

# Flatwater Austin Healey Club Newsletter

*Austin Healey* CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

September 1999 Volume 3, No. 9

Editors: Bob Shaw & Martha Johnson

## SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Kansas City All British Car & Cycle Show,** September 4th & 5th. The club will have our own pavilion this year. Bring your cooler and a lawn chair. Departure times and places will be given later.

**Breakfast at Mahoney State Park,** September 11th at 9:30 A.M.

**Ice Cream with Her Majesty's Royal Nebraska Patrol** at Goodrich Dairy Store, 48th and Pioneer Blvd, in Lincoln, September 9th at 7:30 P.M.

**Fish at Ricky Sue's,** formerly the Union Bar Friday, September 24th, 1999 at 7:30 P.M.

**Flatwater Austin Healey Club All British Car and Bike Show** September 26th. 10:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. at Lincoln Public Schools District Office Parking Lot, 5101 "O" Street,



The Austin-Healey 300 MKII and the MGB HS-4 carbs vary slightly (fuel mixture needles and minor linkage components). The BJ8 for some reason still not known had stopped running on Lap 8 or a 22 Lap race at the 1998 Labor Day races at Heartland Park, Topeka, Kansas. Following a flat tow to the Paddock and a 30-minute rest it sprung back to life. Not wanting this to happen again I replaced most of the ignition (a switch, the coil, points, and coil to distributor wire) system and went to a duel (parallel) pump fuel delivery. I made my usual three-day trip to Elkhart Lake with overnight stops at my friend Richard's farm at Mabel, Minnesota and my sister's at Pardeeville, Wisconsin. This was to be our biggest yet family reunion at the "June Sprints" (sixteen of us). Son Dave had the longest travel (from England).

## AUSTIN SEVEN COOPER

### Phase V

### (The Pause for Racing)

By Frank H. Grover II

(July, 1999) With mixed emotions I had relocated the Mini to the back of the building so I could get on with the task of preparing the MGB and the BJ8 for the 1999 Racing Season. I had intended to race the BN6 100-6 this year at the "June Sprints". However, while the Machine Shop (Kevin Taylor in Glenwood) where I took the engine block to be bored and have the cam bearings renewed expressed good intent; whenever I stopped by during the next 18 months to pick it up, all I could get out of them was "I will call when it is ready." I had gotten a racing cam from British Parts Northwest, a lightened flywheel, and was converting the intake over to the three carbs (MGB) from Austin Healey club members at the Lincoln Swap Meet (1997).

I've known Richard since the 1960s when I first got my MGA and interests in English cars. Through the 1960s Richard prepared several Porsche Speedsters for SCCA EP and repaired many (mostly foreign) cars and farm



implements on his farm in Hokah, Minnesota. Although he now works the family farm (where he grew up), his training at the Porsche Factory in Germany has sure paid off in keeping his daily driver (a 1917 Model T Ford) on the road. His buddy Ernie Tuff whom Richard was a team chief (NASCAR) for in the late 1950s had just recently prepared a flat head Ford which set a speed record on the flats of Utah. He has settled quite nicely into his current life of raising pigs by the hundreds. Our conversations were, as usual, about circus music, raising wild animals, hogs, racing as it was, being antisocial, and politics. His favorite subject is Bill Clinton and the President's statements on how well the economy has been doing. He wasn't too sure of Clinton's credentials because buying pigs for 30 dollars, feeding them for 60 dollars, and then selling them for 22 dollars does not result in too much prosperity.

It was with less effort than usual that I got my preferred spot on the starting grid being 42nd out of a starting field of 44. I always enjoy the first several laps prior to seeing the race leaders in the mirror. I don't think many people can really enjoy the true Road America experience because as in the movie "Patch Adams" they always seem to see just four fingers. The car never missed a beat-so I finished 11th of the 17 EP starters. While the Toyota Supra gearbox doesn't have the most ideal ratios it does seem to keep the revs and

engine heat down. The Chicago Region of SCCA was celebrating their 50th year so there was a special display of historical "June Sprints" racers. In addition to three big Healeys there was a variety of open wheel and closed wheel cars. These included a Ferrari, a Cheetah, a McKee, a MG TC, a Mustang, and a dozen others. SCCA has a goal for this to be the last year of EP as we know it. The cars will be pushed off to another group possibly combined with FP to form a P2 group. P1 will be reserved for the new generation of EP racers that have the "potential" which means Honda, Mazda, Datsun, and Toyota. From a wonderful June day in 1965 to a fun filled gathering of family and friends in 1999, EP has been a big part of my life. But I guess it is time to move the racers to the back of the building and get on with the many restoration projects. I think after the Austin Seven Cooper I'll bring the Jaguar XK-150 back to life-the last time I drove it was the day before I went into the military in 1968.

