



NORTH HAMPSHIRE AUSTIN ENTHUSIASTS' GROUP

welcomes owners of Austins and other vintage & classic cars

CHAIRMAN'S CHUNTER

The club is buzzing this summer and members have reported some great events and trips (*see pages 1 -6*).

The 'Member Interview', this month, (page 9) features Adrian Walker telling the story of his introduction to the MG brand and how he came to own his present MGB GT.

So, continuing our series on members' car types, it seemed logical to look at the MGB history in more detail (*page 12*). Especially as it was one of the most popular sports cars of the 60's and 70's. A more comprehensive history of the whole MG marque is available online from the birth of the company in 1929, to its final sad demise in 1980 under the control of British Leyland and then MG-Rover.

Technical Matters (*page 14*) looks at Summer Preparation 1933 style – this serves as our historical item as well, as Andy Ranson has been on holiday and doing car shows.

The Quiz (*page 17*) is provided this month by quizmaster Trevor. (*Answers to the tricky March Quiz from Julie are on page 18*). There is also a new Caption Competition for you on page 18.

Finally, Aunt Brassica (*page 19*) is offering more seasonal advice on male drivers - and the benefits of tennis.

Happy motoring,

Simon

THE JULY 2018 NEWSLETTER

CLUB NEWS

Club Night Monday 14th May: Medical Emergency Talk

Alan Smart, who is the lead Community First Responder (CFR) in Fleet, gave an insightful talk about how to respond to a suspected cardiac arrest and how to spot Sepsis. Those of us who had a go at reviving a mannequin were very surprised how hard, deep and fast you had to apply pressure to the chest!

Mid-week run 17th May: The Armoury, Fareham

Six cars with eleven people had a 'genteel ride' through some lovely lanes from Newlyn Farm, Odiham, to Fort Nelson near Portsmouth to see the Poppy Wave.



Jane Hanslip drove up all the way from Waltham Chase to drive with us

about five miles from her home. Thanks to Alan for the planning and this time, Gwendoline behaved, so he managed to get there and back without the need to be rescued!

Club Night Monday 11th June The 'Half-gallon' Run

We enjoyed lovely weather that evening and the run took us to the very pretty and interesting village of Greywell.

Out of 10 'proper' cars and one modern, the top scorer was Mark Brenninkmeijer in his 1936 Morris 8. Mark is one of our regular Nightjar entrants. As he is not actually a member of NHAEG, but came along for the 2nd year running to take part in the Half Gallon run, it gave Tony, Pat and Simon a little head scratching moment.

Finally, though, the decision was made to present Mark and his co-driver with the trophy and bottle of wine (to ensure they join us again next year) and then present the top scoring NHAEG member with an IOU for a further bottle of VINO and of course the honour of devising next year's run.

Adrian Grey was that lucky member! He did extremely well, as he was riding solo, so he not only navigated himself to Greywell, but also managed to correctly answer more questions than the rest of us, who were in pairs!



Thank you, Pat and Tony!

OTHER EVENTS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS

Saturday 26th May The Hog-roast Meet, Odiham

Organised by Andy Seager, The Mill pub provided a tasty lunch enjoyed by several of our Members, while mingling with Riley folk. Unfortunately, Phil had a bit of carb dismantling practice on his way home!



Saturday 9th June Hartley Wintney Festival

Trevor Mulford reports that this annual event was again a great success, with a display of some 70 cars on the village common. Hundreds of people came and enjoyed the festival & parade. A thank you to Peter for arranging the banner and also thanks to Ann, Ken, Ruth, Terry and Barbara for their great help with the arrangements.

Saturday 16th June Watercress Line, 'War on the Line'

Phil Dunford reports, "Over a mid-June weekend Jan and I enjoyed an annual highlight at the Watercress Line as part of their War on the Line event. This enables visitors to transport themselves back in time to the 1940s, against the backdrop of a Second World War railway, to experience the 'Blitz Spirit'. Each station provides a different experience of life in wartime Britain. Visitors can help run the recreated RAF Plotting Room, dance alongside GIs, learn about the 'Home Front' and wartime railway manufacturing or have their hair styled for the 40s.



We supported the 'home front' section based at Medstead and Four Marks Station. We took Matilda, our Austin Ten, displayed as she would have appeared during the wartime blackout. On Saturday, dressed as ARP Warden and WVS Civil Defence members, we were joined by our children, their spouses and our two new grandchildren, all dressed for the period. The babies shared a period Royale pram as we journeyed up and down the line and around the displays at Alresford Station.



The Sunday morning always begins with a short parade service of remembrance in the station yard. We spent the second day in the roles of wartime nurse and policeman. We ended the day with a little more excitement than desired when Jan had to do some real nursing, helping with a chap who had collapsed. Next year's event is on 15th and 16th June.

Saturday 16th June Old Basing Carnival



The weather was breezy, starting nice and sunny for the carnival parade, but then clouded over and turned really quite cold. A very original 1966 primrose yellow Austin Mini was sandwiched between other Austins and MGs. Simon & Denise were awarded a prize for the best village scarecrow.

The ATDC 'Great Parks Run' to Sir Wm McAlpine's estate – Sunday 17th June 2018

Organised by ATDC member, Jim Richardson, seven vehicles from the NHAEG joined an invitation only visit, on Sunday 17th June, to the home of recently deceased Sir William McAlpine at Fawley Hill, near Henley on Thames. Some may be aware that Sir William was an avid railway buff and over the years had built up a huge collection of railway related memorabilia, including a full-sized railway set into the grounds of his estate. This is a genuine, standard gauge set up - not a model or scaled down version!

Convening at Henry Street Garden Centre, at 10.00 a.m. promptly, seven couples – Colin/ Ann, Dave/ Hazel, Andy/ Do, Adrian W/ Helga, Malcolm/ Barbara, Adrian G and his Mum, plus Jean and myself - all had time to grab a quick cup of something at the very recently re-opened, rather swish coffee shop and restaurant, (made one feel that there's maybe more money to be made out of filling stomachs than stocking gardens!), before setting off, along a suggested route, the dozen or so miles, via Hurst, Twyford and Warfield, to Farley Hill, off the Henley/Marlow road.



Arriving just before noon, Jim and many other 'proper' cars, plus occupants, were already there to greet us in a field adjacent to the railway complex itself. Once brief announcements had been delivered and a quiz sheet handed out by Jim, we wandered down the short distance to the station platform



'Casey Jones?'

and museum area for the fun to begin. As it happened a film crew from Channel 5 was on-site during the afternoon to record a programme believed to be associated with model making and a prize giving related thereto. For that reason and much to Jim's irritation, we had been warned that at certain times, whilst we were there, the museum area would be temporarily closed to visitors. In the event, this did not seem to impact on matters too much at all and no particular inconvenience was really experienced.

