

NORTH HAMPSHIRE *AUSTIN* ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
Founded 1973

Monthly Newsletter and Events Update

www.nhaeg.org.uk

January 2009

Club nights at The New Inn, Heckfield, 8pm, 2nd Monday in every month

It's that time once again when our highly-esteemed *Newsletter* Editor, Maureen, has gone on what, now appears, is now her regular, annual globe-trotting exercise - with Don. Hence it's down to me to cobble together the *Newsletter* for the next three months or so, in order to keep you informed of what's going on. Whilst I can't promise such a professional product, compared with that to which we have all become accustomed, I'll do my very best, whilst she's away, to at least gather together, collate and include anything and everything which may be of interest to members. Having made such a statement, this month's edition, on reflection, appears to have turned into something of a 'Bumper Number' though it's probably a case of 'Never mind the quality - feel the width!'

First off then and to start the ball rolling, as per normal, here is :

COLIN'S COLUMN

I would like to start off by saying, on behalf of all members, thank you very much Trevor for offering to take over the production of the Newsletter while Maureen is away.

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I am sure that everyone will agree that the venue for our Christmas Dinner this year was one of the best we have used. The room was nicely laid out, the food was very good and the service was excellent with all the staff working hard to look after us. Our numbers were a little down on previous years, with 30 attending, but unfortunately quite a number of our members were away, which meant they missed a very good evening. As usual we had a free raffle with many excellent prizes.

The whole evening was very well organised by Trevor and Jean. I am sure that everyone enjoyed themselves and would want me on their behalf to thank both Trevor and Jean for an enjoyable time.

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As usual our December club night was devoted to festive fun. This year we had our own version of the television programme 'Through the Keyhole'. Members had been asked to bring along a photograph taken in their house or garage containing a subtle clue as to who's house it was, these were then passed around and everyone had to guess the owners of the house each photograph was taken in. I have to admit some of the subtle clues were very clever and in some cases amusing as well, especially the one from John and Joan Hancock. The eventual winners with ten correct answers

were Trevor and Jean who received a bottle of wine and a box of chocolates, well done to them both.

As it was still early in the evening Trevor organised a very entertaining game. It was played in teams with each team having a card with the alphabet down the left hand side, a random sentence was then read out from a book and the first 26 letters from that sentence were then written down the page next to the letters already there, this meant we now had 26 sets of 2 letters. The idea then was for each team to think of the names of well-known people that would match the 26 sets of initials that were now on the cards. If a team could not think of a person to match the initials then they had to think up a name and try and convince the other teams it was genuine.

The winning team with the most names comprised Tony and Pat with Roy and Ronnie, well done to them. A great deal of fun, many thanks Trevor.

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I cannot believe another year has gone but it has and as usual at our January club night we will have the AGM. This is usually very well attended so come along and let the committee know how they have done this year and maybe suggest an activity for next year. We will also be awarding the 'Annual Group Trophy' to the person that you the members think has done something special for the club this year, the vote will be taken on the night.

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If anyone wants to give their cars a run in the new year a good event is the annual VSCC driving tests at Brooklands which this year are on Sunday 11th January. It's always worth going along to watch. Details can be found on www.vsc.co.uk

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All that remains now is to wish everyone a very Happy New Year and safe and happy *Austin* motoring in 2009.

Colin..

Secretary's Scribblings

Christmas Dinner 2008

For those who were there and for the possible interest of those who were not here are a few pictures taken at the Christmas Dinner, held on 1st December.

As Colin mentions, this turned out to be probably one of the best in living memory – certainly in the opinion of some of our more long-standing members. The venue – Downshire Golf Complex – was a little distant for some of those attending but this didn't seem to dampen their enthusiasm or enjoyment of the

evening. All in all an excellent time was had by all. Sometimes there is a 'but' on such occasions e.g. "The food was OK 'but' the service wasn't" or "The service was good 'but' the food wasn't hot". On this occasion there weren't any 'buts' and the venue got a clear 'thumbs up', by most of those attending, for next year's dinner. Unless, that is, someone can come up with a more 'central', suitable suggestion in the meantime, perhaps a little more convenient for our overall membership, bearing in mind that this currently ranges from Horndean (South), over to Guildford (East), up to Wokingham (North) and across to Basingstoke (West).



A cheery bunch!



Our most senior member – Sheila ('Ma') Breakspear and friends!



