



# WESSEX MG CAR CLUB THE TOLLGATE INN-HOLT

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

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**NEXT CLUB NIGHT**  
25th February - Start  
Time 8:00pm

[http://  
www.wessexmgclub.org](http://www.wessexmgclub.org).

As we are now in mid February hopefully the worst of the winter is now behind us and we can look forward to the better weather.

Our first club night of the year featured a "Feel the Bag" competition, and this was certainly an entertaining evening with unusual items in the bags and some interesting answers.

The major event of the month was the Valentines meal at The Tollgate, which was a very enjoyable evening with great food and I am certain that there will be pictures elsewhere in your newsletter.

Our outdoor events season commences very soon with some of the familiar events and also some new ones.

For those who have not yet booked for the Club Spring break in May to Mid Wales, there are now 2 rooms available due to 2 members having to cancel their visit due to unforeseen circumstance.

I have applied for passes for the Bowood Classic Car Show on Bank Holiday Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup> and should receive these shortly, if you would like a pass please let me know.

The Gloucester MG club would like to challenge us to Skittles again this year and we will be having a home and away match with them and also later in the year our own club skittles challenge match.

On behalf of all of our members I would like to wish Ken Scott a speedy recovery from his recent medical treatment and we look forward to seeing both Ken and Anne at club events again in the near future.

For our February club night which starts as usual at 8.00pm we will have a quiz, featuring general knowledge questions hosted by Sue Warder.

Hope to see you on the 25<sup>th</sup>. at The Tollgate.

**Martyn**





## From Abingdon to Shanghai

Paul Warn

Of our membership, Tom Strickland has MG embedded in his DNA. Not only has he owned a number of post war MGs, but he has embraced the new iteration of the much loved MG brand by owning models of the new breed of MG, including the current MGZS.

I'm sure he would agree that the history of MG is a tangled web, debated by MG aficionados the world over. I'm going to attempt to unravel it in my October Club night talk. However, to cut to the chase, between 1924 and 2005 it has had to my knowledge six owners, the last of which, the MG Rover Group, entered receivership in April 2005.



The news that the company was going into receivership, is one of those occasions where you knew what you were doing when the news broke - just like the the assassination of JFK - When I

first heard the news of the demise of MG, I was attending a conference at what was the Royal Military College of Science in Shrivenham. It seemed that MG was going to join those other much loved brands - Austin, Austin-Healey, Morris, Riley, Rover, Standard, Triumph and Wolseley in that graveyard of British automobiles in the sky. Then as we thought all was lost, in the best traditions of all good western films, over the hill came the cavalry in the form of Nanjing Automobile - perhaps not the obvious saviour to the MG enthusiast - but nevertheless the saviour of the MG brand.



Then in 2007 the Chinese government merged Nanjing Automobile with SAIC Motor. Which is where we are now, that is to say MG is now trading as MG Motor under the umbrella of SAIC Motor, with it seems a bright and optimistic future.

SAIC is China's largest motor manufacturer ie the biggest player in the world's biggest market, whose sales in 2017 numbered 6.93 million units. Its own brands include MG and Roewe, the latter being a marque that rose from the ashes of Rover and is also an entity within SAIC. SAIC also assembles Volkswagen, Audi, Skoda, Buick and Chevrolet for the Chinese market.



SAIC presence in the UK consists of a technical centre and design studio on the site of the old Longbridge factory in Birmingham. The Longbridge centre is an integral part of the SAIC Motor Technical Centre based in Shanghai, responsible for key phases of the engineering, research, design and development programmes for new MG and Roewe products for world markets. There is also another design studio and show room in Marylebone London which is complementary to Birmingham, tasked with exploring the future of mobility for both MG and Roewe brands. The studio is digitally based, not only for 2D sketching and 3D modelling but also utilises Virtual Reality.



