



Centenary Event News – 3rd April 2021

Dear Austin Seven Enthusiast,

I promised to tell you more about the exciting activities that we are planning for The Austin Seven Centenary Celebration which runs from 19th to 24th July 2022 at the Fire Service College at Moreton in Marsh, Gloucestershire.

During the event week there will be a great many things to do and something very special indeed will be taking place on **Wednesday, 20th July 2022**.



THE CENTENARY FESTIVAL OF AUSTIN 7 COMPETITION HISTORY

Those who know their Austin Seven history will recall that on 7th July 1922 the Austin works driver, Louis Kings, took the Austin Seven prototype, registration OK 2950, up Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb to the 'great appreciation of the crowds'. This was in advance of the car being made available for sale to

the general public and was a truly seminal moment in the development of the Austin Seven.



*Louis Kings at Shelsley Walsh
(Photo courtesy of the Austin Harris Collection)*

It was also the start of the wonderful Austin Seven sporting heritage that went on to touch the lives and influence the careers of so many famous people - Campbell, Moss, Hill, Chapman, McLaren, Issigonis, Cooper, and countless others.

One hundred years on - to the month - and as part of the Centenary Celebration week at Moreton in Marsh, we shall be holding the *Centenary Festival of Austin 7 Competition History* at Prescott Hill Climb, well known as the home of the Bugatti Owners Club who have very kindly agreed to us inundating their property with Austin Sevens.

The Festival day, which is being organised by Charlie Plain-Jones and a band of willing helpers, will re-create the historic moment of the Austin Seven's first competitive outing and will feature a cavalcade of competition Austin Sevens celebrating its sporting prowess over the past 100 years.

Charlie has written to tell us the latest news about this thrilling part of the Centenary week.

AUSTIN 7 CENTENARY FESTIVAL



“As part of the week-long Centenary event based at Moreton in Marsh, and to celebrate 100 years of Austin 7 sporting achievements, this public event at Prescott Hill Climb on Wednesday, 20th July 2022 will bring together some of the rarest competition cars demonstrating their stuff on this famous hill climb course, plus the opportunity to drive your Austin 7 up the track.

Interest in the event, particularly amongst those lucky enough to own these exotic cars, is already running at a high level and visitors will be guaranteed a never to be repeated occasion of historic significance.

Not only will the event look back on the immense influence the Austin 7 has had on British society and even on the shape of Formula 1 to this day; it will also look forward as motoring as we know it changes beyond all recognition in only a few short years.

Whatever the developments in the technology, the spirit in which the Austin 7 was born – affordable personal transport for the millions - will be certain to remain.

We are also delighted to announce that The Festival will be benefitting one of our major charities, Parkinson’s UK, who fund research and support sufferers from this most distressing of diseases. It cruelly and progressively robs a person of all their abilities including movement and speech, leaving them locked in and totally unable to communicate. Sufferers have included Billy Connolly, Muhammed Ali, Pope John-Paul II – and my Dad...

PARKINSON'S^{UK}
CHANGE ATTITUDES.
FIND A CURE.
JOIN US.

There will be fundraising activities taking place throughout the day and we hope that everyone attending will give generously to this deserving cause.”

Road-going Sevens will be able to take to the hill and as this is not a competitive event, and runs will not be timed, there will no requirement for race licences or safety equipment in the vehicles.



Arthur Waite and Alf Depper at the Monza Speed Festival in April 1923

The spirits of the Austin works drivers, including the likes of Waite, Hadley, Petre, Goodacre, Driscoll, Dodson, and designer, Murray Jamieson, will no doubt approve of us all enjoying a tantalising taste of what they experienced in-period.



Sir Algernon Guinness congratulates Kay Petre after a race at Brooklands. Kay drove a sidevalve racer while Charles Goodacre (centre) and Bert Hadley (right) drove twin-cams.

(Photo courtesy of the Austin Harris Collection)

Prescott Hill Climb is a picturesque twenty-mile drive through Cotswold countryside from Morton-in-Marsh. The track is nearly a mile long and has excellent viewing locations along almost the entire length. The parkland setting provides a relaxed and pleasant garden-party atmosphere for all the family and the restaurant and bar will be open throughout the day.

Those attending the Centenary Celebration at Moreton in Marsh and coming as visitors to the *Festival* at Prescott will have use of an exclusive parking and picnic area in the Orchard next to the start line, plus the unique opportunity to take their car and passengers up the historic hill climb track.

Visitors will also be able to enjoy the on-site Bugatti Trust museum, which is dedicated to Ettore Bugatti's engineering achievements on the road, on water, in the air, and even on rails!

Booking for the *Centenary Festival of Austin 7 Competition History* day will open in September 2021 on the Centenary Celebration event website.

More details to follow in due course.



A word about Centenary Year merchandise.

Towards the end of this year we shall have a full range of merchandise available to purchase. We recommend that you only purchase through the Centenary website – because we shall be able to approve and maintain the quality of the goods on offer.

Unfortunately, we have already had to deal with some unauthorised use of the Centenary logo – which is the copyright of the Austin Seven Clubs' Association.

Use of the logo in connection with any commercial activity is not permitted without the written consent of the A7CA. Anyone wishing to tender as a supplier of branded goods may do so through the contact page of the Centenary website.

Useless, but interesting, trivia...

Did you know that Moreton in Marsh's wartime RAF station (on the site of where the Fire Service College now stands) is reputed to have inspired the BBC and Radio Luxembourg series 'Much-Binding-in-the-Marsh'?

Starring Kenneth Horne and Richard Murdoch along with Nicholas Parsons, Maurice Denham, Sam Costa, and Dora Bryan, the radio series began in 1944 and lasted until 1954. Its theme tune is still fondly remembered by many.

The weekly episodes followed the antics on a fictional RAF station as its staff battled red tape and wartime inconveniences. 'Binding' was RAF slang for complaining vociferously about problems.

Kenneth Horne joined the RAF during the war and served on a barrage balloon unit. Before the war he had a career with Triplex – the firm responsible for so many safety glass windscreens – and after the war became chairman of Chad Valley, the toy manufacturer. Until 1958 he kept broadcasting as sideline interest but following a stroke he gave up business to concentrate on entertainment - including, of course, the wonderful 'Round the Horne'!

Kind regards

Nick Salmon

For The Austin Seven Centenary Organising Committee

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THE AUSTIN 7 CENTENARY CELEBRATION

19th - 24th July 2022

at The Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire
