



JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S CHUNTER...

A very happy and a reliable 2016 to all our members.

The AGM was held on Monday 11th January 2016 and the existing committee was reelected. Thank you for your support. (See page 2 for highlights of my review of 2015).

This edition of the newsletter features Club News, Technical Matters, Past History and two new Features: 'The NHAEG Member Interview' (*page 5*) and 'Ask Aunt Brassica' (*page 13*). Aunt Brassica would love to answer your questions on keeping Austin owners happy – please email the Editor with them...

Finally, the daffs in the header were spotted by me on a flying weekend visit to Dartmouth in December – before the cold weather came!

CLUB NEWS

Xmas dinner 7th December

Even the most cynical club members were mystified by a magician performing tricks right in front of them at their tables. The Downshire Golf Club pulled it off too with good food making



the evening. But perhaps the 'stand-out moment' was the raffle where winners had to draw a second ticket to see which prize they had won. For a change, the proverbial 'can of WD40' wasn't the last prize to go!

A call for volunteers to help with the November 2016 Nightjar Navigational Scatter Rally

Derek Ball writing in the January issue of the Austin Ten Drivers Club magazine said, "Brilliantly organised as usual by NHAEG, this rally forms part of the Inter-Register club series in which each member club is responsible for one event, be it a driving test, day or night road run. The Nightjar is the only one run in the dark, to add that extra spice!" The NHAEG planning process starts in May, but Trevor and Colin are anxious to find volunteers for marshals, runners and even soup/ tea-ladies! Are you up for it?

The Santa-tastic December Club Night!

Julie and Karen's Christmas Club Night usually promises something special – and this year's didn't disappoint. There was a quiz with a festive theme - we struggled with questions, pictures and music



knowledge. The winning team included – Trevor, of course! Luckily there were spot prizes as well and the prize for the best Christmas outfit was shared between Jeanette and Simon.

Editor: John Pratt (johnpratt@orange.net)



The Annual General Meeting – Monday 11th January 2016

Highlights from the Chairman's & the Treasurer's Reports

The AGM was held on Monday 11th January 2016 and Denise was elected '2015 Club Member of the Year'. The newly-elected committee consists of Simon Jocelyn, Denise Adams, Andy Barker, Peter Kenrick, John Pratt, Jeanette Mosley-Pratt and Elaine Watkin. Also Alan Pickett has taken over as Membership Secretary from George Ewart, who has provided stalwart service to the club in many roles over the years! Together they intend to deliver some interesting club nights and challenging events *(see the 2016 Events Diary on the next page...).*

The 2015 committee was able to deliver a comprehensive programme, thanks to the help and advice from the outgoing committee members. The big social events of the year were the Club Holiday, the Free Night at the New Inn, the Carol Service in Winchester and the Christmas Dinner and these were all well supported. Although the appalling weather had an impact on some events like the picnic, the highly successful 40th Nightjar, of which we should be justifiably proud, was run on a dark, wet & cold November night. Members also attended a good selection of events, shows and runs over the year including the Basingstoke Festival of Transport (Ken C), a history walk round Odiham and a run to Basing House (Trevor M) and a couple of midweek runs to Winchester Science Centre & Whitchurch Silk Mill (Alan P). The committee has outlined the whole Club Night programme for 2016 and this will be developed and added-to throughout the year.

Financially, the Club continues in good health, with 89 members and no subscription changes are planned. It is sad that we lost Maureen Breakspear during the year and our best wishes go to those other members that are unwell. A few members have resigned due to health or house moves and we welcomed two new members.

FINAL CALL for places on the NHAEG Group Trip: 4th-8th July 2016

Warner Leisure Hotel – Cricket St Thomas, Somerset ('To the Manor Born')

Your final chance to join those who have already booked for the great value 2016 'Adventure'.

Cost, per individual, is £264.00 on a bed, breakfast and dinner basis for 4 nights.

Full details will be published at a later date - but the usual format is to meet up, on the 4^{th} July, at some convenient venue in the Basingstoke area, before proceeding westward, stopping en route, for coffee/ comfort stop(s) and lunch, arriving Cricket St Thomas mid/late p.m.

