



WESSEX MG CAR CLUB

THE OLD BEAR INN STAVERTON



CONTENTS

PAGE 2

MOLLIE'S MAKEOVER - THE FINAL CHAPTER

Ken Binstead

PAGE 4

ROCKING ON WITH CASTROL R

Jeff Rattle

PAGE 6

DAD'S RULE OK

Malcolm Taylor

PAGE 7

STRIKING FRANCE

Malcolm Taylor

PAGE 9

THE DORDOGNE INTEGRALE

Mark Bouch

PAGE 12

SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLES

Tom Strickland

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PAGE 13

PICTURE GALLERY

PAGE 14

DIARY

Club Night Start time
8:00pm unless otherwise
stated.

NEXT CLUB NIGHT:

27th June

Club Website

<http://www.wessexmgclub.org.uk>

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Hello All,

I must start by thanking Vic for standing in for me at last month's meeting. Although I have not been able to catch up too much I am sure it went well.

As I said in my last chat, Jane and I had to suffer a cruise from San Diego to Miami via the Panama Canal. We had a really good time and it passed quickly. At our third port of call, Guatemala, there seemed to be a general gathering of vehicles, motor bikes and cars. The first we spied was a 1967 red MGB. They seem to get everywhere! From what I can gather the last two runs organised by Martyn have both gone well. We were unable to come as we had family visiting to see the scarecrows at

Urchfont. An annual outing.

We are now all back from France having had a good time. I would like to thank Roger and Lynne for their organising. We had to take Jane's TF as the b had a nasty problem blowing a lot of oil out over the exhaust. It is now Ok though and was returned just before the trip.

Our mystery run will be over by the time you get this month's letter and I am sure it will have gone well thanks to Ken. We have two events to look forward to next month Vintage Nostalgia 4th (Tony), and Club Run Beaulieu 18th (Terry and Sue). Please contact them if you are interested.





MOLLIE'S MAKEOVER - FRANCE OR BUST

Ken Binstead

If you are reading this version then all has been successful and we made to France, if it hasn't gone well then I have had to rewrite it and come up with my excuses.

Well its been a furious few weeks putting Mollie back together again but thankfully all the bits fitted and I didn't have too may left over,(they couldn't have been important). She did however fight me all the way especially with the electrics. Once it was all connected and working though I booked her in for her MOT and took her down at the allotted time. She did have one last tantrum though as she only went and failed. No

rear lights, number plate light or front off side light. That car can be infuriating at times as



they were all working when I left the house.

Thankfully it was only a fuse so switched over to one of the spares in the fusebox and the tester was happy, a clean sheet and off we went. I did then spend the afternoon chasing the snag which turned out to be a badly wired number plate light

which was earthing out, (not of my doing), so hopefully that's the end of that little matter.

Sarah took her to work for a few days and pronounced herself satisfied. Off to France we went.

We had a great run to France (more of that elsewhere I'm sure) , however Mollie did have one thing up her sleeve that I wasn't quite expecting. As we were on the dual carriageway going towards Caen with the sun blazing and the car sounding wonderful doing 65-70mph I had to brake reasonably hard due to traffic slowing rapidly ahead. It was at this



point that Mollie took her revenge and the cars nose swung rapidly left. Now I don't mind things trying to kill me when I am paying attention but not when I am not looking. Anyway panic over as I hauled her back onto the straight and narrow without upsetting the Frenchman in the outside lane too much. I checked her over when we arrived at the hotel and could find nothing obviously wrong but gave it some thought and decided it could be a stuck brake piston in the right hand caliper and I could do nothing until I got home. The rest of the trip went without incident and we returned with only minor adjustments required and

the brake issue. Thankfully my diagnosis was correct and I managed to free the piston and now



it operates as it should. Mollie had an extended period off the road this time so I assume it got stuck due to lack of use.

