

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

Held at the Kings Head, Little Marlow

2000hrs Tuesday 17 November 2015

1 PRESENT

Brian White (Chairman)
Richard Kidson (Member Liaison Officer)
Ian Foster (Director and Treasurer)
Rob Fenton (Events Notification and Webmaster)
David Gray (Committee member)
Barry Marsh (Committee member)
Peter Freeman (Committee member)
Stephen Huntington (Committee member and Minutes)
Robert Slack (Committee member)
John Keener (AHC National Chairman)
Stuart Freebody
Tony Heyworth
Neal & Nicky Roberts
Paul & Monica Gerhold
Juliet Constantine
Ruth Huntington
Mary Freeman
Chris Tauchert
Kathie Blencowe
Anita Foster

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

David Blair
Paul Burton
Ian Cochrane
Nick & Christine Crocker
Richard Deeprise
Paul Filby
Peter & Pam Garner
David Garratt
Peter & Joan Hickman
Graeme & Sue Hulme
Peter Mann
Richard Moores
Jim Morris
Tony Swinnerton

Nick Crocker (Secretary) was unable to attend due to impending knee replacement. The meeting sent good wishes for a successful operation and speedy recovery.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Approval of the minutes of the previous AGM held on Tuesday 18 November 2014 was proposed by Chris Tauchert and seconded by David Gray. Brian White signed them as a true record in his capacity of Chairman.

4 OFFICERS' REPORTS

Reports from all officers had been circulated to all those present, so each officer summarised their report at the meeting and the full reports are included below.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Thames Valley A H Centre went international this year! A small group of members and their cars took a Tour to France around the Loire Region. It was very enjoyable and was well received. The Wine Region was explored and such investigations will be repeated again this year. We also continued with our format in that we had three Events where we had overnight stays. Such overnight stays allows a more relaxed time for both cars and chats and time to enjoy the short break.

This year we noted a steady participation of regulars at the Events and it would be very good to see new attendees this year, so our efforts are rewarded. Richard's turn-outs at the monthly Noggin and Natters must be applauded and continues well, whilst the venue has had to be adjusted and we hope now for stability at our latest pub 'The Spade Oak'. Thanks also must go to Rob (Mr Web Master) for his great work in reformatting our TV website, which now looks and performs in a professional manner. Rob continues his great efforts with the Christmas cards. Two new designs this year and these sales greatly help with our TV funds. I must again give my warm thanks to the Thames Valley Committee Members for their total support, to me and your Centre. Their efforts make our Centre function.

6 DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

- NEC Webmasters report

Since last year the number of hits has increased and has settled down to 120,000 per month after the home page was reconfigured. The number of visits has also increased by 9% to 12,000 per month. The web page is now fully maintained by an officer of the club, rather than a third party as in the past.

- Membership statistics

The National membership has shown a 4% increase over 2014 with a total of 1734 registrations.

- 2015 International Weekend

The International weekend at Farncombe (in the Cotswolds) attracted 68 cars. There were 59 Big Healey's, 8 Sprites and I Jensen Healey. Three people living outside of the UK attended. The 2016 International Event which is being held in the Black Forest, Germany is programmed for 7 days in July. Currently 81 cars have booked.

The 2017 International meeting will be held in July in the UK, with negotiations currently underway for a suitable venue.

- MSA Regulations

There has been much concern and discussion between the MSA (Motor Sport Association) and the FBHVC (Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs) about the definition of Touring Assemblies and Social Runs. As the Austin Healey Club is a registered member of the MSA we are required to abide by their rules.

Mainly due to the insurance implications and the continuing ambiguity of the MSA regulations the National Executive Committee has strongly recommended that all events obtain a Certificate of Exemption for such events.

7 TREASURER'S REPORT

- Income

The Annual Membership Levy was slightly up on last year at £1020.50, with the individual levy remaining at £6.50 per member.

- Events

This year the events generated an income of £1821 with the amount covering all the associated costs. The additional expenditure of £301 shown in the accounts was in the main to cover the cost of the evening welcoming drink to the members who kindly supported the event. It is still the committee's policy to subsidise an event if it is felt that it will attract new members to join in the Centres activities.

- Xmas Cards

The annual sales of Xmas cards organised by Rob Fenton continues to be a profitable source of income with last year's sales increasing to £1436. This was a 17% increase on last year.

- Equipment

It is to be noted in the accounts that the Centre has acquired certain equipment to the value of £151, which is for renting to the centres' members for a nominal fee.

- Funds

The Centre continues to be cash rich, £8207, compared with £8045 last year, which generated the enormously healthy sum of £12.54 in bank interest.

8 MEMBERSHIP LIAISON OFFICER'S REPORT

The Centre currently has 156 members (158 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.

17 new members have joined since January 2015, 4 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 has now moved to 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 new venue has been well received and it will be interesting to see how popular the gatherings are as we enter the summer period next year.

