

# NORTH HAMPSHIRE *AUSTIN* ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

Founded 1973

Monthly Newsletter and Events Update

[www.nhaeg.org.uk](http://www.nhaeg.org.uk)

SEPTEMBER 2009

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

## Mo's Mutterings

Who are these people? Read on!



Lots of happenings during August, fun and games were had by all! Read all about it!

## Colin's Column

### August Club Night

August club night was a lot of fun. Karen and Dave organised the evening and it was called Karen's Kollections .

We were all given a sheet of paper with letters of the alphabet on it in three columns. The columns represented different degrees of difficulty. The idea was to collect items beginning with the different letters. Some were quite easy to find, G for grass and L for leaf etc. but it was not so easy to find things beginning with the letters X, Y, Z and a few others. There were extra points if any of the items were Austin related so quite a few members were seen removing bits from their cars, in one case a spare wheel, or rummaging through their tool boxes.

Thankfully, it was a dry evening and we had a great deal of fun. The eventual winners were Tony and Pat with prizes also given for the couple with largest item, which went to Nick and Pat, the item being Nick himself for the letter N. The prize for the smallest item, a washer for the letter W went to Malcolm and Sandra and the prize for the wackiest item went to Maureen and Don's grandson, Harry, who produced an oily tissue, for the letter O. Very well done to you all.

Very many thanks to Dave and Karen for organising such an unusual but very entertaining evening. I know it was enjoyed by everyone taking part. I understand that Karen used to do this with the Brownies, is there anything else Karen that you did with them that we could do next year.

## August Amble

We were blessed with wonderful weather for the August Amble, which made the countryside and villages we passed through look even more picturesque than usual. There were 12 cars on the 44-mile run, which started at Henry Street Garden Centre where most members had coffee or in some cases a “full English” (no names) and finished at The New Inn where 25 of us sat down to a very enjoyable lunch.

I hope you all enjoyed the route that Ann and I devised as well as the lunch. It is amazing how many attractive villages and beautiful countryside we have on our doorsteps. The trouble is, we do not see them when rushing around on motorways and other main roads in our modern cars. Thank goodness we have our Austins to enjoy what others do not see.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to those members who travelled all the way to Scotland for the Scottish Austin 7 rally. Especially to Dave and Karen who won an award for best in class and Trevor and Jane who won the award for the furthest travelled. Hopefully someone may write about their travels in the Newsletter.

## BMW Mini Plant Tour

Our trip up to Cowley to see the Mini being produced was a great success and very interesting. We had a very pleasant drive up, although Bob unfortunately was having problems with his Triumph and decided to leave it at Twyford and continued on with me. Malcolm, who was with him, went with Andy and Do.

The BMW Mini Plant was fascinating. We had an excellent guide who was very friendly and had been in the motor industry for 42 years. He was very knowledgeable, there was not a single question put to him that he could not answer. To me the most interesting part was the body shop where there were no humans working, just hundreds of robots. As our guide said, they don't need tea-breaks and very rarely go sick.

The tour lasted about 2 ½ hours and I think was enjoyed by everyone. We then had a good run home, stopping to let Bob pick up his car which he managed to nurse home.

## September Club Night

At the September club night we are having a review of our ‘Sponsor a Veteran’ efforts earlier in the year when we raised money to send two veterans to the D-Day celebrations. David, Karen, Trevor and Jean will be organising the evening so I imagine there will be details of what's happening elsewhere in this newsletter. Come along and find out where all the money you raised went.

## Peters Potter

“Peters Potter” is on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September and is being organised by Peter Barlow who I imagine will be sending details to Maureen to include in this newsletter. The run starts at The New Inn and finishes at a pub where lunch or just a drink can be had.

Please come along and support Peter and have a good day out in your cars.

## Parts & Services Directory

I shall soon be compiling the next update to the Parts & Services Directory, which should go out towards the end of September. I have already been sent a few recommendations but could always do with more. Please let me have any you may have by [September 20<sup>th</sup>](#). Remember if you have had good service from someone

or found a new supplier for parts don't keep it a secret, let us all know about them by sending me their details. Email [colin@greigc.freerve.co.uk](mailto:colin@greigc.freerve.co.uk)

## Littlewick Show

As I write this the Littlewick Show on Bank Holiday Monday is only a few days away. As last year, all members going to the show are invited to call in on me and Ann from 9.30am for coffee, we will then leave at about 11.30am for the 15 minute run to the show. Our address for those who have not been before is 16 Clifton Road, Wokingham, RG41 1NB. We look forward to seeing you all. Give me a ring on 0118 978 2087 if you need directions.

That's it for now.

Safe and Happy Motoring.

