

# **TRIPLE-M REGISTER BULLETIN**



**June/July 2013**



**The Kimber Trial 2013**

*Jo Ward manages to dry off some of the Honeypits mud before setting off again  
(Photo: George Ward)*



# **BULLETIN No. 73**

## **June/July 2013**

### **Editorial**

*Front Cover Picture: Photo from Ross Kelly of the engine bay of his K1 Tourer, taken at the MG National Meeting in Toowoomba*

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Future Events	2
Chairman's Jottings	7
Obituaries	9
Crow's Feet and Detent Balls	13
Kimber Classic	16
What, When, Where, Who??	19
Reflections on a Damp Kimber	21
Gearbox Spacers	22
Mark Dolton's Spring Roundup	23
Register Championships	28
Gear Ratios - A Study in Steps	33
J2 History Wanted	39
Hints and Tips	39
Cartoon Competition	40
Your Letters	41
Your Adverts	42
Talelights	43
Contacts	44

Welcome to another Bulletin! Despite my worries of a few weeks ago, we have just managed to fill 44 pages, but not without including a reprint of an old Yearbook article which I feel sure you will find worth reading.

I am sorry to harp on about this, but it is really getting difficult to find new material, so I hope those of you who have useful or interesting information to impart will put fingers to the keyboard - or even pen to paper. As you know, the Bulletin comes out regularly every two months and it is put to bed in the 3rd week of the month, before being sent off to the printers. So, to avoid a last minute panic, please could I ask you to send all contributions to me well before the 3rd week of the preceding month of publication; this also applies to any private adverts that you may want to put in. (These adverts are free to

subscribers but we do like advertisers to contribute a Hint or Tip.)

My final editorial plea concerns photographs. Unfortunately, there have been some sent in recently that were not suitable for publication because they were either too small or of a low resolution. I am sorry that some poor photos have appeared in recent bulletins but some appear to be OK on my laptop but are disappointing when printed. Sadly, photos taken on mobile phones often fall into this category. They may seem OK on the screen but when printed, they are not so good. Photos of Triple M related subjects are most welcome but please make sure that the size/resolution is high.

**That's enough moaning from me, please read on!**

## 2012 Yearbook

Thanks to much hard work by Cathelijne Spoelstra and team the 2012 Register Yearbook is now available. This 80-page full colour publication contains fascinating articles and features, including an account of the racing history of Australian-resident J3s, Mike Allison's researches about the construction of our cars and customer experiences, a technical contribution from Barry Foster about the 'B6' Wolseley-derived engine and how to improve lubrication to the rear main bearing. Amongst other features is Mike Linward's illustrated 26-page report on the competition year. And there's more ....

You can obtain your copy from our on-line Library Shop or in person at Silverstone.



## Future Events - 2013

15/16th June	MG Live, Silverstone	01235 555552
23rd June	75th Anniversary of the Cork Grand Prix	<a href="http://www.triple-mregister.org">www.triple-mregister.org</a>
7th July	Triple-M Register Summer Gathering	See below
7th July	Abingdon Works Centre Car Show	See page 3
20th July	Pre-War Prescott! - Saturday 2013	See page 4
11 August	Petwood Concours	See page 6
23/26 August	Main Register Event, Llandrindod Wells	
Please contact Elizabeth Taylor at <a href="mailto:e.taylor@oakend.net">e.taylor@oakend.net</a> or tel. +44 (0)1628 665055		
28th August	Gerrards Cross Classic Car Show	See page 5
25 -27 October	Rally of the Pre-war MG Register of Australia	

## Triple-M Register Summer Gathering Sunday, 7th July 2013

The Register's Summer Gathering with BBQ lunch is again being organised by Peter Green and will take place at his home in Farnham Royal on Sunday, 7th July. The event is open to all Triple-M owners and their friends, whether their cars are on the road or not. The event will be run on similar lines to previous years, there will be a concours/pride of ownership and a light hearted gymkhana for those that want to take part as well as some other 'fun' competitions to keep everyone amused.

Peter regrets that it will not be possible to enter on the day as he has to know in advance how many people will be attending so that he can provide enough food and drink for everyone, so please enter in plenty of time. The cost of entry is £15.00 per person which includes the BBQ lunch and drinks throughout the day.

An entry form is included with this Bulletin for UK members and it can also be downloaded from the Triple-M website [www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org).

## **The Abingdon Works Car Show**

On the 7th July 2013 between 10:00 and 17:00 the Abingdon Works Centre will be staging a revival of the original Abingdon Works Car Show. An event which in the past has been held in the town and showcases all of the MGs, Austin Healey and Riley RM cars built at the Abingdon factory between 1930 and 1980. Naturally it will also include all marques of MG manufactured from 1925 until the present day. The event, which is in aid of charity, is being organised jointly with the Rotary Club of Abingdon and supported by the MG Car Club. The charities involved are the Macmillan Cancer Support and the Thames Valley Air Ambulance and others.

Everybody will be welcome to the show, whether an owner or an interested member of the public. The event will include an arena parade, gymkhana, traders, local businesses and other commercial suppliers, tuning, sports equipment and a display of vehicles from the original Factory Competitions and Special Tuning Department. We are also very lucky to have the Factory Fire Engine and an early Transporter. All this together with a fun fair for the children, a traditional hog roast and beer tent will make a great day out for everyone.

The show, at Rye Farm Meadow, OX14 3HY on the banks of the River Thames, will also offer a great place for a picnic, a chance to visit the Abingdon Town Museum in the Old County Hall which incorporates the MG Museum and the recently opened MG Garden. It is also planned to offer an optional road run around the old works test circuit. If your car was built in Abingdon it will have travelled on one of these routes after completion. Entries into the Gymkhana and for the road run will carry a small donation to the charities

Entry is free for all eligible classic cars who pre register. A registration form can be found on the Abingdon Works Centre website [www.mgabingdon.co.uk](http://www.mgabingdon.co.uk) under events calendar. Entry by the public or unregistered Classic cars will be charged at £5 but the classics may then be directed to the display area if space is available.

## **Pre-War Prescott! - Saturday 20th July 2013**

I am delighted to invite MMM members to participate in the third Pre-War Prescott Garden Party on Saturday 20th July. Now in its third year, this exciting and rapidly expanding annual event is open to all Edwardian, Vintage and thirties cars and fills a gap in the annual schedule of club events held at this famous hillclimb venue.

Pre-War Prescott is characterised by a relaxed garden party atmosphere that offers untimed climbs of the hill throughout the day. The day is free from the formality of a competitive meet. No flame-proof overalls, helmets or racing licences will be required. Passengers and children may be carried, and saloons are equally welcome to join in the fun.

Full catering and licensed bar facilities will be available all day, the BOC shop will be open and there will be numerous trade stands, autojumble stands and much more to see and do. In addition a number of one-make clubs and registers will be present with their club tents and spares stands. Motor Wheel Services will also be on site and happy to fit new tyres for you during the day. And once again, we are honoured to have the SU Carburettor Company as our main sponsor for the day and the SU boys will be out on the hill with the remarkable Skinner Special.

The event is fast becoming a significant international gathering, the objective of which is to honour equally all those cars that survived World War Two. Many of our pre-war cars were used during the war and contributed materially to our victory. And many of us are now driving cars that were owned in the war by those who never returned, and whose sacrifice paid for the freedoms we enjoy today. To repay just a small part of our debt, the RAF Charitable Trust has been nominated as the official charity of the event, and a significant donation will be made at the end of the day with proceeds from a no-reserve auction of donated spares and automobilia organized by Hereford Vintage Auctions during the lunch break, when we are also expecting a display by aircraft from the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The day will conclude with the award of various prizes followed by a BBQ and live Forties entertainment on the hill. For those wishing to make a weekend of it, there will be a Cotswold Navigation Rally and parallel Scenic Tour on Sunday.

Much more is in the pipeline for this year's expanded event, and breaking news can be found on the event website at [www.prewarprescott.com](http://www.prewarprescott.com), where online entries can also be made.

Ian Grace [vintageminor@gmail.com](mailto:vintageminor@gmail.com)

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**Concours d'Elegance**  
**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2013**



You are invited by Mike Hewson, Norman Fisher and Stewart Parker along with the Petwood Hotel to the 4<sup>th</sup> event here at the hotel in The Temple Gardens by the Lake.

Entry will be from 10am with tea, coffee and biscuits available in the Garden Room until 12.30pm. The Terrace bar will also be available from 11am to purchase refreshments. There will be Live Jazz by Peter Tabak on the terrace between 12noon and 2.30pm.

A hog roast will be served on the terrace from 12noon to 2.30pm, priced at £5.95 per person. Alternatively you may wish to book Sunday lunch in the Restaurant, priced at £19.60 per person. Bookings are essential, please contact reception as soon as possible T: 01526 352411.

