



# WESSEX MG CAR CLUB THE TOLLGATE INN-HOLT

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

As we begin the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century I would like to wish everyone a healthy and happy year, during which at some time we will all be able to get together again.

At present with the escalation of the Covid 19 infection, the year has not started well but with the rollout of the vaccine and by being careful, hopefully things will improve in the coming months.

We held a committee meeting this week and in this newsletter you will find a provisional events diary for the coming months.

I have been contacted by two of the local Lions Clubs and have booked a club stand for the Chippenham Lions Cherished Vehicle Day in June and also the Westbury & Trowbridge Lions White Horse Car Show in September, both are hoping to be able to go ahead with these events but

there may be changes. There will be more details in the February newsletter.

We are hoping from the end of April, subject to the Coronavirus restrictions in place at the time, to be able to organise some form of regular outdoor club activity and if this is possible details of where and what will be in the newsletter sent out in the actual month. This seems to be the only thing we can do as restrictions can change rapidly which I am certain that you all appreciate.

Remember that we still have the regular weekly fun quiz nights on Zoom to keep us entertained until we can all physically meet again.

Be careful, keep safe and well and let's hope that the brighter future arrives soon.

**Martyn**







Happy Birthday

Roger Binney

I bought my "A" 20 years ago in the coming March, when she had just reached her 40th birthday. I was 11 when she was borne, starting grammar school in shorts with a compulsory tie and cap to wear. So 2021 is quite a significant year, when she reaches 60 and my 20th anniversary.

I believe I have shared the story of my spontaneous purchase from Thornfalcon Garage situated half way between the A303 and the M5 and its consequences but, I thought you might like to see why I was seduced and some of the pictures of her restoration that led to her pristine condition.

The guy who restored her decided to bring her back to original showroom condition and the quality of his work has proved its worth. Still no rust and just a few small blemishes on the paintwork. She is still , as original, with just an electronic fuel pump as a concession.



On buying her I was faced with the choice of three lovely cars, the A, a red Healey 3000 and a Morgan trike, all perfect. I should have bought all three but I probably wouldn't have lived to enjoy them once I got home! Price then was £13,750, a bit over the odds but proved a good choice.

With a bit (lot) of help from Terry, a rear brake cylinder was replaced a couple of weeks ago and I have a replacement rear damper on order just now. 75 mph towards Melksham, on a sunny day was just heaven to blow away those Covid blues.







HAYNES MOTOR  
MUSEUM...CRIKEY  
JUST MADE IT

PAUL WARN

You would have read in Tom's November scribbles, that the Strickland family motored down to the Haynes Motor Museum during the autumn half term. The museum had just reopened - following an enforced period of closure for you know what - in time for the half term holiday. Advantage was taken of the six month closure to make a number of changes to the museum and to change some of the displays.

We also paid a visit the week following half term, intrigued to see the changes.

The museum is a popular destination for Anne and I, primarily because during the winter months we use it as a destination to take Millie our Morgan for a run - weather and salted roads permitting - to blow away the cobwebs. The routine is to travel down the A359 - hood always down - via Frome and Bruton. Mosey around the museum, have a little lunch and return via the A303. The A303 is all dual carriage from the museum to our exit onto the B3092, and therefore an ideal opportunity to give the engine plenty of breathing space. The B3092 allows us to pop into the farm shop just before the entrance to Stourhead for "essential" food shopping and then homeward bound. A perfect day.

Referring to our diary, prior to this latest outing, the last time we paid a visit was Friday March 13th a few days before the first lock-down on March 17th. For this autumn visit booking was compulsory and spookily as it turned out, this visit was again two days before the second lock-down of 2020.

During 2020 the Haynes website had been promoting the changes that were planned during the summer months, so we were curious to see what changes had been made. We were not disappointed. The new lighting and black painted ceilings give the museum a



Dedicated to John Haynes

very classy look. It reminded us of the time we visited the Schlumpf museum on the way back from the Italian Grand Prix in Monza in 2008. The Schlumpf is located in Mulhouse north of Basel near the Swiss border with France. The museum houses amongst other collections the largest collection of Bugattis in the world. Good company.

Immediately on entering the museum there is now a new display dedicated to the life of the museum's founder John Haynes OBE who died earlier in 2020. However like Tom I was keen to see what they had done to the "Red Room".

