



# *Devon Sevens*

*February 2025*

*Issue 179*

*Newsletter for*

## *The Devon A7 Club*



*Several of our members braved the weather to enjoy a visit to the New Year Steam Day at Coldharbour Mill.*

## Chairman's Chat

It's some time since I have written a Chairman's Chat and I must say that my inactivity can be blamed on the weather! Plus of course all those medical interventions that seem to increase in number as the years go by.

My Ruby has remained safe in the garage for much of the Autumn and now winter as the grey skies and constant rain have blessed North Devon.



I have used the time oiling and greasing those parts as required and cleaning and polishing everything that needs it, though why these things are left to the winter when the garage is freezing cold and unfit for human activity I wonder! I especially checked the back axle to make sure there was enough oil and not too much in the differential. Last year I was subjected to a demonic squeal and vibration seemingly coming up the gear stick. On examination the cause was found to be low oil level in the back axle.

I was unable to attend the north Devon group annual fish and chip dinner in Barnstaple this year, the dentist's modification to my teeth fell apart making anything other than warm mushy food impossible to eat. Happily all is now restored, and I look forward to attending the Sunday Saunter lunch at Brampford Speke.

Devon Austin Seven Club is a forward looking club. This is made apparent in our association with Refuel and our efforts to encourage young people to drive Austin Sevens and aspire to ownership. Now we have another exciting project. The club is buying a rolling Austin Seven chassis which will be taken to events such as Refuel and give young (and old) the opportunity to learn how the cars work and to practice working on them. There seem to be plenty of A7s for sale at quite reasonable prices, low enough anyway for the young to persuade their parents to buy one if they can't afford one themselves! David will be circulating more details in due course.

I'm glad to say that our online clothing shop has been a success. Thank you to all those who have bought badged items. We have earned £35 towards club funds from the sales.

Happy Austineering and may the enamel on your teeth and on your car remain in pristine condition.

*Viv Gale*

## Renewals

The membership renewals process is going well with 91 of the 117 having paid (78%). 55 members have used the new payment system, 24 by bank transfer (BACS), and 12 by cheque.

The new payment system seems to have worked well but I have noticed that there have been a few at "incomplete" status. I tried to recreate this status, and only get it if I go on to the actual payment page and don't put in any card details. I am therefore assuming that members are uncomfortable putting in their card details. It would be useful to know if any member actually had a problem with the system. You can email at [s.r.wise@outlook.com](mailto:s.r.wise@outlook.com)

The club has historically sent out renewal invitations in December because it was the Club's year end. This is obviously not the best time to send out these invitations and the Club's committee has decided to move the renewals process to January next year. In my dual role as the membership secretary and treasurer, in October, I also plan to send out a budget for 2026 so you can see the plans for the Club and how your money is being spent. In this newsletter, I am providing a Treasurer's report so you can see where your money went last year. This year, the committee has kept the membership rates the same as they were in 2024.

At time of going to press, there are 26 members that have not renewed. It would be helpful to get these payments as soon as possible. Please let me know if there are any issues regarding payment.

*Steve Wise*

*Membership Secretary*

## Secretary's Notes

A new year and a new calendar of events to look forward to in 2025.

Our 'Sunday Saunters' continue to be popular and by the time you read this, the January meeting will be almost upon us and we will be returning to the Agricultural Inn, in Brampford Speke near Exeter which has been a regular haunt for us over the last few years. Our lunch meeting in February has, by request from a few members, been changed to a Saturday and on the 15<sup>th</sup> we will visit The Manor Inn, Lower Ashton in the Teign Valley. Full details are on page 5.

We did end a Club run at the The Manor Inn a few years ago and following a more recent personal visit, I can highly recommend the venue.



Both of the Club trips to Guernsey in May and to the Scottish A7 Club Rally in June are going ahead and if you have already registered your interest, you should be up to date with the arrangements. However, it is not too late to join in with either trip. Get in touch with Jude for Guernsey and me for Scotland if you are interested. Contact details for both of us can be found on the back page.

Our plans to build on the success of our 'Young Drivers for Vintage Cars' project has progressed and at our next Re-Fuel event on April 12<sup>th</sup> we will have a complete A7 rolling chassis. Anyone will not only be able to look at, but get 'hands on' experience with it in the same way as they have done at previous events with the A7 engine. Our overall aim for this chassis is for it to spark interest in the next generation of A7 owners. If we can organise the necessary finance and facilities, we would like to offer interested members the opportunity to work on and restore the chassis and it's running gear. Perhaps eventually with the aim of producing a road going A7 Special?

More details will be circulated to all members as this project progresses, but as Viv has said in his piece this month, we are all very keen to see this get successfully off the ground.

In an effort to keep all members engaged with what the committee are discussing and the decisions they make, we will in future, publish the minutes of our meetings on the Club website. The latest minutes should be in the 'Members' section, hopefully within the next week or so.

This is the time for nominations for the Murray Park Award and full details can be found on page 7. Please do give this some thought and let me have the name of the person you would like to nominate.

To improve communication between members, we have started a Devon A7 Club, WhatsApp group. Some members have already joined and, although it is early days, it is proving to be a useful tool for passing on information. If you have a mobile phone and would like to join the group, please message Steve Wise on his mobile number which you can find on the back page.

*David (DA7C Secretary)*

## Special Delivery!

Jude received a rather special birthday card from her niece, Poppy. It shows Poppy and her sister out for a ride with Jude in Gladys.

