

Newbury Owners Club 1023

NEWSLETTER NO. 369 – June 2025

SECRETARY'S SUMMARY JUNE 2025

May was glorious the sun shone on us all, and time for our MG cars to come out.

The meeting at the Bowlers early in the month was a very interesting talk about Post Cards. Who thought how diverse they were in life and what they meant to life in general.

A good day was had at Hambleden, Henley on Thames, where there was a good turnout at the Jaguar enthusiast club meeting. A good line up of proud owners of numerous makes and models in a beautiful setting. I am told the village was used for the filming of Uncle Tom. His cottage looked great with a man sat in the garden talking to all passers by. And in the church an organ played in a gorgeous almost in tune, truly wonderful setting.

Good to see all our cars looking so good. A nice lunch was had by all and a good chat a really nice time.

Looking forward to June and hope the weather is kind to us at the forthcoming events.

Paul



Charity Update 2025

Each year the club supports a different charity, back in 2022 we decided to support the British Heart Foundation (BHF). However as a result of the invasion of Ukraine it was decided to switch to a charity supporting people in Ukraine affected by the war. Since then we have supported Parkinson's UK and Myeloma UK in honour of two members who succumbed to these diseases. Having conferred with the committee they have agreed to revert to supporting the BHF this year.

As many of you know it is a charity very close to my heart literally (sorry for the pun) as I have been involved with them for many years.

Just to give you a bit of background, the BHF was set up over 60 years ago and is primarily involved in heart research, spending around £100 million p.a. on it. In fact it is probably the largest heart research sponsor globally and has been responsible for many major breakthroughs. Around one in



set up over 60 research, outside the USA globally and has Around one in

three people will be affected by heart disease at some point in their life. It is not just the heart but the whole circulatory system for which research gets funded, this includes strokes, diabetes and dementia. Of course all this research needs funding hence whatever we achieve this year will be greatly appreciated. My main involvement with the BHF has been focused on helping them to spend that money wisely having been on their Clinical studies Committee for three years. This following link shows you some of the research the BHF is currently supporting, <https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/research>. I have also served on a couple of oversight boards a couple of oversight boards, such as this one <https://bhfcrc.org/about-us-2/oversight-board>.

Kelvin

Newbury MGOC Diary 2025

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

Date	Event	Organiser
JUNE		
Mon 9 Jun	Club Night - Chat	All
Sat 14 Jun	BBQ (reverted to usual date)	Sue
Thu 19 Jun	Lacock Abbey	Brian
Thu 26 Jun	Lunch Bunch Walk - Cancelled	
Sun 29 Jun	Yattendon Car show	Paul
JULY		
Tue 1st Jul*	Evening Drive out/walk	Date TBC
Tue 1st Jul*	Picnic – Date TBC	Andy & Angela
Mon 14 Jul	Club Night	All
Sun 20 th Jul	Tulip route to Stourhead	Roger
Thu 24 th Jul	Lunch Bunch Walk	Phil & Karen
Thur 31 st Jul	Evening Drive Out	Tony

EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN JUNE

CLUB NIGHT – MONDAY 9TH JUNE – 7.30PM – GENERAL CHAT

Club night this month will be a general chat, looking forward to seeing you there.

ANNUAL BBQ – SATURDAY 14TH JUNE

It's our summer BBQ on Saturday the 14th June, ~12:00 pm - 5:00 pm at Carolyn and Bobs. Please let me know if you are now able to attend and if you are able to bring a food contribution. As usual the club will provide the meats i.e. burgers and sausages. Look forward to seeing you there.

Sue

LACOCK ABBEY VISIT & PICNIC – THURSDAY 19TH JUNE 10:30

NT property and village, also home of the Fox Talbot Photography Museum. Fascinating village and Abbey with extensive grounds with large picnic area, so you can either bring a picnic for lunch or there is a café if you prefer, on the edge of the village.

Meet in the Stables Café (just up from the NT car park) around 10:30 for coffee and/or meet up for picnic lunch in the Orchard within the Abbey from 1300 on.

Lacock is about 50 miles/1 hours drive from Newbury, postcode SN15 2LG.

Brian

LUNCH BUNCH WALK -THURSDAY 26TH JUNE – NO WALK

Sadly, there will be no walk in June. No-one has come forward to lead, as I was hoping someone might; and I did not have sufficient notice to be able to organize a lunch. However, Phil & Karen are leading the walk for July, so save your legs for that outing.

