

NORTH HAMPSHIRE *AUSTIN* ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
Monthly Newsletter and Events Update

www.nhaeg.org.uk

JULY 2007

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

Mo's Mutterings



Note the two dollies Dave and Don picked up in Normandy!

We had such a good time on our trip to Normandy for the D-Day ceremonies. We learned a lot during the days and had such a laugh in the evenings, whilst enjoying the wonderful food and wine at the lovely hotel. Although the weather was a bit cold and very windy, Don and I would do it all again, and may well do so next year, if invited!!

We also enjoyed the Half-Gallon Run organised by Brian and Chris. It was a lovely route and the clues were not too easy or too difficult. Just about right. Good fun was had by all!

Maureen

COLIN'S COLUMN

June Club Night

Despite quite a few of our members not being able to come to the June club night due to holidays, illness etc we still had eleven cars take part in the 'Half Gallon Run'. The event this year was organised by Brian (Mayers) and Chris (Broom) and they had devised a very attractive and quiet route for it.

The first cars set off at about 7.00 pm some of us having enjoyed a meal beforehand. The route was 15 miles long with 35 questions to be answered along the way, some fairly easy but some were a bit more difficult to find. As mentioned above it was a lovely route with very little traffic and most people took about 1½ hours to complete it.

With everyone back Brian and Chris added up the scores and announced the winners, who were Tony and Pat (Westall) in their 1931 Austin 16/6 Iver. They received the 'Half Gallon Trophy', with Don and Maureen (Breakspear) in their 1926 Austin 12/4 Windsor coming a close second and receiving the 'Half Gallon Mug'. Both also received a bottle of wine generously donated by Brian and Chris. A bottle of beer was also presented to Trevor in his 1935 Austin 10 Colwyn, who completed the run without a navigator, Jean being away on holiday, and still got a very respectable score. Well done to you all.

I am sure you would all want me to say a very big thank you to Brian and Chris for organising the evening. From the comments I have heard, you all enjoyed the event, I know Ann and I did.

Would anyone like to offer to organise next year's 'Half Gallon Run', if so, please let a committee member or me know. Don't worry if you have never organised an event before we will be able to give you advice and help, if required.

Brooklands Centenary Festival

Over the weekend of the 16/17th June, Brooklands celebrated its centenary, the track having opened on the 17th June 1907. I went in Arabella along with Don (Breakspear) and Brian (Grant) in Don's Chummy and what a fantastic day it was.

We arrived there at 8.45am to find that there were already a great many cars in the car-park for pre 1940 vehicles, all post 1940 cars had to use a 'Park and Ride' facility set up for the day. This meant that all cars in the car park were cars that could have been used by spectators at Brooklands in its heyday. Inside the Museum grounds were cars that had some sort of Brooklands connection and there were hundreds of them including many famous ones that used to race there. I should think with all the cars in the car park, plus the ones in the Museum grounds, it was the largest gathering of pre-1940 cars ever and certainly the most expensive.

There were activities going on all over the museum site as well as in Mercedes-Benz World, which is adjacent to the museum. The most interesting action was on the Mercedes-Benz test track where a great many of the racing and competition cars were very enthusiastically put through their paces. There were many well-known Brooklands cars including 'Blitzen Benz' built in 1909 with its massive 21.5 litre four-cylinder engine, that's over 5 litres per cylinder. 'Babs' the Higham Special built for Count Zborowski and later to become the land speed record car used by Parry Thomas and at 24 litres the largest engined car to have raced at Brooklands. Also there was the Napier-Railton world 24 hour record breaker and in perpetuity the fastest car around Brooklands. There was also the 24 litre Napier Bentley which is a 1929 Bentley chassis with a 24 litre Napier aeroplane engine built in 1968 and what a glorious sight and sound it was.

There were many other varied and interesting cars and motor bikes, being driven on the test circuit, as the commentator said, we have cars here that would not pull the skin off a rice pudding and others that would blow your socks off. We also had a display put on by Mercedes including their 1954 W196 Formula I car, driven by Jochen Mass who raced in the 1970s, two Formula 3 cars and finally a McLaren-

Mercedes Formula 1 car, boy did that move, it really blew your socks off. It made everything else look pedestrian.

There was also a great deal of action on the Test Hill, the highlight for me being a 3 wheeler Morgan which had so much power its rear weaved from side to side, black lining all the way to the top, he can't have had much rubber left after three runs.

