

NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Hello Everyone,
Jane and I have just returned from a Golden Wedding Anniversary celebration in Hereford. (Not Ours). We drove down over the Brecon Beacons on Friday to a little village called Penderyn. We had booked a tour around the distillery. I would recommend a visit if any of you happen to be travelling around the area but you will need to book. It's time to road test our new venue at The Old Bear at Staverton where Terry has arranged a visit of an old Police car. I hope it is well attended. Unfortunately not by Jane and I as we are cat sitting in Weston-Super-Mare. We will be back in

time for the driving tests and BBQ in Tom's field on the 30th. I'm sure he will be well supported as usual.

My thanks to David and Carrie for our games night which was well attended and enjoyed.

My apologies for not being able to attend our first night at The Old Bear and thank David for standing in for me.

Graham

For your diary in the coming month:

August

19th - Peter Browning Talk Abingdon.

24th - Club Night - 'ello,'ello,ello

30th - Action Day - Tom's Field

September

20th - Club Social Run - The Vyne National Trust

28th - Club Night

See page 16 in this edition for more events and details.

Club

Night start
time 8:00pm
unless otherwise stated



Does anyone have a line on the Austin 7 BMW link?

This was a question I posed in the covering e-mail for last month's newsletter.

As a reminder, Graham and Jane were holidaying in Germany and came across a number of pre-war cars. Graham sent photos of two of the cars for inclusion in the newsletter - one a Nash and the other a BMW. I thought the BMW looked very much like an Austin 7 - hence the question. Now, it's not often I receive responses to my questions, however on this occasion I have had two.

Ken Scott replied:

Dixi was a small German car manufacturer founded in 1904. In the 1920's came the recession and they were struggling to sell their larger cars so in 1927 formed an association with the Austin Motor Company to manufacture the Austin 7 under license. The first 100 were built from kits shipped from Austin in the UK. By December 1927 they had reengineered the design for metric fasteners and conversion to LH drive and was designated the DA-1. They continued to manufacture complete cars until 1929 and 9300 were built with a royalty paid to Austin on each car built.

BMW (Bavarian Motor Works) were originally aero engine manufactures but after WW1 were unable to continue as part of the armistice agreement and moved to motorcycle manufacture. To further expand into cars they purchased the Dixi company in 1929 and, with it, the Austin manufacture and royalty agreement. It was further improved and continued in production as the BMW Dixi DA-2 until 1932 after 18,976 had been built.

To continue the BMW story further; by 1958 they were in financial difficulties and formed a similar agreement with Iso of Italy to produce the Isetta, and fitted with a BMW motorcycle engine had moderate success along with all the 'bubble' cars of the time.

From these small beginnings we now have the giant highly successful BMW we have today; all based on the humble Austin 7. The company is still 46% owned by the Quandt family holdings.

Of course the story does not end there. In 1994 BMW bought the Rover Group which included Austin thereby coming full circle!

Paul Adams also replied:

Paul has an Austin 7 Ruby and therefore a particular interest in the marque. He recently entered his car in the 53rd Beaulieu National Austin Seven Rally - see photo - organised by the 750 Motor Club. There were according to Paul, a number of Dixi Austin 7s there as guests. He sent the following information which he picked up at the rally.



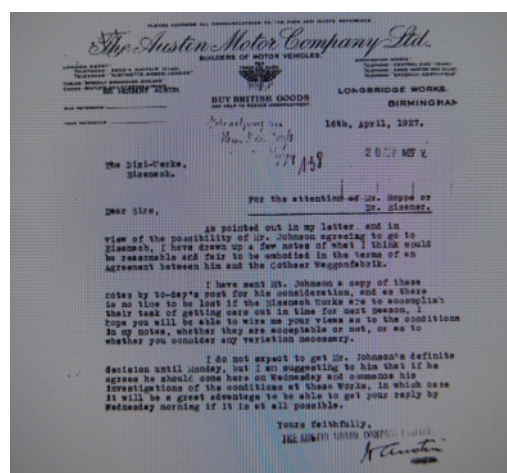
"From 1904 until 1928 different types of cars were made under the trademark DIXI. One hundred Austin Sevens were transported to and modified in Eisenach in 1927 to build the Austin Seven - reversed - under license until 1931. BMW took over the factory in 1929. The entire production amounted to 25,365 cars.

