



The Crankhandle

January 2014

NEWSLETTER OF THE HEREFORD AUSTIN SEVEN CLUB

Editorial

Welcome to the January 2014 issue of 'the Crankhandle'. This is the first edition produced under the stewardship of your new Editor - who very quickly realised that following Mike Ward will not be an easy task. Mike was Editor for over two years and despite claiming an uneasy relationship with his computer, consistently produced delightfully interesting and informative newsletters. So on behalf of the whole club I would like to extend to him our warmest thanks for a job really well done.

My background is civil engineering and as I am sure you know - Engineers are not famous for their facility with the English language, so I hope this information will help manage your expectations regarding the literary merit of this and future editions. In fact, someone once told me that if I could bring the same degree of imagination to my work as I do to my spelling - then something really useful might be achieved.

Not a great deal of club activity during the winter so I assume members are busy in their workshops preparing their Sevens for the coming season. However, this issue does include a brief report of our very enjoyable Christmas lunch at the Royal Oak in Much Marcle and an acknowledgement of the most generous 'mince pies and mulled wine' evening at Eversley House courtesy of Lyn and Stuart. We also have the latest Diary of 2014 events from Michael and one or two other items that I hope you will find interesting.

I have introduced a small number of changes to the format of our Newsletter (mostly to make my life easier) but have tried to retain the overall well established approach. It is a fact that *'you can't please all the people all the time'* but I would very much welcome your feedback on what else we might include or perhaps leave out and whether the editorial approach is what you expect.

Please remember Crankhandle is your Newsletter and it will be a good deal more interesting if it contains a wide variety of your Austin Seven thoughts and experiences, for example - ownership, maintenance, repair etc. So please let me have your thoughts so that we can share them with our club colleagues.

Finally, can I ask all members to try to get to the AGM at the Richmond Club, Edgar Street, Hereford at 7.30pm on Tuesday 28th January 2014. This is your opportunity to influence the shape of the club.

Keep those 'Seven' wheels turning and I hope you enjoy the issue.

Bob

Secretary's corner

Amongst the correspondence that has arrived since the November edition of the Crankhandle was a communication from Rosy Pugh, secretary of the FBHVC, to inform me that their newsletter will be sent to me by e-mail. If any member would like me to forward this to them, then I will be pleased to do so - just let me know.

I also had a communication from an authoress, Laura Crassus, a fiction writer whose current book features a character trying to start an Austin Seven! Ms. Crassus is now living in Herefordshire and was keen to learn about the car that she is featuring in her next novel. Wonderful where our website finds itself!

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on Tuesday 28th January. Please support your Club and also enjoy the fun quiz afterwards or just come along and have a natter. Finally, please remember the evening starts at 7.30 pm at the Richmond Club.

Happy Sevenning ... Mike

A Swallow Saga Episode 21

Hi everyone

Funny old game this! What you think will be the easiest job is often the hardest and vice versa. I thought the woodwork would be a piece of cake and only take a couple of days, wrong again! Still, I must say it does give you a lot of satisfaction to see it slowly take shape and at least look as its supposed to.

With very little to finish on the frame it's now time to book in with John for the bodywork. Bulkhead, inner panel rear of bonnet, and sills will be made in new aluminium but the main body and doors will stay. Rear wings will be sand blasted and repaired but the front wings are replicas and will need altering to fit - as the original wings were quite bad. The bonnet will need working on to close properly and the radiator cowling will require attention before chroming.



Plenty to keep John busy I think!

Regards ... Glenn

Recent events

Mince pies and mulled wine

Stuart and Lyn hosted a very enjoyable evening at Eversley House on 15th November and on behalf of all who attended, our thanks for their hospitality and the generous supply of delicious mulled wine – I've

never understood how warm spicy wine can taste so delightful yet be entirely non-alcoholic. Thanks also to Eddie for masterminding a most entertaining quiz and I am told the raffle was also a success. Ed.

Christmas lunch 2013

Twenty two members, some bringing family - met at the Royal Oak, Much Marcle on the 15th December for our annual Christmas Lunch. Typical Christmas fayre of pate on toast followed by roast turkey with all the trimmings, finishing with Christmas pudding and brandy cream were enjoyed by many - washed down with a most agreeable wine. Lots of Sevens in the car park, although the temporary interruption to the current heat wave meant that not too many people gathered outside to admire the cars.

Subsequent to the lunch, I have received a couple of comments about the size of the portions, and the pudding being rather tasteless. Although we have a booking in place for Christmas 2014 at the Royal Oak, it occurs to me that in the light of these criticisms, together with numbers being down on last year, it might be time for a change of venue. I would suggest the Bunch of Carrots, which we all know and is central for everybody, but I will canvass opinions at the AGM, so if you have something in mind, please mention it at the meeting.

