

NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

**WESSEX
MG CLUB** 
AT THE BELL INN SEEND



Firstly I would like to thank Martyn for organising our Abingdon trip, and Sue and Terry for the Tyntesfield picnic.

On the 6th we left Devizes Warf at 0815 having been given routes and followed Martyn. We arrived in Abingdon and parked in the square before visiting the museum. It was a surprise to see the penultimate MGB LE in the upstairs room, as it was identical to mine. (Maybe a little better preserved)! Ron and I met some local people who had actually worked on our cars when they were being built.

From there we went to the MG Garden which was a waste piece of ground which has had a mosaic of the MG badge built into the ground and a lot of good information posters plotting the MG history.

The picnic at Tyntesfield was also a success thanks to Sue and Terry. The trip was broken with a refreshment stop at Chew Valley Lake. We ended up in front of Tyntesfield house with some old Alvis cars. Many hands made light work of the new gazebo. (Or was it too many cooks)? Sue's got it all on film plus a good shot of our secretary's bottom. Thanks to Roger we had some music played on an old style gramophone. The records were of the same era. I didn't realize that he was quite that old!

Lastly I would like to thank all who supported us for those two weekends and looking forward to seeing you all at David and Carrie's for our club night. Don't forget to let him know if you intend going.

Graham

For your diary in the coming month:

July

28th - Club Night, an evening of sport and elegance 7:00pm.

August

18th - Club Night

31st - Action Day in Tom's field

See page 13 and ads for more details.

Club Night start time 8:00pm unless otherwise stated



THE RED ARROWS

It is hard to accept that the Royal Air Force Display team, the Red Arrows, was formed 50 years ago. It was formed by amalgamation of a number of individual display teams within the RAF and became part of the Central Flying School. 'Red' came about as it was the main colour used by the School so that they could be identified as 'trainers' and for safety reasons.

They were formed in 1964 with 7 Folland Gnats and 7 aircraft in broad arrow formation brought about the rest of the designation and the 'Red Arrows' were established. Their first public display in the UK was at the Biggin Hill International Air



Formed up in 'Diamond Nine' formation

Fair in June 1965. In 1969 the then current leader, Sqd. Ldr. Ray Hanna, increased the number to 9 and the signature display formation of 'diamond nine' was established. In 1979 the aircraft were replaced with BAe Hawk aircraft, as this had become the new RAF training aircraft. To date they have given over 4000 displays in 52 different countries.

For the 2014 season, the tail fins have been repainted with a Union Flag emblem with a starburst of the planes from the centre and a 50 logo to commemorate their Golden Jubilee.

At the time of their formation in 1964, Raymond Baxter, the well known BBC presenter and ex Spitfire pilot, was Publicity Manager for BMC and he managed to 'persuade' the company to loan the team 7 red MGB roadsters for use by the team throughout the 1965 season. To mark this event, a note in Safety Fast in March, asked for anyone with a red MGB Roadster if they would be prepared to take it to the Biggin Hill Festival of Flight in June to commemorate this part of the event, to ferry the pilots to their aircraft and form part of a display with the aircraft on the ground. I felt that this was a wonderful opportunity to take part in a very historical event and put my name forward.

They wanted 9 cars so I did not expect to hear further as 'Tartan Red' is the most popular MGB colour and you would expect they would be overwhelmed with offers and find that number of red MGB's within a 20 mile radius of Biggin Hill! I was surprised to be asked for full details of my car and an invitation to take part. The organisers were surprised to find so little response and, up to a week before, they only

had 7 cars. On the day, they managed 10! This was also fortunate, as they always have a spare plane and pilot to cover emergencies. The spare pilot is in fact an ex Red Arrow and a Sqd. Leader and is able to take over if required. In all the photos, if you check, there are 10 cars, so we have Diamond Nine + one in the arena!



Me and my pilot

The actual involvement by us was rather a disappointment in the end. We were formed up in Diamond Nine in the centre of the Classic Car arena which was a good talking point with the visitors.

No time table was given and suddenly all the pilots arrived, allocated a car and we drove in formation into the main arena. They really enjoyed this and didn't seem to have been briefed that this was to happen but thought it a wonderful tribute. Their only complaint was that they were not allocated their respective position in the diamond!

My pilot was 'Red Six', Flt. Lieutenant James McMillan and, at well over six foot, I am surprised he can fit in a Hawk! He is in his third and final year and will be moving on to the Eurofighter at the end of this season. After they had been introduced to the crowd, we drove them back to the classic car area and they went off to their marquee to do their PR bit. That was the last we saw of them. We were told originally that a group photo would be taken of all the planes, pilots and cars together as a



Red Arrows and Red MGBs

souvenir of our involvement. This was not to be. Health and safety would not allow us onto the apron where the planes were parked while the public were still there. We then had to wait for the planes to be serviced and refuelled ready for the next day's operation; a display at the IOW. The pilots went to their hotel in Croydon for debriefing, so we never saw them again. However, we were allowed to form up alongside the aircraft at the end of the day which does make an interesting picture.

