

MIBS DELF (formerly MIBS CLEGHORN)

1917 - 2022



Mabel Edith Delf has died at the age of 105. She was born in Norwich, one of six siblings (three boys and three girls), but never liked her name, so from a very young age Mabel was known as Mibs and she became very secretive about her real name.

Her first husband was Ted Cleghorn and she and Ted were active members of the Sporting Car Club of Norfolk from the earliest days of the club. In the 1950s they were both committee members and their enthusiasm was undiminished through the 1960s and 70s until Ted died in 1974. Ted lost his right arm before the war in a lorry accident, but that didn't stop him from competing in many trials and rallies, always in cars with manual gearboxes. He competed before the war in an MG and soon after the war Ted bought a blue Dellow sports car. Occasionally Ted took another navigator but he and Mibs in their familiar Dellow became part of SCCON folk-lore because they entered so many classic hill-climb trials and rallies together. Mibs also navigated the little Dellow on the Scottish Rally during the 1950s.



Ted and Mibs Cleghorn winning a Premier Award on the 1952 London-to-Exeter Trial

Mibs had a favourite peaked cap and often wore sunglasses on the daylight sections of hill-climb trials making her easily recognisable in the period photos of the time.

Ted had been a well-liked and greatly admired member of SCCON and after he died in 1974, the club ran the Ted Cleghorn Memorial Stages Rally from 1974 to 1985 attracting up to 100 entries. Mibs presented the awards at the end of many of these very popular rallies. During this period she continued to be a member of SCCON and was appointed as one of the club's four Vice Presidents, a role that she held until at least 1987.



Duncow's Grave hill-climb during the 1953 Derbyshire Trial



Beggars Roost on the 1953 Lands End Trial

Some time after Ted died, Mibs married Stuart Delf senior, and although Stuart wasn't a SCCON member and had little interest in motor sport, the Delf family would soon make its mark in the club's history. Stuart senior's son (also Stuart!) became a long-standing club member and nowadays he runs Touchwood Models, specialising in scale models of World Land Speed and World Water Speed Record holding machines. Stuart in turn has a son Stuart, who runs Mass Racing Engines and has competed on special stage rallies over many years. His son Stuie (yes - four generations of Stuarts, all in one family) has been taking part very successfully as a junior in recent SCCON autotests. He won the production car class in the tarmac autotest held at Snetterton on 12th May 2022 beating his Dad in the process.

Mibs was a familiar face over many decades as she served at the Westlegate Tea Rooms in Norwich, initially because she needed the money, but in later times for the friendship and camaraderie that the job brought with it. In her later years Mibs suffered from increasing deafness, but she was still able to provide a lot of historic information to SCCON for the club's Diamond Anniversary commemoration event in 2011. She spent her last few years living at Woodside Care Home in Thorpe St. Andrew where she died peacefully on 28th June. The staff described Mibs as a popular resident who always had an interesting tale to tell and she attributed the secret of her long life as being down to "always working hard at everything you do and giving it your all".

Mibs was the last link to SCCON in the 1950s when the core values of our club were so firmly established and to which we still adhere today. The Sporting Car Club of Norfolk sends sincere condolences to the Delf family.

Peter Riddle July 2022