

NORTH HAMPSHIRE AUSTIN ENTHUSIASTS GROUP



AUSTINTACIOUS NEWS

At the April club meeting, Tony Westhall warned members about the perils of not having an agreed valuation for insurance purposes. He has written up this 'must-read' advice for us (*see page 2*).

With many of our cars now on the road and plenty of events to look forward to (*see The Club Diary page 3*) your thoughts may have turned to buying another one! (Also, we regularly have people asking us for advice on buying.)

So, our Technical Section features an article on 'Should you buy an Austin 7' from CA7C (*see page 8*) and a handy check-list from Andy Seager (*see page 12*).

This issue's 'NHAEG Member Interview' (*page 5*) features long-standing members, Trevor & Jean Edwards.

We have more historical items and past press from Andy Ranson (*page 14*).

The Quiz (*page 16*) is again by Trevor, but – please note - an entry fee is no longer required.

Finally, Aunt Brassica (*page 17*) offers wise advice on buying a car ...

Simon

Editor: John Pratt (edmundjohnpratt@hotmail.com)

THE MAY 2017 NEWSLETTER

CLUB NEWS

Club Night Monday 10th April

The 2017 Spring Airing was an outstanding success, with an excellent turnout of over a dozen polished and fettled vehicles. As usual, the die-hards braved the cold wind and dusk to pore over new acquisitions and updates, while the less hardy enjoyed a drink in The New Inn!



Drive-it-Day Sunday 23rd April



Trevor E organised a gentle run in the Austin countryside as part of the FHBVC 'Drive it Day' movement to demonstrate that the vintage & classic car movement is alive and well.

As it was St Georges Day, the 14 cars taking part were decorated with flags and bunting and some brave jockeys were dressed entirely in red and white!

Starting from The Phoenix Inn in Hartley Wintney, the route meandered southwards, through byways and through the Candovers. Trevor's route guide was peppered with questions to be answered 'on the hoof', but the destination had been kept a mystery.

It turned out to be the Northbrook Arms at East Stratton, near Winchester. This is a traditional country pub and we all enjoyed a traditional roast lunch in the old stables, before working off the calories in the traditional Skittle Alley!



Mid-week Runs

Alan Pickett has confirmed that a further mid-week run of 30-40 miles will be on Thursday 20th July. Building on last year's success, he is hinting at a return to the seaside before the school holidays start. Alan hasn't given any destination yet, but it might not be Southsea...



A Cautionary Tale from Tony Westhall



Last Christmas Day, I was out in 'The Duchess' (a 12/6 Ascot). I pulled out of a junction, where I was turning right, onto a main road that was becoming a dual carriageway. There were good sight lines and I couldn't see anything coming. I was gathering speed slowly – as you do in an Austin uphill – with plenty of room to be overtaken. The next thing I know is that the mirror is full of little red Peugeot approaching very fast.

Oh dear, I thought. BANG! It hits me square on up the back. I get out to see a very sorry Duchess with the back well crumpled. I go over to the miscreant and ask for his name and address only to find that he does not speak a word of English. He jabbers away unintelligibly and then drives away. I did get his reg. number. The car did make rather a noise and was smoky as it drove away! I phoned the police and gave them the details and as soon as they knew that nobody was hurt and the car was not causing an obstruction, I was able to move on. I drove the car home carefully as it did pull to the left a bit.

On examination, the front doors didn't close properly, the boot lid was badly bent, the boot uprights were badly bent and the body was bulging between the rear wing and the rear window on both sides. Underneath you could see where the body had been pushed forward on the chassis at the rear mountings. It was fine on the forward mountings. There was a kink noticeable on the chassis.

On checking the DVLA website, I found that the Peugeot was not taxed or MOT'd. "Oh crumbs", I thought – no insurance either. Despite the fact that he had no tax or MOT, and that he drove away from an accident without leaving details, I had a letter from the police saying that their minimum criteria had not been met - so no action was being taken!

On contacting my insurers – RH, or ERS as they are now, – they said that it was insured and that as he hit me up the back, there would be no problem, as it was unquestionably his fault. An assessor will come round and we will go from there. Fine, I thought, but I was mistaken...

An assessor from the other company came round and pronounced that it was uneconomic to repair. Next came a phone call informing me that a truck was coming to collect the car. "Oh no it's not", I said. After some words, they agreed that it would not be collected, mainly because RH hadn't seen the car yet. When the RH assessor came, he said to get a couple of quotes for repair and we will take it from there.

I forwarded the quotes from a couple of local repairers that I was happy would do a good job. I next had a call from RH saying that in their view the car was uneconomic to repair and we will have to talk about values. This is where the tale becomes important to you. I told them that the car was on an agreed value policy, so they know the value of it. After checking the policy, "Oh yes" came the reply, "Take it to the lowest quote, if you are happy with them, and get it done"!!! As soon as they realized it was on an agreed value policy, the attitude changed and all went smoothly.

I took it to Alan Lambden of AL Coachworks at Hook, about 12 miles from me. He has done an excellent job of repair and he was very helpful and co-operative. I would recommend him to do any repairs that you might want done at a reasonable cost. When he was giving the quote for repair, he looked at the damage and said "Oh that's OK, I'll just hook the dozer on and give it a good tug. It'll be fine!" I thought he meant that he would hitch the car up to a bulldozer and pull! The tool he was going to use is a hydraulic ram called a dozer! Coincidentally, the other repairer used exactly the same phrase.

