

April 2020

Mutterings

THE NEWSLETTER of the EASTERN CENTRE
of the AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB



*Last Supper (or lunch in this case) before the lock-down
- See inside*

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

ROB'S RAMBLINGS

What a difference a month makes.

Last month the magazine was optimistically looking at a full and exciting programme of motoring events: this month most, if not all have been cancelled or postponed. The coronavirus pandemic does not preclude us driving our classics on the road but socially it probably would be regarded as cocking a snoot at Government's ban on non-essential travel. How long the restrictions will stay in place is anyone's guess but I can't see freedom of association being resumed until a vaccine is produced which will be a long time.

I, purely fortuitously, packed a lot into the period before lock-down with the Norfolk Noggin', Toft Spring Lunch and on the very last day before all public venues were closed I attended the H&H auction preview day at Duxford.

I met up with several friends at the venue having abandoned the idea of a pub lunch.

The auction itself was held behind closed doors the next day with live streaming that made an interesting watch.:

[Duxford results](#)



For the Club, whilst we cannot meet face to face we can socially interact via the telephone, email and Facetime or Skype. If you know of someone who is on their own or particularly vulnerable, give them a call.

This is a horrendous time for us all, let's make it a bit more bearable for members who may be alone or sick by not forgetting them.

Stay safe

Rob

TOURING TROPHY - 2020

The Touring Trophy runs from AGM to AGM (October to October).

The 'Mr Mercury' trophy seen right was presented to the AH Club by National Benzole and rededicated as the Touring Trophy some years ago.



If you want to be in with a chance of winning the Trophy let the Editor mutterings@ahc-eastern.co.uk know your mileage in the following format.

Entrant	Date	Trip description	Trip	Total
Angela Bonner	25/3/ 2020	Local and around	723	499
Rob	25/3/ 2020	Toft and warm up	33	103
Dave and Pam	25/3/ 2020	Slumber		101
Dave Holman	25/3/ 2020	Busting lock-down for essential trip	16	16

From Chairman Dave: put me down in the tourist trophy, I got the Hundred out this morning to do a drugs run, going the long way round I managed a whole 16 miles!

It is unlikely that you will be using your car very much until we are released from lockdown so a prize of a loo roll for the most innovative way to keep those wheels turning. Marathon runners are jogging around their flats so perhaps driving in and out of the garage could add to your tally!

'Clocking' using an electric drill will not be allowed, although in the interests of fitness training jacking up and rotating the rear wheels by hand or foot is acceptable but evidence is needed.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

I hope you are all keeping well amid the uncertainty. April has been well and truly cancelled and there doesn't seem too much hope of returning to social motoring in the near future. We are still waiting to find out the official position on Classic Le Mans but the "real" 24 hour race has been postponed. The Dutch Club event in June has been postponed and the June Euston Park Rural Pastimes event near Thetford in Norfolk has been cancelled.

Due to all of this the Hundred hasn't actually turned a wheel this year. I am still working my way through the work on the 3000; I keep finding other areas that need attention due to its prolonged inactivity.

All the track rod end boots have perished so I had a quick look on eBay and found some suitable replacement boots. There is no play in the joints so a quick clean and re-grease should keep the MOT man happy when the time comes, and it is a whole lot cheaper than replacing the track rods. The heater had been bypassed so that was removed for inspection. The matrix is clogged and the heater valve jammed solid. While everything is out I decided it may be worth investigating an upgrade, *Ahead for Healeys* advertise an upgrade kit but it didn't really show much on the website as to how it would fit or indeed what the benefit would be.

I have always found Kit Car suppliers to have interesting components for sale so I had a look at Car Builder Solutions. For loads of money I could fit air conditioning but that would need a bit of re-engineering to fit the compressor so I decided on a simple heater option. It hasn't actually been delivered yet but I am optimistic from the drawing dimensions on the website it should fit in the same area occupied by the original. It incorporates a 3 speed fan so it means I can dispense with the asthmatic snail fan under the wing and plumb straight into the cockpit. There is a 3 way vent arrangement that I hope to be able to incorporate into the existing de-mister and footwell vent system leaving an additional duct to be utilised somehow. Hopefully I will be able to dream up an ingenious way of connecting the original heater controls so I won't lose too many concours points.

Chairman's chat continued...

If it works I will try and write an article detailing the work. If it goes as planned it should be able fit to any of the 6 cylinder Healeys and I am hoping that the 3 speed fan will make a marked difference to the de-misting capabilities in the rain and maybe get a bit more cool air into the cockpit in the summer. I may even consider trying one in the Hundred as the de-misting capabilities of the "Fug Stirrer" are pathetic [and that is being nice to it].

