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SEPTEMBER 2023 | EDITION 380

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H&HCVC Ltd.

Chairman & Director

Steve Divall

stephen_divall@hotmail.co.uk

0161 483 4475

Vice Chairman & Director

Mike Coffey

mick.coffey1@talktalk.net

01298 27424

Director & Committee Member

Richard Burnham

ric.burnham@sky.com

(Inc. photography and runs)

07770 533677

Treasurer & Director

Graham Knowles

graham.knowles@btinternet.com

19 Bath Crescent

Cheadle Hulme

Cheadle

Cheshire

SK8 7QU

0161 439 2106

Company Secretary & Director

Chris Parr

chris.parr67@ntlworld.com

4 Bramham Road

Marple

Stockport

SK6 7LJ

0161 427 1363

07512 783818

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Reg. Office - 2, Kings Drive, Marple, Stockport SK6 6NQ

Reg. N° 4999097

hhcvc1991@gmail.com

Printer: Frank Aspinall & Co. Ltd., Building 4, Unit 5,

Tameside Business Park, Denton, Manchester

M34 3QS Tel: 0161 480 2707; Mob: 07977 211213



September 2023

Sun 3rd September – Annual Club Show – Brookside Garden Centre, London Rd, Poynton, SK12 1BY. Open to members & non-members.

Sat 9th & Sun 10th September – Air Fair “Wings & Wheels” – Avro Heritage Museum, Chester Rd, Woodford, SK7 1GE.

Weds 20th September – Club Night – Noggin & Natter.

October 2023

Weds 18th October – Club Night – A quiz, prepared & presented by Andy Robinson.

November 2023

Weds 15th November – Club Night – A presentation by Ken Coxey (subject to be confirmed idc).

December 2023

No planned activities.

January 2024

Weds 17th January – Club Night – Annual Chairman’s Quiz Night.

February 2024

Weds 21st February – Annual General Meeting

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Keith Yates

I'm sat writing this piece on Bank Holiday Monday and, I have to say, the weather, like the majority of this summer of 23, has been pretty poor. We went to the Poynton show on the previous Saturday and the weather then was even worse – heavy showers ruined the afternoon activities. I really do feel very sorry for organizers of shows as they are so dependent on the weather gods looking kindly on them and it's just not happened this year. About a week prior to all of this I had a look at the long range forecast for Sunday 3rd September; it was showing me big, yellow sun stickers! Looking at it now and it's showing me rain! What a difference a week can make. Anyway, it would seem that our annual Club Show may be be-devilled by rain rather than sunshine but I'm still looking forward to it, having a chat with some friendly people and looking over some great vehicles. I'll see you all at Brookside Garden Centre then.

Steve Divall and Thomas Wardle have both made some more valid points about the EV situation and the lack of accurate information/data on which to base a decision that we're all going to have to make at some point prior to 2030 – do I buy an electric car and what are the true implications if or when I

do? It would appear that the decision is mostly being made for us as there won't really be a choice the nearer to 2030 we get. For good or bad the vociferous minority have spoken and we are all going to have to go down the electric route whether we like it or not. It sort of reminds me of an old joke that can be paraphrased as follows: -

Speaker to Crowd – come the revolution brothers and sisters, we'll all be driving around in expensive, electric motor cars!

Man in Crowd – I don't want to drive around in an electric motor car. I think that they're all bobbins!

Speaker to Man – Come the revolution brother, you'll do as you're damn well told!!!

I was very interested to read Graham's MG piece last month and, in particular, the bit about the MG Cyberster. I think that the name is about as iffy as a month old pork pie but what a really good looking car it is. So, why has it taken the Chinese to produce such a good looking car (very much in the Mazda MX5 mould) when, for example, European manufacturers have such a rich history of car design and automotive beauty? I can't understand

why manufacturers are hell-bent on selling us bloated, ugly and totally bland SUVs or why they're compounding this crime by pushing even more grossly bloated, horrendously ugly and insipidly bland electric SUV type vehicles onto us – it's no wonder that these monstrosities won't fit into one of Steve Divall's car parking spaces!

To continue with this theme of looking back to last month's issue, it was great to see the photographs of the Peugeot 405 T16 ("Cool Car/Classic") that David had edited in. I'd forgotten just how good this car was. It was practical, aggressively good looking, had a purposeful stance and had overall performance figures to back it all up. A real Autobahn cruiser that could do some proper business in the twisty bits too.