I would encourage all of you to make sure you have an agreed value on your policy. It doesn't cost anything, but you might have to pay a nominal amount to get a certified value. Decide what you think a good value for your car is and set the wheels in motion.

Don't leave sorting the value until something awful happens to you - so act now!

Tony Westhall

(Editor: PWA7C will issue a Valuation Certificate for £15 and ATDC have a similar scheme.)

CLUB & EVENTS DIARY 2017

Please let John (edmundjohnpratt@hotmail.com or 01252 643527) have details of any events that NHAEG members might be interested in, to add to this compilation.

NHAEG	Dates	Events	Arranged by or details from
Club Night	Mon 8th May	Car related photo-quiz	John P & Jeanette M-P
Mid-week Run	Thurs 18th May	Mid-week Run	Alan P
Holiday	5th-9th June	Club Holiday, Isle of Wight	Trevor E
Club Night	Mon 12th June	Half Gallon Run	Hazel & Dave, Elaine & Roy
Sunday Run	Sun 25th June	The Vyne, Sherborne St John, to see National Trust house & roof repairs	Simon & Denise
Club Night	Mon 10th July	Dress Up & Coveted Car Evening, judged by James Gibson of BCA	John P
Mid-week Run	Thurs 20th July	Mid-week Run to the seaside	Alan P
Sunday Picnic	Sun 30th July	Picnic in the Paddock, Finchampstead	Trevor E
Club Night	Mon 14th Aug	Noggin & Natter	Committee
Heritage Day Run	Sun 10th September	'Austin to Austen' run to Chawton House & visit (admission charged)	Jeanette M-P
Club Night	Mon 11th Sept	Music Quiz	Andy B
Mid-week Run	Thurs 14th Sept	Mid-week Run	Alan P
Club Night	Mon 9th Oct	Speaker – Robin Lawton on a life of Austins, MGs & Rileys	John P
Club Night	Mon 13th Nov	Auction Night	Colin, Don & Trevor
Club Night	Mon 11th Dec	Festive Fun	tba
Event	Mon 4th December	Christmas Dinner, location tba	Jeanette M-P

Organiser	2017 Dates	Other Events & Location	Contact
750MC	Sunday 7th May	Buttercup Bounce BBQ & Concours. Ash Manor	brooklands750@hotmail.co.uk
Brooklands Museum	Sat 13th May	1940s Relived at Brooklands	www.brooklandsmuseum.com
Beaulieu Museum	Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th May	Spring Autojumble	www.beaulieu.co.uk/events/spring-autojumble
The Thorneycroft Society	Sunday 14th May	Basingstoke Festival of Transport & Autojumble; 11am-4pm but early arrival recommended	Ken Couzens
Riley MC/ NHAEG	Saturday 20th May	Hog Roast, The Mill, Odiham	Andy Seager +44 (0)7990 546677 andyseager@mac.com
Farley Hill	Sunday 21st May	3rd Farley Hill Classic car and motorcycle show near Swallowfield	Adrian Gray agray@its.jnj.com/07769923761
Brooklands Museum	Sun 21st May	Brooklands Classic Spring Breakfast	www.brooklandsmuseum.com

Sth Hants Vehicle Preservation Society	Sunday 4 th June	Classic Vehicle Show, Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Gravel Hill, Horndean PO8 0QE	Further details: 0780 735 1316
Hartley Wintney Festival	Saturday 10 th June	Classic Car Show at the Village Festival	Entry Form from David Preston classiccars.hwf016@btinternet.com
Watercress Line	Saturday 10 th -11 th June	War on the Line	www.watercressline.co.uk
Brooklands Museum	Saturday 17 th - 18 th June	Brooklands Double Twelve Motorsport Festival	www.brooklandsmuseum.com
BEN Run	Sat 1 st July	Route through Windsor Great Park, start/finish at Ascot Racecourse	Kelly Neal, Head of Events, BEN Kelly.neal@ben.org.uk
Watercress Line	1st-2nd July and 7th-9th July	ExtravaGala - 50th anniversary of the end of Southern region steam	www.watercressline.co.uk
750 MC	Sunday 2 nd July	National Austin 7 Rally at Beaulieu	http://www.750mc.co.uk/austin7/Beaulieu.htm
Thames Traditional Boat Festival	Friday 14 th , 15 th & 16 th July	Display of pre-1970 cars and vintage vehicles, Henley- On- Thames. Fawley Meadows	Lyndon Yorke at vehicles@tradboatfestival.com
Watercress Line	16th July	Alton Bus Rally	www.watercressline.co.uk
ATDC	14th-16th July	National Rally	www.austintenddriversclub.com/events
Rotary Club Odiham & Hook	Saturday 5 th -6 th August	Odiham Fire Show, Classic Fire Engines & Displays, Lodge Farm, Odiham	
BADCCC	Sunday 13 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
Camberley Car Show	Saturday 19 th August	Vintage, Classics, Customs, Hot Rods, Motorbikes, Entertainment. Camberley town centre	By invitation only: contact Ken Bonner kenbonner@btinternet.com
Swallowfield Horticultural Society	Sunday 27 th – Monday 28 th August	Swallowfield Show, Showground at Swallowfield Park	Trevor E or email organisers@swallowfieldshow.co.uk
Beaulieu Museum	Saturday 2 nd to Sunday 3 rd Sept	International Autojumble	www.beaulieu.co.uk/events/international-autojumble
Cobham Conservation & Heritage Trust	Saturday 9 th September	Cobham Heritage Day classic car gathering	Entry forms from July from ian.s.nelson@btinternet.com
Shooting Star Chase	Sunday 3rd 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
Surrey Classic Vehicle Gathering	Sunday 17 th September	Rural Life Centre, Tilford	Application form at www.surreyclassicvehicleclub.com or contact Phil Dunford
West Green House	Sunday 24 th September	Classic cars in a Concours D' Elegance at West Green House, Thackham's Lane, Hartley Wintney	Trevor Mulford or book online https://festivalticketkiosk.cloudvenue.co.uk/home

