



Dear Members,

Hopefully there is light at the end of the tunnel once mass vaccinations have been carried-out and this will enable a return to more normal NHAEG Club business sometime during the summer. When 'normal' life resumes we can continue with endless hours of talking about gearbox ratios, piston clearances and suspension roll-centre heights etc. Several of our lady members tell me they are really missing all this stuff !

My thanks this month to those members that have sent in contributions to our monthly bulletin, and to our Chairman for a statement 'in lieu of' the normal January AGM. Please keep your articles coming or send in any suggestions for future newsletters.

The following article was kindly provided by Colin G.

Webber's Garage

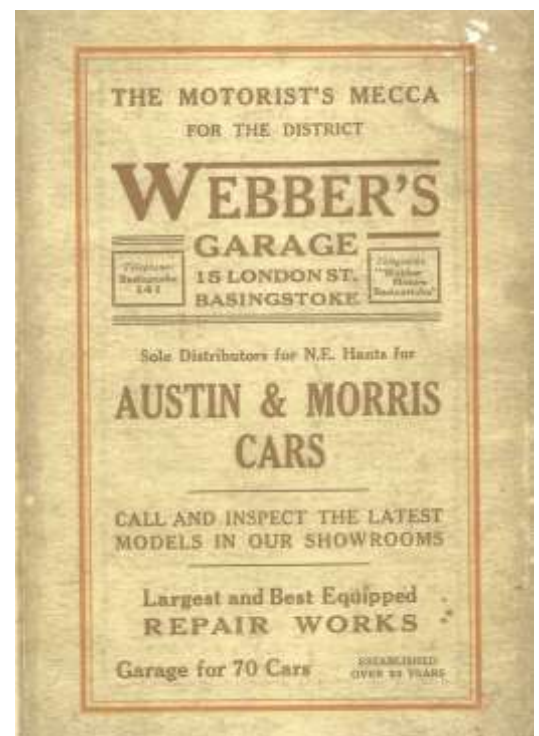
Some time ago Ann came across this copy of a 1925 advert for Webber's Garage in Basingstoke, and recently I decided to see if I could find anything about the history of the company.

Walter Webber started out running a cycle shop before opening a repair shop for motor vehicles at London Street in 1893. In 1900 he acquired premises in Winchester Street where he opened a showroom selling a variety of cars, motor bikes and bicycles.

During WW1 he stopped selling bicycles and concentrated on motor vehicles having moved to 15 London Street and opening a showroom. In about 1920 Walter became a dealer for Austin, Morris and Talbot cars and in 1926 his son Clifton became a director of the company.

In 1928 Walter published a 32 page book, Motor Runs Around Basingstoke, describing various routes around the area. A few years ago it was republished by Milestones Museum, but I have been unable to find a copy. In 1935 as a councillor he was elected Mayor of Basingstoke.

In 1960 Walters grandson Roger, son of Clifton, became a director when Walter died, aged 89. In 1963 as part of the redevelopment of Basingstoke the garage was compulsory purchased and demolished. New premises, including a showroom, workshop and filling station, were built on the new road.



In 1974 Roger became Managing Director, however 15 years later, in 1989 he sadly died aged just 55, when his son Ashley took over. 10 years later in 1999 Clifton, Walters son, died aged 95, one year before the company's centenary.

In 2007 Webber's was bought by Harwood's, who have a number of dealerships around the south of England, who later moved to Joule Road where they are dealers for Jaguar and Land Rovers.

As far as I can make out 15 London Street is now a shop, although I have not been to look. Does any member remember Webber's when they were an Austin and Morris dealership?

The following article was provided by Trevor M

Fuses – (based on an article from the Talbot Owners Club magazine)

A vital little device but so simple – what could there be to learn about them ? But did you know that the methodology of fuse rating has changed over the years ? If you replace your 35 amp main fuse with a modern 35 amp fuse then you have probably put in a fuse that would have been rated at 70 amps pre-war and you are risking the safety of your car.

