



# Devon Sevens

May 2024

Issue 171

Newsletter for

## The Devon A7 Club



### A Taste of Drive it Day 2024

Judith drove to visit her brother, Andrew had a 65 mile drive to Minehead and back via Winsford Hill, Andy went train spotting, Jeff had a short trip around the coast, while several other DA7C members met up for a drive around the Devon countryside.

Let us know where you took your A7 for Drive it Day - lots more photos in next month's 'Devon Sevens'.



## Chairman's Chat May 2024

Its always good to be able to look forward to something. I'm looking forward to Drive it Day which will be my first major outing of the year. However as I write this the wind is howling around the eaves and the rain is battering the windows. As usual I live in hope for better weather. As I do for the reliability of my Seven.



The fitting of new indicators that I mentioned last month did not go as easily as I expected. I cleaned and painted the brackets and connected the new wires with new bullet connections but at the dip of the indicator switch nothing happened. Luckily I was able to retrieve an old indicator from the bin and when it was wired up it worked. On investigation it seems that these indicators had LED bulbs which although described as suitable for six volt systems wouldn't work on the system. I replaced the LEDs with the bulbs from the old units and all was well. Bit galling to have to put old bulbs in new kit though.

On a more successful note I did manage to repaint the green parts of my Devon Sevens badge using Humbrol green enamel paint. Otherwise it's just been freeing up the cartridges in the front brakes, they do seem to seize up. I used copper grease on them last time but it appears to have become very thick and sticky.

I received back thirteen questionnaires. There were not enough to make any definitive statement about why many members don't take their cars out. Modern day traffic and bad weather were mentioned a couple of times. All replies were pleased with the club and the newsletter was held in high esteem.

No pictures in this month's chat. My new laptop doesn't seem to want to allow me to insert any photos from my file. Can't repair this in the garage so it's off to the computer shop.

Hope to see you all on Sunday at Whiddon Down.

*Viv Gale*



## New Members

*This month we welcome 2 new members to the Devon Austin Seven Club:*

Nigel Coleridge lives in Chudleigh Knighton near Newton Abbot, and owns a 1937 Big Seven in blue.

Richard Sanders lives in Dunkeswell near Honiton and doesn't own an A7 at the present time.

*We look forward to seeing Nigel and Richard at future club events.*

## Devon Sevens

In my annual report for the recent AGM of the Devon Austin 7 Club, I noted that David and/or I have been producing the monthly newsletter since the club was formed in 2009. I am happy to continue for another year but not indefinitely. Apart from anything else, after 15 years, it is probably time for someone with new ideas to take on the role. If anyone would like to consider taking on the role, either now or in the future, please contact David or myself for details of what is involved. Contact details are on the back page.

*Janet (editor)*

## Secretary's Notes

A big **“thank you”** to start my ramblings this month. Our second ‘Vintage Cars for Young Drivers’ day at Re-Fuel proved to be a great success and that was primarily down to all the effort put into the planning and preparation by Nick Borst-Smith. But I am sure that he would also want to join me in thanking all the members who brought along their A7’s for the youngsters to drive or to take passengers on a run into Cullompton or help in so many other ways. We must also acknowledge the support given by Dan Regan from Re-Fuel and his team who really did go the extra mile to accommodate us. For the record, we gave over 50 people, of all ages, their first taste of driving a Vintage Car and also allowed some youngsters to get ‘Hands On’ with an A7 engine.



There were also numerous conversations on all aspects of owning a vintage car and who knows what all that may lead to in the future.

We plan for this event to be repeated later in the year. As I have said many times before, we as the present generation of Vintage Car Owners, need to be pro-active in engaging with the next generation. Otherwise, instead of our cars continuing to be used and enjoyed, the risk is that they will just become museum exhibits. So please, whenever you have the chance to let someone sit in, or even just look at your car, take some time to chat to them and ‘spread the word’.

That leads me very nicely to Drive-it-Day on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April. Now I know that by the time you read this, that date will have come & gone. But hopefully you will have been out and about with your A7 and this is just a reminder to send in a photo and/or details of where you went on the day. Our aim is to record at least 20 members cars on the road for Drive-it-Day. E-mail me on [devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk) or post a picture on the Club Facebook page. We will publish the photos and final numbers next month.

On page 5 you will find details of the Devon Vintage CC Autojumble on May 19<sup>th</sup>. This is always a very enjoyable morning, both for buying and selling spares and also for meeting up with members from all over the county. If you have some spares taking up space that you would like to move on, please get in touch and hopefully we will be able to help you to find them a new home.

The debate around the wording of Indemnity/Public Liability Insurance disclaimers on entry forms for various events has once again surfaced this year. With organisers all having different wording and conditions of entry, it is not possible to give accurate advice. What I would say is that if you are not happy with the wording or don’t agree with what you are being asked to sign, then in my opinion, you have two options. Either don’t go to the event, or secondly, cross out the offending wording, send in your entry form and let the organisers either accept the amendment or reject your entry.

Early in March, I circulated a questionnaire to all members, and a few were returned. It would be interesting to hear from a wider selection of members, so if filling out the questionnaire and returning it is still on your ‘To Do’ list, I look forward to hearing from you.

*Happy Austineering - David*

## Run to Cornwall - Friday May 3<sup>rd</sup>



This is a 'get together' with the Black & Whites Club (anyone with a black and white number plate) and the Cornwall A7C at The Inn for All Seasons, Treleigh, Redruth TR16 4AP.

For those who would like to travel down together we can meet at 8.30am on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at Sourton Services (Okehampton). There is a car park next to the petrol station. We aim to set off by 0900am. If some members find it too far to travel there and back in one day, they could always arrange an overnight stay.

