

NORTH HAMPSHIRE AUSTIN ENTHUSIASTS GROUP



SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S CHUNTER...

Autumn has arrived with colder weather, wind and yet more rain. So it's nice to look back on our Summer activities. On *pages 1-3* we feature members' reports of Summer events that they attended including the jaw-dropping Robert & Tanya Lewis Collection in Churt. The Club Diary (*page 4*) shows that there is plenty to look forward to.

This issue's 'NHAEG Member Interview' (*page 5*) features Dave & Karen Witton's extensive collection – and asks how they ended up with so many cars and a tractor? This month's History (*page 8*) and Technical Matters (*page 9*) focus on Trafficators. There are other historical items from Andy Ranson including the blood red road sign (*pages 13-14*). The Quiz (*page 15*) is provided by Julie Els. Finally, Aunt Brassica (*page 16*) continues to dish up advice in answer to readers' questions. This month it's hair!

I look forward to seeing you on Monday 12th September club night when we have a speaker from the Brooklands Trust.

Simon

Editor: John Pratt (edmundjohnpratt@hotmail.com)

CLUB NEWS

Alan's Fish & Chip Run Thursday 14th July



Alan's mid-week run to Hayling Island was an outstanding success. The sun finally came out and 7 cars made their way through the leafy Hampshire countryside to their fish & chips destination by the sea. Alan reports that, "The run did have its little surprises. On the return, whilst trying to negotiate the Liss roundabout (to cross the A3), little 'Gwen' was eased out onto the roundabout only to be swarmed by a pack of ferocious Audi's - so discretion being the better part of valour, she hastily diverted from her intended path and turned down the A3 heading back towards Portsmouth peddle to the metal! When we finally got back to the Liss roundabout, all seemed quite peaceful and we had an uneventful run home. All in all, it was a great day out.

Dressed up - Monday 11th July



This year's Coveted Car meeting had a different twist, with members invited to wear clothing corresponding to the year of their car. James Gibson from BCA had agreed to judge the best period clothing as well as the most coveted car and turned up in his really nice Citroen Traction Avant. A prize was also given for the best Austin and a new award was given for the best story behind a car's ownership (a 'Pride of Ownership' prize). Next year we plan to continue this format and hope more people can dig out their wardrobes...

Paris to Dakar - Monday 8th August

Rollo Malcolm-Green finally made it to Heckfield, having postponed through illness from earlier in the year!

A full house of members heard of his incredible journeys from Paris to Dakar in a prewar Lea Francis and Peking to Paris in a Delage! His matter of fact delivery hardly conveyed the scale of the challenges and the difficulties that he faced – sleeping in a tent every night paled into insignificance compared with the risk of breaking down in a remote spot.

Rollo brought his car along for us to see. He had re-bodied it himself as a graduate hoping to drive to South Africa in search of a job. Only a modest amount of fettling was needed before embarking on his epic journey – apparently the Lea Francis is very robustly engineered and even the emergency 'pillow' jack wasn't need to change a wheel! Thanks to Peter & Wynn Kenrick for persuading Rollo to share his story.



THE ROBERT & TANYA LEWIS COLLECTION

Wow! What an amazing set of 45 cars all in concours condition, maintained on site in their own pristine garage with a dedicated mechanic.

Every year there is an opportunity to view the collection by invitation in aid of Help the Heroes. So on Saturday 13th August, 13 NHAEG members' cars met up in Badshot Lea before travelling in convoy to Churt for 12.30 pm. Either following Colin, or his directions, we arrived and were directed to drive through a marquee to be announced to the crowd of other visitors, before being directed to the parking area in a paddock. This was $\frac{3}{4}$ full with about 200 visitors' cars ranging from exotic McLarens, Astons, Ferraris, Rolls Royces, MGs etc. to us humble lot!



We didn't know whether to check out the carpark first or view the collection!



Having made a beeline to see the collection, the first building that we came to had a very nice 1930 Austin Swallow outside and Jaguars to drool over inside – 1955 D-type, 1951 C-type, 1951 XK120, 1931 several SS100s and a very beautiful 1954 MKII 3.8 recently restored to concours condition (with no expense spared). In the adjoining shed we found their latest acquisition - a racing K-type MG – and a Lotus Cortina imported from the USA and fully restored.

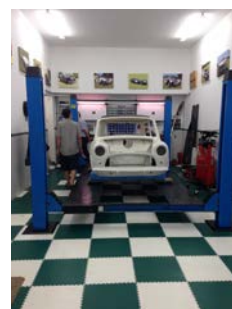


By now, we had begun to appreciate the amount of auto ephemera in each shed. But the biggest surprise came when we crossed the driveway into another building to be greeted by a stunning 'gull-wing' 1955 300SL Mercedes and an awesome 1939 Lagonda Le Mans replica (1 of 11 only built) – not forgetting the bright orange 1970 Lamborghini Miura P400S.

Lurking to one side we found a fully restored 1931 Austin Seven Box Saloon – one of the few vehicle needing a drip tray! Without going through the catalogue, we also loved the Alvis, Sunbeam and other Mercedes and Lagondas. Also, the Editor was waxing very enthusiastically about a 1960 MGA similar to one he had once restored to a much inferior standard!

