

IAW Report July 2022

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The main motoring event of the first weekend of July wasn't happening at Silverstone, but in rural Suffolk. The Alvis Owner Club International Weekend was making a much-anticipated, post-pandemic return. With cars and drivers arriving from



the four corners of Great Britain, as well as continental Europe and the USA, the event was hosted by our East Anglia Section and centred around Hintlesham Hall, near Hadleigh.

Being new to the AOC, this was my first IAW. I drove over on Friday, taking an A14 avoidance route, which took me south of Milton Keynes and Bedford, then along the A505, before taking some more twisty Suffolk roads through villages. The route suited my car, a 1927 TG 12/50 Alvista Saloon, very well.

Upon arrival at Hintlesham, some others were already there and I could already see that it was going to be an enjoyable weekend. The evening reception and supper provided an excellent opportunity to meet many new friends, as well as some familiar faces.

Saturday was a day of tours, with various trips arranged, including Sutton Hoo, Flatford Mill and Woodbridge, but I opted for the 'Longstone Tour' which was a 65-mile scenic tour of that corner of Suffolk on country roads, taking in many impossibly pretty villages and some good vintage driving roads. Those who weren't staying at Hintlesham joined us, and we were set off from there.

Early on, the tour took us through Kersey, with its famous 'splash' at the bottom of the main village



street, an ideal photo opportunity. The first refreshment stop for some of us was in the village square at Lavenham, where we created

an additional tourist attraction for a while. This presented another opportunity to stop and chat with fellow Alvis tourists as well as other interested passers-by.





The recommended lunchtime stop was at the Queens Head at Hawkedon, not least because it coincided the VSCC's local monthly meeting. This is where I was in my perfect sweet spot. A rural pub, dozens of vintage and classic cars and the company of likeminded people. We were there for much longer than originally planned...

Eventually we tore ourselves away and continued our route. That part of Suffolk is surprisingly hilly, with plenty of twists and turns in the lanes and ideal for vintage motoring.



Congratulations to the route-planners for such a well-thought-out tour.

Back at Hintlesham, letting the cars cool off, we compared notes on our various tours over a glass of Pimms, before enjoying the Gala Dinner. Excellent food, live music, too much wine and lively conversation all contributed to a good time for all.

Sunday was the main rally and concours and I was out early to get my car ready. Members of the East Anglia team were already marking out the field and booking in cars. Red Triangle had kindly agreed to be the main sponsor of the event and they arrived with a display of parts and were on hand for technical advice.

The event included a driving test, with various manoeuvring exercises between cones. I didn't enter my car, but could be persuaded to have a go next time.

I was pleased to see that, while our Club cars are impeccably turned out, they are not what I call 'trailer queens'. They are driven to events and are in regular use, which is exactly what they are for.



Once the event was over, awards presented and rounds of applause given, it was time to hit the road. My car started off well then went through a half hour section on the Cambridgeshire / Hertfordshire border of low power, backfiring and generally misbehaving. I pulled over into a garage

to fill up and checked her over - nothing apparently wrong from the outside, so I decided just to coax her home. Fortunately, the stop and restart seemed to provide the cure and the old girl blasted up the road with renewed vigour.

Driving into the summer evening, all the windows down, the characteristic 12/50 exhaust rasp reverberating off village houses and woodland, I was often leaving modern traffic in my wake. Going to high revs in every gear and leaning the huge steering wheel into the bends I was heading into the night stage of a 1920s Le Mans. It was an epic drive back and a fitting end to a very full and extremely enjoyable weekend.