



Est. 1980

# NEWSLETTER

**MARCH 2008**



Bowling Joy

# Chairman's Chat

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Hi, I don't have much to report with respect to the club. As you will remember from last month's newsletter Karen and I have been away skiing again, missing the last club night and committee meeting.

I could write about the 2 day adventure that we had flying to the "states" with aborted take offs and emergency landings. But I will leave that to Karen who will hopefully get the article in next month's newsletter. I could ramble on for ages about the skiing trip, the snow, blue skies and sun but you may not all be interested. It is sufficient to say that we had a great time, the skiing, food & drink and scenery were fantastic. We have now visited this area once in autumn and four times for ski trips and each time we are amazed by the scale and beauty of the scenery.

Just to put the finishing touches to our trip we had the pleasure of flying back to Manchester via Heathrow Airport and you guessed it they lost (according to BA misplaced) part of our baggage again. We collected our 2 suit cases from the carousel, 2 days later our ski bag was delivered to the house, but one week later we are still waiting for our "misplaced" bag to be located. They claim it has been in Heathrow but at present can't locate it. Instead of me trying to describe the beauty of Lake Tahoe see the photos below.



*View from our apartment window looking up to the Heavenly ski slopes. From the other side of the balcony we could see the lake.*



*View from Nevada near the top of the Heavenly ski slopes looking out across Lake Tahoe and to California. Our apartment was just at the bottom of this mountain on the lake shore.*

For those who are interested in big boy's toys, this must be one of the ultimate. It is one of the normal piste machines used to groom and prepare the ski slopes, to see them operate is almost beyond belief, they can climb and descend slopes (moving snow) that we would find difficult in hiking boots without the snow. This machine has the attachment used for shaping the "half pipe". Using these machines they will create 2 long banks of packed snow that they can then shape.



Planning will soon start for this year's Lancashire Lanes Run and as soon as the format is agreed we will get the advert and booking forms in the Newsletter.

Finally a few important notes and reminders.

- Club trip to Cockermouth (North Lakes) over the (May) Spring Bank Holiday weekend. We now have 12 confirmed bookings and the deposit has been sent to the Hotel. If anyone else wants to come along, I will need to know by the March club night.
- Although we have received some requests for club clothing, I need a few more orders to be able to get the best price. I am hoping to be able to place an order very soon, if you want anything please contact myself or a member of the committee.

**Tony**

# Secretary's Scribbles

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On 26th Feb 15 club members attended Lakeside Superbowl for our annual Ten Pin Bowling evening. Several pretenders to the ten pin bowling crown were intent on unseating Andy Shultz as the reigning trophy holder. Before the game, Andy modestly insisted that he was unlikely to win again, but a score of 163 in the first game followed by 136 in the second was too good for the rest of us. The trophy will be returning once again to the Shultz estate (no need to go out and buy a door stop for another 12 months).

Well we are getting to that time of the year again when dust covers are being removed from all those SORNED MG's and thoughts are turning towards taking the MG out for a run (if you can still afford the petrol) to country pubs for lunch, or out on quiet leafy lanes after work on warm balmy evenings, away from all those choked up motorways and busy town centres.

Well stop your dreaming and come and add to the enjoyment of your MG by joining us on our first club run of the year - our St George's Day Run on Sunday 20th April. If you're one of our members who rarely if ever take part in one of the club runs for whatever reason, why not come and give this one a go. We have organised a scenic run of about 50 miles through the beautiful Trough of Bowland, finishing at a country pub for either a spot of lunch or just a quiet drink. These events are great fun, non-competitive and allow you time to explore a planned scenic route in your MG at your own pace. Routes are set out using clear and simple to follow tulip diagrams, just set your mileage trip and follow the arrows. Don't worry if you haven't got a navigator (although you shouldn't find yourself in an MG convoy), the route that we have planned does lend itself to being able to easily follow another MG if you're on your own. A run of this length takes quite a lot of organising, so if you've thought about dipping your toe into one of these events but have kept putting it off, why not come and support the club and have a great day out at the same time. We are meeting at 9:30am at The Myerscough pub on the A59 at Samlesbury - opposite the entrance to British Aerospace.

