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The Crankhandle

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NEWSLETTER OF THE HEREFORD AUSTIN SEVEN CLUB



This is the Crankhandle equivalent of a pin-up, i.e. most beautiful car of the month. (I was going to say a page 3 girl equivalent, but that would not be PC)

COMING UP IN THE NEW YEAR AT A PUB NEAR YOU

There is support for a regular lunchtime gathering at a different pub each month, enabling us to get our cars out even with the shorter days, and be able to have at least one or two gatherings nearer to home for everyone. There will be no obligation to have a meal of course, but those wishing to eat will need to make their arrangements direct with the pub of that month.

Start will be 12pm on the second Thursday of the month. There will be no business discussed, it will be purely and simply a social meeting for a noggin and natter, plus food if you wish.

Would members like to nominate pubs for us to consider?

We presently have on our list

- The Skirrid at Llanvihangel Crucorney,
- The Carpenter's Arms at Walterstone,
- The Royal Oak at Much Marcle,
- The Bunch of Carrots in Hereford
- The Butchers Arms in Woolhope.

Has anyone knowledge of good pubs in or near Ross on Wye, Leominster and Bromyard? For summer gatherings, we do need a decent garden in which to sit.

Please contact Kip Waistell on kipcarwaistell@hotmail.com



NEW MEMBERS

Adam and Vicky Oliver write: We've just recently joined the club, in fact, I received my welcome email this morning! I look forward to joining club events and meeting club members. I acquired Annie Peake's 1928 yellow Chummy a few weeks back, and have been busy enjoying some runs out since. I plan to use the car for VSCC light car events and club outings. I would also like to try my hand at trials, especially having seen Annie and her daughter and Malcolm and Jenny at the Welsh. **I need some wheels for trialling (p25)**



Chairman's View. Michael Ward



Congratulations to all those club members who have arranged such an interesting and varied calendar of events for us this year. I have been spoilt for choice but have managed to attend most. For a relatively small club, compared with the likes of the size of the other Austin Seven Clubs around the UK, we do remarkably well when I think what we have covered this year so far. In addition to some outstanding Club Runs, we have been privileged to attend Early Engineering, A Nursing Home, Bowling evenings, had film evenings and interesting talks as well as a Club holiday in Bishops Castle. Our Events Co-ordinator's Pat and Jan, ably supported by our website guru, Roland, have done well to keep us informed along the way. But, we have not finished yet, there is the annual club lunch, a talk on building your own 'A7 Special' and a visit to the Prior's Motor Works still to come. Well done to everyone involved and making it all happen.

I mentioned in the last issue of the Crankhandle the committee's efforts in encouraging the younger generation to get involved in Austin Seven's. It was a great pleasure therefore to read in the Hereford Times last month of the activities of an eleven-year-old who has been restoring an A7 Ruby for the past two years. Henry Dukes of Bromyard was recognised by the National Transport Trust and presented with an award by Princess Anne for his efforts. I wrote to Henry on behalf of the HA7C to add our congratulations and best wishes and received an enthusiastic reply. I am sure that we will see Henry in the future at one of our club activities but in the meantime we will no doubt get updates on Henry's progress from his Grandfather Martin Prior and uncle (HA7C member) David Prior, who themselves have four Austin Sevens collectively.

I am pleased to inform you that the club has purchased a projector and screen to enable films, video's and slides to be shown. This will assist our speakers as well as being portable to use for the club in any room or location. If you have 'stills' or videos of your own and are willing to share these images with other members, then please let it be known so that we can all enjoy the captured activity of your 'Seven's'.

I cannot close this end of year 'view' without thanking our Editor, Frank Sibly, for producing our Crankhandle since he was handed the mantle by Roland Alcock in February this year. Always a first class publication full of interesting information.

As there is no monthly meeting in December, I wish you all a Happy New Year.

Happy Sevenning,

Michael

I continue to regularly update the Events page (<https://www.ha7c.co.uk/events.html>) as and when I receive new information from Pat. I also publish monthly by email a pdf version of the events list to the membership.

Any input from the membership for the website will be gladly received. Particularly if you want to say something interesting about your car, with photos of course.

The TR3A gave me some excitement, due to the solid part of the heater piping snapping off the on/off valve on the cylinder head. My original thought was that the heater was working really well, until I realised it was boiling water pouring on to my legs! Naturally I jury rigged a solution to get me home. Valve and pipe replaced now.

The box saloon had a recalcitrant petrol tap which would insist on leaking, a replacement was no better, so I re-corked a push/pull Stuart Turner tap with some success. When off it worked fine, when on it leaked in to the exhaust. I have now installed a ball valve type tap and that works fine. Cheers Roly



Trojan compared to A7

The following is a conversation Roly had with an A7 owner who is considering buying a Trojan.

Hello Roly

I am an Austin 7 owner - I have a 1934 Ruby and a 1930 Swallow saloon (and if you are a subscriber to The Automobile, in the May issue was an article on a Standard Swallow - that's mine also) and I am thinking about changing the Ruby for a Trojan.

I have never driven one of these cars - the Ruby is a very easy car to drive with synchromesh gearbox, the Swallow is more demanding with its crash box, I like the quirks of the Trojan and by all accounts, this is easy to drive.

Anyway, you sold yours and have an Austin 7, so perhaps I could trouble you for information on your experiences, particularly, which you think is the better car.

Several points, in comparison to the Austin 7 - the brakes - in particular, the band on the transmission - is this really as good as the maker claimed? Does the car stop well - assuming all the components are in good order of course.

Driving the Trojan - is it as fun to drive as an Austin 7 and is its performance comparable, appreciate the top speed is late 30's, whereas my Ruby has been at 57mph (gps reading) with more to go, the Swallow has a lower top speed of around 45mph, speed is not everything, acceleration is important where I live - Brighton.

Hello Gary It's been a while since I sold the Trojan... In October 2013 Gerry Michelmore wrote an article in the Automobile about owning and driving a Trojan. I thought it rather inspiring. Shortly afterwards a Trojan came up for sale and I did a deal by swapping my A7 1928 Fabric saloon plus some cash for it. Amazingly it turned out this car once belonged to an elderly friend, Jim Dudley, in the late 1950s. He owned a Chummy.

The Trojan gearbox is very easy to use as it has epicyclic gears. There are only two forward gears, very low and noisy, and high which is almost silent. There are three main ways of braking. A single drum brake on the rear axle which is a solid axle (no diff). A transmission brake which is usually ineffective as it is soaked in oil. And putting it in reverse gear while still moving forward! The factory promoted the latter as a feature! My Trojan had standard tuning and gearing, so 30 mph was its maximum speed. It may be that the car you are interested in has been breathed on, and has a higher gearing on the chain drive.

The performance between the two cars is not really comparable. It's a bit like asking which makes one more drunk, a slice of bread or a chunk of cheese and of course the answer is neither!

