



# WESSEX MG CAR CLUB THE TOLLGATE INN- HOLT

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

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**NEXT CLUB NIGHT**  
24th April - Historic  
talk The Battle of  
Roundway- Devizes

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

As the clocks have now gone forward we are now officially in spring giving us lighter events and the start of the outdoor show and events season.

During the weekend that the clocks changed I was at the NEC Birmingham for The Classic Car and Restoration Show, this was my first visit to this show which featured cars from barn find to concours and also practical work being carried out on the stands, the show attracted visitors from both the UK and Europe.

We are now approaching the start of the MG 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year with the first event of the year being the MG Centenary day at The British Motor Museum at Gaydon, on Saturday May 27<sup>th</sup> **see page 13** of this newsletter regarding ticket booking,

I have already booked my ticket and following the show am planning to drive the short distance to Gilks Garage Café at Kineton for something to eat, this is a motoring themed café run by the descendants of the original garage proprietor and they are MG owners, if you would like to join me please let me know and I will book a table for 5.30pm.

Two weeks later we have the big MG Triumph 100 celebration weekend on Saturday June 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday June 11<sup>th</sup>, this weekend includes racing, track parades live music and also motor and lifestyle stands on the "green", this will be one of the biggest displays of MG and Triumph cars during the centenary year,

If you wish to join the club at The Gloucester Steam and Country Extravaganza on Sunday August 6<sup>th</sup> and have not given or emailed me your filled in application yet please do so before April 29<sup>th</sup> as I need to send these to the organisers to reserve our space.

Just after you receive this news letter some members will be in West Sussex on the Club Spring Break and then on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April we have our next club night.

Our club night this month will have a special presentation by Tom Strickland about the Battle of Roundway, this promises to be a very interesting evening so please do try to join us for this.

Hope to see you on the 24<sup>th</sup> April at The Tollgate at 8.00pm



## Club Member Car of the Month - 1976 MGB Roadster



**This month's featured car is owned by Peter Harris**

**I** bought my first MG way back in 1968. It was a white MG 1300 Mk 2, GFB 655G, some may say it was not a "proper" MG, but it did have the octagonal badge on the radiator grill! It was the 2 door sporty version of the BMC 1100/1300 range, with a smaller leather covered steering wheel, again with the badge in the middle. It also had a short gear stick rather than the standard long "stirring rice pudding" stick of the basic models. Although it was only a 1300 cc engine its performance was very similar to the MGB at the time. The twin carb, high compression ratio engine required 5 star petrol and I recall there were not many garages in the Trowbridge area where that was available, Lesters in Duke Street was the best option I recall, Shell 5 star was I think about 6 shillings a gallon.

It served me well, taking 4 young men on a camping tour of Switzerland, ( it needed a roof rack which spoiled the sporty look!) A couple of years later it took my girlfriend and I all the way down to Lake Como in Italy, across the Alps (No long tunnels like today's travellers!)





MG 1300 Mk 2 GFB 655G

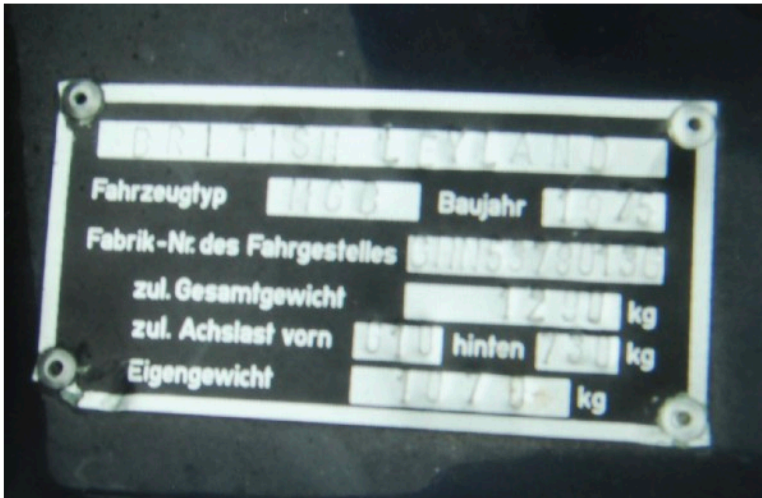
After nearly 4 years and 90,000 miles it was time for a change. The above mentioned Lesters had a red MGB in the showroom that I was smitten with and was taken for a test drive, but in the end my head ruled my heart and I plumped for a more practical car (a 1750 Maxi) My decision was later vindicated when we bought our first house and all the pipework and radiators for the central heating, and the new kitchen units, including the proverbial "kitchen sink", were transported in the maxi!