*Colin.*

## Secretary's Scribblings

### 'August Amble'

It's quite often that Colin (Greig), our Chairman (I'll never get around to referring to 'The Chair', which, so far as I'm concerned, is simply something to sit on!), expresses thanks and appreciation to others for organising something or other but rarely, however, is he extended the same courtesy. This must be rectified forthwith since the 'August Amble', on the 16<sup>th</sup>, was so well-planned and enjoyed by all those taking part that it certainly cannot be allowed to pass without special mention.

The weather behaved beautifully and the leisurely drive along mainly country lanes, plus the meal at the 'New Inn' at the end of it made for a thoroughly great day out, enjoying the joys of motoring as it used to be in days gone by.

Grateful thanks, therefore, go to Colin and Ann, on behalf of the 23 of us who made the run, all, I believe, without incident. Certainly my gear-stick remained firmly where it should be on this particular occasion!

### Quiz News

As mentioned at the last Club night there were only three entries for the July Quiz (a second 'Trolley Good Shop') and these were all entered by the same person(s). Since at least five entries are required before a prize is awarded I'm afraid that Malcolm and Sandra (Ryley) have to be content with the knowledge that two out of their three entries achieved full marks! Maybe the fact that I had inadvertently indicated a six-letter answer for Question No 1, (instead of seven) had something to do with the 'poor turn-out'. My sincere apologies for this oversight. Will try to do better in future!

The August quiz, based on pop singers, groups and orchestras was much better received and there have been several entries already for this one. Results and winners will be announced at the September Club Night, the 14<sup>th</sup>, so you still have time to get your entry in by the closing date, 12<sup>th</sup> September, if you wish.

There's another quiz in the same general format appearing this month – this time all associated with Counties, both traditional and current, as well as names of well-known areas in Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Eire (Republic of Ireland). County names may be the normal abbreviations (e.g. Warks for Warwickshire). Spelling *must* be the place name spelling.

Entries in to me, (together with a £1.00 donation towards prizes), by October 10<sup>th</sup> please! Good luck!

### September Club Night (14<sup>th</sup>)

As has been previously announced the next Club Night is being devoted to a 'de-brief cum 'wash-up', of the *Sponsor a Veteran* initiative which, as a Club, we took very early this year and into which considerable effort was made by many of our members in being able to raise over £2000.00 towards our goal.

Exactly what form this will take is still being finalised as we go to print but, if you are interested in learning all about the topic and the subsequent Normandy trip, involving this year's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day, then do come along when all will be revealed.

## Christmas Dinner 2009 – Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December

Many thanks to all those members who responded so promptly with names and deposits for the above event. There are still some places available so if anyone would like to attend but who has/have not yet given me their name(s) please let me know soonest to avoid disappointment. Full details regarding price and menu choices will be forwarded to all those interested when these are received, hopefully in the fairly near future.

Cost is likely to be roughly the same as last year, i.e. £20.50 per head.

Like our Government, which essentially shuts-down and scuttles off on vacation at this time of the year, little has been going on which merits reporting this month. Hence this time it's a short, sweet offering.

However, hope to see many of you at the imminent Littlewick Show, in Maidenhead on Bank Holiday Monday or, if not then, at the September Club Night.

Till then, take care and happy motoring.

TREVOR

### *Maybe just a couple of funnies to fill the page.*

*Now that Mr. Obama has had his feet under the table at the White House for a few months it's maybe worth reflecting on just a few of his predecessor's more sensitive and memorable recent quotes.*

*"Goodbye from the world's biggest polluter"*

Parting words made to Gordon Brown and Nicolas Sarkozy at his final G8 Summit, punching the air and grinning as they look on in shock.

Rusutsu, Japan 10 July 2008

*"The German asparagus are fabulous"*

Meseburg, Germany 11 June 2008

*"These immigrants have helped transform 13 small colonies into a great and growing nation of more than 300 people"*

Charlottesville, Virginia 4 July 2008

*" We've got a lot of relations with countries in our neighbourhood"*

Kranj, Slovenia 10 June 2008

*" I'm coming as the president of a friend and I'm coming as a sportsman"*

Referring to his trip to the Beijing Olympics

Washington DC 14 November 2008



## DON's DOODLINGS

*It seems of late we are frequently saying thanks to Ann and Colin for giving up their precious free time to organize events on behalf of the NHAEG!*

### AUGUST AMBLE

*The start was at The Henry Street Garden Centre, but not before a bite to eat and a cup of coffee to get those little grey cells working. Unfortunately, I think I should have had two or three more cups because my brain was seriously not working! The very first instruction was to turn right outside the garden centre and yes, we turned left. Not entirely my fault I must add as my navigator, my eldest grandson Harry at the start asked if he could read the route and I agreed. Not thinking I should have explained to Harry that Colin had put abbreviations at the top of the direction sheet ie. T/R turn right, T/L turn left etc. Harry in haste, read the first line of the abbreviation thinking it was the route. Out of the gate, turn left and the good news was, Nick and Pat followed us! We soon realized we had gone wrong and quickly turned around, hoping that not too many members had seen us going the wrong way. Unfortunately, they had!*

