

# NEWSLETTER

WESSEX  
MG CLUB  
AT THE BELL INN SEEND



## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Paul's February Newsletter provided a rich seam of inspiration for your 25% Chairman this month. Terry's skid Pan experience was obviously great fun - and educational. It is a shame that this sort of thing is not mandatory. I recall that, when I worked for a subsidiary of Shell in the 1990s, we had 200 company cars; at least two were written off each year and the per-car insurance claim was nearly £1000 a year.

This led us to insist on additional training for all company car drivers. We used an outfit called Drive and Survive based near Didcot and I remember both stints of training I went on vividly. The first was an IAM type drive with commentary and the second, entirely at the MIRA ground near Camberley, was about experiencing extreme ABS braking, then a fairly new innovation.

It was amusing to see the change in attitude of some of the drivers to the training. The more gung-ho pooh-poohed the idea of additional training and did their best to avoid it. Eventually, once they had the experience, they found it enjoyable and we couldn't keep them away!

Ken's Mystery Car, the Lotus Elite, brought back memories, too. My Brother-in-Law had one in the very early 70s, as Ken said, a beautiful car, in American racing colours. Unfortunately, he smashed it up and then spent several months occupying my in-laws garage as he rebuilt it.

Classic Car magazine now value mint versions at £41,000 - wow!

That reminds me of the Ed's note about the value of Classic cars. I'm not sure how much one should believe an auction house and some ac-

For your diary in the coming month

### March

**25th** - Club Night

### April

**9th** - Committee Meeting.

**20th/21st** - Bristol Classic Car Show

**22nd** - Club Night

**26th/29th** - Spring Weekend Away

For details see page 13.

**Please note that unless otherwise stated club nights start at 8:00pm**

countants about this but a 30% increase in value over the last 10 years sounds nice, doesn't it? That's 30% tax free to us. I think I'm right in saying that the stock market betters that but with no fun involved!

The downside of this increase is of course pricing people out of the market. In the USA, many aficionados of T Type MGs think that, due to their rarity, their cars should be worth more than the typical \$30-40,000. Others take the counter view, that even this prices many enthusiasts out of the market. I guess the skill is in choosing the next

classic car trend and the next big risers in value.

Any ideas, Clubbers? Not Allegros, surely.

Valentine's Night was a resounding success - an evening of romance and canoodling. The Bell produced an excellent meal (a good portent for our Christmas do) and Jane's roses looked the part - Carrie's has only recently gone the way of all things....

I gather that the "Bring a Thing" night went well. Not too much cheating and jiggering with the scoring, I hope. Thanks to Peter for organising it, to Paul A. for stepping in to officiate and to you all

for delving deep into your cupboards!

Our next Club Night is a talk "WW1 Wiltshire Soldiers - Finding the Forgotten". Let's have another good turnout in appreciation of our speaker.

Keep smiling - Spring is nearly here.

**David Whiteley**

**25% Chairman**

**PS Thought you might like these photos - built in Britain**

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/car-manufacturers/mini/9918663/Built-in-Britain-100-years-of-Oxford-car-plant.html?utm\\_source=tmg&utm\\_medium=TD\\_oxfordplan11403&utm\\_campaign=MotoringTDs](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/car-manufacturers/mini/9918663/Built-in-Britain-100-years-of-Oxford-car-plant.html?utm_source=tmg&utm_medium=TD_oxfordplan11403&utm_campaign=MotoringTDs)

### MY MGB GT

As there cannot be too many forty six year old cars still with their original purchaser, I thought it might be useful to write a few words about my MG B GT.



A bit of background history to start. I started my association with M G in 1952 when I became the owner of a 1949 MG TC, which I kept until 1960.

This photo was copied from details of an auction at Dorset Vintage and Classic Auctions held in March this year when the estimated value was £20000 to £24000. I had heard that it was coming up for auction, although I had never been able to find its whereabouts until this month.



That MG was the beginning of a long association with the marque. I replaced it with a new Austin Healey Sprite in 1960,

there being no Midget manufactured at that time. I collected the Sprite from the Abingdon factory.

