

Minutes of the AGM of the Thames Valley Centre of the Austin Healey Club

Held at The King's Head, Little Marlow

2000 hours Monday 14th November 2016

1. PRESENT

Brian White (Chairman)

Richard Kidson (Vice-Chairman)

Rob Fenton (Events Notification and Webmaster)

Ian Foster (Director and Treasurer)

Nick Crocker (Secretary)

David Gray (Committee Member)

Barry Marsh (Committee Member)

Peter Freeman (Committee Member)

Stephen Huntington (Committee Member)

John Keener (AHC National Chairman)

Robert Slack (Committee Member)

Juliet Slack

Chris Tauchert

Kathie Blencowe

Ruth Huntington

Mary Freeman

Stuart Freebody

Christine Crocker

Paul Gerhold

Monica Gerhold

Anita Foster

Jon Leo

Tony Heyworth

Neal Roberts

Nicki Roberts

Nazwal Saighal

David Blair

Jan Blair

Richard Pearce

Peter Hickman

Joan Hickman

Stephen Rein

Jean Rein

2. APOLOGIES

None

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous AGM held on Tuesday 17 November 2015 were signed by Brian White in his capacity of Chairman as a true record.

4. OFFICERS' REPORTS

Reports from all officers had been circulated to all those who had signified their intention to attend the AGM, so each officer summarised their report at the meeting, the full reports being shown below, together with any additional comments from the officer or the members.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I feel that this year has been fun and very enjoyable for our active members of The Austin Healey Thames Valley Centre. Our participation levels attending our TV Events might have increased a small amount and again it depends on what is covered in such Events. I would highlight four Events that, for me, were most enjoyable and informative. The weather was (on the whole) very pleasant for this year's Events and the new ones I enjoyed were: The Watercress Line in May - very good turn out and a calm day from breakfast through to the last puff of steam. Our International Tour of France was even better supported this year and the fun, wine and touring was another success. Ian's substitution of the A40 for America's Route 66 was well run, pleasant and even the sun shone mightily on Wales. Finally our visit to Nuffield House, the family home of Lord Nuffield, who was such a generous benefactor to many causes, and the visit to The Morris Museum was informative and pleasantly paced.

Our format of Events, which incorporate an overnight stay, appears still to be popular – probably since most of us are of a mature age! Richard Kidson's handling of our monthly N & N at The Spade Oak pub is again to be applauded, whilst Rob's ongoing efforts to improve and update our TV website and its technical content is just great. Our stock of tools has also been enhanced by an appreciated gift from Nick.

I am only continuing to be Chairman since we/ you have a very great Committee – their efforts of total support to our Centre and the Club allow us to function. I thank them whole heartily for their involvement and support to me.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

(1) CHAIRMAN

After many years (I think it was just after he left school) John Keener has sadly decided to stand down as Chairman of the Austin Healey Club and election of the new Chairman will be announced at the AGM on the 4th December at the Stratford Manor Hotel. All members are invited to attend.

The Articles of Association will be changed so that in future the Chairman may only serve for a period of 5 consecutive years in any one term.

(2) Members Survey

Jim Palmer the clubs web master recently carried out an online questionnaire/survey based on the for and against of being a club member. The completed survey will be issued in full in the coming months in the Revcounter. Points of particular interest for the Thames Valley committee are :

- 40% of members prefer one day drives.
- 90% wanted to support the club.
- 75% like Technical Articles.

(3) Revcounter

You will be aware that Ron Fitton, who was the managing editor of Revcounter for 25 years, sadly recently died. Ron's passing coincided with the decision to publish articles from the Norman Nock Tech Talk book, which was acquired by our very own Santa Claus, Rob Fenton.

The technical articles will continue to be published (which should satisfy 75% of our members mentioned in (2) above). For the time being John Keener and Jim Palmer are doing a grand job preparing and overseeing the printing of the Revcounter.

(4) NEC

The NEC committee members have decided not to increase the club subscription for the foreseeable future and investigate other ways of raising funds to support National events and the centres.

The committee is also in the process of finalising a 5 year action plan to ensure the continuation of the Austin Healy marque.

(5) AH National Events

The National event held in the Black Forest was a success with 98 cars attending from many parts of Europe.

Next year's National Event will be held at Woodland Grange, Royal Leamington Spa with the booking forms already published. Thames Valley is the principal organiser of the event and it is hoped that many members from Thames Valley will be in attendance.

It was also noted that total membership was a record 1840.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

(1) INCOME

The Annual Membership Levy has shown a further year on year increase from £1020 to £1046, with the individual levy per member remaining at £6.50.

(2) Events

This year's drop in income reflects the move towards members paying their own hotel accommodation directly

The Income & Expenditure Report and the Balance Sheet had been distributed to those who had said they would attend and is available for inspection to any member who wishes it.

8. MEMBERSHIP LIAISON OFFICER'S REPORT

The Centre currently has 160 members (156 last year) of which approximately 35 have been attending our Events and Noggin 'n' Natters thorough out the year. If you include wives/partners this again gives a total of about 70 individuals being involved in our Club activities. This is similar to last year.