Inter Club Register	2017 Dates	Inter Register Event & Location	Contacts as below, or talk to Trevor, Colin or Tony W for information
The Riley Register	Saturday 10th June to be confirmed	Navigational Economy Tour, Prescott, Gloucestershire	Conway Hall conwayhall@btopenworld.com
The Jowett Register	Sunday 11 th June	Treasure Hunt, Gt Dunmow, Essex	Richard Keil richard@richardkeilphotography.com
The Riley Register	Saturday 19 th August	Rally, Sonning Common West Berkshire	Richard Scott email: rscottok@btinternet.com
The Crossley Register	Sunday 17th Sept	Treasure Hunt North Yorks	Stephen Weld Tel. 01765 658569
MG Car Club	Sunday 8th Oct	Autumn "Naviscat" Kent	Chris Leigh candleigh@yahoo.com
ATDC/NHAEG	Saturday 18th Nov	"Nightjar" Scatter/Orienteering Surrey/Hants/Berks	Trevor Edwards Trevor.c.edwards@btinternet.com

The White Lion Classic Car Meets have been revived at White Lion Antiques, London Road, Hartford Bridge, Hartley Wintney, RG27 8AE on every last Sunday of the month

The meet runs from 8.00am to midday and there is a restaurant where you can get a good breakfast, or just a coffee or tea if you wish.

All information correct as at: 01/05/17

THE MEMBER INTERVIEW — TREVOR & JEAN EDWARDS

Editor: Have you always tinkered with cars?

Jean: I've known Trevor since we were 16 and I always used to say his mother had found him under the bonnet of a car!

Editor: When did you first realise that you had an interest in cars (and how)?

Trevor: As a child back in the 1940s, like many of us, I used to build 'orange-box carts', using whatever I could find, like old boxes and pram wheels; then in the 1950s, I progressed to building homemade bicycles. My father, who worked at Standard Cars in Coventry, died in 1938 when I was 8 months old and my mother remarried in 1946. I would then help my step-father tinker with his Morris 8. As I entered the teenage years, my interest naturally turned to motorbikes and I would unofficially 'borrow' the JAP belonging to our neighbour, Mr Oakley. So, by the age of 16, I was mercilessly pestering my parents for my own bike. This was rewarded with a brand-new 200cc Triumph Tiger Cub (PDD 544) purchased from a garage-owning uncle. As we lived 6 miles from the Triumph works in Meriden, I visited it, on occasions, for parts and my stepfather knew a manager in the research department who was helpful.



I also met Jean at about this time, but I rebelled against the idea of university and literally 'ran away to sea', joining the merchant navy at the age of 17. Meanwhile my stepfather kept the Tiger Cub in good running order and on one shore leave, Jean and I holidayed in North Wales with it. How we managed to pack enough to cope with one night away is a source of wonder. But I did acquire a second-hand Triumph 350cc bike (GOB 24) which was a little beefier than the Cub.



Editor: What was the first car that you owned?



Trevor: By 1958, I couldn't see my skills as an Apprentice Deck Officer being much in demand in Kenilworth (in the centre of England) and with the threat of National Service, I joined REME in Arborfield. I studied in the School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering and in 1959, to facilitate travel back to see Jean, I bought a 1932 Morris 10/4 for £45. It had hydraulic brakes, a 4-speed gearbox and was reliable, but consumed almost as much oil as petrol. When we married in April, it took us all the way from the Midlands to Mevagissey (in 9½ hours) for our honeymoon. But the Morris then gave way to a 1935 Standard Nine which boasted novel flashing trafficators! By then I had been posted to 12 Command

Workshops in West Derby, Liverpool, and the Standard Nine famously blew its head gasket in the middle of the Mersey Tunnel on the way back from Kenilworth. The noise was terrible and the steam considerable, but I nursed it home for a straightforward repair.

Editor: What is the most interesting car that you have driven?

Trevor: There are two really – firstly I spotted a sporty looking lime green Ford E93A Special (Ed: Convair Mk 1?) on a forecourt for £300 and my heart over-ruled my head! I had been posted to 7 Inf Workshops in Gillingham, Kent, in September 1959 and because no married quarters were available I commuted weekly to the family home in Kenilworth to see Jean. The M1 motorway had recently opened but one Sunday, cruising at 60mph proved too much for the 1172cc Ford sidevalve unit, as I reached Hemel Hempstead. Luckily just one big end had gone and I was able to clatter my way through London to the barracks. It achieved further notoriety as Jean's transport to the maternity ward at Colchester Military Hospital (I had been posted to Colchester to 19 Inf Brigade – the military's 'fire brigade' for hotspots). I had phoned the Military Hospital and explained that Jean was having contractions, only to find that I was speaking to the telephone exchange operator, who then kindly put me through. They told me to bring her in straightaway.