If you have a planned route or an idea for an evening run that the club could use, let one of the committee know and we'll see if we can include it within the calendar later in the year.

## Kevin

And finally.....

A woman and a man are involved in a car accident on a snowy, cold Monday morning; it's a bad one. Both of their cars are totally demolished but amazingly neither of them are hurt.

After they crawl out of their cars, the woman says, "So you're a man, that's interesting. I'm a woman. Wow, just look at our cars! There's nothing left, but we're unhurt. This must be a sign from God that we should meet and be friends and live together in peace for the rest of our days"

Flattered, the man replies, "Oh yes, I agree with you completely, this must be a sign from God!" The woman continues, "And look at this, here's another miracle. My car is completely demolished but this bottle of wine didn't break. Surely God wants us to drink this wine and celebrate our good fortune." Then she hands the bottle to the man. The man nods his head in agreement, opens it and drinks half the bottle and then hands it back to the woman. The woman takes the bottle and immediately puts the cap back on, and hands it back to the man.

The man asks, "Aren't you having any?"

The woman replies, "No. I think I'll just wait for the police.... "

# Editorial

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## First, the sad news

With all the sadness and trauma going on in the world at the moment, it is worth reflecting on the death of a very important person, which almost went unnoticed last month.

Larry LaPrise, the man who wrote "The Hokey Kokey", died peacefully at the age of 93.

The most traumatic part for his family was getting him in the coffin. They put his left leg in. And then the xxxxxx trouble started !!!

Following Godfrey Dennis's interesting article last month on how he acquired his first car for sixpence and a Christmas pudding, members are invited to send in their own experiences of how they acquired their first car. Mine was a beige 1959 Ford Prefect that I inherited from my dad when I was 22 (WYE636), and Janet's was a 1947 Austin 14 that we bought from a neighbour for £5 in 1967 - black with leather seats, flick-up indicators and doors that opened forwards. We traded it in for £10 when we bought her grey Minivan (DBK541), and we remember bundling our kids in the back and having a child seat that simply hooked over the front passenger seat, which itself hinged forward to allow access into the back (no seat belts at that time of course). It's a wonder they all survived.

The next club night at the Welcome Tavern on 25th March will feature a quick quiz organised by Kevin Doran and the World's easiest quiz from myself. Please do come along and enjoy a drink and chat with your fellow members.

## MGB Engine For Sale

This is an ex-American 18GG engine completely restored with unleaded head. It has been previously rebored +.040" and the bores are perfect with zero wear. New parts including piston rings, water pump, exhaust valves, cam followers, and all gaskets and seals, have been fitted and it's finished in MG burgundy, the correct colour for this series. Andy can put it in your B in a day (or a day and a half if I help, he says). It doesn't include carbs, distributor or clutch. Contact Andy or myself for full details.



## Bill B

# Technical Tips - Andy Schultz

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### Tip 1.

MGB heaters are known to be not very good but if yours is non-existent then check your heater valve on the side of the cylinder head. Remove the 2 bolts securing it to the head and check that it is not blocked. This is quite a common problem because the head has a large hole and the valve is smaller so debris can build up at that junction eventually stopping flow altogether. Clean out the valve or replace it with a new one because when you have cleaned it out it will most likely start to leak.

### Tip 2.

If you are thinking about trying to make your car go faster by fitting some free flow air filters, please remember that if you increase air flow you also need to increase fuel flow. So you will also need to fit some richer needles and check the CO content on a meter.

# Originality...One man's view

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Does originality matter? The 'market' would have you believe that it does. But then, who is 'the market' - if it isn't the buying public who are prepared to pay a premium for something that remains unchanged from the day it was made? OK, 'the market' might also be that faceless band of 'experts' which tells us what they think we ought to think, (a bit like the stock market that decides the viability of a company based on the price that its shares are trading rather than what the company does; remember the film "Boiler Room"?), and if this is the case, we're all being played like fiddles!

