

Chairman's Chat

In Gordon's absence this month it falls to me to do the Chairman's Chat so here goes. Last month's meeting saw a good turnout for the BBQ at the bell and we managed to get through another year without setting fire to Tony's equipment – not sure that's come out quite right but never mind. We were also joined by two prospective new members who have recently purchased a Midget.

The 4th July was a busy day for the club with some members attending the club's annual picnic and others going on the Cotswold Caper. The weather turned out to be not quite as hot as during the week but stayed fine none the less. The Cotswold Caper was, as usual very well supported, and we followed an excellent route around the Cotswolds enjoying some lovely scenery and even lovelier properties (reaffirming the fact that I clearly made a bad career choice) finally ending up at a hotel near Thornbury. By all accounts the picnic was also a success enjoyed by those that attended – more inside.

Thursday and Friday evening were spent helping Tom to change the bearing in his rear axle which, after a few worrying moments with the threads for the retaining nut, all went back together nicely with (so

far) no oil leaks. This was just as well because he had planned to take his Mum and Dad on the Caper on Sunday. Mind you, having put up with his Fathers complaining about no air conditioning and "are we there yet" type comments I'm not so sure that Tom was thinking that the BGT might have been the better choice. Still the Magnette caused a lot of interest at the start being the only one on the run. Tom was very disappointed that there was no award for the best Magnette as he was fairly confident that he would have won that.

July's meeting is the mystery run which I am organising. A slightly earlier start than normal, 7.00pm at the FOCUS car park in Devizes. Thanks to Gordon for reminding me at the BBQ or the July meet would indeed have been a complete mystery.

Finally, preparations for the 25th Anniversary are well under way but we would encourage those of you who have not already done so to get your tickets and book your rooms and also to see if you can persuade a few of your friends to buy some as well. The more tickets we can sell the better the event will be.

See you on the 26th if I've managed to find my way



WESSEX MG CLUB
At the Bell on the Common Broughton Gifford
25th Anniversary Year - 2010

For your diary in the coming month

July

26th Club night – Club mystery run starting from Devizes FOCUS store 7:00.

August

7th Families Day RAF Lynham.

8th Club run Athelhampton Bournemouth.

home from the mystery route!

Paul Adams

Is it ever OK - to buy a BMW

With a few of our members buying BMWs I pose the question: Is it ever OK to buy a BMW? Let us think this through.

Historically some generations of British people have come at this purely with anti-German war time thoughts and I can understand how someone who was involved in the wars could hold lifelong anti-BMW feelings – I certainly had mixed emotions when I saw the Blue and White badge on a Heinkel Bomber in a museum recently. Another generation comes from a time of rust prone unreliable British cars and so swung towards a strong and reliable car in the form of a BMW. Following this another generation bought BMWs because if they didn't they simply hadn't made it in the World. But what about today's generation? Well that is easy – they buy them because they want to be able to cut up people, be accused of being arrogant and of course listen to the likes of Clarkson – or perhaps they are simply German (which would be fine).

All this aside let's take preconceived opinions out of it and look at the facts. Answer the following questions and make your own mind up:

Which are you:

Someone who buys wants a local product or someone who buys a product that needs air/water/road miles to deliver?

Someone who wants to buy a car designed by a local person or by a foreigner?

Someone who wants a beautiful, good looking car or wants a hard aggressive 'thug' like car?

Someone who is stylish and likes cool cars or thinks he has to have a certain car to get a certain image?

Joking aside - do we really want to join in with this Germanic car buying craze or do we want to follow in the spirit of our MGs – truly beautiful British built cars. The closest I personally get is the Mini – A British designed, built and a good looking car – but of course BMW stole this!

Tom

PS. Whatever you do – don't buy a soft top BMW! That is what MGs are for!

Tom, life is too short; presumably 'Is it ever ok to buy a BMW' is a euphemism for anything German or perhaps foreign.

Ed

MGs - at the Festival of Speed

This year's Festival of Speed included an additional day on the Thursday called the Moving Motorshow. The Moving Motorshow is an all new pre-cursor to the Festival of Speed with the novel twist that the cars taking to the Goodwood hill climb are those on display from the manufacturers – all foreign I'm afraid or with foreign parent companies, including the MGs..... At the heart of the Moving Motorshow was a 'pit garage' a huge temporary enclosed structure with a two lane 'road' running down the centre with manufactures' displays either side. One of which was MG.

