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NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2008



Andy Schultz at Donington

Chairman's Chat

For those who didn't see last month's Newsletter, the hunt is over and Karen has got her MGA, or perhaps I should say most of it. On Sat 27th Sept we hired a long wheelbase van and borrowed my brother's trailer, with these we drove up to a couple of locations near Carlisle. The first stop was for the chassis, engine, gearbox, back axle (which went in the van), the body shell and the bonnet and boot lids which went on the back seat of the Audi. It was then off to the second location for all of the boxes of bits. Having collected the log book and handed over the cheque it was back down the motorway.

At first the idea of collecting the car seemed like it may be a challenge, but that was nothing compared to unloading it and trying to get everything in the garage which took until Sunday afternoon.

I have now had the chance to look more closely at the body and chassis which both look to be solid, the body has had quite a bit of work done on it but I think some of it needs a bit of a tidy up and some extra welding.

I have not started work on the rebuild project yet, but (as those who know will be able to guess) it won't be an authentic restoration. As you can imagine I have a few little alterations in mind (which have been approved by the boss) that should make it a more comfortable long distance tourer. So the first task is to find all of the major parts and then work out how to fit them. I will try to keep you updated as to progress over what I am hoping will be about a 12 month project, subject that is to work on the house and the "B". It's MOT has run out and as it would only get used once between now and the spring we decided to SORN it which now seem strange. It will be the first time in more than 20 years that we have not had an MG on the road.

Forthcoming events.

Tue 28th Oct. - Club night. Quiz.

Tue 25th Nov. - Club night. 2009 planning

Sat 1st Nov. - Bonfire party at the Schultz estate. Please make sure that you book (and pay for) tickets with Andy or a member of the committee if you are planning to attend. We need to confirm numbers for the supper.

Sat 6th Dec. - Annual Dinner. We are booked in at the Leyland Golf Club again. Booking forms and further details are in this Newsletter.

Next Year.

Tue 27th Jan. - AGM.

In last month's news letter I confirmed that I would be standing down as Chairman and from both the club and run committees, I can now also confirm that Mike Newton will be standing down as Treasurer and from the committee.

So it makes what I said in last month's Chairman's Chat all the more important.

I know this might seem like a long way off, but time seems to fly by and we need to be sure that we are ready for the AGM. To avoid the situation we had last year when we almost failed to elect a new committee, I would like to ask all members to please give some thought as to whether they would like to volunteer for committee and if so let a member of the present committee know before the 1st December.

Tony

Secretary's Scribbles

I don't know about you, but I for one am fed up of turning the news on and hearing about the credit crunch, markets are up one minute and down the next. About how banks are looking for every excuse possible to say no to customers - whatever happened to the bank that liked to say yes, (it was probably Icelandic).

I remember buying my first car, I was probably 18 or 19, and like most teenagers, having saved up a bit of money I was desperate to get hold of my first motor. A mechanic friend (I use the term friend loosely), happened to mention to my mum that they had a mustard coloured Austin Allegro Estate on the forecourt of their garage. It was a heap of junk, but I spent what little money I had and bought it anyway and almost immediately began regretting what I'd done. The term unreliable didn't start to come close to describing how bad this car was, I remember that when I opened the glove box, I could see the front wheel spinning round. I was an apprentice at British Aerospace at the time and it would be another couple of years before I'd managed to save up enough money to buy my second car.

I'd wanted an MG for as long as I could remember, and I'd decided to put a wanted ad in the Lancs Evening Post. I soon received a lot of replies and looked at several cars before deciding on a blaze coloured 1973 MG BGT. As it turned out, this MG was, if anything, worse than the Allegro. I couldn't count the number of times it let me down - the phrase Friday afternoon car was probably coined after this car. If I had had one iota of common sense I would have walked away from the marque and never looked back. Unfortunately, when it comes to cars, common sense has never been something that I've been particularly blessed with.