Entry permitted unlimited rides on the steam train, i.e. an open topped wagon and guard's van, hauled by an elderly engine, "Sir Robert McAlpine", along a track, which included an impressive 1:13 gradient, by the side of which peacocks and what looked like emus strutted their stuff. Icing on the cake, however, so far as yours truly was concerned, was the fact that I'd kindly been given a Pass, by Jim, allowing me a ride on the footplate of said engine, an opportunity I was not slow to take up. The experience took me back very much to the time, probably almost 70 years ago, when, as a keen train-spotter in the 'Ian Allen era', I would visit the marshalling yard at Leamington Spa station and sometimes, if very lucky, be invited up onto the footplate of a shunting engine at work there. It's very much doubted this would be likely to occur these days, now that 'Elf and Safety' rules omnipotent.



Recognise anyone?

After returning to our cars for a breather and welcome picnic we went back for a further session mid-afternoon. There's a vast amount to see in and around the museum and station - far too much to take in in one visit - and the 20 questions quiz we'd been invited to complete during our stay proved just too challenging for some of us - including Jean and myself. Nevertheless, some managed to have a reasonable stab at it and although none actually produced a winning entry, Andy and Do (Ranson), from Weymouth, quite understandably, took the prize for having travelled the furthest to the event (in their Morris Minor)!

The estate is not routinely open to the public and admission is invariably by invitation only but if the opportunity ever arises for members to visit this possibly unique and fascinating location it should be quickly seized. The annual, so-called 'Great Parks Run' is something Jim has organised for several years now, although this is the first one in which Jean and I have ever taken part. The experience, though, was a thoroughly enjoyable one and members are highly recommended to look out for it in future years.

The Transport of Yesteryear Show 24th June Dorset

Andy Ranson reports that, "The "Transport of Yesteryear" annual show, known locally as the Toy Club Show was held in glorious weather down here in Dorset and we walked away with a couple of cups. Considering a lot of events were going on locally plus England playing in the world cup and the French Grand Prix there was a very good turnout, probably about 120 cars and lots of visitors (mostly holidaymakers).



A French Connection, or a bit of a holiday 'En France'

Trevor Edwards reports that "Representatives of the Devon, Dorset and Berkshire 'contingents' of the NHAEG, i.e. John /Joan Hancock, Andy/Do Ranson and yours truly/Jean met up at the port of Poole, on Saturday June 2nd, ready to board the fast-cat 1330 hours Condor Liberation ferry service to St Malo, in Brittany, for a mini-holiday trip to France, masterminded entirely by Andy and Do.

"Once clear of Poole harbour (which always seems to take an absolute eternity, caused by the need for extreme caution and exceptionally slow progress through the tricky sandbanks in the area), the crossing included a 45 minutes stop in Guernsey, to allow disembarkation/embarkation of passengers and vehicles, before continuing to Jersey, where a change of vessels was necessary, for the remaining 39 nautical miles leg to St Malo. The Condor Rapide, a smaller, noticeably older vessel was waiting for our arrival and we were quickly transferred onto it. Some 110 minutes later, at around 9.00 p.m. we disembarked at St. Malo, from where we set off, in cautious convoy, (naturally driving on the 'wrong' side of the road!), Andy and Do leading, for Dinan, approximately 20 miles distant, alongside the River Rance where, still in (fading) daylight, we arrived at our holiday accommodation, Les Rossignols, close to Port de Dinan. Instantly drawing comparisons between driving in southern England and northern France, very apparent were (a), the superb quality of road surfaces and (b), the noticeable reduction in traffic - there being a possible correlation between these two factors.

"It was a joy discovering it totally unnecessary to keep constant careful vigilance for potholes which, on this side of the Channel, is now a necessary practice and found that the relatively lightly used roads, even in the St Malo area itself, made driving a pleasurable and unchallenging experience once again



The ancient way up from Port de Dinan to the main town



A happy bunch of people!

"Arriving at our destination, which turned out to be a typical French, rustic, three-storied gite, converted from what may have originally been an old warehouse and after rapidly unloading our luggage and agreeing on bedrooms we retired, pleasantly weary after a fairly lengthy day. Despite an initially puzzling flashing green luminescence, invading our bedroom (which eventually transpired to be a large, crossed knife and fork sign, attached to the building wall, advertising the presence of an eating establishment!), sleep was not long coming and we awoke the next day, all suitable refreshed.

"Sunday began with brilliant sunshine and gave us the opportunity, after a simple breakfast, to explore our immediate surroundings which confirmed that we were located right on the bank of the River Rance, a short distance from Port de Dinan, the lower, possibly older section of a mediaeval town, split in two halves; one directly on the side of the River Rance itself and the other, greater part set higher up and

reached either by vehicle along an exhilarating switchback road, or by foot up a narrow, steep cobbled lane, lined with very quaint and attractive wood-timbered houses. An added bonus turned out to be that the owner of the property also runs a café set directly between our accommodation and the river, which clearly turned out to be a popular spot for both locals taking a walk along the river bank as well as offering us a very convenient watering hole and eatery!

“John had reported that the charging system on his Seven appeared to have failed en route to Dinan so later on, during the hot, Sunday afternoon we decided to investigate the cause. On initial inspection nothing immediately appeared at fault, so the dynamo itself was removed and stripped down although, apart from a dodgy-looking fly-lead on the third brush, nothing obviously leapt out that might explain the problem. At around 5.00 p.m. however, just after refitting the dynamo and checking engine timing a sudden flash of lightning, accompanied by a loud crash of thunder was heard very close by. These were immediately followed by large spots of rain and hail which very rapidly turned into a positive deluge forcing us to dive into vehicles where we remained trapped for twenty minutes or more until such time as the downpour had abated sufficiently to allow us to retreat hurriedly back into our temporary ‘home’.

“Concluding that the dynamo was in some way the guilty party and lacking a spare, a quick re-assessment of the situation forced a change to the intended plan of action so far as driving out into the countryside and nearby seaside locations during the ensuing days was concerned. The need for a battery charger (6volts!) was self-evident and a Monday foray into Dinan, in order to source one, was made. Although the search was actually successful John felt that the cost of a very good model on offer, at €110.00, was a little ‘eye-watering’ and a ‘Plan B’ was then drafted to try to borrow one, via the good offices of a friendly (English) waitress at the aforementioned café. This proved a useful approach and the problem was eventually addressed when her boss turned up with the vital piece of kit, which enabled the battery to be fully charged allowing John and Joan to use the vehicle to make a planned trip, on our final day, to the famous Mont St Michel, a distance of some 33 miles, as well as later being able to reach home in Devon following our eventual return - regardless of the dynamo malfunction.



