



# WESSEX MG CAR CLUB THE TOLLGATE INN-HOLT

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

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**NEXT CLUB NIGHT**

24th 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 but as I write this the forecast is for another wet and windy weekend,

Last Sunday on a very windy and wet day I made the journey up the Fosseway to visit the MG Spares day and car show at Stoneleigh. Despite the weather the show was well attended and it was good to meet owners from other MG Clubs.

Many thanks to Sue and Terry for organising the "Feel The Bag" competition at our first club night of the year, I must say that I did not do very well in the competition!!

Also thanks to Peter for organising the Valentines Meal and also to Sue for sourcing the chocolates and roses, I hope that all of you enjoyed the evening

There are many events in the diary for this year and we have been invited to be one of the featured clubs at the Chippenham Lions Cherished Vehicle Show on Sunday June 7th. One of the charities that

they are supporting this year is Dorothy House. If you would like to join our club at this event please let me know.

I have also booked a club stand at the Bath Festival of Motoring on June 21<sup>st</sup>, I will have more details available about this next month.

Clive Dorling has sent me details of a Classic Car run starting in Calne which may be of interest to you, details are elsewhere in this newsletter.

Tom Strickland is launching his new book about World War One, at Devizes Books on Friday evening February 28<sup>th</sup> and I am hoping to get along to the launch evening

Our next club night at The Tollgate on Monday February 24<sup>th</sup> will see a visit from Wiltshire Search & Rescue, a voluntary organisation who will tell us more about what they do, this starts at the normal time of 8.00pm.

Hope to see you on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Martyn**





## A Visit to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance

Paul Warn

On the 5th February a small contingent of club members arrived at the Air Ambulance airbase in Outmarsh on the outskirts of Semington village near Melksham. Numbers were limited for practical reasons relating to the tour of the facility. Vic will be arranging another visit in the near future. The reason for our visit was twofold. First and foremost to present a cheque on behalf of the club to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance charity and second to have a tour of the facility.

The airbase became operational in May 2018. The charity's lease on their previous base in Devizes ended forcing them to look for an alternative site. We were welcomed by Cas Loudon in her role as Community Relationship & Volunteer Manager. She explained that for the first time in their history the crew and charity team were now located in the same place, making their lifesaving service more cost-effective in the long-term. It was also explained that the site was chosen to allow a build that would future proof the important work undertaken by the charity.



Our hosts during the tour were two trainee critical care paramedics Craig Wilkins and Emma Thompson. We were first escorted to the flight room where an explanation was given on how the missions were planned and how information was used from the various maps of the region and weather data. For example the crew often have to fly in the vicinity of the army's training ground on Salisbury plain, therefore live firing data and permissions to fly are important aspects of the data available.

We were then taken outside where the Rapid Response Vehicle - a Volvo VC90 - was parked alongside an ambulance. The 160mph VC90 carries all the emergency equipment needed for the paramedics whilst the ambulance is used to transport the patient. Apparently the vehicles can have up to three new engines during their lifetime.

This was followed by a visit to the Immersive Simulation Suite (I-Sim suite). This suite allows trainers and crews to practise and demonstrate clinical skills in an interactive environment that feels 'real'. The surfaces of the immersive simulation suite respond to touch, while sights and sounds provide context and challenges to the delivery of patient care. Emma set this snow scene up with the patient in the foreground. We were also shown how advanced and lifelike the modern manikins are for practicing accident scenarios or indeed delivering babies - a picture speaks a thousand words...



Unfortunately the helicopter was not available on the day. However this did not detract from a very interesting and fascinating insight into the operations of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance service.

The money collected during the year in the form of a cheque was gratefully received on behalf of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance by Cas Loudon.

Many thanks to Vic for organising the day.





## A Response to Roger Binney from Rick Meopham

I suspect that the question posed by Roger and the magnificent response by Malcolm as to the reasons for the demise of the UK motor industry will open the floodgates from members with their thoughts and personal experiences perhaps.

It is doubtful that members would dispute Malcolm's views but perhaps you would allow me to summarise and add a couple of thoughts of my own.