I owned this MG when Rosie and I first started going out and irrespective of the problems and breakdowns that we experienced, we kept the car for several years. After the MG came a Volvo which set on fire within a week of us buying it, then came a Cortina Crusader - the first reliable car I'd ever owned. Getting married and buying our first home put paid to MG's for a little while. However, before too long, Rosie's Vauxhall Viva (that her dad had given her) was on it's last legs and we needed to replace it. It was the early nineties and we were on the lookout for a little Metro. We'd seen one advertised at a garage in Tarleton and we decided to have a drive over to have a look at it.

Whilst driving through Tarleton, we passed a Metro being advertised outside someone's house - it was a black Metro Turbo....fatal. Well I know I should have known better, but before long we'd done a deal and were now the proud owners of another MG (well some people would call it an MG). I cannot begin to tell you how unreliable that car was. The excuse I needed to get rid of it came within a few months - I saw a green chrome bumpered Midget at a garage in Lostock Hall and promptly traded the Metro in against it.

The Midget surpassed all expectations, what a fun car these are - they drive like a dodgem car and are far more responsive than the MGB's.

A few years after the Midget came the MGA which I bought as a box (several boxes) of bits, I remember driving down to Stafford to buy it, when I arrived home with it on a trailer Rosie's face dropped. She was obviously disappointed and said, "I thought you were buying one of those that had running boards along the sides". I spent the next 4 yrs restoring this MG and kept it for 14 yrs before buying my present MG.

So that's my MG history

The car market at the moment is on its arse, although having said that the MG TF LE500 is proving popular with around 80 per cent pre-sold.

The papers are saying that new car sales are down 20 per cent on the same time last year with premium brands Aston Martin selling just 19 cars last month. The manufacturers of the highest polluting vehicles saw sales fall by over 50 per cent. I didn't realise that anyone kept league tables of the best selling used cars - apparently they do. Did you know that the average used car costs just over £6,000 is 39 months old and has covered over 50,000 miles? There are 7.5 million used cars sold in the UK every year, roughly 3 times the number of new cars.

A panel of judges from What Car have named the Ford Focus used car of the year. A 3 yr old should cost around £5000 for a good example. BMW's 520 was voted best executive car, Vauxhall's Zafira won best MPV with a one year old car costing half the price it was new, and the Ford fiesta was the best small car buy according to the magazine.

Secretary's Scribbles cont...

Now, what have we got coming up :-

The October club night is Quiz Night

November 1st - Bonfire night at Andy and Carole's. We are lighting the fire between 7:00 and 7:30, the club have spent £200 on fireworks (so please don't bring your own), which is why we need to charge £5.00 per head. A hotpot supper will be included on the night, so please let a member of the committee know if you're planning on coming. Don't let the weather on the evening put you off, this is the first bonfire that the club have run and we can't afford to lose money on the event.

Tue November 25th club night - This is a planning evening for the coming year.

Sat December 6th Annual dinner at Leyland Golf Club

Sun December 28th Cold Turkey Run. This is a 30 mile run starting from "Guy's Court - Old Nell's" at Myerscough and finishing at Samlesbury.

And finally.....

Earlier this month, I found myself having to scrape the frost off my car before I could set off for work in the morning, so with this in mind, I thought I'd include the following article as a warning to all those of you with chrome bumpered MG's.

Jay Leno (on the Tonight Show) went into the audience to find the most embarrassing first date that a woman ever had. The winner described her worst first date experience. There was absolutely no question as to why her tale took the prize!

She said it was midwinter... Snowing and quite cold...and the guy had taken her skiing in the mountains outside Salt Lake City, Utah. It was a day trip (no overnight). They were strangers, after all, and truly had never met before. The outing was fun but relatively uneventful until they were headed home late that afternoon. They were driving back down the mountain, when she gradually began to realize that she should not have had that extra latte. They were about an hour away from anywhere with a rest room and in the middle of nowhere! Her companion suggested she try to

