

MGCC South East Centre Newsletter

May 2012



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Editorial

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Forthcoming Events

- ◆ 13 May
Regency Run
- ◆ 10 June
Tour of South East
Jubilee Barbeque
- ◆ 23/24 June
MG Live! Silverstone
- ◆ 6/8 July
Isle of Wight weekend
- ◆ 19 August
Summer Gathering

Does anyone remember Denis Howell, the Labour Minister for the Environment who was appointed Minister for Drought in 1976 following the driest period for 200 years? Then you will also remember his spectacular success leading to his appointment as Minister for Floods later that year followed by Minister for Snow in the winter of 1978/9. With the recent hose-pipe ban and the torrential rain falling outside the window as I write, this all sounds a little familiar. History aside, it is only just May and there is still hope for the summer ahead. And one glance at the Programme on the following page shows it will also be a full summer with many events on offer. So there is no excuse not to go out there and enjoy your MG; just remember your umbrella.

News.

The Centre held its AGM at the Bell at Godstone on 19 March. This was quite a quiet affair with the principal purpose being to approve the accounts before the end of the financial year. The forthcoming programme was reviewed but that information was already available on the website. Overall, no startling revelations. However, on a sad note, it was announced that Christine Poxon had died earlier that week following a short illness. Christine was well known throughout the Centre, the MGCC and the wider motorsport community. She was a hard worker who would always assist and gained

Next Edition

The next edition of the Newsletter will be distributed at the end of June. All copy to me by 20 June please.

The main events I need to draw your attention to are the Jubilee Run and Barbeque on Sunday 10 June and the Summer Gathering on 19 August. OK, the Jubilee event is not actually on the Jubilee weekend but a full programme of events is on offer and you will be able to collect your 2011 award as well. Full details and entry forms are attached to this Newsletter.

A taster for the Summer Gathering is also included here.

Finally, my sincere thanks to all the contributors who have made this Newsletter the biggest yet - this is only my third edition but it is already almost up to the maximum mailing size. However, please keep the contributions coming in; anything of interest welcome including your favourite recipe (see page 8).

James Mumford

my particular respect over her mastery of the naviscat. She will be missed.

The MG6 team started with a win at Brands Hatch and Jason Plato is now leading the Dunlop BTCC drivers' rankings. This is just the kind of publicity that the car needs to restore MG's sporting image.

A warning has been given that many car insurers are quietly dropping the cover allowing policy holders to drive other cars. This is a particularly useful feature to many of our members; make sure that you check your policy coverage when your insurance next comes up for renewal.

Programme

Below is the four month rolling programme of events with something of interest for everyone. This programme includes not only Centre events but information on other activities organized by Natters, Main Club, Branches and Registers taking place within our area together with outside events which may be of interest to members.

Please be aware that some of the events may be provisional or subject to change; always check with the organizer before you go!

Further details available on the website.

