

# NEWSLETTER

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

WESSEX  
MG CLUB  
AT THE BELL INN SEEND



How confusing it must be to read a different Chairman's chat each month. I think I have managed to be 20% Chairman this year but there is a "circumstances beyond my control" excuse for some of the meetings. Your stalwart other Chairmen have always been there to keep the show on the road and at least my tally will rise to 30% following the AGM.

I have heard very little comment about this "Chairman sharing" that we have had this year. That either means:

- a) You are happy enough with the arrangement: or
- b) You are all too embarrassed to say what you really think.

From my point of view, it has made for a relatively easy and tolerable responsibility (made easier because of the flexibility and commitment of Vic and Paul) and whilst 2014 may see a

different solution, 2013 seems to have sort of worked.

Well, MGers, we approach the end of another successful Club year. Membership remains very healthy with several new and interesting members. Events have been of great variety and well attended, from Roger's Spring Weekend to Tony's Frome walkabout. I suppose that there is no better way of measuring success than that.

But don't let that success prevent anyone suggesting other ways of maintaining this interest. In my fairly short time with the club, a combination of established and novel activities seems to be the key - Tom's garden afternoon and Peter's Marlborough College visit being good examples of the latter and the Mystery Run of the former.

So please keep new ideas coming.

For your diary in the coming month

**November**

**25th - AGM - 7:30**

**December**

**7th - Christmas Party**

**January 2014**

**7th - Club Walk**

**27th - Club Night - Talk 7:30**

**See pages 7,9 and 10 for details of events.**

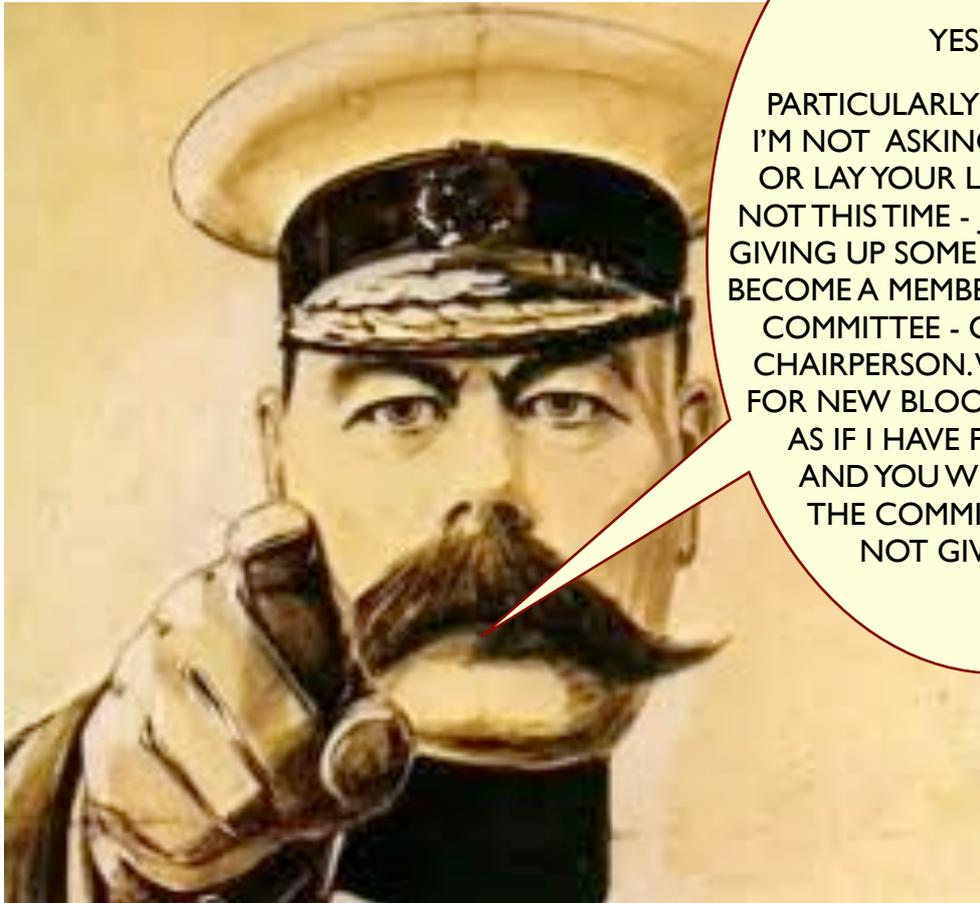
**Club Night start time 8:00pm unless otherwise stated**