*Steady progress en route to Mont St Michel
(Note road surface!)*

“It was very evident that the choice of location, made by Andy and Do, was an excellent one. The town of Dinan is charming, typical of the kind found in Brittany and Normandy, with a traditional weekly market, where stallholders of every conceivable kind turn up selling their wares, fresh produce and otherwise. Fortifications, many of which were erected during the Hundred Years War - to keep out the wretched English, of course! - are much in evidence and the interesting castle attached to these was visited - on what was a particularly damp day. What is so readily apparent is that in France old buildings seem to be revered, retained and put to good use to a much greater extent than on this side of the Channel. They are rarely knocked down and turned into car parks, or a new LIDL store, as seems so often to be the case here. The old blends easily with the new and the effect is a very positive and pleasing one.

“Despite the lack of promising weather, on one of the days we ‘doubled up’ in the use of our vehicles and set off for the seaside villages of St Briac and St Lunaire, both of which, whilst doubtless possessing charm and attraction on a bright sunny day, exhibited somewhat similar appeal to that of a wet one in Bognor on the occasion of our visit! Controlling the weather is impossible and one simply has to make the best of it. Something that Brits are pretty good at!

“During our stay in La belle France, it turned out to be a mixed bag - ‘variable’ in the bland parlance of weather forecasters - with a couple of very hot days, a couple of OK days and a couple of pretty wet ones, all interspersed with periodic thunderstorms, some hugely dramatic in effect. During late afternoon, around 5.00p.m. on our final day, (having just returned, bizarrely in glorious sunshine, from a wonderful visit to Mont St. Michel), the mother of all thunderstorms broke which increased in intensity throughout the night and was still raging 14 hours later, when we loaded up and left for the St. Malo ferry port at 8.00 a.m. the following day. The journey was ‘interesting’ and conducted slowly and carefully, with windscreen wipers, never the most impressive features of pre-war vehicles, barely able to cope with the vast amount of water they had to deal with. Nevertheless, navigated, with impressive skill, by Do and Andy, we made it without incident. Even more surprising was that Andy and Do, in their saloon model Ten and Jean and I, in our canvas-topped cabriolet, managed to remain dry throughout the deluge,

although John and Joan, unfortunately, were not so lucky - Joan spending her time in the car cocooned in a black bin-bag which, of course, is de rigour equipment for many Seven owners.

“Despite everything the entire trip was memorable on several levels and it was unanimously agreed we all thoroughly enjoyed our adventure across the Channel and were undeterred from repeating the exercise at some time.”

Footnote: Quite coincidentally, it later emerged that Don/Val and Brian/Jana, plus some others on a 750 Club trip to Normandy, spent a little time in Port de Dinan, at the very time we were out of the area, visiting Mont St Michel - and were also in St Malo the following morning, catching the Brittany Ferries service to Portsmouth, leaving an adjacent dock to ours!

FUTURE EVENTS FOR MEMBERS

Club Night Monday 9th July Coveted Car Evening

For this year, voting slips will be issued, revival clothing is optional and the categories have been refreshed as:

1. Most Coveted Car,
2. Best Austin,
3. Best pre-war non-Austin,
4. Best Post-war Classic (including Spridgets, MGBs, Morris Minors etc.),
5. Best Oily-rag (condition unrestored with original patina).

INSURANCE MATTERS

As the world becomes more litigious, the committee has reviewed the club's insurance cover. As a result, the club has put in place some cover for Public Liability, Professional Indemnity, Equipment etc. but this cover excludes motoring events on public roads. Therefore, the club cannot accept legal liability for injury to others *and* damage to their property on events.

Members taking part on club Mid-week Runs or events like the Half-gallon will now be asked to sign-on, confirming that they have in place valid motor insurance for their vehicle (that complies with the Road Traffic Act 1988) and to sign a disclaimer. The requirements for the Nightjar Event are quite specific and are underwritten through our MSA membership.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

Yes, this takes some explaining...

Apparently, the car is an Austin A40 Sports being taken on a world trip – and being given a check-over by its mechanics, while it's still on a plane (a KLM Skymaster DC4)!

This started as a half-crown bet between Leonard Lord, Chairman & MD of Austin and his PR Chief, Alan Hess. The challenge was to drive the A40 Sports round the world in under a month in 1951.

The car successfully covered 9,263 miles across continents (averaging 441 miles per day), but was flown over the oceans, completing the whole odyssey in under 3 weeks.

Full details at <http://www.austinmemories.com/styled-9/index.html>



CLUB DIARY & EVENTS JULY-DECEMBER 2018

NHAEG Events Planned	2018 Dates	Details	Arranged by, or details from
Club Night	Mon 9th July	Coveted Car Evening	Denise
Club BBQ	Sunday 5 th August	Farley Hill	Adrian G, details from Denise
Club Night	Mon 13th August	Noggin & Natter	
Mid-week Run	Thurs 16th August	Country Lanes	Alan
Club Event	Sun 9 th September	Heritage Day Run	
Club Night	Mon 10th Sept	Speaker: Beefeater Tony Strafford	Denise
Mid-week Run	Thurs 20th Sept	Country Lanes	Alan
Club Night	Mon 8th Oct	Shoebox Challenge	Don/Val
Club Night	Mon 12th November	Auction Night	Colin/Don/Trevor E
Club Night	Mon 10th December	TBC	
Event	Tues 4th December	Christmas Dinner, Downshire Golf Club	Jeanette

Other events

Information correct as at 11/06/2018. Please let John (edmundjohnpratt@hotmail.com) have details of any events that NHAEG members might be interested in, to add to this compilation