**The Concours d'Elegance will consist of 9 classes:**

1. Motor Cars built no later than 1940
2. Motor Cars built between 1945 & 1969 inclusive
3. Motor Cars built between 1960 & 1969 inclusive
4. Motor Cars built between 1970 & 1985 inclusive
5. Motorcycles built no later than 1930
6. Motorcycles built between 1931 & 1940 inclusive
7. Motorcycles built between 1941 and 1970 inclusive
8. Racing motorcycles pre 1970
9. Masters Class for award winners at 2010, 2011 and 2012 events

All entrants will also automatically be entered into the Petwood Choice Competition where the winner will be chosen by a representative of the Hotel. The organisers reserve the right to merge any class where, in their opinion there are insufficient entries.

**Awards**

An award will be presented to the winner of each class and the Petwood Choice Competition with complimentary presentations to the runners up.

There will also be a special awards for the 'Car of the Day' and the H & H Classic Trophies.

No car or motorcycle may win more than one award.

Each car and motorcycle will be judged on originality, mechanical condition and presentation. The Judges decision is final and no objections in relation to the results will be considered.

The announcement of the results and presentations will be around 4.30pm.

**Entries**

To be forwarded to the Secretary of the Meeting by **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2013** – Mike Hewson - The Cherry Trees, Bucknall, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire LN10 6DT (Tel: 01526 388680)

The entry fee is £7.00 per car and £5.00 per Motorcycle provided it is received before the closing date. Entries will be accepted thereafter and also on the day at a fee of £9.00/£7.00 respectively. Due to the cost of postage, entries will not be acknowledged unless accompanied by an SAE.

**ENTRANTS MUST SIGN ON BY 12.45PM AND JUDGING WILL COMMENCE AT 2PM**

There will be no supercar display this year. Except for officials no post 1985 vehicles will be allowed into the Temple Gardens. Only competitors will be admitted into the Gardens, all other visitors are asked to park in the main car park.

**Joint Organisers:**

Mike Hewson – The Cherry Trees, Bucknall, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire LN10 6DT (01526 388680)

Norman Fisher – Orchard Lodge, Stowfold, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire LN10 5HP (01526 364073)

Stewart Parker – PO BOX 4, Brigg, NE Lincolnshire DN20 6TA (01652 657603)

E-mail: [concours@thepetwood.co.uk](mailto:concours@thepetwood.co.uk)

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## Chairman's Jottings

It's now mid-May as I write this and here in the UK we have had a rather fitful start to Spring before the weather gremlins decided to revert to the rains and chill that should surely have passed by now. Maybe things are better where you reside, dear reader? Enough of the British obsession with climate – I had better find something else to talk about.

On the Committee front I am very pleased to report that Jeremy Hawke has been co-opted to our number. He will take over the Safety Fast Scribe's pen with effect from the July edition. There is an interview with Jeremy in June's Safety Fast and judging by his thoughtful and interesting responses his notes in the months and (let's hope) the years ahead will be full of interest. Just as the Editor of this Bulletin is very dependent on you sending in material for publication, so too is Jeremy, so please support him by sending him at [mgk3007@supanet.com](mailto:mgk3007@supanet.com) jottings, articles, pictures or anything that you think other people might like to read.

On a sadder note we have to report that during the past two months we have lost two much-loved friends and stalwarts of our Triple-M community: Terry Andrews and Eric Tieche.

Terry Andrews died on Sunday evening, 14th April, 2013, having battled with multiple myeloma over a protracted period of time. Terry's sunny and optimistic disposition will be missed by all who were privileged to know him. His memorial service on 3rd May at St Margaret's Lee was attended by very many Triple-M friends. Terry contributed to the Triple-M world in more ways than can be recounted in this brief note. As a mark of respect, June's Safety Fast contains a number of affectionate comments gathered from his friends. In this edition of the Bulletin Philip Bayne-Powell has added his own appreciation, drawing on his own reminiscences and those of Terry's close friend Mark Deacon, who gave a moving address at the memorial service. On behalf of all of us I extend deepest sympathies to Margaret Andrews and her family at this time.

Eric Tieche passed away peacefully on Thursday 25th April, 2013 at the grand age of 97. His long-time friend Terry Holden has contributed a tribute which appears in Safety Fast. Others have spoken about this exceptional man – “a truly gifted hands on engineer and most generous with his help and advice” – “not only a highly respected figure but one of the most intelligent and interesting characters you could ever meet” – “the many exquisite cars that he and Colin rebuilt and campaigned over the years are testament to the attention to engineering detail that he never veered from” – “one of the finest engineers to cross my path”.

We express sincere condolences to Eric's daughter Pauline and his son Colin.

But life goes on, and I hope that many of you will manage to attend MG Live on 15/16

[www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org)

June. The Register has a stand and Library stall in the main MG Car Club Pavilion where Committee members and helpers will be present in force, so do drop in and you will be made most welcome. Do please also support the traders upon whom we are all very dependent – most of them will have a presence at the event and will be happy to take your money!

Our UK Summer touring event – The Welsh Marches Weekend – is now virtually fully subscribed. At the time of writing all of the 62 allocated rooms at the Metropole Hotel have been taken. Although we can still accept late requests to enter the event, anybody requiring accommodation will be dependent on availability of rooms at other hotels or B&Bs in the area, over which we have no control. If you do wish to take part in the event I suggest you contact Elizabeth Taylor immediately you receive this Bulletin and she will give you contact details for hotels or B&Bs.

For those of you who live in more distant climes, please remember that the Register exists to support you across the miles. You can stay in touch and exchange information, wants, sales, etc. via our very popular website Discussion Forum at [www.triple-mregister.org/forums/default.asp](http://www.triple-mregister.org/forums/default.asp) We are very fortunate to have this tremendous resource at our disposal and our webmaster Nick Feakes is constantly working on improvements; watch this space for a 'self-service' pictures section!

Until next time.....  
Dick Morbey



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## Obituaries

### Chris Lewis



It is with great sadness we have to report the passing of Chris Lewis.

Chris has been an active member of the South West Centre for many years. He passed away on 25th January 2013 after almost 2 years fighting Brain Cancer.

He studied Combustion Engineering at Sheffield University and was later employed by Rolls Royce, working on Concorde and Proteus Engines.

He was a keen member of the MMM register, driving his 4 seat PB to MG events and also frequently toured France with his French Wife and family. He was also a member of the Austin 7 Club.

Chris will always be remembered for his help and kindness, using his engineering knowledge to assist any one in need. On one occasion he offered us his spare head gasket, then, spent most of the day fitting it, sacrificing his own days fun. He then escorted us most of the way home. This was the measure of the man. All in the South West will remember him with great fondness and esteem. A real gentleman!

Our sympathy goes to his wife Elizabeth, who always accompanied him on his MG travels also to his children and new grandchild.

*Derek Moore and family.*

## Terry Andrews 1947- 2013



It is with great regret that we have to report the recent death of one of the MG Car Club's great stalwart enthusiasts. Terry was primarily into Triple-M cars, and produced many parts for fellow enthusiasts, as well as helping out anyone who needed his assistance.

Terry was born in February 1947 in the family home in Eltham, to join his older brother Mick; his father worked in the Woolwich Arsenal. After Deansfield Primary school, Terry went to the Catford Boy's School. The family was now living in a prefab in Gavestone Crescent. His first set of wheels was an NSU Quickly, which he restored so he could ride to school. Brands Hatch was not far away, and was regularly visited with friends,

In 1963 Terry was dangerously ill after a burst appendix, and nearly died; he was in hospital for 3 months, but being a natural fighter he pulled himself round, to return home to be with his new sister, Julie.

Having missed a year of school, Terry took on an engineering apprenticeship with the GPO, helped by his aero modelling skills. He soon bought his first car, a Speedwell Blue Mini, and travelled all over SE London and north Kent looking after telephone exchanges.

Terry met Margaret at Badminton club and they were married in April 1971, setting up home in Bexleyheath. They had two sons, Tim and Peter, and in 1993 moved to Lawn

Close in Sidcup, where they had a garage with house attached. The garage was subsequently extended by "The Pentagon", which had access from a lane at the back of the house. In true Terry style, this was a first class job, and the envy of all who saw it. Terry was also doing up the house for Margaret during this time, and not being content with second best, it took longer than anticipated! At one stage the staircase was being replaced, and a ladder was used to gain access to the first floor!

Terry's first MG was a 1935 PA 2-seater, in need of a complete restoration, and is the lovely 2-tone blue car we have seen him and Margaret in for many years, attending Triple-M rallies in the UK, as well as abroad, being a regular at the popular Luxembourg rallies. He then bought a completely dismantled TF in Glasgow, which he restored to concours condition for Margaret. He subsequently bought a NA 2-seater, which was being restored/rebuilt by my welder in Ash; this car hasn't progressed very far in the last 2-3 years, much to Terry's disgust. However a chance find of a rare, and very original, L-type Continental Coupe had Terry all fired up again, and he contacted the few survivors of these cars, and arranged to have six sliding roofs made up, as these items were missing on most of the cars, and they have a very complicated operating and locking system. This car was being professionally restored, as Terry had by now contracted multiple myeloma, and it was hoped would be finished before Terry past away. Unfortunately although it was very nearly done, it is not back on the road, but the family is having it finished as a tribute to Terry.