Programme to August 2012

Date	Event	Venue / Details
Weekend 5 / 6 May	MGCC Race Meeting	Brands Hatch. Contact Main Club for details
Sunday 13 May	Regency Run	Commencing Epsom racecourse, the annual run to the seafront at Brighton. Contact Main Club for details.
Weekend 26 / 27 May	Motorsports at the Palace sprint event	Crystal Palace including an MG display from the Centre. Invitation from Sevenoaks and District MC; for information contact www.motorsportatthepalace.co.uk
Sunday 27 May	FDMC Autosolo	Bordon, Hampshire. Invitation from Farnborough District Motor Club to the second in the Autosolo series for the year. http://www.farnboroughdmc.org.uk/
Sunday 10 June	Tour of the South East followed by Jubilee Barbeque and 2011 Awards Presentation	For Tour, see website or contact Andrew Mitchell on 07821 838538 . Barbeque and presentation to be held at Woodcroft, Okehurst Lane, Billingshurst RH14 9HR; contact Derek Edwards on 01737 765891 to reserve your place of see attached entry forms
Tuesday 12 June	Brooklands Concours d'Elegance and Jazz Band	Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey. Contact Danny Byrne on 01932 829814 for details.
Weekend 16 / 17 June	Brooklands 12 / 12	Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey. Driving tests with a class for MGBs. Apply and information from www.brooklandsmuseum.com
Monday 18 June	Alternative Pride of Ownership; First Round	The Bell at Godstone from 8.00pm. Contact John Morgan on 020 8657 2714
Weekend 23 / 24 June	MG Live!	Silverstone. Contact Main Club for details
Weekend 6 / 8 July	Isle of Wight Weekend	Based at the Shanklin Hotel, Shanklin. Ferries, hotel and events included. Contact Derek Edwards 01737 765891
Sunday 8 July	FDMC Autosolo	Barton Stacey, Hampshire. Invitation from Farnborough District Motor Club to the third in the Autosolo series for the year. http://www.farnboroughdmc.org.uk/
Tuesday 10 July	Brooklands Natter Summer Barbeque	Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey. Contact Danny Byrne on 01932 829814 for details. Booking essential
Thursday 19 July	Alternative Pride of Ownership; Second Round	Barley Mow, West Horsley from 8.00pm. Contact David Washbourne on 01483 282379
Saturday 21 July	Ripley Vintage and Classic Car Meet	Ripley. Contact David Washbourne on 01483 282379
Sunday 22 July	Alternative Pride of Ownership; Third Round	Carpenter's Arms, Limpsfield Chart. Contact Alan Rothwell on 01737 211482
Sunday 22 July	Southdows MG Summer Picnic	Herstmonceux Castle Observatory Science Centre. Contact Mike Crawley on 01323 833401
Sunday 19 August	Summer Gathering	Groombridge Place. See separate article in this newsletter. Contact Philip Bayne-Powell on 01483 811428

Awards 2011

The awards for the 2011 year have now been collated, and the full list is shown below. The presentation of these awards will take place at lunchtime at our Jubilee Barbeque at Woodcroft, Billingshurst, on Sunday June 10th, so we hope those who are to receive an award, as listed below, will come to the meeting and collect their prizes in front of their peers; if not, can they please make alternative arrangements.

ANNUAL TROPHIES

Lew Wooster Trophy - for marshalling	Derek Edwards
Banana Trophy - for racing	Russell McCarthy
Lingfield Trophy - for Naviscats	Lesley and Martin Neal
Car of the Show at Loseley Park	John Heagren
Alternative Pride of Ownership	Derek Edwards
Pentathlon Trophy - all Centre competitions	Philip & Rosemary Bayne-Powell
Ladies Award - for all Centre events, except POO/ Concours	Rosemary Bayne-Powell
Enthusiast's Trophy - not winning an award	Piers Hubbard
SE Centre Championship - for all attendances at events	Rosemary Bayne-Powell
Club Member of the Year	??????????????

2011 EVENT PRIZES

Spring Naviscat

1 st in class A&B -	Annette and Gary Lee
1 st in class C -	Lesley and Martin Neal
2 nd in class D -	Julian Symes and Nicola Wilson

Summer Gathering (at Loseley Park)

1 st in Concours -	Richard Thorne
1 st Premier PoO -	Jean Burton
1 st PoO -	Ian White
2 nd PoO -	Helen Scutt
3 rd PoO -	Ray Cooke
1 st Gymkhana -	John Bennett/Sarah Bingham
2 nd Gymkhana -	Sarah Bingham/Sheila Bennett

Autumn Gathering (at Michelham Priory)

1 st Premier PoO -	Helen Scutt
1 st PoO -	Mick Loynes

Autumn Naviscat

Overall winner -	Lesley and Martin Neal
1 st class A&B -	Philip and Rosemary Bayne-Powell
1 st class C&E -	Gavin Rowles
1 st class D -	Chris and Janice Leigh

For Sale

When we move to East Kent in July, I shall have trouble accommodating my four wheel car trailer. As the photo shows, it's not pretty, but it is functional, it has a winch, and I would prefer not to sell it. I wonder if anyone, particularly living in the East of our region, would be interested in accommodating it and sharing ownership with me on a 50/50 basis. I use it very seldom but when I do, it's a really handy thing to have. Contact John Bennett on 020 8660 9606 or johndotbennett@tiscali.co.uk

Private adverts from SE Centre members accepted subject to available space.



MGCCSE Spring Run 15 April 2012

On a dry but cool spring day, 45 MG's and their crews turned out for the 2012 Spring Run.

