



Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders MG CLUB

www.MG-Edinburgh.co.uk



March 2024

GoF West MGs in
Zion National Park, Utah



Credits: Helen, John Q, Allan, Neil Mac, Peter, Tony H, Fraser, Andy, Emo, Ernie

MEMBERS' CARS

John Q has swapped his MGB for a good looking rb GT.



INTERESTING CAR

Spotted by Tony H at Haynes Motor Museum





Mrs Grumpy's Grumble

You wake up about 6am, decide it's too early to get up and go back to sleep - to be woken by the land line ringing at 8am! You are jolted awake, immediately thinking someone is seriously ill/has had an accident/died.

You stumble to the phone to be greeted by a Sky technician asking you about your faulty Sky equipment. "I don't have Sky" you snarl and slam the phone down.

You decide to get up, feeling decidedly discombobulated. The cats are yelling for breakfast, so you stagger into the kitchen to feed them. You are putting down the dish when one thinks it would be a good idea to walk between your legs, tripping you up, hurting your back and of course the cat food dish ends up on the floor - the wrong way up BOC.

You tell the cat in question to eat her breakfast off the floor and feed the other one. Head for your shower feeling frazzled. Come back dressed and calmer to see the cat who had to eat her breakfast off the floor has indicated her displeasure at being so rudely treated and puked her breakfast all over another part of the cleaned yesterday floor.

Not a good start to a day, but at least no-one was ill/had an accident/died!!

IT woes again. Brian's old computer that can scan items for me has been telling me there isn't a scanner attached - there is and it's plugged into the USB port, switched on etc. There was also an intermittent issue with the mouse. I needed to scan old photos of Tony for his 'This Is My MG Life' folder, so deciding (yet again) I wasn't going to be beaten by a bit of recalcitrant IT, I took the keyboard and mouse off my old iMac and plugged it in. Still no Joy.

Plug the scanner into the keyboard and WE HAVE A SCANNER ATTACHED!!! Scan the photos no problem and investigate - one of the two USB ports is dead. OK, I know which one is working, so when I found another couple of photos to scan, I plugged the old iMac keyboard into the correct one - to be told that USB port was drawing too much power and will be disconnected! Looks like Brian's old G4 is well and truly dead.

And yes, I did just photograph the two photos!

INTERESTING CAR

1951 Turner with highly tuned 6 cylinder, 2262cc engine from Lea-Francis engineering. The body was to resemble a Ferrari 166 Barchetta.

AGM REPORT

As is our normal practice, we held our AGM at the February meeting. I had forgotten to send out the agenda which probably meant we didn't get as full a turnout as in previous years.

I gave a run down of the past year's activities and then watched the eyes glaze over as I went through the finances. In both cases we had a successful year. We attended a number of shows, had some social events and did a run or three while we had made a surplus of just over £400 in the year. Should you wish a copy of our accounts, please email me and I'll send them to you.

There were two items of AOCB. The first was about a constitution for the club which would frame the activities of the club, its committee and its members. Most clubs have one and the committee had been discussing the issue for a time. I outlined the process going forward whereby the committee would produce a draft document for discussion by the members and at a special meeting, a final version would be approved by the members and then sent to every member. The members at the AGM were happy with this approach.

The second item concerned my resignation as Area Secretary. I have done the job for the past eight years and while I've enjoyed my time as AS (well almost all my time) I felt it was time for someone else to take over the reins. As a result, I stepped down at the end of the AGM and passed the baton to Steve Hastwell as your new AS. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody in the club for their help and support throughout my time as AS and I am sure you will give Steve as much help and support going forward.

Allan Digance

MANY MOONS AGO

An extra special Tech Day in 2017 - getting to inspect Gerry's incredible Landie.



SYNTHETIC FUELS

Among the many characteristics we share as fellow owners of MGs are practicality and realism, hopefully in equal balance with adventure and dreaming! It goes without saying that we love our cars in many different ways - their shape and style, the feel of them on the open road, their smell even - and so on. It's good that they generally reward our labour and monetary investment, keeping many specialist suppliers and manufacturers and motor garage businesses afloat to support our real motoring experience.

