



WESSEX MG CAR CLUB THE TOLLGATE INN-HOLT

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

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CLUB NIGHTS SUSPENDED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE

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

It has certainly been a sad month for your club with the sudden passing of Vic Wright.

Vic was an enthusiastic member of the club, being the longest continual serving committee member and chairman for several terms. He organised many events for the club with the last one being the very popular visit to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Base.

He was a keen MG and classic car person. Always willing to help fellow members and with his knowledge of all things MG help members who had problems with their cars.

Vic was also active in motor sport and a member of a local skittles team and also

the organiser of the club skittles matches.

His support as vice chair and knowledge of club matters was invaluable to me when taking on the role of club chairman.

It was fitting that members managed in accordance with social distancing to pay their final respects to Vic by parking their MG and Morgan cars at the crematorium.

Vic will be sadly missed by all who knew him, and the club will be a strange place without him.

I would like to pass on condolences to Jeni and Verity and all the family.

Martyn



At present monthly club nights are postponed due to Covid 19 restrictions on group meetings, making it not possible to meet at the Tollgate. However, hopefully with another government announcement due in the next few weeks we may be able to organise some form of get together meeting.

I have booked a club stand at this year's Castle Combe Autumn Classic which at present is due to go ahead as planned. See page 9.

Martyn

VIC



Vic was our consistency, our 'Father Figure' in Wessex MG Club. A continuous committee member and our Club Chairman several times over the years.

Vic loved cars, indeed his home was named 'Carmad'. He started with minis, but dreamed of MGs and to him the MGB was the car to have. When I first joined the club Vic had a BGT but it was in bits, in the garage, and it took quite a few years for the BGT to become 'Sid'. I remember going to help Vic re-build the newly painted body-shell at his Bromham home -being fed coffee and biscuits by Jeni (who learnt my weakness for biscuits very quickly). I spent many days helping Vic to get Sid back on the road. Working with Vic was always educational - I was the student and I was trying to absorb all his patient teachings. He had high levels of trust and looking back I am amazed that he trusted me to drill the holes required to reattach the chrome waist strips on his immaculate new panels. On these days we would always stop for lunch with Vic disappearing for 10 minutes to reappear with a couple of rolls and French beer. Vic loved the mechanics and when Sid started to smoke he became 'Hissing Sid', something Vic didn't mind at all - this gave him the opportunity to pull the engine out and use one of his spares, with all the fun and games that goes with an engine change.

A few years later I sold my MGB roadster to Vic and so started the second MG restoration. This car became Bertie that was Vic's real love (other than Jeni of course). Again the car was stripped down and sent off to be painted -this time by a chap down near Amesbury. Vic put the newly painted rolling shell straight into his lockup to let the paint harden and then requested my help to bring it down to his house - this involved me having to steer the pristine MG, without brakes, down the steep hill to his home on a solid tow bar that he had bought especially for the job. Terrifying! Again showing the level of trust Vic would impart. Unfortunately the car's paint needed some rectification and had to go back for a few more coats before it was rebuilt in a giant tent that Vic had located for his drive. Again Vic trusted me and asked if I could rebuild the seats for him, which I did. Over these years what became evident is that I had become a sort of part time apprentice - something that he did again when Steve Todd joined the club.

One of my problems going forward is that Vic was always the first person I called when I had a problem with my MG (or my washing machine). He would always help, either through advice, but more likely through turning up and calmly fixing the disaster in moments. He helped many of the club members with larger projects: Gordon's MGA gearbox, my Midget's engine and gearbox transplant, my ZB's entire suspension rubbers to name but a few. Roger's MGA was a regular patient at Vic's garage and probably knows it's own way there. On these bigger jobs done in his garage for a period of days, he operated a policy of 'if you help and come to learn' then there was no charge for his time. Again evidence of his kindness and his attitude to sharing his knowledge with others.

Vic loved motorsport, he was involved at Castle Combe, The Great Western Rally and spent many years helping Clive on professional rallies. He was also an active member of Bath Motor Club for many years. He enjoyed auto-tests, which he was particularly good at. Don't be fooled by his recent performances at some of our club tests - where he 'sandbagged' due to having set the tests himself - again letting others go before himself. I remember one day arriving at his house early to go up to the Classic Car show -he gingerly walked to the car and explained that he had had a busy night. He had been out with his daughter Verity doing a '12 car' scatter rally and they had rolled the Corsa down a lane in the middle of the night - destroying the car in the process. Vic wasn't going to miss the show just because of his lack of sleep or his bruises....