'Zac' – with his new keeper (on the left!) and previous 'foster parent'

Don't keep it to yourself!

The Internet is undoubtedly a wonderful thing; often described as a solution looking for a problem.

One of its benefits we've been able to take advantage of in recent times is the ability to transmit monthly Newsletters electronically, via e-mail, to the majority of our members. This means a considerable saving in postage costs over previous arrangements since those needing to be sent out by 'snail-mail' have been reduced dramatically in number.

However, one of the less welcome side effects has been the fact that it would appear that not everyone is getting to see a copy of the publication since, (we strongly suspect!), it's not being printed out for all and sundry to read at their leisure. Whilst it may be being read by the person sitting at the computer it may not necessarily be printed out or even stored away for a later access; just being deleted after a cursory scan through.

Obviously this defeats the object somewhat and means that we're constantly hearing the cry '*I didn't see that in the Newsletter*' or even '*I don't seem to be getting the Newsletter*'.

If you think you could be 'guilty' of the 'crime' described here please try to ensure that the Newsletter **is printed out as a hard copy**, wherever possible, and left

lying around on a coffee table or somewhere for a while, where anyone who may be interested can browse through it. Many thanks!

The following letter is from Paul Goff who, as you'll note, is able to supply bulbs with enhanced performance for types of vehicles we have:

PAUL GOFF

62 CLARE RD.

PRESTWOOD

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

HP16 ONU

01494 868218

E MAIL norbsa02@aol.com VAT No.866955559

Press release

Brighter Lights for older cars

Dear Sir

Compared to modern cars, older cars headlights are poor, and used in modern traffic are bad enough to discourage owners from using their cars after dark.

The original headlamp bulbs, until the advent of the sealed beam unit, were the Tungsten Filament type. These were replaced by Quartz halogen bulbs with a different fitting, the P43t H4, which could not be fitted to the earlier types of headlight.

We have had made Quartz halogen bulbs fitted to the original British Pre-Focus & earlier Bayonet Cap type bases allowing them to be fitted to the original headlamps.

They are available in 6V & 12V in a number of Wattages so there are types to fit most vehicles and give much brighter headlights with a longer beam and no extra load on the charging system.

Bayonet Cap	British Pre-Focus
6V 25/25W	6V 25/25W & 35/35W
12V 35/35W & 45/40W £7.95	12V 35/35W, 45/40W & 60/55W £8.25

We offer worldwide delivery with payment via UK cheque or Paypal.

Please visit our website www.norbsa02.freeuk.com for more details of these bulbs, headlights to replace the sealed beam units, brighter replacements for sidelights, modern H4 headlights & LED stop/tail Bulbs.

If you are the editor of your club magazine please include my contact details, if not please pass this on.

Yours faithfully



And on a vaguely-related note the following is kindly submitted by Roy (Roberts):

12 V CONVERSION


To the Gentleman with the American Austin 7.

You may remember at Newcastle expressing an interest in my conversion to 12 V electrics using a standard A7 dynamo type C.35M. The details are as follows:

First, to understand how the dynamo works, the core of the field windings has a certain residual magnetism which is just enough to get things started, as long as the dynamo is isolated from the battery by the cut-out. Above a certain critical speed the dynamo output (which is fed to the field windings through the half flow charge rate switch on a standard A7 or via the voltage regulator if things have been modernised), begins to build up in voltage and in a perfect world would carry on rising to infinity because the higher the voltage the greater the field current.

Fortunately due to various losses in the system this is not the case and things stop at about 20V at reasonable revs. The battery acts as a reservoir with no voltage regulator and holds things down to about 7V but disconnect the battery with the engine running and all sorts of 6V equipment will be done in. Simply substituting a 12V cut-out for the 6V one will allow 12V battery to charge but one thing which has to be watched is the current. At 12V the field current is twice what it is at 6V which could burn out the field windings. Because of the doubled field current the dynamo out-put available is also doubled which could burn out the armature. Fortunately the dynamo has an adjustable third brush and setting this for minimum charge rate keeps things down to a safe level at the expense of reduced charge rate at low revs. There is then no risk of burning out the dynamo.

Because the 6V cut-out has been removed it is easier to fit a 12V regulator/cut-out from something of the Morris Oxford era (1950-60), than hunt for a pre-war 12V cut-out. There are problems using a regulator with a 3 brush dynamo (the experts tell you it will not work), but they can be overcome. A diode must be connected across the regulator contacts (terminals D & F) to avoid excessive sparking and also a condenser of about 0.5-1 microfarad.