Fast forward 40 years and when I retired from full time work I grasped the opportunity to at last purchase a "B" that I so nearly bought all those years ago. It was a 1975 model that had been converted back to the chrome bumper style so to me it looked the "real thing" The paperwork showed it had had a major work about 10 years before I purchased it, including new gearbox, clutch, overdrive and other bits and pieces, At the time it was not tax exempt, but the slightly older ones that were exempt, were much more expensive so unaffordable at the time.

Sometime after I got it home I noticed the chassis number plate under the bonnet was in german. I wondered if it had perhaps been purchased by a military person serving in Germany who brought it with him when transferred back to United Kingdom.

I subsequently found a letter from the Heritage Trust dated October 1988 confirming engine/ chassis numbers, date of build etc. and delivery to a dealer in Middlesex, which seemed to discount my theory. However the letter was addressed to a gent in Nurnberg W Germany, so perhaps the plate had to be changed if the car was re-registered over there for a period of time.

The car's registration is KAM 300P and an AM registration mark was a Wiltshire one, not a Middlesex one, so the mystery deepens even further. Unless it had a German registration and had to be re-registered when the owner came back to the UK and he was based in Wiltshire



The letter also confirmed the original colour was Flamenco, which I suspected as there are one or two spots where the original red shows through where the current blue paintwork is chipped.

Whilst I enjoyed short journeys in the car with the hood down it was always "overheating" ( the gauge suddenly would go off the scale) if I got caught in traffic, so I was reluctant to go far. Flushing the radiator did not improve things so after a frustrating few years of limited use I eventually found an "old school" mechanic, J L Classics, at Sutton Veny, and he managed to sort that and other issues out, and it was like a different car to drive, and I felt happy to take it out further.

Then Covid arrived and put an end to those jaunts. After, when it was time to enjoy the summer's weather again, catastrophe struck and the starter motor failed. When the local garage was eventually able to look at it, it transpired the solenoid, battery and some wiring had also failed, which took them ages to repair. When I eventually got it back and took it out to the railway at Bitton, the front brake calliper seized on. The AA loosened them and said try and drive home without using the footbrake! Which, actually was not too difficult. So it was off the road again until the local garage could replace the callipers. So all in all, last year, with the excellent weather we had, was a write off as far as using the MG with the hood down was concerned.

So here's hoping this summer will see more use made of the car.



**Peter Harris**



## Don't Get Over Heated...

Peter Harris' reference to overheating in his great story above, reminded me of an article I have had filed away on the selfsame topic - well worth a read. Apologies for the print size, if there is sufficient interest I will rewrite the article and include it in a future edition. **ED**

**We've all seen it** and many of us have been there – classic car pulled over, bonnet up, steam pouring out. You can almost guarantee it every time there's a queue for a summer event. But it shouldn't be so: classics made before the 1980s should be less likely to overheat than many more modern cars.

By the 1980s, electric fans had taken over. A properly fitted mechanical fan cannot fail (unless the fan belt breaks, in which case you have warning and can replace it), whereas electric fans depend on good electrical connections, a functional thermostatic switch and sound fuses.

In a hot, dirty engine bay, those fail and that's why you see moderns on motorway hard shoulders whenever gridlock develops – the electric fan simply doesn't come on to cool the radiator. And that's one good reason not to rush out and convert your classic to an electric fan. The other is that an electric fan is not necessarily as effective. Ironically, the best argument for fitting an electric fan is if you are going to a very cold country, where a mechanical fan pulling super-cold air through the radiator first thing before the thermostat opens could freeze it, even with anti-freeze.