The subject of this article is my M G B GT, registered number JAM600E, purchased when the arrival of our first child made the Sprite no longer practical family transport. The MG would now be our family transport. It was pur-

chased new on May 12th 1967 and equipped as the invoice shown below - British Racing Green, including overdrive, wire wheels, fresh air heater and S.P. tyres.



INVOICE		WARD'S MOTORS	
F. L. J. Alexander, Esq., 25 Brompton Square, London, W.1.		NEW PARK STREET DUNSTON	
QUANTITY & DATE	QTY.	1966 MAY, 1967	CO/124
422. To... one new B. G. 15' G.T. Coupe, Deluxe: wireless bearing system, lock-wiring overdrive, wide wheels, steel-rod shocks, R.P. 120000.			550 0 0
Registration No: JAM 600E. Chassis No: 8425/23076. Engine No: 1002/12/0 29442.			
430. Purchase Tax.			220 15 0
423. Delivery Charges.			125 15 0
427. Road Fund Licence.			10 0 0
429. Registration Plates.			17 15 0
431. Best 24H5 Supplies and fitted by customer.			2 15 0
424. Best allowance on 1968 dealer's dealer Sprite.			128 15 0
			207 15 0
			4 200 0 0

The B GT was used daily to commute to Westinghouse Brake & Signal Company at Chippenham, where I was employed. In those days I was also involved with the family garage business and carried out regular servicing myself.

In 1970, we decided to buy a caravan and I fitted the necessary tow bar etc. in order to tow a Thomson "Glenelg" 14 foot caravan, as shown in the photo



A change of employment in 1973 meant a daily commute to Bratton, where I ran the family haulage business, still using the MG as daily, and business transport. At about 96000 miles, I had the engine rebored. I eventually replaced the MG, as our daily transport, with a Rover SD1, in about 1976, although I kept the MG in dry storage.

In 1988 I gave the MG to my son, the one who occasioned its initial purchase, for his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and he later damaged it in a minor accident.

Being preoccupied with the business, I kept the MG in the dry storage at Bratton, unpaired, for some seven years or so.

Avon tyres for Rover at Solihull



Ex Farm Milk Tankers



Just a glimpse of what kept me occupied, and why the MG was not repaired for a while!

On my retirement in June 1996, I sold the still damaged MG, to a customer who repaired and restored it, and retained it for 9 years. Out of the blue, in June 2005, the person who had acquired the car from me in 1996, rang me to say that he was going to sell it, and asked if I was interested. Of course I was, and when I saw it I had to have it, so a deal was done. That was June 2005.

In his ownership he had fitted an unleaded cylinder head and generally improved the car with the addition of chrome wire wheels. To date the car has covered some 101100 miles. Recent work has included servicing, and only replacing the condenser, rotor arm, the original distributor cap, and fitting new pedal rubbers. It is only used in fine weather now, except when I get caught out, as with the MGB 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary trip to Blenheim Palace.



At the MGB 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Blenheim Palace in September this year.



The MG at the Silverstone Classic meeting in 2011 in the MG enclosure inside the circuit



As a post script and just because I have it. In the knowledge that you are all interested in the marque, here is a picture of my uncle Fred's MG police car, part of the Southampton police force just after the war.

Viv Alexander

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## FOR SALE

A set of four unused tubeless Uniroyal tyres - 165x14 - bought 27th May 2010 for my MGB GT but never used. The stickers are still on the tyres.

They have been stored out of the light in my garage.

£100 for the set.

Contact 07799884425

Kevin Meakin





# Llangollen Here We Come



For those motoring into deepest Wales for the Spring Weekend. Please be advised that we will meet at Morrison's car park Chippenham, for 9:30 departure, with lunch organised en route and information packs will be given out and content reviewed at the 22nd April Club-night.

Please check your mobile phone numbers below and let me know of any corrections.

