



The Crankhandle

NEWSLETTER OF THE HEREFORD AUSTIN SEVEN CLUB
OCTOBER 2026

ISSUE 100



Peter Hewitt and his Ruby with the Herefordshire Bull in High Town Hereford

I am under strict instructions from our Editor to keep this month's submission small and short in this 100th edition of the *Crankhandle!* Having said that, I feel privileged to be allowed to make even a small contribution as I was so pleased to hear how many of you have answered Annie's call for contributions making it as special as she had hoped.

It is a busy time with so many activities on during August and September. The Chairman's run on Saturday 16th August was a terrific turn out with sixteen cars and thirty one people. The Club was well represented at Gloucester Retro on Saturday 29th August and besides the monthly lunch meet on the 10th September and the evening meet on Tuesday 29th, there is the exciting (fully booked) Club Holiday at Llandrindod Wells starting on Sunday 13th September. All-in-all, there is something for everyone, so I hope that you enjoy whatever you do.

Happy Sevenning,

Michael.

From our membership Secretary Julia James

Reminder to all Members

Time flies, it is almost 1st October and renewal time.

Please do NOT pay before the 1st October '26, but no later than 1st December 2026.

Annual subscription is held at £10 per annum, for Grey Mag subscribers it is an additional £13 per annum. Subscription includes family members living at the same address up to the age of 25 yrs.

Payment methods:

A few members have standing orders, other members might like to consider this payment method in the future?

Additional payment methods:

BACs is quick and easy, if you are unable to pay by BACs, please make your cheque payable to:

Hereford Austin Seven Club

Bank details for BACs:

Account No: 38104560

Sort code: 30 80 55

As a last resort, you can also pay your subscription by visiting Lloyd's Bank Hereford in person quoting

Account No/Sort Code.

Any problems or help required please contact me on membership@ ha7a.co.uk

For **EDITION 100** I thought we would look at some of the innumerable ways we use our Austins and to celebrate them in photographs.

I have only possessed an Austin 7 since 2016, but of all vintage cars, Austins appear the most versatile. Granted, they were mass produced in the 1920s and 30s at the cheap end of the market, but these tough little cars endure. Initially they were used for transporting the family but also modified extensively as work horses. For example, the Austin factory sold chassis with engines to various companies who then modified them. The first prototype jet engine used an Austin engine in 1943.

Now Austins are more 'play ponies.' The beauty of them is that we can still find parts and fix them relatively easily.

Austin also fostered a craze of A7 specials in the 1950s by home enthusiasts, and currently 750 Formula Austins for track racing.

They bring people together from all walks of life, and a lot of the camaraderie of the Hereford Austin 7 Club comes from helping one another on restoration projects. When out and about, I am often stopped (as I'm sure you are too) by complete strangers who smile and want to know more about my Chummy. It always emerges that a relative of theirs learnt to drive in an Austin 7 back in the day. Because they were at the least expensive end of the vintage world, I'm convinced we have a lot more fun in ours than the more valuable makes, partly because we aren't afraid to use them.

