FEBRUARY 1980

DORSET AUSTIN SEVEN CLUB

CLUB NIGHT February 21st 8 p.m. Nags Heed. Mike Riley has kindly agreed to come along and give us one of his very entertaining talks on a motoring topic. So a good turnout please.

EDITORIAL

Another month gone by! I don’t know where the time has gone this winter. I haven’t got round to covering the Ruby up or jacking her up off her tyres yet. I don’t think it is worth bothering now as I hope to tax her next mouth. It is all this decorating and home DIY that takes so much time. I think I'll teach Pat how to grind in the Austin valves and do a decoke!!

The skittles evening was a great success with more people than last year mainly thanks to Brian Pledger who brought 26 people. Well done Brian, the more the merrier. The evening was organised and run by Elisabeth Wragg this year with a bit of help (or hindrance) from Mike! Many thanks for your hard work and a very pleasant evening. No one seems to know who won the skittles!

NEXT MONTH’S COMMITTEE MEETING: The Avon Tyrrell, Avon, Nr. Ringwood.

Thursday 28th February at 8.30 p.m.

AUSTIN SEVEN CLUBS ASSOCIATION MEETING

John Page and I went up to the A.S.C.A. meeting at Great Hasely,

nr. Oxford, on the 13th January arriving just as the meeting was about to start. This quarter was the AGM and we had to vote for the incoming committee. Two positions were not filled - that of Advertising
Manager, formerly John Platt, and that of Magazine Editor, formerly Roger Shea. No one present wanted to take on either of these positions, so it was decided to ask each club to advertise the posts in their newsletters. Roger Shea explained that he would remain editor for all of 1980, but added that a new editor must be found by the April meeting, as planning for 1981 must start around then. John Platt agreed to carry on with the advertising until someone else was found.

There was some debate on the Everest insurance scheme again this meeting, the general consensus of opinion was that on the whole it was a good scheme and well worth continuing. 1980 premiums will start from £18.50. Phil Baildon informed us that as from the 1st January 1980 there were 528 policies in force, and there had been 20 claims up until that date. Phil went on to say that if anyone has any problems arising over the scheme, they should contact him.

Another rather worrying point was brought up by Ian Dunford. This concerns Public Liability in the event of an accident or injury to persons during a club event. As far as I could understand the committee were liable to be sued in the event of a claim and we could lose everything including our homes. Ian went on to say that the solution was to become as Limited Company whereby only the club (or company) would be sued and lose its assets. Evidently the Bristol A7 club are seriously thinking of taking this course.

Finally, it was stated that any contributions for the ASCA Magazine being sent in should be typed and not hand-written, as the printers are now going to charge extra for reading and-written material.

GLYN

WHAT'S SO WONDERFUL ABOUT VETERAN CARS?

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I'd be the first to agree with you if you think that because a veteran car is old it has outlived its usefulness. And as such should be taken off the roads and quietly put to sleep. However, there are a good many people – usually – men - who would stand up and say loudly that we are wrong. And given half a chance, they'll tell us in exhausting detail just how well-made the wretched things are. Then all about the craftsmanship and the perfect engineering and so an - I've discovered you need a really thick skin or a rare gift for putting your foot in it to get them stopped. What on earth, you wonder, do they find so fascinating about these old cars.

Well, veteran cars certainly look different from present day cars.

They’re frequently open to the air and there's a sit up and beg look
about them. They will probably be started - if you are lucky - with a starting handle. Their headlights are more likely to be lamps. And they come in all shapes and sizes. One thing they do have in common is the loving care with which they are treated by their owners.

A typical veteran car will have been tended in its early days by some gifted craftsman turned chauffeur-mechanic. And more recently by a doting owner. Some of them, however, haven't been quite so lucky. Sometimes, I discovered, they even got lost How, you may wonder, is it possible to lose something as big as a car? Yet a l906 Rolls Royce, covered with weeds, was unearthed on a farm near Adelaide in Australia. The weeds were removed, it was done up, and was soon restored to its former glory. It still enjoys an active life.

