



# Synchro!



The Newsletter of South Staffs and North Birmingham MG Owners Club

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February 2010

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

## *MG owners fall on hard times: the tramps' supper,*



*Poor Graham and Cynth, down and (nearly) out*



*One-eyed Lay plus trampovitch*

### SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLINGS

As the Christmas and New Year celebrations fade away into the distance, after all the reviewing of the past year, it is now time to look forward to the new season.

A final word on the past year; many thanks to everyone who has taken part in any of the 2009 club events in any way. Particular thanks to those who took the trouble to organise an event, such as a club run, but also thanks to everyone who took part in any of the events.

The club AGM has come and gone, and with the committee in place again, various events are already well planned for 2010.

I won't dwell again on the weather, but following two fairly poor summers, followed by the coldest winter for about thirty years, at least one good thing is that we have had a brief respite from the daily (hourly) bombardment about global warming! The 'experts' have gone a bit quiet for the moment, but no doubt they will reappear as soon as the temperature rises above about 2 degrees.

I just hope that we may have a reasonable summer this year; it would make a welcome change.

At risk of becoming boring, please could I ask yet again for some contributions for the newsletter. It would be great if I could receive just the occasional letter, preferably on any contentious item. Your experiences with anything relevant to the car would be most welcome. Have you tried any of the modifications available for the MGB, for example. If so, did it work? Was it a waste of money? Have you had particularly good (or bad) service from a particular supplier?

Any of these types of comments would be most interesting, and liven up the newsletter no end.

And so may I conclude by wishing everyone a really good and enjoyable new season of MGing.

### THE CLUB AGM

At the AGM, I made the point that in the spirit of openness, all of the minutes of club committee meetings are published in full on the club website, as are the minutes of the AGM. They are all to be found in the 'Members' Area' on the website.

For that reason, I will not take up space in the newsletter with a very full account of the meeting, but just the main points.

Both myself and our chairman, Steve Gwilt, did a brief review of what had been, for the club, a very successful year. We, as a club, attended more events than ever, and by and large, they were all very enjoyable.

The election of the committee for 2010 was rather unexciting, as there were no new nominations for the committee, and all of the 2009 members had agreed to stand again for another year. This being so, there was a lack of drama, and the committee sails on into the new year unchanged. The good point of this is, of course, continuity; everyone is now pretty well aware of the requirements of their jobs, and a bit of experience is a good thing. On the other hand, an unchanged committee can mean a lack of fresh ideas. With this in mind, please remember that committee meetings are held regularly on the first Monday of every month (unless it happens to be a bank holiday).

*If you have anything that you would like raising at a meeting, all you have to do is contact one of the committee members before the next meeting and ask them to raise the matter on your behalf. It could be a criticism, a comment or a new idea for a run etc., but any contribution is welcome.*

#### **The Committee:**

Chairman: Steve Gwilt  
Secretary: Alan Heeley  
Webmaster: Steve Moore  
Treasurer: Dave Barton  
Membership sec. Stuart Lay  
Events sec. Nigel Preston  
Regalia sec. June Rogers  
Archivist: Pete Walker

Thanks to all who took the trouble to attend the meeting. There were 37 of us at the meeting, which, as a proportion of the total membership, was not bad.

**The minutes of the meeting, along with all committee minutes are available in the members area on the website.**

## **THE ASCOT TAVERN**

Just a word about the January club meetings. Both took place in Arctic weather, and the heating system at the Ascot had failed, and also the flat roof had developed a leak. Heating was provided by a slightly modified Rolls-Royce RB-211 jet engine borrowed from a passing jumbo-jet, which blew my toupee away, and also nearly set fire to Graham Cherry's hair! This type of heater is rather violent, and if on for a few minutes quickly raises the temperature to cooking point, but if turned off, the temperature drops rather rapidly.

I am informed that this state of affairs will not last for long, but the heating system needed a replacement part which had been difficult to obtain.



*More victims of the recession, Tony and Sue Moseley (with MG to support!)*

## **COMING ATTRACTIONS**

The second ordinary club meeting of February, on **Wednesday the 24th. February**, will feature a visit from a representative from **AUTOGLYM**.

