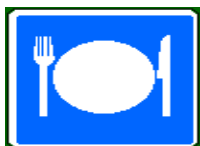


# Flatwater Austin Healey Club Newsletter

Austin Healey CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

December 2000 Volume 4, No. 12

Editors: Bob Shaw & Martha Johnson



## FROM THE UNCONTESTED PRESIDENTIAL GARAGE

Marvin Marshall

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Breakfast

Saturday, December 9 at Mahoney State Park Lodge. Approximately 9:30 A.M. Breakfast in January will be the 13th, same time, same place.

#### Ice Cream

Ice Cream with HRMNP Thursday, December 14 at Baskin Robbins, 70th & Pioneers Boulevard, Lincoln, about 7:30 P.M. Ice Cream in January will be at the same ice cream store on January 11th.

#### Holiday Dinner

Holiday Dinner to be held on January 20, 2001 at the Knolls Country Club, 2201 Old Cheney Road, Lincoln. More to follow.

#### Last Fridays Fish

We will not meet for fish the last Friday in December, because of the Winter Holidays. The officers and editors of the Flatwater Austin Healey Club would like to wish all Happy Holidays! Enjoy your families during the holiday season, and we will see all of you in Nehawka on January 26 at about 7:00 P.M. for fish.

As you do your holiday shopping please remember Moss Motors. They are able to meet the needs of most all Little British Car enthusiasts, and have very generous in their support of The Flatwater Austin Healey (and other British Marques) Club for several years. You may order by Fax at 805-692-2525, by phone at 1-800-MOSS USA. Or order by e-mail by surfing the Moss site, [www.mossmotors.com](http://www.mossmotors.com)

Merry Christmas to all you LBC lovers out there. I hope that each and every one of you has a very good holiday this year. As I reminisce about the wonderful year of motoring we've had I can see some snow starting to fall. I guess it's time to put the top up. (Maybe Santa will bring me a new one as I've been such a good boy this year.) [*The opinion expressed in the previous statement is that of the club president and may not reflect the opinion of officers, members, or editorial staff of FWAHC. ãEd..*]

It has been a good year for Flatwater. We have been to the Cobra plant and watched them make FAST cars. We had a great Christmas party with Her Majesty's Royal Nebraska Patrol at the Knolls Country club. (Please attend this years' event next month) The Grants put on a fantastic event over in their neck of the woods. We descended on St. Joe like the Huns and cleaned up a number of awards at the Heartland; had a fun time and more awards at the All-British. We ate a lot of breakfasts, ice cream, and fish. Although not on the same day. The road trips each month were all different and very enjoyable. If I keep going on, Bob will never get this all in the newsletter before deadline. If you missed out on any of our doings last year then take time to see what we have planned this year!



Sue Marshall, the Patrol's secretary, will be sending out the HMRNP Calendar in the near future. If you don't get one call and ask for it. Also, don't be shy in suggesting things to do. We always are open to new ideas and the calendar is constantly being updated.

Thank you for all the articles everyone submitted last year. We need more! Every month we would like to print a little about your cars, garage, tips, and trips. I promise not to hold your driveshaft hostage to coerce you into writing like I did Bruce Cratty. In the meantime, have a wonderful Holiday and see you all at the Christmas Party.

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## NOTICE OF REVOCATION OF INDEPENDENCE

To the citizens of the United States of America:

In the light of your failure to elect anybody as President of the USA and thus to govern yourselves and, by extension, the free world, we hereby give notice of the revocation of your independence, effective today.

Her Sovereign Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will resume monarchical duties over all states, commonwealths and other territories including New Jersey.

