

Newbury



Owners Club 1023

NEWSLETTER NO. 360 – September 2024

SECRETARY'S SUMMARY September 2024

At the beginning of the month Brian arranged a wonderful drive out to the Bush Inn at Ovington near Alresford on one of those warm summers' balmy evenings allowing us to eat out in the gardens as the River Itchen flowed by. On the way there some of us even managed to find a route via a very narrow road including a ford to add a bit of excitement. Although typical pub fayre, the food and service was good. It was a wonder turnout that was enjoyed by all.

Our club night was a treasure hunt with a difference both planned and unplanned. The planned bit was that to avoid drivers getting distracted looking for clues, we aimed to park at three villages along the river Lambourn and search for clues by foot. The unplanned bit was a collapsed sewer that blocked the road necessitating a significant detour to the last location. We all eventually ended up meeting at the Queens Arms in East Garston to check the results. Most cars decided to abort at the road blockage but a few soldiered on. Those that only made it to two locations were rewarded with a treasure bag of chocolate coins. Those that made it to all three villages were rewarded with two bags of treasure. Another balmy evening that saw us chatting away in the garden until late with some consuming their spoils of war.

Later in the month we had a great day out to Chalfield Manor. It's a NT property, near Melksham, that is normally closed on Fridays, but Janet had arranged for a private tour of the house by the tenant who still occupies part of the house. More on this and our Lunch Bunch around Aldworth later in the newsletter.

Kelvin

Newbury MGOC Diary 2024

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

Date	Event	Organiser
September		
1 SEP	*DATE TO BE DECIDED Activity to be decided	????
Mon 9 Sep	Club Night – Prostrate cancer talk and Diamond Wedding Anniversary drink	All
18 to 23 Sep	Isle of Man Trip	Kelvin
Thu 26 Sep	Lunch Bunch Walk 192	Trina
October		
1 Oct	*DATE TO BE DECIDED Stonehenge	Roger
Mon 14 Oct	Club Night - Members Evening	All
Thu 24 Oct	Lunch Bunch Walk 193	Andy & Angela

EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO SEPTEMBER

NEXT CLUB NIGHT 9th SEPTEMBER

Barry and Penny have recently celebrated the DIAMOND wedding anniversary and wish to invite all members to join them for a drink at our next Club meeting on 8th September. But as you will see there is a talk about Prostrate Cancer in the meeting room above us on the same night (see attached note). A couple of members have heard about this and have expressed a wish to attend if possible. Having talked to the talk advisors and to Barry, I think we can accommodate both. The talk starts at 7pm and is due to finish about 8pm with refreshments. At that point our members can come downstairs and enjoy the refreshment that Barry and Penny are kindly offering. A diamond anniversary is something very special these days so I hope we can honour them both by joining them soon as the talk finishes. We had planned a Beetle Drive that evening, but as we will be starting a little later let's just make it a drink and chat evening and save the Beetle drive for another occasion.

If you do intend to attend the talk, please let me know so I can let the organisers know and be prepared for the extra people.

MEN
IT COULD BE YOU!

“WHAT I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MY PROSTATE”

AN ILLUSTRATED TALK BY:
Professor Richard Hindley, Consultant Urologist
MB ChB (Dundee) FRCS (Eng) MSc Urology (UCL) FRCS (Urol)

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer to affect men. Each year over 52,000 men are diagnosed with the disease and over 12,000 will die. This illustrated talk by Professor Richard Hindley, North Hampshire's top consultant urologist working for both the NHS and private sectors will tell you all about:

- The Symptoms
- The Risks
- The Treatments

When: Monday 9th September 2024 - 7pm prompt
Where: The Presidents Room
Falkland Cricket Club
Enborne Street
Newbury RG14 6TW

In the New Pavilion above The Bowlers Arms Parking and bar available.

Contact: Bruce Blaine - procantalks@gmail.com
or Gareth Capner - procantalks@gmail.com
to indicate attendance.

