



# Spark

Issue 2 – Summer 2025

The quarterly magazine of the MG Car Club South East Centre



## THIS ISSUE INCLUDES...

The Butcher of Eastbourne | 50<sup>th</sup> of the 50<sup>th</sup> | Sunset Over the Cones  
Wine to Water | Passionate for Pashley | Jersey VE Day | Tony Bugbird  
EKW Go Up North | Classics at the Castle | Crosthwaite & Gardiner  
An Autosolo Experience | Alternative PoO | Canterbury Go Historic

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## THE EDITOR

*Will Opie has been a member of the MGCC SE for over 50 years and has been playing with MGs all that time. He currently co-leads the North Downs Natter as well as being a member of the Centre committee.*

We welcome you to the Summer Edition of your South East Centre magazine. This is packed with great articles and contributions so it's a BUMPER one!!

This edition covers the second quarter of 2025 and includes contributions from the Natters, Wanderers and Members

If you or your fellow member are not receiving the quarterly SE newsletter via email it may be because your up-to-date email address is not held by the main administration at Abingdon.

To update your details either go to the Members login area of MGCC web site, email [mgcc@mgcc.co.uk](mailto:mgcc@mgcc.co.uk) or call 01235 555552.

This is your magazine so contributions to the Editor always welcome! Please get in touch as below.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

Do you have an article about your MG that you would like to share with the Centre? If so then please get in touch with the editor and you could see it in the next edition.

Email [spark@mgccse.co.uk](mailto:spark@mgccse.co.uk)

*Cover Picture: Alan Field in his lovely MGA ably helped on the South East Run by Navigator Yvonne Davey. Alan owes her a big thank you for her navigation skills following the route with 100% success!*



My byline photo this quarter shows me with my good friend Julian Grimwade at the Brooklands Easter Gathering in 2023.

The reason is that Julian sadly lost his life in a racing incident at Donington Park at the end of May

He was an accomplished driver racing historic cars for fifteen years and winning countless trophies, mostly with the VSCC.

His latest car was a recreation of a 1913 Oakland Curtis which still qualified for VSCC racing. It was this car that he was racing at Donington.

His death has deeply affected the Brooklands, VSCC and Bentley communities but why am I mentioning him here?

Julian was a founder of the Brooklands Trust Members and I was the founder BTM Administrator. His dedication, as a volunteer, to Brooklands was immense and this reminds me of the dedication that our own volunteers give to the MG Car Club – be it on the committee, helping at events or simply taking part. Without them and the members the Club would not exist.

Despite being a vintage enthusiast, Julian also helped me when my MGF and MGB broke down on several occasions – not hesitating to come and rescue me with his trailer. Again, his willingness to help reflects on our own club members and I see several helping fellow members today with problems on their MGs.

As with the VSCC and Brooklands the MG Car Club also has a strong community and when one link in that community breaks then it is felt by all.

Welcome to Spark 2! We hope that you liked the first edition of our brand-new online magazine. We have had some great feedback from within the Centre and outside so hopefully we are getting the mix about right. Of course, there are Members with specific interests and at least one bit of feedback said "I got as far as far as the modern stuff then gave up"

It is always a balancing act as there are plenty of members who do like the "modern stuff" as well as plenty who like the "older stuff"! We are lucky that MG is a "live" marque and we are blessed with both. Therefore, we are a club that caters for all ages of MG. Personally I find the modern era very exciting with new MGs appearing around the World on what seems like a weekly basis! Keeping track is difficult and that's what we try to do in Spark whilst at the same time appreciating the heritage and love for MG across the ages. On the other hand, I like to delve into the history of one of the great marques as well. You *can* enjoy all aspects of MG life!



*On our patch the link with the past is strongest at Brooklands which is why we have a presence at many events there – this was the Best of British event where over 30 Club MGs attended in May.*

We are gently increasing the number of competitions for you to enjoy with your MG including the recent Evening Autotest as sun set over Newdigate and are looking at another one on the 24<sup>th</sup> July. That means we are now running Naviscats, Autosolos and Autotests in addition to our Pride of Ownership events and a young person challenge.

There is plenty to be getting your MG competitive teeth into. All our events are now bookable via our website, and you'll usually find a short form to fill in there to register with a link to our Little Box Office payment system. Many are run as MotorsportUK Taster events which means that any car and anyone can enter them.

John Morgan is the engine behind our competition push, and he wrote a splendid article in the last edition of Safety Fast about Grass Roots Motor Sport which is worth reading, if you haven't already, to explain what it is all about.

I hope you like Spark 2 – there has been some tweaking, and more features added to go along with the event reports and natter updates – so read about the Butcher from Eastbourne, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Jubilee MGBGT, driving around the cones and on to the Electric Spark. I am sure there will be something for any era of MG enthusiast to enjoy.

I try to get to as many events as I can and if you see me at one then do please say hello!

Harry Leeson was incredibly excited to be on the start line at Brooklands. His C-Type Montlhery MG Midget had recently been purchased, and this was the first major race for the butcher from Eastbourne. This was one of the few long-distance races to be held in the UK - 1000 miles around the 2.616 mile Brooklands track over two days and open to stripped out production sports cars. It was run in a clockwise direction missing out the Members section of the track and swinging a hard right back on to the Finishing Straight. Two hundred laps were to be run on the Friday and two hundred on the Saturday.

The race replaced the famous "Double Twelve" and took place on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 1932 with numerous rules and regulation changes that effectively kept out some of the big names racing at the time. That included the Earl of March who was considered too "inexperienced" as he had failed to attend qualifying. However, Malcom Campbell was one of the competitors in his big Mercedes along with two ladies, Joan Richmond and Elsie Wisdom in a Riley.

Nine 746cc MG Midgets in Class 8 were taking part, including Harry's, and they were flagged off first at 10am led by a driver called Jeffress. Two cars came in early with head gasket failures (something familiar to MGF drivers today) with one coming out again after 40 minutes, the other took two hours. Harry was busy amongst the pack, no doubt enjoying every moment of his first full race experience.

Harry was born on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1889 in Chigwell Row, Essex, he was christened Henry Leeson and was one of four children. Chigwell Row is a small village in Epping Forest and little is known of his early life. Two of his siblings, Gertrude and Leonard were also born in Essex but his third sibling, Leslie was born in Chislehurst, Kent where the family had moved south of the Thames (co-incidentally the place where Malcolm Campbell was born, was this his inspiration for the need for speed?). He married Edith Uhlmann in her hometown of Hastings in 1924 and moved to the south coast - he was found in Pevensy Rd, Eastbourne by 1930. They had a son, Derrick, in January 1926. Harry was described as a Master Butcher with 8 shops in the area and also a "Grazier" which no doubt meant that he farmed his own livestock to serve in his shops.

He developed an interest in fast cars owning a series of fast Bentleys culminating in a supercharged Le Mans car (JK1925) in which he entered the Lewes Speed Trials. He also owned a 2-seat 20hp 1928 Rolls Royce. He was clearly a man who loved speed and on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1931 he crashed a small green sports car at Fence Bridge in between Pevensy and Pevensy Bay. A local Reverend saw the crash and estimated him to be travelling at over 60mph however Harry claimed he was doing 15mph and swerved to avoid a dog. The car was completely wrecked, and no witness saw a dog - however the magistrates believed Harry and the case was dismissed.



*The Brooklands JCC 1000 miles race programme 1932*



*Fence Bridge at Pevensy – was Harry doing 60mph or 15mph?*



*The Supercharged Bentley Harry drove at the Lewes Speed Trials*



*Harry's 2-seat Rolls Royce*

His feet were not always on the ground as he owned a Gipsy Moth aeroplane which he flew with the Cinque Ports Flying Club in 1930 and 31.