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 encouraging. There was still a preponderance of Committee members and their partners, plus a small regular group of non-Committee. However Bicester and Kop Hill attracted a much wider attendance list. Part of the reason for this, we suspect, is the success of the new Noggin & Natter venue at Hurley and subsequently at Bourne End

April: Bicester

The opening event of the year took place on April 26th 'Drive it Day'. Our Club supported this event by making our maiden visit to Bicester Heritage and taking part in their Sunday Scramble. Over 21 Healeys and Sprites lined up providing a very impressive display. Over 76 car marques spread themselves across the 348 acre ex-WW2 Bomber Station. More than

1000 classic and vintage cars took part. Our members enjoyed touring the newly restored buildings now housing many historic motoring and aviation specialists. Workshops and showrooms opened their doors to over 2000 visitors who were free to roam the site, walk the airfield and view the classic vehicles and aircraft. There followed a short scenic drive in the Chilterns arriving in time for a very enjoyable lunch at the Lambert Arms at Aston Rowant.

May: Donington

The 3 day event at Donington was marred by bad weather - cold and wet - but the racing was excellent. The poor weather deterred most of the TV contingent and those from Midlands and elsewhere (some 20 Healeys overall) looked more like they had been rallying - the unmade roads in the centre of the circuit had quickly turned to mud! This was the third time the TV representative had attended this May Bank Holiday event and each year the attendance and grids grow.

June: France

4 members spent 4 days exploring the Normandy countryside and travelling also down to the Loire via some delightful small hotels and excellent eateries. Hotels, food and, of course, the wine was much enjoyed and the pace of touring allowed the whole trip to be gently experienced.

June: Lewis Collection

The drive to the Lewis Collection - of over 50 classic cars - was on 6th June. We met at the Brick maker's Arms at Windlesham for breakfast and briefing. A total of 11 cars (10 big Healeys plus one MGT) turned out and went on an enjoyable meander to Churt where one more member joined us and also a further 6 cars from the Southern Counties.

The 12 cars comprised the National Chairman, 6 Committee members, 3 members, and 2 New Forest members.

The Lewis collection of cars was truly outstanding and unique including the 1931 Lagonda and a MG K3 which Robert and Tanya Lewis regularly race. We had a picnic lunch in the grounds before wending our respective ways home.

July: Peak District Run

9 cars made the intrepid journey to Bakewell via the A5 (which unfortunately was overburdened with closed M1 traffic!) where we were joined by a North West member. A good dinner set us up for Day 2, a run around the reservoirs of the Derwent Valley and the high moors – sadly visibility was poor in the almost constant drizzle. In the afternoon we visited Chatsworth, luckily the weather had improved considerably so we were able to enjoy the grounds as well as the house.

On our final day a visit had been organised to a working cloth mill where we had an excellent private tour, following which the route home via the A5 was thankfully clear.

July: Henley

July 18 and 19 was the occasion of the Henley Traditional Boat Rally, which we have now attended several times. We are particularly welcome there because of the boats which Donald Healey designed and we have been able to display at least one each year. Only boats of wood are allowed on the water, so this year our boat was a land-display item. Both days were reasonably well attended with 6 or 7 cars displayed in our private area.

August: Beaulieu

After lunch at the Watership Down Inn, we followed a minor road route to Brockenhurst, where dinner, bed and breakfast were at the Balmer Lawn Hotel. This was followed on Friday 21 with a visit to Beaulieu National Motor Museum. A total of 8 cars attended, all Thames Valley, including 3 non-Committee Members.

September: Kop Hill

The weekend was warm weather and both days had a full attendance. We took a Stand Pitch for our Thames Valley cars this year in the Club area, which worked out well with 6 cars on each day. In total 10 different cars/crew enjoyed the event, three of whom were TV committee and others included new members. The paddock entries were many and varied including the Napier Railton from Brooklands.

The excellent weather, the nearby beer tent and hill climbers' car park which is always good viewing for the range of cars that attend this meeting, contributed to a very interesting and relaxing weekend.

Barry Marsh was able to add that the event had raised £76,000 which will be distributed to various charities.

October: Prescott/Castle Combe

Weekend was fine, the weather and particularly the racing at Castle Combe was great, especially the Healey race...really impressive and good competition.

Healeys were also involved in another race mixing the different Marques....not sure it works.

There was a big crash....a DB1 - value circa £20m was the meat in the sandwich between a Jag and a Healey....big damage to front and rear!

The hotel was excellent... again very welcoming...and still great value.

There were 10 of us for dinner, in the private room, which worked well.

Prescott was also an enjoyable gathering where the highlight was a fly pass by Vulcan – the sight and sound is never to be forgotten.

Very many thanks to the organisers of all the above events.

10 WEBMASTER'S REPORT

Arguably, 2015 has been an exciting one for the web-master. Why's that you ask? Well three things. First of all we have relied on the kindness of a private IT company to host our web-site, for a very large number of years, without charge. This in itself was a fantastic gesture but one that couldn't go on forever. It was all down to a Healey owner who happened to be employed by said company. With their help, we've now migrated to a bona-fide web-hosting company which provides 24/7 help for a relatively small fee and ultimately will be more secure.