We had a similar event quite some time ago, and it was very interesting. Steve Gwilt has arranged this repeat visit, and it is hoped that as many as possible will manage to attend. As you probably know, apart from polish, Autoglym produce a range of car-care products such as chrome and metal polishes, glass-cleaning products etc. The range seems to be constantly increasing in scope, and they now provide a product for every imaginable need.

Please come along in your thousands on that evening and support this event, and also be prepared to buy some of the excellent products on offer (hopefully at discounted prices).

On ***Sunday the 21st February*** the Stoneleigh International MG Show will take place. For anyone who has not been to this, it is the ideal place for purchasing any MG parts for the winter refit.

A lot of the well-known MG suppliers will be there, plus the MG Owners Club, with a stand laden with tempting regalia and books. South Staffs will have a stand, and this year it seems that we will have space for just three cars. At the time of writing, these are likely to be the MGA of Chris and Ruth Austin, the MGBGT of our treasurer Dave Barton, and to represent the 'new' MGs, the 2009 MGTF of Gordon Green. It was quite interesting at last year's show, considering that restoration and parts play such a large part in the show, that the MGF of John Taylor seemed to be surrounded by a crowd of people for most of the day. It created a lot of interest, and it is confidently expected that the same will happen with the TF this year. We will see.

Apart from spending your money, please come to the show and spend a bit of time on our stand. It is a social occasion as well.

The next extravaganza will take place at the first club meeting in March, which will be on ***Wednesday the 10th March***.

Those of you who are members of the MG Owners Club (I hope that is almost everyone) will have seen technical articles written by Roger Parker. Recent offerings from him have been an interesting and useful article on improving the efficiency of the notoriously useless heater of the MGB, and in the latest '*Enjoying MG*', a thought-provoking article on the possible future course of MG under the Chinese ownership.

Roger will be giving us a talk at the meeting, which I can say confidently will be full of interest for everyone.

Please, again support this meeting, and come along, in your thousands, and preferably turn

up a little earlier than usual. The talk will not be unduly long, but it would be only fair to Roger to 'get the show on the road' reasonably early.

There should be ample time for you to put questions to Roger on any of those technical aspects of your car. It will be good to have the company of an MG expert who is internationally known for his wealth of experience in all aspects of MG cars.

That takes us on to the middle of March.

Looking through the binoculars into the further distance, there are a couple of other items to mention:



*Is there no end to this rogues gallery of scruffbags?  
Pete and Geoff in their Sunday best*

## **MGs IN THE TREES 2010**

As you are no doubt already well aware, the date for this year's event is ***Sunday the 13th June***. Please, if you have not already done so, make a note in your diary.

The state of play at the moment is that we have our main sponsor lined up, our friend Paul Depper, which has generously decided to support the event.

We have also, after a club meeting last year at which those present could state their preferences, our nominated charity, the very worthy County Air Ambulance.

Each year after the initial one, we have made a point of sending out entry forms to anyone who took part in previous years events. The timing of this is a bit tricky. Send them out too soon, and they risk being put away

‘somewhere safe’, never to be seen again. Send them out too late and the recipients could be already arranged to go on another event. There is no 100% correct answer to this, and the forms were sent out within the last week, and we await their return.

In order to get some advance publicity for our event, the now traditional MGs in the Trees T-shirts have been ordered and delivered already. This year they are in a quite attractive blue colour. They are available from June Rodgers or Elaine Gwilt, in all the usual sizes from tiny to enormous, and although they are of very nice quality, they are actually slightly cheaper than last year. Please buy one, and wear it at any event between now and June, to act as a piece of walking publicity for our premier event of the year.

Last year, “The Trees” unfortunately coincided with the Cotswold run. This happened because both events were re-timed from the dates of the previous year, and ran head-on into each other. We have been careful to avoid this this year, and as far as we know, the only event locally with which we now coincide is the Cosford Air Display. The only effect of this (apart from the loss of anyone who happen to be a keen aviation enthusiast, is that planning for the road run(s) has to avoid Cosford and surroundings like the plague. As, at least theoretically, we could be on a possible flight path for Cosford, Steve has been in contact with the MOD to see if we could be overflowed by something interesting, preferably without live bombs.

## **SUNDAY THE 20<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

Talking of clashing dates, we had a real dilemma with the above date. The Kimber run, suddenly moved from early April to June, now appears on the same date as the Transtar event at Trentham Gardens. There was quite a lively debate at the last committee meeting to see which one we, as a club, should support. One school of thought was that Trentham had become a bit stale, so perhaps we could actually participate in the Kimber run, instead of marshalling. After several years of marshalling, it would be good to see what the

actual road run was like.

