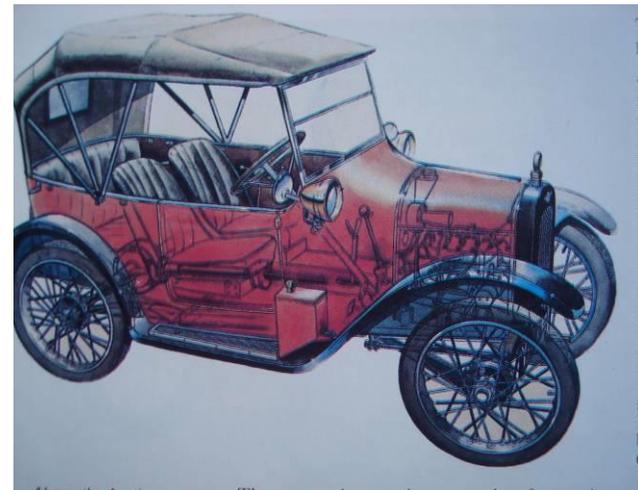


8.

Natal Diecast Model Collectors

March 2010



The Austin Chummy – a version of the Seven produced between 1922 and 1938.

Natal Diecast Model Collectors

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Stand-in Editor..... Laura Myers
..... Position Vacant - Volunteers needed urgently

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Details of next meeting:

Date: Monday 29th March 2010
Venue: VCC Clubhouse, Kloof
Time: 17:30 for 18:00 'til we end
Cost: R20-00 for non-members
Subs due: R90-00 for the year.
R60-00 for Country Members
Theme: Austin Seven

Dates to look out for:

Monday 29th March Natal Diecast Model Collectors Meeting
VCC - Kloof

Sunday 4th April Train and Toy Collector's Fair
Lion Park Hotel

Sunday 9th May Vintage Baynesfield Hobbies Fair
Baynesfield Museum (On N3 - Exit 61 from DBN then R56 - Richmond area)

Saturday 29th May Annual Hobbies Fair
Bellair Primary School

Morris Mosquito - Mike Serrurier has produced a 1/43 scale resin model, of the Morris Mosquito, the experimental vehicle which led to the Morris Minor. The model is available in black or matt grey for wartime camouflage 1942/43 vintage. They have been produced under the Mikes Miniatures name, and are priced at £35 each, including shipping / postage and packing. Other models are planned for 2010. For further details contact Mike (info. from the April 2010 Die-Cast Collector)



Morris Mosquito in 1/43 scale



An Austin Seven 'Top Hat' saloon, so named because of its high roofline, alongside a Twelve of 1928.

Dinky Models for Sale by Closed Auction.

At our end of March meeting, Tony Day will have about 60 play-worn Dinky models for sale by Closed Auction.

This is a reminder to Members that they can contact Richard Hebron to arrange to borrow any of the clubs magazines (as per the details on the inside front cover of this newsletter)

Hi Folks !

Our January meeting was well attended with many members taking advantage of renewing their annual NDMC subscription – and at the same time receiving a free cooler bag. This offer of a free cooler bag with the renewal of your subscription will not last, and there are only a few cooler bags left, so if you've not already done so, you may need to act fast, to renew your annual subscription ASAP, and get your freebie.

These cooler bags are small and approx. "6 pack" size and they work extremely well. Many thanks to Sarel Jooste and East Coast Control for kindly donating these cooler bags to the club and members.

On a sad note, the recent death of Sue Richardson (1943 to 2010) will be felt throughout the model collecting world and she will be especially missed by Dinky collectors. Amongst her many accomplishments, Sue was the well-known co-author of "Dinky Toys and Modelled Miniatures" and "The Great Book of Dinky Toys" which were written together with her husband Mike.

For YesterYear collectors, you may just be in time, or may just have missed the 1st auction of Horace Dunkley's MOY collection on 24th / 25th March by Vectis Auctions in the UK. For those who may have missed this one there's a 2nd auction of his YesterYears planned for mid-2010.

Catalogue information and further details can be obtained from:

e-mail address: admin@vectis.co.uk

On the local front, several fairs are being held in April and May. Please try and support these fairs, to keep both your hobby and interests alive and active.

