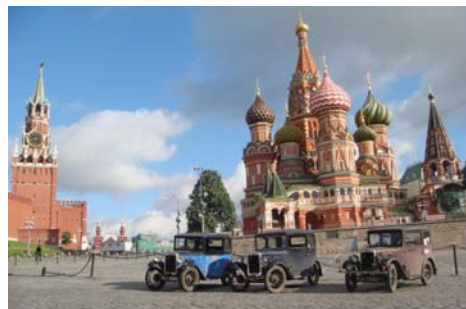


## Seasonal Survey Austin - Sevens and Others

2007 was the 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous and 'Dependable' Austin Seven and the 750 Club organised several 'local' and continental runs to celebrate the fact. Details below. However the real proof of that 'dependability' was demonstrated by three 750 members, Vince Leek, Stan Price and Chris Parkhurst, who took their Sevens on a marathon 7,700 mile journey from **Peking to Paris** to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of first such journey in 1907. There were no serious mechanical problems and they did it in 42 days – a wonderful achievement!



Below are reports of our 'national' events and some of those organised by the regional centres of the 750 Motor Club, outlining their activities over the past year and their plans for 2008.

First our **National Austin Seven Rally at Beaulieu**, which was organised as a HQ event, led by Ian Nelson, Mike Griffiths, Gordon Phillips and Mike Daves, with members from many centres assisting. This prestigious event, on July the 1<sup>st</sup>, was the 45<sup>th</sup> in the series, the first being held in July 1963.

There were various memorable features of the rally. As many of you know, we had the wettest summer since Austin 7s were invented, which meant that the rally field was waterlogged and we had our rally on the tarmac arena. The arena was prepared for the event on Saturday by which time many of the entrants had set up camp in a nearby field.



Mark Winter and family arrived with his family and catering equipment on Saturday afternoon. By 7pm, the most fantastic BBQ meal was being dished up to a marquee full of happy munching Austineers while the heavens opened outside. With some excellent guitar accompaniment by Nick Salmon, it was a great evening.

Despite the weather, we had 170 entries. The 27 rally trophies were presented by Lord Montagu himself, although David Charles had to help him from time to time. The star car of the day was David and Eddie Williams' 3 cylinder aero-engine powered A7 Blackburn, which was driven around the arena during the day.

The rally organising team look forward to seeing you again in 2008. Please note that the rally will be one week earlier than usual, on **29 June** with many improvements planned.



Geoff Cox took on the organisation of the Austin 7 display at the club's **Summer Festival at Silverstone** on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August. A garage was available to display the cars in case of rain – which tipped it down on Saturday. The drivers in the 9 races had to cope with dense spray but there were few spins or serious incidents. The Sunday saw more Sevens arriving on a fine and sunny day. Two cars that took part in the club's, 5 capital city, 'EEC Run' in 1989 were parked together. 16 Austins in the compound outside the garages made interesting viewing for the spectators and racers. The much anticipated 'parade' was led by John Barrett in his Reliant engined saloon. The other Sevens enjoyed the superb surface while

trying to catch up! Chairman, Viv Ayres, in the pace car gave us another couple of laps which was much appreciated.” Some ‘Triple Challenge’ racers joined in as a warm-up for their race at the end of the meeting.

The 750 board is keen to expand the Austin and trials participation at this meeting in 2008.



Another HQ organised activity is marshalling the start of the **VCC London to Brighton Run** at the beginning of November. The 750 MC provides around 100 marshals for this early morning event which has become quite a social occasion for those involved – especially since, in recent years, breakfast has been provided at the lavish RAC headquarters in Pall Mall.

**The Brooklands Centre** meets on the last Wednesday of every month at the King William 1V at West Horsley. Mostly we Noggin and Natter with the occasional talk of film night.

2007 started with a visit to Brooklands Museum on New Years Day and then a drink with members at the Pub afterwards.

In February we met for a pub lunch and then visited Mercedes World, the splendid new showroom next to Brooklands Museum site.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> March about thirty of us met at a pub in Eton Wick and then paid a visit to History on Wheels which is a fantastic collection of one man’s memorabilia. It consisted of Vintage vehicles of every description, an air raid shelter, displays of army equipment, and general wartime articles, prams, bikes.

April was the month for Nigel’s Easter Egg Hunt. Always a success, and certainly a challenge to those who excel in the navigational skills.

On 29<sup>th</sup> April we held our very popular Cobham Trial. This is a production car trial, which attracts entries from far and wide. We were blessed with fine weather and a good time was had by all. This is a trial of varying degrees of difficulty so there was something for everyone.



20<sup>th</sup> May we held the Buttercup Bounce. This is lunchtime BBQ in the garden of Betty and Graham Currie. It is always very well attended and we have simple driving tests in the field of Buttercups, hence the name.