Trina

YATTENDON CLASSIC VEHICLE DAY -SUNDAY 29TH JUNE

A number of members attended this show last year, and the details are in last month's newsletter. If you are attending please make sure you indicate that you are with Newbury MG owners club. The organisers are asking for a £5 entrance charge for visitors, however, there is no charge for exhibitors. All money raised is for The Thames Valley Air Ambulance and other local charities.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - CHANGE OF PLAN

EVENING DRIVE OUT FRIDAY 1st AUGUST - NOW THURSDAY 31st JULY

You are invited to drive out to THE HATCHET at Lower Chute near Andover it is a lovely old thatched pub with ample seating inside and out. There is also ample safe parking. The food is excellent at relatively reasonable prices. The drive is approximately 20 miles and should take 45mins. I have booked us in for 7.00 pm. There are at least two ways of approaching Lower Chute which is very rural. Turning right off the A343 in Hurstbourne Tarrant and following a route through Vernham Dean to Lower Chute is probably favourite. A Sat Nav will find the pub but details will be supplied nearer the date.

Jerry the landlord has asked if we can pre book our meals and this can be dealt with in July's Newsletter. Checkout The Hatchet's website to wet your appetite.

[Sample Evening Menu – The Hatchet Inn](#)

Tony

UPDATE ON RECENT EVENTS

CLUB MEETING 12TH MAY – COLLECTING POSTCARDS

This was a fun evening, Kelvin had kindly arranged for a friend of theirs who had a hobby as a child of collecting Postcards to talk to us about this interest, which has now developed to become a business. Almost 30 of us attended the meeting, one of the largest attendances for some time.



The reminder email that Kelvin sent to us all proved to sum up an excellent evening:-

“Please can I remind you all of Jonathan Edwards Post Card talk at this evening's MG Owner Club meeting. I have had the opportunity of a quick preview as I loaded them onto my laptop in preparation for tonight. I think they will bring a fascinating insight into local history with many cards depicting Newbury and surrounding towns over the last 100 years or more. They also bring an interesting perspective on local social history. Of course there is a sprinkling of historic forms of transport including cars but not overly so. The presentation finishes off with a good selection of amusing cards to leave you with a broad grin on your face.”

It was an excellent presentation which captivated us all as Jonathan entertained us with his story and the history of the postcard. It transpired that Jothathern was a Priest and the saucy cards were self-deprecation featuring vicars, and we all found them amusing, with laughter filling the bar. His business operates at the arcade in Hungerford. Call in and see him if you're in the area and take a look at the collection. A splendid evening, more please.



Roger & Nicky

CHOCOLATE FROG VISIT – THURSDAY 15TH MAY

When this event was conceived by Nicky and I on a dark, wet December evening in front of a roaring fire it sounded like a brilliant idea. Drive out in the MG with the roof down to an interesting location and enjoy the convivial company of lots of friends over a splendid cup of tea and lump of cake in the sunshine. As it turned out this was not to be as it failed to get the support we were anticipating. Three cars made it to the Chocolate Frog and certainly enjoined the opportunity to have tea and scones with jam and cream after an interesting drive along some exciting and challenging roads with the roof down. The weather unfortunately failed to play ball, as it was a bit chippy due to the easterly wind and we had to eat inside. The five of us put the world to rights and laughed, so this objective worked well. We took advantage of the opportunity to explore the Chocolate Frog's shopping area, before driving home. The three shops have an interesting array of goods that you don't want but just might find a reason to buy! On this occasion it was not the success we had hoped for, but if you don't try you don't know, so back to the drawing board.



Roger & Nicky

RAMBLE TO HAMBLEDON – 18TH MAY

It promised to be a perfect MG Day when 5 cars met up at the Woodpecker for coffee, organised on behalf of us all by Ian & Sue. It was a little overcast but with the firm promise of sunshine later.

We set off refreshed to start the 36 mile Tulip Route to Hambledon as the sun came out. The plan was to join in with the local area Jaguar Club annual meeting in a beautiful cricket field in the stunning village of Hambledon near Henley. The route took us through some of the delightful countryside that we are so fortunate to live amongst.



When we arrived we were joined by more members who had either made their own way or joined Ian's route at a point nearer to their home. It was soon lunch time and the circle was formed. It was nice to meet up with Ian and Sue's son and daughter in law Sam and Amanda



who came with us in their immaculate Austin Healy 3000. Their attendance reduced the average age of our group considerably! After we had finished munching, a vote of thanks was made to Ian & Sue and a surprise presentation was made to them to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. It consisted of a genuine antique biscuit barrel, our collection made it easily to the charity shop's price of £5. Sue was delighted with it, Ian less so. We then broke up into nattering groups, explorers and tyre kickers to enjoy the afternoon sunshine.