In 1931 he was the first private owner of the famous Aston Martin works car "LM4". An outright racer it was an Aston Martin team car driven by the company owner Bert Bertelli in 1930, it came 4<sup>th</sup> overall and 2<sup>nd</sup> in class at the 1930 Brooklands Double Twelve and 7<sup>th</sup> overall at the Irish Grand Prix the same year driven by Sammy Davis. It is not believed that Harry actually raced this car but no doubt drove it around the roads of Eastbourne at more than the required speed limits. However, after a few months of ownership he sold it on to Rolland Cookson, a young northern businessman who only kept it for a short period as well.

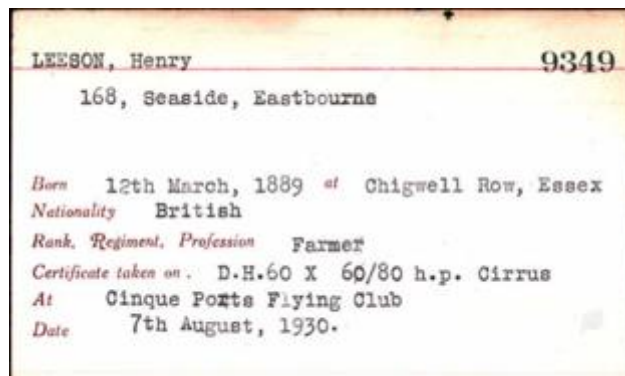
Returning to the Brooklands 1000 mile race, after an hour Harry's No.63 Midget was seen swerving on the track just after the Hennebique Bridge travelling at about 70mph. The car slewed down the track and hit the brick parapet that sits over the competitor's tunnel (now next to the London Bus Museum). It hit with such force that the car was thrown over the low wall and landed on the roadway some 20 feet below landing upside down. Eyewitnesses said that there appeared to be no attempt to correct the car's direction and it did not slow down, the belief was that Harry had fainted at the wheel. He died instantly and the inquest at Weybridge recorded his death as "Misadventure".

Despite the fatal accident, the race continued with Campbell's giant Mercedes being the last released on handicap at 11.46am – some three quarters of an hour after Harry's tragic death. The race itself was notable not just for Harry's death but for the fact that the two ladies driving the Riley were the ultimate winners at 5pm on Saturday having averaged 84.42 mph for the 1000 miles – a remarkable achievement and a first for lady drivers. There is a fascinating Movietone film to be found on YouTube of the race and Joan and Elsie speaking about their win afterwards. Harry's crash is also seen in the film.

What happened to the Midget? Well, surprisingly, given its highly damaged state, it was rebuilt and raced again with the plate JK1969. Its whereabouts have not been traced since 1935 so it may not have survived. Shortly before his death Harry had purchased another C Type Midget

JK2340, which he did not race but the car went on to compete at Le Mans in 1935 coming sixth overall and first in its class with John Ludovic Ford and Maurice Baumer driving.

The supercharged Bentley survived and last sold in 2013 in the United States for \$4,647,500. The LM4 has been fully restored by Aston Martin and is still in private ownership.



Harry's Pilot Licence



Harry purchased this C-Type just before the fatal race at Brooklands



Aston Martin LM4 at Brooklands recently – Harry was the first owner



Contemporary reporting of Harry's fatal crash at Brooklands 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1932 – you can see the parapet he hit at speed and the badly damaged C-Type- racing continued on the track above.

Harry's grave at Ocklynge Cemetery, Eastbourne mentions the tragic accident





The first SE Centre Evening Autotest was run on 21<sup>st</sup> May at a farm close to Capel in Surrey. After all the weeks of dry weather, the first signs of some rain were forecast for the afternoon, but dry during the evening. The forecast was almost right apart from thunder storms between 4.00-5.00pm just as we were setting out the coned test routes.

Fortunately, the sun broke just as the entrants started to arrive and we ended up with a very pleasant bright and sunny evening.

We should have had 14 cars including 4 from our friends at Sevenoaks and District Motor Club. One entrant had to drop out at the last minute and another did not finish the tests. But 12 cars completed the event arranged into 3 classes, namely

- SDMC – Post 55 MG and other cars
- MGCC – Post 55 MG and other cars
- Production Car Class which allows passengers to be carried

Whilst some of the MGCC entrants had entered the Filching AutoSOLO, none had entered an Autotest. The tests had a fairly simple arrangement but with enough turns and detail to make them interesting.

Several MGCC entrants ended up with wrong tests but the scoring arrangement did not preclude them from achieving results and in fact the MGCC – Post 55 MG class winner had experienced wrong tests in his winning score.

Five tests were planned with entrants having to run on each with best time counting. One test proved quite slow and we ran out of time to complete the final test before the impending sunset arrived. This is why the results show scores for four tests.

After the event, we retired to the adjacent Dorking Brewery Tap Room and enjoyed an excellent pint whilst the scores were computed. The event results are appended to this report.

Entrants were enthusiastic for another event this summer and we are hoping to hold another one on **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> July** – contact John at [competitions@mgccse.co.uk](mailto:competitions@mgccse.co.uk) if you are interested.



## Newdigate Evening Autotest 21st May 2025

## Event Results

No	Entrant	Club	Car	Class Entered					Route Scores												Position	Total Score
				A	B	B	C	D	1			2			3			4				
									Time	Penalty	Total	Time	Penalty	Total	Time	Penalty	Total	Time	Penalty	Total		
1	Paul Hebden	SDMC	MXS		1				27.88	0	27.88	83	0	83	47.16	0	47.16	45.85	0	45.85	1st	203.89
2	John Massey	SDMC	MXS		1				31.31	0	31.31	86.63	0	86.63	44.75	0	44.75	47.54	0	47.54		210.23
3	George Zippo	SDMC	VW Golf		1				28.56	0	28.56	84.44	0	84.44	44.6	0	44.6	43.47	0	43.47	FTD	201.07
4	Robert Kennedy	SDMC	MXS		1				28.13	0	28.13	WT		102.23	60.19	0	60.19	52.82	0	52.82		243.37
6	Ian Cleghorn	MGCC	MGF			1			35.63	0	35.63	115.03	0	115.03	59.93	0	59.93	56.29	0	56.29	2nd	266.88
7	Philip Roussel Smith	MGCC	Mini			1			0		0	0		0		0	0		0		0	
8	Andy Everest	MGCC	MGB			1			31.32	0	31.32	WT		135.03	WT	0	72.94	60.06	0	60.06		299.35
9	Chris Matthews	MGCC	MGC				1		47.6	0	47.6	108	0	108	55.35	0	55.35	51.94	0	51.94		262.89
10	James Munro	MGCC	MG Midget			1			34.44	0	34.44	WT	0	135.03	WT	0	72.94	55.69	0	55.69		298.1
11	Lis Woolly	MGCC	MGTF				1		35.85	0	35.85	111.66	0	111.06	53.19	0	53.19	59.34	0	59.34	2nd	259.44
12	Andrew Sewell	MGCC	MGRV8			1			31.94	0	31.94	WT	0	135.03	52.94	0	52.94	46.25	0	46.25	1st	266.16
13	Simon Gray	MGCC	MG Metro				1		47.07	0	47.07	98.09	0	98.09	50.91	0	50.91	53.3	0	53.3	1st	249.37
14	Peter Gray	MGCC	MGTD				1		41.4	0	41.4	112.57	0	112.57	75.26	0	75.26	61.06	0	61.06		290.29

### Classes Applicability

- A. Pre-1955 MG and Historic cars
- B. Post 1955 and Non-8 (This class was split into SDMC and MGCC)
- C. Production Cars
- D. Juniors up to and including 17 years old.