*(Everyone is obviously thoroughly enjoying the journey Jude. Children make the best cards - Editor)*



## Treasurer's Report

The following table provides an analysis of income and expenditure for 2024:

### Devon Austin Seven Club Account Summary - 10/1/2025

**Opening Balance - 1/1/2024** 2,652.23

#### **I N C O M E**

Membership Subscriptions	1,630.00	
Hardcopy Newsletters	229.00	
Merchandise Sales	115.00	
A7CA Mags	408.00	
Donations	77.00	
Powderham Camping	160.00	
Other Income	<u>100.00</u>	2,719.00

#### **E X P E N S E S**

Zoom	154.68	
Merchandise Costs	154.80	
Website	705.49	
Bank Charges	20.14	
Printing & Stationery	138.00	
Postage	177.20	
Donations	200.00	
Events	715.99	
Equipment	181.02	
Subscriptions	51.23	
A7CA Mags	236.00	
Other costs	<u>107.95</u>	2,842.50

**Closing Balance - 10/1/2025** 2,528.73

This analysis is a bit misleading as income is offset, more-or-less, directly by expenditure in the following areas:

- Hard copy version of the newsletter
- National A7 Club magazines
- Merchandise

The main income is the £10 annual membership fee, which brought in £1,630 in 2024 (covering late 2024 and early 2025 renewals).

The main expenditure was £705.49 on the website (including £145 on the new payment system) and a net £446.16 on the Club's stand at Powderham.

Most of the activities of the Club are done by the members on voluntary basis, and I'm sure we'd all like to thank those that have participated.

The Club started 2024 with £2,652.23 in the bank and ended the year with £2,528.73, a net shortfall of £123.50.

The Committee is content with the financial position of your Club, but will be holding a planning meeting in October to ascertain the projects that will be undertaken during 2026.

*Steve Wise*  
*Treasurer*

## Manor Inn, Lower Ashton. EX6 7QL

**Saturday – Feb 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**12 for 12.30**



In response to a couple of requests from members, in February we will be holding our monthly 'Saunter' meeting on a Saturday rather than the more usual Sunday.

- Full menu choice served to table, not carvery.
- Good parking.
- Dogs welcome.

Please contact David Aylmore for a copy of the menu.

**Reservations and main course choices to David by Saturday February 8th please.**

Website link [Manor Inn Ashton | Restaurants Ashton Devon](#) for more information.

*For our new members who may be confused, a "Saunter" is a run out in an A7 or modern car to meet up with other members for lunch - always an enjoyable social event.*



## Zoom Club Night



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

**Monday 17th February 2025**  
**7pm**

This month we are lucky to have a talk by Tino Whittlestone on Steam Traction Engines.

His 30 minute presentation will be a general talk on the basics of:-

- Types of steam engine
- How steam engines work
- The National Traction Engine Trust and Steam Apprentice Club involvement in getting youngsters into the hobby
- Building his own steam engine

There will be plenty of time for questions and for some A7 chatter as well.

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



## Austin 7 names

Following the article by Jude in the last newsletter about her Chummy's name, we received this e-mail from Tamsin from the Cornwall A7 Club:-

*By chance we have at least two cars sharing the same name in the Cornwall club... my Olive (so-named by the owner prior to me, some 30ish years ago) and another Olive belonging to much more recent members. My car's second owner called her Betsey (in 1937) and as there is already another Betsey, I've stuck to the Olive name...*

*Best Wishes from soggy Cornwall - Tamsin*

## 2025 A.G.M - Sunday March 16th .

Once again we will be returning to Spreyton for our 2025 A.G.M.



*The AGM will be held in the Village Hall - EX17 5DP*

10.30am - Coffee & Biscuits

11.am—Start of Meeting.

Followed at 12 Midday by

*Lunch at the Tom Cobley Tavern just a short walk away  
which serves a superb Sunday Roast (served to table).*

*Choice of 2 roast meats with vegetarian options available (see below)*

*Main course - £15.95 Dessert - £5*

*Vegetarian options: Nut Roast or Mushroom, Brie & Cranberry Wellington or Chick Pea and Spinach Pie.*

We will be sitting at tables of 4 or 6

**Bookings for lunch MUST be made through David Aylmore only (details on back page)**

**When booking, please let David know if you would like one of the vegetarian options, or if you have any special dietary requirements.**

Please contact David Aylmore for more information. Obviously there is no need to book for the meeting but it would be helpful to know if you plan to attend.

**Please note that we need final numbers for lunch by Sunday March 9th.**

FEDERATION OF BRITISH HISTORIC VEHICLE CLUBS  
**DRIVE & RIDE IT DAY**  
SUNDAY 27<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025

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Scan Me

Drive It Day 2025 - Yesterday's Vehicles Supporting Today's Children. National Drive It Day was created by the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs in 2005. It is the occasion when historic vehicle enthusiasts and the public at large have the opportunity to celebrate the One Thousand Mile Trial organised in 1900 to prove the viability of the new invention, the motor vehicle. It's also a chance to raise awareness and support amongst the public for the historic vehicle movement and keeping transport heritage on UK roads, while fund-raising for charity. Please see the website for how to support the event and buy a fundraising rally plaque.

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

See next month's newsletter for details of Drive it Day events in Devon.

## Murray Park Award

Murray Park was a founder member of the Club and our first, and in fact only, Honorary President. During his time as President, he gave the Club a cup which he wanted to be awarded annually to a member who was chosen, by the membership, for their support to the Club - someone, who in Murray's words:

***“Made a significant contribution to the Club and its activities during the preceding year.”***

Your vote can be for any reason and is certainly not only for competition achievements. Assistance with work on A7's, special efforts with restorations, contributions to the Newsletter or indeed anything else that came to your notice during 2024.

One final note – Committee members cannot be nominated.

To make it easier to send in your nominations, all you need to do is 'reply' to the e-mail accompanying the newsletter and give the members name and your reason for nominating them.

For those who have the newsletter sent by post, a nomination form has been enclosed. And should be posted back to me once completed.

The award will be presented at the AGM in March.

Many thanks.

David (Secretary)



*Bob Downey receiving the Murray Park Cup in 2024.*

## Musings of a Mascot

As the year drew to a close there hadn't been many opportunities to go anywhere exciting in Annie, which is a bit of a shame for me as I do so love that dear wee car.