New acquisitions are either fully restored or 'freshened up' by the in-house mechanic, although bodywork and trim items are sent outside to specialists. Both Robert and Tanya race cars from the collection and every car is driven for 1½ hours every month before being washed, polished and parked up.

From a handful of cars that they fell in love with, this very personal collection has grown into something very special and Robert & Tanya use it as a basis for many charity and club events. It is a must-see if the opportunity arises again...



NOSTALGIA CORNER



CLUB & EVENTS DIARY 2016

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	2016 Dates	Club Nights	Arranged by or details from
	Mon 12th Sept	Speaker – The Brooklands Trust	John P
	Mon 10th Oct	Shoebox Rally	Don (tbc)
	Mon 14th Nov	Auction Night	Colin, Don & Trevor
	Mon 12th Dec	Festive Fun	tba

NHAEG	2016 Dates	Club Lunch Meetings	Contact
	Mon 26 th Sept	The New Inn	Colin
	Mon 24 th October	The New Inn	Colin
	Mon 28 th November	The New Inn	Colin

Organiser	2016 Dates	Other Events & Location	Contact
Cobham Heritage	Saturday 10th Sept	Cobham Heritage Day classic car gathering	Ian Nelson tel: 01932 863073; email: ian.s.nelson@btinternet.com
Camberley Car Show	Saturday 3 rd September	Vintage, Classics, Customs, Hot Rods, Motorbikes, Entertainment	By invitation only: contact Ken Bonner kenbonner@btinternet.com
Watercress Line	Friday 21st-23rd Oct.	Autumn Steam Gala	www.watercressline.co.uk
NHAEG	Mon 5 th December	Christmas Dinner, The Mill House, Nth Warnborough, Odiham	Elaine
Club	2016 Dates	Inter Register Event & Location	Contacts as below, or talk to Trevor, Colin or Tony W for information
Crossley	Sun 18th Sept	Treasure Hunt North Yorks	Stephen Weld Tel. 01765 658569
MGCC	Sun 9th Oct	Autumn "Naviscat" Surrey/Sussex	Roger Thomas mmmfixit@hotmail.com
ATDC/ NHAEG	Sat 19th Nov	"Nightjar" Scatter/Orienteering Surrey/Hants/Berks	Trevor Edwards trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com

NIGHTJAR – SATURDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2016



Time flies! Yes, it's only 2 months until the next Nightjar scatter orienteering rally run by NHAEG. Under the guidance of Trevor and others, this event has flourished and become a 'must-do' event of the Inter-register calendar.

But to keep standards up and to secure the future of the event, we need more volunteers to either man a control (in the warmth of your car) or to help in the hall in Hook. We can promise a good fun time among enthusiastic people – why wouldn't you want to give up a Saturday evening for that? Please contact trevor_c.edwards@btinternet.com ASAP. Thanks!

THE MEMBER INTERVIEW - DAVE & KAREN WITTON

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

Dave: My father bought a Riley RMF 2½ litre in the early sixties and although, at the time, I was too young to drive, I would help him in the garage.



Editor: What was the first car that you owned?

Dave: For Christmas 1965, I was given a 1938 Austin Ruby to learn on and I subsequently passed my test in 1966. But, although I had the Ruby, my father bought a Riley RME 1½ litre which I used as day to day transport. The Ruby leaked a considerable amount of oil and I had to replace the stripped sump studs and replaced the crank shells before selling it on for £50. I then had a succession of old cars including a Riley RMF and Triumph Renown.

Editor: So what got you back into Austin ownership – and in such a big way?

Dave: My interest in Austins was rekindled after we moved from Reading to Farnham in 2005 and we bought a 1932 Austin 7 Tourer (Molly) from Arnold Crowe. She was in quite good order, but I've done quite a bit of work on her installing a Phoenix crank, a downdraught SU carburettor and a higher 2nd gear, which makes all the difference. In 2014 we completed the Tacho Tour in France and we plan to take her to Austria next year. This year Karen won an award at Beaulieu with Molly.



We then bought a 1932 RN box Saloon (Mabel) in Weybridge in 2005, which needed lots of tlc. We did this over the next year with her parked in Dorset at Karen's Grandma's house. This led us to our next find in Dorset in 2006, a red 1931 RL which was being offered at a very attractive price, having been restored about 16 years previously.



By now I was getting quite a taste for box saloons and when a 1931 RL 'Barn Find' came up in the same year, I was very tempted – especially as it was a one-owner vehicle with the original V5 logbook and all the tax discs from 1931 to 1944 when she was put into storage. She still had the wartime blackout shields fitted. But she needed a full nut & bolt restoration and this is still ongoing, although I did rebuild the engine and ran it in another car for a time. You won't be surprised to know that the restoration cost exceeded the value of the car some time ago!

By now my interest was turning to the other variants of the Austin Seven and in 2008 we went to see a Type 65 (Nippy) in Chapel-en-le-Frith in the Peak District. This had been restored by an elderly gentleman who now wanted to pass it on. The car was great and we bought it on the spot, but given the distance and not having driven it very far, we decided to bring it home by low loader. But the following year, we took her to Perth in Scotland.