*The fantastic route that Colin and Ann had worked out for us, through some real Hampshire country lanes where you wish you could built a house with lovely views from your living room, bedroom or even better still, from your garage workshop window.*

*Finally, we ended up at The New Inn for Sunday lunch which as usual, was up to its usual standard and in good company.*

*On August 25<sup>th</sup> Colin had arranged a trip to the BMW mini plant at Cowley. Peter Gallespit-Brown navigated for me and at 9.45 a.m. we set out from my house for a 10.30 a.m. start from Colin's house in Wokingham. The weather was fine and Colin and I had the hoods down on our Austins. Colin has worked out a brilliant route missing out all the main roads. We did have one small hiccup on the way and I am sure Colin will give an account of this in his column.*

*Chummy went very well to Cowley, the run was approximately 33 miles and I think we did it in about an hour and a half. On arriving at the mini plant car park, we had time for coffee and sandwiches before we went into BMW reception. Again I am sure Colin will have written an account of our time at the plant but I must say I was extremely impressed with the two tour guides. Not once were we asked to move on quickly, not go there, stay here etc. Also our guides were extremely knowledgeable on every part of our tour. Fortunately, before we went into reception I decided to put the hood up on Chummy as I thought it may rain. Well, that was an understatement, it hammered down for about ten to fifteen minutes just as we finished our tour of the plant. By the time we were ready to set off for home the rain had stopped and the sun was out. It soon dried the hood and Colin and I were able to drop them down again just before we arrived in Nettlebed. Finally, it was back to Colin's for a cup of tea and then home. A delightful day out with good friends and once again, my thanks to Colin.*

### 2010 TRIP TO BRIDGNORTH

*At this moment in time we have thirteen couples out of fourteen places. We did have all fourteen until George and Ruth realized that the dates of 1<sup>st</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010 is the time they will be Germany. Therefore, we have one place vacant. If you are interested in joining all twenty-six of us please give me a call and I will send you details of the trip. It will be a very leisurely run, no heavy mileage and three or four stops on the way to Bridgnorth.*



### Club Tools

*Can I remind you if you are planning to lift the engine out of your car, the club are the proud owners of a hydraulic engine lift and you can borrow this at any time. It is stored at Breakspear's Farm, Finchampstead so call me to arrange collection. It folds up quite small and will fit into a medium sized modern car.*

Don

## **QUERIES OF THE MONTH**

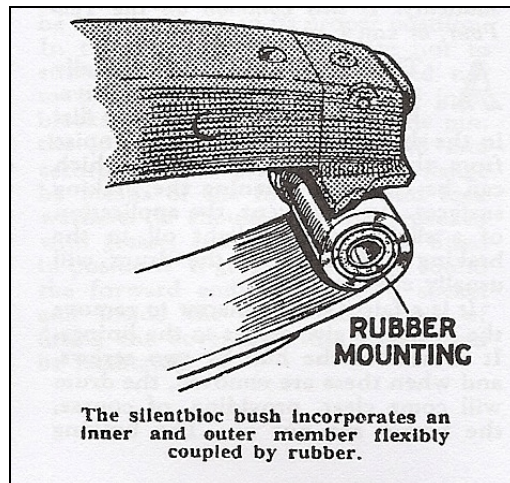
Some more “Queries of the Month”, these originally appeared in “The Austin Magazine & Advocate” during the 1930s and 1940s. This month’s selection includes: Silentbloc Shackles, Austin Ten-Four and Oil Pressure, Austin Seven.

No 454 appeared in December 1932, and No 1140 appeared in September 1943.

### **No 454 – Silentbloc Shackles – Austin Twelve-Six**

**Q.** *Having recently become an owner of one of your Twelve-Six cars, I am wondering whether the Silentbloc shackles, which you state require no lubrication, need any other attention. Surely there must be some working surfaces which wear. Will these bushes require renewing at any time, and if so, can this work be easily done?*

**A.** The Silentbloc bushes used for the spring shackles and anchorages on your car need no lubrication because there are no metal surfaces in sliding contact.



The Silentbloc bush uses rubber to enable the inner member to rotate slightly relative to the outer member, or vice versa. It is virtually two bushes flexibly coupled, but, of course, can be used only when the angular movement to be accommodated is small and not progressive. There are thus no parts to require lubrication and no parts to wear, and the only possible cause of failure of these bushes is disintegration of the rubber – an exceptionally rare occurrence. The possibility of renewal ever being necessary is therefore extremely unlikely. These bushes are pressed into the spring eyes and special tools are required for removing or fitting them.