Jean: How I ever got into that sports car, fully pregnant and about to give birth, I will never know! For a time, we used to travel three up with the cat in the boot (which a policeman noticed as the lid kept going up & down!). Needless to say, it had to go when I joined Trevor in hot, sticky, Aden.

Trevor: Aden was reputedly the last place God made, but forgot to finish! We acquired an elderly battered Opel Kapitän, which chugged to the local grocers and the beach – and over 2 years, required many visits to the scrapyards and a deal of imagination to keep it going!



We returned home in August 1963 to Arborfield and I bought a very smart Wolseley 6/80 which had been a Police car. Sadly the low price was reflected in the badly worn engine, which burnt oil at an alarming rate – necessitating a rebuild with the help of the car club at The School of Electronics. We drove this with two children and a washing machine secured to the roof rack - all the way to Minden, Germany, via Ostende and Aachen, to 97 Tell Workshops (part of BAOR). This leads me to the second 'most interesting' car, which was a DKW 1000, which I bought from a civilian on the base, having sold the 6/80 to another REME guy. The DKW was made by



Auto Union (later Audi) and featured a willing, 2-stroke, engine which ran like a well-oiled sewing machine, having roller bearings throughout and three of everything e.g. pistons, con-rods, coils, points etc. It also boasted a free-wheel device to aid fuel economy – not a strong point of 2-strokes otherwise. It also had a high ground clearance and I did a lot of rallying in it. I brought it back to the UK in 1967, but spare parts, though still available, were astronomically expensive. The final straw was when my mother



reversed into it (she was a genuinely bad driver with a standing account at the local body shop). She had left a note on it claiming that she had sneezed!

So, in 1968, it gave way to a 1728cc Singer Gazelle – a pleasant enough, comfortable car, but which suffered from ‘Rootes-Rot’ (AKA ‘tin-worm’) especially in the front wings. This gave way to a LHD Ford Taunus estate, as we had 3 children by then. Then I left the army in 1973 and, for the next 25 years, I enjoyed company cars chosen by other people until I retired in 1998 – so we can skip over those!

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

Trevor: Jean doesn’t know this (Ed: at which point Jean sits bolt upright), but I once fell asleep on my motorbike! I was returning to Arborfield from a weekend in Kenilworth, when I ‘came to’ in Upper Basildon - realising that there had been a passage of time that I couldn’t account for.

Editor: How did you come to buy your first old Austin?



Trevor: After I retired in 1998, I needed a hobby to occupy my time. And an old car was a natural choice. I found PO, a 1931 Austin 7 RN Box Saloon in Datchet. We had a ride around town and the deal was done. The previous owner had started a major restoration in the mid-1990s, including a bare metal respray. I continued the restoration process, putting my effort into improving her electrical & mechanical condition. Jean and I then used her a lot including some memorable trips to Cricket St Thomas, Normandy and the London-Brighton run with the grandchildren.

Editor: What prompted you to buy a second Austin?

Trevor: I have always been keen on rallies and it was clear that I really needed a car that was more long-legged, comfortable and with better brakes. So, I bought Clarissa, an Austin 10 with the Colwyn Cabriolet body, which gives us the option of hood-down motoring!

Editor: What were the highlights of your career (maybe automotively)?

Trevor: Possibly winning the Austin Ten Drivers Club award for Driver of the Year in 2015 and again in 2016; also taking the Austin 10 to Guernsey for my Grandson’s wedding last year.



Editor: What have been the low points of Austin ownership?



Trevor: Coming home on the back of a recovery wagon – the first time we were near Alton on the way home from France in PO, when the gear stick came off completely in my hand! Once I got home I realised that it was a simple fix. The second time with Clarissa, the gear stick snapped completely and we were stuck in neutral. The third major incident meant that we had to proceed in 4-5 mile bursts as the wax in the distributor condenser was alternately melting then setting as it cooled. We were on the way back from an NHAEG run to Bletchley Park and we got as far as Hurst before finally grinding to a total halt. I’m also quite proud of changing a head gasket at the

roadside in a pair of white chinos in 1hr 40min (Ed: Jean looks at me despairingly!)

Editor: What have you enjoyed most about NHAEG?

Trevor: I had briefly belonged to Thames Valley Car Club, but we both became heavily involved in running NHAEG not long after joining it and we are still enjoying the friendships we’ve made and the runs together.

Editor: Looking back – what would you do differently?

Trevor: It may be heresy, but I wish I had kept my old Morris 10/4. Morris made a good product then; rather more advanced than Austin, especially in the brake department!

SHOULD YOU BUY AN AUSTIN SEVEN?

This article was written by Andrew Jarmin and Malcolm Watts in 2001. It was originally produced in a booklet format by CA7C and given to people who were genuinely interested in becoming Austin Seven owners. The article has been updated by the authors several times since, but the valuation figures have been updated by our Editor.

This advice has been written for potential owners, both men and ladies, and is intended to provide some background information about the Austin Seven and owning, maintaining and driving one. At best it can only be an introduction and will either leave you wanting more information, or help you to realise that Austin 7 ownership is, perhaps, not appropriate for you.

First of all, answer the question 'Why do you want an Austin Seven?'