The Trojan is a substantially larger car than the A7 but smaller than a Ford Model A.

Driving is a different experience, first of all the smell from the two stroke is redolent of a steam traction engine. Handling is good with the "Wonder Springs". Although slow they will climb up the side of a house if asked.

On the VSCC website in Light car section they have this to say. *"We are often asked what is a light car. Like the female hippopotamus who was asked how to distinguish a male hippopotamus, the answer was that one knows one when one sees one. In cases of doubt, it should be an unmodified vintage light car claiming less than 30 b.h.p. and not exceeding 1500cc both as advertised at birth. Edwardians at our events are not expected to take advantage of the Club modern tyre derogations. In both classes the overriding criterion is that the vehicle's performance is unlikely to give its owner much satisfaction in main club events. We make an exception to this in the case of cyclecars (because we all like to watch them being mended), and Trojans (why they win main club trials is not generally understood). Any owner exceeding Management's expectation of his car's performance is expected to marshal next year"* Arthur Jeddere-Fisher. President Emeritus.

Finally it makes all the difference in the world if it has had an electric start fitted. The hand start in the cockpit can be fraught. Hopefully this answers some of your questions. Let me know if there is anything else I can help with. Cheers Roly

Secretary's Corner

News from the workshop –

Happily, I'm making steady progress with the next A7, another two-seater Special. Back in September, the Beaulieu Autojumble proved the source of some rich pickings for this project but the half mile walk back to the car park with a heavy load of essentials, was a serious ordeal in a temperature of 30+ °C.

The early LWB chassis has been completely refurbished with a lovely 'Speedex' independent front suspension and a newish 5.125 : 1 CWP in a D-type rear axle. Also, completely refurbished Semi-Girling brakes, flat springs and brand new drums.

Now constructing the body frame in ½ and ¾ inch square MS tube.

Happy motoring Bob G



Mystery Object



To find the answer, you will have to read the rest of the Crankhandle! The answer is hidden somewhere in the following pages

Refurbishment of Austin Seven – Semi-Girling brakes

By Bob Garrett

Most of my Austin Sevens in recent years have enjoyed hydraulic brakes with the benefit of twin leading shoes at the front. However, a knowledgeable source, recently suggested that Semi-Girling A7 brakes might be just as effective as hydraulics in a lightweight special - so long as everything was in excellent working order. My spares box contained numerous Semi-Girling components, so, I decided to put this suggestion to the test for the A7 Special I'm currently building. This article addresses the brake components attached to the axles but does not cover the brake cross shaft, cables or handbrake mechanism.

In the interest of maximising braking efficiency, I decided to replace all damaged or worn components, and the first stage was to dismantle, clean and inspect everything.



Original backplates



Backplates cleaned and etch primed

Interestingly, hydraulic backplates are 'handed' and they differ front to back axles but all four Semi-Girling are the same which is rather convenient.

The actuator mechanisms were examined, and the alloy housings were found to be in good shape but both the 'paddle' levers and bushes were badly worn. So, new levers were obtained, and the 'oilite' bushes replaced, by drifting out the old ones and replacing them with new, using a simply turned-up mild steel drift.



New 'Oilite' bush and bespoke drift

Before fitting, the 'Oilite' bushes were soaked overnight in oil. The lead end of the drift was made an easy fit in the new bushes and the following shoulder just a few thou' smaller than their OD. The bushes seemed to be a fairly light press fit in the housings (presumably to preserve an accurate ID after fitting), so a thin smear of Loctite 242 was employed on the outer surface to hold the bushes securely in position, whilst taking care to keep any Loctite clear of the bore.



Ground actuator on right

These marks were quickly removed using a 5/8" collet to hold them in a Model Engineer's universal grinder.

New, rather nice quality paddle shafts were obtained from one of our usual suppliers which were usefully marked to denote their location (front/rear & near/off-side) because all four are different. They were also an excellent free working fit without any play in the bushes. This was important because it is inadvisable to ream sintered 'Oilite' bushes.

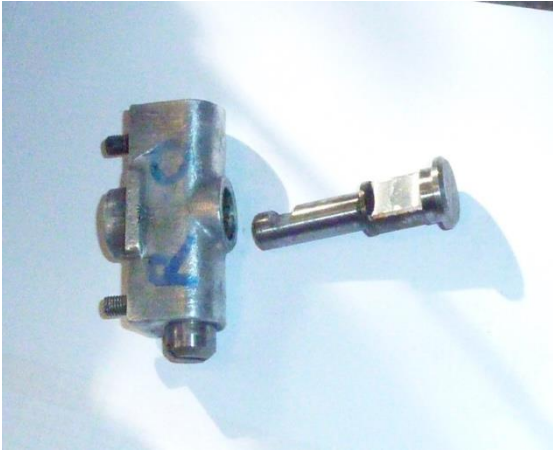
The actuator plungers were found to be an excellent sliding fit in the alloy housings but their inner hardened end faces were marked where the operating paddles had worn significant grooves over the past 80+ years of use.



Refacing actuator plungers

The actuators were assembled on the backplates with new coil return springs, greased felt seals, and correct castle nuts etc. The Adjusters were also dismantled and cleaned, and found to be in good working condition, and were then lubricated and attached to the backplates using the original setscrews with new locking washers.

Next, the new operating levers (ball fronts and simple clevis pin rears) were attached to the actuator paddle shafts with new cotters, and each backplate marked with its location on the car.



Actuator ready for assembly



Adjuster ready for assembly

The old linings were removed from the steel brake shoes which were then cleaned-up and given a coat of paint. Some shoes had grooved bosses for attachment of return springs,

and some just had a simple drilling. I had ordered new return springs that suited the latter arrangement, so, drilled-out and removed any grooved bosses.

I obtained a complete set of new linings and was pleased to discover that they seemed quite soft – and therefore likely to give good braking without too much pedal pressure.

The linings were attached to the shoes with the provided 3/16" dia' semi-hollow copper rivets working from the centre of each shoe. With a 0.365" dia simple flat-faced mild steel mandrel held vertically in the vice, the rivets were first opened slightly with a narrow lathe dead-centre, then rounded-over with a special drift that I turned-up many years ago. The rivets were then finished-off, using the ball-pein end of a small hammer taking care to ensure firm attachment without damaging the linings.