Retiring down the Dorking Tap for some refreshment afterwards



Simon Gray – first in Production cars class with his Metro



John Morgan presenting Lis Woolley with her rosette



Sunset and mist brings an end to the first evening autotest



*Peter Bevan's immaculate Jubilee MGBGT on the South East Run*

2025 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary model MG – aka the Jubilee MGBGT LE.

It is something of an anomaly as we have been celebrating the centenary of MG from 2023 to 2024, to cover all bases, not 2025. The reason being that British Leyland were in their usual strife and, indeed, in July 1975 they effectively went broke and had to be bailed out by the taxpayer. Celebrations were planned along the 1973/74 basis but delays meant that the actual car was not ready until 1975. Another theory is that sales were lagging and “something” needed to be done to boost them. The reason BL gave was that they were celebrating “Old Number One” produced in 1925.

A limited edition marking a significant MG anniversary seemed to be the ideal thing. The MGBGT Jubilee was the first factory LE to be produced. This was followed in 1980 by the “end of line” LE roadster and GT and later by a whole slew of MGF and TF specials and LEs.

The car was a standard MGBGT in the recently introduced rubber bumper form. All of the changes were cosmetic most strikingly the gold stripe along the side featuring a 1925 / 1975 logo. The paint was (New) Racing Green, a colour available in 1971 and the normal chrome side strips were painted green. Gold painted wheels previously seen in silver on the V8 were fitted with satin black MG centre caps. Overdrive was standard and the interior featured a yellow MG badge on the steering wheel, tinted glass and seat headrests.

There should be an individual numbered badge on the dashboard with the laurel leaf design and a blank plaque below, where the first owner's name would be inscribed. They are rarely seen these days as they were separate items and not always fitted.

751 were made (the extra as one was crashed for a PR stunt) and today their value is slowly being recognised but still a bargain if you can find a good one.



*Jubilee GT with the other Anniversary models at MG100SE – 50, 75, 80, 85 & 90*



*Jubilees at a special event in Abingdon Town Square in May*

# Spark Plug – July & August Events



## July

Thu 10th	Alternative PoO 3 & MGCCSE Open Evening	The Fairmile, Cobham, Surrey	MGCCSE last of three rounds (Evening event)	<a href="#">email</a>
Sun 13th	Epsom MGOC Surrey Run	Gatwick Aviation Museum	Epsom MGOC	<a href="#">Website</a>
Sun 20th	MGCCSE Summer BBQ & PoO	Kentish Horse, Mark Beech, Kent	MGCCSE	<a href="#">email</a>
Mon 21st	Boules in the Beer Garden	Fox & Hounds, Walton on the Hill	North Surrey Natter	<a href="#">email</a>
Sun 27th	Brooklands Classic Car Show & Jumble	Brooklands Museum	Museum event – MGF Register & T-Type stands	<a href="#">email</a>
Sun 27th	Bromley Pageant of Motoring	Ardingly Showground	MGCCSE Parking	<a href="#">Details</a>
Sun 27th	Summer Picnic & Classic Cars	Mount Ephraim Gardens, Faversham, Kent-pre 1990 cars only	Ash Natter	<a href="#">email</a>

## August

Sat 2nd	Fish N Chips on the Beach	Sea Front, Hayling Island	MGF Register	<a href="#">email</a>
Sun 17th	MGCCSE Summer Gathering, Road Runs, PoO & Concours	Chiddingstone Castle, Kent	MGCCSE	<a href="#">email</a>

# Spark Plug - September Events



## September

6th / 7th	MGCC 95th Anniversary at Croft	Croft Circuit, North Yorkshire	MG Car Club	<a href="#">website</a>
Sun 7th	WSMGOC South Downs Run	Sussex / Eastbourne	West Sussex MG Owners Club	
Mon 15th	Natter Darts Challenge	Fox & Hounds, Walton on the Hill	North Surrey Natter	<a href="#">email</a>
Sun 21st	MGCCSE Autumn Naviscat	TBA	MGCCSE	<a href="#">email</a>
Sun 28th	MGCCSE Autumn Gathering	Newhaven Fort	MGCCSE	<a href="#">Details</a>

The events season is well under way and there have already been many to get involved with, and they have been varied as well. Three competitions put the Centre back into the Motorsport UK map with the Filching Autosolo, Newdigate Evening Autotest and the Spring Naviscat. So, if some mild competition is your thing then we've been off to a good start! The Pride of Ownership season is coming up and this might be the time to get those MGs cleaned as three rounds of the Alternative PoO get under way – although in one category the dirtier the better!

There are more gatherings as well – the main Summer one is at Chiddingstone Castle on the 15<sup>th</sup> August so don't miss that one but there is the Summer Barbecue at Mark Beech as well and, what has become, an annual train gathering we have just been to the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. We'll be eating fish n chips on the beach at Hayling Island on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August from about 5.30pm – no need to book just turn up at the Sea Front car park behind the miniature railway engine shed. You can read about those in the edition of Spark.

# The Main MG Car Club Event – MG Fest North



**MG Car Club** fest **NORTH**  
Croft Circuit • Darlington

**TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW!**

*MG Car Club are coming to the North*

**MG Car Club announce - MG Fest North 6-7th September**  
Croft Circuit - Darlington

**Celebrating MG Car Club's 95th Anniversary**  
A FUN FILLED FESTIVAL WEEKEND  
Arena entertainment, trade stands and circuit racing  
Enjoying friends old and new  
Eating, drinking and enjoying music

**An MG Car Club event for all MGs**

This weekend Festival will feature displays, trade stands and motorsport action  
Full weekend race programme provided by British Racing and Sports Car Club including MGs

Main Arena attractions • Anniversary cars celebrations • Arena Compere  
Pride of Ownership • Show and Shine • Road Runs • Carkhana  
Parade Laps • MG Register parking • MG Car Club shop  
Classic buses into Northallerton • Music entertainment  
Live band (Sat night Ticket entry) and DJ  
Bar • Food • Trade stands • Auto Jumble  
more to be confirmed!

No camping on site - but there are lots of local campsites and hotels around the area  
Tickets and further information available via the website.  
For more information - [office@mgcc.co.uk](mailto:office@mgcc.co.uk)  
(Subject to change)

Croft Circuit, West Lane, Dalton On Tees, North Yorkshire DL2 2PL

**SUPPORTING PROSTATE CANCER UK**

The main MG Car Club event this year takes place at Croft Circuit near Darlington in Yorkshire. It is a good distance from us in the South East but you may want to make a few days trip of it.

There is accommodation in the area but I understand it is booking up quite quickly.

There are still tickets left for the event itself though.

## Brookland Best of British

Tim Morris



Brooklands has a strong MG history and the South East centre likes to support the Museum in order to keep that heritage alive. One event that we attend is the annual "Best of British" show which took place in May. Over 30 MGs from the Centre had booked in with us in addition to the T-Type Register and we were delighted that this year we were all parked together in the middle of the Finishing Straight. This was great but did pose a problem in putting up the gazebo on a concrete surface in strong winds and threatening rain, so we didn't! The flag had to be tied to the brown barriers as well, as you can see in the picture.

Once again, a fantastic array of British classics surrounded the clubhouse with some live music – but sadly the Test Hill runs were cancelled due to the damp surface.

*The  
Chairman's  
MGF with flag*

*The T-Type  
Register*





What a lovely day for our Drive it Day run to Pashley Manor Gardens in Kent. An unusual DIY route saw MGs spreading out from two start points in Surrey and Kent, or simply just turning up at the Gardens to enjoy the hordes of tulips in the grounds. Most MGs managed to get there at their own pace and their own route – although we have a feeling a couple may still be driving around the Kent / Sussex borders!

