



Synchro!



The Newsletter of South Staffs and North Birmingham MG Owners Club

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Date: April 2011

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SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLINGS

The January newsletter was very short, partly due to lack of time, but it seems to have fulfilled its object, to publicise the forthcoming events, because attendances have been nothing short of phenomenal.

Already previously mentioned were the club AGM, the skittles evening, the Valentines' run and the Stoneleigh show, all of which were very well supported (in the case of the Valentines' run the number of people participating was sensational!

And so on to March. This is usually a pretty lack-lustre month, because of the number of cars still in their winter quarters and not taxed. It was therefore another quite amazing turnout for the short but very nice run to Charlecote Park, in Warwickshire on the 20th March. At the last count there were 29 cars present, which must be some sort of record for this time of year. With exceptionally kind weather, a good time was had by all at this very interesting venue. If this is the kind of turnout for March, the summer should see some interesting personalised traffic jams (all MG!).

For late March, a quickly-organised run was arranged to the Blist's Hill Museum at Ironbridge. Considering that it was put together so quickly with pretty minimal publicity, the 17-car turnout was very creditable, and above all, everyone had a really interesting and enjoyable day out.

The Ascot Tavern

Knowing that pub landlords inevitably have a late night on Saturday, it has been surprising and pleasing that Pete, the landlord at our pub, has willingly opened up for the starts of our Sunday runs. The tea or coffee and biscuits, not to mention the toilet facilities, have been very welcome, and our sincere thanks are due to Pete.

On a slightly different subject, for many months now, Pete has supplied the food for the normal club evenings free of charge. Even in good times, we would never expect this; it all costs money. And as everyone knows so well, times are not good, particularly in the pub trade.

With this in mind, a decision was taken that in future we would give the proceeds of the raffle to Pete to cover the cost of the food, and I am sure that all will agree that this was a fair thing to do. So please buy the raffle tickets, perhaps a few more than you might have done previously.

DRIVE-IT DAY APRIL 17TH.

I remember my description for this last year, and so will repeat it (because I liked it!). This is the day when we all take out or own piece of mobile rust (i.e. classic car), and annoy all other road users by turning out in our thousands, some at a very stately pace, and cause the usual impatient modern drivers to curse us! The theory is that this will in some way further the cause of classic cars.

Hmmmm.....



Well this year there is something a little special. We have been invited as a club to Hop-ton Garage near Stafford, as this is the official launch of the new MG6 saloon car.

The car has been around for some time; I had a good look at one at MG Live, at Silverstone, last July. But this coming April will hopefully see the start of sales in this country. For those like me who still deeply mourn the passing of MG Rover, there is a feeling of faint sadness about it, but as the proud bearer of the MG badge, we can only wish it success.

It still seems to be madness that although all of the other European car marques soldier on, Mercedes, Audi, Renault, Citroen, Fiat etc., MG and Rover are now just a memory. The total loss to the country must be incalculable, with all of the suppliers included.

The MG6 was designed at Longbridge, and to my eye looks like a very nice car. Only time and sales figures will tell.

On the 17th., we will be able to look at the real production item, and perhaps have a ride. This will be coupled with a run, details of which are not yet finalised, so watch out for the text message, or look at the website for the start details. We will be joining the Potteries group for this event, and Hopton are providing some refreshments, so please come along in your thousands (well a couple of dozen maybe).

CLUB RUNS

Do you have a secret favourite place to visit? As we have got off to a cracking start to the season, it would be good to keep up the momentum. Any offers of ideas for club runs, long or short, would be gratefully accepted, and best of all would be if you would organise a run. It doesn't have to be super detailed, with Tulip directions etc. Some of the most pleasing runs have been with the simplest of run instructions.

If you have any ideas, please contact Nigel Preston, who will be pleased to listen to your ideas.

It is probably not either possible or desirable to have a club event every weekend, but there are plenty of blanks in the programme at the moment.

THE CLUB TRAILER

Going back to the autumn, Steve Gwilt was offered a trailer for the use of the club, which

had previously been owned by the dog training group who have entertained us at MGs in the Trees.

The trailer is BIG. In truth it may be too big for our needs. The plan is to do a few jobs on it, to get it fully roadworthy, and then take the decision whether to use it or possibly sell it and buy something rather smaller.

It could be a very useful storage area for some of the club's many possessions. There are many items such as the sound gear which obviously have to be kept indoors, but there are also many items which could be stored in the trailer.

There is an over-riding problem. Because the trailer is rather large, it will need a quite chunky vehicle to pull it. If there are enough members who are a) able, and b) willing, to pull the trailer, the job of towing it could be shared between a few people. If there could be four or five volunteers, individually they need only tow the trailer once a year.

If you think that you may be able to help with this, please contact Steve Gwilt with your offer of help. This could well be the deciding factor whether the trailer becomes operational or sold on.

CHARLECOTE PARK RUN, 20TH. March 2011

This run was organised in order to take advantage of the National Trust's open day, when all of their properties are open with free



admission, no doubt in an attempt to drum up some new members.

This run was rather hastily organised, and as so often happens under those circumstances, it turned out to be a great success. The actual road run was a very simple one. From The Ascot via Bassett's Pole, and then straight down the A446 through Balsall Common to the edge of Warwick, and then through Barford to Charlecote.

As ever, the thing that makes or breaks any club run is the weather, and on this occasion it turned out much better than our wildest dreams. It was one of those all-too-rare March days when the feeling is really that Spring may be here, rather than round a very long corner.

Almost thirty cars plus occupant took part, and it was 'hoods down' for the day.

GEOFF AND COLIN'S RUN 10TH APRIL

This was another highly successful 'off the cuff' run organised a short notice. Among the twenty or so cars were one very notable one, plus an equally notable absentee. Colin arrived in a resplendent red MGB Roadster; its very first outing, having been purchased just the previous day.



