



East Sussex Saab

A Branch of the SAAB Owners Club of GB Ltd.

Branch Newsletter

May 2004

Issue 08

Dear Member,

Welcome to the May Newsletter.

With the summer almost upon us we look forward to an exciting selection of meetings. Our next meeting is our first Sunday one for a while and will see us attend Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum. This should prove to be our first proper family event as there is a lot to do for all ages. See Page 3 for full details.

July sees our second branch excursion. We have been asked to provide up to six cars for display at the Lydden Classic Car Festival. By our June meeting, we should have full details of the cars to be exhibited along with details of admission prices. Members may wish to car share for getting to the event, as it is 60+ miles away. See Page 3 for details.

I hope to see many of you attend our upcoming meetings!

Kind Regards,

Toby Field
Branch Secretary



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Welcome
Branch Contacts
Contributions
- 2 Meeting Report
Dealer Listing
Latest News
- 3 Future Meeting Dates
Saab Trackday
- 4 Reader Experience
Latest News
For Sale

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chairman@eastsussexsaab.co.uk

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Richard Dickins

Tel: 01825 766566

treasurer@eastsussexsaab.co.uk

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

The branch newsletter is designed to cater for members at a local level. If you would like to contribute any content to the newsletter, then you are more than welcome. Deadlines are set in advance so you know how long you have to get content ready for a particular issue. Upcoming deadlines are listed below.

June Issue - Friday 11th June 2004

July Issue - Friday 16th July 2004

August Issue - Friday 13th August 2004

We prefer content, including images, to be in electronic format, but a hard copy can be sent to our postal address below. Scanned images should have a resolution of 300dpi for acceptable clarity.

Branch Address: 78 Foxglove Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 8BX - Email: info@eastsussexsaab.co.uk



MAY MEETING REPORT

Date: 18th May 2004 (Tuesday)
Venue: Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill
Time: 7.30pm-10pm

Our May meeting saw us attend our regular meeting place of the Horseshoe Inn near Herstmonceux. The meeting had been pushed forward to the third Tuesday in May because branch secretary, Toby Field, was unable to make the scheduled date, and had already missed the previous months meeting due to being on holiday.

By 8pm we had 14 in attendance including a couple of non-members that had attended our inaugural meeting back in October. After chatting amongst ourselves for a while it was decided that we make our way out to the car park to look at the lovely shiny Saabs that we had drove to the meeting in. Because the evenings are much lighter now, we managed to stay out there for quite a while. John Winter was smart enough to remember his camera and took some great photos.

The main topics in the car park were strut braces on 9000's and which cars would look best at the Lydden Festival in July.

Once the sky started to darken and glasses started to empty, it was time to head back in to the pub for a refill and more conversation. There were two main topics of conversation once inside. The next family meeting at Bentley Wildfowl on 13th June, and who wanted to submit their car for the Lydden Festival on 11th July. Not many members were very forthcoming with vehicle submissions, but by the end of the evening we had an idea of whose cars might be most suitable for the event.

An aside to the main discussion was that of the Saab Trackday at Anglesey in July. Details can be found on page 3.

By 10pm we decided that it was time to go home and headed toward the car park. An enjoyable evening was had by all and most of us can't wait until the next one at Bentley Wildfowl.



Dealer Listing

MAIN DEALERS

Ballamys Shoreham Ltd
120 High Street
Shoreham-by-Sea
West Sussex
BN43 5DB
Tel: 01273 452456
www.ballamysaab.co.uk

Turners Hill Garage Ltd
Turners Hill
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 4NP
Tel: 01342 716322
www.saab.uk.com

INDEPENDENTS

Bourne Motors
1-2 Cornfield Lane
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 4NE
Tel: 01323 727011
www.bournemotorssussex.co.uk

Mann Woodland
2 St. Johns Road
Hove
East Sussex
BN3 2FB
Tel: 01273 771807
www.mannwoodland.com

SAAB FLIGHT
Mill Lane Garage
Mill Lane
Hellingly
Hailsham
East Sussex
BN27 4HD
Tel: 01323 449908
www.saabflight.co.uk

SAABTECH
11 Harold Mews
St. Leonards on Sea
East Sussex
TN38 0EA
Tel: 01424 439391
www.saabtech.co.uk

LATEST NEWS

Troubles continue at Saab

Below is an excerpt from Autocar 18 May 2004

For all the bullish talk about a raft of new Saabs over the next couple of years, I remain nervous about the future of GM's troubled Swedish outpost. Why so? Because Michael Mauer is departing as head of Saab Design, and GM's European studio, to replace the retiring Harm Lagaay at Porsche.

Mauer, 41, joined Saab in 2000 set on developing a new design direction. His responsibilities went far further. As a member of Saab's product committee, he reported directly to Peter Augustsson, the CEO, so was he in a position to influence what Saab built as much as how it looked.

As losses mounted, however, GM looked for short-term solutions to increase sales, especially in the USA, and postponed or rejected proposals for a variety of innovative new models that were intended to revive Saab's image, and take it into previously ignored niches with a batch of intriguing new models.