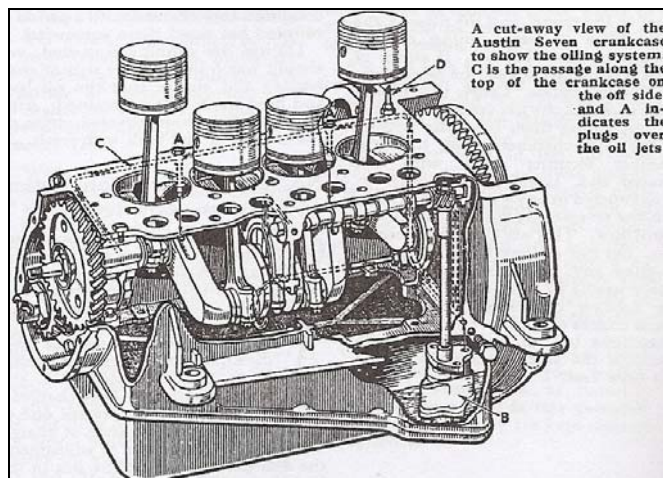
## No 1140 – Oil Pressure – Austin Seven

**Q.** *I have recently purchased an Austin Seven and there being no handbook with it, I consulted a friend who has owned several Sevens, as to its condition and maintenance requirements. One point he commented on was the oil pressure, which he considered too high. I should therefore like your comments on this point, as the needle of the oil gauge keeps at its maximum reading while the engine is running. I would have thought that a high oil pressure would be no detriment as it would ensure with all the more certainty that the oil is reaching the bearings. In any case, I suppose the pressure can be adjusted. Perhaps you can enlighten me on this matter.*

**A.** Your friend is quite right. A high oil pressure on the Seven is a sign of an inefficient rather than an efficient lubrication system. This is because the lubrication of the Seven engine is virtually by a gravity system, and the oil pressure need only be sufficient to lift the oil from the sump to a passage in the crankcase from which it drops through jets into pockets in the crankshaft throws to feed the connecting rod big-ends. The ball and roller bearings of the crankshaft are lubricated by oil splash or mist, only the centre main crankshaft bearing (if fitted) and the camshaft bearings are actually pressure lubricated. Further, only a nominal pressure being necessary, there is no need, nor is there any provision for its adjustment; the pressure was fixed as required when your car was made.

The correct oil pressure is therefore merely a nominal one, sufficient to ensure that the oil flows through the crankcase passages, and any tendency to a high pressure, such as you quote, indicates that there is an obstruction in these passages. This is most likely to be at the point where the oil emerges to feed the big-end bearings through the two oil jets on the offside crankcase, and you should therefore ensure that these jets are quite clear.

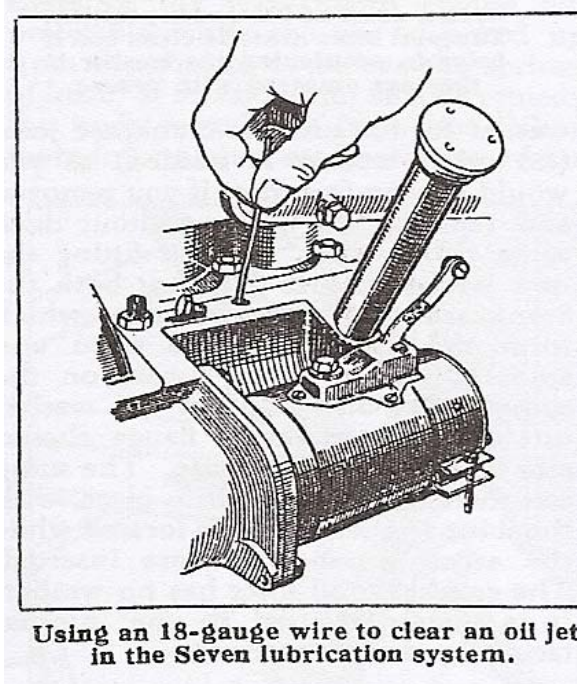
These can be quite easily done by removing the two small brass plugs on the top of the crankcase, just by the base of the cylinder block and below the water branch.



An 18 gauge (3/64 in. dia.) wire should then be pushed through each jet. This is best done when the engine is on or near compression on one cylinder, as this will ensure the crankshaft pockets are clear of the jets and no foreign matter, if displaced, can drop into them.

This liability to obstruction, and the building up of the high pressure, which at the same time is harmful to the pump, is usually due to neglect. You should ensure that the engine oil is drained regularly and replaced with new, and occasionally the sump and filter are dropped and cleaned. On making the latter attention it is most important not to use loose woven rags or cotton waste for the cleaning, as strands of cotton may then be left in the sump and gauze, and it is these, more than anything else, that cause obstruction and interrupt the flow of oil. The official recommendation for change of engine oil and cleaning sump and filter, is every 2,000 to 3,000 miles.