Leaving at 5am, we drove to Lincoln for the first overnight stop and then on to Beamish, finally making Perth on the third day. With the lack of luggage space, we sent our clothes ahead by parcel-post, as we were going to a rally with a ceilidh afterwards. On the Sunday, we posted our dirty washing home and on Monday, after leaving at 9am, we proceeded to drive all the way to our holiday cottage outside Bury St Edmunds, arriving by 11.30pm! We got back to Farnham the following day, but I would never attempt that again!



We had started to hanker after an early Chummy and, through the Norfolk Austin Seven Club, we found a 1926 model in Wymondham, Norfolk, in 2009. We her drove back to Bury St Edmunds where she now lives. The roads are so much quieter there - and more Austin-friendly!



By now the variant theme had taken root and I thought it would be nice to have a van. I happened to see one on eBay just before Christmas (2010) and we went to Swanley, Kent, to have a look at it. It had a green repro ash body by John Heath on a 1926 Chummy chassis with 4 wheel uncoupled 6" brakes and a magneto engine. I thought that I'd put in a low bid. So, having set my maximum price, I used a bidding program and thought no more about it. So I was slightly surprised to get an email telling me that I now owned it. I decided to rebuild the engine, which was just as well as the crank was

cracked. After a couple of false starts to adopt a brewer's livery, I have now finally had a sign writer put a simple Austin Seven Servicing design on her.

Then there followed a hiatus of four years while we absorbed our purchases and brought them up to standard, but during this time, I had been doing the maintenance for a friend with an RP saloon in near-concours condition. Sadly, he was no longer healthy enough to drive it - and wanted me to buy it – so she too joined the collection!



Then we come to the 9th car: over some time, I had been talking casually to Nigel Snow about the desirability of a Gordon England bodied seven and when he heard of one in 2014 from Graham Beckett, he alerted me. Having finally agreed a deal, we drove up to Lincoln with a trailer on Good Friday 2015. The condition of the chassis and fabric body was great, but I have to be so careful not to damage it! The engine, by repute, had been rebuilt by Ian Bancroft of A7 Restorations.

Editor: That is quite a saga and a really interesting collection – does the story end there?

Dave: Well not quite! In 2004 I had bought Karen a 1999 Morgan Plus 8 for Christmas. It's a great car for burbling down country roads at weekends and we take it to France on holiday. But to bring us bang up to date, my birthday present this year from Karen is a 1955 Massey Ferguson tractor which is road legal. After some fettling, I plan to take it to local agricultural shows in Norfolk/Suffolk, where we plan to move next year to our 'forever' house. Although I retired as a commercial pilot a few years ago, Karen is still working, so it will require a transition. The house needs some restoration, but it has a bit of land and, more importantly, two barns to house the vehicles. Meanwhile I've become chairman of the Norfolk Austin Seven Club.

Editor: You've undertaken some pretty long trips, which many of us wouldn't countenance. How do you manage it?

Karen: I enjoy driving our cars and we share the driving equally. I passed my test at 17 in a Ford Fiesta, but I wasn't particularly interested in old cars. But having mastered double declutching by the 'Dad's Army method' i.e. counting 123 between clutch depressions, I learned to adjust the revs by experience - it's all about getting in the road miles - but I think a lot of people give up too quickly. Downhill changes are definitely the hardest to get right, but on the long journeys, which we favour, there aren't too many! The long wheelbase cars are the most comfortable and we have put effort into bringing their brakes, engines and suspensions up to scratch, so we can cruise at over 40mph.

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

Dave: I think we all worry about breakdowns, but having the insurance based recovery service removes some of the worry. I'm not into roadside repairs and we have been fortunate with only having one major 'moment', when the Nippy blew the rear core plug on the way to Scotland. Luckily it had just popped out and I found it lying on top of the crankcase. This normally needs the engine out, so I tried forcing the plug back in with plenty of gasket-goo, and I wedged it against the bulkhead with a pack made from a cut-up radiator hose. Karen set off on foot to find water and returned with a full watering can from a hotel that we had passed on the road. This got us going again, but I later resorted to replacing the rubber packing with a piece of wood - and this got us to Scotland and all the way home. Otherwise, it would have been a recovery vehicle to get home and then we would have missed the rally.

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

Dave: We love driving in France because the French are so enthusiastic about old Austins – and this is also true of East Anglia and the North East. And as we prefer driving to rallies rather than exhibiting at shows, distance isn't an issue for us. But, undoubtedly, Austin ownership is all about the people that we have met in the process – we might all be very different, but we share the same interest - and among Austin owners, there isn't the pretentiousness or vanity that exists in other single marque clubs.

Editor: Looking back – what would you do differently?

Dave: I wished that I had started earlier before Austin prices for the more unusual models became silly! Also, the 'variants strategy' only emerged along the way.



