



# Synchro!



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The Newsletter of South Staffs and North Birmingham MG Owners Club

Editor: Alan Heeley

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Website: [www.ssmgoc.co.uk](http://www.ssmgoc.co.uk)

## SEASONS GREETINGS TO EVERYONE



*The splendid setting for the Christmas Party at The Terrace Restaurant, Brownhills*

### SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLINGS

So that was 2009. On the whole another excellent year for the club. Looking back over the year, the only real disappointment was the awful weather during late June and all of July. The season is short enough anyway, but with July virtually wiped out, it left rather a big hole in the proceedings.

Despite that, we enjoyed a very good year with the MG's. Right from the Valentine run in February through to the Christmas party, all of the events have been very well-supported, and thoroughly enjoyed by all. We had everything from a European holiday in Holland to some local club runs, plus participation at a lot of the usual large events. Our own national event, MG's in the Trees was once again a resounding success, blessed, this year, by a very nice bit of weather.

Due to the Christmas rush, this edition of your newsletter is going to be a very short one, quickly bashed together, and no doubt full of mistakes!

There is not a lot in the way of reviews of past events, and so in the immortal words of Noddy Holder, "Look to the future, it's only just begun", and so this edition is just to keep you up to speed with a few plans for the new Year.

On a personal note, as a lot of you will already know, I had a rush of blood to the head recently, and bought an MGF. I must say that so far, I really like it. The two things that surprised me were the lack of wind turbulence at motorway speed with the hood down, and also the fact that the engine is quite slow-revving. At 70 mph it is only doing about 2600 rpm, which I found agreeably restful.

The game plan is to use the F for this part of the year, and then the B when the weather improves. It will be interesting to see how that turns out in the long run

So, for now, may I just wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy, Prosperous (government and bankers permitting!)

New Year.

Alan

## ***A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION***

Just to repeat the suggested new year's resolution from 2009, for 2010, if you feel that you didn't use your MG as much as you should have done this year, make sure that in 2010 you make as much use and get the maximum enjoyment from it in 2010.

## **SOUTH STAFFS MGOCC AGM**

Early in the new year, on ***Sunday the 7<sup>th</sup> February***, the Annual General Meeting of the club will take place. It will be held at the Parish Rooms at Hatherton, just off the A5 near to the Four Crosses Public House.

In recent years, the club AGM has been really well-attended, and I hope that as many as possible of the members will again come along to the meeting which decides the future of *your* Club.

In a previous life I was a member of another car club, and the main feature of the AGM was that it was studiously avoided by the members. The comparison is not entirely fair, because it was a national club, but usually only about 20 members out of a total membership of around 1000 turned up to the meeting. The ordinary members were usually outnumbered by the committee!

With this background, I was very agreeably surprised when I found that our AGM was always attended by a very large percentage of the membership.

If you have not been to an AGM before, please come along. It is not a dry and uninteresting meeting, more of a social occasion, but with the opportunity for you to express any comments, criticisms or hopefully good ideas for the coming year.

The committee will be elected, and if you wish to stand as a committee member, you are fully entitled to do so. If you wish to be nominated, or to nominate someone else for a committee position, all we ask is that you have consulted the person in advance and ensured that they are in agreement, and that you notify the secretary before the AGM itself.

Please come along!

## **For reference, THE PRESENT COMMITTEE**

Chairman:	Steve Gwilt
Secretary	Alan Heeley
Treasurer:	Dave Barton
Membership:	Stuart Lay
Regalia:	June Rodgers
Webmaster:	Steve Moore
Events:	Nigel Preston
Minister without portfolio:	Pete Walker

If you want to see them as a rogues gallery, just visit the website

The committee meet on the first Monday of each month during the year, and it should be pointed out that the minutes of these meetings are always posted on our excellent website, and are accessible to all members.

There are no secrets!

## **MG'S IN THE TREES 2010**

Although June seems a long way off, as this is being written, the date for our premier event of the year has already had to be fixed, with one eye on the availability of the Cannock Chase site, and the other on major events with which our mega bash could clash. The chosen date is Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2010. The site has already been reserved for us, and the advertising for what has become a well-known national event, has been arranged for "Enjoying MG", and of the production of posters etc.

One issue that needed to be resolved very quickly was that of sponsorship for the event. I am very pleased to say that our good friend Paul Depper has agreed to act as the sponsor for 2010.

The other thing that needed to be resolved quite quickly was our chosen charity for the proceeds of the event. Each year we donate a large proportion of the proceeds of the event to a chosen charity, agreed in advance. The reason for this is that it is only fair to our sponsors and advertisers to know that they will be indirectly helping a charity of which they approve, rather than perhaps a home for gay donkeys in Argentina.