However we did manage a trip to the Mill on the Exe for a face to face committee meeting. As you all probably know by now it was pleasing to my human, the pub being a St Austell pub, so that he could indulge in a drop or two of Proper Job one of his favourite beers.

My human and I were down for a Christmas Lunch with our Morris chums, which was delayed for a couple of days because of gales forecast. When we eventually went we were the only old car there, but had a very enjoyable lunch.

My human and his friend Sharon went to the Whimble Crematorium for the funeral of the wife of one of his Morris chums. I remember my human telling me how honoured he felt to be asked to lead the hearse in Annie. Both Phil and his dear late wife Nina were very into their old cars, having done the London to Brighton run for many years.



On New Year's Day, when we went in convoy with my human's chum Philip Snell to the steam powered woollen mill at Uffculm, where we were given pride of place in the mill car park. The mill was interesting as it had several floors with the story of how the fleeces get sorted out into decent knitting wool, that is available to purchase if desired.

We had some snow on the roads the day before we were due to go to the Cat and Fiddle near Exeter with our Morris chums for lunch. My human decided not to expose Annie to all the salt and grit on the road so we went in Millie

Micra instead. Our next outing will be on 26th January when I hope we will be able to travel in Annie for the first Sunday Saunter of the year to the Agricultural Inn. So a pretty quiet month, let's hope for more activity as the season warms up.

*Happy Austineering folks - Max the Mascot*

# The Vintage Nostalgia Festival

*Stockton Park, Stockton, Wiltshire.*

*30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025*

We have been invited to The Vintage Nostalgia Festival in the heart of the Wylde valley. The event focuses on the past and celebrates all that was great from before the turn of the century up to the 1980's...

Whatever your interest, Vintage/classic cars, Heritage skills, Veteran Cycles, Old Tractors, Vintage Fashion, antiques, rusty automobile or dance and music. There is something for everyone at VNF whether you're 8 or 80! Live bands, Palmers Brewery fine Ale bar, cocktail bar and dance troupe, Vintage antique trade Village and traditional children's entertainment!

There is camping on site so if you have a tent or motorhome or caravan you are most welcome in this area. There is running water and pay as you go showers. Facilities are basic but in a beautiful area. The organisers also offer glamping options pre-erected bell tents or caravans, follow this link for details and costings.

<https://www.vintagenostalgiafestival.co.uk/glamping>

If you prefer hotel or pub accommodation there are lots to choose from in the area, Home Close Farm or The Angel at Heytesbury or The Carriers in Stockton.

The cost of the festival is £6.00 per person if arriving in a classic for the day. Sat 9am - midnight, Sun 9am to 4pm. The full comprehensive pricing is on the Entry Form. There is the option for club members to make a weekend of the event and camp from Thursday or Friday. Members would need an exhibitor's Adult weekend ticket discounted to £64.50 per person for 2 nights, £72.00 per person for 3 nights. This would include camping on site, entry to the festival & classic car display, Thursday, Friday, Sat and Sun, and all the entertainment laid on during the day and the evenings for campers. There will be more than 35 live acts over the weekend. Here's the link to the live music <https://www.vintagenostalgiafestival.co.uk/entertainment>.

**If 8 or more members wish to attend with their A7, a club area can be arranged, so if you think you might like to attend, please contact Nick Borst-Smith - [nickbs@outlook.com](mailto:nickbs@outlook.com) to say you are interested before booking, for special information.**

Members can book online on [The Vintage Nostalgia Festival](#) but please state in "how did you hear about us" Devon Austin Seven Club.

Look at <https://www.vintagenostalgiafestival.co.uk/> for more details

*Situated just off the A36 in Wiltshire, in the beautiful Wylde Valley between Warminster and Salisbury. The nearest postcode for the satnav is BA12-0SQ .*

*West of the Codford bypass, there is a turning south signed to Stockton. Take this turning and follow the lane over the River Wylde. Once over the river signs will direct you to the Festival and show ground. What Three Words Location; <https://w3w.co/sourcing.grace.deed>*

## Update on Cpt. Wingspan's advice on removal & replacement of the Dynamo

Following the article in last month's Newsletter, Roly Alcock from the Hereford A7 Club e-mailed to add this useful advice, thanks Roly.

*Regarding dynamo removal and refitting. Or indeed distributor removal and refitting. I do an extra step to that detailed. With the distributor cap removed. I photograph directly downwards to the distributor. Not only is the rotor arm position noted, but the orientation of the distributor body is also recorded. It makes reassembly so much easier to line up distributor and rotor arm exactly as it were before removal. I also place the engine at tdc, so that if the crankshaft has to be turned, at least it can be put back to tdc before refitting. Mobile phone cameras are a wonderful engineer's notebook!*

Roly.

## Vintage and Classic Weekend at RHS Garden Rosemoor, July 26th & 27th 2025

This is an Annual Event for Devon Sevens. We will have a Club Stand so if you intend to come please mark your entry form "Devon Austin Seven Club" to ensure we reserve sufficient place. Then please contact Nick Borst-Smith (contact details on back page)



Now in its 15th year the weekend has proved to be one of their most popular events with Vintage Vehicles, Motorcycles, Tractors, Caravans and Steam Engines, and in 2024, the event attracted over 2900 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. Following feedback from exhibitors and visitors there will also be a food and beverages area closer to the vehicle displays.

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.

Rosemoor can no longer offer overnight stays for exhibitors, but have arranged reduced camping rates at Smythen Manor, located 2 miles from Rosemoor.

Full details and a booking form are available on the Devon Austin 7 Club website.

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

## Out and About



Thank you to Ann Downey for these photos, Ann says: "On Boxing Day, Bob and I went down to Teignmouth sea front to watch the very brave ?? souls doing the Boxing Day walk in the sea. Many wore fancy dress in the sea, and there was a fancy dress competition for others on the promenade."

