



# Synchro!



**The Newsletter of South Staffs and North Birmingham MG Owners Club**

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**H**i and welcome to the first newsletter of 2012. I hope you will find this a useful communication passing on our news and gossip about our club. But for this to be a success we need input from you, members of our club. So if you have any stories, news, gossip or anything that can be published let us have it!

Steve Moore—Newsletter editor.

## Wise Words From our Chairman

May I start this message by saying how proud I am to be voted Chairman of the South Staffs MG Owners Club and promise to do my utmost to ensure the good work done by my predecessor will not be undone. I would also like to welcome the new members of the committee namely Lin, Dave (Ford) and Tony to the team I am sure they will work hard and provide a good service to the membership and promote the harmony that the members deserve. (see photos on next page)



I also wish to thank the existing committee members some who have remained in the position Dave (Barton) Peter, Steve and Meryl whilst Nigel has moved to the post of secretary. These members again will supply valued experience to the club and ensure it's ongoing success.

With regards to the members, who without them there would not be a club. I would like to express my gratitude especially all those who have contributed by organising a run or an event. We do realise the trouble and work they have put into giving the club happy memories. Also the work that is done behind the scenes such as stewards, raffles, setting up stands etc. and last but not least, volunteering to help.

It is my intention to have a very good relationship with the MGOC and give them all the support we can whilst they can return the favour by supporting the club in the ventures we do and giving us a lot more exposure in their monthly magazine.

It will be a year of change. Already as of writing this we will be changing our venue. There will be more changes some for the good some for the bad. All I can ask is that myself and the committee have your support. We are there for you please assist us in all we do.

**Now let's start by enjoying ourselves !**

## New Committee Members

Dave Ford  
Membership Secretary



Lin Hill  
Events Secretary



Tony Haughton  
Committee Member



### TV Quiz – Part 1

*By Sally Boyde Shaw*

Those of you who know me may have realised that I have a passion for quizzes. They bring out my competitive nature, a part of me that Dave hadn't seen until 2010 and the treasure hunt round Berrington Hall. I was determined to win, to the point where we saw parts of the house that we would possibly not have noticed on just any old visit. I love solving clues, and get a buzz out of testing my general knowledge.

So, after some hassling from my kids who were fed up with me watching TV quizzes and shouting the answer at the screen, I started applying to go on the shows myself. For years, almost since it started, I have phoned in to 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire?' just waiting for that call that would make me rich! That telephone number is ingrained on my brain. If it came up as a tie break question I would win! All to no avail – and now it's been announced that they are ending the show after the next series. But I am still calling in regularly, just in case. In the meantime, I decided to take my kids' advice and show them what their mum was made of at the same time, and before I knew it I was invited to an audition for 'The Weakest Link'.

The audition format follows the theme of the programme. The programme researchers take care to make sure that the applicants have seen the show (you would be surprised how many people apply for things without having even seen the show they are applying for). We had to introduce ourselves to the group, trying to make ourselves as bubbly and memorable as possible. We were asked to tell everyone an exciting thing that we had experienced, and as the other members each took turns I felt more and more boring. I couldn't compete with free-fall parachuting, winning 'Going for Gold', appearing as an extra in a James Bond film or surfing on Bondi Beach. When it got to my turn I was thinking 'help!' but my mouth was telling the others about me meeting Ozzy Osbourne, offering cups of tea to members of ZZ Top, sharing photos of kids with Paul Young, having a drink with the Ashes winning England cricket team and showing Noel Edmonds (yes – the Noel Edmonds) to his bedroom. It's amazing the experiences you get when working at a posh, exclusive hotel.

After this, we all played a couple of rounds as on the show, with one of the researchers playing the role of Ann Robinson. All this was being filmed, to be used in making the decision which applicant was through to the real thing. At the end of the audition we were told that we would be contacted if needed, but not to contact them – reminded me of the lines 'Don't call us, we'll call you', or 'Thanks, but no thanks!'. So, imagine my surprise when I received a letter from the 'Beeb' saying that they were really impressed with my audition and they wanted me to appear on the show. Lots of phone calls from them later, going over details and a 'bio-pic' – asking me all about my family, my loves, hates, hobbies and what I would do with the money if I won, I got the confirmed date of filming, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

