

## Chairman's Chat



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

Hi to you all.

Since the last magazine several things have happened.

Bertie is now fully fit for another year and running well [FAMOUS LAST WORDS].

The offer of an MGA MK I 1600 - offers over a grand - have been shelved due to possible excessive expense and divorce [never too late]. I would possibly end up destitute in the poor house.

The weather for the run to Brooklands was excellent but where were you? A nice, enjoyable run and relaxing day.

A flying trip to North Wales, to finalise plans for the spring weekend trip was a good idea as several details have changed, all to the

good! As you can see the weather has improved and is ideal for MGs of all types, topless or otherwise.

If you read this before Monday pm, don't forget the PROD AND POKE 7.30 start on the green outside the pub; let's have a good turn out - YOU KNOW YOU WANT US TO PROD IT AND POKE IT!

See you on Monday

***Vic Wright, Chairman***

For your diary in the coming month

### April

18<sup>th</sup> - Club Night 7:30pm - Prod & Poke.

### May

6<sup>th</sup> - Club Spring Weekend Trip to North Wales.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Club Night - Mystery Run.

For details see page 6

## My MG – and other cars

Well, last month you had 'Jeff and his MG'... this month, I offer you 'Geoff and his MG... his TR's... his Singer ... his Wolseleys... his..."

This is just a short narrative about one 'old' man and numerous old motor cars. It is written to reassure (or terrify) other men with a similar affliction. If you are a fellow sufferer (and MGOC membership would suggest this is highly likely) then this is to confirm that the condition is not curable, or even treatable and it does not diminish with age and wisdom.

To begin at the beginning... some 45 years ago... graduating from my A35 van (with windows!) I bought a 1959 Mini from a slightly older cousin, who was buying an Austin Healey Sprite, Mk2, in ice blue and cream. Oh, I wanted that car, or if not that car, something similar. With a drop-top. I followed the Mini with a 1949 Rover 75 sports saloon - my first taste of 'old', then a Standard pennant with a Herald engine; followed by a Dauphine and an Anglia 105E - with gold stripes and no grill. Sporty or what!

Then came that thing called marriage, luckily to a lady with an adventurous spirit. Yeah, she thought a sports car sounded like a good idea. And so it came to pass, a Mark 1 Sprite with a Midget front end and two sets of wiring, neither of which could be trusted. That said the cherry red roadster served us well for a while, until a new job took us to Bristol and an increased wage packet opened the door to



Jenna, with 'Bessie' - the TR3A I owned twice!

something with a little more oomph. We did our homework thoroughly and the ideal choice seemed to be a TR3. This being 1970, they occasionally came up for sale in the local press 'classifieds'. That's where we found Bessie... BRG, red interior, one and a bit owners and 35000 miles on the clock. Steel wheels and no overdrive, but sound as a bell and with a hard top too. After hard bargaining and a new MOT, she was ours for £275.00. Yes, those were the days!

Two months later we drove her down through France and right across Spain. The boot full of spares was never needed. Bessie never missed a beat. She sat street

parked, outside our various flats in Bristol and was our daily transport for three happy years.

Then another new job and another move, saw us buy our first place and Bessie finally had a garage. We had her refurbished and resprayed and even bought some new chrome hub caps and wheel centre globe medallions from the spares department of the Trowbridge Triumph dealer. The old guy who worked there happened to remember there was a set languishing in a dark corner and asked 'Do you want them, then?' Yeah, right!

By this time I had a company car, but, with the Triumph receiving attention, my wife needed transport. This came in various guises... a bright orange Moggy 1000 pick-up, a tuned 1100cc Mini Sprint, an MGBGT which I kept for one day and then took back, another Mini and then a very nice 1275 Midget, BRG with black trim and chrome wires. We took this little beauty right down to the southern tip of Spain. 76,000 miles on the clock when we left UK, 80,500 when we got back, 40 degrees above normal temperature, most days and, like the TR, she never missed a beat. Oh, and the silencer back box was strapped to the boot rack, as it kept getting knocked off by the uneven roads!

