

FROM THE CLUB ARCHIVIST

ISSUE 1: 1 SEPTEMBER 2021



DEAR FRIENDS,

AS MOST OF YOU WILL KNOW BY NOW, I STEPPED DOWN AS THE CLUB TREASURER AND AS A COMMITTEE MEMBER AT THE 2021 AGM AFTER MANY YEARS IN THESE ROLES. AT VARIOUS TIMES I WAS THE CLUB SECRETARY AND VICE PRESIDENT, AND ALSO ASSISTED ALAN JENNINGS, MANY YEARS AGO NOW, WITH PUTTING THE CLUB MAGAZINE TOGETHER.

I HAVE THOROUGHLY ENJOYED MY TIME ASSISTING IN THE RUNNING OF THE CLUB. BUT IT WAS INDEED TIME TO MOVE ON AND LET FRESH BLOOD TAKE OVER AND GUIDE THE CLUB INTO THE FUTURE. THERE IS ALSO SOME UNFINISHED CLUB BUSINESS THAT I WANT TO COMPLETE - I'LL TALK FURTHER DOWN ABOUT WHAT THAT IS – AND TIME IS RUNNING OUT.

I'D LIKE TO EXPRESS MY VERY GRATEFUL THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT AND HELP GIVEN TO ME BY MANY FELLOW COMMITTEE MEMBERS OVER THE YEARS WHEN DISCHARGING MY DUTIES. MANY FRIENDSHIPS HAVE ARISEN FROM MY INVOLVEMENT ON THE COMMITTEE.

AT THE AGM, IT WAS VERY PLEASING TO SEE A FRESH BATCH OF MEMBERS STEPPING UP TO HELP DETERMINE THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE CLUB. IT'S SOMETHING THAT WE HAVE NOT SEEN FOR MANY YEARS, SO WELL DONE TO THOSE NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR RISING TO THE OCCASION AND THANK YOU TO THOSE EXISTING COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO HAVE AGREED TO CONTINUE ON AND GUIDE THE CLUB FORWARD.

I'M VERY PLEASED THAT ROSS MIDDLEMASS HAS AGREED TO TAKE OVER AS THE CLUB TREASURER. YOU CAN BE ASSURED THAT THE CLUB'S FINANCIAL AFFAIRS ARE IN VERY SAFE AND CAPABLE HANDS AND THAT HE WILL GIVE WISE COUNCIL AT THE COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

MY STEPPING DOWN FROM THE COMMITTEE DOESN'T MEAN IT'S THE LAST YOU'LL SEE OF ME. ALONGSIDE MY ROLE AS TREASURER, I'VE ALSO BEEN THE CLUB ARCHIVIST FOR MANY YEARS. HOWEVER, I'VE ALWAYS STRUGGLED TO FIND SUFFICIENT TIME TO DISCHARGE THIS ROLE WHILE UNDERTAKING COMMITTEE AND TREASURY WORK; OTHER THAN JUST BEING THE CUSTODIAN OF THE CLUB'S ARCHIVES. (TEN BOXES AND COUNTING!)

I'VE AGREED TO CONTINUE AS THE CLUB ARCHIVIST AS I FEEL IT'S UNFINISHED BUSINESS FOR ME. I INTEND TO PUT THE CLUB'S ARCHIVES INTO GOOD ORDER AND CATALOGUE KEY MOMENTS IN THE CLUB'S HISTORY. I ALSO INTEND TO FIND INTERESTING ITEMS AND ARTICLES FROM THE CLUB'S PAST THAT MAY HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN OVER THE YEARS AND BRING THEM FORWARD FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT.

I WON'T COMMIT TO PRODUCING MORE THAN FOUR NEWSLETTERS A YEAR BUT YOU CAN BE ASSURED THE ARTICLES AND ITEMS INCLUDED WILL BE INTERESTING AND HOPEFULLY OF THE "I DIDN'T KNOW THAT" VARIETY.

MY FIRST ARTICLE FOLLOWS THIS INTRODUCTION. ALTHOUGH NOT ABOUT OUR CLUB, IT'S AN INTERESTING STORY ABOUT THE RETURN OF AN HISTORIC ITEM THAT ONCE BELONGED TO CECIL KIMBER.

IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE COMMITTEE (AND MEMBERS GENERALLY) FOR THE VERY KIND HONOUR THAT WAS BESTOWED ON MARIE AND I AT THE AGM. THE AWARDING OF LIFE MEMBERSHIPS WAS TOTALLY UNEXPECTED BUT VERY HUMBLING. THANK YOU.