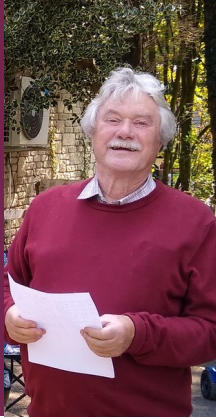
Now then, how about a birthday celebration? Not only is it MG100 this year but I recently read that it's also the 60th birthday of the Mini Cooper S too. This wonderful little car is, of course, now highly sort after and, if you can find one that isn't a basket case, will be very expensive to get your hands on – in fact basket cases can be pretty expensive too!

Whilst on about Minis, it's good to see Deborah Bradbury's Mini on our front cover. I had a good chat with Deborah and photographed her car at last year's Club

Show. David and I have been looking for the right opportunity to get this Mini as the cover shot and this month seemed as good a time as any. I think it's interesting that Deborah decided to modify her car as, no doubt, the purist snobs will be looking down their collective noses at wide/alloy wheels and the like. All I can say is, good on you Deborah!!! A significant number of Minis were modified and customised and, in fact, a huge after market catered for this for many years – it's what Mini people do. It also made me smile when Deborah pointed out the Mini's iconic status and how it provides so many people with such fond memories. I can second this as I'm often regaled with Mini stories and memories when I'm out and about in my own Mini; long may that continue!

Fingers crossed for fine weather for the Club Show and, as always, David and I hope that you all enjoy this September issue and that you also enjoy lots of trouble free 'classic' motoring.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



HALL OF FAME AWARD RECIPIENTS

2012 - Chris Parr
2014 - Bob Plant
2015 - Ray Etchells
2016 - Fred Dean
2020 - David Bowden
2022 - Jane Harrop

During the months of July, August and September we seem to be inundated with shows of various types. Not that I am being critical of any of them but, ideally, we really do need to have some level of co-ordination so as to prevent several worthwhile events occurring on the same day. This is partially undertaken by the FBHVC but, of course, a fair few clubs and organisations are not members of that particular body. Most organising bodies are careful to avoid similar events occurring in local areas but if you, dear member, belong to such a group then please get them to avoid clashes. We are often asked to show our vehicles at various events but only given very short notice to do so. I ask you all to give as much notice as possible.

We, the Club, have attended many shows in the last few months and I thank you all for so doing. It isn't easy, particularly in a drop head car, in the awful weather we have been having but our members are a robust lot and take their vehicles out whatever. We attended the

Poynton Show on August Bank Holiday Saturday (26th) with about 30 vehicles on display. We were joined by members of GVEC, the Rolls Royce Owners Club and the Lotus Club. The day went swingingly until the rain arrived just after lunchtime and so at around 3:00PM everyone started to leave. The "Best in Show" cup went to Rick Hood for his 1958 Austin Healey 100/6 that he rebuilt, over 25 years, from 12 tea chests of parts. How he got the doors to fit so well is a mystery.

This month's front cover picture shows the 1963 Austin Mini owned by member Deborah Bradbury.

Moving on to yet another onslaught on the motorist, the introduction of the widened Ultra Low Emission Zone in Greater London. Basically, if your vehicle does not comply with the restrictions on age (roughly prior to 2005 and less than 40yrs old) or emission limits and if you live in the Gtr London ULEZ area (roughly inside but excluding the M25) then you're going to get clobbered with a £12.50 daily

charge each time you use your vehicle. The Mayor of London is to introduce yet another scrappage type scheme wherein you can get £2000 against the cost of a new vehicle. However, if your vehicle is worth, say, £10000 you are not going to do it. Many vehicles of, say, 20yrs and up to 40yrs (not mostly covered by the ULEZ exemptions) are now considered to be “modern classics”. So, what does that do for the classic car movement – not a lot! The “classic” spare parts and repair industry employs a heck of a lot of people and generates a lot of tax yield for the Treasury. What will become of all of that (certainly in Gtr London) and of course, there’s the future of Classic Car Clubs? If you own, for instance, a 35yrs old Ford Escort and belong to a Club, any Club, where does that leave you? I guess you could always keep the car in a garage and look after it until it becomes 40yrs old – under the present rules of course! I have been banging on about the introduction of electric vehicles and the sense of them. I think that what is needed is a “cheap” runabout, shopping type vehicle. As I have mentioned before, the emphasis seems to be on top speed and acceleration rather than on battery life etc. The French seem to have taken up the mantle as Citroen are producing an AMI “shopping/city”

