

NORTH HAMPSHIRE AUSTIN ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

Founded 1973

Monthly Newsletter and Events Update

www.nhaeg.org.uk

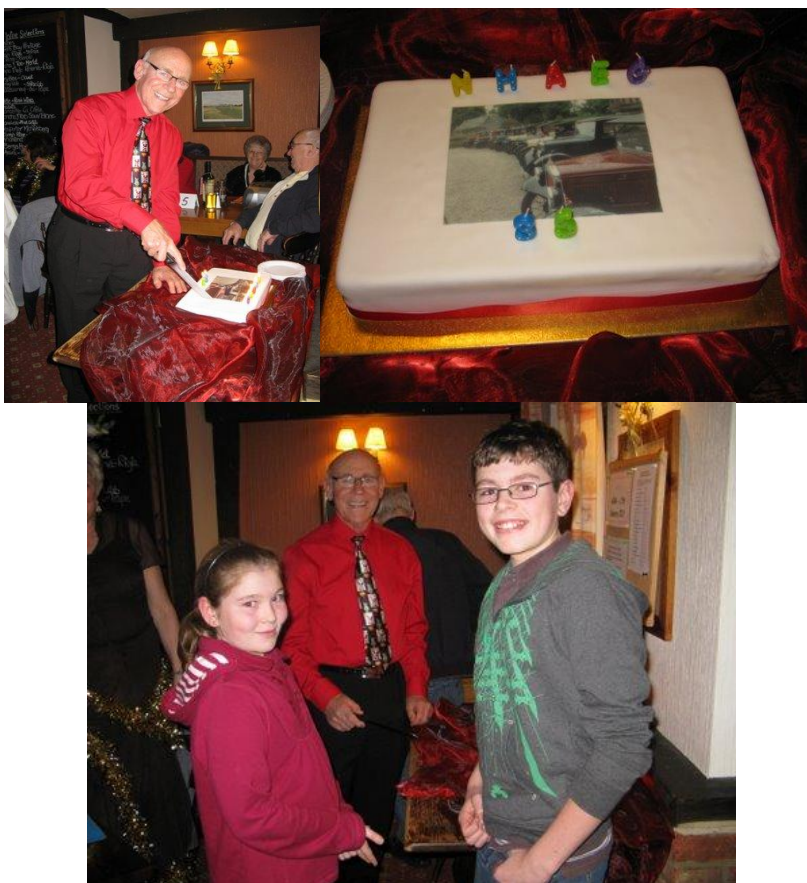
JANUARY 2010

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

Mo's Mutterings

Contributions to the Newsletter.

Hi all, I am pleased to say that I am now back online and catching up with outstanding pc jobs including the newsletter. Sorry about the delay but thanks to my very able friend Nick Buchanan, now back from spending the New Year in Bonnie Scotland, we are now up and running.



The above photos were taken at the December Fun Night by Jean Edwards and the lovely cake was brought in by Ann and Colin Greig. Thank you for all your good work.

See you at the AGM.

Maureen

Colin's Column

First of all many thanks to Trevor for producing last month's newsletter while Maureen and Don were away in Dubai.

Big Breakfast Run

The Big Breakfast Run on Sunday 6th December organised by Trevor and Jane for the Solent Austin Seven Club, to which the NHAEG had been invited, was a great success with a total of 14 Austins taking part plus a few moderns.

The weather was pretty awful when Ann and I left home at 8.30, although being in the Mazda due to Arabella being off the road at the moment, it did not bother us too much. Thankfully by the time we reached 'The Hut' in West Meon where we were having breakfast the rain had stopped. The breakfast had to be seen to be believed, 2 of everything plus tea or coffee for just £4.95 and very tasty too. Shame you were in Dubai Don, you would have loved it.

With breakfast out of the way we set off on a lovely route to Hinton Ampner. By now the sun was shining and most people had their hoods down. On arrival all the Austins were lined up in front of the house, the house having been decorated inside for Christmas. In the main hallway there were also bell ringers playing carols, what a beautiful sound they made.

A very enjoyable day and with the sun still shining a nice run home, still with the top down. On arriving back at Wokingham we were held up by the annual Reading Christian Bikers Toy Run, which has been taking place every Christmas for 24 years. Motorbikes from all over the country travel in convoy, armed with toys, from Reading to Barnardos School in Wokingham. Most are dressed up in festive gear with many of the bikes decorated as well. This year there were about 2500 bikes taking part, most were modern but there were a few vintage ones as well. Quite a sight, for once I did not mind being caught in traffic, we just sat there and watched them all go by.