I have to say despite the frustrations and the odd minor injury I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience and learnt an

awful lot. She has not come out of the garage as a perfect example of her type but she is much stronger and certainly looks the part. This will certainly keep her on the road for quite a few years to come. I hope you have enjoyed hearing about by winter exploits and all that remains is to get out and drive her to as many of the events as we can make.

Now, where's Harvey the Healey.



A BIG THANK- YOU to all those on the Normandy trip

A brief note to thank all those MG Club members on the Normandy trip who contributed to the beautiful flowers and the delicious chocolates you sent to Jeff and me as we were unable to join you in France because of my treatment. We were very touched by the kind thought and did appreciate it as we missed you all and were very sorry not to be there. (I could not help but water the flowers copiously from my personal reservoir!!) We hope you all had a good time and look forward to hearing all about the trip - We know the area and could picture you all bombing around!

June Rattle



SCRAMBLING AT YATTON KEYNELL - or *rocking on with Castrol R*

Jeff Rattle

Just before being seduced into buying my present "B", I was toying with the idea of acquiring a classic motorbike and was avidly consuming pictures and articles about such a commitment. In my teens and still at school, I had bought a BSA Bantam and learnt some basic maintenance skills in the process. My father was a photographer with the Cambridge local paper and was required to go to motor cycle scrambles to capture all the thrills and spills and I went along and got know by name all the leading riders of the day such as Dave Bickers on his Greeves two

strokes. This later inspired me to acquire a Greeves Fleetstar roadbike which I really loved but unfortunately had to sell before going to university. I suppose ever since then I have been attracted to the Greeves name and the unmistakably alluring smell of Castrol R, long associated with scrambling.

Much more recently I came across a self published book about Shrublands Park in Suffolk which was one of the premier scrambling circuits from the late 40's until the mid 60's. I went there several times with my father and reading this

book and studying the black and white photographs of so many familiar names from those halcyon days of scrambling persuaded me to find a local scramble where I could live out some of those childhood memories and again smell that wonderful aroma of Castrol R.

By chance I came across the website of the Bath Classic Motorcycle Club and they were holding a scramble on the 24th April at Yatton Keynell. My daughter kindly offered to go with me, more as company for her old Dad than any interest in scrambling it has to be



said. The day was fine, people friendly and an almost non-stop series of races round a very interesting course with one spectacular jump by the finishing line made for some really entertaining and exciting few hours. It quickly became clear that my daughter's enthusiasm for being there wasn't restricted to being in her dad's company and that she too was thoroughly enjoying the whole spectacle and atmosphere as the number of pics on her iPhone attest.

The race programme was unusual to say the least because as well as listing the names of the riders, their race numbers, the make of bike they were riding and their club, it also included their ages! These ranged from 22 right up to 76, and over 20% of the riders (over 100) were in their 60's or 70's . There were several race categories including pre 60, pre 65, and pre 74 - the numbers referring of course to the year of manufacture of the bikes, NOT the ages of the riders! There was even one

special race for those over 55, riding bikes made before 1965. I shall definitely be looking out for another such event - I seem to remember that there is one at Farleigh Hungerford later in the year.

The title photograph shows 56 year old Phil Roberts from Ross On Wye riding a 360 CZ.



Bath Motor Club BBQ

I've received an invitation from the Bath Motor Club, for Wessex Club members to join them on the 13th June. **If you would like to go please let me know.**

"It is our intention to hold another Bath Motor Club Barbecue evening on Monday June 13th at the Orchardleigh Golf Club on the A362 Buckland Dinham to Frome Road. Post Code BA11 2BP. The entrance will be signed.

We had a superb number of Bath Motor Club members and friends last year together with an equally super number of interesting motor cars.

Food will be provided in the form a Sausages, Rolls and Salad for the sum of £5 per head to include a 50p per head donation to our charity the Great Western Air Ambulance. Please come along and support this evening and tell your motoring friends about and let is see if we can have at least as many people and cars as we did last year.