Don't forget even though we can't carry on with the Noggins your committee is just an email away if you have a question regarding your Healey and with the extended fettling period I hope to see many of you about later in the year. We would like to think that normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

Best wishes to all,

Dave

WARNING SCAM ADVERTISEMENTS

Please warn all your readers about scam adverts offering a car in loo of toilet rolls etc.

I saw such an ad and contacted the seller, a well spoken man with strange accent, difficult to understand, possibly from Norfolk, I asked for information on the vehicle, he knew very little about cars reinforcing my Norfolk suspicion.

His questions were only in whether it was 2ply, what colour, how many rolls were available, where I kept them and were any of them used!!

I will arse more questions, and try and flush the culprit out I am determined to find out who is behind this and will inform you when I get to the bottom of it.

However not too sure how to handle it as he may be part of a chain I will see how it pans out.

Ps Does anybody need some classic toilet rolls - old stock marked "IZAL"

Clive Cocks

ADVICE TO CLUB CENTRES & MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID 19) FROM THE NEC

The Club National Executive ("NEC") at its regular bi-monthly meeting held on the 15th March 2020 discussed and resolved to issue strong advice to all members and Centres of the club to minimise the risk to our members whose demographic age profile (probably in excess of 50% of the club are over or approaching 70) falls substantially within the categories of person at most risk of contracting the virus.

Whilst the NEC do not wish to be overly prescriptive, the strong advice of the NEC, the Directors and Officers of the club, is to follow as closely as possible the Advice given by the Government experts in the field.

As a result of both the NEC's deliberations and the latest published advice, as recently as Monday late afternoon, the Club's advice is as follows:-

1. All face to face meetings with the exception of emergency or critical meetings of club members carrying out Club functions or activities should cease forthwith.
2. All NEC, Centre Committee meetings and other sub group meetings including informal meetings such as "Noggin & Natters" should be suspended.
3. The NEC is actively researching video conferencing, conference call facilities and other alternative means of non-personal contact meetings.
4. Social Distancing requirements should be observed as fully as possible in relation to all Club activities.
5. Where Centres have outstanding Commercial obligations (to hotels, venues and other contractual obligations) it is suggested the organisers should attempt to re-negotiate the same and postpone scheduled events in to the next calendar year. With the above in mind the IHW Weekend in mid-July 2020 will be re scheduled to the next calendar year.
6. Where possible, deposits and pre - payments should either be returned to participants or carried forward against the re scheduled event. The Company Secretary, Charles V Fraser-Macnamara a retired commercial and litigation solicitor (Mobile Number 07836624663) will be available to assist any Centre Committee with any negotiations and agreements in that regard.

NEC Coronavirus response continued.....

- 7 We must be mindful that Hotels and Venues also face challenging times and if they are to retain future business they will have to be flexible in their negotiations.

The Club and its members are a voluntary organisation and we are blessed with a wide spectrum of expertise and experience and now is the time when we should be acting to protect our members and to ensure the survival of the club. Financially the Club is secure and can weather this "Storm" and with the full co operation of all our members we will do so.

Where members are aware of other members in their area, who may fall into the vulnerable groups outlined in the Government advice, we would urge members to keep in contact with them (by non-direct physical contact) such as a phone call or e-mail to see that they are safe and well - we are sure this would be appreciated . Indeed, there may be other practical assistance that can be rendered to self-quarantining members without risk to your own health.

Hopefully these measures will not last for more than 4-5 months or so and we can then resume our club activities in full. In the meantime, it may be a great opportunity to commence/complete that long awaited overhaul!

<https://www.austinhealeyclub.com/>

Advertisement

Austin Healey Sprite 1961. Fair condition, all usual bits, mostly standard. Garaged for many years. Willing to swop for toilet rolls or any form of dried pasta. Quick deal required (special need for toilet paper)

Contact (or NOT under present circumstances), will be sitting by the phone (nothing else to do) 01234 987654

Editor's note: The Club takes no responsibility for any Cocks-ups.

CARS AS TV STARS

- **Bullitt** - A 100 is passed repeatedly in the car chase which must go round in circles because the car is parked up!
- **K-PAX** - Kevin Spacey film. The consultant psychiatrist drives a 3000
- **Beach Boys Docu Drama** - some weird channel. When they get famous they all buy smart cars, one a 100.
- **Tears for Fears music video: Everybody Wants To Rule The World** A BJ8 is featured as the backbone to the video. You can get it on You Tube.
- **10cc album cover: How dare you!**
Thanks to David Singer for this contribution.



- **AXA Insurance advert - current:** Sprite is seen in the main character's garage business

No excuses as we all have loads of time on our hands; let me have your contributions and I promise I will keep them safe!!!

PAT AND ZARA'S DRIVE IT DAY RUN

Sadly but for obvious reasons our Run is postponed. We are going ahead with getting things organised (but not making the cakes!) and hope it will be possible to have it later in the year.

