



WESSEX MG CAR CLUB

THE OLD BEAR INN STAVERTON



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NEXT CLUB NIGHT:

27th June

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

Club Website

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

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Hello All,

My first thoughts this month are with Malcolm and Pat. As most of you will be aware Pat was taken ill on the night of our mystery run, organised by Ken. She was taken to the RUH Bath and found to have a problem with her heart. She has been discharged and is now recovering. Unfortunately to add to Malcolm's problems, his car was written off when someone drove into him and pushed him into another car. Lets hope that's the end of their problems and things start to pick up.

On a brighter note, thanks to Roger for organising our French trip all our cars survived and we all had a good time.

The mystery run, thanks to Ken, was also well attended and organised ending up in The Barge Inn in Seend. We had a good

drive out and the meal at the pub was also good. The Vintage Nostalgia, thanks to Tony, was also well attended with plenty to see and do to keep us occupied throughout the day. It was nice to see Mark and Clive, two of our newer members were able to come.

Our club run to Beaulieu on the 18th also promises to be a good day out and I hope will similarly be well supported. Sue has sent information out, but if anyone has not seen it please contact her for details.

Club night this month promises to be interesting with Tom giving his talk on The Battle of the Somme.





MATA HARI MOLESTED

Malcolm Taylor

For those that may remember my assertion that MG was an acronym for 'Metal Grinder', read on.

2nd of June, the day before Pat came out of hospital. Anne Alderson and another friend of Pat's were going to visit her in RUH, so I took the opportunity to slope off to Bristol, to take a malfunctioning camera back to John Lewis. I was intending to drop in on Pat on the way back, but never made it.

Plodding through Bath I was behind a 'Hyundi Veloster'. A car up until now I was unacquainted with, but that was about to change.

Getting onto the dual carriageway, beyond the Newbridge junction, I slipped out into the outside lane and gave it some welly. Over the roundabout by 'The Globe' pub and on towards Saltford.

On the right hand side is the 'Stothert and Pitt, Rugby Club' grounds. It appeared that they were erecting or dismantling a fun-fare in their car park. There are some traffic islands and a junction on the left called Corston Lane. Something caused the traffic to slow to a halt and I followed suit. I was stationary with my foot on the brake, then everything went into slow motion.

I had the roof down and I became aware of a lot of noise behind me, I couldn't fathom out what it was. Then suddenly my head snapped back against the head rest. I think this caused my foot to lift off the brake and the car shot forward into the vehicle in front of me and stopped again. Where-upon, I lurched forward into the seat-belt.

It now dawned on me what was happening.

Getting out of the car, I recognised the Hyundi Veloster that I had previously been following, being far too intimate with Mata Hari.

I was feeling a bit woozy from the thump on the back of my head and



never thought to rant and rave at Mata Hari's attacker. I did ask him why he had run into the back of me, but he couldn't think of a good reason. My theory is that he was rubber necking the fun-fare and never noticed the traffic stopping in front of him.

The malfunctioning camera was in the boot, but that survived, so I still had to get it fixed. However my umbrella was laying fore to aft and was jammed between the front and back of the boot, which is obviously the rear crumple zone. One thing that happened that I haven't come across before, not that I make a habit of this, is that his insurance agent, Hastings Direct, contacted me. They accepted that their client was at fault and offered

to take over the repair of my car and provide me with a hire car. My



Insurance company had already declined a hire car because they considered my car a write off. They offered me a write-off value which they would transfer into my bank that afternoon. I declined their valuation.

I accepted the hire car because Pat and I were hoping to go on a weeks motoring holiday. Better to put the miles on the hire car instead of

my other car. There were no strings attached to the hire car, I could decline them taking over the fixing of the car and proceed with my own company.