Many thanks to Trevor and Jane for organising a very enjoyable day and also for inviting the NHAEG to join in, maybe we can do something with the Solent club again next year.

Christmas Dinner

For the second year running, as we had such good food and service last year, we held our Christmas Dinner at the Downshire Golf Complex near Crowthorne. The whole evening had been organised by Trevor and Jean and was a great success with 42 members sitting down to dinner. As in the past few years there was a free raffle with many excellent prizes as well as a 'Name the Bear' draw.

As everything was as good as last year we decided after a show of hands to book for next year so put the date in your diaries, Monday 6th December, more details nearer the date.

Many thanks to Trevor and Jean for arranging a wonderful evening, I am sure everyone enjoyed themselves as much as Ann and I did.

December Club Night

The Christmas Dinner was very quickly followed the following Monday by the December club night which was again organised by Trevor and Jean. Don't know where they find the time.

As usual at the December club night we managed to get a well-known celebrity to come along and entertain us. This year we had John Humphries who brought along his black chair to enable four of our members to

take part in 'Mastermind'. Many members were struck with his similarity to our Trevor but as I explained on the night he wears a lot of make up when he is on television.

The four brave contestants who volunteered to take part were Pat (Westhall), Sandra (Ryley), John (Chad) and Don (Breakspear) who on the night assumed some wonderful names dreamt up by Trevor and Jean. It was a great deal of fun and the final winner was Pat. Well done to her and all the other contestants who all received a gift for taking part and many thanks to you all for volunteering. Thanks should obviously also go to Trevor and Jean for a very enjoyable evening.

During the interval we celebrated the 35th birthday of the NHAEG with the cutting of a large cake by Roy (Roberts) who is the only member who has been with the club for all 35 years. I trust everyone enjoyed their slice of cake. There were some photographs taken which hopefully Maureen will find room to fit a couple in this newsletter.

A very good evening with many members dressing in a festive manner, I trust you all enjoyed yourselves.

January Club Night

We will be having our AGM at the January club night which I am sure will be as well attended as usual. Please come along and have your say on any matters to do with the club. We will also be electing the committee for 2010.

Raffle

I would like to thank Ann for running the raffle for the past few years which has helped raise a quite a lot of money for club funds. As you will have read in the newsletter recently she has decided she would like to pass it on to someone else. I am glad to say that Jan (Barker) has offered to take it over, many thanks Jan.

Whilst on the subject of the raffle, a big thank you to all members who have donated prizes this year. If you have anything you would like to donate, unwanted Christmas presents etc. then please hand them to Jan at a club night. Remember the more prizes donated the less we have to buy which means more money for the club, this in turn means we can keep our annual membership fee low, run most events without a charge and also enables us to have a very good *free* raffle at the Christmas Dinner amongst other things.

Membership Renewal

If you have not already done so now is the time to renew your membership, forms were in last month's newsletter. Can I please ask everyone to ensure that George receives your forms with cheque by the AGM on the **11th January at the very latest** so that he does not have to chase people up as in previous years.

All that remains is to wish you all a 'Happy New Year' with plenty of 'Safe and Happy Motoring' and here's to the next 35 years.

Colin

Don's Doodlings

Firstly, can I wish everyone a Very Happy New Year. Maureen and I were so pleased you all had a good time at the Downshire Golf Club's Christmas Dinner. We understand you were all so pleased with the food and service that there is going to be a "re-run" next Christmas. Hopefully, we will be able to arrange our holidays a little better and be with you all.

We had a fantastic Christmas with half of our family now home in the UK from New Zealand and now in their own house. Over Christmas time we were invited out to dinner several times and enjoyed every minute. The bad news is, you probably won't recognise me as I think I have put on a few extra pounds! Recently, we had a new wardrobe fitted in our bedroom and I am seriously thinking of suing the company because the wardrobe has been slowly shrinking my clothes, especially my trousers!

