

# NEWSLETTER

**WESSEX  
MG CLUB**   
AT THE BELL INN SEEND



## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

You didn't expect that it would be me writing this Chairman's Chat, did you?

Nor did I!

Those of you that attended the AGM in November will recall that no Chairman candidate came forward and that it was left to the Committee to resolve the No Chairman problem. In the event, at a Committee meeting on 3 January, a rotating Chairmanship was debated and considered to be the only viable solution.

In some respects, you may see this as a messy solution but it might just invigorate the role. In a weak moment, I offered to take the first turn and Paul Warn, Jackie and Vic followed suit. Gordon is a difficult act to follow and I feel less daunted by the prospect of three months rather than twelve months of Chairmanship.

So, I will hold the baton for January to March, when I will pass it to Paul for April to June, followed by Jackie for July to September and Vic for October to December. Wish us luck!

More important than the above, we hope that we have planned a

good programme for 2013. The Committee did debate the nature of our club events and agreed that the most popular configuration was for a mix of MG and general themes, with each Club night having an activity of some sort at its centre.

The history of 2011 and 2012 indicates that members like to have "something to do" and support such events eagerly and in healthy numbers. Roger's Llangollen trip is indicative of this, with 33 of us planning to go in April. Let us hope that the rest of the programme is as eagerly supported.

Winter is with us and at the moment there is a chilly Easterly wind blowing and snow forecast. I'm pleased therefore that Carrie and I have already been out in Marilyn this year because it may be a while before she sees the light of day again!

On that basis, things can only get better, so ..... A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL.

**David Whiteley**

**25% Chairman**

For your diary in the coming month

January

**28th - Club Night (Quiz)**

February

**16th - Valentine's Dinner**

**25th - Club Night**

For details see page 7.

**Please note that unless otherwise stated club nights start at 8:00pm**

MG50 GALA DINNER



Over 80 guests attended a Gala Dinner at the Guildhall in Abingdon on Saturday 24th November to conclude a year of celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the MGB. Graham & Jane, Vic & Jenni their friends from Peterborough Frank & Jackie, Andrea and myself made up the Wessex contingent.

Other guests were mainly the MG Owners, MG Car Club officials and MGB 50 organisers. Don Hayter the designer of the Outstanding MGB was the guest of honour.

The November drought was in full swing when we arrived at our hotel the Upper Reaches in Abingdon. It was on an island between the Thames and a mill - we were concerned that we may have a soggy evening. We are looking forward to the possibility some dry events in 2013; there can't be that much rain left to fall.

The dinner was held in the modern annex to the towns historic Guildhall and the civic catered meal was helped down by a couple glasses of house wine. After the meal was a raffle and an auction, sadly Wes-

sex won neither prize nor bid. The guest of honour

Don Hayter then presented a £12,000 cheque, to Stella Krajewski of Macmillan Cancer Support. The money had been raised at MGB50 events and by sponsorship throughout the year.

Following the formal part of the evening, there was a disco when some members danced till midnight when we retired to our hotel.

The next morning after an excellent breakfast we decided to explore Abingdon as it had at last stopped raining. The town dating back to Saxon times has many fine historic buildings. In the centre is the old County Hall an impressive pile that is now a museum. One of the latest exhibits in the museum

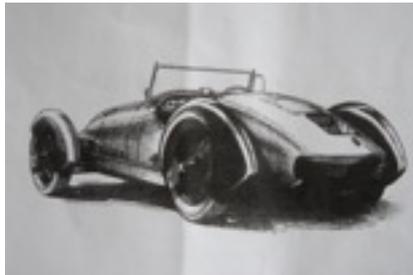
is the last MGB to come off the line on the 23 of October 1980. Sadly not the finest examples of the marque, however, the installation of the B was very impressive; through a first story window with 15mm to spare.

**Paul Wheal**



THE GORDANO - A STORY OF A LOCAL SPORTS CAR

Do you remember Ron Alderson's mystery engine in the October edition of this newsletter? I wasn't surprised that there was no response - it really was difficult. But hey! what about this, **Andy Hole** approached me at the Christmas party with details of the Gordano sports car for which the engine was built!!



Ron said that the engine was built by Cross Engineering in the late forties for the Gordano sports car company, based in the Bristol area. The engine was a four cylinder 1500cc block fitted with 4 Rotary valves and 4 Amal carburetors with forced air induction. Now all this fits very nicely with Andy's details of the Gordano sports car.