19 new members have joined since January 2016. 2 more than at this time last year. Taking into account those who have left or moved on to higher places the total membership is about the same as at this time last year.

Our Berkshire/ Buckinghamshire Noggin 'n' Natter continues to be held at The Spade Oak in Bourne End and is still being well attended with up to 18 coming along some of the months, many with their Healeys. The gatherings continue to be very popular.

Let's hope that the forthcoming year will continue to be as rewarding.

9. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Attendance at events which were organised during the year was very encouraging (bar one with only 2 cars!) even when compared to the previous year's responses.

April: Drive it Day

The opening event of the year took place on April 24. Around a dozen cars met at the Compleat Angler at Marlowe for a light breakfast followed by a (non-competitive!) ruin to the Lambert Arms at Aston Rowant for an excellent lunch.

May: The Watercress Line

On May 8, a group of 14 cars the Brickmakers Arms at Windlesham for breakfast, and then took part in the meander to Alresford. The attendees travelled on the steam train to the engineering shops at Ropley and were shown around by David Snow who is also a Healey owner and a member of New Forest. After a further ride on the steam drawn train lunch was taken at the nearby White Swan public house.

June: France

In early June 6 cars spent 5 days exploring the country routes south from Normandy countryside to the Loire valley via some delightful small hotels and excellent eateries. One of the highlights, as in the previous year, was the night spent in the Hotel de France at Sully sur-Loir, the base for the Aston Martiin Le Mans teams of the 50's.

June: A40 Run

In late June an intrepid group of 18 members in 9 cars took the road to Brecon and Hay-on-Wye. Scenic routes and massive sunshine in Wales made for a most pleasant tour

July: A circus in the Cotswolds

Unfortunately only 2 members were available to stay at the Fox in Great Barrington near Burford and attend a performance by Gifford's Circus, an old-fashioned country circus, which was skilful and delightful.

August: Polo at Ham

The day started with an ample breakfast at the Classic Chrome Showroom at Mortlake Station in Sheen Lane, thanks to the generous hospitality of Gary Shortt and Keith Grimshaw, the owners of this excellent business.

The weather was beautiful, the sport excellent...some important matches, including the Ritz Club Trophy and finals of the Dubai Cup. As in previous years, the gracious hospitality of Ham Polo Club and its executives, was very warm, the buffet very generous and tasty, and we were given the best tables, overlooking the action with great views. Safe and secure parking was provided, away from any stray shots, and the cars lined up, made the usual very impressive sight (even though three Aston's and a Peugeot stole a few places!)

It was a great pleasure to entertain some new members of Thames Valley on their first sortie with us....let's hope they become regulars!

The parade lap was most professionally described by our, 'now regular' commentator, Rob Fenton, who managed not only to describe, in great detail, each of the eight Healeys, 'strutting their stuff' on the circuit....but also managed to control the speed and actions, mainly waving, from the cockpits!.

August: Nuffield Place

One of our Committee members, Stephen Huntington, is a volunteer at The National Trust's Nuffield House, the former home of Lord Nuffield. A fascinating private tour had been arranged for the 18 attendees, who then made their way to the Oxford Bus Museum, where a good collection of Nuffield cars and memorabilia is housed.

September: Windsor Concours

Although not an event organised by Thames Valley, it is worth recording that a number of Austin-Healeys (at least 9) took part September:

Kop Hill

The Thames Valley Centre organised a club stand in the display area of the Kop Hill Climb event in mid-September. The weekend attracted a wide variety of classic cars and bikes, allowing close interaction with entrants and exhibitors. Whilst it is a largely static event, it has far more activity and interaction than at a normal car show - cars being on show whilst drivers and navigators participate in, and enjoy, other activities.

We had six cars on each of Saturday and Sunday, with 3 club members and 3 non (but potential) members on each day

October: Castle Combe

9 cars and a total of 17 members attended the weekend, staying at The Old Bell at Malmesbury, one of the oldest in England, which exceeded all expectations. The rooms were excellent, the food and service faultless. A private dining room was provided each evening, 14 dining on the Friday and 11 on the Saturday.

The drive to the circuit was perfect, it had rained heavily during the night, but the weather improved steadily during the day. This providing an added bonus of some very 'on the edge driving on the track'...the sight of a trio of Healeys sliding sideways, close together, around the final bend was enough to stir many memories of yester-year!

November: Technical Day

At Four Marks, in Bill's new garage facilities, which are large, well stocked and impressive. Some 20 Thames Valley and New Forest members attended and Bill and his staff put on an knowledgeable and instructional session

November: Karting

On 12th November an indoor endurance Karting event was run at Premier Karting in Woodley nr Reading,. This 2.5hr event saw see 11 teams of 4 competing in a figure-of-eight track. The teams came from across the Centres and also includes a team from Rawles Motorsport and Orchard and 2 from Thames Valley - it's a very competitive event!