The "Queries of the Month" are reproduced with the kind permission of the Austin Ten Drivers Club (ATDC)

I found this advertisement in a 1960s car magazine. If any of you Austin Seven owners are into recycling and wish to get a decent looking car! I am afraid you will be out of luck with Super Accessories, they ceased manufacturing bodies in 1962 and went out of business in the mid 1980s.

Super Accessories worked at one stage with S. E. Hamblin Ltd, the manufacturer of the Hamlin Cadet. I found an interesting web site that gives some good background information and can be found at [www.1950sspecials.com/super\\_accessories%201.htm](http://www.1950sspecials.com/super_accessories%201.htm) I hope that it opens ok because it is worth a look.






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Andy Ranson

## TO SCOTLAND (AND BACK) IN A '65'

Our visit to the Scottish Austin Seven Rally in Perthshire was to be the furthest Karen and I have so far ventured in an Austin Seven. Although modest in comparison with those who have ventured to Peking or Argentina it was adventurous enough for us!

Challenge number one was luggage – or rather how to take some, since space in Myrtle is limited to say the least. How do you fit enough luggage in a Type 65 for a week long trip? Answer – you don't! Karen looked incredulous at my suggestion that one pair of pants would surely last the week so alternative plans had to be made.

Since we just about had room for a soft overnight bag, the solution was to send a parcel of more clothes to our destination in advance. We thus only needed enough to cover 2 or 3 days until we reached Perth. We could then send our dirty washing back home by post when we left and carry only another couple of day's clothes for the return journey. Simple really.

Challenge number two was which route to follow and how to break the journey in to manageable legs. A rough look at a map of the British Isles and uncertainty of our endurance levels led us to dividing the journey in three parts with Lincoln and Beamish near Newcastle for overnight stops. Motorways were to be no go areas. With two other Austin Sevens and a Triumph Spitfire in the group we did not intend to travel in convoy but merely to meet at our overnight hotels and perhaps during our comfort stops. Refreshment stops would be at trucker's cafes wherever possible and Little Chefs would be avoided at all costs.

The eve of our departure was spent completing last minute fettling, loading spares in every nook and cranny imaginable, and stowing a car cover to protect the old girl whilst parked outside hotels in the event of rain.



Day One and with a planned departure from Farnham at 5 am, we were surprised to hear the doorbell at 4.50 am. It was our neighbour in his pyjamas with a camera to record our departure for posterity

We set off via Newbury and the A34 to our first refreshment/comfort stop which was Jacks Hill café on the A5 near Towcester for a much needed cuppa and trucker's fry-up. We were soon joined by fellow adventurers, Pete and Pauline in their RL saloon, Trevor and Jane in their Ruby and Mick and Julie in their Triumph Spitfire. From there we routed to Bourne via the A43 and then to Lincoln. As we were the first to arrive at the hotel at midday, there was plenty of time to explore this very pleasant city. We had the misfortune to stumble upon a handbag shop which, after Karen had been inside for about an hour, resulted in the burden of additional cargo for Myrtle.

Day Two saw us departing promptly at 7 am and we were soon eating up the miles towards the Humber Bridge. A glance at the map shows that the A15 leads almost directly northwards in a straight line but in practice I discovered this to be a very treacherous road in an Austin 7. Despite the 60 mph and sometimes 50 mph limit, it is a fast road and single carriageway for most of the way and many cars and lorries took great risks in their efforts to get past us even though Myrtle was hardly hanging about. This was sufficiently unnerving for us to deviate to the B1398 which runs parallel and was much quieter.



We loitered near the southern bank of the Humber Bridge so we could cross in convoy and then assemble for photos on the other side. This stunning piece of engineering held the record until recently for the longest single span section of bridge in the world and at £2.70 is cheaper than the Dartford Crossing and more than twice the width.

North-westwards via the A1079 took us to our next refreshment stop at the Highwayman Café on the A64 to the northeast of York. This is a much recommended café with good food and picnic tables to sit outside if the weather is good.

With cars and occupants suitably replenished we continued up the A19 towards Thirsk and Northallerton but not before we called at Austin Seven Service at Kirby Wiske. Anybody who has ever owned an Austin Seven will know of them since they have been in business since 1937. In those days, the business was run by John Dalby and when he died in 1978, the business was taken over by his son, Chris. Those of you who have had dealings will know that this enterprise almost belongs to an era long past and I just had to visit the place, pick up a few spares, and to meet Mr Dalby himself.



It was difficult to find and all that gives its presence away is a sign on a garden gate and a replica of an Austin radiator on the wall. Inside was a time warp of an Aladdin's cave of spares and memorabilia including a motoring bulb horn to attract attention if the counter was unattended. Mr Dalby was a very interesting chap to talk to but did not want his picture taken when we took a picture of his premises.



