

January 2018

Mutterings

THE NEWSLETTER of the EASTERN CENTRE
of the AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB



HAPPY NEW YEAR
to all our members

2018 - The year of the Frog

www.ahc-eastern.co.uk

ROB'S RAMBLINGS

Happy New Year and welcome to the first edition of *e-Mutterings*, the all-electronic version of the Eastern Centre's newsletter.

Each month to tie in with the postal issue of *Revcounter* you will receive an email with a link directing you to the appropriate page on the new EC website where you will be able either to read *Mutterings* online or to print out a paper copy should you wish. The beauty of viewing online is that all the links will work at the click of your mouse.

Dave Holman will also include the link address in his monthly *View from the East*, in *Revcounter*.

I am looking forward to the Sprite 60th Anniversary celebrations but there is one hitch - I do not have a Sprite. My New Year's resolutions therefore include getting one. So if you are thinking of selling get in touch - it doesn't have to be concours in fact the quirkier the better!

You will see masses of dates in the calendar so enter them into your 2018 diary and get out to as many as you can. Those wheels are meant for turning, as I remind myself having put less than 1000 miles on my Big Healey last year!

Rob

NEW MEMBERS

- **Colin Yarwood** from Broxbourne has a 1969 blue Mk 4 Sprite in good condition.
- **Mrs Louise Cadman** of Ipswich has a 1963 Red/white Mk2a 3000 in good condition.

Welcome to the Club and I look forward to meeting you at one of our meetings in the coming year.

Stuart Self, Membership Secretary.

TOURING TROPHY - 2018

The Touring Trophy runs from AGM to AGM (October to October) with hopefully a few more sunny days this will tempt you out. If you want to be in with a chance of winning the Trophy let Richard Mayes (not the Editor) know your mileage in the following format.

Entrant	Date	Trip description	Trip	Total
Pat & Zara	20-12-18		20	20

LITTLE GRANSDEN CAR & AIR SHOW 26TH AUGUST 2018

We shall again have a Club Stand at this popular event. By the time you read this the Little Gransden Show website www.littlegransdenshow.co.uk will be available and there you will find an [application form](#).

As last year you MUST book through me. Please send your completed entry form, payment and self-addressed envelope to me at:

117 Norton Way South
Letchworth G C
Herts
SG6 1NY

I will then submit them all in mid July.

As before Club Stands are limited to the first 10 people to enter. After that you will be parked in the general classic car area, you can of course still use the facility of the event shelter.

Richard Mayes

secretary@ahc-eastern.co.uk

01462 623635

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Happy New Year, I hope you have all had a wonderful break and found time to get out and do a bit of work on the car, the warmer weather will soon be upon us [think positively] and it will be good to just press the start button and go [or pull, or turn the key depending on which model you have!].

Don't forget this month sees the national roll out of invites to Chris and Angie's Ufford Park Sprite Celebration Weekend so don't forget to apply before the places fill.



What do you think of the new website? It is still early days so if there is anything you would like to see please contact us. The benefit of an electronic Mutterings will be that we can add information much later than we could when it had to go to print, so we will now be an up to the minute Eastern Centre. I haven't had any phone calls from anyone feeling unable to read the magazine on-line but please if you know of someone in your area who isn't connected to the web maybe print a copy for them, we really don't want to exclude anyone.

I am planning on putting a few words in Rev-Counter every month [if I remember the deadline!] to add to the normal events listing so we should be able to keep everyone informed. Thinking electronically do not forget the National Club website, it is worth signing up to use the members section to make use of available discounts, as well as the archive and technical areas. Also on the internet side of life it is always worth having a look at the [FBHVC website](#),

The Federation does sterling work protecting our interests and fighting the cause of classic motoring and they have just released [this link \[19th December\] to the DVLA site](#) to explain the proposed changes to registering Vehicles of Historic interest. It doesn't sound quite as bad as first feared.

David Singer is reviewing this and will report in a future edition of Mutterings - Ed.

Chairman's Chat continued...

As well as covering the changes in law affecting us and what they are doing to minimise problems, the FBHVC also have articles covering fuel additives, the proposed emission zones, autonomous cars and how they will affect us and they are promoting Apprenticeships to ensure there are people around in the future who understand older vehicles even though they haven't grown up with them.