The diode can be anything of the 1N-400 Series (1N4001-2-3 or a TV rectifier is suitable). The diode is connected so that it does not normally conduct or the regulator won't regulate. The diode labelling may be  or simply a red dot or a stripe at the + end. The + end goes to the D for negative earth or F for positive earth. It is essential to have the regulator contacts in good condition and they may need a go with a file or emery. The electronic regulator from early Lucas alternators would be a more reliable and a more accurate regulator, but would only work on a positive earth system (on the alternator the regulator is between field and earth on negative earth which is the same as between field and D on positive earth). My battery has never gone flat yet and my lights are good and bright.

John Ashbridge,
"Attorgarth",
Disington,
Workington,
Cumbria.
Tel: Harrington 830556 (STD0946)

2009 Committee

This is a final reminder to get your nominations in for those you might like to see serve on the Committee for next year. A form for this purpose was included in the December Newsletter but another is included elsewhere in this issue - just in case you've mislaid it. Please note you should seek agreement from the person being nominated, of course, before submitting your proposal, which should reach me by 10th January at the very latest.
Postal address is: 55 The Brambles, Crowthorne. RG45 6EF.

Names of those nominated, in addition to the existing Committee, all of whom have indicated a willingness to stand for re-election, will appear on the Voting Form to be distributed, completed and counted at the AGM scheduled for **Monday 12th January 2009**.

Please try to attend and, in particular, those members who are sometimes conspicuous by their absence, are especially invited to turn up to help choose next year's committee.

The subject of lubricating oils is a perennial talking point. The following article on the contentious topic, appearing in the latest FBHVC Newsletter is therefore reproduced, in its entirety and with its kind permission:

CASTROL CLASSIC OIL WITH ZDDP ANTI-WEAR ADDITIVE

In response to a question about oils which do not contain zinc dialkyldithiophosphate Castrol Technical Centre very kindly submitted the following article. Club editors are very welcome to reproduce it in their own newsletters but to preserve technical accuracy Castrol request that it should only be reproduced in whole.

Established in 1899, originally as C.C. Wakefield, Castrol launched their first lubricant for cars in 1906 and have been at the leading edge of lubrication technology ever since. With the introduction of low viscosity engine oils and changes to anti-wear additives in modern oils in recent years, owners of veteran, vintage and classics are asking whether modern oils are suitable for their cars.

Choosing the correct lubricant for your veteran, vintage or classic vehicle is essential to ensure peak running and maximum wear protection. The technology of older vehicle engines is very different from today's modern cars, so to assist owners, Castrol reintroduced their older brands with their 'Classic Range' in the early 1990s. These Classic oils are produced to original viscosities and importantly have retained the necessary levels of additives including anti-wear additive ZDDP (zinc dialkyldithiophosphate) appropriate for the technology of the engines they are designed for and to provide overall protection. The ZDDP levels are appropriate for engines that are in use or running-in, including those fitted with new or reconditioned components, where care should always be taken to follow the manufacturers' recommendations when breaking in new components such as camshafts.

ZDDP additive provides a high level of anti-wear protection, but its phosphorus content is harmful to catalytic converters and other emission equipment fitted to many modern vehicles. It has therefore been reduced in the latest specification oils, designed for engines using the latest surface hardening technology and meeting the latest emission requirements for modern vehicles. These requirements also necessitate the use of other new emission equipment friendly additives not designed for use in veteran, vintage and classic car engines.

Oil formulations required for today's modern vehicles are very different from formulations needed for older vehicles, having thinner viscosity and alternative additive technology as stated earlier, making them generally unsuitable for use in older engines. This has been done in conjunction with new vehicle manufacturers who have increased the surface

hardening of engine components to receive maximum protection from the new additives. Oils for modern engines comply with the latest API ratings and are designed for modern engine technology with tight tolerances and compatibility with catalytic converters. A car engine of old design has very different characteristics, with cork, graphite or rope seals, low pressure cog driven oil pumps, wider oil-ways with greater dependence on 'splash' and 'cling' lubrication, lower revving with lesser machine tolerances. Such widely different specifications demand totally different lubricants of thicker viscosity with appropriate additives specially included for the work they have to do. Oils even of the same viscosity, supplied by different oil companies can have radically different formulations and thus have significantly different performance characteristics. Oil classifications are designated 'S' (for spark ignition petrol engines) and 'C' (for compression ignition diesel engines). Oil classifications for older petrol vehicles range from SA for vehicles from the turn of the last century to SH, to the late 1980s and early '90s.