Only 9308 different types of the model DIXI DA1 were made until 1929. From 1929 onwards under the aegis of BMW, 12318 cars of the model DA2 were made, only 150 of the model DA3 "Wartburg" and 3480 of the model DA4 (swing axel made of leaf springs). From 1934 to 1939 the company Ihle produced sports suspension and bodies of sheet steel with the classic BMW kidney-shaped grille on the chassis of the DA1 and DA2. The DA3 "wartburg" - BMW's first sports car - had an aluminium body and was inspired by the Austin Seven Ulster.



The photo shows Sir Herbert Austin visiting the DIXI production plant in 1928. Behind him is the Wartburg. Paul

also included a copy of a letter written by Sir Hubert Austin to the DIXI works on the 16th April 1927.



ED

A Chance Meeting



From time to time Anne and I will take the car and motor into the countryside for the weekend, usually with friends who also have a Morgan. The weekend of the 1st August was such a weekend and our destination was The Ettington Park Hotel, via Hidcote Manor. The hotel is/was a Neo-Gothic pile a few miles south of Stratford on Avon. Now the reason for telling you this is as follows.

We decided for our return journey to visit Upton House and Gardens, about a twenty minute drive from the hotel. Having shown our membership cards at the entrance and sang happy birthday to a young lass - whose duty it was to hand out maps of the site - we sauntered through the grounds to the house in the early morning sunshine.



Now the walk includes what in period was the drive to gain access to the house used

in period by the owner and house guests. On this occasion the approach was taken up with over 120 MGAs making their way down to park along the grass verge either side of the drive - what a magnificent sight!



Well that brought a temporary halt to our visit to the house. I caught up with the organizer who explained across the bonnet of his MGA Twin-Cam that they had gathered together at the Gaydon Heritage Museum earlier that morning and were celebrating 60 years of the MGA with a drive and picnic at Upton House. Most folk had a story to tell about their car and many had driven

many miles to be at this gathering. I've never seen so many Twin Cam 'As' in one place, I particularly liked the Dunlop steel wheels. There were also a number of invited interlopers - can you spot them in the photo at the top of this piece?

Not wanting to teach grannies - or those with MGAs in the club... - to suck eggs and all that. For those that are not familiar with the origins of the MGA here is a quick jaunt through a bit of history.

The MGA is a perfect example of motorsport inspiring the creation of a new produc-



George Phillips with his MG Special at Le Mans in 1950.
The inspiration behind the MGA?

tion car. And integral with that is George 'Phil' Phillips. Phil started competing with a standard MG TC after the war and in 1947 stripped the car and fitted a Lester light-weight two-seater body and set about tuning the engine.

As a result of his exploits he was invited to compete in the 1949 Le Mans in which he retired the car and again in 1950 with co-driver Eric

Winterbottom a leading 500cc racer of the day. The car ran faultlessly averaging 73mph finishing 2nd in class to a Works Jowett Jupiter. Phil then approached Abingdon for support for the 1951 race. Having finished the 1950 race, he was automatically invited back for 1951.

Discussions took place between John Thornley, Syd Enever and Phil. The only car available was the TD and it was decided that the Works would build unofficially a special bodied light weight version of the TD, known as project EX172. Although Phil had some financial support - £150 - that's where it ended. There was no mechanic from the works to support him, he was all on his own. The body was, for that time, very pretty with low flowing lines that looked really efficient. At scrutineering the car created a lot of interest, they had not seen a road-going MG that looked anything like it before. Some aspects of the design could be detected in "Goldie" Gardner's record breaking car that Syd Enever designed.

In the race the car performed well topping 120mph, but then dropped a valve through the piston. There were some recriminations back at Abingdon about the failure of the engine.

Phil recalls:

"If I could build an engine in my kitchen that would last 24 hours and was used doing other events, I would have thought the Works could have done the same. They in turn blamed me for being lead-footed so nothing really came of that."

Despite its retirement, the Le Mans cars' outstandingly pretty bodywork prompted highly favourable comments at a time when MG was seen to be falling behind in the design stakes. Clearly the time had come for Abingdon to move on from the traditional 'square-rigged' concept and a new modern shape was desperately needed.

Phil's Le Mans car was clearly the catalyst for a new design and after the 1951 race Enever, who was personally not happy with the very high driving position of the TD based car, modified the design with a wider chassis where the driver sat between the side members. This was to be the first of the MG prototypes (EX175). Alongside this on an identical chassis was built a new record-breaker (ERX179) which, powered by a TF engine and driven by Captain George Eyston and Ken Miles, set new records at over 150mph at Utah Salt Flats in the summer of 1954.



