

NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



How the time seems to be passing! That time of the month again when pen and paper meet.

Jane and I spent 5 days with her sister and brother-in-law in Hereford last week. We visited Berrington Hall which was well worth the visit although we did not tour the gardens as they were still rather sodden after all our wet weather.

From there we went to South Wales on our fortnightly visit to my mother's, wishing we had the MG on the sunny Sun-

day, and finally home on Monday.

The MG has had its oil leak fixed and seems to be running well. (Only from the garage home) but I'm sure all is well.

By the time you read this we will have enjoyed the skittles evening in Rowde and looking forward to Tom's chat on the Great War on Monday, let's hope we have a good turn out to support him.

Graham

For your diary in the coming month:

March

24th - Club Night - Talk, The Great War - Tom.

April

7th - Committee meeting - The Bell 8:00pm.

25th-28th - Club spring weekend away.

28th - Club Night.

See page 10 for more details.

Club Night start time 8:00pm unless otherwise stated



More Tales From The Early Years of Motoring

More bites from motoring publications during the very early days of the motor car. In an age when only the rich could afford the new form of transport and the costs of exceeding the speed limit and equal opportunities for women were two world wars away.

PLACE TO THE LADIES - 1907

It has hitherto been supposed that the domain of the chauffeur was safe from the encroachment of woman. Those who have entertained this idea, however, must be prepared for a rude shock. We have before us a letter addressed to the Motor Drivers' Employment Agency from a lady, whose name and address, for obvious reasons, it would not be allowable to disclose, seeking employment in this capacity, and setting forth her qualifications.

Although a single letter does not prove that the chauffeurs' profession is being "invaded" by the fair sex, any more than one swallow proves that summer has come, yet it must be taken as a sign of the times. Thus, if we project our minds somewhat into the future we shall probably have presented to our imagination a picture not merely of feminine chauffeurs, but of female mechanics and mechanical engineers as well, and mere man will be driven to seek fresh outlets for his powers. To return to the lady in question, we must let her letter speak for itself. She writes in the most matter of fact kind of way, as though there were nothing at all extraordinary in her application, and as though she was not at all conscious of introducing the slightest innovation.

Her letter is as follows:

"Sir, I wish to know if you know of anyone is wanting a lady driver. I am wanting a situation as driver to drive a car. I drove a Darracq for a lady last summer, bit this lady is now dead, so i am out of employment. I can also drive a Daimler car. I can do all running repairs, and put tyres on and am willing to make myself useful. If you know of any lady or elderly couple who are wanting a lady driver, will you please let me know."

COSTUMES AND CHATTER - 1905

My Dear Diana - The Christmas bazaars are in swing and the Christmas numbers are out. Yuletide gifts stare us in the face, and , as usual, it is a case of embarrassment de richness in the choice of souvenirs to bestow on our dearest friends.

Motorist's pot pourri would be a good present, don't you think? Naturally the perfume would require renewing somewhat often, for it is hardly to be expected that a delicate scent could long withstand the violent currents of air to which it would be subjected under the expressed conditions.

Motor foot-warmers, labelled as the cosiest of Yuletide gifts, are other worthy objects displayed, together with handsome fur motor-sacks, and when once you are tucked inside one of these, Diana, you are rendered practically invulnerable to chill and can laugh at the frost.

and finally.....

HIGH SOCIETY - 1898

From the past week's records of magisterial exploitation of automobilists we extract the following:

"Viscount Northland appeared before Mr Marshham, Bow Street, in answer to a summons for driving at 10 miles and hour in St James's Park. The defendant did not dispute the police evidence, but said he was not aware he was going so quickly. A fine of £3 and 2 shillings. Costs were imposed."

ED

The Mystery Car

Many thanks once again to David Whiteley for the February mystery car. The internet played its part in enabling Ken our resident car sleuth and newcomer to this section Gordon to track down the answer.

Ken:



Initially I thought it was an Hispano-Suiza as the radiator is the right shape but the badge did not match. I continued with this older luxury vein and eventually hit upon Isotta Fraschini of Milan. I was then lucky to land on the correct web page, from where I would imagine David got the photo.