To aid in the transition to a British Crown Dependency, please comply with the following acts:

- Look up "revocation" in the now official Oxford Dictionary (\$75). Start spelling English words correctly.
- Learn at least the first 4 lines of "God Save The Queen"

- Start referring to "soccer" as football
- Declare war on Quebec and France
- Arrest Mel Gibson for treason
- Close down the NFL. Learn to play rugby
- Enjoy warm flat beer and steak and kidney pudding. Train waitresses to be more aggressive with customers and not to tell you their names before you eat.
- July 4th is no longer a public holiday, this has been replaced with November 5th.
- All members of this British Crown Dependency will be required to take 6 weeks annual vacation and observe statutory tea breaks.
- Driving on the left is now compulsory - recall all cars to effect the change immediately.
- Report to our Consulate General in NY - M Wragg - for your new passport and job allocation.
- Have Meg Ryan report to the Prince Andrews bedchamber.
- Add the Royal insignia to the top of the Washington Monument - and the Queens Christmas speeches to the Lincoln Memorial.
- Stop referring to the World Series of Baseball and instead call it the National Series of USA, Cuba and Japan.
- Tax collectors from Her Majesty's Government will be with you shortly to ensure the acquisition of all revenues due (backdated to 1776)."
- All American military personnel will exchange present uniforms to those representing the proper British service branch.



**WISH I'D KEPT  
MY FIRST CAR**  
Or My Driveshaft  
is being Held For Ransom

by Bruce Cratty

We've all heard the stories told to us, or by us, to others at car shows or at swap meets. The beginning is a variation of "I had one like that," or "My dad had one of those." There is the version commencing with "A guy in town has two of those in a barn." And there is the deviation of the story beginning "My first car was a ..." and ending with "I wish I'd kept that first car."

Well, I did just that; I kept my first car. Sort of. Maybe I should explain. When I was 12 years old, my sister, Gloria, had an MG TD. Unfortunately, she sold it before I was old enough to lay claim to it, but that seed had been planted, only to grow a few years later.

Christmas of 1966 my parents took a train from Omaha to Bakersfield, California to visit Gloria. It was in Bakersfield that we saw it in the paper. For Sale: 1951 MG TD. Runs. \$300. We went to look at the car, in black primer with a white vinyl interior. There was, of course, no top. But then again, with the car's being in California what need was there for a top? We gave it a push start and it ran. I was hooked.

So it was that I bought my first car 1800 miles from home, in the middle of winter traveling by train. I could tell the story of how we gassed it up, checked the fluids and the air pressure in the tires and, starting it with a push, drove 1800 miles straight through ice, snow, and blizzards sans top to arrive in Omaha without a stop 18

As we all know, driving sports cars is a highly addictive activity. I confess to suffering the addiction missed driving the TD. But absent the time to finish the restoration what was I to do? Of course! I would buy another MG, but this time to drive and enjoy! A 1953 TD was found stored in a shed in Souix City, much closer to home. My dad and I were able to get it running and I drove it back to Omaha.

And drive it I did. This car and I went on several adventures, including a motor vacation in 1970 to Massachusetts for a New England MGT Registry GOF (Gathering of the Faithful). Some time after this holiday I decided the '53 TD was looking a little long of tooth, so I disassembled it for refurbishing, but I did reassemble this car, and I still own it.

Time passed and in 1978 my girlfriend Judy, who has since become my wife, and I went to Vail, Colorado for a vacation. By coincidence (Oh sure Ed) there was an MG meet being held there. Judy saw a group of MGAs on display and, of course, the predictable happened.

Upon our return to Omaha, an ad in the Omaha World Herald led us to Brian Goldsmith who had an MGA for sale. It needed to be repainted and some other small odds and ends. However, Judy got to drive it a while (about 100 miles) before the restoration began. She has yet to drive it again because it is still not finished. We needed a car that was a bit more amenable to touring than the '53 TD. The MGA was far from finished so we bought a 1980 MGB to drive and enjoy. Emma, as we called her, was a trooper, but after 2 years there was the 1996 MG International approaching, to be held in Indianapolis, and Emma needed a bit of mechanical attention.

I rebuilt the engine, overhauled, and installed an overdrive transmission, and against all odds, reassembled the car. Wonderful! A complete and user friendly MG! This is the Vermillion Orange MG Tourer that many of you have seen us in.

hours later. But no matter how good the story, that is not what really happened. This is the true story.

We looked at buying or renting a truck to haul the TD back to Omaha. But after checking all of the options we decided to store the car in Gloria's garage and return for it in the spring.

Spring could not come quickly enough. With a borrowed tow bar and my grandfather's 1957 Ford we took off to retrieve my MG. Luckily we had an uneventful trip and made it home safely.