This year's run was organised by William and Dianne Opie and took place entirely in Kent. The day started with sign-on and tea/coffee at Beech Court Gardens. By 10:45, the parking areas were full with an eclectic collection of MG's of all ages, from pre war J & P types to modern TF's. After meeting many MG friends and a walk around the gardens, it was time for the off. We were all provided with an excellent very informative route book to enable us to get to our destination at Biddenden Vineyards.



The route took us over some glorious almost traffic free lanes, along the hills and valleys of the Kent North Downs. Inevitably we became part of a small group of MG's and for the next two hours we enjoyed all the sights, sounds and smells of the English countryside. The sun shone intermittently and although there were some black clouds around we only had light raindrops for about two minutes as we caught the tail end of a shower. We crossed the 'Pilgrims way' twice without impairing any pilgrims. Many of the lanes were narrow and often 'single track' but any opposite direction traffic issues were sorted out, as by the time we reached them they had already realised that they were outnumbered by MG's. The route book also provided fascinating notes on some of the places we passed through and for us all of it was new ground. A number of Pubs were driven by including the George Inn at Newnham Village which was built as a private house in 1540 and converted to a Pub in 1718. [Must go back there for lunch]. At Charing we learned that in 1590 the ancient village church was badly damaged by fire, caused by a Mr Dios out bird shooting whose hot shot set the wooden roof shingles alight and the subsequent fire melted the bells in the church steeple!

When we arrived at Biddenden Vineyard, again the parking areas around the buildings were full of MG's. Some were very neatly parked in front of the large cider vats and others amongst the grape vines. About 1:45 pm there was a short snow and hail shower, which made the 'Picnickers' hastily erect their umbrellas. An excellent Ploughman's Lunch, was enjoyed along with a generous glass of white wine. Free wine tasting was also availed by many [in moderation for the drivers of course] then we were given a guided tour of the vines and the wine and cider making process. The vineyard produces mostly white wines; those of which we tasted were of very good quality. The area does not get enough consistent sunshine to be able to successfully grow red wine grapes.



Eventually it was time to set course for the drive home, again for us it was a dry, cold but very enjoyable wander along the minor roads of Kent and Sussex. The 2012 Spring Run had provided us with a great day out, enabling us to renew friendships and enjoy open-top sedate driving through the beautiful Kent countryside, with MG's ahead and behind all doing the same thing. What more could MGCC members want? With very grateful thanks to William and Dianne, for organising a very enjoyable day in the Kent countryside.

Doug & Chris Bush



Spring Navisat Sunday, 11th March 2012

The MGCC South East Centre Spring Navisat started at the Bull Hotel, in the village of Wrotham, Kent. Fortunately, the weather forecast was favourable, it was a lovely sunny spring morning, and the event was well supported with 29 cars entering the Navisat. The MGCC invited a number of other clubs to the event, including members of the MGOC, The Octagon Car Club, The Midget and Sprite Club, the Inter Register Club and the Renault Alpine Owners Club, which resulted in an interesting and impressive range of cars. There was a warm welcome for the 10 novice entries that were taking part in a Navisat for the first time.



The 41 grid reference points had been plotted to take in the scenic country lanes and villages in the North Downs Area of Kent. Entrants seemed to have a good

time exploring the local area to find the answers to the clues, ranging from finding the planet Venus in the Otford Village Solar System, the War Memorial in Ash Village and the unusual Milk Churn letter box on a country lane....



Congratulations to everyone that took part especially the winners of each class.

Overall Winners	James & Tom Campbell (IRC)
1 st Class A	John & Sally Reay (MGCC)
1 st Class B	George Homewood & Cliff Boulton (MGOC)
1 st Class C	Gavin Rowles & Ralph Whitmarsh (MGCC)
1 st Class D	Liz & Tim Morris (MGCC)
1 st Class E	James & Tom Campbell (IRC)
1 st Novice Class	Lucilla & Hester Mackay (MGCC)

Full results of the event are available on the MGCC website, along with some photo's of the event showing the impressive range of cars that took part.

Thank you to every one that supported the event, and we look forward to seeing you at the next Navisat in the Autumn!