Combine the free and easy run with a fantastic homemade lunch on the terrace of the manor house, beautiful weather and a host of MGs in our own parking area in the fields and it was the perfect day out.

The South East Run is designed to become the signature event for the South East Centre in the years ahead but it got off to a chequered start. Our first choice of finish point, Herstmonceux Castle, became unavailable due to overrunning restoration works so a new finish had to be found – in a hurry! Ron Kemp came to the rescue and arranged for a separate parking area in a field at Bewl Water – the largest man made body of water in the country. A scenic finish but we had to make sure all the handbrakes were working as we didn't want any MGs taking on more water.

The start at Denbies Wine Estate, another largest – this time the largest Vineyard in the country, attracted around 50 MGs who were given their rally plates and printed souvenir route books before a quick coffee and, maybe, stocking up on some Surrey Gold.

The Chairman flagged the cars off with his giant Union Jack and they set off on the scenic 53 mile run through Surrey, Sussex and Kent. Most arrived safely, some had gone a little wrong and one had broken down with a failed fuel pump. So, not a bad tally for these single mid-distance day runs.

The Chairman and his team miraculously re-appeared at the finish before the MGs arrived, and Austin Banner waved the cars home with a chequered flag through a remarkably tight gap in the fence.

Then it was time for a walk along the shore or simply break out the picnics and sit with the cars overlooking Bewl Water.

We may not have turned water into wine but we did drive from wine to water.

Next year we will be visiting Herstmonceux, and the date is pencilled in for the 17<sup>th</sup> May – subject to confirmation.



*The Chairman flags away cars at Denbies*

*Four MG RV8s in the same colour were a surprise – and all from the Whitstable area*



*Arriving at Bewl blown PB*



*Picnics out on the grass at Bewl Water*

*The printed Souvenir Route Book and Rally plate*



Some cars arriving at Bewl- if anyone wants an image let me know  
Will Opie -editor.



## Tony Bugbird 1937 - 2025

Tim Morris

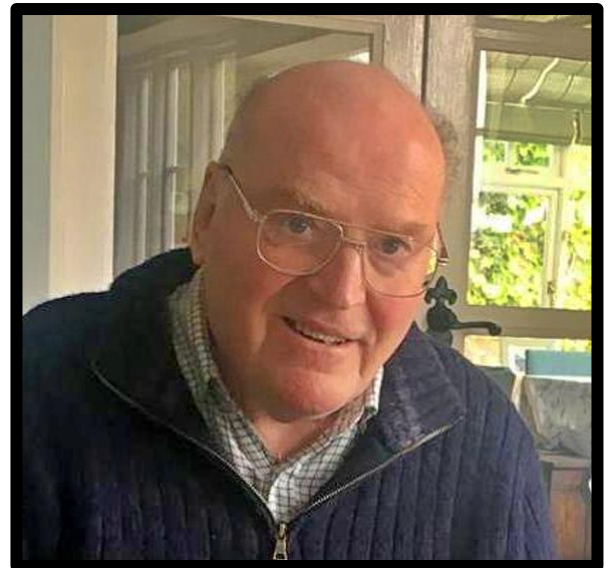
Tony Bugbird was a well-liked member of the MG community and a former member of the South East Centre Committee as well as a former MGCC Director. From the late 1960s he ran a natter at the Hautboy pub in Ockham, Surrey which attracted up to 80 members including the racing driver Sammy Davies on several occasions. This natter is still going but moved to the Talbot at Ripley and is now at the Fairmile in Cobham.

Tony's wife, Judith, owned an MG TD and he owned a red one, he also built an M-Type Le Mans MG replica with his daughter, Robbie, which was used very successfully in MGCC Driving Tests. His MGs included a white MGC ex-police car and a green MGF – latterly he drove an MG ZT.

Tony was also a proficient photographer and took pictures at many MG events, particularly in the South East Centre, and many were used in the club's magazine, Safety Fast. He was a director of Dawson-Strange photography and later ran his own studios in North Surrey including one at Watts Gallery.

Away from MGs Tony was also keen on radio-controlled model yachts and helicopters.

There was a celebration of life service for Tony on Friday 27th June at Limnerslease, Compton (the artist George Watts' house) accompanied by a string quartet as Tony loved classical music. The MG Car Club was represented by the Chairman, Tim Morris and Fairmile Natter leader Ian Ailes, who brought along his MG TD which Tony had helped him buy over 22 years ago. Philip & Rosemary Bayne-Powell also attended, their son Jeremy is married to Tony's daughter Robbie.



Tony Bugbird



Ian's TD at Limnerslease for Tony's celebration of life

# Hever Classics at the Castle

Andrew Mitchell



*Picnic loaded MGA ready for the day!*

It was a very successful day at Hever Castle for their Classics at the Castle day.

30 Centre members put on a great display after a really early start in prime position, joined by the East Surrey MGOC.

With many diverse car makes on display it made for an interesting day set against the stunning gardens and lake. Over £50 was raised for the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity in a new way of donating on event application via the Little Box Office.



*SE Centre display top and below.*



*Ducks inspecting the cars!*



*Karl's RV8 drew many admiring looks*





*Round One at the Fox and Hounds, Walton on the Hill*

You have, no doubt, seen our pride of ownership and concours competitions at shows in the South East in the past. Cars are polished within an inch of their lives and all signs of dirt and detritus are carefully removed.

Well, you don't have to do any of that to take part in the alternative!

Designed as a competition for those who don't necessarily take hours, days and weeks preparing their MGs – you can just turn up. Of course, you can present an immaculate MG as well if you wish!

Basically, it's a bit of Summer fun over three rounds at different venues. You don't have to go to all of them but bear in mind points are awarded for just turning up!

There are four categories

**Most Used** – for mucky MGs, high mileage used frequently etc

**Best All Rounder** – for those not necessarily used regularly but still used enough to not be immaculate!

**Best Restored** – these days lots of MGs have been restored and this is the category for those

**Car of the Show** – what's is your favourite MG of the event – could be anything.

*Les Hudson and Roger Gasson with their rosettes after Round 1 – with Roger's MG Magnette*



Two rounds have taken place now and the third and final round will be at The Fairmile in Cobham on **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July**. No need to book, just come along around 7pm.

Each round has individual winners and there will be overall winners announced at The Fairmile with appropriate fanfare.



*Round Two took place at The Surrey Oaks in Newdigate*



*East Kent Wanderers arriving at the Black Swan at Masham base.*

*Is that Chris Leigh under the bonnet changing plugs on the twin cam A?*

Twelve Southerners toured the county of Yorkshire from 18th to 24th May, and the MG's all behaved themselves (MGTF's, an MGB and an MGA Twin-Cam) as we went up and down the hilly countryside, visiting many local hotspots. Gill Quilter had organised the whole trip, and we enjoyed the hospitality of The Black Swan at Masham near Ripon, our base for the week.



*Fountains Abbey – a visit on the way up*

We all left Kent on Sunday 18th and travelled north, stopping at hotels en-route to break the journey. Then on Monday continued towards our accommodation, with a brief interlude at the attractive Fountains Abbey. Others visited the York Railway Museum and Castle Museum, and also the Newark Air Museum. A visit to the garage run by the Mathewson's (Bangers and Cash) at Thornton-le-Dale could not be missed, and we all arrived mid-afternoon to find our rooms at the pub.