The counter view was that the Trentham event was good, and we should put on a club stand there again this year.

A guiding principle was that if we were to put on a stand at Trentham, it would have to be a good one, not a half-hearted effort from just a few people.

The committee ended up divided on this, so it was decided in the end that we would put the choice to an ordinary club meeting, to see what the opinion was there. One thing to mention here is that partly because Chatsworth House, the venue for the Kimber run, have decided to put a charge on every car attending the run, the cost for entrants this year will be £26.

Another complicating factor was that South Staffs have, as a club, marshalled the Kimber run for several years. If actually doing the run were put on our events list as a club run, and a significant number of people decided to do it, there is no way that we could put on a club stand at Chatsworth.

So, in summary, there were three choices:

- Take part in The Kimber Run
- Marshal at the Kimber run, plus club stand
- Take part, with club stand, at Trentham.

Having said all of that, this is, as they often *used* to say, a free country, and anyone is of course entirely free to go to whichever event they prefer. At the club meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> February, there was a vote, and the (to me) quite surprising result was that virtually nobody wanted to go to Trentham this year, but several hands were raised in favour of the Kimber run. However, several people volunteered for marshalling at Chatsworth. It should be emphasised that all of the discussion on this issue were entirely amicable.

If you want to marshal, please contact Roy Clarke, on 01543 670756. Whichever of the options you choose, as they say in America, have a nice day!

## **THE TRAMPS SUPPER, 30<sup>TH</sup>. January**

This was a new venture, and although the number of people attending was a bit on the low side, it was a really great evening. Everyone entered magnificently into the spirit of things, and some of the costumes (if that is the correct word) were unbelievable! For a good flavour of the occasion, have a look at the website. The 'soup kitchen' was very ably prepared and run by the two Steves, Elaine and Meryl. The food was very tasty, and many thanks to them. The disco which followed was very good, and an exceptionally good time was had by all. Goodness knows whether we will repeat the event, but if we do, watch out for it, it was a real hoot!

If you have enjoyed the few pictures of the tramps, have a good look at the website. Steve has put together best part of a hundred pictures of the vagabonds who were at Hatherton Parish Rooms. Don't miss it!!

## **THE ALAN JONES MEMO- RIAL / VALENTINES RUN, 14<sup>th</sup> February.**

Considering the time of year plus the preceding bad weather, the turnout for the run was very good, with about 18 assorted cars, of which a very good proportion had MG badges. They say the sun shines on the righteous; I think that we must have proved that saying wrong, because we had truly marvelous sunshine, and most of the MGs managed with hoods down!

As Steve Gwilt remarked after the run, it is always a slight surprise that within five minutes of the start at the Ascot, we were in open countryside, and could have been miles from anywhere. The excellent route, cooked up by Graham and Cynth Cherry, complete with 'tulip' instructions, was a delight. The lanes of Staffordshire are truly amazing. We ended up at the Byrkley Park Garden Centre, where a very good Sunday lunch was enjoyed by everyone.

(sorry for repeating the phrase 'enjoyed by all' several times in the newsletter, but that does convey the general feeling, and I'm

blowed if I can think of another one!).  
Many thanks, Graham and Cynth.

And for something entirely different.....

## **FEST JAZZ 2010**

Have a look at the attached page, which gives the brief details of the Regional event organised by Roy Clarke.

*Do you like Jazz, in one of its many forms?*

*Do you like France?*

*Do you like old cars? (a rather daft question)*

If the answers are all yes, the Fest Jazz event, to be held in Brittany at the end of July could be for you.

Roy Clarke stumbled on the Fest Jazz last year, and during a conversation with the local mayor, suggested that a mix of old cars plus the jazz could be very attractive.

The Jazz festival is held at the town of Chateauf-neuf-du-Faou in the west of Brittany. It is only a couple of hours drive from the port of Roscoff, served by Brittany Ferries from Plymouth, and so should be a relaxing weekend in beautiful surroundings.

There is a website for the festival, and if you search on Chateauf-neuf-du-Faou, the excellent site gives views of the local area plus a list of the bands performing, and there is even a place to click on to listen to snippets of each of the bands actually playing.