Michael

Editor's note - On this occasion we were all seated around a single long table that some people thought was probably better than the previous year when we were spread out on different tables throughout the bar area. Sadly however, this new arrangement made it impossible to judge the usual much-coveted award of '*noisiest table*'. It is rumoured that Derek whose name cannot be mentioned for legal reasons was not best pleased to lose his hitherto unblemished record.

More from Michael

This year, due to other commitments, I shall not be organising the runs for you that I have done in the past. I shall however, as events co-ordinator, continue to publicise any event of interest to members that you wish to advertise or organise yourselves. So, once again, a plea - we love getting out and about in our cars, so if you fancy putting on a run, a visit to a place of interest, perhaps a treasure hunt, or even just a meet for lunch in a pub local to you, then don't hold back – please let me have your suggestions.

New Year's Day

A number of members attended the excellent but rather damp New Year's Day VSCC gathering at the Royal Oak near Much Marcle, mostly in their Sevens. Eddie had then arranged a run which he worryingly described as an '*off piste*' route to the Green Man in Fownhope for lunch. However, in view of the poor weather, everyone understandably headed straight to the pub for some delicious food.

Membership

We are delighted to welcome Bill and Rose Price of Hereford who drive a 1932 Austin Seven saloon (also, interestingly an Aston Martin DB7 - like you do!) and we look forward to meeting them both.

Just a quick reminder - if any members would like to see a complete schedule of HA7C membership, then please contact Ron. I believe he recently updated his master list to check who has (or has not) paid their subscriptions!

The A7CA Register

Mike Ward recently circulated details of the updated A7CA Register of surviving Austin Sevens that is now available to view and/or download at <http://a7ca.org/chassisregister.php>. The register is maintained by Jim Blacklock of the A7CA who has asked to be notified by email at jimb.a7@tesco.net of any errors or

omissions in any of the Registers.

It is worth checking the entry for your car(s) because when I checked mine I found a small error - my car was recorded as a Type AG whereas it is in fact a Type AF. Accordingly, I notified Jim who very quickly acknowledged he had misread the data provided by the HA7C and gave an assurance the record would be amended in his next update, expected in a month or so.

Interestingly, the register can now usefully be viewed in different forms, for example grouped either by car type or club affiliation. For those of you who are comfortable manipulating Excel Spreadsheets there is of course no limit to how you might choose to order the data once saved to your computer. Ed.

Website news

Please remember our website can be viewed at www.herefordaustin7club.co.uk and can now be found via a Google search. Please help Gill and Michael to keep the site up-to-date and I urge all members to offer ideas and provide new material to help develop this facility for the Club. Please talk to Michael or any member of the committee with ideas you may have that will keep the website as informative and interesting as possible. Photographs and/or descriptions of cars or projects are particularly welcome.

Thoughts from the Chairman

Apologies from Stuart but he was unable to prepare a 'note from the shed' (or his armchair) in time for this issue of Crankhandle. He will of course be talking to us at the AGM next week and has said he hopes the club has a most enjoyable year of Austin Seven motoring, restoring or tinkering during 2014.

Technical tips

Con rod truth



When assembling an Austin Seven engine, it is very easy to check whether your con' rods are sufficiently straight. I understand alignment within two thou' over 4 inches length is deemed an acceptable tolerance.

The picture on the left shows a set of rods correctly torqued in place on a crankshaft (here a 'Phoenix' 5/16" splash feed type) and a length of 1/2" diameter ground silver steel fed through all four little ends. The silver steel rod should slide firmly but smoothly in-place without any binding or lose play. Very slight adjustments by cold twisting or bending the rods are considered permissible. Usefully, the Dorset A7 Club website Technical Pages show how rods can be straightened using a vice as a press.

Interestingly, I bought my Phoenix crankshaft new from one of our well known suppliers but discovered one big-end journal was nearly ten thou' smaller on diameter than the others. This probably occurred during the grinding process and may have left an insufficient thickness of nitriding. Happily, the supplier exchanged the shaft without any quibble for one that was well within a 'tenth' on all journals. The message here is that it is definitely worth checking such items.

Head nuts - all torque

My edition of the otherwise excellent 'Austin Seven Companion' (actually the 6th impression dated 1990) suggests on page 133 that cylinder head nuts should be tightened to a torque of 360 lb.in (which equates to 30 lb.ft) and is clearly a mistake. If you are using decent machined full nuts and tighten to this torque, the stud will almost certainly strip the thread in the cast iron block; or in the case of the centre stud - it might well completely wreck the block by dragging out a whole chunk of cast iron between cylinders two and three. Please also remember that torque figures are normally quoted for clean dry nuts and studs and should be reduced (often by as much as 25%) if the threads are lubricated. Woodrow (and others) suggest the suitable (dry) torque for Austin Seven head nuts is 18 lb.ft (much more like it!)