His role on the Wessex MG Club committee was always total. He was heavily involved in the event planning and perhaps his finest hour was his role in the 25th Anniversary that we held at Lydiard Park. The organisation of this event took

many many days and Vic was a vital cog in the operation. He loved the weekends away and I can hear his voice at committee meetings reminding us that the club was for the wives as well and needed these social occasions. One weekend we stayed in a hotel that didn't really have a carpark and we were forced to use the church carpark next door. This became a problem the next morning when an angry parishioner parked his car across the front of our cars to block us in. I was all for letting it's tyres down but Vic calmly showed us that we could just reverse a bit and inch by inch manoeuvre around it - it was good to see the chaos in the carpark as we left - the other parishioners struggled to park because of the random abandoned car in the middle of the carpark.

I am sure every club member has a story of Vic's kindness. It wasn't just given when asked for. During the patch of my life dominated by young children and when so often you can become quite insular. He would deliberately ring me up every so often to invite me to the Classic car show or ask for my help doing something in his garage. He didn't really need my help, he just wanted to check in on me and keep me involved and it always worked.

Vic was a family man too and Jeni, Verity and his grandchildren were very important to him. The last time I saw him he proudly showed me a framed drawing of his house and garage. This had been presented to him as a present from either Imogen or Alyssa and he was moved to tears as he pointed out all the detail that had been lovingly put in to it.

I am proud to have known Vic and he is someone who will continue to inspire me to be a better person.



TOM

PS

Photograph of Vic courtesy of Steve Todd



This short story won Malcolm runner-up in the Trowbridge in Bloom short story competition, 2018...

On a lovely warm cloudless day, the bullion van swung off the road on its daily trip to the supermarket. As it trundled between the rows of cars towards the front of the store, Ron, the driver exclaimed to Barney, his partner, 'cor look at those two beauties.' He was distracted by two young women sitting in separate cars, with the windows open, lolling back in skimpy summer attire and licking ice creams. They both had on wide-brimmed floppy hats that obscured their faces but Ron could assess the desirability of the rest of their bodies. 'Suppose they've sent their blokes to do the shopping. I wouldn't mind doing the shopping for a go at one of those,' he exclaimed.

'Down Rover' answered Barney, 'just concentrate on the job in hand.'

Ron hurrumphed and turned the truck parallel to the shop front and then reversed into the corner. Barney adjusted his helmet and checked he had all his other security paraphernalia and climbed out of the truck.

Ron locked the doors behind him and settled back to wait for Barney to return with the cash box.

The foyer was busier than normal as there were two characters dressed as a rabbit and a cat collecting money for charity. People were stopped, hunting in their purses and pockets for change to put into the collecting bucket. 'God, my uniform is hot enough, I wouldn't fancy being in those furry oneses,' thought Barney.

Barney was met by a member of staff who swiped his magnetic card through the security lock to let him into the staff offices to collect the day's takings. The money was placed into the strong box shackled to Barney's wrist. He signed the release document and returned the way he had come.

As he was passing through the foyer, the rabbit playfully shook his collecting bucket towards him. 'In your dreams', said Barney. A few paces further on as the rabbit had gone from his vision, Barney suddenly felt his legs violently swept from under him. He hit the floor with a sickening thud that knocked the wind out of him. Before he could gather his senses, the cat was on top of him and he felt the prick of a sharp knife at his throat. 'Don't even think about activating anything', growled a voice from inside the cat suit. He watched as the rabbit withdrew a giant pair of bolt croppers from inside his outfit and effortlessly severed the chain attaching Barney to the strong box.

The next second they were gone, sprinting towards a car that had accelerated to the front of the shop. Another car with a young woman at the wheel spurted across the roadway and parked immediately in front of the bullion truck, boxing it in. The woman withdrew the keys, leapt out and as she too was sprinting for the other car, locked her car doors with the remote.

With all four in the getaway car and the rabbit shouting, go, go, go, it accelerated rapidly up the roadway towards the exit.

As the getaway car commenced its run a frail little old lady started to pull out of a parking space further up the row. Suddenly she heard the roar of the accelerating car's engine and looked toward the source of the noise. The noise of the straining engine was joined by the blare of its horn. The old lady saw a car careering towards her with a giant cat and a giant rabbit in it. Both were waving frantically at her. She fainted.