Other Organisers	2018 Confirmed or Expected Dates	Events & locations	Contacts
750 MC/ Beaulieu	Sat 30th June - Sun 1st July	56th National Austin Seven Rally at Beaulieu	www.750mc.co.uk
Macmillan Cancer Support	Sunday 8th July	Classic Motor Show at Clandon Park Estate (Henchley gate entrance)	email: macmillanclassic carshow@hotmail.com or tel Barry Brown 07932869876
Broughton Festival of Transport	Sunday 15th July	Free entry if displaying a classic car at Broughton Sports Field, Buckholt Road SO20 8DA on B3084 4m west of Stockbridge	Email to register: motors@broughtonpageantoftransport.co.uk or www.facebook.com/BroughtonPageantofTransport
Thames Traditional Boat Festival	Friday 20th - Sun 22nd July	Display of pre-1970 cars and vintage vehicles, Henley- On-Thames. Fawley Meadows	Lyndon Yorke at vehicles@tradboatfestival.com
ATDC	Fri 13th - Sun 15th July	53rd National Rally, Kirkby Lonsdale RUFC	www.austintenddriversclub.com/events
Brooklands Museum	Sun 22nd July	BTM Classic Car Show & Retro Jumble	Tim Morris, BTM 01932 867381
White Dove Transport Show	Sunday 6th August	Classic cars & motorbikes + trade stalls for Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice at Kingsley Sports Club, Borden	http://www.whitedoveevents.org.uk/white-dove-the-show-enter-your-vehicle.html
West Berks Classic Vehicle Club	Fri 10th-Sun 12 th August	Newbury Classic Vehicle Show, Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury RG14 7TD. £6 entry pp	www.classicvehicles.org.uk or email show@classicvehicles.org.uk

THE NORTH HAMPSHIRE AUSTIN ENTHUSIASTS' GROUP – JULY 2018

Milestones Museum Basingstoke	Saturday 11 th August	Combustion Event with display of vehicles	Entry form from H.Chatfield.14@unimail.winchester.ac.uk
Camberley Car Show	Saturday 18 th August	Vintage, Classics, Customs, Hot Rods, Motorbikes, in town centre in aid of The Kidney Fund	By invitation only: contact Ken Bonner: kenbonner@btinternet.com
Swallowfield Horticultural Society	Sunday 26 th – Monday 27 th August	Classic cars, bikes, tractors, lorries etc at new location in Swallowfield Park	email Rod Stean: swallowfieldwheels@outlook.com or tel: 01252 625305
Beaulieu Autojumble	Saturday 1 st & Sunday 2 nd Sept	Spring Autojumble	www.beaulieu.co.uk/events/international-autojumble
Shooting Star Chase	Sunday 2 nd September	'Family Fun Day' display at the Children's Hospice, Christopher's, between Guildford and Godalming	By invitation only - contact Phil Dunford phildunford@dunfords.co.uk
Goodwood Road & Racing	Provisional dates Fri 7 th - Sun 9 th Sept	Revival meeting (20 th Anniversary)	www.goodwood.com
Heritage weekends	6-9 th & 13-15 th September	Open days at historic locations	www.heritageopendays.org.uk
Surrey Classic Vehicle Club	Sunday 16 th September	Classic Vehicle gathering at Rural Life Centre, Tilford (500 entries in 2017)	Application form at www.surreyclassicvehicleclub.com or contact Phil Dunford
Basingstoke MG Car Club	Sunday 23 rd September	Doughnut Run: 65 leisurely miles through back roads & lunch stop. Start/finish at Milestones, Basingstoke	Adrian Walker or www.BasingstokeMGClub.co.uk for entry form
West Green House	Sunday 23 rd September	Classic cars in a Concours D' Elegance at West Green House, Thackham's Lane, Hartley Wintney	Book online https://festivalticketkiosk.cloudvenue.co.uk/home
Inter-Register Club Events	2018 Dates	Events & Locations	Contacts as below, or talk to Trevor, Colin or Tony W for information
The Crossley Register	Sun 23 rd Sept	Treasure Hunt North Yorks	Stephen Weld Tel. 01765 658569
MG Car Club	Sun 7 th Oct	Autumn "Naviscat" Kent	Steve Cherry stevecherry@virginmedia.com
The Riley Register	Sat 27 th October	Rally, Worcestershire	Greg Nicholas gregnicholas@hotmail.co.uk
ATDC/NHAEG	Sat 17 th November	"Nightjar" Scatter/Orienteering Surrey/Hants/Berks	Trevor Edwards: trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com

THE MEMBER INTERVIEW – ADRIAN WALKER

Editor: What was the first car that you owned?

Adrian: Back in the old days when I was a student I was very fortunate because I was sponsored by the GLC to take my degree in electrical engineering. I already owned my first car, a Ford 100E with a 3-speed box which was bought for me by my parents.



Editor: What other interesting cars have you owned and how did you come to buy them?

Adrian: I used to pass a local garage on my way to college where I spotted a 1966 BRG Midget 1098 cc sitting on the forecourt. I then had to convince my father that it was basically a Morris Minor with a different body shell. With my savings I was able to purchase this and somehow insure it (comprehensive) at the age of about 19! I kept this car for several years until I got married and then sadly it had to go as a more practical vehicle was required in which to teach my wife to drive.



Editor: How did you come to buy your first MGB?

Adrian: After a year or two I wanted a change of vehicle and it was either a new Mini at about £750 or a second-hand MGB GT for the same price. Somehow, I won the argument and got the MGB. At the time I didn't know much about cars and missed the structural defects in the cills,

which were covered up with filler and underseal! Another mistake, which I still don't understand, was to attempt to cure a noisy gearbox by using an oil additive. This resulted in the sudden failure of the gearbox, but it was fortunately covered under the limited warranty.

Editor: You indicate that you were both involved in this decision – what happened?

Adrian: At the time I was commuting to London by train and my wife drove the car to work. However, she hated the heavy steering when trying to park.

So, when the family came along, the faithful B had to go and then many cars came and went, some were mine and others were provided by various companies. In those happy days the greater the company mileage driven, the less company car tax was paid (never mind the environment).

Editor: What prompted you to buy a second MGB?

Adrian: Moving on again to 1996, this was a particularly bad year with a family bereavement, redundancy and divorce within months of each other! Eventually I recovered both financially and emotionally and decided the time had come to buy another classic car.

I joined an MG club and went to a few meetings. Through the club I met a man in a pub and ended up buying an MGB Roadster from him. This was not a 'cut and shut', but more of a 'cut the top off' job. He was honest about this and I understood what I was buying. The car had started life as an MGB GT but was rolled at some point in its life. The man in the pub turned out to be 'in the trade' and he had converted what had been a rubber bumper GT into a chrome bumper roadster by replacing almost every panel and at the same time the glass and windscreen to make a convertible, but at the expense of a dubious provenance. This had the advantage that wings, well known for rotting, had all been replaced.



At the time, the DVLC were also updating their computer systems and wrote to owners asking them to confirm that the correct details of make and model of the car were held. DVLC fortunately had lost the GT part of the model description and so it simply became an MGB 2-seater with a non-matching VIN number on the new V5C. The car however had the spec that I wanted – a convertible in white with wire wheels and overdrive, and a chrome bumper conversion on a late 1979 car. The car was never intended to be an investment but a project to learn on and fettle.