The point is made that we should remember that it was not only the UK car industry that fell into terminal decline. The UK aerospace business has also suffered, as I know from first hand experience, due primarily to incompetent successive governments, de stabilising policies, a lack of business aptitude and misreading the markets.

The car industry, unlike the aerospace industry, did however have additional problems to contend with such as major issues of build quality and communist led unions. But it can be argued, so did the French and the Italians. Who can forget for example the Fiat Strada? These would arrive at the dealerships with rust already bubbling through which required a pre delivery rub down and respray. And the French, like us, had their own union issues to contend with, yet they have survived and prospered.

So why then did the UK car industry fail? Was it in fact a number of factors including a cost obsessive management who failed to recognise that investing and building better vehicles would lead to better business? We must not forget a further key component, that of complacency. Management complacency, government complacency, work force complacency and just as important, customer complacency. The UK new car buying public expected their shiny vehicle to leak oil, expected it to rust, expected it to breakdown. Expectations were low. Add to this the poisonous mix of government meddling and union interference combined with an indifferent work force, ensured that failure was inevitable.

As to the post Brexit future I am optimistic enough to believe that we now have many excellent senior managers with a first class well trained work force but remain pessimistic as to our government capabilities at ministerial level, as the on going traditional Eton/ Oxbridge path to senior political positions and thus to making major business/industry decisions, has historically proved disastrous for the U.K.

And with my wild ramblings now concluded, I will now step down from my high horse via my soap box and hand the reins over to other members.

**Rick Meopham**



## Experiences of Cars of the 60s and 70s

Rick Meopham

After submitting my wild ramblings on the subject of the demise of the UK motor industry ( which could drag on for months I suspect ) it occurs to me that another interesting and perhaps amusing topic for future newsletters could be that of members experiences with cars in the 60s and 70s. Many amusing tales I'm sure.

Mine relate to the Lancia Beta ( engine mount failures), New Austin Maestro ( left side trim build different to right side and my personal favourite a Ford Capri which I purchased not realising the Dagenham workers scam of paying bungs to their mates on the assembly line which resulted in a vehicle wildly different to the log book details. (Never was able to sort it out with DVLA). Actually, other than the inevitable rust, the Capri proved to be a fairly decent car - paid the princely sum of £620 and five years on sold it for £620! Mind you, I did spent a fortune on fibre glass and filler, as indeed we all did in those days.

Anyway, food for thought perhaps.

## A Response to Rick Meopham from Roger Binney



My second car, courtesy of my employer, was a 1.8 Marina, colour regularly suggested as "dogshit brown", to my dismay. I used to occasionally carry grain samples in the boot, which used to sprout after time due to water ingress. Hence the name Marina apparently.

However, I have to say when I was eligible for a Vauxhall Cavalier 1.8 SRI, I have to say I thought I had made it, especially when I had my own initialled parking slot at the office, next but one to the entrance and someone washed my car on a Friday and filled full of petrol for the weekend. (Free of course). Now those were the days and downhill ever since!

**Roger**

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## In Response to Rick's Question

Paul Warn

In response to Rick's question ".....members experiences with cars in the 60s and 70s." I have a few, as indeed I'm sure you all have.

The subject of this one involves the first car we bought, the pictured Triumph Vitesse, in the days when the world was in black and white ie 1970. By the time we had saved sufficient money to buy a car, I had been a qualified driver for two years but had not turned a wheel since passing my test. We decided, to be on the safe side, to buy our first used car from a reputable dealer...

We scanned the local Plymouth newspapers and eventually decided to visit Vospers, Plymouth's main Ford dealer who had for sale what would be our first car, a 1964 Triumph Vitesse in steel grey. It was advertised as a low mileage car having had one owner and in excellent condition and would be sold with a full MoT. Having prearranged a test drive and with much trepidation, I arrived to drive the car. The dealership was located on a very busy dual carriageway and my first manoeuvre in a strange car - remember I hadn't driven for two years - was to turn right across the dual carriageway. It was a wintry day and of course in the day I had the added distraction of a manual choke. What I was expected to deduce from this short drive in a strange car with little or no practical knowledge, I had no idea.