Now, as you all know, December 2010 brought snow to the country, and more specifically to Glasgow, where the filming takes place. The journey up didn't start well. The BBC had arranged for me to fly from East Midlands' airport, which is literally 12 minutes away from my home. The Airport Link bus passes by my front door – perfect. Or so I thought. On the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> (the day I was flying up to Glasgow) I woke to snowdrifts and bad road conditions. The bus was late. The bus was so late it didn't turn up. I waited as long as I could and then had to drive to the airport myself so I wasn't too late to check in. Because of the time spend waiting for the invisible bus and having to drive slowly in the snow and ice, I had to park in the nearest car park to the airport – the 'Short Stay' car park. I ran into the terminal and checked in with literally 2 minutes to spare and rushed through to the departure lounge, only to find that my flight had been delayed. Three hours later an announcement came telling us that Glasgow airport had been closed and my flight had been diverted to Ayr. A quick telephone call to my allocated 'personal advisor' and it was agreed that a car would be in Ayr to meet me, rather than in Glasgow.

After what seemed an eternity, the flight took off, but not before the captain telling us that Glasgow had reopened for a short window and so we would be landing there after all! A secret text to my contact and a car was arranged in Glasgow as well as Ayr, just in case. The flight itself was uneventful, it is after all only a take-off and landing to fly to Glasgow, but once in the air over the city it was announced that the landing lights at the airport had a fault and were not working, and we would be circling a couple of times before turning direction for Ayr as originally planned. On the

last circle, the airport landing lights came on and the captain made a perfect landing in Glasgow just as the lights went off again. The weather was atrocious and the snow was deep, but my car was waiting for me. It seemed that it was the only vehicle on the usually busy motorway into Glasgow, and the driver had difficulty pulling into the hotel car park, skidding to a stop resting on a bollard!

We had been asked to be in the reception of the hotel at 6.30am the next morning, and that was the first time when all the contestants met each other. After lots of 'Hello' and 'Where have you travelled from?', and even more of 'What dreadful weather, nearly didn't make it', four people carriers pulled up outside and members of the production team, armed with clipboards, came in to get us all together. We were driven over the Clyde, which was frozen for the first time in living memory, and deposited at the BBC studios on the opposite bank of the river. Once there, things were a whirlwind. We were told the rules of the game again, so that we were all sure of what we had to do. We had been asked to take three or four different outfits and the most appropriate ones were decided by the camera team. They have to consider who we stand next to and clashing colours, the background colour which can make you disappear if you wear anything too dark, and stripes and patterns can cause 'swirling' on film. Make-up and hair followed, even for the men, and then change into the outfits that had been chosen; a quick trip to the loo, and into the studio.

It was huge! The ceiling was so high I couldn't see it, and there were hanging lights everywhere. The set is so different when you see it for real, and it took some moments before I saw my name in lights on one of the podiums. The studio is the domain of the studio manager and he took over, telling us where to stand and which cameras to look into. Microphones were secreted about our bodies – no time for shyness here as microphone packs were attached to bras and wiring fed under the boobs!

The camera crew like to be able to 'sweep' round contestants and so those short arses like me had to stand on platforms of varying sizes in order for us all to look a uniform height. Then the introduction was filmed – 'I'm Sally. I'm 53. I'm a trainer assessor from Loughborough'. Some of us managed it in one take, but others said 'Hi', 'Hello', the words in the wrong order, or didn't look into the camera lens and so had to do it again. Then we had to practice turning the boards, which is not as easy as it sounds. They have to be turned 'top away from you', exactly when Ann says 'the Weakest LINK' (turn). A couple of practice sessions and one of the contestants was still not getting it right, but the team were ready to go so he was told to try his best and be prepared for Ann to say something about his timing.

Then Ann appeared. And, yes, she is as formidable in real life as on screen. The production team had already warned us that she didn't like having to do retakes, and that she would be scathing and sarcastic, but we were to react positively and try to get her to laugh as the audience loved this. I didn't find this too hard as I thought she looked really funny with a straight, tight lipped expression, but others in the group seemed quite intimidated by her, and said afterwards that she had put them off giving the right answer.

After the first round we had all got the questions right first time and had banked the full £1000. That was the most difficult decision having to say who I wanted to vote off. We had all answered our questions and no one had banked too soon. But, that's the game and the unfortunate fella was gone. I didn't feel too guilty over my choice, as others had gone for him as well, but he was the one who had to leave. The rest of the rounds went in a quick haze, slowly losing contestants one by one. The questions came faster as fewer people were there to answer them, and before I realised there were only three of us left. This is where strategics come in when choosing who to vote for. Both the other contestants were lovely and I hated having to make a choice, but my competitiveness came to the fore and I voted off Emily who had been the strongest link on a couple of rounds – so did Terry, which left us two in the final head to head.