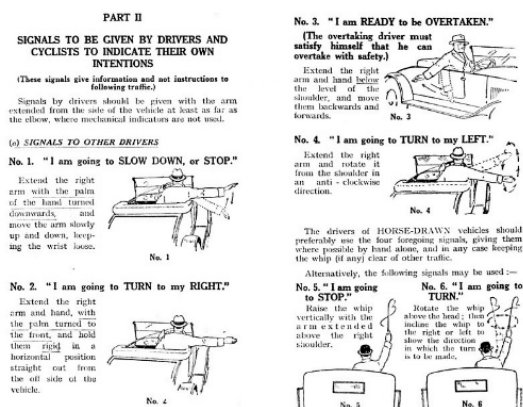
I certainly wouldn't buy another 'barn-find', but stick to buying cars in good condition and undertaking whatever extra work is needed to bring them into top condition. I use outside specialists for body work, but I really enjoy undertaking engine repairs in my workshop (Ed: which is well equipped). The satisfaction lies in bringing the cars back to life and driving them!



THE EARLY HISTORY OF SIGNALLING A TURN

The whole business of signalling a turn – by whatever means – has to be seen against the huge rise in UK road deaths as popular motoring took off in the 1920s. Over 7,000 people were killed on the roads in 1930, compared with 4,886 in 1926. This is a huge figure compared with the modern day when some 1,775 people died in 2014.

The government of the day reacted to this alarming situation by introducing driving licences and a Highway Code. In 1920 driving licenses were issued to 100,000 addresses in London and by 1930 this figure had risen to 261k.



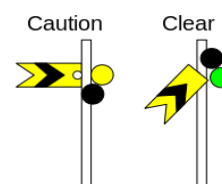
In 1931 there were 2.3 million cars on the British roads and 7,000 copies of the first edition of the Highway Code were sold. The Highway Code was targeted at all road users – particularly important as the disparity in speeds between horse drawn vehicle and motor cars was growing.

Drivers of horse-drawn carriages were told: "Rotate the whip above the head; then incline the whip to the right or left to show the direction in which the turn is to be made."

Drivers were given a simplified form based on the semaphore. It stated that there was "no objection" to the use of a suitable mechanical or electrical device in the place of hand signals.

The idea of a semaphore arm was taken directly from the railways, which operated to a strict set of 'Signal Orders' dating back to the 19th century. While railway 'home' signals were usually red the discretionary 'distant' signals were indicated in yellow. To facilitate night time operation, some portion of the signal showed an appropriately coloured light at night. When semaphore signals became common on the railways, after about 1880, they were formally adopted as 'train order' signals. Usually, arms for both directions were mounted on the same post, with a single lamp for night aspects in both directions. A train was governed by the arm pointing to the right. In the case of multiple tracks, the signal applied to all tracks and to trains moving against the current direction of traffic. The signal mast was conveniently placed on the station platform in front of the telegraph office, from which the operator had a view in both directions along the track. If visibility was restricted, the mast was sometimes placed on the far side of the track. These signals became by far the most common semaphore signals.

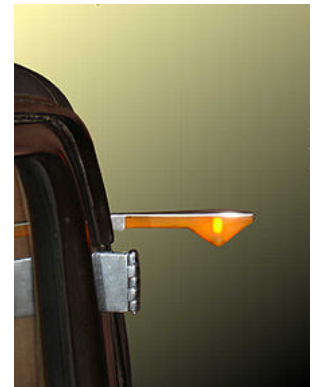
In the United States, they were placed in front of every station with a telegraph office. They were easy to sight, and every train approached under control ready to obey their indications. Until the 1920s, distant signals were coloured red, with a red light at night. Given that their meanings were different, it was obviously unsatisfactory to have both home and distant signals showing the same colour, but one of the problems which delayed a change in the colour of distant signals to yellow was the lack of a suitable yellow glass for the spectacle frame.



Some British railway companies used the Coligny-Welch signal lamp to clarify night aspects; this was fitted to distant signals and showed a white vee in addition to the main red or green light. The Ministry of Transport recommended that the colour of distant signal arms and spectacles be altered from red to

yellow in the early 1920s, although this was not universally adopted in the UK until the late 1920s. Since that time, the yellow caution aspect has remained a British railway standard.

In the motoring world, these turn indicators quickly became known as 'Trafficators'. They were essentially semaphore signals which, when operated, protrude from the bodywork of a motor vehicle to indicate its intention to turn in the direction indicated by the pointing signal. They had first appeared in the 1900s, when they were actuated either mechanically or pneumatically. In 1908, Alfredo Barrachini in Rome added electric lights inside the arms that turned on as they extended, but operation was still by a cable system. Electric operation came in 1918 when the Naillik Motor Signal Company of Boston added electric motor drive. This system was superseded by two French inventors, Gustave Deneef and Maurice Boisson, who used a linear solenoid in 1923. The final complete system came in 1927 when Berlin-based Max Ruhl and Ernst Neuman combined internal illumination and solenoid operation.



Trafficator in the 'On' position

It is believed that the shape of the Trafficator arm was closely based upon the shape of the semaphore signal arm used by the Royal Bavarian Railway beginning in 1890. The only difference from the railway arm is that it is halved down its length so as to fit flush with the vehicle's exterior.



