



# WESSEX MG CAR CLUB THE TOLLGATE INN-HOLT

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

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**CLUB DIARY**

### NEXT CLUB NIGHT

22nd July CLUB BBQ

Start Time 8:00pm

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

Summer has continued and we have had a busy month with our first club visit to the Bath Festival of Motoring which was a very good day. The following Sunday I went to the Bristol Classic Car Show at the Bath & West Show-ground, there were certainly some very rare cars in the classic car park,

The highlight of the month was the Summer Picnic at the Hawk Conservancy in Weyhill. This started with a scenic drive from the meeting point in Devizes. When we arrived at the venue we had the opportunity to meet the vultures up close with the Birds of Prey flying displays certainly something different. Many thanks to Malcolm and Pat for arranging this venue at such short notice, and also arranging the weather!! I expect there will be some pictures in this newsletter.

Our annual Club Boules match was held on a nice summers evening and congratulations to Gordon and Sandra who were

the winners of a close fought contest, Gordon and Sandra are proving the team to beat having won the boules game two years in succession now.

The next club competition is the annual fun driving day in Tom's Field on the August Bank Holiday Sunday.

On September 1<sup>st</sup> we will be attending the White Horse Classic Car Show in Westbury, if you have not already booked in, please do so as soon as possible, and then let me know, it is free entry for classic cars if you book in advance.

I am planning on organising a run on a Sunday in mid September, if you are interested in this please let me know.

Our next club night on July 22<sup>nd</sup> is the Club Barbeque at The Tollgate, starting at 8.00pm

**Martyn**





## The Club's Summer Picnic

Paul Warn

For various reasons, Malcolm's planned summer picnic to The Weald and Downland Living Museum had to be cancelled. Undeterred, Malcolm made alternative arrangements for us to visit and picnic at the Hawk Conservancy Trust near Andover. An inspired choice.

After everyone arrived, the first task was to erect the clubs event shelter. We have had the shelter for a while now, but it still manages to challenge the minds of those who happen to be there on the day. With Kevin taking the lead, we managed to erect it in good time before we were welcomed by the senior conservancy officer. He outlined the important work the conservancy is involved with - his mission during the day was to



convert us to loving vultures - not easy given the poor show of hands when asked who liked vultures. He concluded by describing the programme of events during our visit.

Our first major contact with the resident population of wild birds was during the "Wings of Africa Flying Display". We were invited to step into the "Savannah", where we were shown how African birds fly as they would in the wild. The display included White Storks flying elegantly alongside vultures, not to mention Kites a Milky Eagle Owl and African Fish Eagles too.

We experienced the dramatic impact of a bushfire and African rainstorm. The display was inspired by the work the conservancy carry's out in Africa with vultures, which both entertained and infected the audience with the keepers' passion for this endangered creatures. Of which more in a moment. My personal favourite was the Secretary Bird. The team simulated the bird hunting and killing a rubber snake - something it does for real in the wild.

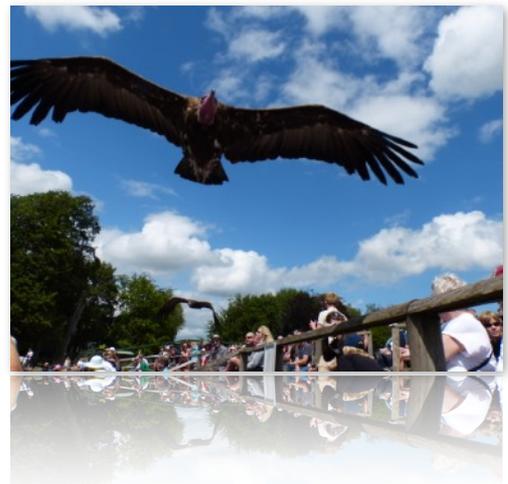
Going back to the Vulture.