Whilst it was an interesting day, I feel we were promised too much for our involvement which the organisers were unable to deliver. It was still good to have been part of the Red Arrows history.

Ken

TROWBRIDGE MOTORING

When I first came to Trowbridge I thought they had some funny road names. They seem to have a confusion about roads, lanes, avenues etc.

There is a 'Silver Street Lane', and an 'Avenue Road'. A further complication is Horse Road. The road starts within Trowbridge's boundaries and there are No's 1 to 10, Horse Road Trowbridge. The road then comes into the Parish of Hilperton and the numbering starts at No. 1 again, Horse Road Hilperton. The person I was trying to locate also said there were some houses further up that were set back from the road and numbers were duplicated again. He reckons that delivery drivers are usually tearing their hair out by the time they find him.

The strangest is of course 'Bythesea Road' Even at times of really high tides, nowhere in Trowbridge can be considered to be 'by the sea'. See pic of road that is really 'bythesea'. Pat and I came across this tidal road whilst on holiday in South Devon. The sign states that the

speed limit is 8 Knots but I couldn't find a suitable scale on my speedo. The satnav directed us safely along it on



the way from Bigbury-on-Sea to Kingsbridge. The picture shows the state of the tide on our return. Satnavs are incredibly proficient things but they obviously do not take account of tide states.



Second pic shows the view from the window of our holiday let on a day when a yacht also got caught out by the state of the tide. Interestingly the estuary is of a River Avon? The third picture

shows the ultimate extension of the practice of jacking up the suspension to comply with local regulations/conditions, ah la rubber bumper MGB's. This vehicle has its suspension jacked up to cope with high tide when transferring people between Bigbury-on-Sea and Burgh Island.

Finally, has anyone else noticed the behavior of Trowbridge motorists on mini roundabouts? I've lost count of the number of times there are 3 or more people all waiting for each other to do something. If I am stopped because it is the other person's right of way, they also stop. Then a third person arrives and stops to see who is going to go. I usually precipitate the action. If I arrive last, I just keep going because they are going to sit there eyeing each other up.

I suppose mini roundabouts are pretty new technology. I expect they will get used to them down here soon? It's not just me. Other people have commented on this phenomena too.

The exception to this modus operandi was the time I came back from a motor-homing trip round Europe with various damage, all to the nearside rear quarter of the vehicle. Before I had time to report matters to my insurance company, some kind soul drove straight onto a roundabout and crashed directly into the already damaged area. So I claimed off his insurance.



Malcolm

CAPTION OF THE MONTH

I have in the past included - for a bit of fun - a caption, a photograph taken either by me or someone in the club which would be suitable for a caption. Well this month David W suggested this one taken as part of a group he sent in of the club's BBQ.



TALKING CARS

As you may have read in some of the broad sheets, there is a worrying trend of machines communicating with each other through social media. Only last month - in the interests of open dialogue in this newsletter - I included such a communication from Joyce a MGB roadster in our club, yes in **our** club! Well I should have known better, another roadster in our club has had the temerity to reply, sparking a further response from Joyce - I think I'm in need of counselling!

Dear Joyce

I too am a red MG but I don't have a name and am a little younger at 45&3/4 and a later model which they called a 'B'. This is not surprising, as you are an 'A'. Very clever these humans, they use a thing called the alphabet for such purposes. Anyway, I loved your story of the way your new owners have lavished love and care on you and you now seem to be better than new. I was totally rebuilt in 1989 using a new body that they produced on the original press tools, fortunately the factory that made me back in 1969 didn't throw anything away! Then all new parts were fitted so I was then as good as new, or even better. The man that rebuilt me back in 1989, Lyndsay Porter, wrote a book all about the work he had done and after being

road tested by a couple of classic car magazines, he put me up for sale. My new owner managed to buy me in December



1992 and has cherished and cared for me ever since. He is now getting on a bit so he had power assisted steering fitted so he can drive me without getting so stressed (pity they can't be rebuilt like us and go on for ever!). After all the care and attention that Nigel had lavished on you, I think it a bit mean that you let him down on your recent adventures to Ireland and Scotland. I, too, let my owner down on a recent trip

to Norfolk, the first time in nearly 22 years and 42,000 miles. He drove me through a deep puddle, but I got my own back by letting the battery go flat because he left me with water in the starter motor. As a result, I too had to be brought home on the back of a lorry. Did you enjoy that? I thought it was smashing; riding up high you could see so much more over the tops of the hedges just resting and taking it easy without having to do any work. He was very annoyed with me as I spoilt his holiday but I did save him £50 for petrol! I hope you enjoy your trip to Le Mans but please be good and don't make Nigel and Sue put you on that 'naughty step' and bring you home on another lorry! Happy motoring.