We then decided that a move to the USA would be good and, after much soul searching, we sold the TR for the princely sum of £650. With the caveat that should the buyer ever decide to sell her, he had to call us first. Unable to get employment in the US, we decided to move house in the UK and bought a derelict cottage to renovate. The first thing we needed to do, obviously, was build a garage. Have I mentioned that by this time Mrs Fry was driving a bright yellow Lotus 7? This was followed by another Midget in bronze yellow, RWA this time, while I bought a 1931 Wolseley Hornet Special, to keep me amused. That was a non runner, three quarters renovated and I was going to put it 'on the road', but it overstretched both my knowledge and my enthusiasm, so, having received an offer I couldn't refuse, it went to join a similar car in Singapore. From then on the affliction got steadily worse...

I changed jobs, was asked what company car I wanted and said 'a BGT would be good'. After a bit of arguing I took delivery of a brand new BRG, rubber bumper 'B', with orange 'deckchair' stripe seats and overdrive. Sue still had her Midget and I bought a '33 Eustace Watkins International Wolseley Hornet Special. Got it running, sold it for a profit and bought another TR3A... then a '35 Singer 9 four-seater sports (she was called Amelia, after my great gran, who was an opera singer - so I named one old singer after another).



My daughter Jenna, with 'Amelia' - an 'old singer' like my great granny.

Then came a phone call from the guy who had bought Bessie, ten years before. He was buying a place in Spain and needed to release funds, so did we want to buy her back? He said "I'm not going to mess about, we both know what she's worth, they have become very collectable, you know". Yes, I did and my wife and I had agreed that we would go to £4,500. I got her for £2,500! But she was never the same the second time around. Instead of being our good old, ubiquitous daily car, she had indeed, become a 'collectors' item'.

We were afraid to leave her anywhere... she just wasn't fun anymore. So I sold her to Japan for £6,500 and replaced what had once been my favourite car, with what is still the best of all the cars I have owned... my '36 MGTA - BRG, with red interior and a later XPAG engine. It looked fabulous, went superbly and I never, ever ever should have sold it. To this day, I don't know why I did, but I must have had a good reason at the time. Anyway, I took her to Beaulieu and sold her to a German, who was going to drive her all the way home to Cologne. He has never been in touch, but I guess he must have got there by now. Even at pre-war MG speed, 8 years should be sufficient time for a journey like that.



The TA that got away.

Since then, the affliction has become ever more serious... two more 'B' roadsters... another TR3A... a Robin Hood... a Marlin... another Midget... three NGTF's, including a 3.5 V8 and now, on the cusp of buying another B, this time with a Stage 2 Oselli engine. There is, dear friends, little hope.

And this list only deals with the 'sports cars'... there have been other 'things of interest'... several 4 X 4's..., 4 motor boats... 4 motor bikes, including the obligatory Harley...

But for all this mayhem, madness and financial shenanigans, one thing still pertains. From the very first time I drove an open top, British sports car, all those years ago, I was hooked and, now in my 65th year and on my 56th car, it gives me the same buzz that it did back then. To come over the Wiltshire downs, top down, on a summer's night, with the exhaust burbling and the smells of the hayfields and a 'proper' motor car, is one of life's great pleasures. If I had the money I would go back to a T-type, but my £9,000 TA would now be £29,000! And, if I really, really had the money, an F or K-Type MG would do very nicely... or a blower Bentley... or a pre-war Aston... or a Frazer Nash... or? See, incurable.



The current line-up

My total MG tally over the years has been, 3 (and a half) midgets, 3 BGT's, 2 'B' roadsters, a TA, 2 NGTF's with all 'B' mechanicals and next in line, the soon to be 'B', so I guess I do qualify for MGOC membership!

Oh, and my 'little daughter', pictured with two of my cars is now 32 years old and a mum! Tempus really does fugit when you're having fun.

**Geoff Fry**



## Two Accounts of the Brooklands MG ERA Day

On Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup> April four cars from the Wessex Club met on the hottest day of the year so far, and then set off in convoy for Brooklands near Weybridge in Surrey. The Brooklands Museum occupies what remains of the first purpose-built motor circuit constructed in 1907, making it the birthplace of British Motor Sport and aviation. The occasion was the annual gathering of a diverse selection of MG's organised by the MG Car Club.

We arrived at about 11 o'clock after a straight forward run via the A303 and M3, all four cars managing to stay together despite fairly heavy traffic on the motorway. First requirement was a coffee in the recently refurbished Sunbeam Cafe then a tour around the exhibits.