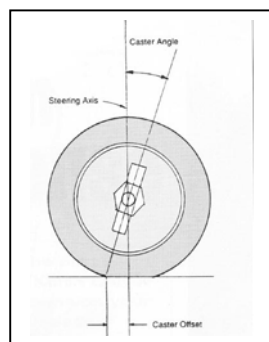
Julian & Nicola Symes

Technical Tip B Caster Angle

Owners of Bs will be familiar with their heavy steering. This at least in part arises from the large caster angle in the steering necessitated by the crossply tyres of that era. For those unfamiliar with "caster angle"; it is the rotation of the king pin as shown in the diagram above which causes the steering to self-centre, much like the front wheel of a bicycle. The larger the angle, the harder it will be to turn the steering at low speeds.

Improvements in tyres have allowed caster angles to be reduced; the around 7 degree angle used in Bs was reduced to around 4 degrees for the RV8 which otherwise has the same steering.

Now, the RV8 is not light in steering either but that is partly down to its wider tyres. Having got tired, quite literally, of the heavy slow-speed steering of my B, especially in Autosolos and the like, I thought that I



would look into this problem.

Altering the caster angle on a B is in principle quite easy; the whole front suspension is held on a subframe secured by four bolts. "All" that is required to be done is to insert a suitable thickness packer between the body and the subframe at the front bolt and the caster angle is adjusted appropriately. Of course, this is not quite as easy as it sounds; the shims under the steering rack also need adjustment to take into account the change in the angle of the subframe. The work is not difficult and Moss and Frontline sell quite cheap kits; I used the Moss kit which comes with good instructions if optimistic on the 3 hours fitting time; mine took a good day! The instructions are available on-line at the Moss site so you can see what you are in for before commencing.

In short, it works. I have found that the steering is significantly lighter at slow speeds without apparently affecting high speed stability. £35 well spent. Contact me if you would like any further information.

James Mumford

This is a personal view; please don't attempt this unless you have satisfied yourself of its suitability

Goodwood Track Day Experience

If you are a regular reader of MG related magazines, it is likely that you have read articles about the joy of participating in Track Days organised by MGoT. The unsubtle message within this short contribution is very clear: Yes it's true, a track day is well worth trying.

I have been the proud owner of a MGTF 115(2004) for the last few years. Like many MG owners I use it at weekends and attend some events organised by MGCC. It has been on West Country tours and recently explored 1000 miles of French roads in a topless week. Early on I decided to try a track day in response to many claims that it would prove to be a great experience.

Recently I attended my fourth track day at Goodwood exactly one year after I had first given it a go. It is now part of my MG life!



Courtesy Xtreme Sports photography

My experiences confirm the view that ordinary people in ordinary road registered MGs are well suited to the demands of a track day. If you do decide to give it a go, rest assured that your cherished MG will respond positively to being driven as the engineers once intended.

MGOT days possess a well oiled routine to ensure safety and enjoyment. You will sign on, complete

indemnity forms, attend a safety briefing and get noise tested! This will be followed by a 15 minute session per hour on the track with drivers of similar experience. Novices are looked after particularly well looked after, with plenty of t.l.c. and additional supportive briefings. Instruction(a must in my view) can be prebooked as can the obligatory helmet.

As is usual the first session included sighting laps following the pace car. This was the chance to get a clear view of the carefully placed trackside bollards that indicated braking, entry and exit points at the various corners. A session with an instructor always helps and in my experience adds to the enjoyment and develops skill levels very quickly. I am now beginning to understand how my cornering skills dictate how much speed I will build up in the following straight.

My TF115 behaved itself during the day topping 100mph, but more importantly was able to drop from this pace to cornering speed smoothly within the braking zones with my instructor urging me not to brake too soon, counter-intuitive to someone whose driving skills have been blunted on the M23/A23 commute to work! The track day experience really is "safety as fast as you wish". It is not crowded and I have experienced no problems with letting faster cars pass on the straights. The rules are clear, overtaking is by consent and you will always get a wave when it happens.

A well maintained car will have no problems. Obvious checks have to be made (fluids, tyre pressure, fuel), but no specialised equipment is necessary. You will certainly learn more about your car's attributes and your own driving. You will enjoy it and you and your passenger(my wife, a non driver accompanies me) will exchange big grins at the end of each session. You will feel nervous but that is a normal condition before engaging in unfamiliar activities. At venues such as Goodwood, Brands Hatch and Silverstone you will also experience a sense of motoring history. Think of the names that have been there before you.