I am experimenting with reshaping the gearlever on the 100 at the moment [concoors judges look away now!] as I have always thought it doesn't fall readily to hand, in my old 100 I ran a centre change box so it wasn't an issue. I am also fitting a boot rack as the Boss wants to tour Scotland and my son and I are going camping to Classic Le Mans, so a little more storage area will be useful for trips like that, I was rather spoilt with the large back seat in the Westland as you could wedge quite a lot in. The other alternative would be to get organised and be tidy, probably not an option for me! Fingers crossed it will all be completed in time for the warmer weather so I hope to see lots of you out and about.

Dave Holman

MEMORIES

Maggi Byford recently presented me with this bottle of wine that she had found hidden away in a dark recess of the garage. The wine and the CD you will also see in the photo were given by the Dutch Club to participants of the AHCON weekend held in the east of Holland at a recreation park called Klein Vink back in the mid-1990s.



The CD is of *oompah* music that is an acquired taste and judging by the colour I suspect the wine may be the same!

EASTERN CENTRE WEEKEND
AUGUST 31ST-SEPTEMBER 2ND 2018
UFFORD PARK HOTEL, SUFFOLK



We are pleased to be hosting a weekend based in the Suffolk countryside. The event commences on Friday afternoon at the hotel with a welcome afternoon tea and dinner in the evening for everyone to get acquainted. A local scenic drive on Saturday takes us to a historic house with a guided tour and lunch included in the weekend cost. After lunch you can follow another route or do your own thing with plenty of local attractions to visit. Dinner in the evening is followed by a tombola with proceeds donated to our chosen charity - the RNLI. Sunday sets out with another planned drive to an interesting museum but as always you can plan your own day to visit any of the plentiful places of interest in the area. The evening sees the Gala dinner with entertainment. It's farewell to everyone after breakfast on Monday.

The weekend is planned to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Sprite, and a special parking area is available for Sprites each day, so if you have a Sprite lurking in the garage dust it off or complete your restoration and bring it along! We look forward to seeing all our old friends and new faces too. As always we are limited in the number of places available, so don't delay - get that form filled in and send it off with your deposit to ensure your place.

Angie & Chris Davis



Austin Healey Club

= EASTERN CENTRE WEEKEND 2018 =

"In celebration of 60 yrs of The Sprite"



FRIDAY 31st AUG - MONDAY 3rd SEPT 2018

Ufford Park Hotel, Golf & Spa - Suffolk

NAME(S)			
ADDRESS		TELEPHONE	
		MOBILE TEL	
		Email	
CAR		REG No.	CLUB/MEMBERSHIP NO.
ACCOMODATION ['X' as required]		SINGLE	TWIN
			DOUBLE
WEEKEND RATE	Couple = £ 585 PER ROOM, DINNER, BED & BREAKFAST**		£
FRI/SAT/SUN	Single = £ 440 PER ROOM, DINNER, BED & BREAKFAST**		£
Please advise any special dietary requirements ('1' or '2' as reqd)			Total
			£
Vegetarian	Vegan	Gluten free	Other
There are places available for Sunday Night Gala Dinner & Entertainment only, @ £40/person payable in advance. Please use this form to book, and payment is required by 1st July latest			
No of persons		Total	£

A Non refundable deposit of £60 per room will be required on booking with balance of £525 (£380 single) to be paid by 1st July 2018:

Please send booking form and £60.00 deposit [cheque payable to Austin Healey Club (Eastern)] to:

Mrs A. Davis, 5 Stable Close, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8HP

Telephone 01206 385982, email canda3000@hotmail.com

OR- Payment by bank transfer to AHC (Eastern) and email confirmation of payment to Angie

Bank details: 30-91-59, 01020843, ref ECW18 with your name (eg ECW18CDAVIS)

Booking form can be downloaded, completed and returned via email

Your mobile will be included in a contact list for participants only: if you do not wish to be included please 'X' here ↓