About the middle of May I got a call from Bob Hubbard. Bob had been a member of SCCA since the late 1950s and still raced his FP MG. I first met him at Jack Beck's Orion Engineering in Papillion, Nebraska six or seven years ago. He was then in the process of modifying a Datsun 1200 for GT-5. I got to know him much better during the two winters I worked for Jack mostly on restoration projects. Bob was best at home in his machine shop where no mill or lathe project seemed beyond his skills. As we worked in close proximity he was always showing me his latest project or providing a guiding light on how to proceed with a task that seemed beyond my skills. I guess what Peter Zekert had to say following his roll over at the Runoffs - "The driver simply ran out of

skill prior to the end of the curve" describes many of us. As a boy I had

much admired Jack Brabham so to see Bob bring to life from what seemed totally unrelated pieces a Brabham for Bob Baker was a real treat. If it was not for Bob I would have never known there were VW pieces in a Brabham gear box.

Bob's call was direct. He was making a last call to his friends as he had liver cancer, advanced stages, and had maybe a month to live. He had been through his storage area recently and had noticed some Mini Cooper S parts that included both front and rear sub frames with my name on them. My friend Charlie said I could use his truck so a couple of days later, Edith and I were in Columbia, Missouri. We spent an evening with Bob, his wife Thelma, and daughter Rita. When somebody with just a few days to live wants to spend some time with you it is most humbling. Most of our conversations were about SCCA racing, Tom Newcomer (who raced as Tom Casket so as not to alert his father who owned a funeral parlor), and his family (especially the coming wedding of his son). I went down to the basement to see the Porsche Speedster he had once raced and the beautiful new paint job on the BMW bike. Although of all the things Bob could be proud of you could just see his chest puff when he spoke about his daughter Rita and her care. We met the next morning at the storage area where Rita and I were to load the truck. While we had some initial set backs (the engine lift jack burst a seal and the rain was continuous) we managed to get the parts along with three engines to be delivered loaded in quick order. The engines were an Alfa 1750 with transmission, a Fiat aluminum V8 the likes of which I had not previously seen, and a Coventry Climax for a Vintage racer. Besides the many engines and transmissions in storage there were the three wonderful cars. The Mini, the MG TF and the MG TC that E. Tom Newcomer had raced at Offutt AFB in 1953. I had the programs from the Offutt races so I made Bob a copy to keep with the TC. Bob asked me to get together all the information I could get on the TC to help.

## TESTY ANSWERS

The following are actual submissions on a series of quizzes, tests, and essays. Enjoy!

"Nitrogen is not found in Ireland because it is not found in a free state."

"H<sub>2</sub>O is hot water, and CO<sub>2</sub> is cold water."

"To collect fumes of sulphur, hold a deacon over a flame in a test tube."

"When you smell an oderless gas, it is probably carbon monoxide."

"Water is composed of two gins, Oxygin and Hydrogin. Oxygin is pure gin. Hydrogin is gin and water."

"Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, vanes and caterpillars."

"Blood flows down one leg and up the other."

"Respiration is composed of two acts, first inspiration, and then expectoration."

"The moon is a planet just like the earth, only it is even deader."

"Artifical insemination is when the farmer

does it to the cow instead of the bull."

"Dew is formed on leaves when the sun shines down on them and makes them perspire."

"A super saturated solution is one that holds more than it can hold."

"Mushrooms always grow in damp places and so they look like umbrellas."

"The pistol of a flower is its only protections agenst insects."

"The skeleton is what is left after the insides have been taken out and the outsides have been taken off. The purpose of the skeleton is something to hitch meat to."

## LATE EVENT

Nebraska Triumph Drivers have invited us to their picnic on September 19th. Meet at the parking lot at Holmes Park near Normal Boulevard & Van Dorn at 11:30 a.m. Bring a side dish, utensils, and beverage. The site will be at a private acerage about forty-five minutes from the park. If you have questions, call BobWeddington at 402-488-0024.