Interested? It is very easy to get involved. Check out the MGOT website for more information, maybe go along to an event and spectate and talk to the organisers. You will find everyone willing to answer your queries. Reading about these days is fine. Seeing and hearing one will fire your enthusiasm.

See you there.

Jonathan Barker

Making a Start in Speed Events

The MGCC supports two types of speed event - **Sprints** and **Hillclimbs**. In essence they are no different, involving competitive runs along a properly surfaced track, timed to 1/1000 of a second.

Cars run singly, against the clock, so there's no risk of other competitors bumping into your pride and joy as there might be in racing. You get several runs at the course in a day. For those who enjoy trackdays, speed events can provide an additional competitive thrill, and several SE Centre members are regular competitors.

All MGs are eligible, and there are separate classes in the Luffield MGCC Speed Championship for every model both in standard unmodified form, and in various stages of tuning. Championship scores are calculated from a competitor's performance against his class target, and targets are reviewed automatically on the basis of track records set by the class. Thus, a standard road-going car competes on equal terms with fire-breathing specialist racers.

Over a hundred MG owners enter the Luffield Championship each year, and the appeal of its scoring system is borne out by results. During the time I've been competing, the overall championship has been won by everything from a completely standard 1954 TF through Midgets and MGF to a full house MGB V8 running on slicks.



Sprints

Sprints are run on race circuits or other fairly open and level areas. Popular venues in the south include Goodwood, Castle Combe and Lydden Hill circuits and a number of airfield and MOD sites such as Abingdon, Rushmoor Arena and Eelmore MOD Driver Training Area.

Hillclimbs

Speed hillclimbs (which should not be confused with 'mudplugging' car trials) use the gradients of twisty, hilly roads in the same way. In the south, we have Gurston Down, a purpose built track near Salisbury, and Wiscombe Park, the driveway to a rather nice country house.

What's involved?

You must be a paid up member of MGCC to compete, and register yourself in the Speed Championship. You'll also need a 'National B Non-race' licence from the MSA - there's no qualification test required, just fill in the application form and send it off with a cheque for £40.

Entry fees for events vary from about £70 to over £100 for prestigious circuits like Goodwood.

Cars are checked for safety and eligibility by the scrutineers before each event. A standard road-going car can usually compete with no greater modification than a sticker showing how the ignition turns off, but the speeds involved in these events mean some safety regulations need to be complied with. Helmets, fireproof overalls and gloves, to standards laid down by the MSA, must all be worn when competing. And Luffield Championship cars must also carry a fire extinguisher.

This can be a substantial outlay for a newcomer, although budget ranges are now becoming available. If you're a trackdayer, you'll probably have a compliant helmet already. And if you share the driving with a friend of similar size to yourself, you may be able to share helmet, overalls etc to help keep costs down.



Find out more

Several of us compete regularly in the club's speed championship (check our SE web site picture galleries), and there's a great camaraderie amongst us. Lots of leg-pulling and laughter, but if you need advice or have a problem, several pairs of hands will be there to help out.

Get in touch via mgccse@talk21.com if you'd like to know more, or come along to a sprint or hillclimb and make yourself known - events are listed on the Comps page of the SE web site. And there's lots more information on the Luffield MGCC Championship web site at <http://www.mgspeed.net>.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Martyn Phillis

How to Savour Your Rebuild.

I am now just about able to perceive the light at the end of the tunnel that has been my TD rebuild for almost longer than I can remember. When people stop to chat outside my garage door they always ask me how long the job has taken me. I tell them 'all century' which they probably think is a joke but is actually completely correct. Along the way, I have learned a lot of lessons on what not to do, so for anyone contemplating a similar exercise, here's how to go about it - or not!

Now I assume that any labour of love involving passion for the subject is far better savoured and not rushed in any way, as is true with certain other things in life. With that principle in mind, this is how to do it.

