

Newbury



Owners Club 1023

NEWSLETTER NO. 346 – July 2023

SECRETARY'S SUMMARY JULY 2023

Wow, it has been quite a busy month made even more enjoyable by the good weather we have had most of the time. The month started off with two excellent options. Three cars took up an invitation by MG France to attend an MG Centenary Celebration held in Epernay which is famous for its Champagne. It was wonderfully organised and featured over 300 MGs of all types and ages coming from all over Europe and even a group of cars from Australia. There were tulip runs out into the countryside on Friday and Saturday, with a Gala Dinner that evening and a display of all the MGs down the Avenue de Champagne on the Sunday morning. There is a more detailed report later in the newsletter.

The second option was a classic car show organised each year by our very own Tom at the Pangbourne College in aid of a Ugandan and a UK charity. It now attracts over 250 classic cars including some from our club.

Blag-a-ride night arranged by Paul allowed members to ask others for a short ride in their car and compare their experience with their own car.

Being blessed with such good weather this month we enjoyed an evening ride out to the Abbots Mitre at Chilbolton for some sustenance. Thanks to Brian for arranging this event.

The following day Roger arranged an excellent day out aboard the SS Shieldhall, the largest working steam ship in the UK, for a tour of Southampton and Portsmouth harbours. We were free to visit the engine room and the bridge whenever we wanted.

A highlight of our club year is our annual BBQ held as usual in Bob and Carolyn's garden, a perfect location to enjoy a local butcher's produce while having time to catch up with everyone. The cost of the event comes out of club funds, but we thought it would be good to offer people the opportunity to donate to the club charity while at the BBQ. I have just heard we collected over £90 in cash on the day and quite a



few said they would also donate on line. This and any other money we collect will go to Parkinsons UK this year.



Our Lunch Bunch Walks were focused around the pretty village of Aldworth. Some of us did a 3.5 mile walk around the local countryside while others focused on the history of the village and the giant effigies of the de le Beche family to be found in St Mary's church. Of course we finished off with lunch in The Bell Inn gardens.

I just want to take this opportunity to remind you that Janet is stepping down from the committee, so please consider if you would be willing to join it.

Finally, several of us are heading up to Cumbria over the next day or two to stay at the Fat Lamb Inn that specialises in hosting classic car clubs; this includes Carol and myself, so sorry if this newsletter is a few days later than normal.

Kelvin

Newbury MGOC Diary 2023

Full details for all events will be published in the Newsletter near event date.

July		
Mon 3-Fri 7 Jul	NMGOC goes North – touring from the Fat Lamb, Ravenstonedale	Kelvin
Mon 10 Jul	Club Night	
Wed 12 July CANCELLED	Midweek Meander 69- tulip run to Snowhill Manor (picnic event)	Trina
Wed 19 July	Evening Drive-Out – What3words mystery route	Colin and Janet
Thu 27 Jul	Lunch Bunch Walk 179	
August		
Sun 6 Aug	West Berkshire Classic Vehicle Club Show	
Sun 13 Aug	Fawley Hill Railway & Museum – Special Invitation Running Day	David
Mon 14 Aug	Club Night – our car problems: searching for solutions together	Bob
Thu 24 Aug	Lunch Bunch Walk 180	Trina

EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN JULY

WHAT3WORDS MYSTERY TOUR – WEDNESDAY 19TH JULY

For one more year we are going to have a What3words mystery tour. I think you all know what this involves by now – you turn up at a start point and are given a list of What3words location squares. You enter the first of these into the What3words app and use this to give you a route to the location where you repeat the process for successive locations the last one being a watering hole where you can relax for the rest of the evening.

Here are the important details:

We will again begin at nicely.visits.gadgets (AKA Snesmore Common Country Park)

Start times between 5:30 and 6:15 pm

Route - around 20 miles

All of the What3words locations will be at spots where you can pull in rather than simply pass en route so, due to this consideration, the stops are not necessarily beauty spots! Once again there will be a simple clue to answer at each stop if you wish and, this year, all those arriving with a full set of correct answers will receive a small prize. I expect you can hardly wait!

The venue seems relaxed about food orders as we will not all be arriving at the same time or expecting to be served at the same time but we do feel it would be polite just to give them a rough idea of how many people intend to eat. They offer a mixed menu of main meals and small plates.

We would be grateful if you could let us know if you would like to participate in this event - along with whether you are likely to be eating or just drinking - by the 14th July.

Colin and Janet

LUNCH BUNCH WALK 179 - THURSDAY 27th JULY

The next Lunch bunch walk is planned for Greenham Common with lunch at a local hostelry after. The walk will start at 10.30, and be about 3-3.5 miles, almost completely flat, around the old airfield where there are still plenty of interesting remnants of its days as a USAAF airbase to be seen. There is a café on site for coffee/cake etc and if possible (still tba) we will have lunch at the Swan inn nearby. Full details will be available at the next MG club night on 10 July

Brian

EVENT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN AUGUST

AUGUST LUNCH BUNCH

This is advance notice of the August Lunch Bunch as it is a little different from usual and you may need to note this in your diaries.

It will be a guided walk around the historic town of Hungerford led by Drs Hugh and Lois Pihlens who are members of the Hungerford Historical Association and former GPs of the town. It will last about 90 minutes and will be just over a mile in length with frequent stops.

