



news update
December 2020 (No. 13/20)



2020 is a year that we will remember – for all the wrong reasons.

Not least, because it was the year when almost all of our vintage motoring plans were cancelled, or at least postponed, because of the Covid 19 pandemic. We learned how to wash our hands whilst singing “Happy Birthday to You”, how to self-isolate and how to judge 2 metres in a trice.

One of our number, Chas Howe caught the virus right at the start of the pandemic. He spent weeks in the Intensive Care department of Salisbury hospital in a coma, with the worst case of infection the staff had seen. He still doesn't know how or where he became infected.

Happily, Chas has almost fully recovered – but nine months later, he is still not quite back to full strength. If anybody ever doubted the dreadful effects of the virus, they should ask Chas or Sue.



Not technically an “Early M.G.” but close enough for Rudolph!



THE COOKE GROUP RESTORATION • PARTS • SERVICE
VETERAN & VINTAGE CARS (ESTABLISHED 1950)

Bullnose & Flatnose Morris Specialists
cookejohn@hotmail.com

To all our customers and friends in the vintage community – take care and stay safe.
Restoration work suspended – limited parts service still operating.
Bullnose & flatnose spares now urgently required:
RADIATORS, INSTRUMENTS, LAMPS, DYNASTARTS, MAGS, ETC.
Time to clear out your garage?

THE COOKE GROUP West Avenue, Wigston, Leicester LE18 2FB Tel: (0116) 288 1234 Fax: (0116) 288 1238

With little to report in regard to Early M.G. activity, here's a seasonal extract from the Frittenden Parish magazine, sent in by Geoff Radford:-

DELIGHTFUL CHRISTMAS TRIVIA

Christmas is a contraction of "Christ's Mass," which is derived from the Middle English "*Cristemasse*," which in turn comes from the Old English "*Cristesmaesse*" and was first recorded way back in 1038.

Hanging stockings out comes from an old Dutch custom of leaving shoes packed with food for Saint Nicholas's donkeys. He would leave small gifts in return.

The tradition of putting tangerines in stockings comes to us courtesy of 12th century French nuns who left socks full of fruit, nuts and notably tangerines at the houses of the community poor.

According to tradition, you should eat one mince pie on each of the 12 days of Christmas to bring good luck.

The Christmas cracker was invented by a London sweet shop owner by the name of Tom Smith. In 1847 after seeing French bonbons wrapped in festive paper with a twist at each end, he began selling his sweets with "love mottos" inside. He then started to include a trinket and added a 'bang'. He also created a top of the line edition that included gifts such as miniature dolls and jewellery. By 1900, he was selling 13 million a year!

It is technically illegal to eat mince pies on Christmas Day in England. In the 17th century, Oliver Cromwell banned Christmas pudding, mince pies and anything else to do with gluttony. The law has never been repealed or rescinded.

Why red, green and gold?? Green has long been a symbol of life and rebirth; red symbolizes the blood of Christ and gold represents light as well as wealth and royalty.

Mistletoe (*Viscum Album*) comes to us from the Anglo-Saxon word *mistelán*, which means "Little Dung Twig" because the plant spreads through bird droppings.

The Yule Log was originally an entire tree that was carefully chosen and brought into the house with great ceremony and ritual and was burned over the 12 days of Christmas.

Rudolf the red-nosed reindeer was invented by a company in the USA for a Christmas promotion of their products in 1938.

Traditionally, families used to gather in the kitchens of their homes to mix and steam Christmas puddings on "Stir-up Sunday," which was the last Sunday before Advent. Everyone took a turn to stir the pudding mix and make a wish for the year ahead.

Holly and Ivy have been used to decorate homes since the 9th century because together they symbolise everlasting life. The holly represents Christ's crown of thorns and the berries His blood.

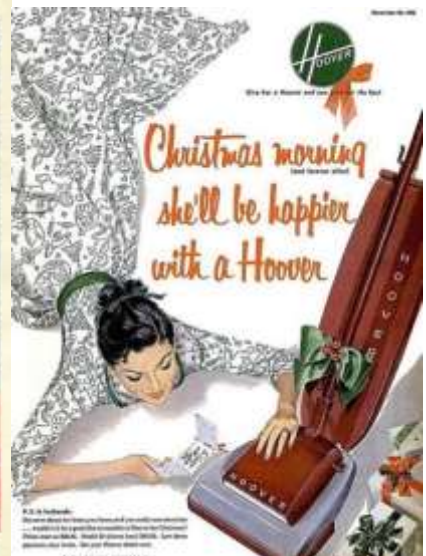
AND FINALLY,

No wonder Santa gets tired, American scientists have calculated that he must visit 822 homes per second and travel at 652 miles per hour in order to deliver all the world's presents!

Tom Smith, the man mentioned above, who invented Christmas Crackers, even marketed a special version for motorists :-



Here are some adverts for Christmas presents for the lady in your life, from a time when sexist ads were more palatable :-



Staying on the theme of Christmas presents – here are a couple of suggestions for the man who has everything:



The fitness training bicycle with automatic air-conditioning.

or perhaps



The good news in the U.K. is that the government predicts that we'll all have been vaccinated against Covid 19 by Easter 2021. If that prediction proves to be true, then the prospect of running the Early M.G. Society events, which were postponed this year, becomes a possibility.

We have heard from many members who tell us how much they're looking forward to going on EMGS events again, "once this thing is all over" – especially the next trip to France.

Thinking about those trips, it seems amazing that our trip to La Roche Bernard in Southern Brittany, was more than 10 years ago – in June 2010.



To evoke some memories for those who went on the trip, you can view a [new updated video of the event](https://vimeo.com/479256509) by clicking here:

<https://vimeo.com/479256509>

You can view the video in full screen by clicking the icon at bottom right of the picture.

