

NORTH HAMPSHIRE *AUSTIN* ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

Monthly Newsletter and Events Update

www.nhaeg.org.uk

March 2007

Spring's Almost Here (?):

Apart from a few days back in January when temperatures dropped to a little less than comfortable, plus, more recently, a brief spell of stormy weather, it appears that we may have escaped the worst of Winter pretty nicely this time around. There's still time yet, of course, for a dramatic return of the 'cold stuff' but, if the present trend continues we might confidently look forward to conditions when we may be encouraged to dust off our 'real cars', after their Winter hibernation, and give them an airing.

In any event, it is hoped that many members will do just that for the April Club Night (16th, remember, not the 9th!!), a.k.a the 'Spring Airing'.

Remember also that there's an M&S voucher on offer for the free draw on that evening, open to anyone turning up in a historic vehicle! Who could resist such a deal?!

By then Don and Maureen should have returned from their extended trip to Kiwi Land and will no doubt have many tales to tell including those of old cars spotted in that particular 'neck of the woods' where, by all accounts, historic vehicles abound doubtless due to a lack of salted roads as much as to any other reason.

Maureen, of course, will be absolutely itching to get back to resume her 'proper job' as Newsletter Editor (!!!) thus relieving me of feeble attempts to 'hold the fort' during her absence.

Meanwhile, here are a few collated items for March, starting, as usual, with 'Colin's Column' :

As I sit and write this it is wet and cold outside, not the kind of weather to be out in our type of cars. Even if it was a nice day I still could not go out in Arabella as I have finally decided to try and sort out her slipping clutch, which had got so bad it was even slipping on a flat road.

Taking the gearbox out was not too difficult with the help of a friend who has far more experience of this than I do and despite being told by a number of people that the brake cross shaft would have to be removed we managed to take the gearbox out without doing so.

Once removed we could see why there was so much slip, the clutch was soaked in oil which appeared to be coming from the gearbox. I took the gearbox over to Tony Westhall who knows far more about Austins than I do and he confirmed what we thought. I have therefore taken the gearbox to a company that was recommended to me in Farnborough who are going to look at it and hopefully cure the leak. If they make a good job of it I will let you have their details next month. In the meantime I will get the clutch relined and fit some new springs.

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February Club Night

Being in the middle of winter and with quite a few of our regular members away on holiday I was not sure how many would turn up to take part in the quiz that Julie (Els) had devised for us. In the event we had a very good turnout with 31 members attending.

The quiz consisted of a number of advertising slogans some from a few years ago and we had to guess which product they were advertising. It was quite frustrating at times because you could remember the slogans but not the product. When Julie read out the answers at the end there were quite a few 'of course it was' to be heard.

With the scores added up the winning team were Karen, David and Roy; in second place were Malcolm and Sandra. They must all watch a lot of Television.

Many thanks to Julie for organising the evening and very generously providing the prizes, it was very much appreciated.

March Club Night

We have what should be a very interesting evening lined up for March with Michael Passmore the former Archivist of the AA coming to give us a talk. Michael joined the AA in 1968 in the Membership Dept and later worked on the staff newspaper then known as Fanum News, Fanum coming from the name of the then AA Head Office in Leicester Square, London called 'Fanum House'. In 1990 he took over the Archive section where he remained before retiring in 2000. During that time he gave conducted tours of the AA Museum, which has since moved to the 'Milestones Living History Museum', gave talks to various organisations and added many items to the AA collection. He has also written a very interesting book titled 'The AA' History, Badges and Memorabilia, which is part of the Shire collection of books published by Shire Publications.

This should be an evening to remember so come along early so you do not miss the start of Michael's presentation, which I believe will include some interesting slides.

Future Club Nights

We still have nothing arranged for the May, August, September and October club nights. If anyone would like to organise something for one of these nights or have any ideas for speakers etc then please let me, or a member of the committee, know.

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Brooklands Centenary Event

Details of the above event, which will be on the weekend of 16th/17th June are now available and can be seen on www.brooklands100.org The Sunday, which is the actual anniversary day, will be the high point of the weekend when a recreation of the original Grand Opening Parade will be held on what's left of the three and a half mile track. Cars and bikes will be in action on the Mercedes-Benz World test track as well as displays by vintage aircraft. It is a ticket only event and they can be obtained by phoning the Centenary Ticket office on 0870 850 6639. Prices for each day are Adults £35, Children under 12, £20 with children under 5 free. Unfortunately members of 'The Friends of Brooklands Museum' will not be able to get a discount on these prices. It looks to me as though it will be a great weekend.

Great Parks Run

I have received information on the above event, run by the ATDC, which is on the 3rd June and all members of the NHAEG are invited to join in. The start point is The Fairmile, Portsmouth Road, Cobham, KT11 1BC where coffee and tea will be available, 10.15am for a 10.45am start. They will be visiting Clandon Park, Nr Guildford, which is a National Trust property, where allocated parking at the front of the house will be available. Admission to the House and Parkland is £5.60 per person, children £3.60 unless you are a National Trust member when of course it will be free. If you would like further information or would like to go on the run then contact the organisers, Jim and Jan Richardson, 30 Queens Way, Hanworth, Middlesex, TW13 7NS, Tel. 020 8751 1830 after 6.30pm.