This was typical of Terry, helping out other people and getting items made up using his wide range of contacts. He had a batch of 2-brush dynamos made up, before these were available from the spare parts suppliers. He also had a batch of Malcolm Campbell steering wheels made up, as well as many other items that he arranged for his fellow Triple-M owners. If Terry said he could help you out with any items, you could be sure that it would soon turn up. This help and assistance was what we will always remember Terry for. He spent much time and effort helping out his fellow man, often causing his own restorations (of cars and house) to be delayed. Nothing was too much trouble for Terry.

Not content with just producing difficult and unobtainable parts for people, Terry also managed to find time to edit the Triple-M annual Yearbook. He also gave lectures at the popular workshop in Louvain, Belgium, which was organised by his good friend, Stefaan Vernys.

Terry continued to work at BT in various managerial posts, as he had very good organisational and managerial skills, eventually finishing as a business planner and senior networks business process analyst. In 1998 he took voluntary redundancy, and did a few short-term projects, before being headhunted to project manage the introduction of the Oyster card system on the London Underground, which has now spread outwards to many regions of the railway system; a real feather in Terry's cap. This project finished in 2005, allowing Terry to concentrate full time on his cars.

In 2010 Terry was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, which seriously crippled him, causing him to resort to a wheel chair, but soon he seemed to be getting better, and we were all pleased to see him at meetings again, albeit with walking sticks or a wheeled zimmer with seat attached. He had many visits and treatments over the three years, and was always cheerful and optimistic, so that most people didn't know how bad he really was. Throughout this period, Margaret was always by his side giving him moral and physical support. Just before he found that he had this incurable cancer, Terry and Margaret went to America and visited the Kennedy Space Centre, where he bought a plaque of their motto "Failure is not an Option". This was Terry's attitude throughout his very full life.

We will always remember the smiling and ever cheerful Terry, and give Margaret and his two sons our heart-felt support in these hard times.

*Philip Bayne-Powell*

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# Crow's Feet and Detent Balls

## Words and pictures from Bob Walker

It is always the case that there are more ways to kill a pig than choking it with butter, so in the long history of F type head gaskets and in the light of Ewan's excellent article, here are some more thoughts involving crow's feet; the detent balls part is connected through the Law of Sodd which may become clear later.

The traditional type of head gasket requires tightening in generally three stages, the first obviously with everything cold, then after reaching running temperature, when it will be found that the nuts will turn some more at the same torque setting, and again after a good run. Doing this with a hot Triple-M is not without problems. With rocker shafts in place, ordinary sockets and a torque wrench can't be used. Open ended spanners find access difficult or impossible, and the nicely warm exhaust and water manifolds add to the fun. Ewan's method solves the problem. Another method would be to remove the various manifolds to permit access for spanners but not a torque wrench. By then you have burnt your fingers and when putting everything back will probably drop a nut, washer, or both down the inlet manifold.

The crow's foot spanner is a way of getting at the inaccessible nuts without dismantling anything and being able to use a torque wrench for good measure. The bad news is that B.S.F. versions make hen's teeth look easy to find. People like myself [possessed of welder and machine tools] could try the home made route. My first attempt involved a rather tired B.S.F. spanner which made both 5/16 and 3/8 sizes with the addition of a couple of welded on bolts [ Photo 1 ].

The smaller size died when tightening down the F head with its nice solid copper gasket. Delving into the scrap metal box for the second attempt yielded no high tensile material but a piece of 5/8 thick mild plate which gave rise to the items in photo 2. The jaws were



Photo 1  
[www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org)

milled, leaving a bridge over the top with a hole to take the protruding end of the studs. The thing has worked OK so far on the F.

By chance, Tony Hay was seeking peace of mind with his NA and wanted to check that the head was tight - an ideal opportunity to try the 3/8 size.



Photo 2

Sodd's Law stated that his studs would be too long for the bridge bit to go over, so I still don't know if the mild steel version will work in the larger size. With the aid of a multiplicity of spanners we found that all was indeed well. I had contorted myself into position beneath the steering column and was regretting not having taken with me an improving book. I posted the rev counter drive through to Tony who, after a delay of no more than a microsecond, stated " It's gone in".

Anybody familiar with this scenario knows such an outcome to be without precedent; in normal circumstances there are several new entries in the book of words.



Photo 3

It was therefore in a state of shock that, after Tony had left, I returned to work on the discumknockerated D type remote from Tony Margel's M type. I needed to install the selector forks into the gearbox lid. This requires that the detent ball and spring



be in position, a job that looked like it would require a tame and very slim octopus. The solution that worked nicely and which will no doubt have been thought of before, involved a short length of round 7/16 bar [same diameter as the selector shafts]. One end is faced off square and the other has an angle grinder disc and round file applied to it with result as photo 3.

In photo 4 the pieces are in position ready to push the bar a little further through, which puts the ball where you want it. The selector fork with bar inside it then goes into position in the gearbox lid and, not forgetting the spacer tube, the selector rod is put in to come up against the square faced end of the bar which it drives out leaving the ball in the selector fork rather than somewhere in the workshop.



## Kimber Classic Capers in the Wet and Windy West

by Jo and George Ward

### The Trial



*Alan Grassam on Batcombe (Just!) - Photo from Patrick Gardner*

It was a story of magnificent marshals, weather-crazed competitors and a lot of Dutch courage.

Windmill Hill set the tone for the day when after going down hill, on the timed Special Test 1, many had great difficulty getting up the tame-looking grassy slope out of the field. In fact only the Flying Dutchman Thijs De Groot and two of the Austin 7s managed to clear the numbered Section 1 back up the hill.

Section 2 Barrow Lane proved to be a complete 'stopper' for the first few who attempted it and hence was cancelled when the backlog of cars, waiting to have a go, got too large. Section 3 Short Cross revived spirits when everyone managed to clear it, including the restart.

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*Kim Jenkins in Allam splash - Photo from Richard Jenkins*

Things literally soon got sticky again, as the approach to the start of Section 4 Honeyfits was more tricky than the hill itself, and consequently half a dozen failed to reach or leave the start.

The final section in the morning, Osborne Stoney Lane, only claimed Mike Linward in the J2 at the restart, when his recently replaced clutch started playing up.

Lunchtime at the very welcoming Camelot pub in South Cadbury gave a chance to dry off, warm-up and revive the inner man (and woman) but unfortunately not necessarily together

The first hill after lunch Batcombe was a real challenge with only a handful of the serious survivors even attempting it. Even last year's MMM class winner managed to park his car half way up the hill in a most precarious and embarrassing position.

Surprisingly Section 7 Allham Splash only claimed 5 victims despite the dampish conditions.

Honeycliffe Section 8 was another potential 'stopper' even with the restart cancelled, leading to 3 failures from the remaining greatly reduced field.

Finally Pitcombe restored hope as the aptly named Hell's Ladder was cancelled and

all you had to do was negotiate the muddy puddles to exit the section and claim your Finisher's Certificate.

In summary:

- 35 entrants (7 Dutch),
- 34 starters,
- 16 retired,
- 18 finishers.

Awards:

- Kimber Trophy
- Thijs De Groot, J2
- Class 1& 2:
  - 1st George Ward, PA,
  - 2nd Oliver Richardson M,
- Class 1-3
  - Best Non MG: Anne Whellock, Austin 7
- Class 3,4,5,9
  - John York, MG Midget
- Charles Shepstone Trophy (Best Novice)
  - Richard Robins, MG TC
- Best Team:
  - Roosters, Alan Grassam, Philip Coombs and John Haine, all in M Types.

In conclusion, another splendid day's sport despite the dismal weather, thanks to Andrew Owst, Bruce Weston and all the marvellous marshals and South West Centre supporters who turned out and made the event possible. Here's to next year's event, hopefully in the sun.

### **Driving Tests**

On the Sunday the sun came out and about half of the Saturday survivors made it to Barry & Hamish's holiday camp for weary trial drivers – to be further tortured by devilish driving tests. The outcome, largely determined by the tricky incursion into North Korea to defuse the missile aimed at Glastonbury Tor, was success for Richard Jenkins in the N type, closely followed by Frank Holtrigter in the NB and Thijs De Groot in the J2.

Thanks go to our hosts plus Bruce and his patient marshals for entertaining us and winding up a great weekend in such pleasant company and surroundings.

## What, When, Where, Who??



Bryan Ditchman has unearthed some mystery trialling photos, of which the locations are uncertain. The third of these photos (above) shows J.E.S. Jones (232) in BBL80 on the '39 Exeter. Does anyone know the location?