Permanent displays include Malcolm Campbell's workshop and showroom now containing Brooklands racing cars. The adjacent workshop contains the Speed Record Exhibition including a 24 litre beast called the Napier-Railton which achieved an average speed of some 143 mph around the banked track, an act of considerable courage by any standards when you see the size and rudimentary nature of the car, not to mention the banked track the highest of which is 29 feet high at the steepest point.



Outside we drooled over the considerable display of older MG's many pre-war and earlier, as well as admiring some of the more recent models such as A's, B's, C's, Midgets YA's and Magnettes. All the visitors cars had been grouped together

according to model (with a few exceptions) and the Wessex bunch parked on the lower and fairly level portion of the old banked track, and where under the dappled light of a convenient tree we enjoyed our picnic lunch. Paul and Danela could not resist a drive up the Test Hill which can just be seen in the picture above.

Aviation exhibits include Concorde but I fancied trying out the pilot's seat of a Harrier Jump Jet. There are many more aeroplanes and associated paraphernalia providing plenty of interest including the bouncing bomb and a Lancaster Bomber recovered from Loch Ness.



An ice cream preceded the journey home which was uneventful if you choose to ignore the fact that I missed a turn in Weybridge or was it Cobham, and we took an unguided tour of the leafy suburbs inside the M25. Notwithstanding this, it was a thoroughly enjoyable and worthwhile day out.

**Gordon**

We woke to a glorious Sunday morning and set off in the sunshine, roof open to meet at Devizes Wharf for a rather civilised 9.30 start. 4 cars were there and so we convoyed down to Brooklands arriving at around 11.00am to an already fairly full Brooklands. Ron for some reason was parked with some RV8's although later moved to where the other C's were and we were sent round to park on the banking with the B's. Gordon in his F, was in grumpy old man mode and ignored all parking instructions (I've paid me money and I'll park where I want) so he could park with us.



First stop was for Coffee and biscuits in the café and then we had a wander round the museum which houses some excellent cars and lots of information about the circuit and how it was built. Apparently pretty much all of the concrete used for the building of the track was mixed by hand! That's a lot of shovel work! I particularly like the old garage type displays with all the old tools and oil cans etc.



Next we had a wander round the MG's parked up around the circuit and there were some lovely examples of most models of MG from the early 18/80's and M types right up to a couple of V8 ZT's as well as a couple of fantastic interloper Blower



Bentley's, but it was Brooklands.

The test hill was open to those that fancied a go so, I went to the briefing and then joined the queue. Unfortunately I had forgotten my camera but did have my phone. Danela (not brave enough to come up the hill) was sent to film the run and despite having two runs before they shut, spectacularly failed to film me at all. The first practice effort showed a nice blue B roadster roaring up the hill and the second, the midget behind me lining up and then lots of feet and Danela saying to the lady next to her "I got it this time, I messed it up last time and was in trouble ha ha" Women! I shall have to go back next year with a more reliable camera person.



Next we had a wander round the aircraft hangar and had a sit in the cockpit of a Harrier Jump Jet. We were amazed at how little space there was in there and we didn't have G-suits and helmets on

either. It really was very tight and many of the switches and dials were hidden from view by your legs and arms.

With the sun still scorching hot we tootled home reflecting on a very enjoyable day (despite the filming cock up).

**Paul Adams**

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	<a href="http://www.bristolclassicarshow.co.uk/">http://www.bristolclassicarshow.co.uk/</a>
19-Feb	Valentine's 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			
11-Mar	Skittles Night	Yes	Cross Keys Rowde	See details below
06-Mar	Winchester MGOC Cobweb Run	No	Hursley Park	
28-Mar	Club Night - History of Grand Prix Racing - Part 3 -The Sixties	Yes	The Bell	Paul Warn - paul.warn@homecall .co.uk
10-Apr	MG ERA day Brooklands	No		For Info
18-Apr	Club Night - Prod & Poke	Yes	The Bell	Rescheduled from the 25th April to avoid Easter Monday
06-May	Spring Break Weekend - North Wales	Yes		Vic Wright
08-May	Abingdon Air Day			<b>TBA</b>
23-May	Club Night - Club Mystery Run	Yes		David Whiteley
05-Jun	Cotswold Wildlife Park	No		
27-Jun	Club Night - BBQ	Yes	The Bell	<b>TBC with new owners of The Bell</b>
03-Jul	Club Summer Picnic	Yes	Newark Park	Paul Warn - paul.warn@homecall .co.uk
03-Jul	Cotswold Caper	No		
17-Jul	Sherborne Castle Classic Car Show	Yes		
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	Yes	The Bell	<b>TBA</b>

**Additions to the events list are included below.**

## Club Rules and Member's Directory

Dear All,

Following the last club meeting, a copy of the revised club rules is attached with the newsletter for your information. I have tried to summarise the changes in the document, but if you have any questions, please let me know.