- Firstly, don't attempt to plan the project. Far better to let it be a spontaneous decision. This approach avoids the risk of having second thoughts and not starting the job in the first place. Besides spontaneity always heightens the excitement of the moment.
- Having committed yourself to the exercise, don't worry too much about taking photographs of everything before you dismantle or of bagging and labelling everything as you go. This approach completely ruins the fun of figuring out, perhaps years later, how in the world it's all supposed to go together again.
- Similarly, don't bother joining the appropriate Register or seeking the advice of 'experts'. After all, it's your rebuild, not theirs. There's a special satisfaction in getting it absolutely right all on your own - so they tell me!
- Some will tell you that it's better to have existing parts refurbished than to buy new. They will tell you that new parts are often made in China and might not fit. Well, I say that all MG's are now made in China and they seem to fit together OK.
- Don't be too single minded or obsessive about your rebuild. Had I done that, I would not have taken up with a new partner in the middle of the job, married her, moved twice, landscaped the garden, or spent a year preparing my Cousin's Jaguar for sale, to name but some of the distractions that have prolonged the joy of my project.
- Finally, and most importantly, always destroy all invoices as soon as you have paid them. That way, no-one can tell you how much money you would have saved had you traded the car in for a pristine example and saved yourself all the hassle. After all, it was a labour of love, wasn't it?

John Bennett

Recipe of the Month BAKED LEMON CHEESECAKE



Ingredients

For the base

- 250 gram(s) packet digestive biscuits
- 125 gram(s) unsalted butter

For the filling

- 1 large unwaxed lemon
 - 2 x 250g tubs curd cheese (or cream cheese)
 - 142 ml carton soured cream
 - 2 medium eggs
 - 175 gram(s) golden caster sugar
 - 1 ½ tsp vanilla extract
 - 1 level tbsp cornflour
 - 50 gram(s) sultanas
1. For the base, put biscuits in a food processor and whiz until fine. Melt butter, add to biscuits and mix in the processor until well combined.
 2. Tip the mixture into a greased 20.5cm (8in) springform tin. Using the back of a spoon, press evenly into the base. Chill for 1hr until firm.
 3. Preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan oven) mark 4. Grate the rind from the lemon and put aside. Halve the lemon, cut three thin slices from one half and put to one side. Squeeze the juice from the lemon into a small bowl or cup.
 4. To make the filling, put the lemon rind, lemon juice, curd cheese, soured cream, eggs, sugar, vanilla and cornflour into a large bowl. Using an electric mixer, whisk together until thick and smooth, then fold in the sultanas.
 5. Pour mixture into tin and shake gently to level. Bake for 30min. Put lemon slices, overlapping, on top. Bake for another 20-25min until just set and golden brown. Turn off oven, leaving the cheesecake inside and door ajar. When cheesecake is cool, chill for at least 2hr or overnight.
 6. Remove cheesecake from the fridge half an hour before serving. Run a knife around the edge and sit the tin on an upturned bowl. Release the side of the tin and remove. Slide a palette knife or fish slice under the base and carefully move the cheesecake on to a serving plate.

Diana Calvert

JEG 325N : ANOTHER V8 CONVERSION – Part 1

To begin, a brief history of the car and why I attempted this project.

JEG 325N was a late '74 rubber bumper roadster, one of the first rubber bumper cars I believe. It shared some of the features of a late chrome bumper car, ie perforated vinyl seats, a wrinkle finished type "c" dash, the smaller 60mm speedo and revcounter, but no anti-roll bar. It was also painted in an insipid pseudo Kawasaki lime green which I think is called citron.

By the time we bought it in late '92 it had been re-finished in an anonymous shade of flame red and the body had been part "restored", although the vendor did admit that the engine needed attention. It was quite cheap, looked as though it had possibilities so we bought it.

After about three months use, the smoky rattly engine and strange handling made me decide to take it off the road for a bit of attention. At this time I was reading any classic car mags I could get my hands on and a couple of articles on V8 roadsters really got to me. As we were living in a flat at that time and had no garage space, the best I could hope for was an engine rebuild and any other mods subject to a running restoration.

A week later the car went into a friend's barn for a couple of months while the engine went in my van back to a bit of space in a another friend's garage! When stripped, I found the pistons were the originals and the crank had never been ground in 110,000 miles. The timing chain had worn right through the tensioner and this, of course, explained the noise. Sutton Rebores undertook to do the necessary work - +40 pistons in rebored cylinders, -10 bearing shells on reground crankshaft and new Kent fast road cam in new bearings. They also fitted pistons to conrods and fitted the cam. I was then able to assemble it all into the rebored block with new duplex timing gear. On top of this went a reconditioned secondhand gas flowed head which has since been identified (on a subsequent upgrade) by its originator, Peter Burgess, as one of his. Naturally, a new Borg and Beck clutch with roller release went in. This engine was now 1840cc and with rebuilt modified SUs, K&N filters, upgraded distributor, tubular exhaust manifold and freeflow exhaust, it has evolved over the years and given us loads of fun, including many trips to Europe.