As the old lady slumped forward her foot pressed on the accelerator and her car plunged into the side of the getaway car. The momentum of her little old car was enough to deflect the bigger car from its path and it careered into the line of parked cars to its left, dragging the old ladies car with it. The car gradually lost its momentum with a grinding of metal as it became entangled with one car after

another. It finally stopped and the horrendous noise of screeching, tearing metal abated.

The 'would be' robbers were shouting and swearing and flailing about, trying to get out of the car but all its doors were jammed shut and it was trapped between the old ladies car and the carnage to its left . As their world quietened down they could hear the sound of police sirens in the distance.

During the mayhem of the collision, the little old lady had stayed unconscious. Now, she started to stir. She groaned and pushed herself up off the steering wheel. She ached all over. She shook her head and tried to focus her vision and recall what had happened. She became aware of another car immediately to her left. In the car were two women and a giant cat and a giant rabbit, all staring malevolently at her. She fainted.

An unexpected outcome for a trip to the supermarket. The best laid plans of mice - and cats and rabbits!



Tom Strickland sent this photo for inclusion in this month's newsletter. Ideal for a few amusing captions?



Just a Thought

The government is going to pour billions into 'build, build, build' to create jobs. But how about 'maintain, maintain, maintain,' of what we already have. I've always thought that there is so much that needs to be done in this country.

What is the point of paying people who are out of work to sit at home doing nothing, when you could be paying them to be doing useful public works.

If they directed this money in the right direction, we could be driving on beautifully smooth roads, free from potholes, patching and weeds. Well, maybe not free from patching, because as soon as they had resurfaced something, someone else would be along digging it up!

Some of our pavements are like 3rd world goat tracks. I have just urged Trowbridge Town Council to come for their annual deforestation of the pavement outside of my house. The forest gets bigger each year, because they bring their weed ripping machine to tear up the weeds. This breaks up the tarmac even more and next year the forest boundary is bigger. Unlike the Amazon Rain Forest.

I keep trying to sow a seed in their mind to the effect that resurfacing it would save them money in the long run (or maybe even short run). But no, that's a different council and a different budget?

Another thing where lack of maintenance defeats new technology must be white lines, or the lack of them. In some places lane markings and stop lines are almost indistinguishable. How does this affect 'lane sensing' technology, I wonder. What's the point of deploying this wizardry if there are no lane markings to detect? Yet, in another respect modern technology is essential. You couldn't find anywhere without a 'sat nav', because it's no good relying on sign posts. They have all disappeared into untended hedgerows.

Okay, what else needs putting to rights in the world?

Malcolm Taylor

CASTLE COMBE AUTUMN CLASSIC

SATURDAY October 3rd and Sunday October 4th, 2020

I have booked a club stand for the autumn classic at Castle Combe Circuit, which this year is being held for 2 days.

We have a special code to book discounted tickets which need to be booked by August 30th to get the special price

You can book at <https://castlecombecircuit.co.uk/shows/autumn-classic-racing-festival/03/10/2020/club-book>

WESSEX MG CLUB And enter the code WESSEX AUTUMN

Tickets are for one day £15 or for seniors £12

For both days £20 or £18 for seniors

Alternatively let me know and I will book a ticket for you

Hopefully this event will go ahead and not be postponed due to Covid-19



**PETROL AND
HOW IT HAS
CHANGED****1960s**

UK forecourts sold regular, premium and super grades. They had different descriptions according to who sold them. So the star rating was introduced: 2* - (91 octane), 3* a blend (94 octane) 4* (97 octane) and 5* (100 octane.

1979

5* phased out to reduce the use of high-aromatics ingredients

1986

4* lead content reduced from 0.4g/litre to 0.15. Unleaded (95 octane) replaces 2* and 3*.

**What Does
Yours Drink?****Paul Warn**

Some years ago I got involved with the make-up of fuels bought on the forecourts of our petrol stations. Since then I have tried to understand how fuels have evolved and occasionally written a piece in this newsletter - usually, over recent times, about the increased alcohol content and its potential effect on our classic cars...

From sometime in 2021, this country's forecourts will be selling petrol with up to 10% ethanol. It will not be an alternative to what's currently on offer as originally envisaged, instead the new fuel called 95 E10 will replace the current 95-octane standard unleaded (95 E5) which has up to 5% ethanol.

Terry Warder has experienced problems with the fuel tank on one of his collection of motorbikes, which he puts down to the current E5 fuel. There is also anecdotal evidence from experts, classic car specialists and clubs who have reported failures of rubber fuel-system components, corroded carburettors and petrol tanks. And in the extreme the doomsayers predict the disappearance of cars unable to use the new fuel.