The committee decided a short list of possible charities, and this was put to the club meeting

on the 9<sup>th</sup>. December. It was decided that our nominated charity this year would be the same as last year, namely The County Air Ambulance. This popular and very worthy choice was partly on the basis that as motorists, just about any of us could require the services of the Air Ambulance, which, like the lifeboats, is supported entirely by charity. When the time comes, it is good to know that we can count on the help of a large contingent of members. Your help is what has made 'The Trees' such a popular event for so many people.

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

With the start of the new year, it is time again for renewal of your membership. As you will see from the form, which is attached, we have made the distinction of single or double memberships. The object of this is *not* to discourage wives/partners/spouses to be members, quite the contrary. We hope that as many as possible will renew their membership with their wife/spouse/partner as a named club member in their own right, rather than just an add-on. One result of this will be that we will have an accurate measure of exactly how many members we actually have. The fee is £20 for double membership, and £12 for singles. It is hoped that everyone will renew their membership as soon as possible.

### **CLUB DIARIES AND CALENDARS**

These were very popular this year, and so there is a new issue of both for the coming year. Because of the prohibitive expense of postage (particularly due to the large format of the calendars), these will be handed out at club meetings in January to those who have not already got them. If you would like them, but will be unable to attend a club meeting, please let either Steve Gwilt or Alan Heeley know by phone, and we will make some arrangement to get them to you.

### **THE INTERNATIONAL MG SHOW, STONELEIGH**

This will take place on the 21<sup>st</sup>. February, and we will be looking for a couple of good cars to take pride of place on the club stand,

which has been reserved. The show is a good shop-window for the club, and over the years we have picked up many new members there. It is also an excellent place for a bit of pre-publicity for MG's in the Trees. Please make a note in your new club diary, and come along to help man the stand.

Don't forget also that it is the ideal place to buy those bits and pieces to get the MG fit for the new season (or even to buy or sell an MG—there is always a good selection on view)

### **OTHER COMING ATTRACTIONS**

#### **Quiz Night**

Come along to the usual club meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>. January for a quiz, which is being organised again by Stuart Lay. You will be assured of an entertaining evening, and be able to enjoy his own brand of obscure Geordie questions!

#### **Tramp's Supper**

On the following Saturday evening, we have booked the Parish Rooms at Hatherton for what promises to be a really good laugh. We will have our Tramps' Supper. Please come along in best Tramp's garb, bringing with you your own tin mug and tray, please a drop of unleaded or meths to keep the cold out. There will be a disco, and prizes for the best outfits. It should be good.

The room at Hatherton, though very nice, is not large, so the number has to be restricted to a maximum of 70. Tickets will be on sale at the club meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup>. January, the first club meeting of 2010, on a first-come, first-served basis. If you would like to come but can't be at the meeting, please ring Steve Gwilt or Alan Heeley to reserve ticket.

Now cast your minds back to the summer. An article that had to be held over from the last issue:

### **THE LEISURE DRIVE AND PRIZEGIVING PICNIC 2009 (A.k.a the treasure hunt)**

**By Pete Walker**

And the winners are.....

Derek and Pete. Those were the words that started a twelve month interesting, and sometimes difficult, time.

We had made the mistake of winning a treasure hunt (sorry, for the purposes of insurance it will be called a leisure drive and prizegiving picnic), and in the time-honoured fashion, we were to organise the next year's event.

So, where to begin? That is the question. We needed somewhere to have our cars congregating and driving off without causing problems for other road users, so what did we do? We cheated, and used the same start point as the one where we had won. Then our problems really started.

The next decision was where to go? Then one day I was on my run (I drive a delivery van around Shropshire for a living). A big hill, the famous Wrekin hove into view, and I thought that there must be a car park or picnic area somewhere, and it would be easy to return to our area afterwards.

So when I got home, I fired up my trusty P.C. and called up autoroute to find a nice devious way from Cannock Chase to the Wrekin, which I did. I then showed my ideas to Derek, who seemed to like them. He then, as one of those people with time on their hands (we know them as pensioners) had a drive out to the Wrekin, and discovered that there was only one small car park at the back of the hill, which would be too small for our needs. So, back to the drawing board.

Then I had another thought (not *another thought*, I hear you cry!). Soon be over, I promise! What about the battlefield heritage site? I was told that it has nice big car parks. So Derek and I had a drive over to look at them. They were big, but that was all—no facilities, just hardstands. So.....drawing board, here I come again!

On the way over, we had driven through Newport, and we thought that it would make an interesting place for the walk around.

On our next meeting, Derek had been to Newport, and compiled a list of questions, and challenged me to answer them. He had also been to Church Eton, and found a lot of questions there. He had some inside knowledge, as his son lives there, but he still found

some things that even the locals don't know about.

