



Newsletter October 2015

Introduction. The season is drawing to a close now, and also drawing a veil over what has been a rather disappointing summer weather-wise. The rain has rather decimated the events to which we had planned to take the MGs, although we did risk the rain and go to the Classic Car day at the Sow & Pigs at Poundon in the V8 over the Bank Holiday weekend. This was a bit special for me, because one of the regulars at the S & P has an extensive collection of classics, and he invited Will, the landlord and me to go over and choose some classics to show at the pub. We chose a magnificent 1930s Buick, a WW2 Jeep, a 1966 Ford Mustang fastback and a 1959 Jaguar XK150 Coupe – he wouldn't let us take his latest acquisition, a beautiful Corvette Stingray! I drove the Jaguar there and back – a slightly nerve-wracking experience as he had only recently bought the car at Bonham's auction following a complete restoration and I couldn't find the wiper switch! The car is worth an undisclosed sum, but I reckon you wouldn't get much change out of £150k!! And of course, it rained most of the day, but this didn't prevent intrepid members Jack and Debs Martin turning up in the MGF, and Dave and Heather Barton coming along in their new RV8. The weather was pretty hopeless, but we enjoyed the Barbecue!!! The next day was the Classic Car day at the Bucks Railway Centre at Quainton, and I had planned to take the MGA and had spent ages prepping it, but it poured all day, so we decided to stay at home. What a wimp.

Weekend away in Somerset. This was an entirely different kettle of fish – we had beautiful late summer sunshine for the whole weekend that we were away. Roger Skinner had chosen the Hollies Hotel in Bower Hinton for our base, and this proved to be a very good choice. We had garden rooms that looked out onto a private terrace, so we were able to congregate and enjoy a pre-dinner drink together each evening. We ate out on the first evening, enjoying a good meal and beer at a local pub.



We assemble at Haynes

In the morning we all assembled at the Haynes Motor Museum at Sparkford. Dave Barton had taken over the organisation of the weekend from Roger when he became too ill to continue, and Dave had arranged a special deal with Haynes so we had privileged parking right in front of the museum, which even had a big notice with our club name on it, even if it was a bit wrong... On arrival, we had coffee waiting for us in one of the presentation suites before we began



looking around the exhibits. At lunchtime we returned to the suite for a very welcome soup, sandwich and pastries lunch, which was excellent.



Lunch Time!

After lunch, taken outside in brilliant sunshine, we were treated to a guided tour of the exhibits, thus seeing much more than the normal visitors would. Roger, and Dave between them did a first-class job of organising the weekend, so our grateful thanks go to them.

Haynes has an extensive range of cars on show, something over 250 in all, and I was struck with the diversity of the exhibits. They were well laid out, and comprised both the exotic and the more mundane but no less interesting, such as a room full of Minis. MGs, as you would expect, were well represented (I counted 12, but may have missed some ..)



Lots of nice MGs - I particularly liked the CGT



But the star of the show for me was the magnificent Deussenberg Model J straight 8 Derham Tourer, worth a reputed £8m, standing alongside an Auburn Speedster that had belonged to some film star or other and that rather took Pete Thomas' fancy! This pair alone were worth making the trip to Sparkford.



My Deussenberg



Pete's Auburn Speedster

Sadly, the Deusie wouldn't have fitted in my garage, so I refrained from putting in an offer. Debs fell in love with a burgundy Jaguar XJS, but she couldn't take it home either! Dave did take something home – a model of a V8 engine from the gift shop, which he says is really for the grandchildren – Oh yeah, we've all heard that one, Dave.

That evening, after a couple of glasses of wine, we assembled in the hotel restaurant for a magnificent meal, that everyone agreed was superb! Roger was with us in spirit, and in the form of Biggles, who kept falling into his glass of red wine – can't take him anywhere.

Next day, the girls decided to go shopping in Clark's Village in Street, while some of us blokes went to the Fleet Air Arm Museum. This is very well laid out, with plenty of interesting aircraft and other exhibits from the Fleet Air Arm in the years since its beginning - one exhibit caught my attention – a Grumman Hellcat fighter just like the one my late uncle flew against the Japanese in WW2 in the Pacific from the deck of HMS Illustrious. One hall depicted the deck of an aircraft carrier – the audio-visual simulation of a Phantom landing and taking off was most impressive, as was the tour of the mock-up of the Island Control Centre. Peter Mansfield was in his element, many of the exhibits, particularly the helicopters, bringing back happy reminiscences of his time in the RAF, and he kept us amused with tales from his service life.



Fleet Air Arm Museum

Some of the girls off to Clark's Village – I'm along to guard the plastic!!!

Peter and Dave admiring a Dragonfly

The girls too had a good time – they seem to have been impressed with Clark's Village, and came back laden with shopping bags full of essentials such as handbags and shoes (Mary and Jill) and half the contents of Marks and Sparks (Jill, Heather and Jackie). We all met up at lunch time, and then it was time to find our way home again after a memorable weekend.

Future Events

5th October – Natter Night. Our normal monthly gathering at the Five Arrows in Waddesdon.

30th October/1st November – Classic & Sports Car – The London Show. The Ticket office for this event at Alexandra Palace is now open, www.classicandsportscarshow.com for details. If you subscribe to Classic and Sports Car magazine, as I do, you can claim a 20% discount if you buy your ticket on-line, apparently.

25th October – Restoration Show, Stoneleigh Park (NAC). For all your oily bits.

2nd November – Natter Night. Our normal monthly gathering at the Five Arrows in Waddesdon.

13th-15th November - Classic Car Show, NEC Birmingham. *The* annual show for Classic Car nuts.

7th December – Quiz Night. As well as being our regular Natter night, Brian Deacon and Karen Hall will be officiating at a quiz night with a festive flavour. Brian and Karen are experienced quizmasters, so sharpen your



pencils for this event, and make sure you have fish for tea

That's all for now, Folks!!

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