vehicle which sells for around £8000. It’s not quite there yet as it’s capped at 28mph and has a round trip capability of around 50 miles or so. Both need to be increased as, with a top speed of only 28mph, it could be dangerous and with a range of only 50 odd miles, it will not let you visit too many shops etc. I saw one of these vehicles in Kefalonia in June and it looked just right for the job however, I did not know its limitations. I knew it was Citroen made as it has 2CV type opening side windows!

I get notifications from the RAC about various topics. The first concerned parking charges. More and more car parks are installing pay by card units where you can only pay to park using a credit or debit card. The use of cash seems to have gone out of the window. I recall being in Carnforth, where the film Brief Encounter was filmed, and we tried to pay for parking by card. No luck but on a second visit we were able to pay by cash. Hopefully, the present usage of pay by card will get sorted out soon. Why I’m bringing this matter up is to make sure that you always have a card with you. The second RAC topic was about car parking spaces. When I worked, I recall being involved in car park lighting and at the time, some 20yrs ago, the BS specified a car park space width of

six feet. Modern vehicles have grown, in both width and length, and can now be too large to fit parking bays with any comfortable 'space' around them. The six foot specification doesn't seem to have

been changed to keep up with this. I think the RAC message is to try and make car park spaces wider and longer. We wait.

And so, that is it from me for this issue.

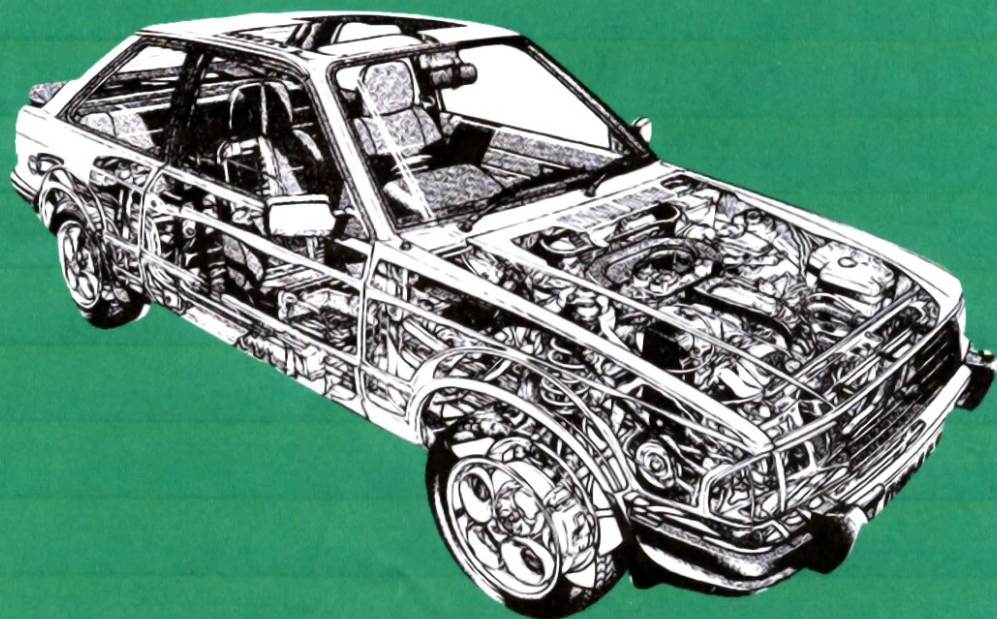


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MG

CATCH UP

Graham Scattergood

Hi Gang.

Well, it's again come around to that time of the month when I try to come up with some ramblings to entertain or inform you of goings on within the Club and the MG Section in particular.