Donations to:
<https://prostatecanceruk.org/get-involved/donate>

ISLE OF MAN TRIP– 18th to 23rd SEPTEMBER

Six cars from our club will be making their way half way across the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man for the Isle of Man Festival of Motoring that Colin noticed advertised by Scenic Car Tours over a year ago. Of course it is far too late for anyone else to join as I believe it is fully booked out. There is an exciting programme over 5 days that we look forward to sharing with you on our return.

Kelvin

UPDATE ON RECENT EVENTS

GREAT CHALFORD MANOR– FRIDAY 16th AUGUST

A sunny, dry August day, Friday 16th, saw 10 cars from the Club making their way down the A4 to Great Chalfield Manor, near Melksham for a private tour of the Manor House, organised by Janet and Colin.

The Manor House, once fully moated was built around 1465-1480 and is on the site of an earlier fortified house. It remains today a Class1 listed medieval Manor despite inevitable alterations particularly in the C19th. The house and its contents, all period, are magnificent and we were given a tour by the donor family tenant. The



Manor House and 9 acres were given to the N.T. by Robert Fuller in 1943 with the right for the family to live in the property and to manage it on behalf of the N.T.

Outside are beautiful, landscaped gardens, grade 2 listed, ponds and 4 enormous tree houses of clipped yews. We were able to wander freely around the gardens and grounds, greet the stabled horses before meeting up for a picnic lunch on the lawn.

An added attraction was All

Saints Parish Church which joins the manor's forecourt. Records indicate a Chapel existed here in 1316 and the existing nave was probably built in the C14th. A fascinating building with magnificent stained-glass windows and ancient wall paintings in the side Chapel. No date was given but they were whitewashed in 1765. The Chapel references the history and the many families associated with Chalfield over the centuries. Our visit over we made our way home, a bit more traffic this time but with grateful thanks to Janet and Colin for discovering this gem and for organising the outing.

Jenny



LUNCH BUNCH WALK 191 - THURSDAY 22nd AUGUST 2024

It was dull and grey, it was chilly and damp, it was rather windy, typical March weather - but wait a minute it's not March its AUGUST!!! We should be in warm sunshine, shorts and T-shirts, not bundled up in waterproofs!! But, despite all that, not a lot daunted, the hardy members of the Newbury MG Owners Club members, 7 hardy souls on 2 legs and 1 on 4 legs set off from The Bell in Aldworth – famous for its wonderful rolls – for the longer walk with Richard and 6 elected for the shorter walk with Jenny (see separate account).

The Longer Walk

The walk with Richard encompassed some lovely views over our wonderful English countryside, albeit slightly misted over in places by the weather. We debated 'north/south facing' by the celtic fields which were slightly terraced and where some archaeological items had been found. The debate was solved by consulting a smart phone - instead of a compass! We trudged along the Ridgeway which had been filled for one & a half kilometres by James Dyson, of vacuum fame, with a considerable amount of 'filling' to level it, so his Landrover didn't bounce over the potholes – oh that we could do that for our poor roads. Apparently, he has a large amount of farming land close by, which he manages with just two people as he uses all the up-to-date (and probably over-the-top) farming equipment, possibly some which hasn't even been invented yet. He has a wonderful system for recording yield and future growth! In places it was a rather uneven walking surface making it a little necessary to watch where one's feet where tramping, and uphill inclines seemed to outnumber the level plains, but it was still a good walk and the thought of the rolls to come for lunch spurred us on towards the end.

Thank you Richard and Jenny for organizing and leading the walk(s) and lunch at the Bell, where we were joined by 5 more Club members.

Trina

The Shorter Walk

Six enthusiastic members of the club were led by Jenny Ainsworth on a most informative and enjoyable short walk in the beautiful little village of Aldworth, which has under 300 inhabitants.

Several important features were pointed out: the Well, at 372 feet deep is one of the deepest in England; the Old School House; the Primitive Methodist Church and the Old Bakery.