The general arrangement is that you can make your way there by your preferred route, the ideal ones being Plymouth-Roscoff or Portsmouth-St. Malo, and although hotel accommodation seems to be a bit sparse in the actual area, there seems to be an abundant amount of Gites and Chambres d'Hotes (B&B to you), all of which are available on websites.

If you need any further details, please contact Roy Clarke 01543 670756 or email [info@mgocwestmids.co.uk](mailto:info@mgocwestmids.co.uk)

## ***AND SO, A BRIEF SUMMARY:***

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

***Sunday 21st. February MG International, Stoneleigh***

***Wednesday 24th. February Club Meeting at The Ascot Tavern, with presentation by Autoglym***

***Wednesday 10th. March Club Meeting at The Ascot tavern, with a short talk on technical matters from Roger Parker, of the MG Owners Club***

***....and further into the future***

***Sunday 9th May Berrington Hall***

***Sunday 30th. May (Spring Bank Holiday) Ragley Hall, Transtar event***

***6th June—Mountains and Valleys Run—organised by Hereford MGOC***

***Sunday 20th. June The Kimber Run, organised by the MG Owners Club, starting from Chatsworth House in Derbyshire***



### **Club Text Messages.**

Following on from an idea proposed by Steve Moore at the AGM keeping members up to date with events and last minute changes, we have now set up a Club Mobile Texting service. We will send text messages out to all members mobile phone numbers keeping them informed if any last minute changes to events and meetings.

The service will also be useful when a “last minute” run could be organised, so if you spot a free Saturday/Sunday and the weather forecast is good then a simply request a text to be sent out. If you do not want to receive these texts you will be given the opportunity to opt out and never receive another text. Due to the limit of text messages (160 Characters) full details will always be available on the website and the phone number of the organiser will be sent for further info. Watch this space for further updates and watch out for your first Text Message from the club.

***PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO SUPPORT THE TWO CLUB MEETINGS WITH VISITING SPEAKERS***

***The last word:***

**Please don't forget that your subscriptions are due, £20 for a couple, £12 for a single member. Please either download a membership form from the club website, or come (complete with the cash) to one of the club meetings, or if this is not possible, there's always the good old post.**

# MGOC WEST MIDLANDS - - FEST JAZZ 2010

Southern Brittany 30th July to the 1st August 2010



**You are invited to take part in a new event being organised by the West Midlands Region!**

2010 will be the 6th year for Fest Jazz, an event similar in style to the Upton Jazz Festival here in the West Midlands, a weekend ideally suited for a gathering of classic cars. The festival is held each year at Chateaneuf-du-Faou in Southern Brittany. A beautiful little town nestling on the banks of the river Aulne, part of the picturesque Brest Nantes Canal system.

*"This years Fest-Jazz was a huge success ! Great groups and musicians, lots of spectators, a fabulous atmosphere and the sun shone!! Fest-Jazz is now established as one of the fastest growing and significant music festivals in the region."*

## Program of Events

### Friday 30th July

On arrival at Chateaneuf-du-Faou, the weekend gets off to a flying start with a welcome reception for all car event entrants by the Mayor, followed by a dinner dance at the Hotel Relais de Cornouaille. Where you will be able to enjoy an excellent meal, while being entertained by two jazz bands.

### Saturday 31st July

On Saturday morning we all assemble in the town centre, for the start of a road run around the local region. With rally plaques and route books provided. In the evening, there will be a Jazz Band Ball at the Salle Ar Sterenn.

### Sunday 1st August

Cavalcade of cars around the town finishing at the festival site near to the river. During the day a Concourse d'Elegance competition will take place.



The festival finishes late Sunday, although you may want to take the opportunity of staying longer to explore the region, including the Finistere coastline.

### Costs

This will be a none profit event for the region with only a small charge being made to cover the cost of route books and rally plaques. Ferries and accommodation being booked on an individual basis, although there maybe the possibility of group discounts depending on numbers. We are also looking to negotiate an all inclusive ticket for the Jazz Festival covering all of the options during the weekend.

Brittany Ferries provide the most practical routes to the region with Chateaneuf-du-Faou only approximately 2 hours from the nearest ferry port.

**Call 01543 670756 or email [info@mgocwestmids.co.uk](mailto:info@mgocwestmids.co.uk) for more details.**