Our next meeting is the AGM. were 9 committee members  
As you might have worked-out and we are particularly keen  
from the foregoing statistic, I to recruit new blood as "ordi-  
have been elected to chair nary" members. This is not  
that meeting. Be gentle with arduous but can be both re-  
me, dear reader, and help me warding and involving. How  
prepare the club for another about you? see message from  
good year. We will be looking our sponsor.....  
for nominations for all offi- Since Carrie and I returned  
cers and also committee mem- from our travels, it has been  
bers. At the last count, there very wet, definitely not the

weather to go out in Marilyn. So I  
guess that she, along with all of  
your MGs and Morgans, will now  
stay tucked up in our garages 'til  
Spring peeps over the window sill.  
Shame!

**David Whiteley**  
**Chairman-ish**



THE COMMITTEE  
NEEDS YOU!

YES YOU!

PARTICULARLY LADY MEMBERS -  
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO JOIN UP  
OR LAY YOUR LIFE ON THE LINE -  
NOT THIS TIME - JUST TO CONSIDER  
GIVING UP SOME OF YOUR TIME AND  
BECOME A MEMBER OF YOUR CLUB'S  
COMMITTEE - OR EVEN BECOME  
CHAIRPERSON. WE ARE LOOKING  
FOR NEW BLOOD. I DON'T LOOK  
AS IF I HAVE FUN, **BUT I DO**,  
AND YOU WILL IF YOU JOIN  
THE COMMITTEE, SO WHY  
NOT GIVE IT A GO!

*L'Echarderie & The Circuit  
des Ramperts - Angouleme*

It was a cold and damp evening, probably the January club meeting. Roger, no doubt dreaming of all things French - steady! suggested spending a few days later in the year at "L'Echarderie" - Lynne and Roger's lovely French home - to include the Circuit des Ramperts in Angouleme. An opportunity not to be missed.

Fast forward to the morning of Tuesday 17th September. Having arrived in Ouistreham, we are disembarking "Millie" from the jaws of "The Normandie". We had a cabin for the overnight crossing, but Annie didn't sleep too well.....

A route was planned that would take us via Caen, and onward south, through Swiss Normandy, Fleurs, Mayenne, Moulay, La Fleche, Condes-St-Martin, and L'ile Bouchard. By late afternoon, after a few stops for picnics and stuff, we arrive at "L'Echarderie" a short distance to the west of the village of Cussay. We were warmly by Lynne, Roger and of course Sadie.

Now the theme of any stay with Lynne and Roger includes great walks and swimming with Sadie, great lunches in beautiful village settings and when the girls have their way - which as you can imagine is more often than not - retail opportunities in the small village antique shops. To redress the balance, when we get back, Roger and I reflect on the day over a beer or coffee in a local bar.

One of our lunch destinations was the village of Angles-sur-l'Anglin. A favourite place for Sadie to swim. It was also a destination for the famous five - aka Roger, Ged, Paul Wheel, Vic and yours truly - during a trip to the Le Mans Classic in 2010. The five spent a very lazy afternoon after a substantial lunch, sleeping beside the river.

For a full report on that particular trip, see the August 2010 newsletter - back issues are available!!

On Friday it was our first visit to Angouleme. Anne, Lynne and Michelle had a posh day-out meandering around the French countryside sight-seeing, including



of course lunch. Chateau Villandry being their eventual destination.

Now on the other hand the boys were off to Angouleme. It's a three day event, although racing is only on Sunday. Roger and I took the Morgan down on Friday. On Sunday the four of us travelled south in Lynne's Volvo.

Set high above flat agricultural land the town of Angouleme is nicknamed the 'Balcony of the southwest'. It is home to the Circuit des Ramparts, almost like a museum of historic cars, brought to life for a few brief days in a perfect setting - probably a nightmare if it should rain!

September each year attracts historic racers and their cars from across Europe, to enjoy the festival and racing that first began in 1939. The tradition of fine food, wine and racing in the streets continues and we were there to help keep the tradition alive!