Before going any further, I'm going to declare an interest and say it doesn't matter to me - well, not a lot anyway! At first glance, my own car looks pretty original. It isn't and I'm perfectly content with this situation. I'm also going to declare that I like pretty much anything with an MG badge on it. Regrettably, that doesn't include the MG Montego, so any models cited in this article are purely for illustrative purposes and have not been singled out for specific criticism or praise.

But, lets get back to the original question; does originality matter? There is no right or wrong answer, but if honest enthusiasts were asked what they wanted, I imagine that the truthful answer from many will be a phrase I have just created; 'selective originality'. Watch any 'buying a property' programme on TV and you will hear people saying they want '...a Victorian semi with period fireplace and an original tiled hall and porch'. What you won't hear them saying is: "...and you can take out those granite worktops and downlighters and whilst you're at it, you can get rid of the 'en-suite' as well; they didn't have those in Victorian times!" Selective originality? You bet!

In October 2007, H&H Car Auctions sold a stunning MGA for just £11000; (even with the 10% buyer's premium added on, £12100 was still a snip!) The spec for the car was as follows: 1958 Roadster, RHD, nut & bolt restoration; fitted with tuned MGB 1800 5-bearing engine (including Piper cam, Weber DCOE, electronic ignition and alternator conversion) and 5-speed transmission; finished in two-pack Davos white and sporting 72-spoke Dayton chrome wire wheels. (The 5-speed conversion gave 80mph

in 5th at 3000 rpm.) Externally, the car looked standard. MG Enthusiast magazine reported that "...if the restoration had preserved more of the car's originality and standard specification, it would have made more money". I'm sure that the new owner will reflect at length on this point as he/she settles down into what must be one of the prettiest MGs ever made, starts up the 'bullet-proof' MGB engine, cruises comfortably in the cut 'n' thrust of today's traffic and is the object of more envious looks than you can shake a stick at. And all for a 'tad' over £12 grand!!!

Let me pose a question. If MG had been able to build the MGA to the above spec in 1958, would they have stuck to a 1500cc engine and a 4-speed box? I suggest not. So, there's nothing wrong with the changes then; it's that MG didn't make them.

Let's come up to date. If in 2001, someone had fitted a new nose and bootlid to their MGF and made the suspension less compliant, the 'pro-originality' supporters would have shouted out "...but it's not original...!" However, when MG Rover did it and gave it a new name (TF), everyone accepted it. And what about the dreaded 'head gasket failure'. Is there anyone who wouldn't advocate modifying their K-series engine to eliminate this defect in the 'original' design.

In December 2007, a "For sale" advert appeared on the internet for a Flame Red race prepared RV8 (No. 0326). Originally Woodcote Green, this car was first shown at the Frankfurt Motor Show, after which it was returned to Cowley and kept in the Showbay. In 1996, it was completely dismantled and rebuilt into a uniquely modified bodyshell at the Essen Techno Classica Motor Show along with 'one-off' red and black trim. So, not original then... (Vandalism even, given its provenance as a show car?) However, the car went on to achieve many successes between 1996 and 2000 in the MGCC BCV8 Championship and the Phoenix Challenge; and in so doing, gained some 'new' provenance. But when you add in the final fact that the work was carried out by a team of mechanics from British Motor Heritage and Rover Cowley - it made everything alright. It might not be original, - as in 'how it left the factory', but the changes were carried out 'officially'.

## Originality....One man's view cont...

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Presumably, if changes are made from this 'new original spec' in the future to make it even more competitive, someone will complain that it was no longer 'original'; but now we were talking about the 'second' original rather than the first!

At the other end of the spectrum from the above RV8 is the ex-Chris Falla Cosworth powered B roadster. Chris used to own Falla Classics in Bournemouth and built the roadster as an alternative route to V8 power. The result was an exercise in engineering excellence which successfully demonstrated the standard of work his company could produce. Chris and his brother (alternately) owned the car since 1977, and Chris rebuilt the car into a Heritage shell using a turbo-charged, twin-cam engine, gearbox and independent rear suspension from a Ford Sapphire Cosworth. The car is stunning! I got to know Chris some years ago and I had a good look at the car. It is, quite simply, unique. The finished standard of work exceeds what BMC / BL turned out in the late '60s and early '70s, yet I suspect that 'the market' will deem it to have a lesser monetary value than it truly deserves.

