

**NEWSLETTER
MAY
2020
EDITION**

TAMAR VALLEY MG OWNERS CLUB

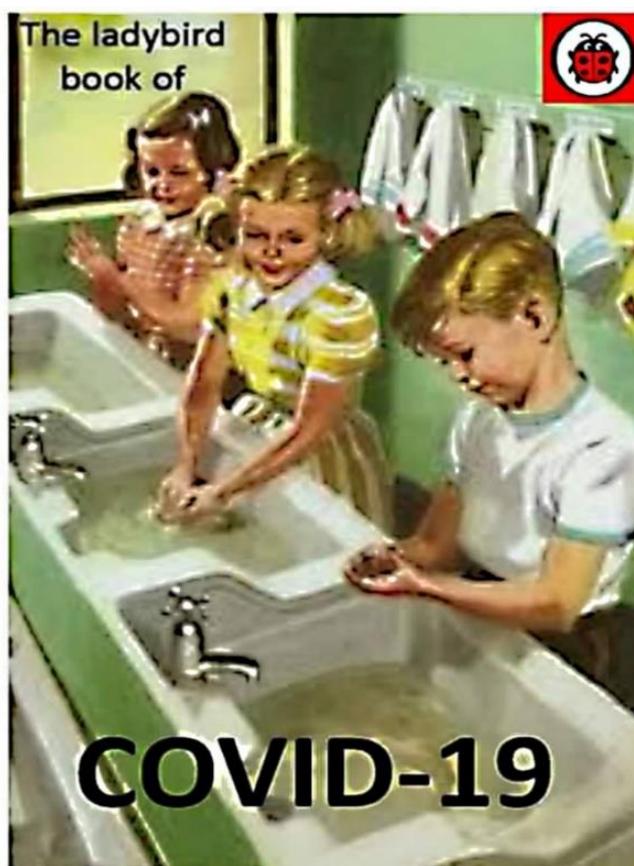
supporting our

HEROES NHS

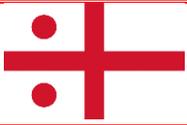
This Month's bumper* issue:

- Committee reports
- Supporting the NHS
- News snippets
- Technical articles
- Two new MG models
- Stirling Moss and MGs
- Things to watch & listen to during lock down
- Our club Facebook page
- Memory Lane – your stories

**As it's not being printed, the newsletter can be longer than usual.*



ENJOY YOUR MG MORE WITH TVMGOC



Secretary's Report



Well what an extraordinary period in which to live. Here in the Tamar Valley, on the border between Devon and Cornwall, life has been surreal. The weather has been positively Mediterranean and locked down in our beautiful corner of the country it is easy to forget the grim reality of our hospitals. We have been fortunate so far in that compared to the rest of the UK our incidence of COVID 19 is relatively low and our medics are hard pressed but not overwhelmed. Numbers and statistics do not really tell the story however, and all deaths feel close to home. You will see in other parts of the newsletter how we as a club have reacted – suffice to say here that I have been reminded what a good bunch of people I share my MG enthusiasm with.

In line with the main classic car movement we have been strictly observing Government guidelines. Our gardens are pristine and there is more evidence of Howard's 'Car-owner Virus' as we self-isolate in garages. Various shades of MG paintwork are burnished to a deep lustre and unusually major parts have been removed for refurbishment. It can only be hoped that we will remember how to put them back together when we are able to drive in the bright sunlit uplands of Dartmoor.

We have held an online Zoom committee meeting and the heart of the club still beats, albeit restfully. We have considered a 'whole club' Zoom meeting – but have held off for the moment as there is little 'new news' and there is some concern that the technology might be more trouble than it is worth. If you have views – one way or another – drop me an email so that I can share it with the Committee.

For now – stay safe and I look forward to getting back to a degree of normality.

Simon

Should you need to contact our club secretary, for example to send in club subscriptions,
first call or email: 01822 852843 clubsecretarytvmgoc@gmail.com



Notes from your Chairman



Hello everyone,

I sincerely hope that you and your families have remained safe and well during this current pandemic. If someone had suggested a few months ago that that this would be how we were going to be living our lives, you would have thought they had really lost the plot.

Well done all of you who so generously helped to raise an amazing £1035.00 for Derriford Hospital's front-line Doctors and Nurses. It must be sheer hell working on the Red (Covid 19) wards at this moment in time. Also, for those of you who have been involved in the shopping and deliveries to the hospital, as well as those Tamar Valley sewing bees who busied themselves producing 130 wash bags for the scrubs, a really well deserved shout-out goes to you all.

Your committee have managed a Zoom meeting to discuss club business and that didn't work too badly, although I really prefer face to face meetings. Mind you it was better than nothing and it was nice to look ahead to when things might just return to normal.

With driving very much curtailed, it leaves you with a bit of time on your hands to continue to enjoy your garden, DIY and working on those gleaming MGs.

I am hoping that you and your families can continue to remain safe and well.

My very best wishes to you all,

Alan



Event Secretary keeping it wheel



Dear all,

The best thing for me about owning a classic car is using it. Since the MGA came into our lives Jan and I have toured England, Scotland, Wales and Spain (Ireland was to be this summer) and you get a rather different view of the landscape from an open-topped roadster. Firstly, there's a connection with the vehicle - its positive steering, stiff suspension, throaty engine noise accompanied by various rattles and squeaks, the rushing of wind past your ears. Yet none of this stops you experiencing the sounds and smells of the countryside – in fact there's a heightened connection to the environment, seeing and thinking about things in a more detailed and sometimes more profound way. It's a sensation of travel that you just don't get in a modern car. Our Merc is an amazing bit of modern kit, but all it does is get you from A to B in comfort and silence, utterly disconnected from any sense of journeying.

So, where's all this rhetoric leading, I hear you ask? Well, unable to take the MG out on a run, which surely we all miss terribly, I have been seeing my locality anew by the simple act of going for a walk each day. This goes part way towards making up for having to leave the MG in the garage. I'll explain.

Walking down streets I would normally drive along gives a new and fresh perspective of what has previously barely registered. I've had time to look at details. This has been interesting, and often uplifting, even living in the middle of Plymouth (it also keeps the Fitbit happy!).