Also attached is an updated member's directory. It's always good to add new faces to the directory.

Please remember to let me know if there are any changes to car details, phone numbers, email addresses etc. as they happen so that I can keep the club records up to date.

Thanks

**Peter**

## Chippenham Lions classic car show

This event is being held on **28 August 2011** by the Lions Club of Chippenham to raise money for Lions Charity work. It's the first time we've put on an event like this and would welcome your suggestions as well as your participation. It's intended as a fun day out - Vintage Vehicle drivers and their vehicles have free entrance if registered in advance - other visitors £2.50 and children under 10 free. There will be plenty of parking and easy access to the site - Allington Farm in Chippenham, near Castle Combe. There will be good food - the famous Allington Farm sausages and burgers - as well as others, and drink and ice creams. We have ordered good weather specially! There will be many different car marques to see and plenty of opportunity to show and perhaps judge your own vehicles. There's a parade ring as well as auto jumble and other stalls.

**Tom**

## Calne Classic Car Show

I am writing to invite you to participate in a Classic Car Show we are hoping to include in the weekend's activities. On Sunday 19th June a Town Crier's competition is planned for the afternoon and it would be wonderful if you could participate in the classic car show as part of the festivities. As in 2010, the car show will be held in the High Street (pedestrianised road) on **Sunday 20th June 2011** from 10:00hrs until 15:00hrs. It is expected that the Atwell-Wilson Motor Museum will form the centre piece of the show.

At this point I have to start to collate names for the Calne show and need to know if you are interested in the Chippenham one. Please email Tom with your car's Registration and Year if you want to participate in the Calne show. I expect that we will park the cars and then walk to my house for a BBQ lunch.

**Tom**



## Visit to Coventry Museum of Transport



On **Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> May** there is a Club Visit to Coventry Museum of Transport leaving the Esso Filling Station on the A429 just north of Chippenham at 9am. Entry to the museum is free but I hope to arrange an optional guided tour lasting about 1 hour for which there is a charge of £2 per person. Secure parking has been arranged and you may wish to take a picnic lunch if the weather is good. Alternatively there is an on-site cafe.

Please let me know if you wish to go along so that I can arrange the correct numbers parking spaces.

**Gordon**

## Secretary's Scribbles

Following on from my award at the Stoneleigh show this month, I have had my photo shoot and interview with MG Enthusiast magazine so look out for the article on me that I think will be in the June issue released at the end of May. The day was a few weeks ago on a day without a cloud in the sky so there should be some great photos. The chap turned up and then went for a scout about for a suitable location which happened to be a piece of concrete beside a field near Ratford just outside of Calne. He took posed pictures as well as some with him led in the road as I drove passed rather close! He asked me all about my MG History but was particularly interested in the family aspect and how I bought the Magnette to keep up our MG activities - I think that this will be the focus of the article.

Claire had great fun playing with all my switches in the GT the other day – she even demanded the door shut and made broom broom noises. I was relieved that she never found the horn although she did manage to find and switch that now infamous immobiliser switch! Yes for a moment I was confused when I tried to start her up....again!!!

I have had invites from Calne town council who wish to make the Calne Classic car show an annual event and Chippenham Lions who would also like our participation in their show - see the separate section for further information.

See you all soon

**Tom**





## A Recommendation

Following a little bump in my MG that needed sorting (the post was not there and yes it did hit me) I went to a few places to get quotes. All for big money, that would mean the car being off the road for the time being. On getting a new boot lid and thinking about how I was going to do this myself or having a body shop party! I phoned Declan and took the car to see him; he gave me a nice quote and I booked the car in to be repaired. The car had the boot put back on, re-spayed and a bit knocked back into space, all for under £400. My car is back on the road and did not have to miss the MG season (thanks to a lot of praying to the MG gods). On talking to Declan, he does a lot of MGFs and will try and breathe life back in all cars that other garages won't work on.

Declan McCormack vehicle repairs  
07786130525  
01249464082  
Union street (round the back of the train station by Tesco)  
Chippenham

**Jackie Court**