Yet, at the same time, as responsible and aware citizens (RACs) we need to react to the 'modern-day' problem of climate change and known environmental pollution and so on. Especially up here in Scotland as a whole and like it or not, motor-driven personal, public and business transport will simply still have to include, for many future years, liquid fuel driven vehicles. Going fully electric in due course is probably the way to go and all very laudable, but incredibly naive for the short term, in my view.

So, just how can we best as RACs do 'our bit' for Present and Future generations in terms of reducing atmospheric pollution NOW and what does this mean for our cars including the classic MGs which we so very much cherish? We like driving them and would like to keep using them for the foreseeable future.

When I read a very interesting article in Enjoying MG last August, I realised what we, together, could do to assist and achieve our selfish aims at the same time.

Much of the present emphasis and efforts in the UK and generally in the Western world would seem to be focussed upon most exclusively on 'going electric' with only grudging acceptance of continuing fuel/electric hybrid motive power. It's all happening around us - even both my sons (Kris with his private Nissan Leaf all-electric car in Bergen and Sven with his business perk Kia EV6 limo in Glasgow), have taken the plunge encouraged by private and employers' tax breaks, grant and LEZs etc.

But there soon won't be sufficient in the Electricity Grid to go round. Just where is all the investment in new, separate power infrastructure going to come from? Not from either level of Government here in the UK for sure and green renewable power production will struggle to meet industrial and personal power demand in the future unless new infrastructure in established toute de suite!

Against such a demanding and compelling picture of virtual Armageddon if very much reduced atmospheric pollution is not achieved, I myself, who can in no way afford a (new) electric car, let alone the uncertainty of winter and long-distance driving where I have close family in Yorkshire and Skye, hanker after a petrol electric hybrid, like Andy Bailey's car, to replace my 11 years old diesel Merc. However, it will have to be the 11 years old oil burner for the immediate future. But, I do not wish to be forced out of continuing to 'enjoy' my mid '70s MGBs, both of them also driven of course by Internal Combustion Engine (ICEs).

When I read that article, it soon struck me that there IS something which I/we can do RIGHT NOW and for the foreseeable next 10-20 year future; that is to use and support in every way possible, Synthetic Fuels (SFs). These can be truly Zero Rated. When you can, I suggest you read in full the article I referred to earlier to get the full benefit of all the real and apparently well researched statistics which back this but here are a few tasters:-

About half of the UK's CO2 emissions come from the Transport Sector, amounting to 51 million tons of the gas each year.

At their present rate of new car sales it will take roughly 21 years to replace the existing fossil fuel burning engine (ICEs) for the UK Transport Sector alone, on an optimistically assumed (by the way) basis of one-for-one replacement.

We are talking truly massive figures - 35 million plus cars registered in the UK of which 34 million are still ICEs; there are of course so many more such ICEs in use on land, at sea and in the air. There is of course a massive vested interest in the existing petroleum industry with UK manufacture being roughly 16.3 billion litres of petrol and 29.5 billion litres of diesel burnt each year. If they also look at best use of their built estate on the ground in communities, they could voice strong support for SFs.

However, forgetting for a moment the long term (20 years plus) there is something we can do in the immediate near future and MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Most of us already pay a 5% extra premium at the typical forecourt pump for E5 in preference to E10 to protect the rubber-based pipes and gaskets in our treasured classic engines - so why not be prepared to pay more? Say, even 50% more, to help Save the Planet at the same time. I'm up for that in principle at least. After all, with an average annual mileage of say 3,000 miles at better than 30 mpg, this amounts to say 90/100 gallons (say 400 litres?) at an additional price of say 70 Pence - say even £250 or so? Cheap at the price, says I, when we're already exempted from Road Tax and insurance for such limited mileage is a real bargain.