Have you previously owned an historic car, have some knowledge of them, and wish to relive the life with one? If you haven't previously owned one then why do you wish to have one now? Is it because you just like the look of them or think it would be nice to own one? Do you know someone who owns one and wish to do the same? What are you going to do with it? Are you just wanting to own one and put it in the garage, to look at now and again, or do you intend to drive it regularly?

Our main advice to anyone who decides that they wish to buy an Austin Seven is to first join a specialist club BEFORE you purchase a car. Buying the wrong car could be very costly and you may be landed with a 'bitzer', one not really true to type which has been made up from spare parts. You will also have met some members before buying the car and then you will not be afraid to go out with it in case it might break down or you don't know anyone. You will also have the back up of people who can offer technical support.

If possible, try and drive one as you will find that a 'Seven' does not have the performance, and handling characteristics, of a post-war, or later, 'modern' car. Before continuing and deciding to buy one, do be sure of why you wish to own an Austin Seven and have an idea of what you intend to do with it.

The most common things said to Austin Seven owners, when they are using, or displaying their cars are: "My father had one of these", or "I'd like to own an Austin Seven."

A Very Brief History of the Austin Seven

When the 'Seven' was introduced in 1922 it was intended for, and succeeded in, providing four wheeled transport that the average working family could afford. It was built by the Austin Motor Co. at Longbridge, Birmingham from 1922 to 1939 and during that time several different body styles were fitted to the basic chassis and running gear.

Austin produced tourers, 2-seater sports cars, saloons and light van versions of the 'Seven'. The chassis and running gear was used as the basis of models built by many specialist coachbuilders. The 'Seven' was exported across the world and also produced under licence in America, Australia, France, Germany and Japan.

Early cars were open tourers, with just enough room for Mum, Dad and two small children, and these became known as the 'Chummy'. Then came the saloon models from 1929 to 1934 which are referred to as 'Box Saloons'.

The styling was modernised in 1934 with the production of the 'Ruby', and the exposed radiator with the familiar radiator surround was replaced by an enveloping cowl.

The 'Big Seven' appeared in 1937 as a development of the 'Seven', with a different chassis and a larger engine, having a more spacious body in 4-door and then 2-door versions.



Throughout production 'Sevens' were available with a choice of body colours – blue, green, grey, maroon, primrose with black top and black wings; with the 'Ruby' and 'Big Seven' also in black. All cars had a choice of a complementary trim colour. When manufacturing ceased in March 1939 almost 300,000 'Sevens' had been produced of which about 10,000 are known to survive worldwide.

Which do you choose?

Ultimately the particular body style you like is going to be a personal choice; however the format of the chassis and running gear changed significantly over the years and this does have an important bearing on the ease of maintenance and driveability, and so should also influence your choice of model.

All Austin Sevens are based on the 'A' shaped chassis which came in three basic designs over the 17 years of production:

- the short chassis from 1922 to 1931. The short chassis suffered with limited space in the rear of saloons and the first vans had a small load capacity of 2½ cwt (125kg).
- the long wheelbase high chassis from 1932 to 1934. The chassis length was extended by 6" (150mm) in 1932 to provide more room for the rear seat passengers and the load capacity of vans was increased to 5 cwt (250kg).
- the long wheelbase low chassis from 1934 to 1939. The low chassis, with flatter rear springs, was introduced with the 'Ruby' in 1934.



The engine



The first engine in 1922 was 696cc, but was soon increased to the 747cc engine which appeared in 1923 and remained until 1937. The engines are side-valve with a bore of 57mm and stroke of 78mm. During 1929, a larger diameter, stronger, crankshaft was fitted. The crankshaft was two-bearing until the three-bearing crankshaft was introduced in July 1936, but these are prone to breaking and hence a two-bearing crankshaft is preferable. These, and other, modifications gradually increased the brake horse power.

Magneto ignition (see above) was used until 1929 when coil ignition was fitted as standard.

The engine was bolted directly to the chassis until late 1933 when the engine was then rubber mounted onto the chassis (smoother). All engines made post 1932 are readily interchangeable.

A re-designed 900cc engine appeared with the 'Big Seven' in 1937 (right).



The gearbox

The early Austin Sevens were fitted with a three-speed gearbox with a gate change, an 'H' shaped slot through which the gear lever is moved. This was changed around 1930 to the more familiar 'ball' attachment of the gear lever, as used in modern cars, but it is still a three-speed 'crash' (non-synchromesh) gearbox.

A four-speed 'crash' box was fitted in late 1932 through to late 1933. In late 1933 synchromesh was fitted to 3rd and 4th gears only, and from mid-1934 synchromesh was fitted on 2nd, 3rd and 4th gears.

All of the four-speed gearboxes are interchangeable.

The brakes

Before 1930 the handbrake applied the front brakes only and the footbrake applied the rear brakes. From 1930 onwards, the brakes were linked and so the footbrake operated the front and rear brakes together, as did the handbrake.

Until the last of the 'Ruby' models the brakes were operated through cables. The 'Big Seven' has a cable to the front brakes and rods to the rear brakes.

Wheels and Tyres

All 'Sevens' up to and including the 'Ruby' models have spoked wheels; the 'Big Seven' has Easyclean pressed steel wheels.

Up until 1934 the tyre sizes of the tourers and basic saloons were 3.50 x 19", Avon Sidecar tyres are now fitted for these cars.

The tyres were changed to 4.00 x 17" when the low-chassis was introduced in 1934. The 'Big Seven' tyres are 4.75 x 16". New cross-ply tyres are available from specialist suppliers



So which model?