REFERENCE		
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Drivers and passengers of all cars attending any event organised by Austin Healey Club or any members of Austin Healey Club must agree to the following terms and conditions and disclaimer of liability before signing up to or attending an activity or event. The driver(s) must be insured for the vehicle they are driving, or in charge of, at any event or activity. All vehicles must have a valid MOT and road fund licence. All drivers must hold a full UK driving licence and not be disqualified from driving. All drivers and passengers attending do so at their own risk and will not hold any member of or organiser from the Austin Healey Club responsible for any losses, damages or injury. All drivers must obey the Highway Code and not exceed road speed limits. By signing up to any event you have agreed to abide by the above terms and conditions and will not hold Austin Healey Club or its appointed representatives responsible for any liabilities. If you do not agree to the above terms and conditions you must not attend any event or activity organised by or on behalf of the Austin Healey Club. By setting out the above terms and conditions the Austin Healey Club has taken reasonable precaution to ensure safety of people and property.

EVENTS FOR 2018

Main events organised by AHC or where we have a club stand or where we know AHC members are attending will be shown in **bold**. Check on the website for the latest information: www.ahc-eastern.co.uk

1st January: New Year's Day: Barrington Classic meet and Byford Bun and a Bowl. Maggi and Roger extend an invitation to attendees and others to celebrate the start of a new motoring year with a sandwich and soup at their home in Royston. Contact Maggi at treasurer@ahc-eastern.co.uk or on 01763 242910 to express your interest and she will let you have directions and parking instructions.

18th March: Sunday Spring Lunch. Season opener at Toft Meridian Golf Club, super roast lunch just to the west and slightly south of Cambridge. Contact Andrew Hollick on andrewhollick48@tiscali.co.uk

Daffodil Weekend, probably in April, details to follow, but David Wheeler has agreed to run this popular event again, his email is wheelerd@blueyonder.co.uk

22nd April: Drive it Day: There will be lots going on marking this important motoring heritage event, keep a look out for your favourite.

29th April Sunday. Wings and Wheels, Old Buckenham Airfield, Norfolk, NR17 1PU. Book a space on their website.

13th May: Battlesbridge Spring Classic Car Show, always popular with Eastern Centre members. <http://www.battlesbridge.com/events>.

20th May: National Sprite 60th Birthday celebrations at Shelsley Walsh, near Droitwich. NOTE THE CHANGE OF VENUE. Tony Curran is planning a big family fun party to mark this important anniversary. Latest details on the website at Sprite60.org or from Tony on info@sprite60.org

2nd June: Saturday Letchworth GC Classic CC Picnic. Relaxed afternoon with a real country picnic atmosphere, music, beer tent, teas, etc. more details later.

Events continued...

10th June: Sunday Euston Park Rural Pastimes. Great country show with all sorts of exciting events including classic cars. Booking form not available yet, further details soon, your club contacts will be Dave Holman or Angela Bonner. Their emails are on the back page or social@ahc-eastern.co.uk

6th/8th July: Classic Le Mans. Super event well supported by Eastern members To link up with other local people or to travel as an AHC group contact Rob Ransom mutterings@ahc-eastern.co.uk

28th/29th July: Old Buckenham Airfield. Classic cars and flying displays, book in on their website, Classic drivers and all passengers free at this event, book early, was full in 2017.

5th August: Higham Ferrers Chichele Classic Car Show: Contact Roy Murphy via [Higham Ferrers Classic Car Show](#)

26th August: Sunday Little Gransden Airshow and Classic Cars. Entries will be limited on the club stand again this year at this popular show, so keep abreast of developments later in the year. Your contact will be Richard Mayes on secretary@ahc-eastern.co.uk

31st Aug/3rd Sept: Eastern Centre Weekend, Ufford Park, Woodbridge. In honour of the Sprite anniversary, Chris and Angie Davis are organising this one in the lovely Suffolk countryside. Please register your interest with them on canda3000@hotmail.com . If you want to go, tell them soon!

In addition there will be two Classic Car Shows at **Duxford**, dates not available yet, 1st Friday at **Barrington**, 1st Saturday pub meet at The Horse and Groom, **Cornish Hall End**, 1st Sunday Breakfast Club at **Colmworth** village hall, 3rd Saturday pub meet at The Bluebell, **Hempstead**, and of course our regular Noggin and Natters, see back of Mutterings for details, not to mention all the race meetings, most classic events have Healeys competing, check the websites for details and dates.