These Synthetic Fuels primarily require a basic 'amalgam' of Hydrogen and Carbon as a base - the former coming from the Electrolysis of water and the latter already existing in vegetable waste and naturally occurring (or already emitted from other processes) carbon dioxide, monoxide etc, just waiting to be captured. This amalgam is very similar, chemically, to crude oil before it goes into the manufacture of in the order of 3,000 bi-products. It can also simply be 'refined' into fuel equivalent in every way to conventional existing diesel and petrol fuel. It is in fact then an actual 'zero carbon, electro fuel', capable of being transported, distributed, stored and delivered in liquid form, within all the existing infrastructure, right down to the nozzle to your very own ICEs as a 'drop in' fuel. I understand that NO ADJUSTMENT whatever is required for carburettor mixture and so on.

The article tells us that Porsche and Siemens amongst an impressive list of German companies researching and investing in pre-production of SFs, in effect building on the base Hitler's scientists adopted in World War II to power his forces on land, at sea and in the air using Synthetic (in those days a largely coal-burning process but not so now) fuel. As a result small scale wind powered production already happens in windy Chile and hydro-electric powered Norway so that our engineers in Scotland could readily do their bit if we chose to. Indeed, I have recently read elsewhere that, for the last 4 years at least, both the UK and Scottish Governments have been quietly 'romancing' Germany (hitherto largely dependent on Putin for gas supplies to its national network) as a wind/tide -powered producer of (electrolytically made) Hydrogen which they aim to pipe direct to Germany. Unfortunately, Norway, Spain and other countries are already ahead of us but clearly, large scale production within the UK is thought possible and we have plenty of sources for the essential Carbon.

Motor Races have already occurred at last September's Goodwood Revival and the earlier Festival of Speed at which others and Seb Vettel, no less, powered his Formula One cars on SFs. So, they (SFs) do indeed work in ICEs and can be accommodated within the physical infrastructure UK and indeed Worldwide but there is the devilish question of the PRICE/Economics of it all which essentially boils down to good old Supply and Demand.

Supply will only respond to known or reliably estimated Demand. The latter is something we could do something about, I reckon, albeit in a small way and here's how:-

1. We could circulate a questionnaire round members of ELBMGC to establish if and how folk would be prepared to commit to spending on SFs - say a guaranteed number of gallons each year and at what price? Let's see how the figures go to see if we could merely purchase on a joint basis a large (50 gallons) barrel of the fuel - if we could find somewhere legal to store it. We could of course conduct such enquiries per our own Website?

2. An obvious second stage is somehow reaching the majority of Classic owners in the East of Scotland and Borders on a similar exercise, via enthusiasts` clubs in the area, perhaps even more ambitiously aiming at getting a garage operator to stock and sell such fuel from a particular forecourt pump in return for committed pre-sales? When you think of it, provided the economics could be squared it could grow ‘like Topsy’ and all accumulate quite spectacularly if the economic and social conscience aspects were skilfully ‘sold’.

3. A third stage could be to appeal through MGOC nation-wide with their vast range of contacts and influence in society as a whole, throughout the UK.

4. And, fourth, all Classic owners in the UK could theoretically be ‘tapped’.

I fear the last two stages would be beyond us to operate and control so I am in no way doing other than mentioning them as possibilities.

Surely , however, we locally in Edinburgh could ‘mine’”all our garage business contacts to see if someone of similar mind on SFs would be prepared to experiment with 2 above? Experimental to start with of course but I reckon word would spread like wildfire - provided ‘the price was right’.

I’ve nailed my colour to the mast to pay considerably more per litre for E5 equivalent for my buggies - HOW ABOUT YOU?

Could we possibly debate this at a local meet at Meggetland, or even via the Club website?

Neil Macaulay

Ed: Neil has seen Roche Bentley’s letter which says that Biofuels are already on sale publicly as “sustainable” and costing between £3.80 and £4.65 per litre.

INTERESTING SNIPPET

An unusual Beetle conversion spotted by Fraser



ARE YOU FRUSTRATED ON CLUB RUNS??

Question - Why do my odometer/trip recorder mileages never match Club Run RoadBook miles?

Answer - It's because the speedo's & odometers in our MGs (and all other cars) are deliberately inaccurate, and the inaccuracy varies between our cars.