DA7C contact for more details or to arrange to meet at Sourton Services : Derek Vertenten, 07553 034013  
e-mail: [derekvertenten123@btinternet.com](mailto:derekvertenten123@btinternet.com).

More information also available at: [www.events-innforallseasons](http://www.events-innforallseasons)

## Wiscombe Hillclimb, Club Day – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May

THE SOUTH WEST'S PREMIER MOTORSPORT VENUE  
**Wiscombe Park**  
SPEED HILLCLIMB

Welcomes  
**Devon Austin 7 Club**

**Vintage Sports-Car Club**  
Sunday 12th May 2024

Wiscombe Park  
SPEED HILLCLIMB  
[www.wiscombepark.co.uk](http://www.wiscombepark.co.uk)

Club Motorsport Since  
**1958**

Wiscombe Park is considered to be one of the most challenging courses in the UK, and a driver's favourite. Wherever you spectate on the hill, you will have an excellent view of the action.

On 12<sup>th</sup> May, the VSCC are holding their annual Speed Hillclimb and there will be many A7s competing. As an additional attraction, our new members Tim and Anne Whellock are in charge of the Autojumble at the event. If you would like to book a stall, please contact Anne direct on [anne@vintageandsportscarservices.co.uk](mailto:anne@vintageandsportscarservices.co.uk)

We will have a dedicated, reserved area in the public car park, for up to 30 cars.

Our Club discounted entry fee price is £10 per person, which also includes a programme per car, valued at £2. Tickets can be booked directly through the Wiscombe Park website – <http://www.wiscombepark.co.uk/events> and the discount code can be obtained from Steve Wise (contact details on the back page). Steve can also provide further information, a spectator's guide and a 2024 brochure.

The days timetable will be:-

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 8.30am      | Gates open   |
| 9.00am      | Timed practice runs commence – 2 runs per driver.    |
| 12/12.30pm  | Lunch break  |
| 1.30/2.00pm | Timed competition runs commence – 2 runs per driver. |
| 5pm         | End of the meeting                                   |



## Devon A7 Club Stand

at the

Devon Vintage Car Club Autojumble

Sunday May 19th; 9am to 1pm

S. Devon Railway, Buckfastleigh, TQ11 0DZ



Once again this year, we will have a stall at the DVCC Autojumble in May with the objective of providing a meeting point for Devon Austin Seven Club members and also to sell surplus spare parts on their behalf.

**The sale of parts will be a FREE service to members.**

We can only accept parts for sale on the following basis:-

- Every part or collection of parts must have a label attached with your membership number and price required, and if it is not obvious, a description of what the part is would be helpful.
- When the item is sold the label will be cut off and kept with the money to be returned to the member.
- Members can, if they wish, indicate on the label how much reduction they are willing to give to `hagglers`. This will be indicated by adding a letter, ( A, B, or C ) after the price, `A` will entitle the stallholder to give a maximum of 10% reduction, `B` 20% and `C` 50%.

e.g. a label could read **Mem No 5. - £100 B.**

(Selling for member No.5, price £100 possible 20% reduction)

We are aware that there is always a certain amount of pilfering goes on at these events and whilst the people on the stall will be as vigilant as possible, neither the individual nor the club can accept responsibility for any losses.

Why not come along and help on the stall for an hour or so - that way you can keep an eye on your spares, help the club, and have a good day out. You might also find that elusive part that you have been seeking for ages!!!

Even if you are not interested in buying or selling, the event has proved to be a good social gathering and there is usually a cup of tea or coffee on offer, so why not drop by and say hello?

If you are willing to volunteer to help out for all or part of the day, or have spares to sell, please contact: David Aylmore - Contact details on the back page.



## Zoom Club Night

A chance to safely catch up with other DA7C members,  
without leaving the comfort of your own home

**Monday 20th May 2024**

**7pm**

**The Zoom link will be sent out by e-mail during the week preceding the meeting.**





# National *Austin Seven* Rally

## Beaulieu - Sunday 30th June 2024

The largest annual gathering of Austin Seven enthusiasts, vehicles and trade suppliers.

Special Displays:

**Opals & Pearls, Swallows,  
and Long-Distance A7s**



Entry forms available on the PWA7C website

[www.pwa7c.co.uk](http://www.pwa7c.co.uk)

Rally Organiser - Ian Nelson  
[ian.s.nelson@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.s.nelson@btinternet.com)

07803 888585



### ALLONS EN FRANCE??

You might think I'm crazy (most people do!), but as a new vintage car owner with a still lamentable knowledge of mechanics, I am planning to take Gladys, my 1929 A7 Chummy, on a little jaunt over to Brittany in late May or June 2024.

I know some might consider this late notice, but does anyone fancy joining me? I'm not a great one for forward planning, but will probably head either to Roscoff or to St Malo via Guernsey and spend a few days taking a tour of the Département. I usually travel with a 2-man tent, but will be easily persuaded to find a nice little hotel or two.

I can provide the French language (and wine drinking) skills. Any mechanical knowledge you can provide would be a definite bonus! If you have even a passing interest in the idea, then please contact me as soon as possible and we can start making plans.

Vive Le Austin Sept!!

Jude Zebedee 01884 841677 or 07944 602211  
or [judezebedee@gmail.com](mailto:judezebedee@gmail.com)





# HISTORIC VEHICLE GATHERING POWDERHAM Castle, Nr Exeter.

13th & 14th JULY 2024

Organised by the Crash Box & Classic Car Club.



One of the major events this year will be our Club stand at the Historic Vehicle Gathering at Powderham Castle, Kenton near Exeter. The club will once again pay entry fees for DA7C members who display their cars on our Stand.

You can exhibit on one or both days and cars can be left on the stand overnight on Saturday or driven to and from the venue. Space is also available for trailer parking.