- *Inadequate anti-wear additive (ZDDP)* and the oil film between moving parts breaks down prematurely, resulting in metal to metal contact and damage to reground or new engine components particularly on run-in.
- *Inadequate detergent* will result in gum and lacquer clinging to the hotter engine components.
- *Too much detergent* can cause a build-up of metallic ash in the combustion chambers of older engines. In older engines with traditionally high oil consumption, this will cause detonation and pinking. In older engines where the carbon has built up over a number of years the detergents can also have a scouring effect causing the carbon to flake off, blocking up oil galleries and spray jets. High levels of detergent will 'wash' traces of carbon from seals and gaskets, revealing oil leaks.
- *Inadequate anti-oxidant* and the oil will permanently thicken during high temperature motoring, with large amounts of gum and varnish clogging filters and piston rings.
- *Inadequate corrosion inhibitors* and engine internals become pitted with corrosion and rust from acids and water formed during combustion.
- *Inadequate dispersing* results in soot, wear metals and the by-products of combustion settling out in the sump to form a thick sludge that will block filters and oil ways.
- *Inadequate pour point depressant* and the oil ceases to flow at low temperatures, with excessive strain on the oil pump or in certain cases, oil starvation on start-up causing complete failure of the lubrication system.

For older vehicles; veteran, vintage and classic, use an oil of the correct viscosity as recommended by the vehicle manufacturer and shown in your vehicle's handbook. Where your vehicle requires a specific viscosity such as 30, 40, 50 and 20w-50, avoid using inappropriate low viscosity engine lubricants designed for modern vehicles such as 0w, 5w, 10w, 15w.

Castrol's vehicle lubrication records date back beyond the turn of the last century, detailing lubricant specifications for engine oils, gear oils and greases right through to today's classics, so to find out which Castrol grade is right for a vehicle, owners can simply refer to their vehicle handbook and select that grade from Castrol's Classic range. Castrol's Classic engine oils XL30, XXL40, GP50 and XL20w-50 are formulated to the original viscosities and contain the necessary levels of ZDDP anti-wear additive to provide appropriate protection for veteran, vintage and classic engines. The range is available throughout the UK via leading car specialists. For further information either telephone the Castrol Classic helpdesk on 01954 231668 or visit www.castrol.com/uk/classics.

Events Diary / Update!

A programme, possibly subject to some possible slight changes, has been drawn up for the first half of 2009. Further details of these and for those later on in the year will follow in due course but please remember that everyone is free to plan and organise an event so, don't just sit back and wait for the Committee to dream up things!

Jan 1 2009

Annual meeting of vintage vehicles at 'The Phoenix', Phoenix Green, near Hartley Wintney. Just turn up for a convivial get-together with like-minded individuals.

Jan 12 **Club Night - AGM!**

Feb 9 **‘Sponsor a Veteran Evening’,
including a ‘Bring & Buy’ Sale,
Raffle and talk by a D-Day Veteran**

In aid of the recently proposed efforts to sponsor sending a D-Day Veteran to the 65th Anniversary of the Normandy landings in June.

The sale will be preceded by a talk given by Mr. Thompson, from the Surrey Branch of the Normandy Veterans Association, who will tell us more and who is assisting us in identifying a suitable candidate on whom to focus our efforts.

Please donate whatever you can (e.g. ‘unloved’ Christmas presents? etc.) and come along to give your support to what undoubtedly is a most worthy, deserving and rather unique, charitable cause. Items can be handed to Karen (Witton), Jean (Edwards) or, indeed, any Committee member at the January (AGM) Club Night or passed on to them in the interim or, even, actually on the February Club Night Sale Evening.

Mar 09 **Talk: ‘Wind Turbines’**
Arranged by John Hancock and given by
Tom Brinicombe – Head of Marketing and Communications,
Partnerships in Renewable Energy (part of The Carbon Trust).
Probably will cover all you ever wanted to know on the subject - but were afraid to ask!

Apr 13 **‘Spring Airing’**

Bring along your ‘pride and joy’ (*or, in Dave and Karen’s case, select one from your collection!*) to get the ‘motoring season’ off to a good start.

As has now become the custom, eligibility for a free draw for an M&S voucher, will be available to anyone turning up in a ‘real car’.