And of course some people go to it ridiculous lengths to dig them up. Take my advice and avoid an enthusiast like the plague or you'll find yourself ‘enjoying’ long draughty drives in various ancient vehicles. Or nosing around in old barns for no better reason than to look for a disused Lea Francis, or a temporary out of work Riley. The fact is that once a man has a love of cars of any kind, any relationship he might have with a mere female must definitely take second place. He might be in the middle of a quite interesting conversation with you, then some old jalopy will come lumbering along and he will at once forget that you exist. Off he'll go and talk to the owner about its age and where got it. So that you might as well go home.

Veteran cars breed a sort of camaraderie. If one enthusiast has a breakdown another is sure to stop to help. The two of them will suggest ways of improvising to make repairs. They will uncomplainingly push the invalid car uphill and, always, they will talk.

However, if you decide to stick around, you can learn a lot. For instance, did you know that the first self-propelled road vehicle was almost certainly built in 1768 and was made to work by steam? And that a Cornish gentleman called Richard Trevithick (not Peter – Ed) created a magnificent steam car which travelled from Cranborne to Plymouth in 1802, attaining the heady speed of nine miles per hour on the flat. Another interesting fact you will discover is that the invention of the petrol-driven motor came in 1884.

Soon there were enough vehicles around to make it possible to hold a motor race. In fact, this early race, held in France, heralded the future popularity of the motor car. Or to put it my way, that’s where the rot set in.

From that day, speed progressively became the most important factor in our lives. Not that many veteran cars will exceed the speed limit, but with the arrival of the motor car the urge to get everywhere as fast as you could began to spread. The quiet, peaceful, leisured days started to disappear. As more modern cars went faster so, strangely, the interest in older, slower vehicles increased. And as soon as you have a group of people all mad about the same thing you are bound to have a club. So, of course there is a Veteran Car Club of Great Britain. Members of this club will talk about slipping clutches and belt strikers with genuine affection. They will even look a trifle shocked when others admit to not understanding a word they’re talking about. They will speak loudly and with enthusiasm about rallies. And they look quits cross when you suggest that ancient vehicles make as much noise as an aeroplane – and take a lot longer to get out of earshot.

A number of years ago, a film about a veteran car called Genevieve gave a boost to such stars as Kenneth Moore and Kay Kendall. Unfortunately,

The film also did as much for veteran cars as it did for the stars. After that the annual Brighton Run for Horseless Carriages became an even more popular event. The Brighton Run can be truly be called the Everest of the Veteran Car Club. This is the day when other motorists in sleeker, more modern vehicles only laugh when they’re kept waiting in the Brighton Run traffic jam. Policemen smile indulgently and traffic wardens put their books away for this great day all the competitors dress for the occasion. Pretty girls are persuaded to sit by the driver purely for decoration. They wear gorgeous boaters, with soft chiffon draped over them tied underneath the chin. And if they are wise they will borrow some of grandma’s warm winter woollies as well as a collection of hot-water kettles and rugs.

So, the circle of men who became addicted to this hobby grew even wider, the number of people who enjoyed watching people on their ceremonial drives increased. You might think that interest in older cars, or crocks as they’re irreverently called, is confined only to the rich, but this is not true. You will find members of the club who, even if they cannot afford a car themselves, still manage to get involved with someone who can. They will insist they are engineering apprentices or mechanics, or carpenters ...or for that matter bankrupt stockbrokers! The only real qualification for membership is a fervent wish to get some groaning old crate into motion - slow motion!

The sad truth of the matter is that to anyone like me, who does not know a big end from a hammer, interest in Veteran or Edwardian cars is extremely difficult to understand. However, the fact remains that there are thousands of men who, though they won't lift a finger in the house to help with the washing up…... Yet will not bat an eyelid when it comes to mending half a dozen punctures, or grinding a few inlet valves. Not to mention tinkering with their timing or getting their bright-work to gleam with lots of elbow grease. Above all is their ever-ready willingness to push.

And as far as I’m concerned, let them get on with it!

RESTORATION OF WL 1133
Nothing very much has gone on with the restoration this month due mainly to the fact that after waiting two months for a set of pistons, they still haven’t arrived.

Consequently, the rest of the engine rebuild has stopped except for opening and polishing of the valve ports on the block to try and keep up with that dreaded ’Blue Box’ of Bernard. The wheels have also been shot-blasted, hand painted and fitted with new tyres – at great expense!

