

# Flatwater Austin Healey Club Newsletter

*Austin Healey* CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

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Editors: Bob Shaw & Martha Johnson



## Last Fridays Fish

Fish will be in Nehawka at the Windmill Inn Friday, September 29th at 7:00 or when ever you get there. The fish is good, and there is some variety in the menu for those who do not eat fish. This restaurant wants our business, and have worked hard to earn it. Please help us say thanks by being there.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Ice Cream

The usual place, Baskin Robbins one block south of 70th and Pioneers at 7:30, Thursday, September 14th.

### The Stuhr Museum Tour

Saturday, September 16, Frank & Bonnie Watts of HMRNP are leading a tour to the Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer in Grand Island with dinner at a Nebraska legend, Dreisback's. Call Frank at 402-466-5922 and enjoy a great trip, a wonderful museum, and in Her Majesty's tradition: GREAT FOOD.

### Flatwater Austin Healey Show

Sunday September 24th, 10 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. the Annual Flatwater Austin Healey Show will be held. As is custom, Moss Motors has provided prizes of merchandise for the Diamond in the Rough, The Distance award, the Peoples Choice, and the Largest Fluid Leak. There will be a few other prizes awarded to participants by random drawing. As always there is no entry fee, and the show is geared to drivers and their cars.

## FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL GARAGE

Another Labor Day has come and gone and with it the All-British Car show at the Marriott Hotel, Kansas City International Airport.

Again, your Club, along with HMRNP and the Triumph Drivers rode away with a boot full of trophies. Read all about the winners inside. The clear Lucite trophies were first-class this

year. (Rather than bowing out this year to let someone else win, your President might have entered just to get one of those babies!)

A special congratulations goes to Steve Witt. His Triumph Spitfire is featured on the cover of the latest Victoria British parts catalogue. Now that is a classy car.

Remember our show is coming up on Sunday, the 24th. Drive, tow, or in a box, we want you to be there in Lincoln with your LBC. There will be drawings for door prizes and awards to the



entrants. And afterwards all of us invade some local eatery like a horde of locusts. See you there.

In closing, I have a couple of things to say. First, Flatwater and Her Majesty's now have a 14' dual-axle car trailer for your use. Jerry Needham made the inaugural run with it to K.C. Two of the tires will never go flat because he filled them with fix-a-flat. A coat of paint covers a multitude of sin so I'll have it painted red and spruced up shortly. Call if you wish to borrow it. Secondly, if you have any ideas or suggestions for events next year, write them down. The Christmas Party and Planning meeting are just around the corner.

## Phone Solicitors

What to say to phone solicitors who call to sell you credit cards, vacation packages, etc.:

- The police photographer is still here, and the county medical examiner hasn't released the body to the coroner yet. Can you call back a little later?
- What's that you say? Speak up, please, will you? The battery has run down on my hearing aid. Louder, please, louder. Is that the best you can do? I'm afraid we're just not communicating.
- I'm gonna have to put you on hold. The baby is due any minute now. Quick someone, get some hot water. Lots of it. Sorry, gotta hurry now, don't go away.
- Oh, it's you again. I was hoping you'd call back. The better business people said I need more positive identification to file my complaint. Now first let me have your name and telephone number...

## Tidbits

- The citrus soda 7-UP was created in 1929; "7" was selected because the original containers were 7 ounces. "UP" indicated the direction of the bubbles.

- Mosquito repellents don't repel. They hide you. The spray blocks the mosquito's sensors so they don't know you're there.
- The liquid inside young coconuts can be used as substitute for blood plasma.
- American car horns beep in the tone of F.
- No piece of paper can be folded more than 7 times.
- Donkeys kill more people annually than plane crashes.
- 1 in every 4 Americans has appeared on television.
- You burn more calories sleeping than you do watching television.

## A MINI VACATION

*By Marty & Marilyn*

On July 7th, Marty and I flew to Pendleton, Oregon to drive home a newly imported Mini Cooper. Our plan was to take our time to enjoy the sights along the way and break the car in at the same time. Although it made me nervous to drive in a new car through the mountains and several states, I decided to relax and enjoy the adventure.

### A Bad Omen?

The first doubts came when I noticed Marty taking clothing out of my suitcase and replacing it with TOOLS! I watched long enough to see a socket set, WD40, a hammer and a roll of mechanic's wire where socks and underwear used to be and decided not to watch any longer. Here we go...

