisting that Bob be included in the National Hot Rod Association team that launched the sport in the UK during the 1964 Allard-promoted six-race Drag Festival. Still just semiprofessional, but now with a blown small block Chevy dragster in a Tommy Ivo chassis and called Dos Palmas, he found himself in the company of America's top drag racing stars of the era. What a thrill.

He sold his car to a UK team, helping them learn the techniques to get the power to the ground. The machine went on to play an important role in establishing drag racing in the UK during the next few years under the name Asmodeus, then in the hands of American Bill Weichelt who took the dragster back to the USA. Bob managed to track down this car in later years and Ray Evernham financed its restoration to original condition.

Bob captained the American team that raced at Blackbushe and Woodvale in the 1965 Drag Festival. By this time the small block had been replaced with a blown Chrysler in a Kent Fuller chassis. The following year, with a big block Chevy, Bob captained a team that visited Australia. This car too has been recreated and Bob is recognised as playing an important role in developing drag racing in Australia. He met his wife Lee there and they married in 1967.

Bob kept in contact with many UK pioneers during the years that followed and returned to the country several times. He was very involved in the research for Crazy Horses – the history of British Drag racing. Sadly he passed away during the summer of 2015, but he remembered the period between 1964 and 1966 as the highlight of his career. It is for his



involvement in launching drag racing into the UK in 1964 and 1965 that he is being inducted into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame..

Rob Loaring – Profile by Simon Groves



Rob Loaring is one of the most versatile and accomplished engineers in European drag racing. Working as I.C.E. Automotive from premises at Silverstone, he has won six UK Pro Modified Championships as crew chief or tuner, created a highly respected engine building business, fostered the introduction of new class regulations into the sport in the UK and built and run some of the sport's best performing and spectacular race cars.

He was in his late teens, when he first ventured to Santa Pod with the Draper Brothers, carrying out minor roles on their first few cars. He then acquired a dragster from them which became his grounding as a crew chief and tuner.

In the mid-eighties Rob made the momentous decision to work in drag racing for a living. The name I.C.E. Automotive was coined as it was a suitable length to place on his customers' hood scoops and fenders. The initials stand for Internal Combustion Engine. Pro Modified had just started by 1988 and Rob had an opportunity to work with Tim Cook on his '56 Chevy and, later, a smaller '55 Chevy, The class technology was growing quickly, albeit solely with nitrous engines, and the pair won winning the championship in 1990 and 1991. Rob then joined with Tony Rose for two years, who ran the first six second pass by a European doorslammer in July 1993. Subsequently, they both took the 1994 Pro Mod Championship. A further collaboration, with Dave Mingay in 1995, gave Rob his fourth Pro Mod title.

Rob teamed up with current business partner Nick Davies in 1997, the pair winning the Championship in 1999 and 2000 with Nick driving. He drew up plans for a heads-up doorslammer class which would be more affordable and yet be highly competitive - Super Modified. The class was an instant hit and fields of eight cars were common during its ten year reign.

And during recent years, he has developed turbo engines for Pro Mod and Street Eliminator and built the iconic Havoc Altered, which he and Nick raced memorably against the legendary US Fuel Altered Pure Hell at Santa Pod Raceway's 2014 Dragstalgia Meet. Rob also turned his attention to Nostalgia Funny Cars and built the superb Apache for Tim Garlick and he found time to help with the recent restoration work on the Allard Chrysler dragster. It is for his continued determination pursue engineering to



excellence and influence drag racing's development in the UK, along with his willingness to help others that Rob Loaring is being inducted into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.

Paula Marshall – Profile by Andy 'Tog' Rogers



Paula Marshall became interested in drag racing in 1986, attending races with a group of family and friends including then-boyfriend Ian Marshall whom she later married. Paula and Ian soon volunteered to work at events at Santa Pod Raceway and starting in 1989 Paula filled almost every possible role at the track, from working in the Signing On office at both race events and Run What You Brungs, to marshalling in the pairing lanes and collection area, to working on the fire crew. She started to race at the 1996 Cannonball at Santa Pod Raceway, making test runs in Jon Webster's Comet before driving her own car, the Highlander Camaro, in Super Gas.

In 1998 Paula became Secretary of Santa Pod Racers Club. At that point she had no experience of the organisation of UK and European Championship events but she was a quick learner and equally quickly earned the respect of racers

and authorities both for her efficiency and for a no-nonsense approach which became legendary. In a sport in which many people think that they know everything, Paula genuinely did know everything. Whether obscure questions about rules, or queries from UK racers wishing to compete overseas or overseas racers wishing to compete here, Paula knew the form and was always ready to inform, to assist, and to deliver.

Paula played a leading role in the formation of the current UK National Drag Racing Championship, whose first season was contested in 1999, forging links between Clubs whose relationship had historically been uneasy. The UK National Championship is administered by Santa Pod Racers Club and as well as working on regulations and paperwork on behalf of both SPRC and APIRA, she



also organised the annual UK National Championships Dinner Dance. She was one of the first to realise the potential of the internet and in 1999 set a precedent for providing event entry lists and notices to racers for publication on-line.

Paula continued to race until the end of the 2000 season before stepping out of the car to have daughter Holley, who now races and who also assists Ian both with SPRC administration and marshalling at race events. Paula returned to the track when Holley was a few years old to contest a few events in Super Modified before finally hanging up her firesuit and concentrating on her duties as Club Secretary.

