

# Flatwater Austin Healey Club Newsletter

*Austin Healey* CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

October/November 1999 Volume 3, No. 10

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## OCTOBER / NOVEMBER EVENTS

### Ice Cream with HRMNP

November 11 at 7:30 P.M. at a new location, Baskin Robbins at 70th and Stacey, one block south of 70th and Pioneers Boulevard in Lincoln, south of the I Can't Believe its not Yogurt. This is the second change this year. The first occurred because of inconsistent management, we were never certain if they were going to be open or not, and because some members do not like yogurt. The second location proved to have a small narrow parking lot, placing many LBC flanks at risk, and has proven difficult to find. It is our hope that the suggested location has ample parking, both ice cream and yogurt, and is easy to find.

### Breakfast

Breakfast is Nov. 13, 9:30 A.M. at Mahoney State Park.

## Fish

### Fish will not be the last Friday in November and December!

The November/December Fish Fry at Ricky Sue's in Union will be Friday, December 3, 1999. We are doing this for several reasons, including no fish on the last Friday in November and December because of the holidays. Hence a combined November/December meeting on December 3. We will resume the normal schedule on January 28, 2000.

## THE WORLD OF WHEELS CAR SHOW AT PERSHING AUDITORIUM

There is some effort to create a FWAHC presence at the World of Wheels show at Pershing Auditorium this February and at the Civic Auditorium in Omaha in April. There are also shows in Sioux City and Kansas City. British cars have been a major part of these shows in several other cities, and with 3 or more cars we will be able to do a club display.

The necessary information includes:

- Mandatory membership in International Show Car Association (ISCA) at a cost of \$35/year;
- Show entry fee of \$10/show;
- Option of enter in either individual display or club display;
- Possible club prize of \$300.

The plans are for a club display to be set

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Martha and I put over 8,000 miles on the MGA this year. We got the engine put together 3 days before the Heartland Regional in June, and with about 300 miles on the engine and overdrive transmission we left with the rest of the Flatwater Caravan for St. Joseph, MO. The run down Route 7 was as delightful as always, although the eatery we had planned to utilize had closed.



The field on the courthouse lawn in St. Jo. was a beautiful venue for a car show - the view of the show from the top of the hill was spectacular. As always we had several local winners, including, but not necessarily limited to, Marvin Marshall, Steve Espelund, Leo Thietje, Jerry Trainer and Dan Forehead. We shared a few buckets with the Kansas City area Triumph drivers, were blessed with the company of Miss Lizzy at the banquet and were honored with the presence of John Twist in our unofficial hospitality suite. But the real award for valor should go to Ryan Ries and Renae Drewel who drove a newly installed and untested overdrive transmission in their almost equally new (to them) and untested B. They made it back, after losing a heater hose, by filling the radiator with their drinking water and with water from a rain gutter. Renae is reported to have kept smiling throughout it all. It is interesting that such reports of Ryan were omitted from the tale.

There were several drives into the country and club events, including Fish in Union and the Marshall's annual 4th of July bash (yes, there were loud explosions, yes there were car alarms going off about 5 blocks away, yes the police did visit and yes the fireworks at near by Rosenblatt Stadium were spectacular) and then, with about 1200 miles on the drive train, the tour of the year commenced.

On July 6th, with the party behind us, we were back on the road with the Marshalls and the Espelunds, for a two week and 4200 mile trip to the coast of Oregon, by way of Dannebrog, Carhenge, Chadron, Lusk, Jackson Hole, Mountain Home, Boise, Cottage Grove, Coos Bay, Florence, Boise, Rawlins, Saratoga, the Snowy Range, and Olie's Big Game Lounge in Paxton.



Sports car driver's nightmare!

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*Austin Healey* CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

Page 3

At each stop a conversation similar to this occurred: "Yes it is an MGA. It is a '57. We are going to the Oregon Coast, later changed to we have been to the Oregon Coast and are returning to Lincoln, Nebraska. Yes, they are great cars. A number of people did sell theirs, and we almost sold this one when the kids were smaller, but luckily we did hold on to it. No, we have not had any major problems. Yes we do drive them frequently. I don't know, what leftover parts do you have, and how much do you want for them?"



ignition parts. Take an extra coil THAT HAS BEEN TESTED before you leave. Do not leave the extra distributor cap on the workbench.

The mountains are more spectacular when they are viewed from an open car. The coastal highway is best viewed from an open car. The people in the western half of the United States are still friendly and trusting, almost beyond belief. It is good, occasionally, to ride with someone else in their car and for their partner to ride with your partner in your car; cabin fever can occur in an open MG after 1500 miles. Unless the difficulty is really major, Red Green is right. You can fix most anything with a little wire and the handy man's friend-duct tape!