Fuse ratings

Before about 1980 a fuse was rated at the current that would cause it to blow in 1 second. The present system is to rate a fuse by the current it can carry; there is about a 2 to 1 ratio between these values. A modern fuse marked 15 A will take 15 amps almost indefinitely, will take between 10 and 100 seconds to blow at 20 amps, and will take 1 second to blow at 30 amps. A modern fuse marked 15 A is thus the same as a pre 1980 fuse marked 30 A.

Fuse wire

Copper fuse wire is a fire risk unless it is enclosed in a glass or ceramic tube. Copper melts at over 1000 C; a 15 amp fuse will take between 10 and 100 seconds to blow at 20 amps (1 second at 30 amps) and during this time the fuse wire will be red hot. Therefore do not use copper fuse wire as substitute for correct alloy wire (perhaps only available pre-war ?) which melts at a lower temperature. The fuse wire used in old style consumer units is tin coated copper, and it is claimed that the tin coating reacts with the copper to reduce the melting point. It can be obtained on a card with values of 5, 15 and 30 amps and blows at double these figures, so the 15 amp wire can be used to replace the main fuse.



Cartridge fuse

Where you have fuses in a glass tube they are usually referred to as cartridge fuses, but there are two types. If the fuse element is a flat strip with a narrowed part in the middle then it is probably a modern type, so you will need a 15 amp rating to replace a 30 amp fuse; if it contains a round wire it is probably an old fuse and you will need a 30 amp rating. The wire in a 35 amp fuse compared with some 15 amp fuse wire, appears to have about the same diameter, showing the fuse can carry 15 amps safely and will blow at about 35 amps.



Fuse problems

A fuse will fatigue over time, especially if it feeds a load with a high initial current, which is most loads on a car. However, most problems with fuses are the connections made to them. If the connection is not gas tight it will oxidise over time. Moisture can penetrate which, in the presence of an electric current, causes a galvanic reaction that further corrodes the connection. The resulting high resistance connection causes local heating which accelerates the chemical reaction. Even if not blown, fuse replacement and cleaning of the connections will usually be beneficial. Emery paper can be used to clean the contacts and the fuse clips should be gently squeezed to increase the clip tension. If you have the modern ceramic fuses fitted, then discard them. They are a poor design – the small contact area between the fuse and the clip causes local heating and eventual contact problems – plus they don't look at all vintage !



How Many

There is a fascinating website listed as www.howmanyleft.com . A few minutes of browsing reveals how many are left of each model. Other websites show that the UK currently has 43 million licenced vehicles, of which 1,538 million are registered as historic. (Note you have to enter Austin seven and not Austin 7).

The AGM we never had!

The AGM we never had!

'Opening remarks':

As members will be well aware, under all normal circumstances we would have held our AGM at the time of the kick-off meeting of the New Year, which, on this occasion, would have been Monday 11th January. Unfortunately, as we are also only too aware, this could not happen, as, indeed, were the Club's other planned activities and events similarly affected for virtually the whole of 2020.

The (disappointingly few) responses received to the question posed in January's Newsletter, asking members to choose between a ZOOM type 'virtual' AGM, or to wait until later in the year, when the situation **may** be changed and permit an actual one, indicated a convincing preference for the latter.

Nevertheless, it's felt that *something* is required, Club-wise, to wave a definitely not-too-fond farewell to 2020 and, as far as is possible in these uncertain times, to take a cautious peek forward to the time when we are all able to meet up socially and exercise our aged vehicles unrestricted again. Hence this brief report which has been compiled in an attempt to provide a simple measure of cohesion and continuity for the NHAEG.

Clearly, there has been little on which to actually report for the past 10 months or so, therefore publishing a report such as this might seem a little unnecessary and even irrelevant. Nevertheless, the Committee has held a few Committee Meetings (courtesy of ZOOM) in the interim, although there has obviously been precious little to discuss or plan etc. However, in an attempt to keep the 'Club's engine ticking over', ready to spring back into action, whenever the time is right, please be assured we are doing what is possible to try to ensure it is kept well 'fettled and oiled', in the meantime.