The walk will start on the Town Hall steps at 10:30 and will finish by the War Memorial. We have made a provisional booking for lunch at The Bear in Hungerford for 12:15 and those who wish to join us there will be able to park in the hotel car park - but it is important that you register your car with the hotel reception before joining the walk.

There is a total charge of £40 for the walk which I will send off before the event so, to make things easier, we will make an individual charge of £4 and donate any excess to our charity for this year, Parkinson's UK. I will collect this on the day, so please remember to bring cash with you.

The hotel has requested food pre-orders a week in advance so I will write again in the August newsletter and seek bookings at that point.

Janet

UPDATES ON RECENT EVENTS

Lunch Bunch Walk 178 - Aldworth

The Non-Ambulant Group

Following the group photograph, five members followed an alternative gentle walk led by our history expert Jenny. Our first stop was at the well: 372 feet deep and one of the deepest in England.



Observations were made of historical buildings in the village: the Old School (closed in 1961), Baker & Grocery Shop and the Primitive Methodist Chapel, dated 1864. These properties are now private houses.

A short walk brought us to St. Mary's Church. One member made a hasty note of the Wednesday afternoon teas as an ideal venue to take an old school friend to; box ticked Judith. The famous 1000-year-old yew tree, though struck by lightning and blown over in a storm is sprouting fresh green shoots. Great news for those still eager to make their arrows from

this trusty tree. The unusual circular graveyard, indicative of a former pagan site of worship, evoked a hush moment of sense of place. The door opened. We entered the stunning church and lingered. Jenny filled us with wonder and knowledge of the Norman family of de la Beche: the Aldworth

Giants. Representing five generations, nine members of the de la Beche family lie in stately stone splendour. The life size representations, some over seven feet tall, lie under richly carved canopies or upon tombs in the nave. Some confusion arose regarding the accuracy of the information presented for each effigy. "But, there is neither lion nor dog at his feet!" It became clear that some notifications were in the wrong place. Could we move the effigies to the correct place? Following some discussion, a solution was found. The notifications were rearranged: job done. A proud moment.

Sadly, there is damage to these monuments which fill and dominate the church. This damage was at the hand of Cromwell when the Act of Parliament was passed: "...the demolition of monuments of idolatry and superstition".

The Aldworth Millennium Tapestry was much admired, and the important input of Heather Macauley (landlady of The Bell) was noted. She instigated the project and chaired the committee. Outside the church, Caroline and Fran were puzzled by an unusual arch marking at ground level on the south wall. A tenth effigy, "John Ever Afraid", is said to have given his soul to the devil and so was buried under the wall under this arch.

A low small building in the churchyard was pointed out: the cold house used to store bodies prior to funerals. One poignant grave is that of the war poet Laurence Binyon who wrote, "For the Fallen". "They shall not grow old, as we who are left grow old:"

Enriched by our experience, we returned to the Bell Inn. There we were joined by "the walkers", who seemed very thirsty, and we all enjoyed an excellent Bell Inn roll along with jolly company. Many thanks to Jenny and Rich for a great day.

Fran

The Ambulant Group

After the usual photograph we split into two parties – the walkers (ambulant) and the strollers (non-ambulant). The strollers went with Jenny to view the Church – lots of history there, witness Fran's write up – and the walkers followed Richard up Mount Everest! It was warm; we set off going through the Churchyard and on to a rough roadway which seemed to incline upwards a little. We strode along grouping and chatting and re-grouping and chatting; still it seemed inclining upwards. We came to stop for a refreshing drink and joined the Ridgeway path. Narrowing and widening and declining and inclining with the sudden shout of 'Car' so we all climbed the bank to let the car pass. Then along came a Refuse Freighter (bin lorry) so we scrambled up the bank again and this was followed by Postman Pat in his van – didn't see Jess though – what a busy rough road and still we inclined! But we were graced with the most magnificent views of green fields, trees, and hedges, and we stopped to take in the stunning vista. The path narrowed and widened, and we proceeded; and it got warmer, and the comments came 'I am really looking forward to that pint!' and then suddenly we were there in the pub garden! with a table reserved for the 'Haynesworths'. Unfortunately, I could not stay for the wonderful rolls they serve at the Bell, so Thank You Richard and Jenny for a lovely morning historical and physical.

Trina

MG CENTENARY TRIP – EPERNAY, FRANCE



MG Club of France organised MG Days 2023 for the MG Centenary based in Epernay at the Centre Vinicole Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte.

In all there were 323 MGs registered and the whole event was well organised and went really well!

Unfortunately we only managed to limp to our first stop near Compiègne from Le Havre to the Villa de Chatelet in second gear.



Have no fear of breaking down on the continent. Our insurance was brilliant. Picking up the car and arranging taxis and hire cars was a snip and so we carried on regardless in a Fiat Tipo.



Reception on the first day at the Nicolas Feuillatte Centre went really well after our obligatory glass of champagne.



Our first dinner at the centre was excellent especially as they were serving over 600 people



The first day's rally took us through the vineyards along the Marne to the Abbey of Orbais where we had a superb lunch.

Even the bottles of Champagne had the MG logo on them.



On Sunday, the last day, the mayor allowed all the MGs to be parked down the Avenue de Champagne- quite a sight to see the different MGs!



A buffet lunch was served back at the centre and ended an exciting and hectic 4 days.
Au revoir Epernay.

Rob and Marion