The show is organised by the Crash Box & Classic Car Club of Devon Ltd, and is widely recognised as one of the very best in the country. It offers a huge range of attractions and displays for all members of the family. Have a look at their website [www.historic-vehicle-gathering.info](http://www.historic-vehicle-gathering.info), it really is a great day out.

July may seem a long way in the future, but with the amount of planning necessary for an event of this size, entries need to be in early and the latest date for reserving a space on our stand is **Friday 31st May**, so please don't delay.

An entry form has been sent with the newsletter and should be filled in and sent to Richard Bishop, 40 Feltrim Avenue, Exeter, EX2 4RP e-mail [rchrdbshp7@gmail.com](mailto:rchrdbshp7@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

If you would like any more information, just drop Richard an e-mail or telephone David on 01626 852259



**Don't delay - the deadline for reserving a space on the DA7C stand is fast approaching!**

## Vintage & Classic Weekend

RHS Garden Rosemoor

July 27 & 28 2024



The DA7C will again be at Rosemoor for their Vintage and Classic Weekend. If you are the owner of a Vintage or Classic car, tractor, motorbike, caravan, bicycle, Rosemoor would love to welcome you to this great weekend.

Now in its 14th year the weekend has proved to be one of their most popular events with Vintage Vehicles, Motorcycles, Tractors, Caravans and Steam Engines, and in 2023, the event attracted over 2400 visitors a day. The event will again be at the Arboretum Lawn on Lady Anne's side of the garden, which will give a beautiful backdrop to the amazing vehicles on display. There is a small café and toilets available at this side of the garden, or it is a couple of minutes' walk to the visitors building where the main restaurant is located.

This is a free to enter event for vehicles, which will provide you with entry to all of Rosemoor Garden for you and a guest. Rosemoor will supply an exhibitor's pop up beverages tent, where you will be able to enjoy free teas and coffees and separate portable toilets will be available just for exhibitors. Onsite overnight stays are available for those of you that have caravans or camper vans etc. There will be a professional security person on site over the weekend. If you wish to stay onsite on the Friday, Saturday and (or) Sunday, please remember to state it on the vehicle entry form. There are no shower facilities but there is a toilet block you are welcome to use. You will be issued with an overnight pass and given instructions on where you are able to pitch up your vehicle.

Please contact Nick Borst-Smith or David Aylmore for a vehicle entry form, and be sure to let Nick know if you plan to attend, so that he can ensure there is space for your vehicle. (contact details on back page)

Please note that it is RHS policy of strictly **no dogs** unless they are registered assistance dogs.

## Car Facts Disc

### What is a Facts Disc?



Facts Disc is your classic car's specialist information holder. A file just for your car where you can build its value by storing everything that makes it authentic and document its history, restoration and other achievements on the go throughout your entire ownership.

***Just Scan the QR code above to see an example of what information can be stored.***

It's more than just a bespoke link for your car, because it's only accessible to others when you decide to share it. You are in complete control over who you wish your car's life to be shared with, whether you're collecting its restoration progress for a future sale or keeping it as a family heirloom. Or quite the opposite, you want to share your adventures with general enthusiasts when having it featured at a car show. In this case, just display the Tax Disc sized label in the windscreen so anyone can scan the QR code and read all about your car.

Steve Wise, our new Club Treasurer has firsthand experience of this system and has negotiated a 20% discount for Devon A7 Club Members.

Click on this link [Keep your car's memories alive! – Facts Disc](#) for full details and use the code DSEVENS20 to get the discount on their full range of products. If you would like more information, contact Steve – details on the back page – to have a chat about his experience with the product.

## PUZZLE PAGE

by Julie Eddles

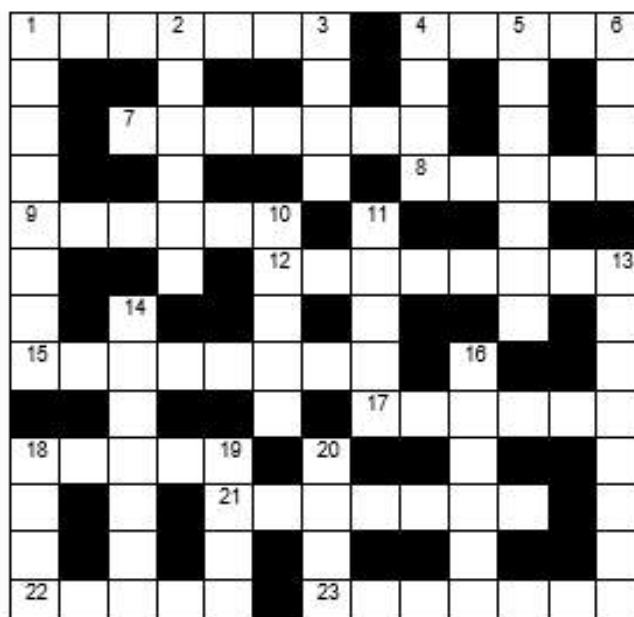
### QUICK CROSSWORD

#### ACROSS

1. Come apart (7)
4. Get to feet (5)
7. Pipe fixer (7)
8. Establish in law (5)
9. Quick task (6)
12. Reappraise (8)
15. Scaremonger (8)
17. Playground items (6)
18. Sceptical person (5)
21. Sinister (7)
22. Relinquished (5)
23. Swindled (7)

#### DOWN

1. Brolly (8)
2. At sea (6)
3. Research locations (4)
4. Certain (4)
5. Wears away (7)
6. Eating regime (4)
10. Empty out (5)
11. Deer (5)
13. Flavoured (8)
14. Mocked (7)
16. Fluid (6)
18. Stylish (4)
19. Chilly (4)
20. Competed (4)



### BOOKS AND AUTHORS

The vowels have been removed from these groups of words, the spaces closed up, and the consonants grouped into fours, so that PRIDE AND PREJUDICE JANE would become PRDN DPRJ DCJN STN. Can you work out the titles of these book for children and their authors?