Paula was diagnosed with leukaemia in 2011, and although she faced up to the disease with her characteristic toughness she passed away on the evening of 6th January 2013. There were tributes from all over the planet to the Club Secretary, the racer, the wife, the mother, the daughter, the sister, and the friend. The sport as a whole in the UK and Europe, and all of us as individuals, will be forever in debt to Paula Marshall for her hard work, for her friendship, and for the lifetime of dedication and service to the sport for which she is inducted into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.

Photo credit: Eurodragster.com

Santa Pod Raceway - Profile by Robin Jackson



The history of Santa Pod Raceway began when John Bennett announced plans to establish a permanent drag strip on Podington airfield, near Wellingborough at the British Hot Rod Association's 1965 annual meeting. A new company, National Dragways Ltd., leased part of the airfield and operated it as Santa Pod Raceway – 'Santa' to evoke visions of Santa Ana, scene of California's first commercial drag race in 1950, and 'Pod' for Podington. The founding directors were Bennett, Bob and Roy Phelps, Ted Peddle and landowner Ernie Braddock.

Staging its first event on Easter Monday, 11th April 1966, it was the first permanent drag strip sited anywhere in Europe and for the first two seasons, the start line stood close to where today's finish line is located, the current track layout being completed at the start of 1968. It is impossible to overstate the importance of Santa Pod to the history of British drag racing, and arguably European drag racing as well. To every UK legend of the sport, Santa Pod has been the cradle. And visitors from the homeland of drag racing have been in evidence from the beginning.

In June 1966 a team billed as the 'American Commandos' headlined one of the earliest meetings. Led by AI Eckstrand it included the Ultra-Sonic AA/Fuel Dragster driven by Bud Barnes plus the eccentric biker EJ Potter, 'The Michigan Madman'. Bud returned in 1967. Since then, the numerous American luminaries to have graced the track have included Don Schumacher and Paula Murphy, who together gave Britain its first, thrilling experience of full-tilt US Funny Cars in 1973. Don Garlits raced at Santa Pod in 1976 and 1977. Other American stars include Ken Annesley, Marion Owens, T C Christenson and Danny Johnson on their bikes; Sammy Miller and Al Eirdam with their rockets; Raymond Beadle, Gordie Bonin, Tony Nancy, Frank Hawley, Tommy Johnson Jnr, Darryl Gwynn, Leroy Chadderton, Dale Emery, Gene Snow, Don Prudhomme and Al Segrini with their fuel dragsters and funny cars. And let's not forget Melanie Troxel in her Pro Mod. Scandinavian racers became a regular and valued addition to the ranks as early as 1970. At this year's The Main Event, no fewer than 16 continental European countries were represented. Entrants from further afield have ranged from South African Arthur Christie who raced a fuel dragster on the track in 1971, to 2016's debut European appearance of a competitor from the thriving Arabian Drag Racing League, Pro Mod racer Hussain al Shammari of Kuwait.

Santa Pod has been run by three distinct management teams in its half-century of history. After John Bennett stood down in 1969, the Phelps family assumed full control, with Roy Phelps accepting sole charge after father Bob retired in 1983. Don Brister and Bo Meftah acquired the



venue in 1989 and the current team, led by Keith Bartlett, took over in 1996. For 50 years of continuous, and sometimes challenging, operation, Santa Pod Raceway has served as the bedrock and the heartland of drag racing in Europe. It is for this signal and abiding achievement that Santa Pod is inducted into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.

Honorary Chairman of the BDRHoF Stu Bradbury said, "Once again I think the Selection Board have chosen very well. It is not an easy task but somehow they come up with the goods each year and I would like to thank them for the work they do. Bob Keith, Rob Loaring and Paula Marshall are names respected by all those that have been following the sport as it has grown over the years and it is particularly appropriate for Santa Pod to be inducted as Britain's, and one of the world's, best drag racing facility. These inductions into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame represent our tribute to the dedication of the individuals and others associated. It will ensure their names are honoured for all time".

They join a select group whose names are shown below in alphabetical order.

Alf Hagon Alan O'Connor Alan Wigmore Allan Herridge Barry Sheavills Bob Keith Brachtvogels Brian Chapman Brian Johnson Brian Sparrow **Clive Skilton** Custom Car Magazine Carl Olson Dave Grady Dave Lee Travis Dennis Norman Dennis Priddle Dennis Stone

Don Garlits Geof Hauser Gerry Belton Harlan Thompson Harold Bull John Bennett John Clift John Hobbs John Ledster John Whitmore Keith and Frances Parker Ken Cooper Krister Johansson Murty Family Nobby Hills Page Family Paula Marshall Pete Davies

Peter Crane Peter and Erica Bartlett Peter Billinton Phelps Family Phil Evans Read Family Rob Loaring Roz Prior Rune Fjeld Russ Carpenter Sammy Miller Santa Pod Raceway Sydney Allard Terry Gibbs Ton Pels Tony Densham Tony Murray Yvonne Tramm

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HOF*diary*

BDRHoF at Dragstalgia 2016

This event was eagerly awaited by all fans of nostalgia drag racing and certainly did not disappoint. To celebrate Santa Pod's 50th year, they had brought over Ron Hope's Rat Trap and Randy Bradford's Topolino Fuel Altereds to be the highlight of the weekend along with over 300 other Nostalgia racers.



This was a high profile event for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame and we were based in the Historic Vehicles Marquee with a superb variety of dragsters and bikes from back in the day, including Commuter, the Allard Chrysler dragster with its newly rebuilt engine, to the Pegasus drag bike on loan from the National Motorcycle Museum. We had our usual display of Hall Of Fame merchandise and Management

board members were on hand to talk to fans about the HOF and our aims and the cars on display. It was well attended throughout the weekend and many existing BDRHoF members came to say hello as well as potential members.