### *And I thought I was untidy!*

Somewhat reluctantly, we left Kirby Wiske with a few purchases and pressed on northwards to our next night stop at Stanley, near Beamish. Then, just north of Darlington, disaster struck. I first glanced what I thought was exhaust smoke in the rear view mirror but when it appeared in the car as well, I soon realised it was steam. We stopped immediately and it was soon apparent that Myrtle had lost her rear core plug followed soon after by the contents of the radiator. This was a major setback since not only did I forget to pack a spare, (nor did I think of buying some in Kirby Wiske), fitting a new one would not have been an easy task by the roadside since no-one had previously bored a hole in Myrtle's bulkhead that might have facilitated this.

Once things had calmed and cooled slightly, I noticed that the original core plug was still resting on the top of the rear crankcase. A get you onwards/homewards bodge seemed possible. We managed to manoeuvre Myrtle off the main road and in to a nearby gateway. Karen was dispatched to look for water whilst I had a



lie down on the grass to ponder on a solution. After all there was nothing else I could do until the engine had cooled enough to touch was there?

About 45 mins later, a distant speck on the horizon gradually materialised in the shape of Karen struggling up the hill with an obviously very full watering can she had scrounged from a nearby hotel. In the meantime I had reset the original core plug with a liberal coating of red hermatite.



### *The core plug bodge*

The rest of our concerned convoy were waiting for us as by this time we had lost about two hours sorting Myrtle's hiccup and a welcome beer was pressed in to my hand. Billy Ness, the Normandy Veteran we sponsored earlier this year, was hoping to meet us at the hotel as he lives nearby but he was not feeling well enough to attend and Julian Novak and his family came to see us with Billy's apologies and some photographic mementoes of our visit to Pegasus Bridge in June.

We spent a very convivial evening in this excellent hotel which fulfilled all our requirements – good food, good beer, and an ambience enhanced by wooden floors and beams. Well done Pete for finding it, we shall certainly revisit this hotel in the future. As you can see, the ladies were not averse to the odd glass/bottle of wine either!



### *The girls can just about be seen over the empties!*

Another early start saw us on the road following a scenic route through Northumberland but after about an hour, Myrtle starting complaining again with a misfire. Opening the bonnet the cause was obvious. The errant core plug had cracked open sufficient to spray water on the HT leads. This time the rest of the convoy were not far behind and Trevor was carrying spare core plugs. Since fitting a new one was still not an option, I placed a new core plug on top of the old and with more gasket cement applied, reinserted my hose 'compressor'. The additional core plug reduced the clearance from the bulkhead thus compressing the hose - and therefore the original core plug - further, hopefully to better effect.



*Trevor uses his carpentry skills by assisting with whatever piece of wood he can find whilst Pete is about to clout him with his Ferrari umbrella*

After scrounging more water from a local resident it was onwards again with a couple of reassurance stops to check Myrtle's bodily fluids were holding out. We continued on the A68 which was reminiscent of our experience on the A15. It passes through stunning countryside and whilst generally very straight, it has many 'hidden dips' and 'blind summits' which are adequately signed. However this did not deter some drivers, even HGVs, overtaking in unbelievably dangerous places. We pulled over frequently to avoid traffic build ups behind us.

We reached the border at about 1130 am and it was time for a photocall and sustenance from the nearby tea wagon.



With still over 100 miles to go to Perth, there was no time to hang about so we pressed on and as we got closer to Edinburgh, the roads got busier, and the clouds got darker. We negotiated the A720 Edinburgh ring road without difficulty but by the time we reached the Forth Bridge it was raining steadily. Whilst the road bridge is a good opportunity to admire Victorian engineering in the form of the adjacent Forth Rail Bridge, the road surface is unbelievably rough – made worse by the expansion joints everywhere. I thought poor Myrtle was going to be shaken to pieces.

Once over the bridge, we opted to avoid the M90 as we were still unsure how long my bodge would last and I did not fancy any fettling on the hard shoulder. We therefore opted to continue on the B996 to Perth which I later regretted as the roads were at times at least as bad as the Forth Bridge.



### *Raining or what ?*

We were the first to arrive at the Holiday Inn at about 4 30pm and were delighted to find that my parcel with the relief supply of clothes was waiting for us at reception. After relieving Myrtle of her cargo and we had all freshened up, we motored over to Guildtown to introduce ourselves to Ruairdh, meet some of the other participants and to check out the agenda for the weekend. However, since we were all fairly shattered, we soon made our apologies and returned to the hotel for dinner and an early night.

We convened again in the morning on the rally field for a very pleasant run in the Perthshire countryside with a lunch-stop at Balbeggie. The pub car park was bursting at the seams with Austin Sevens. The pub was similarly heaving with the car's occupants and judging by the length of the queue which stretched some way outside, seemed unable to cope with sudden influx of customers. We gave up trying to get something to eat and drink so mingled amongst the cars outside instead.

