DORSET AUSTIN 7 CLUB NEWSLETTER AUGUST 1981

AUGUST CLUB NIGHT THURSDAY 20th AUGUST

Meet at the Nags Head, Ringwood at 8 p.m. for a run to ‘Albany' at Fordingbridge at 8.30 p.m.

September Club Night Thursday 17th September

Meet at 'The Nags Head', Ringwood for a run to the 'Fleur De Lys' at Cranborne at 8.30 p.m. sharp.

Next Committee Meeting - Thursday 27th August at 'The Tyrrells Ford Avon at 8.30 p.m.

EDITORIAL

Hi Gang,

Everyone seems to have been away on holiday for the past two weeks including Pat and I, so I am a bit out of touch with recent happenings. The last event I attended was the Wimborne "Wedding Celebrations", which was a very well staged affair and was followed by a smashing bar-b-que at John and Janet Stone's house in Wimborne. Many thanks John and Janet for a super evening.

I understand the run to H.M.S. Victory was called off as all the regulars were away, perhaps we could keep it in mind for another time.

I haven’t received news of any restorations taking place at present. Surely someone in the club is busy restoring a '7' and could let me know how they are progressing. I am still trying to find time to get on with my 'Box' but the typist keeps finding me jobs in doors. Women can't get their priorities right! Finally, I'm sorry about the newsletter cover again this month, but the stencil was not ready.

ED.

EVENTS CALENDAR

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 22nd & 23rd AUGUST

RUN TO MIDLAND A7 CLUBS RALLY AT LONGBRIDGE. We are meeting at Ringwood Cattle market Car Park for a 9.30 a.m. start, the run to Birmingham usually takes about 4 hrs. and camping is laid on in Cofton Park. There will be a barn dance in the marquee on Saturday night. (Entry Forms from me at club night or phone New Milton 613080)

SUNDAY 30th AUGUST

Grand Charity Football Match - TV Stars & Sports Personalities XI, the Black & White Minstrels at The Ringwood Town Football Club. Gates open 2 p.m. K.O. 3 p.m. Suggest we arrive about 1.30 take turning opposite 'Nags Head' then 1st Right. The club has been approached to put on a display of Austin 7's for this charity event please support it and make a worthwhile club show. It should be a good afternoon out and its free in an Austin! Let’s try and get the whole range from Chummy to Big 7. If you can make it please try and let Phil Whitter know either at club night or phone Ringwood 5558. Let’s make this the club's contribution to a charity event. (for more details see enclosed leaflet)

MONDAY 31st AUGUST

Run to A7OC Rally at Littlewick show, Nr. Maidenhead. Leaving Ringwood Cattle Market Car Park at 10 a.m. sharp.

SUNDAY 6th SEPTEMBER

Dorset A7 Club North Dorset run, meet at the Old Mill, Sturminster Newton at 11 a.m. for a run around North Dorset, organised by Richard and Margaret Cressey. This run will finish at Sherborne School Rally, and the enclosed entry form should be sent off by all attending the run. Please give your support for this event.

SATURDAY 12th SUNDAY 13th SEPTEMBER

Beaulieu Auto Jumble, reputably the largest Auto jumble held outside the U.S.A.

DORSET/SOLENT CAMPING WEEKEND

The run to the Savernake Forest started from Ringwood, with the organisers being late. A good turnout though, as is usual for our camping weekends, with Phil and family our leaders for the weekend, Glyn Pat and Trevor, Gary, Willy and myself and family. Five cars in all, two towing camping trailers. The run to dinner at a pub near Burbage was very easy, and there we were met by Richard and Margaret Cressey with their enthusiastic Austineer, Rosie. Also, Mike and Jean Norris-Hill who had had some bad luck on the run up from Winchester, in the form of out-braking a modern and getting a shunt up the back, causing a fair-sized dent to his rare boat tail model 7.

After the usual liquid and sandwich lunch, we arrived at the campsite in the Savernake Forest, this being a well laid out site keeping a very informal forest atmosphere about it. We pitched our tents and all drove into Marlborough for an ice-cream.

Evening entertainment was by way of a Bar-b-que. This started out as a small fire under the Bar-b-que grating on which we cooked our sausages! As the evening wore on and the food all gone, the fire got larger and larger until in the finish it was November 5th again. Rosie slept through it all in dad's car.