UK law requires a speedo to indicate between 100% and 110%+6.25 mph of the car's true speed (European law = between 100% and 110%+10 kph). i.e. at a true speed of 60 mph, your speedo could legally be indicating up to 72.25 mph.

To ensure the speedo reading is within the legal band, and definitely not be under-reading, car manufacturers calibrate speedos to read around 5% greater than the true speed.

Speedo's are driven by measuring gearbox output rpm, either via a gear & cable linkage (like our MGs) or, on modern cars by an electronic pick-up. The prop shaft rpm is then converted to speed based on the distance travelled per rotation of the car's wheels/tyres. As the speedo, odometer and trip recorder are mechanically linked, if the speedo is overreading, by say 5%, recorded mileages will also be 5% too high.

Unfortunately, the diameter/circumference of car tyres is not fixed, which is why car manufacturers add ~5% to their speedo calibrations. The distance a tyre travels per revolution, and therefore speedo and odometer indications, will vary depending on -

- Size & profile of tyres fitted (many of our MG's don't have original spec tyres fitted)
- Tyre inflation pressure
- Load in the car (causes more or less tyre profile deformation)
- Brand & speed rating of the tyre (external diameter & tyre wall flexibility varies)
- Tread wear (new tyres 7 - 8mm tread, can reduce to 1.7mm before renewal, reducing rolling diameter)

The above does not even consider retro-fitted changes to the speedometer model or the speedo drive pinion installed by previous owners or restorers.

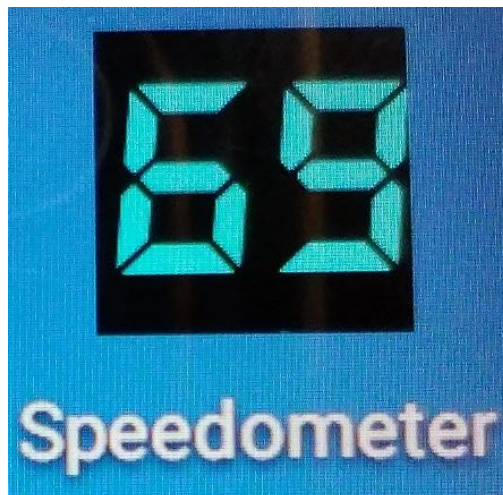
Question - How can we avoid speedo/trip recorder errors, obtain mileage readings matching Club Run RoadBook mileages, and be consistent between our MGs?

Answer - Don't believe your MG dashboard speedo or trip recorder. Use GPS measured mileages.

GPS will display your MGs true speed and accurate mileage. I use a free GPS App on a 10-year-old mobile phone, mounted in a windscreen holder. The App does not require a phone SIM card, nor an internet connection, so nil cost. Many club members may have an old phone knocking around in a drawer that could be used. If not, I bet your younger family members have a discarded phone.

The free App I use is called "Speedo" (a GPS Speedometer and Odometer, published by "COOL NIKS" -- many other similar Apps are available). It displays true car speed and trip recorder readings. These distance readings are 100% accurate and will tally between all GPS users.

Typical GPS Speedo & Odometer mobile phone icon -



[Enter 'Speedometer' (or COOL NIKS) into Play Store (Android) or Apple App Store on your mobile phone. Then select the GPS Speedometer/Odometer App that you fancy using]

Here is an example screen grab (portrait & landscape options) of a GPS App. It displays accurate and repeatable speeds & mileages -



Club Run RoadBooks could be prepared from GPS mileage readings. Participating MG drivers/ navigators should then use GPS trip recorders to follow the route. We would then avoid distance uncertainties, minimise the chance of missing junctions etc, and (most importantly) avoid navigator frustration.

Problem Solved!?

Peter Woodham

INTERESTING SNIPPET

At March's meeting, Andy Baillie is going to give a talk about his racing cars and career.



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Please feel free to contact the committee if you have any queries.

Monthly meetings at Boroughmuir rugby club, second Thursday 7.30 for 8pm