Angela

CAN YOU HELP?

Dear Maggi

I'm unable to find a 'forum' site in the AH club website, so may I ask for your help? I want to canvas the local membership about any recommendations they might have for a reliable person/garage to maintain my BN1 (very good condition). I have been using Bell Classics for years, but they have mutated into a Ferrari garage, and made a mess of a recent restoration of my front suspension (though they did compensate me). Is there someone reliable within about 100 miles of Cambridge that I might approach?

Joe Herbert

jh24@cam.ac.uk

EVENTS AT BATTLESBRIDGE 2018



- May 13th - Classic Car Show and autojumble
- June 16th and 17th - Essex Vee Dubbers Volkswagen Show Contact: Scott Walker 07504 951014
- July 1st - Classic Motorcycle Show & Bike jumble
- August 12th - Classic Ford Show & Autojumble
- September 2nd - Essex Boat Jumble & Small Boat Sale Contact: Chaddock & Fox Promotions 02392 381405 (www.boat-jumbles.co.uk)
- September 30th - Thirty Second Annual Grand Motorabilia Day and Classic Vehicle Show including cars, bikes & autojumble

Visit the website for further details <http://www.battlesbridge.com/>

Dave Holman

A LETTER FROM RICHARD SIMMONDS

Dear Maggi

Do you remember Judy and me? We were part of the committee of Eastern Region for many years with Dave Hicks, Alan Kempster and Robin Weston. I don't know how aware of our lives you are since we left the club.

Judy and I continued living at Woodside Green until last August (51 years in the cottage). We have built an annexe to our daughter's house in Sheering, very different and easy to maintain. Our daughter's are well into their forties and we have 5 Grandchildren ranging from 24 to 8. We always had plans to rebuild our Healey 3000 and when the franchise was stopped by BMC, I bought several spares from Marshall's in Cambridge. We never achieved that plan and recently sold the car to a Mark Richards. I am left with the Spares which I wish to sell. They deserve a home where they will be used to help maintain the marque.

Obviously, the members of the Healey Club are the best people to use these parts. **Photos on our website - Ed.** The Spares are stored in a dry garage and I can arrange for them to be viewed before sale. I would welcome any sensible offers through this email address, richardandjudysimmonds@btinternet.com.

PS. Dave and Wyvern separated many years ago and Dave moved to Normandy. Cycling got him involved in the local community but he now has dementia. Robin and Sandra hear about him occasionally.

Alan and Christine moved to Devon and became heavily involved with the Jensen Club and then the South Devon vintage and veteran club. Christine developed cancer and Alan looked after her so well but she died last year and not long after, Alan was diagnosed with the same type of cancer. He is still with us but there is no cure for this type of cancer.

Robin and Sandra also moved to France, initially the Dordogne but now near Limoges. We have seen them several times and they stayed with us for Christine's funeral.

SPRITE HISTORY

With the 60th anniversary of the introduction of the Sprite this summer it is interesting to look at the development of the Sprite and below I have used extracts from Geoffrey Healey's book, *More Healeys* from 1978 where he looks at the concept and its development.

After my discussion with DMH (Donald Healey), I was left with a lot of sketches and the OK to design and produce two prototypes. One idea was to make a car with a nearly identical front and rear end. Although this is possible, the end result is never pleasing and we did not pursue it.

I next told Barry Bilbie, our chassis designer, and Gerry Coker, our body designer, what we were going to do, at the same time emphasizing the need for the utmost security. I had decided that we should use the A35's front suspension, and engine and the basic case and track of its rear axle, with a 4.22 to 1 ratio.

One of the features of the first prototype were its pop-up headlamps. The car was very low and the headlamps had to meet a British regulation of 26 inches between the lamp centre and the ground. This ruled out any possibility of fitting the lamps conventionally in the wings.



The two lamps were fixed onto hinges joined by a tube and activated mechanically so that they would swing up and forward to their operating position. When not in use, the lamps lay back flush with the bonnet. Unfortunately, in conjunction with the one-piece bonnet hinged at the back, this mechanism proved too complex and expensive, and was installed only on the first prototype. Porsche later used an almost identical pop-up headlamp system on their 928 model.