I wanted to fix it up a little so I took it apart. In retrospect this was not a brilliant move. After a couple of years of working on restoring the car the temptations of youth, sex, drugs, and rock and roll (Okay, so it was really college, motorcycles and racecars but it was the late 60s and I have to pay homage to that period in some way) allowed for my getting distracted from putting it back together. So I still have it. It is in my garage. As well as my basement, office, and spare bedroom.

So this is our MG history. However, you might be thinking just what does all of this have to do with driveshafts? Well, it goes back to my first car. The tube to the '51 TD's drive shaft was dented, so I gave it to Steve Espelund to repair. Steve replaced the offending member and gave it to Marvin Marshall, FWAHC President, to deliver to me. Marvin, always on the lookout for newsletter material then held it for ransom. I was informed that when I submitted a story about how I got started in LBC's my driveshaft would be released. That is the whole story of why my driveshaft is being held for ransom, and how this story was extorted from me.

So editors, please call Marvin and inform him the ransom has been paid. He can now arrange for the release and delivery of the kidnap victim.

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## UPDATING THE FRONT BRAKES ON THE MGA 1500

### From Grass Roots Motorsports

December 2000

*[Editor's note: I have been asked several times just what is involved in converting the MGA 1500 to disc brakes. If you are lucky enough to find the brakes from a 1600, as I was, this is a pretty simple conversion. I had heard several different solutions to the problem, but this one is pretty simple answer to the question.]*

## FOND FAREWELL

We at Flatwater would like to wish Ken and Caroline Kennedy farewell and best wishes on their move to sunny California. No one can blame them for heading toward family, great weather and beautiful Healey roads. They, and their outstanding green 3000 will missed.

## LIFE WITH A V8

John W. Ulrich

Carl Heideman, British car restorer, MGA expert and GRM contributor offers the following advice regarding your proposed project:

"The MGB front disc brake swap is an excellent choice," he explains. "You'll need the kingpins, calipers, pads, rotors, hoses and dust shields from the MGB. Since the MGA shocks have a wider yoke than the MGB shocks you will need to make spacers to fit the MGB kingpins."

"Do not use MGB shocks—the four mounting holes are not a perfect square as they appear—some people will egg out the holes on the MGB shocks to make them fit the MGA. This is dangerous! You'll also probably need to cut about 1/2 an inch off the threaded ends of each tie rod to make your alignment (toe) correct."

Mr. Heideman does not believe in normal driving changing the rear brakes is necessary.

As many of you know, my 1969 MGB-GT is now up and running .

To review the basics; I have a Rover 4.0, Borg Warner T-5, and Ford 8" rear drive train. The A/C and heat seems to work fine, and the interior is beautiful, and almost complete with a full length rear deck in place of the fold down jump seat. All the rest of the big pieces seem to work well , but I still don't have the steering right yet. Bump steer and power on /power off stability is enough to make you aim the thing carefully before you do anything rash. The 205/60/15 Dunlops fit with room to spare, and traction is great. I have to really jump on it to break loose in first, and have never even chirped the tires in second. Part of that is probably due to the 3.0 rear end, but I think the weight distribution may be 50/50, or even a smidgen heavy on the rear.



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Brought to you on the web by [Shaw's Garage](#)

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The tach is not real accurate yet, and the speedo isn't even hooked up. However, I found a great web site that will calculate MPH



at any RPM if you punch in the correct ratios and tire size. Using a 5000 RPM red line I get 41 in first, 63 in second, 91 in third, 122 in fourth, and some obscene speed in fifth that I know the engine couldn't even pull. (as if I would even want to go that fast!) The good news is that I can run with the pack all day in fourth, have third for killer passing power, and have 78 MPH at two grand in fifth if I need it.



I'm not sure how quick it is yet, but I know I give up a lot of acceleration with a 3.0 rear. Something in the 3.30 to 3.70 range

would make it a lot faster off the line, but would put me in "never never land" between 4th and 5th on the highway. Be that as it may, no one has kept me from a lane change when I see a hole. I guess with about 220 HP and 2500 pounds, something good is going to happen.