These Group trips are <u>always</u> great fun so if you are interested please get back to me soonest before everything has to be finalised in a few weeks' time.

Trevor E. Contact tel: 01344 775012 or email: trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com

STOP PRESS - White Lion Antiques Car Meets stopped in December 2015

With the demise of the White Lion Classic Car Meet, Gavin Francis has been contacted by Brian Poulton (<u>bp2007@poulty-towers.co.uk</u>) who is putting together a replacement monthly gathering hopefully starting Sunday 21st February at the Pinewood Centre, Old Wokingham Rd, Wokingham, West Berkshire RG40 3AQ. Apparently, Andy who runs the centre, which has a cafe and bar, already hosts motorbike and MX5 meetings. There is a big car park which is full of mums and dads chauffeuring their offspring to football matches on Sunday mornings but they will have gone by 2pm.



Club & Events Diary 2016

Please let John (johnpratt@orange.net or 01252 643527) have details of any events that NHAEG members might be interested in, to add to this compilation:

NHAEG	2016 Dates	Club Nights	Arranged by or details from
	Mon 11th Jan	AGM	Committee
	Mon 8th Feb	Quiz night	Julie
	Mon 14th March	Speaker Night: (Rollo Malcolm- Green) 'Driving Paris to Peking in a 1930 Delage'	Peter
	Mon 11th April	Spring 'Airing'	tba
	Mon 9th May	Music Quiz	Andy
	Mon 13th June	Half Gallon Run	tba
	Mon 11th July	Coveted car & valuations	John P
	Mon 8th August	Walking Rally	Jeanette
	Mon 12th September	Speaker Night – The Brooklands Trust	John P
	Mon 10th October	Shoebox Rally	tba
	Mon 14th November	Auction Night	Simon
	Mon 12th December	Festive Fun	tba

NHAEG	2016 Dates	Club Lunch Meetings	Contact
	Mon 25th Jan	The New Inn	Colin
	Mon 22nd Feb	The New Inn	Colin
	Tues 29th March	The New Inn	Colin
	Mon 25th April	The New Inn	Colin

Club	2016 Dates	Other Events & Location	Contact
VSCC	Sun 31st Jan	Driving Tests, Brooklands	www.brooklandsmuseum.com
Watercress Line	Friday 12th- 14th Feb.	Spring Steam Gala	www.watercressline.co.uk
Practical Classics	Sat 5 th -6 th March	Restoration Show, NEC	www.necrestorationshow.com/
Austin	Sun 13th March	Austin Morris Day, Brooklands	www.brooklandsmuseum.com
Brooklands Museum	Sat 14th May	1940s Relived at Brooklands	www.brooklandsmuseum.com
Merrist Wood College	Sun 15th May	Merrist Wood Summer Show, Worplesdon, Guildford	Pre-booking necessary. See ww.merristwood.ac.uk/NewsEvents/Events/ ClassicCarShow.aspx
Fawley Hill	Friday 20th-21st May	Fawley Hill Vintage Extravaganza, Henley	Pre-register essential at www.fawleyhill.co.uk



Brooklands	Sunday	Brooklands Classic	www.brooklandsmuseum.com
Museum	22nd May	Breakfast	
Hartley	Saturday 11th June	Classic Car Show at the Village	Entry Form from David Preston
Wintney		Festival	classiccars.hwf016@btinternet.com
Festival			
Watercress	Saturday 11th-	War on The Line Event	www.watercressline.co.uk
Line	12th June		
Essex Austin	Sunday 12th-17th	The Only Tour is Essex (& Suffolk)	https://ea7c.wordpress.com/
7 Club	June		
Brooklands	Saturday 18th-	Brooklands Double Twelve	www.brooklandsmuseum.com
Museum	19th June	Motorsport Festival	
750 MC	Sunday 3rd July	National Austin 7 Rally at Beaulieu	Ian Nelson tel: 01932 863073; email:
			ian.s.nelson@bteinternet.com
			www.beaulieu.co.uk/events/austin-seven-
			rally/
Watercress	Sunday	Alton Bus	www.watercressline.co.uk
Line	17th July	Rally	
Beaulieu	Saturday 3rd-4th	International Autojumble	www.beaulieu.co.uk/events/international-
Museum	September		autojumble
Cabhana	Caturday 10th Cant	Cabham Uaritaga Day alaggia agr	Lan Malaan tal. 01022 862072. amail.
Uoritaga	Saturday 10th Sept	coonam Heritage Day classic car	ian A palson (el: 01932 8030/3; email:
Heritage		gathering	lan.s.nelson@bteinternet.com
Camberley	Saturday 3rd	Vintage, Classics, Customs, Hot	By invitation only: contact Ken Bonner
Car Show	September	Rods, Motorbikes, Entertainment	kenbonner@btinternet.com
Watercress	Friday 21st-	Autumn Steam Gala	www.watercressline.co.uk
Line	23rd Oct.		