Despite the global madness, nature is just getting on with things. Outside our locked-down homes spring has arrived and everywhere new life is in abundance. Passing numerous newly painted front doors with rainbows in windows and gardens of fresh, colourful growth (though not all are like this!), Jan and I often walk through Ford Park Cemetery. In this place of peace there's a tree festooned with bird feeders where a variety of small garden birds get pushed aside by thuggish thieving magpies, intent on grabbing more than their fair share of nuts and seeds. Hmm...greedy big guys bullying the little guys: feels like I should use this as some kind of metaphor, if only I could think of one.

And what stories the gravestones tell through the centuries, though I rush past the resting place of children as the loving lines there inscribed are a bit too upsetting for my fragile emotions.

In Central Park there are carpets of bluebells – lovely to see, but they remind me that we won't be able to jump in our MGs to visit Keat's wonderful woodland display this year. Orange-tip and yellow Brimstone butterflies flit around.

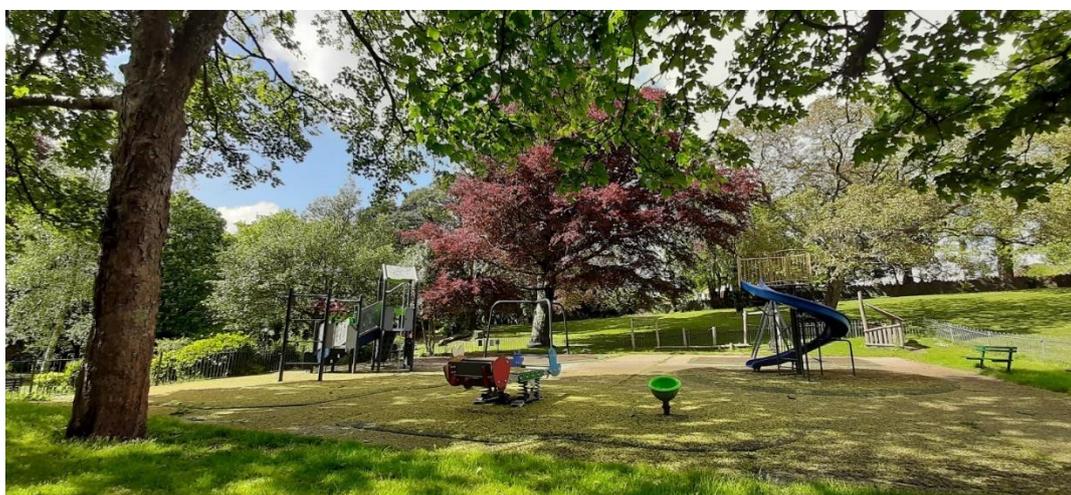


The Park has been ablaze with white and pink blossom, looking like avenues of candyfloss trees. That blossom has fallen and blown away, and now the rhododendrons and hawthorn trees are in full bloom.

Whilst all this is gratifying, the trouble is that nature's new life is at odds with the current state of humankind and my walk makes me rather maudlin at times.

The Argyle ground stands empty and quiet, but the beautiful game goes on as a father and two young boys enjoy a boisterous a kick around in the deserted car park.

From the Hoe the view across Plymouth Sound is utterly devoid of boats. Has the Sound has ever been so consistently empty of human activity at any other time in the last 1000 years? As Plymouth was a fishing and tin-trading port in the late iron-age (about 2000 years ago) I doubt it.



Nearly home again and passing through Mutley Park the playground is locked and deserted. Our daughters played here thirty-odd years ago and now we take our granddaughters there when they visit – or at least we did. This place should be full of excited, laughing children but the silence, sunshine and spring colours make the void poignantly sad. In times like these, the little things in life can be almost as upsetting as the big things.

I wish I was clever enough to say something insightful, wise and poetic about all this, but it's all just too ironic for my mangled brain. So what's the point for a car club of this self-indulgent diatribe? Well, though right now we can't jump behind the wheel to go on an MG adventure into the great wide world, (or untie our narrowboat!) we can go on a close-up adventure, and one that's happening right under our very noses. All of life is there - all we have to do is look and count our many blessings...and make sure our MGs are in tip top condition ready for a new dawn.

I suppose this lockdown is not *all* bad. Have our gardens ever been tidier? Have our homes ever been so spotless? (ours hasn't, even compared with all the years we employed a cleaner!). I'm a bit tidier too, after letting Jan cut my hair (she did a great job, so that's 12 quid saved – see it's not all bad).

I've even been doing a bit of DIY – yes things are that desperate. A few materials were needed and a click-and-collect time at Wickes was booked (they are very organised and have an efficient and safe system). To give it a bit of a run, the MGA was fired up to enjoy a short, top-down drive in the sunshine, but it just made me realise what we are missing. Ho hum. I've also done a few laps of our park in it, but it's not what you can call an MG adventure. To rub salt into the wound, we have had to cancel our tour of Ireland this summer.

As already mentioned by Simon and Alan, the recent club committee meeting carried on as planned as a Zoom online conference.

In this time of lockdown, Zoom has become the fastest app to be downloaded. Many millions of people around the world are using it to facetime friends and family.



As well as using Zoom video conferencing for our committee meeting, Jan and I have been making use of it to share mealtime chats with our families in Cambridge and Modbury. On Easter Sunday, our daughters had hidden chocolate eggs around their respective homes for an Easter Egg Hunt.



Jan, here in Plymouth, read out her clues in rhyming couplets as to where our granddaughters might find the eggs – in the ‘fridge, bathroom, garden etc.

Their mums and dads carried laptops around each room beaming pictures back so Jan and I could follow the children’s every move. It was not as good as actually being with them, but the next best thing.

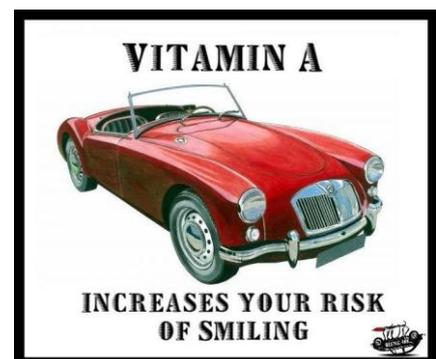
This made me realise how internet technology is for most people making the lockdown a lot more bearable. As well as being able to keep in touch with friends and family at a distance, it’s inspiring to see how so many creative and imaginative people have been finding online ways to organise exercise sessions, create music, share jokes, educate children etc. etc. Imagine what the lockdown would have been like twenty or so years ago in the days before Google and apps – surely unbearably lonely, boring and much more frustrating.