hold it, which she did for a while. Unfortunately, because of the heavy snow and slow going, there came a point where she told him that he had better stop and let her go beside the road, or it would be the front seat of his car. They stopped and she quickly crawled out beside the car, yanked her pants down and started. In the deep snow she didn't have good footing, so she let her butt rest against the rear fender to steady herself. Her companion stood on the side of the car watching for traffic and indeed was a real gentleman and refrained from peeking. All she could think about was the relief she felt despite the rather embarrassing nature of the situation. Upon finishing however, she soon became aware of another sensation. As she bent to pull up her pants, the young lady discovered her buttocks were firmly glued against the car's fender. Thoughts of tongues frozen to poles immediately came to mind as attempted to disengage her flesh from the icy metal. It was quickly apparent that she had a brand new problem due to the extreme cold. Horrified by her plight and yet aware of the humour of the moment, she answered her date's concerns about "what is taking so long" with a reply that indeed, she was "freezing her butt off" and in need of some assistance. He came around the car as she tried to cover herself with her sweater and then, as she looked imploringly into his eyes, he burst out laughing. She too, got the giggles and when they finally managed to compose themselves, they assessed her dilemma. Obviously, as hysterical as the situation was, they also were faced with a real problem. Both agreed it would take something hot to free her chilly cheeks from the grip of the icy metal! Thinking about what had gotten her into the predicament in the first place, both quickly realized that there was only one way to get her free. So, as she looked the other way, her first-time date proceeded to unzip his pants and pee her butt off the fender. As the audience screamed in laughter, she took the Tonight Show prize hands down. Or perhaps that should be "pants down." And you thought your first date was embarrassing. Jay Leno's comment... "This gives a whole new meaning to being pissed off.

Oh, and how did the first date turn out? He became her husband and was sitting next to her on the Leno show.

Kevin

Editorial

My main problem this month is involved with the printing out of the newsletter for those members not on e-mail. Our Epson Aculaser C1100 printer now tells me it needs a new photoconductor unit that retails for £170, and this is a large amount for the Club to fork out. Whilst the committee decide what to do, I'll print out the newsletter on my own inkjet printer which is slower, particularly for photographs, so we've reduced the number of photos this month. Photos that members have sent in will be sent by e-mail separately, meaning that snailmail recipients will not receive them. I therefore repeat my plea to these members to let me have their e-mail addresses if they do have this facility, and reduce the number that have to be printed out, currently 23 out of 54 members. This will save the club money in printing and postage, and you'll get the newsletter quicker and in full technicolour. Also if any member has the expertise or a contact who can help us recondition our defunct laser printer, please let me know.

Please note that memberships are due for renewal this month - a form is included in the newsletter.

Menus for the annual dinner are included this month, and members are requested to send in their choices direct to Bill Ryding at 5 Dovecote, Clayton-le-Woods PR6 7AY with a cheque for the full amount, or pass to any committee member.

Welcome to new member Martin Gaskell, who hails from Leigh, and has a trophy blue MGTFF Spark (thankfully on e-mail).

Tony Sharples and Mike Newton are standing down from the committee as chairman and treasurer next season, and we desperately need to fill these vacancies, so please feel free to nominate yourself or another member for the 2009 committee.

Bill B

Calendar of Events for 2008

Date	Club Event	At	Time	Meet
Tue 28 Oct	Quiz night		20.00	Welcome Tavern
Sat 1 Nov	Bonfire Party	Schultz Estate	19.30	Stoney Lane
Tue 25 Nov	2009 planning		20.00	Welcome Tavern
Sat 6 Dec	Annual Dinner	Leyland Golf Club	19.30	
Sun 28 Dec	Cold Turkey Run		10.00	Owd Nell's

Travellers France - the third team

With September upon us, as the third team from Preston MGEC to tour France this year, it was time to check over the V8. On the first dry morning for weeks I ventured out to the garage to check over the car and ten minutes later was satisfied with tyres and fluids. The engine fired on the first turn of the key and we were ready for the journey.

One quick stop for fuel and off we went, confident in the car's reliability and sure enough it took the complete trip without a hiccup. Yes, in less than an hour we had arrived safely - at Andy's. I had booked the V8 in to Andy for some Botox and a face lift to the front wings and valance during our holiday, the trip to France was to be in our motor home. Taking advantage of Cuerden Classic's courtesy car (Carole kindly gave me a lift to Preston bus station) and a free three hour trip with my bus pass I was back in Hellifield in time for the rain and a chance to wash the motor home ready for the trip.