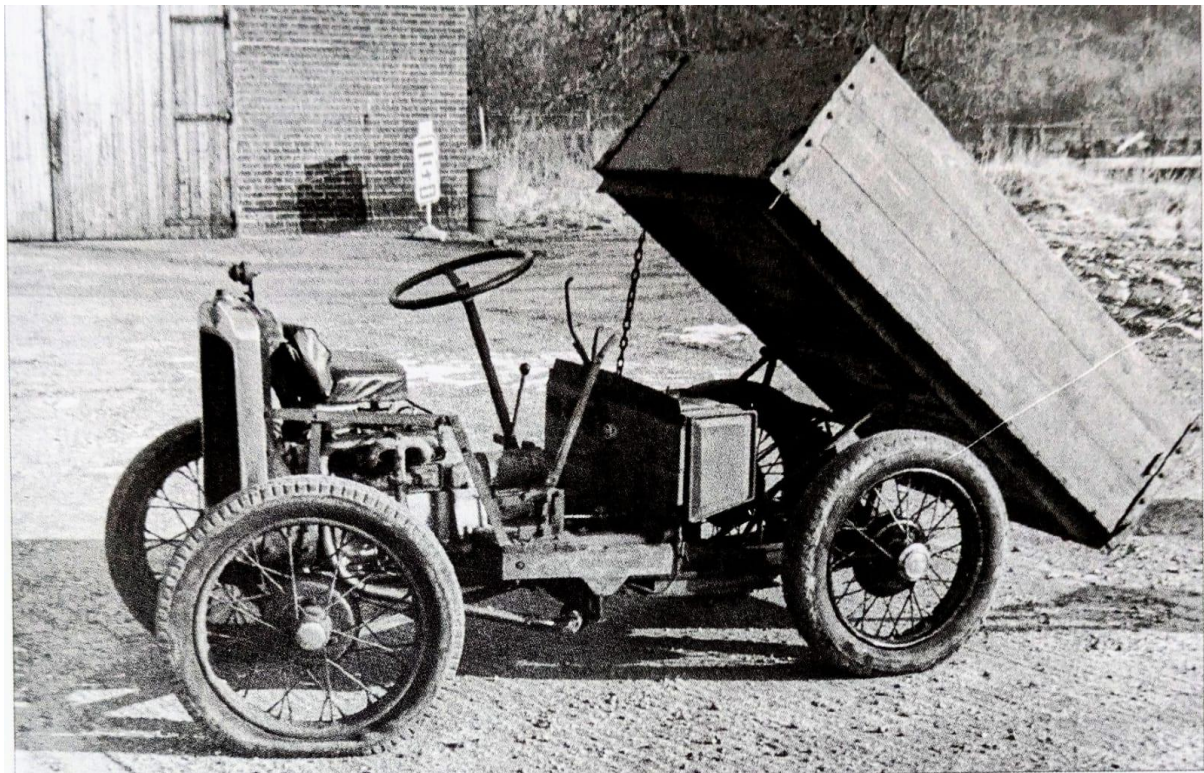
This edition is a lighthearted snapshot of Austins then and now. I hope the photos here will make you smile and remember how fortunate we are to own one. Where possible I wanted to include photos of our own members in their cars. Given the scope of uses they provide, I have only just touched the sides of Austins, and I hope you will forgive me for any omissions.

My thanks go to those from the HA7 club who have provided photos, especially David Southcott (website.vintageman.zenfolio.com), Ann Robbins of the Chummy Ladies, Robin Batchelor, balloonist and car owner; David Morgan and Veloce Publishing, and of course Roly Alcock who expertly puts the Crankhandle into shape for me, and Matthew Bell, editor of the VSCC.

