



Newsletter March 2017

AMGC Annual Dinner and Prizegiving

The Annual Dinner and Prizegiving was held on Friday 3rd February, with 21 club members attending. Alex McEwen had set us up in the Coach House at the Five Arrows, a venue that suits the occasion very well. As usual, the catering was superb, and the service provided by the hotel very good.



The Meal in Full Swing

After the excellent 3-course meal, the chairman, Dave Barton, thanked those attending and Alex and his staff for looking after us so well, and proceeded with the prizegiving. The trophy for the Best Club Car, chosen at the Pride of Ownership event in July, went to Debs Martin and her nice red MG3.



Dave presents the Best Club Car Award to Debs Martin



I receive the Skinner Trophy from Mary



Clive chose Pete Thomas to receive The President's Shield

Dave then handed over to Mary Skinner to present the new Roger Skinner Trophy in memory of her late husband Roger, a Club stalwart for many years. This trophy, a handsome claret jug, was presented to Adrian Bennett (me!) for amassing the most Skinner points during the year – a very close result, with only a couple of points separating the leading 3 members. As is fast becoming a tradition, the recipient of the Skinner Trophy filled the Jug with port, and all members present drank a toast to our late friend and colleague Roger. The last award, presented by Clive, was the President's Shield, this year presented to Peter Thomas. The evening was a great success, one of the most sociable events in our calendar.



Other Matters

A Final Reminder that The Annual Subscriptions are now due. The rate has increased slightly this year as noted in the minutes of the AGM after being static for the last 5 or 6 years, to £15 for a couple and £10 single. This increase is to cover the cost of running some of our activities such as the Pride of Ownership which last year showed a slight loss, and to help to fund proposed improvements to our website. Subs will be collected either:

In cash at the next and subsequent Club Nights

By bank transfer direct to the Club Account, details are:

NatWest, Sort Code 60-01-31, A/C No. 69656940 (preferred method)

By cheque made out to the club sent to our Treasurer, Jack Martin, at:

Rosemundy, School End, Chetwode, Bucks, MK18 4LA

Club-Branded Clothing Items

Don't forget that we are planning to submit a bulk order for club-branded clothing items – an order form was sent out recently – and we will hopefully be submitting the order some time in March, so please if you want any items, let Dave Barton (davebarton1@virginmedia.com) have your order asap. Also, Dave has now arranged with the supplier to add baseball caps to the order, details as follows :

BB10 Beechfield Original 5 Panel Cap



100% cotton twill.

5 panel.

Stitched ventilation eyelets.

Pre-curved peak.

Rip-Strip™ size adjuster.

Size:	One size
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Club Branded Caps will have the MG Octagan Logo
In the centre and AYLESBURY MG CLUB below

Colour choice :

Red Cap White Logo

Black Cap Red Logo

White Cap Red Logo

Blue Cap White Logo

Cost £6.95 Please state number and colour required.

So if you want a new cap, now is the opportunity!

February Club Night At the February Club Night there was considerable discussion about the events that we would like to run during 2017. There was an early call for people to reserve the weekend of 22 to 24 September for our weekend away. This event last year took a back seat to the 30th celebration, and partly because of this there was insufficient support for it, and the event was eventually cancelled. To avoid this happening again, we propose to begin planning for the weekend earlier. Also, there is a problem with venue – we will want a venue where the cars can be secured overnight, and displayed at our chosen location. Many potential sites will



only allow the cars into public areas if there is a certain number of them, usually at least 10 – 12 cars, which we would struggle to achieve. If there are insufficient numbers again this year to mount our own event, we will look to see if a number of us would like to join an organised event arranged by someone else, such as the MG Owner's Club. Also under consideration and in an early planning stage is a weekend in Canterbury, with trips out to Dover Transport Museum and Leeds Castle – more about this in a subsequent communication.

Other events were decided: we will repeat the August evening run and meal – Heather Barton will organise the meal and I and Dave will have a look at the run. I had previously mentioned that I would organise a day out to the Thames Valley Sports Car Day at Hambleden Village, to combine this with a picnic at the Hambleden site. Unfortunately, I now discover that the date for this event, organised by the Jaguar Enthusiasts Club (JEC), clashes this year with my holiday in Sicily. Brian Deacon however has stepped into the breach and volunteered to organise this, possibly with a breakfast meet at somewhere like The Aylesbury Tuck and then a run through The Chilterns in convoy to Hambleden. More information about events will appear in the newsletter as it becomes available.

