

September 2018

Mutterings

THE NEWSLETTER of the EASTERN CENTRE
of the AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB



*Warwick Healeys at the Silverstone Classic - Tony
Withrington reports inside*

<http://new.ahc-eastern.co.uk/>

ROB'S RAMBLINGS

I spoke too soon about the glorious summer having just returned from getting a soaking at Gransden! Such a shame as this is a great event but I suppose we all knew that we would suffer from the two months of uninterrupted sunshine!

Whilst the weather has been unpredictable I managed to get out and about to several things this month including the Barrington First Friday meeting, racing at Snetterton (*below*) and the Hunstanton Kite Festival in addition to Gransden. That I only got wet once is more to do with luck than any strategic planning, particularly as I attended the Kite Festival on my classic Hercules pedal bike liberated from a scrappy by my father in the '50s. This bike ticks all my boxes as it looks in need of extensive tlc but goes well - a sort of Q-bike!

I rather like oddballs and this took my attention at the Hunstanton show. It is an Enigma, made by the company that used to make the Sebring Healey replicas out at a place called Three Holes near Wisbech (unusual name but simply referring to the three arches of an ancient bridge across one of the many fen watercourses).



The car is Mazda MX-5 based with a glass-fibre body that is made in a factory in Eastern Europe. A Lexus V8- powered option is also available.

Not necessarily everyone's cup of tea but looks a nice bit of kit with more than a hint of Healey in it.



Rob (*seen in the sun at Snetterton*)

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	25-08-18	Wroxall and around	266	531
Dave and Pam	25-08-18	Corrected catch-up	1136	3050
Rob	25-08-18	Barrington/Gransden	75	830

CLUB TROPHIES AND AGM

Please would all trophy holders return cups and trophies awarded at last year's AGM to Andrew Hollick or a committee member ready for new inscription as soon as possible.

Contact me also about the AGM and Autumn Lunch which is to be a carvery to choose on the day. So no need to choose your meal now but we do need the numbers.

See the notice elsewhere in *Mutterings*.

Please ring or email Andrew on 01223 263089 or email - andrewhollick48@tiscali.co.uk if you would like to attend.

2018 MIDGET & SPRITE CHALLENGE

Sept 29/30th Snetterton

Dates may change so check the website:
www.mgmidgetchallenge.co.uk

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

What a difference a month makes, after a period of non-stop sunshine our trip to Derbyshire gave us some rain to keep the dust down [much needed it must be said] and sadly a couple of weeks later the heavens opened just in time for the Little Gransden Air Show on Bank Holiday Sunday. That was very disappointing as it was the first time I had managed to attend, I have been regaled with stories of how wonderful it always is so I booked early to avoid disappointment!!!

We did see three aircraft brave the gusty side winds, all 1930's stuff, two Spartans and a Beech Twin engine beauty, all with radial engines and sounding glorious. The rest of the show had to be aborted, the Lancaster and Hurricane didn't risk it and the lighter acrobatic planes couldn't fly in the prevailing conditions either. I can't say I blame any of them, I was struggling to keep control of an umbrella! There was a very low turnout of cars as well but the hardy souls that did turn up made the best of it and warmed up with bacon rolls and huddled under the gazebos.

There were some interesting vehicles braving the rain, a gorgeous Bristol 401 on its shakedown run prior to going to Goodwood in a couple of weeks, an F series Vauxhall Victor, [I think that was very brave considering their propensity for rust] and a smattering of pre-war saloons which I don't think would keep out much more water than the Healey. We had two Hundreds and a 3000 on parade, we all drove home with the hoods down so will be spending a week or so drying out the carpets, good fun this classic motoring!

Our friend's Frogeye decided to play up again, this time the inlet manifold gasket failed. We noticed an anomaly on the gaskets supplied by a usual suspect, the hole for the inlet is larger than the locating ring in the head leading to a very narrow sealing area, presumably based on a competition engine with enlarged ports. I think this could cause a problem but the area surrounding the exhaust port is wider than an original gasket which is no bad thing. Has anyone out there got any thoughts on the matter?

Chairman's chat continued...