Windout has been suggested but the photos on the following page, showing Windout in 2006, would seem to dispute this suggestion.

On the upper photo of Windout, the contours of the hills in the background are clearly different from those in the 1939 photo, whilst the lower photo shows a fork in the stream which is not evident in the 1939 photo.

Any suggestions?

### **Addendum to the last mystery photo ref Lewis Welch and JB7521**

Bryan Ditchman is grateful to Mike Dalby for informing him that Lewis Welch also drove the PB Cracker JB7521 in the Scottish Rally. (See article in Safety Fast - Feb 2011, pages 38-43.' Also, the editor apologises for mistyping 'Cheltenham' instead of 'Cloutsham'.



Windout in 2006 (see previous page)




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## Reflections on a Damp Kimber

As some of you know, it does not take much adversity to make me lose my sense of humour; so I raise my cap (which does not happen often) to Bruce and the stalwarts who ran the Kimber Trial this year, manning the hills in unrelenting wet weather to make the event work; in addition I complement the great crowd from the Netherlands, always positive and laughing, walking off with the Kimber Trophy.

As Colin Butchers (older than me and far more experienced) pointed out to me, it developed into a difficult trial; but finally we were most impressed with a smiling Andrew, thanking us for entering, as he gave us our finisher's certificate in the pouring rain, having had to cancel the last two hills.  
D'Artagnan.




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# Gearbox Spacers

by Ian T Coxen

At the end of 1999, through Octagon & MG Car Club MMM members I sought and collected information on this subject, putting forward figures and suggestions as to what was the position. Thanks went to 5 persons who provided information to my own position and I try to list those for your knowledge.

Spacers should be on 1st/2nd rod, but in our group do appear on 3rd & top at times and always reverse.

Most J/P boxes -front spacer	1 3/4"(44mm)	rear 2nd	21/32"(17mm)
One J box	ditto	1 3/16"(30mm)	rear 11/16"(17.46)
One PA Box	ditto	2" (50mm)	rear 21/32 as top set

The Wolseley box, good for trialling, which is 3/4" longer according to history but actually proved to be exactly 1" longer, producing a direct relationship of a 1" longer front spacer at 2 3/4" but the rear still 21/32". However it had on the 3rd & 4th gears a 1 3/4" and rear 9/16"(15mm) rear one. Ask yourself why does a humble saloon need 4 whilst the sports have 2? Heavier car abuse

Reverse produced a surprise, in that there were a variety of differing linkages, we think more variations than manuals show. The normal spacer was 13/32"(10mm), some marginally more.

Our conclusions were that there should only be spacers on 1st & 2nd. They are there purely to assist the changes to bring the moving parts to a positive stop and full engagement. We felt that 1 3/4" & 21/32" were standard and probably 13/32" on reverse, concluding that at the works they probably had boxes with one or two other additional longer/shorter spacers to hand, as we do not think money would have been spent in grinding pieces by hand. If you want to add spacers to the other shaft there appears no reason why you should not do so to get that positive change.

The trials 4 speed Wolseley box might be a red herring in that perhaps it could be another 10 or 12hp box from the range of cars. Indeed some of the boxes from which we obtained information may well have been built up from other spares, perhaps, accounting for the variations given.

What would be nice to see, if a members has these, is the factory drawings showing the spacers and obtain the measurements from them for the benefit of all MMM owners. I would mention that we were all owners of cars, not professionals and persons were asked to measure the sizes, sometimes with the gearbox in the car ! You try it! Hope it helps, Ian



## Mark Dolton's Spring Round-up



**Silverstone Spring Start 20/21st April 2013**

### ***Mike Painter Race 1 Victor***

It was easy to forget the cold long winter as this fantastic 2 day event blasted into life in great sunny conditions. The first 2 day event for the VSCC at Silverstone, combining a great collection of historic motorsports to complement the VSCC events, supported and televised by Motors TV. It really was a great example of how to run a 2 day event at Silverstone, without any hint of the GP circuit! Instead the 2 days ran on the national circuit which seems so much more suited to this type of motorsport. As always, as one of the first events of the year, the grids were full, with some grids attracting 40 starters! There is no lack of willing drivers and no lack of Triple M racers with a great list of entries. I must say it's a real attraction for me and I hope to be on the grid for this event in 2014. Competitive racing in a really friendly and enjoyable club environment.

The triple M contingent were going well, mixing it up through the fields across 9 of the races on the weekend. My personal favourite was race 1. I was sitting with my 5 yr old on the copse banking, enjoying an ice cream in the sunshine, watching Mike Painter obliterate the field in the Kayne special. It brought back great memories of my childhood days at Silverstone, although I'm not sure I remember the sun!!! Mike was miles in front, the car sounding and going brilliantly. Mike's smile in the paddock summed it up for me and certainly put the MGs on the map right at the start!

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J2s of Andrew Harrington and David Downes proved just how much fun you can have in our cars on the track. They might lack the pace of many but clearly enjoyed their own tussles out on the circuit. The shorter National circuit allows for the lower capacity cars to enjoy themselves far more than the vast expanses of the GP track.

There were some new cars on show for me too, including David Seber's PB, a very good looking car. I had also not seen Chris Smith's immaculate NB before and it was great to see Jeremy Rivers Fletcher mixing it up in the offset NA amongst a very quick grid of pre 41 racing cars. Jeremy took 1st in the 1100cc class.

Off the track we didn't quite all manage to meet up as a collective but certainly bumped into many of the Triple M Brigade out and about. My good Friend James Critchley successfully collected his new car, Mike Pancheri's PA in the vintage car park. No pressure for the first timer! Most began to wonder what on earth James was up to as he searched for the starting button. It became apparent that snow and dark evenings had prevented him from ever having driven the car before. Anyway much encouraged by helpful friendly comments and with a few pointers on how to drive they were off for a test spin. Then James's first ever trip in a vintage car took him round the M25 and into London and Peckham. The car ran immaculately and only needed one rest in the traffic late on to avoid overheating. James would like to thank everyone for their kind words and advice and perhaps more importantly ."many, many thanks to Mike for entrusting us with his car. I'm very lucky to be its latest custodian and I am really looking forward to getting to know the MG and taking it on more adventures. In short I am hooked."

So all in all a fantastic start to the 2013 season. Always a joy to be able to enjoy such incredible racing, the atmosphere, smell and noise is quite addictive. Pretty good being able to watch it all on TV the following day too!

#### Saturday

##### Race 1 VSCC Scratch 5 lap

1st	Mike Painter	MG Kayne Special	Best Lap 1:22:56
16th	Tanya Lewis	MG KN/K3 Rep	1:32:79
18th	Simon Etherington	MG PB	1:34:49
19th	David Seber	MG PB	1:34:22
26th	Chris Cadman	MG M	1:50:87

##### Race 4 Fox and Nicholl Trophy, Standard and Modified Pre war sports cars (VSCC SET 3)

19th	Barry Foster	MG Monthery	1:27.32
36th	Chris Smith	MG NB	1:39:95
38th	David Downes	MG J2	1:42:48
39th	Andrew Harrington	MG J2	1:53:06

#### Race 6 VSCC Handicap

20th	Peter Haynes	MG Q Type Rep	1:32:03
22nd	Simon Etherington	MG PB	1:34:67
29th	David Seber	MG PB	1:34:87
30th	Anne Boursot	MG PA	1:56:25

#### Race 7 Scratch race for Pre war cars ( Set 5)

23rd	David Seber	MG PB	1:44:10
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#### Race 9 Silverstone trophy – Special and pre war sports cars ( Set 4)

16th	Simon Etherington	MG PB	1:35:22
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#### Race 11 – VSCC Regularity Trial

Fred Boothby	MG J2	1:37:94
Anne Boursot	MG PA	1:48:36
Kenneth Sheffield	MG D Type Sports	1:58:69

#### Race 1 - VSCC Standard and Modified Pre 1941 Racing cars

10th	Jeremy Rivers-Fletcher	MG NA	1:33:87	1st in class up to 1100cc
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#### Race 3 VSCC Standard and Modified Pre war sports cars

17th	Barry Foster	MG Monthery	1:27.58
28th	David Downes	J2	1:43.91
29th	Andrew Harrington	J2	1:54.26

#### Race 10 - Handicap for pre war special sports cars

13th	Simon Etherington	MG PB	1:34:24
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Full results available on the VSCC website

### **Curborough, 5th May 2013**

Curborough is a very relaxed club event, and a terrific day of sunshine really helped to make it a top day out. The sprint course, just one lap, is short. So you definitely have time to read the Sunday paper and take a long lunch in between your runs. Like Prescott, the challenge on these short courses is where on earth you target making up time. There is really no opportunity to correct any mistakes made early in the run. The class systems here don't make for much competition; all specials bundled in with us with superchargers. So it's left to handicaps and beating yourself or the other MGs!!