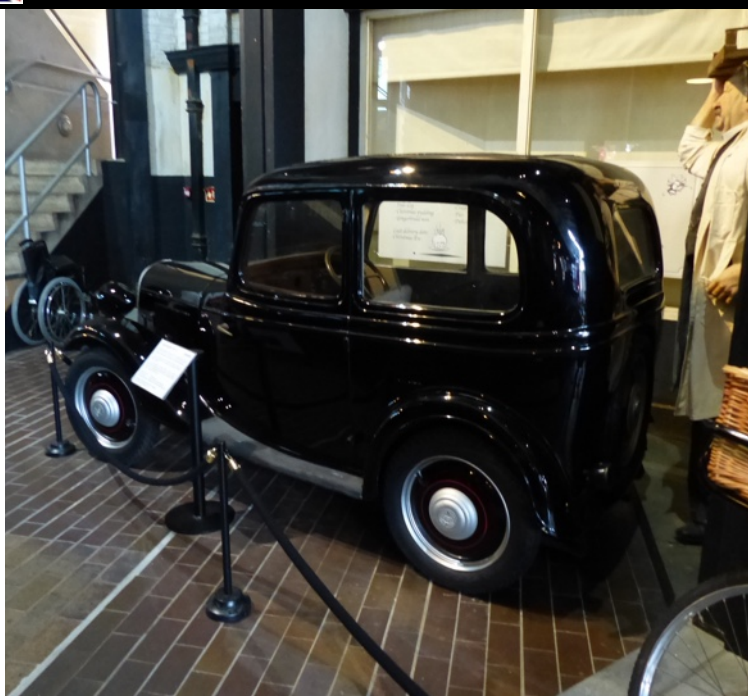
They say they are just trying to make my life as easy as possible following the actions of their client. It's a form of advertising and good for their reputation, I suppose.

The insurance situation is a little confused at the moment. Whether I succeed in playing one off against the other remains to be seen.

At the time of writing I am still on the look out for an F or TF but finding one in as good a nick as Mata Hari is not proving easy.



Happier times - it was good to see Pat up and about during our trip to Beaulieu. ED



MYSTERY CAR EDITOR

Motor museums are always a good source for our mystery car slot. I took this at Beaulieu. Those that enjoyed our club trip courtesy of Sue and Terry may recognise it...



WITH OUR THANKS



Many thanks to Lynne and Roger for organising the club's spring trip to France.



The French even have a wine named after a famous Marque...



THE HUFF

Ken Binstead

Well it's not so much withdrawal symptoms that prompts me to write but another addition to the Binstead vehicle collection as I alluded to in my last missive.

She/he (not sure yet) is a 1980 rubber bumper GT that used to belong to Sarah's grandmother but had been laid up for a few years. A friend and I were looking for a car to start some historic road rallying in and having a little experience with MG's I thought that this would make an ideal starting point. The name "The HUF" is fairly self explanatory considering the number plate. It needs a reasonable amount of work as the tin worm has had a go in all the usual places but hopefully all the work done on Mollie will stand me in good stead.

So it will need new hoses, tyres, brakes all round, full service, sill repairs,

then need to look at clocks and trip meters, heel board and possibly new seats as the originals are a bit tired and probably not that suitable for the type of competition envisaged.



replacement off side wing (anybody know of one

Thankfully there wont be a report on progress every month for you to digest but I will give updates as to how the preparations are going. The aim is to take part in the HRCR Clubman championship starting next Feb/March where the first objective is to finish.

Just as I had started on Harvey the Healey as well!



going spare, colour immaterial), fluids and a damn good tune. Once the MOT is achieved we





RETIREMENT MG STYLE - TIME TO SEEK OUT BRITAIN'S BEST DRIVING ROADS

John Bishop

Preamble

I have made more fuss about retiring than anyone else I know. Priscilla wholeheartedly agrees. Thirty eight challenging but phenomenally rewarding years as an English teacher left me worrying about how to fill the inevitable gap. Friends kept asking me whether I had any projects up my sleeve and I have found myself replying, "Yes, I want to drive my MGB more often!"

Much as I enjoy club runs and local jaunts here in Wiltshire, I have always loved a longer driving challenge - to the extent that back in the seventies

Priscilla and I took an Austin Healey Sprite over some of the highest and most challenging Alpine roads including the Grossglockner, the Grand Saint Bernard, the Gavia and finally the Stelvio. So,



I hatched my plan. Priscilla regularly works away from home so on Day 1 of my retirement she headed west up the M4 to London while I drove off east towards Wales in the MGB to start enjoying the best

of British driving. A secondary purpose was to revisit some of the wilder Welsh places that I remember from childhood holidays.