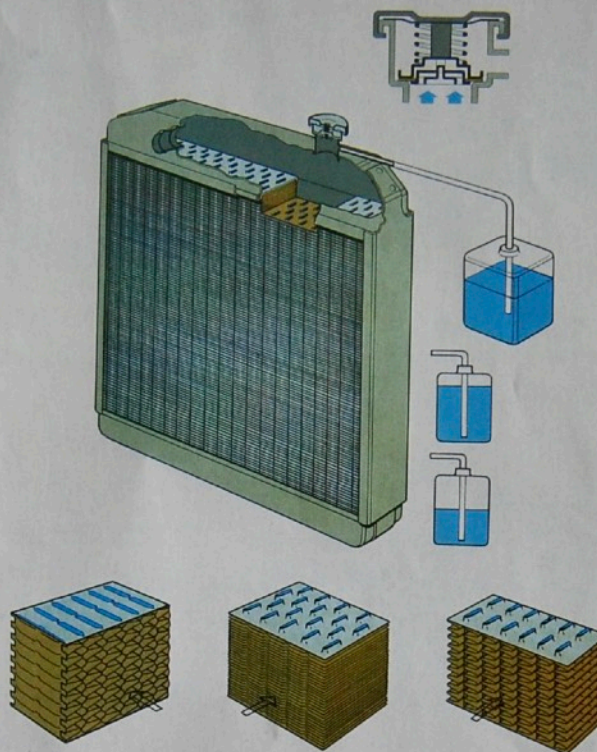
Introduced in the 1960s to reduce the noise and wasted energy of mechanical fans at high revs, the viscous coupling was a great idea. However, they deteriorate with age. With the engine off, try turning your fan – if it spins freely, the viscous coupling has failed: replace it as it will not cool your engine efficiently. It should turn, but with resistance.

The biggest cause by far of overheating in old cars is a silted-up radiator. There's a common misconception that you can fix this by back-flushing with a hosepipe. This may remove loose deposits but if you've seen how limescale builds up in a kettle or central heating pipes, you will know that the real problem is the layer

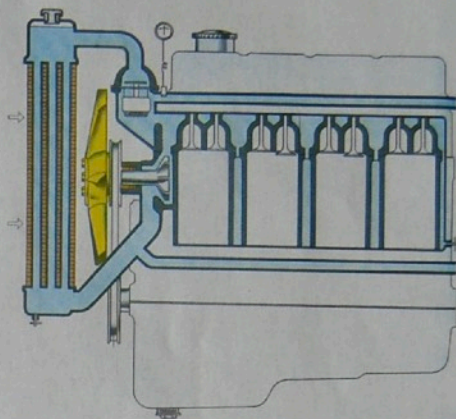
of hard lime that builds up gradually on the surfaces. It's a good insulator and, long before it actually blocks the pipes, it reduces flow and dramatically reduces the heat-exchanging capability of the radiator.

Just because water flows through it, that doesn't mean the radiator is fine: in a hard water area, radiators last less than eight years and only if you use deionised water and anti-freeze exclusively will you get more than 10 useful years. If your car overheats and the timing, mixture and cooling fan are correct, replace the radiator – you won't regret it.

Before you take out the old rad, use a flushing compound to flush as much as possible out of the water passages in the engine and heater. With luck, they'll get deposited in the old radiator before you chuck it out.



**Clockwise from radiator illustration**  
Sealed systems, with overflow bottle, were usually fitted from early 1970s; typical thermostat; coolant flow around engine; radiator core designs.



**'Classics made before the 1980s should be less likely to fail than many more modern cars'**

Other cooling problems can be improved by replacing the thermostat (some fail closed, some stick partly open, restricting water flow). Never run a road car without a thermostat, because you will accelerate engine wear and increase fuel consumption, as it takes longer to warm up and will wreak havoc with a temperature-controlled automatic choke.