While on the trip we learned a few lessons. Spare fuel filters are a good idea. A spare generator might be OK as well, as are spare

The voyage, on the whole, was good. All involved would travel together again, although we did need a break between excursions. In fact we may endeavor to trek together again next summer. Talk is of going east. We may well be dining on crab cakes in Maryland next summer.

A week after our return the club had scheduled a show at the Strategic Air Command Museum that was followed by a short tour to an ice cream parlour in Springfield, NE. A combination of terrible heat and humidity, uncooperative schedules and LBCs in need of repair conspired to keep the attendance low, but those able to attend reported extreme enjoyment. Thanks again, Jerry and Nancy Needham, for organizing the event.

In early August, some of our number drove west on a tour with the Motor Patrol. Save for some rain at the beginning, a traditional part of the Motor Patrol's August activity, the weather was beautiful. The voyagers breakfasted at the Kochs in Milford and then drove to Cozad, where they established a "home base". From there they drove to North Platte, where they toured the Bailey Yard (rail yard of the Union Pacific), and Buffalo Bill Cody's Scouts Rest Ranch and Museum. Additionally, there were tours along the south side of the Platte River. We are told that the excursion maintained the tradition of 20 miles per gallon and 50 miles per meal, all of which were reported to be quite good.

Labor Day weekend means the Kansas City All British, and a good party at the Marriott. The drive down was memorable for the very heavy rains. We, who drive LBCs, expect a bit of moisture when we drive, but many of us were enduring demonstrations of Bernoulli's principle not previously experienced by man.

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Your reporter and FWAHC President Marshall also experienced a strong dose of humility when walking from his room to mine with a bottle of scotch and a bottle of bourbon, both open, in hand. As we walked past the desk we were wished a good evening by the desk crew. We understand that as we advance in middle age we are no longer viewed with fear and trembling, but to be viewed as HARMLESS? That is almost unbearable. Among the class winners were Steve Witt, Jerry Trainer, and Jim Stork, with Leo Thietje and Ken Grant also taking awards. The drive home was dry, but Ben Anderson's Sterling made intimate acquaintance with a large dog. The dog died and the Sterling came home on the hook. Score it Sterling 0, Dog 0.

The final driving event of the year was the October Loess Hills Fun Run put on by the Nebraska Triumph Drivers. As always, the event began in Council Bluffs, IA at the KMart and ended in Council Bluffs at the Pizza King Restaurant, with a pleasant drive to the park in Logan, IA in between. The weather was wonderful, the scenery was great, and the fellowship was warm. Thanks, Don and Chuck, for a wonderful event.

The leaves have changed and are falling, and the days are getting shorter. Each cool morning reminds us that the time is short until the snow and salt drive us inside for another winter. As we sit by the fire and view the photographs of the year's events we will feel the warm glow experienced while driving a British sports car yet again. We will be grateful for another successful driving season, and we will begin to dream of the year to come. Two thousand is going to be a great driving year.

## HUMOR

**IDIOTS AT WORK...** - I was signing the receipt for my credit card purchase when the clerk noticed that I had never signed my name on the back of the credit card. She informed me that she could not complete the transaction unless the card was signed. When I asked why, she explained that it was necessary to compare the signature on the credit card with the signature I just signed on the receipt. So I signed the credit card in front of her. She carefully compared that signature to the one I signed on the receipt. As luck would have it, they matched.

**ADVICE FOR IDIOTS** - An actual tip from page 16 of the HP "Environmental, Health & Safety Handbook for Employees: "Blink your eyelids periodically to lubricate your eyes."

**IDIOTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD** - I live in a semi-rural area. We recently had a new neighbor call the local township administrative office to request the removal of the Deer Crossing sign on our road. The reason: Many deer were being hit by cars and he no longer wanted them to cross there.

**IDIOTS IN FOOD SERVICE** - My daughter went to a local Taco Bell and ordered a taco. She asked the individual behind the counter for "minimal lettuce." He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg.

### IDIOT SIGHTINGS

**SIGHTING #1:** I was at the airport, checking in at the gate, when the airport employee asked, "Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?" I said, "If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?" He smiled and nodded knowingly, "That's why we ask."

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**SIGHTING #2:** The stoplight on the corner buzzes when it is safe to cross the street. I was crossing with an intellectually challenged co-worker of mine, when she asked if I knew what the buzzer was for. I explained that it signals to blind people when the light is red. She responded, appalled, "What on earth are blind people doing driving?"