My radiator, after testing at Marston Radiators in Poole has had a new core fitted and is now due for collection with a bill for £75, but I hope this will prove to be money well spent in the long run.

This week I have stripped all the instruments, polished and replaced them and I must say they really look good on the new dash.

Well, that’s all this month’s toils except for a de-coke and valve regrind on my everyday transport – my 1930 Box Saloon.

GARY MUNN

SECRETARIAL RAMBLINGS

With the start of the year and better weather around the corner, now is the time to check your Seven over. Here is a check-list of things to do if your 7 has been dormant for a while:

1. Change oil in engine and check gearbox and axle levels
2. Check that all brake levers are free and well lubricated
3. Adjust brakes
4. A good grease-up – don’t forget the Propshaft!
5. Clean plugs and points
6. Check over all electrics, bulbs etc, and that loose wire

By the way, we have not got a date yet for the Daffodil Run and the date for the Beaulieu Rally has been changed from the 6th July to the 29th June with the barbeque the previous night. Midland A7C are holding their Longbridge Rally again on the 16/17th August. This is usually a very enjoyable and friendly event. I have been for the past two years and can thoroughly recommend it. If you are worried about taking the Seven a long way, we all go together in convoy and it is a very pleasant run (no motorways!) Further details will be given closer to the event.

BERNARD

ENGINE TUNE-UP AND TEST DATA FOR 1936 AUSTIN 7

Carburettor

Make: Zenith Type: 26VA

Choke 17 Main jet 57

Compensating jet 50 Pilot or slow-running jet 60

Progression jet 50 Capacity tube 2

Needle seating 1.5

Fuel Pump

 Make: AC Type: T

Delivery pressure 2.25 lbs/sq.in

Distributor

 Make: Lucas Model: DK 4A

 Type: BE 30/2 Rotation: clockwise

 Contact gap 0.013

Coil

 Make: Lucas Model 606

Timing

 0o on flywheel fully retarded

Plugs

 Make: KLG Size 14mm

 Type: L777 Gap 0.018 ins

 Firing order 1 3 4 2

Valves

 Head diameter: Inlet 1.0938 in. Exhaust 1.0938 in

 Stem diameter: Inlet 0.279 in. Exhaust 0.279 in

 Seating angle: 45o

Tappet clearance: Inlet 0.004 in. hot Exhaust 0.004 hot

Timing: Inlet opens at 45o before bottom dead centre

 Exhaust closes at 15o after top dead centre

Pinched from Essex A7C with thanks.

LIST OF EVENTS FOR 1980

April 3rd – 9th incl French trip organised by Solent A7C

April 20th Daffodil Run

May 4th Dorset A7C run to the aircraft museum at Yeovilton

May 10/11th Breamar Steam Rally

June 1st Dorset A7C run to Wookey Hole

June 7/8th Caldicot Castle (SW A7C)

June 21st/22nd Berkley Castle (Bristol A7C)

June 28th Pre-Beaulieu barbeque

June 29th Beaulieu 750MC

July 4th Dorset A7C barbeque at John Bramwell’s, New Milton

July 12th Dorset A7C evening boat trip to the Isle of Wight from Keyhaven. (This is still a provisional date)

Sunday 27th July Dorset A7C run. Destination to be decided

August 2nd/3rd Alderholt steam rally

Sunday August 10th Dorset A7C run. Destination to be decided.

August 16/17th Longbridge A7 Rally. Midland A7C

Monday 25th August Littlewick Show. A7 Owners Club

Sunday August 31st Dorset A7C run. Destination to be decided.

September 5/6/7th Beaulieu Autojumble

September 19/20/21st Stourpaine Bushes Steam Rally

WANTED

PAIR RUBY HEADLIGHTS AND A RUBY FRONT BUMPER

M. Glover, 35, -North St, Wareham, Dorset

WANTED

THE AUSTIN 7 CLUB ASSOCIATION REQUIRE A VOLUNTEER EDITOR TO TAKE OVER THE MAGAZINE. ALSO REQUIRED IS A ADVERTISING MANAGER. ANYONE INTERESTED IN EITHER POST SHOULD CONTACT PHIL BAILDON, 10, GROBY RD., LEICESTER.