A worn pressure cap that no longer seals properly will allow coolant to leak out and lead to early boiling; it will also encourage air locks. Look out for these if your cooling system regularly loses fluid without boiling; some cars have bleed valves at high spots to let air out, on others you may have to loosen a hose until all air escapes. Jack up the car if necessary so that the filler cap is higher than the rest of the system when filling.



Forth in my series of contemporary advertisements  
for MG Sports Cars.

*Safety*  *Fast!*



***The M.G. has a magic of its own . . .***

... its appeal is strongest among those who admire the characteristics which stamp a thoroughbred. No sports car has inspired more enthusiasm, or commanded a more loyal band of devotees. The driver who has enjoyed the many delights of an M.G. two-seater sports car will turn instinctively to an M.G. Magnette when he needs a fine all-purpose saloon.

Twelve Months' Warranty and backed by B.M.C. Service — the most comprehensive in Europe.



**THE MAGNETTE SALOON**

A pedigree sports saloon with traditional M.G. performance. The 1,489 c.c. o.h.v. engine develops 68 b.h.p. Superb road-holding, fast cruising, Leather upholstery, Safety glass throughout. Also Varitone model in wide range of two-tone finishes.

**THE SERIES M G A**

A breathtaking blend of power and beauty. Sparkling all-round performance. Tremendous strength and rigidity. Choice of brilliant contemporary colour harmonies. Open two-seater, fixed head Coupé, and Twin-Cam models. (Wing mirror and luggage rack optional extras).

**THE M.G. CAR COMPANY LIMITED, SALES DIVISION, COWLEY, OXFORD**  
Overseas Business: Nuffield Exports Limited, Oxford and 41 Piccadilly London, W.1.

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## Further to...

Mike Mitchard's "1970 Triumph TR6 Winter Project" in the March edition.

It seems since retiring, Mike has enjoyed a winter project to keep him out of trouble. I asked if he would include details of some of his projects. Here is his reply...

"I had a clear out last year and sold the Crew Cab, Minor Pickup and the Land Rover.

I still have have MGC GT & Porsche 911, plus the TR, with a VW California and a Smart fourtwo (which gets more use than all the others put together.) Great car for the two Jack Russell Terrorists we also have."

For this month I have included Mike's Austin Pick-up project...



***This 8cwt Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) was built in 1969 and purchased from new by a local Hampshire farm. After many years of typical farm work, the pick-up was laid up until purchased as a restoration project by the current owner in October 2017.***

***On dismantling it was clear how hard a life it had experienced. The chassis was twisted and bent and not economically repairable, so it was replaced and much of the remainder of the truck followed suit. e.g. tailgate and rear wings, cab and load area floors, inner wings front & back, B posts, inner & outer sills, front panel, valance, petrol tank.***

***The engine was totally rebuilt; re-bored with high compression pistons, balanced throughout, fast road camshaft and 1275cc head, new clutch & pressure plate,***



***starter motor, distributor, coil, SU HIF44 carburetor, petrol pump and Manifold exhaust system.***

***Upgraded suspension with disc brakes fitted to the front and new master & slave cylinders and brake pipes. New radiator, rack & pinion steering and Weller wheels on adjusted suspension.***