A new venture for the Hall of Fame was Children's this vear а colouring competition with three age groups which was very well received, in fact one young lad came back three times. Early Sunday none other than Ron Hope of Rat Trap fame kindly judged the competition , not easy as there were many very good pictures but we had our winners and runner ups . Many thanks to Ron Hope (pictured right) for not only the judging but for providing some



prizes and to Santa Pod Raceway for also donating prizes

For more on Dragstalgia, including the emotional first time that Sidney Allard's dragster made a pass down the Santa Pod quarter mile, a memorable demo race between two Hall Of Fame members, and the autograph sessions, see HOFpeople on page 20.

Overall Dragstalgia was great weekend for the Hall of Fame, Santa Pod and UK drag racing. The BDRHof is proud to have been involved in Dragstalgia since it was originally launched in 2011 and congratulations to James Forster of Santa

Pod Raceway who has done a great job in developing it to its current level. Here's to many more like it!

The BDRHoF were present for the entire weekend and represented by Stu and Bev Bradbury, Brian Taylor, Phil and Angela Cottingham, Syd and Carol McDonald and Robin Jackson.

Images: Andy Willsheer (signing) and Phil Cottingham (colouring competition)

Gala Dinner Tickets update



November's third weekend is now firmly established on the international drag racing calendar as "Gala Weekend" for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame. The sparkling, black-tie occasion celebrates British drag racing's past, present and future before an audience of racers, fans and contributors to the sport, along with a gathering of distinguished figures from home and abroad, and honours the year's new roster of

members inducted into the Hall of Fame.

The date for 2016's Gala Awards Dinner will be Saturday 19th November and the event has a new venue, the **Sheraton Skyline Hotel** at London's Heathrow Airport. BDRHoF Honorary Chairman Stu Bradbury explains:

"Our usual home, the Savill Court Hotel, had planned to close for refurbishment in the autumn so we selected a new venue which will suit the occasion perfectly. The west-of-London location has worked well for us, with excellent motorway connections from all directions, and the Sheraton Skyline will have the added benefit of rail connections from London into Heathrow close at hand.

"The Sheraton Skyline has some spectacular facilities to offer us – our pre-dinner drinks reception, for instance, will take place in the Sky Garden, the hotel's tree-filled central atrium around the pool. We have endeavoured to keep any price rises to a minimum. The bedrooms are spacious and comfortable and we have negotiated special room rates



for guests choosing to stay overnight. We expect our table prices to remain unchanged.

Ticket prices for the 2016 BDRHoF Gala Awards Dinner remain unchanged at £60 per person. Corporate tables of 10 are available at £580. More details are available from www.britishdragracinghof.co.uk/news-events/2016-bdrhof-gala-awards-new-venue/

To reserve tickets please email stuart@britishdragracinghof.co.uk or telephone Stu Bradbury on 01933 279102.

BDRHoF Gala guests are eligible for a special hotel room rate via an exclusive online reservation link. Details will be supplied with Gala ticket applications as above. Discounted room prices are £115 per night single, £125 double, and include full English breakfast and complimentary use of Sky Garden pool and Fitness Gym. Car parking will be available on-site for £8 per night. The Sheraton Skyline Hotel is situated on the A4 Bath Road on Heathrow Airport's northern perimeter and hotel information is available online at www.sheratonskyline.com.

Official European presentation of IDRHOF award to Dennis Priddle

Back in March 2016 British Drag Racing Hall of Fame member and European drag racing legend Dennis Priddle travelled to Gainesville in Florida to receive his International Drag Racing Hall of Fame Award. He is only the second European to receive this accolade, the other being Sydney Allard. The Andy Willsheer photo shows him at Gainesville in March with 1960s Top Fuel racer Jerry Baltes (left) and Summit Racing's Rick Green.



The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame, in association with the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame, is proud to announce that the official European presentation of this award will take place during the 2016 BDRHoF Annual Gala Awards Dinner being held at the fabulous Sheraton Skyline Hotel Heathrow on November 19th.

Dennis says, "Receiving this award in Gainesville from Don Garlits was one of the proudest moments in my life and I was so honoured to be in the company of many of the great names in world drag racing history. I must thank my friends Phil Pead and Dave Riswick for making it possible. The only regret was that so many of the people who have helped me during my drag racing career were unable to be there.



So when the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame said that they would like to represent it at this year's Gala Awards Dinner it gave me the opportunity of celebrating the award with more friends and European fans. I'm really looking forward to meeting up with people I have met from the USA and Europe and getting involved in the Bench Racing Session, talking about my days in drag racing and seeing how they compare to stories from the Americans on the panel". Donna Garlits, Chief Financial Officer of the Don Garlits Museum of Drag Racing and very much a prime mover in the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame said, "I am so pleased that the trophy will be presented again in Europe where Dennis is so revered and respected. The function is such a prestigious affair and I know how hard everyone works to make this occasion special for the award winners and the other guests - be they sponsors, organisers, promoters or fans".

European drag racing's glitterati will be joined by American drag racing personalities.

BDRHoF at Burghley House



Burghley House is a grand sixteenth-century country house near Stamford, Lincolnshire. The Aston Martin Owners Club have an annual show there and this year there was a record attendance of Aston Martins gathered in one place with 600 cars.