Our August Club Night saw a presentation from a previous guest speaker, namely Dr Peter Sykes. On the last occasion he had given us a detailed account, with demonstration and ably assisted by our very own Jean Knowles, of the procedure involved in the removal of a gall bladder – not actually performed on the night, much to Jean's relief. This time he regaled us about his induction into the NHS, the trials, tribulations and outlandish hours of being a junior doctor and some of the exploits that he and his fellow junior doctors were involved in. These were, one could say, more accustomed to the Carry On films of yesteryear and would absolutely not feature in the modern NHS. A fascinating insight and a couple of humorous anecdotes thrown in for good measure made for a truly enjoyable evening. Thank you Peter.

Also at the Club Night, I'm sure he won't mind me saying, Ray Etchells informed me that, reluctantly, he is putting his beloved MGTF 135 up for sale. So, if anybody out there wants a truly magnificent machine then please contact me or Ray and avail yourself of one of if not the nicest modern classic MG you will find. (See "Classified Ad" in this issue Ed)

Also, I've been contacted by a gentleman in the MG Owners Club. He has a 1972, fully restored body shell that's finished in British Racing Green. It has the original boot lid, bonnet and doors that have all been fitted and fully gapped to perfection. The sills and wings have all been replaced so providing a stunning start for a winter project. His intention, in his words, had been to make a remarkable car but too many projects and not enough time means it will have to go. Again, if anybody is interested then let me know as I have a number of photos he's provided and I will provide you with his contact details. The V5 is also present if required.

I'm writing this as I get ready for my annual excursion to Rhyl Air Show (on Sunday 27th) and the Prestatyn Classic Car show (on August Bank Holiday Monday) so, please give me some good weather!!!

Toodle Pip for now

H&H

CLASSIFIEDS

MG TF 135

37,700 miles, with head gasket water pump, and cam belt replaced.

Colour - Anthracite with black and red interior.

Stainless cooling pipes, and adjustable shock absorbers fitted.

Black hardtop is included.

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Contact Ray Etchells on 07940512969



PEAKS AND DALES SPONSER CORRECTION

The August 2023 magazine (Issue378) carried a report about this year's Peaks & Dales Run. This included a list of businesses that had very kindly sponsored our event and, thereby, helped our charity for the year, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Unfortunately, one of our sponsors was missed from that list so we would now like to correct that and to acknowledge their contribution and generosity: -



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1963 AUSTIN MINI



Ed. This month's front cover shows Deborah Bradbury with her 1963 Austin Mini. This car was awarded the Runner Up prize in the 'Cars 1960-1975' category at the 2022 Club Show. The story that this fabulous little car has to tell is now reproduced here, using Deborah's own words, for readers to enjoy.

This 1963 Austin Mini was bought by my dad, in the late 1960s, as the family car. I am the eldest of four children and obviously we were a lot smaller then(!!) but I know that we each have very fond memories of all of us being strategically fitted into the back of the Mini – suitcases on the top and other items in the boot and, on a couple of holidays, even a boat engine behind the front seats. I still don't know how this little car managed to transport us all the way to North Devon, North Wales and various other places around the British Isles without the wheels buckling!

As the Mini started to need more work to keep it roadworthy and also the fact that we were all getting older, we needed more practical transport as a family. The Mini got put aside in the garage whilst other family cars were purchased and came and went as time passed on.

It was in the early 1980s, when I passed my driving test, that this little car was given to me by my dad, as my first car, and it was then provided with a new lease of life. Dad decided that the bonnet area was in too bad a way so put on a one-piece glass fibre Mini Clubman front end. This bolted on and if you needed to gain access to the engine then you pulled it forward and it dropped down on hinges. This was then sprayed and polished up, to match the rest of the car, as well as

the application of some "go-faster stripes" on the side. I then drove the Mini for around five years before starting to drive more modern cars and, once again, this little car got put down the side of the house, out of the way.

Time passed and in the late 1990s, after a discussion with my dad over whether I was going to scrap the little car, I decided that for sentimental reasons I would invest in restoring the Mini back to its original condition, or as much as possible. Obviously I did not realise, at that time, how much money this was going to cost but, over a period of three years and a lot of help from my dad, especially with the mechanical side of things, we managed to get it back to its former glory – pretty much as you see it today. I did make some decisions around modifications along the way, just to be a little different, as you will see by the twin exhaust and the wheels; although we do have all the original bits, including the original longer gear stick, should we decide to put these back on the Mini in the future.