Drive it Day

'Drive it Day', which was started last year, by the 'Federation of Historic Vehicle Clubs' of which the NHAEG is a member is now an annual event. The idea, which they probably got from the ATDC's 'Drive your Austin Day', is for as many Historic cars as possible to be out on the roads on that day. This year it is on 22nd April and as requested by many members I will organise a run, different from last year, to 'The Crown Inn' at Pishill as everyone seemed to enjoy the lunch there so much last year. This year we will be starting at 'The New Inn' Heckfield where we hold our meetings and the Landlord has kindly offered to lay on coffee before we start. As the 22nd is the day before 'St Georges Day' I suggest we be patriotic and decorate our cars with a flag or two as we did last year.

The run will be about 35/40 miles avoiding main roads but full details with times etc. will be in next months Newsletter. Before then however I will need to know who is coming so that I can let 'The New Inn' know how many coffees are wanted and 'The Crown Inn' which does not have a particularly large dining area, want to know how many they will need to cater for and also what everyone wants to eat for their lunch.

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A menu is included in this Newsletter so would all those of you who want to come and there were quite a few indicated they would at the last meeting, please let me know as soon as possible and also advise me on what you would like for your lunch.

I would like this information as soon as possible but by March 30th at the very latest as The Crown Inn obviously would like to know how many other bookings they can take that day. That means if you are not coming to the March meeting you will need to let me know by email, colin@greigc.freemove.co.uk, phone 0118 978 2087 or post, 16 Clifton Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 1NB

Colin

Secretary's Scribblings

The 'Floating Garden'.

Thinking that it might be pleasant to escape for a short break to somewhere where temperatures may perhaps be a little higher than they are here in the UK in this time of the year Jean and I recently spent a week in Madeira, specifically in Funchal, the island's capital. This was our second visit to the island, the last one being in 1998 since which time there have been a few inevitable changes, not least in the amount of buildings, mainly hotels, which have sprung up.

However the island seemed to have lost none of its charm and was as attractive and welcoming as ever. Daytime temperatures were in the low 20's C. (most agreeable!) whilst those in the nighttime didn't drop more than half a dozen degrees - and all with no rain during our stay. Madeirans (250,000 in all, of which half reside in Funchal) are very friendly and appear especially so towards the British, with whom they have had a long, historical relationship. Indeed, Britain and Portugal enjoy the longest period of harmonious relations of any European countries, this going back 620 or so years, since the Treaty of Windsor of 1386!

For anyone into gardens and flora generally Madeira is an absolute paradise. Virtually anything, familiar and not so familiar, seems able to grow there without any effort and the several formal gardens in and around Funchal are something to be seen to be believed.

Being formed from a volcanic eruption, in the Atlantic Ocean, some 18 million years ago there are no sandy beaches in Madeira so it tends not to attract families since, one assumes, there is little to appeal to the younger set. Paradoxically, most visitors/tourists of any nationality, seem to be 'of a certain age' yet, quite why this should be so is a little odd since the entire island is extremely mountainous and everywhere is either 'up' or 'down' with the 'ups' being often quite daunting! Indeed, one needs to be fairly fit to cope with any pedestrianised activity once leaving the

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confines of the seafront and harbourside promenade. It was very obvious why the total absence of Austin 7's - particularly the three-speed box variety- was perfectly understandable! Indeed, the only vehicles of a historic nature seen was a small, possibly private collection of post-war MG's spotted through a garage window near our hotel. Otherwise 'real cars' appeared to be rarer than hen's teeth on the island, despite the favourable climate which might favour their preservation.

Nevertheless, probably the biggest attraction, for us at least, is the opportunity to walk levada paths. Levadas are narrow, man-made irrigation channels cut into the mountain sides designed to carry water to areas of cultivation, usually narrow terraced plots. There are over 3000 miles of such channels on an island roughly twice the size of the Isle of Wight. For obvious reasons the channels are gently sloping and paths adjacent to them are equally gentle and, for the most part, unchallenging. Therefore, once on the levada paths, accessible by a white-knuckle ride on a local bus, (whose drivers handle their vehicles with the skill of Michael Schumacher whilst negotiating the tightest of hair-pin bends on roads about as wide as a pavement in the UK), not too much effort is required to make steady progress amongst the most beautiful countryside imaginable.

So, anyone looking for a holiday destination which is relatively close (a little over three hours flying time away), where temperatures are pleasantly warm without being stiflingly hot, where the natives are friendly, where costs are reasonable, and where, above all else, scenery is breathtaking, Madeira is for you.

Travel commercial over, now on to items of general news interest:

March (12th) Club Night:

Talk by Michael Passmore, retired Archivist for the AA.