I had rejected the mechanically operated rear brakes of the A35, however, as these were not completely trouble-free and the installation would have presented some ground clearance problems.

Sprite development continued....

I decided to go for all hydraulic brakes. It was quite remarkable what performance was obtained with small and light 7 inch diameter brakes. The rear suspension consisted of two quarter elliptic leaf springs and two Armstrong dampers with long arms forming the upper torque reaction members. The aim was positive axle location with low unsprung weight.

Everything was kept as simple as possible: The seat frames came from the Austin Healey 100, with greatly cheapened trim, while the external door hinges were very similar to those used on the 100 boot or trunk.



DMH finally pronounced himself satisfied with the prototype and rang up George Harriman at Longbridge, telling him that he had something to show him. Leonard Lord was now gradually handing over control of BMC to George who had been made managing director and deputy chairman of the group earlier in 1956.

George told DMH to bring the car over on 31st January 1957 and to put it in the garage under the Kremlin this being the nickname of the head office block at Longbridge. DMH and I duly drove over on the day, cleaned off the mud and showed him the car. After a thorough inspection, he was obviously impressed and said that he would like Sir Leonard Lord to see it on his return on 20th February. Whilst Harriman was by now effectively running BMC, Len Lord still liked to be consulted. He, too, approved the car and it was decided then and there that Austin should make it under the type number AN5.

DMH and Harriman agreed on conditions for its manufacture, while I drew up a provisional parts schedule and produced an estimate of costs. My figures came out to within £2 of those produced by Austin and, with the planned selling price of £450, promised an excellent profit per unit.

BOLDEN'S BOTTOM

Show Girl, our BJ7, has her bottom cleaned ready for the winter.

Holding out really well considering she won the AHC national concours back in 1996!!



John Bolden

John is seen below with his latest flame at the Newmarket Race day event last summer and with a somewhat earlier flame next to his first car, a Morgan.



If you have any interesting photos of either you or your car, or both, let me have them.

Rob



SPRITE SPARES

Hello Maggi

Re my phone call to you this morning re my Sprite hood frame. Please find attached photos of the frame. The frame is the packaway type, i.e. splits in the middle. Do hope that one of your members can make use of it.

My phone number is 01379 309095 near Diss Norfolk. Steve Lewsley.



Note: All spares are advertised in good faith for the benefit of EC members. Please contact the vendor and not the EC or its committee.

FROM THE 50TH

Every month running up to the Sprite 60th Anniversary celebrations I will include a picture from the 50th. Held at Goodwood in 2008

Here Pat and Zara Kimber enter the Gymkhana Arena.



NOGGIN `N` NATTERS

Colchester area	Varies	Contact	Tony Poulter	07835 653199
St. Albans area	First Tuesday	Contact	John Keener	01494 728360
<i>Crown and Sceptre at Bridens Camp, Water End, HP2 6EY</i>				
Suffolk area	Varies	Contact	Garrow Shand	01394 389013
<i>Regular road runs and pub meets - contact Garrow for details</i>				
Cambridge Area	2nd Wednesday	Contact	Rob Ransom	01223 524821
<i>St Ives Golf Club, Joint meetings with Cambridge and District Car Club</i>				
Ongar Area	2nd Wednesday	Contact	Jim Sweetingham	01268 545429
<i>Old Kings Head, Stock, Ingatestone, CM4 9PQ</i>				
Biggleswade Area	Varies	Contact	Clive Cocks	01933 551885
<i>Contact Clive for venue and timing</i>				
W Norfolk area	2 nd Thursday	Contact	Dave Holman	01366 347412
<i>Varies: Contact Dave for the latest information</i>				
Bury St Edmunds	Varies	Contact	John Bolden	01359 240153
<i>Location varies</i>				

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100, 100/6 & 3000	DAVE HOLMAN	01366 347412
SPRITES (All Marques)	PAT KIMBER	01920 420642
WARWICK HEALEY	JOHN KEENER	01494 728360

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Produced by the Eastern Centre of the Austin Healey Club. Comments and opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Club or the Committee.