***New electric loom and light fittings. Replacement seats and new interior trim.***



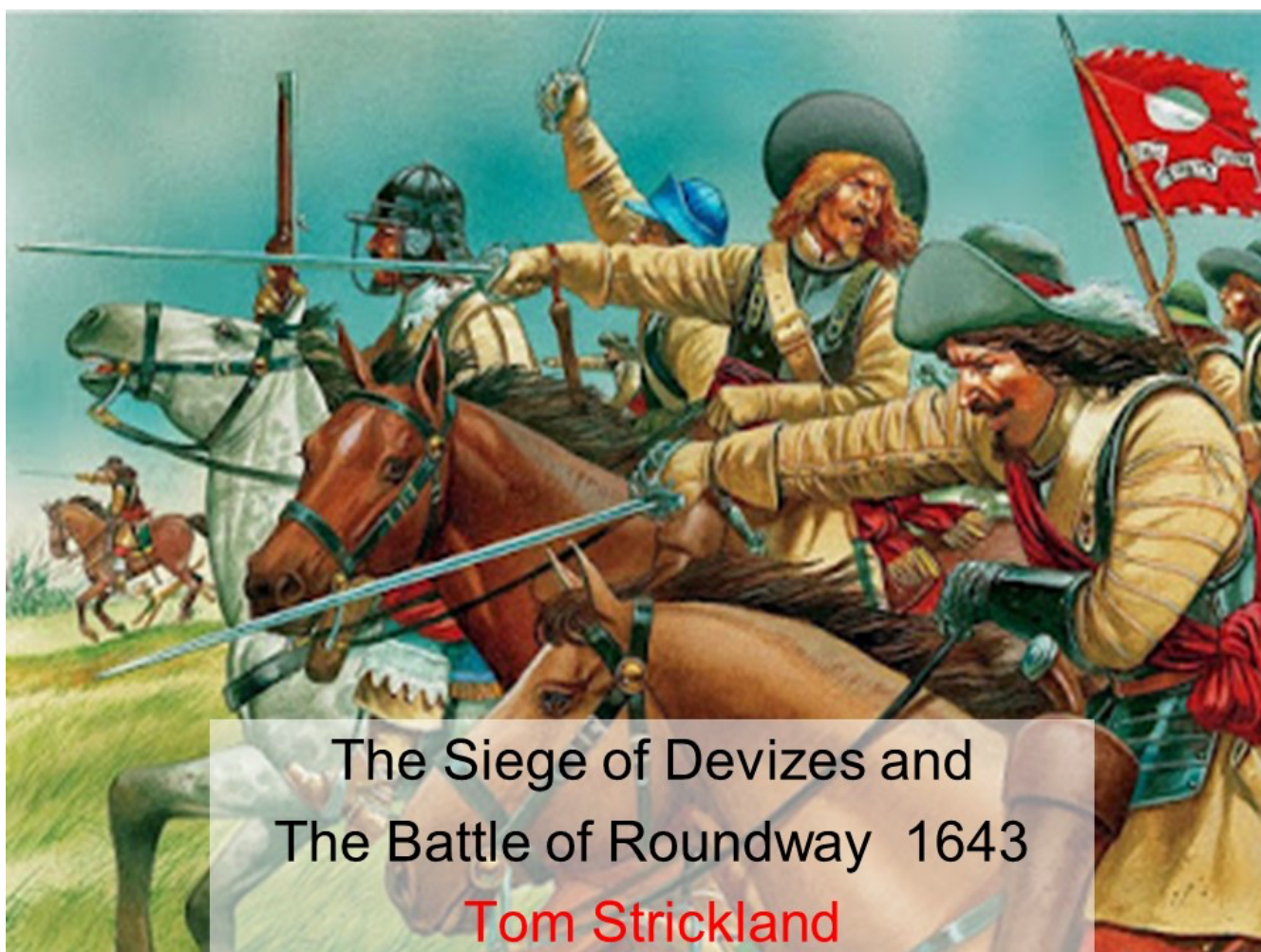




A Porsche Tractor next month....

## April Club Night - Tom Strickland Talk

Not only does MG flow through the veins of Tom but also History. We are used to Tom giving talks about the First and Second World Wars but the April club night talk has a local flavour







## How I Didn't Get Harvey Fixed

Malcolm Taylor

**H**arvey has been a bit incontinent of late. He dribbles oil. I'm sure its the front (or in the MG TF's case, the offside) crankshaft oil seal. For a couple of years I've treated this affliction by putting an additive in the oil that slows the leakage rate. That was until my local garage told me to get it out as the long term result would be oil leakage from everywhere.

Earlier this year I decided to get a proper job done and change the oil seal. Then, as most of you know, I went and had a heart attack. No driving for a month! That delayed proceedings.

Eventually I decided to take it down to Martin Smith at East Lydford in Somerset.

You may have come across him at various shows. He started by breaking F's and TF's for spares and then selling new spares and now does mechanical work. I have purchased various bits from him in the past. Harvey's new drivers door came from there.

I thought he would be the safest bet because he stocks all new parts for the cars and therefore if anything else transpired during the work, he would have all the parts there.