The Gordano Motor Company Ltd. was housed in Alma Vale Road, Clifton, Bristol. Their sales brochure describes the car:

"We offer the enthusiast something entirely new and fascinating in sporting motor cars. A car which in standard everyday trim combines high speed competition performance with the 100% reliability of a quality touring car. The Gordano is not in any sense a boosted version of a standard

machine. Such an approach to high performance almost inevitably results in inadequate reserves of power, high stresses and a short unreliable life. The Gordano as a whole has been conceived as a sporting or de-rated edition of a modern racing car.

This conception of design, coupled with a new, brilliantly simple and direct approach to constructional problems has resulted in a unique motor car. A car, brand new to the point of being ahead of its time which yet incorporates no vital principle that has not be tried and proven on that toughest of all testing grounds - the Continental tracks and road racing circuits.

We believe that never has such a combination of economy and high performance, light weight and long life been offered at such moderate cost. The Gordano chassis is ideally suitable for light coachwork of any kind, from a fully streamlined saloon seating three abreast in front, to a racing shell.

The illustrations show the standard open two seater. Other types of coachwork will be standardized at a later date and "chassis only" will be available for

enthusiasts who prefer specialist bodies."

**Andy Hole**

**PS**

In 1945-46 it was racing enthusiasts at meetings of the Bristol Aeroplane Company Motor Sports Club in Filton, who devised the 500cc racing car formula that was to become the International Formula 3 of the 1950s. The Cooper versions of these cars would evolve to become the first rear engined Grand Prix cars winning the 1959 and 1960 World Drivers Championship.

Anyway, a number of 500cc racing cars were constructed locally in Bristol. The most successful being the IOTA. In 1949 the chassis was redesigned and complete cars were produced by Iota Racing Cars of Alma Vale Road, Clifton, Bristol - the same address as the Gordano.

The Gordano was planned by some of those behind the Iota, but unfortunately was not destined to reach production. Chassis design was by Dick Caesar, the engine was intended to be a 4cylinder 1.5 litre design with Cross rotary valves. It was to be financed by local racer Joe Fry. Two prototypes were built, an open sports version with 1548cc MG engine, & a saloon with 1767cc Lea Francis engine. However in 1950 the project folded after Fry died in a hill climb accident at Blandford and engine-designer Rodney Gordon-Jones also died. **Ed**

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

What a great party at The Greyhound, Borham - enjoyed by everyone. Not sure how many there was of us, but we filled the salts and newer members - great to see. malities of greeting each other, general chat and placing our Christmas presents secret santa "grotto" we sat to a sea- and festive table.



upstairs with a mix of old

After the for-

chit  
in the  
sonal

To begin the party we had all been allocated a ticket with our place setting. A ticket was drawn and the ner was Terry Gazzard, who won a day's driving experience at the Castle race circuit. Not to miss an opportunity, I asked Terry to write a few notes and provide pics of his experience, so we will look forward to that.

raffle  
lucky win-

Combe

The entertainment, prizes and flow of the evening was managed by Jeni, ably assisted by Vic. After we had eaten a hearty Christmas fayre it was time for the entertainment - at least that part I am able to report on....



sur-  
you  
table  
tick-  
Roger.

First on the agenda was the raffle prizes. Surprise, prise, Roger won with the first ticket drawn - well couldn't see the for his raffle

ets!! but hey, well done

Then there was some controversy as to whether one of my tickets had been drawn, number 233 if you really want to know. I got up to collect my prize only to be turned away..... I'm not bitter you understand, but 233 was the number - if hadn't mentioned it before!



There were great prizes on offer and a good cross section of guests won prizes. Next up was "pass the parcel". This was also a lot of fun, as the parcel was passed along the line, waiting for Vic to stop the music. Again loads of gifts on offer.

The evening ended with the traditional secret santa present giving.

On behalf of all those present (sorry about the pun) very many thanks to Jeni and Vic. And also many thanks to Peter for arranging the evening.

Ed

## MYSTERY CAR

For those who were unable to identify the 'Mystery Car' in November issue; it is a Brough Superior. For those motorcycle aficionados amongst us, the name will be very familiar. For the rest of us, it may be known through the death of T E Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, who was killed riding his Brough Superior SS100 motorcycle near his home, Clouds Hill, in Dorset in May 1935.



As an aside; he died of massive head injuries and this led to the introduction of crash helmets for all military and, subsequently, civilian motorcyclists.



They only made 85 cars between 1935 and 1939 initially using an American Hudson 4 litre straight 8 engine. They did not carry any Brough Superior badges as George Brough felt that they would be distinctive enough on their own! Could that be why he only sold 85?