There were many other things going on including a re-enactment of the cavalcade which was part of the original opening ceremony, consisting entirely of pre 1908 cars. We were also treated to a fantastic aerobatic display by two helicopters, I never knew that a helicopter could fly upside down but one of these did as well as many other dangerous looking manoeuvres. To finish the day we had the Falklands 25th anniversary helicopter flypast of 25 machines, which had previously flown over Buckingham Palace.

I have been to many events at Brooklands over the years but this was by far the best and an event never likely to be repeated again and as a bonus we had good weather. I was glad to have been there on such an occasion and delighted that Arabella along with Don, s Chummy, were part of the static display of cars in the car park. I am sure that Don and Brian would agree it was a fantastic day and excellent value for money.

July Club Night

As usual we will have our Concourse d'Elegance at the July meeting. There will be three categories, best car overall, best Austin 7 and Landlord's choice. To add a bit of fun to the evening we thought it would be an idea for members to dress up in the period of their cars, this of course is purely optional and should not put anyone off coming if they do not want to dress up. It does not have to be anything special, it's just for a bit of fun, there will however, be a prize for the best outfit. So get your cars polished, see what you have got in the back of your wardrobes and come along for a good evening.

Before the next club night we have a number of events, there is the Ben Run which I believe quite a number of our members are going on, there is the Dog Racing at Reading which I understand from Don has 20 members going and there is Jean's run to Loseley House which I understand has about 24 people going. Ann and I will be going on all of them so I look forward to seeing you all. Just a reminder in case you missed it in last month's Newsletter, the **Picnic in the Paddock** is now on the **22nd July** and not the 29th as originally planned, remember to bring family and friends along.

As mentioned last month I am sending the Parts & Services Directory update direct by email to those of you who receive your Newsletters that way. Those who receive their Newsletter by post should receive their copy with that. If anyone is not receiving it please let me know.

That's all for now.
Safe and Happy Motoring.

Colin

Secretary's Scribblings

Excursion 2008 - your views please!

As may be appreciated, when organizing group trips, it's essential to start early, several months in advance, in order to be able to determine numbers likely to be involved, ensure bookings at preferred locations are secured and obtain best possible prices, etc. From experience this usually means soliciting interest some time during the summer of the *previous* year.

Now that at least two such trips have been completed in 2007, ('Warner Break' to Somerset and cross-Channel excursion to the D-Day Anniversary celebrations) it's perhaps timely to try to establish, what, if any, similar activities would have the greatest appeal for 2008.

Therefore, please note below, a short questionnaire which everyone is invited to complete and return in order to assist this process. Please aim to return all questionnaires to me (Trevor) by August 1st, at the latest.

Please do take a few minutes to give it some thought and, especially if you have already been on one of our group jaunts or even maybe fancy the idea of participating in something next year (far off in time though that might seem at the moment) let us have your candid opinions and suggestions. This way we will be better equipped to be able to plan something (or perhaps more than one!), which meet(s) the expectations of the majority which, in a democratic society, is probably the most appropriate arrangement.

Loseley House and Park Visit - 8th July:

A short note has already been circulated to all those who intend participating in this event.

Jean advises that everyone should be at the car park of Fleet railway station in time for a

9:45 am departure on Sunday 8th July, *or*, if preferred, to be at Loseley House by about

10:45am for coffee, etc., at 11:00. Fleet railway station is located at GR 816552.5 on OS

Landranger Map No: 186 i.e. at eastern end of village, off A3013.

If there are any questions at all please call Jean on 01344 775012

'PO'

As most A7 owners will readily agree the propensity for the engines in such vehicles to

leak oil from the block to crankcase joint is fairly commonplace. Whilst this may be to a

greater or lesser degree it exists in virtually all instances sooner or later.

Various theories abound as to why this should be so, the most readily acknowledged seems to be that it is due to the steel block and aluminium crankcase possessing differing coefficients of expansion, resulting in an inevitable lack of seal integrity between the two faces *when hot*.

In the case of 'PO', when I re-worked the engine some four years or so ago I thought I had done all that could and should be done to prevent the problem rearing its ugly head.

How wrong I was! It was not very long before it became necessary to clean off the oil which had found its way through the seal after even a fairly short journey and, of late, this had become so severe that I resolved to take the bull by the horns and make yet another determined attempt to cure the problem once and for all (such ambition!!)

I had put off the evil hour for quite some time believing that it would be necessary to pull out the engine if only to gain access to a single block-securing nut, at the rear of the block, firmly adjacent to the bulkhead. I'd even borrowed George (Ewart's) engine hoist to do the job.

In the event I was very pleasantly surprised to discover that, having removed carpets, etc, from the front footwell plus an exposed plate over the gearbox and then the upper, half-moon housing over the flywheel, it was possible to release the nut in question without too much difficulty and without the need to physically remove the engine.

