



WESSEX MG CAR CLUB THE TOLLGATE INN-HOLT

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

CONTENTS

PAGE 2

**THE CLUB'S SPRING
WEEKEND IN WALES**

Paul Warn

PAGE 6

**NEW EXCELLENT SPARES
PROVIDER**

Roger Binney

PAGE 7

**A GERMAN DESIGN ICON -
THE JERRY CAN**

Paul Warn

PAGE 10

**A THANK YOU FROM
ENDOMETRIOSIS UK &
THE CLUB'S WINNING
STREAK CONTINUES**

PAGE 11

PHOTO GALLERY

PAGE 12

**SECRETARY'S
SCRIBBLES &
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

PAGE 13

CLUB DIARY

NEXT CLUB NIGHT

24th June Start Time
7:00pm

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

We are now in the peak events season.

So far this month I have attended the Chippenham Lions Cherished Vehicle Show, which was held at a new venue in Langley Burrell. The day started well with those of us with open top cars driving there with the roof down, this would have been a very good show but the organisers closed the show early because of continual heavy rain,

The following week was a visit to MG's in the Park at Burford. This was the 21st anniversary event, and there was a good mix of MG cars from all eras on display, the rain held off until the drive home when once again there was heavy continual rain,

As this issue goes to press there will be a club presence at the Bath Motoring Festival, and then we have the Bristol Classic Car Show at Shepton Mallet.

The destination for our annual Club Picnic on Sunday June 30th, has had to be changed because of an unexpected problem with parking at the Downland Museum. Malcolm has been busy and found an alternative venue, which is the Hawk Conservancy near Andover.

The Gloucester MG Club have now scheduled a date for our away skittles match, it is Thursday 24th October. We need to form a team for this to enable our club to retain the trophy, volunteers please.

Our next Club Night is the club Boules match, which will start at the earlier time of 7.00pm at The Tollgate on Monday 24th June.

Hope to see you on the 24th.

Martyn





The Club's Spring Weekend in Wales

Paul Warn

Spring seems a long way off when arrangements are being made for the club's annual spring weekend - this year the 9th through to the 12th May. However, unsurprisingly, time has flown by and we are looking up at a grey sky on the morning of the 9th, wondering whether to put the hood down prior to making for the Tollgate car park, to meet-up with our fellow travellers.

Our fellow travellers consisted of four other cars, the rest making alternative arrangements. Our lunch stop enroute to Llandrindod Wells - our base for the weekend - was Abergavenny, specifically the Lamb and Flag. Under threatening skies we departed the Tollgate and set off via the M4, M48 and a toll-less severn bridge to Abergavenny. We motored across country via USK and the other four via Monmouth.

Following an adequate lunch at the Lamb and Flag, the five of us set off once again for the Metropole Hotel in Llandrindod Wells. Everyone arrived safe and sound. Martyn had arranged a dedicated car parking area for the club, which was ideally situated adjacent to the hotel entrance. Once we had registered and settled into our room, we took a walk around the town to gather our bearings before changing for supper. We all decided to eat at the hotel for the duration of our stay. And why not, the food was excellent.



We awoke on Friday morning to the sun shining through our window. The Metropole is a popular destination for visitors to this part of the country. We had members of the Jensen Club, a walking group and a motorbike club for company during our stay. Over a leisurely breakfast there was plenty of maps set out and plans being made, to take advantage of the great driving roads on what seemed to be a dry, sunny morning. As you would expect, everyone had different

plans and interests, although come the end of the weekend we all pretty much did similar things. As a flavour of what those things were, here is what Anne and I did.

We particularly wanted to go to the picturesque town of Ludlow with its castle looking out along the main street. A great drive along the A488 and A 4113 with the hood down. It was market day with many interesting stalls selling fresh food, antiques, cheeses and most other things, including pottery. The clouds were beginning to gather and so we decided to head out to our next planned stop. The hood was now up as it started to rain as we made are way to Berrington Hall. By the time we arrived the rain had stopped.



We had lunch and then a tour of the 'Hall' before a gentle stroll around the gardens. A huge Wisteria covered the south facing side of the walled garden and newts were swimming in the fountain. Taking the B roads back to the hotel via Presteigne was a wee bit arduous as it rained most of the way back.