1. WNNT HPHM LN .....
2. SWLL WSND MZNS RTHR RNSM .....
3. THWN DNTH WLLW SKNN THGR HM .....
4. THWT RBBS CHRL SKNG SLY .....
5. THRL WYCH LDRN NSBT .....
6. THSC RTGR DNFR NCSH DGSN BRNT T .....
7. PTRP NSMB RR .....
8. THLN THWT CHND THWR DRBC SLWS .....

### QUADRUPLES

Select the word with the correct definition from the four choices.

- |              |                |                |                       |                   |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. TROUNCE   | (a) Fling      | (b) Beat       | (c) Decoration        | (d) Move abruptly |
| 2. EDUCED    | (a) Drew out   | (b) Assumed    | (c) Renounced         | (d) Shortened     |
| 3. PLANGENCY | (a) Exact copy | (b) Opaque     | (c) Supporting scheme | (d) Travesty      |
| 4. DEVOID    | (a) Avowed     | (b) Chasm      | (c) Free from         | (d) Fanatic       |
| 5. BURR      | (a) Warren     | (b) Rough edge | (c) Sear              | (d) Barricade     |
| 6. LITTORAL  | (a) Rubbishy   | (b) Educated   | (c) To the letter     | (d) Coastal       |
| 7. LIMPID    | (a) Flaccid    | (b) Clear      | (c) Uneven            | (d) Mollusc       |
| 8. VACILLATE | (a) Waver      | (b) Leave      | (c) De-activate       | (d) Go on holiday |

See page 13 for puzzle answers

## David's Diary

Since driving up to the AGM early in March, I must admit that most of my A7 time has been spent in the garage rather than on the road. I have changed the gearbox on our AH Tourer, Mabel a couple of times and the original one is now stripped down for repair. As I think I have mentioned before, it started to make a bit of a noise on the last day of our S.W. Coast drive in the Autumn but was otherwise not giving any trouble. My first thought was to send it away for refurbishment, but after chatting with Richard Bishop, and not being under any particular time pressure, I decided to have a go myself.

With Richard's help, we stripped it in just a few hours and I am now in the process of cleaning all the parts with diesel and inspecting. So far, I have found that one bearing is definitely in need of replacing and I think it would be sensible to renew the other one as well.



Something has been rubbing against one of the selector forks and I will try to find another one and then investigate what has caused the problem – Other than that the only other issue I have found is a well-worn speedo drive. I'm not sure that replacements are available so I might have to be rummaging through the stand at the autojumble in May.

According to the 'Woodrow' Manual, my next job is to measure various gaps in the gears, bearings and syncro cones and then I will be calling on Richard's expertise again to help me put it all back together.

I have also been trying to find the cause of an overheating problem for the last few months and eventually came to the conclusion that it was the radiator that was both leaking slightly and was restricting the flow of water. I took it to Exeter Radiators for testing and my worst fears were confirmed and the core was unrepairable. Furthermore, they found that both the top and bottom tanks had been bodged at some time in the distant past (pre 1965!!!) and were really not serviceable either.

I knew that I had a spare that had been sitting in the garage for many years and I had always thought that it was sound, but no. On testing, it leaked much worse than the original, but lucky for me, both the tanks were in good condition. Now, I know that new radiator cores are not cheap, especially those of the same design as the original, but "how much"!!!! – I did try to console myself by remembering that the radiator that I was replacing had lasted for around 90 years, but even so – "How much"!!

Having given them the go ahead, Exeter Radiators have done a very good job in a reasonable time and it looks very good indeed. I will fit it when I take the engine back out to replace the repaired Gearbox, and in the meantime, it is safely tucked away where hopefully it won't come to any harm.



*Cont. on page 11*

### David's Diary cont.

I did have one drive out to Chagford to meet up with someone who has asked for an A7 to be used as their wedding transport. I must admit that I don't really like doing this sort of thing as I wouldn't want to spoil someone's big day with a breakdown or an oily smear on the wedding dress. However, there are some special reasons for helping this couple and I have enlisted the support of Richard Soffe in his A7 Pearl to come along as back-up in case of need. It should be an interesting day and I will update the story after the big day in May.

Hopefully by the time you read this, I will have been out with one of the cars for Drive-it-Day.

Happy Austineering.

*David.*

### Young Drivers' Day

What an excellent day we had at Re:fuel for Young Drivers' Day. Congratulations to all who were involved in organising.

I just wanted to add a couple of stories from my day.....

I wasn't brave enough to attempt to teach people to drive my car (I can barely do it myself!), but had a wonderful time driving people of all ages around Cullompton.

Two journeys particularly stood out. Firstly, I took my friends James and Judith for a spin. They have been involved with Austin 7s all their lives and drove from their wedding to the reception in a car almost identical to Gladys. It turns out that they are celebrating their Golden Wedding this year and, as they are no longer 7 owners, they have asked me to drive them to the party in Gladys! What a wonderful way to celebrate 50 years of marriage!

Secondly, I took a young couple and their 5 year old son out for a ride. Not only was the young lad called Austin, but he also turned out to be the great-grandson of my friend Kit, the 97 year old I took out for a ride last summer - being the only person I know who is older than the car. So that's three generations of the same family that have joined me for a ride in Gladys! I just need to track down Kit's daughter and I will have driven all four generations of the same family!

It was a great day for all involved. Let's hope we have gained a couple of new A7 enthusiasts....



*Jude*

## Out and About

Steph and Doug have been out enjoying the sunshine. Steph says "Finally on a rare sunny Saturday we got the chance to make our maiden voyage in our latest acquisition, our 1933 PD tourer. Purchased earlier last year, 'Poppet' has undergone a very thorough recommissioning and improvement process across the long winter months and we are now enjoying some test runs on Exmoor. Here's hoping for a long and sunny summer!"