As we made our way I came across a 1915 Horstmann, it has probably been in the museum for some while but it was the first time I remember seeing it. You probably know their story but I will tell you anyway. Horstmann cars were manufactured in Bath.



Sidney Horstmann established his company in 1913 in James Street West. His first car was launched at the London Motor Show in 1913 and the company went on to manufacture around 3,000 cars until 1929. This particular model cost £155 compared to a contemporary Model T Ford which cost £135.

Now back to the "Red Room". As you can see from the title pic it is still there. This area sets the scene for the rest of your journey through the exhibits. To my mind the

museum had become tired, a fantastic collection of cars and motorbikes but unimaginative in the way they were presented - perhaps the reason for not noticing the Horstmann mentioned earlier? What a difference now! The same red cars but laid out in a completely different way, complemented by the new lighting, paint job and wall exhibits.

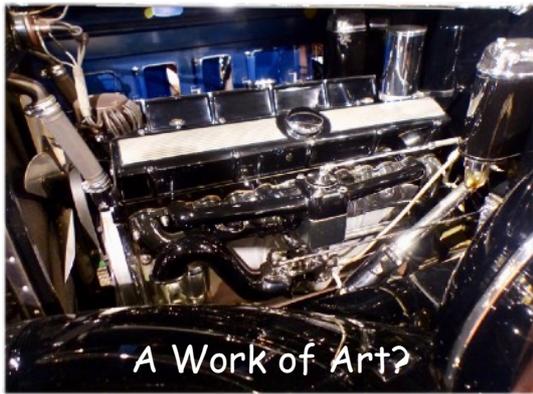
Anne often asks which is my favourite car in the museum. Given the number and sheer diversity of exhibits it is a very difficult call. However lets say the car I always like to look over is this 1956 AC ACE. Those of you who know the AC Cobra story will know that this AC ACE is the antecedent of the Cobra. AC was founded in 1904, and after a bumpy ownership the Hurlock brothers William and Charles bought the company following the depression in the early thirties. The Cobra owes a lot to John Tojerio and - through him - to Enzo Ferrari. In 1953 Tojerio built two Bristol engined sports racers and clothed them in aluminium, with an aerodynamic shape almost identical to

the contemporary Ferrari 166MM. The Tojerio bodies borrowed the Italian superleggera (super-light) system, shaping the aluminium body over a framework of welded tubes. The brothers liked Tojerio's light simple design and agreed to produce it but using their own venerable and cheaper AC engine. Called the ACE the car was an immediate hit at the 1953 London Motor Show. In 1956 AC finally offered the ACE with the 2 litre Bristol engine. When Carroll Shelby learned that AC Cars were losing their supply of Bristol engines around 1959/60, he arranged for AC to supply chassis and Ford their V8 and the AC Cobra was born. The Cobra was sold through Ford's US dealer network.



1956 AC ACE

Just a couple of other things before I finish. If you were looking for motoring works of art, then it would be difficult not to include the 1929 Cadillac V16 engine -



A Work of Art?

designed by Owen Nacker if you ever. As you can see it's a handsome creation of chrome and polished aluminium, porcelain and gleaming black enamel. No unsightly cables or hoses.

And finally there's quite a good display courtesy of Williams Grand Prix of a number of their Grand Prix cars. I was expecting examples representing the Williams story which is not the case unfortunately. To sum-up, well worth a visit. I'm sure I noticed "new"

exhibits only because they are now displayed in a more interesting way eg the Horstmann.





## My Journey With MG Cars

Chris Nixon

I have always been interested in cars. As a child I had a large collection of Dinkey and Corgi vehicles (what would they be worth today?) and then as a teenager if I was offered a car for free or could afford it with my pocket money, I'd take possession and with my friend push it home, making part of the back garden look like a scrap yard as my mother would often tell me. But I enjoyed taking them apart and making them go again or making a good one from two or three.

It was mainly made up of Austin sevens. Old Morris's and I started to drive around in an Austin seven Ruby 1936, cable brakes, side valve engine. I was fortunate we lived on the Chiltern hills, a large garden, and had access from our back garden to areas of common land so started driving well under the age of 17.

This all ended abruptly with my mother calling in the local scrap man one day and clearing the garden of all the cars, she had had enough and wanted her garden back. (Again, I often think what they would be worth today) I was heartbroken, and it caused friction with my mother for years. My father who at the time worked mainly abroad did not offer any opinion. Looking back now I should have at least tided up a bit and been more understanding.