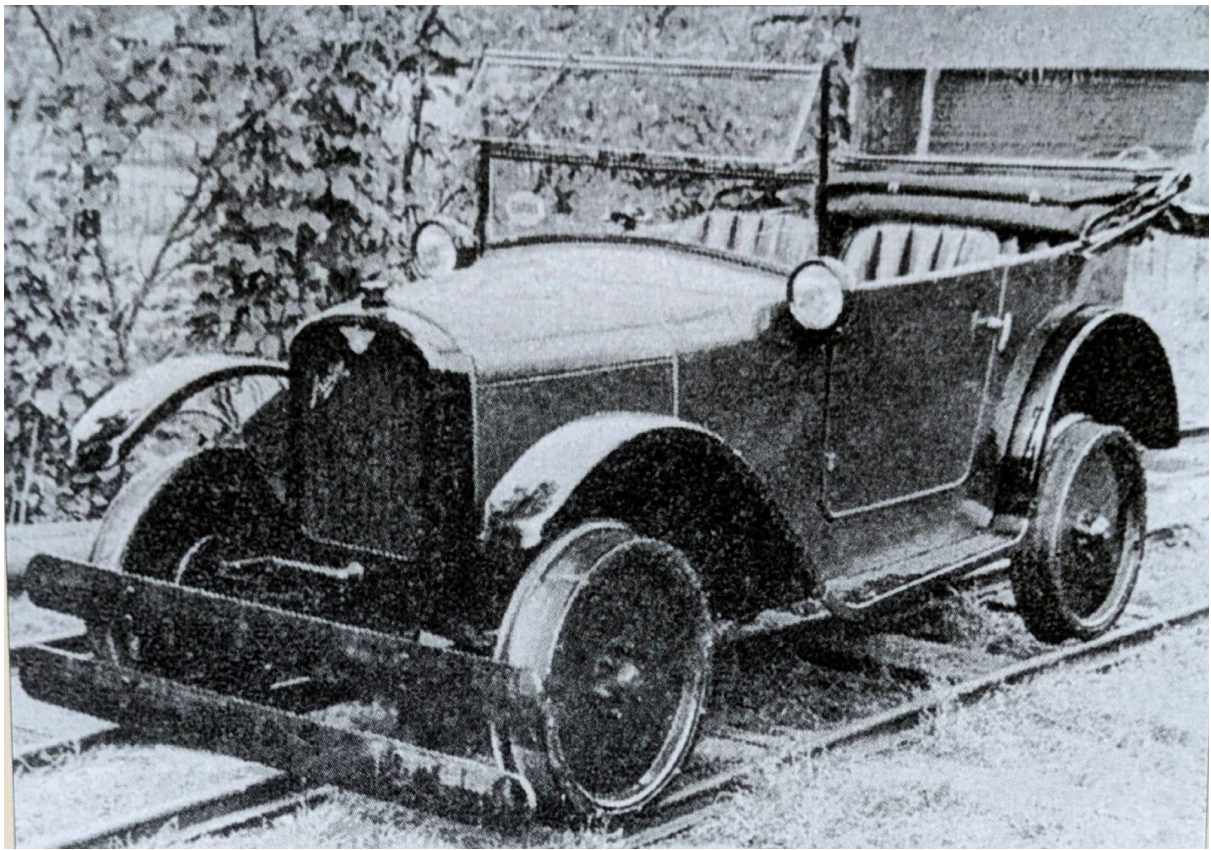
Austins as Workhorses



Austin Seven powered Seagull Motor launch of 1930 included varnished mahogany decking.
Thanks to David Morgan



Rear wheel steering dump truck, with special self-warming seat. Courtesy of Ken Cooke.



This Austin Chummy was converted for rail track inspections first in 1928 by D. Wickham and Co. It had no steering wheel, but heavy bumpers and cast flanged wheels.
Thanks to David Morgan



Lawnmower on a 1925 chassis by Ransomes Sims and Jefferies. Apparently, the engine runs well but it is a hopeless mower. With thanks to Classic and Sportscar.com

Frozen in Time - Then and Now



1930s Morris on the newly straightened A 438 Ledbury to Hereford Road at Tupsley Pitch, towards the pub the Cock at Tupsley. Photo probably February 1939, showing either snow or flooding on the meadows. The 'Cock' was a powerful shire horse used to assist heavy carts up the original hill into Hereford.



Photo reconstruction by Nat and Clare Johnson (HA7) in the summer of 2026 driving their Austin 12/16 on the same spot.

Pranks in the Past

Austin 7 on the Senate House Roof, Cambridge 1958



In 1958, a group of twelve engineering students successfully hoisted a stripped out and derelict Austin Seven van onto the roof of the Senate House in Cambridge. After months of meticulous planning, the students used a custom-built scaffold derrick and a block and tackle system to lift the lightened vehicle from a neighbouring college during the night. Despite a few near misses, including a falling derrick and a run-in with drunken bystanders, they managed to secure the van on the roof and escape undetected. The spectacle drew massive crowds the following morning, and it took emergency teams nearly a week to remove the vehicle by cutting it into pieces. The students were publicly chastised but privately applauded.