The Hawk Conservancy Trust, which operates international research and conservation projects for many bird of prey species, has learnt of four poisoning attacks on vultures since 7<sup>th</sup> June this year - the worst being southeast of Chobe National Park, Botswana. Three elephants that had been killed for their ivory were laced with poison and a staggering 537 vultures who fed on the elephant carcasses died. Although the site is still being assessed, early accounts show that all vulture species were affected with the worst hit being the White-backed Vulture.



Vultures are key species in ecosystems where they occur and are the 'clean-up crew'. They consume more dead animals than other scavengers and play a major role in nutrient recycling. What's more, they have an important role in minimising diseases that impact local wildlife and human communities due to their speed at cleaning carcasses.

Explaining the reasons why vultures are targeted it was said that the poachers lace the elephant carcasses with poison to deliberately wipe out the vultures, because whilst circling overhead, they are a visible signal to the authorities that a poaching crime has been committed. Another reason why vultures are targeted is for witchcraft and the collection of vulture body parts for belief-use purposes. The critical fact here is that neither elephants nor vultures in Africa can sustain these losses.



After our lunch-time picnic we were invited to "Reg's Wild Flower Meadow" to sit and experience "The Valley of the Eagles". This included a team of vultures swooping across the audience, we were warned to duck as they came within inches of our heads whilst they demonstrated glide in flight. Black Kites showed their unique hunting skills in the air, and the unbelievably fast Peregrine Falcon seemed supersonic as it swooped down to the lure. Whilst the Peregrine was flying, the local bird population

disappeared, except that is a pigeon, completely oblivious to the clear and present danger the falcon posed.

Every species was impressive in their own way. However the Bald Eagle took a lot of beating. It carried an ultra light-weight tracker, at one stage during the talk it had climbed to over 3,000 feet and from 3 miles away could see the lure being swung by the keeper in front of us and started its "attack".

Finally toward the end of the day were bowled over by an array of beautiful owls skimming silently over our heads in what can only be described as an intimate demonstration in a small Silver Birch Glade. Again keeping our heads down was the order of the day. We were mesmerised by the likes of the Barn Owl, Great Grey Owl, Long-eared Owl, Eagle Owl and Tawny Owl.

The event shelter was much easier to disassemble... Oh, Anne and I are converts to team vulture. Very many thanks to Pat and Malcolm for a great day out.



## A CLASSIC CAR MEET



Members may be interested in a Classic car meet at the Mill in Rode. It's in the evening of Wednesday 7th Aug. No formality just turn up.

Regards

**John Thomas**

## THE 2019 CHRISTMAS PARTY

I hesitated to include Christmas decoration with this promo for the Club's Christmas Party. Martyn has been on the case and it turns out that the Tollgate has already published its Christmas menu. See following page.

To ensure we have a Christmas Party, Martyn has reserved our room for Saturday December 14th for up to 32 persons.

Peter Hine is also on the same page. If you are interested and it is very popular, Peter has requested that you please email him to declare your interest. He will need a £5 deposit/person either by cash, cheque or bank transfer. Deposits are non refundable. Peter will collect menu choices closer to the time



**Tollgate Christmas menu 2019****2 Courses £23.95 3 courses £ 28.95****Starters:**

Cauliflower and celeriac soup with truffled apple -VGO \*\*

Goats curd with honey glazed figs, beetroot purée and a walnuts crumb V \*

Tiger prawns pan fried in a chilli and garlic butter with tomato bread and mixed leaf \*\*

Ham hock and leek terrine with pickled carrot, tarragon puree and sesame lavosh

**Mains:**

All served with roasted root vegetables, braised red cabbage and chestnut sprouts

Roasted butternut squash, spinach and truffled wild mushroom wellington with roast potatoes VGO

Braised Venison with roasted garlic mashed potato and a parsnip purée\*

Roast turkey crown with pigs in blankets, goose fat roast potatoes and a sage and apricot stuffing\*\*

Pan fried hake with sweet potato gnocchi, samphire and a lobster brown shrimp butter

Roasted Lamb Rump and Pulled Lamb Croquet served with Mashed Potato\*\*

**Desserts:**

Walnut glazed sticky toffee pudding with honeycomb and vanilla ice cream

Christmas pudding with festive poached berries and brandy custard VGO

Dark chocolate and pistachio tart with orange candy and salted caramel ice cream

Trio of local cheeses with biscuits, pickled grapes, red onion chutney and celery \*\*

V Vegetarian

VGO Vegan Option Available

\*Gluten Free

\*\*Gluten Free Option



## WESSEX MG BOULES EVENING

Many thanks to Peter for this pic.