On New Year's Eve, Ann and Colin came to dinner and to see the New Year in with us. They arrived in Arrabella and parked her in our garage behind Chummy so we were ready for an early start in the morning to drive to The Phoenix at Hartley Wintney after we had all had bacon butties. Queenie had been put into a neighbour's garage to make room for Arrabella as I thought the weather was so nice, we would go in Chummy with the hood down. Unfortunately, 'er indoors was not at all happy with this so a compromise had to be negotiated. This was hood up until half a mile from The Phoenix but I did get away with the hood down all the way home!

I know I say this each year but this year I had never seen so many cars at The Phoenix on New Year's Day. The car park was full. We arrived at about 10.30 a.m. and I think we were the last to park in front of the pub. There was a spare space just big enough for two Austins. We would not have known this space was available but for the very nice car park attendant who looked just like Tony Westhall. Thank you Tony!

Good news regarding the Bridgnorth trip in July. All fourteen places have now been reserved by club members.

That's it for now and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Don

Austin 12/4 - 'Brakes in a bind' **Andy Seager ATDC 4th Dec 2009**

Being a newbie to larger pre-war Austins I'm still learning the nuances of the mechanicals. My recent acquisition, a Light 12/4 Eton has presented me with a few challenges – the latest of which has been to solve a problem where the front brakes grabbed on full lock. It turns out that the answer to this riddle was pretty simple, but the journey of discovery was not! Being a seasoned Austin Seven owner, I've always tried to share solutions. I dare say in the ATDC there are many experts that already know these things but it never hurts to be proactive in sharing solutions to common problems – so here goes! I'll start with the answer – the reason my car's brakes jammed on when the steering was on full lock was simply worn steering stops – however the devil is in the detail! Simply slackening off the brakes to overcome the bind means poor front brakes – and in my case the rear brakes becoming predominant – not nice!

Lets go back to the beginning and ask - when the steering stops are worn why do the brakes jam? Well it's mostly due to the design of the rudimentary 'universal joint' that allows the brake cam to operate in a single plane. A design feature means that the brake cam does not come to rest exactly in the vertical position when the brakes are released. The result of this is that when the 'UJ' is stretched to it's fullest travel, i.e. on full lock, and the pin is at one end of the slot, it tends to 'cork screw' because of the slight rotation that exists in the 'off' position. If the brakes are adjusted tightly, the arm cannot turn because the brake cable won't let it and so the only other movement is to put the brakes on. The answer, after much head scratching, was to stop the wheels turning so far - i.e. sort out wear in the steering stops.



Fig 1 – The Ball and Pin 'UJ' in the stub axle assembly

Before we jump to the steering travel, there are some issues with the UJ and its associated components that need attention, because wear in these simply undermines efficiency in the braking system.

Wear can be noticed in the ball pin and the casing slots in which it slides. Constant pressure on the pin causes it to flatten on the side where braking pressure is exerted causing unwanted movement that makes adjustment difficult. The pin can be driven out and rotated and this will cure this problem until this section becomes worn. Should you find the slot has been stretched then (*very*) careful application of some weld and a bit of filing should overcome that issue.

The opposite end of the UJ shaft (on which the operating arm clamps) runs in a blind hole in the main axle. The simple solution to the inevitable wear on the end of the shaft is to apply weld around it and grind it to its original shape so that there is no play as it rotates in the axle hole. Finally, and this has no direct bearing on the operation of the brakes per-se but it's worth watching; the UJ assembly rotates in a brass collar in the stub axle – as it does, it wears down a shoulder in the collar. (fig 2) Why is this an issue? Well if the wear gets too bad the brake cam will protrude far enough to strike the backs of the wheel studs. The only current way to resolve this is to find a collar with less wear and drift out the old one and replace it. Sadly there is not enough material in the collar to machine out the worn area and insert a drive ring – *just don't ask how I found that out!!*



Fig 2 - showing wear in stub axle collar.

OK – back to the plot! If you're satisfied that the UJ is working nicely, we can turn our attention back to the *actual* cause of the brakes jamming – the steering stops. On the Light 12/4 at least, this is affected by an angled web on the back of the axle and a small cube like bump-stop that is cast into the stub axle recess. In fact it seems to be the web on the axle eye that gets worn away by the bump-stop. On mine, the web had eroded by about 1/8" at its outer edge – this might not seem much until you measure the effect at the edges of the tyre!