We were very lucky with the weather and it made for quite a spectacle when all the participants rushed into the sea. An outing for our little A7 tourer as well. Happy New Year to all members, Ann & Bob Downey.

Chris Bird took his 1924 Chummy for a December drive to celebrate it's 100th year.



## David's Diary

I am a bit embarrassed to say that neither of our A7s have been on the road since the last Newsletter. I did plan to go to Colharbour Mill on New Years Day but when I woke up and took a look at the weather forecast, I whimpered out. Well done to those more dedicated A7 drivers who turned up. – Maybe next year?

There has been just a little progress on the RP restoration project. The doors have had repair sections welded in along the lower edges. I'm not sure how well the photos will print, but they had been 'bodge' repaired with a selection of nails, screws and newspaper and liberal helpings of body filler.



I shouldn't really be surprised, back in the day, that is how it was done, and I have to admit to doing something similar in the 1960/70's to a Mini.

Whilst the body has been in the welding workshop, I have the chassis at home and have started to clean it up. Like most other parts of this car, on first inspection it looked to be OK. The axles and some chassis parts have been freshly painted and the springs look in good order. However, doubts started to set in when I found the hub nuts to be no more than finger tight!!

The brake shoes had been contaminated with oil so to replace the seals, the axle had to be removed and stripped.

Now, I have never done this before, so proceeded slowly with the 'Woodrow Manual' at my elbow. Having removed the casing, my intention was to just replace the seals, but even with my very limited knowledge of rear axles, I know that the bearings shouldn't fall apart like this.



Removing the inner ball races from the diff carrier meant completely stripping the differential and even then, they proved to be very stubborn. Further inspection revealed some chips and wear to the Crown Wheel and Pinion so all in all there is not much right with this axle!! – Back to the drawing board, again.

I am determined that Reggie will be finished one day, just not sure which day or even which year!!

*Happy Austineering*

*David*

# PUZZLE PAGE

by Julie Eddles

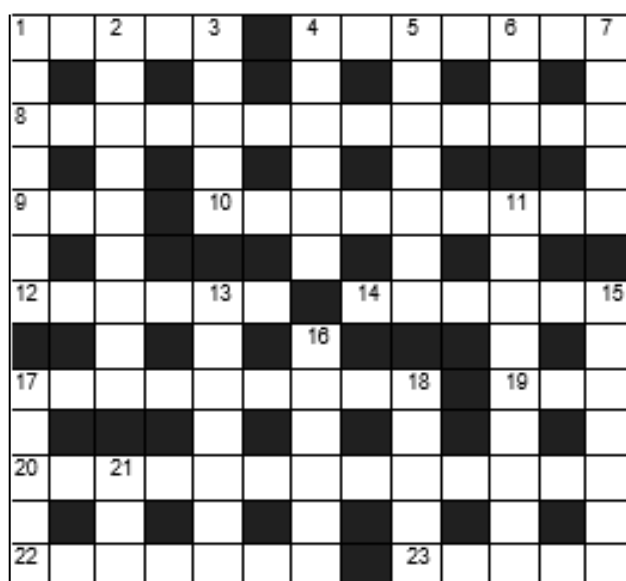
## CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

### ACROSS

1. Act it out, it's understood (5)
4. Amounts returned if bets are wrong (7)
8. Taking off proper suit, change to what's appropriate (13)
9. She may have a little lamb (3).
10. Such an animal enjoys party affairs (9)
12. Curt, bar put off (6)
14. Minister's in magic circle (6)
17. Going after the fans? (9)
19. Beer found n chalets (3)
20. Reflection on mental topic perhaps (13)
22. Might be nicer in the south-east to be honest (7)
23. It may be present in wild teens (5)

### DOWN

1. Material from Falstaff et al (7)
2. Doctor had claret in church (9)
3. Some soldiers return poor model (5)
4. During trip, plenty wave (6)
5. Sort lab out in remand home (7)
6. It's also in cartoon form! (3)
7. Reportedly take metal (5)
11. Flower from an actor in trouble (9)
13. Ward got peer drunk (7)
15. Eels and wriggle free from dirt (7)
16. Not complicated medicinal herb (6)



17. Concentrate on what a lens can do (5)
18. Battling Ian takes on big fellow (5)
21. Sister going in both directions (3)

### WEST COUNTRY ATTRACTIONS

The vowels have been removed from these groups of words, the spaces closed up, and the consonants grouped into fours, so that BUCKFAST ABBEY would become BCKF STBB Y. Can you work out the titles of these attractions?

1. THLS TGDN SFHL GN .....
2. TVRT NCNL .....
3. STNT RMWY .....
4. XTRN DRGR NDPS SGS .....
5. RYLW LLMY RD .....
6. DRTM RNTN LPRK .....
7. THNT NLMR NQRM .....

### QUADRUPICS

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

- |              |             |                 |               |                  |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. GORMONDIS | (a) Eat     | (b) Decorate    | (c) Retail    | (d) Demolish     |
| 2. PARADOX   | (a) Casket  | (b) Epitome     | (c) Criterion | (d) Anomaly      |
| 3. ANARCHIC  | (a) Ancient | (b) Dictatorial | (c) Lawless   | (d) Narcissistic |
| 4. ZIGGURAT  | (a) Belfry  | (b) Aristocrat  | (c) A mineral | (d) Sharp sound  |
| 5. PENUMBRA  | (a) Amulet  | (b) Shadow      | (c) A flag    | (d) A verse      |

Answers on page 17



## Wanted - A7CA Magazine Editor

This highly rewarding role will be come vacant in December 2025.  
Working alongside the current Editor prior to this will be a huge benefit to a smooth handover.