Editor: Given its strange history, what low points did you have with this MGB?

Adrian: When I first got the car, removing some of the road wheels was very difficult. Either the spinners had not been tightened fully and therefore the splines had distorted, or the spinners were over-tight and the wheels were seized on the hubs. Various suggestions on the MG forum were to drive around without the spinner and put the car into a tight turn, or hit the wheel with a large hammer when the car is jacked up! Neither is recommended! It is worth checking the hub splines occasionally to inspect that they are not sharp or pointed and that the splines inside of the road wheel are not damaged or worn.

The advantage of the Midget and MGB is that 95% of the parts are still available (although beware that many parts are only poor-quality copies of the originals). I have learnt that cheap electrical parts such as rotor arms can fail and that cheap distributors have random advance curves. I however ran the car for 12 years over which time I replaced the brake lines/ fuel pump/ front suspension/ hood /seat covers etc.

Editor: How did you come to buy your current MGB?

Adrian: When retirement came along, I thought that running a modern 'Euro' car and owning a classic was a bit excessive. So, I decided to buy an MGB GT - which I hoped would serve as both my hobby and daily driver. However, this didn't work out and I still have two cars. I finally sold the white roadster and then started a search for a GT with a genuine provenance.

Eventually I found a car that had been professionally rebuilt and within my price range. The only drawback was that it was located just outside Edinburgh. On impulse I took a flight to Scotland, carrying a suitcase of cash with me. I bought the car after a short test drive, and, having previously arranged the tax and insurance, commenced the 400-mile drive home.

Editor: Have you had any scary experiences at the wheel?

Adrian: Not so much scary, as annoying, my drive back from Scotland was in November 2011 and I soon discovered the heater did not work! Half way home my feet were so cold I could barely drive the car and so decided to stop at a motorway services for food and a rest. By now it was dark, and I decided to stop for a few hours rest before driving on. Fortunately, the car turned out to be 'as described' and it did get me home without any incidents. A few days later however, I received via the previous owner, a parking ticket. What I hadn't noticed in the dark, was the new (to me) introduction of limited free parking at motorway service stations of just 3 hours!



Editor: And what of your plans for the future?

Adrian: My MGB GT will 40 years old next year, so I am looking forward to re-classifying it as 'historic' and not having to pay the road fund licence. In the meantime, I hope it will continue to give me pleasure and 'challenges' for many years to come - but having got the MG 'bug' there is always some improvement to be made to the car or maintenance to be carried out.

Editor: What have been the high points of MGB ownership?

Adrian: Owning any classic car opens up new experiences of going to car shows, events, meeting like-minded people and going touring etc. I am not obsessive about the car and don't participate in concours events, but I feel quite proud (and fortunate) to have such a good example of the marque. High points of ownership have been taking it abroad, with another planned trip later this year with the NHAEG.

Editor: What is the MGB GT really like to drive. Compared with a modern sports car?

Adrian: The MGB is sometimes (cruelly?) described as agricultural, meaning it is basic simple engineering, which I like. Compared to a modern car it is harder to drive of course, and there is a lot of wind noise over about 50 mph. Overdrive works on 3rd and 4th, which gives relaxed cruising. The previous owner had fitted oversized tyres, but since these were 12 + years old I have replaced them with the correct 165/80 x R14. There is no power steering (although this is available now from the MG Owners Club for about £1000 plus fitting), but I don't have a problem with the steering and I like the way you can

'feel' what the car is doing.

Editor: You obviously have a mechanical bent; how did you acquire it?

Adrian: Because my father was very practical I have followed in his footsteps. He taught me the basic of car maintenance and I have learnt by trial and error on the cars which I have owned previously. My roadster was my project car on which I have gained a lot of experience. I have done most things on various cars such as replacing brakes, changing gearboxes, clutches and replacing the cylinder head etc. There is a huge parts supply business for the MGB which is great, but the downside is that the quality is not as good as the original parts, and I wonder how club members manage with pre-war cars?

Editor: What have you enjoyed most about NHAEG?

Adrian: I have found the NHAEG very friendly and been to several events with the club. The other plus point is having a speaker on club nights to enlighten us all on some topic. I realise how hard it is to arrange for a guest presenter, but I think it makes for a more interesting club night.

Editor: Looking back – what would you do differently?

Adrian: Ideally, I would have invested in Aston Martins and E Types many years ago when they were affordable and waited while they appreciated instead of going to work. However, the best advice as always is to buy the best classic/historic car you can afford because putting a 'basket case' on the road will cost far more in the end.

UPDATE ON THE DVLA'S LICENCING CHANGES

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) made the following announcement on its website (1 May 2018) after we went to press for the May issue of this newsletter. Ed.

Declaring your vehicle as exempt from an MOT Test

This is a new self-declaration process to be carried out as part of annual licensing by DVLA by a keeper of a qualifying vehicle who does not wish to submit the vehicle to an MOT test. By making this simple declaration you are confirming that your vehicle is at least 40 years old and has not been substantially changed in the previous 30 years. (For further advice on the process you can consult the Legislation pages in recent Editions of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs Newsletter.)

The Department for Transport (DfT) has published a set of guidelines to assist owners in deciding which if any more recent changes to their vehicle would be considered as 'substantial'.

The DfT understand that owners may feel they need to consult a specialist prior to making this declaration and have asked the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs to compile and publish on its website, a list of marque specialists who have indicated their willingness to advise owners unsure of their vehicle's status.

The initial iteration of this list is published on the website (www.fbhvc.co.uk). It is intended to be continuously added to as more specialists come forward.

Before approaching a marque specialist you should study the DfT Guidelines carefully and make your own judgement concerning your vehicle if you can.

An expert or an organisation nominating an expert is entitled to reimbursement of any costs incurred in reaching or providing the opinion and may make a reasonable charge for the service provided, which may be different depending upon whether the keeper making the request is or is not a member. It is your responsibility to accurately describe your vehicle as no inspection will be made. Their advice is provided solely in relation to the declaration you will make regarding VHI.

If there is not a specialist listed on the FBHVC website for your type of vehicle you may contact the FBHVC Secretary (secretary@fbhvc.co.uk) who can advise you.

TECHNICAL MATTERS

What is the appeal of the 'MGB'?

Two of our members own 'MGBs', so it seems time to answer the question, why? I hope the answers are revealed in this brief history. Ed.

The MGB was a two-door sports car manufactured and marketed by the British Motor Corporation (BMC), later British Leyland, as a four-cylinder, soft-top roadster from 1962 until 1980.