I decided to solve this by drilling in to the bump stop in the stub axle and attaching a small right-angled packing piece to restrict the steering travel. I did one side on the bench and the other in situ – I can report that it's relatively easy either way. Refer to Fig 3 & 4 – the little packing piece is only about 3mm thick, the close-ups make it look rather more 'industrial grade' than it actually is.

Fig 3



Fig 4



Drilling across the bump-stop from the outside edge of the stub-axle casting means it can be done in situ. I drilled with a small pilot and then a 5.5mm drill so I could tap the holes 1/4" BSF, then used a bolt and spring washer to ensure it stays done up. The advantages of this approach are no intense heat and possible distortion that comes with welding, no excess weld to grind off and no fires! It took about 20 minutes per side to complete the job. A couple of tips:

- 1) Use a nice sharp centre punch and carefully mark the centre position of the bump-stop – which is on the back of the face that you're drilling.
- 2) Old cast material has a 'skin' that is very hard so make sure the drills you use are high speed steel and sharp! Be careful as you get close to the drill exit point at the end of the hole because the 'skin' will tend to grab the drill and you don't want a bit of broken drill in the hole!!
- 3) Use a tapping drill at the upper end of the range (consult the Zeus Book) so the tap does not snap and use a long-reach tap wrench – go carefully and use oil as you cut the thread.

What has been the result?

The steering travel has reverted to somewhere apparently close to its original specification and prevented the UJ from over reaching and twisting, hence the brakes no longer bind. On my car the small reduction in steering lock has made no tangible difference to the way it drives. I think that the brakes are as good as I can get them now. They still bind a little on full lock, but this will probably sort itself out as it all settles down again. This is the first time I've been able to get a little advance on the front brakes over the rears and the car stops more efficiently than it did previously.

So I'm claiming a victory!

The victory was not *all* mine of course – this is simply the consolidation of a few opinions of those in the know and a bit of common sense on my part. Tony Westhall provided a much-needed technical sounding board and moral support when it was all in bits on the garage floor. I know that other cars in the ATDC with this braking system suffer with this brake bind issue, so I suspect that worn steering stops are worthy of investigation – maybe sharing this will be enough inspiration to solve this riddle!

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 consists of Spares for Tour – Austin Seven and Petrol Gum – Austin Twelve

No 839 appeared in December 1937, and No 1200 appeared in December 1944.

No 839 – Spares for Tour – Austin Seven

Q. *I am about to start on a tour abroad with my Seven which I bought new earlier in the year and has now covered 8,000 miles without trouble. Can you tell me what spares I should carry? Is it necessary to carry a spare coil? The only “fade out” I had with my previous Seven was due to worn distributor gears. Is it necessary to provide for this possibility?*

A. Providing they are adequately lubricated the distributor gears on your Seven should give no trouble over a very considerable mileage and therefore we do not think you need cater for the possibility of their failure in choosing the spares to take on your tour.

It is difficult, of course, to give advice that will enable you to cover every eventuality, but it should not be necessary to take many spares on such a trip in view of the dependability usually to be expected from the modern car.

We suggest that you should take with you a spare coil, spare contact breaker spring, fan belt, one valve complete with spring, cotter, etc. We think you would also be well advised to take some tyre valve insides and spare lamp bulbs. You might also consider spare fuses for the electrical equipment.

Although modern tyres stand up very well to hard usage, a spare tube sometimes comes in useful as it will certainly save you trouble if you should get more than one puncture in quick succession.

We think this about covers all your likely requirements, especially as there are efficient Austin distributors with stocks of spares in most European centres.

No 1200 – Petrol Gum – Austin Twelve

Q. *I have been fortunate in being able to purchase an Austin 1935 Ascot Saloon, 13.9 h.p., engine No IF20813, chassis No F 23450, mileage 42,000. I have been overhauling this car for some weeks, and after spending some £30 on renewals, etc., have now an excellent car in almost showroom condition. Now, after surmounting many snags, I am up against one that has me beat. This car stood from 1939 until now with a quantity of petrol in the tank which has left a black treacle-like residue in the tank which keeps blocking the feed pipe. I carry a bicycle pump with rubber tubing to clear the main front-to-rear feed pipe, also a bottle of petrol to recharge the float chamber of the carburetter when starved. Further, I have gently cleared the pipe descending into the tank with a soft flexible wire. Now, if I have to lower the tank (which is held up by two stout bolts each end) how do you suggest I wash this stuff out – a hot caustic solution?*