The role is a 3 year term limit, with an option to renew for a maximum of a further 3 years after that.

### Job Specification for the editor of the A7CA magazine.

The Association magazine is a quarterly publication of 48 pages A5 format.

#### It is the editors job to:-

- Receive articles, letters, photographs etc. (copy) from authors.
- Cajole potential authors to submit copy.
- Edit submissions for length, grammar and spelling.
- Choose running order and appearance, write contents list and editorial.
- Transfer completed copy to the page artist (The editor will need a reimbursable Dropbox account).
- Liaise with the page artist regarding final appearance and content.
- Read and correct page artist's proof and printer's run copy.
- Attend and report to the A7CA quarterly committee.

#### The editor should be:-

- Relatively computer literate.
- Have reasonable spelling, grammar and word smithing ability.
- Able to communicate well with people.

#### The editor need NOT have:-

- A special computer (current editor uses an iPad).
- Have a special email account (editor@a7ca.org is provided by the Association)
- Does not need to travel (all communication is on line).
- To page edit or organise the layout of the magazine. (The A7CA employs a page artist).
- Is not directly involved with advertising (The A7CA has an advertising officer)

Anyone interested in this post should contact the A7CA Secretary on: [secretary@a7ca.org](mailto:secretary@a7ca.org)



## AUSTIN SEVEN INSURANCE COVER FOR YOUNG DRIVERS AGED 17+



The Austin Seven Clubs' Association is very pleased to announce that, following recent negotiations with some of our Officers, RH Specialist Car Insurance now offers the following:

### Insurance cover for drivers of Austin Sevens aged 17+ years

Young drivers:

- 17+ (warranted accompanied and unaccompanied cover)
- Referred on a case by case basis to the insurer
- Each case is assessed on its own merits

We think this is worth celebrating and please ask you to share this far and wide.

*Ruairidh Dunford (A7CA Secretary)*

## Caught In the Headlights

### Martin Wright's 'Five Bob'

This month we are Headlighting Martin Wright up there at Bradworthy, in the north of the County.

Martin's story and fortunately for me, everyone has an A7 story, begins way back in his school days. Away at boarding school too many years ago, young Martin was cycling through a country village and was intrigued to spot an old car, in a very dilapidated outbuilding, with a bush growing out of its roof! Brakes on, cycle clips off, Martin turned back and knocked on the door and explaining to a doctor opening the door (who also had aspirations for restoring it for his wife) that he was looking for a school project. The school later said 'Okay, why not?'

After extensive negotiations, it was determined that the car would be sold 'as seen' for the exorbitant sum of 10/- (or for any of the uninitiated, born after the start of Beatle mania, this equates to 50p in today's money - although this will not need explaining for most of the DA7C membership). Further negotiations followed and eventually a price of 5/- (25p) was agreed! No wonder Martin went on to enjoy a very successful career as a Chartered Surveyor & Valuer!

As we know 5/- was colloquially known as 'Five Bob' and that's how she was named. 'Five Bob' was then unceremoniously towed back to school, attached by a rigid metal tow bar courtesy of RAF Fylingdales, in the halcyon days before MOTs, digitalized registrations and insurance certificates, etc. with an underage school boy at the wheel, fitted with jury-rigged brake lights and ample scope for practicing the art of counter steering against jack-knifing.

The gentleman, who was a Doctor, explained that it had been 'laid -up' in the outbuilding for well over a year. He probably recognised that he was never going to renovate it, and was content for it to go to a new home and doubtless inspire many young people into understanding basic mechanics, which we all now appreciate, they were beautifully designed, albeit a little frustrating at times. So Martin acquired his legendary 1937 Ruby 'Five Bob' which went into the school workshop to be dismantled, renovated and meticulously studied.

Whilst at University in London in 1968, Martin came across parts for a 1932 RN Van, after previously having the Ruby as a 'Runabout' in Maidenhead. This collection was moved to a relatives' house in 1968 and later to a house in Devon where it sat in Martin's father's barn until restoration finally started in earnest in 2010.

At this present time, years of patient restoration are coming close to fruition. Martin's project has been the extensive rebuild of his cherished 1932 RN Box Van. She runs like a dream, looks splendid in her gleaming new green paintwork, just awaiting the signwriters' ministrations to launch her back into the Austin 7 annals of perfect excellence.

Martins' story is many faceted and period Land Rovers have also played a big part of his life. Then there was a project with his 16-year-old son to restore a 1958 short 80" wheel base Series 1 '2-wheel-drive' Land Rover. Apparently, this was made for the military as a cheaper Utility vehicle!

Memorable experiences include driving Five Bob, the 1937 Ruby, in and around London and Northamptonshire. Doubtless at a loose end, Martin has recently acquired another RN in need of TLC!

We look forward to seeing the magnificent 'Green Van' out and about, in the County this year.



*More photos of Martin's vehicles on page 14.*

*Mike Moore*

## More photos from Martin Wright



## West Exmoor Run

Here are a few photos of our recent expedition to west Exmoor.

Poltimore Arms Yarde Down, Withypool car park and over the river Barle at Simonsbath.



Chris Hartnoll

## More Caught In the Headlights

*Note from editor - as we were unable to bring you 'Caught in the Headlights' in December, we will spoil you this month with 2 editions.*

### Robert Brown in the Headlights

How many times do we say, "I wish I had kept all of my old cars"?

It is a classic line that everyone says who owned one or two back in the 'good old days' and would certainly be the case for every member of the Devon 7's.

We love our cars because they become part of who we are or were and certainly in my case that is true. My first car at the age of 16 was a Trojan bubble car because I could drive it on a motor bike license although I had trouble getting any one to ride with me because they did not feel safe. The first car I owned after passing my driving test was a 1936 Austin 7 Ruby that cost me a staggering £100 which was a lot of money 53 years ago.