High on the list of such endeavours is the monthly *News Bulletin*, compiled and put out by Adrian (Walker), who resourcefully forages for items to include and manages somehow to produce something to keep us focussed on topics in which we all have a common interest. Please do remember, if you've got *anything* you think may be of interest to the Club's readership, pop it down on paper or tap it out on the PC and let Adrian have sight of it. For sure, he will be very appreciative indeed.

Not too many members appear to be intrigued by the quiz, included in the Bulletin, but the loyal few who clearly are and who regularly submit entries will be pleased to know that their £1.00 entry 'fee' is very much appreciated by the RNLI, which charity now benefits from accrued amounts periodically.

Activities:

In February Alan (Pickett) gave us a very interesting, illustrated talk on the Albella Boys Home, in India, a charity with which he is personally and deeply involved. The work done there is clearly carried out by staff who passionately care about the education and well-being of disadvantaged children, right through to adulthood.

March Club Night, (held, literally on the eve of the initial 'lockdown') saw a welcome return of Simon Williams, the ex-policeman, who treated us to a fascinating insight into '*Cons, Conmen and How to Avoid Them*'.

Within a few days of this meeting we were all unexpectedly and abruptly 'confined to barracks', a situation which has prevailed, to various degrees, ever since.

Casting minds back to very early 2020, a photographic competition was announced at the AGM and mentioned again in the February 2020 Bulletin, which would run between then and the end of September, for which NHAEG members were invited to submit entries to be judged at the October meeting.

Clearly no-one had any idea at that time that such a plan would be frustrated by an unwelcome visitor from China.

In a brief moment of Autumnal optimism, the closing date for entries was subsequently extended to the end of the year, in anticipation that we would all be set loose by then. This, also, turned out to be wishful thinking and the pragmatic approach now considered to be most sensible is to keep the closing date open until such time as we are able to confidently plan a re-union date, back at the '*New Inn*', without fear of it being stymied once again.

As a reminder the categories (revised)! for entries are:

People (singly or as a group)
Animals (singly or grouped)
Landscapes (i.e. scenery)
Automotive-related

Even if we haven't done so yet, there's still going to be ample time for us to get snapping with our cameras or camera phones, so do get busy and put on your thinking caps, using your creative talents to come up with a show-stopper for when judging actually takes place - later in the year (??)

It was a cause of great regret to all 28 of us, who had been looking forward to the planned trip to the Isle of Wight in September but which eventually had to be cancelled just at the very time when the balance of payment was due to be paid in early July. Right up to that moment there remained just a glimmer of hope that it might still be able to go ahead although, by then, most had already sensibly decided it was wiser to draw a line under the prospect and had opted for the refund then being offered by Warner Leisure Hotels - which was then the fun truly began!

From July right through to December efforts were made, on an almost weekly frequency, to secure refunded deposits. Countless excuses and explanations were offered for the frustrating tardiness but eventually, perseverance paid off and shortly before Christmas the expected sum was forthcoming and individual deposits were able to be refunded which, of course, made a tiny extra present for everyone concerned.

It's much too early to be even *thinking* about trying to arrange anything definite but, with the expectation that the overall situation *might* be improved sufficiently to do so by, for example, June/July and it was *possible*, all things considered, to do so, how many members, one wonders, would wish to try again this year, perhaps for the same time-frame? Or any alternative proposals? One can dream!

Needless to report it was not possible for our annual Christmas Dinner to go ahead as planned. By popular demand this had been tentatively booked at Sand Martin's Golf Club in Finchampstead and a deposit paid in early 2020. This is now being carried over to 2021 in the hope that all will be well by December, or, if necessary, may be used against any future event of our choosing. However, at the suggestion of Don (Breakspear) and Val (Woolfs), a raffle was organised *in lieu* of the free one traditionally held during the Christmas Dinner evening. Membership Numbers of all members were 'put into a hat' and 15 pulled out to select those who should receive an M & S voucher in time for Christmas. As a result the postman brought an additional Seasonal surprise to roughly 30% of the Club's membership. Many thanks go to Don and Val for this initiative, which is certain to have been appreciated by all the lucky recipients.