It is an Isotta Fraschini Tipo 8A Convertible 7.3Ltr built in 1924. It was re-bodied by Ramseier, a Swiss coach builder, in the early 30's. If anyone would like it, it is for sale by auction by Artcurial in Paris in October. The guide price is 1.4/1.8 M Euro. (£1.15/£1.5 M)!

Gordon:

For the first time ever I am going to have a shot at the mystery car. I believe it to be a 1924 Isotta-Fraschini Tipo8A convertible. It has a 7.3 litre 8 cylinder engine and its second body was created by the Swiss coach builder Ramseier. I don't have an intimate knowledge of luxury Italian classic cars, you understand. I happened across the details on car auction web site.

Thank you both for your efforts.

Here is David's full SP on the car

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Make: | Isotta Fraschini |
| Model: | 8A Convertible by Ramseier |
| Year: | 1924 |

At the start of the 1920s, no extravagance was too much and the prestige car manufacturers competed to offer the highest level of luxury and indulgence. At Isotta-Fraschini, the Tipo 8A, launched in 1924, followed their first series car, the Tipo 8 that had an inline 8-cylinder engine designed by Giustino Cattaneo.

Weighing more than 2 tonnes, the Tipo 8A was given a 7.3-litre engine that while not overly powerful (approximately 110 bhp at 2,800 rpm), had an enormous amount of torque, so that it barely needed all three gears. Most of the cars built went to the US where people were crazy about this type of model, and an Isotta was more expensive than a Duesenberg.

One of the most famous fans of the Isotta-Fraschini during his Hollywood years was Rudolph Valentino - he shared his nationality with this impressive automobile. A real show-stopper, the Isotta was perfect for cruising down the wide boulevards, or for a long journey on the open roads, lulled by the gentle roar of its insane engine. Testimony to a carefree time, cars like the Tipo 8A were condemned to a short production run by the 1929 Crash. Nothing like these cars was seen again until the birth of the likes of the Bugatti Veyron in the early 21st century.

The illustrated Isotta-Fraschini Tipo 8A which was built in 1924, was initially given a "boule" torpedo body. Some years later this was completely dismantled in the workshop of the Swiss coach-builder Ramseier, in Worblaufen. Ramseier created a new cabriolet body and exhibited the car at the Geneva Motor Show in 1932. Since then, it has been owned by the head of Omega Watches in Geneva, by French author Yves Dalmier and finally ended up in the large collection of Albert Prost, a wealthy textile manufacturer in Roanne, France.

This car was sold in Paris in February this year for 1.37m Euros.

David Whiteley

The March Mystery Car

Another mystery car from the Whiteley stable.

I notice this time there are no badges to provide clues...



Photo Gallery

ITS ONLY A GAME - Don't you believe it! The annual Skittles evening.



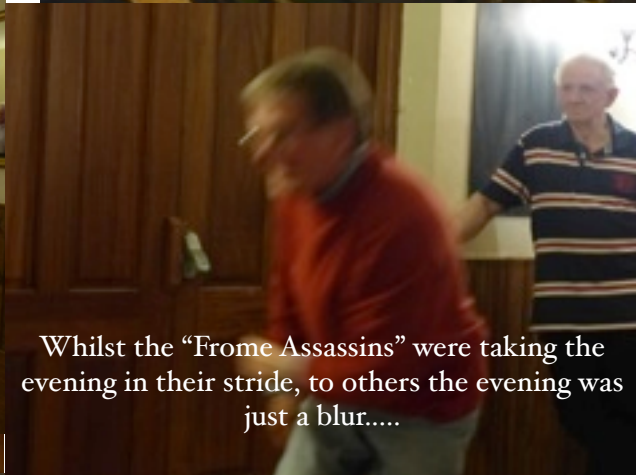
Much socializing during the evening



Many thanks to Vic and Jeni, who look on as Anne sends another salvo down the alley.



Jenny and Tony's grandson Sam, replaced the skittles during the evening.



Whilst the "Frome Assassins" were taking the evening in their stride, to others the evening was just a blur.....



Highest lady and gent points winners Jenny and Malcolm



The "Frome Assassins" celebrate another victory as they scoop the "killer" prize.