The Trojan I eventually swapped for an old BSA C15 motorcycle with a friend. The Austin 7 Ruby, after snapping the crankshaft, was swapped with another friend for some furniture in its stead, both decisions I have always regretted.

So, I have always dreamed of having both car models back in my life somehow.

One of my dreams has always been to have an early Austin Chummy as it optimizes to me what an Austin 7 should be but I also wanted an Austin 7 Ruby again. And rather than a Trojan, I have always wanted a Messerschmitt bubble car.

After dreaming for many years about owning these cars again, a mechanic friend phoned me, knowing I loved old cars and told me he knew of someone that was clearing out her late husband's barn and workshop and if I was interested to go and view, to give her a call.

You know the feeling when a dream comes true? That feeling when you see your first Christmas tree as a child, you can imagine the look on my face, when we opened the barn door and yes, a very rusty Messerschmitt, full of water because something had fallen and smashed the acrylic bubble, as it was parked right under a hole in the barn roof. It was the most beautiful sight in the world to me, no matter what condition it was in. Then a part restored Morris Traveler was my next encounter followed by a 1938 Austin 7 Ruby with more holes in the floor than floor. It was completely stripped of all its parts and these were stacked in plastic crates.

This was a formidable challenge. The lady owner wanted an amount, just over what the scrap man had offered for the lot, so yes, I bought the lot. First, the Morris was completed with my son Sam and put on the road for him to drive, then time stood still, as it often does. Another 10 years passed and the Austin 7 Ruby sat in my workshop and the Messerschmitt was stored in my brother's barn in North Devon. As my work took me overseas and many distractions of life that inevitably took place, I did not take any further interest in the cars.

Whilst I was out of the country, Sams girlfriend Sophie, contacted Car SOS to apply for the Messerschmitt to be fully restored to enable Sam and I to enjoy car shows together after his own serious illness had prevented him being able to restore the car. Sam and I had no reason to miss the car as visits to my brother were not frequent due to distance, so we had no idea that it had been taken up to Birmingham to be restored by car SOS. It was presented to Sam, as a joint restoration project, at Sams birthday event.

This now left the Austin 7 Ruby. It was in very bad condition and restoring it was not financially viable; however, I believe all cars are worth restoring as breaking them just does not feel right. There was something about this car that made me want to bring it back to life but it would eventually be the means that would bring me back to life in my recovery from serious health issues.

Following four recent years of personal illness and eight operations I was not feeling able to do much but I found playing with the Austin 7 Ruby was a life saver for me as it got me focused on a project that encouraged me to get up in the morning and seize the day.

*Continued on page 16*

After making all my own floor panels, repairing the doors and wings without spending much money, I was finally ready for the body to be fixed to the rolling chassis. I then focused on rebuilding the engine and spraying the body. The next job in the restoration was the more costly bit of the re upholstery and trimmings which has slowed me down considerably, as I need to source second hand parts to cut the costs down. To date the Austin 7 Ruby is ready for carpets, upholstery and trimmings, the engine to be fitted and all the glass put back and then the wiring loom (not my best gifting). So, it is still a work in progress but I aim to finish and put it on the road for summer 2025.

Two extraordinary things came to light with these two cars. Firstly, going through the old paper work that came with the Messerschmitt, I found that it used to belong to someone in the same village where I lived for a time in East Devon and the local garage remembered servicing the car many years ago. So, I was living close to this car for many years without realizing that one day it would come into my possession.

The next discovery was truly amazing as one evening, I was looking through the documents for the Austin 7 Ruby, and there to my astonishment, I saw recorded that the first owner in 1938 was an older second cousin of mine who had apparently bought the car from a BMC garage in a town in Buckinghamshire where I grew up as a boy. I would walk past this dealership every day on my way to school. I also had a mechanic friend who worked there in the late 60's. My cousin must have sold the car to the man in Devon who became the second owner then his wife on her husband's demise, sold it to me as the third owner.

After all those years, my dream came true, now owning a Messerschmitt and an Austin 7 Ruby, that was also now back in my family.

I would like to thank Devon 7's club for letting me take the Messerschmitt to the shows with them.



Robert Brown

## A toad is born, building a special

Even before work started it's been christened, 'The Toad'.

Thinking back, I've been around Austin 7s for nearly 60 years, having owned my current 1936 Ruby for 53 years. During that time I seem to have acquired lots of spare parts, from scrap cars, gifts and bits that I've purchased.

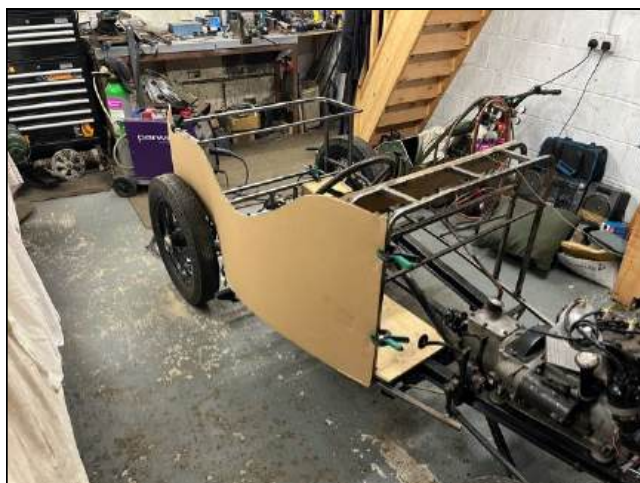
Once I retired the 'special' building bug bit. Thinking that I almost had enough parts to build another car I bought a 1932 rolling chassis from a friend and with his help and advice started work.

I did some research and watched many YouTube videos, even taking photographs from the television screen. I photographed every special I saw at rallies during the year, no two were the same. The underlying thought was to build a car suitable for trials, so then it was decision time.

I opted for hydraulic brakes using Morris 1000 components, the careful conversion took much longer than the first time I undertook this with youthful abandon at 18.