Vic



DAD'S RULE OK

Malcolm Taylor

According to Steve, the reason we never saw much of him at the Abingdon Air



Show was because of his daughter's agenda. Yeah right! Sometimes it's very useful to have a little person with you, because people will

then think that you are doing silly things to entertain them? Hah! You will see that his daughter has turned away, having done the 'Crazy Crooked Cottage.' I'm sure we heard her say, 'come on Dad, I want to go and look at the cars and planes.' But, no, Dad's enjoying himself too much. Whereas us grandparents are much more considerate and obliging, as you

can see from the picture of the young lad playing in his grandad's bubble car.



And a picture of a very nice MG (I think) to close.





STRIKING FRANCE

Malcolm Taylor

I'm sure someone will do a piece on the club trip to Swiss Normandy, which Pat and I enjoyed immensely (thanks Roger and Lynne). So my piece is on our extension of the trip to see Monet's house and garden at Giverny.

The whole trip is the longest journey I have ever taken Mata Hari (MGF) on. Despite various worries about the car and me, all went without a hitch. Except for the flat battery that I caused by leaving the interior lights on. Thanks for the bump start, guys.

On Thursday when everyone else was heading for the port, we had a last

look round Clecy and did Falaise Castle before



heading for a 3 night stay in Evreux.

Pat has long wanted to visit Monet's garden in Giverny and it didn't disappoint. The house and gardens are a delight to the senses and extremely popular. Pat treated me to a birthday meal in the village, so even I can't forget where I spent my 70th.

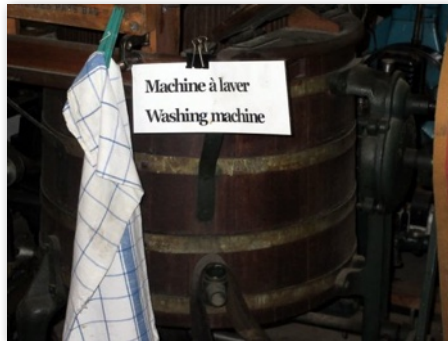
Wandering around the village afterwards, we came across a privately owned collection of vintage machinery. Outside was a lump of red metal waiting to join the display. Actually it was the owners car.

Inside we came across a machine for making footwear for wooden footed MGC drivers.



Oh no! The girl has found a source of shoes, direct from the manufacturer. Then there is that most modern of conveniences, the washing machine. All you have to do is crank up the engine that drives the shaft, that works the pulley, that drives the belt, that twiddles the doofer, that chews the clothes up, etc. etc. Then there was one for Terry. Just needs a bit of rubber on the front wheel and she'll be fine?

The collection was housed in what appeared to be a little old factory



in his garden. It was a massive collection and some of the steam powered stuff he had running on compressed air.

He was so enthusiastic, you had a job to get away. And also, my new Citroen biscuit tin. Cool, eh? Saturday was a bit of a washout as we spent a long time trying to get petrol, which was rationed due to the strike. Then we over-reacted to protect our precious commodity and never drove anywhere. Sunday, we took in the seaside resort of Houlgate and the Pegasus Bridge Memorial on the way to the ferry.



THE DORDOGNE INTEGRALE

Mark Bouch
and Sarah
Fretwell-Jex

The Dordogne Integrale is a classic endurance marathon for canoes, kayaks and stand-up paddle boards (SUPs) that takes place on one day over a course of 85 miles between Argentat and Castelnau la Chapelle.

This year Sarah and I, both key canoeists, decided to tour down by car. With dry weather planned we invited Laura the '69 MGB GT to bear responsibility for getting us there and booked ferries. Our game plan was to cross from Portsmouth to St Malo overnight on Wednesday and return via Caen overnight on the following Monday. A total of 900 miles (roughly) by car in two days with an 85 mile canoe race to complete on the Saturday!

Laura the MGB didn't need much preparation beyond an

annual service and general check-over. We did discover a minor oil leak and a loose coolant hose clip (there's a surprise!) but otherwise good to go with a thorough clean and polish. We made a small



investment in European recovery for one trip and the selection of replacement bulbs, breathalysers, fan belts and other stuff then packed the car with our kit for 5 days, a tent and

sleeping bags for camping at the finish and our paddling gear including two carbon racing paddles. The GT really was like a tardis - it kept swallowing luggage.