The dry hot conditions certainly helped to produce some quick times with some scarily quick performances from the ERA's and Darraq! Ian Baxter was not far off the FTD taking 2nd in class 14 with a 38.49, just behind the ERA of Mac Hulbert who clocked 36.27.



***Duncan Potter in his C-Type - Photo: David M. Jones***

Mike Painter continued his domination from Silverstone, unable to break the 40 secs golden target with a 40.78 but enough to take 1st place in class 6. John Seber and Chris Broad were well off the pace in the PB, struggling with oily plugs and perhaps taking it gently whilst getting to know the car.

In Class 1 Frank Ashley couldn't quite match his usual times, slightly frustrated by his own or the car's performance. In class 3 we had a good Triple M battle, my PB, Les Procter's Q Rep and Duncan Potter's C Type. Duncan had a season's rest last year but was back in anger with some really strong runs. The C Type is far more sorted than we've seen previously, clocking a 47.44. It's also now sporting go faster, boy racer number roundels, which clearly have made all the difference. Les in the Q was quicker in practice but I managed to sneak inside the Q's time on my first run. Les couldn't match his impressive practise times so for the first time in any event I managed to pip him. 46.19 in the PB was nearly 2 secs quicker than my previous best at Curborough, just about hanging on to 3rd on Handicap. Now I have a rev counter that goes above 6000rpm it's a little more worrying as I can actually see how hard I'm pushing!!

Another cracking day at Curborough, great friendly organisation as ever. Just must remember the sun cream next time out!!!



**Frank Ashley in his M -Type - Photo: David M. Jones**

Triple M results

117	Ian Baxter	MG Bellevue Special s	38.49	2nd In class 14
100	Mike Painter	MG Kayne Special	40.78	1st Class 6
44	Mark Dolton	MG PB s	46.19	3rd Handicap 16th/28 Class 3
48	Les Proctor	MG Q Type Rep	46.55	17th /28 Class 3
38	Duncan Potter	MG C Type	47.44	19th / 28 Class 3
101	John Seber	MG PB s	49.79	10th /14 Class 6
6	Frank Ashley	MG M Type	51.96	14th / 18 Class 1
701	Christopher Broad	MG PBs	60.09	14th /14 Class 6

**Wiscombe Park 12th May 2013**

Unfortunately I didn't make it down to Wiscombe this year and looking at the weather, I might have selected my events wisely. It's a tough course, difficult to assess the damp or drying conditions as you head into the forest for the 2nd half of the run. It was cold but dry for practice but very wet for the afternoon runs. There were 7 MMM cars on show.

Rachael Holdsworth, PB, started very well beating her previous best time by over 1 sec in practice and was confident she would do even better in the afternoon. Then the rain came! After a very lairy moment on her first, she decided on caution from then on as it was her first ever event in the wet. Phil Coombs, J2, continued where he left off from last season, taking another 1st on handicap. Ian Baxter, current Speed Championship holder, is well set again for 2013 after another blistering run of 52.98 (2nd in class 7). The power of the Bellevue is a challenge in the dry, so it must be hair raising in the wet! Ian finished fractions of a second behind ERA R4A that took fastest pre-war award with a 52.50. Another fantastic effort.

#### Triple M results

165	Ian Baxter	MG Bellevue Special s	52.98	2nd in class
17	Frank Ashley	MG M Type	70.97	
144	John Seber	MG PBs	71.06	
31	Richard Jenkins	MG N Type	73.22	
14	Philip Coombs	MG J2	73.16	1st handicap
32	Rachael Holdsworth	MG PB s	75.09	
19	Philip Bayne-Powell	MG C Type	76.60	

Plenty of action to come in 2013. My next stop is Cadwell park for the VSCC track day. An opportunity to get some valuable track time in the PB ahead of getting my ARDS for next season. Bags of time on track, so very good value and I look forward to watching the racing the next day. Then it's off to Silverstone for MG Live the following , so looking forward to seeing many of you then!

All the best  
Mark Dolton

## **Triple-M Register Championships** **- Mike Linward, Competition Secretary**

Almost half way through the year and, in the UK at least, the effects of last winter have not quite gone away as cold, wet, north and east winds continue to blow across the land with unseasonable regularity. These conditions are not conducive to open air motoring. The first of the year's race meetings at a cold, but dry, Vintage Silverstone had a good selection of MGs taking part. The first scratch race saw Mike Painter's Kayne Special produce a convincing performance in winning by more than seven seconds from the rest of the field of thirty. Mike's average speed for the race was over 70 mph with a best lap of 71.47 mph on his second of five laps. The next fastest MG, the supercharged KN driven by Tanya Lewis was 10 mph slower. First time out was the ex-Ted Lund supercharged PB racer, BTU 260, driven by David Seber. The

Sebers, more associated with indecently quick Wolseley Hornet Specials, had been asked by the owners of the PB to put the car back into a serviceable, racing condition and use it competitively this year. It will be interesting to see how this works out as the car has plenty of untapped potential. The other 'new' car competing was the ex-Dugdale single seat N type driven by Jeremy Rivers-Fletcher. The car competed in one race, for pre-1941 standard and modified race cars and despite finishing two laps behind the race winner was adjudged second on handicap - another car with plenty of potential. Three MGs took part in the Regularity Trial, a welcome feature of the Vintage weekend but sadly, and for some time now, removed from the MG Car Club's Silverstone International Weekend premier race meeting. On this occasion, none of the three qualified for an award but Anne Boursot, a first time competitor in Hamish McNinch's PA, completed fifteen laps in the half-hour allocation at an average of more than 50 mph, a very competent performance having in mind that Anne had not driven a Triple-M, or any car with a crash gearbox, before and experience in the PA was limited to a short practice around the country lanes.

The first of the non-race speed events took place at Curborough on 5th May with eight MGs taking part. Once again, Mike Painter's Kayne Special was the pick of the bunch, winning the pre-'41 racing car class for cars up to 1100cc. John Seber was exercising the ex-Lund PB on this occasion and reported that changes to the set up from Silverstone were showing improvements to the car's performance. Ian Baxter narrowly missed out on a class win in the NA Bellevue Special in racing Class 7. Once again Terry Crabb's ERA R12C proved to be the quicker car but only by 0.68 seconds. In the 'Up to 1500cc Sports Car' class, the three MGs of Mark Dolton, PB, Stuart Procter, PB and Duncan Potter's C type all finished mid-class with Mark's PB being adjudged third on handicap. The second speed event to take place was at Wiscombe Park on the 12th May. Unfortunately the dry weather for the morning's practice did not extend to the afternoon's timed runs and although the rain had stopped by mid-afternoon, the track surface never dried out enough for fast times. Frank Ashley's M type was the quickest MG in Class 2 but Philip Coombs' J2 claimed the handicap award. Philip Bayne-Powell's C type was running quite poorly and almost ten seconds slower than last year, partly put down to a blown inlet manifold gasket discovered after the event. In Class 3, Richard Jenkins' unblown NA was just able to hold off the challenge from Rachael Holdsworth's supercharged PB, although the PB was faster in practice. John Seber managed to get his PB down to 62.59 seconds in practice before the rains came, but ended up near the bottom of the Class. There was a similar story for Ian Baxter's Bellevue Special NA, which led the racing Class 14 after practice but had to settle for second spot in the competition proper.

The first half of the trials season finished with the ACTC Ilkley & District Motor Clubs' Ilkley trial on 12th May, Bill Bennett's J2 being the only MG entrant in Class 2 for pre-'39 cars and finishing second on this occasion. It has not been a happy year so far for Bill and the J2. A Silver Award in the MCC Exeter was the result of one

failure on the first section of the trial. Poor signage, in the dark, caused Bill to take a wrong route on the section. There was further disappointment in the MCC Lands End trial at Easter where Bill had a disputed finish, which has still not been resolved. Nevertheless, Bill leads the Slade Trophy competition by a country mile as all other drivers on the list have only taken part in one trial, namely the MGCC Kimber in April. The least said about that event, from this writer's point of view, the better but a full report appears elsewhere in this Bulletin.