Well hello 'B'

- are you a boy or a girl?

It was good to hear from you, as I get so little communications from other MG's. They all appear to be rather shy and not try to talk these days. Even when I park up right next to them, they are reluctant to talk. Do you find this?

I really did feel bad that Nigel had to use the breakdown services twice on our trip to Ireland, especially as he had never ever had to use them in the ten years that he has owned classic cars. He even sold his 'B' to make room for me, and his 'B' never let him down like I have. I have to admit, I felt good sitting on the back of the transporter, as I had an excellent view of the Cumbrian coast on the first occasion, and an equally good view of the very beautiful Antrim coast on my second trip. Nigel's navigator, Sue, had to adjust the mileages, to take into account the distances that I was resting!

Since I returned to my nice dry garage in Urchfont, Nigel has removed my clutch slave cylinder to check that it is

still clean, replaced a back axle oil seal as I was wetting my back tyre, (comes with old age), and also replaced the front discs as they were slightly warped (like my mind). He has also removed my distributor to set it up again, and fitted that really smart looking red rotor arm which



matches my paint work. Pity that it is hidden by that ugly cap that sits on top.

I am now ready for my long trip to Lausanne in Switzerland; not quite sure where that is yet, but I am going on another ferry, this time across the English Channel.

He told me that I am going to have to work very hard when we get to Switzerland as the hills there are much steeper and longer. I do have concerns that I will find it hard, but I do know that he will help me all he can. He has arranged lots of overnight stops

on this trip so it will give me a chance to rest up. Navigator Sue has told me that she has planned a pleasant route on lots of 'D' roads (not sure what they are really) so that I won't have to go on those horrible, busy, smelly motorways.

Le Mans sounds fun and I shall be meeting some other friends (Lotus Elan & Mercedes 500 SL) from Urchfont. Nigel told me that there will be a large number of cars of similar & older ages to me. Sound like fun and I may meet some of my relations.....

I am pleased to hear that you have recovered from your illness. It was good fun joining you on the weekend in Norfolk, and I'm pleased that you enjoyed your ride back home. We must be careful that our owners never suspect that we like the views from the back of the breakdown flatbeds. If they ever find out, they may stop using us and that would be a great pity.

Best regards

Joyce

The 'Ultimate' MGB Roadster

As most are aware, I have been having a little bit of trouble with my B lately (let's call him Brian, as Nigel feels that I should give 'it' a name and a sex) and a thought came to me that I should consider a replacement. I was therefore pleased to read in Safety Fast that Frontline Developments were to introduce an 'Abingdon Edition' of their LE 50 GT as a roadster, limited to 25 vehicles. This appealed to me so I requested the details. It certainly will be 'the ultimate'!

Engine: Mazda 2.5 litre 4 cylinder; producing 304 bhp @ 6800 rpm; max. torque: 326 Nm @ 5200 rpm; power to weight ratio: 339 bhp/tonne

Gearbox: Mazda 6 speed manual transmission

Body: Heritage shell, fully seam welded

Suspension: 'Frontline' independent front with adjustable dampers; 'Frontline' 6 link rear suspension system

Brakes: 4 piston callipers with ventilated discs at front, 2 piston with solid discs at rear

Standard Equipment: Power Assisted steering; LSD; Connolly leather trim; 3 eared spinners.

Performance: 0-62 mph in 3.8 secs.; top speed 162 mph.

Price: £79,895

I thought I would just share this information with you!

Anyone like to make me an offer for a lovely Tartan red B, answers to the name of Brian!

Ken

PS

There is a little footage of testing the car at Prescott should this be of interest and is available to view here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmqA753OH8>

PHOTO GALLERY



The Club BBQ



Abingdon Run



June Mystery Car

Well, the June mystery car shouldn't have provided any challenges to those of you who read the words of wisdom published in these pages every month.

In the February edition as part of a series on unusual MGB variants, I included the very rare Coune Berlinetta MGB Coupe. Well wouldn't you know it, Paul and Andrea found one...

"On the way back from Norfolk we dropped into Houghton near Huntingdon; my mother used to live there. In Beer's the village MG garage I saw this rare MG."



Ken was on the ball as usual and sent this reply.

"The mystery car that Paul Wheal discovered on his return from Norfolk is a Coune Berlinetta MGB Coupe. Built by Jaques Coune of Belgium in 1963. Only 56 were built and only 12 are believed to survive. I believe he was an MG dealer and was asked by customers if there was a closed coupe version. As there was not, at that time, he made one. 2 years later the factory introduced the BGT and that was the end of that!"