Generally speaking the later the car, the easier it is to drive and maintain. For information on the performance of the most popular 'Sevens' see Road Tests.

Later cars are cheaper than the earlier cars and saloons are cheaper than the open cars. As a rough guide for on-the-road cars in reasonable condition with current MoT, consider the 'Big Seven' and 'Ruby' saloons to be about £5-7,000; 'Box Saloons' about £6-8,000 and earlier 'Tourers' etc. about £10-12,000, with the late 1920s 'Chummy' models around the £14-16,000+ mark. In each case, condition, especially originality, makes a big difference. Beware of inflated prices on internet auction sites and at specialist dealers and restorers.

If you are seriously thinking about ownership, have a good look at the range of 'Sevens' which club members own. When choosing your 'Seven' it is important that you let your 'head rule your heart', at least for the first one you purchase. It is all too easy to fall in love with a rough looking, non-running project that appears to be cheap, which with a little tender loving care you can turn into your treasured 'Seven'. UNLESS you have previously restored a pre-war car and you know what is involved, this is definitely NOT what we would recommend!

Our best advice is to buy a later car with the benefits of linked brakes, four speed gearbox and synchromesh, and probably saloon type bodywork. The car should be running, preferably with a voluntary MoT, and the bodywork and trim at least presentable.

If you follow this advice you will have a 'Seven' that is immediately usable. You can drive it and take part in Club activities and gain experience as and when mechanical repairs are necessary. Many of the Club member's cars that are most used are far from immaculate but none the less give their owners, and the general public, much pleasure.

Do I need to be a mechanical wizard?

As with all things mechanical it helps if you have a basic understanding of how things work. An Austin Seven has very simple mechanics, unlike modern cars, and providing that you are willing to learn, you will soon pick up the basics. Hopefully, you will soon be able to carry out the routine maintenance, as set out in the manufacturer's handbook and essential pre-run checks.

When the going gets tough and major problems arise, then help and advice is always freely available from other Club members; they will probably have met the problem before, they may have the special tools and equipment, and can help to put things right.

Spare parts

New and second-hand spares are plentiful and relatively cheap. There are a number of businesses which provide replacement parts for Austin Sevens and normally will provide excellent service by ensuring next day delivery following a telephone or on-line order; in fact a lot better than modern car dealers!

Second-hand spares are still readily available through Auto-jumbles and fellow Club members.

If you intend to try a Club run you should carry some spares in your car.

We can offer guidance on sources of all parts, imperial tools, nuts, bolts etc. and specialist engineering services; see our 'Guide to Parts and Services'.

Running Costs are low

The road tax, or Vehicle Excise Duty, is zero rated i.e. free, for vehicles produced before 1 January 1973 and these are classed by DVLA as 'Historic'; but you are still required to 'apply' for vehicle tax annually.

Our cars are no longer subject to the annual MoT (UK), but owners are advised to take them for a voluntary test at a garage that understands the testing of historic cars.

Fully comprehensive insurance, arranged through reputable brokers, is about £100 per year, and includes UK and European Recovery. See Guide to Parts and Services

A new tyre costs £60 or so for the earlier sidecar tyres, increasing to around £100 for the Big Seven tyres. Then add the cost of the inner tube and valve, sometimes plus carriage, but with care and regular use they will last up to 20,000 miles.

Fuel consumption is around 40 mpg and all 'Sevens' run well on normal unleaded 95 octane petrol. However, they will have a problem with bio-fuels having an Ethanol content of more than 5% i.e. E10 (10%). The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs, www.fbhvc.co.uk, has endorsed several additives for protection against corrosion in metals and rubber components in the fuel system

Engine oil costs depends upon your choice of a multigrade Classic 20W-50, or the traditional SAE 30 or 40 monograde; and how much your engine burns and leaks!

Using your 'Seven'

Once you own a 'Seven' you really should use it to preserve it; otherwise it will soon deteriorate, both internally and externally, if it is just left in the garage and looked at; and it will certainly not appreciate in value.

We encourage our member's to drive their 'Sevens', not only on Club events and to the summer rallies in the county, but whenever you wish, even for shopping, an afternoon run out to the coast or a pub-lunch with a few fellow club members.

NOSTALGIA CORNER



THE 'ANDY SEAGER' BUYER'S CHECKLIST

Editor: I asked Andy for his advice on buying an Austin Seven. This is his response:

I've considered this for a while - to be honest it's quite open-ended. Is the intention of this to support those who want to buy a car that's 'ready to go'?

Because, other than that specific use case, one might be prepared to correct all manner of problems, as I did when I bought and restored my 1931 Tourer. If one buys a project, then there are any number of potential 'horror stories' that might be part of the deal.

Buying a car in say April, to use in the same season and expecting it to be 'fit for the road' does put some more specific constraints on what you'd agree to take on. In that case then the most obvious area of concern is the braking system, which on an Austin 7 is likely to throw up these points interest:

- 1) Worn ball-end lever pivots
- 2) Worn ball ends on the actual levers
- 3) Worn brake cams
- 4) Loose and/or worn bottom pivot pins
- 5) Oil/grease soaked brake linings
- 6) Worn cross-shaft bearings
- 7) Split or cracked cross-shaft bearing mount on the chassis
- 8) Loose or split handbrake mounting
- 9) Worn brake pedal pivot and or pivot eye in the brake pedal
- 10) Damaged or crimped cables (the latter where after-market cable tensioners have been used)

To my point - I had to do ALL of these on my Tourer and recently I helped a fellow that had much of this that needed correcting. Before buying, jack the car up so that all 4 wheels are off the ground, have someone progressively apply brake pedal pressure on the pedal while you walk around the car and turn the wheels. Doing this recently revealed that only one brake actually pulled up! This leads one to further investigation.