On Wednesday at about 6pm we set off for Portsmouth. We had intended a cross country drive staying away from the M3/M27 so headed off towards Sparsholt then down through Romsey. The journey was enlivened by two visits to garages to check tyre inflation and finding that both had broken airlines. We had a minor panic as we turned into the ferry port exactly 45 minutes prior to departure only to discover everyone else was boarded and a rather unimpressed marshal saying "the gate may still be open for boarding". This is as a result of increased security since we last made a

trip abroad and a lesson learned to allow more time next time.

The journey was comfortable and uneventful. We loaded surrounded by motorbikes heading for the MotoGP at Le Mans (mental note avoid the road round Le Mans), watched the ferry leave Portsmouth and the Solent then retired for a meal and bed. Next morning we left St Malo for Argentat. We had already made a decision to do the entire route using B roads (no peage and no autoroutes) so headed South on a cross-country route for Angers, where we picked up the Loire valley ('Car in the Loire' photo opportunity) then stopped for lunch in Samur. Out of Samur we made a pit stop at a wine merchant to acquire some of the local product then headed for Fontrevaud for coffee. Fontrevaud is a fascinating place where two of our Plantagenet kings lie at rest, Henry II (with Eleanor of Aquitaine) and Richard I (the Lionheart). Sadly not enough time to explore the abbey, so we will have to go back! After that, it was time to get some serious miles under our belt so we set off once again for a 4 hour stint with only a fuel and ice cream stop before we arrived at a gite in Argentat. This part of the drive was really easy

with mile after mile of smooth and relatively straight B roads. The final hour as we entered a national park providing a great drive through woods, trees and big bends as we dropped into the Correze region and the Dordogne valley.

Everywhere we stopped the car was photographed by people which was fun. In Argentat our attention



turned to the canoe race, collecting the rest of our crew by minibus and fitting in a Friday afternoon training run. A good night's sleep then next morning we made a 5am start from gite to the start where we left the car.

The paddle was an important part of the trip. The route covers the most beautiful part of the Dordogne River through limestone cliffs and

medieval castles. There is a 14 hour cut-off time to complete the course and wonderful French hospitality at both ends. Over 100 boats entered this year and entries from Devizes Canoe Club included a C9 (think giant canoe!) and three K2s (two seat kayaks).

The start line was very crowded and we had a pretty disastrous start when a K1 capsized in front of us then tried to hang on to our boat. This pretty much stopped us dead in the water for a while so we effectively started at the rear of the group! When we eventually got moving we were able to catch our closest competitor by the first refreshment stop 2 hours later but they got back into the boat before us so once again we laid chase. There is a big weir at Carennac and a compulsory portage. Fortunately we were able to save some time as the organisers allowed us to shoot the weir with a guide and two of our crew in the boat - big smiles all round and some great photos for them. As the day went on we made up time and although we finished about 10 minutes behind Pangbourne Canoe Club we took an hour and a half off last year's time so we were pleased to be in second place amongst the mixed C9s that were doing the entire race with the



same crew (rather than as a relay). The after party is typically French and involved copious quantities of muscle relaxant, otherwise known as red wine before we literally collapsed into our tent overcome by tiredness! The organisers then ferried us back to Argentat (nearly 3 hours by minibus) where we collected Laura and took the day off exploring the village we were staying in, found a local café and then cooked a crew meal at the gite.