Stripping off the block was straightforward of course which was removed complete with pistons/con rods. I considered this to be the better approach if only because fitting the pistons back into the cylinders afterwards would be easier (though still tricky!) with the block out off the car, rather than leaving them all flopping in the breeze and attempting to do so, single-handedly and using just one compression ring clamp!

Once the block was off I then took the opportunity to decarbonize everything and also regrind the valves which, I was pleased to note, were all in excellent shape even after four years or so running on unleaded fuel, using no lead-replacement additive. (Well, these vehicles *were* manufactured prior to the introduction of unleaded so should we be all that surprised?) Even so, a little judicious regrind was still prudent, I thought.

The decision then had to be made as to what technique and material(s) I was going to use to effect a decent deal between block and crankcase when reassembling everything. In casual conversation with Brian (Adam) he mentioned something called '*Stag Wellseal*' which he believed was highly regarded in certain circles, *moreso*, evidently, than 'Hylomar Blue' and which I, personally, have never felt performs as well as its reputation might suggest.

However, Brian was unsure where '*Wellseal*' might be obtained since it seemed unavailable from any of the usual sources. Luckily the tube he showed me had a telephone contact number on it which I called the following day. It evidently was formerly manufactured by *Stag*, a British company, but the manufacturing rights were sold to a German company by the name of *Kommerling*. Their UK operation, *Kommerling UK Ltd*, handle the product here through their National distributors, *Binney and Son* in Birmingham. Calling the latter it emerged that the product is possibly one of the best kept secrets and worst marketed products around! Additionally, the person I spoke to seemed to regard the Berkshire/Hampshire area as only marginally more familiar to him than the far side of the Moon and he

certainly wasn't able to provide the name of a local supplier. However, he did offer to put a couple of tubes in a jiffy bag and send them to me but only after mentioning that, for some reason, the Post Office objects most strongly to handling this particular product in its mail! Why this should be so isn't at all obvious but, whatever else might be the case, it does appear to be *really GOOD stuff!* Using 'Wellseal', plus a regular gasket, *appears* to have done the trick. Though I haven't done too many miles yet since carrying out the exercise there doesn't appear to be a drop of oil bubbling through the joint and my garage floor is consequently oil free - at the moment at least! Watch this space though. Further report(s) will surely follow!

Meanwhile, Happy Summer Motoring!

Trevor

2006 COMMITTEE CONTACTS:

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	George Ewart	01344778286 (george.ewartx@btinternet.com)
	John Hancock	01189885387 (route66_2003@hotmail.com)

Just a note for anyone interested in the **Autojumble at Brooklands on the 15th July**, there is a web site for more information. It is:

www.brooklandsjumble.com

2008 Trip(s) Questionnaire

Name (optional).....

A) Please consider the following and indicate in which of the options, if any, you might prefer to participate, in 2008?

Please circle your order of preference.

Isle of Wight	(Warner Break)	Norton Grange Resort	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Isle of Wight	(Warner Break)	Bembridge Resort	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cricket St. Thomas	(Warner Break)	Historic Hotel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other location	(Warner Break)	Suggestions?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cross Channel destination - e.g. Normandy/Brittany/Other			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ireland			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Guernsey			1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B) In order of importance which of the following factors influence your decision whether or not to participate in an organized trip?

Destination	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Distance to destination	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall cost	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Standard of accommodation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Time of year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Duration of trip	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other? Please state.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

C) What is your opinion regarding the *optimal* duration of a trip? Please circle.

4 days/3 nights 5 days/4 nights) 7 days/6 nights Doesn't matter

D) What month(s) of the year do you consider best for such trips?

E) Finally, what upper limit, if any, would you prefer placed on the overall cost of a trip?

£.....

Please feel free to submit any other suggestion/recommendation/comment/observation which you consider relevant to the issue and which will help in the planning of future group trips and...

Return questionnaire to Trevor Edwards by August 1st 2007, at the latest.
(55 The Brambles, Bramley Grove, Crowthorne. Berks. RG45 6EF)

DON's DOODLINGS

When Maureen and I agreed to join Karen and Dave Witton on their trip to the Normandy D-Day celebrations, we felt it would be more appropriate to use the Seven instead of the Twelve-Four as all the other cars were Sevens.

