

# NEWSLETTER



The WESSEX MG CLUB  
At the Bell on the Common Broughton Gifford

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Hi to you all,

As you probably know our chairman is enjoying himself in sunny Devon and/or Cornwall, basking in all that glorious sunshine. So it falls to me to write the chat this month.

During the last month I took SID on a late night tour of the Wiltshire countryside, and found that 90 degree bends with humps, do not suit the MGB. This particular bank decided to take advantage of the situation and move! Not too much damage was done but a paint job is now required. I have changed the tyres on my other MGB, BERTIE, as they are now 6 years old but show no signs of wearing out. My Astra has now inherited the 6 year old nearly new tyres.

Last weekend I took BERTIE to the Atwell Motor Museum's annual classic vehicle show in Calne. There was a variety of things to see, including collectors' cars, commercials, tractors and motor cycles. This year they were having a special feature celebrating 50 years of the MGB. The weather started off quite nicely but as is usual this year, at times got very wet. At least 6 to 10 MGBs were displayed and many more unusual cars. A few tractors etc were

parked in the far field but it was too muddy for anything else.

Surprise surprise, the best 'MGB' went to a MGC! nobody told Joe public that there is a difference. Guess whose car it was.....There were over 175 exhibits of all sorts, a good turn out considering the weather.

A short note on the Sherbourne Castle Classic Car show - see club events. Don't forget we are meeting at the Warminster Services, departing at 09:30. Please can you let me know if you are coming - 01380859618/895743 or Mobile 07734804198.

See also page 10 for details of the MGB50 Gala Dinner to be held in the Abingdon Guildhall.

We have now found a new venue for our club meetings, as we have out grown the Bell on the Common. Coincidentally it's another Bell, this time The Bell Inn in Seend - see page 2 for details. Our first meeting will held at the new venue on September 24th at 7:30pm.

Hope to see you Sunday.

**Vic** - Vice chairman

For your diary in the coming month

### July

**15th** - Sherborne Castle Classic Car Show.

**22nd** - Club summer picnic.

**23rd - Club Night.** Boules evening.

**28th** - Salisbury Race Meeting.

### August

**20th** - Club Night - Driving Test.

**For details see page 8.**

*We are moving!!!*

*To "The Bell Inn" at Seend*



Bell Hill, Seend,  
Wiltshire SN12 6SA

Tele 01380 828338 - <http://www.thebellseend.co.uk>

Our first meeting at The Bell Inn, will be the 24th  
September club meeting.

*1962 - MGB Roadster is launched - but what else was going on in your lives*

Well, I'm sure we are all well aware that this is the fiftieth anniversary of the MGB roadster. Production started in May 1962, a monocoque successor to the separate chassis MGA. The official launch took place in September. As I said you will all know this, but what were you doing in 1962? assuming that is, you were already resident in this world. What were you driving? did you like the new MG? what music did you listen to - what was going on.

Well the answer to the last question is the subject of this short piece and I hope will get you thinking about what you were doing. The world was pretty much in black and white and I was interested in cars. The Lotus Elan was launched in 1962 and was used in the Avengers in 1965 by Emma Peel (Dianna Rigg). The car I aspired to as a 15 year old in 1962, was the newly launched Ferrari GTO - well if you are going to dream, dream of the best. The car was built to race but had to be built in sufficient numbers to homologate it as a GT.

I wrote to Ferrari asking for pictures of the car - we were simple folk in those days. I received a folder of all of Ferrari's current range of cars with a letter thanking me for my interest. I can't remember how much the car cost in those days - no more than £6,000. A GTO was built for Stirling Moss to race. He entered into a contract with Ferrari for the 1962 season, to drive formula 1 and sports cars - the GTO. Sadly, following his accident at the 1962

Goodwood Easter Monday meeting, which I still remember, he never got to race the car. The deal was that he would race his Ferraris in green rather than the Italian red, hence the colour as shown bottom. The same car sold for £22.7 million earlier this year.



It wasn't all about cars. I remember going to the Odeon in Plymouth, to see the long awaited first James Bond film, Dr No and of course Ursula Andress in the famous bikini.

And what about those great pop songs of 1962. Most of the current pop singers came to Plymouth, including the Shadows, Cliff Richard, Adam Faith, Helen Shapiro, the Rolling Stones, the Beatles and many others. What was your first record? I remember The Loco-motion - Little Eva; Big Girls don't cry - Four Seasons and of course the Beatle's first hit Love me do.

Just to prove I was listening to the news, I remember the Cuba crisis and Kennedy and Khrushchev going toe to toe. Marilyn Monroe was found dead in her apartment and of course Z cars started on the television!