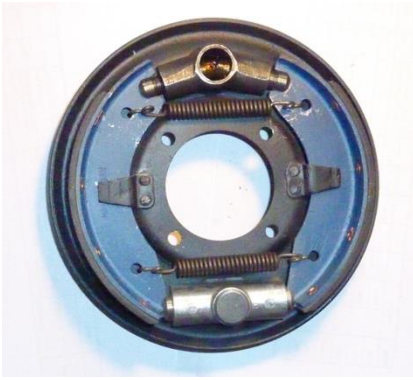
Actuator & adjuster in position



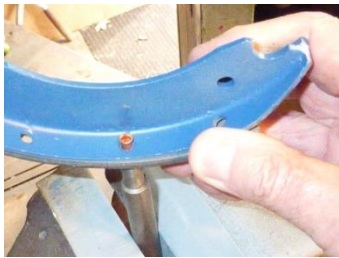
0.365" Dia Mandrel



Hollow rivet drift



Final assembly followed, ensuring all moving parts were sparingly lubricated with high melting point grease. The nice new shoe return springs are deceptively strong but have a very useful loop at each end that enables them to be coaxed into position by the use of a thin screwdriver, or even better with a hook tool as recently described in another club's newsletter. After a final coat or two of



Rivet in position



Rivet closed with drift



All rivets in position

'Hammerite' spray paint, the completed backplates were ready for attachment to the car.

A blocked jet and a tale of woe...

It all started with our much anticipated trip to our local village fete, where I was to display my Austin Seven to the admiring crowds. All went well for the first few miles then cough, splutter, cough, something was amiss. My wife said I think we should go home? No, I said, hastily pulling on the choke to clear what was obviously a jet problem. Fine, there you are, no problem said I. We got to the other side of a roundabout and the car refused to go any further so I coasted into a layby where she totally died on me. So out with the jet key, head tucked under the bonnet, and with petrol covered fingers I unscrewed first the idle jet and peered through it to discover it was blocked! Hey presto I thought this won't take a moment. Out with my trusty fuse wire and would you believe the crud was well and truly stuck up there. Nothing would shift it, so I began to resort to plan B. Just at that moment a small MG Midget driver pulled up. "Are you OK? Do you need a lift anywhere?" How kind I thought, but explained about the blocked jet, and he scooted away.

Luckily, I had a spare jet, 120 in size, although I prefer the 70, but, hey-ho when push comes to shove, any jet in a storm, so it was we limped home not wishing to chance going any further. The car was making strange noises now, and was hardly making progress at any reasonable speed. Once home she was pushed into the garage where she stayed on the naughty step for a week or so until I could get around to checking

Graham Baldock



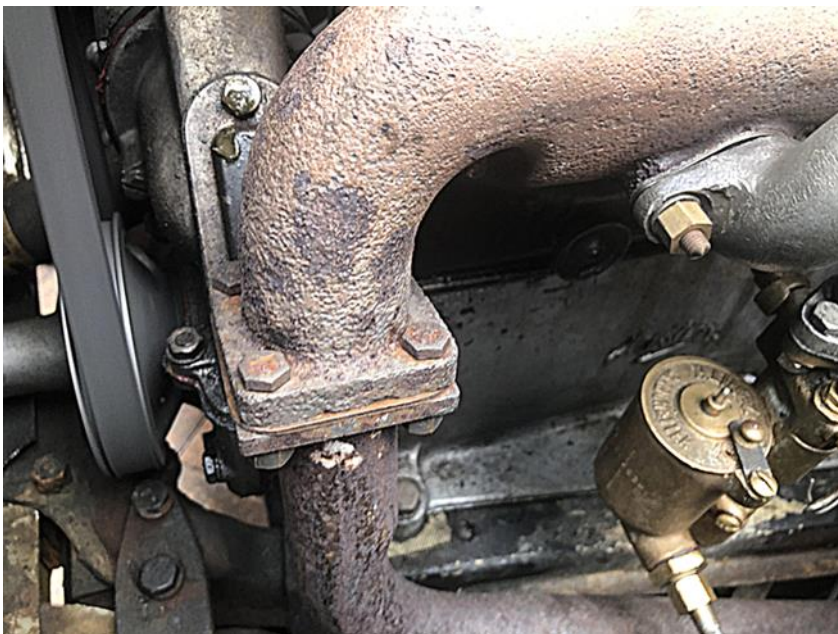
her out, hoping by that time she had repaired herself like in the film 'Christine'. I took her out for a quick run, but there was literally no power, and those ghastly clonking sounds reverberated through the car. What was the cause of the small plastic pellet which had infiltrated the carb? Verdict was it could only be the E10 petrol eating away at the rubber tubes that adorned my fuel filter, even though whenever I fill up I always drop in some fresh two-stroke oil to negate the effects of dreaded Ethanol. New rubber tubes fitted, the filter washed out, E10 petrol drained, and fresh E5 in the tank. But like the 91 year old motor car she is, she still made those awful noises - like an old girl screaming in pain. Perhaps after 91 years she had had enough?



A call to my trusty local mechanic Tim got him scratching his head and wondering if the coil was playing up?

Tim: Dedication at its best when it started to rain – nearly done he said pity to stop now!

There was also a huge leak coming from the exhaust manifold where it joined the block. A swift call to David Cochran at Austin Seven Services and a fresh 6-volt coil and a new manifold gasket was on its way.

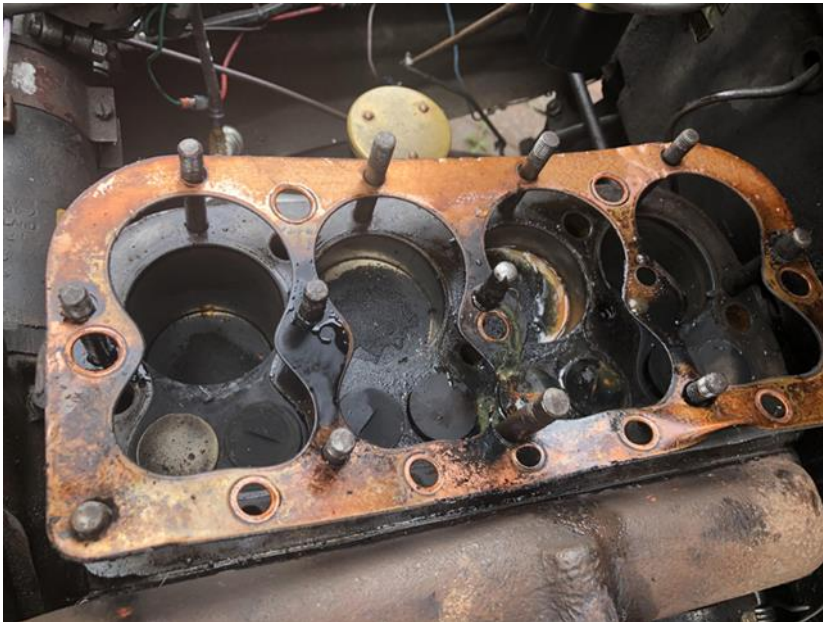


New exhaust gasket

Fitted, but still no luck. Now she didn't want to start at all. More scratching of heads and we tried the starting handle, hard, easy, easy, hard. Something was horribly amiss with my pistons! What to do now?