May 11 **TBA**

June 8th **‘Half Gallon Run’**

July 13th **Concours d’Elegance**

Committee contacts (current)

Chairman: Colin Greig 0118 978 2087 *colin@greigc.freeserve.co.uk*

Secretary: Trevor Edwards 01344 775012 *trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com*

Treasurer Jean Edwards 01344 775012 *trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com*

Editor: Maureen Breakspear 0118 973 3568 *maureenbreakspear@yahoo.co.uk*

Members: Don Breakspear 0118 973 3568 *maureenbreakspear@yahoo.co.uk*

Peter Adams 01256 419344 *peteradams666@msn.com*

George Ewart 01344 778286 *george.ewartx@btinternet.com*

John Hancock 0118 988 5387 *route66_2003@hotmail.com*

NHAEG 2009 Committee Nominations

Current Committee members have indicated a willingness to stand again for re-election for 2009. However, you are invited to nominate *any* current member of the Club to serve on the Committee, providing you have obtained their permission beforehand. You are also free to nominate yourself, should you wish to do so, provided such nomination is seconded.

Current Committee:

Officers:

Colin Greig (Chairman)	Jean Edwards (Treasurer)
Trevor Edwards (Secretary)	Maureen Breakspear (Newsletter Editor)

Members:

Don Breakspear	George Ewart
John Hancock	Peter Adams

Nomination(s); (please state for which position nominated):

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.....

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Nominated by:..... Print name.....

Seconded:.....Print name.....

Ensure nominations are submitted by January 10th 2009, via email or regular mail.

Andy (Ranson) has clearly been trawling through yet more ancient motoring publications and has managed to unearth the following fascinating snippets. We are indebted to Andy for his research!

QUERIES OF THE MONTH

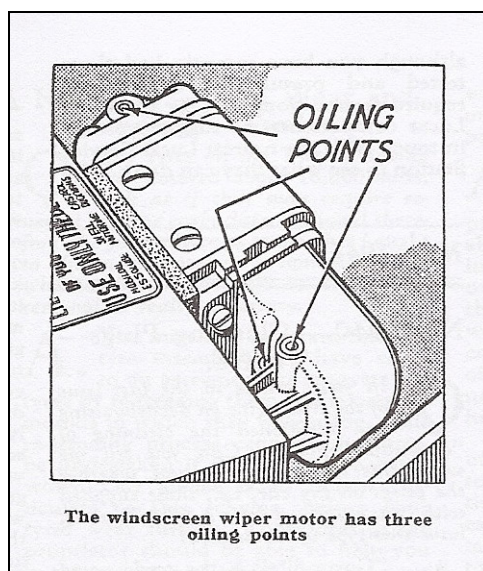
“Queries of the Month” originally appeared in “The Austin Magazine & Advocate” during the 1930s and 1940s. We have three queries for this month; I missed the deadline for December’s newsletter so there is an extra one for January. This month’s selection includes; Oiling Windscreen Wiper - Austin Ten, Valve Springs - Austin Big Seven and Distributor Squeak - Austin Ten. So some springs and a few squeaks.

No 1045 appeared in June 1941, No 1048 in July 1941 and No 1165 in March 1944.

No 1045 – Oiling Windscreen Wiper – Austin Ten

Q. *In the article in your June issue on “doing your own greasing,” you do not mention in detail the windscreen wiper or the direction indicators. Do these units need lubrication on my Austin Ten?*

A. Whilst the requirements in respect of lubrication of the windscreen wiper mechanism and the direction indicators are very minimum, these units can, on occasion, do with a trace of light machine oil. On the windscreen wiper motor, located under the bonnet, you will find three ball-type oilers, two at the driving spindle end and one at the other.



Just a trace of thin oil should be applied through these. So far as the linkage behind the instrument panel is concerned, this is not very accessible, but using a torch for visibility, and a feather or brush to apply a trace of oil to each joint, you should be able to effect the necessary lubrication.