Events:

These, as such, were understandably very thin on the ground last year and one of the first to be affected was the annual, national 'Drive It Day' Run, normally held on or around the 25th April. However, we were not entirely denied the fun associated with the event since Richard (Long) cleverly devised a virtual version which 'started off' at Conkers Garden Centre, in Hatch on the A30 and which took us along a chiefly rural route where, with the aid of Google Earth (Streetview), we were able (some of us!) to pick up answers to clues. Unfortunately, we were unable to start with a convivial coffee before setting off, but it at least helped to pass away a couple of pleasant hours honing our Streetview navigation skills in preparation for things yet to come!

Another event which also still went ahead was the 'Half-Gallon' Run, thanks to Tony and Pat (Westhall), who organised it all, which took place in June. This year, being virtual in nature meant it uniquely differed from all previous ones and involved a 'Start' from the 'New Inn', followed by a traditional clue-solving 'tour' of the surrounding area, either side of the A30, plotted using OS Landranger map 186, Aldershot and Guildford. A number of members 'entered', finding it a very

pleasing distraction at the time. Scoring was very close with Richard and Janice (Long`) coming first with 56 points, a mere one point ahead of Andy and Do (Ranson).

In addition, a tiny number of *real*, actual rally-type events have been staged, not just locally but throughout the country, during the few brief periods of intermittent lockdown-easing and there has also been a proliferation of 'virtual' ones, some being purely of the table-top variety which, as previously mentioned, involve map and navigation work in the comforts of one's own home, without the need to get in the car and actually drive somewhere, whereas others, including our own 'Nightjar' in November, also required the use of Google Earth, in Streetview mode, to discover answers to clues/questions. The *Nightjar* attracted a very respectable 37 entries this time, from all over the country since, being virtual, there was no necessity to be confined to the usual areas covered by OS Maps 186 (Aldershot/Guildford), 175 (Reading/Windsor) or 185 (Winchester/Basingstoke). In this instance, covering a quite underpopulated, rural area, OS Map 149 (Hereford/Leominster) was selected. From feedback subsequently received and although experimental in format, it was judged a big success and hugely enjoyable by all taking part. The overall winners, with 119 points, were regular *Nightjar* enthusiasts, Helen and Peter Payne in a modern (virtual) SEAT Ibiza and the top scorers, only one point behind, in Class 1, (pre-war vehicles) were Mark and Rachel Pacey, from Ashby de la Zouche, in their (again virtual) 1935 Riley Falcon.

As the year wore on it became increasingly clear that Virtual Events were becoming surprisingly popular and although generally deemed not quite as satisfying as the real thing have been appreciated and enjoyed by all those participating. So much so that a three-fold increase in event entries, over the previous year, has been reported for 2020, reversing a worrying declining trend taking place over the past decade or so!

Moreover and very gratifyingly, the cumulative performances achieved by some of *our own* members have been particularly impressive, to the extent that Richard (Long) and his navigator friend Peter Christie (*not an NHAEG member*) have resulted in their recently being presented with the Inter Register Clubs Novice Award for 2020, with Team Ranson (Andy and Do) coming a close second (again). We congratulate them all on these achievements especially so since competition from the likes of Riley, Humber and Alvis entries, *et al*, is historically fierce in this context. Their efforts, plus those of others amongst the Austin fraternity, have ensured that the Austin Ten Drivers Club ended up third in the IRC Team Championship competition for 2020, a quite creditable achievement unequalled during the past, almost four decades!

Committee:

Another subject which would normally have been addressed at the AGM would, of course, be the election of Committee Members, nominations for which would have been invited some weeks previously. This was another casualty of the present situation and did not happen.

