

Synchro!



The new name for the newsletter of the south staffordshire and north birmingham MG owners club

editor: mike watkins
phone: 0121 241 3284

March 2004

e-mail: Mike@ssmgoc.co.uk
website: www.ssmgoc.co.uk



Quite simply the response to the idea to have a club run and raise some money for Shelsley Walsh was amazing, and broke our record for the number of cars entered in one run from our club. I had put it to the members that if we got twelve cars together and chipped in a tenner per car we could buy a 99 year lease on a square yard of the tarmac of this very important and historic venue. Well, we got 19 cars. We even had members who couldn't attend wanting to pitch in, and longest standing member Alan Jones, who competed at Shelsley in the fifties on bikes, sent the club a cheque for his ten pounds as sadly he was too ill to make the trip.

Another factor I had raised when I proposed the run was that I wanted everyone to come in their MGs. The club has sometimes been reluctant to run their cars so early in the year in the past, and on our season opener which traditionally has been the Valentines Day Run, the entire club has been known to turn out in their modern daily drivers. On this occasion, everyone who could brought their MG along for the trip to Shelsley, such was the enthusiasm to do their bit.

The Teme valley really is a lovely part of England. In fact at Shelsley, the view from the hill of the other side of the valley must be one of the finest views you could have in this country. If you wanted to encapsulate all that is wonderful about English scenery this one view could do that, and is a major element of what makes a visit to Shelsley so very special.

At the club meeting on the Wednesday before everyone seemed determined to come out in their cars even though the weather forecast was redolent of brass monkeys, with the possibility of snow. On the day however, it was sunny, crisp but very cold. Everyone was expressing surprise at how long they had to keep the choke out on the cars.



We set off from our club venue, the Longford House in Cannock, and went the scenic way to Bridgenorth via Shifnal. From there we took the winding B4364 through lovely countryside, and then we took a left to travel along a delightful lane to pass by the village of Cleeton St. Mary, to then pass around the front of the spectacular escarpment that is Tittersone Clee Hill. The scenery was gorgeous in the bright sunshine, but you had to watch out for the ice and unmelted snow that lurked in the shade along the quiet lanes.

We stopped at the viewpoint at Clee Hill, not least for a comfort break. (There are very pleasant toilets situated a minutes walk from the car park). I've been told by the ladies in our club that I don't include enough of these in my runs, and I've learnt well enough to take note of the ladies requirements.



So, from there it was down the hill to Tenbury Wells. Then we picked up a lovely quiet narrow winding lane, which runs beside the River Teme, past the oast houses and hop poles. It didn't take long from there to reach Shelsley Walsh itself. The lane that leads to Shelsley itself must be unique. This lane has been used by motor cars, going either to compete or just to carry spectators to Shelsley since 1905. There has probably been a greater variety of vehicles along there than anywhere else in the world. There can hardly be a single make or marque that has not been along that lane.

At Shelsley we were greeted by members of the Midland Automobile Club, including club steward Tony Matthews, and multiple hill climb champion and long-time Shelsley record holder, Martyn Griffiths. The club had laid on a very special surprise by allowing us all to drive up the hill in convoy. The view from the top

Big THANK YOU! To Karen Brookes for the printing and posting of this newsletter

is spectacular, and gave us a chance to see and wonder at the short stopping distance competitors have, bearing in mind the fastest cars cross the finish line at some 140mph. After making our way down we presented our cheque, which was kindly accepted by Martyn Griffiths on behalf of the MAC, and South Staffs chairman Colin Hawkins selected a square yard of track located between the double 'Esses'.



We took time to explore the surroundings at Shelsley, including the amazing buildings which just seem to be from a time gone by, before adjourning to a splendid carvery lunch at the Old Lion at Clifton-upon-Teme. From there we had all been kindly invited to take tea at Tony and Shirley Matthews's home, all 38 of us, which was nice. Tony has a delectable collection of cars, and many interesting pictures, paintings and assorted motoring ephemera. I could while many a happy hour away there. I'll have to see if I can get another invite.



And so to return home, along another winding route - I don't like going the direct way. It had been a long day, which saw us travelling back in the dark. But it had been a full day, a nice day out, a sum of money donated to Shelsley Walsh, a nice lunch, and a good chinwag over a cup of tea and some interesting cars afterwards.

Not a bad day at all, methinks.



Thanks respectively to Mark and Karen Brookes, Graham Cherry, Dave Barton and Joy Edwards for their help and assistance to making the day a success.

What is Going On?!!

A couple of events coming up which are noteworthy:

The Kimber Run is on April 18th. The South Staffs and the Chesterfield group are supplying marshals for this event. The guy responsible overall for the run is long-time South Staffs member and regional secretary Roy Clarke. Roy was an active member and committee man for a very long time. Over the years he put a lot of effort into the successful running of our club. The South Staffs are always happy to support Roy in his ventures, and we will be happy to do our bit to see this event run successfully. We need about a dozen people or so, and Chesterfield will be supplying a similar amount of people. We will need to be at the start venue which is Chatsworth House from about 8.30 am onwards. The MGOC will be rewarding those who do come along and marshal, although we don't have full details on just how they intend to do so yet.

Furthermore, we don't need to feel we are losing out by marshalling and not participating. Yours Truly put together one of the three routes that the Kimber Run will cover. My initial route was too long and had to be reduced, which is a little bit of a shame as it did cover some fabulous roads in deepest Derbyshire. As a group though, we can do the whole run as a South Staffs club event. We'll be having a Derby Dales Run on Sunday 20th June, using the full route adapted to start at a convenient point to suit ourselves. I'll also adapt the notes I made so that we'll each have a full tulip road book for the run. And we won't have to pay an entry fee either, so I reckon we're quids in.

On the second club night of April, which is on the 28th, we'll be visited by the proprietor of a local car parts and accessories emporium, namely Max Autos. He'll be bringing along lots of car cleaning and polishing equipment for us to purchase, so men, you might all need to bring a cheque book along!

The weekend before the Kimber run is Easter, and a small club holiday to Clwyd Gate near Ruthin has been organised. I think that may be fully booked now, but there is also a club run on the Easter Sunday, the 11th for those not going away for the weekend. Contact Mark Brookes for more details.

SENTRY
SEAT BELTS

WITH A CHOICE OF
7 COLOURS

RED · GREY · BLUE · BEIGE
BLACK · GREEN · OFF WHITE

SAFETY FIRST WITH SENTRY

THE FULLY APPROVED
QUALITY BELT WORTH £5
NOW SAVES YOU 45/-

DIRECT TO YOU, no middlemen's profits.
Lap and diagonal belt for greater safety.
Breaking strain almost 3 tons. Washable
Bri-Nylon webbing. Metal buckle instantly
released. 2-point steel floor anchorage.
Easily fitted by you or your garage. Fitting
instructions enclosed. For all types of
front seats. Money back guarantee.

55/-
plus postage
2/6 one belt
3/6 two belts




Direct From
Manufacturers

Please supply **SENTRY** seat belt(s)

State colour required _____

Name _____

Address _____

I enclose cheque/P.O./Money Order to the
value of _____

SENTRY SEAT BELTS Dept: M57
141, New Bedford Road, Luton, Beds.