Well, not quite. Stopping for gas on the way to the airport, Marty's trusty and very necessary credit card didn't work! It worked perfectly

fine the day before and the day before that, etc. As we found out much later, after having credit card problems in several places, the system went down and millions of people also had problems with their card. Not knowing this, we wondered if someone was telling us something.

## Pendleton, Oregon

The Pendleton airport is even smaller than Lincoln International and as soon as we deplaned, all 10 passengers were locked out of the terminal. Once we were let in, we had to climb over the luggage carousel to get our own bags off the cart. Apparently only 2 people work at the airport and they were both busy. We recognized Gary, the Mini seller right away. He was the only person waiting for someone at the airport.

After  
getting

something to eat, Gary drove us to his gymnastics academy for the Mini unveiling. He opened a large door and there it was - a shiny blue Mini Cooper with a white roof and white stripes! I don't know what Marty's first thoughts were (I hope there's no rust?), but I immediately said, "Oh, it's so cute!" And it is! Cute and fast!

Gary assumed that Marty would want a ride right away and was surprised that Marty started crawling on the ground looking over EVERYTHING! When I told him that Marty could be inspecting for hours, he brought out a couple of lawn chairs. Gary and I sat in the parking lot talking and enjoying a beautiful Oregon evening and watched Marty explore every square inch of the car with a flashlight and screwdriver.

Sadly, some (important) things about the car concerned Marty and made him uncertain about completing the purchase. He suspected that the car was a 'bodge job' and, horror of horrors, lifted a floor mat and saw RUST. The rest of the evening can be summed up by Marty's repeating "Gee, I don't know what to do." Compounded by Gary locking us all out of the gym and stranding us outside late at night.

The very first words from Marty upon waking the next morning were "I think I'm going to buy the Mini". Yippee! And so our adventure continued.

In preparation for an 1800 mile drive, Marty worked on the car ALL DAY while I visited the Pendleton Woolen Mills and walked around downtown. Marty had a cell phone and I was to call him when I wanted to come back to the hotel. I nearly couldn't go because I was so worried that Marty would be in Mini heaven and would completely forget that I had come with him and was all alone in a strange town. He patiently convinced me that coming in for dinner 3 hours late at home did not mean that he would abandon me in Oregon.

## The Mysterious Rattle

The Mini really goes and it was so scary driving through the mountains that I couldn't look out the window half the time and had a big drink at lunch to calm me down. Although things seemed to be fine with the car, we noticed a very distinct metallic rattle of unknown origin.

Marty had me listening and poking my fingers under the dash, into the vents, into the glove compartment, etc. For miles and miles and miles we could not find the rattle. Once we thought the problem was fixed as we left a gas station, but NOOOO...as soon as we congratulated ourselves it started again. Turned out that the mounting brackets had broken on a front disc backing plate - and now I know why Marty had packed so much stuff - like mechanic's wire!

Marty drove pretty fast through the Rockies. The Mini's engine and drivetrain had only 2000 miles on them, so it was time to "break them in". Lots of curves to try out the handling. We took I-70 instead of I-80 so that we could stop at Grand Junction, Vail, and other beautiful places along the way. After we got home, we were pretty freaked out when Marty found that the entire front subframe and steering rack had only been loosely (finger tight) bolted in place! We thought back on that high-speed drive through the mountains....

## The Perfect Storm

Somewhere in Colorado it started to rain. This was considered a good thing because Mini's have no air conditioning and for the most part we were baking in the sun with the windows open. Besides, this was an opportunity to check for leaks, something common to Minis. I passed my hands along the seams of the door and happily said that there was no water coming in. Marty said, if it's going to leak it's going to leak farther down. So, reaching down and lifting up a floor mat I found myself sitting above SEVERAL INCHES of water! Maps, feet, purse, books...everything suddenly floating under me. Yup, the Mini appears to be leaking from somewhere. Fortunately - or maybe not - it turns out that the outside air inlets are right behind the

front wheels and are supposed to have ductwork attached - but don't. So they were wide open and right there behind the wheel's spray.