But back to MGs and classic cars. I have still found items you might find interesting so, as far as the newsletters are concerned, the show goes on! Last month I asked for some of your stories, and later you’ll see this has borne fruit. Some things I’m holding over until the next newsletter. Also, remember to look out for my mid-month joke fest *Colour Supplement II – Dumb and Dumber*.

Happy MGing!

Howard Send submissions to eventsecretaryvmgoc@gmail.com or mediatvmgoc@gmail.com

Ads from the past



Our appeal to club members for donations to support the NHS staff in the Intensive Care Unit at Derriford received a fantastic response. Here is the story of how your money was spent.



Alive to the tension and selfless commitment of the NHS staff, Club member Tim suggested a fundraising effort for the three Intensive Care Wards in Derriford Hospital, Penrose, Pencarrow and Torrington. We have been overwhelmed with generosity and our small club has raised over £1000.

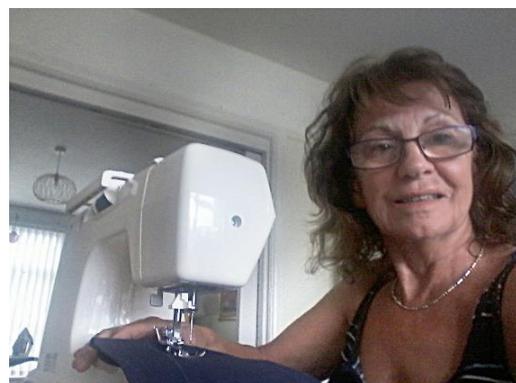
Rather than just tell the staff what we were giving them we put the ball in their court and it seems that what they really appreciate is snacks, drinks and fruit which can be consumed quickly, often in their protective clothing. They also needed hand cream, lip salve and pillowcase style bags in which to wash their clothing and the MG Sewing Bees got to work with alacrity, providing 130 bags to a grateful medical population. So, what started as a good idea has snowballed into a very practical example of support to our community.



Howard and Simon make a huge delivery of food and drink.



Simon's RV8 packed with fresh fruit



Undaunted, next day Tim, Janis, Alison, Sonia and Pam set to work on an initial 42 pillowcases converting them into laundry bags. After scouring the shops another 76 were acquired. The finished 130 bags were delivered to the wards within days. An amazing achievement and gratefully received!



Some of the 130 finished laundry bags



Tim making a delivery



Janis and Lucy set off to make another delivery



Torrington Cardiac Intensive Care Unit - Derriford

@torrington_CICU

University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust - Cardiac Intensive Care Unit

Tweets Tweets & replies Media Likes



Torrington Cardiac Intensive Ca... · Apr 17

We are overwhelmed with the generosity of the South West MG Owners Club, who have delivered us these drinks and snacks today, to be shared between all of the ICU staff. Thank you so much, we really appreciate your support!
[@UHP_NHS](#) [@AnnJamesNHS](#)
[@DerrifordNurses](#) #criticalcare



1 2 35



The ward's Twitter page

As I write we have spent about half of our funds raised and are in a cycle of regular delivery – occasionally in our MGs when combined with the essential shopping where we simply shop for the wards and ourselves. It is surprising how much you can squeeze into the passenger seat of a roadster, and this month's pictures are all from this activity.

Simon

P.S. MG Motor UK have donated 30,000 facemasks to the NHS, as well as 100 ZSW EVs for up to six months free of charge to provide additional transport capacity and low running costs for hospital workers.

TVMGOC EVENTS 2020



Upcoming events

The most up to date and detailed information on all 2020 events can be found and downloaded on the Event Diary Page and the Entry Forms page. See: www.tvmgoc.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 29 April 2020 No 1537 £2.90

CLASSIC CAR WEEKLY

BUYING ■ SELLING ■ NEWS

DRIVE-IT DAY

Pics of your classics across Britain

As we all know Drive It Day was cancelled this year, along with everything else until late summer at the earliest. A couple of weeks ago I informed club members that Classic Car Weekly were asking owners to send in photos of their cars at home or taking part in a previous event to be printed in their newspaper. I don't know how many of you sent pictures in but at least Tom and I did, and they were used. Tom's even made it onto the cover as well as an enlarged version inside! Mine was inside too - see bottom right.



Beating the drum for SW Shows

I recently had a letter published in Classic Car Weekly - belatedly because it has been overtaken by events, but the message remains true. I was a bit surprised it got used as it criticises their coverage. The letter is self-explanatory, and they kept the plug in for our club's website.



Go West... for great shows

Classic fans might get the mistaken impression from reading your piece on Britain's best events (CCW, 11 March) that there are no 'great events' in the South West, by which I specifically mean Devon and Cornwall.

May I respectfully point out that whoever compiled your 'great' list didn't do a very thorough job. I am fully aware that there is an overabundance of classic cars shows across the UK, and that only a fraction of these can be mentioned, but you should at least aim for a fair and proper geographical spread.

The nearest events to me on your list covering six and a half pages are in Somerset and Dorset. The North, Midlands, South East, North East, North West, Scotland even, all feature a number of events in your list, but the

likes of Killerton House Classic Car Day near Exeter, the Crash Box Classic Car Show at Powderham Castle (also near Exeter), Torbay Old Wheels Show on the seafront at Paignton, Mt Edgcombe Classic & American Car & Summer Fayre and Wadebridge Wheels, both in Cornwall, don't get a look in, and that's to name but a few! All these are large, top class shows in lovely locations.

Should any of your readers fancy coming to show off their pride and joy down here, a comprehensive list of local shows can be found on the Tamar Valley MG Owners' club website (tvmgoc.org.uk/entry-forms-details).

Howard Perks, Mannamead, Plymouth

We regularly include shows from right across the UK in our listings, but you're right that Devon and Cornwall residents have some brilliant shows - Ed.

Not what you could actually call a car show, but here are three beauties I came across on my walk to the park. I also saw an MGB owner in a back lane whom I've invited to join our club.