MG Motor UK Limited had invited me down for the day and I was able to take Anne and our grandson Fraser. The day included taking the MG6 Turbo up the Goodwood Hill Climb. As an added bonus, all the cars competing in the festival weekend, the shopping village and other attractions were also available on the day. This could be the start of a 4 day Festival.



Our grandson (14years old) has a keen interest in motorsport and races karts at Castle Combe. He thoroughly enjoyed looking and sitting in the cars on display. Some of the cars were 'out of bounds' but with a good chat line we were able to get Fraser in the Gull Wing Mercedes and the new Ferrari.



Back to the MG. Doug Wallace of MG was our host for our run up the hill in the MG6 Turbo. There were two 6's available both in left hand drive, one in bronze as seen in the advertising blurb and one in silver and apparently closer to the European spec. 'Our car' was the silver version – see picture below with Doug.

You may remember that whilst it was failing MG Rover sold the rights to the Rover 75 and the MG name to Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC) and also spoke to SAIC about a rescue package. That didn't come to within Longbridge was taken ing Automobile Corporation right old pickle. But the im-Rover stopped, the engineer-been working with SAIC be-deal to carry on doing so at Spa, and they have been de-models ever since. In the meantime, the Chinese government forced NAC to merge into the bigger Shanghai Company.



The merger allowed the UK's SAIC engineers and designers to return to Longbridge and establish it as a European technical centre for SAIC – now called MG Birmingham.

As I said Doug Wallace was our host and he drove the car with the three of us aboard to the start of the hill climb, where we changed seats for my drive up the hill. I have been going to the Festival since the first year in 1993 and always wanted to drive the hill and now was my opportunity.

Our car was a five door hatchback with left hand drive, a 4 cylinder in line 1796cc turbocharged petrol engine, transverse mounted in the front - driving the front wheels. Performance is a modest 0-62 in 9.0secs with a top speed of 130mph. The design and specification is similar to the Ford Focus. I'm sure the interior is very acceptable in China, where the car is currently on sale but I didn't think it was up to European standards. But hey it's a pre production model so hopefully work in progress.

We lined up behind the new Lotus Evora with permission to drive as quickly as I liked as long as Doug felt relatively safe...I had to sign a waiver during the briefing before going on the hill. I have to say the performance was disappointing, although we caught the Evora. The



handling was really quite good but there was no involvement with the car, the engine needed much more power to match its handling qualities. As I



said to Doug and on the questionnaire if you are going to put an MG badge on a car, then there is an expectation of sporting performance, something out of the ordinary. Why model it on the Ford Focus and why a 5 door hatch? – Why not the BMW 1 series M sport coupe.....perhaps not given Tom's contribution to this month's newsletter!

Anyway I am very grateful to MG UK for the opportunity and privilege of not only trying the new MG but also driving the Goodwood hill climb.

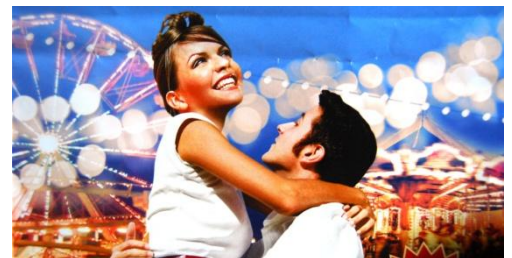
Ed

Dreamboats and Petticoats

This is a 'Thank You' to all of you that came to the Isle of Wight and to say Paul and I had a great night at the theatre with the gift you gave us.

We went to see **Dreamboats and Petticoats** which was showing in the Bath Theatre in June.

Directed by Bob Tomson this young company put on a tremendous evening's entertainment of Rock and Roll revival. From start to finish it had us tapping our feet or clapping our hands, the whole audience were enthralled by the music. There were all age groups there and even the younger members of the audience were up on their feet at the end dancing. We spotted another MG'er in the audience – Ann Alderson, who also enjoyed the evening.



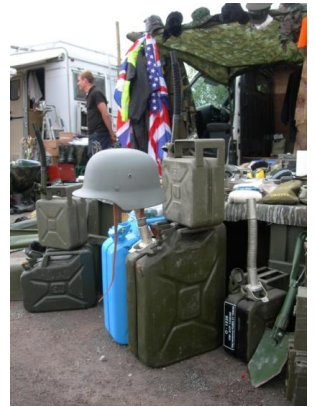
The show had a love story line but with songs we all knew and loved, the cast were extremely energetic and enthusiastic and this came across to the audience. I won't tell you any more, but if you get the chance to see this show we thoroughly recommend it.