## Ken Scott

Ken has also provided the mystery car for this month; any self respecting petrol head should be able to identify and provide a description.



PICTURE GALLERY

Vintage Sports Car Club's New Year's Day Meet at Cranmore 2013

This event is always the perfect way to start the New Year, and this year was no exception. All in all, about 30 vehicles turned out for the first motoring event of the year. The weather definitely makes a difference, here's hoping for more of the same in 2013.

Terry Warder



Standing on the terrace, drink in hand in the sunshine and lots of vintage cars, what could be better



A lovely example of an early MG



Thankfully not the only "Sunbeam" of the day!!



A local Alvis from Farleigh Hungerford



Too many Morgans to include them all, but this early side-valve 3 wheeler Flat-Rad was a fine example



You probably all recognise this one; I took the photo in one of the rare moments when there was no crowds and I was able to close the bonnet!!



This lovely Lagonda was the other car that I wanted to take home that day

**CLUB NEWS**

2013 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
<b>28-Jan</b>	<b>Club Night (Quiz)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Bell</b>	
16-Feb	Valentine's Night	Yes	<b>The Bell</b>	<i>For details, see page 10 below.</i>
17-Feb	MG Show and Spares Day	No	Stoneleigh Park	
22-24 Feb	International Historic Motor Show	No	Stoneleigh Park	
<b>25-Feb</b>	<b>Club Night (Bring a Thing Night)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Bell</b>	<i>For details, see page 10 below.</i>
3-Mar	Cobweb Run - Hilliers Romsey	Yes		<i>Meet at Devizes Wharf for 10:30 departure</i>
16-Mar	Skittles Evening	Yes	<b>TBA</b>	
<b>25-Mar</b>	<b>Club Night (Talk - WW1 Wiltshire Soldiers - Finding the Forgotten)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Bell</b>	<i>Tom Strickland</i>
<b>29/30/31 Mar</b>	<b>Easter Bank Holiday</b>			
<b>9-Apr</b>	<b>Committee Meeting</b>	No	<b>The Bell</b>	<i>Tom Strickland</i>
20-21 April	Bristol Classic Car Show	No	Shepton Mallet Show Ground	
<b>22-Apr</b>	<b>Club Night (Prod &amp; Poke &amp; Chips &amp; Chat)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Bell</b>	
26-29 April	Club Spring Weekend Away	Yes	Llangollen	<i>Roger Binney</i>
5-May	IWM Duxford Spring Car & Motor Bike Show		<b>TBC</b>	<i>Paul Wheal - overnight stay? or visit museum on another day with an overnight stay.</i>
<b>20-May</b>	<b>Club Night (Mystery Run)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<i>David Whiteley</i>
1-Jun	Vintage Nostalgia 2013 - Warminster	No	<b>TBC</b>	<i>Peter Hine</i>
2-Jun	Lions Chippenham Cherished Vehicle Show	Yes		<i>Tom Strickland to get a pitch - See page 9 below</i>

2013 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
8-9 June	Gloucestershire Motor Show	Yes	Highnam Court	<b>TBC</b> <i>Peter Hine</i>
<b>24-Jun</b>	<b>Club Night (BBQ)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Bell</b>	<i>Paul Warn</i>
21-Jul	Classics at the Castle		<b>TBA</b>	
July ?	Summer Picnic		<b>TBA</b>	
19-Aug	Visit Marlborough College	Yes	<b>TBC</b>	<i>Peter Hine</i>
25-Aug	Action Day & BBQ	Yes	Tom's Field	<i>11:00 am Tom Strickland</i>
1-Sep	Bath Classic Car Show - Supports Help for Heroes	Yes	<b>TBC</b>	
Sep/Oct ?	Walking Frome Treasure Hunt	Yes	<b>TBC</b>	<i>Tony and Jenny Neale</i>
<b>23-Sep</b>	<b>Club Night (Review of Spring Weekend - slides etc. and discuss 2014 Spring Weekend)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>TBC</b>	
<b>28-Oct</b>	<b>Club Night (Talk - 1970-79 GP Seasons - When Sex was Safe &amp; Motor Racing was Dangerous)</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<i>Paul Warn</i>
<b>7-Nov</b>	<b>Committee Meeting</b>	No	<b>The Bell</b>	<i>Tom Strickland</i>
<b>25-Nov</b>	<b>Club AGM</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Bell</b>	Formal notification will be included in the Sept & Oct newsletter.
7-Dec	Christmas Party	No	The Greyhound Bromham	<i>Peter Hine</i>