MGZT

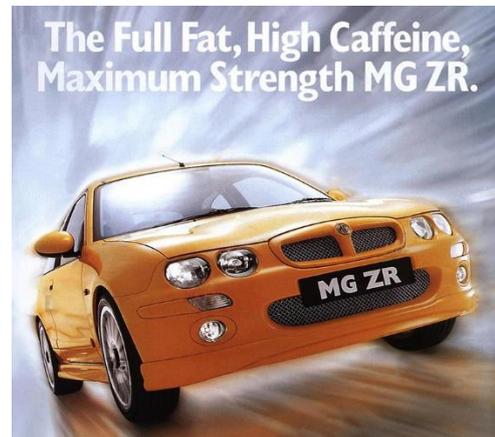
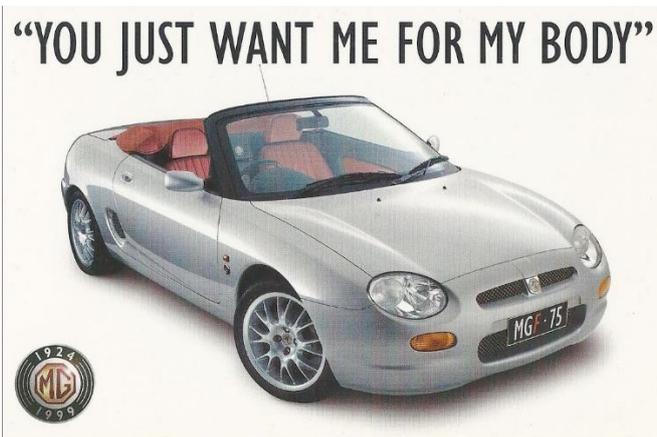


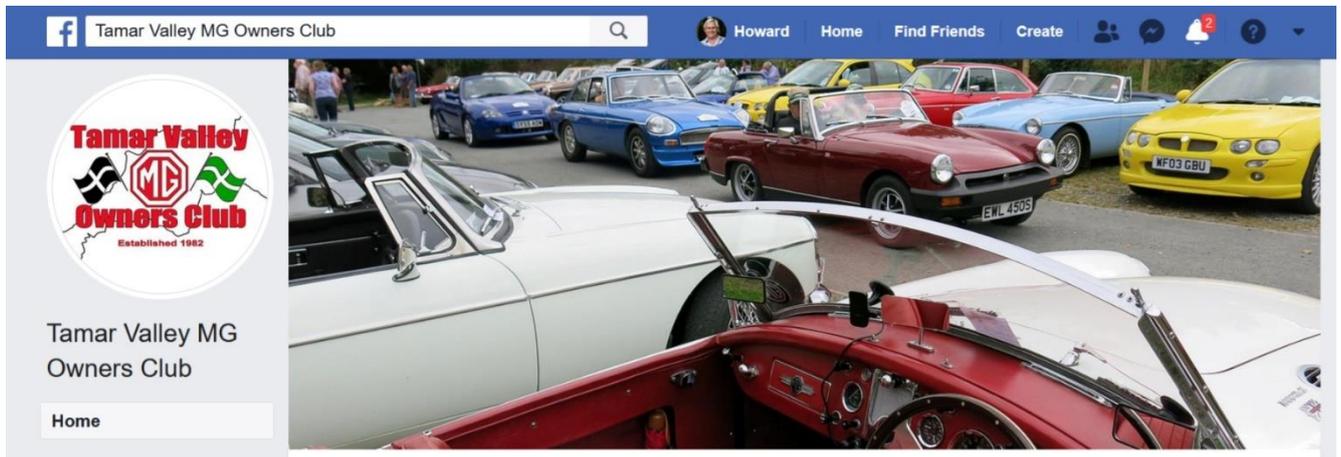
MK1 Golf GTI Cabriolet



Rover P5 3.5ltr V8 Coupe

More ads from the past





WANTED – A FACEBOOK VOLUNTEER (spoiler alert – since drafting the newsletter we have a volunteer)

The above is a screenshot of our club Facebook page. You've probably never seen it before. That's because no-one uses it. If you look at this page the message it sends out is that our club is defunct. It's time that changed.

When I set up that page about four years ago it was a time of flux in the way the club was being managed, and back then making the club active on social media was for some a step too far. In fact, I remember being somewhat derided about my suggestion by more than a couple of members. Some were deeply suspicious about social media in general, having read various horror stories about breaches of personal data. With all the other changes that were going on, making the club active on Facebook was one bump start I didn't have the energy to push. I still don't.

However, times have changed and now, more than ever during this time of crisis, social media and the internet have come into their own. Many club members are now using social media and video conferencing to keep in touch with friends and family, yet club is missing out. Here's why.

Unable to continue with their normal diary of events, shows and meetings, up and down the land classic car clubs are turning to virtual car meets as a way of continuing to be active and keep spirits up. In addition, they are realising how useful social media can be as a recruitment tool for those who can't or don't attend more traditional meets.

Classic Car owners in Cheshire regularly held large meets at the Off The Rails Café. Now they are holding virtual car meets where people post images of their cars on Facebook at a pre-determined time, usually coffee time. They have been attracting enthusiasts from around the world.

Other clubs are sharing pictures and stories about what's going on in their members' garages. The Riley Register has recently launched a digital radio station, Radio Riley to entertain classic fans. The MX5 Club hosted a virtual car run on its Facebook page, with owners posting pictures of their cars on runs in the UK and abroad. The Jaguar Club reported 'an incredible response' to its first virtual meet. They are a national club and hundreds of classic fans took part. I've Googled 'virtual car club meetings' and what I've listed is just a drop in a full tank.

TVMGOC is missing out on all this. Not only is that a shame, but it also signals that in this respect ours is a club out of step with the times. Unfortunately, I don't have the time or energy to take on an extra task for the club. So, do we have anyone with enthusiasm and a basic knowledge of how Facebook works who would be willing to take on this role and make it their own?

Howard (with fingers crossed!)

Since writing this, Members Rep. 1 Peter S., who had also previously highlighted this as a concern, has offered to take on the role of our Facebook administrator. Thanks Peter. More anon.



Just as Mick Jagger sang in 1964, I've found that of late *'Time is on My Side, yes it is.'* In the intervening years, I guess like most of us, I've never really sat down and taken stock of things, until now. Putting aside the topic of mortality, the state of the NHS, the UK's looming economic ruin, Brexit (remember that!) etc, I've been thinking about another important matter, namely our club newsletters.

In pre-internet days club newsletters carried technical items. Whilst I realise the importance and usefulness of such items, these days the repository for techy stuff should be on-line, not in a newsletter. Now everything you want to know can be found with a few mouse clicks - model-specific information about every aspect of fixing up your particular car. That's why, since I took over producing the newsletters, they are tech-lite.

I'll prove my point. I have pdf versions of every TVMGOC newsletter since 2013. A great many of these contain technical items produced, if not always penned, by club members. I suspect they have been completely forgotten about and sit unused and gathering dust. However, I have trawled through each and every one of these and compiled a list of 35 articles that are really good and useful to owners of various types of MGs.