10. WEBMASTER'S REPORT

We're now in the 2nd year of our new web-site and I hope our members enjoy the new format and the way we have tried to give a better interface for information. From the number of hits we get every day, from all over the World it appears that the transition has been a success. At the time of writing we've had 9,601 visitors over the two years and at a rate of 450 visitors a month it looks like we'll hit the magical 10,000 by Christmas

Apart from advertising our great events, we now have a technical page which is second to none. There are many videos cloned from YouTube which give a wealth of information, together with some "personal" hints and tips. If any member wants to contribute their own experiences, please feel free to send them to me for inclusion. More recently, we've created a Facebook Group Page for members only. You can access that from our web-page or contact me for assistance. The page is designed for users to exchange technical information, ask for help or merely to let the members know what you're up to. Please contribute when you can - we'd like this to be an active forum.

At this time of the year, we promote Christmas Cards. These cards help pay for subsidies we apply to some events and also to pay for web hosting. The cards are very good value and high quality so please order them either by filling in the email form we've sent out or you can now get a form from the web-site. It is hoped that there would be the facility next year of selling the cards on line, which would open up the market internationally.

11. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Of the current committee members, Stephen Huntington and Nick Crocker have resigned and the Chairman and the TV Committee thanked them both very sincerely for their dedication and productive participation in our Centre. Their presence, humour, wisdom and contributions will be much missed. The following standing committee members have indicated that they offer themselves for re-election for the coming year of the Thames Valley Centre of the Austin Healey Club:

Chairman	Brian White
Director	Ian Foster
Treasurer	Ian Foster
Webmaster	Rob Fenton
Committee members	David Gray
	Richard Kidson
	Barry Marsh
	Peter Freeman
	Robert Slack

The above were duly elected, proposed by Stuart Freebody and seconded by Anita Foster.

Neal Roberts and Jon Leo offered themselves for election, They were duly elected, proposed by Peter Hickman and seconded by Stephen Huntington.

12. FUTURE EVENTS – PRELIMINARY PLANNING

1. Drive-it Day: 23April

A meander for 40-50 miles finishing at Clivedon. a tour of the house and surrounds will be organised.

2. Visit to the Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford - upon - Avon

Sometime in May. Meet at the Complete Angler in Marlow for coffee and snacks then a meander to Stratford with accommodation at the Arden Arms Hotel. An evening meal and then go to the theatre to see either Julius Caesar or Antony and Cleopatra. The next day go to Gaydon. After lunch drive home.

3. Visit Highclere

Details to follow if we can get a viewing. If not in 2017 this event will roll forward to 2018. Due to the extreme popularity of the site it is likely that we may only get very short notice of availability. David Gray looking at this. It was noted at Stuart Freebody has a contact at Highclere who could be useful.(not sure who is developing this). Lunch to be arranged.

4. Visit to Northern Spain 7-16 June using a Brittany Ferries offer. Bob Slack investigating and he noted that, to get the “offer” price of £1051/head for the ferry and half board in (hopefully old) paradors, booking would be needed before end November. Bob will negotiate and noted that we would look to have a party of 8 vehicles. Peter Hickman has a number of routes in N Spain he could offer.

5. Barry Marsh noted that a visit to the Champagne area may be a possibility.

6. National Healey Weekend 07/08/09 July.

A weekend at Woodhall Grange near Leamington Spa, the event organisation being led by Thames Valley (Ian Foster) who is asking for volunteers to assist in various aspects of the event. Peter Hickman had devised a route which needs checking, but as he is not able to drive at the moment, asks for a volunteer to chauffeur him on a validation run.

7. Kop Hill

16/17September. TV will support the event as we have for this year with a stand and ask for owners to advise Barry Marsh or Stephen Huntington if they will use the display stand.

8. Castle Coombe

30 September/01 October. This is a very popular weekend of racing with Healeys participating in a number of events including an all Healey race. This year we had accommodation at the Old Bell in Malmesbury which is a short drive away from the circuit.

9. Further Proposals

- Kennet & Avon Canal trip – possibly try for if Highclere has to be 2018 –
- Stonehenge and Avebury, Rob Fenton looking.

Found a good small hotel that is highly recommended on trip Advisor. They have 8 doubles and a family room. We can't book till the new year but he's going to give me the nod when the booking is available. I thought we could reserve all the rooms. In September (the date suggested at the committee meeting) they have a minimum of two days at the weekend or 1 day is possible during the week. We are thinking of 2 nights, Sat/Sun return Monday. Parking at Stonehenge may be difficult

- A repeat of the successful Technical day at Rawles Motorsport, this time possibly looking at bodywork, paint, upholstery etc. Likely towards year-end

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13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman asked members to communicate any event ideas/wishes to a Committee member.

The Chairman and the Committee thanked Nick Crocker for his generous donation of further tools to be added to the Centre's collection. Such tools can be loaned from the Centre from Rob Fenton by Healey members and Nick's donation added a torque wrench, valve compressor, stud puller and a tap & die set .
(See AH TV website www.austin-healey-club.co.uk)

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.15 hours, thanked those present and all adjourned for drinks and buffet.