I explained my problem to Eddie Loader (my long time A7 guru, from whom I bought the car 37 years ago) who remotely diagnosed a blown head gasket, and said 'I'm coming up your way to your house for afternoon tea'. He and Ann were more than welcome, especially as he also bought a compression tester! On testing the engine he found number 2 and 3 pistons were zero compression, while 1 and 4 were in the 90s! I had literally been driving the car with just two pistons firing - no wonder she was complaining!

Not being entirely sure I was up to the job, it was time to yet again call my friendly local mechanic Tim. Whipping the head off, we discovered horror lurking underneath, the gasket had destroyed itself between the 2nd and 3rd pistons and had literally welded itself to the cylinder head.



Damaged Gasket

'This needs skimming' said Tim. So down to Hereford I went, dropping the head off at Eddie's, who very kindly arranged for Gerwyn's garage to get the head skimmed while Janet and I were on holiday in Bristol. Picking it up on our way back to Shrewsbury, Tim made another visit.

The block was cleaned, the pistons were scraped clean of carbon (except for the edges which need their carbon), then a smear of goo and the head was back in place. Hooray! Trouble was just lurking however, as on torquing up two head studs sheared off in the block.



Two studs sheared off in block, at cylinder head level

The head was whipped off (again) and drilling commenced to remove the broken studs, both of which had also welded themselves to the block - would anything go right?

Meanwhile, I had ordered 14 more cylinder head nuts from David at Austin Seven Services pleading for them to be delivered the next morning as my nuts were by now quite worn. As luck would have it, they were delivered, but to the wrong address so on replacing the head the old nuts were used. Ho-hum, such is life - would anything go right?

Sending away for a special drill took another day and several hours of hard work, but eventually, and with more goo, the head was firmly back in place (with the old nuts), the spark plugs were cleaned, the leads were back in place.



Goo goes on the gasket, the merest smear

Would she start? No. It didn't matter what we did, there was no way the old girl even wanted to cough. Taking each lead in turn, a duff spark plug was diagnosed. Now would she start? No. The engine laboured and refused to even give us a glimmer of hope. 'Has to be the carburettor' said Tim. So I unscrewed the idle jet (the original source of my trouble) and lo and behold it was blocked yet AGAIN! I'm sure now that the car was just playing with us. However, this time I was ready and blew out the crud. A few more turns on the starter and much to our relief the engine roared into life, bless her. For good measure I made sure the reserve petrol tap on my gravity tank was pushed firmly in. It wasn't all the way in, so could that have been the source of the muck that can gather in the bottom of the tank?

Since then I've made sure I only fill up with E5 and have enjoyed several trips through the centre of Shrewsbury. We are fighting fit again - still fearful of the engine dying with yet more muck in the carb, but fingers crossed she will keep on running.

Moral of the story, only use E5, keep your carb clear of crud, and above all have patience and all will be well.

My grateful thanks to Tim, Eddie, Gerwyn's garage and David Cochrane

Graham Baldock

HA7C trip to Bishops Castle October 2023, by Roly Alcock

Monday morning saw me greeting the house sitter who was going to take care of my two dogs Harry and Freya. As Harry is 14 he is enduring various foibles of old age; arthritis and dementia. He gets very confused if left anywhere not known to him. Hence the house sitter.

We set off about 10:30, and immediately I was not too confident with the engine as it was a little down on power and not feeling quite right. As a pre-service for the trip I checked the compressions and they were the same as 12 months previous. 85 lb dry and 100 lb wet. This morning it would not start using the handle and when I drove away there was a certain amount of spitting back from the carburettor. I then remembered that I get those two symptoms when the manifold gasket starts leaking. It has a history of this and is not helped by the crummy baked bean tin gaskets supplied these days. I elected to live with the problem and indeed reached the destination without problem.

I was planning on stopping in Ludlow for lunch but was somewhat put off by how busy it was, so continued through. Naturally after that, every pub we looked at for lunch was not open on Mondays. So we lunched at the Castle Hotel where we are staying and proceeded to work my way down the beers on offer at the bar.

Attendees are Stuart and Lynne Howard, myself and Sheena, Gerwyn and Pauline, Gareth and Ursula Prosser, David Southcott, Julie James.



Day 2

We decided to go to Severn Valley Railway but on consulting the train timetable we discovered there are no trains running today. Stuart then suggested the British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry.

We set off with me as lead car, although others had satnavs...

Immediately I sensed my car was not well. Quite a steep hill but not horrendous, even so I struggled in 1st gear to climb. No more than half revs were available. Thankfully once the engine had warmed up things were much improved and cruising at 40 mph was good. Even so hills which the car would have made a decent fist of it in top gear were not enthusiastically coped with.



The Triumph Stag is Stuart Howard's new purchase.

Notwithstanding any of the previous, the destination was reached without issue. We parked up as a group in an overflow car park and pictures were taken. It was a very short walk to the entrance, where we discovered that the official person behind a desk was just selling raffle tickets and directed us to the real reception desk, whereupon we were told that entry was free, and a wristband was slapped on. During our ensuing perambulations back and forth we noticed that the same raffle ticket seller was still having to explain to each new incomer that she sold raffle tickets not entry tickets. Poor lady.

Anyhow in we went and found a large emporium not much different to the sales areas of garden centres. After trundling round we went outside and started seeing the sculptures. Magnificent, some were welded constructions, others were cast metal. Most of which were far too heavy for a single person to pick up.



Stuart who was a blacksmith, and has special interest here, was disappointed that there seemed to be no signs of manufacturing facilities any longer. Despite enquiries by him, no one seemed to know where the sculptures were made any more.

On leaving, we had to turn right on to the A5. Scary! Especially as my engine was not yet hot and low on power. Pedal to the metal it took well over 1 mile to attain 35 mph. After that it was business as usual and we made our way back to the hotel. I made one wrong turn just as we got back to Bishops Castle which involved driving round 3 sides of a square. Parked up at hotel to find no loyal band of followers. Finally they appeared, they had carried on and filled up with fuel

A little later I looked out our room window to see David's car parked next to mine but with David lying on the floor groping under it. He told me it was making worrying noises from the back end when going over bumps or accelerating or slowing. We ascertained after jacking the rear end up, that the rear wheel hubs and axle appeared to be in good order. Maybe a broken spring or shock absorber. Watch this space.

Day 3 we went to Blists Hill Victorian Town.

This event is good. A bit like Beamish up north, but of a slightly earlier era. Naturally the Victorian pub had to be visited, but was a tad busy, so we bought a beer and sat outside listening to the piano and music hall songs. Less welcoming was the fully equipped dentist complete with treadle powered drill.

The day was a mix. David Southcott's box saloons (*see below*) is making mysterious heavy clunking noises when going over bumps or speeding up and slowing down. Torque tube mount is suspected so it stayed behind.