He wanted the car over 3 days, 2 nights, so that he could do the job on the middle day with a cold engine. I was getting him to do the timing belt and water pump at the same time.

He seems to be well known. On the day I rang him, he had two cars there from Germany. The people put up at a local hotel while he does the work.

Then the dreaded Lurgi struck. I got Covid. So, grounded again. I'm becoming very acquainted with the inside of my house.

I had to cancel the trip to Somerset until I could mix again, as I was getting Pat to follow me down and ferry me back and vice versa.

Today, the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, I tested negative for the first time. That's day 13 since going positive.

I was straight on the phone to Martin to see if I could plead with him to refit my job back into his schedule in time for the club spring break.

Disaster, dahlings. He had a massive break in last night and was waiting for the police and insurance company to turn up. He wasn't booking any further work until he had the plod out of the way and could see if he could complete the work he had in progress.

To be continued.....



**Frank Fletcher has included this great pic of his MG TD2 just outside Keevil airfield**





## MG Centenary Day - Saturday May 27<sup>th</sup> at The British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

This is the first event of the centenary year

At the end of the show I am planning to drive the short distance to Gilks Garage Café at Kineton for something to eat, this is a motoring themed café run by the descendants of the original garage proprietor and they are MG owners, if you would like to join me please let me know and I will book a table for 5.30pm. details of the venue [Home \(gilksgaragecafe.com\)](http://gilksgaragecafe.com)

## MG Triumph 100 at Silverstone Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June

This weekend includes racing, track parades live music and also motor and lifestyle stands on the "green", this will be one of the biggest displays of MG and Triumph cars during the centenary year,



The poster features the MG Centenary logo (1923-2023) at the top left. Below it, the text reads 'An event celebrating 100 years of MG'. To the right, it says 'British Motor Museum Saturday 27th May 2023'. A large image of a vintage MG car is in the center. At the top right, logos for Air Ambulances UK, Prostate Cancer UK, and Sporting Bears Motor Club are shown, along with the text 'In support of Air Ambulance UK, Prostate Cancer UK and Sporting Bears Motor Club'. Below the car, a list of activities is provided in two columns. At the bottom, logos for the Octagon Car Club, MG Car Club, Early MG Society, and MG T Society are displayed, along with the text 'Jointly organised by The MG Octagon Car Club, The MG Car Club, The Early MG Society, The MG Owners' Club and The MG T Society'.

**1923 2023 CENTENARY**

**An event celebrating 100 years of MG**

**British Motor Museum**  
Saturday 27th May 2023

In support of Air Ambulance UK, Prostate Cancer UK and Sporting Bears Motor Club

**BRITISH MOTOR MUSEUM**

- Timeline of 100 MGs
- Old Number One
- Works cars display
- MGs of special interest
- Sporting Bears dream rides
- Multi start point scenic runs converging on Gaydon
- Centenary dinner with guest speaker
- Club marquees
- MG specialist traders
- MG Motor UK
- Pride of ownership competition
- Private MG sales
- Car boot sale
- MG archive films in the film theatre
- Children's entertainment
- Souvenir merchandise
- The Barn-ettes – girl singing group

Full details and merchandise from our website: [www.mgcentenary.co.uk](http://www.mgcentenary.co.uk)  
Tickets on sale from British Motor Museum: [www.britishmotormuseum.co.uk](http://www.britishmotormuseum.co.uk)

**OCTAGON Car Club** **MG Car Club** **EARLY MG SOCIETY** **MG T Society**

Jointly organised by The MG Octagon Car Club, The MG Car Club, The Early MG Society, The MG Owners' Club and The MG T Society

## AN OPPORTUNITY TO OWN A GREAT CLASSIC CAR...

Earlier this month you would have received an email from long standing club member Paul Adams, advertising the fact that he is selling his MG TC and Austin 12/4. Paul has included a number of pics of the two cars he is selling.