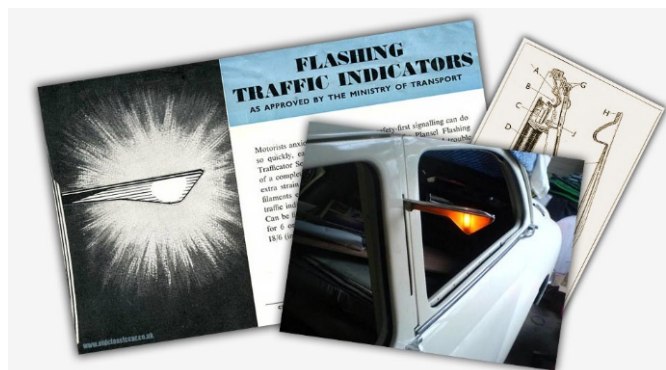
Trafficators first appeared on Austin Sevens in 1934 on the RP Box saloon as an external box trafficator. From the introduction of the Ruby they were fitted as built-in versions, firstly type SE26 and then type SF28A by Lucas. The SF80 lens and stainless cover are still available from

<http://www.vintagemotorspares.com/page6.htm>

The picture shows a pair of 1933 SE26 Trafficators (believed working!) sold at Herefordshire Vintage Auctions for £70!

Trafficators were common on vehicles until the introduction of the flashing amber, red or white indicators at or near the corners of the vehicle (and often along the sides as well). But they became increasingly rare since the 1950s, as ever-tightening legislation has prescribed the need for the modern type of flashing signal. It became common for many historic vehicles that are used on today's roads have their trafficators supplemented or replaced with modern indicators to aid visibility and to meet legislative requirements.

In the 1960s a conversion was offered to give trafficators a flashing lamp!



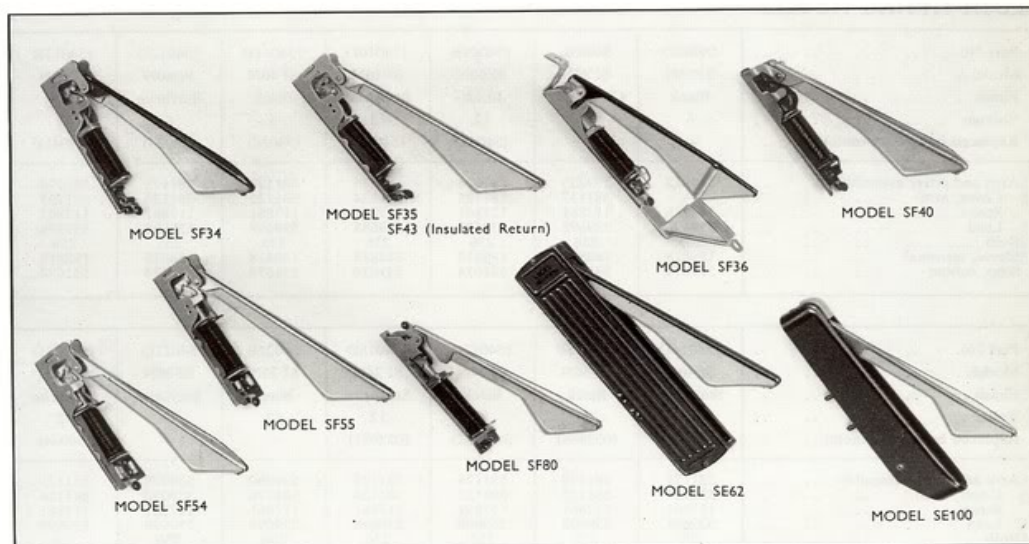
LUCAS

TRAFFICATORS

SECTION
M

MODEL INTERPRETATION

- SF34 Flush fitting type; arm extends $7\frac{1}{4}$ " from pivot pin.
- SF35 Flush fitting type; arm extends $8\frac{1}{4}$ " from pivot pin.
- SF36 Flush fitting type; narrow, shaped arm extends $7\frac{1}{4}$ " from pivot pin.
- SF40 Flush fitting type; arm extends $7\frac{1}{4}$ " from pivot pin; similar to SF34 but shallow body.
- SF43 Similar to SF35 but insulated return.
- SF54 Similar to SF34 but arranged to suit special warning light circuit.
- SF55 Similar to SF35 but arranged to suit special warning light circuit.
- SF80 Flush fitting type; arm extends $7\frac{1}{4}$ " from pivot pin; separate detachable arm moulding.
- SE62 Exterior fitting type; diecast case incorporating SF35 trafficator movement.
- SE100 Exterior fitting type; streamlined, pressed steel case incorporating SF80 trafficator movement.



Catalogue
No. 400E

JOSEPH LUCAS LIMITED BIRMINGHAM 19

MI

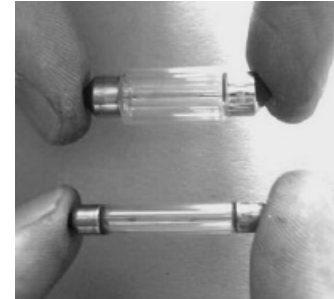
The final development worth noting is that of the turn indicator stalk or turn signal lever. In right-hand-drive (RHD) motor vehicles, the indicator stalk is located on either the left or right of the steering column, depending on the manufacturer. European RHD cars generally have the stalk on the left (often using the same component as LHD cars), while Asia-Pacific RHD cars generally have the stalk on the right (mirroring the configuration of a LHD vehicle). Some manufacturers such as Subaru still have variations in the model line-up as to where the turn indicator stalk is located. Yet some cars have forgone the traditional stalk-mounted indicators for either a switch (as used on a motorcycle) or a button. Examples are the Caterham 7 and the Ferrari 458.