Two or three weeks prior to the run, life was pretty hectic getting the Chummy ready as we had decided to give her quite a bit of refurbishment including new sidescreens, carpet and new seats. Unfortunately, we ran out of time to have the new hood made and this will have to be done at a later date. The Saturday before we left was spent changing oil, greasing etc. whilst Maureen packed the suitcase. All we had to do on Sunday morning at 5.45 am was load Chummy and make our way to Portsmouth. As you can imagine, at this time of the morning it was quite cold and we had to stop at Bordon for Maureen to put on yet another layer of clothing, thus resembling an Eskimo for the rest of the journey to Portsmouth. Three of the other Sevens were already at the port when we arrived, Karen and Dave, Peter and Pauline and Trevor Wild from the Solent Club. Shortly afterwards, Dave and Hazel and Ronnie and Roy also arrived, this completed the group of six cars and eleven people.

As we waited, a brand new Bentley pulled alongside and the lady passenger wound down the window and said in a lovely Lancashire accent, "oh, we have some of those cars!" Her husband came over to look at the Austins, and told us he owned two Vauxhall dealerships in the Lake District and had several vintage cars. He said if we were in the area to pop in and he would show us his cars. Meanwhile, several of us had a good look at the Bentley, which really is a superb car.

When we moved on through Customs, Karen and Dave were asked by one of the Officers if she could look in the boot? I think Dave said, if you can find it you can search it. Satisfied they had no drugs or illegal immigrants hidden away, we moved onto the Brittany ferry called Mont St. Michel. This ferry was far-removed from some of the clapped-out old tubs in which we have crossed the channel in the past, it was more like a cruise liner.

With all the Austins safely stowed on board, we were led by Karen and Dave to the restaurant where we had a very enjoyable breakfast. We were approached by a vaguely familiar-looking man at this time, namely George Ewart, who was also on the boat with his lovely wife Ruth. Ruth and George were on a coach trip and staying a short way along the coast from our hotel. After breakfast, some of us went out onto the sun deck and spent the rest of the crossing relaxing in the sunshine.

On arrival at Caen, we had about a forty minute drive to Saint- Aubin sur Mer and the hotel Le Clos Normand. On arrival the hotel staff arranged for all of our cars to be safely parked at the rear of the building in an enclosed square, along with several british vintage motorcycles.

We had a wonderful dinner in the hotel that evening and each evening we were there we tried different food from the very varied menu, which was all perfectly prepared

and presented. The staff were so friendly and looked after us so well we will certainly be returning next year.

Also staying at Le Clos Normand were a large coachload of Australians, mainly brits who had emigrated there years ago, some of whom were actually at the D-Day landing. Unfortunately, I did not see any Australian, or New Zealand, flags flying which was a little disappointing to them as well as myself.

On Monday the 4th we visited the old German gun emplacements at Longue sur Mer Gun Battery, now very rusty but still there. These guns are set back from the coastline about two miles and were controlled by observer posts raised on a hill, looking out to sea. We went on to Omaha Beach and had lunch before making a visit to the American Cemetery which was a very moving experience. The headstones were in absolutely perfect surroundings all in line and stretched as far as the eye can see. These headstones represented only one-third of all the Americans killed there on D-Day.

On the way back to our hotel we stopped off in Arromanches and had tea and biscuits with some lovely friends of Karen and Dave called Adrian and Karen who have worked extremely hard on a very old French house and made it into a most unusual "B & B".

On Tuesday 5th we visited the Pegasus Bridge Museum where a reproduction of the Horsa glider is kept, together with the original bridge with the dent on the side made from an unexploded bomb. It was thought that the people in Germany working on the bombs managed to tamper with some of them so that they did not go off on impact and this is what happened on the old bridge.

We also visited the British Cemetery at Ronville and just by chance, were just in time to join in the ceremony with the British and French dignitaries and the D-Day veterans from all different regiments looking very smart in their blazers and showing all their medals from the campaigns in which they had been involved. Firstly, the chaplain said a few prayers and a number of wreaths were laid by the memorial cross, the buglar played the last post whilst the flags were lowered to the ground. Then there was a two minute silence broken by the buglar. There were not many of us without a tear in our eye or a lump in our throat.

We went back for an early dinner at the hotel and then re-visited Pegasus Bridge for the midnight ceremony where Penny Bates, the daughter of Major Howard the officer who led the British Assault on Pegasus Bridge on the night of 5th/6th June 1944, made a speech and played a recording of her father's recollections of the night. After the ceremony we drove back to the hotel with our 6-volts gleaming brightly through the French countryside. The hotel staff were waiting up for us, with the bar open so that we could have a cognac to warm us before bed.