Saturday dawned sunny if a little chilly. Our destination today being Devil's Bridge via Rhayader and the Elan Valley. A root recommended by the owner of

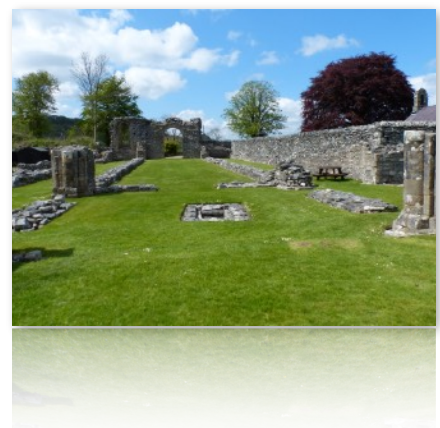


the hotel who of course had a Morgan and a classic BMW CSI. We set off for Devil's Bridge with the hood down. Again great driving roads and stunning scenery, although narrow, with passing places along the way. The Vale of Rheidol Railway terminates at Devil's Bridge, conveniently located



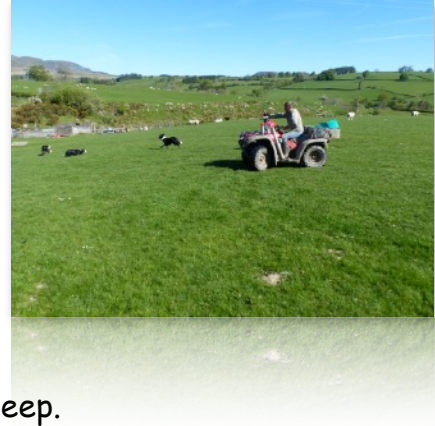
adjacent to 'The Two Hoots Cafe'. It is a popular destination for touring car and motorcycle clubs. We met up with a group of bikers. We sat chatting to them over a light lunch. We also met up with Martyn and Kevin who had set off earlier for Aberystwyth to take the Vale of Rheidol train up to Devil's Bridge.

We then plotted a long scenic route back to the hotel via Tregaron and Lampeter. On the way we paused to visit the ruins of Strata Florida Abbey - which translates from the Latin simply as the Vale of Flowers. This is a truly evocative and peaceful site, which we last visited some 30 years ago.



Sunday arrived all too quickly. Our stay and I think I speak for the others has been really enjoyable. The scenery outstanding with unbelievable stretches of bluebells on the hillsides and being able to see for miles whilst travelling on fabulous roads - pot-hole free and virtually empty of traffic - heaven.

After saying good-bye to everyone, we topped up with fuel and wine and travelled further north via Powys Castle and Lake Vyrnwy to our new destination. Our home for the next few days was to be a three bedroomed cottage - 'Glan Donan' - on the south western tip of Llyn Tegid, better known as Bala Lake. We were blessed with a quiet location looking out across a valley of fields and hills and of course sheep.



We spent a few days seeking out more wonderful roads and countryside. Amongst other places, we visited Portmeirion.



In 1925, Welsh architect Clough Williams-Ellis acquired the site which was to become Portmeirion. He had been searching for a

suitable site for his proposed ideal village for several years and when he heard that the Aber Iâ estate near Penrhyndeudraeth was for sale, he did not hesitate to make an offer.

He wanted to show how a naturally beautiful location could be developed without spoiling it, and that one could actually enhance the natural background through sympathetic development. The Aber Iâ estate had everything he had hoped for as



a site for his architectural experiment: steep cliffs overlooking a wide sandy estuary, woods, streams and a nucleus of old buildings.



On our way back we visited a jewel of a garden in the aforementioned village of Penrhyndeudraeth. Plas Brondanw was given to Sir Clough Williams-Ellis by his father in 1902. The gardens at Plas Brondanw it is said, are the finest example of Sir Clough's talent for creative

landscape design. The main features date from the early part of the 20th Century

before he began Portmeirion, work continued on and off until the 1960's. Why the picture of a jerry can? see page 7.

Also during our stay we decided to take a trip on the Ffestiniog Railway. It was originally built to transport slate from the quarries in Blaenau Ffestiniog, however now it takes passengers on a 13½-mile journey from Blaenau Ffestiniog to the harbour town of Porthmadog. The trains descend over 700 feet from the mountains through tranquil pastures and magnificent forests, past lakes and waterfalls, literally alongside houses, around tight bends clinging to the side of the mountain or tunnelling through it.