TECHNICAL MATTERS – LED TRAFFICATORS

The original article, written by Geoff Hardman, originally appeared in CA7C Seven Focus in Jan 2007 pp16-17. It is reproduced here with the kind permission of the Cornwall Austin Seven Club.

Ever since I rewound some 12V trafficators to make them work properly on 6V, they've always looked a bit lop sided. The reason for this is that one has a 6V bulb and the other has a 12V bulb. Not surprisingly, the 12 volt one looks a bit feeble, not really a job at all. You'd think that changing a bulb would be simple enough... but just look what happens when a Festoon puts on weight!

Anyone who has tried to replace a Festoon bulb in a trafficator arm will have encountered some problems. New Festoon bulbs are much bigger in diameter than before, and simply do not fit inside the orange plastic housing. The smaller part in the picture is an original Lucas festoon bulb from a trafficator. The larger part is ALSO a standard Lucas festoon, but a brand new one. This may not matter in a modern interior light, but just try getting this inside the orange arm on a trafficator!

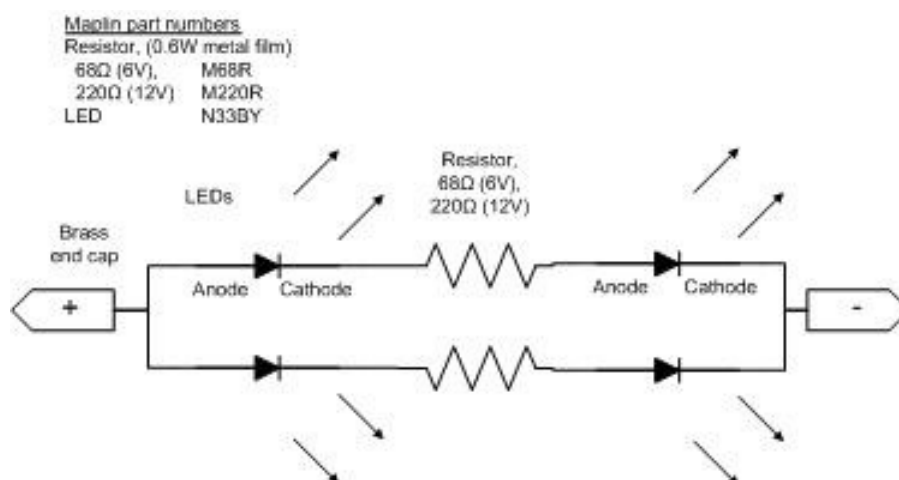


Also, there are very few, if any, 6V replacements available. So, if a bulb has failed in a trafficator, the only way ahead is to make one.

The bulb is very crudely held in place between two moulded guides. Contact is made by a spring at the lower end and by bearing on to the earthed chrome cover at the top. So, it is necessary to make up a lamp that meets these mechanical requirements, whilst still being electrically compatible.

This can be done using an array of four LEDs. As the outer cover is orange, the LEDs must also be orange. Note that white LEDs will not work; they are predominantly blue and green in the spectrum and will be filtered out by the orange of the arm. Four LEDs are needed as LEDs are very directional and somewhat small. By using four, two can point towards the back of the vehicle and two towards the front. Provided they are spaced out, the trafficators look quite similar to those that are filament lit.

An old festoon bulb was dismantled in order to reuse the end caps. This is done by heating the glass envelope so as to burn off the adhesive and allow the caps to become loose. Take care when doing this: use pliers and protective glasses.



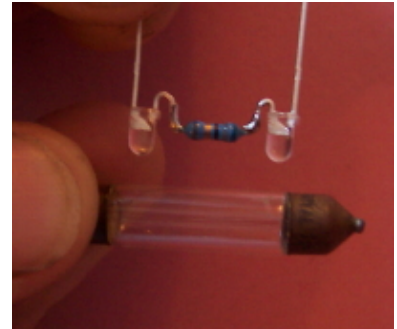
Two banks of LEDs were assembled, so that they can be mounted facing in opposite directions. Each bank consisted of an orange 3mm LED (Maplin part number N33BY), a 0.6W resistor, (68 Ohms for 6V, 220 Ohms for 12V), and a second LED.



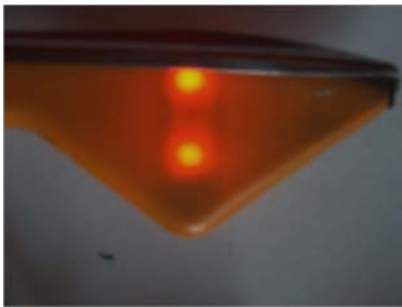
Thus the resistor spaces the two LEDs out. No circuit board was used so as to keep weight to a minimum. Then the LEDs and the resistor were folded to make a simple springy structure as shown in the photo.