It took authorities almost a week to remove the van from the roof.

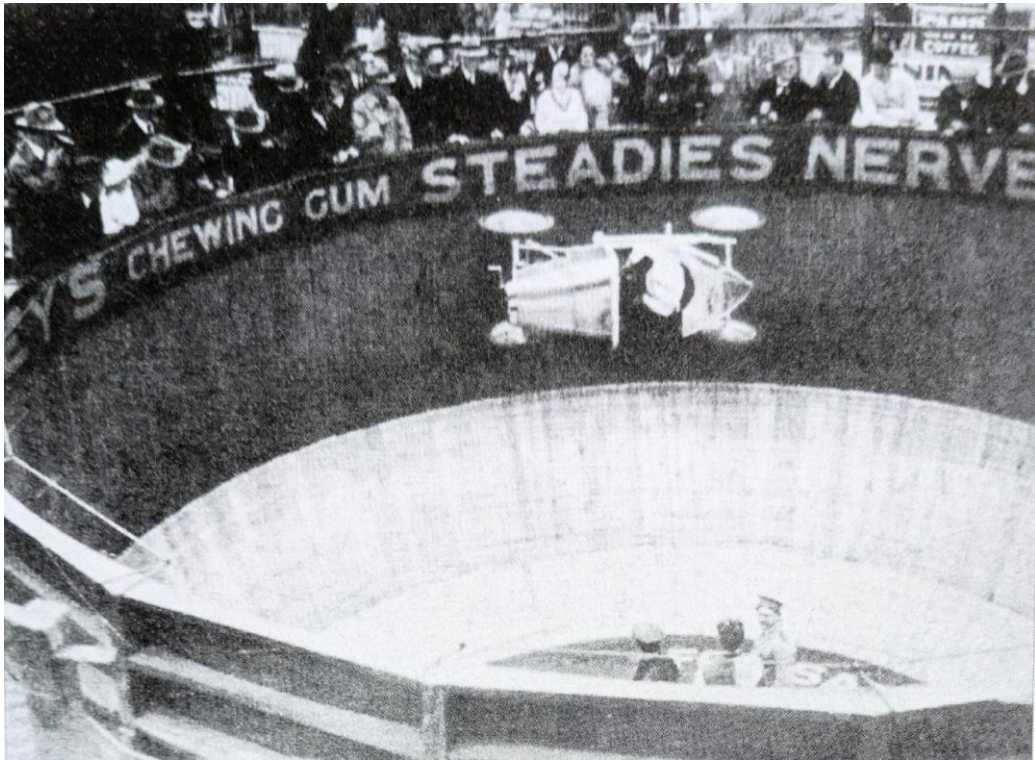
Austin 7 (1928) below Bridge of Sighs St Johns Cambridge in 1963.



This 1928 Austin saloon was punted along the Cam and carefully suspended from the stone windows of the bridge above, without harming its structure. The participating students from Gonville and Caius were not revealed for decades but the Dean of the college sent cases of champagne to several staircases, as a token of his admiration. The stonework of the bridge was not harmed in any way.

Austins in Sport

Racing Austins



Ketring Dare, the first Austin 7 driver to ride the 'Wall of Death at Olympia.
David Morgan, Veloce Publishing



The Doctor's Coupe 1928 London to Edinburgh at Stake Moss. With thanks to LAT and Matthew Bell



1922 Shelsley Walsh entered by Herbert Austin, driven by Louis Kings
Thanks to LAT and Matthew Bell





Tim Bradley at Curborough Track day in his Austin 7 Special



Goodwood 2022. 100 Years of Austin 7s. Julia James on the starting grid in her Opal

Trialling Austins



Harry Peake and your editor, Herefordshire Hill Trial April 2021



HA7 member Malcolm and Jenny Lyon in their Class 1a Austin Chummy at Badlands, the Welsh Trial 2025



David Hunt in his Class 1A Chummy at Chandos, the Herefordshire Trial 2022.