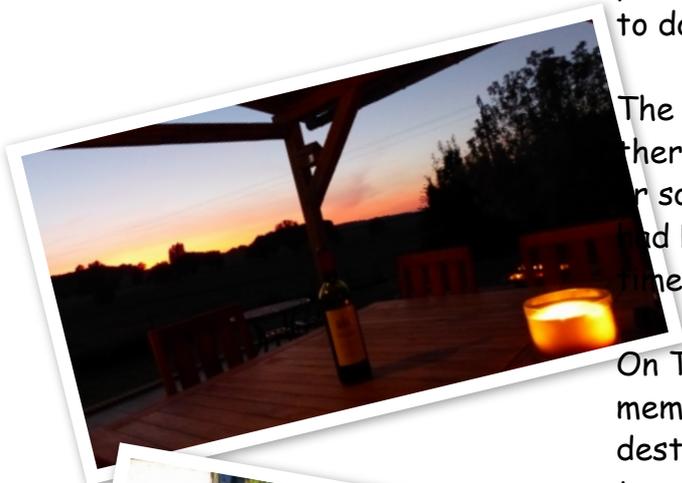
As you may imagine, parking was an issue in the confines of the ancient town with its cobbled streets, historic buildings and many racing enthusiasts also looking to park. Eventually we found our way to the top of the town and shared parking with some English racers who had commandeered space in a restricted area allocated to competitors. We spent the day people watching, wandering around the paddock and lunching on oysters.

The weather was perfect on both days, although a little too hot on Sunday. There was an eclectic mix of cars entered in the seven-race meeting with each race named after a French racing hero. Practice was in the morning and racing during the afternoon. These days, an all Bugatti-class race is rare. But 15 started the 'Trintignant' race and appropriately two Frenchmen dominated the race Jean-Marc Laffont winning in a Type 35B. A great day's racing.

The day before we left "L'Echarderie" for our return journey I thought it prudent to grease "Millie's" nip-



ples. Some may say an erotic pass-time but someone has to do it!



The sliding pillar suspension has 2 grease points on either side which have to be 'topped-up' every 800 miles or so. Given the many cobbled streets the suspension had been subjected to, I thought now would be a good time.

On Tuesday morning we said our goodbyes after a memorable few days and headed off to our eventual destination Putanges-Pont-Ecrepin, via Le Mans. Putanges is some 50 minutes south of Ouistreham in Swiss Normandy and would take most of the day to travel.

There was an early morning mist as we made our way north-west to Le Mans via Chinon, Gizeux, Le Lude and Pontvallain, keeping to the quiet inter-regional routes. On our approach to the Le Mans circuit we passed the massive camp-site where we parked Roger's car on our 2010 trip.



We spent a little while wandering around Le Musée des 24 Heures Circuit De La Sarthe. The museum is located to the left of the main entrance of the historic circuit. Paris has its Louvre and Le Mans has its Musée - I'll leave it at that.



Our hosts at 'Le Bosquet' in Putanges were Magda and Richard. Magda was brought-up in Malvern near the Morgan factory. 'Le Bosquet' was a great place to stay, just a 5 minute walk down to the small town of Putanges with its river, two churches, assorted small shops and restaurants.



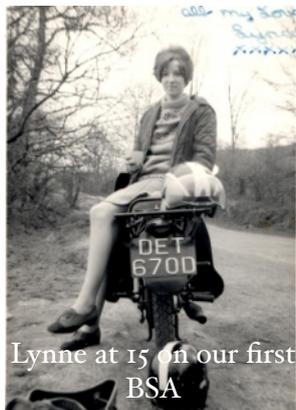
On Wednesday we mooched around the town and then set off to Falaise and 'William the Conqueror's' Castle. An interactive tour with an I-Pad device which when pointed at the walls in each room showed how the place would have looked. Thursday we travelled to Le Mont St Michel, some 2 hours west of Putanges. On Friday it was time to say auvoir and we made our way to Ouistreham and the ferry. An uneventful drive saw us back home for 10:00pm - tired, but with many pleasant memories.

ED

### Bikes are fun too!

Unfortunately, once you get motor bikes in your blood you simply cannot live without one it seems, or so many bikers claim.

So when I saw a beautiful concept bike 12 months ago which replicated one that I had owned at 18 years old, my resolve of 12 years ago when my "last" bike went down the road simply dissolved away like butter.



Lynne at 15 on our first BSA

And so it was that I recently picked up a sparkly new Royal Enfield Continental GT 535, fresh off the boat from Chennai in India. And lo and behold, just a few days later I find that Terry and Sue have the same weak-



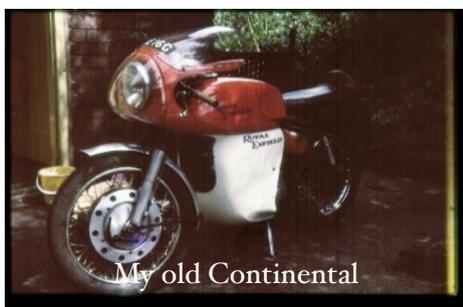
Terry and Sue's Continental

ness and in fact still own one of the original 60's 250 Continental Gt's that I and Lynne had ridden so many years ago.