Sunday 4th April - Train and Toy Collector's Fair, Lion Park Hotel

Sunday 9th May - Vintage Baynesfield Hobbies Fair, Baynesfield Museum (On N3 - Exit 61 from DBN then R56 – Richmond area)

Saturday 29th May - Annual Hobbies Fair, Bellair Primary School

See you at the next meeting,

Keep collecting

Philip

Austin Seven - Motoring for the Millions.

From "The World of Automobiles" An illustrated Encyclopaedia of the Motor Car
The Austin Motor Company will probably always be remembered for the unique Austin Seven, which put cars within reach of the masses, but there is more to the story than that.

Herbert Austin, founder of Austin, became one of the major forces in the establishment of the British Motor Industry.

Austin's inspiration was the growing number of motor cycle and side car combinations on the roads. While these were a cheap method of family motoring, they were hardly ideal, particularly in wet weather, as well as being far from comfortable at any time. The crude cycle cars then available were normally only two-seaters, badly engineered, and lethal to drive. What was needed, thought Austin, was a real car in miniature, a full four-seater, no bigger than a motor cycle combination.

His friends and colleagues for the most part treated his proposals with ridicule. So he converted the billiard room at his house into a drawing office and, helped by a young draughtsman, designed the tiny four-seater – the Austin Seven. Originally, he planned to power it with a flat-twin engine, but the prototype was so rough, that Austin changed his mind, deciding on a tiny four-cylinder engine of 696 cc.

Tests showed that more power was needed, so production Sevens had a 747cc engine, which was a lively, if crude, power unit featuring a two-bearing crank, and 'faith hope and gravity' lubrication.

The Seven, which made its debut in summer 1922, was a remarkable little machine, based on a skimpy A-shaped chassis, with a transverse front spring and rear quarter-elliptics; well ahead of its contemporaries, the new Austin had four-wheel brakes – even though the handbrake only acted on the front-wheels, the footbrake on the back.

"Pa" Austin was delighted with his new baby – but others were still dubious, calling it a toy. 'The whole staff thought the old man was going soft in the head' recalled aviation pioneer E. C. Gordon England, who was attempting to get Austin to provide a racing Seven for 750 cc class record attempts at Brooklands

Gordon England and Austin's son-in-law Arthur Waite led a band of drivers,

professional and amateur, who competed in a wide range of speed events with the little side-valve Seven.

The Sevens first competition appearance was at the Shelsley Walsh hill-climb in August 1922, when Waite's car, driven by L. Kings took only 20 seconds longer for the ascent than the Austin 20, again driven by Kings, which carried off the open award for the meeting.

When the car was first announced, in July 1922, its price was £225, but by December the figure had dropped to **£165, effectively killing the cheap and nasty cycle cars at one stroke. Orders began to pour in, and soon the Seven was Austin's principal product.**

By mid 1928, 60,000 Sevens had been built and a wide variety of special versions, ranging from sports two-seaters to stylish saloons, were being offered by various coachbuilders.

Austin, in the mood for further expansion, had proposed amalgamation with Morris, and even with Ford, whose British sales had suffered badly from the rise of the Seven, but nothing came of his approaches.

Meanwhile, development of the racing Sevens kept the little cars firmly in the public eye: in late 1924, Gordon England almost succeeded in beating the crack Salmson team in the 1100 cc class of the 200 mile race at Brooklands, then he topped this by winning the 1925 French Light Car Grand Prix.

In 1925, Waite began development of a supercharged Seven, with the aim of breaking the 100 mph barrier: but he could not better 92 mph with this model. It was not until 1931 that a racing Seven, known as the "Flying Canary" became the first 750 cc car to exceed 100 mph in Britain, using a blown Ulster Sports engine, developed from the power unit of the team cars that almost stole the 1929 Ulster Grand Prix from Caracciola's Mercedes and Campari's Alfa Romeo. Ultimately, the "Flying Canary" took records up to 10 miles at Montlhéry at a speed of over 109 mph, still with a two-bearing crank !

Meanwhile, the Seven had spread all over the world. It was being built under licence in France as the Rosengart, in Germany as the Dixi, in America as the Bantam, and in Japan as the Datsun. Over 29,000 were built at Longbridge before production ceased in 1938. (see also NDMC newsletter – January 2010.)

Herbert Austin went on to become Lord Austin of Longbridge in 1936.