Continuing on the Sprite theme I have been playing a little with my Mk4, I am still putting the body shell back together so there is no imminent danger of it getting on the road but when trial fitting the doors I found the captive plates in the A posts for the hinges appear to be about a quarter inch too high, I didn't think to check too closely when I fitted them, I just assumed as they were from a reputable supplier they would be correct. Thinking about it now I really should have known better as the A post covers were too wide to fit on the sills, I had to split them and reduce the profile to suit the sill. All the parts were bought from the same supplier so I would have expected them to fit together even if they weren't exactly the original dimensions. I have been able to enlarge the mounting holes in the doors to drop them down and I will be fitting new skins, so hopefully will be able to achieve a reasonable gap in the end but it is frustrating to have to modify so many of the items purchased [this includes "Heritage" parts as well as the Shapecraft and Ashley Hinton products].

Happy Healeying?

Dave

THE HEALEY JENSEN CONNECTION

John Bolden has sent through a link to a very interesting article relating to Jensen Motors and the Healey connection.

I will reproduce parts of interest in a future Mutterings, meanwhile follow the link below to see the full article.



<http://www.carsceneinternational.com/warwick-healey-archive-bulletin-ix/>



**Austin Healey Club
Eastern Centre**

2018 AGM and Autumn Lunch

**The Eastern Centre AGM and Autumn Lunch will take place on
13th October 2018 at the Cambridge Meridian Golf Club
Comberton Rd, Toft, Cambridge CB23 2RY**

The AGM is at 11.00hrs followed by a carvery lunch at 12.30hrs
The cost is £17.75 per person for a 2 course meal, [coffee extra]
Come and enjoy a great meal, a fun social event and have your say about
the way Eastern Centre should move forward.

Please contact Andrew Hollick to reserve your place.

Telephone 01223 263089 or email andrewhollick48@tiscali.co.uk



EASTERN CENTRE CALENDAR SEPTEMBER 2018

By the time you are able to read the September edition of *Mutterings* we will have unfortunately come to the end of most scheduled events for the summer. However, there are still the 1st Friday evenings at Barrington Royal Oak, 1st Saturday lunchtimes at Cornish Hall End Horse and Groom, 1st Sunday morning breakfast club at Colmworth village hall and 3rd Sunday lunchtimes at The Bluebell at Hempstead.

All the above are a good opportunity for a good natter with other enthusiasts, and a wide variety of vehicles can be seen at all of them.

One late vehicle show has come to my notice; a Military Vehicle and Classic Car meet on **Saffron Walden common on 9th September**, in aid of the Injured Soldiers Welfare Fund for the local Carver Barracks. These men regularly perform vital and dangerous explosives disposal work, both here and abroad, so support from the community is appreciated. From 10am to 4pm.

AGM - AGM - AGM - Toft Meridian Golf Club

Please note, the date is Saturday, 13th October, 11am meeting, with an excellent carvery lunch and dessert for £17.75 at approximately 12.30pm. We need your support and inputs of ideas so please come, it's your club, be part of it.

Angela

PAT AND ZARA ON THE AUGUST HERTS AND BEDS NOGGIN

Royston is such an interesting town, full of historical events and people as we learnt on our stroll with Maggi Byford. Roger, at 10mph on his mobility scooter, easily outpaced us as Maggi gave us a fascinating tour.

This was followed by a cream tea at the Byfords. Jane Stevenson's scones were the best ever tasted! AH members who missed the August afternoon in perfect weather missed a veritable treat.

For details of future Noggins contact Clive Cocks on rushme51@live.com

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

Regular events 2018

- 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**
- 1st Friday at the **Royal Oak Barrington**, near Cambridge

Saturday 13th October: AGM and Sunday lunch 2018: Toft Meridian Golf Club. See notice in Mutterings

Please check the Events calendar on the website for full details on all our activities. It will be regularly updated as new events details come in, so don't miss out on anything.

If anyone has a favourite event that they would like to feature, please do let me know.

Angela

EVENTS AT BATTLESBRIDGE 2018



- 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/>

SOCIAL WHEELS SEPTEMBER 2018 from Angela Bonner

WVS rides again!!

After an unbelievable list of problems, my dream car is back on the road, and has hardly stopped since coming home at the beginning of August. I wasn't able to attend Helmingham Hall, but have managed two pub meets, the Colmworth Breakfast meet; two car shows and a photo shoot for the local Camera Club. There was inevitably some hanging around for that, but quite interesting, with six or so assorted vehicles including a bullnose Morris, a Jaguar and a Merc SL.