The British Drag

Racing Hall of Fame was represented by Stu Bradbury, Robin Jackson and Phil Cottingham, with Dial-A-Flight also represented at the Lucas/BDRHoF marquee. BDRHoF member Russ Carpenter brought his famous Daimler Hemi Dragster along to complete the display.



The whole event raised over £45,000 for charity and was considered a massive success by all those attending.

Bench Racing to return at 2016 Gala

A major addition to the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Gala last year was the Bench Racing session. The panel of US and European legends held the packed audience in thrall with their stories and views on the sport for two hours in the afternoon prior to the main Gala dinner and presentations in the evening.



Geoff Stilwell of Beech Underwriting Agencies, maior sponsorship partner of the BDRHoF announced that plans are in place for an expanded Bench Racing session. Bob Muravez, Fred Miller, Harry Hibler, Paula Murphy, Carl Olson plus very special guest Dennis Priddle will be on the panel and the legendary and US motoring and drag racing journalist and writer Bob McClurg will be hosting the event.

BDRHoF Honorary Chairman Stu Bradbury said 'This is a great chance to get face to face with some legends of drag racing from the 60s and 70s and movers and shakers of the sport in more recent years. We are offering the press the opportunity for individual interviews with panel members during the morning of 19 November before the Bench Racing session. There will also be a unique chance to mix with legends socially before, during and after the Gala dinner.'

Beech Underwriting Agencies managing director Geoff Stilwell said 'We are delighted to have an expanded Bench Racing session this year as it was one of the most popular events during last year's gala. The addition of Bob McClurg is fantastic; he has been active for almost 50 years and interviewed all the legendary racers of the sport. The Gala has become a must for anyone remotely interested in drag racing and we urge attendees to apply for tickets now to avoid disappointment'. The BDRHOF Bench Racing session sponsored by

Beech Underwriting Agencies will take place from 1pm to 3pm on 19th November at the Atlantic Suite at the Sheraton Skyline Heathrow. Admission will be by ticket only. You can apply for tickets by sending an email to geoff@beechunderwriting.co.uk to enable your place to be registered and confirmed.



Jason Phelps at Goodwood in tribute livery

BDRHoF member Jason Phelps had attended the Goodwood Festival of Speed in his nitro funny car in 2013, but the return visit in 2016 had special poignancy.



2016 is not only the fiftieth anniversary of Santa Pod but the sixtieth anniversary of FGR Motorsport (formerly known as Fibreglass Repairs) which Jason's grandfather Bob Phelps formed in 1956.

The funny car has been re-liveried by Jason and dad Roy in the same colours as the iconic Gladiator Trans Am, owned and run by Roy in the early 1980s and driven by the incomparable

Allan Herridge.

Jason said 'We closed the show at Goodwood and did another fantastic run up the hill. It was a fantastic weekend with lots of burnouts and smoke'.

Jason followed up this appearance with a storming run at Santa Pod to close Saturday's racing during Dragstalgia.

For video of Jason's Goodwood finale see <u>https://youtu.be/V2BaSEJNrv0</u> (*Photo: www.motorcardiaries.co.uk*)

Andy Wheeler joins BDRHoF Management Board

Former Junior Dragster team principal and former Europcar UK Group Business Services Director Andy Wheeler has joined the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Management Board as Social Media Director.



Andy has over 20 years experience in the highly competitive global car rental industry. He ran a multi-car Junior Dragster team with daughters Paige and Belle from 2009 to 2015. The team raced in the US and attended events at several venues including the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame, Gainesville Raceway, Bristol Dragway and The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. During their time in the US Andy, Paige and Belle met and networked with many stars of the sport including Melanie Troxel whose team at the time, R2B2 Racing, recruited Paige

as her Junior Dragster team-mate.

In 2013, Andy played a key role in helping to launch the Junior Drag Racing Fun Day at Santa Pod. This event, held in August when all schools are on holiday, incorporates a day's racing with charity fund raising and free entry for spectators. The Fun Day is an important part of promoting Junior Drag Racing and the sport in general. Santa Pod Raceway has announced that their charity partner for 2016 is Harry's Rainbow which is committed to supporting bereaved children and their families in the Milton Keynes and surrounding areas.

Andy said 'I am excited to be joining British Drag Racing Hall of Fame management board and to develop my involvement with the sport from what I

experienced in six years of running a Junior Dragster team. Our experience as a team with social media has enabled us to utilise it to the best interests of promoting the sport and I hope this can bring an added dimension to the BDRHoF'.

BDRHoF Honorary Chairman Stu Bradbury said "We are really gathering some fabulous expertise on the Management Board now and I am so pleased that



Andy has agreed to join us. With the plans for the Awards Gala Dinner and associated events now proceeding at some pace we will need plenty of hands to ensure everything runs smoothly for those attending. We already announced many great personalities from the world of drag racing who are attending and when everyone hears about the others they will be amazed. Watch this space but make sure you book your tickets".

Mintex to Sponsor Sydney Allard Media Awards

The Sydney Allard Media Awards for Written and Photographic Journalism will be presented for the third consecutive year at the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Gala Awards Dinner on Saturday 19th November at the Sheraton Skyline Hotel, Heathrow Airport.

The Hall of Fame is delighted to announce that this year's Allard Awards will be sponsored by Mintex, manufacturers of brake pads since 1908 and one of the sponsors of the 1964 Dragfests. Lawrence Bleasdale from Mintex said "Having



been 'in at the start' supporting Sydney Allard from his very beginnings as a manufacturer, Mintex are delighted to support these awards given by BDRHoF in his name".