Michael Tabart says "Max the Mascot with Annie in the car park of the Cat and Fiddle, waiting to go in for our monthly lunch date. Max did very well helping several people to eat up their meat when they had too much. Despite the showery weather Annie did very well too: Seaton to the Cat and Fiddle in 40 minutes. Not bad for about 18 miles, and stopping several times to let the heavy traffic past."



Keith Selley sent us two photos of his Austin 7 AH Tourer (Miss Daisy). The first photo parked on the driveway on her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday 14<sup>th</sup> March. The second photo on her second run out in Keith's ownership in readiness for Re-fuel on the 14<sup>th</sup> April.

## Out and About cont.

Philip Snell enjoyed the 'Vintage Cars for Young Drivers' day at Re:Fuel



Philip also joined 3 other Sevens and 2 Rileys at a convivial Wednesday evening gathering of the Somerset Sevensers.



## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES ON PAGE 9

### CROSSWORD

#### ACROSS

1. Unravel 4. Stand 7. Plumber 8. Enact 9. Errand 12. Reassess 15. Alarmist 17. Slides 18. Cynic  
21. Ominous 22. Ceded 23. Diddled

#### DOWN

1. Umbrella 2. Afloat 3. Labs 4. Sure 5. Abrades 6. Diet 10. Drain 11. Harts 13. Seasoned 14. Taunted  
16. Liquid 18. Chic 19. Cold 20. Vied

### BOOKS AND AUTHORS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Winnie the Pooh A. A. Milne             | 2. Swallows and Amazons Arthur Ransome            |
| 3. The Wind in the Willows Kenneth Grahame | 4. The Water Babies Charles Kingsley              |
| 5. The Railway Children E. Nesbit          | 6. The Secret Garden Frances Hodgson Burnett      |
| 7. Peter Pan J. M. Barrie                  | 8. The Lion the With and the Wardrobe C. S. Lewis |

### QUADRUPICKS

1. (b) Beat 2. (a) Drew out 3. (c) Supporting scheme 4. (c) Free from 5. (b) Rough edge 6. (d) Coastal  
7. (b) Clear 8. (a) Waver

## Those were the days....

No doubt all Seven owners have tales of finding and driving their first car but there is no understanding lunacy when you can remember having owned several Sevens. Some people never learn.

I bought my first Seven while still at school, a 1931 Top Hat. I had already encountered a Seven when one evening our eccentric maths master known as Goofy because of his impressive dentistry, and owner of an early Seven visited our House Master for dinner. The prefects carried the car across the lawn and deposited it in the rose bed. Bear in mind that this would have been 1959 or 60, the car would have been 1925 or so, thus 35 years old but still in everyday use and as I recall not considered unusual.

A school chum had acquired the Top Hat by means I did not enquire, it was in a garage, a stiff walk out of town, and did not run. Bearing in mind this was a tough Scottish boarding school in the early 1960s so owning a motor car that your House Master knew nothing about risked a severe beating.

I had a photo of a Brescia Bugatti travelling at speed so set out to make my Seven look the same. Only later did I appreciate what an unrealistic aspiration this was and we called her Jezebel.

However there was one moment of satisfaction. Having finally finished the conversion after more than a year's creative work, and before I was old enough to have a licence, I had the car taken to a nearby airfield where I could do reliability and even "speed " trials. At the end of a meandering stagger down the runway a passing car raced over with a driver fully expectant of finding - a Bugatti! It just shows, as someone said, you can fool some of the people some of the time but what joy!

Looking back on it, that car was desperately dangerous, if only because I had made getting into it so easy that it was equally easy to fall out. Fortunately I never did and eventually sold it for a satisfying amount of money when I found my Chummy.

I bought the Chummy for 2 reasons - the number plate which had my initials and the condition. She was ready to run and had even won a couple of concourse cups. Standards were not so high in those days. However it was only later that I realised her biggest attraction, that underneath the excessive polishing she was a largely original, unrestored car. Not quite true actually. The engine had been changed but the original engine came with the car. Oh! and an oil pressure gauge had been fitted to replace that tedious drip. The log book showed she had been owned sometime back by a lady who presumably found oil drips did not add to her couture.

I must have driven that car thousands of miles. Certainly it went up and down between our homes in Scotland and the Lake District several times, once on a 500 mile tour around Scotland, a long run to London and back and later to a new home in Devon. I don't remember it ever breaking down.

My aim on the Scottish tour was to track down more vintage cars and especially Sevens. I found the remains of a Seven in the bracken alongside the road somewhere south of Fort William. It was only bones, no body but I was able to remove some useful spares promising myself I would come back to pick up the rest. I found the chassis of an early MG on the beach under a bridge. I rolled up the drive to a real castle to be told by the house keeper that the "Wee Laird was away doon south at Sandhurst "but she agreed to open the stables for me. No cars but full of horse tack and some very fine carriages - the sort of place where nobody had thrown anything away since Culloden.

On the way north I had picked up rumours of an old Rolls Royce and finally tracked it down. On a fine clear afternoon we drove up a long steep drive, stopped outside a garage from where we could see the house up the steps above and to my joy I glimpsed the wing of a big car through the half open door. We walked up the steps to find the family having tea on the lawn and were very cordially asked to join them. It turned out that the old man in the deck chair was a retired doctor from Birmingham and had bought his Silver Ghost new in 1926. In those days you bought the chassis before sending to the coach builders to have, in this case, an open tourer body built. He had driven the car ever since then as his everyday transport. His remarks are still with me.

"Nothing special, just an ordinary car doing its ordinary days work".

He took her to Rippon Bros in Leeds every year for service.