The Club website was also discussed – a few members of the committee had met with a web designer before Christmas to discuss a revision of the site, but the quote to do so came in far too expensive. Graham King mentioned that his daughter's partner, Justin, is a web designer and might be interested in taking this on as a project at reasonable cost, and volunteered to progress this. Dave Barton has now been in touch with Justin, and is holding preliminary discussions with him this week, so watch this space for further news on this topic.

My Relationship with MG

As mentioned in the last newsletter, I want to explore via this newsletter why we have become passionate about our MGs, so while you all jot down your recollections as to why you are passionate about your MG, I will kick off this topic myself. Here is the first part:

My Relationship with MG (Part 1, 1973 – 1976) – Adrian Bennett

I have had a long and varied relationship with MG, having owned quite a few of these endearing little cars over the years. My MG experience started in 1973. Jackie and I had just decided to set up home together, and since we both lived in North London we could not, at this early stage in our careers, afford to buy a house in our local area. However, via the GLC, who were looking to move people from the Capital to nominated development areas outside, we secured a GLC mortgage sufficient to buy a 1930s 3-bed semi in Somerset Avenue, Luton. We chose Luton because I was working as a computer programmer at RAF Hendon, where there was a big project to replace the ageing computerised RAF Stores System, and the site was right by the (then) end of the M1 motorway, and Somerset Avenue was only a mile or two from Junction 10. Jackie was still working at the time for the MOD in Tolworth, so, on completion in the Spring of 1973 I moved into the house alone to begin the task of rewiring it (a requirement of the mortgage) while she stayed with her parents in Kingsbury until we married that August and she moved to a new job at RAF Stanmore.

The commute to work was straightforward – there was nowhere near as much traffic on the M1 in those days. However, I drove a Mini 1000, a great little car, but not ideally suited to a daily thrashing at motorway speeds. After a few months the poor old thing was showing signs of stress, some days wheezing and panting as it laboured along, so I decided it had to be changed



for something more suitable. Looking around the dealers local to work and home, I saw and was rather taken with a lovely blue Midget, but on consideration decided it was probably a bit on the small side for what we needed. But it had started a train of thought, and I eventually decided that an MGB with overdrive would do nicely. I found one – a glacier white 1970 B roadster, owned by an airline steward who lived in one of the villages near Luton, so at the age of 25 I became a proud MG owner.



Jackie and I with our first MGB in 1974



Our B at a very early MGOC meet (Roche's black B is third in the line)

Shortly after I bought the B, I saw an advert in Exchange and Mart, for a new club for MGs. The advertiser lived in Pomfret Avenue, just around the corner from Somerset Avenue, so I went round and knocked on the door. The advertiser was Roche Bentley, and the club he was starting up was the MG Owners Club, and so I became one of the first members, and soon became involved with helping to organise and develop the club. Jackie and I also became good friends with Roche and his wife Trish, spending many evenings, days out and weekends away with them.

The MGB was perfect for my commute to work, easily keeping up with the traffic and quite economical. Jackie by this time was working for the MOD in Stanmore, so I would drop her off on the way in to Hendon, and pick her up in the evening for our blast back up the motorway. Best of all were the Sunday mornings, when I was booked to work overtime – there was next to nothing on the motorway at 7 o'clock in the morning, so I was able to cruise at 100 all the way in (the 70 speed limit was in force, imposed in 1965, but the police always seemed to be asleep on Sunday mornings!). We loved the MGB – touring holidays in Cornwall and elsewhere were a real pleasure! The low point of our relationship however was the winter – in the really cold weather the car would refuse to start until I took the plugs out and warmed them up under the grill. Also, it would not fire up while the starter was actually running – but would fire as soon as you released the key – I soon got the hang of giving it a quick spin on the key and releasing it. Back then I had no idea why, but now realise that there are two ignition circuits – full spark for cranking and reduced spark via a ballast resistor for normal running. When you release the key it switches to the resistor circuit. So there was a fault somewhere in the full spark circuit. Anyway, nothing I couldn't live with at the time. The car served us well, even helping with our DIY projects – I well recall Jackie and I driving back from the DIY superstore, hood down, with a flat pack sink unit tucked behind the seats and towering over us, when it started to pour with rain – amused stares from the other Saturday shoppers

I had the B for about 18 months, until it developed a more serious fault. When thoroughly



warmed up, there was a drag on the transmission, as though the handbrake was partially on. I diagnosed a duff overdrive unit, and decided I didn't want to pay out for it to be replaced, so I traded the B in for a later, 1973 B roadster in yellow ochre, purchased from Camden Motors in Leighton Buzzard. I parked the old B just down the road from them, then wandered off for a couple of hours to let it cool down and hope they wouldn't notice the overdrive problem..... So now I was on my second MGB, newer, smarter and quicker than the first one, and a great car that I wish I still had (interestingly it had been sold new by Kernahan of Witney, from whom I was destined to purchase a TF 26 years later.....).