A. The deposit in the tank and feed pipe, which you describe as a “black, treacle-like residue” means that you are suffering from petrol gumming, due to the previous owner having left petrol in the tank over a long period. Present-day fuels are subject to this action, and it is undesirable to leave such fuels in the petrol tank or the carburettor for any prolonged time. We must warn you that this gum is somewhat difficult to eliminate once it has formed. It will tend to block the gauze strainer on the petrol tank outlet, also the feed pipe, and may affect the petrol pump, carburettor and even the valve stems. The only positive solvent is acetone, which requires about 20 minutes’ application in small parts such as a carburettor or valves to remove the gum, or possibly 24 hours in respect of a petrol tank. This obviously entails draining the tank, removing it and applying the acetone, and subsequently draining again and drying. It should be noted that acetone is highly inflammable, and should be handled with care.


An alternative method of cleaning out the tank, since acetone may not be readily available, is to flush out for five minutes with a boiling 10 per cent caustic soda solution, subsequently rinsing the tank with boiling water, and then allowing it to dry. Caustic soda attacks aluminium and if it is used for cleaning out the carburettor or petrol pump, which may be equally affected, it should be flushed at once with boiling water, to remove all traces of the caustic.

Normally we would advise the owner who has trouble through gumming to get his local Austin dealer to undertake the work of eliminating this deposit from the fuel system. You have to decide whether it is a job within your capability, or whether you will approach your nearest service station with your problem.

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


Some more old advertisements from the 1950s

You MUST see
the



**IF YOU
WANT THE MOST ECONOMICAL
MOTORING IN THE WORLD.**

85-90 M.P.G. 50 M.P.H.
LESS than 1d per MILE.
ANNUAL TAX only £5-0-0.
Prices from £268-0-0 including tax.



SHARP'S COMMERCIALS LTD. BOND MINICAR WORKS. PRESTON. LANC'S

How about one of these for a bit of family motoring, 90 mpg and annual road tax for £5-0-0!

★ **start easier—stop faster—**
 ★ **hold straighter—drive**
 ★ **safer on PARSONS CHAINS!**

★ **PARSONS CHAINS: TYPE 'DL' de luxe** with
 ★ Bar-Reinforced Cross Chains give better
 ★ tractive grip, greater protection
 ★ against side slip and more than
 ★ double the mileage possible
 ★ with any other type of
 ★ Non-Skid Chain. They
 ★ are recommended as
 ★ the world's best value
 ★ in Tyre Chains for
 ★ private vehicles. All
 ★ Parsons Chains are
 ★ packed, one pair in a
 ★ hessian bag. Prices
 ★ from 80/- per pair.



★ Illustrated price list gladly sent, on request to
 ★ **PARSONS CHAIN CO. LTD., STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN, WORCS.**

The Parsons Snow chains would have come in handy this week. Checking out the company as it is today, the head office has moved from Stourport-on-Severn to Cradley Heath in the West Midlands. The company appears to have gone from strength to strength, they now produce all types of lifting chains, chains and fittings for the commercial fishing industry and chains for the mining industry, but, surprisingly, they no longer produce snow chains.

Daddy, why didn't you tell me you'd fitted a **CE-LAST** Silencer?

... and you don't have to be an irate parent to feel the benefit of the CE-LAST silent approach! Whatever make of car you drive, a CE-LAST silencer gives improved all round engine performance, reduces back pressure and vibration to a minimum, and is guaranteed against bursts or blowouts. Obtainable from your local garage.

CE-LAST Silencers

Send for our free Catalogue!

SILENCERS (BOLTON) LTD., WATERLOO ST., BOLTON, LANCs.

Unusual way to advertise a replacement silencer, I would have thought the approaching car headlights would have given prior warning! Reading the motoring advertisements of the 1950s, car manufacturers, unlike today, relied upon a whole host of suppliers to produce such standard items as brake components, electrical systems including ignition items, exhaust systems etc. Today most items on a car will only fit a particular model, and that sometimes even includes light bulbs, makes you think, perhaps progress is not always the best way forward!

Andy Ranson

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CLUB NIGHT & EVENTS DIARY/UPDATE

JANUARY 2010 AGM Postponed to February
due to bad weather

**February
Club Night** AGM
Feely Bags

**March
Club Night** Possible talk on Submarines