We both liked the car, it drove really well as I remember and looked immaculate sitting on the forecourt of the dealership - we were seduced into making a purchase. Within a couple of weeks of buying the car, Evans and Cutler the main Triumph dealership in Plymouth at the time, were advertising free car inspections. Despite having a full MoT, for whatever reason probably a suspicious nature, I decided to take the car along.

Despite having in effect a year's MoT, our new pride and joy failed the inspection. As you probably know, the Triumph Herald family of cars had a separated steel chassis onto which the body was attached. The chassis was of square section with holes along the base to allow water to drain out - the holes also of course allowed water in. The chassis outriggers onto which the suspension was mounted were rotten. As far as I can remember there was no attempt during manufacture to seal the inside of the chassis to prevent corrosion. To cut along story, the outriggers were replaced and the replacement parts of the chassis injected with underseal.

After all these shenanigans the car ran extremely well and trouble free until we sold it (for our first MGB GT) to a work friend of Anne's who was absolutely delighted with the car.

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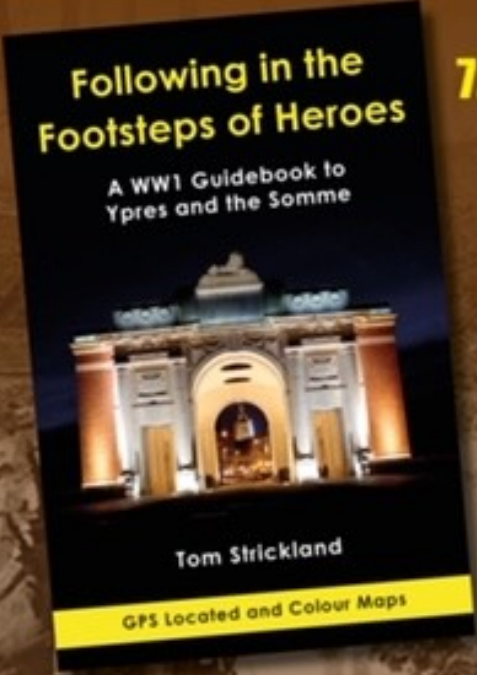
Tom has asked me to include this poster advertising the launch of his book "Following in the Footsteps of Heroes" on the 28th February.

# Following in the Footsteps of Heroes...

**Book Launch and illustrated talk by  
author Tom Strickland**


**28 February 2020  
7.30pm at Devizes Books**

- Illustrated Talk
- Wine & Nibbles
- Discounted Signed Book
- Local Author



**£4**  
Advance Only

**Tickets available from Devizes Books:**  
Devizes Books, Handel House, Sidmouth Street,  
Devizes Wiltshire SN10 1LD  
Tel: 01380 725944 Email: [sales@devizesbooks.plus.com](mailto:sales@devizesbooks.plus.com)



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## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

### Chippenham Lions Cherished Vehicle and Fun Day -Sunday June 7th

The Chippenham Lions will be holding their ninth **Cherished Vehicle and Family Fun Day** on Sunday 7 June, 2020 from 11am at the fields at **Meadow Farm Nurseries, Langley Burrell, Chippenham, SN15 4LW.**

We have been invited to this show and will be one of the featured clubs, I have asked for a club stand,

Please let me know if you wish to go to this event and I will add you to the list of our club entries.

Some of us went last year and it was a very good show with a good selection of cars and also attractions for everyone., only marred by wet weather!!

### Bath Festival of Motoring - Sunday June 21st

I have asked for a club stand at this show and will have more details next month.

### **Martyn**

Clive Dorling has also included a poster - see page 11 - promoting a Classic Car run organised by the Rotary Club of Calne starting in Calne which may be of interest to you.