As a postscript. With very little modification or re-styling a final prototype (EX182) was built and was offered up as the MGA to the new combined Nuffield and Austin BMC management at Longbridge. The timing was unfortunate for MG because Donald Healey was already in negotiation with Austin for the production of the Austin-Healey 100 - clearly there was not room for two very similar rival sports cars from the same manufacturer. The Healey design won the day and the MG was sent back to Abingdon, the disappointed MG team being told to produce the stop-gap TF.

It was not until 1955 that MG got the go-ahead to put their new car into production.

PS

You will find beginning on page 10 further thoughts from David on the MGA. I had already written the above, however I thought I would include both stories.

ED

Wessex MG Social Run Sunday September 20th

I have been informed that our original destination Milestones Museum is undergoing refurbishment and the Thornycroft vehicle collection is offsite in storage, but they have a temporary Dinosaur exhibition in part of the museum, I feel it would be best to postpone our visit to Milestones and have prepared an alternative run which will still give members who wish the chance to visit Milestones on this day.

The new plan is leave Devizes at 9.15, taking a scenic route to Basingstoke, where we can split into two groups if desired to visit Milestones or go on to the Vyne.

Going on to The Vyne at Sherborne St John, which is a NT Mansion with connections with Henry VIII, Jane Austen and J.R.R Tolkein, we can spend a few hours here looking around the Mansion and grounds, with the opportunity for a snack lunch or Picnic, Being NT admission is free for NT members.

On the Vyne we can regroup with Milestones visitors and drive south through the Hampshire countryside passing through picturesque scenery before heading towards the return journey in the direction of Andover, stopping for an evening meal if desired.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you wish to join this run and whether you wish to visit Milestones or The Vyne, also if you would like to partake in the evening meal, this will enable me to plan the run accordingly.

Please let me know at the club night at the Old Bear on the 24th August or by email martyn.lucas2@btinternet.com or tel 01373 859583 or 07788 102067

Martyn Lucas

Sunday Brunch Scramble



6th Sunday Brunch Scramble
20th September 2015

Pre-booking via our website is essential,
the 5th Sunday Brunch Scramble sold out!

All visitors are welcome from 9am.



www.bicesterheritage.co.uk

Thank you for your continued support of our Brunch events. As a guest of previous events and being entered on our database we wanted to let you know that registration has opened today for our next Sunday Brunch Scramble on 20th September and tickets are on sale. Following on from the success of our April Brunch which coincided with Drive It Day we hope to encourage as many of you as possible to bring your classic vehicles.

Thank you to those of you who took the time to feedback comments - these are always welcome as we continue to improve the event and your experience. With that in mind we have changed the booking process so that the charge is per person not per car. At Bicester Heritage we are always delighted to see classic vehicles arrive so we are offering a Bring a Friend for Free offer for every person who arrives in a classic car (pre'89).

Here is the direct link to registration and ticket sales. We look forward to seeing you hopefully in September - our last Brunch event of the year.

<http://bicesterheritage.gigantic.com/sunday-brunch-scramble-tickets>

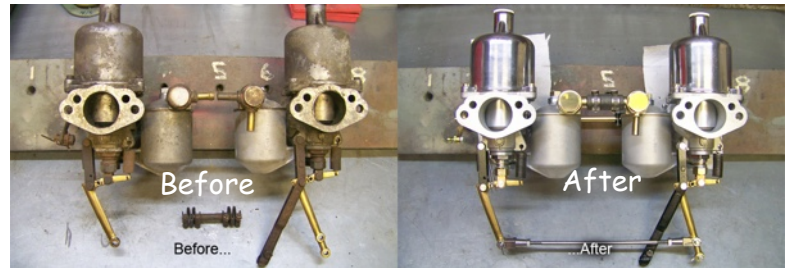
Best wishes

Tiggy

The Skinners Union (SU) Carburettor

I have recently spent quite some time rebuilding a pair of SU carburetors for Tom's Magnette, fitting new needles, jets, seals and jet assemblies. He purchased the spares from Burlen Ltd, based in Salisbury, who are a main SU parts supplier.

I am currently rebuilding the SU carbs on my Lea Francis and wanted some new parts. I used Burlen's website www.sucarbs.co.uk which is excellent. It has so much information regarding the workings, servicing, repairs & tuning of various types of carburetors and I think that members of the Group would find it beneficial. The exploded diagrams & parts service are second to none. Even a novice would find some of the information useful.



I spoke to John in their technical department as I have some unusual problems with my carbs, and he was really helpful. He is sourcing & making the bits that I require, and will post them to me in a couple of weeks. Most of their standard items are in stock.

I hope you find this helpful.