Insiders confirm that Mauer the pragmatist accepted the need for the Saab-badged Subaru Impreza and Chevrolet SUV, and did his best to give them a Saab identity. But Mauer the idealist knew this would destroy the basis of his plan to rebuild Saab's sales and reputation. GM's decision to badge Saabs as Cadillacs in Europe (if they don't sell as Saabs, why would they sell as Cadillacs?) didn't help.

Saab suggests that Mauer quit to return to his family in Germany. And there is some truth in this. In fact, he has an old house not far from Weissach. However, that's not the real motivation behind the move. Sources within Saab told me last year that he was becoming increasingly unhappy and, unless a couple of key new models were approved, Mauer would look elsewhere if the right opportunity came along. The call came from Porsche's Wolfgang Durheimer.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Date: 13th June 2004 (Sunday)
Venue: Bentley Wildfowl & Motor Museum, Halland
Time: 11am-4pm

Details: Our next Sunday meeting is to be held on 13th June at Bentley Wildfowl. There are many great facilities at Bentley including:

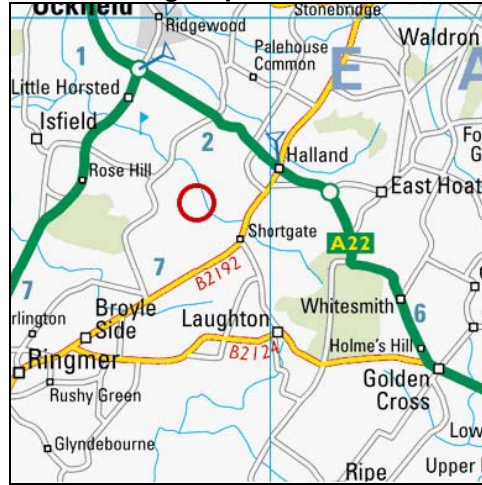
- motor museum
- house and formal gardens
- wildfowl reserve
- woodland and orienteering
- adventure playground and railway
- licensed restaurant

Because the facilities at Bentley are not free there will be a reduced admission charge of £4 for adults and £3 for Children over 4 years. We would need to all meet at the entrance before 11am so that the entrance fee can be paid for the whole group.

Address: Harveys Lane
Halland, Lewes
BN8 5AF

Telephone: 01825 840573

June Meeting Map



SAAB TRACKDAY SaabScene 2004 International Event

On 30th June 2003 some 17 Saabs, including 99 turbos, classic 900's, 9000's, 9-3's and a 9-5, and a greater number of drivers participated on the track itself, attend the first SaabScene trackday.

Anglesey Circuit is a privately operated and owned circuit which is an MSA recognised school and an Association of Racing Drivers (ARDS) approved school, which means that you benefit from professionally accredited motor sports driving instructors.

Situated in an interesting location Anglesey Circuit provides stunning views of the sea from an undulating track with challenging but rewarding sweeps and rises, leading to excellent spectators viewing areas. So much more engaging than a flat airfield.

Anglesey Circuit is 1.057 miles long. The powerful Saab 9000's, with circa 300bhp, were recorded lapping the circuit in around 1m05s.

The straights are only long enough to reach 90-100mph meaning that the Saab 9-3's with circa 240bhp were lapping in around 1m09s.

Book your place now for FRIDAY 9th JULY 2004.

For a very competitive cost of £120* per car you will get full use of the circuit, helmet hire, tuition and public liability insurance.

To sign up for TD04 go to www.saabtrackday.co.uk and use the online form, or send an email to the following address signmeup@saabtrackday.co.uk

For those without internet access, please call 01827 737508 and leave your name and address so that you can be sent the booking form and corresponding information.

* for 30 cars sharing the circuit.

Date: 11th July 2004 (Sunday)
Venue: Lydden Festival, Nr Canterbury, Kent
Time: TBC (to be confirmed)

Details: Our second excursion of 2004 will see East Sussex Saab exhibiting cars at the Lydden Classic Car Festival.

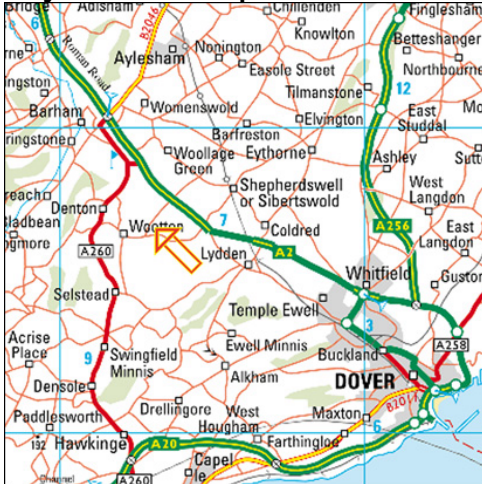
Those that display their car at the show will get two free adult tickets but others attending must pay. Prices are yet to be confirmed but accompanied children under 14 get in for free.

Further details will follow in next months newsletter.

Address: Lydden International Motor Racing Circuit
Wootton, Nr Canterbury
Kent CT4 6RX

Telephone: 01825 840573

July Excursion Map



Date: 20th July 2004 (Tuesday)
Venue: Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill
Time: 7.30pm-10pm (8pm start)

Details: Our July meeting will be held at the Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill Nr Herstmonceux.