Minna Peake at Chandos on the Herefordshire Trial 2023

Driving Tests



Glenn Sanger with a bucket on his head, negotiating a course. Cone, what cone? Austin Swallow 2016

Holidays and Touring



Bob and Heather Garratt in their Box Saloon 2019



Julia James in her Austin 7 Opal



Michale Ward's Opal 2017



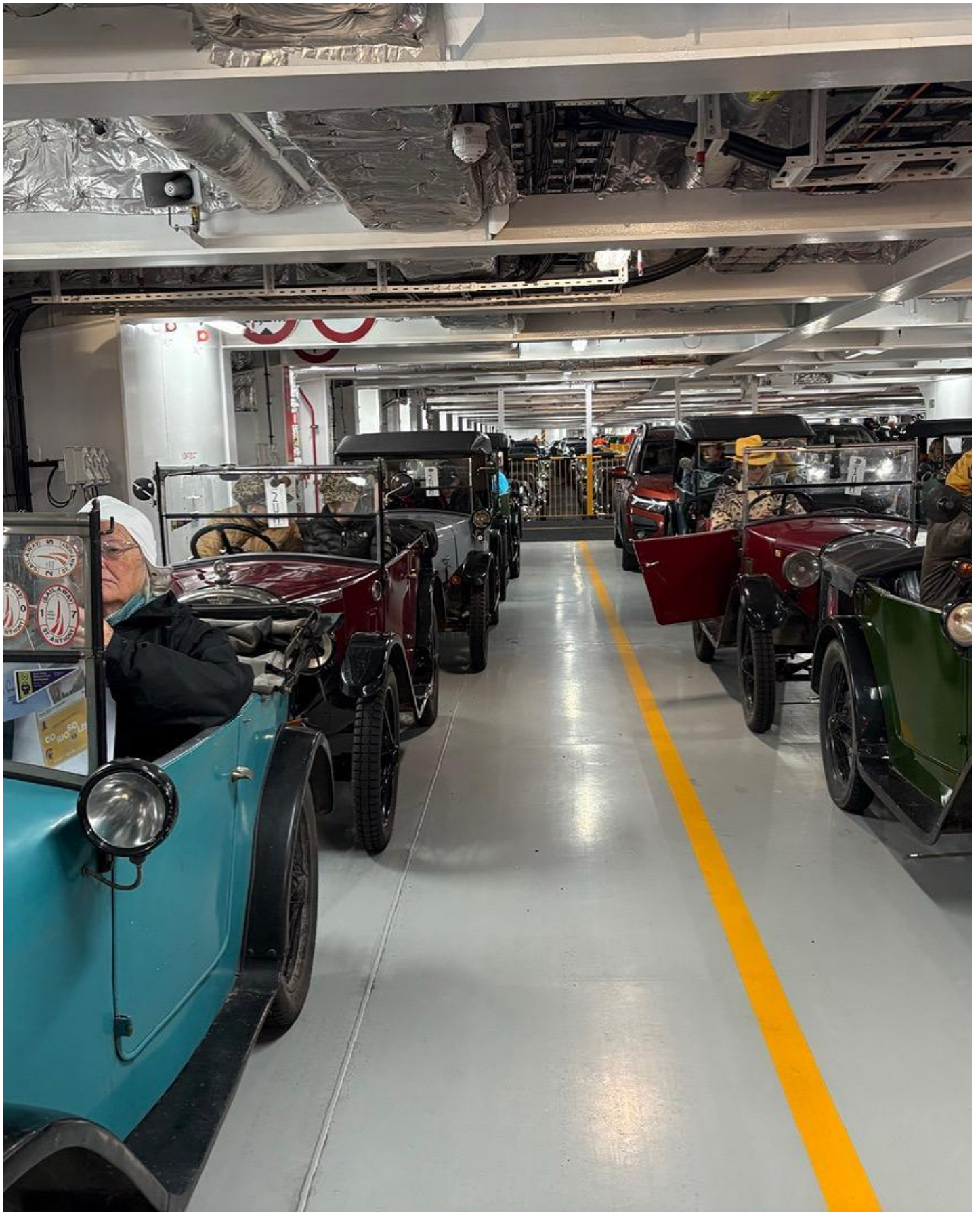
Drive it Day HA7 Austins 2019



Gerwyn Lloyd in his Austin 10 Cabriolet, 2019



HA7 visit to Mostyn Hall 2024



Chummies on the Brittany Ferry September 2025



Chummies at the Brittany seaside September 2025



Long Range Touring Austins



Peking to Paris Rally 2011. The Steppe, Mongolia, Kip and Carmen Waistell



Peking to Paris Rally 2011. The Gobi Desert, Mongolia. Kip and Carmen Waistell

Austins for Pleasure

For Weddings and Proms





Nat Johnson driving his son David to his school Prom July 2026 in his 1936 12/6 Ascot.



Wedding of Louis Parkin and Rebecca Smith 11.7.2026



Louis Parkin/ Rebecca Smith wedding, Dinedor Herefordshire 11.7.2026



Wedding of Minna Peake to Mat Roberts, Ledbury 7th June 2025

**Starting a New Club : The Hereford Austin 7 Club started in 2009
: The Chummy Ladies started 2007**



Chummy Ladies began in June 2007 in Chawton Hampshire.
Ann Robbins, Penny Cawley, Francine Pimperton and Frances Still.



Chummy Ladies outing to Derbyshire April 2024. Higham Hotel.

Different generations



Ann Robbins of the Chummy Ladies’s grandchildren



Jane Fowler-Turner's aunt, Auntie Phill driving her Type 65. Presume during war time as the car is displaying the headlight deflectors.



Sidney Earl who passed his driving test earlier this year.

Austins in Art



Austin 7s in Art, with apologies to David Hockney



Granny in her Chummy by Joe Robbins age 9



Gaynor White's Chummy ready for a picnic