Pushing Kevin's tales of horrendous fuel prices to the back of our minds and on to the credit card we crossed to Dunkirk. After a night's camp we set about using our new Sat Nav to plan a route to the South of France avoiding autoroutes. Unlike Kevin in the RV8, no worries here about trying to keep the speed below 65mph to save fuel, take the motor home much above that and it displays all the stability of the Cutty Sark in a force 10. The Sat Nav proved excellent for giving us an interesting touring route throughout the holiday allowing us to mix and match types of route and without the threat of divorce once!

Over three weeks we covered some 3,000 miles going from Agay near Cannes to Lerici on the Italian coast, up to Lake Maggiore then through to Annecy before visiting some vineyards in Burgundy on our way north back to Dunkirk.

So what's of interest to an MG club? Well, as Kevin mentioned some fantastic driving to be had in mountain areas, the motorways through Italy and the roads through the Aosta valley and on to Annecy via the Mont Blanc tunnel would make perfect touring for a major club adventure. A detour on a mountain D road, great for an MG, made an interesting challenge in a wide, 3 tonne motor home giving Carol more of a white knuckle ride than my trip round Silverstone with Graham. Despite the fuel costs, touring in Europe can still give keen drivers a real buzz whatever the vehicle.

As to cars on route? . We found a classic car shop near Agay, with a V12 E-type, a TR7, a Bentley Arnage, a Triumph Spitfire and an MGB roadster. Carol was for buying the Jag but we couldn't decide who would drive it home so gave it a miss!

Some surprises - St Tropez, land of the wealthy was covered in very expensive boats but lots of cheap

Euro boxes, only three great cars - two Astons (a V8 volante circa 1990 and a DB9) and one Ferrari plus a cute chopped Fiat 500. In Lerici a following a wedding party led us to the bridal car, an early silver Porche 356 with red leather interior.

Out on the roads through France and Italy, modern Astons way out numbered Ferraris until we approached Annecy. On the road up from Albertville was a Ferrari rally, some 20 plus cars from a 308 upwards, all with numbers on the doors and clearly on their own version of the gumball run.

Parked up in Annecy the following day was another club on tour. At first sight it looked like a Cateram 7 club outing but though similar the cars seemed to be of Dutch make judging by the labels. Our final day in Annecy saw a line of Porche Boxsters out on a club run, all with their hood up, drivers perhaps too ashamed to be identified!

A brief trip to the land of the cuckoo clock produced no club gatherings but a solitary TVR Griffith in Ecurie Ecosse livery and a 1960s Galaxie 500 the beat of their V8s resonating in the high street near Lausanne.

Those who may want to fit a bed to their MG and try motor home trips may be interested in France Passion; a scheme that allows free stays on vineyards in return for a small registration fee. Armed with the expertise gained from the wine tasting evening at Kevin and Rosie's we turned up at a vineyard near Beaune to be offered a free night in the yard complete with power and a loo. We were just starting to prepare a meal when the owner called to see if we would like a drink. Eight carefully sampled wines later (yes we did the swirl and checked for legs in the glass) our free night had cost a mere two dozen bottles loaded into the boot!

After meeting and Irish registered original Mini with 24 on the door and full rally equipment from the round Ulster rally of 2002, last stop at the appropriately named village of Bouzy saw us watching the grape harvest in the champagne region and sampling the product of another vineyard. With the motor home nearing its maximum vehicle weight and the credit card crying foul, we loaded our last impulse purchase, several bottles of champagne ready to toast whatever goodies fate sends our way in the near future.

Bob & Carol Moore

PS a phone call to Andy on our return confirmed he had found no major horrors on the V8 and a week later we were able to collect a car with a much smarter front. Time to save up for the tailgate seal as the next job.



Renewal Confirmation

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Name.....

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Car details or changes (if any).....

.....

I wish to renew my annual subscription and enclose herewith my cheque / postal order in the sum of £10.00 made payable to **Preston & District MGEC**

Signed

Date.....

Committee, Contacts & Useful Information



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