**C.O.T.Y. 2013  
Scores to 23rd May**

Position	Register Number	Car	Registration Number	Driver/s	Points
1st	909	J2-PA/s	FW 3909	Bill Bennett	62
2nd	2362	NA	BTT 726	Richard Jenkins Neil MacKay James Mather	
=3rd	2960	J2	AM-30-25	Thijs de Groot	42
"	2694	J2-PB/s	Kayne Spl.	Mike Painter	27
"	1426	NA/s ss	Bellevue Spl.	Ian Baxter	27
6th	920	PA	TG 8337	George Ward	25
=7th	2615	PB	BOF 564	Tim Beckh	18
"	360	PB/s	BTU 260	John Seber David Seber	18
9th	1746	NB	JB 4846	Frank Holtrigter	17
10th	148	M	OY 1548	John Haine	15
=11th	1883	J2	PO 8865	Patrick Gardner	14
"	1595	M	PG 1045	Frank Ashley	14
13th	1931	C/s	VD 30	Barry Foster	12
=14th	691	NA All'ham	BYU 271	Philip Bayne-Powell Rosemary Bayne-Powell	11
"	1018	J2	MG 2853	Philip Coombs	11
=16th	3303	M	LS 2464	Oliver Richardson	10
"	-	PB/s	-	Simon Etherington	10
=18th	3	J2	DG 5404	Jeremy Hawke	9
"	1135	M	SV 5438	Alan Grassam	9
"	-	M	HX 91	Chris Cadman	9
"	2170	PB/s	CLX 112	Mark Dolton	9
=22nd	907	K1	ADH 360	Neil MacKay Ewan Graham Mark Darnell	7
"	1551	PA	CYE 387	Barny Creaser	7
"	3018	PB/s	MG 4516	Rachael Holdsworth	7
=25th	82	M	PO 1357	Nigel Stroud	6
"	2715	KN/s	CG 8379	Tanya Lewis	6



=27th	1235	L1/s	JB 6878	Bryan Ditchman	5
"	2852	M	RH 5831	Philip Coombs	5
=29th	797	K1	ALA 871	Christopher Hobbs	
				Kate Hobbs	4
"	3302	J2	KS 6104	Andrew Harrington	4
"	761	J2	APU 280	David Downes	4
"	2200	C/s	RX 8306	Philip Bayne-Powell	4
33rd	329	PA/s	CZ 4895	John Adams	3
=34th	1428	J2	DG 6142	George Ward	2
"	317	Jarvis M	GP 1856	Philip Bayne-Powell	2
"	815	KN/s	MG 4314	Martin Warner	2
"	3534	J2/s	WF 5494	Fred Boothby	2
"	3357	D	FS 1786	Kenneth Sheffield	2
"	597	PB/s	VV 4538	Peter Haynes	2
"	534	NA	HH 8103	Bill Bennett	2
"	3298	PA/s	OSL 309	Les Procter	2
"	2912	C/s	GX 9693	Duncan Potter	2
=43rd	1140	J2	JL 753	Mike Linward	1
"	627	J2	FS 5663	Emma Digby	1
"	65	PA/s	DOH 228	Nigel Gibbons	1

Results from the following events are the only ones that have either been submitted or analysed and hence are the only ones that make up the 2013 COTY scores to date. Results can be submitted up to three months after the event took place or later at the Comp. Secs. discretion. However, to be included in the End Of Year final results, a submission must be made no later than the third week of January:

4th/5th January	MCC Exeter Trial	Full Results
12th/13th January	VSCC Measham Night Rally	Full
3rd February	VSCC New Year Driving Tests	Full
3rd February	Stroud & District MC Cotswold Clouds Trial	Part
16th February	Fell Side Auto Club Northern Trial	Part
24th February	Holsworthy MC Chairman's Trial	Part
2nd March	VSCC John Harris (Derbyshire) Trial	Full
17th March	MGCC SE Centre Spring Navisat	Full
17th March	Torbay Motor Club Torbay Trial	Part
13th April	MGCC SW Centre Kimber Trial	Full
14th April	MGCC SW Centre Kimber Gymkhana	Full
14th April	Ross & District MC Kyrle Trial	Part
20th/21st April	VSCC Silverstone Race Meeting	Full
27th April	VSCC Spring Rally	Full
5th May	VSCC Curborough Speed Trials	Full
12th May	VSCC Wiscombe Park Hill Climb	Full

**Slade Trophy 2012  
Scores to 25th May**

Position	Car/s	Driver/s	Points
1st	J2-PA/s	Bill Bennett	38
2nd	J2	Yhijis de Groot	11
3rd	PA	George Ward	10
4th	M	Oliver Richardson	9
5th	J2	Jeremy Hawke	8
6th	M	Alan Grassam	7
7th	M	John Haine	6
8th	NA	Richard Jenkins	5
9th	L1/s	Bryan Ditchman	4
10th	M	Philip Coombs	3
11th	PA/s	John Adams	2
12th	KN/s	Martin Warner	1

**Racing Challenge Trophy 2013  
The Betty Haig Cup  
Scores to 25th May**

Car/s	Driver/s	No. where less than 5 Races	Index of Performance
PB/s	Simon Etherington	4	0.839
C/s	Barry Foster	2	0.537
PB/s	David Seber	2	0.849
NA/s	David Downes	2	0.970
J2/s	Andrew Harrington	2	1.000
J2-PA/s	Mike Painter	1	0.038
KN/s	Tanya Lewis	1	0.615
PB/s	Peter Haynes	1	0.667
NA/s	Jeremy Rivers-Fletcher	1	0.769
NB	Chris Smith	1	0.923
M	Chris Cadman	1	1.000

**Speed Chamionship  
Scores to 25th May**

Position	Car/s	Driver	Points
=1st	NA/s ss	Ian Baxter	21
"	M	Frank Ashley	21
3rd	PB/s	John Seber	13

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4th	C/s	Duncan Potter	11
5th	J2	Philip Coombs	10
6th	PB/s	Mark Dolton	9
=7th	NA	Richard Jenkins	8
"	J2-PA/s	Mike Painter	8
9th	PA/s	Les Procter	7
10th	PB/s	Rachael Holdsworth	6
=11th	C/s	Philip Bayne-Powell	5
"	PB/s	Christopher Broad	5

## Gear Ratios: A study in steps

by Mike Allison (*Reprinted from 1998 Yearbook with kind permission of the author*)

For many years we MG enthusiasts have had to put up with writers of presumed knowledge telling us that our cars were inflicted with highly unsuitable gearing, especially when compared with those of supposedly superior cars. Now it may be that I have a somewhat blinkered view, but there are very few cheap sports cars which have a good set of gear ratios, in fact I would challenge anyone to tell me of one! The fact is that cheap cars by their nature must be fitted with available parts, rather than specially designed parts, so that these perform will be cheap to buy and so not over-inflate the selling price of the car.

The M.G. is nothing if not a cheap sports car. This is not to say that it was not a good car, a judgement which is primarily subjective anyway, and one into which I am not going to enter in this piece, since I am in the large preaching to the converted anyway. However the cars were designed by a clever and resourceful engineer, H.N. Charles, and are well designed. An M.G. was cheap because it was built from parts available at low price from the Morris and Wolseley parts bins. However that does not make a bad car, and in fact the parts were not haphazardly fitted to the cars with no thought to performance potential, which is why the Triple-M MG. is a good cheap sports car.

Along with just about every mass produced gearbox, M.G. gear ratios leave something to be desired, but the appreciation of why seems to leave many people confused. Without going into the mathematics of it all, I will try to explain why we observe what we do, and the best way to minimise the effects.

Firstly we must consider the purpose of fitting a gearbox to a car. Because of the nature of the internal combustion engine, with a very limited power range, which broadly is from the point of maximum torque on the power curve to the point of maximum power. Put into Triple-M performance terms, this means that the engine must be kept between 3500 rpm and 5500 rpm for maximum performance, for all cars having the 'standard' valve timing. For the M, D and F type models, the relevant

speeds are between 2400 and 4500. The gearbox is therefore fitted to enable this power range to be maintained over a wide range of road speeds. For any gearbox, its success in giving the best acceleration in use in a car depends on the ability of the change to take engine speed from the level of quoted maximum power in the first speed to that of maximum torque in the next higher speed, or perhaps slightly higher up the torque curve. This will enable the car to progress from one gear to the next without apparently expiring in the next higher gear.

The gearboxes as designed fitted a range of touring cars, which by their nature were heavier than sporting equivalents, and so the ratios needed to cover the deficiencies in power outputs, as well as allow for the reluctance of drivers in the 1930's to actually use their gears. The previous generation to mine thought that the best way to drive was to get into top gear as quickly as possible and stay there at all costs. The reason was, of course, the dreaded double-declutch gear-change, which few ordinary mortals could master infallibly. Anyway, this style of driving resulted in the use of very low gear ratios to enable the car to be driven at low speeds in top gear. Few drivers went much faster than 40 mph ever, and many were happy to cruise along at less than thirty, which is why that speed became the 'safe maximum' for built up areas, when speed limits were first imposed.

For a sports car, a different set of parameters come into force. Sports cars were built for the enjoyment of driving, as well as for transport, and it was accepted that this involved driving at speeds higher than the ordinary mortal went! The overall gearing of the car is therefore made so that the car will achieve its maximum speed at the maximum power available, and the driver is encouraged to use his gears, with a little propaganda telling him that the proper use of the gears represented good driving technique. It is worth noting that when the M-type was introduced, a target maximum speed of around 65 was deemed to be sufficient, the same being applied to the D-type, or the 'Midget Long Chassis', to give it its contemporary full name, which was assumed to be a touring car. When the F-type Magna was introduced, it was hoped that the car might be capable of speeds of around 75/80, and after that it was accepted that this was about the best speed which one might expect from a standard road going M.G. car.