They say of course that if you remember the swinging sixties you can't have enjoyed it. But I'm sure you can, so send in your memories of those great years particularly 1962.

**Ed**

## More on Bio-Fuels

Further to last month's piece on Bio-Fuels, I attach some notes from various sources that may be of interest to the club. It appears that this issue is most hotly debated by owners of older cars, but I think much is applicable to cars from the 60s and 70s.

Interesting stuff, Ethanol.

It appears to have its advocates and its detractors. Advocates say that fixing carbon in vegetation and turning that vegetation into fuel reduces fossil fuel usage and therefore is beneficial to climate change.

Detractors say that using valuable farmland to "grow" fuel is wasteful, increases food prices and detracts from the need to reduce fuel usage. Interestingly, in the USA, there is also a strong negative lobby holding the view that this is simply an Agri-subsidy!

### The Problem

There are varying levels of Ethanol use in different parts of the world. In the USA, E10 (10% Ethanol fuel) has been in use for a number of years whilst in Europe, E5 (5% Ethanol petrol and diesel) has been in use since 2008. The EU had planned to introduce E10 petrol next year but this has been delayed "at least until 2015". In general, it appears that 97 ron (Super) petrol is E0 but as pumps are not marked, one cannot rely on this.



From a user's point of view, there are a number of concerns about both E5 and E10, let alone the E15 mooted in the USA for the future. These concerns fall into three categories:

- Damage to various components (e.g. rubber, cork, some fuel tank linings) in the fuel system leading to leaks and poor running, particularly in classic cars:
- Damage to metallic (mainly aluminium) components due to electrolytic action and rusting of steel components resulting from high moisture content of these fuels:
- Greater difficulty in setting-up carburettors due to the characteristics of E fuels, particularly relating to:
  - a) higher levels of volatility:
  - b) a tendency to deteriorate with age.

### Should we be worried?

That appears to be a difficult question to answer. A USA based forum for early MGs had a very energetic exchange early this year regarding the effects of E10 on old cars. There appeared to be no clear conclusion – some had experienced problems, particularly relating to fuel starvation and difficult tuning. Many however maintained that they experience no ill effects at all.

In the UK, the Federation of British Historic Vehicles Clubs (FBHVC) started to test E5 fuel last year but have had problems with contamination, so no clear conclusions have yet emerged. In parallel with this, a member of the Octagon Club ran some comparative tests on E10 and 97 ron fuel last winter and his conclusions were published in June.

These run as follows:

- No deterioration in cork, rubber or fibre washer components in the fuel system:
- Minimal corrosion of mild steel components:
- Notable galvanic corrosion of aluminium components:
- Silicone used in sealants (e.g. gasket seal) was badly affected, even by vapour alone.

The observations about galvanic corrosion of aluminium is the most concerning; galvanic corrosion occurs when two metals (in this case aluminium and one other) are immersed in a fluid, in this case, petrol, a small current flows causing the aluminium to dissolve. This effect is not limited to old cars; perhaps your lovely new car is also dissolving..... In fact, the conclusion was that, because of the limited use of mixed metals in classic car fuel systems, this effect could be a more serious problem in modern cars.

Comment was also made about the relative instability of E5 and E10 and its tendency to absorb water. Apparently three effects have been seen:

1. A tendency for the petrol/alcohol mix to separate with age:
2. The tendency for old fuel to degrade and clog carburettors:
3. Being hygroscopic, the fuel can absorb water over time and thus cause corrosion.



In the exchanges between MG owners in the USA, these were the effects most pooh-pooed but that may be as a result of a relatively less humid and warmer climate. The additives available in this country at the moment are aimed at reducing the effects of water absorption and thus corrosion. In fact, as far as I am aware, the only additives approved by the FBHVC are those aimed at water contamination, though the precautionary use of these may be wise.

Further research undertaken by a member of the Octagon Club suggested that, other than galvanic erosion of aluminium components, the most worrying effect on old cars is the difficulty of tuning carburettors. Three effects were noted:

1. Because ethanol is more volatile, fuel starvation is more likely if under-bonnet temperatures rise too high:
2. Ethanol burns slower than petrol so timing should be advanced to compensate:
3. E5 and E10 are denser than non-ethanol petrol so floats in carburettors ride higher, leading to a somewhat leaner mixture.

### **Belt and Braces – parts availability**

Any concerns about parts degradation leads one to wonder about availability of E5 compatible parts. MGOC Spares advise that their suppliers have made no changes to parts specifications since the advent of E5 and are monitoring reported effects.

