

Chairman's Chat



The WESSEX MG CLUB
At the Bell on the Common Broughton Gifford

Welcome and Happy New Year to you all.

Well I'm back in the saddle once again and would like to start by thanking Gordon and his committee for a very successful year which included the 25th celebrations and of course the Christmas dinner.

Not much happens in January although the committee met to discuss the diary arrangements for 2011. Anyone who has any suggestions please contact Tom who will offer them up to the committee. The first event of the year is the Valentines dinner, Roger with his usual flair has organised it and all I can say is expect the unexpected (I hope the club will be there in full to enjoy the evening).

Plans for the annual holiday are underway, hopefully for the first weekend in May, details will be released within the next few weeks, .

On the Car front, it's good news that Collin's GT (Josephene) has found a new home within the club as also the MGF of the McDines.

I took Sid out several times during the last month and had great fun, hard work cleaning afterwards but so worth it and it kept me from the sales. There are always a few good days so get the MGs out and enjoy them.

See you all at The Bell on January 24th for the first meeting of the year.

Vic Wright, Chairman

For your diary in the coming month

January

24th – Club Night 8:00pm

February

12-13th – Great Western Auto Jumble

19th - Valentine's Day Massacre

20th - Stonleigh MG Spares Day

28th – Club Night 8:00pm

For details see page 7

My MG – But which one

As a little boy I would sit with my nose against the car window looking for Jaguar E-Types and most of those that I spotted ended up being MGBs! Particularly confusing for me in the early days were BGTs that looked just like E type coupes! Anyway I worked through my Degree by serving as an of-



ficer in the Territorial Army and so left University debt free (it was pre-tuition fees too then) and when the bank said did you know you could have an interest free graduate loan my eyes lit up and I became the owner of a very original damask red MG B roadster (a bit like Vic's but not metallic and with a black interior). This was the car that brought me into Wessex MG club and within two months a 'rather green' Chairman. Soon after that in 2001 I took up my teacher training course and had a daily commute of an hour each way to Cheltenham or Gloucester in the MGB – and she was

great and never ever let me down. But on getting my job at Devizes School I was straight in to Chippenham Motor Company to order a new MG ZR – that thanks to the MGOC scheme meant that I could buy a new one for less than a second hand one!



I loved this car and how well it went. On its first day it went to the MG show at Athelhampton to show off. It was around this point that I was running the 2 MGs and had met a rather nice girl called Nancy (I knew I was on a winner when she still liked me after the MG Xmas dinner experience!) and anyway it wasn't long before she needed a car – 'how about an MG Midget' I said and in perfect timing Gordon had just recommisioned a lovely and rather 'time warp condition' 1500 Midget. It was an early rubber bumper and had hardly been run in before being laid up. We were now becoming a 3 MG family!



It wasn't long before I was getting fidgety with the need for a project and my eyes turned to lowering and chroming the 1500 midget. This turned out to be quite straight forward and later on I put the early style steel wheels and Chrome hub caps on and she looked really pretty. We had several summers of camping around France in her. Once that was done I got

bored again and decided to take the big step of selling the B and buying a 1275 midget that I could restore.



So off the B went to a fellow enthusiast and on to ebay I went! I bought a



1970 Midget in need of 'finishing off' This car ended up being beyond me but became an endless supply of spares for my 2nd 1969 1275 midget (I still own the V5 on the 1970 Midget) This 2nd Midget is the one that most of you will remember – The White one. It came with a very ropey interior and hood, a gear box that jumped out of gear and to top it off cracked it's cylinder head within a week – but I had a new Engine and Gearbox from the donor Midget so with a days hard work some of the Club helped me to get it sorted and then I spent the winter re-trimming to achieve the beauty that Hector the Midget was.

Of course I didn't stop there and had a need for Wire wheels so I bought a conversion kit and some second hand wires and they were a catastrophe as they rubbed on the wheel arches – I managed to make things better by grinding some of the wheel arch inner lip away. This was enough to use the car at our wedding that summer – where she headed an MG convoy through to Lydiard Park where we had our reception.