Rotary Club of Calne Invite you to join our

# Classic Car Run

## Sunday 17 May 2020

Enjoy a fascinating 70-mile route from Calne through beautiful Wiltshire countryside with an interesting stop at Middlewick House finishing at Casterley Barn near Pewsey

**Be one in just a hundred on this special day**



**All proceeds will be shared between  
The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust and Calne Rotary Charities**

For more detailed information, Registration and Regulations

Website: [www.calnerotary.org.uk](http://www.calnerotary.org.uk)

E-mail: [calnerotaryclassicrun@gmail.com](mailto:calnerotaryclassicrun@gmail.com)

Facebook: [facebook.com/calnerotaryclassiccarrun](https://facebook.com/calnerotaryclassiccarrun)



**Supported with all our thanks by**

The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust | Calne Lions  
Marden Belles W.I. | Farm Cottage Brands  
Classic Shows | Rotarians and Volunteers  
The Mayor and Calne Town Council  
Dorothy House Hospice Care | Tesco

069-2020

## Secretary's Scribbles

This month I really haven't done much MGing if I am honest. The weather has been awful and apart from pottering about in the ZS I have been ignoring the Magnette. I have just purchased Goodwood Revival tickets for next September though!

I thought I would get peoples thoughts on the MG E Motion Sports Coupe. It is now due for production! Have a look at the pictures - I dare you not to dribble. The only problem (is it a problem?) is it is electric. 0-100kmh in less than 4 seconds, swivel up doors, back seats (for very little people I am guessing).

I do wish they wouldn't round off the MG Octagon - but what a great looking car. Even Roger would look good in this. What do people think?

I personally think MG needs to start being a bit more sporty - try and put the image back in the right place..... something we can be proud of. MG are expecting this car to be with us before 2021 - that means 2020 and well we are in 2020!! Please please please can I have one - will they do teacher discount?

Tom





## Club Diary

2020 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
24th Feb	Club Night - Talk Wiltshire Search and Rescue	For Info	The Toll Gate Inn	Martyn Lucas
7th March	Social and Scalextric Evening	Yes	Eddington Village Hall	Roger Binney - 5:00 pm start
TBA	Skittles Night	Yes	White Hart Atworth	
23rd March	Club Night - "Name that Tune"	For Info	The Toll Gate Inn	Tony
10th - 13th April	EASTER BANK HOLIDAY			
TBA	Skittles Return Match with Gloucester (Thursday)			
TBA	Committee Meeting		The Toll Gate Inn	
April 24th - 27th	Club Spring Break - South Wales			
27th April	Club Night - Social Evening and Gardening Quiz	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Sue Warder
10th May	Bowood Classic Car Show	Yes	Bowood Estate	Martyn Lucas
18th May	Club Night - Prod & Poke and BBQ	Yes		Martyn Lucas
7th June	Chippenham Lions Cherished Vehicle and Fun Day	Yes	Meadow Farm Nurseries	Martyn Lucas
7th June	MGs in the Park	Yes	Cotswold Wildlife Park	Martyn Lucas
13th - 14th June	MG Live Silverstone		Silverstone	

2020 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
20th - 21st June	Bristol Classic Car Show	For Info	Shepton Mallet	
21st June	Bath Festival of Motoring		Lansdown Rugby club	Martyn Lucas
<b>22nd June</b>	<b>Club Night - Boules</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	
12th July	Summer Picnic	Yes	Newark Park	
25th - 26th July	MGF 25th Anniversary		Gaydon	
<b>27th July</b>	<b>Club night - Mystery Run</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>TBA</b>
1st - 2nd Aug	Gloucester Steam Fayre		South Cerney	
<b>24th Aug</b>	<b>Club Night - Social Evening</b>	<b>No</b>		
30th August	Tom's Action Day	Yes	Tom's House	
6th Sept	Westbury White Horse Classic Car Show	For Info	Westbury	
<b>28th Sept</b>	<b>Club night - Talk TBA</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Talk by Tom Strickland</b>
<b>26th Oct</b>	<b>Club night - Talk TBA</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Talk by Paul Warn</b>
<b>23rd November</b>	<b>Club night - AGM</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Club AGM</b>
12th December	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.