Then, there is the issue of period changes. Back in the '70s, I had a Webasto sunroof fitted to my '71 BGT. It wasn't a factory option, but it was a period 'after market' change - and it was the business! I have seen recent classified adverts for BGTs using the phrase "...desirable Webasto sunroof...". So, it might not be original, but if it's a 'period' modification - that might be ok, then.

But what about a glass sunroof? Don't be too quick to sneer. They were around when the last of the rubber bumpered Bs were being built, so they're just as much a period feature on a rubber bumpered car as a Webasto is on chrome bumpered car.

And then there is the question of alloy rocker boxes, braided hoses and colour-coded plug leads. I don't remember those being original, but they certainly 'pass muster' in "Condition" class competitions - even if they don't meet "Concourse" standards.

Or how about alternator and electronic ignition conversions? Well, providing the changes can be concealed (either within the old dynamo or the old distributor), then that's OK. So, if it's not original - but it looks original, then that's OK too.

But a rubber bumpered B that has had a chrome bumper conversion makes no pretence at originality, yet few would argue that this isn't an attractive modification. Interestingly, the best chrome bumpered B roadster at the 2007 River Exe Rally and Devon Classic Run has the registration number MGB 348 V - which, (by virtue of the rules surrounding vehicle registrations), makes this car one of the later rubber bumpered cars to be put on the road! Clearly, I'm not a lone voice in the wilderness!

In 1924, Cecil Kimber took a modified chassis from a Morris, put a custom-built body on it and with some sporting success under its belt, the car entered the annals of history as 'Old No. 1'. (Kimber did this on the back of his success in the Land's End Trials in a modified Chummy in 1923.) Perhaps it's just as well that Kimber didn't have any hang-ups about not maintaining originality, otherwise we might never have had MGs!

So, does originality matter after all? It's up to you to decide what matters to you. I nailed my colours to the mast at the beginning of the article. I've taken as much enjoyment from gazing at a totally original car as I have from picking over the ex-MGOC V8 B Roadster (complete with its silver paint and chrome bumpers). The only advice I can give is to say "Make up your own mind", but don't let the threat of 'non-originality' spoil what might otherwise be many years of pleasure with a car which, whilst having been changed from original, may in fact be improved beyond what the factory was able to do at the time - and had they been able to, they might have just done it themselves anyway!

## Roger

# 'Tin snips' - from Roger Schofield

## Testing or abuse?

In addition to testing in the more familiar locations of North America, northern Europe and Australia, NAC has been testing their new MGTF on the Silk Road in the Turfan region of NW China.

In an area which boasts the second deepest inland depression in the world (with an area lying below sea level exceeding 4000 sq. miles), the TFs have been subject to temperatures ranging from 30-47°C in summer to -30°C in winter (without taking the wind chill into account!).

In scorching conditions, the cars are left to 'bake', then repeatedly started, run, parked up and re-started to see how they cope. As well as testing 'hot starting', this also allows engineers to check the effects of 'heat soak' on plastic components and see whether they melt, warp or stick. Another 'full sun' test involves driving the car at speed and then leaving it idling for long periods of time to test the effects of extreme heat on the fuel and cooling systems; for example to see how the coolant behaves at well over 100°C, the potential for evaporative fuel loss and the effects on engine efficiency of warm fuel.

Given the testing that the 'original' F and TFs were put through, followed by this further testing by NAC, it must make the NAC TFs the best developed MGs that have ever been built!

## Cheshire Romp - 13th July 2008

Having taken part in club runs in the Midlands, in Wales and on the south and east coasts, I have decided to do a couple of local runs this year, one being 'the Cheshire Romp'.

Organised by the South Manchester MGOC, the route meanders through Cheshire's picturesque, leafy lanes before finishing at the Anson Engine museum in Poynton (formerly the site of the old Anson Colliery). Entry fee is £20 per car (2 occupants).