I bumped in to Bryan Norfolk who had driven up from Hertfordshire in his Boat Tail but did not come across any others who had driven the sort of distance that we had.



We opted out of the return leg to Guildtown as by this time we were starving so as soon as we could extricate ourselves from the car park we meandered and devoured a superb cream tea in Tibbermore where we were joined by Pete and Pauline. On returning to the hotel, I managed to find time to give Myrtle a wash down in the car park, much to the amusement of the hotel guests.

After dinner at the hotel, we all travelled by taxi to the Ceilidh at the Guildtown village hall. This is something we had not experienced before and was a hilarious evening. The highlight had to be the lookalike competition – the subject this year being Tony Betts.

Entrants assembled on the stage behind closed curtains and prepared their appearance to resemble Tony as closely as possible. The curtains opened to reveal the candidates, all of whom had stuffing in their shirts.





*Tony, pint in hand, passes judgement on Ruairidh's stuffing! The winner is on the far right.*

Tony a regular supporter of the SA7 Rally, was a great sport and was called upon to judge the winner who had managed to stuff the largest cushion he could find in his shirt. Tony joined the stage for a photocall and applause.

That evening I came across a SA7 member who remembered Myrtle when the car was with Taggarts of Motherwell, a motor dealership who had owned the car from new in 1933 until 1998 . He recalled being asked to recommission the car to that it could attend a one-off rally sometime in the 1990s. He had not seen the car since. What a small world.

Thanks to a rather unhelpful taxi driver, we had to leave whilst the party was still in full swing so perhaps it was a blessing that we did not get the chance to embarrass ourselves with our attempts at Scottish dancing.

Sunday morning dawned cloudy and wet and Karen took some persuading to join me in Myrtle to go to Guildtown. This did not deter the petrolheads who chatted to the Austineers and browsed the autojumblers. The ladies meanwhile disappeared off in a taxi to visit Scone Palace instead.

Myrtle was entered in the concours class and at first looked rather sorry for herself caked in mud and parked alongside two immaculate chummies and a C cab van with no sign of a speck of dirt anywhere above or underneath.



*Not a speck of use/dirt anywhere*

They appeared to me as if they had been trailed everywhere. I also wondered whether 'concours' was a little too ambitious for Myrtle and was compelled to fetch a sponge and bucket of water to at least give the old girl a thorough wash down.

The gymkhana was rained off so there was no alternative but to mingle in the mud and carry on jumbling.

When the time came for prizegiving, we were absolutely stunned when Myrtle won first prize in her class, particularly in view of the local competition. The trophy is a very ornately mounted Austin Seven clutch release bearing. We were also delighted when Trevor deservedly won the prize for having driven the greatest distance to the rally (from Waterloo) in an Austin Seven and he received the trophy consisting of a silver salver. Interestingly, the salver was donated by a lady who actually used to own Trevor's car – an amazing coincidence.



After the prize-giving it was time to bid our farewells to our hospitable hosts at the Scottish Austin Seven Club and we returned to the hotel to make a start on the Chinese puzzle also known as 'packing Myrtle'. Why is it that more luggage always seems to materialise on the homeward section. This is partly explained by Karen's purchase of handbags but the services of the Post Office were again called upon to dispatch our dirty washing and anything else I could fit in the box.

We set off in the morning and after posting our laundry home, set off on our different ways. In our case we were heading for our cottage in Suffolk to spend a few days there. Rather than unnecessary night stops, we thought we would travel as far as we could, sharing the driving, as far as our endurance would allow. We opted for a smoother ride on the M90 until Edinburgh but still had to endure the cobblestone effect of the Forth Bridge. We made good time past Edinburgh and got off the A68 as soon as we could and routed via Coldstream for a refreshment stop and on towards Newcastle. We headed for the east of Tyneside via the A1 and A19 and arrived at the Tyne Tunnel to be told that as an historic vehicle, we would be exempt from the toll charge. This was probably just as well as I thought the tunnel was reminiscent of the archaic Rotherhithe Tunnel – two-way traffic and HGVs bearing down in all directions. We picked up the A1 again near Durham and got as far as Scotch Corner before we felt pangs of hunger again.

We crossed the Humber Bridge again in a beautiful summer's early evening and it was beginning to look as if we could make Suffolk in one day. We reckoned if we could get to Lincoln by 9pm, then it would be possible to make Suffolk with 2 hours night driving at most. In fact we reached Kings Lynn by about 10 pm and finally reached Bardwell just north of Bury St Edmunds at 1130pm. I had missed my objective of getting there before the pub shut so we collapsed on the sofa with a glass of wine instead, but not before we had given Myrtle a well deserved pat on her radiator cap.