Again time passed too quickly and it was time to say goodbye to 'Glan Donan' and head for Hay-on-Wye, our overnight stop before our onward journey home. The journey from Hay-on-Wye was not without its problems. The police closed the A40 to allow a light aircraft to make an emergency landing - causing chaos on the arterial roads leading to the A40. Ho hum.

Very many thanks to Martyn for arranging a great spring weekend in Wales.





EXCELLENT ALTERNATIVE SPARES PROVIDER

I recently decided to buy a new indicator switch for the A and came across SC Parts Group who some of you may not know, and they came with nice surprises.

Firstly the part arrived from Germany very promptly by DPD and cost £15 less than from the MG Owners Club at £96.

Secondly, I was not happy with the return speed of the indicator(too fast) despite adjusting the bleed screw on it. An email prompted an immediate response and apology and a no charge replacement, with no requirement to return the original, arriving two days later.

Thirdly I requested one of their parts catalogues (car specific) and they are absolutely excellent with very clear diagrams.

Prices on line or via phone. They even have some Morgan parts it seems. Really nice to get first class service without hassle.



Roger Binney





A German
Design Icon -
the Humble
Jerry Can
Paul Warn

In light of recent commemorations of the D Day landings, I thought you may be interested in the the following.

Whilst we were visiting Plas Brondanw, the gardeners were at work mowing the lawns and I came across this Jerry Can being used for refuelling the mowers. Now, we see these containers everywhere and pretty much take them for granted. However there was a time when it was the subject of a German top secret project.

During World War II the United States exported more tons of petroleum products than all other war matériel combined. The mainstay of the enormous oil-and fuel transportation network that fed the war was the oceangoing tanker, supplemented on land by pipelines, railway tankers and lorries. But for combat vehicles on the move, another link was crucial—smaller containers that could be carried and poured by hand and easily moved around a battle zone by trucks.

Hitler knew this. He perceived early on that the weakest link in his plans for blitzkrieg using his panzer divisions was an adequate fuel supply. He ordered his staff to design a fuel container that would minimise fuel losses under combat conditions. The result was a fuel can that was so well designed it is still used today. The Germans called it the Wehrmachtskanister. The allies nick named it the jerrycan for obvious reasons. The jerrycan had been developed under the strictest secrecy, and its unique features were many.



The sides of the can were marked with cross-like indentations that strengthened the can while allowing the contents to expand, the two halves being welded together. It had three handles, enabling a soldier to either carry two full containers or four empty ones, or easily pass one to another man in bucket-brigade fashion. Its capacity was approximately five gallons. Thanks to an air chamber at the top, when full it would float on water if dropped overboard or from a plane. Its short spout was secured with a snap closure that could be propped open for pouring, making it unnecessary to carry a funnel or opener - unlike the pic above... A gasket made the mouth leak proof. An air-breathing tube from the spout to the air space kept the pouring smooth. And most important, the can inside was lined with an impervious plastic material developed for the insides of steel

beer barrels. This enabled the jerrycan to be used alternately for gasoline and water. Millions of these new fuel containers were manufactured and stored at the Tempelhof Airport.

Early in the summer of 1939, this secret weapon began a roundabout odyssey into American hands. An American engineer named Paul Pleiss, finishing up a manufacturing job in Berlin, persuaded a German engineer colleague to join him on a trip overland to India. The two bought a car chassis and built a body for it. As they prepared to leave on their journey, they realised that they had no provision for emergency water. The German engineer knew of and had access to the jerrycans stored at Tempelhof Airport. He simply took three and mounted them on the underside of the car.

The two drove across eleven national borders without incident and were halfway across India when Field Marshal Goering sent a plane to take the German engineer back home. Before departing, the engineer compounded his treason by giving Pleiss complete specifications for the jerrycan's manufacture. Pleiss continued on alone to Calcutta. Then he put the car in storage and returned to Philadelphia.

Back in the United States, Pleiss told military officials about the container, but without a sample can he could stir no interest. The risk involved in having the cans removed from the car and shipped from Calcutta seemed too great, so he eventually had the complete vehicle sent to him, via Turkey and the Cape of Good Hope.