Let us now look at what is achieved in the standard M.G. models, the data being taken from the Works Specification Sheets, which are replicated in 'Blower' if you want to check them.

### **M-type Midget:**

*With standard 3 speed gearbox:*

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	16.4	Axle ratio	9/44 (4.889:1)		
First:	3.50:1	Speed at 4500:	21	Speed at 2400:	
Second:	1.83:1		40		21
Top:	1.00:1		73		40

This seems to be just about ideal, and personally I have never found a standard M-type needing the extra gear, although you do have to hang onto low gears for much longer than seems comfortable. However, suppose you have a J2 gearbox fitted to your car, what happens then?

First:	3.58	Speed at 4500:	20	Speed at 2400
Second:	2.14		34	18
Third:	1.36		54	30
Top:	1.00		73	40

There is no denying that this provides an even better progression of speed, but with the inconvenience of one extra gear change, which could easily lose you time when driving in competition. It is certainly doubtful whether the work involved in fitting the gearbox is worth the effort for touring purposes. It is not just the cutting of floorboards and carpets, but the change to the propellor shaft, and its tunnel, as well as the re-calibrating of the speedometer which becomes necessary, as well.

#### **D-type Midget:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	14.7	Axle ratio:	8/43 (5.375:1)	
First:	3.50	Speed at 4500:	19	Speed at 2400:
Second:	1.83		36	19
Top:	1.00		66	35

Again the progression is agreeable provided the maximum power of the engine is utilised, and as with the M type the extra gear may not be worth the effort of fitting it, in fact given the limited performance potential of the car, is definitely not worth the cost of doing.

#### **F-type Magna:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	16.7	Axle ratio:	9/43 (4.778:1)	
First:	4.02	Speed at 4500:	19	Speed at 2400:
Second:	2.00		38	20
Third:	1.36		55	30
Top:	1.00		75	40

This is an excellent progression from the standard ratio ENV gearbox, and I have always maintained that the F-type has the best manual transmission fitted to any pre-war MG. Even if one tunes the engine moderately, fitting 12/12 timing, the ratios are just about ideal with the standard rear axle ratio.

#### **J and PB-type Midgets:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	14.73	Axle ratio:	8/43 (5.375:1)	
First:	3.58	Speed at 5500:	23	Speed at 3400:
Second:	2.14		38	23
Third:	1.36		60	37
Top:	1.00		81	50

The speed progression is pretty good, provided the engine is fully extended, but an

early change into third from second on an incline can cause problems, which means that for maximum performance a tachometer is essential to maintain speed.

**PA Midget:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	14.73	Axle ratio:	8/43 (5.375:1)		
First:	4.18	Speed at 5500:	19	Speed at 3400:	
Second:	2.32		35		21
Third:	1.36		60		37
Top:	1.00		81		50

Here for the first time we can see that the ratios are not ideal: one needs to over-drive the car in second to 'reach' third, and even the bottom to second change is poor.

**Ki, K2, KN Magnettes:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	14.18	Axle ratio:	9/52 (5.778:1)
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The K Magnette was a heavy car, and in standard tune was not all that powerful, so the low ratio was needed. The contemporary drivers were not ready for low gearing, and the model was somewhat condemned as being 'fussy' to drive. However, the modern man should have no problems coming to terms with keeping the engine speed up at fairly modest road speeds!

**Manual gearbox: K1, K2:**

First:	3.58	Speed at 5500:	22	Speed at 3400:	
Second:	2.14		36		22
Third:	1.36		57		35
Top:	1.00		78		48

Once again, reasonably satisfactory ratios, which should allow the car to be driven smoothly through the gears, and maintain speed on the roads. Compare these speeds with those achieved with the J2 above, however, and note how lowering the final drive ratio has improved the change speeds relative to each other.

**Manual gearbox: KN:**

First:	4.18	Speed at 5500:	19	Speed at 3400:	
Second:	2.32		34		21
Third:	1.36		57		35
Top:	1.00		78		48

Effectively the PA ratios, where first and second gears must be used fully to maintain speed. Here however, the lower axle ratio masks the effect of the inconvenient spacing of the gears, and the extra power of the six cylinder engine makes driving the car much easier.

**Preselector gearbox, K1, K2:**

First:	3.40	Speed at 5500:	23	Speed at 3400:
Second:	2.00		39	24
Third:	1.36		57	35
Top:	1.00		78	48

Much more satisfactory ratios are obtained here, but with the penalty of increased weight of the unit, as well as extra complication!

**L Magna:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	15.2	Axle ratio:	8/43 (5.375:1)	
First:	3.58	Speed at 5500:	23	Speed at 3400:
Second:	2.14		39	22
Third:	1.36		61	38
Top:	1.00		84	52

Satisfactory ratios, as noted with the J2, which are numerically the same.

**NA Magnette:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	15.65	Axle ratio	8/41 (5.125:1)	
First:	4.18	Speed at 5500:	23	Speed at 3400:
Second:	2.32		37	25
Third:	1.36		63	39
Top:	1.00		86	53

As with its sister PA, the ratios are not very satisfactory, but maximum torque with the six cylinder engine is fortunately nearer to 3000 rpm, so the gaps are not so noticeable.

**NB Magnette:**

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	15.65	Axle ratio:	8/41 (5.125:1)	
First:	3.58	Speed at 5500:	25	Speed at 3400:
Second:	2.14		40	27
Third:	1.36		63	39
Top:	1.00		86	53

As with the PB a better set of ratios, which coupled with the excellent torque characteristics of the N-type engine give a good road performance.

So, there it is in black and white, M.G. ratios are not too bad with the standard MG gearing. It all comes down to the driver applying his knowledge of driving intelligently, and keeping the engine turning over at its kindest speed, which is around the maximum torque figure for economic cruising.

Now it is time to consider the overall gearing of the car, the final drive ratio. Yes. I know that I am always banging on about raising the rear axle ratio being counter-productive for a car which is near to standard tune, but there is more than a little truth in the situation. In point of fact, given the weight of the Triple-M car and its frontal area, one needs a minimum of a fifty percent power increase to justify raising the axle ratio to improve performance. Still don't believe me?

OK, well lets try the much recommended 8/39 ratio, in the L-type for example. I have deliberately chosen a six cylinder car, because these have a better torque characteristic than the Midgets, and should be able to deal with the higher gearing:

Speed per 1000 rpm in top:	16.71	Axle ratio:	8/39 (4.875:1)		
First:	3.58	Speed at 5500:	25	Speed at 3400:	
Second	2.14	43	:	26	
Third:	1.36	67		42	
Top:	1.00	92		57	

On the face of things, this does not seem too bad, you have the bonus of a theoretical top speed of over 90, and you will apparently be doing 60 mph at 3500 rpm or thereabouts. Fine, but the problem is that the engine only develops around 45 b.h.p. at the flywheel, and to 'do' ninety something, in excess of 55 b.h.p. is needed for a car with full front wings. With 45, the top speed will be around 80, which was recorded in road test for the L2, and rather nearer to 75 for the heavier, and more bulky, L1. These speeds would have been achieved at Brooklands after a considerable wind up to speed, and so represent the absolute maximum of which the car is capable. The Works L2 cars, although they were relatively low powered, and ran at over 90, were stripped of front wings, lamps and trim, and just about everything to make them lighter!

It is not difficult to see now that with the slightly raised power, and since that '45' is at 5500 or thereabouts, you will actually reduce the top speed capability of the car by over-gearing it, as well as the acceleration to, say, 60. On the 8/39, 80 mph is at 4800 rpm, at which we are not yet getting full power, and therefore full power cannot be achieved in top gear, which will be akin to 'overdrive' on a modern car, and the tendency will be for the car to slow down when top is engaged, and more fuel used in consequence, since larger throttle openings will be required to maintain speed.

Try it for other models and you will find that a standard ratio is best for near standard tune MMM cars, indeed M.G. cars in general. You need a lot of power to get the car to perform well on a higher ratio. My ex-Monte NA goes quite well on the 8/39 ratio, but I have in excess of 90 b.h.p. at the wheels, or more than 160% of standard power, in competition tune. Even so, I used 8/43 for hill climbs, a LOWER ratio than standard, when the car was going at its best. Using the 8/39 at Wiscombe knocks SIX seconds off its best time, or around 15%!

The usual reason given for raising the ratio is to give the car quieter cruising on the



motorways... Well, really! The motorways are a place for trucks, caravans and repwagon Montras, Vecdeos and things, and should be avoided by real car drivers: the A and B class roads are where our cars are at their best, and can easily keep up with modern cars with a minimum of fuss by using the gearbox, and due to the general lack of large vehicles are a pleasure to drive on.

So I have this suspicion that increasing the final drive ratio is advice only given by those selling gears. If you want the truth though, take advice from one who has tried, it ain't worth the effort or the expense!