If you want to know more, then refer back to the February 2014 edition - that is if you haven't deleted it - you haven't have you? let me know if you want me to resend it!!!!

ED

A POEM

I have a little SatNav, it sits there in my car
A SatNav is a driver's friend, it tells you where you are.
I have a little SatNav, I've had it all my life
It's better than the normal ones, my SatNav is my wife.
It gives me full instructions, especially how to drive
"It's sixty k's an hour, it says, "you're doing sixty five".
It tells me when to stop and start, and when to use the brake
And tells me that it's never ever, safe to overtake.
It tells me when a light is red, and when it goes to green
It seems to know instinctively, just when to intervene.
It lists the vehicles just in front, and all those to the rear
And taking this into account, it specifies my gear.
I'm sure no other driver, has so helpful a device
For when we leave and lock the car, it still gives its advice.
It fills me up with counselling, each journey's pretty fraught
So why don't I exchange it, and get a quieter sort?
Ah well, you see, it cleans the house, makes sure I'm properly fed
It washes all my shirts and things, and keeps me warm in bed!
Despite all these advantages, and my tendency to scoff,
I only wish that now and then, I could turn the bugger off.

The End

By Pam Ayres

Secretary's Scribbles

31st August sees our annual MGs in Tom's field - please put the date in your diaries. It will consist of the usual social and BBQ lunch activities as well as some basic 'non-damaging' car auto-tests. I will publish more details and a map next month.

I have had some great MGing this month. My MG3 has been well behaved after having an airbag warning light issue last month. My Magnette continues to drive well taking us to MG90, Martin's Abingdon trip and Terry and Sue's Wessex Picnic all great excursions that the whole family enjoyed. It is worth pointing out that our thanks go to Martin and the Warders for organising these trips on our behalf.

There is a lot of talk following MG90 of new products from MG. On display for the public to



try were three MG Dynamos (or MG EV) which is a small electric car that is surprisingly good looking. There was also an MG3 trophy which is an MG3 with 204 bhp that sounded terrific. There is also talk of an MG GT which is a small saloon and rumours about the MG5 coming to the UK. We know the MG



CS is due over here in a year or so - this is a good news as it is the type of car being bought at the moment. All this is good news and we just pray that MG starts proper TV advertising! I hope I haven't put you guys off the new MGs and that they do well and perhaps we might have more new MGs in the club.



Tom

Club News

2014 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
28 July	Club Night - Fun & Games	Yes	David & Carrie Whiteley's House	David 01380 828806 david@whiteleyo.plus.com
18-Aug	Club Night	Yes	The Bell	
August	Evening Trip to Butcombe Brewery			EVENT TO BE CONFIRMED - Vic Wright 01225 704685 vic@devizes-domestic.co.uk
31-Aug	Action Day	Yes	Tom's Field	Tom Strickland time to be confirmed. 01249 447125 stricklandto@hotmail.com
7-Sep	Run to the New Forest ending in Bournemouth for Classics on the Prom	Yes		<i>Martyn Lucas</i>
8-Sep	Committee Meeting	No	The Bell 8:00 pm	<i>Tom Strickland</i>
22-Sep	Club Night (Talk by Ian Brooks - Road Pilot Heavy Loads)	Yes	The Bell	Graham Bennett 01380 723872 graham.bennett1945@yahoo.com
15-Oct	Devizes Ghost Walk	Yes		Meet Market Cross Car Park Devizes Jane Bennett 01380 723872 janexbennett@btinternet.com
27-Oct	Club Night (Talk Part 4 - 1980-89 GP Seasons)	Yes	The Bell	Paul Warn 01225 768676 paul.william.warn@gmail.com
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.
13-Dec	Christmas Party	Yes	The Bell	Peter Hine 01672 512847 peter_hine@btinternet.com



For this special event we will be gathering automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles, commercial vehicles, buses and aircraft from the period up to 1919. In the paddock there will be a display of the vehicles taking part in the Great War Centenary Parade in London on the 4th August. At lunchtime these pre-war vehicles will be taking part in a Cavalcade round the Mercedes-Benz World circuit. Overhead will be a stunning air show from the Great War Display Team. On the ground, we hope to bring the Vimy to life, for the first time since it flew in in 2009.

Secretary's Scribbles

See page 12

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
Event Shelter	Vic Wright	01225 704685	devizesdomestic@gmail.com
Gazebo	Tom Strickland	01249 447125	stricklandto@hotmail.com
Projector	Vic Wright	01225 704685	devizesdomestic@gmail.com
Projector Stand	Roger Binney	01380 830524	roger.binney@btopenworld.com
Projector Screen & Cover	Tom Strickland	01249 447125	stricklandto@hotmail.com

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.