My box is performing far better today with its leaking manifold gasket, and has recovered most of its enthusiasm for ascending hills in a higher gear than the day before.

Gerwyn and Pauline's Austin 10 blew a head gasket, explosive bangs could be heard as it neared the hotel.

Then to top it all, on leaving Blists Hill I naively assumed the satnav would take us back the same way as we came. No 😊 , it decided to route us via Shrewsbury. As a result our small convoy of 4 split up and got lost. What a dreadful conurbation of roads around Telford to try and avoid with an A7.

Finally all arrived back separately at the hotel and had a welcome beer.

The next morning the breakdown vehicle arrived to pick up David's car, we thought it was the lorry come to collect a skip! As it was going directly to Gerwyn's workshop, Gerwyn tried to get the truck to take his car as well. Apparently that was unsuccessful as Pauline texted me later to say that Gerwyn drove his Austin 10 back on 3 cylinders and then finally on 2 cylinders. He was successful in getting the car to his home.

My saloon misbehaved with the charging on the way home - plenty of amps but little voltage. This morning I changed the manifold gasket for one of the Austin Seven Workshops copper ones and immediately it feels greatly improved with top gear torque going up hills, and starts willingly on the handle when cold. I cleaned the points of the cut-out and the charging appears to be performing correctly. .

VISIT TO FAIR OAK FARM CIDER PRESS , BACTON by Kip Waistell

What a perfect day for an outing. Warm, bright and no rain clouds in sight. On Saturday 7 October, we had coffee at The Old House Vowchurch, then set off for Fair Oak Farm, tucked away in the depths of the countryside at Bacton. Parked in a field off the road, then a short walk down to the old farmhouse, enjoying the fabulous views of the Black Mountains, where we received a warm welcome.

This is the only place in the country, according to the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, where cider is still made using horse power, and the mill itself dates back to 1680. It is believed it was in operation right up to the First World War, when demands on both men and horses meant that it fell into disuse. Fully restored in 2012, it is now working again, and producing a variety of ciders, and even cider brandy...not allowed to call it Calvados, but that is what it is.

Tommy, a fifteen year-old 14 hand Gypsy Cob who spends most of his time running wild in the hills above Hay-on-Wye, was being harnessed up to turn the apple crushing wheel which weighs half a ton.



The wheel turns in a circular trough about 8 feet in diameter, into which washed apples are placed. After crushing, the pulp is put into a rectangular wooden frame on a stone platform, wrapped in sacking, forming what is called a “cheese”.



The wooden frame is then removed and placed on the cheese below to start making the next cheese, until about 16 such cheeses are piled up one on another, and then pressing begins.

The juice is squeezed out of the cheeses over the course of up to a day, running down the sides of the stack onto the base and thence via stone channels into buckets, to be taken away and put into barrels for fermentation. Several varieties of apple are used, and the resulting juices, which vary in sweetness and acidity, are blended to the best effect. The juice extracted from a single pressing seems to equate to roughly the same volume as the pulp in the cheeses before pressing.

The dried/pressed pulp is then fed to the cows and pigs...it's not fermenting at this stage of course, so the cows and pigs remain steady on their feet.



In the barn, there was an opportunity to taste the several still ciders, one sparkling one and the brandy.

After our visit, we made for the Cornwall Arms in Clodock. A wonderful, old-fashioned ale house, no food, but plenty of drink choice and crisps!

Next year we will visit several working water mills in the area- don't miss it!

Gerwyn and Pauline Lloyd

Newton Court - The Fountain, Tenbury



From Special correspondent, Dave and Jenny Rusher.

It seems a good fortune was on us weatherwise, considering the awful stuff that had been thrown our way during the week, and our first thanks go to David Southcott for inspecting the route and reassuring us that wellies would not be necessary.

We were very impressed with the staff, facility and menu of Newton Court Café, and the spacious car park served our purpose well. Will definitely go back there.



With itineraries in hand, we all headed toward our trusty rides, fired up and headed out. Peter Hewitt, an experienced front man, led the way, and we were some four cars back. It wasn't long before we hit the narrow, *let's hope we don't meet anything*, lanes, and sadly only a short while afterwards, we

came across a stranded Kip and Carmen. We later heard that they had suffered from a bad case of loose nuts, with Carmen smiling as she waved us on, seemingly knowing that she would get little productive assistance from our group! Thankfully the cavalry in the form of Tim, Jeremy etc were able to help with recovery.

We were enjoying the countryside and had just taken a fork to I'm not sure where, when it happened. Coming toward us on the smallest road it could possibly find was the largest Sunday drive vehicle you ever did see. A huge artic truck. All came to a halt, and there was the inevitable and uncomfortable stand-off. Our intrepid leader stood firm for a while but there was only going to be one winner in this, and we weren't it. Fortunately it wasn't far back to the fork so after a lot of reverse zigging and zagging we released the beast and were able to journey on with a shuffled pack of cars.

We passed through some wonderful countryside and saw numerous homes we wished we could afford. It's always amazing how many people stop, wave and smile. An unusual experience for us two, well, for me at least. At this moderately sedate part of the journey we concluded that Jules, who we had been choking behind for most of the time, could have made a better choice of navigator as he/she had spent pretty much all the time obliviously gazing out of the window. Regardless, we think from now on the dog should be renamed Satnav.

Not sure what it was about forks, but on this second such fork we met a happy-go-lucky tractor driver. Don't go down that way he said to our experienced front man, intrepid leader, or Peter for

short, but having no knowledge of an alternative route he was obliged to disobey and face whatever challenges came our way. And come our way they did. I have to ask at this point why, if they increase the size of tractors by 10 fold, do they leave the farm tracks the size they were for horse and carts? Anyway, another stand off,



a kind of David and Goliath situation if you will. As if the sight of the A7 army had momentarily intimidated this green monster supporting an even bigger trailer went into reverse. Elation lasted seconds when reverse became a forward charge, and we were under attack. The reason for his confident aggression became obvious. There were two of them. Well, chaos reigned for a while, with Frank and Julie selfishly claiming the only spot of refuge trackside, whilst the rest of us revisited the reverse zig zagging for a distance which culminated in us using the farmyard as a temporary car park.

These adventures obviously resulted in a great deal of additional time on the journey, and as most are aware this can create some degree of

discomfort, and let's say inconvenience to persons of a certain age. It has to be noted that at this point a number of the not so fair sex abandoned their vehicles to inspect the irrigation systems in the barns and woods. I won't mention names, so as to shield them from embarrassment, but whilst broaching this delicate subject I would like to, if I may, digress a little, and share a sensitive poem with you and dedicate it to Brian, Peter and copilot, and Eddie.