What a great evening we loved every moment.

Anne

A German Design Icon – *the Jerrycan*

Last month I reported on a visit Ron Alderson and I made to the Bristol Classic Car Show and the discovery of the Early MG Society. During our mooch around the various displays we came across a stand selling all kinds of stuff including jerrycans. Now, jerrycans can be seen everywhere particularly on the side of Land Rovers and other off road vehicles and on various television adventure documentaries. But there was a time when it was the subject of a top secret project.



During World War II the United States exported more tons of petroleum products than all other war matériel combined. The mainstay of the enormous oil and fuel transportation network that fed the war was the oceangoing tanker, supplemented on land by pipelines, railway tankers and lorries. But for combat vehicles on the move, another link was crucial—smaller containers that could be carried and poured by hand and moved around a battle zone by trucks.

Hitler knew this. He perceived early on that the weakest link in his plans for blitzkrieg using his panzer divisions was fuel supply. He ordered his staff to design a fuel container that would minimize fuel losses under combat conditions. The result was a fuel can that was so well designed it is still used today. The Germans called it the Wehrmachtskanister. The allies nick named it the jerrycan for obvious reasons.

The jerrycan had been developed under the strictest secrecy, and its unique features were many. The



sides of the can were marked with cross-like indentations that strengthened the can while allowing the contents to expand, the two halves being welded together. It had three handles, enabling one man to carry two cans and when required, pass one to another man in bucket-brigade fashion. Its capacity was approximately five gallons. Thanks to an air chamber at the top, when full, it would float on water if dropped overboard or from a plane. Its short spout was secured with a snap closure that could be propped open for pouring, making it unnecessary to carry a funnel or opener. A gasket made the mouth leak proof. An air-breathing tube from the spout to the air space kept the pouring smooth. And most important, the can's inside

was lined with an impervious plastic material developed for the insides of steel beer barrels. This enabled the jerrycan to be used alternately for gasoline and water. Millions of these new fuel containers were manufactured and stored at the Tempelhof Airport.

Early in the summer of 1939, this secret weapon began a roundabout odyssey into American hands. An American engineer named Paul Pleiss, finishing up a manufacturing job in Berlin, persuaded a German colleague to join him on a trip overland to India. The two bought a car chassis and built a body for it. As they prepared to leave on their journey, they realized that they had no provision for emergency water. The German engineer knew of and had access the jerrycans stored at Tempelhof Airport. He simply took three and mounted them on the underside of the car.

The two drove across eleven national borders without incident and were halfway across India when Field Marshal Goering sent a plane to take the German engineer back home. Before departing, the engineer compounded his treason by giving Pleiss complete specifications for the jerrycan's manufacture. Pleiss continued on alone to Calcutta. Then he put the car in storage and returned to Philadelphia.

Back in the United States, Pleiss told military officials about the container, but without a sample can he could stir no interest, even though the war was now well under way. The risk involved in having the cans removed from the car and shipped from Calcutta seemed too great, so he eventually had the complete vehicle sent to him, via Turkey and the Cape of Good Hope.

It arrived in New York in the summer of 1940 with the three jerrycans intact. The War Department looked at it but in the 'not invented here' mentality unwisely decided that an updated version of their World War I container would be good enough. That was a cylindrical ten-gallon can with two screw closures. It required a spanner and a funnel for pouring.

The one jerrycan in the US Army's possession was later sent to Camp Holabird, in Maryland. There it was poorly redesigned; the only features retained were the size, shape, and handles. The welded circumferential joint was replaced with rolled seams around the bottom and one side. Both a spanner and a funnel were required for its use. And it now had no lining. As any petroleum engineer knows, it is unsafe to store petrol in a container with rolled seams.

Lessons were learned quickly about the jerrycan's advantages and the Allied can's costly disadvantages. 40% of all the fuel sent to Egypt was being lost through spillage and evaporation. Conditions at the rear of Montgomery's army were appalling. Fuel arrived by rail from the sea in fifty-five-gallon steel drums with rolled seams and friction-sealed metallic mouths. The drums were handled violently by local labourers. Many leaked. The fuel that survived was decanted into the infamous five-gallon "petrol tin." This was a square can of tin plate that had been used for decades to supply lamp kerosene. It was hardly useful for petrol. In the hot desert sun, it tended to swell up, burst at the seams, and leak. Since a funnel was needed for pouring, spillage was also a problem.