If anyone is interested in taking part in this run, please let me know; I have a few spare entry forms.

## Streetwise MG

Members will remember the Rover 'Streetwise' - the Rover 25 based car which was adorned with grey bumpers and wheel arch cladding and had a raised ride height. Well, NAC has decided to re-introduce the concept - still based on the Rover 25/MGZR model, but the car will be dubbed the 'MG3 Streetwise'.

Clearly aimed at the younger market, the Streetwise comes with a choice of 1.4 and 1.8 engines and allows NAC to leapfrog to the front of a market sector which is popular in Europe but which has still to become established in the more conservative Chinese market. (At the time of writing, it was not known whether the car will be sold in the UK.)

## Wheel gun?

A US man has injured himself in both legs after attempting to loosen a stiff wheel nut by blasting it with a shotgun.

The 66-year old from Washington State was repairing his car outside his home when the accident took place. Shooting at the wheel from arms length with his 12-gauge shotgun, he was peppered with buckshot and debris.

The man, who police say was on his own and not intoxicated, was taken to hospital with severe but not life-threatening injuries.

According to police, the man from South Kitsap, (10 miles south-west of Seattle), had been repairing his Lincoln Continental and had managed to remove all but one of the nuts on the right rear wheel. Frustrated by the one remaining nut which refused to budge, he resorted to fire power in an effort to shift it.

"He was bound and determined to get that lug nut off," said Deputy Scott Wilson, a spokesman from the Sheriff's Office. "He sustained injuries from his feet to the middle of his abdomen, with some pellets reaching as high as his chin."

## Fuel prices up - but not just yet...

Well, it might only be a 6-month postponement (to October), but that 2p per litre is better in my pocket than it is in the Chancellor's!

## Car insurance hits new peak

The cost of car insurance has risen to an all-time high. The AA's Insurance Premium Index shows that the average premium has more than doubled since 1994.

The average comprehensive policy now costs motorists £822 whilst the premium for third party, fire and theft has reached £1006.

## On-the-spot fines for foreign truckers

Foreign hauliers who flout the rules of the road face 'on-the-spot' fines and having their vehicles immobilised.

The measures, which will see the police and VOSA inspectors being given powers to collect on-the-spot fines, are intended to ensure that hauliers based outside the UK are no longer able to escape punishment, by virtue of the fact that they do not have a British address.

## Road deaths up

Official road casualty figures for 2006 reveal an increase in the number of adult fatalities with motorcyclist deaths up by 5% on 2005 figures (to 599) and pedestrian deaths also showing a slight increase to 675. However, the death toll amongst car users fell to 1612 - 4% lower than the previous year.

Overall, the number of children killed on British roads increased by 20% over the previous year's figures with child cyclist deaths up by 55%. (I am forced to wonder whether the figures for children could be attributed - in no small way - to a reduction in the promotion of road safety awareness and cycling proficiency? Roger)

## Clean Cars?

Are cars getting greener? According to the Institute of Advanced Motorists, the answer is yes; the IAM reports that last year, 60% of new cars sold fell within the lower emission VED Bands A-D compared with 43% in 2000. (However, these figures fail to take account of the fact that buyers might be deliberately picking cars in lower VED bands to save money, where this wasn't as much of a priority in 2000. Roger)

## 1000 mile misery

Some 1000 miles of busy roads face gridlock within the next 35 years unless they are widened, a report by the RAC Foundation claims. And an extra 372 miles must be added to ease traffic congestion - irrespective of whether or not road pricing goes ahead, the report "Roads and Reality" claims.

By 2041, car traffic will have risen 37% and already-packed roads such as the M25 and the Manchester and Birmingham orbital motorways could grind to a halt if nothing is done.

Of the 13 roads identified as being most at risk, 7 are in the south east, but the M6, M56 and M62 also feature.