Things you can look for without pulling the car apart:

Engine:

There could be all sorts of potential issues, but things I'd look for initially:

- 1) Oil evident around the centre head studs which can mean a cracked block
- 2) Grumbly rear end when car under load or advanced to 'normal' levels - could mean a worn rear main
- 3) I'd be looking for four even compressions on the starting handle - easy to detect a weak cylinder with a broken ring or burned valve
- 4) I'd also look for obvious changes to year-specific items such as the cylinder head type (low or high compression),



Gear Box:

- 1) Excessive movement of the gear lever or difficulty engaging gears (worn ball change or selectors)
- 2) Any noise created when pulling hard or on the overrun - gear boxes are not that difficult to find or change but it's always worth considering the impact when negotiating
- 3) Stripped threads on the starter motor mount/flywheel cover - cause the starter to move around when engaged

Back Axle:

- 1) Any spurious noises mean work!
- 2) Any bends or repairs in the axle tubes (leads to broken half shafts - I had two deal with this)

Bodywork:

- 1) Pull the carpets up! Looks for repairs that have been done and assess the quality of the work
- 2) Are the wings the same? There are a few different patterns and some cars have odd wings!
- 3) Leaks to the roof (saloons)
- 4) Check battery box for signs of corrosion

Wheels:

- 1) Jack them off the ground and spin them to see if they are out of true
- 2) Look for loose and/or broken spokes
- 3) Have a look at the key-ways around the wheel nuts and make sure the wheel centres look sound

Chassis:

- 1) Look for evidence of misalignment or repairs that might indicate a crash or use as a trials car
- 2) Look for corrosion at the back - the front is usually covered in oil!
- 3) Look at the join between the floor and the chassis and check for anything suspicious - like the body having been welded to the chassis during a bodge repair

Electrics:

- 1) Do all the switches and gauges work as intended?
- 2) Check for bodge wiring with bad connections and any evidence of burning to wires.
- 3) Make sure the dynamo cuts in properly and that it works on half and full charge



That's about all I can think of as a check list - it's been a while since I had a Seven.

I pretty much had everything on my list to do and a whole lot more - the car came off the road in October and was put back on the road in May the following year. The first stage of re-deployment did not include the new hood and side screens admittedly - but I lived in the garage ... ask Jo!

Andy Seager

AUSTIN HISTORY

Queries of The Month from Andy Ranson

These question and answer articles originally appeared in "The Austin Magazine & Advocate" during the 1930s and 1940s. This month's selection is: No 1179 Brake Drums – Ten. It appeared in the June 1944 edition.

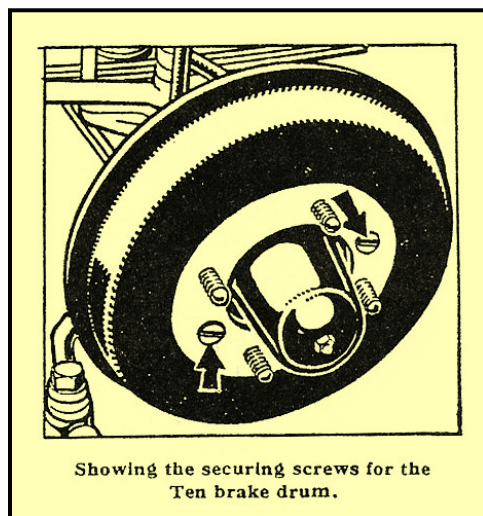
No 1179 Brake Drums - Ten

Q. *I recently decided to investigate the condition of the brake linings on my 1939 Ten, and attempted to remove one of the front brake drums. After taking off the wheel I discovered set screws apparently holding the drum in place, but on removing these the drum would not come clear. Should it have done so, or is there any others securing medium which has also to be released? I hesitated to drive the drum clear from behind, in the absence of precise knowledge on this point, and so should appreciate any advice you can give me on this point.*

A. The brake drums on your Ten are secured to the hubs by two small screws and should come clear when these are removed. If the drums stick on the hubs, try applying paraffin or a penetrating oil round the centre of the drum and the hub, and round the wheel studs. If this is given time to seep past the surfaces in contact it will attack any rusting, which is possibly resisting the removal of the drums.

You should remember that the brakes must be off for this purpose, or otherwise, the shoes and linings will grip the drum and prevent its removal.

The car being jacked, it should be securely chocked before the brakes are released and care will be necessary not to rock the car off the jack while persuading the drum to come clear. Mark the drum so that it can be refitted in the same position on the hub.



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

Past Press from Andy Ranson

Some advertisements from December 1932.


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AUSTIN MOTORS STANDARDISE
THE PYTCHLEY SLIDING ROOF
BECAUSE IT IS THE BEST

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A light easy rub with a "Town Talk" Impregnated Chromium Plate Cloth instantly removes the murky film that settles on Chromium Plating and simultaneously restores its original flashing brilliance.

This one cloth cleans and polishes at the same time, and being specially made for cleaning Chromium Plating, nothing else, it is non-injurious, instant in action, and used with effortless ease, without even soiling the hands or imparting the faintest odour.