Club	2016 Dates	Inter Register Event & Location	Contacts as below, or talk to Trevor, Colin or Tony W for information
MG Car Club	Sun in March TBC	"Naviscat" Scatter Rally Kent	tba
Alvis	Sat 26th March	Scatter Rally + tour West Sussex	James Campbell jamesiscampbell@btconnect.com
Riley	Sat 4th June	Batho Trophy Worcestershire	Tom Pellow
Humber	Sun 10th July? TBC	Navigation Rally Dorset	Dick Arman thearmans@googlemail.com
STD	Sun 31st July? TBC	Driving Tests + tour Hungerford	tba
Riley	August TBC	Rally Thames Valley	Richard Scott rscottok@btinternet.com
Crossley	Sun 18th Sept	Treasure Hunt North Yorks	Stephen Weld Tel. 01765 658569
Alvis	Sat in Sept TBC	Scatter Rally Dartmoor	James Campbell jamesiscampbell@btconnect.com
MGCC	Sun in Oct TBC	Autumn "Naviscat" Surrey/Sussex	tba
ATDC/ NHAEG	Sat 19th Nov	"Nightjar" Scatter/Orienteering Surrey/Hants/Berks	Trevor Edwards trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com



The NHAEG Member Interview - Playing with Trains...

Editor: Some of us have wondered what Colin Greig has been up to since retiring as our Chairman. So I decided to put the question to him...

Colin: If anyone calls or phones for me on a Wednesday, Ann always says, "He's not here – he's playing with his trains." I've been volunteering in the Engine Shed at Ropley on The Mid-Hants Railway.

Editor: But after Austins, why trains?

Colin: I have been fascinated by Steam Locomotives since I was very young. Living in Highgate, North London, I spent most of my time train spotting at various terminus stations and when I could sneak in, engine sheds in and around London. When I was not train spotting I had my 0 Gauge model railway, which my Father had built in my bedroom. It was on boards that went all round the room with all the furniture fitted under it, including my bed, which meant I had to be careful when getting up not to bang my head on it, perhaps that is why I lost my hair at an early age. With steam starting to die out in favour of diesel my interest waned especially after buying my first car in 1960, an Austin 7 what else, when I started to get interested in Vintage cars. When preserved lines started opening in the 1970s I started visiting some of them with my sons and later with my grandson Ben, especially the Watercress Line. For a number of years I thought it would be interesting to become a volunteer worker there but didn't think I would have the time especially when still working.

Editor: So how did you get the job?

Colin: When talking to Ann one day she said, just find the time, so I went along to their next volunteer welcome day where they tell you all about the various departments you can join as a volunteer. All I was really interested in was working on the engines so at the end of the presentation I spoke to the representative from the Locomotive Department asking what qualifications I needed. He replied by asking me if I could use a spanner and screwdriver, when I replied yes he said you have got the job, we can teach you everything else, when can you start. I started the next week.

Editor: So what are you actually doing?

Colin: I joined the so called Wednesday Loco Gang, which number about 30 men, but not everyone is there every week. They are a great bunch of characters, mostly retired, from all walks of life. Some have worked in engineering of some sort all their lives, others, like me, have a little knowledge from working on cars etc. and some have very little experience. However, all have an interest in steam locomotives. Apart from working, an important aspect of the day is cake eating, everyone is expected to take their turn at bringing the cake. Each week two of the gang have to bring a cake, many are made by themselves but others, like me, contract the baking out to our wives, a few even buy their cake. This ensures that we can all have a couple of slices at coffee time. The cake eating has become quite a joke



among other departments who sometimes wonder how much work we get done.