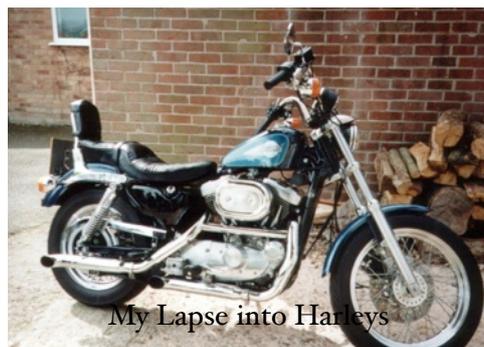
Royal Enfield was a classic famous British brand as I am sure you know, which continued manufacture in Chennai long after the company's closure in the UK. I once visited the factory there and still remember the noise, smell and excitement of seeing bikes being assembled from raw

metal, much like the Morgan factory the "Wessex" once visited.

85% of bikes in India are Enfields, protected by import tariffs and carry a real status symbol for their owners. So Enfield decided to capitalise worldwide on their history and particularly their beautiful 250 Continental GT café racer. It symbolised everything that a biker wanted in the 60's, an image which emulated the Manx and Thruxton racer styles of the day and gave us lucky kids



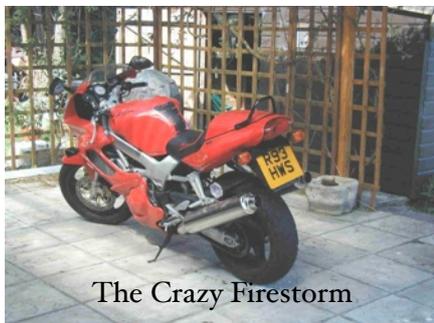
My old Continental



My Lapse into Harleys

a bike that had the potential to reach a ton, looked great, and would carry a girl on the back so long as she held on tight!

And so it was that the new bike saw its rebirth, but with twice the capacity, a 535cc fuel injected single, disk brakes, gas shocks and a frame designed to race.....and I had to have one.



The Crazy Firestorm

Now it's not fast, it doesn't behave like my last 1000cc V twin which would do 0-60 in 4 seconds, 0-100 in 8 seconds and leave your passenger as a heap on the road if you opened her up too quickly. But

oh yes it has torque, it has the right noise, and most of all it takes you right back to the 60's when she starts up, and has the looks to kill, and with a classic bright red tank, she looks so dead right sat next to the British Racing Green "A" in the garage.



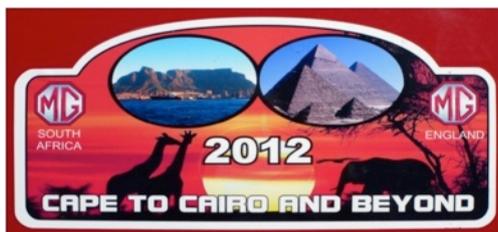
The New Girl!

So yes, bikes get in your blood and stay there and if you have ever have owned one you will know just what I mean, just ask Sue and Terry.

Roger

### Cape to Cairo & Beyond

For our first club meeting on January 27th 2014, Nigel and Sue Fowler will be giving a talk entitled "Cape to Cairo and Beyond".



It will be a 2.5 hour talk with an interval, on the trials, tribulations and spirit of Adventure during their journey across the African continent, with like

minded MG owners from across the world.



I'm looking forward to it! ED

### THE PLACES ONE GOES - THE PEOPLE ONE MEETS - 3

Porlock is a small village in North Devon made famous in the early days of motoring by Porlock Hill. Apparently, in the 1930s, you weren't a man if you hadn't climbed Porlock hill in your MG or Riley.

Nowadays, it presents no problem to the humblest Ford Fiesta or Nissan Micra but our 3.5 tonne motorhome, powered by a Ford two litre diesel, certainly did notice the gradient.

Carrie and I had stayed at a delightful campground on the fringe of Porlock for a few nights. It is ages since we last visited the area and I for one had forgotten how beautiful this area is. The cliff top walks are spectacular if strenuous - a six mile walk can easily take three hours because of the ups and downs involved!

You certainly earn your cream tea - and the cream teas a **very** good. En route to one of these we passed a building declaring itself "Exmoor Classics", not quite what we expected in Porlock High Street. On our return, we nosed in and found out that Exmoor Classics is run by a chap who used to look after a collection of classics for a local landowner, alongside his business of classic restoration.