Tale from an older man

My nookie days are over
My pilot light is out
What used to be my sex appeal
Is now my water spout
Time was when, on its own accord
From my trousers it would spring
But now I've got a full time job
To find the gosh damn thing
It used to be embarrassing
The way it would behave
For every single morning
It would stand and watch me shave.
Now as old age approaches
It sure gives me the blues
To see it hang it's little head
And watch me tie my shoes

Back to the story line!

The rest of the journey although uneventful, was really enjoyable. Views, scenery and villages with elaborate names you'd love to live in, and a final long challenging hill with which our car wasn't very happy, with but it made it, to finish at the wonderful Fountain Pub. The lunch was excellent, and the company was as good. We were sat close to Jeremy so it had to be, didn't it!

Jenny and I would like to offer David our second thank you for the efforts that must have gone into this successful, great start to finish day.

Pesky tractors!

Letters to the Editor:

Chris Garner, an Ulster enthusiast writes: Reading the latest edition of *Crankhandle* I noticed a comment from Eddie Loader that the Citroën Cloverleaf engine may have influenced the design of the Austin Seven engine.

Not so. The Citroën Cloverleaf name, (*Trefle* in French), was only applied to one particular 3 seater model – which was announced in May 1922, by which time the Seven had long been designed, and the three prototypes had been built. The official name for this Citroen was the 5 hp Type C.

Although questionable, it would be more likely that some of Peugeot's products may have had an influence. The jury is out of this, but I am hoping that the research I'm doing may shed some further light.

Although I'm sure Austin had good working relations with all the major British and Continental vehicle manufacturers, it is highly unlikely he would have access to Citroën's new designs.

The Type C was a good car and sold well across the World, although Citroën lost money on every one. However, it was somewhat primitive, and cannot be compared with the Seven. In any case production only lasted four years, it being withdrawn in 1926, so demonstrating it quickly outlived its usefulness.

Mystery Object It is a split wooden pulley fitted to the very early Austin 7 drive shaft to the rear wheels. This in turn drives the speedo via a flat belt. This type of drive to the speedo was only used for the first 9 months or so of production. **Correction to last Sept 23 MYSTERY OBJECT:** It was indeed the cover of the Crankcase blanking plug which has to be removed to assess the lubricating pump retaining nut, but of course the camshaft drive to the oil pump is a worm gear, not a bevel gear

Crankhandle contributions Welcomed

Please send your letters, comments, articles and photos to editor@ha7c.o.uk or ring 01531 640406 or by post to Frank Sibly, Riddings Farm, Coddington, Ledbury HR8 1JP.

Next Crankhandle will be distributed 18th January

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Battery Charger

My Chummy has a 6V 80aH battery. I have become a bit nervous of battery charging since I found a charging battery producing clouds of gas. It is probably safest to have a 'smart' charger that will turn itself off, or at least go into float mode, once the battery is fully charged.

Then there is the question of which size to have, some saying that the charging current should be 15% of the ampHour capacity, and some saying that if the charging current is too low, then that is also harmful, and can also lead to the battery heating up.

Eventually I settled on a Ring RSC804, 4 amp charger, suitable for batteries up to 90aH, and can be run at 6V. Cost £24

For Sale



1936 Austin Ruby for sale. Needs work 😊! Has been in the same family near Monmouth for most of its life. £2000. Contact via Annie Peake anne@annegriggsdesigns.co.uk 01531 636315

1931 Austin Seven

small door tourer, in excellent fully restored condition with lovely hood, three speed gearbox, (frames for side-screens), 'Bowden cables' to front brakes and upholstery like new.

New battery (and charger).

Large history file and DVD of re-build. Over £15,000 spent.

The car is in Hay-on-Wye and ready to go.

Asking £12,000.

Jo Bentley - 07815 535994



MODEL for sale Austin 7 Chummy - Retro Tin Model: Nitsche Germany 25x12x13 cm

I cannot remember whether it came with a box or not. £40.

Roly Alcock roly@moth.co.uk 07730557952



WANTED



International Assistance Required

This lovely 1927 Doctors Coupe is on the Gold Coast of Australia, and needs a good generator to suit a magneto motor. There are none in the Australian club spares (they only have the 1929-30 type), and Tim is looking for one in the UK. The photo is of Tim (who was allowed to drive that day!) and the owner Peter Goldsworthy (navigator) and his car, taken 21 years ago on a rally in Tasmania.

Tim Braby, 43 Arcola Street, Aspley Q4034 Australia email timbraby108@gmail.com mob. 0405 740 418

WHEELS WANTED

Two 19" Austin Seven wheels to suit 350x19 trials tyres. I'm planning to give trials a go and would like two spare wheels for trials tyres. I'll consider any condition, although would much prefer usable wheels, cosmetic condition unimportant. If not for sale, maybe someone would be willing to loan me two spare wheels? If you have anything suitable, please contact me at adam@oliverfamilyonline.co.uk mobile 07901 009 087

Available Club Regalia

Windscreen Stickers £ 2.00

Sew on Embroidered badge £5.00 (Previously £10)



Badges available at most monthly meetings. There are limited stocks.

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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/>

Please note that the views expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Editor or the Hereford Austin Seven Club. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of 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.

Peking to Paris 2011, by Kip Waistell

CHAPTER FIVE

UKRAINE

Thursday 23rd June

Thank God, the last of Russian roads. One long stretch of bad road was where a dual carriageway was being constructed, and the new road looked a real bodge up. Machines were aimlessly moving to and fro, lots of men standing about doing nothing.

As we approached the border, we saw lots of roadside stalls, each with two people sitting at a table, and one would wave a piece of paper at passing cars. I thought they were selling road maps! It took a while for me to realise that they were selling insurance for Ukraine, and as we had none, we stopped. We filled in all the necessary paperwork, then the lady asked us for fifty-five pounds in roubles, being the total for the two cars. We departed, insurance in hand, and joined the queue at the Russian border post.



Carmen arrest

We were there an hour and a half, during which a car pulled up, and out came the lady who had sold us the insurance, saying that she could not do it after all- we never understood why, but it may have been because she could only sell to Russians - and that we should obtain it after the border. She returned our money. A good thing for us, for after a mere ten minutes at the Ukrainian border point, we were able to get insurance for half the price, then within a mile of the border post we were stopped by the police who have a reputation in Ukraine for demanding "fines" unreasonably, due to poor pay! Not so this time- they admitted they just wanted to look at the cars and called up a colleague who was an old car fanatic.

Kotka had started prop shaft problems again, the shaft being loose but not as bad as it had been in mid-Siberia. We'd have to find a garage, as going downhill, or on the rough, was difficult, the shaft banging about under such conditions. I had partially solved Myrtle's oil leak by removing the exhaust and carb, taking off the valve cover and renewing the gasket, but it was not long before the leak began to show yet again. Carmen was nearly shunted from behind as a chap came storming along to overtake, not noticing someone else pausing whilst overtaking to snap away with his camera.

We were due to meet a Dr Natalya Tettrueva in Kiev, plus maybe the local Smile Train rep, Konstantin Efimov- but had had no reply from either after e-mailing them from Novosibirsk, so I began to wonder what was happening. I e-mailed them again, via Danica, asking for them to maybe recommend a reasonable hotel where perhaps we could have a press conference and get some publicity for Smile Train- also did they know a good garage!

Not far today, just 173 miles, total 5,254

Friday 24th June

First thing, I tried to clean Myrtle's brakes, which were really bad. I took off the rear wheels to find the rear right brake was oily, so cleaned that as best I could, but clearly the seal had failed.

We stopped to try and buy a new end for my grease gun, the nozzle having disintegrated, and the shopkeeper took us to a garage where we ended up having both cars fully greased, and Kotka's prop shaft problem resolved- no fee charged. I never quite understood what they did to the prop shaft- quite a lot of hammering went on, and grunting, and that seemed to fix it. To get Kotka over the pit was a bit of a struggle as her wheelbase is so narrow.

We had aimed to get to Kiev, but by lunch at 12.30 we had only done 80 miles, and Kiev was about 300 more. Set off again after lunch only to achieve just 70 miles or so by 4pm, as the road was awful- we had hoped Russia would be the end of really rotten roads. Unlike Russia, there were no good bits to give us any relief. Not so much holes and cracks- of which there were certainly a few- but lots of deep troughs and furrows, which Kotka's "spring" problem did not like, judging by the grating noise.

At one café stop we passed, there were lots of stalls selling this and that, plus a long legged blond beauty sitting outside a little kiosk with flowery curtains- surely a prostitute?! We stopped a short while afterwards for a cuppa, and as we slowed down, we were escorted for a quarter of a mile by a stork which kept about ten feet above Kotka as we went along. A magnificent sight, which could have turned messy if it had decided to relieve itself.

A nasty accident had happened shortly before we passed another spot- police cars were arriving, two lorries were involved, one with a trailer, and a car down a bank. No sign of any bodies though. Then into rain coupled with a bit of decent road- as usual. At our petrol stop, a priest and his female "assistant" were also filling up. He wore a long black cassock, and had a big bushy black beard. He wanted his photo taking next to Myrtle, and ended up taking the driving seat.



We stopped again to look at a stall selling stuffed animals and birds- wild boar, squirrels, badgers, hedgehogs, owls, cranes,- and straw items such as hats.

I was forced on to the verge again by an inconsiderate lorry driver overtaking when he should not have been, but balanced by cheering, clapping, waving and photograph-taking by bystanders in the towns and villages through which we passed.

My bottom was getting very sore, because there being little room for my legs, they were scrunched up under the edge of the dashboard, so my thighs did not rest on the seat at all, and my weight was on the two bottom bones. Even constant jiggling from cheek to cheek made little difference. Myrtle felt like a Rolls by comparison! Lucky Carmen.

215 miles done, total 5,469, and not far to go to Kiev, where we intended to have a three day rest at a hotel I had twice stayed at before

Saturday 25th June

Only three hours on the road today before we made Kiev, where we had to pay a taxi five pounds to lead us to our hotel! Just after we had made ourselves comfortable in the hotel, it started to rain and it pretty well never stopped till late on the last evening we were there. A real disappointment as Kiev is a lovely city with a lot to see, but in the cold wind and wet, it is obviously not as much fun.

We went to the Opera House to book tickets for the Sunday showing of a Rachmaninov one-act opera, plus Ravel's ballet Bolero- it never ceases to amaze me how in Kiev the companies can put on different shows every night, and still produce a magnificent standard of performance. Had we stayed another night, we could have seen Madame Butterfly.

90 miles, total 5,559

Sunday 26th June.

Today I took Carmen to visit the Lavra, a huge monastic complex on the edge of Kiev. It covers 50 acres, and has several churches, all overlooking the huge river.

In mild drizzle we walked all the way there, and as we arrived, a huge bell began to toll, sounding rather funereal. We went through the entrance archway into the complex, where we could see an imposing bell tower to our right, but the bell which was tolling was not in the tower, but was mounted under a canopy at its foot. The bell was about eight to ten feet high, and mounted on a huge oak beam in a frame so that the bottom rim was about six feet from the ground. A man was standing to one side of the bell, pulling a rope attached to an

enormous clapper, and as he rang the bell, people coming to the service in the adjacent church would stop by the bell, and put their hands to its rim before crossing themselves and sometimes then touching the soil. The noise was incredible, and surely harmful to the ringer's ears!

We carried on towards St Nicholas church from which we could hear the sound of orthodox chant. It was pretty full- no seats in Russian churches, you just stand and people come and go as they please. All women wore head covering, everyone regularly crossed themselves and bowed. In the centre were eight tall, bearded priests, wearing gorgeous golden robes and huge golden headpieces, and as far as we could tell, they were ordaining a priest. The atmosphere was absolutely electric, and the chanting of the priests, backed by a "choir" of four or five male singers at one side, marvellous.



Ближние пещеры. Рака прп. Ильи из града Муром

After half an hour, we left the service and descended down the hill to a small church in which is the entrance to a cave complex containing mummified monks, each in elaborate robes with an embroidered cloth over the face. These monks all died a hundred to two hundred years ago, and are placed in glass topped coffins in niches in passageways about four feet wide. The only lighting is either candles in small chapels

leading off the passageways, or the small candle you yourself carry which you have bought at the entrance in the church above, prior to a descent of some thirty feet underground. The faithful stop by each coffin and kiss the glass lid, before wiping it with a cloth and going on to the next. Each body and coffin seemed to me to be suspiciously regular in size- about five feet six inches. The bodies/mummies are not visible, save for one mummy which had a brown scraggy hand sticking out from under its robes.

Then to a museum of miniature works created by a Russian artist in the 1960's- portraits on poppy seeds, a book the size of a pin head, a flea with golden slippers, a ship a couple of millimetres long fully rigged. All these, of course, you had to look at through a microscope. The museum can get very crowded, but we were very, very lucky- a sign on the door said that

it was closed in wet weather, and wet it was, but we had seen someone coming out a while before, so I knocked on the door, and the lady said "sorry, it is wet we are closed"- in Russian, but we got the drift. I said we had paid an entry fee and had a ticket, which I showed her, and she fussed about rather and then waved us in for our own private view, during which I think she rang the ticket office and told them to sell no more tickets. Why wet weather should be a problem we could not understand, unless it was something to do with messing up the floor!



We then went to Babi Yar- but this time I wanted to find the real one, not the one I had visited some years previously, which was described in the guide book as being incorrectly marked. However, the guide book was not clear where the real ravine was, so we walked backwards and forwards in the area I had been to all those years before..... everywhere but to the

ravine where the Germans massacred the Kiev Jewish population of some 30,000 in 48 hours.