Established in 2014 in memory of the founding father of British drag racing, the Allard Awards celebrate the best of the past year's written and photographic drag racing journalism and salute the vital contribution of the media to the sport's wellbeing and success. Entries are now invited from writers and photographers, amateur or professional, to reflect coverage of British drag racing and associated activities during the year ending July 2016. Entries closed at the end of July by which time there were nearly 60 entries to judge. The winning entrant in each category will be invited, together with a companion, to attend the Hall of Fame Gala in November and receive a crystal trophy in recognition of his or her achievement.

The Written Journalism Award will be presented to the author of the year's best article, feature, book or blog, published or unpublished, in print or online, in the judges' opinion. The Photographic Journalism Award will be presented for the best picture taken during the same period and under the same criteria. The judging panel will include Guy Loveridge, Chairman of the Guild of Motoring Writers, motoring connoisseur and Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason, and the Editor of *Octane* Magazine, David Lillywhite.

Previous winners:

Written Journalism:

2014: Nick Brooke-Langham – "The Invasion Begins" (International Drag Festival 1964) 2015: Rodger Attaway – "Street Rod & Custom Showtime".

Photographic Journalism:

2014: Jon Spoard – "Slingshot And Sun".2015: Jeni Long – "Sharing A Toast".

Junior Champions to be honoured again

Junior Drag Racers will again be honoured when the Gala Awards Dinner takes place on Saturday 19th November at the Sheraton Skyline Hotel, Heathrow Airport.



Last year, for the first time, the top three Junior Dragster and Junior Drag Bike finishers in the UK National Championship were invited, with their parents, to attend the occasion for their accomplishments to be recognised before the gathering of distinguished guests from Europe and America. 2016's young drivers and bikers will share the evening with the new Hall of Fame inductees along with leading figures from the States such as Don Schumacher and Paula Murphy, who brought the first American Funny Cars to Santa Pod in 1973, and the founding president of the FIA Drag Racing Commission, Carl Olson.

BDRHoF Honorary Chairman Stu Bradbury commented, "While the Hall of Fame's prime purpose is to recognise drag racing achievements of the past, we're particularly pleased to welcome and celebrate the rising new generation of racers too, and we salute the sponsors whose generosity and foresight have allowed us to create this opportunity. It's a wonderful thought that some of today's young achievers might one day, perhaps, return to the Gala stage for induction into the Hall of Fame in their own right."



Once again, the Junior tables at the Gala will be sponsored by Atlantic Fluid Tech Ltd. the Santa Pod Racers' Club, US Automotive and Lucas Oil, and the young racers can expect to take home some valuable mementoes of the occasion. The Hall of Fame is grateful to Lizz McCarthy and Wayne Jackson for their help with



arrangements

(Photos; Charlotte Bradford, 2015 Lucas Oil Junior Dragster UK National Champion; Paige Wheeler and Billy Everitt, runner up and third place in Lucas Oil Junior Dragster UK Championship; Liam Holgate (pictured right), Louis Davies and Stacey Reed, top three in the 2015 Junior Drag Bike UK Championship. Photo credits: Grace Roaf (Charlotte Bradford), Andy

Wheeler (Paige Wheeler/Billy Everitt) and Allan Davies (Junior Drag Bike top three))

National Hot Rod Association to be presented with Lucas Oil Global Achievement award at BDRHoF Gala



It is a well known fact that the National Hot Rod Association, founded in 1951 by Wally Parks, is the largest promoter of drag racing on the planet, with 70,000 members and 40,000 competitors. What is not well known - until now - is that NHRA is receiving its first-ever Global Achievement Award, sponsored by Lucas Oil, at the British Drag Racing

Hall of Fame Gala to be held on Saturday 19th November 2016 at the Sheraton Skyline Hotel, near London's Heathrow Airport.

The Lucas Oil Global Achievement Award was inaugurated in 2014 in memory of Pat Garlits, the late wife of legendary drag racer Don Garlits. This year it marks the role played by all people at the NHRA as without their support in developing drag racing, it could not happen at the level it does today.

NHRA will be represented by Senior Vice President-Racing Operations Graham Light who is also president of the FIA Drag Racing Commission. Graham, who joined the NHRA Board in 2004, oversees competition and operations at all NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series races. In addition, he oversees NHRA Field Operations/Divisions and the NHRA Technical Department, supervises the NHRA Safety Safari presented by AAA, and serves as chairman of the NHRA Competition Committee.

NHRA has always been dedicated to safety and in 1950s the Safety Safari travelled around the US for early national events and to the NHRA network of member tracks. Track facilities developed rapidly and a programme of upgrading of facilities to stadium quality, with fan amenities, VIP towers, and tall grandstands took place in the 1980s and 90s under the direction of Dallas Gardner who is the current Chairman of the NHRA Board.



As well as overseeing incredible growth and success in the sport of drag racing in the United States, NHRA has over the years been closely involved in the development of the sport overseas. In the UK Wally Parks was personally involved in organising the 1964 and 1965 Drag Fests which established the sport in Europe. In the 1990s the NHRA organised a number of races in Japan. The NHRA also chairs the FIA Drag Racing Commission which organises championships in Europe and Australia.

In 2011 NHRA announced the creation of NHRA Worldwide Network, a program that will enable drag racing facilities around the world to conduct events under the NHRA banner and have access to NHRA technical resources. The first track to be included in the Network was Bahrain International Circuit and Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi joined in 2013. And in 2016, world-wide online streaming and in-house TV production has begun under current President Peter Clifford. British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Honorary Chairman Stu Bradbury said 'It is an exceptional honour to be able to present the Lucas Oil Global Achievement award to the organisation that we owe so much to for the establishment and growth of the sport across the world'.

Graham Light (pictured right, with BDRHoF Board Member Geoff Stilwell) said 'The NHRA is thrilled to receive the Lucas Oil Global Achievement award and I am looking forward to meeting UK drag racing racers and fans at the BDRHoF Gala. NHRA and its 200 dedicated employees have a passion for drag racing. They love the sport, they love the people in the sport, they just love being involved. The Safety Safari guys, the guys that



haul the equipment down the racetrack and the guys that work cleaning up oil spills to drying racetracks, they work all hours to get it done and they keep the show on the road'.



Introduced in 2014, the **BDRHoF Lucas Oil Global Achievement Award** is presented for achievements in the world of drag racing that have had a global impact. It can be presented to a person, a team, a company, an institution/organisation or any other body that in the opinion of the judges has increased the awareness and stature of drag racing on a global basis, or contributed to the technical development of the sport that has resulted in advances on a worldwide basis.

A unique aspect of the crystal trophy is the inscription "In Memory of Pat Garlits"– something that is engraved each time the award is presented. It is a tribute to Mopar brand ambassador Don Garlits' wife Pat who passed away early in 2014. Don was the first person to receive this award and, as well as being his wife, Pat was his constant companion at the drag strip throughout his amazing career and as such the trophy marks the role played by all family members associated with drag racing. Without their support it could not happen.

The Shoe and Miss STP are back



To any UK drag racing enthusiast of a certain age, the names Don Schumacher and Paula Murphy conjure a special moment in time: Summer of '73. Heading a band of American racers attending that year's July Internationals at Santa Pod Raceway, the pair unleashed the first full-tilt American Fuel Funny Cars seen on these shores and seared the occasion into the minds of all who witnessed it. The spectacular,

ground-shaking Funnies – essentially nitro-burning dragsters cloaked by lightweight, saloon-car-replica bodyshells – were all the rage across the Atlantic, drawing huge crowds to America's dragstrips. Schumacher and Murphy together created a seminal moment in the sport's British history.

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame is therefore proud to announce that Don Schumacher and Paula Murphy will be reunited on UK soil for the first time as honoured guests at its 2016 Gala Awards Dinner, to be held on Saturday 19th November at the Sheraton Skyline Hotel at London's Heathrow Airport.

To a modern drag racing audience, Don Schumacher is proprietor of the most powerful team in America's NHRA Drag Racing Championship. Since its foundation in 1997, Don Schumacher Racing's drivers have won no fewer than 14 NHRA Championships in the Top Fuel Dragster and Funny Car divisions,

including eight Top Fuel titles for Don's son, Tony, at the wheel of the US Army dragster. Yet Don once had an illustrious driving career of his own.

Having set out as a Sportsman racer in 1963, he switched to the new, professional Funny Car class in 1966 and became one of its greatest stars as the class took drag racing by



storm. A year after his Santa Pod visit in 1973, he retired to lead his family's Schumacher Electric Corporation and develop the company into the world's foremost manufacturer of battery chargers.



Paula Murphy, now 87, has been retired from professional driving for 40 years. Her time in drag racing was just one element of a career remarkable for its diversity. She began as an amateur sports car circuit racer in the late 1950s and decided to go full-time in 1963. There followed an extraordinary litany of accomplishments. She set new records for US transcontinental driving, both east-west from coast to coast and north-south from border to border. She set land speed records at Bonneville and became the first woman to drive a jet-engined car on the Salt Flats. She became the first woman to lap the

Indianapolis Motor Speedway at speed during a 1963 test session and set subsequent women's records in NASCAR machinery.

with granddaughter Paula (pictured *Christina*) was the first woman to be granted an NHRA Funny Car licence. She enjoyed a long association with Andy Granatelli's STP Corporation and it was in the quise of "Miss STP" that she made her trip to England. On her return, she took the tiller of the STP rocket dragster and survived a near-fatal crash, breaking her neck. Once recovered, she returned to drag racing before driving right around the world on the US



Bicentennial Global Record Run. Unable to top that experience, she chose to call an end to her professional driving career.

Following their 1973 appearances in England, both star drivers returned home but their respective Funny Cars – Schumacher's *Stardust* Barracuda and Murphy's *Miss STP* Plymouth Duster – remained here to form the keystone of a class that would become the most popular attraction in British drag racing for many seasons to come.

Don Schumacher said 'I remember the warm reception Paula and I received in 1973 and I think we put on a pretty good show. I love drag racing, it is a unique family atmosphere, not just my personal family but all the other competitors in racing.

Paula said 'I am very happy to be able to return to England after a thrilling time we had over forty years ago in match racing Funny Cars for the first time in front of European fans'.

Stu Bradbury said 'It is fantastic news that after more than forty years Paula and Don, who were key players in the 1973 International, both plan to join us at our Gala Dinner at the Sheraton Skyline on 19th November'.

Guy Loveridge to join BDRHoF Management Board



Distinguished motoring journalist and Chairman of the Guild of Motoring Writers Guy Loveridge has joined the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Management Board as Marketing and Commercial Director. Guy will also be presenting the Sydney Allard media awards at the forthcoming BDRHoF Gala evening which is taking place on Saturday 19th November at the Sheraton Skyline Hotel at London's Heathrow Airport.