Unfortunately, the collection had been sold earlier this year but (withdrawal symptoms perhaps) he had recently bought a Healey 3000 and an early Austin Seven. He was a very interesting chap to talk to - his real love was early Alfa Romeos and aero modelling and it was the love of the latter coupled to an interest in the former that led to his restoration activities and ultimately the care of a classic collection for someone else.

He appeared to have no particular plan for the future though buying the Healey and Seven perhaps give some clue!

**David**

**CLUB NEWS**

| 2013 EVENTS LIST |                 |            |                       |  |
|------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------------|--|
| Date             | Event           | Club Event | Venue                 | Contact Details & Start Point/Time                                 |
| 25-Nov           | Club AGM        | Yes        | The Bell              | Formal notification will be included in the Sept & Oct newsletter. |
| 7-Dec            | Christmas Party | Yes        | The Greyhound Bromham | Peter Hine   |

**BRADFORD ROOTS MUSIC FESTIVAL  
11<sup>TH</sup> AND 12<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY 2014**

This event repeats the success of last year's inaugural festival which draws together a wide range of musicians and singers from the BoA area. There are styles to suit every taste and our own larger combined choir, the

Wiltshire Wailers will be performing on the Sunday, fresh from sharing a stage with Charlie Dore and Julian Littman (ex Steely Dan) for whom we also provided backing vocals.



More details on the Wiltshire Music Centre web site: [wiltshiremusic.org.uk](http://wiltshiremusic.org.uk). Advanced

ticket prices are £16 for the whole weekend, or £12 just for the Saturday and £8 for the Sunday. There are lots of things going on for kids and if last year is anything to go by, it will be a really enjoyable event where you will be able to wander around sampling different kinds of music in a variety of settings on 4 stages.



See you there

**Jeff Rattle**

## MG ITES GO WALKIE'S - A BRIEF UPDATE



We are now 17 people and a dog or two. So nice to have a good group. We are:

Jeni and Vic; Ron and Ann; Paul and Anne; Paul and Andrea; Ken and Anne; Jeff and June; Tony and Jenny; Priscilla; Tuppence and Sadie (part of the way)

The plan is to meet and leave cars in the Edington Village Hall car park ( In old Edington, go uphill from the church and just before the T junction there is a left into the car park) Congregate there at 10:30 -10:45.

We have our village minibus to take us to the top of the plain to start off (and a half-way rescue point if anyone wants it), and then to collect the remnants at the Turnip Airways hanger, to go back down to The Daggers.

You might like to bring a flask of tea for the half way stop.

Lunch space is reserved for us at the Daggers for 1pm.

We have not fixed a menu to give everyone flexibility in what they eat, but this may well lead to a slow staggered meal, but they assure me they will not run out of beer during the afternoon and remain open till 11pm

I propose that everyone buys and pays for their own drinks and puts into a pot what they think they have spent on food. Then I will settle up the total bill and hopefully the pot should be somewhere close to the total bill.

The food in The Daggers is not particularly cheap but its a pleasant and convenient place to have lunch. The farm shop will be open and you will also be able to see the microbrewery and buy take away beer if you need further supplies.

Our cars are then just a short flat walk across the field away from the pub.

So thanks for joining us and lets hope for a bright dry day, but good walking shoes and a stick are advisable and the chalky soil can be slippy.

**Roger**

## SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLES

It is November 11th and I still have no new MG. My dealer believes that they have built the car but are tweaking various things before supplying it. I pushed him a bit and he has agreed to supply a temporary car for us as we are struggling with one modern car in this wet and miserable autumn.

I wonder whether this is a good sign or not? Does he in fact know it may be a while and is trying to keep me sweet? Or is he just being helpful - he does have a vin number for my car. I just don't know.

I had a nice run out in the Magnette last Sunday, which was a bright clear day, and I am very suspicious of my speedo. You may remember that I put in a spare over the summer so that I had a working mileometer. The needle was swinging around a lot at the start of the journey and later on when it settled down it seemed to be over-reading a lot! I should have used the opportunity to do a fictitious amazing top speed but with wife and kids I just trundled home wondering what to do.

One of the things I am going to do is trial iPhone speedo apps - some of these even have clever speed limit alerts and so on, so may be good. Most reviews seem to be good but a few complain about poor GPS preventing the apps working properly, we shall wait and see! I could use my satnav but carting it about and setting it up is a pain. More and more people are using their iPhones as a satnav - do any club members do this regularly? How do you get on?

Hopefully see you soon in my MG3!!!!

**Tom**