After that I took the front hubs apart and got a proper wire wheel rear axle and did the job properly. The next time I got the itch we decided that there was little point in having two Midgets so we decided to sell the 1500 Midget and replace it with a BGT. I found one being sold by a classic car hire company near Bath which had done about 2000 miles since a full photographic restoration. So we now had the ZR, White Midget and now Sylvia the BGT (that we still have). I replaced the seats and otherwise Sylvia has done us proud over the years and I am continually impressed by her ample space and practicality. Sylvia is pretty much my daily hack these days and she is FAB!

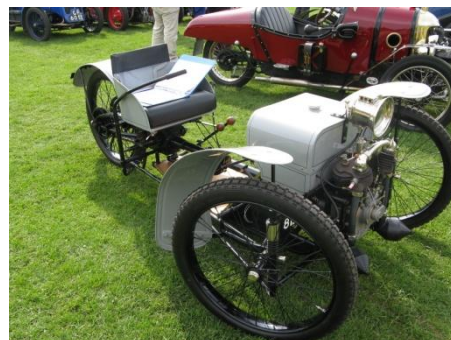


Around about this point in my story Nancy somehow became pregnant and I had rather too many months to sit and worry about MG Midgets and babies! Many a conversation was had about slinging carrycots behind seats and the like by the older generation – but this is a no these days and so on a club weekend away I made the decision – the Midget was to go in favour of a Magnette or Y Type. I became the proud owner of a ZB Varitone and the Midget went to Germany to even up the BMW import ratio. The ZR went soon after and now we have just the BGT and Magnette. The Magnette as you all know has had some restoration and a new coat of blue paint to get her to where she is now – a Classic family MG! So how many MGs? 7! Gosh I hadn't realised it was so many!! What will I get up to next

Tom Strickland

Bemused

Leaving the AGM last November, I was pleasantly bemused as to why so many people had come up to chat about Morgan's, and in particular the 3 wheeler. Obviously I'm always delighted to chat about Morgan's, but wondered where the interest was from. What I had not done is read the November newsletter prior to the meeting (or looked at the Morgan web site recently) – oops. Having now done so, all is now clear. Thanks Paul for thinking of us. As there was such interest shown, I thought I would pen a few more words on the 3 wheeler, and give you some pictures of what the very first Morgan 3 wheeler looked like, and what indeed was the very start of the Morgan Motor Company.

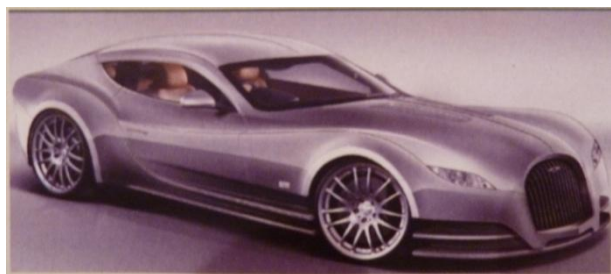


Sadly there are none of the original cars left now. However, for the 100 year anniversary, Morgan commissioned the build of the car pictured which was created from the original drawings and is absolutely true to the original car – thank goodness car design has moved on.... This car is pictured at a national 3 wheeler club event Sue & I went along to (I know we haven't got a 3 wheeler, well mine had 4 last time I looked, but it was a nice day and a nice location...). There must have been about two hundred 3 wheelers at this meeting. Amazing that there is so many on the road in all sorts of conditions from concourse, to well used to racing.



What is also planned by Morgan in 2011 is the next evolution of Morgan, the EvaGT. Deposits are currently being taken, so if you have a spare £85,000 ~ £100,000 towards the end of year here is a Christmas present idea:-

The EvaGT will use a Super Plastic Forming (SPF) aluminium body (that's techi speak for moulded aluminium) over a bonded aluminium chassis. Yes that's right, it's glued together! As an aside, it's interesting to see these bonded chassis which are already used for the current Aero cars. They actually have spot welding 'marks' which do absolutely nothing structurally because the glue holds it all together. The spot welds are made for effect only to make the customers feel good about the strength of the construction! The following spec. for



the EvaGT is planned:

- BMW (sorry Tom) 3 litre straight six twin turbo engine
- 306bhp
- Predicted 0-62 mph in 4.5 seconds
- Predicted top speed of 170 mph
- Euro 5 and 6 compliant (at 200g/km CO2)
- Estimated 40mpg

It's also a 4 seater so it's just like my Morgan – if only!