Roger

MAY LUNCH BUNCH WALK – HARWELL

April's Lunch Bunch lacked a walk; May's lacked a pub! Plus it had a somewhat different flavour: no muddy footpaths; many 'bright young things' (MG Club members included?); and the lunch venue could be described as 'unusual'! Nevertheless, 13 intrepid Newbury MG Club members assembled at the DiSH on the Harwell Science & Innovation Campus (see photo of us gathered in front of the HQ building), partly because we were all curious to see what progress had been made up there on the North Wessex Downs since our last visit in 2022 (2 days before Graham's hip op - you were right, Mike!) and also because it's just an excuse to meet up; a short walk of only a couple of miles.



Apart from containing the Diamond synchrotron, impressive just on its own, the site is also home to a large number of science research centres mostly concentrating on space and health. An estimated 6,000 people work on the campus (as we observed, perhaps rather younger than us!). It houses the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (space and satellite research, computing and that Diamond), a heavily flagged outpost of the European Space Agency's Centre for Space Applications and Technologies (ECSAT, a welcome survivor of European co-operation in science), the UK Health Security Agency (where disease statistics are assembled), plus what are becoming the UK's main centres for vaccine innovation and manufacture. The new Moderna facility opened earlier in the month and is *huge*! It is currently working on the Covid-19 booster vaccination for the coming winter.

None could fail to be impressed by the speed and extent of development which has taken place on the campus even since the Bunch's last visit, including the authors, for whom the campus is very much a back yard. One of the campus' notable features is the landscaping surrounding buildings, new and old. The buildings are often in themselves attractive but many of their 'urban spaces' are really pleasant places for the workers to rest and relax. If only the new housing estates now growing like Topsy in many parts of the country looked even half as good!

Of course, the campus is also a site of tremendous importance historically. It was the home of the UK Atomic Energy Research Establishment from 1946 until 1994, when its work was transferred to the neighbouring campus at Culham across the Thames, home to UK fusion research. Before that, from 1935, it had been an RAF airfield from which, notably, many of the Horsa gliders were launched for the D-Day invasion of Normandy in 1944. The small war memorial situated at the end of the former main runway (now buried), commemorates those who used the base then, and is also close to the site of the unsuccessful RAE Mark III aircraft catapult, recently unearthed, but again reburied.

Our walk coincided with a European rounders tournament, so that by the time we wound back to DiSH there were few tables available. Having separate 'street vendors' offering a variety of different menus was for some a novelty. Nevertheless, group individuals adapted well and scattered to forage amongst the kiosks. 8 managed to commandeer one picnic table, whilst the remaining five joined one of those bright young things, a young Frenchman, we think; slowly but surely easing him out of his comfort zone. He was most gracious and very polite on departure!

One day we shall return. There is much more to see...

Graham & Fran

EVENTS OF INTEREST

May 2025 a Brilliant Month for MGs

What a brilliant month May has been for owning and using an MG. Lots of events and some amazing weather with `almost unbroken sunshine. Here is a review of some of them.

Newbury MG on Tour 10th to 12th May

We set off in simply amazing conditions to drive to Exeter for our overnight accommodation ready to do the **More 2 See** road run, organised by the local club for the Sunday. Nicky and I stopped in Wilton to spoil ourselves with a bacon sandwich at a favourite café, Cuckoo. Most enjoyable, then it was on to the new Castle at Sherborne for a wander in the magnificent gardens before we had lunch by the lake. We saw a family of Canada geese with their six goslings and then a heron flew over to sit in a tree. When we got to our hotel we were soon joined by Mike and Carol and then by Ian and Sue. Newbury MGOC had arrived. We ate in the hotel and laughed throughout the meal. Mike having conned me into believing that he had been swimming in the sea the previous day. More fool me in believing the photo he sent was of him up to his waist in water in the UK!