At the second car show, not huge but again a nice assortment I decided to offer a ride in the 100 as a raffle prize. This proved quite popular and we raised an additional £51 for East Anglia Children's Hospice.

The much anticipated Ufford Park Sprite weekend will sadly be over by now and I'm sure we will all look forward to reports of you adventures in the next issue of Mutterings.

Some of you will have been to Little Gransden Air show by the time you read this, and I hope you all had a wonderful day with some good flying weather to go with the usual amazing display aircraft. Hopefully the autumn will be as kind as the summer has been, with plenty of opportunities to continue enjoying our lovely cars well into the end of the year.

On a slightly sour note, not especially to do with Healeys, I have been done for parking for the first time in my life. Furious doesn't begin to describe it, and just goes to show how careful you have to be. I parked in a hurry, in heavy rain, in a place I have used occasionally for more than 30 years, and didn't notice the new Residents' Only sign, which applies to just the end three spaces on a line across the top of the common, and is obscured by a vehicle parked in front of it as it is low on the bank. This is very recent, but when I challenged it, was told, I suppose reasonably enough, that it is the driver's responsibility to always check the signs. So be aware, particularly in an area you think you know like the back of your hand, and don't spoil your parking record. Motoring is expensive enough without feeding the greedy hands of parking authorities.

See you at the AGM; I might have stopped spitting feathers by then.

Happy Healeying

COMMITTEE MATTERS

As mentioned previously the bookings for events this year seems to be a bit low. Is our notification system inadequate; is there a better way of getting information to the members? Please let us know what you would like to see happening in the Centre, we are always open to new ideas.

The AGM is only a few weeks away now and it would be good to see some new faces on the Committee so please give some consideration to joining us. Hopefully every member should have had an email with the AGM details and contact details for booking lunch. Contact any of the committee members on the list on the website to find out more about the running of the Centre and find out how much fun it can be.

Richard Mayes will be standing down from the secretary post so it would be good to find someone who can keep us organised and take minutes. It is a great post to get to know people and be the first to get new information so please consider giving it a go. The Secretary post involves booking the Pub, taking minutes of meetings and producing agendas and the like for the committee but there is always help available so don't be afraid to have a go. We have had interest for the membership secretary post but we would still like additional committee members. Most of the current committee have been in post for a long time and it would be really useful to get the input from newer members to progress the club into the future. As always, many hands make light work.

At present we meet at lunchtimes but that [and the venue] can be changed to evenings to suit whoever is on the committee if necessary

Please come to the AGM, the food and the banter is good, this could be the perfect opportunity to get involved and shape the future of Eastern Centre. Contact Andrew Hollick to book your meal, see the notice of AGM on the website and in this Newsletter for details. You can always come along to a committee meeting to see what goes on [next one 13th September], chat to your nearest committee member or collar us at an event and see if this could enhance your Healey experience.

Your Healey Club needs you.

Dave

ON THE ROAD WITH PAT AND ZARA - WROXALL ABBEY

The day after the Royston walk-about Pat and I set off for the Wroxall Abbey Sprite & Midget 60th anniversary weekend. We had three showers of rain but kept dry as we were able to keep moving, so did not need to put on the hood.

The hotel, in a former abbey with some lovely stained glass windows and large bedrooms, set in dozens of acres of beautiful Warwickshire countryside, was very good. A cream tea awaited us on arrival, plus a generous and useful goody bag. The barbeque that evening, due to the weather, was indoors instead of outside; rather a squash but we managed.

A briefing on the Saturday morning was followed by a 60 mile run to Crusis for a ploughman's lunch. Together with the return trip, the Cotswold villages and towns of Broadway, Chipping Campden, Moreton in the Marsh, Snowhill, Burford, Stow on the Wold, Bibury etc were especially appreciated by the Sprite members from Germany, Netherlands, Ireland, Switzerland, Australia as well as those from Scotland and distant English counties.

A gala dinner that night was much enjoyed with some extra local enthusiasts adding to the 95 staying at the hotel and nearby.

Saturday's perfect weather was followed on Sunday by all day heavy rain, but in true British fashion cars, drivers and passengers braved it out in the Abbey's field to celebrate the Sprite's 60th birthday.

Our 1958 Sprite behaved well, despite losing a bit of oil on our way there. However, on our return home it lost its new filler cap, probably due to road humps, spewing oil everywhere on the engine, but despite this it got us safely back to Ware after the 260 mile round trip.