Bosch distributors

In recent years a number of coil engine Austin Sevens have had their original DK or DJ distributors replaced by a Bosch offering - owners believing it to be a reliable modern item providing a more suitable advance curve characteristic. Unfortunately, with some suppliers a number of problems have emerged, e.g. -

- Rotor arm failure – actually the in-built resistor
- Insecure base plate fixing – simply crimped
- Shaft made in two sections – does not always remain thus
- Lack of lubrication to the shaft – obvious consequences
- Insecure bob weight pivot pins
- Possibly excess advance – believed up to 27 degrees!
- Lower rotating platform can come adrift

Apart from the above, I understand the Bosch unit is just fine! Luckily for anyone considering this 'upgrade' or already using the Bosch item - David Whetton of the Dorset A7 club has collated a variety of different club articles that discuss these problems and their remedies. His very useful article can be found on that club's excellent website at www.da7c.co.uk

Apologies – but the tips in this issue are from your Editor - but I will endeavor to include tips with a more reliable provenance (i.e. from our Technical Advisor Eddie) in future issues. Ed

Market Place

I have not been advised of any for sale or wanted items for this edition. However, please let me have details of any items you would like published in the next Crankhandle - which (if I get to keep the job) will hopefully hit the press towards the end of March. Ed.

Events Diary for 2014

Please note – the activities listed in Bold Type are events organised by HA7C members.

January 28 th	Club AGM @ Richmond House 7.30 pm followed by a general knowledge quiz with Eddie
February 25 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm
March 25 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm
April 11 th to 15 th	South Wales Austin 7 Club Llanberis weekend. An invitation to HA7C members to join them and stay at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis. Booking details have already been advised to HA7C members
April 21 st	Coleford Carnival of Transport, Coleford, Gloucestershire. - 9.30 am to 4.30 pm

(Easter Monday)	
April 27 th	National Drive it Day. Also "Wartime in the Cotswolds" - a trip to the Gloucester/Warwickshire Railway. They are putting on a 1940's w/e event including 1940's dress and music. The final details are yet to be fully decided but see www.gwsr.com
April 29 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm
May 3 rd & 4 th	Monmouth Steam and Country Show, Vauxhall Fields, Monmouth. Classic cars of all makes, vintage machinery, tractors, stationary engines, trade stalls and refreshments etc. Contact: Ian Harper: 01600-860552 (6pm to 10pm only) for free entry form. Entries Close 1st April 2014
May 13 th (Tuesday)	Shed night at Eversley House with Eddie Loader and a chance to learn more about your Austin Seven
May 17 th & 18 th	Austin 7 Beaulieu Autojumble - details at www.beaulieu.co.uk
May 21 st (Wednesday)	A trip out to Llandrindod Wells in your Austin organised by Stuart. Details TBA
May 27 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm
June 10 th and 11 th	SWA7C Annual Rally at Bryngarw Park Bridgend, South Wales. All HA7C members welcome. Contact John Williams (Secretary) e-mail jonniejumble@googlemail.com
June 13 th to 16 th	BA7C Old Down Rally @ Thornbury, near Bristol. You don't need to be a BA7C member to bring your car along for the run, evening ceilidh and BBQ on the Saturday and/or the open rally on the Sunday. Contact details as yet undecided by BA7C
June 15 th	Gloucester/Warwickshire Railway Classic vehicle Day see www.gwsr.com
June 24 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm. This is a "bring your car" meeting with as many Austins as possible assembled in the car park
June 26 th to 29 th	Goodwood Festival of Speed, details at www.goodwood.co.uk
July 4 th to 6 th	Le Mans Classic, details at www.lemansclassic.com
July 25 th to 27 th	Silverstone Classic, details at www.silverstoneclassic.com
July 20 th	"Strawberry Tea" A kind invitation by Stuart and Lyn to join them at Eversley House for strawberries and tea. Time tba
July 29 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm
August 11 th	Three Cocks Vintage Show, Hay-on-Wye. It is intended that HA7C will have a club enclosure at this year's event. This will be confirmed with the organisers. It might perhaps be in the club's best interests if as many members as possible would attend
August 17 th & 18 th	Kington Vintage Show, Kington, Herefordshire
August 23 rd to 25 th	Pershore plum festival, details at www.pershoreplumfestival.org.uk
August 26 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm
September 6 th & 7 th	Beaulieu International Autojumble, details at www.beaulieu.co.uk
September 9 th (Tuesday)	Shed night at Eversley House with Eddie Loader. Another opportunity to learn more about your Austin Seven
September 10 th (Wednesday)	Second visit to the Severn Bore. Members seemed to enjoy the 2013 visit, with a good turnout for the dinner and viewing at the Severn Bore Inn, Minsterworth. So if you want to do it again, this year's best viewing is at 21.48 on the 10th Sept. Listed as a 10.4 m tide and a five star viewing rating! Arrive approx 7.00 for an open-air riverside table for dinner and subsequent viewing. If you are interested please let me know
September 12 th - 14 th	Goodwood Revival, details at www.goodwood.co.uk
September 14 th	Classic Vehicle day at the Gloucester/Warwickshire Railway, details at www.gwsr.com
September 30 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30pm
October 12 th	Ludlow and the Marches Classic Tour, details at www.ludlowcastlemotorclub.com
October 19 th	BA7C Forest of Dean run. Contact: Charlie Miles 01594-836587
October 26 th	Classic Restoration Show at Stoneleigh, details at www.restoration-show.co.uk
October 28 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm
November 14 th	Mulled wine and mince pies at Eversley House by kind invitation of Stuart and Lyn. Club raffle and quiz
November 14 th to 16 th	NEC Classic Car Show details at necclassicmotorshow.com
November 25 th	Monthly meet @ Richmond House 7.30 pm

Please note: The foregoing is not a complete and final list of events for 2014, further additions will be made as details of other events of interest to members become known. This might mean that dates of some events listed will have to be changed. If members have an event in mind that they would like included, please let me know.

Note also: At the committee meeting on the 13th January, the subject of entertainment at the “Monthly Meet at Richmond House” was raised. The committee felt that it might be possible to do more with the time we spend there, and to that end we will be attempting to perhaps invite guest speaker(s), organise a film night, have a games night and maybe include a “Ladies night” in the calendar. So if you have any ideas as to what you might like to see, or have something in mind that may be of interest to all of us, then please let me know. Any feedback would be most welcome and useful. This may also mean that the Diary might alter to include items not currently listed above. So please keep an eye on the Crankhandle, and/or the website for updates.

Michael H

Tail Lights

Suspicious paparazzi?



Last year a number of club members enjoyed the ‘Wye Valley Wander’, an event that took us to the far-flung outposts of South West Herefordshire – and included the historic Llanthony Priory for lunch.

During the lunch stop there were several reported sightings of a suspicious member of the paparazzi lurking in the priory ruins obviously hoping to capture an unguarded and embarrassing moment of HA7C behaviour.

Presumably, the rogue photographer was hoping to sell his photograph to one of those well-known unscrupulous Fleet Street organisations for a small fortune. Ironically however, it transpires that he was himself accidentally caught on camera by a passing tourist and if any readers recognise him from the image on the left, perhaps they would kindly inform their nearest That’s enough Ed.

Austin Seven brakes

Have you ever thought how lovely it would be to have really effective brakes on your Austin Seven?

Some purists are known to frown on hydraulic drum brake conversions – so their views on this amazing concoction are probably unprintable.

The picture was found somewhere on an Austin Seven web link and surely must show the ultimate set-up for effectively stopping your seven (and probably bending your radius arms!)



Dynamo brush cover plate



Another item of possible interest is this recently spotted dynamo brush cover. Clearly not for the purist but it could be useful anyone pushing a six-volt dynamo really hard by winding the third brush a long way anti-clockwise (looking at the distributor end of the dynamo) to maintain charge whilst using uprated headlight bulbs together with an electric wiper motor.

In such circumstances, this arrangement might prevent soldered joints in the dynamo melting in very hot weather (however difficult that is to imagine at this time of year). The idea is that the gauze permits a cooling airflow but keeps-out road grit etc.

This is arguably a neater solution than the often seen practice of simply removing the cover.

Something for van enthusiasts

Mike Ward has remained in contact with a gentleman he met at the A7CA 90th celebrations at Warwick called Ronnie Grace who lives in South Africa. Ronnie (a regular reader of Crankhandle it seems) has a great interest in Austin Sevens and recently sent the following delightful photos of the 1927 Van he owned and restored over a period of 27 years Clearly these Rons don't rush their restorations!



Finally – rumoured to be a true story

Research scientists at Rolls Royce developed a gun that could fire dead chickens at Mach 2 straight at the windscreens of airliners and military jets to test their resistance to bird strikes.

American engineers heard about the gun and were eager to test it on the windscreens of their new high speed trains. A business deal was agreed and a gun was sent to the Americans.

When the gun was fired, the engineers stood shocked as the chicken hurled out of the barrel, crashed into the 'shatterproof' windscreen smashing it to smithereens, blasted through the control console, snapped the engineer's back-rest in two and embedded itself firmly in the back wall of the research building.

The horrified Americans sent Rolls Royce full details of the experiment, the disastrous results and the design calculations for the windscreen and asked for suggestions

Rolls Royce responded with "Defrost the chicken"

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Please note that the views expressed in the HA7C Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Club, Committee or Editor.

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