Editor: So apart from eating cake, what else have you done?

Actually despite the cake eating, quite a lot of work does get done. When I first started I joined two others who had started to strip down a pair of bogies from a 1948 Oliver Bullied designed coach, which was one of two donated to the railway. Both of these had stood for 35 years by the coast, which of course meant they were thick with rust and most nuts, bolts and screws were seized solid. This meant quite a lot of heat and the





50-ton press to dismantle the parts and a lot of wire brushing and needle gunning to clean up the smaller parts and the wheels, with the main frame and some larger parts going for shot-blasting. During the course of this work we were joined by two new volunteers, which meant that when the frames and other parts came back from shot-blasting we were now 5 strong. Over the next few months the two bogies were gradually reassembled, with a number of parts having to be remade, and everything receiving three coats of paint and at the finish they looked brand new.

With the bogies finished and moved to the carriage department, to await

the crane to lift the coach onto them, I moved onto other tasks. This included working on the valve gear of Cheltenham, a Schools class 4-4-0, working on the piston seals of the class 9F 2-10-0 and recently preparing an Ivatt class 2MT Tank engine, which has had a complete overhaul, for painting. This included dismantling some parts, lots of wire brushing, sandpapering and using the needle gun on heavily rusted places, including inside the coal bunker - a particularly dirty job.

Editor: So what has given you most satisfaction recently?

Colin: One of the most interesting days recently was helping when the giant steam crane arrived to lift the coach onto the bogies we had finished a few weeks before. The crane is steam powered and was built in 1943 by Ransome and Rapier (weighing in at 130 tons and able to lift 45 tons). The first job was to lift one end of the coach, pull out the temporary bogie it had been sitting on and drop the coach onto large stands, so that the crane could then lift the temporary bogies onto another line - to enable the restored bogie to be rolled under the coach once it had been lifted again. After the coach was lowered onto one bogie the procedure was repeated.



Editor: What else has been going on?

Colin: With the coach pushed out of the way a very large boiler was brought in on a low loader to be lifted off onto a pair of specially prepared bogies, to enable it to be taken into the boiler shop for complete restoration. The boiler belongs to a Bullied designed Canadian Pacific, a Merchant Navy class 4-6-2, which is owned by the railway and currently being completely stripped and rebuilt at Eastleigh, with the help of an £850,000 grant from the lottery fund leaving another £200,000 to be raised from voluntary contributions The boiler was transported to Ropley by road as there is a large boiler shop there. Although I was not involved in the boiler lift it was fascinating to watch.

Editor: How come they trust you to do all this work?

Colin: If you are wondering if the locomotives are safe to run after we volunteers have worked on them there is no need to worry. As well as the volunteers, there are a number of highly skilled paid staff and apprentices - so there is always someone on hand to show you what to do and check it all when you have finished. Altogether the railway has about 50 paid staff covering all departments and about 450 volunteers. There are a number of other jobs I have done and I have enjoyed every day spent at Ropley even though it means an early start from home and often getting back very dirty and tired, but a shower followed by a beer with my dinner and I feel fine and looking forward to the next week. I also sleep well that night.

Background: Originally opened in 1865 the railway was soon nicknamed The Watercress Line due to its early role in transporting the locally grown crop to the markets in London and beyond. It was finally closed by BR in 1973 when a group of enthusiastic volunteers saved it from extinction and reopened the line from New Alresford to Ropley in 1977 and after raising the funds, finally opened the line to Alton in 1985, where it joins up with the South West Trains main line station. It has a very steeply graded line with Meadstead and Four Marks, being the highest station in Southern England. Because of this, all the engines have to be large and powerful - no small tank engines here! Details of the Watercress line can be found at www.watercressline.co.uk



The Early History of the Car Radio

Research by John Hancock & the Editor



In England in 1901 Guglielmo Marconi fitted a radio to a Thornycroft steam powered vehicle. The drawbacks were that the radio only received data, not sound, and the tall roof mounted cylindrical aerial had to be lowered to a horizontal position before the vehicle moved.