Note that it is important not to let the structure be either too long, (the overall length being 1½") or too wide to fit in the slots. The best tool for this job is a pair of tweezers or very pointy pliers. Note also the LEDs are polarised. Before cutting or soldering, the shorter lead

is the cathode, or negative connection. If the leads have already been cut, the cathode can be identified with a magnifying glass – it is the structure that is wedge shaped inside the plastic envelope. In addition, as the leads are quite short, it is important to make the solder joints quickly, to avoid overheating the LEDs themselves. Once each bank of LEDs was assembled, the positive end (anode) was marked with a tiny piece of red sleeving.



With a bit of careful bending and folding, the LEDs fit neatly between the end caps, one forward and one backward at each end. The leads from the LEDs were passed through the holes in the end caps, though these needed opening up slightly to get both wires through. After soldering, the excess wire was cut off.



The assembly was inserted into the arm, noting that the polarity is important. If the car is negative earth, then the cathode is inserted LAST, as the earth connection is at the top. For positive earth cars, the cathode is inserted first. If this is inserted incorrectly, the LEDs will not be damaged; they simply won't light.

On reassembly the LEDs were found to be visible even in bright daylight and quite bright enough in the evening.



SPANNERMAN – THIS MONTH'S TIPS

1. If you find it difficult to start a small screw in a hole as your fingers don't seem able to push and twist at the same time, slide a bit of tight fitting rubber or plastic tubing to join the screw to a screw driver. No more hunting dropped screws on the garage floor. This is an old tip, but one tends to forget it.
2. When soldering a nipple to the end of a copper pipe, it is easy to get solder in the pipe as well, not a good idea. If you put a length of aluminium rod or tube inside the copper tube, you keep the pipe open and the solder won't stick to the aluminium, so it can be pulled out. Model shops sell ali. tubing in various sizes, or ask your aeromodelling friends what they have.
3. Wire wool is ideal for cleaning metal prior to soldering, and tinning of both items to be joined is essential for a good joint. If the joint is close fitting, flick off the surplus solder while it is still liquid.

AUSTIN HISTORY

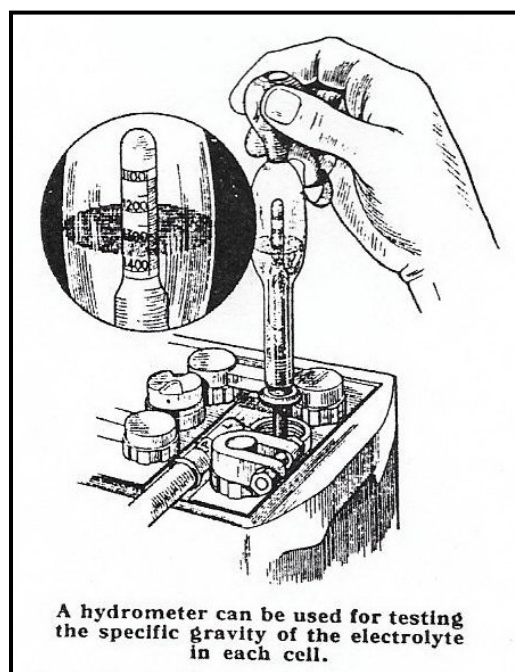
Queries of The Month from Andy Ranson

These question and answer articles originally appeared in "The Austin Magazine & Advocate" during the 1930s and 1940s. This month's selection is No 671 Battery Corrosion – Austin Seven and appeared in the June 1935 edition and are reproduced with the kind permission of the Austin Ten Drivers Club (ATDC).

No 671 Battery Corrosion - Austin Seven

Q. *In my Seven the battery terminals and adjacent surfaces are being attacked by the battery acid. I have Vaseline'd the terminals as instructed, but obviously cannot smear Vaseline on the battery box and surrounding parts. What is the cause of this corrosion? Is it fumes from the battery or a leakage of the actual electrolyte?*

A. From the information you give it appears that you have been overfilling the battery cells when topping-up with distilled water. The level of the electrolyte in each cell should never be above the tops of the separators which can be seen when the vent plug has been removed from the filling orifice. The separators then serve as baffles to prevent the electrolyte surging in response to movements of the car when running, so precluding the acid solution working out through the vents. Moreover, with the electrolyte only up to the level specified, a space is left for acid vapour, which is then not likely to be forced out of the battery by movements of the solution. As there has possibly been a loss of acid from the cells of your battery, you should ensure that the electrolyte is of the right strength, i.e., 1.285 specific gravity, if the battery is fully charged, or 1.200 if in a low state of charge, as specified in the handbook. This can be tested by a hydrometer, an instrument akin to a large syringe, but having inside a small graduated float. On electrolyte being drawn into this instrument by squeezing and relaxing the rubber ball, the degree of immersion of the float will indicate the specific gravity.



When making this test, ensure that the electrolyte withdrawn from each cell is returned to the same cell, as otherwise the test will be inconclusive, and the reading will obviously not be reliable unless the float is freely supported by the electrolyte. To replace spilled acid, as indicated by a low specific gravity reading, add a diluted acid solution of 1.320 specific gravity. Any corrosion should, of course, be cleaned off the battery terminals and adjacent surfaces and the terminals smeared with Vaseline as a protection against subsequent attack, also the entire battery top should be cleaned and kept dry. If spilling from the cells persists even with the electrolyte level only up to the top of the separators, rubber drip cups, obtainable from any Lucas Service Station, can be fitted under the vent plugs a further safeguard.