MG at Indianapolis

MG in one form or another has been associated with the world of motor sport since the first MG rolled off the assembly line. Last month's piece on the early plans for an MG3 rally car is the latest in a long line of MG's sporting heritage.

Now if I were to ask you to name a form of motor sport that MG has been associated with you would probably come up with Rallying or the British Touring Car Championship or indeed those early pioneering days at Brooklands.

For the last 4 weeks I have been - with Anne's help - clearing my room of decades of magazines relating to motor sport, which I have hoarded since the late fifties and moved around the country during my working career!! I've also been reorganizing my library of books. Inevitably, when Anne is not looking, the temptation to reflect over those years by dipping into those magazines and books was just too tempting, which is probably why the room is not yet finished....

The reason I mention this is that a book I happened upon was "The British At Indianapolis". As racing anoraks, one of the races we all looked forward to in the sixties was the Indianapolis 500. British racing teams such as Brabham, Lotus and Lola were successfully challenging the great offenhauser (Offy) engined roadsters that of course dominated the oval tracks of the USA. But that's another story.

As this is an MG related newsletter I want to talk about MG at the speedway.

In the mid-1960s, cars named the MG Liquid Suspension Specials ran at Indianapolis - the Americans had a habit of calling all their Indy cars a special of one sort or another. The chassis were built by Joe Huffaker and the engines were Offys, but it was the suspension that led to the association with Abingdon.

As you will recall, in 1962 BMC launched what was to become its popular Morris 1100 small family saloon. Other BMC badges were gradually applied to the car, with an MG two-door version becoming available in the USA. A particular feature of these cars was their Alex Moulton-designed, interconnected 'Hydrolastic' suspension - that is the use of a fluid instead of springs.



The San Francisco-based British Motor Car Company run by Kjell Qvale was an importer of MGs. The company operated a competition department producing racing cars, usually

with BMC engines but also entering the Indy 500 with one using a 6 cylinder Aston Martin engine driven by Pedro Rodriguez, who would become famous for his exploits in a F1 BRM and as a works Porsche sports car driver.

There was no BMC engine that could be used at Indy, so instead Huffaker and Qvale got together to use the suspension on a car to maintain a link with the British for 1964. The three rear engined cars entered for the 1964 race, followed the design principles of the Brabham and Lotus. What made them different was the use of BMC Hydrolastic units from the 1100 in place of conventional springs. The liquid suspension it was thought would help reduce tyre wear while, by calling them MG Liquid Suspension Specials, Qvale could publicise his import business.



For the 1964 race, two of the three cars entered were placed a troubled thirteenth and nineteenth having run as high as third during the race of five hundred miles. In 1965 all three cars qualified - no mean feat - but none reached the finish.

Two cars qualified again in 1966, the year Graham Hill won the race, but they were no longer entered using the MG name. Four new cars were built by Huffaker using the same suspension and were placed 7th and 8th - the best finishes for a Hydrolastic suspended car at the speedway but sadly not carrying the MG name.

The original 1964 cars went on to race in 1968 and finally in 1969.

