

May 2020

Mutterings

THE NEWSLETTER of the EASTERN CENTRE
of the AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB



**Lockdown
lament:
Angela's
Can't Drive
it Day!**



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

ROB'S RAMBLINGS

A month into the lockdown life has changed beyond recognition with no social contact, confined to home and this dreadful virus rampaging through the population.

For those of us whose main passion is motoring the lockdown and restriction on travel is hard and it's difficult to see it being lifted any time soon. So are your cars polished to within an inch of their life? Fettled so that when the door opens they start on the button? Mine have been started and rolled around a bit to keep the wheels from flat-spotting but not much more - sitting in an open-top car on the drive in the lovely weather we have had doesn't help the fed up feeling!

Send me a picture of your car in lock-down; Angela Bonner's appears on the front cover and I will start a regular piece.

Stay safe

Rob



NEW MEMBERS

Andrew Watts from Ware, Herts
Car: '59 100/6 - 3000 engine - 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*.

Tony Withrington

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	25/4/ 2020	Covid lockdown	0	499
Rob	25/4/ 2020	Covid lockdown	0	103
Dave and Pam	25/4/ 2020	Covid lockdown	0	101
Dave Holman	25/4/ 2020	Covid lockdown	0	16

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.

Rob

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Hello everyone, it doesn't look as though normal business will be resumed any time soon. We have had confirmation that Classic Le Mans will be postponed until 2021 but of course it is difficult to make plans that far ahead when everything is getting pushed back, it looks as though it will be hard to choose what to do.

I did SORN my modern and the Hundred will get used on the monthly run to collect prescriptions, but even going the long way round isn't much of a drive. Everything that doesn't move in the garden has been painted, so at least that has been getting rid of the collection of half-finished paint tins from the shed.

Work has progressed a bit on the BJ8 but I keep finding other bits that need attention that I had totally forgotten about during its rest period of several years. It was a LHD conversion done about 30 years ago, I used it as it was for a couple of years, putting up with its foibles. One of which was that the wiper's park position was not changed. Now not being someone who does things the easy way I couldn't resist the chance to "upgrade" to two speed wipers as I have an old Reliant Scimitar set up lying around doing nothing. Let's face it where's the fun in just fitting new arms and twiddling the "park" contact! I did perform this modification on the Westland and by using the Reliant switchgear you also get electric washers on the same switch. That obviously produces another problem as the pump would empty the original washer bottle with one press, so the hunt is on for a suitable hiding place for a reasonable size reservoir.

I will also be converting to negative earth while I am playing, the Rev Counter needs a clean and check anyway as it was over reading so while I am in there with the soldering iron I might as well swop a couple of wires over. I don't think I will fit an alternator just now, but going negative will mean it will be an easy job at a later date.

The Heater modification is more or less done, the adaptor plate needs painting and I need to sort out the fresh air ducting into the heater and up to the de-mist vents. I should be able to utilise the original controls so the only modern switch will be for the three-speed fan which should be easy to place out of sight.

Chairman continued...

Whether it was worth all the effort won't really be known until we are able to use it in inclement weather, let's hope I can give an update by Christmas.

Once all the modifications have been done the fun will really start, I took it apart a number of years ago so:

- Problem one; remembering where I put everything: Problem two; remembering how it all goes back together.
- Problem two isn't really a problem as there are manuals showing where it all goes.

Problem one could be the major stumbling block, I will have to have a chat with some squirrels to find out how they remember where their nuts are! [Problem three will be wondering what to do with all the left over bits, and what should go in any holes that are left that don't fit the bits that are left over!]

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. Keep an eye on the website and look out for emails from our membership secretary, we will pass on any news as soon as we get it.

Best wishes to all,

Dave

*...still can't find where
that rattle came from!*



A MOMENT WITH MOSS

I am sure much will be written about the passing of the legend that was Stirling Moss. One particular memory I have is of seeing him in the 1990 Pirelli Classic Marathon.

The rally stops at Lydden Hill in Kent, en route to the channel crossing. The circuit lends itself to an interesting time trial, with a mix of tarmac and off road to challenge all competitors.

We had driven down from Cambridge for the day and we were rewarded with fine weather and a fabulous array of classic rally cars. Some lovely Healeys were present, including no 36, a triple SU rally Healey prepared by JME of Warwick. Perhaps some of our members recall the event and could expand on the rest of the rally in another edition?

Can you spot the famous drivers in some of the pictures? (Answers to the editor)

The obvious one is, of course, Stirling.

That year he was driving an MGB prepared by Brown and Gammons of Baldock. Happy as ever to have his picture taken by fans and always seeming to have time for everyone - a great racing driver and a true gent!



Tony Withrington

More from the 1990 Classic Marathon...