Monday morning came all too soon and it was time to pack the car and leave for the coast. The weather was overcast as we headed to Tulle for a coffee then North through the Limousin national park towards Limoges then Chateauroux. Chateauroux is almost in the centre of France. By the time we reached the town it was raining gently. It could

certainly lay claim to be France's dullest town and most of it was closed, so we just stopped for a coffee. Onwards to Blois and a short interview with a charming gentleman from the Police Nationale on a motorbike about my speed on the dual carriageway (apparently 15 km over the speed limit!). There was little point in explaining that Laura's speedo is not calibrated in kilometres and the needle wobbles like a jelly, so we just coughed up the 45 euros and we wished us a nice day. The next leg was all cross-country to avoid Le Mans and took in the Parc Natural du Perche on route to Alençon. An hour later we found our way across the Pegasus Bridge at Benouville (the first bridge to be captured on D Day) then into Ouistreham for a meal before boarding at 9pm. Another comfortable night

at sea and on Tuesday morning we disembarked at Portsmouth for the drive home. It was a rather flat end to a wonderful trip to pull out onto the M27 in four lanes of stalled traffic in the rain, but we were home mid-morning for coffee at the Black Swan in Devizes!

Laura was the star of the trip as she covered over 900 miles, mostly over two days, and didn't skip a beat. The only regret I have is that the decision to fit a full sports exhaust back in about 2001 didn't seem like such a good idea after all - a beautiful noise, but too much of it over that distance. Still, even the motorcyclists on route back from Le Mans turned their heads in the ferry queue!



Secretary's Scribbles

This month it is Light Bulbs! On the way up to the Abingdon Show Kevin pointed out that I was a brake light down - no problem.... Out came my little pack of spare bulbs and of course there was a double filament brake/tail bulb brand new and ready to rock and roll! However it just would not fit in the bulb holder. The fiddling had to be abandoned and continued when we got to Abingdon - on close inspection it was an issue of the quality of the pins. The bulb has offset pins and on the original bulb these are very precise pins and on my spare the pins were more like blobs. I managed to borrow a file from Kevin but before long I had taken the whole thing off and the bulb was useless. Luckily Vic had a bulb to get me home. Once home I started to try and find a supplier of good quality replacement bulbs and ended up looking at

LED ones. The short and narrow of it are that I think these may not be totally legal in our old cars but they work, use less current and are brighter - all wins. The other great thing is that the LED bulbs have a higher quality fit and go straight into my bulb holders. I am now LED across my dashboard, my interior light and my brake/tail lights. There is a chap working out of Bristol on ebay who is the chap to know - CLASSIC CAR LEDs - and goes by led_bulbs_for_classic_cars try searching for him on ebay or going straight to his website:

www.classiccarleds.co.uk

Vic and I would both recommend him.



PICTURE GALLERY



TOILETTE NORMANDE

Not sure last year's image of the "pissoir" could ever be beaten - here is this year's contribution with Tony hunkering down.

Images of Swiss
Normande

2016 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
4-Jun	Vintage Nostalgia	No	Warminster	Tony Neale
18-Jun	Club Run to Beaulieu	Yes	Beaulieu	Terry and Sue Warder
27 Jun	Club Night - Battle of the Somme talk by Tom	Yes	The Old Bear Inn	Tom Strickland
10 July	Summer Picnic	Yes	Sudeley Castle	Paul Warn
25-Jul	Club Night - BBQ	Yes	The Old Bear Inn	Paul Warn
22-Aug	Club Night - Boules/ Games	Yes	TBA	Vic Wright
28-Aug	Action Day	Yes	Tom's Field	Tom Strickland
18-Sep	Club Run Watercress Steam Railway	Yes		Martyn Lucas
16/19 Sep	MGB CC Register weekend	No	TBA	Ken Scott
26-Sep	Club Night - Talk Invited speaker	Yes	The Old Bear Inn	Graham Bennett
24-Oct	Club Night - The Racing Life and Times of Sir Stirling Moss.	Yes	The Old Bear Inn	Paul Warn
TBA	Pre AGM Committee Meeting	No	The Old Bear Inn	Paul Warn
28-Nov	Club AGM	Yes	The Old Bear Inn	Formal notification will be included in the Sept & Oct newsletter.
10-Dec	Christmas Party	Yes	TBA	TBA

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 10. Just click-on their email address or give them a call.

ED