



Malvern Hills Branch Newsletter

April 2020



Welcome to the Malvern Hills Branch April newsletter.

Dates for the Diary for 2020

Saturday 8th February

Meeting at Bowberries Chaddesley Corbett about 12ish

Thursday 12th March

Evening meeting at the Huntsman at 8pm with a talk by Mr. Max Hunt who is going to give us a talk on Herbert Austin and the Longbridge Works.

Thursday 9th April

Evening meeting at the Huntsman at 8pm with a talk by the Air Ambulance.

Thursday 14th May

Evening meeting at the Huntsman at 8ish

Sunday 17th May

Our Branch Rally at Burford House near Tenbury Wells

Everything is cancelled

Well Spring is here, the clocks have just gone forward and everything is in lockdown to try and slow down the spread of the Corona virus. Goodness knows for how long. All I can say is keep safe, and I will be sending out the Branch News Letters as per normal. So once things change and we can hopefully a meet up again I can send out info via email. Dave.

Happy Easter



Treasurer's trivia,

Hello everyone,

It was only a few weeks ago that we were looking forward to our branch events being held over the next few months and in particular our branch rally. The Corona virus has put paid to all that. Our branch meetings are now suspended and our rally postponed. We are hoping that it might be possible to hold our rally later this year but as with our branch meetings it is impossible to plan anything at present. The committee will keep everything under review and once we feel able to plan again then we will let you all know.

Our February branch meeting was a great success with a superb talk given by Max Hunt on Herbert Austin. It was not an easy journey to our meeting from Upton for Bob and myself. We had both left home early and hit a quite horrendous hail storm; I almost had to stop driving. Incredibly, on arrival at Kempsey it was bone dry! I was not sure how many members would be coming; I knew some could not make it for health reasons and, very understandably, some members were becoming concerned about the virus. Despite this some 21 members assembled in the skittle alley to hear Max's talk. His talk covered not only the life of Herbert Austin but also encompassed the BMC years from 1952 right through the Leyland years until Rover cars finally ceased production. In conjunction with a fine selection of slides Max started by recalling how Austin had been born in Buckinghamshire in 1866 before emigrating in 1884 to spend some time in Australia. He principally worked for the Wolseley sheep shearing company there and it was for this company that he returned to England in 1893. He constructed his first car in 1893; a 3 wheeler in which he drove to Rhyl and back. It was in 1905 that he formed the Austin Motor Company and purchased an old print works at Longbridge to start manufacture. Max showed us slides how the early Austin cars were noted for being large, very solidly built cars which in many respects were over engineered. However, that did change in 1922 with the introduction of the Austin 7 one of the most famous cars ever made. Like many manufacturers, the Longbridge works turned over to war work during both the first and second World Wars. Everything from aeroplanes to ammunition was produced and in incredible quantities. Herbert Austin had also tried his hand at aeroplane building between the wars bringing out a light aircraft with fold away wings that could go in a garage known as the Austin Whippet. Max showed us how he had built a village at Longbridge for his employees using pre-fabricated bungalows from Australia many of which are still occupied. Herbert Austin himself died at his home, Lickey Grange, in 1941 but Max continued the story through the following decades. There were many names from the past such as Leonard Lord, Donald Stokes and Michael Edwards. A most fascinating story and evening and we thank Max for visiting us.

Membership- Thank you to everyone who has renewed. For those of you who have not **DO NOT WORRY**. We all have far more serious matters to worry about at present and with the current suspension of branch activities, I will sort this all out with you when we return to normal. In the meantime, I will ask Bob and Dave to continue to use the existing membership lists.

Rally- With all the uncertainty now on whether we will be able to hold our rally, as with membership, please do not send me any rally entries at present. Hopefully by early summer we will have more idea of where we are going.

Air Ambulance talk – This is, of course, postponed and will be held at a later date.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS WHO HAVE SENT ME CHEQUES IN THE LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS

Owing to the current stringent rules on movement (at time of writing) plus the suspension of the mobile bank facilities, I have not been able to pay any cheques in. I can pay the cheques in at the Post Office and will probably use this facility when possible. Therefore, do not worry if you see your cheque has not cleared at present. If you have any concerns by all means give me a ring.

Future newsletter editions- Although branch activities are now at a standstill, the committee are keen to keep contact with members and provide a newsletter. I will try and do something each month but can I urge members to consider writing an article that Dave can include in the newsletter. It need not be about Morris Minors; it could be for instance about a car you have restored in the past or a special journey you have made. Contact details for Dave are shown at the end of this newsletter.



Happier times! A picture from our rally at Hanbury Hall last year. We can only hope it may be possible to hold our 2020 rally later this year.

Take care everyone,

Dave

For Sale

Good morning. I was once a proud owner of a 1959 Minor. Sadly, it gave up on me several years ago. I still have two spare wheels, two workshop manuals and a user handbook. Is anyone in your Club interested?

Regards,

John Haywood

Anyone interested, contact me (Dave Bennett) and I will get in contact with John.

Useful contacts

Chairman

Lester Stenson

Treasurer

Dave Smith

Secretary

Bob Prophet

Branch Contact

Dave Bennett 07816 134009

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