In June about 30 of us sailed to Spain and spent a glorious week in Asturia. Superb Hotels and some interesting mountain driving gave us all a splendid motoring holiday. Only one car faltered but as usual when surrounded by fellow enthusiasts, plenty of help was at hand. A beautifully organised holiday by Robin Gray.

July Club night was a trip to Abbots Hospital in Guildford which is a Jacobean building with a great history.

Our annual Ripley Event was a success again. A large collection of Vintage and classic cars assembled on the Village Green and were greatly admired. We held some games and driving tests, which are also of great interest to the public.

August was time for our Summer Walk. Despite the Foot and Mouth problem we walked to Runnymede along the river after a pub lunch and a walk in Windsor Great Park.

August was also the month for a visit to Loseley House, a wonderful Tudor House in Shalford near Guildford. We were shown round by an excellent guide and were allowed to park on the lawn in front of the House. What a privilege.

In September we had a talk on driving Route 66 trip in an Austin 7. We all thoroughly enjoyed this and that was reflected by a huge turnout of members. We also took our cars to Scotland, which was a lovely way to see the place at a leisurely pace.

October found us in Brookwood Cemetery. A guide showed us around the Military site and what a fascinating tour it was. This is our second visit here and again 30 or so members enjoyed the day.

Film night in November rounded up our Club nights and we watched film of our 2007 Holiday to Spain.

. We are lucky to have such an enthusiastic bunch of members and find that emailing reminders and keeping in touch via our very own Website maintains a vibrant and successful Centre. See fixture list for 2008's events.

The **Tunbridge Wells Centre's** reports another full year of 11 events in 2007. Most comprised road runs through the lovely Kentish countryside. The average turnout was 7 cars. We had our fair share of wet weather but we always got a warm welcome at our lunch break.

The 'Midsummer Road Run' in June was so wet we had to dry our hats and coats around the open fire in the bar.

We had a 'Picnic Run' in July to the Headcorn Airfield. A beautiful sunny day was perfect for the picnic and the flying, sky diving and boot sale made for a very interesting stop. We continued across country to Swanton Mill, Nr Ashford, for a private visit. Owner, John Bicknell gave us a guided tour of the 17<sup>th</sup> century watermill and showed us his Chummy and A7 special.

The run to the Bentley Motor Museum was well supported in brilliant weather. We joined the display of pre-war vehicles, organised by Rod Yates. The museum was very interesting with some superb vehicles and memorabilia to admire. The 45 mile drive home through some fine Sussex and Kent lanes finished off a great day.

Our last Austin 7 run, the 'November Amble' on the 11th started with rain and finished in blinding winter sun. Our party of 12 enjoyed a Chinese buffet lunch at Halland Nr Lewes.

Thanks go to Mike Peck, Mike Stone, Marcus Gillah and Roger Stuart-Ginn for helping to organise a varied and interesting years Sevensing for the Tunbridge Wells Centre. Details of another full year can be found in the Fixture list.

Although operating with a smaller committee than previous years the **Norfolk Centre** had a busy year. They had some interesting/entertaining talks on such diverse subjects as Autocycles, Ignition Systems and Spark Plugs and Road Safety (by the Norfolk Road Planning officer). Other evenings were spent hearing about the motoring life of veteran member, Bernard Crockford, and new members John King and Derek Barratt – who first got interested in motor sport as an RAF apprentice at RAF Halton in Bucks. Other evenings were filled with films/videos with a historic motoring or Aeronautical bent.

Outside events included Rogerson/Sussams Trophy night – remembering two much loved centre founder members – a club stand at the 'Classic Car Auction and show at Costessy. Norfolk's annual 'Austin Allsorts' rally



was held at the 'Norfolk and Suffolk Aeronautical Museum' at Flixton.

Peter Brown organised the 'Autumn Amble' which attracted an excellent turnout with Lunch at Cawston and tea at Peter's home in Wroxham.

Many Norfolk members took part in more 'distant' events such as Kevin Shortis, the Dutch 'Molentoche' run, Peter Brown joined the MG Owners Club run to Norway and the 'Prix des Alpes' in his MGB, Hamish and Anne Alger and Keith and Karen Ashby the 'Grapes and Gateau Run' and Dick and Val Applin the week long 'Yorshire Experience'.

Barring the unforeseen, most of the above events will be held in 2008 – believed to be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the centre.

2007 – the 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Austin Seven's introduction – was a busy year for the **North Herts Centre**.



In January we had our AGM which also gave us the opportunity to present many of the club's Austin Seven Championship awards. Here, championship organiser, Brian Norfolk, presents Janet Edroff with the 'Ladies Award'.

The outdoor season got off to a flying start with the 'March Meander' on the 11<sup>th</sup> of – you've guessed it – March. It comprised a lovely 40 mile run around the picturesque villages of Bedford on a beautiful spring day. Of the 25 cars that took part, 18 were Austin 7s.