Guy has written and published 14 books and a number of documentary films. His first book, Romany Returns, published by the family firm Douglas Loveridge Publications, was shortlisted for the 1996 Longman/History Today Book of the

Year Prize, and since then he has written on motoring and motor sport for a wide range of newspapers and magazines. In 2015 he won the Peugeot Motorsport Cup in recognition of outstanding achievement by a Guild of Motoring Writers member in the world of motorsport.

He has commentated on motor sport for local radio stations, Autosport Radio Le Mans, and the Reims Revival, and acted as Master of Ceremonies at Guild of



Motoring Writers Awards dinners. He also acts as consultant to auction houses and collectors on classic and historic cars and automobilia and organises Lord March's Revival Runners period police force as part of the Revival Meeting each September.

He continues to be Chief Judge of the Sydney Allard award for Writing presented to the writer of the best book, article, feature or blog on British drag racing published in print or on-line during the twelve months ending 31st July.

Photo supplied by Andy Willsheer

HOF*people*

These are stories about BDRHoF members and what they have been up to recently. Send your stories to <u>simon@britishdragracinghof.co.uk</u> so we can include them in the next issue.



The Allard Chrysler, Britain's first dragster, was fired up during Dragstalgia. BDRHoF Director and consultant **Brian Taylor** said 'We had a good four minute fire up in the pits at Dragstalgia on Friday. The temperatures and fuel flow looked good. We only had to check the plug in one cylinder before Saturday morning's fire-up which was for five minutes with throttle blips every minute. The cam and lifters were run in by then. On Saturday we had

three more fire-ups improving things each time. Good advice was received from **Bob Muravez, Russ Carpenter and Rob Loaring**. Then on Sunday we made a bit of history. BDRHoF Chair Stu Bradbury waved the flags and the Allard

Chrysler, driven by regular team member Martin Dunks, made its debut pass along the Santa Pod tarmac.

It was the car's first run down a drag strip since 1964. A big thank you to all those involved since I first had this crazy idea to get Europe's first dragster back in running order back in 2007. Thanks to The National Motor Museum Beaulieu for putting their trust in us. .And thanks to our Patrons **Nick**



Mason and my favourite American **Traci Hrudka**. Now wouldn't it be great if we could get the funds to take the dragster to the USA for a few weeks?

To see the Allard Chrysler go down the Santa Pod quarter mile, see <u>https://youtu.be/jUfW45a-0AQ</u>

Photo credits: Mark Skinner (with Melanie Bond in Historic Vehicle Marquee), Dave Jones (startline).

At SPR's 2016 Main Event held in May, the big celebrations for the 50th anniversary of Santa Pod began with a startline interview of Stripduster driver and BDRHoF member **Harold Bull** with son Simon and daughter Jane Maloney by BBC Look East Sport's Jonathan Park which was broadcast three times on 27th May as part of the regional news bulletin. The interview was combined with historic footage and made for a great promotional item for the event, which in turn had excellent attendance.





Then Santa Pod announced that the recreated Stripduster would be taking to the track at Dragstalgia to recreate the first ever pass along the Santa Pod ashphalt on Easter Monday 1966. It was to the delight of all that 91-year old Harold donned his racing overalls and helmet once again and took the car for its initial run down Santa Pod.

BDRHoF member **Ken Cooper** and son Bradley were entered for Dragstalgia and they were more than up for a challenge. So with a combined age of 169 the race was flag started by Stu Bradbury. With the timing clocks switched off and no-one to judge the finish line, you could say that both were winners! You can't take the racer out of them...

To complete proceedings, Simon Bull and Bradley Cooper raced on the Sunday. Their excitement after the matchup was palpable and it capped a marvellous weekend for both families and their many fans.

Photo credit (Harold Bull and Ken Cooper): Ritchie Arrowsmith



At Dragstalgia, signings were held outside the Historic Vehicle Marquee. Fortunately the weather co-operated and the event was a great success with many stopping by to meet the members and legends. Sessions were held each day with this year's theme being a sort of Cannonball reunion, which featured from the USA Tom Hoover of Showtime fame, **Bill Sherratt**, **Alan Bates**, **Gary Page**, **Roz Prior and Nobby Hills.** These were joined by many others including HoF **members Al**

O'Connor, Russ Carpenter, Brian Sparrow, Pete Crane with Gerry Andrews and Bob Muravez aka Floyd Lippencotte Jr of AA/GD Freight Train fame.

US Funny car legend Tom Hoover and Bob Muravez aka Floyd Lippencotte

Jr shared a moment at Dragstalgia with Bob getting a seat fitting in Bill Sherratt's AA/FD. Tom made his UK debut in Blue Max in 1980 and raced at the track most years until the mid 1990s. In the US, Tom won five NHRA National Events and was '76 AHRA Funny Car Champion. Bob Muravez made over 1300 runs in Freight Train. At one point he won 28 consecutive rounds of competition. His alter ego came from a suggestion from track announcer Mel Reck and track operator Steve Gibbs to keep his racing activities from his parents. Bob is deeply involved in the US Nostalgia scene and was inducted into the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame in 2015. *Photo: Geoff Stilwell*



To see a NHRA interview with Bob Muravez, please follow the link https://vimeo.com/171027249 .



BDRHoF member **Dennis Norman** (pictured) came to Dragstalgia with son Gary, grandson Matthew and two bikes. His legendary Conquest twin Triumph went to the US Nationals in 1970 and the double Norton of six years later which has been restored and was back on track for the first time in almost forty years.