Jackie poses with our second MGB somewhere in Bedfordshire



Jackie, Roche and Trish at Stourhead

Roche Bentley worked for Pitney Bowes in The City, so he used the motorway every day too. He and I used to fantasise over a pint or a curry about a red 1953 MG TF we passed on the way to work each day, parked outside a house in Crawley Green Road, and the idea was born that we would buy and restore a T-type each. Roche was the first to find one – he had a friend who worked in publishing, and saw the E & M before it was issued. We drove into the wilds of the country, and found the car, a black and rather decrepit one, in a lock-up, and he bought it, bringing it home to Luton via a borrowed trailer and his 1966 MGB, which struggled a bit on the hills. A short while later I located a 1952 TD in Sevenoaks, abandoned in a back garden with its gearbox in bits in a big cardboard box, and the tatty body a nice shade of black and rust. I went back to Sevenoaks with a low loader and brought back my third MG, stashing it in my next-door neighbour, Pat's, garage. We got Roche's one going, but it was a long way from getting an MOT, so it languished for some time in his garage, with us driving it up and down Pomfret Avenue until he could afford to restore it to the fine condition it's in today, resplendent in a coat of Old English White. Mine was in rather worse condition – the cardboard box contained not one but two gearboxes. The owner had removed and stripped the box, and got a Wolseley 4/44 box from a scrapyards, stripped that for replacement parts, found they were slightly too big, put all the bits in the box and lost interest.

After much negotiation and promises of redecorating, I managed to get permission to sort out the bits of the two boxes on the dining table over the next week or so, eventually identifying which bits went in which box, and then looked to see why it had been stripped. It had shed a couple of teeth on the layshaft, which mangled both the first and reverse gear wheels. So after much searching I managed to locate a new layshaft and gear wheels, and set about rebuilding it. When this was back in the car, I charged the battery, put some fuel in the tank, and tried to start it. It fired up and ran for a few seconds before cutting out. While I peered into the engine, Jackie, leaning over the fence, casually remarked 'Should it be smoking like that?' Of



course **** not, I muttered under my breath as I looked up to see smoke billowing up from under the dashboard as the TD consumed its ancient ignition wiring. In another two weeks I had relaced this and was ready to try again, having also rebuilt the carburettors for good luck. The next time she fired up, and ran well, after a proper tune up. Unfortunately, switching off the ignition made no difference, the engine kept on running, and the only way to stop it was either to stall it, or switch off the fuel and wait for it to run dry. When later I took the cylinder head off, I found that it had been fitted with racing pistons, which gave it something near diesel engine compression, so no spark needed to keep it going!

To Be Continued....

Upcoming Events -Dates For Your Diary

31 March / 2 April - Practical Classics Restoration Show at The NEC

<http://www.necrestorationshow.com/>

Sunday April 2nd - Brooklands MG Era Day.

This annual event for all MG cars is well worth a visit. The famous Test Hill will be open, can you get up without staying in first gear? Always a very lively event with hundreds of MGs from the earliest models up to the present day. Gates open at 10:00am and admission includes the Brooklands Museum. The MGC and Y-Type are featured this year.

For further details visit <https://www.brooklandsmuseum.com/>

Saturday 8th April – Club Breakfast Meet and Run

We meet up at Orchard View Farm, Little Meadle (near Princes Risborough) for breakfast and a look around the well-stocked farm shop, then a run through the Chilterns to Greys Court (NT) where we hope to park in a reserved area in front of the house. If it's a fine day, bring a picnic, otherwise lunch or afternoon tea in the NT Restaurant there.