*Chris, Janice, Richard and Shiela on the Dales Run*

Gill had obtained run-outs from her contacts within Yorkshire, and on **Tuesday** it was agreed to do the "Dales Trail", a 92 mile circular tour starting and finishing at the Black Swan. Many popular locations were visited (including some used by TV and films) such as Grassington (All Creatures Great and Small), Wensleydale Creamery (Wallace & Gromit), Hardraw Falls (Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves), Buttertubs and Castle Bolton.

A great start to the week, especially as the weather was warm and sunny all day. Slightly disappointing at Hardraw Force (waterfall), as due to the dry weather, there was just a trickle of water coming over the Fall! However, a beer or two at the Green Dragon pub helped to cheer us up! You might not know that in the 1991 film "Robin Hood Prince of Thieves", the star Kevin Costner actually climbed the fall and then swam in the pool at the bottom of the fall!

And an ice-cream from the splendid Brymor dairy on the way back home completed an excellent first day.



*Enjoying a Beer at the Green Dragon Pub!*



*Pullman train on the famous Ribbleshead Viaduct*

Perhaps something to consider for future trips in Yorkshire, as the Fat Lamb offer accommodation and a free tour planning service, taking in a large part of the county. After a good lunch and looking enviously at the motor exhibits on display, we re-traced our steps to the Black Swan via the moors.



*Mgs parked outside at the Fat Lamb*

After breakfast on **Thursday** the group split up to visit different locations, including the seaside villages of Staithes and Saltburn. The RHS Gardens at Harrogate were also on the agenda, as were Betty's Tea Rooms. Bolton Abbey was also visited, as was the highest pub in the UK at Tan Hill.



*Sea Front at Saltburn. Below Parking at Brymor Dairy for an ice-cream*

On **Friday** a trip north on the railway from Ribbleshead station towards Carlisle was chosen by four of the group, and as Appleby is renowned for its horse fair, it was thought worthy of a visit. Lunch at a pub was enjoyed before a quick walk up the main street and then back to the station for the return train. Others visited Richmond and the local village to our accommodation at Masham (pronounced Mass'am, apparently...



**Saturday** was packing day, and after another fine breakfast, the southerners pointed their MG's south and headed home. The end of an excellent week's touring, sightseeing and companionship, combined with warm sunny weather all week; and all credit to Gill (and Roger) for a good time had by all. Here's to 2026!



*The workshop with the North Surrey Natter at the back*

North Surrey Natter visited Crosthwaite & Gardiner near Uckfield on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June. What a fascinating Company! Who could have guessed there was a company with such engineering excellence hidden away in West Sussex?

Having been refreshed with Coffee, we started our tour. Adjacent to the coffee bar were some cars receiving some final fettling including the Frazer Nash, a significant pre-war GP car (can't be named for confidentiality), the Bugatti 8 valve, E Type Jaguar, Bugatti type 35 and the Maseratis in early stage of assembly. From there, we moved onto the assembly workshop with three cars being worked on namely a streamline pre-war GP car (confidentiality again), knobbly Lister and the Cooper Monaco. Moving upstairs, we entered the engine shop and everywhere you looked, there were intriguing engineering projects for pre-war GP cars, Jaguar, Porsche, Coventry Climax, etc. Back downstairs to the spares section which included alloy wheels galore, ranges of cast engine blocks, cylinder heads, gear box casings and numerous general engine parts for Bugatti, Jaguar and Porsche. Finally, the machine shop that uses many fully automated lathes and machine equipment producing either parts or finishing castings and wheels (most Bugatti wheels were machined castings). The design team translate original blueprints into CAD drawings and machine-readable inputs.



*A close up of the natter at the back*

We saw lots of historic vehicles, almost too many to count, but including numerous Bugatti Type 35s and an early "8 Valve" (it's a pre-Brescia car), the two replica cars of highly successful pre-war GP cars that have been built from scratch including the engines, two Maserati A6's c.1947 GCS monofaro, a Lister Knobbly with a Jaguar engine, Cooper Monaco, a Frazer Nash 1934 TT replica (i.e., it was referred to a "replica" in period), a semi lightweight Jaguar E Type, and a Brabham 1967 BT21 race car. Other cars included a Lancia Fulvia, Austin 7 and Fiat 500 Abarth.

The engine shop was undertaking work on spare pre-war GP car V format engines complete with vertical superchargers driven from the crankshaft. These are in the series that have been built from scratch including all the engine block castings, etc. Manufacture of Porsche 356 4 cam roller bearing crankshaft that consist of 14 components. New Jaguar E Type engines. New Coventry Climax 1500cc engines, known colloquially as the 'fire pump' engine, are being manufactured. They were put in Lotus Elite, Lotus 11's, Lola Mk1's, Cooper Bobtails, Lotus 7's etc. we even saw one of these engines on the dynamometer, the latest, 100% new Coventry Climax engine they are building – very special!



As we saw, the company is world class provider of engineering and manufacturing services to the historic motor racing community and have an unrivalled fund of knowledge and experience gained from nearly 50 years of building, restoring, maintaining and optimising some of the finest competition cars ever made.

They have since built a portfolio of high-profile one-offs, such as the Dymaxion car for Norman Foster, that was based on the Zeppelin-like fuselage sheathing humble Ford underpinnings reconfigured into a mid-engined, rear-steered three-wheeler that was a star attraction of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. Three were built originally and only the second has survived. This car was the fourth one built.

This article is only a tiny snapshot of their business, and there will be a more in-depth article published in the Autumn or Winter edition of Spark.



## Marking the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Channel Islands – A packed long weekend

I often visit Jersey to see my friend Ian Le Riche, *THE* Classic Car restoration and salesman of the Islands. Indeed, we have been on several MG visits there with the C Register and latterly with a Fairmile Natter Group. Caroline and I have had jolly times on Guernsey as well. So, when in the depths of last Winter, Ian suggested an anorak type trip to Guernsey for the celebration of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Liberation, I jumped at the chance, enticed by the prospect of side trips to Herm and Alderney as well. Caroline declined, not owning a WW2 anorak! She calls any programmes about the War or Classic Cars – ‘JON TV.’!

To put the celebration in context, after the German occupation of France in 1940, Britain decided to evacuate the Islands as being of no strategic worth and excessively expensive to defend in terms of men and material. Many Islanders chose to stay – particularly Farmers. Others had no choice – French Jews in particular. Constructed by 1500 Slave Labourers and 850 French Jews, come 1943 the Germans had built an incredible but largely, when it came to it, useless, addition to Hitler’s ‘Atlantic Wall’. The ‘workers’ were housed in four Concentration Camps on Alderney – each charmingly named after a North Sea Island.

**“It was fun to walk onto the stand at Gatwick, past all the big jets, to a reminder of how air travel used to be”**

As they had bypassed the Maginot Line in France, so the Allies did the same with The Atlantic Wall on D Day, although the Destroyer ‘Rodney’ did shell the Batteries on Alderney, just in case! The Germans continued to occupy the Islands until V.E. Day May 9<sup>th</sup> 1945, having been bypassed on D Day 9 months earlier. Cut off from France and supplies, the Germans starved, as did the Islanders. Both sides were relieved when the Liberation force of 6000 Army and Navy personnel, code named, ‘Force 135’, led by the Destroyer ‘Bulldog’, finally entered St Peter Port, Guernsey on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1945. And so, to our long weekend of nostalgia, emotion and imbibing. The 80<sup>th</sup> was particularly important as, even though memories on the Islands are long, the number of Islanders who actually lived through the occupation in their homes, inevitably diminishes every year. I flew to Guernsey by one of Aurigny’s larger prop planes.

It was fun to walk onto the stand at Gatwick, past all the big jets, to a reminder of how air travel used to be. After meeting Ian we popped over to the beautiful little Island of Herm for the night. A 20-minute Ferry ride from Guernsey and it’s another world. One Hotel, ‘The White House’, a couple of pubs and a beach café.