In spite of further false starts, it was the beginning of public broadcasting in the 1920s that really kicked things off. Most of the early efforts involved either 'Ham' radios or domestic radio sets taken to high ground picnic spots.

The first radios used in cars were battery operated domestic sets that were usually placed on the car's back seat and typically used stationary at picnic spots etc. - a Marconi eight-valve receiver was fitted into the rear compartment of a Daimler Light 30 car in November 1922. Later, more ruggedized versions started to appear which were built in weatherproof steel boxes that were mounted under the car or on the running board. As radios became smaller and car interior space became bigger, radios were mounted inside the car, often on the floor or bulkhead. Cables reached up to a small control panel on the steering column or dashboard. This arrangement lasted with some cars into the 1950's. The early loudspeakers were either ordinary horn or cone



An attempt to install an amateur radio in a car in New York, 1919

speakers. Sometimes sets were just equipped with headphones. Later high impedance cone loudspeakers were fitted into the car's passenger door. An early example was the two-valve portable receiver by British Thomson-Houston that was displayed on January 29th, 1920, at the London Radio Exhibition.



In the early 1920s a few motorists in England fitted a Marconi V2A (cabinet radio) to the car's running boards.

The American manufacturers involved included Allied Radio Corp, Heina, Philco, Delco and Motorola. The Motorola story typifies the development of the modern mass produced single-unit car radio. It allegedly started one evening in 1929, when William Lear and Elmer Wavering drove their girlfriends to a lookout point high above the Mississippi River town of Quincy, Illinois, to watch the sunset. It was a fine night, but one of the women said it would be nicer if they could listen to music in the car. Lear and Wavering liked the idea. Both men had tinkered with radios (Lear had served as a radio operator in the U.S. Navy during World War I) and it wasn't long before they were taking apart a home radio and trying to get it to work in a car. But it wasn't easy: automobiles had ignition switches, dynamos, spark plugs, and other electrical equipment that

generate noisy static interference, making it impossible to listen to the radio when the engine was running.

One by one, Lear and Wavering identified and suppressed each source of electrical interference. When they finally got their radio to work, they took it to a radio convention in Chicago. There they met Paul Galvin, co-owner of Galvin Manufacturing Corporation, with his brother Joe. They made a product called a "battery eliminator", a device that allowed battery-powered radios to run on household AC current. But as more homes were wired for electricity, more radio manufacturers made AC-powered radios. Galvin needed a new product to manufacture and when he met Lear and Wavering at the radio convention, he had found it. Lear and Wavering set up shop in Galvin's factory, and when they perfected their first radio, they installed it in his Studebaker. Then Galvin drove it nearly 800 miles to Atlantic City to show off the radio at the 1930 Radio Manufacturers Association convention. Too broke to afford a booth, he parked the car outside the convention



hall and put on the radio so that passing delegates could hear it. That idea worked and he got enough orders to put the radio into production.

That first production model was called the 5T71. But Galvin decided he needed to come up with something a little catchier. In those days many companies in the phonograph and radio businesses used the suffix "ola" for their names – so Galvin decided to do the same thing, and since his radio was intended for use in a motor vehicle, he decided to call it the 'Motorola'.



The Motorola 5T71

But even with the name change, the radio still had problems: When Motorola

went on sale in 1930, it cost about \$110 uninstalled, at a time when you could buy a brand-new car for \$650, and the country was sliding into the Great Depression. (By that measure, a radio for a new car would cost about \$3,000 today.)



A Motorola car radio installation diagram (circa 1930) showed batteries, spark plug suppressors and the antenna, in addition to the radio components.

In 1930, it took two men several days to put in a car radio - the dashboard had to be taken apart, so that the receiver and speaker could be installed, and the roof had to be cut to install the antenna. These early radios ran on their own batteries, not on the car battery, so more holes had to be cut into the floorboard to accommodate them. The installation manual had eight complete diagrams and 28 pages of instructions. But things picked up in 1933 when Ford began offering Motorola's pre-installed at the factory. In 1934 they got another boost when Galvin struck a deal with B.F. Goodrich tyre

company to sell and install them in its chain of tyre stores. By then the price of the radio, with installation included, had dropped to \$55. The Motorola car radio

was off and running. (The name of the company would be officially changed from Galvin Manufacturing to "Motorola" in 1947.)