I chose to use 19mm and 12.5mm steel box section and started to practice my MIG welding. Pre-formed corners helped make a smoother profile and it started to look like a car. Cardboard Aided Design (CAD) is a useful tool to help visualise the end result. The aluminium sheets ordered from Metals4u are packed with a very useful large sheet of pristine cardboard, ideal for this purpose.

It's been fun so far and an excellent form of 'Mindfulness'. As you go along there are inevitably things I would do differently. I am now realising how many small parts I am missing and have had to buy. It's kept me busy searching eBay for all those little bits then finding that I had one of those in the bottom of that box, arggh.



*Jolyon Lomax*

## ANSWERS TO PUZZLE ON PAGE 11

### CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

#### ACROSS

1. Tacit      4. Rebates      8. Fir for purpose      9. Ewe      10. Political      12. Abrupt      14. Cleric      17. Following  
19. Ale      20. Contemplation      22. Sincere      23. Tense

#### DOWN

1. Taffeta      2. Cathedral      3. Troop      4. Ripple      5. Borstal      6. Too      7. Steel      11. Carnation      13. Protege  
15. Cleanse      16. Simple      17. Focus      18. Giant      21. Nun

### WEST COUNTRY ATTRACTIONS

1. The Lost Gardens of Heligan      2. Tiverton Canal      3. Seaton Tramway      4. Exeter Underground Passages  
5. Royal William Yard      6. Dartmoor National Park      7. The National Marine Aquarium

### QUADRUPICS

1. (a) Eat      2. (d) Anomoly      3. (c) Lawless      4. (a) Belfry      5. (b) Shadow

## For Sale and Wanted

### For Sale due to illness

1934 A7 RP Saloon. Now in good running order after a mechanical overhaul. Body good, sunroof, modern indicators.

**Must go, so priced at £5,000 o.n.o**

Telephone Pete on 01803 552507 after 7pm.



### For Sale

RP style radiator put together some 15 to 20 years ago by Plymouth Radiators. Thought to be sound, but unused by Martin.

**Price - £120**



Four Ruby Mk. 1, 17 inch wheels. They have been shotblasted and primed. One needs a slight repair to the rim.

**Price - £20 each**

For more details on either of these items contact Martin Wright at [martandla@btconnect.com](mailto:martandla@btconnect.com)

### For Sale

1932 Austin Seven RN Saloon KJ8348. In good running condition, the car has been part of our family for 40 years and is now sadly for sale due to age catching up with me. Sun roof, locking door handles, 6 volt LED lights. Has been used for club runs and rallies and taken us on several enjoyable holidays, among them Beaulieu, Swanage and the Isle of Wight.

To include workshop manuals. Lots of Austin tools and spares including spanners, flywheel puller, hubpuller, spare working starter motor, spare DJ 4 distributor with cap, spare radiator and more.

**Price - £9,000 ono**

Contact Eddie on 01803 842653  
or 07528900852



*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.*

## 2025 Events

*The following list of events is for information only and implies no recommendation from the Devon Austin Seven Club. Before entering any event, members should ensure that they have read the terms and conditions on the entry form and are willing to comply with them.*

### Club Events

- Sat. Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>** Saturday Saunter – The Manor Inn, Lower Ashton. See page 5 for full details.
- Mon. Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>** DA7C Zoom Club Night including a presentation on Steam Traction Engines by Tino Whittlestone. see page 5.
- Sun. March 16<sup>th</sup>** AGM –10.30 for 11am Spreyton Village Hall followed by Sunday Lunch at the Tom Cobley Tavern. Contact David Aylmore. See page 6 for full details.
- Sun. April 12<sup>th</sup>** Young drivers day at Re-Fuel S.W. Five Bridges, Willand Road, Cullompton, EX15 1QP
- Sun. April 27<sup>th</sup>** Drive it Day. More details next month but there will hopefully be organised runs in North and East Devon. See page 6
- Thurs - Sun.  
May 8<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>** Guernsey weekend. WW 2, Liberation Celebrations.  
Contact Jude Zebedee for more information.
- Fri-Sun.  
May 29<sup>th</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> June** The Vintage Nostalgia Festival - see page 8 for full details.  
Contact Nick Borst-Smith
- Fri - Mon.  
June 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>** Scottish A7 Club Rally - Guildtown, Perthshire. Contact David Aylmore.
- Sat/Sun  
July 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>** Historic Vehicle Gathering, Powderham. More information in future newsletters, but please make a diary note NOW.
- Sat/Sun  
July 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>** Rosemoor Vintage Weekend, Great Torrington EX38 8PH, Entry form on the DA7C website. Contact Nick Borst-Smith. Details on page 9.
- Tues. Sept.9<sup>th</sup>** Widecombe Fair. Contact David Aylmore.
- Sat. Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>** Sidmouth Classic Car Show.

### Other Events

- Sun. April 6<sup>th</sup>** Hammerwich Pre-War gathering. WS7 0LJ E-mail. [klaxonhoard@gmail.com](mailto:klaxonhoard@gmail.com)
- Sun May 18<sup>th</sup>** Rotary Classic Car Run. 70 miles starting in Calne, Wiltshire. Details and entry form from David Aylmore, or E-mail. [calnerotaryclassicrun@gmail.com](mailto:calnerotaryclassicrun@gmail.com)
- Sun. June 29<sup>th</sup>** National A7 Rally - Beaulieu Hampshire. Entry forms available in late Feb/early March from The Pre-War A7 Club website
- Fri - Sun  
Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup>** Torbay Steam Fair - Churston, Brixham. Website - [www.torbaysteamfair.co.uk](http://www.torbaysteamfair.co.uk)
- Sun. Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>** Seaton Carnival Classic Car Show – Contact Michael Tabear.