*Island MG in parade*



*German Naval defences*



*Liberating Force 135 reenactor*



*Period Fire engine*

Nothing to do but take in the scenery and walk about a bit. So relaxing, so quiet my ears hurt! Next day back to Guernsey for their celebrations, including a 2-hour parade with 250 WW2 military vehicles and reenactors. In pride of place a detachment of current Gurkhas followed by a large number of Island Classics including 4 MGs all accompanied by military and civilian bands and thousands of spectators. A real highlight was a tour aboard HMS MEDUSA, ML 1387, moored in the harbour. One of the purpose built, shallow draft, HDMLs or Harbour Defence Motor Launches, she was tasked with hunting Submarines or Frogmen trying to destroy allied shipping at anchor and deterring attackers with depth charges. On D-Day, because of her shallow draft, MEDUSA was tasked withstanding off the minefield the Germans had laid off the invasion beaches to mark it for minesweepers creating a narrow passage through for the Landing Craft bringing the Americans to Omaha Beach.

She stayed on station for a total of 30 hours – without damage!

As added interest HMS Medusa is a Fairmile HDML boat using the prefabrication technique pioneered by Sir Noel Maklin just 100 yards from the current Fairmile Natter in Cobham!



*HMS and firefighting craft Medusa*



*TD in the parade*



*Medusa Wartime crew*



*The SYLT Concentration camp, Alderney*

Then to the airport for our next venue – 2 nights at the excellent Georgian House Hotel, Alderney – their Fish Soup is better than Rick Stein's! Ironically, we were flown there - the shortest plane journey on earth – reputedly – in a tiny, modern, Dornier. They were the makers of the Bombers which attacked Jersey and Guernsey Harbours, without warning, as a prelude to occupation in June 1940. The British had kept the demilitarisation of the Islands a secret. It has been suggested that the Luftwaffe may have mistaken Farmers and their vegetable lorries lined up on the harbour wall for army units. A charitable theory. 44 Islanders were killed. I found Alderney a little spooky, possibly the result of having a fertile imagination and seeing many images of British Bobbies saluting German Officers, German soldiers looking in Burtons window and above all images of those Slave workers pouring metre after metre of concrete in the blazing sun. We visited the only remains of the 4 Alderney Concentration Camps – the Gate Posts of Camp Sylt was sobering. You can't move on Alderney without seeing a German construction of some sort – all impervious to demolition after the War. More and more sites are being uncovered by enthusiastic groups – a blessing and a curse. The Islands need the revenue that the ever-growing band of the WW2 curious bring, but their preservation prompts thoughts of that horrible occupation – a prologue to what might have happened on mainland Britain if Hitler had invaded after Dunkirk, but he invaded Russia instead. But do visit the Channel Islands if you haven't been, the scenery, particularly the spectacular beaches, is wonderful and you get a French atmosphere without being in France. The food is wonderful, especially the fish, the Islanders are friendly and for a real treat hire a Classic from the Le Riche fleet – there are MGs available.



**“I hoped I was going to break my previous record of having dodged round the bollards at the break-neck speed of 20mph in just under a minute.”**

## **Filching Manor – Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

As I drove down to Filching Manor near Polegate for my third attempt at racing around a Go-kart track in my 2002 MGTF Step Speed, I hoped I was going to break my previous record of having dodged round the bollards at the break-neck speed of 20mph in just under a minute.

This may not sound like much of a challenge but, believe me, the course is tight and the bollards marking the route are placed near each other. It's a great one for testing your reactions, your arm muscles and your car's manoeuvrability.

This Auto-solo event has been organised by the MGCC South East Centre for the past three years in conjunction with the Sevenoaks & District Car Club.

The 40 cars taking part include both ancient and modern specimens, with drivers to match. There is no stipulation as to what you choose to drive and this was an Motorsport UK “Taster” event so was open to all.

The cars taking part this year included a Nissan Micra, Fiat Panda, Ford Escort, Porsche Boxster and, of course, a number of splendid MGs.

The drivers ranged in age from 17 to late 70's – so it is an event for everyone. The youngest entrant was the 17 year old daughter of an MGCCSE Centre member who responded to the invitation to anyone over the age of 14 years of age to have a go – an attempt to encourage the younger generation to join our car clubs which are sadly depleting in membership. She did extremely well in her father's MG Roadster.

I may have broken my 50 second-a-circuit target but she was close behind me in the results table. Well done, Francesca.

***Ladies, this event is for us too.***

***Come and have a go.***



*Lis in action around the bollards*

# North Surrey Natter Gets involved

Austin Banner



*Lined up in the field behind the Fox & Hounds*



*The pageant moves off through the village*

The North Surrey Natter is based at the Fox and Hounds pub in Walton on the Hill.

The pub provides us with excellent facilities, and the Natter has thrived since moving there some 2 years ago. John Morgan was asked by the pub owner David Dean if we would consider providing some of our classic cars to take part in the parade through Walton at the start of their annual pageant. How could we say no!

So, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May some dozen or so MGs for 1932 to 1995 plus a Morgan and a Chevy Corvette gathered in the field behind the Pub to be joined by some fine ponies with their junior riders.

The weather was perfect if a little overly warm, the onlookers lining the route were clearly delighted with this new spectacle. The Corvette with just pinch pipes for exhausts made Austin's RV8 bringing up the rear seem almost silent.

We were grouped slightly apart from the main activities in the Pageant field which was providing food and fun for all the family but despite this or because of it, there was considerable interest from many "Waltoners" and quite a few of our leaflets were taken and conversations had about all things cars and MG.

Altogether a highly successful event to engage with our surroundings and neighbours which we will probably repeat next year.



*Fun and games for all the family at the finish*



*North Surrey Natter MGs at the finish*

**"The Corvette with just pinch pipes for exhausts made Austin's RV8 bringing up the rear seem almost silent"**



**“Rodney the bull was totally disinterested in our mechanical efforts.”**

The Fairmile held its now annual Cars and Coffee morning at Gordon and Mary Stanley’s house in deepest West Surrey with 12 members attending. This year the focus was on bleeding brakes and checking carbs. Despite a cool morning the rain held off and it was an ideal temperature to work in. Rodney the bull, who rents Gordon’s field at the back, was totally disinterested in our mechanical efforts.

Alan Wakefield was first in and found the cordless impact driver on hand invaluable to get off the 20 wheelnuts on his TD. It turned out he had a seized rear wheel cylinder, so it was good to find out now so it can be fixed for the summer. Joy Anderson was in the next bay changing oil and filter on her TC with the help of Eric Worpe. Ian McCulloch was pleased to get his TF carbs apart and give them a good clean and check the jets – who designed the air filters for the TF. No fun trying to adjust the jets even with the proper SU spanner. Other casualties were Jonesey’s MGB which was trailered in and diagnosed by Vic Young (MGC tech adviser) as worn-out jets on the HIF carbs. Vic is going to rebuild them once Jonesey gets new parts.

Also on display was Gordon’s latest project, an MGA, which is coming on well.

## Top Tip

Don’t overfill the dashpots in the carbs – see top piston in photo. The oil spills out and can get onto the side of the piston which then sticks in the suction chamber and prevents the carb running smoothly.

Check and clean off with petrol or something similar if working inside. Check the pistons and chambers are matched and not been swapped over inadvertently whilst off the car in the past.



The new car market in the UK has had its ups and downs this year with sluggish start, a buoyant March and a repressed April and May. Overall sales were down 10.4% in April but electric sales were up 8.1% but still with their overall share below ambition. Plug in Hybrids were up by over 34% proving them to be the plug-in car of choice at present. Basically, anything with a plug went up and anything without went down.