I'm really proud of my car and so pleased that I made the decision to save it. It is really great to drive and always puts a smile on your face – just like the car itself when it seems to smile back at you when you look at it from the front. It is only now that I'm slightly older that I appreciate how iconic and valuable this little car has become and how it provides fond memories to a lot of people who remember their own Mini days.

Deborah Bradbury

Alfa Romeo





33 STRADALE

Historic, classy, different, new. Call it what you like. When I saw this unveiled only at the end of August, I thought, *this* is something new worth writing about.

Having generally accepted the future fate of somewhat dull, modular, and somewhat convergent design of cars (has it been forever thus?), I don't generally pay that much attention to modern cars. This is different. This is a new Alfa Romeo; and I absolutely need it.

At over £2 million, an absolutely absurd price for any car, it won't matter anyway, because all 33 examples of these cars are already sold. Worst of all, there were two powertrain options available for I imagine the better part of 5 minutes; a 3-litre, twin turbo V6 or a battery electric setup. Given the recent debate over batteries, it seems criminal that there could be literally battery-powered examples delivered, that will never turn a wheel, and simply degrade.

Anyway, enough of that debate. Back to the important parts. This new *33 Stradale* was designed by Centro Stile Alfa Romeo and Carrozzeria Touring Superleggera. And it shows. Okay, so it doesn't quite have the magnificent simplicity or pedigree of the original car designed by Franco Scaglione. But there is simply no denying that this is a more than worthy interpretation.





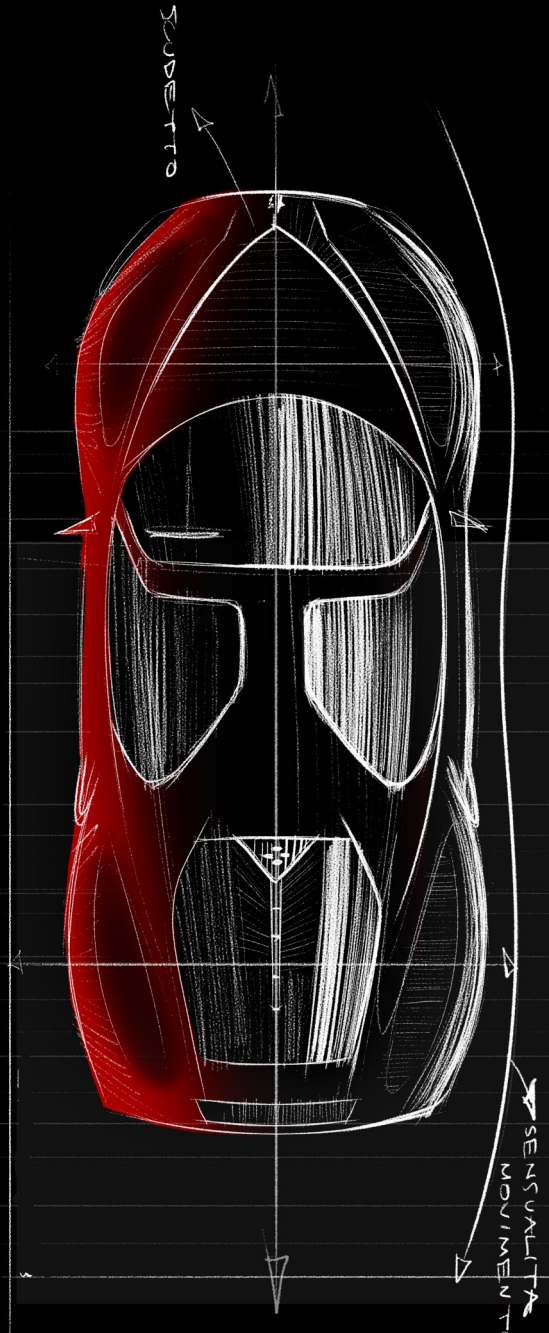
There's an instant timelessness to this design, no doubt a lot of this is borrowed from the original. But there's much here to love. It seems that there are a few designers left, most of which seem to be trapped in Italy, who seem to understand how to make cars into an artform.