The following morning we were up and away to drive to the start, which was at Cullompton Rugby Club. Here we joined 60 other MGs for signing on and a coffee. Soon we were on our way following the Tulip Route to Lynmouth on the north coast of Devon. Unfortunately the route had to be amended due to a road closure. We had to travel 5 miles on the M5 to bypass the problem. Sadly due to poorly written directions, two of our three cars joined the motorway going in the wrong way! This resulted in a 12 mile trek before we were able to turn round and return to where we started. It was only Mike who got it right, Ian and I have to hold up a hand



and admit our mistake! Once back on the route we had a simply brilliant drive on some wonderful picturesque roads up to the coast. What a super surprise it was to discover that the organisers had arranged special parking area on the seafront. After a couple of hours wandering round enjoying this special town, it was time to set off for the second half of the route. This was equally spectacular and an enjoyable drive. Unfortunately Ian had a car problem being unable to

select a gear after having stopped on a hill. Fortunately he was able to get going and managed to drive back to our hotel. Mike and I met up in the rugby club and enjoyed the cream teas. The raffle was conducted and Carol won two prizes and Sue who passed her ticket numbers on to her also won two. Nicky missed out altogether. Soon it was time to go back to the hotel and get ready to meet up again for our evening meal, more laughter, as we relived our adventures. It had been brilliant day out in mixed weather.



On Monday we set off on our separate ways for home. Nicky and I stopping for a fish and chips lunch by the sea in Lyme Regis; well you just have to, don't you!! Ian and Sue decided to travel via the M5/M4 for safety sake.

Aston Hill Climb 100 year Celebration - 17th May

This event was advertised locally in the early part of the year you may recall. I decided to go and have a look. I joined good friend Neil Hyett at his home in Bicester after a rather tortuous journey up the A34 due to a serious accident, making me an hour late meeting up with Neil. No matter it's not far to the venue at Aston in Buckinghamshire. This was one of the first major hill climbs used in the 1920/30s and all the major manufactures entered their cars, to prove how reliable, powerful and versatile they were. Approximately 80 "old" cars came up the hill, which was a dirt track and now is a B road. The now famous luxury sports car Aston Martin was named after the hill by the founder of the company Lionel Martin, who competed with the cars he built and developed in the area. The old cars passed through a guard of honour as they entered the show arena. Neil and I speculated on the value of this line up of an estimated 100 modern Aston Martins to have cost, the figure we came up with was in the region of £80,000,000. There were roughly a 1000 classic cars in the show field. Heaven for tyre kickers like us!



Cricket St Thomas Weekend - 23rd to 26th May

This weekend away for us was organised by three of the Southern Regional Area Secretaries of the MGOC Clubs, taking us to the Warners Hotel at Cricket St Thomas. The event was extensively advertised in the Enjoying MG magazine and the flyer was handed out at our January meeting, it has been well supported by MG Owners around the country. Approximately 97 cars have registered and will be making their way to the venue on the Friday to meet up at the Champagne Reception for three days of fun with likeminded people. We have formed a party with a number of MG friends including Derek & Anne from Newbury Club and ex members Nigel & Jan Pratt. Pals John and Gill Watson from Abingdon and Paul and Diane and Chris and Nesta from South Wales. Did the organisers know is a Bank Holiday and Half Term???

Due to Carol's Newsletter deadline I will report on how we get on at the event next month. While I am at it how about a huge vote of thanks to Carol for continuing to put together our Club's Newsletter. Her efforts are appreciated by us all who contribute as how else would we get the spelling, punctuation and layout completed!

Roger & Nicky

Trip to Agios Nikolaos in Genny MG – Part 1

Well, it all started when Mark, who lives in Switzerland, bought a Triumph Spitfire. He has a friend Teo who lives in Kalamata and has a large garage space under an apartment block where he has several car restoration projects on the go. Several months ago, Mark and Teo drove the Spitfire down to Kalamata so they could check it over and do a few jobs in Teo's garage. Mark and his wife Maureen have a house about an hour along the coast from Kalamata so quite handy for popping along to Teo's to spend a few hours tinkering. However, it was clear that the Spitfire could not remain in Greece indefinitely.

Mark and I often have a WhatsApp chat mainly about our classic cars and on such an occasion the idea was born of Judith, my wife, and I driving down to Greece in our MGB Roadster and spending a few days there before the four of us drove back to Switzerland together. Judith had never been to Venice so we planned to incorporate that on the way down. As it happened we could not get the same ferry back as Mark and Maureen so decided to do Venice on the way back effectively halving our time spent together journeying back.

The trip was planned for the end of October, early November, 3 weeks in total. On the way out we made an early start from home to avoid most of the traffic around the M25 on our way to the channel tunnel. We had not driven more than half a mile when the engine seemed to miss a couple of times, was this a bad omen? I stopped, lifted the bonnet to check for loose leads and inspect the glass fuel filter. Nothing seemed amiss so we carried on a little nervously without any further problems. Once in France we headed down the autoroute to Sainte-Menehould just beyond Reims arriving at about 3pm. The B&B was in an old building fronting onto the town square with a parking place right outside.