It arrived in New York with the three jerrycans intact. The War Department looked at them but in the 'not invented here' mentality unwisely decided that an updated version of their World War I container would be good enough. That was a cylindrical ten-gallon can with two screw closures. It required a spanner and a funnel for pouring.

The one jerrycan in the US Army's possession was later sent to Camp Holabird, in Maryland. There it was poorly redesigned; the only features retained were the size, shape, and handles. The welded circumferential joint was replaced with rolled seams around the bottom and one side. Both a spanner and a funnel were required for its use. And it now had no lining. As any petroleum engineer knows, it is unsafe to store petrol in a container with rolled seams...

Lessons were learned quickly about the jerrycan's advantages and the Allied can's costly disadvantages. 40% of all the fuel sent to Egypt was being lost through spillage and evaporation. Conditions at the rear of Montgomery's army were appalling. Fuel arrived by rail from the sea in fifty-five-gallon steel drums with rolled seams and friction-sealed metallic mouths. The drums were handled violently by local labourers. Many leaked. The fuel that survived was decanted into the infamous five-gallon "petrol tin." This was a square can of tin plate that had been used for decades to supply lamp kerosene. It was hardly useful for petrol. In the hot desert sun, it tended to swell up, burst at the rolled seams, and leak. Since a funnel was needed for pouring, spillage was also a problem.

The British historian Desmond Young later confirmed the great importance of fuel cans in the early African part of the war. "No one who did not serve in the desert," he wrote, "can realise to what extent the difference between complete and partial success rested on the simplest item of our equipment—and the worst. Whoever sent our troops into desert warfare with the [five-gallon] petrol tin has much to answer for. General Auchinleck estimates that this 'flimsy and ill constructed container' led to the loss of thirty per cent of petrol between base and consumer. ...

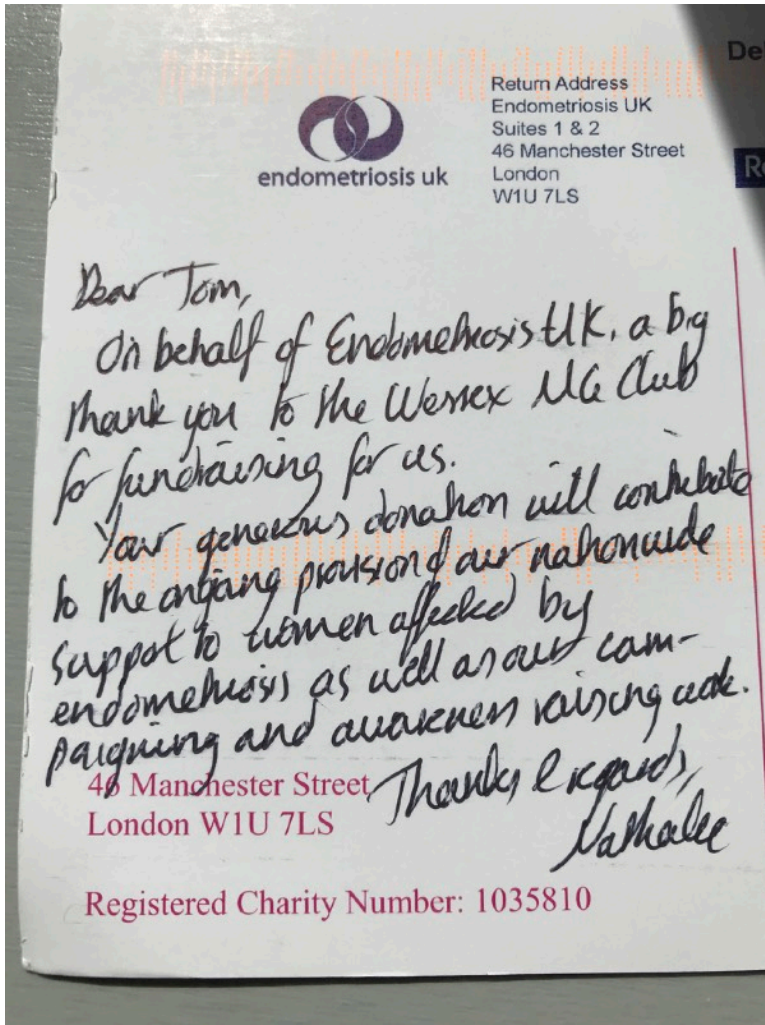
A new five-gallon container under consideration in Washington was cancelled. Meanwhile having captured German fuel dumps the British became aware of what would become known as the jerrycan. The British government finally authorised the gearing up for mass production. Two million British jerrycans were sent to North Africa in early 1943, and by early 1944 they were being manufactured in the Middle East.