Stratford Race Course August 2024

Electric Austins in the Future?



Austin Charging Points



FOR SALE



FOR SALE 1931 AG Tourer

4 speed gear box, RP engine, 12v, SU carburettor. Restored roof, side screens Price £6500 ono.

Contact Stuart Phillips. S.phillips001@btinternet.com

Deadline for next issue: Nov 20th 2026

Please do send in contributions newsletter@ha7c.co.uk

Ideal article length is up to 700 words, preferably with at least 2 photos or illustrations.

Longer articles also very welcome, especially if they can be divided into parts for subsequent newsletters

Short notes, say 150 words, also popular. Please keep writing!

Club Regalia and Membership

Honorary members £4

Paid up Members £65

Family Members £41

Grey Mag Subscribers £22

Available at most monthly meetings from the Treasurer

Windscreen Stickers 50p



Sew-on Embroidered badge: no longer available, but could be ordered if enough interest.



Radiator Badge £20



Lapel Pin Badge £2



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HA7C website <https://www.ha7c.co.uk>

Herefordshire Austin Sevens Forum <https://www.facebook.com/groups/357904524672062>

Some other useful resources on the Internet

Austin Seven Friends	http://www.austinsevenfriends.co.uk/
Austin Seven Clubs Association	https://www.facebook.com/thea7ca/
The Federation of British Historical Vehicle Clubs	http://www.fbhvc.co.uk/
Austin Seven Group on FB	https://www.facebook.com/groups/8069487412
Cornwall Austin Seven Club	http://www.austin7.org/
Bristol Austin Seven Club	http://www.ba7c.org/
Dorset Austin Seven Club	http://www.da7c.co.uk/
South Wales Austin Seven Club	http://southwalesaustinsevenclub.com/
Red Cross Directory of Parts, Products and Services	http://oldcarservices.co.uk/

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