Next morning saw the usual sight of Glyn cooking eggs and bacon outside in the rain, asking everyone why they bothered with big tents. Our leader then gave us a fine tour of the area with a trip down a series of forest tracks. We first paid a visit to a stonemason whose hobby was collecting old and interesting grave stones. We looked at his antiques and he went into the road and looked at ours. We then went to Wilton Windmill which has been restored. On the way to dinner we met Peter Burr and family, so now 8 cars in all. Sunday dinner was had in fine style being a cooked meal at a pub on the banks of a canal.

We spent the afternoon at Crofton looking at the steam pumping engines circa 1920 which provide water to the higher reach of the Kennet and tea time we broke camp and travelled home after a full and varied weekend.

John Page

Bernard's Bit

Well I’ve been ordered by commandant Glyn to write some blurb for the newsletter as it’s been a little while since you've heard from me. First, I'd like to comment on the glory that the D.A.7.C, has been getting this year firstly making a name for ourselves at the Caldicot Castle Barn dance by our expert dancing, then on to Berkley Castle rally where I think nearly all the members attending came home with a prize including the inter club challenge cup. A week later it was Beaulieu, again this year I entered the car and also had a stall with all the family helping (sorry you could not make it Glyn) One comment I would like to make re Beaulieu is the cost of entry most of it going to Lord M. - perhaps one day there will be a national rally with low or free entry. Coming more up to date, on the night of the Royal Wedding D.A.7.C. entered a procession in celebration of the event finishing in Wimborne Square. All the members who entered joined in the spirit of the day with their cars decked out in union jacks etc. After having a few jars at the local hostelries and watching the Morris Men and various other dancing groups most of us went to John Stone's

house for a Barbeque losing Mike Wragg on the way. Many thanks to John for the above and thanks to Glyn, John, Vic, Gary, Derek, Dave, Laurence Jim for entering their cars. The last event we entered as a club was wheels at Longleat organised by Dr. Barnado. John Stone and Gary went on the Saturday and camped and by what I heard had a very good time at the Longleat Arms with the locals. What a pleasant setting for a rally Longleat is - it’s been a few years since we went and so initially we thought we would just have a run there, but when we heard we could also combine a run and a rally we decided to enter. Well the children certainly enjoyed themselves for there had been a trials circuit made up with real motorbikes to ride all in all a good day out.

I have had a few comments recently about my blue box not going as well as it should (you know changing down for second on Spreadeagle Hill instead of going up in top) Well, I actually took the cylinder head off the other day and found, you've guessed it, not one exhaust valve burnt out but four. Anyway, its now breathing a bit better now so you'd better watch out Gary. Well that’s all for now until I get my arm twisted again.

Bernard Cowley

WANTED

B.S.A. BANTAM SPARES PHONE. MIKE WRAGG, FERNDOWN 875087

SCOTTISH HOLIDAY

Pat and I decided that this year we would like to go to the Scottish Austin 7 clubs 'Doune Rally', which is held at the Doune Motor Museum near Stirling. I mentioned this idea one club night and Gary Munn immediately said he would like to accompany us on the trip. After some discussion, it was decided to plan a touring holiday around the rally, and ten days was agreed as the duration. Thursday the 30th July arrived, and at 10 a.m. Pat, Trevor, Tufty the dog and I squeezed into the Ruby and set out for Avon Castle and the Munn establishment. We arrived by 10.30 a.m. to find Gary packed and ready, and so we loaded our camping gear into the back of his 'Box', as he was travelling alone, and set off on our journey in warm sunshine.

Our route was via Salisbury, Marlbourgh, Swindon, Cheltenham and then on to the M6 Motorway. After about two hours driving along the motorway, one of my rear tyres blew out. (This was the first of many tyre problems on both cars). We soon had the wheel changed, however, and continued our journey as far as Macclesfield, where we set up camp in the beautiful Peak district. After a meal, we all piled into the Ruby for a tour of the area and to find a nice pub to spend the evening. The following morning dawned misty, but by the time we had breakfasted and packed up all the gear, the sun was shining, and we were soon motoring up the motorway at a steady 45 - 50 m.p.h. By lunch time we had reached Kendal, and we decided to leave the M6 and do a whistle stop tour of the Lake District, and do some shopping in Windermere. Whilst looking around the town, we came across an Austin 7 tourer of about 1933 vintage, parked in the high street, and although we waited for about fifteen minutes we did not manage to speak with the owner.

