

NORTH HAMPSHIRE *AUSTIN* ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

Founded 1973

Monthly Newsletter and Events Update

www.nhaeg.org.uk

February 2008

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

Mo's Mutterings

Well, as I type this January newsletter in December, Christmas is almost here. Am I ready? Yes, I think so, I don't have so much to do as the family are all still living abroad at the moment. However hard I try to send out all the cards early something always happens to stop me. I even ran out of cards and had to buy some more this year! It will be sad without Pop, Don's dad, this year as he and Sheila nearly always spent Christmas with Don and I and the family, when they were here, but Sheila is still looking forward to coming to us and celebrating Christmas with Don, myself and our friends Jan and John.

Don and I are looking forward to January when we are off again to New Zealand to see Jane and family. We are stopping in Los Angeles for four nights, on the way, where hopefully, a friend will show us around. When we arrive in New Zealand, I think the 1st February, youngest grandson Jamie is looking forward to Christmas shopping for his present(s) from the UK. No doubt his sister will have her list ready as well.

Last club night was a real hoot, lots of fun and I think all of us really enjoyed the bingo session. Well done Colin! It was the only time most of the club members were quiet, whilst they eagerly awaited the announcement of the next lucky number! Not something most of us want to take up as a weekly hobby but a good bit of fun amongst the other fun and frolics of club night.

Weather permitting, Don and I will probably drive over to the Phoenix in Queenie (our 12/4) on New Year's Day. I should say heads permitting after New Year's Eve celebrations at our neighbours' house, the night before. Next door is obviously a good place to celebrate as we can crawl home in the early hours and not have to drive!

I wish you all good health and happiness in 2008 and onwards.

Maureen

COLINS COLUMN

Not a lot happening at this time of year although some of you came to the Wokingham Winter Carnival and took part in the parade despite the awful weather which thankfully improved just before we set off. Much to my grandson's pleasure we were able to have the hood down. There were a great number of floats etc, in the parade and the town was packed with spectators.

It was a bit of fun and afterwards Maureen and Don kindly invited us all back to their place for a meal, they had a freezer full of Cornish pasties which Brian and Marlene had brought up on their last visit. They were delicious as were the vegetables, which I believe Don had prepared. Many thanks to Don and Maureen for their hospitality and also to everyone who supported the Wokingham Winter Carnival, the organisers are always pleased to see our cars in the parade.

Once again Trevor and Jean organised an excellent Christmas Dinner, which this year was at the 'Longbridge Mill' in Sherfield-on-Loddon. For the past few years we have used the 'Falcon' at Rotherwick but with so many new members joining this year we did not think we would have enough room. There is plenty of room however at the 'Longbridge Mill' and with 42 members attending it was a good job we did move the venue. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves especially those who won one of the many prizes in the free raffle, Ann was certainly pleased with her £25 M&S voucher. Many thanks to Trevor and Jean for a very good evening.

Our Christmas club night this year saw us partaking in a festive game of Bingo with prizes, a large bar of chocolate for one line, a box of chocolates for two lines and a Christmas pudding and a bottle of wine for a full house. We played three games altogether but they took a bit longer than they would in a Bingo club because of the noise, in fact I think any self respecting Bingo club would have asked us all to leave. Anyway I hope you all enjoyed it and well done to those of you who won prizes.

We also had quite a few members dressed in a festive fashion with two Father Christmases Don (Breakspear) and Peter (Adams) who like last year had fishnet stockings on underneath his outfit, I am getting a bit worried about him, Denise. Still he did get a lot of admiring glances from other people in the bar whenever he went for a drink. Well done to them and everyone else who dressed up for the occasion.

As usual we had a raffle but this time we had a very special prize. Tim and June our Landlord and Landlady very kindly gave us a voucher to put in which was for a three course meal for two and a bottle of wine. They also gave us a bottle of champagne. Trevor has written to them to thank them for their very generous gesture. The winners of the voucher were Dave and Karen, lucky them.

At the January Club Night we will be having our AGM. This is your chance to have a say on any matters you might want to raise so please come along. This is also the final date for renewing your membership so if you have not already sent your forms and cheques back to George please do so on the night, it always causes problems if we have late renewals. Renewal forms were included with last month's newsletter.

As this is the last Newsletter of 2007 I would like to thank the Committee for all their efforts during the year and also thanks to all those members who have organised or helped with an event or club night during the year, your efforts are very much appreciated.

Looking forward to 2008 we have two holidays being organised. July 21st to 25th we have 5 days in the Cotswolds being organised by Don and Maureen and September 5th to 8th we have 4 days on the Isle of Wight being organised by Trevor and Jean. I will again organise a run for 'Drive it Day' which will be on 20th April, further details will follow but in the meantime put the date in your diary. I am sure that we will have other events as well just keep reading your newsletters to find out about them.

I don't know how many of you get 'The Automobile' magazine but in the January edition there is an article under Finds and Discoveries about Dave and Karen's 1931 Austin 7 RL Saloon, which at present is undergoing a ground-up restoration. It seems the car has been off the road for many years, it still had a 1946 tax disc in the window. I am looking forward to seeing it back on the road again.

Finally I would like to wish all of you safe and happy Austin motoring in 2008.

Colin

Secretary's Scribblings

A7CAMagazine

One last call for anyone wishing to receive copies, in 2008, of the famous 'grey' (now 'buff') magazine published quarterly by the Austin Seven Clubs Association. If you're interested in doing so and haven't already advised me please let me know and forward payment of £5.00, to cover cost of the magazine plus postage, where applicable, to me soonest. Cheques, as always, payable to "NHAEG".