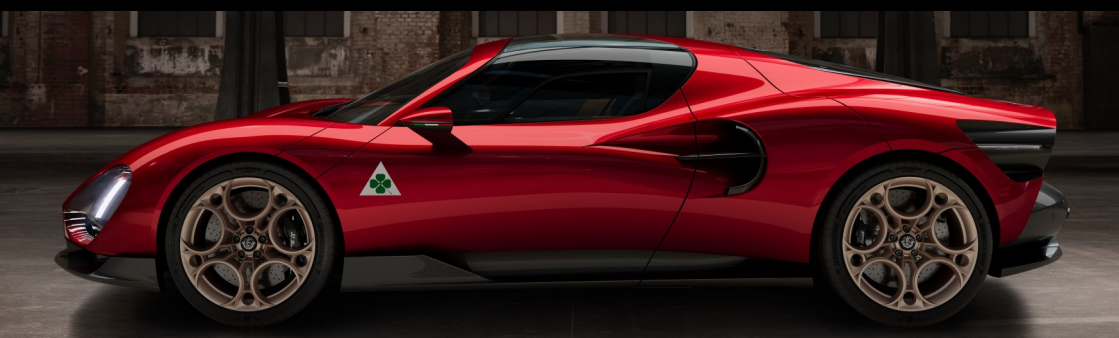
I can only hope that one day, more designs like this take to the roads, combustion or not. I feel that design is one of the last bastions of different as far as the automotive industry goes. It's certainly a breath of fresh air to see that a car can be more than just a tablet sat on a set of humdrum generic battery packs, made by about four different manufacturers.

This doesn't sweep away the reality of the problems at Alfa Romeo. Tarnished, especially in the UK by specific problems, lacklustre dealers, cars that just seem poorly marketed, and plagued with terrible customer service reputation, at least one department doesn't seem to have forgotten how to get it right, first time.

Having had my own Alfa Romeo, nothing of which I use daily has ever come close to how special that car felt, I can only dream of owning such a car as this. But it gives me something I haven't had with modern cars in a long time. Hope.

David Bresnahan







MG 100 (1923 – 2023)

Keith Yates

William (Billy) Richard Morris was a self-made man and one of the early motor industry tycoons. From humble beginnings, selling and repairing bicycles, he moved into the motor-cycle business and became very successful. Moving on from that, in 1911 Morris acquired premises in Oxford and opened a motor car showroom. Additional premises had to be acquired as the business expanded but it was this enterprise that eventually became Morris Garages Ltd. Morris, a very ambitious man, had decided that his future was not only selling motor cars but he wanted to become a car maker too. This resulted in the construction of a brand new factory at Cowley, just outside Oxford. The first car to be produced was the well received Oxford 10hp and this became a staple until the mid-1920s. The car production company was

originally given the name WRM Motors Ltd but this was changed, in 1919, to Morris Motors Ltd. So and around that time, Morris was in control of two successful companies, one a motor car retail outlet and another actually manufacturing them.

In 1921 a young (31yrs) man named Cecil Kimber became Sales Manager of Morris Garages Ltd and subsequently achieved promotion to General Manager. Under Kimber's direction, the company flourished and started to design and build specialist bodies for the stolid Morris Cowley. Even for its time, the Cowley (and the bigger Morris Oxford) was not a particularly adventurous car but it did have a very rounded radiator and grille that gave rise to the public giving it the name "Bull-nose". It was however, these rather staid machines that formed the basis from which MG

cars eventually emerged as a marque in its own right.

So, now seems as good a time as ever to ask the obvious question, what was the first MG? As one could imagine, this is a subject that MG enthusiasts have argued about for years. In 1922 and following on from the special bodied Cowleys, Morris Garages Ltd started to sell Morris Cowleys with small, four seater, tourer style bodies that were known as “Chummy” bodies. A big selling point was that, (unlike the usual two seater plus dicky seat style of body) all four passengers could benefit from the protection provided by the hood. Whilst 100+ of these cars were eventually sold, they were never actually sold as MGs and they certainly didn’t have any sportiness about them. That said, Kimber did tune his own personal Chummy and managed to win a gold medal in the 1923 London to Lands End trial. If however, we accept that none of these cars were MGs then, obviously, they can’t be the first of that marque either.