I will contact the entries we have had.

Zara

NORFOLK NOGGIN - MARCH 2020

The March Noggin' was almost the last hurrah before the coronavirus lock down. It was enjoyed by a hardy few in a time when we had not heard the term 'Social distancing'!

Steve Everest and wife Kath joined us alongside stalwarts Terry Sprosson, Dave Holman and the Byfords. John Wilson was wondering how to get his aircraft released from lock down in Cyprus



Norfolk Noggins ARE ON HOLD but when normality resumes we anticipate celebrating at the Three Horseshoes pub at Roydon, near King's Lynn. Why not hold virtual noggins with members and friends. Zoom and other video conferencing sites offer a free faculty that enables video and chat on line.

EASTERN CENTRE CALENDAR 2020

Eastern Centre supported events are shown in bold. Any other events are for information. If you attend a good event please let me know and we will look to get it in the Calendar for next year. Contact by text or mobile, Angela on 07710 267356 for more information, or landline 01440 730459, and email angelabonneruk@yahoo.co.uk

Subject to amendment

Please be aware that many events are now cancelled or postponed where possible due to the Coronavirus, so even when restrictions are lifted **please check** before you attempt to attend anything listed at the moment. I am keeping the diary going in the hope things will return to normal soon, but currently all events are cancelled or on hold until further notice.

16/19th April Daffodil Weekend: CANCELLED.

26th April. Drive It Day: CANCELLED. All organized gatherings are cancelled, including Pat and Zara's, but they are hoping to re-schedule later in the year.

8th May, Royston Classic Meet: CANCELLED. As this is held in conjunction with the town May Fayre it is not likely to be rescheduled, but they are still hoping for the Kite Festival in August. Details to follow.

30th May Visit to Twinwood Airfield, ON HOLD - DETAILS IN MAY MUTTERINGS. Maggi has organized a private visit, just north of Bedford from where Glen Miller took off on his final flight and was never seen again. An interesting collection of 40's museums and memorabilia. Starting at 11.00am in reserved parking for your picnic lunch, then a tour including tea and cakes in the NAAFI. Car plus 2 incl. £10. Booking essential with Maggi at treasurer@ahc-eastern.co.uk

6th June Letchworth Classic Vehicles picnic, Halls Green, Weston. Over 400 vehicles in 2019 with super weather, hopefully a repeat for this lovely afternoon. Pay on the gate, more details on the LGCCVCC website. **PENDING DECISION.**

Events 2020...

7th June, Euston Rural Pastimes Country fair. This is an interesting and very varied event, lots going on and a wide selection of classic vehicles. More details later, but we hope to group our members together and make it one of our principal events. **PENDING DECISION.**

11/14th June. AH Lustrum 2020. UNLIKELY IN VIEW OF BORDER CLOSURES. European Healey Meeting run by the AHOCN, a Dutch club founded 45 years ago www.healey.nl/events/lustrum If you are booked in I am sure they will notify you.

28th June. Great Saling Fete and Vehicle Display, Millenium Hall and Grounds, CM7 5DW. This is a friendly and growing event, 130 vehicles last year, great food, a bar and entertainments. Free entry for car and passengers, a lovely relaxing afternoon. **PENDING DECISION**

3/5th July Classic Le Mans. The very best of European Classic Car racing at this exciting meeting. Make a short break of it and support our British Healey drivers. **PENDING DECISION**

9th July, THURSDAY Classics on the Green, Friston, Saxmundham, IP17 1NP Anything on wheels produced before 1970, anytime between 3pm and 8pm, refreshments, bar, BBQ, no booking needed and more food and drink at the Old Chequers. Donations collected for the village church. **PENDING DECISION**

10th/12th July 2020 International Healey weekend Stanbrook Abbey, 5 miles from Worcester. POSTPONED

26th July Picnic Pool Party -Date is now confirmed, Tony Withrington and the 5 o'clock Shadows will come and play their selection of 60's music by the pool, which all those who came in 2019 enjoyed so much. Bring your picnic, chair, swimming kit and some sunshine please!! **WATCH THIS SPACE**

2nd August Higham Ferrers Chichele Classic Car Show. Always overbooked so contact Roy Murphy early if you plan to visit this one. 07831 898138. More details later. **PENDING DECISION**

More overleaf....

Events 2020...

30th August. Little Gransden Air and Classic Vehicle show SG19 3BP. We will have the gazebo and a strong Healey presence at this fantastic air show. They do need individual details for security at this one, if you are interested let Angela know as early as possible, there is a **CLOSING DATE** and we nearly missed it last year. Remember you **MUST** stay until the end of the flying, and this can be variable. More details as soon as available. **PENDING DECISION**

Please check Mutterings regularly for confirmed dates and events. There have been some additions and date adjustments recently please check dates carefully and revise your diaries.