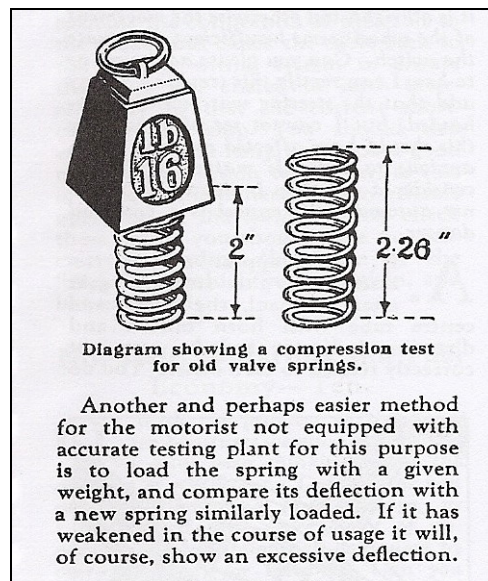
In respect of the direction indicators a feather or brush is again the best means of getting oil to the actuating plunger and links, and, for this purpose the direction indicator should be switched on, supported by hand, and then switched off, so that its movement is free and the desired accessibility of the mechanism is achieved.

It is important to remember in regard to all electrical apparatus, that a risk of over-lubrication is much greater than that of under-lubrication, so be most sparing in the application of oil to the units about which you have enquired.

No 1048 – Valve Springs – Austin Big Seven

Q. *Do you consider I ought to fit new valve springs on my 1938 Big Seven? I am about to decarbonise and grind-in the valves and have been told that after 20,000 miles or so it pays to renew the valve springs to ensure a reasonable maximum speed and all-out performance.*

A. We do not normally consider it necessary to renew the valve springs at the mileage you quote, but it is correct to say that ultimately changing the valve springs will improve the performance of the car. The test for valve springs is to determine their compression under load. The valve springs on your car should compress 0.26 inches under a load of 16 lbs.



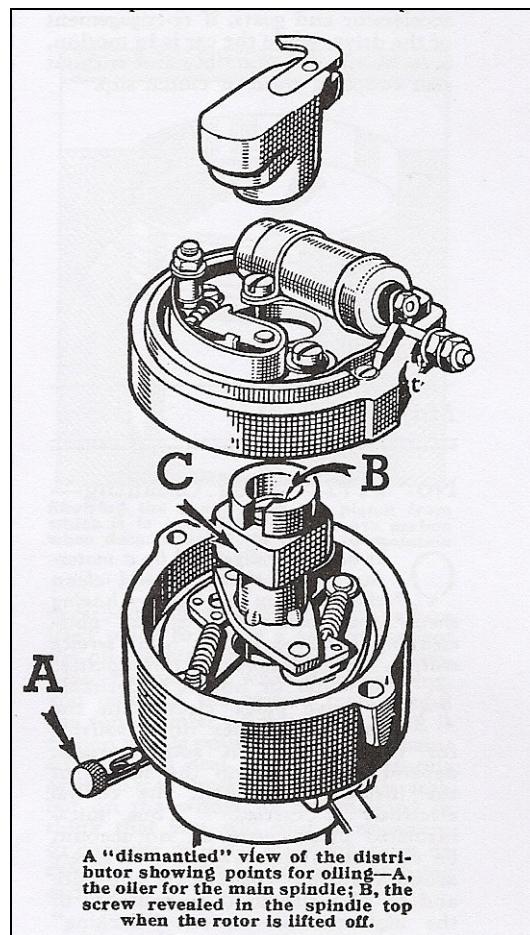
Another and perhaps easier method for the motorist not equipped with accurate testing plant for this purpose is to load the spring with a given weight, and compare its deflection with a new spring similarly loaded. If it has weakened in the course of usage it will, of course, show an excessive deflection.

No 1165 – Distributor Squeak – Austin Ten

Q. *My Austin Ten Saloon has recently developed a rather pronounced squeak which seems to come from the region of the distributor. Is there anything on the distributor to cause a squeak, and if so, what can be done about it.*

A. It does sometimes happen that the distributor spindle becomes dry through lack of lubrication and will cause a squeak. This will, of course, only occur when the engine is running, so can readily be detected when the car is still and the engine is ticking over.

Such a squeak can be simply and effectively cured by either oiling the distributor unit through the oiler below the contact breaker platform, or removing the distributor cover and rotor, and feeding a few drops of light oil on to the screw to be seen in the top of the spindle.



If these measures prove ineffectual try applying a little oil from the oil can to the spindle just where it goes through the distributor platform, ensuring that no surplus oil remains on the platform itself. If the squeak then still persists, the slightest smear of oil on the contact breaker cam on the spindle may effect a remedy, as slight corrosion on this may be causing a squeak as the fibre pad on the contact breaker rides the cam.