Retirement Day 1: the Wye Valley

Check - oil topped up, tyre pressures OK, spares in the boot, maps chosen and stowed, top down - and I'm off. As my former teaching colleagues geared up for their first day of meetings and planning, I warmed to the drive ahead by taking the A46 out of Bath. As you climb up along the valley side there are wonderful views and by the time you reach Dyrham House



(National Trust) you can see the Severn estuary and the Welsh mountains in the distance. My new-found sense of freedom grew as I crossed the Severn bridge - always more exhilarating top-down. At Chepstow I turned right up the Wye Valley to Monmouth, in my view an almost perfect drive for an MG! The Lower Wye landscape was formed by the river which has incised into the margins of the old red sandstone plateau to form a gorge with dramatic river cliffs. Of course there is so much to visit - not in the least the romantic remains of Tintern Abbey, a Cistercian monastery immortalised by Wordsworth in his famous poem in 1798. But the focus of this article isn't what to visit or an attempt at a geography lesson, it's about the fun of driving our amazing cars so I was enjoying the well-engineered bends, constantly changing vistas and the growl of the B's exhaust.

The evening's destination was Hereford where I visited an old school friend who was unlucky enough to be spending a short spell in hospital. I parked in a designated space, duly visited my friend, and returned to the MG to spot a note tucked under a flap in the tonneau cover. Fearing the



worst I gingerly removed it. Was it a rude note saying I had parked in a reserved bay? Was it a militant environmentalist vilifying me for driving a car that lacked fuel efficiency. Imagine my surprise - and relief - when I saw what it simply said: "What a beautiful MG". Whilst we love and probably mollycoddle our

MGs, it's gratifying to know that they can also bring pleasure to others!

Retirement Day 2: the Abergwesyn Valley and the Devil's Staircase

After a late start I enjoyed an excellent lunch at The Tram pub at Eardisley which won an award for its sumptuous outside toilet - please note that we retirees don't need to slum it! I wish I'd had time to linger in the vibrant town of Builth Wells, but I was itching to get started on the Abergwesyn valley and the so-called Devil's Staircase. I picked up the single track road at Beulah and at once began to enjoy the ancient woodland, grassy banks, picturesque stone cottages and glimpses of the mountains beyond. At Abergwesyn village the real treat begins in earnest - single track road, steep drops on one side, narrow bridges and at times a goodly scattering of loose gravel on the road surface.

Having expected stray sheep, cattle grids and



potholes, I wasn't disappointed. This was driving heaven with the landscape and road conditions constantly changing. There must be something masochistic deep within me: when I found myself almost bumper to bumper with a timber lorry and then a farmer towing a heavily laden trailer, I willingly selected myself as the one to reverse uphill to the passing bay that I had passed what seemed like half a mile back. With some hairpin bends, the occasional 1 in 4 gradient and some blind brows this is a road on which spending overlong looking at the view might be a bad idea!

Turning right at Tregaron I headed north up the B4343 enjoying the virtually traffic-free roads. Machynlleth, my destination for the day, came up all too soon.

Retirement Day 3: the Aberglaslyn and Nantgwynant Passes

Day 3 began in fine style. While checking out I had

been extolling the many and various joys of travel by MGB to the hotel receptionist, so I was delighted when she left her post and accompanied me to the car park to have a look at it. I hope that it met with her approval.



My first stop was the Tal-y-llyn lake and Abergynolwyn where my family had taken me on a childhood holiday.

Reassuringly it was even more pristine and beautiful than I remembered it. Urban development is encroaching on the countryside all across our country and towns seem to get a facelift every few years, but most of Wales remains beautifully preserved. I took the coast road towards Porthmadog via the delightful toll bridge at

Penmaenpool followed by the enticing coastal resort of Barmouth and the iconic outline of Harlech castle - all well worth exploring.

As I said I have always loved mountain passes, so for me the highlight began as I headed up the Aberglaslyn pass into the Snowdonia National Park, 838 square miles of gobsmackingly beautiful scenery. Rocky crags overhang a narrow gorge which causes the road to wind in a most delightful and engaging way. After the picturesque town of Beddgelert the landscape begins to open out as height is gained: soon there are wonderful views of the two lakes Llyn Dinas and Llyn Gwynant - the thoughtfully placed car park by the latter afforded me a wonderful place to munch my sandwiches alfresco with a wonderful view of the summit of Snowdon which rises with theatrical elegance in the distance. After this excellent stop I gave in to temptation and drove down and then



back up the Llanberis pass just for fun - I just love its craggy bounders and just for a while you can enter a wild and mysterious world which fires up the imagination.