The British historian Desmond Young later confirmed the great importance of fuel cans in the early African part of the war. "No one who did not serve in the desert," he wrote, "can realise to what extent the difference between complete and partial success rested on the simplest item of our equipment—and the worst. Whoever sent our troops into desert warfare with the [five-gallon] petrol tin has much to answer for. General Auchinleck estimates that this 'flimsy and ill constructed container' led to the loss of thirty per cent of petrol between base and consumer. ... The overall loss was almost incalculable. To calculate the tanks destroyed, the number of men who were killed or went into captivity because of shortage of petrol at some crucial moment, the ships and merchant seamen lost in carrying it would be quite impossible."

A new five-gallon container under consideration in Washington was cancelled. Meanwhile having captured German fuel dumps the British became aware of what would become known as the jerrycan. The British government finally authorized the gearing up for mass production. Two million British jerrycans were sent to North Africa in early 1943, and by early 1944 they were being manufactured in the Middle East. Since the British had such a head start, the Allies agreed to let them produce all the cans needed for the invasion of Europe. Millions were ready by D-day. By V-E day some twenty-one million Allied jerrycans had been scattered all over Europe. President Roosevelt observed in November 1944, "Without these cans it would have been impossible for our armies to cut their way across France at a lightning pace which exceeded the German *Blitz* of 1940."

In Washington little about the jerrycan appears in the official record. A military report says simply, "A sample of the jerry can was brought to the office of the Quartermaster General in the summer of 1940."

Based on a report by Richard M. Daniel a retired commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve and a chemical engineer.

Ed

The Club Picnic – *Hinton Ampner*

We left the Devizes Wharf car park at 10:00am with Sandra and Gordon setting the pace on a leisurely Sunday drive to Hinton Ampner. The weather was good if a little windy. The drive took us through some very picturesque villages eventually stopping for coffee in Stockbridge.

There were a few shops open, but as we were stocked up with our picnics there was little room for any purchases – phew!

Ever onward we travelled via Kingsworthy, Arlesford and Cheriton, eventually arriving at our destination. Pete and Sue had travelled separately and their car was already parked in the grounds. By now the wind had gathered speed whipping up dust in the car park. Undeterred we unpacked our picnics and found a quiet space in front of Pete and Sue's Morgan.



After lunch, it was time to tour the house and gardens.

Hinton Ampner, as it is today, was created quite recently and largely by one man - Ralph Dutton.



The first of Ralph Dutton's ancestors to live at Hinton Ampner was Sir Thomas Stewkeley, who took a lease on the estate in 1597. He occupied an E-shaped house that had been built earlier in that century about 50 metres north of the present building on a ridge looking south over the gentle Hampshire countryside. The haunted Tudor house survived until 1793, when it was demolished to make way for a plain yellow brick Georgian box, which forms the core of the present Hinton Ampner house. In 1867 Ralph Dutton's grandfather remodelled and enlarged this house in the neo-Tudor style and created a garden of formal parterres below it. As soon as he inherited the estate in 1935 Ralph Dutton decided to demolish most of the house - he sought to reveal the Georgian core of the house and give the whole an 18th-century appearance. He remodelled the garden to create something more in keeping with his neo-Georgian house. Work was interrupted by the war and not completed until 1950.

On Sunday 3 April 1960, Ralph Dutton was out walking in the park, when he noticed a thin column of smoke rising from the trees. He returned to find the house in flames. His fine 18th-century fireplaces and his collections of pictures, furniture and books were almost entirely destroyed but, undaunted, he at once began to rebuild the house in neo-Georgian style.

Ralph Dutton was a bachelor, and on his death in 1985, the 8th and last Lord Sherborne bequeathed the estate of 667 hectares (1,650 acres) to the National Trust. The hamlet of Hinton Ampner, the house, gardens and collections were all included in this generous gift.

Ralph Dutton was convinced that a garden must always move forward and left Hinton Ampner to the National Trust as a developing garden. It is presented today as a working garden, a dynamic place where the plantings are regularly being enhanced and the range extended, always with careful consideration of the designer's original concept.



The tea room beckoned after our tour, after which the ladies made purchases in the National Trust shop whilst the chaps finished off the tea and put the world back on track – summer and wine comes to mind.... On behalf of those who attended very many thanks to Sandra and Gordon for a grand day out.