The first iteration of the club's diary, usually contains caveats as details are firmed up. However, it is produced here in full to give you an opportunity to plan your club events for the year. It is regularly reviewed and confirmation of the coming month's activities is provided by the chairman at our monthly meetings. The "Club Event" column indicates whether or not it is a formal club event. Those attending these events are recorded on each occasion and the individual attending most events is awarded our trophy at the end of the year. **ED**

**SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLES**

A couple of months ago I wrote of additives and my deliberations on what to do with them. I concluded that I would tip in a bottle of Millers stuff. Last week the roads were nice and dry and so I took the Magnette out for a blast down the A4. I blasted up Derry hill towards Calne and nearing the top my throttle just opened right up and I thought the engine was going to blow up..... Luckily I switched off and glided into the kitchen place next to the Soho Inn. I was hoping that the cable had snagged or that the pedal return spring had come loose but no luck there. I checked over all the carb mechanisms to ensure everything was free and doing what it should. With ever blackening hands I was thinking I was going to have to take the carbs off to see inside and at this moment a friend (an army mechanic-currently at a desk in Abbeywood) pulled in and offered his services. He suggested that I pumped the accelerator whilst he tapped away where the butterfly valve thingys are and hey presto problem solved. I am blaming gummy petrol etc as well as lack of use of course! The question now is do I really need to strip my carbs all down and clean them up or will just using the car sort it? Thoughts please....

**Tom**



## Valentine's Dinner

Our host for this year's Valentine's dinner is "our" pub - the Bell Inn at Seend - on Saturday 16th February, 7:30pm for 8:00pm. A menu is included as an attachment with this newsletter. Please let Peter Hine know if you are going by Thursday 7th February to include your menu choices. Peter will not be at the January club night so e-mail your choices to Peter. He will collect payment on the night of the dinner. So please have the correct money to save time on the night.



Hi All,



Time to disturb the spiders and get digging around in the back of the shed / garage / cupboards. As you will see from the events calendar, February's club night will be 'Bring a Thing' night. The idea is that everybody brings along one or two weird and unusual items for the other club members to identify. There will be a prize for the person who identifies the most items so please challenge your fellow club members by making the 'things' as unusual and obscure as possible (and also by knowing yourself what the 'thing' is / does....).

If the thing is unusual in shape but a bit too obvious by it's looks, then you could put it in a bag as a 'feel only' thing (but not too many of these please).

We look forward to as many strange and wonderful 'things' as possible and maybe some surprises....

Peter

CHERISHED VEHICLES SHOW 2013

I have had the following through and at committee it was decided that this year we would support the event and go as a club. If you wish to attend please email Tom ([stricklandto@hotmail.com](mailto:stricklandto@hotmail.com)) with a Drivers Name, Vehicle Make, Model, Year and Registration Number. I will be putting the entry in after January club night.

As previously notified, our 2013 Cherished Vehicles Show will be on Sunday 2 June. As with last years highly successful show, this years will be held just out of Chippenham near Castle Combe race track, at Allington Farm, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 6LJ on the A420 towards Bristol,.



The Lions Club of Chippenham Present a  
**CHERISHED VEHICLE  
& FARM FUN DAY**  
Sunday, 2 June, 2013  
Allington Farm, Chippenham, SN14 6LJ (A420)  
Vehicle Exhibitors Free, Trade & Craft Stands £25

For a Vehicle, Ring Bob on 01793 852 497  
For a Stall, Ring Ian on 01249 891 159  
e-mail: [cvehicleshows@chippenhamlions.org.uk](mailto:cvehicleshows@chippenhamlions.org.uk)  
web: [www.chippenhamlions.org.uk](http://www.chippenhamlions.org.uk)

All Money Raised For Lions Charities

Exhibitors' vehicles, drivers (or riders) and up to one passenger are free, if registered in advance. Other visitors are '5 and children under 10 enter free. There will be plenty of parking and easy access to the site.

Over 40 exhibitors have already registered to attend. Apply NOW to be sure of your space..

For each exhibitor, I need Club/Organisation (if applicable), Owners or Drivers Name, Vehicle Make, Model, Year and Registration Number. By all means send a single entry or a list. Exhibitors will be able to pick their spot on the day, if available.

We look forward to seeing you on 2 June 2013.

The Lions Club of Chippenham's highly successful 2012 inaugural event can be viewed online at [www.chippenhamlions.org.uk](http://www.chippenhamlions.org.uk).