15 April from 10.00am - Pride of Longbridge (Cofton Park)

Sunday 23rd April from 10.00am -Drive it Day / Bicester Heritage - Sunday Scramble

30 April / 2 May from 10.00 - Rushden Cavelcade of Transport

Stratford Festival of Motoring - May from 10.00am (no dates yet)

Sunday 7th May – Run to Thames Valley Sports Car Day at Hambleden

Date provisional at the moment. Run through the Chilterns to the beautiful village of Hambleden near Henley, and meet up with the Thames Vallay MGF/TF Register for a great selection of Classic Cars. Bring a picnic, or enjoy the BBQ at the Stag & Huntsman pub.

Sunday 7th May – MG Car Club/Chesham Natter, Spring Chicken Run

From The Bellcote in Ashley Green to Blenheim Palace.

Details Keith Allen <mgkeithallen@outlook.com>

Sunday 21st May from 10.00am- Chiltern Hills Vintage Vehicle Rally

Aylesbury – Bucks County Showground, Weedon



Sunday 21st May – Stewkley Country Fair

"The Grange", Mursley Road, Stewkley Leighton Buzzard Bed LU7 0ES. The organisers would like to see a few MGs in the Classic Car part of the show. Free entry- Contact: Norman Draper, tel 01525 240524.

Sunday 4 June - Vintage Stony - <http://www.vintagestony.co.uk/>

Saturday-Sunday 17th-18th June - MGLive!

The annual MG extravaganza, the biggest MG show on Earth. Visit the dedicated website as details unfold - <http://www.mgcc.co.uk/mglive/>

Woodford Halse Country Show - June (no date yet)

<https://www.facebook.com/woodfordhalsecountryfair>

Gloucs & Warks Steam Railway (Toddington) Classic Vehicle Day - June (no date yet)

<http://www.gwsr.com/planning-your-visit/2016-events-calendar/classic-vehicle-days.aspx>

Pre 1950's Classic Cars @ Upton House, Nr Banbury - June (no date yet)

Andrew.Overton@nationaltrust.org.uk for details, *entry by invitation only*.

24th - 25th June – Bicester Heritage Flywheel Festival

<http://bicesterheritage.co.uk/events/flywheel-festival/> . Great Day out for all the family.

24 / 25 June - Banbury Steam Fair & Classic Show

<http://banbury-rally.co.uk/>

Tingewick Fete & Classic Car Show - June (no date yet)

<http://www.classicshowsuk.co.uk/classic-car-show-event-information/classic-car-show-by-date.asp?id=894>

Buckingham Classic Car Show at Gawcott - July (no date yet)

<http://www.buckinghamrotary.co.uk/>

Chiltern Open Air Museum - July (no date yet)

<http://www.coam.org.uk/whats-on/events/classic-vehicle-show/>

Festival of the Unexceptional at Whittlebury Hall Hotel - July (no date yet)

www.unexceptionalcars.co.uk

28 / 30 July - Silverstone Classic

<http://www.silverstoneclassic.com/>

6 Aug - Higham Ferrers Classic Car Show

<http://classicshowsuk.co.uk/classic-car-show-event-information/classic-car-show>

Cowley Classic Car Show - Aug (no date yet)

<http://www.cowleyclassiccarshow.org.uk/>



13 Aug - RetroWarwick

<http://www.retrowarwick.co.uk/>

20 Aug - Brackley Classic Vehicles in the Park

Saturday 26th August – Club Run to Stonor Park Craft Fair

27 / 28 Aug - Blenheim Festival of Transport

<http://classicshowsuk.co.uk/classic-car-show-event-information/classic-car-show-by-date.asp?id=763>

Brill Beer Festival & Classic Vehicle Show - No date yet

<http://brillbeerfestival.co.uk/vehicle-gathering-3/>

28 Aug - Pre 78 Classic Vehicle Rally - Quainton

<http://bucksrailcentre.org/>

Cars in the Claydons - Sept (no date yet)

<http://www.claydonestate.co.uk/whats-on/>

Sunday 3 Sept - Blackthorn Classic Car Show -

<http://www.blackthornclassicarshow.co.uk/>

Northleach Steam & Classic Vehicle Show - Sept (no date yet)

<http://northleachsteamshow.co.uk/>

Milton Keynes Open Air Museum / Transport Days - Sept (no date yet)

<http://www.miltonkeynesmuseum.org.uk/transport-day/>

22nd - 24th September – AMGC Weekend Away

Current planning is for a weekend in Canterbury and around.

23 / 24 Sept - Kettering Steam & Vintage Rally

<http://www.ketteringvintagerally.co.uk/>

Phew!!! That's it for now.

Adrian Bennett

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Club Secretary