*Continued on page 15*

She was built with brakes on the rear wheels only. "No good in modern traffic" said he. "I wanted them to fit brakes to the front wheels like the new model but they refused. 'That's the way Mr. Royce designed it and that's the way it must stay', they said. You would think it was their car, not mine".

After tea we walked down to the garage with my parked Chummy. "That's what he should have" says she. "The Rolls is far too big for him now". I resisted the temptation to offer a swap there and then.

Some years later I was offered a 2 seater Seven which must have been built as a special on what I think was probably a Ruby chassis, very professionally built in aluminum on an ash frame. I loved my Chummy dearly but a 2 seater sports model was a much more exciting bird-catcher for a young student. The engine did not run so Father was persuaded to tow it home, almost 100 miles as I recall. Father could sometimes be a little absent-minded and after a while appeared to have forgotten I was following him on the end of a string and he of course he could not see me below the level of his big Bentley's rear window, frantically waving. That car never did travel as fast again. It had the annoying problem which many Seven owners will recognise - it boiled on a fast haul up a long hill. Roaring up just such a hill in the way only a Seven Special can I pulled into a garage at the top with steam fizzing out of the radiator. "Get away from the pumps" shouted the owner as he sprinted across the fore court with a fire extinguisher.

At St Andrews University I earned beer money in the winter teaching skiing which meant a 2 hour run up to the hills, never a problem for this Seven. However, one night everything went wrong. We instructors regularly forgathered in an old country house hotel just below the slopes where inevitably we tasted most of the whiskeys lined up along the several shelves behind the bar. This night when we came out it was snowing hard, already well over a foot deep. I had fitted the chains that my grandfather had bought for his Armstrong Siddeley for a Scottish tour before the Great War, which even with their leather straps pulled tight still clattered on my 17" wheels and I set off nonchalantly into the night through a driving snow storm, the 6v headlamps giving that dim glow that a Seven owner will recognise.

These days the infamous Devils Elbow is a sweeping motorway up the glen but in 1964 it was still a double Z bend on a precipitous hillside. As the road dropped away in the dark in front of me I went straight on up the steep right hand bank, took out a row of fence posts which swung me round and I dived 20' down the slope nose first and landed in the deep drifting snow at the bottom took most of the shock, facing the wrong way. The car looked none the worse, engine still running so I pushed her round to point in the right direction and proceeded on my way, still in a bleak, black blizzard, alone at midnight in an open car in the middle of a desolate Highland moor. However the steering did not feel right so when a mile later I saw a light in the distance I pulled into a remote farm yard to find a man working by the light of 40 watt bulb. The problem was immediately visible. The front wheels pointed inwards, the beam axle was bent as was the track rod and the front spring had reversed itself so the car stood off-side down. I removed the front axle and while I held it over a large chopping block the guid mon hit it hard with a large sledge hammer. When we thought it looked about right I put it all back together, straightened the track rod, accepted his glass of whiskey and within an hour drove off into the dark. It was still snowing hard, I had no hood and soon started to look like a snowball on wheels. I needed another whisky by the time I pulled up outside The Old Quod in St Andrews.

The 2 seater went off to an excited young lad as his first car, I laid the Chummy up in a barn, life took its turns and it would be some years before I drove her again.

Eventually settled in Devon I recommissioned the Chummy and taught my 2 boys to drive on the farm tracks around the house. After a year with a busy life centred around boats and realising one hobby at a time was enough I laid her up again. That was over 20 years ago and I am sad and guilty to say she is still in that barn on her blocks, greased up but not quite looking her old self.

Meantime ..... I wanted to introduce my boys then about 10 and 15, to the joys of Sevens. Many years before I had bought one of the Ron Gould GRP 2 seater bodies moulded from an Ulster. They were quite popular at the time and I am sure known to many readers. It also had lain in the corner of a barn for many years but the time had come to make a start. Only now, more than 15 years later is it starting to look like a motor car but I am now introducing the grand children to Sevens.

#### *PostScript.*

I recently decided to recommission the Chummy after 20 years on blocks. Carb and distributor removed, stripped and cleaned, new battery, fresh petrol, a drop of oil in the cylinders and I drove her out of the garage! Even the brakes worked. That's the Austin Seven.

*Peter Gregson*

## The ravages of E-10

With a gap in the weather enabling me to leave the house without wellies or a stormproof Macintosh on for a change, I ventured into my storage building firmly clutching my newfound Round Tuit which seems to go missing whenever the weather is foul or plain laziness infects me. My mission was to “do” one or two little jobs that somehow had escaped my attention over the winter months despite the building being heated!

Casting my eyes over the assembled victims I decided to start and move a Mini Cooper S purchased a couple of years ago and not used, now destined to be sold in a couple of months time. Like all cars there are always a few little 5-minute jobs to do which always seem to take at least an hour to accomplish but with trusty Tuit in hand the Mini was the chosen one. The battery had been charged which negated the usual frustration of a click when turning the key and it was with great joy I listened to the electric fuel pump ticking away enthusiastically at the rear. And ticking...and ticking ..and ticking.

Mini pumps normally tick for about 15 seconds or so as they fill the 2 float bowls with fuel so this extended time was rather unusual but being forever optimistic, I leapt out of the drivers seat to gaze underneath the front to see if the carbs were flooding. Not a drop to be seen, however, the unmistakable stink of stale fuel wafted under the vehicle from the rear as gazing optimistically at the rear the I could see the Mini was weeing fuel onto the floor like an incontinent puppy.

Ignition off, windows opened, extinguisher now beside the car instead of at the furthest point away, several impolite words spoken to the said vehicle, jack and stands installed and the culprit established. Sadly not the easy fix of a perished hose or a loose clip but evidence of the fuel pump itself leaking internally. Once removed and placed on the bench for investigative surgery, when the diaphragm was revealed it clearly showed a hole within the area which had been in contact with the fuel. Gently as my sausage like fingers can, I picked it up and it sort of crumbled in front of me as the affected area was as brittle as burnt paper whilst the remaining outer area was still soft and supple as one would expect from a neoprene like material.