The contest between Terry and me seemed to go on for ever. The questions he was asked I knew, but so did he! Fortunately, we were well matched and had to go on to a tie break. Again, question for question were matched, both of us answering correctly, and those we got wrong the other got their question wrong. So much of this was cut out of the final show, and the production team said that it was nail biting watching us. However, I was stumped by a question asking which small wind instrument was named after a US river. I had Mississippi in my head – I knew it was wrong but I couldn't shift the word out of my head and blurted it out 'Mississippi?' Wrong!! The answer was Swanee – now I've heard of a Swanee whistle, and the saying 'Up the Swanee without a paddle', and I knew at the back of my mind that there really is a Swanee River. My heart sank, my stomach started churning and Terry won £2600. I was totally gutted, but I was rushed to a small room and put in front of a camera and asked my feelings for the final shot of the show. We had been told not to be down or negative, so I put on a brave face and said that I was really pleased for Terry, although the money would have been more comfortable in my bank account.

Back in the Green Room where all the other contestants were waiting, and congratulations all round. They all patted my back and said 'Hard luck', and my brave face was stuck on my face until I was back in the airport. Four hours delay, so I landed back at East Midlands at 10pm in the dark and snow and cold. And a car park ticket for £35!! Not to mention having to tell everyone that I had reached the final, but lost! However, it had been an experience that I would not have missed for the world, and I hoped that the audition for 'The Chase' that I had been to earlier in the year had been successful, and that would be my next target for quiz stardom..... *More next edition....Sally*

## A Funny Road Sign Message Lost in Translation

English  
No entry for heavy goods vehicles.  
Residential site only.

Welsh Translation  
I am out of the office at the moment



### **How it Got Lost in Translation**

The council staff in Swansea, Wales, UK wanted a translation, so they emailed their translator. However, he was not available, so an automatic response was triggered which read in Welsh:

I am out of the office at the moment

Unfortunately the council staff were not Welsh speaking themselves, and believed that the automated response was the actual translation they were seeking. There would be no story if they had the message checked, but they didn't and another funny road sign resulted.

The error was detected by Golwg, a famous Welsh-language magazine. Dylan Iorwerth, the managing editor, said: 'We have been running pictures of this kind over the past few months. 'It's good that people want to have bilingual signs but, unfortunately, they don't make sure someone with a real knowledge of Welsh checks the work through all the different stages.'

## Pavement Artist

Check out this chap, Julian Beever. He is a British Artist that has mastered the art of perspective drawing. He usually makes his art on city pavements, creating some spectacular "3D" images viewed from the correct angle.

Do a Google search for "Julian Beever" for more examples of this extraordinary artist.



## Wikipedia



**WIKIPEDIA**  
The logo of Wikipedia, a globe featuring glyphs from many different writing systems

**Screenshot** [\[show\]](#)

**URL** [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)

**Slogan** The Free Encyclopedia

**Commercial?** No

**Type of site** Internet encyclopedia

**Registration** Optional (required only for certain tasks such as editing protected pages, creating pages or uploading files)

**Available language(s)** 270 active editions (282 in total)

**Content license** [Creative Commons Attribution/Share-Alike 3.0](#) (most text also dual-licensed under [GFDL](#))  
Media licensing varies

**Owner** [Wikimedia Foundation](#) (non-profit)

**Created by** [Jimmy Wales](#), [Larry Sanger](#)<sup>[1]</sup>

**Launched** January 15, 2001 (11 years ago)

## Have you discovered the power of Wikipedia ?

If you are new to the internet, then one site is a must for research and information, Wikipedia. This is a "Free" Encyclopaedia, with all entries written by volunteer experts. All articles are verified before publication, although some inaccuracies can occur, but anyone can write an article for publication. So if you are an expert on any subject then start writing, or have a good read of it and if you find anything inaccurate then put them right!!