NOW FOR THE INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF THE RETURN OF CECIL'S DESK AFTER 40 YEARS

IN A RECENT OTAGO SOUTHLAND CENTRE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE, WE PUBLISHED AN INTERESTING STORY FROM ALEX AND DOROTHY DEMPSTER IN WHICH THEY MET THE GERMAN GENTLEMAN WHO DINES OFF CECIL KIMBER'S DINING TABLE.

THIS TIME I TELL YOU ABOUT CECIL KIMBER'S DESK THAT HAS BEEN RETURNED TO KIMBER HOUSE (THE HOME OF THE MG CAR CLUB IN ABINGDON). ONE OF THE CLUB'S GOALS IS TO PRESERVE THE MG BRAND'S HERITAGE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, ESPECIALLY ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANCE TO THE MARQUE. IT'S ARCHIVE, BASED AT CLUBHOUSE KIMBER HOUSE, IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THIS.

RECENTLY ONE VERY SPECIAL ITEM JOINED THE COLLECTION, CECIL KIMBER'S DESK (LEFT PHOTO BELOW). ORIGINALLY SOLD IN 1981 AS PART OF THE MG ABINGDON FACTORY CLOSURE AND CLEARANCE, THE AUCTION CATALOGUE DESCRIBED IT AS "THE FIRST MADE ITEM OF FURNITURE WHEN THE MG MOTOR COMPANY STARTED".

THE DESK SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR (OR PERHAPS BY) KIMBER. THERE IS A SIDE PANEL WHICH EXTENDS TO ALLOW A SECOND PERSON TO SIT BESIDE HIM FOR A MEETING. THE DRAWERS HAVE SOME CLEVER MECHANISMS TO HIDE COMPARTMENTS.

KIMBER HOUSE REPORTS THAT THE DESK IS IN NEED OF SOME RESTORATION AND ASKS IF ANY MEMBER HAS THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK.

RUMOUR HAD IT THAT KIMBER ONLY USED GREEN INK... EVIDENCE OF THIS CAN BE FOUND INSIDE ONE OF THE DRAWERS!

WHEN I (RUSSELL WALKER) VISITED KIMBER HOUSE IN 2018 (MY THIRD VISIT!), I WAS ABLE TO VIEW CECIL'S FUR CAR COAT, TYPEWRITER AND HIS CHAIR. IT'S WONDERFUL THAT THESE ITEMS ARE RETURNING TO THE HOME OF MG.

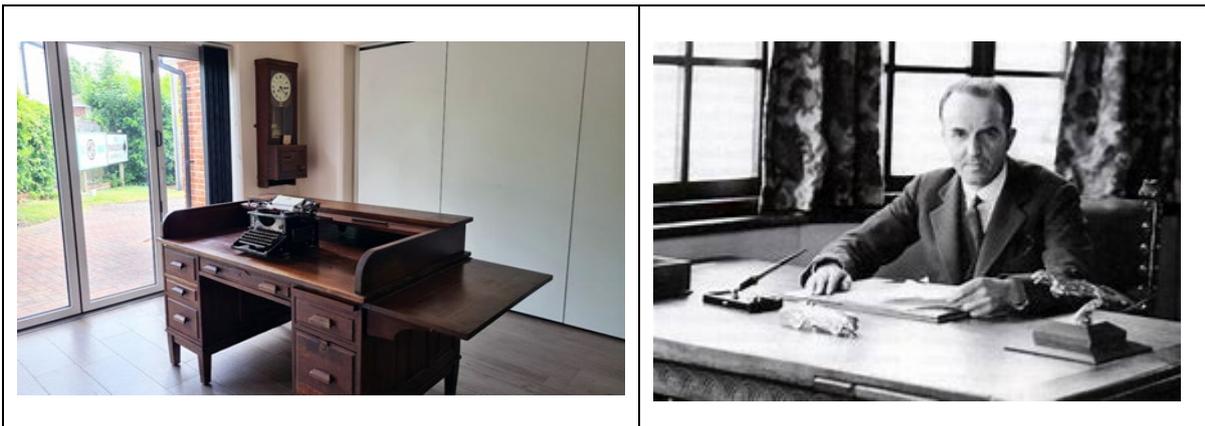
PS 1 CECIL MUST HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF OFFICE DESKS AS THE MOST COMMON PHOTO OF CECIL SITTING AT HIS WORK DESK (RIGHT PHOTO) SHOWS A MUCH LARGER FLAT DESK WITHOUT RAISED SURROUNDS (OR WAS THIS A POSED SHOT FOR PUBLICITY PURPOSES?)

PS 2 AS A SLIGHT ASIDE, DID YOU KNOW ...THAT THE MG CAR CLUB MADE BREN GUNS (A LIGHT MACHINE GUN) DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR ALONGSIDE MAKING MG CARS.

BEST REGARDS

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