By a twist of fate, we found out the next day that the pub was open until midnight!

After a relaxing couple of days, we headed for Farnham which can be a somewhat tedious journey if avoiding the M25, particularly through Slough and the surrounding area. This occasion was no exception and it took us over four hours to drive these last 140 miles. Total mileage for the trip around 1200 miles. My core plug bodge was still intact and had lasted at least 800 miles.

Would we do it again? Yes. It was the thought of the journey that was more daunting than the journey itself. Sharing the driving helped to ease the monotony and fuel stops were a good opportunity to escape the cramped conditions for a few minutes. Although Myrtle seemed capable of much higher speeds, we kept

the speed at a steady 45-50 mph to keep everything under the bonnet at a low stress level. Earplugs also help to exclude the fatiguing effect of road and traffic noise. They also stop you fretting about every little strange noise emanating from under the bonnet.

Spares I am glad I carried - hose and gasket compound. Spares I should have carried - core plugs. Isn't hindsight wonderful?

Total mileage about 1200. Fuel consumption average 44 mpg. Total oil consumption 1.75 ltrs total (some of it leaked)

Myrtle is now having a well earned rest whilst we plan our next epic journey.

Dave Witton

## **MORE NEWS FROM WITTONS MUSEUM OF VINTAGE VEHICLES**



*The Chassis is finally assembled*

Muriel is beginning to take shape as the chassis was assembled ready for the fitting of the body. I had left the fitting of the axles to the chassis to the last minute as it was taking less space in the garage in its disassembled state. The rear springs were fitted first followed by the rear axle. I discovered it was easier to fit the rear spring pins while the U bolts and spring bolts were loose as some jiggling was needed.

The rear wheels were then fitted followed by the front axle and wheels. With the help of Mick Corbett, the whole lot was manhandled in to a Ford Transit van and transported to Ray Hood in Wiltshire who had just completed the painting. With Ray at the front and Mick and I at the rear, the body was manouvered on to the chassis to align with the mounting holes. Felt strip soaked in oil was fitted on the chassis rails beforehand.

Muriel finally returned to her rightful place at home today. Now the work begins!

The next job was to fix Myrtle's errant core plug which fell out during our Scottish trip and to sort an annoying oil leak which I am hoping is the tappet cover and not the block/crankcase joint. After much measuring and re-measuring, I cut a hole in the bulkhead and was relieved when I broke through to find it perfectly aligned with the rear core plug. After cleaning a new plug was drifted in after sealing the recess with araldite. The hole was covered with a grommet. I have purchased an alloy valve chest cover from Tony Betts which I am hoping will keep things oil tight better than the tin covers which always seem to distort. I decided to make my own gasket but discovered that DIY stores don't stock cork tiles any more as they seem to have gone out of fashion years ago – apparently! I managed to get some cork sheet from the local model shop.



## Peter's Potter

**Hi all club members,**

**I would like to invite you all to join me on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30 a.m. for coffee at The New Inn.**

**At 11 a.m. we will set off for a "potter", stopping for tea at the The Avenue Garden Centre.**

**Afterwards, we will head on to The Cricketers Inn at Kingsley, [www.thecricketersinn.com](http://www.thecricketersinn.com) where we will meet up with members from The Solent A7 Club.**

**Regards,**

**Peter Barlow  
Tel. No: 01189**

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|            |                |                                                                                                         |
|------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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Welcome to the following new members:-

Terry and Carole Burns e-mail [tandcburns@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:tandcburns@tiscali.co.uk), tel: 01428722622,  
Their vehicle is an Austin 10/4, chrome radiator model, 1934 registration number CG 8671.

Alan Pickett, e-mail [a.pickett@ntlworld.com](mailto:a.pickett@ntlworld.com), tel: 01252 684069, mobile 07802357555.  
Vehicle 1933 Austin 7 box saloon registration ASL 653. Alan is a past member who has returned to the fold!

George Ewart

**CLUB NIGHT & EVENTS DIARY/UPDATE**

**SEPTEMBER**

**12/13<sup>th</sup>**

Beaulieu Autojumble

**14<sup>th</sup>**

SAV Review/Normandy

**20<sup>th</sup>**

Peter's Potter

**OCTOBER**

**12<sup>th</sup>**

Poss. Talk by Vince Leek

**18<sup>th</sup>**

B2B Run (BEN to  
BASINGSTOKE)

**NOVEMBER**

**9<sup>th</sup>**

Auction Night

**21<sup>st</sup>**

Nightjar Navigational Scatter  
Rally

**DECEMBER**

**8<sup>th</sup>**

Christmas Dinner at  
Downshire Golf Complex

**14<sup>th</sup>**

Festive Fun Evening

**20<sup>th</sup>**

Carols by Candlelight Royal  
Albert Hall