The first all new MG to hit the UK market was the MG6 GT which became available in May 2011. It was derived from the all new platform shared with the Roewe 550. At the time, I was liaising with the Public Relations arm of SAIC and was invited to try the pre production version of the MG6 on the hill

at the Goodwood Festival of Speed - see the July 2010 edition of this newsletter for the full story - I have included a couple of pics I used in that article and this short extract:

*"..As I said Doug Wallace was our host and he drove the car with the three of us aboard to the start of the hill climb, where we changed seats for my drive up the hill. I have been going to the Festival since the first year in 1993 and always wanted to drive the hill and now was my opportunity.*

*Our car was a five door hatchback with left hand drive, a 4 cylinder in line 1796cc turbocharged petrol engine, transverse mounted in the front - driving the front wheels. Performance is a modest 0-62 in 9.0secs with a top speed of 130mph. The design and specification is similar to the Ford Focus. I'm sure the interior is very acceptable in China, where the car is currently on sale but I didn't think it was up to European standards. But hey it's a pre production model so hopefully work in progress..."*

To maintain the connection between the old and the new, a reworked version of a 1980 MGB GT was the subject of the 2017 SAIC Intern Project. Working under the guidance of designers and engineers at SMTc UK - the technical arm of MG - the BGT has been reimagined. Gone is the four-cylinder B-series engine, replaced with a 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine from MG's current range, developing more than 200bhp.



SMTc UK is home to more than 300 designers and engineers. Each year a select group of interns join the team at Longbridge and the 2017 crop was charged with combining classic MG packaging with modern MG engineering and this is the result.

SAIC MG has come along way since the MG<sup>^</sup> GT in 2010. We should be grateful that the MG name lives on and located on part of the old Longbridge site.





## A Winter Sojourn

Paul Warn

You know what they say - "use it or lose it" - this applies even more as we grow older. It also applies to our classics or any piece of machinery - in order to prevent the works gumming-up it must be exercised regularly. With this in mind we try to exercise "Millie" our Morgan as often as we can during the winter months, taking into account the weather and the condition of the roads.

The default configuration when we go out is with the hood down and if we are super brave, we would have the side-screens off as well... Conditions have been such that we have been able to get out three times this year. The latest being last Thursday when we travelled



to Bruton and the Hauser and Wirth contemporary gallery and multi-purpose arts centre. The weather was bright and warm for the time of year as we set off for Bruton along reasonably quiet country roads.



they did in what was a cheese dairy set in a 100 acre estate - Durslade Farm. All the barns on the old farm have been restored and contain the four main galleries, shop, restaurant and library. All of different shapes and sizes, connected with glass doors and large windows.

To the rear is a contemporary garden designed by Piet Oudolf. It's set in a sloping meadow but contained by hedges, within which are, according to the description, 25,000 herbaceous perennials. At this time of the year of course there was no colour, however Anne tells me in the summer it will look fantastic.



To round off our visit its time for lunch. Equally as impressive as the gallery, it has been restored, again from the old farm buildings and is run by Björn and Odder Roth.

After all this culture it was time to head off

to the Hayne's Motor Museum. This is a regular destination for us during the winter months, as a convenient place to stop off for coffee before giving the car its head and a healthy run back up the A303 and home via Stourhead and their farm shop.



"MILLIE IN THE SNOW"

## MORE ON CLUB EVENTS

### BOWOOD HOUSE CLASSIC CAR SHOW - Sunday May 5th



This is the second year of this local show and I have asked for a number of free passes for us. If you would like to join your fellow club members at this event please let me know and I can allocate you a pass when I receive them.

### WESSEX MG SPRING BREAK LLANDIDDROD WELLS - Thursday May 9th

If you have not already booked for our club spring break in Mid Wales, due to unforeseen circumstances Roger & Lynne and Gordon & Sandra cannot now join us on this weekend event, they have both reserved rooms and paid deposit to the hotel, if you would like to take the rooms they have reserved please contact them directly.

### WHITE HORSE CLASSIC CAR SHOW - Sunday September 1st

Held at the White Horse Country Park, (The Old Cement Works), A350 Westbury.

This is the second year of this event organised jointly by the Westbury and Trowbridge Lions Clubs .

I have asked for a reserved area for our club, quite a few of our members have already booked in

The booking arrangements are-  
Visit the website-

<https://www.whitehorsevehicleshow.org>

And enter your details and car details **In the Club Box enter Wessex MG Club**  
You will receive an email acknowledgement and your pass.

**Martyn**

## FROM OUR CONTINENTAL CORRESPONDENT

I received a Brittany Ferries Club notification from them saying that they now offer Motor Car Tour Holidays, should any of our members be interested. Including pre set routes with info

For anyone interested in a few days away, looks pretty good as follows:

3 nights B and B pp.. £239    Full Board £404

4 nights £355 and £452

6 nights B and B £456

7 nights B and B £623

All including car ferries

Full info on their website.