To a greater degree, the whole debate about what was the first MG has been overtaken by the major MG car clubs themselves. They were facing the same “first of” dilemma and finally, for very good reason, agreed that the centenary of MG “sports cars” is 2023. So why is that? Well, it transpired that after

Kimber’s success in the Lands End trial in his slightly tweaked Chummy, William Morris took note of it and, using his authority, sanctioned the production of six “sports” bodied two seaters to Kimber’s design. The coachwork for these cars was put together by Charles Raworth & Sons (Oxford) and incorporated a sloping windscreen, sweeping wings and air scoops mounted on the front scuttle – all features that would appear on MG sports cars for years to come. The design also included improvements to the car’s handling and performance which helped it to reach 60mph on the flat and flat out. This doesn’t seem very much these days but in 1923 it must have been quite something. The car was eventually named ‘the MG Super Sports Morris’ and was to become the very first “MG” sports car. Adverts, featuring the MG Octagon, for these Raworth bodied cars first appeared during December 1923 but it is known that cars were being sold to the public earlier than that, the first recorded sale being in the August.

In all of this, the one thing that we can be absolutely sure about is that Cecil Kimber was there when that very first MG was created and that he was also instrumental in making MG a marque in its own right and a legend amongst road and track sports cars.



Garage Sale

Location – Canal Foundry, Albion Rd, New Mills, High Peak SK22 3EZ

(opposite Swizzels – green gate, next to pelican crossing)

This is a garage unit clear out. There are plenty of items worth looking at:-

Some car parts etc (including Mini wheels), outboard motors, tyres, welding sets, jacks, car ramps, drills, socket sets, hand tools, spanners, sanding disks, hacksaw blades, hand saws, wood, brackets, and much more.

Please phone for information and to check when we are there:-

Ray Etchells on 07940512969

Colin Etchells on 07774487295

July Club Night & BBQ

Keith Yates

It has to be said that there isn't a great deal to report following the Club's annual BBQ. We managed to find a small gap in the atrocious weather that we've been having and the evening was fine, dry, sunny and warm. The burgers were good, well received (the Bowling Club membership wolfed a good few too!) and sold quite well – Chairman Steve reckoned that a whole £1 profit was made on the night so that will be a welcome supplement to club funds then.

A big thanks to Steve B (Chief Burger Cook), Mike C (Burger Builder) and Steve D (Burger Sales). Thanks also go to Margaret K for preparing the onions and for the loan of her special onion pan.

Oh, I nearly forgot, there were some great looking machines on the car park that took part in the impromptu car show. A selection of photographs accompany this piece so as to give a flavour of the evening and the classic car attendees.







This & That, Bits & Bobs and a few Odds & Sods

Graham has provided a very good report (see MG Catch Up) on the August Club Night and the much anticipated presentation by Peter Sykes – very interesting and humorous too. Here are a couple of photos, one is of Peter and the other is of his most recent book – just in case you were getting muddled up! Peter started to give his talks and write his books after retiring from the NHS. The talks and book sales are all entirely in aid of East Cheshire Hospice.

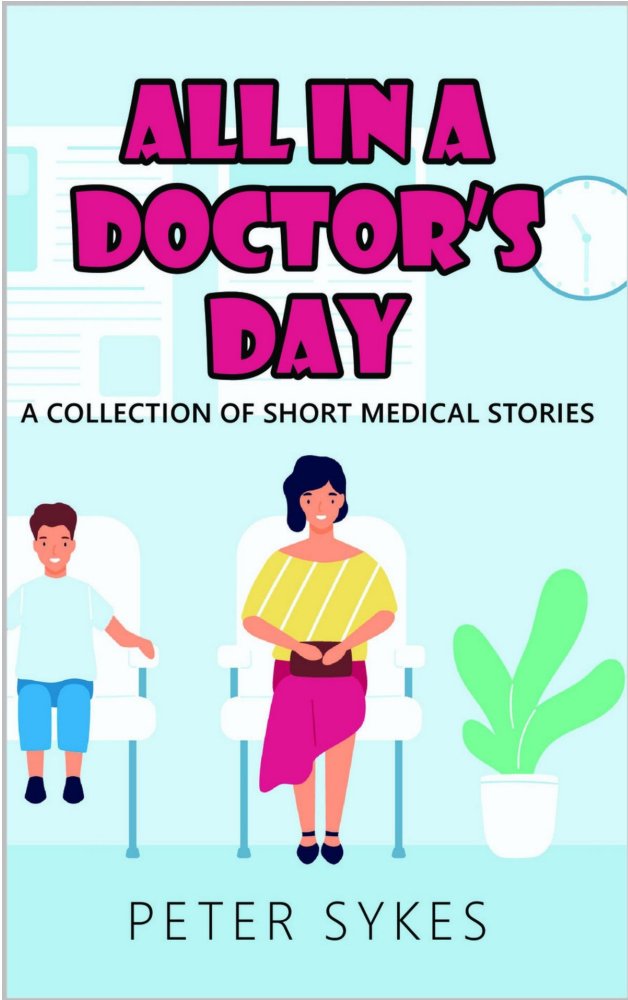
Whilst on the subject of Club Nights and talks/presentations, the Committee has asked for a request to be made to all members. The call is out for speakers who would be willing to give a talk and/or presentation during future Club Nights. This can be a member, a relative, a friend or a colleague etc that would be happy to attend a Club Night and regale us all with a talk on their pet subject(s). This wouldn't necessarily need to be on a motor/transport related subject; it could be, for example, career or hobby related. If you're interested, or know of somebody that is, then please contact Steve Divall or any of the Committee members. Now then, where did I put those notes for my presentation "interesting facts about the inside of a ping-pong ball"?