The big event for MG is always the Shanghai Motor Show and this year the big reveal was the Cyber X. A boxy electric SUV – see more in *Electric Spark*. On the MG stand was the IM6, a luxury saloon, which is rumoured to be coming this way possibly in an MG form.

The MG U9 pickup has gone on sale in Australia and New Zealand but no plans to bring it here as far as we can see. An MG G50 Plus people carrier has gone on sale in the Philippines. It is interesting to see how SAIC are positioning different types of MGs for different markets. It is unlikely we will see this in the UK.

Petrol only versions of the MG3 and ZS Hybrid pluses are now available proving there is still a market for ICE only vehicles, but it is declining.

The MG HS has picked up another gong at the Great British Fleet Awards as the “Best Fleet Medium SUV in 2025” with the judges commending it” for its low and busy-friendly running costs whilst offering drivers with a high-quality cabin that combines comfort with practical storage options.”

On the subject of gongs – Autocar magazine have just proclaimed MG to be the Best Manufacturer for 2025 – Editor Mark Tisshaw said “MG’s sales success in recent years, which has seen it become one of the UK’s top 10 manufacturers, would’ve been reason alone to make it our Best Manufacturer for 2025. But it is the product quality combined with value, as well as the increasing design appeal, that impresses. The fun-to-drive, practical MG4 EV hatchback won our Best Electric Car in 2023 and MG has made even more progress. Models like the Cyberster are ambitious and innovative and we believe a springboard for what MG will bring us next.”

The HS is the third vehicle to receive the Hybrid+ format joining the ZS and MG3 featuring the same 1.5T Hybrid petrol engine (105kW), working with a powerful electric motor (146kw), on board generator and a 1.8kWh battery. In Australia it has been dubbed the HS Super Hybrid!



MG HS Hybrid Plus joins the MG3 and MG ZS as the third MG in the UK in this configuration



Rear end of the new HS Hybrid Plus

**“a high-quality cabin that combines comfort with practical storage options.”**



The MG G50 Plus has just gone on sale in the Philippines



*The Cyber X concept at Shanghai*

The main news is from the Shanghai Motor Show in April which is always a showcase for modern MG. This show did not disappoint with the introduction of the Cyber X. A different direction for MG with a move to boxy SUV style cars similar to the Land Rover Defender and Mercedes G Class. This is clearly the market they are targeting particularly in the east although it is possible that it could come to the UK as the next vehicle in the luxury but youthful “Cyber” sub brand. Clearly aimed at a similar market to the Cyberster, it is all electric and built on a new platform. The car has “pop up” headlights and is not as big as it looks – it will fit in the line-up below the just released MG S5. Clearly inspired by the rugged 4x4 style vehicles it will feature new technology integrating the batteries with the car bodywork which, in theory, frees up cabin space. It has a 69.9kwh battery giving 215bhp and a range of around 263miles. At the moment it is described as a concept and it may, or may not come to these shores.

Still on the “Cyber” brand we believe that the MG GTS could well be in the showrooms by the end of the year but will it still have scissor doors?

As the MG4 moves into the used car market it has picked up an award in that sector as “Best Used EV” at the AM Awards to add to its large collection of trophies.

*MG EXE181 has left the British Motor Museum and is now back at MG Motor UK’s Marylebone HQ. It is seen here alongside the MG GTS with a Cyberster and two “heritage” MGs in the background – the RV8 and Golden Jubilee MGTF*

The EXE181 concept show car which we saw at Goodwood last year has picked up a design award and the car has been moved to be displayed alongside the Cyber GTS in MG Motor’s London showroom. The award was from the iF Design Awards which is one of the largest and most prestigious competitions in the World attracting some 11,000 subscriptions so the award for Best Concept is prestigious. The car is a stunning concept vehicle which, according to the iF commendation, is a “study of style, innovation and efficiency and which acts as an ambassador for the next chapter of MG. The same talented design team, based in Marylebone, played a leading role in the development of the acclaimed MG Cyberster, a two-seat convertible EV”.

The MG S5 has joined the MG4 in receiving a 5 star NCAP rating and a 5 Star Green NCAP rating.

Rumours of a larger MG S6 all electric SUV are also circulating which could reach us by the end of the year. This is a large vehicle similar to the MG Marvel, which although that car is in the MG Motor UK Marylebone showroom, was never released in the UK.

We are expecting two new EVs to be revealed at Goodwood in July along with the Cyber X and Cyberster Black plus the GTS – The two new EVs are believed to be the IM5 and IM6 Tesla rivalling luxury saloons – we’ll wait and see what our roving editor finds in July at Goodwood!





*MGs lined up ready for the day*

## Sussex Wanderers June Excursion

Starting at the Spur in Slindon W Sussex and winding through the South Downs via the centre of historic Arundel finishing up at the Oystercatchers at Climping which is just a stones throw from Ford Prison.



*Special Pub menu board for the lunch*

This was a great day out with 55 for lunch and an excellent collection of different cars on this sunny day.



Whilst MGs dominated it was great to see a mid 50's singer, a 30's Alvis plus an Austin Healey amongst others.





The Pinner Natter continues to meet in considerable numbers and now that longer and warmer nights have arrived we have been fortunate during we will be able to meet outside with our cars. Our numbers are continuing to cause some grief with locals when we get a good attendance but that is a much better problem than having too few attending! As there is no other local suitable pub we are working with the Landlord who is very supportive of us and has encouraged us to display our cars on some Saturday mornings. This continues to help the Natter publicise itself in the best possible way!

The winter/early spring Breakfast season has come to an end which is a shame as on each occasion we have been greeted by superb weather! In February, March and April we met at the Bells of Ouzeley in Old Windsor and in May we had a superb breakfast at Denbies Vineyard after seeing the South East Centre Run start off. A good number of Pinner Natter members visit Brooklands on Sunday mornings, often for breakfast, and it is our intention this summer to get to at least two Breakfast meetings at Goodwood.

**“Our numbers are  
continuing to cause some  
grief with locals”**



With warmer days ahead the Natter will now concentrate on monthly lunchtime meetings and the first of these took place in early June at the Chequers Inn at Wooburn Common

As most South East Centre events are too far away for members to attend the Pinner Natter continue to attend events run by the Abingdon Works Centre's Chesham Natter and the Wycombe Area MGOC both of which are local to us. We are currently looking forward to the Chesham Natter's Pride of Ownership which takes place at the end of June. The Natter is also looking forward to attending the Chorleywood Classic Car Show which takes place at the beginning of July.

And talking of Goodwood we come to the two big summer Goodwood events. The Festival of Speed is always attended by a good number of Natter members and I know of at least 8 Natter members attending the Revival. As there is so much to do at both events a good number of us nowadays go there and back by taxi so that we can spend the whole day and night there having a drink or two and not risk falling asleep at the wheel at midnight!



## The Cinque Ports Run .....Drive it Day 27<sup>th</sup> April 2025 CMOG



*Ready for the start in Great Chart*

**“John Nash was well  
chuffed as he munched  
on a dressed crab!”**

Hastings was very busy and the normal car park was rammed, but we found a good space for us all. A very kind parking attendant offered to keep an eye on our cars. The Triumph club was there in the main car park and displayed a superb range of cars, with more TR6s than we have seen for a while. We all went our own ways looking for coffee and food.....and John Nash was well chuffed as he munched on a dressed crab! Louise did not get her fish and chips promised by Gary so better job next time mate! Barry and Margaret, Mick and I sat in the sunshine with a bag of chips each....yum yum.