“Queries of the Month” are reproduced with the kind permission of the ATDC

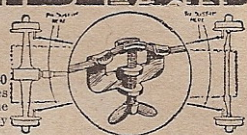
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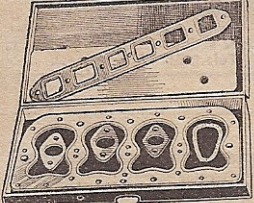
I found this in an old motoring magazine published in December 1937. The advertisement is for a variety of Austin Seven spares, I am afraid you may need a magnifying glass to check out the prices though. If only the club had a time machine

ACTIVE SERVICE
FOR
AUSTIN SEVENS

CABLE ADJUSTERS

As illustrated, price 1/10 each, postage 4d. Enables you to balance the brakes in a very easy manner.

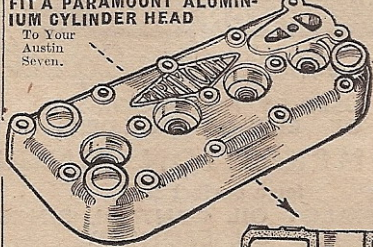





GASKETS

Complete set for decarbonising, boxed. 1/9
Postage 4d.
Cylinder Head Gasket only 1/-

FIT A PARAMOUNT ALUMINIUM CYLINDER HEAD
To Your Austin Seven.



You will be amazed at the increased road performance. Rolls Royce fit Aluminium cylinder heads, why? Because a definite increase in B.H.P. and sweet running is attained. Price, high or low compression, 35/-. or complete with four sports 14 m/m sparking plugs, 50/-. carriage 1/3. No alterations necessary.

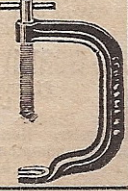


PISTONS

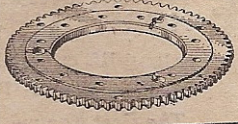
Pistons, complete with Rings and Gudgeon Pins (complete set of four) 17/6
Piston Rings 7d.
Scraper Rings 8d.
Gudgeon Pins 9d.


VALVE SPRING REMOVER
For Austin Seven

A well designed tool which makes the removal and refitting of valves a simple operation. Price 1/6. Postage 4d.



Radiator hose top	11d.
Radiator hose bottom	8d.
Radiator caps	1/6
Pan belts	9d.

	Starter rings 17/6
	Starting handle 3/3
	Clutch rings 2/3
	Clutch springs 2d.

Postage extra.		Each
	Valves, best quality	1/-
	Valve Guides	9d.
	Valve Springs	4d.

Complete replacement parts list free on request. Everything brand new and approval willingly. Post extra. C.O.D. if desired.

J. HEMMINGS & SONS, ENGINEERS, LTD.
Mail Orders, Dept. P.M.
HALE, LIVERPOOL. Phone : HALE 30.
Manchester Showrooms :
223-225 DEANS GATE. Phone : Blackfriars 3792

'Listen very carefully - I shall say this only once' - Part 4.

For those of you who have been reading the Normandy adventure, I thought it would be nice to share with you some of the culture and history of the area; this just adds to the WW2 history.

Whilst the main purpose of the trip is to understand and share with the veterans the momentous occasion of 1944, there is an incredible prior history associated with Normandy which it is important not to forget. A place where this is very evident is Bayeux.

Most of us think only of the tapestry in this historic town and who can blame them. The tapestry is absolutely awesome (230 feet long and 20 inches wide approximately) - you can actually see the tapestry which was crafted in the 11th century. It is unbelievable that something that old remains intact and available for scrutiny. When we first saw this, Dave was convinced it was a copy.. He could not believe that it was the actual tapestry from all those centuries ago!. And what of the history of the area?*

Well, not sure what you might know but the history associated with William The Conqueror is fascinating!. First Williams's father was riding in the area and saw Williams mother washing clothes in a stream, He tried to whisk her off but she would not submit without marriage. So he married her and William was the first born. When William was 21, he too saw Matilda and was determined that he was to marry her and what a story that was. The Bayeux tapestry was constructed in this region purportedly by Matilda and her ladies and is a depiction of the Norman Conquest. It is fascinating to see something which is the best part of a thousand years old and yet the colours are so vibrant and condition quite remarkable. If you have not seen it yet then it is a 'must see'. The museum in the cathedral in Bayeux has a film telling the visitor all about how this was accomplished and what it meant for the times. You cannot fail to be overawed by this. It also tells you all about the Normandy Campaign undertaken by William the Conqueror - you know when he popped over and conquered England! and how it nearly did not happen at all due to the weather. Incredible to think that this was also a Normandy Landing - but in reverse!!