In Germany Blaupunkt fitted their first radio to a Studebaker in 1932 and in the United Kingdom Crossley offered a factory fitted wireless in their 10 hp models from 1933.

The early car radio receivers used the battery voltage (6.3 volts at the time) to run the vacuum tube filaments, and generated the required high voltage for the plate supply using a vibrator to drive a step-up transformer. The receivers required more stages than the typical home receiver in order to ensure that enough gain was available to allow the AGC to mask signal fading as the car was driven. When cars switched to 12-volt batteries, the same arrangement was used, with tubes with 12-volt heaters. Then World War 2 provided a huge leap forward in the technology.



The 1937 Philips car radio



TECHNICAL MATTERS – WINTER SPECIAL

Part 2 concludes 'Three-brush charging – a beginner's guide'

This two-part guide is based on a technical leaflet produced by Andy Seager in 2005. Part 1 appeared in the December Issue, entitled 'Improving Charging Rates' and included a bit about how it all works, the terminals on the dynamo and how to set up the charging rates. Once the full charge rate has been set, assuming that the half-charge resistor is working, you should see around 4 to 5 amps of half charge current when you put dash switch in the half charge 'Summer' position. But modern, low or zero maintenance car batteries don't like being charged for long periods at high charge rates – so you need to set the car up with the smallest charge rate you can get away with, not the largest – you have been warned! At half charge 2 amps is plenty on a fully charged battery.

As we saw in Part 1, the half charge is effected by a wire wound resistor connected between the dynamo terminals D and F. This resistor is either located in a small housing on the dynamo, or located within the base-plate of the cut-out on later models. (It may also be the case that this resistor is located in a fuse box or separate housing on some models) The complete housing is often missing from the dynamo as the Bakelite base is fragile and has often suffered from historic brutality. In these cases, emergency practice is to connect the terminals on the dynamo together so that the dynamo runs 'flat out' all of the time, you may find a curious wire strap between F & D on the dynamo.

So, what to do in the event of a missing, broken or faulty resistor? Since the original resistors were simply made from a coil of wire, you can manufacture your own from a stock length of resistance wire. The cheapest and easiest way is to purchase an old style wire-wound element for a bar fire, these cost around £4 to £5 and are obtainable from hardware shops.

Before you start, MAKE SURE that the wiring from the switch box to the dynamo and cut-out is correct and remove any wire straps that may have been inserted to negate the existing or missing resistor. Remember; assumption is the mother of all evil!

Switch the car to full charge and set the third brush to achieve around 10 amps (see Part1), then with a helper, as this is really a two-person job:

- 1) Connect one end of the bar fire element to the D terminal on the dynamo with a length of wire (*I* recommend getting it clear of the engine bay and have someone help because while you are doing this the fire element will be at 6 volts and you don't want it to ground)
- 2) Connect the F terminal on the dynamo to another piece of wire and put a croc clip on the other end.
- 3) Connect the croc clip to the opposite end of the fire element to the D terminal connection.
- 4) With the engine running and the dash switch now in the half charge position, progressively move the crock clip down the coil until a half charge current of around 4 to 5 amps is achieved. You will need to rev the engine up to 2000 RPM or so to achieve this. You will notice that until it comes in to range, the red warning light will glow on the dash, this is because until you are close to the right value of resistance the field windings will have insufficient current for the dynamo to function.



Note: There is about four feet or so of wire on a bar fire element, I found that I needed about 10 inches to achieve the right rate, however I suspect that this will vary depending on the car, cut-out and dynamo variants. The bar fire element will not get red hot like it does in a fire because it is in a low voltage circuit – it may get a little warm once the right length has been achieved so be careful.