The body was another story. We bought the car as "part restored" but certain bits did not look right. Three years after purchase found us in a house with a garage - a garage was number one on the list of

priorities when we were house hunting!! The front wings were never too good and were on the list of "things to do one day". During spring '96, however, some strange noises were being emitted and on inspection a crack was found in the o/s replacement sill. A decision was made there and then to take it off the road. Twelve months later - after following a well documented route, ie welding course, Lindsay Porter's book, Mig welder, five part sill kits, acres of sheet metal, new front wings, new tank, sender and fuel pump, rear wing repair sections, new suspension all round, uprated V8 brakes, one new door and one new doorskin (difficult), one broken windscreen replaced (nightmare) - it was all bare steel but standing on four alloy wheels and it all looked straight and the doors shut OK.

If this all sounds straightforward believe me it wasn't!!

My neighbour had been a professional restorer and offered to paint it providing I did all the preparation. This was eventually done and, by August '97, it was finished in two-pack Rover flame red (the MGF shade) - and great it looked too.

We used it for club events and trips abroad in basically this form with no breakdowns and, apart from regular maintenance, only minimal attention. In June 2002 it did the "Circuit Historic de Laon" in and decided to play up; then, while on tour in Normandy in July, the clutch started to judder violently - I had visions of coming home on a low-loader but it got us through the week and back home in one piece.

As I was due to have a shoulder operation and knew I wouldn't be able to replace the clutch until later in the year, I decided not to use the B but it didn't feel quite right attending club events without it so I made enquiries about having it done by someone else. We were recommended to a place in Charlwood, booked the car in and then "she who must be obeyed" said why don't we wait a while, until the shoulder is mended, and spend the money on what we (you) really want.....

Mid August found us at Dave Vale's V8 emporium in Farnborough Village. Dave is a lovely guy and the atmosphere at his MG spares establishment has to be experienced. It is really like being at a club meeting except that the bank balance goes down after each visit! He sourced me an engine and gearbox and, in the last week of August, I was in possession of a bare 3.5 SDI lump and manual gearbox. The fun was yet to come....

Peter Calvert

(Part 2 in the July issue)

MG Car Club's Summer Gathering At Groombridge Place Gardens

This year our Summer Gathering takes place at Groombridge Place Gardens, just west of Tunbridge Wells, on Sunday 17th August.



We have arranged a special day out for all the family in the grounds of this 17th Century moated manor house, with its walled formal gardens and Enchanted Forest.

We have a dedicated rally field for our event, although on the same day, in a separate rally field, there will be a Ferrari Owners Club rally, a Hot Air Balloon rally and a rally of Ducati motorbikes, all of which can be viewed at no extra cost to our own entry fee.

Our rally will be based on the usual, well-tryed and popular format, with a Pride of Ownership, Premier Pride of Ownership and Concours competitions. There will also be a Gymkhana, and hopefully enough entries to run a set of driving tests, plus a Treasure Hunt to keep the rest of the family amused.

Adjacent to the rally field is the Enchanted Forest, with a Mystic Pool, Dinosaurs and Dragons, a Romany camp, and Crusoe's World using the tree houses and rope bridges actually used in the television programme "Crusoe"



From the corner of the rally field, and the Enchanted Forest, you can take a canal boat ride

(£1) back to the main house and gardens; the former is not open to the public being a fully occupied home of the owners. The formal gardens are worth a visit, and include a Drunken garden, and Oriental garden, a Secret garden and a Knot garden amongst others.

There will also be two 30-minute Birds of Prey displays during the day (at 1.30pm and 3.30pm), when no vehicles may enter or leave the rally, as the birds would be distracted by our cars passing close to the display field.

There is also a Conan Doyle Museum, with photographs and memorabilia in a recreated study of the author's, who lived 4 miles away at Crowborough, and was a frequent visitor to Groombridge Place, which was used as the venue for his book "The Valley of Fear".

