

NORFOLK AREA MVT - Spring 2009 Report

Firstly a belated Happy New Year to all MVT members, even if the Easter eggs will have already been in the shops long before you read this message!

Well the 2008 season ended with members attending our final event of the year being a 'history day' at *Mannington Hall*. Here we found ourselves rubbing shoulders with Romans and medieval elements of our past with Alan Edwards even taking a fancy to a ride in a Sedan Chair. We finally managed to convince him it was not of military origins and even if painted green would require a section of dedicated carriers which were not forthcoming! Next on the agenda was our support of the Poppy Appeal and although no photos to tell the tale we managed to add to the funds of this worthy cause. Tom Blevins, an ex Inniskilling, was out with both the can and his jeep collecting a fantastic £1780.00 over the period for the Hellesdon Branch. Likewise David Hines had his jeep out in Diss with Cyril and Marian Salisbury supporting Southwold and although the day went well individual sums collected are not known. I collected as in previous years over two Saturdays, this year with the Australian Chevy 'ute', while wife Carol put some considerable time in at the local supermarkets. Most certainly we found persons as generous, if not more so, than previous years collecting a record for us of £2071.97 for the Beccles Branch.

Our last formal gathering of the year was our annual Christmas dinner and dance at the familiar haunt of the Oakland's Hotel in Norwich. This is always well supported with some 86 members and old friends from as far afield as Yorkshire and Sussex in attendance. Yet again Rodney and Marina Reynolds did us proud with their excellent organisation and dedication to ensure all went well on the night.

2009 has started on a bit of a down as we have for many years provided a display at a Restoration Car event, auction and autojumble at Norwich Showground traditionally held the third Sunday in January. Unfortunately this appears to have fallen victim to 'the recession' and will not go ahead. Oh well, never mind, we will just have to rely on our annual coach trip to *Stoneleigh* to do our shopping!

Members are however taking the opportunity during the 'quiet period' to catch up on the vehicle maintenance requirements while others are into the much more serious restoration stuff. Our Trio of Humber's, being David Skinners Snipe PU, Bill Purchases Snipe and John Morter's Heavy Utility are progressing, albeit at different paces dependant on individual intent. Unfortunately on close examination of the PU engine David determined that although remedial surgery was an option it would best be served by an available transplant. Overall progress is being gauged for perhaps an outing at Dunkirk next year in time for the commemorations? Bill's Snipe on the other hand is progressing nicely with next on the agenda being a visit to the trim shop for interior fitment and hopefully will be seen on some proving runs later in the season. John Morter however must get the prize for confidence, as having progressed to the 'all I have to do is build the body' stage it seems there is a real challenge ahead if it's to make an intended debut on the Normandy Tour. David Hines has also added to his motor pool with an Austin 10, which he tells everyone is really for Julie, yea right! Having now got all the requirements through the MOT next is a fresh coat of paint and markings before the season. Other members have also been in negotiation with Ray Elderton purchasing Richard Edwards Plymouth Staff Car, yet another one

who has convinced his wife Sue that it is really for her! Richard has in turn replaced the Plymouth with a Pontiac so we are rapidly becoming an area of staff cars. I think I better leave my Canadian Ford Fordor in the garage a bit longer or I will be accused of copying everyone else!

The rally programme is filling up quite nicely so far although the highlight for many will be our Normandy 2009 tour. Currently this stands at some 25 vehicles and 53 personnel. Accommodation and ferries are all booked, Liberation Task Force requirements completed and all that remains is to determine the itinerary as more information becomes available over the coming months. First on the agenda however will be our spring road run, our 'crank-up' dinner around Easter and some local proving runs at local events before we head off from East Anglia to Portsmouth. Let's hope the Euro exchange rate does not continue its downward spiral in the intervening months!

Ian McCallum