When you have achieved a half charge rate with all this mess connected to the dynamo, you are ready to make a small resistor pack. Carefully remove the right length wire form the bar fire element with about half an inch or so of extra. You need to wind this around a small heatproof former (not wood), a small piece of fibreglass sheet for example – remember it must be an insulator! You need to create some external connections from the resistor using copper wire; the conductor from mains cable is ideal. You should end up with something like this:



Wind each end of the resistance wire around the copper connection points and <u>solder</u> the

connections – don't leave them dry! Once completed re-connect the resistor pack across the dynamo terminals and double check that both the full and half charge rates are within limits – if not, adjust to suit by removing a turn or replacing with a slightly longer resistance wire. Once you have completed the working resistor you can insulate it with epoxy resin. (Araldite or similar)



Tip: A very small polythene bag cut down so that the assembly fitted inside and with the legs sticking out, can be filled with epoxy, and once dry, the bag can be peeled off (nothing sticks to polythene) and the assembly painted matt black.

This month's tip from Malcolm Ryley

I have recently had good service from the small firm 'Specialist Wheel Builders', run by Nick Mouat and James Wheeldon. They are situated near Salisbury and not easy to find the first time, but worth the effort – so call me for directions.



TECHNICAL MATTERS

DVLA UPDATE

DVLA have announced that the traditional silver on black registration plates are only allowed on vehicles built before 1st January 1975. Also, the supply of "age-related" numbers is running out and those of the '**ABC 123**' type that were issued from the mid-1930s to the 1950s have already run out. Vehicles of this period, which can be re-registered, will receive numbers of the '**123 ABC**' type - until these too run out.

AUSTIN HISTORY

Queries of the Month

More from Andy Ranson. These question and answer articles originally appeared in "The Austin Magazine & Advocate" during the 1930s and 1940s. This month's selections are: No 481 Hill Climbing – Austin Seven and No 645 Front Universal – Austin Ten-Four. No 481 appeared in the March 1933 edition and No 645 appeared in the March 1935 edition.

No 481 Hill Climbing – Austin Seven

Q. My amazing little Austin Seven (1931) saloon took four adults over some of the steepest hills on Dartmoor last year and went up like a bird. One day, however, she would not negotiate Telegraph Hill, near here, and would not answer to the accelerator, especially in low gear. Do you think that this may be due to too much oil in the sump, and consequent oiling of plugs? This failure happened last November in fairly cold weather. The local Austin dealers have looked over the ignition, so that should be in order.

A. From the particulars you give it is not possible to state definitely the cause of the failure of your car to climb the hill you mentioned. No doubt in some respects your engine was out of tune. The failure to answer the accelerator points to some restriction in the petrol supply, and possibly foreign matter in the carburetor petrol inlet gauze, or a partial stoppage of the jet may have been the cause. Otherwise, wrongly timed ignition or poor plugs, or poor engine compression due to the valves needing re-grinding might have been responsible, but your local Austin dealer should be able to check over all these points and restore your engine performance to its original excellence.

With regard to your suggestion that the excess of lubricant is oiling-up the plugs, this can be easily verified by removing them. They will be oily round their points if oil is getting past the piston rings.

No 645 – Front Universal. Austin Ten-Four

Q. The lubrication instructions in the handbook for my Ten-Four mention a grease nipple for the front end of the propeller shaft, accessible through a hole in the transmission tunnel. As I cannot locate the nipple, nor one at the rear, I am wondering whether my car has the needle type universals which do not require greasing, described in a recent issue of the Magazine.

A. From your description it would appear that your car has the needle-bearing universal joints, but as you do not quote the car number we cannot inform you specifically on this point. However, assuming this to be the





case, there is no nipple for the rear universal, and at the front the universal also has no nipple, but one is provided for monthly lubrication of the propeller shaft splines, being situated just behind the front universal. This is accessible through the small hole in the centre tunnel to which you refer.

You will find it necessary to move the car, and so rotate the propeller shaft, until the nipple comes in line with the hole, before the grease gun can engage with it.

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

Past Press

Two advertisements from 60 years ago, December 1955.







ASK AUNT BRASSICA...

Editor: In response to requests to lighten the content of the newsletter, I have asked my Aunt Brassica to field some readers' questions.

Reader: "What recipe can I use to get my grandchildren cooking?"

Aunt Brassica: "I have chosen my favourite recipe for Rock Buns which comes from my Be-Ro recipe book, as these were a family favourite. Just remember that your modern eggs are larger than post-war, when the Be-Ro book was a best seller - so you may not need to add the milk if the mix is to stand up on the tray!"