ED

Club News

| 2014 EVENTS LIST | | | | |
|------------------|---|------------|----------------------------|---|
| Date | Event | Club Event | Venue | Contact Details & Start Point/Time |
| 24-Mar | Club Night (Talk - The Great War - Tom Strickland) | Yes | The Bell | Tom Strickland |
| 18 - 21 April | Easter Bank Holiday | | | |
| 7-Apr | Committee Meeting | No | The Bell | Tom Strickland |
| 25 - 28th April | Club Spring Weekend Away | Yes | Norfolk | <i>Details to be confirmed Vic Wright</i> |
| 28-Apr | Club Night | Yes | The Bell | Tom Strickland to Chair Club Night |
| 19-May | Club Night (Mystery Run) | Yes | A Mystery | Graham & Jane Bennett |
| 31-May | Vintage Nostalgia 2014 - Warminster | No | | Roger Binney |
| 8-Jun | Gloucestershire Motor Show | Yes | Highnam Court | Peter Hine |
| 14/15 June | Bristol Classic Car Show | No | Shepton Mallet Show Ground | For Information |
| 22 June | MG90 Silverstone | | | TBC Tom Strickland |
| 23 Jun | BBQ/Prod & Poke | Yes | The Bell | Paul Warn |
| TBA | Trip to MG Museum in Abingdon and visit to Nuffield House | Yes | | <i>To be arranged end of June beginning of July David Whiteley and Martyn Lucas</i> |
| 13 July | Summer Picnic | Yes | TBA | Jane Bennett & Sue Warder |
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| 2014 EVENTS LIST | | | | |
|------------------|--|------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Date | Event | Club Event | Venue | Contact Details & Start Point/Time |
| 20 July | Classics at the Castle | | | TBC |
| 28 July | Club Night - Fun & Games | Yes | David & Carrie Whiteley's House | David Whiteley |
| 18-Aug | Club Night | Yes | The Bell | |
| August | Evening Trip to Butcombe Brewery | | | EVENT TO BE CONFIRMED - Vic Wright |
| 24-Aug | Action Day | Yes | Tom's Field | Tom Strickland time to be confirmed |
| 7-Sep | Run to the New Forest ending in Bournemouth for Classics on the Prom | Yes | | <i>Martyn Lucas</i> |
| 22-Sep | Club Night (Talk - Road Pilot Heavy Loads) | Yes | The Bell | Graham Bennett |
| October | Devizes Ghost Walk | Yes | | TBC Jane Bennett |
| 27-Oct | Club Night (Talk Part 4 - 1980-89 GP Seasons) | Yes | The Bell | Paul Warn |
| 7-Nov | Committee Meeting | No | The Bell | <i>Tom Strickland</i> |
| 24-Nov | Club AGM | Yes | The Bell | Formal notification will be included in the Sept & Oct newsletter. |
| TBA | Christmas Party | Yes | TBA | Peter Hine |

Secretary's Scribbles

A tale of honesty and woe this month and one that you will appreciate is hard to tell. I start by saying my father's MG3 has been faultless - perfect. Mine however has had a different story! When I was at the MG open day that I wrote about last month I had to fill in a survey - to a question asking me what my fears/worries were when buying an MG, I responded that I was most worried about the possibility of having a 'Friday car'. Unfortunately this maybe exactly what I have. I seem to be amassing a list of faults with my car and the car has now been back to the dealer 3 times. It started off with a knocking sound in the suspension - cured by the garage slackening and re-torquing parts of the suspension. The next problem was my wipers falling off and getting tangled up and lodged behind the drivers wing mirror- Nancy had to jump out in the rain to free them so that I could open my door. This was down to a nut not being tightened enough. Next my rear brake drums, which are painted light grey have started to go pretty rusty - this is very obvious on the car. Then my door seals started to fail. MG have replaced the seals and the new ones are better, they say they are dealing with the drum issue which they are aware of. Most recently my reversing sensors have gone very strange - they have a complete mind of their own when reversing whether or not there is anything behind me. I love driving the 3 and the electronic gadgetry and cruise control is awesome BUT should I have bought a secondhand civic? The fact that I have posed the question is not good news at all!

Tom

Club Asset List

| Club Asset List (Version 5) | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Asset | Current Holder | Contact Details | |
| Engine Hoist | David Whiteley | 01380 828806 | david@whiteley0.plus.com |
| Club Sail Banner | Vic Wright | 01225 704685 | devizesdomestic@gmail.com |
| Club Fence Banner | Tom Strickland | 01249 447125 | stricklandto@hotmail.com |
| Gazebo | Tom Strickland | 01249 447125 | stricklandto@hotmail.com |
| Projector | Paul Warn | 01225 768676 | paul.william.warn@gmail.com |
| Projector Stand | Roger Binney | 01380 830524 | roger.binney@btopenworld.com |
| Projector Screen & Cover | Paul Warn | 01225 768676 | paul.william.warn@gmail.com |
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NOTE:

If you need to borrow or take custody of any of the club's assets, the current holder should be contacted directly to arrange transfer. The new 'holder' of the asset should notify Peter Hine by email to ensure the asset list is kept up-to-date.