**Roger**

## SCENES FROM OUR VALENTINE'S SUPPER



## Secretary's Scribbles

I am a bit grumpy this week as I missed the snow day. I was in Berlin with 30 A Level students, which was great but I missed throwing snowballs at my kids and wiping out on sledges. Unusually there was no snow in Berlin and we had fairly good temperatures whilst we were out and about.

We take essentially a Cold War tour and enjoy going into bunkers to find out about the provision for people if it actually kicked off. We also do the usual tourist stuff - going up the TV tower and the Reichstag dome as well as sites such as Check Point Charlie and the Stasi Prison. I love the layers of History in Berlin and although I have been there 6 or 7 times there is still more for me to see. I have been trying to 'gem up' so that I could lead the students on a proper walking tour and in doing so keep finding more and more places to show them.

I am currently reading 111 places in Berlin on the Trail of the Nazis which has unearthed some interesting stories that I have essentially just 'walked passed' on previous trips. Next

month sees me take 55 students on my annual WW1 Battlefield trip - this is always fun with awards to those who spot MGs out of the coach windows. My WW1 Guidebook is just about finished and should be published in the autumn. I have found a local specialist military history publisher based in Devizes to use, or I should say we found each other across a desk at a Year 9 Parent Evening.

Our MGZS continues to deliver great practical family driving and I do enjoy driving it. I rolled the Magonette out of the garage and read my book in her for half an hour last week - better than nothing, but not as good as driving her properly on the road.

On the plus side the mornings and evenings are beginning to lighten and so I proclaim spring around the corner.

Tom



# Club Diary

2019 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
25th Feb	Club Night - Quiz	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Sue Warder
25th March	Club Night - Film Night	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
19 - 22 April	Easter Bank Holiday			
TBA	Committee Meeting		The Toll Gate Inn	
28th April	National "Drive It" Day	Yes		Details to be announced
29th April	Club night - Prod & Poke - with chips	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
5th May	Bowood Classic Car Show No 1	Yes	Bowood House	
9th - 12th May	Club Spring Tour	Yes		
20th May	Club night - Mystery Charity Run	Yes		Steve Todd
9th June	MGs in the Park	No		
15th - 16th June	MG Live Silverstone	For Info	Silverstone	
15th - 16th June	Bristol Classic Car Show	For Info	Shepton Mallet	
19th June	Poulshot Green 'turn up' show	For Info	Poulshot Green	
24th June	Club night - Boules	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
30th June	Summer Picnic - Wealds and Downland Living Museum - Chichester	Yes		Malcolm Taylor
22nd July	Club night - BBQ	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	

2019 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
3rd - 4th August	West Somerset Steam Railway & Car Show	Yes		
3rd - 4th August	South Cerney Gloucester Steam Fayre	Yes		
18th August	Bowood Classic Car Show No 2	Yes	Bowood House	
<b>19th August</b>	<b>Club Night - Theme</b> <b>TBA</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	
25th August	Tom's Action Day	Yes	Tom's House	
26th August	Corsley Show	For Info		
1st September	Whit Horse Car Show	For Info	Westbury	
<b>23rd September</b>	<b>Club night - Talk</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Talk by Tom Strickland</b>
<b>28th October</b>	<b>Club night - Talk</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Talk by Paul Warn</b>
8th,9th,10th November	NEC Classic Car Show	For Info		
<b>25th November</b>	<b>Club night - AGM</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Club AGM</b>
<b>14th December</b>	Christmas Party	Yes	<b>TBA</b>	

## Club Asset List

CLUB ASSET LIST			
ASSET	CURRENT HOLDER	CONTACT DETAILS	
Engine Hoist	Vic Wright	01225 704685	vic@devizes-domestic.co.uk
Club Sail Banner	Vic Wright	01225 704685	vic@devizes-domestic.co.uk
Event Shelter + Sides	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	<a href="mailto:stricklandto@hotmail.com">stricklandto@hotmail.com</a>
Projector	Peter Hine	01672 512847	peter_hine@btinternet.com
Speakers	Paul Warn	01225 768676	paul.william.warn@gmail.com
Projector Stand	Paul Warn	01225 768676	paul.william.warn@gmail.com
Projector Screen & Cover	Paul Warn	01225 768676	paul.william.warn@gmail.com
New Set of Boules	Vic Wright	01225 704685	vic@devizes-domestic.co.uk

### 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.