Design work for the replacement of the MGA had started in the late 1950's under the direction of Syd Enever and was completed by early 1961, with the car styled by Don Hayter. The structure of the MGB was an innovative, modern design for 1962, utilizing a monocoque structure instead of the traditional body-on-frame construction used on both the MGA and MG T-types and the MGB's rival, the Triumph TR series. Inspiration is said to have come from MG's land-speed record breaking EX181, but this seems a bit of a stretch – it had a space frame chassis, mid-engine and a big supercharger!



In retrospect, the MGB was significantly compromised by the carry-over of components from the 1955 MGA, such as brakes, suspension, gearbox and the B-Series engine, which had its origins in the 1947 Austin A40 Devon. However, the lighter weight design reduced manufacturing costs while adding to overall vehicle strength. A comfortable driver's compartment offered plenty of legroom and wind-up windows were standard. A parcel shelf was fitted behind the seats and early cars had an optional seat cushion on this for the occasional passenger! The MGB was also able to offer more luggage space than the MGA, while being 3 inches shorter overall. The suspension was also

softer, giving a smoother ride, and the larger engine gave a slightly higher top speed. The MGB was one of the first cars to feature controlled crumple zones designed to protect the driver and passenger in a 30 mph impact with an immovable barrier. But following a 2013 case in which a driver of a hired 1963 MGB was killed in a collision with a taxi, the AA described the car, like many other classic models, as "Much less safe than modern cars".

The fixed-roof MGB GT was introduced in October 1965. Production continued until 1980, although export to the US ceased in 1974. The MGB GT sported a ground-breaking greenhouse designed by Pininfarina and launched the sporty 'hatchback' style. By combining the sloping rear window with the rear deck lid, the B GT offered the utility of a station wagon while retaining the style and shape of a coupe. This new configuration was a 2+2 design with a right-angled rear bench seat and far more luggage space than in the roadster. Relatively few components differed, although the MGB GT did have different suspension springs, anti-roll bars and a different windscreen, which was more easily and inexpensively serviceable.



The MGB achieved a 0–60 mph time of just over 11 seconds. The three-bearing 1,798 cc B-Series engine produced 95 hp at 5,400 rpm – upgraded in October 1964 to a five-bearing crankshaft. Acceleration of the GT was slightly slower, owing to its increased weight, but its top speed was improved by 5 mph to 105 mph because of better aerodynamics.

The MGB in production

The first MGB production car was completed on the 22nd May 1962. This was a LHD roadster, with a RHD car being completed a few days later. The car was launched to the British public at the Earls Court motor show in September 1962 and was priced at £690 plus £259 purchase tax. The majority of MGBs were exported to the US, but the focus on production costs and export sowed the seeds of the demise of the model over its 18-year production run. The US-market MGB engines were de-tuned to meet emission standards in 1975, ride height was increased by an inch impacting on road-holding and stance, and the ugly rubber bumpers were fitted to meet US bumper standards.

After 5 years from its launch, sufficient changes had been introduced for the factory to define a Mark II model for the 1968 model year. All MGBs from 1962 to 1967 used a four-speed manual gearbox with a non-synchromesh, straight-cut first gear. This gearbox was based on that used in the MGA with some minor upgrades to cope with the additional output of the larger MGB engine. Changes included synchromesh on all four gears with revised ratios, an optional Borg-Warner automatic gearbox (except in the US), a new rear axle, and included the alternator in place of the dynamo, with a change to a negative earth system. To accommodate the new gearboxes there were significant changes to the sheet metal in the floor-pan, and a new flat-topped transmission tunnel.



For the 1975 model year only, the front anti-roll bar was deleted as a cost-saving measure (though still available as an option). The damage done by the British Leyland response to US legislation was partially alleviated by revisions to the suspension geometry in 1977, when a rear anti-roll bar was made standard equipment on all models.

Electrically engaged overdrive gearboxes were an available option on all MGBs. The overdrive unit was operational in third and fourth gears (until 1977, when overdrive was only operational in fourth) but the overall ratio in third gear overdrive was roughly the same as fourth gear direct, so unsurprisingly overdrives were fitted to less than 20% of all MGBs.

Early MGBs used the "banjo" type differential carried over from the MGA with the rear axle ratio reduced from the MGA's 4.1 (or 4.3) to 3.9 to 1. To compensate for the reduction from 15 inch to 14-inch wheels. MGB GTs first began using a tube-type rear axle in 1967. This unit was substantially stronger, being, like the later gearbox, designed for the three-litre MGC. All MGBs used the tube-type axle from 1968.



All MGBs were fitted with 11-inch solid (non-ventilated) disc brakes on the front with drum brakes on the rear. The front brake calipers were manufactured by Girling and used two pistons per caliper. The brake system on the MGB GT was the same as the roadster apart from slightly larger rear brake cylinders. A single-circuit hydraulic system was used before 1968 when dual-circuit (separate front and rear systems) were installed on all MGBs to comply with US regulations. Servo assistance was not standard until 1975. Many modern and contemporary testers have commented on the very heavy brake pedal pressure needed to stop the non-servo-assisted cars.



The MGB initially had an extremely simple electrical system. Dash-mounted toggle switches controlled the lights, ventilation fan, and wipers with only the direction indicators being mounted on a stalk on the steering column. The ignition switch was also mounted on the dash. Like the MGA, the MGB utilized two 6-volt batteries wired in series to give a 12-volt positive earth configuration. The batteries were placed under a scuttle panel behind the seats making access difficult, although this helped weight distribution and maybe handling. The charging system used a

Lucas dynamo. Later MGBs had considerable changes to the electrical system including the use of a single 12-volt battery, a change from positive to negative earth, safety-type rocker switches, an alternator in lieu of the dynamo, additional warning lights and buzzers, and the most common functions were moved to steering column stalks.



Initially, there were two different radial size tyres factory-fitted to new cars, depending on whether the car was a roadster, or a GT, until the arrival of the rubber bumper cars when one size was offered. Simple pressed wheels were standard with wire wheels being an option. The basic 'drilled' wheel gave way to the

Rubery Owen RoStyle wheels irrespective of whether the car was a roadster or a GT. Later, during the rubber bumper production period, alloy wheels were introduced on several different Limited Edition models - with the final 1,000 LE models being the last cars to leave the factory with alloy wheels.



Work on a successor for the MGB had been undertaken as long ago as 1968, but British Leyland had ceased work on that project by the end of 1970. When the Abingdon factory finally closed in late 1980, British Leyland did not replace it.