### Regular Monthly Meetings

- 1st Thursday 8pm** BSAOC Tamar Valley Group meet at the Fox and Grapes, Lifton. DA7C members most welcome to meet up with like minds. (landlord is DA7C member Philip Hockin) Contact Philip for details: [philip.hockin@gmail.com](mailto:philip.hockin@gmail.com)
- 2nd Wednesday** 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)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday 7pm.** Members Zoom meetings with a Guest speaker every 3 months if possible.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday** DA7C members are welcome to join the Somerset Sevensers meet at the Lamb & Lion, Hambridge, TA10 0AT at lunchtime and in the evening around 7.00 p.m. Contact Anne Whellock on 01460 66434 for more details.



## **Devon A7 Club Clothing Range**



Fleece Jacket , 3 Colours available.	£35
Pull-Over Hoodie, 8 colours available.	£28
Polo Shirt, 17 Colours available.	£20
Sweat Shirt, 13 Colours available.	£24
Soft Shell Jacket, 3 Colours available.	£35

All clothing items are available from our new On-Line Shop.

Ordering is very simple -

go to [www.devonaustinseven.company.site/](http://www.devonaustinseven.company.site/)

or

Follow the link from the Members' section on the Devon A7 Club Website:-

[www.devon.sevens.co.uk](http://www.devon.sevens.co.uk)

Choose your garment/size & colour.

Pay in the same way as with any other on-line purchase.

Delivery is direct to your home address.

## **Mechanical help and advice for Devon A7 Club members.**

If you need help with your car, whether it's a chat over the phone or someone to come and have a look at the problem, contact one of the knowledgeable members listed below. They will undoubtedly be able to help, but if they can't, they will certainly be able to put you in touch with someone who can.

Whether you are a new member or have owned an A7 for years, we all need help sometimes, so don't struggle with a problem, help is at hand.

Philip Burrow	Copplestone.	07870969620
Richard Bishop	Exeter	01392 439916
Pete Gilbert	Throwleigh	07879 483529
Nick Borst-Smith	Crediton	07809 568120
John Turley	Wells, Somerset	01749 675475
Chris Hartnoll	Brayford.	01598 710295
David Aylmore	Newton Abbot	01626 852259
Philip Snell	Axminster	07833 620763

*Please note that any advice given is on a friendly, informal basis only and no liability for loss or damage can be accepted.*

## **Members Tool Loan Scheme.**

Any Club Member can ask to borrow one or more tools free of charge. There will be a refundable deposit of £20 to be paid, in cash if the tools are collected, or by BACS to the Club Bank Account if they are to be posted. The cost of postage to be met by the Club Member.

Request for any tool can be sent by e-mail or by telephone to the Club Secretary, David Aylmore, [devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk), 01626 852259

### **These are the tools that are available:-**

Brake shoe adjustment gauge.	Clutch alignment tool.
Clutch plate riveting anvil.	Cylinder Head & Block core plug punches.
Flywheel fitting spacer.	Front main bearing removal jig.
Guide for drilling out broken cylinder head stud.	Tool for removing rear spring bolt.
Tool for drifting front main bearing onto crankshaft.	Wheel bearing drifts.
Tool for drifting rear main bearings onto crankshaft.	King Pin reamer.
Stud removal socket set.	
Engine lifting rig using 2 x spark plug threads (14mm & 18mm available)	
Note this tool can also be used to lift a 'stuck' cylinder head from the engine block	
Tool for removing studs from the engine block or crankcase	

**If the tool you need is not listed, please just ask, as we can probably find it for you.**

## 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.

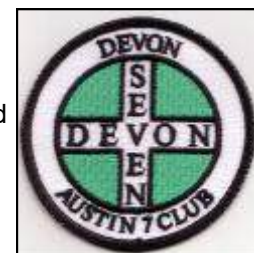
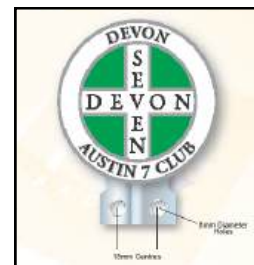
Cost is £3.50 (plus 50p postage)

### 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 Steve Wise by phone or e-mail or can be collected from any club event.*

*Contact details are on the back page.*



## March 2025 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 March issue should be with me by **Wednesday February 19th 2025** and the newsletter will be distributed on or before **Wednesday 26th**.

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:

Viv Gale - North Devon

Tel: 07890 471973

E-mail: [vivgale6@gmail.com](mailto:vivgale6@gmail.com)



### Secretary & DVLA Rep:

David Aylmore - South Devon

Tel: 01626 852259

E-Mail: [devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk)



### Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Steve Wise - South Devon

Tel: 07739 986998

E-mail: [s.r.wise@outlook.com](mailto:s.r.wise@outlook.com)



### Car Identification Number Registrar:

Nick Borst-Smith - Mid Devon

Tel: 01363 866819

E-mail: [nickbs@outlook.com](mailto:nickbs@outlook.com)



### A7 Assoc. Rep:

Michael Tabear - East Devon

Tel: 01297 624208 or 07523 055291

E-mail: [mttabear@gmail.com](mailto:mttabear@gmail.com)



### Committee Member:

Andy Grabham - West Somerset

Tel: 07833 124484

E-mail: [nobbygrump@btinternet.com](mailto:nobbygrump@btinternet.com)



### Committee Member:

Jude Zebedee - East Devon

Tel: 07944 602211

E-mail: [judezebedee@gmail.com](mailto:judezebedee@gmail.com)



### Committee Member:

John Turley - Mendip Hills

Tel: 01749 675475

E-mail: [john@priddyfolk.co.uk](mailto:john@priddyfolk.co.uk)



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

### Newsletter Editor:

Janet Aylmore

South Devon

Tel: 01626 852259

E-Mail: [devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:devon.sevens@hotmail.co.uk)



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