The pump was not a genuine SU but one from a German company called Hardi who proudly state on their website that they now do one with a black diaphragm which resists E 10 fuel and if I contact them they will tell me how to get one. They did. Its too expensive to send out a new diaphragm but they will sell me a new pump at a discount. Best give Burlen a ring in the morning then.

The point of this missive is for those of us who still believe the earth is flat, fairies do exist and there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, all the guff that has been spoken about E 10 and its wicked way with our fuel systems appears to be true. I have never fuelled the Mini and all of my vehicles are run on E 5 which although necessitating endless trips to the local garage with a plethora of gallon cans in my boot, my efforts hopefully will prevent the sort of damage I discovered happening to my other cars plus of course the endless amount of other petrol driven toys, I mean tools of course, a man needs, to cut grass , hedges, trees, transport stuff about, blow stuff around and generally amuse us. Next time you reach for a can of easy start to get the mower started it may just be E-10 has had a nibble at an O ring or two and not the blasted thing was ok when I put it away last time.

My Round Tuit has been discovered to be too small a size as I now contemplate how many other hoses and rubbers there are on this one vehicle that may be being quietly eaten away by E-10.



*Dick Bessant*

## 2024 Events

- Fri. May 3<sup>rd</sup>** Get together at 'The Inn for all Seasons', Redruth with the Black and Whites Club and Cornwall A7C. Details on page 4.
- Sun. May 5<sup>th</sup>** Merton Vintage and Classic Rally. 11am - 5pm. More details on 'Merton Vintage And Classic Vehicle Rally Around' Facebook page. It is now too late to book your car onto the event, but you could still have a good day out. Rally site is a no dog area with exception of guide/assistance dogs.
- Sun. May 12<sup>th</sup>** Wiscombe Hillclimb, Club Day - see page 4 for details
- Sun. May 19<sup>th</sup>** Devon Vintage CC Autojumble, Buckfastleigh, TQ11 0DZ. See page 5 for full details.
- Sat/Sun June 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>** D. Day Commemoration, Fox & Grapes, Lifton – PL16 0AJ Camping available and a full weekend of entertainment & activities. Contact Philip Hockin on 01566 784217 or e-mail [philip.hockin@gmail.com](mailto:philip.hockin@gmail.com) for more details.
- Sun. June 16<sup>th</sup>** Fathers' Day Classic Car Show, Morwellham Quay, PL19 8JL. For details see - [www.morwellham-quay.co.uk](http://www.morwellham-quay.co.uk) or email: [admin@morwellhamquay.org](mailto:admin@morwellhamquay.org), Tel: 01822 832766
- Sat. June 29<sup>th</sup>** Haynes Motor Museum. Yeovil BA22 7LH. More details to come but provisional timing is to meet at 10am for a tour of the museum and a pub lunch to follow. – Contact Derek Vertenten. 07553034013 for more information.
- Sat. June 29<sup>th</sup>** Coldridge Fete & Vintage Rally, Flower Festival & Dog Show, EX17 6AX, 12noon until 5pm - a fun day out for all the family. If you wish to take your A7, vintage motorbike or tractor, please contact Wendy Harmsworth on 01363 83302 or 07802 223589 or e-mail: [vintagecfete2024@gmail.com](mailto:vintagecfete2024@gmail.com)
- Sun. June 30<sup>th</sup>** National A7 Rally at Beaulieu organised by the Pre War A7 Club, details on page 6.
- Sun. June 30<sup>th</sup>** Axminster Carnival Vehicle Extravaganza - contact Bryan Ball, e-mail [axminster-cve@hotmail.com](mailto:axminster-cve@hotmail.com) Entry form also available from David Aylmore.
- Sun July 7<sup>th</sup>** 'All Things Morris' (And Friends) Classic & Vintage Car Show on Ilfracombe Seafront, 11am – 4pm. More details at [www.allthingsmorris.co.uk](http://www.allthingsmorris.co.uk). Entry form from 'Marnie' on 07970258149 or email [events4ilfracombe@gmail.com](mailto:events4ilfracombe@gmail.com)
- Sat/Sun July 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>** Historic Vehicle Gathering, Powderham. Full information on page 7.
- Sat. July 20<sup>th</sup>** Honiton & District Lions Club Classic Car Show. More details and an entry form from [www.honitonlions.org.uk/classiccarday.html](http://www.honitonlions.org.uk/classiccarday.html), or contact Michael Tabart.
- Sat/Sun July 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>** Rosemoor Vintage Weekend, Great Torrington EX38 8PH, see page 8. Contact - Nick Borst-Smith
- Fri/Sun Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>** Torbay Steam Fair. Dartmouth Road, Churston Ferrers, Brixham, TQ5 0JT Entry form available on the Club Website or at [Exhibitors – Torbay Steam Fair](#) More information to come but we hope to link up with the Devon Vintage CC as we did in 2023.
- Sat. Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>** Ideford Vintage Fayre. Entry forms available from David Aylmore.
- Thurs. Aug. 15<sup>th</sup>** Chagford Show. Full details and entry form from [www.chagfordshow.co.uk](http://www.chagfordshow.co.uk)
- Sun. Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>** Seaton Carnival Classic Car Show – Contact Michael Tabart.
- Sun. Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>** Chanters Carnival Classics. Chanters House Ottery St. Mary. More information and entry form – email [chanterscarnivalclassics@gmail.com](mailto:chanterscarnivalclassics@gmail.com) or Tel. 07791 686546
- Fri/Sun Aug.23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>** Silverstone Festival, full details of the event at: <https://www.silverstone.co.uk/news/2024-silverstone-festival-tickets-going-sale>  
Details of the Car Club Display Package at: [www.silverstone.co.uk/classic-car-clubs](http://www.silverstone.co.uk/classic-car-clubs),  
The code for Austin 7 Clubs' Association Car Club Display Package is **151CCDP24**