College, women, work, and Young Farmers saw an array of vehicles come and go as finances were tight to say the least, so it would be some years before circumstances and interest allowed me to purchase my first MG.

The first one was an MG Montego, I know, not a true MG, but at the time we had a family, and it seemed the sensible option of a performance car and children.

It had an electric sunshine roof, 2Litre petrol engine and was a great drive. I think it was a very underestimated car, it had so much room for both front and back passengers and was great fun to drive. Coming back from France once it had all our cases in the boot, the children had boxes of wine under their feet in the back, and even in the engine bay bottles of beer were stored. What a car!

Then as we also had a company car, I saw an MG Maestro with low milage for sale, colour red. It had been owned by a policeman and the number plate had 999 on it. The Montego now with many miles on the clock, was sold, and the Maestro purchased.

We covered again, many trouble-free miles, in my view a great car, I did look at the turbo version but at the time insurance costs and finding an un-thrashed second had one made it difficult, plus my wife said NO.



Due to reasons I can't remember the Maestro was sold. I was visiting a friend at Farrington in Oxfordshire and there sat on the drive of a neighbour looking sorry for it's self-sat a MG Montego Turbo. Upon enquiring with my friend, it had been sat a while, and the owner had to stop driving due to illness. That night I

could not get it out of my mind. I had read about the blistering speed and acceleration, ----- of a shovel was the phrase often heard, and my wife said YES this time.



To cut a long story it was purchased very cheaply, back wheel arches renewed, new exhaust, tyres, radiator, head gasket, and we were off. What a car, once we sorted the suspension it was fantastic, it flew, yes, when the turbo kicked in under a heavy right foot it would try to kill you with the torque, how we did not get a speeding ticket I do not know. Many a happy mile and track day was driven, but eventually problems started to occur, so it was sold, for a profit. Looking back a big regret.

I was now bitten by the bug and wanted a proper MG, and as the children had now flown the nest, Montego sold, a 1967 MGB-GT British racing green, wire wheels was purchased second hand from a private sale at Marlborough. It had been well looked after.

This proved great fun and my wife and I spent many a happy mile driving down country lanes in the south of the country.

We kept it well maintained and over the years it did not let us down too often, but after many miles it was going to need a total rebuild, and as health issues arose with my wife the will to do this dwindled so it was sold, and an empty space appeared in the garage.



After a while, as you do, looking on the internet an MG -TF (of the new variety) popped up, a couple in Chippenham were emigrating to South Africa, and I said to my wife shall we just go and have a look. Well, it came home with us.

It had only done 28000 miles, 2002 model, grey, 1.8 lt. It was tidy, the head gasket, water pump etc were done, a good polish and it has put a smile on my face ever since.

Lets hope in 2021 we can all get back out driving our MG's again.



## Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining

I have written to my MP generally as per the core content below. Why not write to yours? Why not forward this to all your contacts and other motoring organisations and ask them to write to their M.P.s.  
Let's kick up a storm.

**Quote** "There is so much work that needs to be done in this country, not least on roads, foot-ways and creation of cycle tracks.

We hear continually of the number of businesses that will close or fail and thus the number of people that will be put out of work by the Pandemic. Instead of paying them to do nothing and await future jobs, why not employ them to do useful work now.

We keep hearing the term, 'Build Back Greener'. But how about 'Maintain, Maintain, Maintain'?

Some of our roads and foot-ways are akin to third world goat tracks.

Road maintenance is something which desperately needs addressing and something that could easily be expanded by local authorities, given the funding. It would also reduce the cost of compensation paid by councils for damage to vehicles.

They will undoubtedly already know of and have plans for work to be done. An expansion of funding and manpower could readily be accommodated.

It would be open air employment where risk of infection is lower and can be further reduced by correct procedures.

The greener future will hopefully mean cars are lighter and more efficient and these will be better suited to smoother roads,

Let's give the country a road system that befits our standing and is a fair return for the cumulative level of taxation on motorists.

As my representative in Parliament, I request that you and your associates, make the above case to the requisite government authorities. Your affirmative acknowledgement would be appreciated." **Unquote**

Reminds me of a family story about my maternal grandfather. He was a lorry driver and between the wars was put out of work. He heard on the grape vine that a local company was hiring labourers for digging holes for telegraph or power poles. You needed a docket from the Labour Exchange to go for an interview. He headed to the Labour Exchange and when he got to the counter asked for the required docket.