On the 6th June we drove to Arromanches and parked in the courtyard of the house belonging to Adrian and Karen and walked into the town square where the british soldiers were to hold their remembrance ceremony. After lunch we watched the parade which was led by the pipes and band followed by the vererans themselves. A

young british officer took command, it was quite incredible that every one of the veterans, bearing in mind they are all in their eighties, all stood to attention at the same time. The other amazing part was that also at their age, they all stood in the square for well over twenty minutes whilst the ceremony took place even though the weather was cold and extremely windy. Afterwards, we talked to many of veterans, male and female. I must admit, I did not realise there were so many ladies there in the thick of it all, although some of the ladies at the ceremonies were there in memory of their husbands and proudly wore their husbands' medals on their blazers. Two such widows were Violet and Josie who you will see in the photographs with Don and Dave on the front cover. They were given a lift from the café at Pegasus Bridge back to their coach on the other side and they were thrilled to bits with their "taxi" rides!

That evening we had our last dinner at Le Clos Normand and the following morning drove back to Caen for a very early crossing. The drive home from Portsmouth was quiet pleasant and Maureen and I stopped off at Karen and Dave's near Farnham for a welcome cup of tea. Everyone arrived home safely and all the Austins behaved remarkably well, with no breakdowns.

Don

Visit to the LONGSTOCK WATER GARDEN - 19th AUGUST 2007

The Longstock Water Garden was created by John Spedan Lewis, *The John Lewis*, after he acquired the Leckford Estate in 1946. The garden's main focus is water but there are woodland walks along with an associated nursery. The gardens, which are about 32 miles from the New Inn, where we plan to start, are described on www.longstockpark.co.uk. Start time to be advised but about 10.15 - 10.30.

Reserved car parking will be available to us at the nursery, adjacent to a picnic field which is about a ten minute walk through the Arboretum from the garden entrance. Admission is £5 per person for the Willow Court / Andover League of Friends on the day of our visit. Coffee and cakes, provided by the local church, will be on sale at the nursery.

The garden is open from 14.00 to 17.00.

Our plan is to have lunch at 'The Plough' at Longparish, which is about 7 miles before the Nursery. We have made a provisional booking for 10/12 cars with Mrs. Bingham for 12.15, which should allow enough time for lunch. The Plough can be visited on www.theploughinn.info When we first visited The Plough it was a pub with a restaurant but it is now a restaurant with a pub. We called on May 31st to look at the menu and had a nice meal at a reasonable cost. The layout within the restaurant will make it difficult for us all to eat together but we shall try.

However, Mrs Bingham plans to change her menu about two weeks before our visit so some very quick correspondence will be required to give her our requirements. She will e-mail her revised menu to Ruth and I as soon as it is available and we will then advise all those who wish to come on this trip. We will then collect your food orders

and e-mail them to her, hopefully before we arrive on her doorstep. If we do not have your requirements in time you may have to settle for a Kit-E-Kat sandwich - cordon bleu of course.

We will bring a copy of the current menu to the July club meeting and possibly collect final orders at the August club meeting on the 13th.

The Garden is about 2 miles north of Stockbridge so an alternative route home is available.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WISH TO COME ON THIS TRIP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Tel 01344 778286 or e-mail george.ewartx@btinternet.com

Ruth and George

On the Annual Concours d'Elegance Club Night, July 9th, Club Members are invited to wear Fancy Dress in accordance with the year of their car, or as near as possible. Of course, this is not compulsory, but just a bit fun!



Meeting at
Portsmouth
for the
Normandy
Crossing

Karen and Dave Witton wish to thank all the participants on the Normandy D-Day Run for their thoroughly good company and also for their extremely generous gift to us on our return.

Events Diary Update!

July 3rd	Night at Reading Dogs	Don Breakspear
July 8th	Loseley House Nr. Guildford Coffee followed by walk then lunch and visit To gardens and house (optional)	Jean Edwards
July 9th	Annual Concours d'Elegance	
July 15th July	Aero & Autojumble - Brooklands	
July 22nd	Picnic in the Paddock – Finchampstead	
August 13th	Club Night Noggin' and Natter	
August 19th	Trip to Water Gardens, Longstock Near Stockbridge	George and Ruth Ewart
August 19th	Reading & Wokingham Show Loddon Court Farm, Beech Hill, Swallowfield	
August 27th	Littlewick Show, Holyport, Nr. Maidenhead	
Sept.8th/9th	International Autojumble – Beaulieu	
September 10th	Club Night Quiz	John & Jean Hancock
October 8th	Club Night Talk by Julie Els	
October 21st	B2B Run (BEN Lynwood to Brooklands) To be confirmed	
November 12th	Auction Night	Don B.
December 3rd	Christmas Dinner @ The Falcon	
December 10th	Fun and Games Evening	