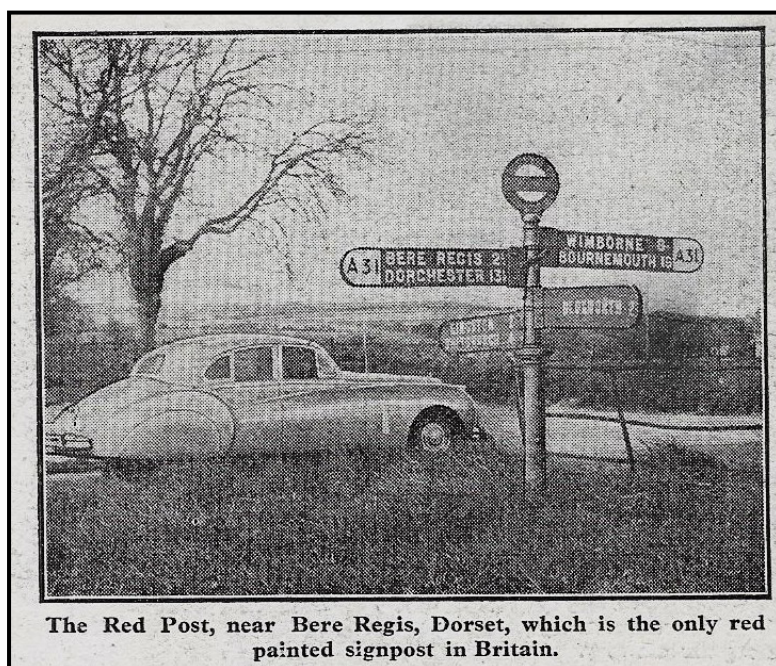
Past Press

An article from a motoring magazine, March 1959, featuring the 'Mo-Bed' priced at £75, including a canvas awning to be used as a kitchen.

I wonder why it didn't catch on!



The pictures below are of a red road sign from down here in sunny Dorset on the A31. The picture on the left is from a motoring magazine from 1955 and the sign still exists today although some place names appear to have been deleted/added and one of the arms has been removed.



I have driven past this sign many times and have always wondered why it is red in colour, however, I am not sure if it is the only red sign in Britain as a further two are claimed to be in existence elsewhere. There are many stories of why the sign is red, the possibly location of a grisly murder or the location of a gibbet, but the real reason is that it is a signpost to indicate the location of a night stop to illiterate prison guards escorting prisoners. These prisoners were escorted from Dorchester prison to Portsmouth for embarkation to the penal colony of Australia.

About 100 yards down the lane to Bloxworth is a farm called Botany Bay, at the farm is a half destroyed barn built like a prison with narrow slits for windows. The barn was built in the 18th century and was used to house the prisoners for their first nights stop, being 14 miles from Dorchester prison. The barn, which was partly destroyed by fire in 1935, had at one time a large pole in the centre, rising to the roof, to which the prisoners were attached by chains for the night. A far cry of how prisoners are treated today!

“JULIE’S TEASER”

All answers are the name of a bird. Please email or send answers to Julie Els by

1. Part of Norwich football team. (6)
2. Catch royalty on line (10)
3. A baby heavenly body? (8)
4. A rotten squawk (7,4)
5. Gulp! (7)
6. Windy in hours of darkness (11)
7. Confused non duck (7)
8. Communist flying aid (7)
9. Similar to a rum butter! ((7,5)
10. Secure a female bird (7)
11. Colourless headwear (8)
12. Burning head feathers (9)
13. Sudden withdrawal of this cold avian (6)
14. Carbon nipple (4,3)
15. Merry King of the bush is he (10)
16. Average decay (6)
17. Two under the average fifty (6,5)
18. Castle that can move in a straight line (4)
19. Titanic character without his offspring (7)
20. Payment for a fenced piece of land (9)
21. Headless sorrow (5)
22. A happy dog can do this (7)
23. Solidified short green fruit! (6)
24. Decorative flags in the midst of winter (4,7)
25. Crown doge keeper is truly muddled (5,10)

NAMES:.....

Answers please to: Julie Els, 5 Edgbarrow Rise, Sandhurst, GU47 8QH or julie.els@tiscali.co.uk

READERS WRITE TO AUNT BRASSICA...



Dear Aunt Brassica,

Thank you for your very helpful advice on the proper way to dress. However, I'm not very happy about my hair. I've been attempting to manage it myself. What do you think I should do?

Yours hopefully,
'Attracted of Aldershot'



Dear 'Attracted of Aldershot',

This is always difficult. I think you need another set of eyes on it – someone who has a wider experience and perhaps can cut it differently. I would strongly recommend a travelling hairdresser, as they certainly won't break the bank and will give you a new more modern cut.

I enclose a picture of the girl that I use and you should look out for one like this.

Good luck!

*Aunt
Brassica*