The absolutely best and most addicting aspect of the car is the ease in which it goes quickly. You don't have to have your foot in it every second to keep ahead of traffic. A whiff of throttle, and you are off. Every time I get out of the GT and into the Bugeye or TR-6, I think the hand brake must be on. The great race between Rover power and BMW power can't be far

off. When you get on the gas the power comes on right away, (lightened flywheel) and just keeps pulling. With the steering not yet dialed in, and the fear of being arrested in my mind, I just haven't let it run wild yet.

The big problem is no good place to stretch those long legged gears!

As with any project, there are a zillion details yet to work out. But so far, the car has met just about every expectation I ever had. Hats off to Terry at Absolute Body And Paint, and the many other folks who had a hand in the conversion. Is it time for Heartland Regional Yet?

## THINGS THAT TAKE YEARS TO LEARN

- The badness of a movie is directly proportional to the number of helicopters in it.
- You should never say anything to a woman that even remotely suggests you think she's pregnant unless you can see an actual baby emerging from her at that moment.
- The one thing that unites all human beings, regardless of age, gender, religion, economic status or ethnic background, is that, deep down inside, we ALL believe that we are above-average drivers.
- There is a very fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness."
- People who want to share their religious views with you almost never want you to share yours with them.
- If you had to identify, in one word, the reason why the human race has not achieved, and never will achieve, its full potential, that word would be "meetings."
- The main accomplishment of almost all organized protests is to annoy people who are not in them.
- You should not confuse your career with your life.
- A person who is nice to you, but rude to the waiter/janitor, is not a nice person.
- When trouble arises and things look bad, there is always one individual who perceives a solution and is willing to take command. Very often, that individual is crazy.

## Alcohol

A preacher is teaching a lesson on the evils of alcohol to a fourth grade Sunday School class.

To illustrate his point he places two glasses on the lectern where everyone can see, and puts a live worm in each one.

He describes what he is doing as he continues. He next fills one glass with water and the other with alcohol. The latter worm rather quickly dies, while the former continues to wiggle happily.

"Now what does this teach us about alcohol?" the preacher asks.

One little freckle face in the front row says, "If you drink whiskey, you won't have worms..??"

## How To Get Rich

A young man asked an old rich man how he made his money.

The old guy fingered his worsted wool vest and said, "Well, son, it was 1932. The depth of the Great Depression. I was down to my last nickel. I invested that nickel in an apple. I spent the entire day polishing the apple and, at the end of the day, I sold the apple for ten cents.

The next morning, I invested those ten cents in two apples. I spent the entire day polishing them and sold them at 5:00 pm for 20 cents. I continued this system for a month, by the end of which I'd accumulated a fortune of \$1.37.

Then my wife's father died and left us two million dollars."

## FLATWATER AUSTIN-HEALEY CLUB Membership Form

Flatwater Austin-Healey Club is the Nebraska and Western Iowa chapter of the Austin-Healey Club of America. For non Healey owners, it is a local British car club welcoming all marques and enthusiasts. We are dedicated to driving our cars, good friends, good food, and good times.

Date:

Name:

Spouse/other:

Address:

City:  State:  Zip:

Auto(s):

Phone:

Email:

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- 1/2 year dues local dues (Aug.1 to Jan.1) \$7.50
- Full year local dues (Jan.1 to Dec. 31) \$15.00
- Full year National Austin-Healey Club with local dues. \$50.00
- 1/2 year National and local dues. \$35.00

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Questions and dues to: John Ulrich  
Flatwater Membership  
6845 S. 44th St  
Lincoln, Ne. 68516  
(402) 421-9252

Austin-Healey 100-4 MGA MK-I MGB Midget MK-II Sprite Mk II Mini Bug Eye Lotus Elan Morris Minor Jaguar E-Type Austin-Healey 100-6 MGB-GT Land Rover Triumph TR-6 Sterling Jaguar XJ-6 MGC Spitfire Jensen Healey Triumph TR-4 MGC-GT Jaguar MK IX Triumph GT-6 Jaguar MK-II Sprite MK-III MGA MK-II Austin-Healey 3000 Jaguar XJ-S MG-TC Sprite MK IV MGB-GTV8 Midget 1500