Colin and Val's "New" Roadster.

The notable absentee was the MGB Roadster of Geoff Edwards. It should have been its maiden voyage, but it decided otherwise, with a tiny electrical fault which caused blown fuses on the morning of the run. This was indeed a pity, because most of us had

been waiting with great interest to view the new arrival. It was not to be!

It is great to see these two long-time club stalwarts returning to MGB ownership after a gap!

**This space was reserved for
a picture (on a run!) of
Geoff and Joy's "New"
MGB
Sorry..... Hopefully next
time!**

The weather always plays a decisive part in success or failure, and on this occasion it didn't just come up trumps, it came up with the ace of trumps. The day was almost unbelievably good for April, with warm sunshine and virtually no wind. The run took us via a scenic route up to the outskirts of Wrexham And then up onto the Horseshoe Pass. It had been pre-arranged that our resident chefs would cook bacon butties up on the heights above the pass, which, looking back on it was a supreme vote of confidence in the weather. The thought of cooking the bacon in a force nine gale, or worse, pouring rain, would have been truly awful. As it was, the weather was so good that everyone ended up with slight sunburn! The bacon butties were very well-received and delicious, and there then followed a lengthy period of wonderful inactivity, just enjoying the sun and chatting about nothing in particular.

The original plan from there was to visit Llangollen, followed by a visit to the famous aqueduct which carries the canal over the river Dee just outside Llangollen. In view of the fact that at the best of times, parking in Llangollen can be problematic, and on a day like this, when all the world would have gone for a drive, it was decided to go direct to the aqueduct, and miss the delights of Llangollen. There then followed a brief example of SSMGOC at large in the best tradition. It appears that some of the normal brown signs for the aqueduct may have 'gone missing', and so the squadron leader for the first group of cars got lost in a small maze of roads in a

housing estate. The second squadron leader arrived very soon afterwards, and seeing that the small car park was rather full, and catching a brief glimpse of the receding last car from the first group, thinking that they obviously knew of a better car park, proceeded to follow, only to lose them down the road!

After much wandering round all assembled again at the original car park, and somehow shoe-horned the cars into the small space.

The aqueduct is very well worth a visit, and must have been virtually one of the wonders of the world when it was built.

We finally split into smaller groups for the return journey. Thanks are due, for a marvellous day, to Geoff Edwards and Colin Hawkins for the route planning, and to Steve, Meryl and Elaine for the cheffery up in the hills.



THE AIR AMBULANCE

Our club meeting on the 13th. April featured a short talk from Jackie Roberts, of the Midlands Air Ambulance.

For the last couple of years this has been our chosen charity, and in the autumn, when we were deciding which charity to support for 2011, it was decided by a large majority to continue to support the Air Ambulance.

The Ascot was just about full for the meeting, and Mrs Roberts gave an account of the running of the organisation. Like the Lifeboat Institution, the Air Ambulance operates entirely without any support, either from government or lottery funding. We heard that they currently operate four helicopters, and they are leased, complete with pilots, for £1.8 million EACH per annum. Since its inception, the helicopters have carried out about 30,000 missions, the larger part of which were to serious road accidents.



Makes you think, doesn't it.....

This present a monumental fundraising problem, particularly in these times of gloom and doom. All of the many volunteers like Mrs. Roberts, who give freely of their time, are to be congratulated.



Do you have any old bits of MG lying about? A thought from John Laban is that we could do a "Swap Shop" exchanging and items we have that we may not use but could be just the part someone else needs. If you don't have anything to swap then a cash alternative could be arranged. Send us details of anything suitable you may have. Watch this space or the website for new item to swap or sell.



An email from Stan Aleksandrowicz: -

"Thanks to everyone who contributed to my 60th birthday bash and the gift token for Clive Wheatley MGs. I have used it to buy a trickle charger and a pair of boot lid dampers for the RV8, Thanks Stan."



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday April 17th. Drive-it Day visit to Hopton Garage, followed by a club run. Starts from The Ascot, to depart at 10.30 sharp. Run organised by Chris Austin.

Saturday 23rd. April. Magnettes and Steam, at Quorn and Woodhouse station, on the Great Central Railway. This is an MGOE event, with reserved parking for members. As one of the premier heritage railways in the UK, it is well worth a visit in its own right. To attend, email Alan.Slack@rolls-royce.com.

Wednesday 27th April. Club Meeting, The Ascot Tavern

Sunday 1st May. Royal Wedding Street Party. **CANCELLED.** This was because many members had already made alternative arrangements. Pity, seemed like a good idea at the time!

Sunday 8th May. Visit to Abingdon Air and Country Show. This will be one of the largest gatherings of MG cars this year, plus a great air show, featuring the Battle of Britain Flight, the Vulcan Bomber and many others, plus the country show, and traders' village. £5 entrance fee for pre-booked car plus one passenger or £10 per person on the day itself. We will need to be at The Ascot for 07.15h for a prompt 07.45h departure. For members not local to The Ascot, there will be another rendezvous point. If intending to attend, please contact Steve Moore, on 01543 425738.

Sunday 15th May. The famous Leicestershire run. A run through Leicestershire countryside with a couple of surprises. Leaving The Ascot at 09.30h, and The Bowing Green at Lichfield, at 10.00h. If you are intending to participate and have not entered your name on the run sheet, please ring 0121-353-9916.

Friday 27th. May. Not exactly a club run, but visit to Laon Circuit Historique, France.

Sunday 29th May. Shugborough Hall Transtar event. Static rally plus auto jumble etc. If not able to enter your name on the run sheet at a club meeting, please call Nigel Preston on 0121 351 4099