Contact by text or mobile, Angela on 07710 267356 for more information, or landline 01440 730459, and email angelabonneruk@yahoo.co.uk

Take care,

Angela

NEW MEMBERS

John Smith, Benfleet

'59 Mk1 3000 in vgc

Simon Norton, Bungay

'64 Mk3 resto project

Joanna Hill & Jonathan Pearson, Ely

Mk2 3000 race spec, road legal

David Hamilton, Hitchin

'61 Sprite vgc

The Committee welcomes all new members to the club and looks forward to meeting with you when normality resumes. New members are asked to let the editor have a brief 'Me and my car' article for Mutterings.

NATIONAL EVENTS

I have had a communication from Dave Wheeler - the Daffodil Weekend is cancelled; Paul Johnson - Northern weekend postponed till next year; rumblings from NEC - IHW at Worcester likely to be postponed till next year. Event cancellations are certain, but all organisers still negotiating financial situation with venues.

Also - MSA no longer issuing event permits or waivers, so no Drive-it Day.

The formal announcement of the AHC situation is reproduced above.

Chins up!

Maggi Byford

NEC Director

TOFT SPRING LUNCH: 15 MARCH 2020

We are going to remember this event for all the wrong reasons as it was held the weekend before all socialising was banned and event after event cancelled. We had around a dozen who came along and enjoyed the carvery lunch and great puds!

I took the Healey as you will see on the front cover and put a few miles on the clock and got wet as a result but hey, ho, bigger fish to fry now.



Rob



SOCIAL WHEELS, (AT A SAFE DISTANCE!)

Hello everyone, the world has turned upside down and what would have been a very full calendar is on hold awaiting Coronavirus developments and decisions from both Government and individual organisers of planned events. How much can be resurrected at short notice when the bans are lifted I don't know, and hopefully some of the work done can be moved to later in the year. I know Pat and Zara Kimber have done a huge amount of work for Drive it Day and are hoping to re-schedule later. At the outset I was quite upbeat and planning to 'Drive It' anyway even if alone but now they have even knocked that on the head as it could not be classed as an essential journey.

Our Eastern Spring lunch at Toft Golf Club just scrambled in before the bans started, and although numbers were drastically down on the usual, those who did make it enjoyed a lovely meal as the team at the golf club always provide. I felt the atmosphere was rather in the spirit of the Blitz, keep smiling, it will all be alright in the end. Yes, it will be, we will come through this, most of us have suffered many traumas in our lives while reaching the more senior years of the majority in the Austin Healey club, and whilst the year 2020 is going to be difficult for many we cannot change the situation. I sincerely hope we can all pull together and help out where needed, try to keep cheerful, and look forward to the future.

The early May Bank Holiday on a Friday, the 8th May looks like falling a bit flat, which is sad as it is especial commemoration of VE Day this year. I am going to hang all the bunting up anyway, and flags, and have a family party in the garden, even if it cannot be a wider celebration. The Rotary Club of Royston are cancelling their Classic Car gathering on the Town Hall car park. They hope to carry on with the Kite Festival later in the year.

Maggi is holding on in the hope the **Twinwood** trip can go ahead and will update us in the next issue of Mutterings. If it does, please contact her on treasurer@ahc-eastern.co.uk as soon as possible.

Little Gransden air show -WAIT AND SEE. Although this is not until August, the security for a working airfield is very strict and details must be sent as soon as possible. Remember vehicles are not allowed to move on the showground between 10am and close of show and the entry fee is £10 PER PERSON not per car. I will be co-ordinating entries and forms as fast as I can get the information together, so please contact me as soon as you can commit. There is a closing date.

Remember to read Mutterings on-line for all the latest information on events in our area, there are inevitable changes again to last month's Mutterings.

See you all soon, hopefully they will lift some of the restrictions before we all go 'stir crazy' and we will be able to at least go out again on non-essential drives but not in company. In the meantime, keep those batteries topped up, and look after the tyres. You would be more than a little peeved if THEY lift the ban and your pride and joy refuses to start!!

Take care, stay safe,

Angela

FROM THE ARCHIVES

I found this photo the other day.

It was taken at the much-missed Colchester Show in 1995. This was the early season opener for the EC and memorable for Tony 'the cake' Bending's sumptuous selection of gateaux.



Those were the days.

NOGGIN `N` NATTERS

Colchester area	Varies	Chris and Angie Davis	canda3000@hotmail.com
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>Joint meetings with Woolpit Area Classics</i>			

EASTERN CENTRE COMMITTEE 2019/20

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SPRITES (All Marques)	PAT KIMBER	01920 420642
WARWICK HEALEY	JOHN KEENER	01494 728360

VALUATION OFFICER FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES

DAVID SINGER	david@overseasair.net	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.