During a recent trip to North Yorkshire, a pit stop (yes, another coffee/tea break) was made at the NY500 Cafe. If you're not aware of this watering hole and happen to be in the area then it's well worth a visit. The accompanying photo will give you a flavour but this is basically a motor cycle and classic car themed cafe that's situated on the A169 between Malton and Pickering – about 1.5mils outside of Pickering. We didn't sample the food menu but the coffee was very good. There's lots of outside seating, a couple of race/rally cars on outside display and, inside, a small display of automobilia, motor bikes and cars – including a nice Ford Sierra Cosworth, a Rick Wood race prepared Ford Capri and Damon Hill's first F1 car (a Brabham). Why not visit Mathewsons whilst you're up there (Pickering/Thornton-le-Dale) and grab yourself an auction bargain from the home of Bangers and Cash?

Whilst on the subject of N. Yorks and classic vehicles, here's a few photos of examples seen whilst out and about and which were, seemingly, in every day or regular use. The "patinaed" Morris 1000 van was spotted at Castle Howard, the VW Golf GTi Convertible was at Whitby, the Commer Caravanette was parked on Scarborough promenade and the really nice Ford Sierra P100 Pickup was outside Pickering

station. The Commer reminded me, “we all live in a green Commer van, these vans were once like street furniture in the 1960s and 70s (eg yellow BT vans) but are now very rare. I also recall that, as a kid, there was a skit “song” going around (or was it a football chant?) that was, to the tune of the Beatles ‘Yellow Submarine’,

“we all live in a green Commer van, a green Commer van”. In my defence, I can confirm that I was too young to be sampling the exotic substances that were a part of the 1960s youth/pop culture but I can’t have made this up – surely.





Financial Administrator

Jean Knowles

judojean@btinternet.com

Magazine Editor

Keith Yates

keith.yates1957@outlook.com

0161 4498432

Motorcycle Section

Steve Divall

See page 2

MG Section & Advertising

Graham Scattergood

scatt911@outlook.com

Publicity

Helen Bowden

01614273584

Website Administrator

Jane Harrop

janeharrop148@outlook.com

Deputy Magazine Editor

David Bresnahan

dwbresnahan@outlook.com

Commercials Section

Dave Rawson

davidrawson54@yahoo.co.uk

Minutes

Jill Dewsnap

dewsap35@gmail.com

0161 3382098

Charity Co-ordinator

Eric Dewsnap

dewsap35@gmail.com

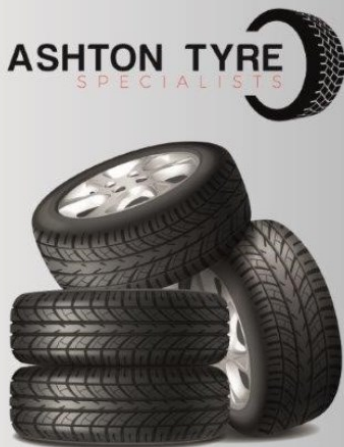
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