Members and of the BDRHoF and its Management Board and Selection Board have all been busy visiting the US in the last year.

Simon Groves attended the California Hot Rod Reunion at Famoso Raceway in Bakersfield in October, the SEMA show at Las Vegas and Lucas Oil Drag Racing Series Pacific Division meet at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway in November. During the visit he saw Funny Car legend **Harlan Thompson**, who is looking relaxed and belies his 70 years of age.





During the visit Simon also met 1970s UK racer **Baz Young** (pictured left) who is President of Worldwide Sales for Snap-On Tools and races a Nostalgia Funny Car on the US circuit.

In March 2016 Official Sponsorship Partner of BDRHoF Geoff Stilwell visited the March Meet at Famoso Raceway and set up a number of meetings to promote the BDRHoF Gala to US legends. These included **Peter Clifford and Graham Light** of the NHRA and legend **Tommy Ivo** (pictured right, with Geoff). Geoff also attended the 25th Smokers Reunion Barbecue, held in memory of the car club that was started 65 years ago and organised the original March Meet in 1959.



Geoff recalls: 'The place was packed. We had fuel cars and rods outside then they fired up two top fuel cars. We had speeches from Adam Sorokin, Ron Capps and Ed the Ace McCulloch. I sat opposite Ed Iskendarian who at 94 was right on the button. I could have sat all night listening to how he got started. He still works and still travels! Sitting next to him was Nick Arias. So many people know what we are doing and love hearing about us. Steve Gibbs knows all about us and is keeping tabs on us. What is clearly apparent is that we are being recognised for what we are doing. It doesn't matter who you talk to, they know and are keen to support us'.

Meanwhile back in Europe we saw two members of the BDRHoF still actively involved with racing, Krister Johansson and Glen Read who run a A/Fuel dragster with Swedish racer Jonny Lagg. They are competing in the FIA Championship which they have been involved with since its inception in 1996. Whilst Krister lives in Sweden and spends time in the US, often supporting other teams, Glen is now based in Norway.





Noted photo journalist and BDRHoF Selection Board member Keith Lee has penned a number of outstanding historic articles for Custom Car magazine. Subjects in recent months include a retrospective of the legendary Easter 1976 event, reflections on three legends who departed in 2015, Peter Bartlett, Brian Johnson and Bob Keith, and (pictured left) and a profile of 2015 inductee Keith Ken Cooper. also gave expert commentary on historic bikes at Dragstalgia.

BDRHoF Honorary Chairman **Stu Bradbury** was a recipient of a Limited Edition NHRA 60th US Nationals Anniversary ring.





Santa Pod Raceway owner **Keith Bartlett**, former announcer **John Price** and BDRHoF member and nitro driver and crewman **Gary Page** all enjoyed Dragstalgia immensely.

BDRHoF member **Peter Crane** shares a joke with former Pro Stock racer **Kevin Pilling** at the autograph session held at the Main Event. Both raced in Pro Stock during the early 1970s. Kevin now restores classic cars as a pastime.





Eurodragster.com editor and BDRHoF Selection Board member **Andy 'Tog' Rogers** donned a historic Santa Pod marshal's shirt from the 1990s and greeted Ron Hope on Sunday of Dragstalgia.

BDRHoF member **Brian Sparrow** (pictured left) is an enthusiast on many types of transport and hosted your Editor at the Fawley Hill Steam and Vintage Weekend. Brian keeps in touch with many racers and hosted **Chris Pattison** (winner of an Allard Dragon in 1965) and **Rod George** (original Krypton co-owner and driver).



HOFteam

About the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame is a non-profit making 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 Board 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 Board

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

Keith Bartlett – Santa Pod Raceway CEO and FIA Championship Promoter

Phil Evans – Member of FIA Drag Racing Commission and Chair of MSA Drag Racing Committee.

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

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

Graham Beckwith – Former Santa Pod Raceway Commentator and now event MC and track announcer at York Dragway.

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 Racers Club International Race Director.

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 two annual BDRHoF Sydney Allard Media Awards for Photo and Written Journalism sponsored by Mintex. A further intermittent trophy is the BDRHoF Lucas Oil Global Achievement Award.

British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Management Board

The management of the BDRHoF is carried out by a separate Management Board which looks after strategy, finance, commercial, marketing, sponsorship, press & public relations, membership liaison, international liaison, events and general secretary duties.

Stu Bradbury – Honorary Chairman
Bev Bradbury – General Secretary and Treasurer
Phil Cottingham – Outdoor Events
Phil Evans – Special Liaison
Robin Jackson – Press and Public Relations
Simon Groves – Membership Liaison and Finance Director
Guy Loveridge – Commerce and Marketing
Brian Taylor - Adviser and acting Chief Executive Officer
Andy Wheeler - Social Media

Advisers: Geoff Stilwell (international liaison), Julian Parsons (audio visual)



The Management Board meets regularly to discuss issues associated with finance, operations and structure. For convenience meetings are usually held at the Sheraton Skyline Hotel (the Gala Awards Dinner venue) and major topics have included the Gala Awards Dinner, increasing promotional activity, gaining corporate status and forming a charitable incorporated organisation. This year meetings have been

held on 17th February, 28th April, 27th May 27, 30th June and 15th July.

Contacts

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HOFtalk enquiries simon@britishdragracinghof.co.uk

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 <u>brian@britishdragracinghof.co.uk</u>



Items for sale

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

New items are being added and these include ball point pens and mouse mats.