Now these articles are available to access on our website. Click the Links/Technical tab and you will find them all numbered and listed. Here's what's currently there:

FILE NAME	SUBJECT
01a Tyres	Changing tyres on a modern T/TF
01b SU carbs	Setting Up SU carbs (See also 02, 13, 14 & 28)
02	SU carb rebuild by EB Engineering to a 1950s TF
03 Ethanol	Fuel additives and a timely reminder about the effects of ethanol in your petrol tank (see also 22b & 24)
04 Fuel tank corrosion	How to stop corrosion in a fuel tank caused by fuels containing ethanol
05 MGF&TF key fobs & indicator bulbs	
06 Soft top renovation	Modern MGTf soft top renovation
07 Midget starter	How to strip down a starter motor off a midget
08 Fitting wire wheels	
09 Bodywork – lead loading skills	
10a 5-speed gearbox	Fitting a Ford gearbox
10b MG supercharger	Fitting a supercharger kit
11 Fitting power steering	
12 Dodgy fuel lines	
13 Rebuilding SU carbs Pt. 1	
14 Rebuilding SU carbs Pt. 2	
15 Fitting an MGB front wing	
16a Fitting an MGB rear wing	
16b Fitting headlamp relays – see also 25	
17 Fitting an ammeter	
18 Battery leaks & charging	
19 Fitting a rear brake cylinder	
20 Fitting a voltmeter	
21 MGB leaf spring & lever arm damper upgrade	
22a MGT+TG seat belt clips	
22b E=ethanol Pt.1	
23 How to recondition your brake callipers	
24 E=ethanol Pt.2	
25 How to fit headlamp relays – see also 16b	

26 Decoding MGB engine & VIN numbers	
27 Clutch & brake master cylinders rebuild	
28 Synchronising twin carbs	
29a Engine overheating	
29b Soft top hood restoration	
30 MGA bilge blower	Fitting a bilge blower to an MGA to help cool the carbs. (Howard has done this)
31 Diagnosing electrics	Diagnosing electrical problems if your car conks
32 How to store your classic car	
33 MG F+TF subframe replacement	
34 MGA hot running issues	
35 Fitting hazard warning lights	

LINKS

<https://www.mgexp.com/forum/> This has a repository of articles for MG cars

MGAs

<https://mgaguru.com/mgtech/> The go-to site for all things MGA, run by US MGA legend Barney Gaylord

All MGs <https://www.mgcc.co.uk/mga-register/technical-advice/>

Members of MGOc can also ask their technical team for one-on-one advice.

Classic & Sports Car publish a number of 'how to' guides : <https://www.classicandsportscar.com/how-guides>

If you have come across, or wish to write, a technical article, please do so and I will add it to our website and notify members of the addition in our newsletters. I'm also keen to share a database of MG mechanical experience and skills that we have within the club. Just let me know.

Howard

	News snippets	
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MOT extensions

It may be old news by the time you read this. The DVSA is not asking garages to close due to the coronavirus outbreak as it acknowledges that cars need to be kept in good order, though some garages have suspended work voluntarily. Vehicles with an MOT test due on or after 30 March 2020 will get an automatic six-month extension to their due date. It is, however, still down to owners to ensure their car remains in a roadworthy state. If your car failed the MOT test before 30 March, it will need a retest before it can be allowed back on the road.

MGB Pick-me-up

Australians and Americans do love a pick-up truck, but perhaps this can be taken a little too far...



G'day



Have a nice day

MG Hector Plus

MG's new SUV was originally slated for launch by August 2020. Now, however, it looks like unfavourable circumstances related to the pandemic might have pushed the launch of the car to the year end.

The 5-seater MG Hector has had an excellent performance in the Indian auto market with decent sale numbers. The six-and-seven-seater version is named the MG Hector Plus.

As regards the powertrain options, the Hector Plus will borrow the 1.5-litre petrol engine. There will also be a 1.5-litre mild-hybrid motor and a 2.0-litre diesel.

The transmission duties are undertaken by a standard 6-speed manual on all the motors and an optional 7-speed DCT on the hybrid version.

Sadly, there is *still* no news about the electric MG E-motion sports coupe that initially was promised for this year, then pushed back until 2021. Will it ever get made?



There is a new MG model on test.

Spotted this week in green camouflage livery the new MG SUV (Shopping Utility Vehicle). This versatile new addition to the MG (My Groceries) model line-up boasts an impressive range of approx. 2 miles or 40 mins before needing to be refuelled with sausage rolls and chocolate. The 1 hp (human power) model is designed to be operated in relays by a team of two and has a large capacity load bay for the weekly shop of approximately 5 shopping bags. Sporting all terrain tyres, it has impressive off-road capability especially on tricky towpaths. The collapsible fold flat chassis and lightweight construction makes storage of this vehicle easy with no garage required.

Currently under extensive test by two TVMGOC members in the Droitwich area, this is certainly a handy addition to the MG model range!!!



Stirling Moss - MG record-breaker

Much has been said about the amazing career of Sir Stirling Moss who recently died aged 91. Although most often associated with sports car and Formula One racing, one of his many achievements was as driver of MG's quickest ever car, the record-breaking MG EX181.

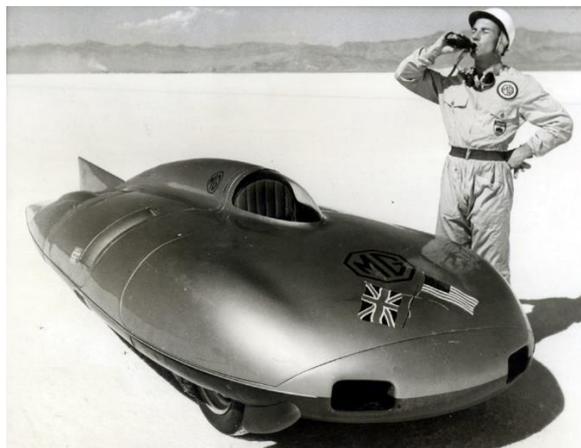
Back in the 1950s the Abingdon sports car maker promoted its products by setting numerous speed records. In 1957 Stirling catapulted himself into MG folklore by shattering the class F world land speed record at Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats in the streamlined MG EX181. Its teardrop shape glinting in the sun, the car raced at speeds over 4 miles a minute, amazing then for such a small car. The Class F rules stipulated that the engine had to displace between 1.1 and 1.5L. Moss reached 245.64mph in the tadpole shaped car, shattering the

previous record of 203mph set by Goldie Gardner in MG EX135 just before WW2. Stirling's pint-sized engine featured double twin cams and a supercharger, allowing it to reach 290bhp at 7,300rpm.