AUSTIN HISTORY/ TECHNICAL MATTERS

THE AUSTIN MAGAZINE

656

April, 1933



Be Fair to your Car—after the rigours of Winter it deserves Special Preparation for its Summer Exertions

IN this month in Great Britain nearly 200,000 cars emerge from hibernation and 800,000 cars that do not hibernate will have completed a winter of hard service. This month, also, between 15,000 and 20,000 new cars will begin their travels. So now, it appears, is the time to prepare for summer motoring.

To buy a new car is the method *par excellence*, and it would indeed be a good thing for motorists (and motor manufacturers) if this were always possible. Happily it is possible *sometimes*, and we have therefore detailed elsewhere in this issue just how the new car should be treated.

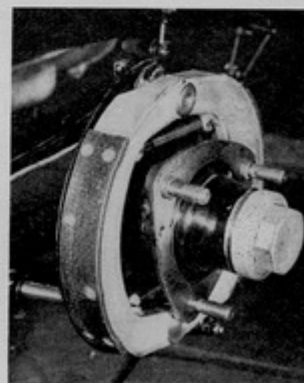
But what of the old cars that have faithfully served the seasons through? Before the summer do they not deserve a little extra attention, even an overhaul, if only a minor one?

And the cars that have been laid up will surely need special care before they take the road. That

at least is the conclusion reached by the wise owner, and rightly so.

It is thus a good plan to inspect the car whether or not it has been used during the winter, with a view to determining what can be done to put it into first-class trim for its summer exertions.

With big mileages in prospect examine the brakes to determine whether new linings are required.



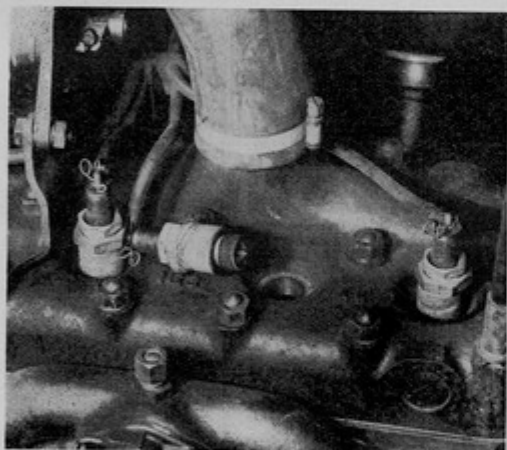
April, 1933

657

THE AUSTIN MAGAZINE

Is decarbonising necessary? The condition of the plugs (i.e., the amount of carbon on them) and the evenness or otherwise of the compression for all four or six cylinders, as tested by hand with the starting handle, will answer this question.

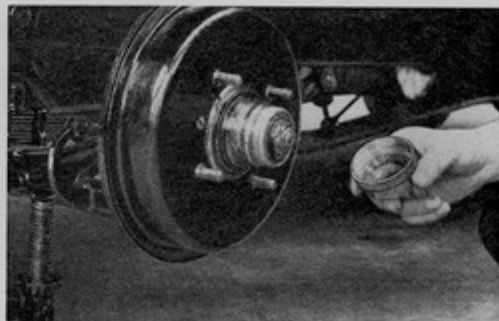
How are the brakes? Are they efficient and properly equalised, or is re-lining desirable? It is a simple matter to take off the wheel and remove the brakedrum so that the linings can be examined. On some Austin models the drum is free when the screws securing it to the hub have been removed. On others, the hub and drum complete must be withdrawn by means of the hub extractor, after the axle-nut has been unscrewed. When this is necessary it is most important to see that the nut is secured with its split-pin when the hub is replaced, and for the rear hubs



The condition of the sparking plug points serves as a guide when considering decarbonising.

the key must be refitted in the key-way before the hub is pushed on the axle-shaft. Remembering that high averages for the long journeys that are common in the summer depend on good brakes as much as on high maximum speed, the importance of starting the season with efficient brakes, if necessary having the shoes re-lined, will not be overlooked.

Are the tyres sound? If any of the treads are smooth and worn well down, new tyres will prove a wise investment. A puncture on a journey made against time is decidedly annoying; it always pays to discard tyres before they become unreliable. If on examination any of the tyres reveal cuts these should be cleaned with petrol and filled with tyre stopping, any flints left in the cuts first being removed. Unless a tyre is old and not

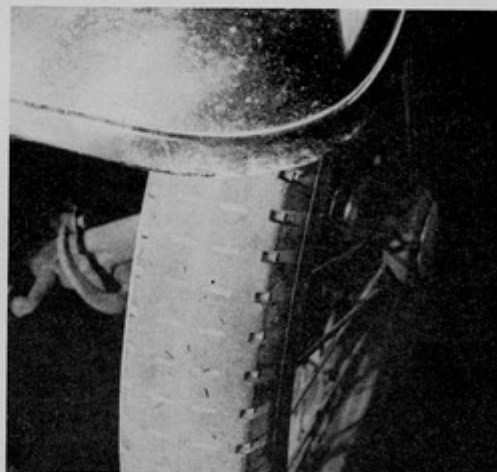


Infrequent lubrication attention can be effected such as greasing the front hubs.

worth saving, cuts that are big enough to be termed gashes should be vulcanised, for if neglected they extend until the tyre is unsafe. Look also for uneven wear as between covers of equal age and change the wheels round to compensate. Pronounced difference between the wear of the front covers points to the need for tracking adjustment.

The battery can do with some attention. Does the specific gravity of the electrolyte conform to the handbook recommendation, or should more acid be added? Are the cell covers and connectors clean and uncorroded? Are the terminals tight? These are questions that inspection can determine.

The shock absorbers also may need re-lining, re-adjusting, or replenishing with oil, according to type. The handbook for the model concerned



Cuts in worn covers should be cleaned and filled with tyre stopping.

will give useful advice in this connection, and the riding of the car might be greatly improved by looking to these important units.

Lubrication attentions required infrequently, such as for the universal joints and hubs, or changing the oil in the rear axle, engine or gearbox,



Replenish the Luvax shock absorbers to ensure that the springing system is adequately controlled.

can be made with advantage as a prelude to the summer, and if the car has seen lengthy service an even more vital overhaul may be desirable.

Clutch inefficiency due to the need for new linings; a smoky exhaust, oily plugs and high oil consumption, arising from the need for new piston rings, or cylinder reconditioning; uncer-

tain steering, resulting from excessive backlash indicating the need for overhaul of the steering box; these are just a few of the possibilities worth considering before embarking upon summer's mileages, and the Austin owner cannot do better than ask his local dealer to effect any repairs or overhauls, renewals or adjustments, that may prove desirable, at the standard prices quoted in the Austin schedule of repair charges.