The church of St. Mary stands on a hill and from the churchyard you can see fields all around. It is a small church, with a stone tower, topped with a pointy red tiled roof. The church dates back to the twelfth century and is a Grade 1 listed building. The shape of the churchyard suggests that it had been a pagan burial ground.



Lawrence Binyon and his wife Cicily are buried in the graveyard. Binyon's poem "For the Fallen" is always quoted at Remembrance Day Services

The famous yew tree is a dominant feature. At least 1000 years old, it has been struck by lightning and blown over in a storm, but remains partially alive.

St. Mary's Church is most famous for its stone effigies of members of the de la Beche family: past parishioners and landowners in Berkshire. These are unique in this country. No other parish church possesses anything like them. Whilst recounting the history, Jenny showed us photos of a silver seal which she had researched in Reading Museum. In 1871, this silver seal was ploughed up in a field on Beech Farm, owned by the de la Beche family.

The stone effigies were supposed to be life size representations, but some of the knights were over seven feet tall which has led to them being known as the Aldworth Giants. There are nine of these effigies carved between 1300 and 1350.

1. The oldest is Robert da la Beche: a knight during the reign of Henry the Third in 1230.
2. His son John de la Beche: died 1328
3. Philip da la Beche: Sheriff of Wiltshire
4. Philip's wife: Joan da la Beche
5. Their son John: died 1327
6. His wife Isabella: owner of the seal
7. John's brother Philip: also a Sheriff of Berkshire and Oxfordshire
8. The third brother Nicholas de la Beche: was Lieutenant of the Tower of London
9. Final effigy is that of John da la Beche: son of Isabella and John, died in 1340

Was there a 10th?

One effigy disappeared, that of John Ever Afraid. The tale claims that he sold his soul to the devil for earthly riches. His body was buried within the walls of the church, but his effigy was placed in an alcove on the outer wall of the church.

St. Mary's Church is also home to the beautiful Aldworth Millennium Tapestry: completed in October 2000. Heather Macauley of The Bell formed a committee to raise funds, plan and execute the tapestry. It is a montage of some of the things which go to make up the parish of Aldworth: a truly successful community project.

Jenny told us of a number of famous people associated with Aldworth. Another poet, Tennyson married Emily Sellwood of Aldworth and took the title of Lord Tennyson of Freshwood and Aldworth. Having moved to Aldworth in 1869, he died there in 1892 aged 83.

The writer left the group to take the shorter route back to The Bell. Jenny led the others on to explore further. Lunch at The Bell was, as always, excellent. Thank you Jenny for sharing your love of history on a memorable walk.

Fran Sumner

NEWBURY CAR SHOW 2024 – SUNDAY 4th AUGUST

At the very last moment being at a loose end I decided to go to this show 4th August. Nicky was watching the Olympic Tennis Final and the sun was out so permission was granted. I got there at about 2.30 and some classic cars were leaving but nevertheless it is some years since I had been there, so in I went; it was interesting to see that as it has outgrown the previous location of Newbury Racecourse and is now situated at the Showground, there is a lot more space to accommodate the 700 cars on show along with lots of visitors' cars.

There was an impressive array of cars to suit the taste of anyone interested in old vehicles. I found a Renault 4 similar to the very first car that Nicky and I owned back in 1970; it cost then £25 and needed a bit of work!! I then came across a 1954 Ford Consul, which was similar



to the very first car I drove on my own, having passed my test in a Ford Anglia. My Dad had a cream coloured one back then; it had a three speed column

change gear leaver which was located on the steering column and a bench seat with no seatbelts, along with vacuum operated windscreen wipers. How things have changed. I spotted an impressive line-up of minis, which again brought back memories of cars owned in the past.



Then there was a very large number of Triumph cars all lined up, approximately 60 cars on the one stand, the largest display in the field. There were a few MGs scattered about in the show but none that I recognised. There was a good turnout of Traders with the normal selection of desirable spare parts and junk, which I am sure someone would be looking for! I spent my disposable allowance of £20 on some birthday cards, four clamps and a couple of MG badges, then I found a couple of shirts which Nicky was not impressed with when I modelled them for her when I got home.