Both Moss and Frosts can supply FBHVC endorsed additives for mitigating the corrosive effects of E5, though, as previously noted, these do not claim to prevent galvanic pitting.

## Conclusion

Is there one! The Yanks generally deride the use of agri-fuels as wasteful of farmland, expensive and potentially harmful to engines. Looking around France and England this year, there is no doubt that huge acreages of bio-fuel are being grown and therefore farmers are being paid vast sums to grow it for fuel. It's not unlike uneconomic sums being paid to landowners for wind farms and to anyone generating solar electricity – probably convenient Politics but dubious economics. I'll leave that argument there.....

As for the detail of the effect of E5 and E10 on our classic cars, the jury seems to be still collecting evidence. There appears to be some evidence of corrosion, particularly galvanic pitting of aluminium, and the particular characteristics of ethanol fuels do have an impact on carburation and ignition.

The best advice available at the moment seems to be:

- If you can, use an E0 97ron fuel:

If you use 95 ron fuel, this is E5 at the moment and it is advisable to:

- give careful attention to fuel mixture to prevent lean burning:
- consider the use of FBHVC endorsed corrosion inhibiting additives:
- advance timing beyond original specification to compensate for modern slower burning fuel:
- protect carburettors and under-bonnet fuel lines from heat to avoid fuel vaporisation:
- avoid storing E5 and (in due course) E10 fuels for extended periods to avoid moisture absorption and general deterioration.

## *David Whiteley*

### References:

Federation of British Historic Vehicles Clubs: Bio-Fuels – 25 April 2012

Octagon Car Club: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly – Ethanol blended fuels – Bulletin, June 2012

Totally “T” Type Yahoo Forum: various e-mails May 2012.

Octagon Car Club: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly – Ethanol blended fuels – Bulletin, June 2012

Totally “T” Type Yahoo Forum: various e-mails May 2012.

## ODD COMMENTS

Whilst out walking a couple of weeks ago in the wind and the rain, I passed a house with a sign that said, 'No Cold Callers'. I thought, that's a silly sign, all their callers are going to be cold. It's freezing out here.

I try to walk as much as possible. I know it's not as cool as cruising in my MG, but it saves a lot on petrol. Also when walking you have time to notice so much more. I noticed that, of all the ways in which drivers break the law, the most common two are, talking on mobile phones and eating bananas. Now, if anyone could invent the 'hands free banana' they would make a fortune.

I remember Gordon talking in the March newsletter of destroying his Yellow Submarine. I think that was a bit premature. It would have been much more appropriate at the April 'Prod and Poke' than Easter Bonnets. Anyway, it's probably best that the aforementioned event never took place. I'm not sure that the landlords licence covers 'Prodding and Poking'?

Reading Paul's fascinating article on the Thermionic Valve, reminded me of an incident from back when the Skoda was considered archaic and a joke. Apparently some Police Force was evaluating the Skoda as a Panda car. The local radio station got hold of the Officer in charge of the exercise and interviewed him. Unusually for the Fuzz he had a sense of humour. The interviewer said, 'you can't seriously be considering using Skoda's as police cars?' The guy replied to the effect that it was only as a Panda car. They are reliable and get from A to B and of course they are cheap. Then added, 'but of course we will be using the 16 valve model'. The interviewer responds, 'but Skoda don't make a 16 valve model'. The Fuzz retorts. 'Yes they do, 8 in the engine and 8 in the radio'.



Just had another short letter published, viz :- 'Despots who don't let journalists on the loose without minders are onto something! It should be a criminal offence for a politician to have contact with a journalist without an independent minder.'

Anyone disagree?

I've decided to name the F, Mata Hari. She's definitely female and slinky and was a bit skittish. I only took her for a test drive and she seduced me. I had to have her.

Just had some new rubber fitted to the rear of Mata. Went to an outfit called Challenge Tyres, Engineer Road, West Wilts Trading Estate, Westbury. They were £40 cheaper than ATS for the same pair of tyres. This business is not the same as other Challenge outlets. It's very basic and is housed in an old Nissen hut. However I found them very efficient and friendly. Would definitely go back. The road itself is fascinating. There are all sorts of businesses, including car restorers and upholsterers. There was an old Rolls tourer stripped down and an MGA up on ramps being administered to.