Groombridge Place was also used for the 2005 film "Pride and Prejudice", starring Keira Knightley, Matthew MacFayden, Donald Sutherland and Dame Judi Dench.

To fortify the inner person, there is a café at the main entrance, serving hot and cold meals, teas and coffees throughout the day. There is also a shop to entice you to spend your hard-earned money! Outside the café there will be a concert band playing music all day. There will be a commentator in the other rally field talking about those rallies, and will encourage visitors to come and see us too.

We regret that NO dogs are allowed, as we shall be adjacent to the Birds of Prey field, and they are upset by them.



There will be a feeder run to the rally to arrive mid morning; details of this are being finalised, and will be posted on the website when available, as will be the entry forms for the whole event. Entry fees are likely to be £7 for adults, £5 for children and £4 each for the Concours, POO and Gymkhana.

As you will see from the above there will be plenty to see and do throughout the day, even if you do not have octagonal blood in your veins. If you wish to see the full extent of the things to do and see at Groombridge Place, check out their website www.groombridge.co.uk

Doug Bush



Billingshurst, West Sussex

Tour of the South East to the Jubilee BBQ

Sunday 10th June 2012

At "Woodcroft": Okehurst Lane, Billingshurst W. Sussex



Start Point: The Bell Public House, 128 High Street, Godstone, RH9 8DX
MR: OS Sheet 187: 350515 Signing-on @ 09:45 for 10:30 Start..

Destination: "Woodcroft" (near Billingshurst) RH14 9HR - is a large privately owned venue, which has been used by the MGCCSE in previous years. On arrival there is an optional Jubilee BBQ available (Pre-booking required + at additional cost) and Pride of Ownership (PoO) and Gymkhana. Event Plaques are available for all TOSE entries. It promises to be an enjoyable day for all members and friends.

Route: The route has been planned to give drivers an interesting and enjoyable drive, using minor roads through our lovely countryside. Navigation will be by using a simple 'Tulip' route plan which will be provided at sign-on at The Bell. The route book will list places of interest en-route and possible coffee stops. Upon arrival, signage will indicate the parking area. A simple 'en-route observation' sheet will be given out at sign-on.

Name:.....

Address:
.....
.....

Car Model & Year..... REG: Phone No:.....

MGCC Mem No:..... E-mail:..... (confirmation is sent)

The charge made by the SE Centre, for the TOSE, will be £5-00 per car (£6-00 on the day) **which includes basic entry to the Jubilee BBQ**. See separate entry form and 'Flyer' for the BBQ etc but costs will be £4 each for the PoO and Gymkhana. The 2 course **BBQ** will be £10.25 (**Pre-booking essential**)

Please send this slip and a cheque for £5-00 made payable to "MGCC Ltd SE Centre" to: Andrew Mitchell, 10; Wheelers Way, Felbridge, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 2QJ Tel: 07821 838538 OR e-mail andrew.mitchell@tubelines.com

(Please title any emails to me "MGCC TOSE" + Your "Pack" will be given out at The Bell start point)

MGCC South East Centre
Jubilee BBQ and Pride of Ownership
Sunday, 10th June 2012

This year the SE Centre will be holding a BBQ with Pride of Ownership and Gymkhana to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. It will take place at Woodcroft, Okehurst Lane, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9HR. (OS Map reference 187:093273)

A celebratory summer social with a tasty BBQ to enjoy in a country setting. Ideal for all the family. A two course lunch will be served at 1pm and will be followed by a self judged P.O.O. and a fun gymkhana.

Entry costs to the event are as follows: Pre Entry £4:00 per person (or £4:50 on the day).

We hope that you will wish to join us. If so, please complete the form below .

✂.....

Jubilee BBQ, P.O.O and Gymkhana, 10th June 2012

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Tel No E-mail

Car Model & Registration:.....

Entry @ £4.00 Per person	No of Persons	Total £
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BBQ @ £10.25 Per person (Two courses)	No of persons	Total £
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POO @ £4.00 Per Car	Total £
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Gymkhana @ £4.00 Per Car	Total £
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POO and Gymkhana @ £6.50 Per Car	Total £
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Please return the completed form with pre-payment cheques to Derek Edwards,143 Carlton Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 0JG. Telephone 01737 765891. (Cheques to be made payable to the MGCC SE Centre).