To see a video of this record attempt search in YouTube for: Fastest Car in The World Breaks Records Driven by Stirling Moss.



EC181 on display at the British Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon



*Stirling Craufurd Moss OBE, racing driver
born 17 September 1929; died 12 April 2020*

Things to watch and listen to whilst being locked down

Le Mans 66 and how MG helped Ford beat Ferrari



Christian Bale as British born racing driver & MG mechanic Ken Miles. Matt Damon plays Carroll Shelby.

One of the outstanding films of the year is *Le Mans 66* about how Ford went all out to score victory over Ferrari in the Le Mans 24 Hour Race. I'd read about this duel of the giants in the fascinating *Go Like Hell* by AJ Balme and, inspired, I pre-ordered the DVD of the movie. It doesn't disappoint, and I can heartily recommend it. The film is now also available to watch on Amazon Prime for just £2.99 and probably on other streaming services as well.

MGCC have produced an article about one of the key figures in the story, Carroll Shelby – he of AC Cobra and Ford V8 fame – who was first inspired by MGs. To whet your appetite, here's a taste:

Shelby was the all-American hero – a former World War II test-pilot, who in peace time turned to motorsport, making his debut in May of 1952 at the wheel of an MG TC. Shelby won his first race, which entitled him to a second, and later that day took on bigger, faster cars from the likes of Jaguar and he beat them, too. He would

quickly graduate to more exotic machinery, but it was the MG that cemented Shelby's desire to succeed on the circuit. "I still had a lot to learn, but I knew how to go fast. The MG changed my life, because from that point forward, I knew I wanted to be involved with racing and sports cars."

Read the rest of the piece here, and the photos alone are worth a look: <https://www.mgcc.co.uk/articles/mg-helped-ford-beat-ferrari/>

MGB History - The car that changed the automobile industry.

Though the technical quality of the video is poor, MGB aficionados might like to spend an hour watching this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPPDXKjVRfE&t=3s>

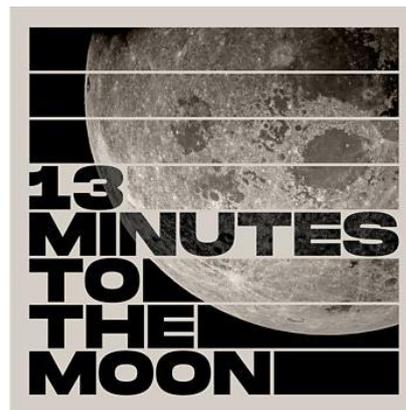
It can also be found by searching YouTube for "MGB History - The car that changed the automobile industry"

13 Minutes to the Moon

BBC World service have produced one of the best radio/podcast series I have ever listened to, and I urge you to give it a go. It is the nail-biting account of how Apollo 11 landed the first men on the moon and it is utterly brilliant.

I've been listening to the 12-part series on my phone whilst out walking or gardening, and it's a fair bet that you now have time to tune in to this remarkable series as well.

It's long, it's detailed, it's gripping, and one can only be awed by the professionalism, bravery and sheer cleverness of the teams involved. And if you have ever been responsible for man-management or team leadership then this is textbook stuff.



There are two ways you can access the programmes - either by searching for them on BBC Sounds and listening on-line or, if you want to listen on the move, I have downloaded the whole series and can share it with you as mp3 files. The series comes to almost 700 mb in all, but that's nothing most smart phones can't take on board. You'll need headphones.

If you don't know how to listen to podcasts let me know and I'll explain. Trust me on this one – it's worth it! (They have also produced a series about the ill-fated Apollo 13 which has almost reduced me to tears but that's for another time. Anyway, it's not finished yet due to coronavirus stopping work on the production, as the main presenter is a doctor who works for the NHS. Apparently he has more pressing things to do right now! Get through Apollo 11 first.)

Howard



Members were asked to send in a story about some aspect of their lives. The first to respond was Keat who also got his cars out to put on a home display for Drive It Day.



Hi Howard,

I would hate to bore you all, but in these times of nothing much doing it might be an occasion to reflect on that other crisis in our lives, one which few of us will remember, the defeat of the Axis tyranny in 1939. Like now, while uncertainty was uppermost in our minds, the British spirit came to the fore then as I am sure it will again.

I would like to relate an incident in around 1942/43. I remember I was just 5 years old when war broke out. Whilst my parents took a rented farm in Stoke Fleming parish near Dartmouth, the area after the fall of France in 1940 was ripe for the Luftwaffe. They used airfields in Normandy to regularly launch raids on the South Hams.

I remember one such raid - the arrival of about 5 Focke Wulf aircraft flying in. Skimming the sea to avoid our radar, they rose up over the cliffs. Each plane carried one bomb and would 'harris' any village in their path. After dropping their bomb, they turned towards home shooting up anything they came across along the way.

I happened to be home from school on one occasion and saw these 5 aircraft. I remember running into the house, to which my father said 'they will be back in a minute'. Sure enough the lead plane, unknown to my father, had been hit by a shore battery. The pilot had to abort his mission and immediately tried to do a 'U' turn. As it was so low my father, by this time in the front garden with his trusty 12 bore shot gun at the ready, was rewarded as the plane came over the farmhouse. It was a sitting duck, so father discharged both barrels. With great satisfaction the aircraft crashed outside Strete village about a mile from the farm. In spite of reports to the contrary, father always claimed it was his contribution to war effort!

The moral of the story is we must show that same spirit today in times of great adversity*.

Regards,

Keat C.

** That doesn't mean going out and shooting people who are ignoring the lockdown! Ed.*

Roger G sent us this:

As most of you know I spent 30 years as a Police Officer mostly dealing with the motoring public as a Traffic Officer.

Many statements were taken after traffic accidents, now called collisions. Here are a few given to me personally and taken from insurance reports:

Three women were talking on the pavement and when one stepped forward and another stepped back, I just had to have an accident.

The accident was due to the other driver missing me.

I collided with a stationary lorry travelling in the opposite direction.

To avoid a collision, I ran into the other bus.

I had to turn sharper than was necessary owing to an invisible lorry.

I was scraping my nearside on the bank when the accident occurred.