## Events cont.

- Sun. Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>** Barnfield Crescent Vintage Car Show - Revival 2024. More details to follow, but put the date in your diary now.
- Tues. Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>** Widecombe Fair. Contact David Aylmore.
- Sat. Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>** Sidmouth Classic Car Show.
- Fri/Sat/Sun Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>** Riverside's Beer, Cider & Music Festival. Vintage Tractor & Classic Vehicle Display. Camping, Caravan and B&B accommodation available. South Molton, EX36 3HQ. To display your A7 call 01769 579269. More information at [exmoorriverside.co.uk](http://exmoorriverside.co.uk)

## Regular Monthly Meetings

- 1st Thursday monthly, 8pm** Combined BSAOC Tamar Valley Group/DA7C/CA7C meet at the Fox and Grapes, Lifton (landlord is DA7C member Philip Hockin) Contact Philip for details: [philip.hockin@gmail.com](mailto:philip.hockin@gmail.com)
- 2nd Wednesday monthly** The North Devon A7 Group have an evening run out or visit in the North Devon area. If you would like to join them please contact Chris Hartnoll on [chartnoll@icloud.com](mailto:chartnoll@icloud.com) for details.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday monthly, 7pm.** Members Zoom meetings with a Guest speaker every 3 months if possible.
- DA7C members are invited to join the Somerset Sevensers at their regular gatherings for all types of cars. Contact Anne Whellock on 01460 66434 for more details:**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday monthly,** Meet at the Lamb & Lion, Hambridge, TA10 0AT at lunchtime and in the evening around 7.00 p.m.
- 1st Wednesday monthly,** Lunchtime meet at Dinnington Docks, TA17 8SX.
- 1st Sunday monthly,** North Down Orchard, TA18 7PL, 2pm - 5pm. Off the A30, east of Crewkerne.
- 3rd Tuesday monthly,** Lunchtime (12noon - 2.00pm) gathering at Eli's Rose and Crown, Huish Episcopi, TA10 9QT.
- Every Sunday morning,** Morning coffee gathering at Upton Bridge Farm, Long Sutton, TA10 9NQ, from 9am - 12noon for a Cars and Coffee gathering.

## For Sale

Seat for sale, possibly from an A7 'Special'. No known history but the base appears to have been modified. Can be viewed in Dawlish Warren, S. Devon. Open to offers. Please contact David Aylmore in the first instance. (Details on the back page)



*Austin 7 related items 'Wanted' or 'For Sale' can be advertised in Devon Sevens free of charge. Items will be removed from the listings after 3 months unless you have notified me that you would like the advert to continue.*

## Keeping in touch with the Devon Austin 7 Club

Remember that as well as the Monthly Newsletters you can keep in touch and up to date daily with both our Facebook Page: Devon Austin Seven Club and the Website: [www.devonsevens.co.uk](http://www.devonsevens.co.uk)



### Also of interest:

[www.austinsevenfriends.com](http://www.austinsevenfriends.com) - the one stop web site for Austin 7 enthusiasts across the world. Austin 7 news and events throughout the country and beyond!

### Useful Facebook Groups:

Austin Seven  
Austin 7 Spares/Cars for sale Group



## DA7C badges for sale

### Car Badge.

There is a choice of 2 styles of Car Badge. Both have the same Green & White motif with black lettering.

1. A small windscreen self adhesive badge which is ideal for a "Modern" if space for a larger external badge is not available. - £1 each
2. A high quality Chrome & Enamel external badge as shown in the Illustration.  
1 badge £13.50 inc. 2nd class post, 2 badges £25 inc. 2nd Class post.

### Embroidered Badge.

We also have a very smart embroidered club badge available. It is 3 1/4" (80mm) in diameter and is, as shown in the picture, very similar in design to the car badge.

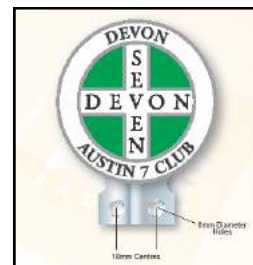
Cost is £3.50 (plus 50p postage)

### Lapel Badge.

These metal badges measure 25mm diameter, and the cost is a very reasonable £2.25 inc. p & p.

*All badges can be purchased by contacting David Aylmore by phone or e-mail or can be collected from any club event.*

*Contact details are on the back page.*



## June 2024 Newsletter

Please send your letters, comments, articles and photos to [devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk) or by post to Janet Aylmore, Corner Cottage, Ideford, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 0BG.

Copy for inclusion in the June 2024 issue should be with me by **Wednesday May 15th 2024** and the newsletter will be distributed on or before **Wednesday 22nd**.

To avoid any possible problems with copyright, please confirm, when sending in articles, photo's diagrams, maps etc, that they are free from any copyright restrictions. For information, the copyright remains with the originator of any photos etc for 50 years and the originator's permission is required before they can legally be reproduced or distributed. Within the very friendly A7 world, there is generally not a problem, so long as the originators copyright is acknowledge but I need to be made aware of the situation before publishing.

Many thanks. Ed.

## Devon Austin 7 Club - Officers & Committee members 2024/2025

### Chairman:

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*If you need to know a Committee Member's postal address, please feel free to give them a call.*

### Newsletter Editor:

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**The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Editor or the Devon Austin Seven Club. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the technical advice and information, the Club and its officers accept no liability for loss, damage or injury from persons acting upon the advice or information given in this publication.**