On then, in warm sunshine we wended our way past lakes Windermere, Grasmere, Thirlmere and Derwent Water to Keswick, where we reluctantly had to turn off towards Penrith and join the M6 once again for a fast run up to Crawford, just across the border in Scotland where we camped for the night on a very nice, small site. The only disadvantage being that as it was so close to the main road it was a bit noisy. Gary and I repaired punctures on both cars, before we all went out to the local pub to get away from the midges.

We awoke on Saturday morning, unable to believe our luck, as once again the sun was shining and the day was warm for our run, via the M73, skirting Glasgow and on up to Stirling, where we turned off the M9 at junction 11 for Doune. We arrived at the Rally field at about midday, and were given a warm welcome by the organiser and secretary of the Scottish Austin 7 club, John Rooney. The tents were soon pitched, and the cars greased and checked over in preparation for our run up into the Highlands. We had covered over 500 miles at this stage.

That evening there was a get together in the Marquee, and for £1 per person you could drink all the beer you could hold AND they kept coming around with a bottle of Scotch topping up your glass. I'm not sure what time I got back to the tent, I only know I did, because I woke up there in the morning!!! Ah yes, the morning, well perhaps we could go on a bit to about 11 o’clock, when I felt a lot better (must have been something we ate, as Gary was rather quiet too!!) we went for a walk with the dog and returned in time to park the cars on their respective pegs, and look round at the other cars. Entries arrived from far and wide, and we realized that it was by no means certain that we would get the long-haul award, which we had thought we might. At about this time, we noticed a crowd forming around an Opal in the rally field, and a familiar bearded fellow (Ian Dunford) leaning over the open bonnet with a big hammer in one hand and a 3/16 – ¼” Whitworth spanner in the other. Being nosy I went over, and asked the owner who did look a bit familiar, what the trouble was, "Oh", he said, "there is a bit of play in the pistons", the head had been removed, so I leant over and tried the pistons for side play, and I nearly fell down between the Bore and the Piston, you could get your finger between, well nearly! We were then introduced to the owner, who turned out to be The Right Hon. David Steele MP. He said that he had passed us on the M6 in his modern car the day before and was quite surprised when we told him where we had come from. We wandered round the few auto jumble stalls, and I dithered about whether to buy a new tyre for the Ruby from John Platts, but as they were £30 each I decided against it (a decision I was to regret) and Gary bought a new tube for his car. By this time, it was prize giving and everyone crowded round the marquee for the results of the various classes and driving tests. Neither Gary or I won anything and the long-haul award went to a car from somewhere near Tunbridge Wells in Kent. After the awards we packed the cars, said farewell and thanked our hosts for what had been a smashing rally and set off on the road to Loch Lomond.

To be continued next month.

Glyn

An interesting excerpt from "My years with General Motors" or subtitled "Your Austin could have been American"

Our next effort to secure a manufacturing position abroad was made in England. The future of American cars in the British market looked poor in the early 1920s, motor license fees were assessed per unit H.P. The formula for determining horsepower greatly favoured a small bore long stroke, high speed engine (i.e. Austin 7 Bernard’s comment) and penalized the American Engine the bore which was nearly equal to the stroke, and also as Insurance costs were generally related to license fees the owner of an American car was doubly penalized. Altogether the charges for running a Chevrolet touring car in England in 1925 came to £1 per week. All this before normal operating costs. By contrast, the owner of an English-made Austin had fixed charges of perhaps 11/- a week and his first cost was lower too. Our first efforts were directed to acquiring the Austin Company. It produced nearly 12000 cars in 1924 (mostly Austin 7's Bern’s comment) which in England at that time was fairly substantial production. The prospects of acquiring Austin were discussed by members of the board several times during 1924/5. We saw that Austin had managed to build up its volume and profits. Mr. Mooney (not you George) inspected the Austin proper­ties in the spring of 1925 and wrote a report recommending that we buy them. In July, a committee went to England to look into the question further. In August, they sent the following cable: Committee agrees unanimously English company an advantage to G.M. Think we can buy all certificates of common stock Austin Million pounds sterling leaving outstanding million 6 hundred thousand Pounds preferred stock dividend. Total in Dollars 5,495,050. Think we can earn at least 20% on our investment. Are we authorized to close in the event of unanimous agreement among ourselves? The reply from America was: Assuming your committee agree on fairness of price we are satisfied for you to go ahead. When deal actually made kindly cable so I can make suitable announcement regards Pres. G.M. The deal was never consummated owing to some disagreement.