Peter Hlne

An Unusual Christmas Present

Given that I own an MG (and an ageing Audi), it was with some surprise that I found that I had been given a Haynes Owners' Workshop Manual for a Spitfire. However when I tell you that the adjective "Supermarine" was to be found in front of the word Spitfire, the surprise became even greater! The book is described as "an insight into owning, restoring, servicing and flying Britain's legendary WW11 fighter (1936 onwards – all marks)." Perhaps it was the project to replace the wings on my Beast that inspired the purchase, but whatever, it is proving to be an absorbing read with loads of detailed drawings of engines, 2 stage superchargers, fuselage and wing structures plus full descriptions of the instrumentation, hydraulics, pneumatics, cooling systems, armaments etc. I hadn't appreciated how many modifications it went through in such a short time, including an increase in the number of propeller blades from 2 to 3 to 4 and then 5 and how the engine power was practically doubled in order to keep up with the improvements in the German opposition.



About 22,000 were built (including the Seafire for the Royal Navy) and many only lasted a few weeks during the war which led to the use of often lower grade materials at the peak of production, relative to the earlier, pre-war models. About 70 airworthy versions still exist around the world.

To those of us used to playing with classic cars there are some interesting parallels between owning and maintaining an MGB and a (Supermarine) Spitfire. For reasons that weren't made entirely clear, the Spitfire has an Irish linen fabric covering for its rudder and elevators which neatly compares with the use of fabric for the roof of a roadster – often, in the past at least, referred to as a rag top. The Spitfire was prone to overheat during taxiing due to the radiators being positioned behind the undercarriage legs and also outside the slipstream of the propeller. This required a slow climb to start with in order to reduce the coolant temperature and we all know about overheating Bs, don't we – at least in the summer?

The provenance of Spitfires is an issue with originality determined somewhat loosely by there being a reasonable proportion of the original fuselage primary structure incorporated in any restoration. As we find with our "Bs", each one is different with its own characteristics and foibles and Spitfires are no different with Merlin engine versions the equivalent of chrome bumper and the Griffon engine variant that of the rubber bumper as regards value etc. Fortunately one aspect of owning a Spitfire does not apply to our beloved vehicle of choice – it was reckoned that a restored Spitfire couldn't be flown until the weight of paper concerning the restoration process equalled the weight of the aircraft!



Incidentally, if you were thinking of buying a restored airworthy Spitfire you'll need about £1.4m with maintenance costs of about £25,000 pa and insurance of another £50,000 pa with fuel consumption of a gallon a minute. Makes ownership of a B sound quite cheap doesn't it?

(If any member would like to borrow the book please let me know)

Jeff Rattle

Mystery Car

You may remember that Roger provided this pic of a racing sportscar as our mystery car in the last issue of the newsletter.

I've had no responses shedding light on the car – not even from Ken Scott who usually solves the mystery.

Well, for those of you with an interest in this sort of thing, here is Roger's answer.

Does anyone know anything about the fate of Tom Dargue's MG Special? It first raced at Goodwood in 1951 and originally consisted of a supercharged 1100cc pre-war MG engine mounted in a tubular frame and had a two-seater cycle-winged body with steel disc wheels. By 1954 it had an XPAG 1467cc engine and a very handsome body built in the style of a Maserati's A6GCS (the body was said to have cost £400) and was fitted with Borrani wire wheels. Dargue, who lived in Bramley Road, Barnet N14, offered it for sale at £925 in May 1954 and claimed that it was capable of over 115mph.