Paul's contact details are - **Paul Adams 07401659995**



**MG TC**







## AUSTIN 12/4



## Secretary's Scribbles

Well, I have done a couple of MG related jobs over my Easter break. I noticed that Prestige Hoods had a 40% sale so ordered a new red glass panel hood for my TF (Poor credit card!). I then spent two days fitting it - well one day removing the old one and one day fitting the new one. The removal of the old one actually took more time as it involved drilling out lots of rivets. The job is actually remarkably straight forward you just need normal tools and a pop riveter and some time. I have fitted Midget hoods in the past with some success and some failures - because the 1960s hoods require some gestimation when working out how tight to make the hood when fitting the front part to the frame - I have had some dramatic fails.

The TF fitting is more straightforward in that respect, but does use a lot of rivets. I have to say that the glass panel is ace and the rear vision is much improved - the disappointment, and there is some, is that this particular brand of hood requires the glass window to be unzipped prior to lowering so is much less practical and I hadn't realised this was going to be necessary.... With more research I have found out that you can get easy 'straight down' hoods with glass panels but they are not so available in the full range of colours. If you are interested in upgrading your hood then have a conversation with me.

**Tom**







# CLUB DIARY

2023 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
<b>TBA</b>	<b>COMMITTEE MEETING</b>			<b>Martyn Lucas</b>
<b>21-24th April</b>	<b>Club Spring Break</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>Gordon and Sandra Newman</b>
<b>24th April</b>	<b>Club night - History Talk</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Tom Strickland</b>
<b>22nd May</b>	<b>Club night - BBQ Prod &amp; Poke</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>The Toll Gate Inn</b>	<b>Martyn and Peter</b>
<b>27th May</b>	<b>MG 100</b>		The British Motor Museum Gaydon	
<b>1st June</b>	MG100 Celebration at the original Garage in Oxford		Oxford	
<b>4th June</b>	Chippenham Lions Cherished Vehicle Show		Chippenham	
<b>4th June</b>	MGs in the Park		Cotswold Wildlife Park	
<b>10th - 11th June</b>	MG Live Silverstone	For Info	Silverstone	
<b>11th June</b>	Lions on the Green			<b>Devizes Lions Club</b>
<b>17th - 18th June</b>	<b>Thruxton Historic</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Thruxton Circuit</b>	<b>Martyn Lucas</b>
<b>18th June</b>	Bowood 'Masters in Motoring'	For Info		
<b>26th June</b>	<b>Club night - Mystery Run</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>Steve Todd</b>



2023 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time
9th July	Atwell Wilson Museum Open Day			
15th - 16th July	Post-Abingdon MG Show			
23rd July	Club Annual Picnic	Yes	Dorchester Sculpture Lakes	Gordon and Sandra Newman
24th July	Club night - Boules	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Martyn & Terry
6th August	Gloucester Country & Vintage Extravaganza	Yes	South Cerney	Martyn Lucas
6th August	Haynes MG100 Breakfast Meeting			Martyn Lucas
21st August	Club Night - Theme TBA	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
3rd September	White Horse Car Show	Yes	Westbury	
25th September	Club night - Theme TBA	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
30th September	Beaulieu MG Event	For Info		
23rd October	Club night - Theme TBA	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	
TBA	COMMITTEE MEETING			Martyn Lucas
TBA	Club night - AGM	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	Club AGM
TBA	Christmas Party	Yes	The Toll Gate Inn	





## CLUB DIARY

2023 EVENTS DIARY				
Date	Event	Club Event	Venue	Contact Details & Start Point/Time

### **OTHER POTENTIAL EVENTS**

Boat Trip on the Thames? (Martyn)

REME Museum at Lyneham? (Martyn)

Abingdon and Nuffield Place? (Martyn)

RMA Sandhurst – Would be Weekday? (Peter)

## 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	Kevin Meakin	01380 727151	<a href="mailto:kevinmg1@live.com">kevinmg1@live.com</a>
Event Shelter + Sides	Kevin Meakin	01380 727151	<a href="mailto:kevinmg1@live.com">kevinmg1@live.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>
Set of Boules	Terry Warder	01225 766068	<a href="mailto:suewarder60@gmail.com">suewarder60@gmail.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.