By default, current Committee members have shown a willingness to continue to serve *pro tem*, although it is important here to mention and bring to the full attention of all members that our Treasurer, Andrew (Barker) has made it known that he is anxious to relinquish this position in the relatively foreseeable future. Andrew has held it for the past six years and has managed to do so despite (unlike so many of us now) having a full-time, challenging day-job. (*Someone* has to try to keep Mr Sunak happy of course!). Unfortunately and although he is presently excused the daily tedium of train travel up to London, the pressures imposed upon him, nevertheless, are such that he feels the task of Treasurer should be transferred to someone having more time at his/her disposal than he has, to be able to fully carry out the role satisfactorily.

Therefore, the search is now firmly on to try to identify a successor for Andrew amongst our membership. If you feel that you have the time available and ability required to deal with the occasional, modest demands associated with the Club's finances I am sure that Andrew would be only too happy to talk to you and fill you in about the role. Please do consider this plea seriously and get in touch either with Andrew directly, or any member of the Committee to get the ball rolling smoothly, if you feel able to step up to the plate.

Financial issues:

A number of members have enquired about Club Subscriptions for 2021. It was announced in the **Autumn**, although may have been missed or possibly overlooked in the meantime, that 2020 subscriptions will be carried over to cover 2021, with no additional subscription being imposed. This seemed perfectly appropriate given that the Club incurred a minimal amount of expenditure last year, compared with a normal year and members derived very little from their subscriptions during 2020.

Andrew has prepared a statement covering financial activity for 2020 and this is attached hereto as a separate document.

In conclusion, it is, of course, to be sincerely hoped that as the much-heralded vaccine is rolled out to an ever-increasing percentage of the population we may reasonably expect for life to return to some form of normality - whatever that may turn out to be - in the not-too-distant future, allowing us to carry on where we left off last March.

We might even all be surprised to still recognise each other!

Until such a happy time arrives do please all continue to take care and stay safe!

NHAEG Committee

Footnote: Comments and questions are, of course, invited and welcome from members on the above and should be directed, in the first instance, to Trevor E at trevorcedwards@icloud.com

Events – All dates subject to Change !

Table top (virtual) Rally

Don't forget that our Club, on behalf of the Austin Ten Drivers Club, is staging a Table-Top (Virtual) Rally on the 7th February. You may just have time to register by contacting Richard Long the organiser. The same map, which was used for the '*Nightjar*' Rally last November, is being used (OS Landranger 149 - Hereford and Leominster) and the rally will involve navigation exercises, plus the use of Google Earth, in Streetview mode, seeking out answers to clues.

Drive it Day Sunday 21st April 2021

Hartley Witney Festival – 12th June 2021

This will combine the following events:

- Procession
- Classic Car Show
- Arena Events
- Stalls
- Catering
- Animal Farm
- Morris Dancers

If you wish to show your car, please contact:

Trevor Mulford (01252) 620435 or by email trevormulford1942@gmail.com

Classic Car & Restoration Show

11-13th June, NEC, Birmingham

The Austin 7 Centenary Celebration & Rally

This is due to take place between 19th-24th July 2022 at the Fire Service college, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire. As provided in the magazine of the Scottish Austin Seven Club. For more information, please visit www.a7centenary.com

Basingstoke Festival of Transport – 22nd Aug 2021 (**New date**)

The Basingstoke Festival of Transport will be held at the War Memorial Park, Basingstoke, RG21 4AG. Parking is available at Old Common, London Road (use RG21 4BY and follow the parking signs) for £2.

NHAEG is organising a parking area for club members and those wishing to attend should complete the Car Club Registration Form which may be obtained from

Trevor Mulford (01252) 620435 or by email trevormulford1942@gmail.com

The Beaulieu 2021 International Autojumble.

The autojumble planned for the 15-16th May is now **CANCELLED**

The event planned for 4-5th September is still on schedule.

Stay safe

NHAEG Committee