Entrance to the B&B was via a door code that we had previously been emailed. It was fairly basic but with typical old French charm. We went for a walk around the town square and discovered the museum was open, so going round gave us an insight into local history. It seems that Dom Perignon who was said to have created the Champagne method was born in the town. The town even had its own brand of champagne (not Dom Perignon) so of course we bought a bottle. That

evening we dined at a local restaurant where I enjoyed a pigs trotter being the local specialty.



After a good continental breakfast we headed down to Switzerland where Mark and Maureen had offered us their home for an overnight stay despite them being in Greece. We left the bottle of Champagne in the fridge for our return trip. The Next stop was another B&B in San Martino in Strada just beyond Milan. Navigating around Milan in pouring rain and a tiny sports car was, shall we say, challenging. Although we had the satnav programmed, the exits off the ring road came so thick and fast that we had passed the exits just as the satnav told us to turn. Eventually

Judith saw an exit that looked promising and we were enroute again. The landlords of the B&B were again absent so we needed three codes to get into our room. The main gate and house were no problem but having tried every which way to enter our room we eventually contacted the owners who said they would send someone round to help us. I gave it one last try and low and behold the door opened. The room was decorated with weird face masks used for Mardi Gras type festivals, so it was a bit spooky. The bathroom had a jacuzzi with little LED lights embedded in the ceiling giving a multicoloured flashing display. One of the jacuzzi controls was loose so we decided not to risk using it. The breakfast the next morning was very ample with an amazing choice.



Our next stop was Ancona where we were due to catch a ferry to Patra on the North of the Peloponnese. There had been a terrible storm across much of Europe and we could see houses were flooded but the autostrada was OK. The ferry down to Patra was 24 hours and the ship was very modern. We chose to go to the posh dining room rather than self service, which was very pleasant and a nice relaxing way to end the day. It was certainly a fascinating cruise down the Adriatic especially as we approached Patra sailing close to Albania and weaving around Greek islands.

As we arrived late evening we stayed in a Days Inn right in the centre of Patra that had a lockup garage 50m away, very convenient. The next morning we decided to follow the Western route down to Kalamata as we had previously driven down the motorway on a previous visit. The first half of the route was rather boring and slow driving through an almost continuous series of built up areas of towns and villages and no view of the sea.



The second half of the route was more interesting but not especially so. We met up with our friends Mark and Maureen at the Kalamata yacht club for lunch overlooking the the marina where there is always something of interest going on. It was great fun driving the MG along the coast road to Agios Nikolaos, very twisty and hilly so lots of gear changes mainly back and forth between second and third with occasional stretches in fourth.



We then had several lazy days enjoying the lovely weather, views and food, punctuated with a couple of trips to Kalamata to finish off a couple of jobs on Mark's Spitfire in preparation for the return journey.



We left 3 days before Mark and Maureen to catch a 36 hour ferry trip up to Venice, two nights and one day. It was a bit of a tedious drive up to Patra, this time via the motorway as it was dark for most of the route and very busy. It was at the end of a bank holiday weekend with everyone heading back to Athens via the Corinth canal bridge. When we arrived at Patra for some reason our ferry was delayed and a threat that it might have to be cancelled. After a two or three hours delay, they let us board and go to our cabins to sleep if nothing else. We also could eat for free in the self service restaurant beforehand if we wished. This was a much older ferry and not



nearly so salubrious but OK. It seems sometime during the night we got underway and woke to find ourselves sailing up the Albanian coast. A relaxing day cruising up the Adriatic but woken early the following morning as we were approaching Venice. Large ships are not allowed near Venice these days as their wake was causing erosion. The ferry terminal is a few miles away approached via a very long narrow deeply dredged channel that had to be navigated slowly and with great care. This has great significance later in this story. We disembarked without trouble and quickly found the Park Hotel Villa Giustinian near Mirano.

Our hotel room was not ready when we arrived late morning, so we were directed to Mirano where we would be able to find somewhere for lunch. Quite a large town where we managed to park near the centre. We both ordered different salads with Judith making sure she mentioned she was very allergic to shellfish. However, this was misunderstood to mean she wanted shellfish. The proprietor who spoke a little more English came and sorted it out and didn't charge us for the seafood salad. We returned and settled into our room then walked along the road to a tabac where we could buy bus tickets into Venice for the next couple of days. We chose our hotel because there was a bus stop right outside for a bus that would take us right into the main terminus in Venice. The hotel also was right opposite a great pizza restaurant that we frequented twice whilst there.



To be continued.....

Kevin & Judith