**Malcolm T**

## CLUB NEWS

The WESSEX MG Club 2012 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
15 Jul	Sherborne Castle Classic Car Show <a href="http://www.merlinevents.com/castle.html">http://www.merlinevents.com/castle.html</a>	Yes	Sherborne	Gordon Newman. 01225 755645. Depart Warminster Services 9.30. Adults/seniors £8.
22 Jul	Club Summer Picnic	Yes	Studland	<i>Jeni Wright. 01380 859618.</i> Beach games & summer sun fun. Details to follow.
<b>23 Jul</b>	<b>Club Night</b> – Boules Evening	Yes	The Bell	<b>7.30 start.</b>
28 Jul	Salisbury Race Meeting First Race 6.10 Last 8.45 <a href="http://www.salisburyracecourse.co.uk">www.salisburyracecourse.co.uk</a>	No	Salisbury	Evening meeting with Abba tribute band to follow. Depart 4.30 Devizes Wharf. Tickets £6.
<b>20 Aug</b>	<b>Club Night</b> – Driving Test	Yes	Tom's Field	<i>Tom Strickland. 01249 447125.</i> Details to follow.
<b>27 Aug</b>	<b>Bank Holiday</b>			
9 Sept	Club visit to Bletchley Park	Yes	Bletchley Nr. Milton Keynes	Peter Hine. 01672 512847. £22 per head. See Peter's email 13 March Option 1. <b>Payment at May Club Night.</b>
16 Sept	Club Treasure Hunt Walking Treasure Hunt.	Yes	Frome	<i>Tony Neale. 01373 465044.</i> Details to follow.
23 Sept	MGB 50 MGCC/MGOC Event <a href="http://www.mgb50.com/MGB50/MGB_50_Home.html">www.mgb50.com/MGB50/MGB_50_Home.html</a>	Yes	Blenheim Palace	Details to follow. <b>Make your own ticket application.</b>
<b>24 Sept</b>	<b>Club Night -</b>		TBC	Details to follow.
<b>22 Oct</b>	<b>Club Night</b> Richard Edmonds Classic Car Auctions <a href="http://richardedmondsauctions.com">http://richardedmondsauctions.com</a>	Yes	TBC	Roger Binney. 01380 830524.
3 Nov	Roger & Lynne's Party	No	Edington Village Hall	Roger & Lynne. 01380 830524. Details to follow.



24 Nov 2012	MGB50 Gala Dinner	No	Guildhall Abingdon	<a href="http://www.mgb50.com/MGB50/Gala_Dinner.html">Contact Vic Wright Make your own ticket application. See below.</a> <a href="http://www.mgb50.com/MGB50/Gala_Dinner.html">http://www.mgb50.com/MGB50/Gala_Dinner.html</a>
<b>26 Nov</b>	<b>Club AGM</b>	No	TBC	Formal notification will be posted nearer the time.
8 Dec (Prov)	Christmas Dinner	No	Bromham	The Greyhound

### The MGB50 Gala Dinner

th  
 Saturday 24 November 2012

To finish the anniversary year a Black Tie Gala Dinner will be held at the Guild Hall in Abingdon. The dinner will start at 6:30pm for 7:00pm, reservations can be made by e-mailing us [HERE...](#)

Cost - £36 per person

For those wishing to stay in Abingdon after the dinner, the Upper Reaches Hotel is very close to the Guild Hall and is offering special rates for anyone wishing to stay on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Rates are for Bed and Breakfast, for single or double occupancy as appropriate. Quote 'MGB' when making a reservation.

Single - £60.00  
 Twin - £80.00  
 Double - £80.00  
 Suite - £115.00

Upper Reaches Hotel  
 Phone: 01235 522536  
 DDI: 01235 462143  
 Fax: 01235 555182  
 Email: [Kim.Johnson@upperreaches-abingdon.co.uk](mailto:Kim.Johnson@upperreaches-abingdon.co.uk)  
 Web: [www.upperreaches-abingdon.co.uk](http://www.upperreaches-abingdon.co.uk)



## SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLES

My BGT has been on sale for a month now and it has had a lot of interest but just not many people actually coming to see her. I had a disaster this week.... The night before a viewing I decided that the clutch biting point was a bit low so I embarked on some hydraulic bleeding - a job that I hate! I can hear Gordon's "if it ain't broke don't fix it" phrase coming straight for me! He is right of course because 2 hours later I had no fluid pressure and no ability to engage the gears! I did finally get my pressure back but it was a late night and it ruined my next day at school! The Magnette is driving well and every time I drive her I am impressed with how good she is - that is before reminding myself that she is a 1950s saloon. How great Magnette's must have been in their day!

Ron has asked me to publicise the North Radstock Classic vehicle Club's gathering at Camerton on 19th August. It is free and very relaxed and last year had over a hundred classic vehicles.

**Tom**