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

From David Singer

Another Healey in films for you; The 1960 film "**School for Scoundrels**" (starring Ian Carmichael, Terry Thomas and Alastair Sim - to name a few) used the 1958 ex works demonstrator 100/6 registered PJB 828 as you will see below. This car was sold to a Ted Worswick in 1963 who uprated it to the then 3000 works specification (with the assistance of the Abingdon competition department). Ted Worswick successfully raced the car for quite a few years and competed with and beat, on occasions, John Chatham in his SAL 75.

Obviously the car must have gone through various hands since but it appeared and sold at a Goodwood Bonhams Auction in 2012 for £85,500. The CVLA website lists the car as still existing but SORNed.

There you are a little filler for you!



David

<https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/20145/lot/154/>

School for Scoundrels...



*PJB 828
with
Alastair Sim
at the wheel
in 1960*



HEALEY SEATS

Laurence Jones has a couple of seats, not complete with the seat bottom cushions, from he thinks a 100/4 and wonders if they are of interest to anyone who is rebuilding an A-H? He lives in Little Baddow, Essex.

More info: Tel. 01245 226337 or mobile 07770 226337

<mailto:laurence.c.jones33@gmail.com>

EASTERN CENTRE CALENDAR 2020

Eastern Centre supported events are shown in bold. Any other events are for information.

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.

BATTLESBRIDGE. Closed until further notice, the first time in 50 years they have had to do this.

8th May, FRIDAY CANCELLED. Royston Rotary, they are still hoping for the Kite Festival in August. Details to follow.

30th May POSTPONED. Visit to Twinwood Airfield, hopefully will be rescheduled for a future date.

6th June POSTPONED. Letchworth Classic Vehicles picnic, new date to be decided in 2021.

7th June, POSTPONED. Euston Rural Pastimes Country fair. New date 13th June 2021.

11/14th June. CANCELLED AH Lustrum 2020 Contact

www.healey.nl/events/lustrum if you are booked and you have not heard from the organiser.

28th June. CANCELLED Great Saling Fete and Vehicle Display, Millenium Hall and Grounds, CM7 5DW.

3/5th July POSTPONED Classic Le Mans. Postponed until 1st - 4th July 2021.

9th July, CANCELLED THURSDAY Classics on the Green, Friston, Saxmundham, IP17 1NP.

10th/12th July 2020 POSTPONED. International Healey weekend. New date 16th/18th July 2021.

Events update continued...

12th July CANCELLED. Kimbolton Castle Classic Car Show.

26th July Picnic Pool Party
WE ARE STILL HOPING,
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!!



July Possible visit to RAF Marham family day. Still unconfirmed so we suspect it will be POSTPONED as far as the Healey club is concerned for this year.

2nd August Higham Ferrers Chichele Classic Car Show. STILL HOPING depending on Gov. restrictions. Always overbooked so contact Roy Murphy if you plan to visit this one. 07831 898138.

30th August. POSTPONED Little Gransden Air and Classic Vehicle show new date 2021.

There have been some date adjustments recently so please check dates carefully and check with organiser. Contact Angela by text or mobile on 07710 267356 for more information, or email angelabonneruk@yahoo.co.uk

Hope to see you soon, take care,

Angela

RACING WITH STIRLING

After the sad news about Sir Stirling Moss passing away I thought back to the time when I was fortunate enough to take part in a race with the great man himself. The place was the Goodwood Revival meeting in 2006, the Fordwater trophy 30 car grid including 13 various Sprite based cars, Morgans, Triumph, Sunbeams, MG`s and various others. Having only raced for 20 months Goodwood was another world, the hospitality, the atmosphere, the cars and the crowd. After the usual signing on and scrutineering it was time for the drivers briefing, entering the building 10 minutes early, I was surprised how many drivers for our race were already there, the last couple of rows of seats were empty so going for a space on the back row I realised that Stirling Moss was sitting on the end chair nearest the exit with his racing helmet resting on the neighbouring seat, thinking I should keep my distance he removed his helmet from the seat, presuming he was offering the seat, I sat beside him. Saying thanks I sat down wondering if I should "chat," I asked if he had to attend the drivers briefing he told me at least it showed willing, I then asked how he was allowed to race wearing his traditional silk racing overalls his reply was that he had signed so many pieces of paper in the past that he could possibly race in his underpants and they could not stop him, the briefing then began and my only conversation with Stirling Moss ended.

My race practice plan was to follow Stirling as best I could (how difficult would that be he was 76 years old driving a car he wasn`t used to). I think Goodwood wanted Stirling to go out first, however I think he had other ideas, luckily I was far down the paddock so I went out 2 cars behind Stirling. I've got to admit it was not easy, each lap he was just getting a little bit further away, after 6 or 7 laps feeling slightly deflated I put in a good couple of laps and I could see his car getting closer, (time to give it a bit more I thought) harder and harder I tried and finally he was in overtaking range my moment of glory came on the Lavant straight where I slipped past him and never saw him again (the truth is he was suffering fuel problems and retired on lap 8).