Nigel

MGA Thoughts

Paul reminded us that this year is the 60th anniversary of the launch of the MGA. I don't remember that day- my first memory of a car launch was of the Mini in 1959 and then of the "E" Type in 1961.

The development of the MGA was a bit haphazard. Prototype EX175 was built in 1952 as a Le Mans entry and was little more than a "T" series with a streamlined body over widened chassis. The introduction of the "B" series engine in 1953 allowed MG to design their replacement for the aging TF based upon EX175.



This proposal was initially rejected by Leonard Lord, then boss of Austin-Morris because he has recently signed a deal with Donald Healey to make

the soon-to-be announced Austin Healey 100 (or because he was a Triumph man!). Declining sales changed that and in September 1955, the MGA was launched at the Frankfurt Show.

We bought Marilyn, our 1959 MGA1600, in 2010. She was the second MG that we completely dismantled, having restored a 1965 MGB in 2003. The reverse evolution was interesting to follow. The "B" series engine was near identical (1600cc v. 1800cc), the front suspension and back axle likewise. However, being able to lift-off the body of the "A" made many restoration jobs, like re-wiring and re-plumbing of the brakes, much easier.



Our observation of reverse evolution continued with the purchase of our 1947 MG TC in 2012. We could now see how a "T" series car became EX175 - the design of the TC chassis is very similar to that of the MGA, though the latter had a widened chassis to allow the driver to sit within the chassis rather than above it.



MG TC Chassis

Similarities between the "T" series and the MGA were limited to the chassis, lever arm shock absorbers and rear springs. Having dumped the XPAG engine and wood frame, MG also introduced independent front suspension and a rack and pinion steering in place of the beam front axle and Bishops Cam steering box.



MGA Chassis

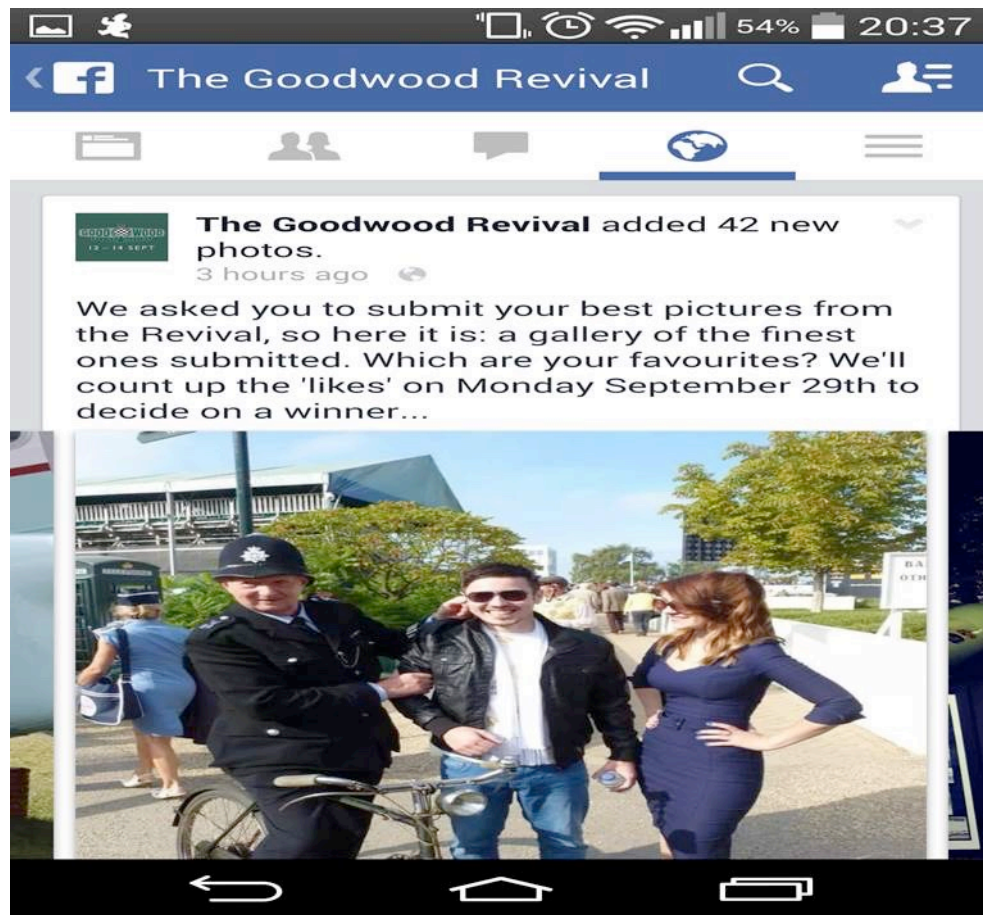
The MGA was therefore one stage of the evolution of MGs from their earliest days of chassis and wood frame to the full monocoque of the MGB. Power nearly doubled in that time, so the adoption of power disc brakes was necessary and of course great strides in tyre technology took-place.