Having spent an hour kicking tyres it was time for a cup of tea, I had not met anyone I knew, but suddenly remembered that Chris Pritchard is always at car shows so I decided to ring him, when he answered he was stood about 20 yards away from me, amazing! We had a cup of tea together and a couple of fresh donuts and putting the world to rights. While sat there Steve Kirby wandered by and stopped to talk to us. Steve was previously a member of Newbury MGOC when he owned a beautiful Oxford Blue MG-RV8; he was famous in our club because for many years it was Steve who provided the barrel of Good Old Boy beer for our BBQ. It turned out that Steve has recently purchased a 1931 MG Midget. This was the car that I had admired and photographed as I wandered round when I first arrived at the show. This fantastic MG is 93 years old and what a wonderful car it is, truly impressive. Steve plans to drive the car to the Le Mans Classic.



On my way out I noticed that Henry Cole from TV had been at the show, I believe he is the presenter behind The Motorbike Show, Shed and Buried and Find It Fix It Flog It. I wonder what programme he was filming during the day.

An enjoyable day out.

Roger.

MGF REGISTER VISIT TO A VULCAN BOMBER



The MGCCs MGF Register organised a visit to see one of the only two Vulcan Bomber aircraft which is still capable of flying. It is located in Wellesbourne Airfield near Stratford on Avon and is privately owned, having been purchased from the Air Ministry in 1983 by businessman Roy Jacobson, the ownership has now transferred to the company which owns and runs the airfield. Sadly while it is fully operational it cannot take off due to not having an Airworthy Certificate. To obtain one of these it

requires the support of the original manufacturer, which can no longer be provided due to the cost and lack of expertise still employed. The dedicated team of volunteers who look after XM655 ensure that it all works and is capable of doing high speed taxi runs on the Airfield, which apparently is very impressive to experience.

Our visit was fascinating, we were able to access all areas see everything and there was a lot of interesting explanations provided. One of our guides was Michael Pollitt who had actually flown this Vulcan, his insight into the instrumentation panel in the cockpit, which we managed to climb up into, was fascinating.

The society enjoys visits by car clubs as this has proved to be a good source of much needed income and at £15 per person well worth the cost for this journey into Britain's Aircraft history. We rounded off the visit by being invited to form up in a V formation for photographs amidst tight security as the Vulcan is located adjacent to a live runway.

Roger.



DAVID RILEY DECEASED 2024

We have just found out purely by chance that ex member David Riley has died. Apparently this sad occasion was some time ago and we had not been advised, hence none of us who knew him were able to attend his funeral.

Many members will recall David and his wife Barbara, who owned a Burnt Orange MGB, and joined in with our events regularly prior to Covid. He had been unwell for a while and the last time we had seen him he was using oxygen to help him breathe. I will always remember David as many years ago now he had parked the MGB in a carpark and some low life had stolen his paid for parking ticket and he got a £50 fine. He was unable to prove he had paid and therefore very reluctantly was forced to pay the fine. His answer to this problem was to make a very elaborate holder for a parking ticket with a stainless steel chain and a padlock! I admired it and two weeks later he delivered one to me. Rest in Peace David.

Roger.



MGB MARATHON CAR



Many of you will recall the involvement of our Club following the discovery of this iconic MGB back in 2015. For those of you who don't know or have forgotten, this actual car was the one that competed in the London to Sydney Marathon Rally in 1968, driven by Lady Jean Denton and her Co-driver Tom Boyce. The car, a private entry with some factory support from MG Cars, completed the gruelling route of 10,000 miles and finished in 47th place; Jean being the first woman to finish took the Ladies Prize. Here is a Youtube commentary of the race