Unsurprisingly, the report has been condemned by Friends of the Earth as "...insane..." and claim that the report "...cannot form the basis for any credible transport strategy". (You'd better get out there and drive that MG whilst there's still petrol to put in it and roads to drive it on! Roger)

## Reduced journey times

The RAC Foundation claims that commuters could shave up to three hours per week off their journey to work time if they swapped their car for a motorbike or scooter. (However, given the UK climate, the 36 minutes per day saved would probably be lost again in 'showering and changing' after each journey. And also see "Road deaths up" - opposite. Roger)

## Dirty Cars?

A recent survey by LV=Frizzell has reported that many of Britain's motorists are driving around in dirty, potentially dangerous cars. The survey revealed:

- only 11% clean their vehicle once a week or more;
- women are worse than men when it comes to cleaning their cars;
- over \_ million drivers admitted that they had never washed their car! and
- 84% of drivers said that they don't check if they have enough windscreen wash.

(A fuller report on this survey will be printed in a future Newsletter if space allows.)

# Calendar of Events for 2008

Date	Club Event	At	Time	Meet
Sat 25 Mar	Kwik Kwiz etc.	Preston	20.00	Welcome Tavern
Sun 20 Apr	St George's Day Run		09.30	Myerscough Pub - opp BAE A59 Samlesbury
Sat 29 Apr	Club Night - possible guest speaker	Preston	20.00	Welcome Tavern
Sun 11 May	Classic Car Show	Cholmondeley Castle	09.30	Charnock Richard services
Thu 15 May	Evening Run	Preston	19.00	Welcome Tavern
Sun 18 May	Leyland Motor Museum	Leyland	tba	25th anniversary
Fri-Mon 23 May	North Lakes Weekend	Cockermouth	tba	tba
Tue 27 May	Show Your Car Off	Preston	20.00	Welcome Tavern
Sun 31 May	Classic Car Show	Tatton Park	tba	Massive autojumble
Sun 8 Jun	Hellifield Run	Hellifield, Yorkshire	tba	tba
Thu 12 Jun	Evening Run	tba	tba	tba
Sat 21 Jun	North West Motor Show	Southport - Victoria Park	tba	tba
Tue 24 Jun	Treasure Hunt Andy & Carole Schultz	tba	19.30	tba
Sat 5 Jul	Lostock Hall Carnival	Lostock Hall	tba	tba
Sun 6 Jul	Classic Car Show	Garstang	09.30	Burlington's, Broughton
Sun 13 Jul	Classic Car Show	Leighton Hall	09.30	Burlington's, Broughton
Sun 20 Jul	21st Lancs Classic Car Show	Hoghton Tower	tba	Hoghton Tower
Sun 27 Jul	NW MG & Triumph Day	Capesthorne Hall	tba	tba
Tue 29 Jul	Auto Test	Schultz Estate	19.00	Stoney Lane

# Committee, Contacts & Useful Information



## Committee

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Chairman	Tony Sharples	Leyland (01772) 495417 Mobile 07950 659470 tony.sharples@blueyonder.co.uk
Secretary	Kevin Doran	Preston (01772) 877285 kevin.doran6@btopenworld.com
Treasurer	Mike Newton	Liverpool (0151) 526 3419 m.s.newton@btinternet.com
Membership	Gordon Mallett	Burnley (01282) 429658 Mobile 07725503888 gordon.mg@btinternet.com
Technical	Andy Schultz	Preston (01772) 627120 Mobile 07817 173158 andy@pr55xq.freemove.co.uk
Events	Bill Ryding	Preston (01772) 323116 william@wryding.wanadoo.co.uk

## Newsletter Editor

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Bill Bradshaw  
Chorley (01257) 261134  
bill.bradshaw@btinternet.com  
  
8 Dale View, Chorley PR7 3QJ

All articles are to be sent to the editor by the 15th of the month. The Newsletter will be published and posted at the end of each month (Jan to Nov) in time for club night.

## Trading Members

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Andy Schultz	Cuerden Classics	Preston (01772) 627120 Mobile 07817 173158 andy@pr55xq.freemove.co.uk
John Ashworth	Accident Repairs etc	Croston (01772) 600964