Since the British had such a head start, the Allies agreed to let them produce all the cans needed for the invasion of Europe. Millions were ready by D-day. By V-E day some twenty-one million Allied jerrycans had been scattered all over Europe. President Roosevelt observed in November 1944, "Without these cans it would have been impossible for our armies to cut their way across France at a lightning pace which exceeded the German Blitz of 1940."

In Washington little about the jerrycan appears in the official record. A military report says simply, "A sample of the jerry can was brought to the office of the Quartermaster General in the summer of 1940."

The above is based on a report by Richard M. Daniel a retired commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve and a chemical engineer.





Tom received the attached thank you letter from Endometriosis UK following the Club's recent donation to the charity.

WESSEX MG WINNING STREAK CONTINUES

We couldn't win the best club stand at 'MG's in the Park' because they wouldn't allocate us a club area.

So Pat and I decided to enter the raffle and chose the winning raffle ticket. An afternoon tea for two at 'Vera's Kitchen' in Lechlade.

So we will be back there when the winter is over and the sun comes out!

Malcolm Taylor

PHOTO GALLERY

Tom's been dreaming of Morgan 3-wheelers again.... Here's one we saw at the Chelsea Flower Show.



And one from Steve Todd - according to Steve, the owner misunderstood how to get the wheels balanced. Might be in need of Roger's new found parts provider.

Secretary's Scribbles

I had a good opportunity to test the Magnette and its running on Steve's mystery run. Most of the time it felt fine, but once or twice it wavered so I now need some time to check the colour of the plug and see if it has blackened up again - which I expect it has.

I am due to be the wedding car for a colleague at the end of July down in Somerset and so she needs to be running well soon. I have bought my ribbon and bows so the car should look the bees knees.

Steve's run was good and although it was fairly local to me, the crisscrossing nature of it meant that I went down some lanes I didn't know. My daughter Claire was a fine navigator and apart from 'Daddy I

need a wee' we had a great time.

I feel for Malcolm having to tweak his Picnic plans at the last minute, but the Hawk Conservancy is a good back up plan. We actually went there as a club a long time ago and the day was an absolute scorcher - a far cry from the storm billowing and trying to catch me downpours. I remember the flying display to be particularly good with some American Bald Eagles as the headline act.

We should have a really good day there.

Tom



Club Diary

2019 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
15th - 16th June	Bath Pageant of Motoring	For Info	Landsdown	Saturday is free, but Sunday is £5/car. You will need to apply for a pass personally
19th June	Poulshot Green 'turn up' show	For Info	Poulshot Green	
22nd -23rd June	Bristol Classic Car Show	For Info	Shepton Mallet	
24th June	Club night - Boules	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
30th June	Summer Picnic -	Yes	The Hawk Conservancy Trust near Andover.	Malcolm Taylor
7th July	BMC & BL Show at The British Motor Museum	No	Gaydon, Warwickshire	Martyn Lucas
14th July	Atwell Wilson Friends Car Show			
22nd July	Club night - BBQ	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
4th August	South Cerney Gloucester Steam Fayre	Yes		
18th August	Bowood Classic Car Show No 2	Yes	Bowood House	
19th August	Club Night - Name that tune	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Tony Neale
25th August	Tom's Action Day	Yes	Tom's House	
26th August	Corsley Show	For Info		NB If the 25th August is too wet then the 26th will act as the reserve day
1st September	White Horse Car Show	For Info	Westbury	

2019 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
23rd September	Club night - Talk	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Talk by Tom Strickland
TBA	Club Skittles Event	Yes	TBA	VIC
5th October	Autumn Classic	Yes	Castle Combe	
28th October	Club night - Talk	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Talk by Paul Warn
8th,9th,10th November	NEC Classic Car Show	For Info		
25th November	Club night - AGM	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Club AGM
14th December	Christmas Party	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	

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	stricklandto@hotmail.com
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.