The following week the Dave and Margaret Bradley Memorial trial received only 10 entries but I think we all – entrants and marshals – enjoyed the day.

The 'Spring Spree' on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April had another good turnout and again the weather was kind to us.

Our annual static 'Rally on the Green' at the village of Cottered, was blessed with plenty of liquid sunshine. In spite of that, most of the 43 entries turned up. Late entries, including 3 Dutch MGs on their way from Silverstone to Harwich, more than compensated for the few 'no shows'.



Then in July came the week long 'Yorkshire Experience'. It is a week of challenging driving through some of the most beautiful scenery in the country intermingled with several social occasions. Around 60 cars, the majority Austin 7s, from the 750 MC and PWA7C completed at least 1000 miles - if they did all the 'runs'.

Our annual Charity Run at the beginning of August, suffered from a low entry due to the closeness of the Eurotour but will be repeated in 08.

Eurotour07, the 'Grapes and Gateaux Run', started on August 11<sup>th</sup>. Over 50 entries, again the majority Sevens, embarked on a 1200 mile tour including the Alsace and the German Black Forest. Mostly minor roads were used to drive across northern France to the medieval town of Kaisersburg where we stayed for 5 nights. In that time, we had a group visit to a vinery and a boat trip on the Rhine. After that we crossed the Rhine to another beautiful Gengenbach in the Schwarzwald where we spent 4 nights. Another group visit was organised – this time to an open air farm museum, showing what life was like in the area 400 years ago. Return to the shuttle was by Luxembourg,



Cambrai and St. Omer where we had a superb celebration Dinner. There was only one serious breakdown when something came adrift in the clutch housing and broke the crankcase in Frank McDonald's Chummy.

The last 'run' of the year was the 'Autumn Ramble' on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October which consisted of the usual leisurely run of about 45 miles round the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire countryside finishing up with a nice pub lunch in the shadow of the Chiltern hills.

During the year the centre supported several local 'shows' and had some interesting and enjoyable club night speakers, quizzes, film shows and treasure hunts at its two venues. See Centres list.

For 2008, the centre's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, there will be a special event, '**The Golden Shamrock Rally**' to Ireland at the end of May. This 4/5 day event will see us sail from Hollyhead to Dublin, spend 1/2 nights there before a scenic coastal drive to Belfast for 2 nights, a visit to the Giant's Causeway and return by a similar route.

There will be no Yorkshire our Eurotour in '08 but a return of L'Amble D'Automne - a very social weekend in northern France with our friends of the Tacot Club Calaisien - on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September. All the regular 'Sunday runs' will be held as usual. Come and join us.

**The Western Centre** meets at the Crown in Paganhill on the outskirts of Stroud on the last Wednesday of the month except December and February when the annual dinner is held.

Historically the centre was very strong on the racing front and won the 6-hour relay race and the Goodacre Trophy in the late 60's. There were several 750 Champions and 1200 Champions racing too. Now there is only one member regularly attending meetings who has built his own car based on a Jedi.

Mainly the other active members are trials oriented. Two well-attended trials are organised one in February and the second in October.

Anyone interested is welcome to attend meetings and join the discussions from bio-fuels to the hard-pressed motorist, from tuning SU's to the modern suspension set up. We are always happy to help people get involved with marshalling, organising or competing in events.

Bill Cole

### **Western Centre A 7 section.**

A number of Austin seven members continue to actively support classic and vintage rallies in the area particularly those at Berkeley Castle and the Kingswood Classic Car Show.

This year has been particularly damp in these parts curtailing some activities although our main event, the 'Newark Park Rally' went ahead and for the rally time stayed dry. The organisers got very wet putting up the shelter and at 10.30qa.m. with just a handful of cars, things looked pretty grim. Shortly after the rain stopped, people got out of their cars and as the morning wore on a stream of hardy A7 enthusiasts drove in through the parkland into the rally field. In the end nearly all the 30 or so Austin Sevens entered arrived but significantly a smaller percentage of the classics arrived.

The prize giving was brought forward slightly and very soon after the clearing up had been done the rain started again. Newark Park itself, which you have free

admission to on the day of the rally, has been developed recently to include a gift shop and small tea room.

The Western Centre monthly newsletter keeps A7 owners in touch with what is going on locally and events further a field . Help and advice is available to those joining the A7 fraternity.

Most of the above events qualify for the annual '**750 M.C. Austin Seven Championship**' in which points are awarded, based on the type of event and it's duration, and trophies presented at the end of the year.

In addition to the above, there is a thriving '750 Trophy' racing series for Austin Seven sports and historic cars of similar performance with races at most of the country's premier circuits.

As you see 750 M.C. activities cover a large area of the country and you can be assured of a warm welcome and people willing to help and advise on Austin matters where ever you live.