Ed



The WESSEX MG Club 2011 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	More Information
24-Jan	Club Night - Quiz Night	Yes	The Bell	Paul Adams
12 - 13 Feb	Great Western Auction & Auto Jumble	No	Shepton Mallet Showground	http://www.bristolclassicarshow.co.uk/
19-Feb	Valentines Day massacre – Murder Mystery Dinner	Yes	George and Dragon at Erlstoke	Roger Binney- roger.binney@btopenworld.com - Invites have been sent out via e-mail.
20-Feb	International MG Show & Spares Day	No	Stoneleigh Park	
28-Feb	Club Night Getting Even' Suffragettes to Flappers	Yes	The Bell	Tom Strickland - strickland-to@hotmail.com
03-Mar	Committee Meeting			
04-Mar	Skittles Night	Yes	Fox & Hounds De-vizes	Vic Wright - vic@devizes-domestic.co.uk
06-Mar	Winchester MGOc Cobweb Run	No	Hursley Park	
28-Mar	Club Night - History of Grand Prix Racing - Part 3 - 1960 - 1970	Yes	The Bell	Paul Warn - paul.warn@homecall .co.uk
16-Apr	Corinium Run			TBA
18-Apr	Club Night - Prod & Poke	Yes	The Bell	Rescheduled from the 25th April to avoid Easter Monday
06-May	Possible Spring Break Weekend			TBA
08-May	Abingdon Air Day			TBA
23-May	Club Night - Club Mystery Run	Yes		TBA
27-Jun	Club Night - BBQ	Yes	The Bell	TBC with new owners of The Bell
03-Jul	Cotswold Caper			
25-Jul	Club Night	Yes	The Bell	
22-Aug	Club Night - Boules	Yes	The Bell	
26-Sep	Club Night	Yes	The Bell	
24-Oct	Club Night	Yes	The Bell	
28-Nov	Club Night - AGM	Yes	The Bell	
10-Dec	Christmas Party			TBA

More events to be added.

Secretary's Scribbles

This is the story of two batteries! This month I have come to hate batteries. My Magnette I knew had a dying battery so that was fine but what was not fine was the damage that my starting handle did to the bottom of my radiator – it clanged into it and it then had a pin hole leak on the bottom!! I have now abandoned the starting handle approach – these handle things are rubbish no wonder they stopped being used! I have had the radiator fixed and flow tested by Arrow Radiators in Melksham that did a great job. I found a lovely Morris stamp label on the back which I would never normally get the chance to see! The good news is that the radiator was easy to get out (I will let you know about the replacing part of the procedure next time!) and it didn't cost me an arm and a leg to fix either which is great – they used liquid metal to seal it back up before a pressure test to check it. I was half hoping the flow test to show it need renewing as I still have some overheating issues but no it was fine.

Now I did say two batteries didn't I well the second was on the BGT and gave out as I tried to go to work one morning. I had half thought it was struggling but had ignored it as it always started and it is used regularly. Gosh aren't batteries expensive! I borrowed Vic's special new battery device that checks well – everything really. I have found out that a dud battery can still read over 12 volts – no doubt you guys all knew that – well I didn't! I am lucky to have a 12 Volt battery bin in the GT that the restorer had put in which makes things easier (I have the petrol pump in the other bin) so I used an online company to get a nice new battery – job done!

The Magnette battery can wait for a month or so as I do some radiator out jobs such as painting the fan the correct colour and wiring up the spot lights etc. I also need a new number plate as the letters keep falling off – grrrrr!

My battery frustration has led me to purchase a Ctek XS800 battery conditioner that comes with a lead that you can leave fixed to your battery – I went on ebay and selected cheapest Price and P&P option and got one for just £29 brand new and came with an extra comfort lead so I can put a hook up lead on both MG' batteries! No more battery problems for me I hope.

Tom

Metal Car Badges

For those of you that have purchased a metal car badge that has proved to be of poor quality (with the paint coming off), I have a few left from this batch that are being offered FOC as replacements on a first come, first served basis. Please note that these are intended as replacements only. Please see me at the next club night if you would like one.

For those of you that need new / additional car badges, new badges are being sought which will hopefully be of a better quality and will prove to be much more durable. I'll let you know when these are available for purchase.

Peter

Membership Secretary

For Sale

Small single axle trailer, good condition. Un-braked. No longer have a tow bar so now surplus to requirements - **£50**

Paul Adams -01672861625 paul.adams285@btinternet.com

MGB Parts

- 1 Propshaft £35
- 2 Rear lenses £7 each.
- 1 Ashtray £3
- 1 Window winder £2
- 1 Door Latch £13
- 3 Sealed Beam units £5 each
- 2 Door pulls/Armrest (black) £19 each
- 1 Chrome coil cover £5
- 1 Piston ring compression clamp £7
- 1 Coil bracket – free

Philip Bussey – 01249 750486