It was a good weekend but I doubt if we shall get to the 75th anniversary!

Zara & Pat

GETTING WET AT GRANSDEN

The combined air and classic car display at Little Gransden airstrip is one of my favourite summer events with participation in the past from the Vulcan, TWO Lancasters, the Blenheim and masterful displays of aerobatics from Mark Jeffries, former British champion and others alongside a large collection of Classics to look at in between flying displays. Sadly this year the event coincided with a very wet and windy day that curtailed both flying and participation by all but the most hardy car enthusiasts. Suffice to say that the three Eastern representatives got wet whilst awaiting the to-be-aborted displays. I only have 20 miles to drive home whereas Terry Sprosson and Dave Holman nearer 60 to King's Lynn. Other Club members were present having driven something more sensible than top-down Healey but other than posting their photographs I will allow them to remain anonymous!!



The low cloud base allowed very few aircraft to display but two (from a build of only 34) Spartan Executives braved the elements and showed what the 1930's equivalent of a Lear Jet looks and sounds like in the air.

SILVERSTONE CLASSIC 2018

Great fun this year at the Silverstone Classic with the usual mix of classics racing, Club displays and entertainment.

AHC members enjoyed good weather (except the Friday evening deluge!) and exciting racing with many Healeys on track.



Loads of gorgeous cars including Club car of the show - the Aston Martin DB1 above - with Warwick Healeys well represented as you will see on the front cover.

Well organised, great value with 2 for 1 club tickets, good camping facilities which included food outlets, essentials shop and a pub with live music!



Already looking forward to next year!

Tony Withrington

SNETTERTON AUGUST 5 2018

I mentioned in an earlier edition of *Mutterings* that EC member and racer, Pat Harris is competing in his Morris Minor this year and one of the venues was Snetterton on 5 August so I duly attended meeting up with Pat and wife, Angie.

Practice had gone well and Pat was fastest in his class and all indicators were that he would consolidate his position as overall leader in the Class Championship.

Oh fickle finger of fate!

The race was in two rounds and in Round 1 Pat was up with the fastest when he came around spluttering and banging indicating that a strategic withdrawal was in order. On checking the engine it was found that one of the plug leads had come adrift from the distributor - an easy fix so on to Round 2.

Going like a train Pat harried and chased the big fish until the Tannoy reported that the burgundy Minor had stopped out on the circuit and the driver was grovelling under the bonnet - same problem, same fix but too late to stop his competitors taking advantage.

So the race was lost due to a minor problem (sorry!).

Otherwise it was a great day at the races with wall-to-wall sun which, for Snetterton, is unheard of - umbrellas were in use as sun shades and the ice-cream van did a roaring trade.

Commiserations to Pat but the series is not yet lost and I will report on how he gets on when all the rounds are completed.



A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THIS MONTH'S EVENTS



From top L: Keith Rudge at the Barrington first Friday meet: Wet and windy Gransden: Terry Sprosson admires a beautiful Rolls Royce at the Hunstanton Kite Festival: Pat and Angie Harris at Snetterton: One of the Spartans and a Beech 18 at Gransden.



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>				
Herts and Beds	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>				

EASTERN CENTRE COMMITTEE 2017/18

CHAIRMAN	DAVE HOLMAN	chairman@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01366 347412
NEC DIRECTOR & TREASURER	MAGGI BYFORD	treasurer@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01763 242910
WEBMASTER	MIKE QUINN	webmaster@ahc-eastern.co.uk	
COMPETITION	Vacant		
EDITOR	ROB RANSOM	mutterings@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01223 524821
MEMBERSHIP	STUART SELF	membership@ahc-eastern.co.uk	
SOCIAL & INT.	ANGELA BONNER	social@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01223 890311
SECRETARY			
MSA LIAISON	RICHARD MAYES	secretary@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01462 623635
TROPHY MASTER	ANDY HOLLICK	andrewhollick48@tiscali.co.uk	01223 263089

GENERAL MEMBERS

JOHN KEENER	healeynutjk@yahoo.co.uk	01494 728360
PATRICK LOUSADA	p.lousada@skikitz.co.uk	01908 582851
TONY WITHRINGTON	tony.withrington@gmx.co.uk	07903 542903

TECHNICAL SECRETARIES

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

VALUATION OFFICER FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES

DAVID SINGER	david@classicresearch.co.uk	01787 476264
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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.