The bus collided with a stationary tree.

More next month...in the meantime

DON'T USE SOMEONE ELSE'S BIT OF ROAD.....

THEY MIGHT WANT TO USE IT AT THE SAME TIME AS YOU!

Roger

Pam & Neil's Trip to Cairo January 2020

I am sure that a few of you will be aware that Neil's sister Diana (or Dina as she is known in Egypt) has lived in Egypt for over 50 years. She met Mohammed when she worked for BOAC in the 60's and went on one of their 'perk' holidays. They fell in love, married and then she moved with him to Egypt to live. She did not speak Arabic at that time, but she was able to communicate with Mohammed's mother in French until she learned to speak Arabic. It seems that Mohammed's mother was not impressed at her son marrying an English girl, but Dina did get on very well with his sisters. Mohammed told her not to let anyone know that she used to have a job, obviously it was not a good thing at that time to have a wife who had paid employment. Dina has a Russian and an Egyptian daughter-in-law, and 4 grandsons.

We have been to see Dina, who now lives in Hurghada, a few times over the last 8 years. The first time was in 2012 when the Arab Spring was happening and Mubarak (*Muhammad Hosni El Sayed Mubarak was an Egyptian military and political leader who served as the fourth president of Egypt from 1981 to 2011 – Ed.*) had been deposed. Hurghada was completely bereft of tourists and we were the only two tourists in our very large hotel for the first four days. On our second visit we had a lovely Nile cruise & then spent a week in Hurghada (Mohammed had died the previous year). Our third time was January this year. We had decided to go to Cairo for 3 days prior to flying to Hurghada for a week. I was keen to see the Pyramids and the Cairo museum. Neil had been there 25 years ago and warned me that Cairo was very busy and chaotic. I foolishly thought, 'How bad can it be?'

We were picked up at Cairo airport by Ibrahim, a very pleasant, steady driver who took great offence at me calling him a taxi driver (he was a Limousine driver, not a taxi driver). He told us that all the drivers in Cairo thought they were called Schumacher. Luckily it was dark on the way to the hotel, so we were unable to see the full extent of the 'Schumacher' type driving. There were however a lot of vehicles trying to save electricity by driving without lights.

I had booked a hotel that purported to be 'close to the Pyramids' but I soon realised that this was not the case as we were driving for nearly an hour after passing them. The Movenpick Hotel was very nice with lovely gardens and pool area. Unfortunately, the bath/shower configuration was such that you had to actually climb into the bath to put the plug in and turn the taps on, I definitely needed longer arms. The hotel was full of Egyptian families, it being school holidays. The breakfast was buffet self-service and we were very surprised that families would take large amounts of food from the buffet to put on their table. They would eat some of it and then walk off and leave the rest to be thrown away. We were astonished at the extent of the waste in a country that is not rich.

The next day we took a taxi from the hotel to the Pyramids. On the way, our driver suddenly pulled over and jumped out, joining a few other drivers. We saw a car had rolled over in the road. Everyone helped the occupants out, checked they were ok, rolled the car back on to its wheels, then they all got back in to their cars and drove off. No police or ambulance were involved at all (and probably no insurance, MOT or tax). There was quite a queue at the Pyramids and while we were waiting we saw 11 people (adults and children) exit a small saloon car.



Neil & Pam



The Pyramids are impressive and from some distant viewpoints are quite amazing. Close up they are surrounded by camels, horses and traps, taxis, tourists, Egyptian families having picnics and climbing up the pyramids, people cleaning up camel and horse dung, tourist guides and people pretending to be tourist guides. It was majestic and chaotic all at the same time. The Sphinx was also very majestic but is unfortunately being eroded by pollution and weather.

Our taxi driver took us back to the hotel driving a bit 'Schumacher' like. He did have to slow down to allow people who stepped into the road to cross. I did think that this was a bit of a dangerous way to try and cross five lanes of traffic, but then I realised that they had no choice as there were no pedestrian crossings, traffic lights, underpasses or bridges to make life easier for them. We also saw a horse and cart travelling the wrong way in the inside lane of the five lanes of traffic.

The next day we went by taxi to the newly built Cairo Museum near the Pyramids, but this will not be open until late 2020. The Egyptian Museum in the centre of Cairo is a very attractive building near the river Nile, but it is surrounded by extremely busy roads.



The museum contents are amazing. I never realised that there had been so many tombs discovered and many mummies are on display. The treasures that were found in Tutankhamun's tomb are unbelievable. We paid extra to see some of the mummies out of their sarcophagi. They are unbelievably well preserved, with teeth, hair and nails perfectly visible. Neil and I were there for quite a few hours - it was well worth the visit.

When we had finished looking around the museum, we decided to go for a walk. The museum is just over the road from the Nile, but we couldn't find anywhere to cross five lanes of traffic, so we walked down the road hoping to find a place to cross, to no avail. We asked a local person if there was a safe way to get over the road. He said he would take us and, before we knew what had happened, he had deposited us in a papyrus shop, introduced us to his 'cousin' and then left. We managed to extricate ourselves without buying any papyrus, worked our way around the back streets, and finally ran over the road dodging the traffic and ended up by the Nile.

Neil then got his map out so that we could find our way to the Grand Bazaar. A local then stopped to ask if we needed any help. He told us that the Grand Bazaar had closed years ago, but he could take us to an excellent bazaar which was nearby. We then foolishly followed him, and he took us straight back to the papyrus shop that we had just escaped from! He walked in - we walked straight past.

We carried on walking for a little while. The traffic was horrendous. At some junctions there were traffic lights but most of them were not working and, if they were, they were only for traffic movements, not to allow pedestrians to cross safely. Eventually we gave up and went back to the museum for a taxi. As we were getting into the taxi, a papyrus seller was trying to get us to buy his goods. We kept declining politely and every refusal made him offer us more of them for the same money. He was virtually sitting in the car with us as the driver was trying to leave. Eventually he gave up before Neil needed to push him out of the door.

Our driver Mahmoud had obviously decided that he was going to do a full-on Schumacher impersonation for the journey back. Luckily I was sat behind a large headrest so I missed a lot of it, but I tried to sit in a relaxed manner with my eyes closed because I thought it would reduce my chance of injury if a collision occurred. We didn't give him a tip.