I raise my hat to Steve Todd - now don't tell me that males can't multi-task. It may have been out of necessity of course, as there are vultures of the human kind ready to pounce!

As an aside. Anne and I had been to our dentist in Frome last week. We decided to walk around the town and find a coffee shop. The coffee shop we chose was opposite a jewellery shop. Our table was in the window. Who should arrive at the jewellers and spy us drinking said coffee was Steve.

Steve was plying his trade and had business with the jeweller. He remarked that we were "Living the Dream" .....

## Secretary's Scribbles

I was heading to work as usual the other day and I was queuing up Dunkirk hill, as is the custom, into Devizes. I had gone round the bend and was about half way along the straight section that leads to the junction.

I was sat there listening to Chris Evans when WHACK a car went into the back of me. Now Dunkirk hill has a reputation for accidents with a lot of the staff at Devizes School being hit at some point in their careers - but the two black spots are normally either pulling onto the road at the top because people are looking right at the traffic not the cars ahead or queueing round the blind bend.

My accident was not in either of the two normal places as it was in plain sight on the straight. We all got out to look at the damage and the young driver was very apologetic. Visually I had a smashed number plate and he had a smashed front grille and he certainly looked like he came off worst. He wanted me to say I only had a broken number plate but I was concerned that there might be damage behind and wanted to do a proper inspection later. I agreed to contact him later to confirm the damage. We obviously exchanged details.

I was a bit shaken and he actually helped me to put all the details into my phone. He shook my hand and apologised again and we left.

About an hour later the young chap's mum phoned me and explained that her son had asked her to call me. She apologised for her son and asked that if it was possible from my side, they would rather settle without using insurance, but understood if I wanted to do it formally.

Later on I got right under the car and checked that there was no damage behind the plastic bumper etc and luckily it was all like brand new there. I sent a text to the young man and his mum, thanking them for their honesty and in particular the way the young man had conducted himself and confirmed that it was just a number plate. I didn't bother asking for the £23 but the chap was insistent he would pay so I explained it was £23 and gave my bank details. £25 duly arrived from his mother's account.

I don't know how or why he managed to hit me on a clear straight section of road but with all the horror stories about people not admitting guilt etc I was impressed by this chaps honesty. The young people are not all the media make them out to be. I now have a new number plate on the ZS. There a couple of tiny scuff marks on the black plastic trim but nothing to really notice.

Tom





## Club Diary

2019 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
<b>22nd July</b>	<b>Club night - BBQ</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	
4th August	South Cerney Gloucester Steam Fayre	Yes		
18th August	Bowood Classic Car Show No 2	Yes	Bowood House	
<b>19th August</b>	<b>Club Night - Name that tune</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Tony Neale</b>
25th August	Tom's Action Day	Yes	Tom's House	
26th August	Corsley Show	For Info		<b>NB If the 25th August is too wet then the 26th will act as the reserve day</b>
1st September	White Horse Car Show	For Info	Westbury	
<b>23rd September</b>	<b>Club night - Talk</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Talk by Tom Strickland</b>
<b>TBA</b>	Club Skittles Event	<b>Yes</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>VIC</b>
5th October	Autumn Classic	Yes	Castle Combe	
<b>28th October</b>	<b>Club night - Talk</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Talk by Paul Warn</b>
8th,9th,10th November	NEC Classic Car Show	For Info		
<b>25th November</b>	<b>Club night - AGM</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Club AGM</b>
<b>14th December</b>	Christmas Party	Yes	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</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.