The MGA was, in technical terms, a big leap forward from the "T" type and MG's first streamlined sports car. It is in my view one of the best looking MGs ever made -and in its 7 year life MG sold over 100,000, 95% of which were exported.

David

August Club Night - "Wot's your game son"



Here's a taster of Adrian's antics from the Goodwood Revival 2014.

Good news.

We bumped into Adrian at the Longbridge Deverill Transport meeting and due to our club night relocation, he will be able to bring two police related vehicles to our meeting.

Sue W

Remember this question posed by David in last month's newsletter?

To stop you getting bored, lets have a different mystery this month.

What is the link between this...

This is a Trojan van from the mid 50s. -

It was made in a factory on the old Croydon Airport site by Trojan Ltd. I recall on a family holiday on the Scilly Isles being collected on landing by a minibus version of this van. I was only ten but remember thinking it was a bit basic.



Whilst Trojan was not really a mainstream manufacturer (or perhaps because they were not), towards the end of the 60s, they were contracted to make this -



- for Bruce McLaren, in this case, the McLaren M14 from 1969.

There seems to be some correlation between Bruce McLaren's death and his company severing links with Trojan. That was when our last car arrives on the scene -

This little gem is an Elva Courier from the late 1960s. Elva (from "elle va" - she goes!) started life as a racing outfit in early '50s and developed the Courier towards the end of that decade. It was powered by an MGA engine and had a ladder chassis and fibreglass body.

Trojan took-over the rights to manufacture the Courier in 1962 and manufacture moved to Croydon. A total of around 620 Couriers were made, though the manufacturing rights were sold in 1965 and production finally ceased in 1968.





One last development under Trojan in 1964 was the Elva GT160, a BMW engined car designed by Trevor Frost. Weighting only 11cwt, this would have been a real flier. Only three prototypes were built before it was considered too costly to continue.

It was Bill Ritson who told me about this striking car but I will leave it to him to tell the story of his experience of one of the only three made.

David

Club News

Secretary's Scribbles

I am writing this just before sailing off for my summer holiday to France. I really enjoyed the club sports night at David and Carrie's and if it wasn't for Martyn I would have been in trouble. Martyn and I managed to come out even against Vic and Steve across the four events which is pretty good if you take into account that Vic was Norfolk county champion at Croquet as a teenager and Steve represented his school at table tennis.

I have continued to have issues with my carbs on the ZB and today Nigel has kindly been over to help. The outcome is that I am nipping down to Burlen in Salisbury to check the jets and needles match etc and get some new ones. Nigel identified that the choke mechanisms around the jets were stiff and that my new needles looked too thin.... So I am hoping with these two things resolved I may be able to at last move forward. Nigel has really kindly taken the carbs away to look at whilst I am on holiday.

Please have a think about our annual get together in our field which is on the Sunday 30th August. There will be some simple and fun (non damaging) auto-tests - even Ken S does them so there is nothing to worry about! There will also be BBQs for people to throw food on.

Start time is 10:30. Hopefully the fruit trees/bushes in the orchard etc will be ready for harvesting too so bring a box or two.

Tom

2015 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
19th Aug	Peter Browning Talk	No	Abingdon	Martyn Lucas
24-Aug	Club Night - 'ello 'ello 'ello	Yes	<i>The Old Bear Inn</i>	TBA
30-Aug	Action Day	Yes	Tom's Field	Tom Strickland
20-Sep	Club-Run - The Vyne National Trust	Yes		Martyn Lucas
28-Sep	Club Night (Theme TBA)	Yes	<i>The Old Bear Inn</i>	TBA
26-Oct	Club Night (Grand Prix talk - Duel of the Titans - Nazi sponsored GP racing 1930-1939)	Yes	<i>The Old Bear Inn</i>	Paul Warn
TBC	Committee Meeting	No	<i>The Old Bear Inn</i>	Paul Warn
23-Nov	Club AGM	Yes	<i>The Old Bear Inn</i>	Formal notification will be included in the Sept & Oct newsletter.
13-Dec	Christmas Party	Yes	<i>The Grey Hound</i>	

NB The last column includes the committee member responsible for the event. If you need to contact them, you will find their details on page 7. Just click their email address or give them a call.

ED