The 'Runners & Riders' on that trip were:

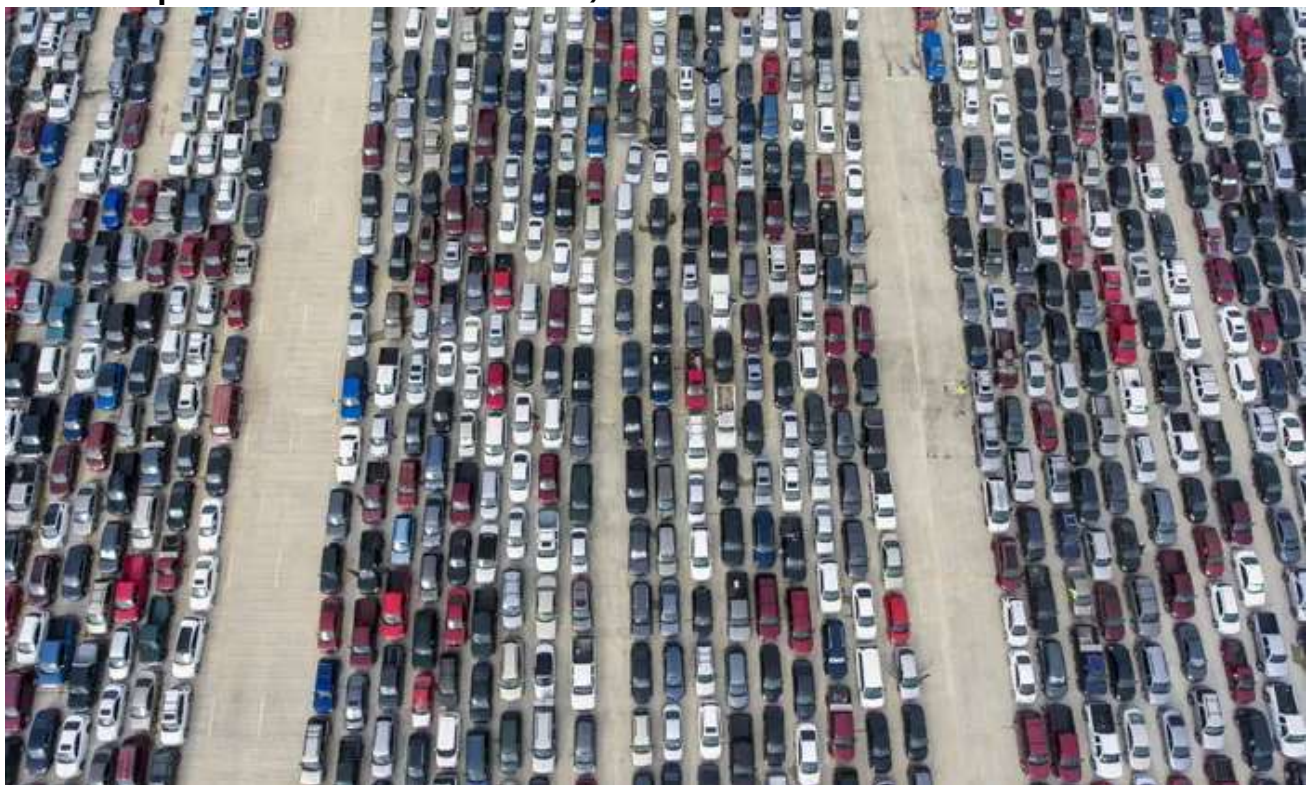
Rally No	Driver & Navigator Names	px no	Car Make & Model Year	Reg No
1	KETTEL Rodney & Alyson	2	1955 AC Ace	GHY 577
2	COXETER Rex & Jane	2	1929 MG 14/40 Tourer	UV 2360
3	JENSEN Gert Orla	1	1930 MG 18/80 Speed Model	MG 796
4	SALEM Alan & Hilary & Dog - Charlie	2	1929 MG 14/40 MK4 Open Tourer	UV 2961
5	LEVER Brian & Lynn	2	1928 Morris Oxford Open Tourer	FK 3664
6	WELLS Clive & Denise	2	1930 MG 18/80 Speed Model	AYV 812
7	TARGETT Jerry & Miriam	2	1929 MG 18/80 MKII Special 2 seater sports	GG 1627
8	KEEVILL Chris & Janice	2	1925 MG Super Sports open 4 seater	PP 3256
10	MARSH Terry & June	2	1937 Bentley Petersen Derby Special	DLO 940
11	GARDNER Patrick & BENDER Nicholas	2	1930 MG MK1 2 Seater & dickey seat	OF 3670

Whilst we chew over the impact of latest Covid ‘tiers’ and the impact on our Christmas, spare a thought for many folk in the USA. After four years of “Making America great again”, to quote a well-known politician, many Americans are going to bed hungry. The term used by government for those who don’t have enough food to eat, is “Food insecure”.

At the Classic MG Club of Orlando, the club charity runs a Free Food Bank. Since the pandemic began, they have given away 50 million meals – just in the Orlando area.



Here’s a picture taken in San Antonio, Texas:



It looks like a traffic jam on the freeway – but no, it shows 6000 families queueing to get a food parcel at a Food Bank distribution centre. In the USA the divide between the “haves” and the “have nots” is far greater than in the UK and Texas is one of the very worst states for “Food insecurity”.

This image of a Bullnose M.G. cropped up on t'internet recently. It's the car that belonged to Julie Craig for many years and is now owned by Terry Prodger in Modanville, New South Wales – about 30 miles inland from Byron Bay.



It looks just as good under the bonnet!

Your copy of the new edition of the Early M.G. Society magazine will be posted to you this week.



Santa delivers one of those new wrenches in the nick of time.



Stay safe.