So off we went, first to Church Eton, where I managed to answer most of the questions, but the local who looks after the local website failed on a few, and asked for a copy of the questions, with answers, to try out on the villagers, which we duly did in time.

Then it was off to Newport, and after a nice meal in the Royal Victoria Hotel we set off again with me trying to answer his questions. I managed to answer most of them, even with some funny looks from shopkeepers who obviously thought that we were casing the joints, from the way we were looking at alarms and passageways.

But we still hadn't got a finishing point.

A little while later, Derek had found one. His son had mentioned to him about Stafford Castle, so nothing ventured, off we went (like I said, a pensioner with time on his hands!). After looking around and liking what we saw he made advances to the staff, after explaining about the treasure hunt (sorry, leisure drive), and they put him in touch with their manager, who was only too willing to help.

So, after playing on autoroute express for a route from Newport to Stafford Castle, and actually running it to see if it was viable, we were ready. Then drawing up route sheets with Tulips that could be read fairly easily, then re-running it top check the route sheets.

We were ready. Came the day, and it dawned like a Wagnerian Opera; throwing it down with rain, hail, lightning, thunder!

So after a time trying to set a new record for the most people in a shopping trolley shed (see the picture for the month of April 2010 in the new Calendar—Ed.), it was decided to cancel, and run the event later.

So, after much juggling with the events list, it was re-scheduled, but with all the other events that we were attending it was only the day before the run that we could re-run the route to see if anything had changed.

It all looked good, and if anybody spotted anything wrong we could say that it was the deliberate mistake. But they didn't, and it all went well.

We are looking forward to taking part next year—as competitors!

Pete Walker



*A little tailpiece from the Christmas party. At the end of the evening, Roy Astley put on his jacket and departed for home (Stafford). The only small problem was that said jacket actually belonged to Dave Powis (and contained both car and house keys in the pocket!). Thanks to our webmaster and his magic phone/computer/satnav / teasmade, contact was made, and there was a ceremonial exchange of jackets. They don't look too upset, do they? It was an interesting sequel to 2008, when the taxi ordered for Sue and Dave didn't materialise, and they had to spend a chilly time waiting for a replacement.*

***A summary:  
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY***

Wednesday January 13th. Club meeting, The Ascot Tavern, Cannock. The first club meeting of 2010.

Wednesday January 27th Club meeting, The Ascot Tavern. **Quiz night**, Arranged by Stuart Lay.

Saturday January 30th. **Tramps' Supper**. The Parish rooms. Hatherton. Please make sure you have a ticket in advance.

Sunday February 7th **Annual General Meeting**. The Parish rooms, Hatherton

Wednesday February 10th. Club meeting, The Ascot tavern, Cannock

Sunday February 14th. The famous Alan Jones Memorial / Valentines' run. Details not yet available. Watch this space!

Sunday February 21st. International MG Show, Stoneleigh

Wednesday February 24th. Club meeting, The Ascot Tavern, Cannock



**APPLICATION FOR 2010 CLUB MEMBERSHIP**

**South Staffs & North Birmingham Area MG Owners Club**

**Club Secretary  
Mr Alan Heeley  
27, Chelsea Drive  
Four Oaks  
Sutton Coldfield  
West Midlands  
B74 4UG**

Club Website [www.ssmgoc.co.uk](http://www.ssmgoc.co.uk)

Club E-Mail [info@ssmgoc.co.uk](mailto:info@ssmgoc.co.uk)



Our meetings are held at The Ascot Tavern, Longford Road, Cannock, Staffs. WS11 1NE  
Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month from 8.30pm onwards.  
All new members will be given a warm welcome.

First Members Full Name:			
Joint Members Full Name			
Address:			
	Post Code:		
Telephone Numbers:	Home:	Mobile(s):	
E-mail Address (if available)	Please check details are legible.		
Details of MG(s) Currently Owned	Model:		
Registration Number (s):		Colour:	
Year Of Manufacture:		Year Purchased	
How do you wish to be kept informed about club activities: Please tick one box only. (Email is easier and cheaper for the club)		Email: <input type="checkbox"/>	Post: <input type="checkbox"/>

**NB:** The above information will be stored on a secure computer database for use exclusively by the club. By signing below, you signify your acceptance of this in compliance with the terms of the Data Protection Act. This information will not be released to any third party for any reason. The annual membership fee is £20 Joint Membership or £12.00 Single membership.

**Only the members named above qualify for members discounts \ subsidies on club events.**

Please send or hand this completed signed form together with your relevant payment to:  
Stuart Lay, 160 Cannock Road, Stafford, Staffs. ST17 0QJ  
Please Make Cheques payable to "South Staffs MGOC".

<b>Signed :</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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<i>For Office Use Only</i>	<i>Database updated details checked.</i>	<i>Detail of money received</i>