The clerk looked up his details and said, 'you're a lorry driver, I can't give you a docket for a labourer.' My grandfather, who was a bit of a firey character, reached over the counter, grabbed the clerk by his lapels, pulled him over the counter till they were eyeball to eyeball and said, 'Listen here sonny, I've got a family to feed, you will know by the fact that your feet aren't touching the ground that I have enough muscle for digging holes. If you don't want to go home a different shape than you came to work, you had better give me a docket.'

He got the docket and the job.

**Malcolm Taylor**

## In My Dreams



My constant scouring of the classifieds has made me stumble upon this an Arnolt-MG coupe. I've never seen one before - would love to be driving this to the next meeting!

Actually would just love to drive anything to any meeting right now...

Manufactured between 1953 and 1954. Built on an MG TD chassis, the bodies were designed and crafted by Bertone in Italy, and the four-passenger cars subsequently were shipped to the United States for distribution and sales. This example is powered by a non-original 1,250cc XPAG inline-four mated to a five-speed manual transmission.  
Sold this month for \$90,999.

**Steve Todd**





## Secretary's Scribbles

Hi everyone.

I hope things are continuing in positive direction for you all.

The good news with my work as a teacher is that the young people continue to be educated. Our problem is the huge shift in practice to allow this and learning the tech. We use Microsoft Teams, which is like Zoom on steroids. It is actually amazing tech - this week I have learnt that I can watch students type an essay and offer feedback as they type.

Have you seen the news from MG they have released the estate car in the UK now and look set to soon have an electric version of the Fiesta sized MG3 and possibly the super beautiful E-motion

coupe. The MG3 car seems very close to arriving. MG is one of the only car companies to still have growing sales during the pandemic and that is largely because it is facilitating economical electric cars. I wonder when most of us will be in electric cars - some of you probably are already?

I hope to be getting the Magnette out more this year - where would your dream drive take you in your MG. If you could afford the time and money where would you drive it to for an adventure? Would you just jump in and go or would you run through a million checks beforehand? Thoughts?

Take care



**Tom**

## Club Diary

2021 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
6th June	Chippenham Lions Cherished Vehicle Show	Yes	The Nurseries	<b>TBC</b>
12/13th June	MG Live		Silverstone	<b>TBC</b>
19/20th June	Bath Festival of Motoring		Landsdowne	<b>TBC</b>
25th July	MGF25		Gaydon British Motor Museum	<b>TBC</b>
26th July	Club Night Outside Event		Tollgate	<b>TBC</b>
31st July/ 1st Aug	Gloucester Steam Fayre		South Cerney	<b>TBC</b>
5th Sept	White Horse Vehicle Show		Westbury	<b>TBC</b>
11th Dec	Christmas Party		Tollgate	<b>TBC</b>

It is the committee's intention to schedule an outside meet-up as soon as practicable. Our annual mystery run may be an opportunity to meet...



## Club Asset List

CLUB ASSET LIST			
ASSET	CURRENT HOLDER	CONTACT DETAILS	
Engine Hoist	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	<a href="mailto:stricklandto@hotmail.com">stricklandto@hotmail.com</a>
Club Sail Banner	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	<a href="mailto:stricklandto@hotmail.com">stricklandto@hotmail.com</a>
Event Shelter + Sides	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	<a href="mailto:stricklandto@hotmail.com">stricklandto@hotmail.com</a>
Projector	Paul Warn	01225 768676	<a href="mailto:paul.william.warn@gmail.com">paul.william.warn@gmail.com</a>
Speakers	Paul Warn	01225 768676	<a href="mailto:paul.william.warn@gmail.com">paul.william.warn@gmail.com</a>
Projector Stand	Paul Warn	01225 768676	<a href="mailto:paul.william.warn@gmail.com">paul.william.warn@gmail.com</a>
Projector Screen & Cover	Paul Warn	01225 768676	<a href="mailto:paul.william.warn@gmail.com">paul.william.warn@gmail.com</a>
New Set of Boules	Tom Strickland	012489 447125	<a href="mailto:stricklandto@hotmail.com">stricklandto@hotmail.com</a>

**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.