**SIGHTING #3:** At a good-bye lunch for an old and dear coworker who is leaving the company due to "downsizing," our manager spoke up and said, "this is fun. We should have lunch like this more often." Not another word was spoken. We just looked at each other like deer staring into the headlights of an approaching truck.

**SIGHTING #4:** I worked with an Individual who plugged her power strip back into itself and for the life of her could not understand why her system would not turn on.

**SIGHTING #5:** When my husband and I arrived at an automobile dealership to pick up our car, we were told that the keys had been accidentally locked in it. We went to the service department and found a mechanic working feverishly to unlock the driver's side door. As I watched from the passenger's side, I instinctively tried the door handle and discovered it was open. "Hey," I announced to the technician, "It's open!" "I know," answered the young man. - "I already got that side."

## THE FLATWATER AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB ALL BRITISH CAR SHOW

We will admit to being just a bit worried about the weather for our annual car show. The Triumph Drivers had moved their show to June 6th from Arbor Day and had avoided rain. Was their gain our loss? Additionally, the weather forecast was for rain, and the day dawned, overcast and with sprinkles. Happily, our usual good fortune returned as the sky changed to partly cloudy and the 70+ participants were gifted with a great day filled with fine cars and excellent conversation.

Thanks to the generosity of Moss Motors, the traditional four awards were presented at the end of the show. The distance award went to Ken Grant, who moved from Fremont to Iowa so he could finally win something at the club's show. Oh yes, he claims it had to do with a new job, but each of us knows the true story. Diamond in the rough went to Brian Goldsmith and "Old Blue". Brian has long protested when someone suggests he restore "Old Blue" and we are beginning to understand why. Doug Taylor's beautiful black Sunbeam Tiger, complete with a high performance 289 won the largest fluid leak award.



He had a combined fluid stain of 17 & 3/4", an effort that would not have placed in years past. However, we are either getting better at dealing the engines, transmissions and rear ends or the fluids have all leaked out of the cars. The Peoples Choice went to Bob Stock's beautifully restored 1959 Jaguar Mk IX sedan. This wonderful car may be viewed frequently motoring down Vine Street at a vigorous rate.

The Jaguar is the perfect winner of the show. It is driven frequently, with gusto and joy. That is the purpose of the Flatwater show, to provide a place for people who drive their cars. The Flatwater show is a celebration of the delight and utility of the British Automobile, and people who use them as they were intended, and all cars, regardless of condition, are welcome. The format works well here. As one young person driving a well used and well loved MGB was overheard telling a friend, "This is my favorite show. There's no pretension here, just a lot of good people who enjoy talking with each other about all sorts of things, and who enjoy driving their British Cars.



## WELCOME ALICIA!

The FWAHC would like to welcome our newest and youngest LBC owner, Alicia Espelund. Alicia is the proud owner of an Aconite (purple) 1974 MGBGT. Alicia, now 14, and her father Steve will be working to put the car together in time for her 16th birthday. Congratulations Alicia on your new car and welcome to the club. We hope that you and your MGBGT have a long and happy life together.

## AS IF THE A WASN'T ENOUGH

A combination of a business surge, a good thing, and difficulty with the hard drive on the newest most powerful computer, a bad thing, resulted in a newsletter for October that never was completed. In an attempt to avoid such a situation from occurring again, I dug our oldest computer out of the closet and took it to Larry at Mac Smart in Lincoln. With his help we have added a 160-megabyte hard drive and have quadrupled the memory. Kind of the equivalent of placing a souped up B drive train in an A, as if anyone would do that. However, there is something that gives pleasure in using an old machine that has been updated to perform at a more efficient level, a level similar to more modern machinery.

The new AutoWeek (November 1, 1999) reports of Jeff Salisbury, a real traditionalist. Jeff runs a '58 Bugeye Sprite, and has for the last 37 or so years. While many in the production classes have gone to coil over suspended cars that are nearly a body hung on a tubular frame, ala NASCAR, Jeff makes do with a mostly stock car, save for some very large and sticky tires carefully tucked under the fenders and a 100 horse power engine propelling the old jewel. Sprites no longer rule H production, but Jeff and his son John, also in a Bugeye Sprite, continue to preserve the British presence in H production. Jeff invites us to check his website [www.h-production-scca.com](http://www.h-production-scca.com). Way to go Jeff. You, like club member and H production racer Frank Grover, are my kind of fellow. It kind of makes me wonder. Do you suppose he runs his site from an old souped up Mac?

## THANK YOU MOSS MOTORS



Once again this year, Moss Motors has been quite generous with their support of the Flatwater Austin Healey All British Show. Moss is also known for the quality of their parts as well as the quality of their service. Please consider this when next you need parts.