Austin Owners keep it with their Kit for ready use.

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Made by the Manufacturers of the world famed "Town Talk" Liquid Silver Polish and "Town Talk" Silver Plate Cloth. It is sold by Austin Car Agents, Garages, Jewellers, Ironmongers, Rialto Cycle Co., Ltd. (All Branches), Timothy Whites, Boots (Cash Chemists).

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Get one to-day.

1/6 EACH

MANCHESTER.

TOWN TALK

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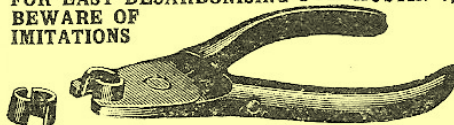


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SPECIAL SET OF SPARKING PLUGS FOR AUSTIN 7, 5/9. Post 6d.

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TREVOR'S TEASER – *"It's a Beastly World!"*

All answers are places in Great Britain which contain the name of an animal, i.e. a bird, fish, insect, etc., within them. Some are London districts.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|
| 1. A gap in a Cornish wainscot | — — — — — | 9 |
| 2. Cheshire boatmen? | — — — — — | 5 |
| 3. Salt water area for royal birds | — — — — — | 7 |
| 4. A sole place for fines? | — — — — — | 10 |
| 5. Funeral of a nasty woman | — — — — — | 10 |
| 6. West-Country ale centre | — — — — — | 4 |
| 7. Small Northamptonshire bog | — — — — — | 10 |
| 8. Got Dec to complete comedy pair | — — — — — | 6 |
| 9. Did Avon rep call here? | — — — — — | 9 |
| 10. Provide food for a pain in the neck? | — — — — — | 9 |
| 11. Be a good female parent | — — — — — | 10 |
| 12. The bottom of a map? | — — — — — | 8 |
| 13. Fried spud, ink dispenser and short amateur! | — — — — — | 10 |
| 14. Unused heavy religious leader | — — — — — | 6, 5 |
| 15. Young person's group of trees | — — — — — | 9 |
| 16. Birds of prey in Scottish valleys? | — — — — — | 10 |
| 17. Once a riotous area of Liverpool | — — — — — | 7 |
| 18. Drinking place for snooker players? | — — — — — | 7, 3 |
| 19. Early motor racing circuit | — — — — — | 10 |
| 20. The way in for a male sheep | — — — — — | 8 |
| 21. Burn one's lips | — — — — — | 9 |
| 22. A Cockney walk? | — — — — — | 7 |
| 23. Cowardly upper limbs | — — — — — | 6, 4 |
| 24. A Cornish cove | — — — — — | 7 |
| 25. A Warwickshire hamlet, near Barford | — — — — — | 9 |

Name(s):.....

Please submit your entry to Trevor Edwards, 55 The Brambles, Crowthorne. Berks RG45 6EF by Friday, 7th July 2017.

READERS WRITE TO AUNT BRASSICA...



Dear Harriet,

Firstly, my dear, you don't say how old you are. I have to assume that you are either a young lady of private means or an established professional.

In either case, you will find having control of a motor car is quite a liberating experience. It will take you to the nearest town for some personal shopping or into the countryside for a quiet ramble. But therein lie the dangers for a woman.

Traffic levels in towns have grown since the 1920s and the risk of a collision with a pedestrian, horse, or another car, is considerable. On the open road, you may find yourself driving too fast and unable to handle the car on rough roads, or bends.

Then there is the matter of coping with a breakdown, even a simple flat tyre. While men may approach you to help, you should be very circumspect about their motives. Whatever you do, make sure that your clothing is suitably modest and do not bend over, or show a leg, when attending to a puncture, or even getting into the car.

I have enclosed a helpful advert, published by those nice people at Austin, extolling the dependability of an Austin Seven.

Yours,

Aunt Brassica

*Dear Aunt Brassica,
I would really like to own a car, but
do you think it is safe?
I've enclosed this frightening picture,
which was published in my local
newspaper, of a crash on the A29
near Slinfold, Horsham.*

*Yours,
Harriet
of Horsham*



"AS DEPENDABLE AS AN AUSTIN"

£140

Think it out... and you'll buy an Austin Seven. The first small car ever designed to give the woman driver everything she wants

Before the Austin Seven was introduced seven years ago... where could be found a car of which a woman could say "Ah—the very car for me?"

The Austin Seven has altered all this. The splendid feeling of independence... the new freedom—a new outlook on life... all these the coming of the Austin Seven—and the Austin Seven alone—has made possible.

For this was the first car to embody all those qualities which a woman demands in a car for her own personal use.

Thoroughly proved for seven years—easily handled—imposing no driving strain—coolly comfortable—silky in running—magnificent in performance... above all, downright dependable, it is always ready to take her where she wills, whenever she wants.

£140 for coupe; coachbuilt or fabric saloon (sunshine roof £5 extra). Tourer £130. Standard equipment includes Triplex glass, chromium plating, wire wheels, Dunlop tyres. Ask your nearest Austin dealer to let you drive the car yourself. Literature free on request.

Austin 7

The Austin Motor Co. Ltd., Longbridge, Birmingham. Showrooms, also Service Stations for the Austin Seven: 479-483 Oxford Street, W.1. Showrooms and Service Stations: Roland Park Hall, W.11.

READ THE AUSTIN MAGAZINE: 4d. EVERY MONTH