We ended up near a Military Cemetery, full of graves with life size representations of the deceased perched on top, or an engraving of the deceased's top half with chest of medals, on the gravestone. After getting directions, we did eventually find the ravine, which was quite long- quarter of a mile or so, and perhaps a hundred feet deep. A spooky place, and so difficult to imagine what went on there with women and children being slaughtered.

Babi Yar Valley at Kiev

Back at the hotel we found a note from Dr Tetrueva, explaining that she had been on holiday, and now wanted to make contact. Rang and arranged to meet her 3pm next day.

We then went to the Opera House to see the Rachmaninov opera and Ravel's Bolero. The first good, the second completely stunning.

Back to the hotel after an excellent meal very reasonably priced, hoping that the next day would bring some sunshine



Monday 27th June

It didn't! It was pouring, so we rang Dr Tetrueva and suggested we met that morning rather than in the afternoon. She arrived with a surgeon called Genardi, and we ended up going to both his clinic, modern and dealing with just Kiev children, and to hers- in a building over a hundred years old dealing with children from all over the country. One hundred cleft operations had been done in the past year. Both impressive though, and again we met patients and parents. A surgeon at one of the clinics also dealt in child micro-surgery, and showed us before and after photos of severed and mangled limbs, then the reconstruction and/or reattachment process. Quite marvellous what they could do. We were given to understand

Smile Train Clinic Kiev, lip was totally restored after our visit that Smile Train's financial help was more in the supplying of equipment, than in paying for operations, as in Ukraine any child under eighteen received free treatment anyway.



Kiev Hospital- surgeons

Throughout our visits, the rain poured down, and afterwards we were dropped back at the hotel, and still it was pouring. We had a late lunch, then at about 3pm the rain stopped, so we thought we would try to get to the architectural museum, an open air museum fifteen miles out of the city where they had reconstructed several villages in the various styles found throughout the country. I had visited it before and had thought it excellent. It took a while to get there by taxi, as our route was several times blocked by flooding (we saw one abandoned car with water over the bonnet), and as we arrived it again began to rain and the wind was blowing. However, the ticket office was open, so we bought our two tickets at just a couple of pounds each- only to find that all the buildings on the site were closed! Pretty cross, we made our way back to the ticket office where a refund was refused in no uncertain terms. I staged a sit-in against their dishonesty, having to be forcibly removed by two security guards, the ticket lady and her fat daughter. I felt I had to make a point though. We certainly would not be forgotten, and these were the only really unpleasant people we met on our whole trip!

Tuesday 28th June

Had the weather forecast been good, I might have been tempted to stay on an other night or two, particularly as we could have then gone to see Madam Butterfly. However, the weather forecast was awful for several days with storms predicted, so we thought we could do no better than get out and fly west as quickly as possible.

We had previously reconnoitred our route out, and today was a public holiday anyway, so having left at 7.45 we made our way out of Kiev easily and without fuss or stress. What a change!

After an easy exit along a good straight road, we then got into the usual bumps for a while before getting on to an excellent road and being able to fly along. For once I could really look at the countryside rather than worrying about potholes.

No fences or hedges, just beautiful countryside with cows ambling along the roadside, horse and carts, storks (often with nests built on top of electricity poles- how come they do not get electrocuted?), fields of corn mixed with grassland and woodland. Later in the day we saw a lot of individuals taking their cow back home to be milked, so having a family cow must be quite common.

At one stage we were diverted onto the other side of a dual carriageway as repairs were being carried out on "our" side for a few miles. However, the oncoming traffic seemed to think we should not be there, with several lorries playing silly devils, coming straight at us and forcing us off the road. A sign at these roadworks announced, in English, "road works in progress-we apologise for the inconvenience"! Lots more waving and cheering from bystanders. Very friendly people, the Ukrainians, bar the odd lorry driver and ticket seller!

In spite of what we had heard and read about Ukrainian police, those we passed did not bother to stop us, till late afternoon when a chap in a patrol car flagged us down just as we were trying to outrun a storm that had been hovering around us for a while. He wanted to see and inspect everything, and I thought, stress only thought, he said something about us giving him a "present" - but maybe I misheard as he did not repeat this, took a few photos and saw us off just as the storm broke, he into his closed car, we into Myrtle and Kotka with no hoods up. However, as the road was good, we could get along at nearly forty mph and have most of the rain go over us.

Just as we escaped the rain, we found a gostanitsa, so called it a day after 312 miles, and being just 20 miles from Lviv, which we hoped to visit the next day in order to see the World Heritage listed centre. Total to date is 5,871, averaging nearly 37 mpg, and roughly eleven hours on the road per day.

Wednesday 29th June

Ready for the off at 6.45 only to discover that we were locked in! Three men were driving three cows to the fields, so we called out of the window, mimed that we were locked in, and they came and banged on the front door to wake up our host, Nestor...who let us out, saying he did not normally open till 7am.

Checked the oil, and Nestor offered us a cup of tea, so ended up leaving rather later than expected. Lots more storks, horses and carts, and more bumpy road, so by the time we arrived on the outskirts of Lviv we were a bit shaken and stirred. Trying to find the centre we were met with lots of tramlines and large cobbles, so we stopped and asked how far it was to the centre. Three kilometres! We decided we just had to give it a miss, so then tried to find the road out to the border, and got lost! We stopped to ask a chap we thought was a policeman sitting in his car, but policeman he was not- nevertheless, he said he would show us the way if we could wait a few minutes. We set off, and then he left us, waving us on our

way. The border never seemed to arrive, and we went on and on, eventually getting to the border but the wrong crossing point, some fifty miles north of where we wanted to be.

The road to the border was pretty bad, and when we arrived there was a long, long queue, but we were beckoned to the front by all the locals. No problem getting out of Ukraine, but a nasty minded Polish border guard kept us waiting for ever, inspected all our paperwork and generally made life difficult. A Ukrainian-born lady we met at the border offered to show us the right way to the road we wanted. She was on her way back to the Netherlands where she lived with her German husband, so she and Carmen could chat away in a common language. She also took us to a money exchange office she knew, where we could get a better rate.

We found a decent hotel, and discovered we had gained yet another hour. Did an axle check, tightened bolts and nuts, checked oils, etc. Discovered that Myrtle's prop shaft was now a bit sloppy, and banging about a bit. Probably would have to wait till we got to Germany?

As soon as we entered Poland, it was obvious we were in a more prosperous country. Not only were the roads excellent, but it was an end to all the dust and concrete lumps in towns, tidy houses, more flowers in gardens- and an end to the constant tooting. Two Brits were at a petrol station filling up in front of us, and they said not a word!

218 miles, broken into another thousand at 6,089