## **J2 History Wanted**

**by Martin White**

It is now a year since I purchased J2 registered ALO789, chassis no. 3714, as a very incomplete pile of bits. Having found or made most of the missing parts, it is now at the stage where it needs painting and final assembly. It was originally black but for the last 50 years has been green, so it is going to be two-toned black with green, with green wheels and upholstery as original.

It now has an original engine and box but when last on the road, it had an Austin Ten engine and box with an air scoop on the bonnet to feed the carbs, This was removed at some point and the hole blocked up with fibreglass, probably because an SU had been fitted. It was last on the road in 1968 in the hands of John Morris in Lancashire, who, I suspect, crashed it, as the O/S of the body showed damage.

If anyone knows anything about this car, do please get in touch.(Tel: 01344 424258)

I would also like to know pre1960 history of J2 LJ7201, J2948 and anything about J2, J3653 which has been registered OY6543 **and** OY6542 during its life. I remember reading a letter in a magazine about how this occurred, long before I bought the car, but I have never been able to find it again.

## **Hints and Tips**

### **From Martin White - Yet another J2 Modification:**

Some front wings have a plinth pressed into them for the sidelight to mount, using a thin rubber gasket. Others, I suspect earlier, did not have this and the sidelight had a nice moulded rubber base to blend it into the wing as did my car J2948.

*I am reminded by Philip Bayne-Powell that when he was editor of the Bulletin, he tried to encourage all private advertisers to submit a Hint or a Tip. We do not charge for private adverts but the benefit of your experience is valued by other readers. -Ed.*

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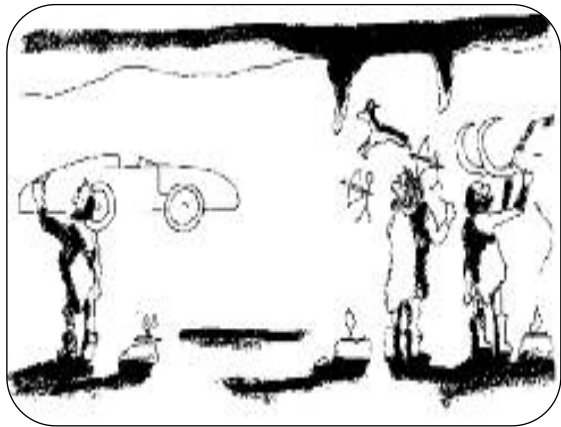
## Cartoon Competition



Your suggested captions for the cartoon above are warmly invited and should be submitted by e-mail to: [triple.m.caption.competition@gmail.com](mailto:triple.m.caption.competition@gmail.com). For details of the Competition Rules, please refer to the August 2012 Bulletin or the web page: [www.triple-mregister.org](http://www.triple-mregister.org).

Congratulations to Andrew Bowden who is the winner of the last cartoon (shown on the right). His winning caption is "Why is Cecil all bah humbug? Oh, he's been on those Magic Midget Mushrooms again!"

Andrew will receive Ged Segrave's original artwork for the cartoon, with the caption inscribed.



## Your Letters

### From Martin White

Dear Bob,

Regarding the recent technical article on cylinder heads, could I add one piece of advice that I do not think comes over clearly enough. When the head is tightened down, no matter whether you do so stripped or fully assembled, make sure afterwards that the cam is free to rotate in its bearings, as the location of the cam stands on the bolts and studs is not brilliantly accurate. I prefer to bolt the head down fully assembled to ensure the best alignment. Getting it wrong will result in seized or run cam bearings.

Also in Terry Holden's article there is an important misprint. On checking the original article, 15 degrees equals  $1\frac{5}{16}$  inches on the flywheel, not  $1\frac{1}{16}$ , the <sup>5</sup> has been omitted. (*My apologies for this typing error which I have corrected in the 'on screen' version of the April/May bulletin. - Ed*)

On a different subject, having been reading about crankshaft dampers, am I right in thinking that the Triple M six cylinder engines do not have a damper? If not, why not?

### From Robin Gordon

Bob,

Don't you hate people who criticise other people's work, when they don't do anything themselves? However something just jumped out of page 17 of the last bulletin. The temperature for annealing copper must surely be 700-750deg. and not as shown. This does not in any way detract from the value of the article itself which deals with an interesting subject.

Best wishes,

*(My apologies for this typing error ; the figures were correct in the original article submitted by Ewan - Ed)*

### From Graham Holdsworth

Hi Bob,

I attach a few photos taken at the Vintage Revival Monthery at the end of April.

"It was a wonderful event for prewar cars and motor cycles at this historic track. There were 9 MMM cars taking part. Entrants were split into grids of 45 cars and let loose on the banked and road circuit ( length 2.1m ) for four 15min. sessions over the 2days. Not racing but you would never have guessed ! Some 270 cars and 90 bikes took part. A great atmosphere ,good weather and fine food. Oh so very French."

# Your Adverts

## Parts for Sale

### MMM Lucas headlamps

Set (8) P-type valves, new,	£100-250 a pair.
Cast Mazak sidelights (not P-type).	£80
Pair, plus spare plastic lens	£20

Martin White (Tel: 01344 424258)

### Bonnets

James Pettit is preparing formers to enable him to make louvred bonnets for J, L, P and N types. E mail [jpettit1952@btinternet.com](mailto:jpettit1952@btinternet.com). He lives not far from Aldershot, in Ash near Normandy.

- 1 **AUA25 Petrol pump** Totally restored with Transil protected points and tested £90
  - 2 New P-type steel bonnet £650
  - 3 New NA Dashboard (by Llinares) £175
- Bryan Ditchman (Tel 01189 326346)

**For J2:** half shaft, unused, still in supplier's wrapping, plus RH (offside) rear hub, used but machined to allow for Roger Furneaux seal nut. How about £35 shaft, £10 hub or £40 both?

Simon Cauthery, 01460 241532 (Somerset)

## Parts Wanted

**J2 etc.** Speedo drive gear, 14 teeth, good or bad, and the threaded bush that holds it in into the box.

J2 Rocker box data plate.

J2, F2, L2, (P?) Hood frame.

J2 Oil pump or parts, especially the main body (same as P-type?)

Martin White (Tel: 01344 424258)

### Wanted for PB

- a) Original flexible loom duct from junction box; have an original N-type duct to swap.
- b) Offside windscreen mounting foot for scuttle; have a TA mounting to swap.
- c) 2 large spring washers for bolts holding the handbrake cross-shaft.
- d) P-type dipstick (manky Mazak is OK as I still have plenty of new handles for both L, P and N)
- e) Cam cover brass union for rev.cable
- f) One P/N intermediate cam stand with cap

Bryan Ditchman (Tel 01189 326346)

### Wanted

Body wood plans for a J/F Salonette.

Contact Ian T Coxen, Fresh Fields, Frogpool, Truro TR4 8RP(01872 863507)

## Talelights

*The peculiar spelling above is due to the inclusion here of some extracts from "J2 Tales", written by Mike Hawke in 2003 as a way of marking 50 years of J2 ownership. (Kindly submitted by his son Jeremy.)*

### J2 Tales (11)

This is a tale of pride coming before a fall. Back in 1969 Brian Cash took a job in the Far East. He asked Ann and I to look after his TC whilst he was away. We had a garage big enough to take both cars and readily agreed. In those days the two car family was a rarity, let alone one with two M.G.s. The neighbour thought that we were mad and the tradesmen thought that we were rich. at least one, if not both of the groups was wrong.

Brian returned a bit earlier than expected and I was away in Kuwait when he collected his car. He thanked us for looking after it so well and promptly swapped it for a Turner. Some time later when turning out the loft, looking for the J2s' hood in case winter came or something, I found the TCs' radiator muff, which Ann (not realizing we had it) had omitted to return to Brian. By now it was no good to him so I was allowed to keep it. This was a proper job with all the right buttons and clips and with the provision to uncover a part of the radiator by rolling down a centre section. I was very pleased.

Now we go to Brands Hatch for a South-Eastern Centre Sprint. It is a bitterly cold day in March 1962 and big head in the paddock keeps his J2 warm between runs with his nice pukka radiator muff. Yes, you've guessed, I forgot to remove it for the timed run and the J2 was boiling like a kettle after one lap.

This was probably the occasion when Steve Dear led the South-Western contingent home down the A4 and drew into a restaurant to "have a little steak". The car park was empty and we were the first customers of the evening. We, a pretty scruffy lot, were seated in a small alcove off the main eating area and had a jolly lengthy meal. When we got up to go we found the rest of the place full of terribly well-dressed people and the car park full of Bentley's and Jags. We did not make a discreet exit because Steve's PB refused to start and our method of push-starting it up and down between the rows of up-market cars caused much interest.

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*K3000, pictured by Ross Kelly at the MG National Meeting in Toowoomba*



Photos from Ross Kelly, taken at the MG National Meeting in Toowoomba:

Above: Dino Mattea's L-Type (L0657)

Below: Ross Kelly's C-Type (C0261)