December Fun and Games Evening

Modesty doubtless prevented him from mentioning who was behind the most entertaining Bingo evening that we so enjoyed on the December Club Night, therefore I will do it for him! Many thanks must go to Colin and Ann for making all the necessary arrangements for this very pleasant alternative bit of fun on which to conclude the year's NHAEG activities. Great evening!

And so another year closes.....

Well, another 12 months have been and gone, bringing with it its usual mixture of pleasures, plus a sprinkling of 'the other stuff', and another one is upon us though what it will hold for us all no-one knows which, in reality, is probably just as well. What is pretty certain however, so far as the NHAEG is concerned, is that it is bound to include a fair variety of events, trips and other activities calculated to bring added pleasure to those who get enjoyment out of tinkering or fiddling with bits of ancient machinery, as well as to those who simply prefer just polishing and/or driving them.

In just a few months time my personal association with the club will have reached its ten year mark. I am something of a relative newcomer compared with one or two of our longstanding members, of course. When I joined the club in 1998 it has to be admitted that it really wasn't all that attractive or inviting. Not that the members around at that time (some of them still with us, I hasten to add) were unwelcoming – indeed, quite the contrary – it was just that the whole ethos and objective at that time seemed to be focused on the notion of a few individuals, almost exclusively male, meeting up once a month to sit over a pint of something or other, in rather cheerless surroundings at the *Four Horseshoes* in Sheffield on Loddon, to chew over, *ad nauseum*, the countless idiosyncracies of the A7. In fact, in view of this, it is quite surprising that I decided to carry on attending for very long, after experiencing the first few visits.

Nevertheless, pursue it I did, and, on reflection, am very pleased that I did so. Though the future of the club then was (as I later discovered) in a somewhat parlous state and it was even thought possible that it might die a natural before too long, I was quite surprised to be approached by our present esteemed Chairman (*can't stand the term Chair, which I always understood to be an article of seating furniture anyway*) and asked if I might agree to join the committee in the role of Secretary. For some odd reason or other I agreed and the rest, as the saying goes, is history.....

One of the goals felt to be very important, at the initial committee meeting I attended and upon which a conscious decision was made, was to seek to make the club not only more attractive to menfolk but also more appealing to their better halves, at least those who had them! Gradually, but with increasing success over the years, this has, we believe, been largely achieved and it is most gratifying to note that at any given club night, in recent times, the number of ladies in attendance pretty well matches those of the men which must mean that something is working. The 'pioneering' ladies, in those early days, who must have

been somewhat reluctant and certainly apprehensive about giving up an evening of assured comfort in front of the television, to turn up at a public house, in the company of a bunch of *Austin* anoraks and risk being bored to death within the first ten minutes, are definitely to be respected for their perseverance. One hopes they now feel it paid off since the club has evolved into very much more than merely one to satisfy the interests of a few motoring buffs. It is now much more of a social club which those of us who attend regularly can enjoy. Indeed, one couple, who shall remain nameless, recently announced that they would be quite lost without the prospect of meeting up at *The New Inn* once a month and participating in the proceedings, whatever they might happen to be.

Content though those of us on the current committee justifiably may be at the current state of affairs, it would be foolish to assume that 'more of the same' is all that's required to ensure the continued success of the club. That is why it is most important that the AGM, scheduled for 14th January 2008, is attended by the maximum possible number of members, who though they (evidently and unfortunately) may not be too ready to nominate themselves for the committee, are prepared, nevertheless, to offer their considered views and suggestions as to how to go forward into 2008. Indeed, everyone is expressly urged to attend, not only to vote in a new committee, but to express their views and opinions on any and all aspects of how the club is being run.

So do try and make it. It's *your* club – please turn up on 14th January to have your say.

There's very little else to mention or report upon in this final edition of the year. Pretty well everything's been covered fully in *Colin's Column*, so far as recent happenings within the club are concerned. All that remains for me to do is to wish everyone and their families a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year. Let's hope it brings us all more or less everything that we would wish for and very little of that which we wouldn't!

Safe motoring!

TREVOR

Don's Doodlings

The Festive Season really is upon us now. I must say how much we enjoyed the Christmas Dinner at Longbridge Mill. It would have been hard not to have had a great time with the good company around us, many dressed in festive costume.

Club Night also went extremely well with some club members, again, dressed in festive costume. It was a great pity that Peter Barlow did not have time to dress up!

On Wednesday of last week, Maureen and I checked the route to Berkeley in the Cotswolds and the Prince of Wales Hotel, in readiness for the proposed trip to the Cotswolds in July 2008. We were overwhelmed by the response from club members as we have twenty members booked in and six more possibles. The hotel is booked and I can look forward to planning the route and checking out places of interest in and around the Cotswolds.

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Don

A Date for your 2008 Diary

Isle of Wight Austins will be holding their "Austin Weekend" on June 21st/22nd.

Details and Entry forms will be available in the New Year. Please e-mail Nigel Offer, nigel.offer@virgin.net if you would like him to send you the information as an e-mail attachment. Alternatively telephone him on 01983 872609.

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Events Diary Update!

January 14th 2008	Club Night / AGM The Witton Feelie Bag Competition	
February	Quiz	Colin
March	Talk on Testing Equipment	George
April	Spring Airing	
20th	Drive It Day	Colin
May	TBA	
June	Half Gallon Run	
July	Concourse	
August	TBA	
September	TBA	
October	TBA	
November	Auction	
December	Festive Fun	