The next day a different driver collected us for our journey to the airport. He was also called Schumacher. All the drivers go far too fast and too close to the car in front, weaving in and out of lanes with no indication and only a beep on the horn to let anyone know they are coming. Nearly all the vehicles are dented and scratched. This particular Schumacher really excelled himself, taking a detour from the 5-lane highway into a small residential area and then re-joining the 5-lane highway by driving the wrong way up a slip road while vehicles were coming the other way. We were pleased to get to the airport safely.

Cairo was awful. It is full of derelict buildings, traffic, congestion and smog. The museum, Pyramids and Sphinx were amazing, and I am pleased I have seen them, but it was the first and last time I will ever visit Cairo.

Pam

THE AUTOCAR October 16, 1931

UNIVERSITY * MOTORS * LIMITED

MODELS FOR 1932



The 12/70 Magna Six Sun Roof Foursome.
An entirely new model. Six Cylinder Engine. Two Carburettors. Overhead Cam Shaft. Under-slung frame. Close Ratio four-speed Gear Box. Racing type Rudge-Whitworth Wire Wheels. Rear Petrol Tank.

Occasional Four - £250	Foursome Saloonette - £289
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The 18/80 Six Mark II Saloon de Luxe.
Fitted with helical constant mesh gears incorporating a silent third speed, the Mark II is acknowledged the World's finest Sports Car for the Owner Driver. All Chassis points automatically lubricated.

Two-seater £625	Speed model - £630	Four-door Saloon £670	
Tourer - £630	Two-seater Saloonette £660	Saloon de Luxe - £699	

Chromium Plating and Triplex Glass fitted as standard to all models.

M.G. * CAR * COMPANY * LIMITED

THE AUTOCAR October 16, 1931

M.G. * CAR * COMPANY * LIMITED

MODELS FOR 1932



The 8/33 Midget Two-seater Sports Car.
The finest little 'big' car ever produced. Holding the road in a most amazing manner, it is capable of speeds well in excess of 60, while the acceleration has been described by the Motor Press as "terrific."

Fabric Two-seater - £165	Panelled Two-seater - £185
Sportsman's Sun Coupe - £215	



The 8/33 Midget Occasional Four.
This new model, providing greater accommodation than the Two-seater, is mounted on a longer and lower Chassis. Upholstered in Leather. Rear Petrol Tank. Remote Gear Control. Rudge Racing Wire Wheels.

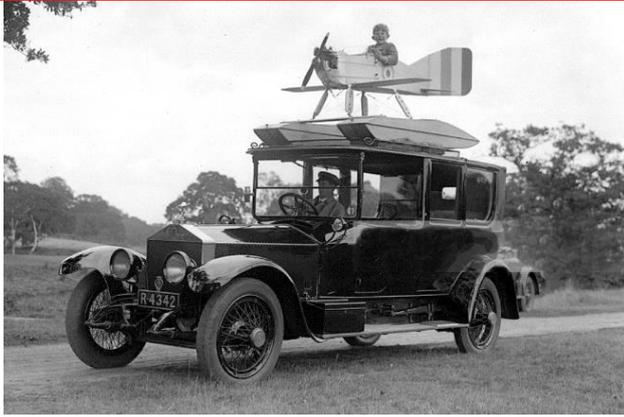
Occasional Four - £219

Chromium Plating and Triplex Glass fitted as standard to all models.

UNIVERSITY * MOTORS * LIMITED

Caption

Competition



The model seaplane belonging to Mr Porter of Surrey being driven to the nearby Virginia Waters strapped to the roof of a Rolls Royce on 7th August 1930.

Received entries	From
<i>Most kids are happy in a child seat in the back</i>	Howard
<i>Top Gear's first attempt at an amphibious car.</i>	Howard
<i>"Pilot to passengers - we are cruising at an altitude of 6 feet."</i>	Howard
<i>London Heathrow third runway finally approved.</i>	John I.
<i>"James you will have to drive faster if I am to get lift off"</i>	John I.
<i>EasyJet re-instates restricted service.</i>	John I.
<i>A composite vehicle for air, sea and land.</i>	Jan P
<i>Lady Penelope competing for the Schneider Trophy, "Faster, Parker...faster"</i>	Peter S
<i>Jeeves "I'm going as fast as possible in the Rolls, Master Timothy, but I think your chances of braking the air speed record are slim"</i>	Ade
<i>SADLY THESE FROM ANDREW CAN'T WIN BECAUSE HE'S JUDGING THIS MONTH</i>	
<i>Thomas Cook arrange first Fly/Drive package holiday.</i>	Andrew L.
<i>ABTA receive first Fly-Drive holiday claim</i>	Andrew L.

And the winner of last month's cliff-hanger chosen by Andrew is John I. AGAIN! He's just too good at this. Well done! John will chose next month's winner

Here's next month's photo requiring a caption.

Your entries by the 23rd of the month by email to:

mediatvmgoc@gmail.com





And finally...



Posted by an American in the MGA Fan Club Facebook group.

Top ten reasons why MGAs don't have door handles:

10. Afraid the rain might get in.
9. Never expected the car to be driven.
8. Brits didn't know which end of the door to put them on.
7. The technology was too advanced.
6. Designers went to tea.
5. Shortage of pot metal in England at the time.
4. Didn't think the Yanks would notice.
3. It was either roll-up windows or door handles and they screwed up both.
2. They had to save one good idea for the MGB.
1. One less thing to go wrong.

Then a Brit added an 11th

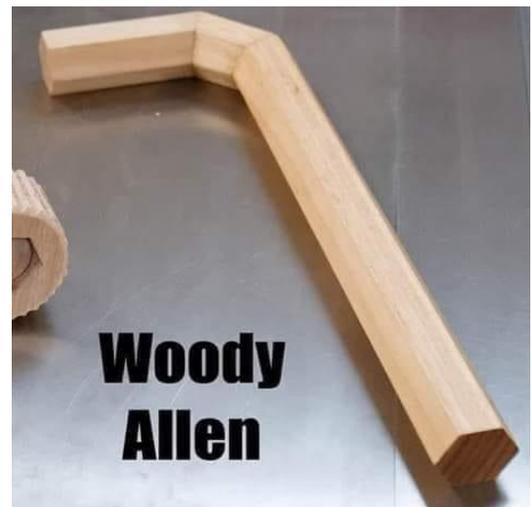
Didn't think Yanks would understand how they worked?



*Of course they do.
Their feet can barely touch the pedals.*



More like 3 months!



Am I being over cautious?



The Italian Job

Look out for more funnies mid-month in *Colour Supplement II - Dumb and Dumber.*