During my childhood my father had brought us on holidays during which he indulged his peculiar passion of pitching the family caravan in the wildest, most unspoiled places he could find. Pointing the MG now down towards Betws-y-Coed, I passed the farm nestled between the twin lakes of Capel Curig where we had spent a memorable week: I can remember the August gale force winds buffeting our caravan to the extent that my father had to lash it down with ropes. Ah such were childhood holidays in those days!

So from there I pootled down various B roads enjoying about thirty miles

of wiggly, unfenced tarmac, skirting Ruthin and Mold to Chester where I spent the night with friends, good food and a suitable quantity of red wine.

Retirement Day 4: the M6 and M5

And so to the anticlimax. Still top down I took to the motorway home, but hadn't reckoned on the sheer density of traffic around Birmingham. And of course I had trusted to the weather not to do the dirty on me. But they say there's no fool like an old fool. As the rain began I blithely blundered into the classic beginner's mistake of thinking I could keep dry as long as I didn't stop. Calamity - somewhere south of Gloucester I realised that rain was pelting into my face, thunder was crashing and torrential rain soaking both me and the interior

of the car...belatedly I peeled off into a welcome service station and mopped up.

Afterthought

Our country is full of great roads for driving our wonderful cars. You don't need to give the engine a leathering to have fun; in fact the real pleasure can come from cresting the ridges, savouring the changes of gradient and becoming one with the sweep of the curves. So retirement isn't so bad after all. I proved that I can enjoy a trip on my own. MGs are after all great drivers' cars - what better company could anyone have?



Secretary's Scribbles

This month I have at last managed to get to Bell's exhaust in Swindon to have the Magnette's exhaust properly fettled - something that I have needed to do since last summer when Vic did the gearbox conversion for me.

Bell's in Swindon is quite a place and can make most classic car exhausts from pattern or make up new systems - you can choose mild steel or stainless and for the MG B you get a choice of silencers etc. I will never go back to fiddling with my own exhausts like I used to do on my Midget - they do a far far better job at a reasonable price.

I remember coming back from one of our annual trips, I think either Guernsey or Jersey and I was pushing on for that 'last drive home from the ferry' when I went over a bump and the exhaust dropped off the manifold-

not great in the darkness of those Dorset roads!

If you are a newer member then two pieces of wisdom for you....

1. We have a Facebook page - do a search for Wessex MG club and
2. If you want club logo'd shirts etc then you need to pop into Galileo clothing in Devizes - you can park in Morrisons and walk around the corner to Estcourt St. Opposite Kwik Fit. You can take in your own clothing or choose fleeces, polos etc etc from a catalogue that they have - almost everything is in there.

I am busy preparing the talk on the Battle of the Somme 100 that we have coming up at Clubnight - join me!





PICTURE GALLERY



OUR MYSTERY RUN - THANK YOU KEN.
PICS COURTESY OF JOHN BISHOP



Images of the club's
trip to Beaulieu -
courtesy of Anne
Warn



2016 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
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

Club Asset List

CLUB ASSET LIST			
ASSET	CURRENT HOLDER	CONTACT DETAILS	
Engine Hoist	Nigel Fowler	01380 840031	erchfonte@gmail.com
Club Sail Banner	Kevin Meakin	01380 727151	kevinmg1@live.com
Club Fence Banner			
Event Shelter + Sides	Vic Wright	01225 704685	vic@devizes-domestic.co.uk
Gazebo			
Projector	Paul Warn	01225 768676	paul.william.warn@gmail.com
Speakers	Paul Warn	01225 768676	paul.william.warn@gmail.com
Projector Stand	Graham Bennett	01380 723872	graham.bennett1945@yahoo.com
Projector Screen & Cover	Graham Bennett	01380 723872	graham.bennett1945@yahoo.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 Paul Warn by email to ensure the asset list is kept up-to-date.

CAR FOR SALE

The following is an actual advertisement in an Irish newspaper:

Automobile for Sale

1985 Blue Volkswagen Only 50 miles.

Only first gear and reverse ever used.

Never driven hard.

Original tyres.

Original brakes.

Original fuel and oil.

Only 1 driver.

Owner wishing to sell due to employment lay-off.