Please do come along and give Michael your full support. He is coming up from Salisbury and it would be nice to have a good turn out to greet him.

Logo'd Garments - update!

Having received and delivered an initial batch of 'logo'd' garments, to those ordering them before Christmas, these seem to have been met with general approval and has resulted in a few additional orders being handed in. However, before I actually place these with our supplier if there is anyone who would like to order any item appearing in the list printed in the Newsletter a couple of months or so ago please do get back to me soonest with details

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Subscriptions

George (Ewart) reports that most members have now renewed their subscriptions and a list of these will be distributed shortly for general information. The few who have not done so will not, of course, be receiving any further Newsletters.

A7CA 'Grey/Buff' Magazine

An order has been placed with the A7CA for the regular supply of a small quantity of this quarterly publication for those few members requiring them. These will be distributed at the next Club Night or mailed out if necessary.

July 8th - Loseley Park Run

This event was outlined in last month's Newsletter. Jean (Edwards) will take names and payment from those interested at the May Club Night (14th).

Cricket St.Thomas - 18/21 May.

Unfortunately two members who had previously intended to come on this trip are not now able to do so. There are therefore two places available should any members, (or friends, relatives, etc.), wish to join us on this expedition. If so please let me know immediately since all arrangements have to be finalised very shortly now. Costs are £189.00 per person for the three nights, including bed, breakfast and evening meal.

Plea for Ideas

As Colin mentions in his Column we remain short of plans for the May, August, September and October Club Nights so if anyone has any ideas or, better still, is prepared to organise something for any of those dates any committee member would be very pleased to hear from you.

For Sale

Battery - 6 volt, 57 AH - traditional hard rubber type - Austin 7 size

i.e. 170mm (L), 175mm (W), 225mm (H)

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Brand new, unused. £30.00 Contact: Trevor on 01344 775012

Events Forecast!

Mar 11th Austin/Morris Day - Brooklands Contact Colin G. for details)

Mar 12th Club Night Talk - Michael Passmore (retired AA Archivist)

April 1st ATDC AGM - Gaydon Heritage Centre - 1:00pm

April 14th ATDC - 'Austins in Action Day'

April 16th Club Night 'Spring Airing' - Free draw for those turning up in an historic vehicle - £25.00 M & S Voucher!

(N.B. NOT 9th, which is Easter B.H.Monday!!)

April 22nd 'Drive It Day' - Run to 'The Crown Inn', Pishill.
Colin G. planning route, etc.

May 12/13th Motormart Autojumble, Beaulieu

May 14th Club Night - t.b.d.

May 18/21st Cricket St.Thomas trip - Trevor E.

June 3rd Great Parks Run to Clandon Park, Guildford, starting in Cobham (ATDC Run). Contact Jim or Jan Richardson on 020 8751 1830, after 6:00pm, for details.

June 3rd/7th D.Day Celebrations, Normandy trip - Dave W.

June 11th Club Night - 'Half-Gallon Run' Chris Broom/Brian Mayers)

June 15/17th Brooklands Centenary Celebrations
Contact Colin G. for details

June 30th Paul Finn Rally (BEN Run)
Ascot to Lynwood Fete, via Windsor Great Park

July 8th Loseley Park - Run to Loseley House, near Guildford.
Coffee first, followed by walk in surrounding area, then lunch before

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visit to gardens and house (optional) in afternoon - Jean E.

July 9th Club Night - Concours d'Elegance

July 29th 'Picnic in the Paddock' - Finchampstead

Aug 13th Club Night - t.b.d.

Aug ??? Run to Water Gardens, near Stockbridge. George/Ruth (Ewart)
Date to be confirmed.

Aug 19th Reading & Wokingham Show.
Loddon Court Farm, Beech Hill, Swallowfield

Aug 27th Littlewick Show. Holyport, near Maidenhead

Sept 8/9th Aero and Autojumble, Beaulieu

Sept 10th Club Night - t.b.d.

Oct 8th Club Night - t.b.d.

Oct 16th B2B Run - BEN Lynwood to Brooklands

Nov 12th Club Night - Auction Night

Nov 17th NHAEG / ATDC 'Nightjar Navigation Rally'

Dec 3rd Christmas Dinner - 'The Falcon', Rotherwick

Dec 10th Club Night - Fun and Games Evening - details t.b.d.

Have fun and drive safely!

Trevor

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2007 Committee Contacts

Chairman: Colin Greig 0118 9782087
(colin@greigc.freemove.co.uk)

Secretary: Trevor Edwards 01344 775012
(trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com)

Treasurer: Jean Edwards 01344 775012
(trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com)

Editor: Maureen Breakspear 0118 9733568
(maureenbreakspear@yahoo.co.uk)

Members: Don Breakspear 0118 973 3568
(maureenbreakspear@yahoo.co.uk)

Roy Roberts 01276 27043
(royrobertsr@tiscali.co.uk)

George Ewart 01344 778286
(george.ewartx@btinternet.com)

John Hancock 0118 988 5387
(route66_2003@hotmail.com)