Roger

Wessex Weekend Llangollen Attendees					
	People	Rooms	Deposit paid	River room booked	Telephone No.
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>400</b>		
Roger and Lynne Binney	2	1	25	Y	07919537762
Vic and Jeni Wright	2	1	25	Y	07734804198
Jeff and June Rattle	2	1	25	Y	07909545475
Ged and Shirley West	2	1	25	Y	07738759658
Ken Scott and Ann Eccles	2	1	25	Y	07929543759
Gordon and Sandra Newman	2	1	25	Y	07758671074
Paul and Andrea Wheal	2	1	25	Y	07926086610
Paul and Anne Warn	2	1	25	Y	07980171886
Graham and Jane Bennett	2	1	25	Y	07552714466
Andy and Lynn Hole	2	1	25	Y	07714537605
Ron and Anne Alderson	2	1	25	Y	07851220604
Tony and Jenny Neale	2	1	25	Y	07775614052
Ian and Dee Willmott	2	1	25	Y	07754303861
Lionel and Marcelle Tonizzo	2	1	25	Y	07890138448
Terry Gazzard	2	1	25	Y	07816676381
Kevin Meakin	1	1	25	N	07799884425

All rooms reserved and confirmed: One defaulted deposit paid.

Hotel contact details
<p><b>The Chainbridge Hotel</b>                      Llangollen LL20 8BS                      Tel: 01978 860215  <a href="mailto:reception@chainbridgehotel.com">reception@chainbridgehotel.com</a></p>

## MYSTERY CAR

I am delighted to report that there were two responses to last month's mystery car.

The mystery car is an MG TD but not as we know it. It is an Arnolt-TD built for S.H.Arnolt, the MG, Riley and Morris dealer in Chicago, USA. By chance he saw two prototypes, one coupe and one convertible, spec. built by Bertone of Italy on TD chassis at the 1952 Turin Motor Show. He offered to buy them on the spot. When asked by Bertone if he meant both of them, he said no, a 100 of each! In the end only 102, including the two prototypes were built, 66 coupe and 36 convertibles. They were well fitted out inside and sold well in the States and production only ceased when MG refused to supply any further chassis. I don't believe it was ever marketed over here but I have seen a coupe in the past at a show, presumably a private import. If anyone would like to see further pictures in great detail go to



[www.fantasyjunction.com/cars/533-MG-Arnolt-1500cc](http://www.fantasyjunction.com/cars/533-MG-Arnolt-1500cc)

### Ken Scott

In 1952, coach-builder Bertone was on his uppers and needed work. Somehow, he managed to buy a couple of chassis "from those nice MG people" in the UK. He burned the midnight oil and managed to craft a couple of hand-made cars, a coupe and a convertible.

He entered these in the 1952 Turin Motor Show and to his surprise, an ebullient American ordered a hundred! He was "Wacky" Arnolt, the Nuffield distributor in Chicago. A deal was struck and Bertone was back in business.

From November 1952 to May 1953, MG shipped 100 chassis to Turin where they were fitted with hand-made coachwork - 65 coupe and 35 convertibles. They were then shipped to Chicago.

Unfortunately for "Wacky", they proved rather difficult to sell, and he didn't shift the last few cars until 1958. This was hardly suppressing since, in the days when a new XK140 was \$4000 and a standard TD was \$2150, the Arnolt MG was \$3200.....

Many of these cars are apparently still around and some were shipped back to the UK at times of weak Dollar against the Pound. The car in the illustration was clearly one of these.

The most recent sale I could find was at Bonhams in New York in 2008 when a coupe sold for \$48,000.

[MGTD dash in Arnolt MG](#) [Another Arnolt MG](#)

### David Whiteley



PICTURE GALLERY

Skittles evening at the Cross Keys - Rowde

Always a popular event and last Saturday was no exception. It even attracted guests from France.....Michele and Beat arrived with Lynne and Roger. They seemed to enjoy themselves if a little bewildered by the antics of anglo saxons - not as subtle as boules.

NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	total	NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Moham	2	2	6	4			20	Sue	2	3	7	5			12
Paul Wa	3	6	6	4			24	Ann Wa	5	6	4	5			20
Phil	7	7	3	6	7		25	Gina	4	7	8	3			22
Tony	6	4	6	7			17	Jenny	7	2	6	5	3		13
Ron	3	4	5	7			19	Anna	3	5	6	5			19
Conlan	4	6	4				17	Sandra	8	5	5	4	2		27
Robert	1	0	7	5	1		10	Pat	3	5	1				9
Roger	7	8	7	4			20	Lynne	3	3	3	4			13
Michele	5	6	3	6			20	Beat	1	4	3				10
Vic	7	5	7	6	7	2	25	Jeni	6	3	6	3			18
Ciel	7	7	6	6	5		25	Shirley	8	8	8	5	1		29
Kevin	6	7	5	6			24	Jeff	5	4	7	6			20
total								total							

Many thanks to Vic for organising the evening and distributing the prizes. A record of the scores is included opposite.

And the prize winners below.



## The Places we visit - The People We Meet.

Part of the enjoyment - and frustration - of re-furbishing an old car is sourcing components. We found all sorts of parts for our MGA via the internet, usually E-bay. With the TC, many parts are available new but frequently these are rather poor copies and expensive to boot.

So E-bay continues to be a useful source of second hand parts, often original. Last week, I bid on some wire wheels. They were advertised as two sets of two wheels. Not perfect by any means but at least they were all original TC, described as true and round but in need of cleaning and painting.

Murphy's Law said that we would be out when the auction ended so I had to put in a bid before we left. And because there is no guarantee I would "win", I bid on each pair. Murphy's Law again says I would win none - or the lot.

It turns out that I bought all four wheels and so we took a day out to drive to a small village near Malvern to collect them. Usually sellers of car parts have a story to tell but this seller was something special.

On first meeting, dressed in his working togs - "Hello, I'm Clive, I'm a builder" - you see nothing out of the ordinary. He directed me to his yard, bounded by a very nice oak framed triple garage, and showed me the wheels. They were exactly as described and we loaded them into the car.

It is always interesting to know why car parts are for sale so I duly asked. Clive had recently bought an MG TB but it turned out not to be an ordinary TB but a Tickford TB. Ken will tell you that these are quite rare - only 379 TBs were made because of the outbreak of war and only 60 Tickfords were amongst these.

### [MG TB Tickford](#)

The Tickford T series was a coach-built version and quite expensive for the time. It had standard underpinnings but a graceful body and folding "pram" hood. This was quite a coup for Clive and he asked if we like to see how he is getting on with the restoration.

"Is the Pope a Catholic?" I replied and he opened the middle garage doors to reveal a TB chassis beautifully restored. All brake lines were in place, which alone were a work of art.

Having admired the chassis (of particular interest to me as this is about the stage I have reached with my TC) we were then aware of other sheeted cars. Clive needed no encouragement to pull off the sheet covering the next car which turned-out to be a beautifully restored TR5. Again it was the detailing in the engine bay that was astonishing. Next up was a mid-60s E Type

Jaguar that Clive had restored some 10 years ago. The final dust sheet revealed an immaculate 1972 MGB roadster in Old English White.

Not surprisingly, Clive said he didn't get much time to drive these cars and admitted a bit sheepishly that he actually preferred the restoration work to the driving. His garage was however a fantastic tribute to his skill and care and a wonderful Aladdin's cave of 20<sup>th</sup> Century car history.

Talking of Aladdin's caves, we came across another one when on our way to see our son this week. I am always on the lookout for a project for when our TC is complete and we called-in on a place in Whitchurch (Hants) on the off-chance that they might have something interesting.

They are Sovereign Motors and their showroom was full of interesting cars - an AC Cobra replica, a Lotus 7, a Jaguar-engined special and a Morgan 3 wheeler, not to mention Porches, a Mercedes SL and a Bentley Continental. After a nose around, we were directed to the back where we found another large display of interesting cars, including a replica Mercedes 500K, Aston Martin DBV8 Volante and a Ferrari 355.

We were not hassled, just left to wander around and admire. If you are near Whitchurch, invent a gentle excuse to visit them (midweek is best) - it's a fascinating place.

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## Genuine MG Parts.

Following the acquisition of an abandoned garage and filling station for redevelopment by my son, a number of small MG parts have been donated to the Club. Most are being stored by Vic and I have a few bits and pieces. The Parts include:-

- MGB/C/V8 wheel bearing kit (tube type axle)
- Midget Mk I-III water pump
- MGB water pump
- Midget 1500 1974 onwards water pump
- MGB Throttle cable LHD (useful that!!)
- Points
- Plugs
- Light bulbs
- Plus others - just ask

If you require any of these get in touch with either Vic or myself. No charge.