Then off we went toward Winchelsea, Rye, Hythe, Folkestone toward Sandwich We had to avoid Dover as there was a massive motorbike demonstration underway so diverted via Alkham. Graham had said that he would peel off before Alkham, but we reckon we lost him way before then as no one could see him behind!

We arrived at Sandwich, parked up and headed for the Red Cow where much needed refreshment was essential.....and the sun was out again...yippee.

A fantastic day all round, so a great start to the Club Calendar year.

We all met at the usual meeting place of the Great Chart layby on the A28.....even Churchy managed to find it! A great turnout of 9 cars and, at least, the day was dry but started cold....the sun arrived later! We had Mick, Barry and Jan, John Nash, Martyn, Dick and Eryll, Gary and Louise, Graham and Sarah, Barry and Margaret, and John C.

Mick was celebrating his Birthday that day so congratulations were the norm. Using the route notes previously prepared by Dave, Barry and Margaret who had kindly printed out copies for everyone, and had agreed to head the convoy.

We all set off on time and headed direct to Hastings, our first stop. It was agreed to skip the loo stop in Tenterden as the parking is often difficult. Most managed to keep up with the group and we did not let too many intruders in!



*MGC GT of Barry Kennedy*



*End of the run in sandwich and  
refreshments*

# North Downs Natter run

Will Opie



Our drive it day run starting at the Luffinghams after an amazing BBQ breakfast!



*The lanes en route.*

## Pashley Gardens Drive it day run

Our natter started at the Luffinghams near Tenterden and Tim and Clare had organised a great run for our MGs (and a new Porsche!) to Pashley Gardens to join up with the Centre on some wonderful country lanes.



*Parking at Pashley*



*The Red Lion, our Natter Pub, on a perfect Summer Evening.*



# For Sale and Wanted

Richard Barefoot has an MGB 123 G100X distributor for sale in its original packing inc instructions £100 Also a B steering wheel. Also a pair of original Lucas spot lights with covers £65 the pair. Original reversing lamp £80. Manuals and books also available contact Ian Russell at [mgashnatter@gmail.com](mailto:mgashnatter@gmail.com)

Ray Ruffels has 4 MGA 48 spoke wire wheels for sale good condition. Contact [ray.ruffels@gmail.com](mailto:ray.ruffels@gmail.com)

## WANTED

Wanted for 1953 TD Lucas Distributor D2A4 DA37 part no 40368A/B with 15 deg action plate part no 420670 and springs part no 420756 or 15 deg action plate on its own.

Contact Ian Ailes [mgv8ian@gmail.com](mailto:mgv8ian@gmail.com) mobile 07962 426863

## MG Midget MKIII 1972 RWA.

Contact **Mick Abrahart 0771 905 9034** ( This car is amazing and it is surprising that no one has snapped it up!!- Editor.) Still for sale!!



Superb 1275cc Midget, excellent condition with 49990 miles on speedo. The cylinder head was skimmed and valves re-seated at 48000 miles, the Goldseal engine was fitted in 1992. The body has been sound proofed before new carpets and door cards fitted. The seats and door cards have been upholstered in magnolia leather by M.G.O.C. It has a s/s four branch exhaust. The speedo has been re-calibrated to the 5 speed type 9 gear box. The engine runs very well with the K.N filter and ram pipes. The Midget comes with full and also half tonneau cover plus the genuine factory hard top with glass windows. It has a heritage body with no rust and also wire wheels. MOT until April 2025 and comes with the full history of the car. **Price £8750**



# For Sale and Wanted

## Richard Clarks superb MG TF for sale £38000.

Contact Richard by email [ricky140clark@btinternet.com](mailto:ricky140clark@btinternet.com)



MGTF. 1954. 1250 cc. Reno Red. 67000 miles from new. Present owner 35 years. Ground up restoration with new tub in 1992. Many Concours and Car of Show Awards, including Winner MGCC National Concours Silverstone, Autoglym all makes Winner Southern Heat and Finalist all Makes Gaydon, Car of Show MGCC 70th Birthday Gaydon, Winner Barry Lacy Malvern Trophy for Best T Type etc. Always garaged dehumidified, regularly driven. 2000 miles since full professional engine rebuild by Sigma Engineering. Full ownership and mileage and service records and history including original green log book. Complete and correct tool kit and jack. Tonneau cover matching hood. Summary - 'probably the finest TF in the country'. Rallye and event plaques included. £38000 ono.

Richard Clark

## 1972 MGBGT



My ownership since 2020 but now need to reduce the fleet. History available back to 2000

Working sunroof | Power steering | Electronic ignition | 5 speed 'box | Alloys 2012 | New Blockley tyres 2020 | Revotec electronic fan 2022 | New wiring loom 2022 | New battery 2023

Bodywork could be improved hence only

**£5,750.00**

Contact [austin.banner@gmail.com](mailto:austin.banner@gmail.com)



## MGB parts for sale.....Prefer to sell everything as a "job lot"

**Offers Invited contact John Clark on 07940769225 Canterbury area**

14" woodrim steering wheel, ally spokes, no boss used but good/Pair Halogen fog lamps, horizontal type new/Pair Lucas Silver Sabre driving lamps with covers.New old stock/Smiths RVI Tacho 4", 0-7000 used but good/Smiths speedo 4", 0-120mphused but good/Smiths vacuum gauge with coloured segments used but good/Smiths oil pressure gauge 0-100psi. used but good/Yazaki ammeter -30 to +30 used but good/Smiths oil pressure gauge 0-100 psi New old stock/Smiths Dual oil/ temp gauge used but good /Twin SU inlet manifold used but good/Pair HS4 1.5 inch Carbs...suitable for refurbishing used but good/Override with rubber pad X2 New old stock/Override with number plate lamp X2.used/Override (plain) X2 used/Lucas rear lamp units...PAIR....Good Chrome used but good/Set MGB/ MGBGT Carpets used but good/Hub Bearing Kit....Unipart GHK 1005 New/Universal Joint....Unipart GUJ 101New/Choke Cable....Austin Rover..CHA 288 New

# Get in Touch

## SE CENTRE TEAM

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MG Car Club South East Centre web site – <http://www.mgccse.co.uk>

# Lost Mystery !



## WOODCROFT TROPHY

This is the Woodcroft Trophy which is now lost.

The committee would be very grateful if anyone comes across it so that it can be awarded once again. Contact Spark if you find it!

The engraving is difficult in this photo but clearly marked

MG Car Club

Woodcroft Trophy

# New Natter

**George & Dragon, Tudeley**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September**



Your committee has been studying the map of the South East to see if there are areas that are not covered for local natters. One such area has been identified as around Tonbridge in Kent.

The Natter Liaison officer had the enviable task of trying out pubs in that area and has decided that we can start a provisional new natter at the George & Dragon pub in Tudeley. The pub is situated between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood and the MG population demographic shows quite a number of members living in the vicinity. We will be contacting those individually closer to the date. In the meantime, if you do live in the area please make a note of the date and we will look forward to seeing you there.

I hope you enjoyed this bumper edition!

Your contributions are invaluable from all directions, and I want to thank contributors for their input. We welcome any comments on this magazine and if you wish to contribute for the Autumn 2025 edition then please get in touch with me at:-

[Spark@mgccse.co.uk](mailto:Spark@mgccse.co.uk)

Many Thanks - Will Opie, Editor Spark Magazine

## SPARK Issue 2 Summer 2025

**Editor : Will Opie**

**Deputy : Tim Morris**

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# *Retro Spark*

Spark keeps you up to date with the modern world of the MG Car Club, but the club's history goes back much further so each quarter we'll end up with a look back at the South East Centre... in the past.



The Brighton Rally 1953



MG Meet at Beaulieu 1981