Next day the race, unlike the practice, the track was damp and slippery. On the 15 row grid I was on row 12, Stirling on row 10 less than 1.5 seconds a lap separated rows 10/11/12 .

Goodwood, Clive and Sir Stirling continued...

The race was on and soon there were casualties with breakdowns and a couple of incidents. I could see Stirling and was confident I could catch him, however towards the end of the race with Stirling the car in front of me and a MGB Berlinetta close on my tail determined to overtake I pushed hard into the Lavant corner and the back end swung out. When I finally opened my eyes I was parked on the grass 90 degrees to the track, luckily engine still revving so I re-joined the track, by this time 4 cars had passed me.

3 laps later the race was over only 19 of the 30 cars that started crossed the finishing line, unfortunately I never caught up with Stirling on the track or afterwards.

At least I can say that in my entire racing career in races with the great Sir Stirling Moss he never overtook me.

Clive Cocks

Right: Sir Stirling at Goodwood in 2006 waiting for the 'off'.



Clive mentions that he did things his way but the disdain for a harness suggests a trust in divine protection that few could hope for.

Lower picture shows Stirling at Goodwood in 2009 signing copies of his book 'All my races'



SOCIAL WHEELS, (STILL AT A SAFE DISTANCE!)

Well, here we are, still two meters apart, not being able to drive anywhere that isn't a necessity and restricted to our own property for even longer now. How long it will last nobody knows, and we can only make uninformed guesses. At least the weather is fine enough to enjoy your garden if you have one, but even that has limitations after a while. There is a limit to how much mowing, digging, planting and choosing more plants one can do, energy, money and garden centers able to help are being decimated.

I was so looking forward to **Pat and Zara's Drive It Day** event, the first I have been able to do for a few years, I had an enthusiastic map reader lined up as navigator, and now will have to hope they can rearrange it for later in the year. The early May Bank Holiday on a Friday, the 8th May is in especial commemoration of VE Day this year and I am going to hang all the bunting up anyway, and flags, at least anyone still out and about might be cheered a little. How about the amazing Captain Tom and his 100 laps before his hundredth birthday? Millions raised for the NHS from a germ (excuse the pun) of an idea.

Maggi has had to postpone the **Twinwood** trip for the moment and hopes, like many other events, that it can be rescheduled for later this year. Keep checking **Mutterings** for the latest information.

Please look at the calendar carefully, almost everything we had planned has been cancelled or rescheduled, many will skip this year altogether, which is such a shame. So many good causes are going to lose an awful lot of revenue generated usually by classic vehicle events, the amount of organization involved simply cannot be moved along to another date easily. **Little Gransden** air and car show has had to cancel although it was not until August. The uncertainty is crippling.

We are still planning to hold the **Pool / Picnic party** here in Helions Bumpstead on 26th July. It involves very little advance warning (apart from buying extra milk) and I am hoping the 5o'clock Shadows are still able to come. I will keep hoping, but if you are planning to come please ring or email me nearer the date as we have to abide by whatever the Government restrictions are by that time.

Social wheels continued...

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

See you all soon, hopefully they will lift some of the restrictions before we all go completely mad and we will be able to at least go out again on non-essential drives. In the meantime, keep those batteries topped up, and look after the tyres. As I said last month you would be more than a little annoyed if THEY lift the ban and your pride and joy lets you down after such a long layup.

Keep pinning a smile on, might not make you feel better, but it may cheer other people up.

All information correct at time of writing but changing by the minute, check before travel.

Take care, stay safe,

Angela



CLUB VISIT TO TWINWOOD AND GLEN MILLER MUSEUM

The current travel and social restrictions are unlikely to be relaxed enough to allow our visit to Twinwood scheduled for 30th May, so I have cancelled with Twinwood management.

I have asked them to keep our details on file so the event can be run as soon as social restrictions are lifted and calendar permits.

Maggi

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

CHAIRMAN and MSA Liaison	DAVE HOLMAN	chairman@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01366 347412
NEC DIRECTOR & TREASURER	MAGGI BYFORD	treasurer@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01763 242910
WEBMASTER	Vacant	webmaster@ahc-eastern.co.uk	
COMPETITION	Vacant		
EDITOR	ROB RANSOM	mutterings@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01223 524821
MEMBERSHIP	TONY WITHRINGTON	membership@ahc-eastern.co.uk	07903 542903
SOCIAL SEC	ANGELA BONNER	social@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01440 730459
SECRETARY	JUNE HEBDITCH	secretaryl@ahc-eastern.co.uk	01763 848157
TROPHY MASTER	ANDY HOLLICK	andrewhollick48@tiscali.co.uk	01223 263089

GENERAL MEMBERS

JOHN KEENER	healeynutjk@yahoo.co.uk	01494 728360
-------------	--	--------------

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@overseasair.net	01787 476264
--------------	--	--------------

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.