**Gordon Newman**

## CLUB NEWS

### SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLES

This month I decided to finally crack my leaking exhaust system - something that has never properly been done since I restored the car 3 years ago. I phoned Bell's Exhausts in Swindon and in I went for a professional fitting. They got the car up on the ramp and had soon diagnosed a crack on the downpipe up by the manifold - now you may think this would be seriously bad news ..... but no! They told me to go into town shopping and be back in a couple of hours! They made up a new front section of exhaust and fitted the whole thing superbly all for a very reasonable sum! Can you think of any other place that you can pretty much drive off the street and have a new exhaust for a Midgette? They do the various styles of MG B exhaust etc too so if you are in the need they are the place to go!

I have also had the misfortune to have my indicators pack up on me this month. I have just one rear lamp at the back that does brake, indicator and rear light - this works through a giant and expensive relay box that enable all 3 systems to work the one bulb. I had long ago purchased some chrome motorcycle indicator pods and now was the time to put them on. This would avoid the need for a new relay and make the car safer on todays roads. I basically wired up a completely new circuit - which involved running new wires all around the car. I used the wiring diagram and flasher unit from an early MGB to guide me. Well the results are great and next time you follow me down the road you are sure to appreciate them!

I was sure that Spring was on the way and then today they say we are going to have snow again! grrrrr!

**Tom**

2013 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
25-Mar	<b>Club Night (Talk - WW1 Wiltshire Soldiers - Finding the Forgotten)</b>	Yes	The Bell	<i>Tom Strickland</i>
29/30/31 Mar	<b>Easter Bank Holiday</b>			
9-Apr	<b>Committee Meeting</b>	No	The Bell	<i>Tom Strickland</i>
20-21 April	Bristol Classic Car Show	No	Shepton Mallet Show Ground	
22-Apr	<b>Club Night (Prod &amp; Poke &amp; Chips &amp; Chat)</b>	Yes	The Bell	
26-29 April	Club Spring Weekend Away	Yes	Llangollen	<i>Roger Binney</i>
5-May	IWM Duxford Spring Car & Motor Bike Show		TBA	<i>Paul Wheal - overnight stay? or visit museum on another day with an overnight stay.</i>
20-May	<b>Club Night (Mystery Run)</b>	Yes	TBA	<i>David Whiteley</i>
1-Jun	Vintage Nostalgia 2013 - Warminster	No	TBC	<i>Peter Hine</i>
2-Jun	Lions Chippenham Cherished Vehicle Show	Yes		<i>Tom Strickland to get a pitch</i>
8-9 June	Gloucestershire Motor Show	Yes	Highnam Court	<b>TBC</b> <i>Peter Hine</i>
24-Jun	<b>Club Night (BBQ)</b>	Yes	The Bell	<i>Paul Warn</i>
21-Jul	Classics at the Castle		TBA	
July ?	Summer Picnic		TBA	
19-Aug	Visit Marlborough College	Yes	TBC	<i>Peter Hine</i>

2013 EVENTS LIST				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
25-Aug	Action Day & BBQ	Yes	Tom's Field	11:00 am Tom Strickland
1-Sep	Bath Classic Car Show - Supports Help for Heroes	Yes	TBC	
Sep/Oct ?	Walking Frome Treasure Hunt	Yes	TBC	Tony and Jenny Neale
23-Sep	Club Night (Review of Spring Weekend - slides etc. and discuss 2014 Spring Weekend)	Yes	TBC	
28-Oct	Club Night (Talk - 1970-79 GP Seasons - When Sex was Safe & Motor Racing was Dangerous)	Yes		Paul Warn
7-Nov	Committee Meeting	No	The Bell	Tom Strickland
25-Nov	Club AGM	Yes	The Bell	Formal notification will be included in the Sept & Oct newsletter.
7-Dec	Christmas Party	No	TBC	Peter Hine

The diary of events for 2013 will be refined at the next committee meeting in April.