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltEXLqYEiGc>

This actual car was rediscovered in a Southampton Scrapyard in 2015 having been abandoned in a lockup for many years and was in a very sorry state. I, accompanied by John Watson and Geoff Edwards went to inspect the car. When it was confirmed to be the actual car it was purchased on behalf of the MGB Register and the parent organisation The MG Car Club. The "fun" then started, the rebuild began in 2016 and numerous members of our club were involved in practical work and many more in fund raising over the next couple of years. Particular mention must be made of Malcolm Sayers and Tony Gilbert who undertook the rebuild of the engine. A complicated and longwinded process due to the condition of the MGB, nevertheless it was great fun. John Soley also helped by fabricating the complicated missing rear bulkhead to a design



produced by Tony. Sadly the time has now come when this iconic MGB has to be sold. The following statement from the MGB Register explains why.



MGB Register - MGB London to Sydney Marathon Car

In response to the recent announcement from the MGB Register of the MG Car Club to sell the 1968 MGB London to Sydney Marathon Car, the Register offer the following statement.

The car was purchased in 2015, which saved it from being scrapped. It was purchased by the MGB Register as a project to save the historically interesting car and which would be used to promote the Register and the MG Car Club. The car was purchased with MGB Register funds together with the majority of the restoration costs aided with donations from individuals and companies. The aim was to get the car restored to its Marathon specification by 2018 which was the events' 50th Anniversary. Register funds were running very low in 2017 so a loan from the Douglas Mickel Fund was graciously accepted allowing the 2018 target to be met with the car being unveiled at the 2018 NEC Restoration Show.

Since that time the car has been displayed at many events with the vast majority being funded by the Register. The Register receives NO additional or external funding to support the upkeep, maintenance, running costs including MOT and fuel. With inflation increases the Register can no longer sustain these costs. To reduce cost the register when able carries out much of the standard maintenance work but some things need to be carried out by professionals. Although restored, the car is over 56 years old so maintenance issues are becoming more frequent and sadly more expensive, to maintain it in a roadworthy condition. This year alone the Register has spent over £1000 of its funds and 30 hours of committee members time maintaining the car. Additional issues have arisen with its storage. Although stored currently in Kimber House we have been asked on numerous occasions to remove it leaving the Register with the headache of struggling to find suitable long term storage.

This combined with the increasing drain on Register funds the decision was taken by the Committee to sell the car. The MGB Register notified the MG Car Club EC Board on the 23rd June 2023 of its intent to sell the car. This was approved by the EC Board with the proviso that the car would not be sold until September 2024 earliest to take account of MG centenary celebrations. It was agreed at the time of purchase with the EC Board that the car could, and most likely would, be sold at some time in the future.

At the time of the Douglas Mickel funding should the car be sold the agreement below was made with the EC Board and minuted:

"In the future if the MGB was sold, the resulting income would be used to:

- 1) Repay any outstanding monies.
- 2) Repay the MGB Register their funds put into the restoration.
- 3) The remainder to be used towards funding a major club project as nominated by the EC in conjunction with the MGB Register."

In summary, the car is not being sold to make financial gain, but because the Register can no longer fund it or has the volunteer resources to maintain it.

The car will be sold by Bonhams at auction during the Goodwood Revival Meeting on Saturday 7th September 2024.

Chichester, Goodwood | 7 September

Goodwood Revival: Collectors' Motor Cars and Automobilia

There is a certain amount of controversy surrounding the sale of this MGB. Many people believing that it should be retained by MGCC or put on permanent display as it is of considerable historic interest. Unfortunately this is not possible due the reasons explained above. In my view selling it is the correct thing to do because, despite the considerable interest that there is in the car, I know from personal experience it requires considerable time, space and money to preserve it, which despite the efforts made have not been forthcoming. The Register and everyone who has been involved in in this chapter of its life in whatever capacity can be very proud of their contribution. Let's hope its future can be secured. Anyone fancying following the sale here is a link to Bonhams, you might even be tempted to put in a bid.

<https://cars.bonhams.com/auction/29334/lot/103/c1967-mgb-roadster-chassis-no-g23n003222f-engine-no-18gd-u-h12251/>

Roger.

