

YORKSHIRE

Right on the deadline for this issue of Windscreen, a couple of 'firsts' happened in Yorkshire; it as pretty much the first nice day of the year and it also was the Sunday of the first big military event of the year, the Yorkshire Area's Crank Up. The fact that the two coincided made everything work really well and it's fair to say that the latter is now probably one of the biggest spring gatherings of military vehicles in the country.

One of the things that makes this event so special is that it's held in the centre of York city centre so is surrounded by large and historic buildings including Clifford's Tower that was originally built as a wooden structure by William the Conqueror in the 11th Century to subdue the rebellious north. The recently refurbished stone building was constructed in the 13th Century and Royalist troops garrisoned the Tower during the English Civil War.

By midday, there were 55 vehicles within the quadrangle of buildings, light vehicles park on the grass and the heavier ones on the tarmac access road to avoid damage to the grass. Of these, 30 were Jeeps but the rarities were among the other 25 including a 6x6 Ward La France wrecker and a Humber Pig that looked as though it was fresh off Belfast's

troubled streets. Other large machines that aren't a common sight on York's street including M35 REOs, 6x6 GMCs and a pair of US half-tracks. There were British trucks aplenty too; a lovely looking Alvis Stalwart had rumbled in while others that caught the eye were a Reynolds Boughton RB44, Bedford OY, a Morris Quad and a Bedford MWD all rounded off by a bevy of Land Rovers and a handful of motorcycles. Also present this year was the MVT's exhibition trailer being manned by several members of the MVT's council of management including Simon Bromley, Steve Parker and Brian Slingsby who is, of course, also the Yorkshire Area Secretary and largely responsible for seeing that this Crank Up goes ahead every year.

The 1940 Bedford MWD was on one of its first runs out since a complete restoration by Nick Dunford. He's spent seven years from

starting the project that was a wreck as long ago as when it was at the Grange Cavern museum in North Wales so until now it probably hadn't run in 40 years. In attending the Crank Up, Nick was getting a few miles on the truck ahead of a trip to Normandy for the 80th commemorations. I was doing exactly the same with my Jeep for the same reason and forthcoming Normandy trips were the subject of many conversations in York especially among Jeepers.

Sunshine, a friendly atmosphere, plenty of chatter and a great selection of green machines made it a day to remember not least because of the rare sight of half-tracks and an Alvis Stalwart rolling through York. I should imagine we'll be back next year but in the meantime there's plenty other events ahead in 2024.

John Carroll

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