On the other hand, others have said there is no need to panic - yet - the plan is to keep super-unleaded (octane rating 97 or 98) available in up to 5% E5 form as now, to ensure that cars unable to use E10 will be catered for. Presumably acknowledging that classic

1990s

Super unleaded
(98 octane) arrives
in the UK.

2000

Leaded petrol
banned, and 4*
becomes lead free
97 octane LRP with
potassium additive
to replace tetra-
ethyl lead. Super
unleaded drops to
97 octane.

2002

Sulphur levels in
fuel reduced. Some
super unleaded
reverts to 98
octane and sulphur
free,

cars matter, or at least they matter for up to 5 years after E10s introduction when the situation will be reviewed.

The whole point of this of course is that automotive ethanol is a renewable biofuel and according to Government figures the 744 million litres of it blended into fuel in the UK in 2017/18 offset 880,000 tonnes of global warming CO2. The use of E10 could offset another 700,00 tonnes.

Of course 98 E5 is more expensive than 95 E5 is now and 95 E10 is likely to be, but that might be a price we pay for continued use of our classic cars, as reliance on fossil fuels is reduced. The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs is to "seek assurance that historic vehicle owners will not be financially penalised at the pump when purchasing 98 E5, and that its availability will not be time limited" - good luck with that...

One of the earlier proposals was to make 95 E5, 95 E10 and 98 E5 all available, as in France and Germany for example, but it seems that idea has been abandoned. One reason is that take-up of E10 especially in Germany was low while 95 E5 was available, partly because fuel consumption is slightly worse - ethanol has a lower calorific value than the rest of the fuel mix. The other reason is that the UK's petrol forecourts nowadays operate with just two types of petrol and as few as two petrol storage tanks.

Being optimistic, many classic cars will be able to use E10 fuel, in fact it has been the standard petrol in the USA for a couple of decades. However there are anomalies. The original Mazda MX-5 is not deemed E10 compatible by its manufacturer, but the Mazda Miatas in the US have been running happily on E10 for many years. So come the day, if you do not want to spend the extra on E98 E5, and E10 is your choice, it may call for a slightly richer fuel settings in cars that can't self-adjust (anything without a lambda sensor). and any deterioration of parts affected by ethanol, or

2003

LRP disappears through lack of demand. EU allows unleaded to contain up to 5% ethanol.

Some super unleaded later gets a small amount of ethanol.

2021

95 E10, with minimum 5.55 ethanol replaces 95 E5

98 E5 Super Unleaded to stay on sale for five years. And then?



the water it absorbs, will be greater than already experienced with E5.

Do you remember Cleveland Discol?

Putting ethanol into petrol is not a new idea. Such a fuel was widely available from the 1930s until, in the UK at least 1968. Here it was sold as Cleveland Discol which used the octane-enhancing effect of ethanol in place of tetra-ethyl lead and promised 'a cleaner burn'. It's interesting to note that Cleveland Discol was an unleaded petrol. There's no evidence of widespread engine or fuel system issues in period as a result either of this or of the ethanol content. Cleveland Petroleum was taken over by ESSO in 1968 and the ethanol-blend fuel was replaced by normal leader petrol.



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Secretary's Scribbles

See Tom's Tribute to Vic
Wright

Club Diary

2020 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
1st - 2nd Aug	Gloucester Steam Fayre		South Cerney	Postponed to August 2021
24th Aug	Club Night - Social Evening	No		TBC
30th August	Tom's Action Day	Yes	Tom's House	TBC
6th Sept	Westbury White Horse Classic Car Show	For Info	Westbury	Postponed to September 2021
28th Sept	Club night - Talk TBA	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Talk by Tom Strickland - TBC
26th Oct	Club night - Talk TBA	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Talk by Paul Warn - TBC
23rd November	Club night - AGM	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Club AGM - TBC
12th December	Christmas Party	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	TBC

Club Asset List

CLUB ASSET LIST			
ASSET	CURRENT HOLDER	CONTACT DETAILS	
Engine Hoist	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	stricklandto@hotmail.com
Club Sail Banner	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	stricklandto@hotmail.com
Event Shelter + Sides	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	stricklandto@hotmail.com
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Projector Stand	Paul Warn	01225 768676	paul.william.warn@gmail.com
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New Set of Boules	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	stricklandto@hotmail.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.