Secondly, we've completely re-written the web-site with a more up-to-date look about it - I hope you all agree. And finally, after a lot of discussion, we've agreed with National that we can retain our URL www.austin-healey-club.co.uk.

As to the web-site, the committee agreed that we would allow access to the widest audience and not restrict it solely to members. We felt that having an open web-site might well attract new members but it also appears to be serving as valuable resource to overseas enthusiasts - which in my book is what we should be doing. As an example, a quarter of all hits in October were from outside the UK (as far afield as China & Fiji) and approximately 400 hits across the UK.

We've also started adding useful technical information not to be found in the usual "Haynes" manual. In addition, we have a few tools available that perhaps you wouldn't normally buy because you might only use them once or twice. So take a look, if you haven't already done so. It's also a good place to see what we've been up to during the year and to keep tabs on upcoming events. We hope to add more functionality over the coming months so if any member has a request, please let us know (we even have a 'contact us' page on the site).

Christmas Cards - We've been selling Thames Valley Christmas cards now for 5 years, and the numbers have been fairly consistent over the years with 1200-1300 cards sold each year. We make a modest profit which we plough back into the Centre to pay for such things as the web-site, tools and to subsidise some events. This year we have 10 cards to choose from, and they are really high quality cards and cheap compared to similar quality cards on the high street, so fill in that form (also available on the web-site) and get ordering whilst stocks last.

11 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

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
Membership Liaison Officer	Richard Kidson
Secretary	Nick Crocker
Web Master	Rob Fenton
Committee Members	David Gray Stephen Huntington Barry Marsh Peter Freeman Robert Slack

Acceptance en-bloc was proposed by Neil Roberts and seconded by Chris Tauchert, accepted nem con.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Initially items from AOB items from the 2014 AGM Minutes were addressed, as follows:

12.1 Website - It was confirmed that Ken Joy had been given a modest gratuity for help given in the redevelopment of the website.

12.2 Tools - It was reported that the Club had acquired a timing gun, a colourtune and a Gunson carburettor balance for use by Club members. Additionally arrangements were in place to access a kingpin reamer. Also it was reported by John Keener that some Jensen Healey tools had been acquired by the national club. These tools are managed by Rob Fenton.

12.3 Technical/valuation expertise - it was reported that both Barry Marsh and Rob Fenton were registered with the Club as available for technical support and valuation advice, supported by John Keener.

12.4 Suggestions for events - The Chairman reported that the suggestions for events made at the AGM in 2014 had all been taken into account in the programme for 2015 and developing a programme for 2016.

The Meeting was then asked to raise AOB items for this 2015 AGM

12.5 Events 2016 - A draft calendar of events was distributed.

19 MARCH – TECHNICAL DAY at Bill Rawles – Tuning – ROB

24 APRIL – DRIVE IT DAY –As per last year with Bicester Aerodrome and Tour followed by Lunch at Lambert Arms – PETER. (This may be revised.)

8 MAY –WATERCRESS LINE – Breakfast at Brickmakers Arms – Tour to Arlesford - Rail to Ropley for Engine Sheds – Rail onto Alton. - ROBERT

25 to 27 MAY – TOUR ON A40 - Thame to Hay on Wye – Hotels currently being checked – IAN

5 to 10 JUNE – FRENCH TOUR– 6 cars max – Do you prefer red or white wine? – NEAL ROBERTS/BARRY

6 to 8 or 13 to 15 JULY – COTSWOLD ATMOSPHERIC TOUR – NICK

24 to 30 JULY – BLACK FOREST by NEC

7 AUGUST – HAM POLO VISIT - Lunch, Drinks, Sunshine, and Watch the Horses perform with great skill – DAVID

21 AUGUST – NT VISIT, TOUR & LUNCH – House availability being checked – STEPHEN

9 to 11 SEPTEMBER – GOODWOOD

17&18 SEPTEMBER – KOP HILL – STEPHEN

1&2 OCTOBER – CASTLE COOMBE & PRESCOTT – DAVID

Looking at a BOAT TRIP on the THAMES in JUNE or SEPTEMBER
Also possible trip to Highclere Castle – when their web shows Opening Dates for 2016.

Donington Historic Festival will also be attended on 30 April, 1&2 June.

12.6 Comments and suggestions on the 2016 Events Programme

It was observed that some of the events were straight repeats from 2015 and it was suggested that it might be better to keep repeats to every other year.

Suggestions for events to be considered in future included:

- theatre trip (Stratford, Glyndebourne)
- motor museum visit (Gaydon or Coventry)
- aircraft museum visit (Yeovilton or Haynes)
- narrowboat canal trip on the Grand Union
- dinner dance
- trip to Ireland in 2017

Chairman thanked all for their presence and contributions and closed the meeting at 2102 hrs.