In addition we spent a fabulous afternoon wandering around the medieval town of Bayeux. It is fascinating to think of the history of those cobbled streets and all without our knowledge!!! Can you imagine walking on cobbled streets which are dating back to the 12th Century? Just make sure you wear flat shoes! Last year most of the group managed some time in Bayeux. I know that Trevor and Jean, together with Pauline had a lovely time but simply could not see it all, as the picturesque city requires at least one pit stop at a suitable coffee house for one

of the delicious patisseries which typically adorn the windows. Therefore Dave and I have decided that a day trip to Bayeux is required for 2009.

In addition to this history there is of course the WW2 piece and there is a very large British cemetery in Bayeux. This is definitely worth a visit as it is, I believe, the largest British cemetery in Normandy. It is an incredibly moving place and is an indication of the lives lost at the fight to liberate Bayeux from the Germans. They were well entrenched and of course this particular city, as the capital of this area, was seen as a prize and not somewhere the Germans were going to give up easily. As in all major towns and cities it resulted in hand to hand fighting as each street and building were cleared. This was not only costly in soldier lives but also civilians. Sometimes we tend to forget that until the Normandy landings, the ordinary French people had to continue with a semblance of normal life whilst they awaited liberation. As there were very few who knew what was happening - for obvious reasons - most of the inhabitants were simply caught up in this and had to flee and take cover as best they could. Unfortunately many thousands died.

The cemetery is sited on either side of the main distribution road around the city and yet it is a peaceful, tranquil place. As well as the actual graves there is also a Wall of Remembrance on which there are thousands more names. As with all Commonwealth Cemeteries there is the information about the overall Normandy Campaign as well as about the particular area of Bayeux. Strategically this city was important as it was a major city which joined up the East and West Flanks and as the US forces advanced from the Cherbourg Peninsular and broke out from Omaha, they joined up with the British in this area.

I hope this has given a very brief flavour of some of the other wonderful things about being in this part of France. The history is fascinating throughout the ages and there is literally so much to do that you have to accept that you can only cover some in each trip. There are still places Dave and I have not visited and next year we have a few different places up our sleeve so to speak. Mind you I also need to prepare my waistline for the trip. I absolutely adore cheese and when you are in Normandy, there is such a selection of local cheeses - of which they are every proud - that it would simply be rude not to indulge.....

Well that is what I tell myself, so my diet startsafter Christmas.

On that note have a wonderful festive season and 'a bientot'

Karen

** Members might like to know that there is a full-sized replica, produced in Victorian times, of the Bayeaux tapestry, on view, in the Museum of Reading. (Ed.)*

+ +

Finally, for fun over the continuing festive season, here's something to keep you occupied when not glued to the 'idiots lantern' watching yet another screening of "Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang"! A prize will be awarded to the person submitting the most correct answers to the following brain-teasers by January 12th 2009. In each case the question contains the initials of words completing a statement or saying.
E.g. 16 O in the P.....answer: Sixteen ounces in a pound.

Some are fairly simple and obvious; others will get you thinking 'outside the box' a little! Good Luck!

1. 57 – HV
2. 60 – S in a M
3. 6 – S on a G
4. 1 – W on my U
5. 54 – C in a D (with J's).....
6. 1001 – A N
6. 200 – P for PG in M
8. 76 – T in the B P
9. 52 – W in a Y
10. ½ - P of T R
11. 3 – M in a B
12. 1000 – MM in a M
13. 22 – B on a S T
14. 8 – S on an O
15. 24 – C G
16. 39 – S
17. 40 – D and N of the G F
18. 4 – Q in a C
19. 100 – DC at which WB
20. 12 – D of C

Name:.....

Forward to me at the usual email/postal address.

N.B. Included on page 20 of this month's Newsletter (overleaf) is the Subscription Form for 2009.

If you wish to remain a member (why wouldn't you??) and, of course, continue to receive the Newsletter, please complete this, as indicated, and return form, with your subscription of £8.00 (unchanged from last year!), to our Membership Secretary, George Ewart, at the address given.

Now, all that remains for me to say is, after the inevitable excesses of Christmas, don't overdo the dieting but do have a Happy, Prosperous and Austintatious New Year!

Trevor