Lastly, a word to the owner who is bringing his car out from the idle security of its snug winter quarters. The tyres and battery will deserve special attention, as these are most affected by storage. The battery, if left in the car, will most likely have lost its charge, allowing sulphation of the plates to set in and so reduce the efficiency. It should be taken to a battery service station for conditioning before the car is put into service. If, however, it has been in store in expert hands, it must be replaced in the car and carefully connected up, as shown in the handbook wiring diagram.

The tyres will require inflation to their correct pressures, engine and gearbox oil levels will need checking, and the cooling system filled, if drained as it should have been; and, of course, the whole car will have to be dusted and polished to remove that air of neglect which it assumes after months out of use.

It is the motorist who conscientiously cares for his car in this way who benefits most in the long run—actually and literally.

“REBUILT” SPARKING PLUGS

FROM time to time, in various districts, there appear on the market sparking plugs which are sold at “cut” prices as “reconditioned” or “rebuilt” plugs of the best-known makes. Sparking plugs are discarded only after giving substantial service and then either because the sparking points are burnt away so much as to preclude further adjustment, or because the insulation has failed. In the latter case, the plug is generally past rebuilding, while if the points are burnt away it may safely be assumed that the insulation is nearing the end of its useful life.

In the majority of the so-called “rebuilt” plugs the central electrode has been replaced and the usual method of doing this is to cut off or pull out the old original electrode and fit a substitute (often of inferior and unsuitable metal) by screwing on to the stump of the old electrode or into the centre stem of the plug. With either method it is impossible to make a sound job, and there is a serious and ever-present risk of the new

electrode breaking loose and dropping into the engine, with serious results to the piston, cylinder walls, and valves.

Cases have occurred where damage to engines, costing as much as £20, has resulted from the use of these “rebuilt” plugs, and motorists are strongly advised to buy their sparking plugs from reputable dealers and not be tempted to purchase “reconditioned” or “rebuilt” plugs.

It should be appreciated that sparking plug makers cannot accept responsibility for any plugs of their manufacture which have been rebuilt by other concerns, and marketed below the standard price.

N.B.—The above comments refer, of course, only to the subject of “rebuilt” plugs offered for sale as such, and are not intended to discourage car owners from the normal procedure—recommended alike by car and plug manufacturers—of having their own plugs cleaned and continuing to use them after such attention.

TREVOR'S QUIZ: "THE WAR OF THE ROSES"

All answers have, or once had, connections with either Lancashire or Yorkshire

- | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------|
| 1. This county town was a WW2 bomber | — — — — — | 9 |
| 2. A river that sounds like wet mud or slime | — — — — | 4 |
| 3. A 'seaside' attraction but not on the coast | — — — — — — — — | 5, 4 |
| 4. Dogs should always be on these | — — — — — | 5 |
| 5. A famous naval officer | — — — — — | 6 |
| 6. A popular activity in the North, East and West parts! | — — — — — | 6 |
| 7. George's instrument | — — — — — | 7 |
| 8. The main part of a ship | — — — — | 4 |
| 9. A Grand event is held here | — — — — — | 7 |
| 10. It pitches just in front of a batsman's block | — — — — — | 6 |
| 11. A swift group of trees | — — — — — | 9 |
| 12. Sounds like a funny stinger | — — — — — | 6 |
| 13. Thethe bigger the crowd | — — — — — | 9 |
| 14. An outlaw's favourite place? | — — — — — ' — — — — | 5, 5, 3 |
| 15. It ought to be facing the English Channel! | — — — — — | 9 |
| 16. Town with noticeable damage? | — — — — — | 11 |
| 17. They were very Co-operative here | — — — — — | 8 |
| 18. Traditional 'dessert' with roast beef | — — — — — | 7 |
| 19. There should be no sharp edges on this coast! | — — — — — | 5 |
| 20. Should one refuse to play with this sportsman? | — — — — — | 7 |
| 21. Funny man from Ulverston | — — — — — | 4,6 |
| 22. An academic river? | — — — | 3 |
| 23. A dead-end town? | — — — — | 4 |
| 24. Is this where statues of academics are made | — — — — — | 9 |
| 25. One must be crazy to swim in this river! | — — — — | 4 |

Name(s):.....

Please submit your entry, by hand or email to Trevor Edwards, 55 The Brambles, Crowthorne. Berks RG45 6EF by Friday, 7th September 2018. (email: trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com) Don't forget to do so! All entries are being logged and the member(s) submitting the highest number of winning entries by the end of 2018 will be awarded a grand prize!!!

ANSWERS TO THE MARCH 2018 QUIZ – 'CHANCE TO LOOK NORTH'

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Newcastle Brown | 2. Metro Centre |
| 3. Tyne Tunnel | 4. Hexham |
| 5. Magpies | 6. Byker Grove |
| 7. Craster | 8. Great North Run |
| 9. Holy Island | 10. Earl Grey |
| 11. Kielder Water | 12. Swing Bridge |
| 13. Angel of the North | 14. Fenwicks |
| 15. Cragside | 16. Sunderland |
| 17. Hadrian's Wall | 18. Northumberlandia |
| 19. St.James Park | 20. Derwent Walk |
| 21. Stottie Cake or loaf | 22. Gateshead |
| 23. Geordie | 24. Durham |
| 25. Beamish Museum | |

There were four entrants in total and thanks to them all for having a go, they all did well. There was a clear winner though, with 24/25 and that was Trevor and Jean, well done to you both, *Julie Els*.

CAPTION COMPETITION

Judging by the ladies clothing, this picture was taken on a Summer's day!

There will be a modest prize for the best caption... (email to: edmundjohnpratt@hotmail.com)



READERS WRITE TO AUNT BRASSICA...



Dear Aunt Brassica,

I think I have maligned the gentleman in the photograph of the Austin 7 Tourer that I sent to you in April. I have now seen him again with a very pretty lady by his side.

What should I do? Do you think his continued leering at me is intended to make me jealous – or to make her jealous? She looks very protective with her around him.

Yours, 'Virginia Water resident'

My dear girl,

What is your fixation with this man? I'm sure that if he was driving up and down looking at the pretty girls, then now he may have found one. But I am somewhat cautious about the moral standing of any girl that could be picked up so easily. Maybe she is a good-time girl and this man is no gentleman?

I really think that you should focus your mind on having a jolly good game of tennis and you will find that opportunities to play a game of mixed doubles will lead to an introduction. The exercise will also help to sublimate your longings, which are not uncommon in young girls of your age.

Yours, Aunt Brassica