A man was driving down a country road in the middle of dairy farm country when his car stalled inexplicably. He got out and raised the hood to see if he could find out what had happened. A brown and white cow slowly lumbered from the field she had been grazing in over to the car and stuck her head under the hood beside the man. After a moment the cow looked at the man and said, "Looks like a bad carburettor to me." Then she walked back into the field and began grazing again. Amazed, the man walked back to the farmhouse he had just passed, where he met a farmer. "Hey, mister, is that your cow in the field?" he asked. The farmer replied, "The brown and white one? Yep, that's old Bessie." The man then said, "Well my car's broken down, and she just said, 'Looks like a bad carburettor to me.'" The farmer shook his head and said, "Don't mind old Bessie, son. She don't know a thing about cars."

**Question:** When does a man open the door of the car for his wife?

- A. When he has a new car.
- B. When he has a new wife.

A piece of bacon and a sausage are in a frying pan being cooked. The sausage says, 'it's hot in here isn't it!' and the bacon replies, 'wow! a talking sausage!'



## Continuous Insurance Enforcement Law.

Just a little warning to anyone who isn't aware of the new law relating to motor insurance that came into force in 2011). Your car must be covered by third party insurance at all times, even if it is off the road, unless you have declared it SORN.

Previously you only had to insure your car for use on the road, but now even if it is in your garage in pieces it must be insured if not SORN.

DVLA and the Motor Insurers Bureau will work together on this, and initially the owners of vehicles recorded as uninsured will be sent a letter. If the vehicle is not then insured an automatic fine of £100 will be enforced. Vehicles kept uninsured on public land may be clamped, seized, and crushed with a fine of £1000 imposed.

I think the danger here lies with our members with older MGs that are taxed (free) all year round. The car may be taxed, but if the insurance expires whilst it is slumbering the winter away in your garage, and you haven't declared it SORN you may have an unwelcome letter drop through the door. Beware.

*Steve Gwilt*

### ***DATES FOR YOUR DIARY***

**Sun 12th Feb** Valentines Run Graham & Cynth Cherry One of our Top Teams of "route masters", Graham & Cynth are putting one of their famous runs together for our early season start & to blow the cobwebs away!, It's so secret at the moment I have no more details, so watch this space, but you can choose your meal now. All interested can contact me, Nigel on 07743 012 165 to get your names on the board. Cheers.

**Sun 19th Feb** MG Show / Spares day @ Stoneleigh Our chance to win 250 quid! by putting on the best display stand up, we're good at that, there'll be 10 passes available, to get in for 9am ( set up earlier). Speak to us if your interested. More News soon.

**Sat 25th Feb** 'M' 'G' Fancy Dress Evening and Fish 'n' Chip Supper Your Friendly, Fun, Stuart Lay. Come dressed as an "M"(i.e. Maid) or "G"(i.e. Gangster) get the idea!! for a fun filled evening, with music & dancing, try your skills at Scalextric racing & anything else we can come up with!. Tickets on sale priced £5 each which includes a "Fish 'n' Chip " Supper. At the Hatherton Village Hall. Tickets on sale now!

**Sat 14th Apr** Bacon Butty Run Geoff & Colin This one's going to be a Mystery Tour with a Surprise ending!! that makes it all the more fun. The first stop is the BUTTY stop, love the smell of sizzling bacon!!yum, the second stop is the Picnic so fill your baskets with your favourite Nosh. OK now all please pray for the SUN!!. More details to follow from Geoff & Colin.

**Sun 15th Apr** MGB register MGB 50 Birthday run FOR YOUR INFORMATION: This being one of the MGB celebrations you might wish to do, please contact the MGCC for details

**Sun 22nd Apr** The Dragon Run Mid Wales MGOC A chance to take in the delights of Wales, a guaranteed warm and friendly welcome and we trust an event to be remembered for all of the right reasons (we aim to please).

**Sun 6th May** Abbingdon Air Show A great mix of classic's, cars & planes to enjoy along with side stalls to browse. We should be back to "picnic" weather so fill your basket's up, it'll be an early start as we need to be there for 9.30am!!but "spring is in the air"!. Details coming up soon, please ask if any questions.

**Sun 13th May** MGs in the Trees, back again at Chasewater Country park. Our major event of the season. Should be a great day, bacon butties and sunshine!! (fingers crossed for the sunshine) Volunteers required to help out on the day.

### **STOP PRESS.....Latest News on our venue.**

Our last committee meeting on the 30th January took place at The Cheslyn Hay Community and Sports Club in Cheslyn Hay. The licensee made us very welcome and has said we can use this as a meeting place for our bi monthly meetings (subject to members approval). So our next meeting on the 8th February will be there. Please try and attend hand have a look at this much improved meeting place. See website for location map