We have been given use of their function room with bar, and parking is available on site. The Horseshoe Inn is situated on the A271 between Hailsham and Bexhill.

Address: Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill
Hailsham BN27 4RU

Telephone: 01323 833265

If you would like to attend either of the meetings above, could you please confirm your attendance by telephone, email or in writing. Contact details are on Page 1.



LATEST NEWS

Saab Cars USA to relocate headquarters to Detroit

Saab Cars USA's corporate headquarters will be relocated from Norcross, Georgia to the General Motors world headquarters at the Renaissance Centre in Detroit, Michigan. The move will take several months and Saab's new corporate office should be fully operational by September 7, 2004.

"This move will allow us to save a significant amount in facilities and other structural costs and re-direct those resources to areas that support the growth of the Saab brand in the U.S. market," says Debra Kelly-Ennis, Saab Cars USA's President and COO. "As is true for Cadillac or Hummer, Saab will retain its unique brand identity and heritage, and continue to provide its customers the same excellent ownership experience."

Examples of back office support areas Saab will utilize include employee benefits, dealer training, purchasing and accounting administration, vehicle distribution and legal counsel.

In a similar move, over the past several months, Saab Automobile AB and General Motors Europe have consolidated sales, marketing and engineering operations throughout Europe. This consolidation has resulted in synergies that have reduced fixed expenses, eliminated redundancies and streamlined internal work processes. Saab in Europe has been able to tap into GM Europe's vast resources, and this has improved Saab's competitiveness in the top markets there.

Saab Cars USA field employees continue to work from the GM regional offices they were recently co-located to and Saab Cars USA's field force continues to report directly to Saab Cars USA.

For the full story and other latest news visit our website at www.eastsussexsaab.co.uk

READER EXPERIENCE

My Saab Experience

By Bryony Bartlett

I was first introduced to Saabs in 1990 when my husband's company car was replaced by his Boss's 1987 Saab 900 classic. The intention was that he should drive it until the company had secured a deal which would finance a round of new company cars. His previous car had been a Ford Escort, and my car was a Fiat Uno, so the Saab was sheer luxury & I was added to the insurance to enable me to drive it too. We joked that we shared the driving when we went out: "He'd drive there & I'd drive back"!

The Saab had not been treated well though, the screen was badly scratched from his Boss's credit-card ice scraper and the back of the steering wheel had holes dug by his idle fingernails. The paintwork too was faded & had seen rather too many stones to look anything other than rather tired & shabby, but to drive it felt as tough as a Sherman Tank with heated seats!

The company deal didn't transpire so the Saab stayed. But in 1993 it conceded that although the purchase of new company cars was not justifiable, second-hand replacements were allowed. My brother-in-law was now working for a Saab dealership & had a rather lovely white 1991 Saab 900C Aero with all the spoilers & trimmings, WOW!

I thoroughly enjoyed driving the 900, but driving the 9000 ... well that really was something!

We purchased the 900 from the company, which by this time had done 95,000 to replace my Fiat Uno, for the princely sum of £2,000 to include a tow-hitch for my horse-trailer which subsequently took me & my ex-racehorse to a great many competitions.

By 2002 the 900 had clocked-up 240,000, which is further than it is to the moon (238,000) and my excellent service garage Offord Motor Co Ltd in Offord D'Arcy, Huntingdon told me that really it had gone past its sell-by date. They had a dark blue metallic 1993 Saab 900 3-door with fuel-injection, air-con & ABS - Lovely, Lovely... I named him Baja from the registration 'BAJ' and proudly took ownership.

A few months ago I was invited by Buckingham & Stanley in Cambridge to have a test drive in the new Saab 93 Sport Saloon. I went along feeling rather disloyal to Baja, I was greeted by a very friendly sales team who took time to explain the many excellent features of the new 93 whilst being plied with coffee & biscuits. I was shown around the various models they had on display and I selected one to take for a spin. It was a manual in battleship grey and inside it oozed luxury & technology with every possible driving convenience within hand's reach - if only one knew which button to press! The feeling the car gave was a superb combination of power & control. Smooth enough not to disturb your drink in the fold-out cup holder, yet giving a lovely push in the back from seemingly endless acceleration.

When I then got back into Baja to drive home it gave me the distinct impression of having left the handbrake on!

The experience wasn't something to be forgotten, but for now until finances improve, it is just the stuff of dreams.



FOR SALE / WANTED

FOR SALE

Description: 1997 (P) Saab 900 SE 2.5 V6, Convertible, Auto, 78,000 miles, deep Metallic Purple, excellent condition, Wind Deflector, Cream Leather Interior, 17" Chrome Alloys, FSH, ABS, alarmed, all electrics, 6 Stack CD, 12 Months MOT, must be seen!! £7,495 ovno. Tel: 01323 768207 or 07979 981640. Ask for Marion.



If you would like to submit a for sale / wanted advert in this newsletter, please email, write or telephone us. Contact details are on Page 1.