Ed

Photo Gallery

Ron Alderson – The 2010 MGC gathering



Ed - Goodwood



Sample of next month's Wessex Boys on Tour



Caption Competition



Paul Adams

"The phantom Bra strap twanger strikes again!"

Vic Wright

Don't fall off your perch, but I've done it

Andrea - Hey our car is prettier than his !!!



Bits and Pieces

Do you recognise the MGB roadster in the advert on page 21 of the July issue of Enjoying MG? It belongs to John Bishop and was used in his piece on what is a classic car.

Nothing like a recommendation on work done.....

Just had an amazing guy sort out some dents on my motor home, the MG and our Peugeot – all 3 vehicles for £120 including coming to our home.

I am staggered what an unbelievable job he did, and asked him for a few flyers for the club, and have attached one, either for inclusion or mentioning the contact details, as I am sure everyone has parked at Tesco's before!! (He lives locally in Hilperton).

Roy McDine

I've taken the following off his flyer - experienced since 1997 – Contact Darren on: 075905 14869

Club News

WESSEX MG 2010 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Details
26/07/2010	Club Night	YES	See Below	Mystery run.
07/08/2010	Families day RAF Lyneham	YES	RAF Lyneham	See below - POC Paul Wheal
08/08/2010	Club Run	YES	Athelhampton Bournemouth	See Below
23/08/2010	Club Night	YES	The Bell	Boules
11-12 Sept	25th Anniversary Celebrations	YES	The Lydiard Conference Centre	Monthly updates
26/09/2010	Driving test	YES	TBA	POC Vic Wright
27/09/2010	Club Night	YES	TBA	Review of IofW trip and ideas for 2011.
25/10/2010	Club Night	YES	TBA	Institute of Advanced Motorists Talk
27/11/2010	AGM	YES	TBA	TBA
11/12/2010	Christmas Dinner	YES	TBA	TBA

Mystery Run

Those going on the run should meet at 7.00pm at the FOCUS car park in Devizes – located just out of Devizes on the A361 on the way to Beckhampton; it's on a roundabout opposite the Peugeot garage. The run is 35 miles and will take about 1 ½ hrs.

Paul Adams

Families Day RAF Lynham

Presumably, those going on this day out would have by now completed a form for security purposes and sent to Paul Wheal and details of a meeting place arranged.

Athelhampton Run

Those going on this run should meet at the Little Chef Services (Esso Station) Warminster for a 10:00am start.

Secretary's Scribbles

Since last writing I have replaced the Magnette's leaking master Cylinder that serves the brakes and the Clutch. This has made a vast improvement in the clutch department and all in all makes one feel much better about the brakes too. The Car was then running beautifully and we went off camping near Hay on Wye for a weekend. On return from the trip I noticed a small liquid dribble stain on one of the wheels – oh great! A brake cylinder failure I thought – more hydraulics ughh! But no, I had a rear axle oil leak at the hub.

On doing some research I found that this was an £8 fix and the parts were the same as an MGA. I spoke to Gordon and found that he had recently done the same job to his A and introduced me to the problem of the large octagonal nut. The Nut which holds the hub on is in deed octagonal and very large at nearly 5cm in diameter. Gordon helped here as he could borrow a large spanner from his friendly local garage and so this was less of a problem than it could have been. The tricky bit was actually the removal of the hub. I embarked on the project fairly confident that I wouldn't have to phone Vic or Paul Adams – both of whom had offered to help especially as I had Gordon's words echoing in my head: "You won't need a puller"! I did though! Luckily I had borrowed Paul Adam's giant tractor hub puller and I set to work – unfortunately it wasn't budging and I had started to damage the thread on the axle with the pressure.

I then started to flap and phoned for reinforcements - thankfully Paul managed to get it off using a piece of brass so as not to make any further damage on the thread. This wasn't the end of the story though as on re-assemble the big nut would not go on (my damaged threads remember!). Paul and I tried lots of different things but it kept slipping off or trying to cross thread. Vic then phoned to see how we were doing and in a sort of 'angel from heaven' moment suggested using a very fine file to clean up the threads. Paul and I gave it go and then did the sensible thing of leaving it until the next day. Of course the next day with about 2 minutes of filing the nut went straight on and the car was back on the road! Thank you to both Paul and Vic for their help and to Gordon for the spanner. My next job is to sort the loud clonks at the front of the GT – I have actually stopped driving the car they have got so bad!

Tom