## Home Sweet Home

Between the credit card problems, the rattles and the water, we decided it best to play it safe and get home. One of the nicest things about owning and driving a Mini is that it makes people laugh. Every time we stopped people would gather around, point, and generally enjoy this teeny tiny car. Most people were seeing one for the first time and would cautiously approach while scratching their heads in wonder.... What the hell is that? And now back home in Nebraska, I have underwear and socks instead of wrenches and bolts and no worries about being abandoned in strange places. Just have to keep dinner warm and looking edible 3 hours after dinnertime. As you might guess, I haven't seen much of Marty since our return. He just keeps mumbling about things like welding sheet metal and porting a stage 4 head (or something like that).

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## MONEY FROM GOD

A little boy who wanted \$100 very badly prayed and prayed for two weeks, but nothing happened. Then he decided to write a letter to God requesting the \$100. When the postal authorities received the letter to "God, USA," they decided to send it to President Clinton. The president was so impressed, touched, and amused that he instructed his secretary to send the little boy a \$5 bill. Mr. Clinton thought this would appear to be a lot of money to a little boy.

The little boy was delighted with the \$5, and immediately sat down to write a thank you note to God which read, "Dear God, Thank you for sending me the money. However, I noticed that for some reason you had to send it through Washington D.C., and as usual, they deducted \$95!"

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## THE ALL BRITISH REPORT

At about 8:00 A. M. on the morning of September 2, 2000, many of the usual suspects gathered at the appointed places in Lincoln and Omaha to begin the annual adventure known as the Tour to the All British in Kansas City. The drive to the event was aggravated by temperatures above 100, the primary reason for the departure from the normal civilized hour, and the noted of stops for food. Almost all of the voyagers were left sunburned and dehydrated. Martha Johnson was unable to garner much sympathy, however, for her difficulty on the trek. She and Bob Shaw were bringing a daughter and grandson back from the event, so they took the Jaguar rather than the MGA. Martha's complaint was that Bob had the air conditioning set too cold.

This show is one of the events which HMRNP and Flatwater have attended for several years, and which we enjoy greatly. And for a little club that enjoys



showing our drivers we generally do pretty well come awards time. This year was no different. The big winners were Dan and Laura Forehead. Dan's MGA 1600 won first in class, an award which this beautiful car richly deserves. Dan placed second in the tire changing contest (a feat which leaves the editor in awe, for he has been known to spend an hour and at least one Guinness on such a task). Additionally the Foreheads, as a team, placed second in the poker run/rally. Way to go Laura and Dan!

There were other winners. Steve Witt won again this year with his Triumph Spitfire poster car. First in the early B's were Steve and Deb Espelund with their beautifully prepared 66 B. Following with a first in the Mark II MGBs was Leo Thietje with his 74 roadster. Steve Williams's Lotus Elan finished in its usual first in class, despite a new Elise racecar being in the same class. Terry and Kathleen won the Big Healey class with his beautiful blue BN 8. There really are some Flatwater Austin Healey Club members who own and drive big Healeys, and we are very proud of them. And Jim Stork's wonderful '67 Jaguar took third in a very tough division. Not too bad for cars that do not see a trailer, unless they are broken down.

On the whole attendance to the show was down a bit this year. There was some thought that the venue is getting a bit long of tooth, and there is some talk of moving the show to a shopping center in Olathe Kansas next year. There is a grass field for the show, a variety of restaurants, and a shopping center where those who are not interested in the cars can "shop 'till their cards are maxed out!"



There was some concern about whether we would still want to attend. We would have to drive another 30 whole miles. (Grins accepted and applause to be held to Memorial Stadium decibel levels). As two members were overheard telling a committee member, we would drive the extra 30 miles to attend. But then again, we will attend no matter where you hold the show.

One last comment on the Kansas City All British. Some entrants were overheard discussing the "Nebraska Bunch." The consensus was that we march to our own drummer. But no group of people has more fun, gets



along better, or drives better cars to a show! One of the Kansas City stalwarts described us as kind of like the bikers your daughter dragged home. They are a lot of fun, but just a little scary. You would kind of like to ask them to join you in a drink and to leave all at the same time. But you are afraid to do either, so you just hold on, watch them and try to enjoy the ride!

## NOT SO SWEET SOMETHINGS

A married couple is driving down interstate 80 doing 65 mph. The wife is driving and her husband looks over and says, "Honey, I know we've been married 15 years, but I want a divorce."

His wife says nothing but increases her speed to 70 mph.

"I've been having an affair with your best friend, and she's a much better lover than you."

Again his wife says nothing but speeds up to 75 mph. "I want the car and the savings account. You can have the credit cards."

She just keeps driving faster.

"Is there anything you want." he asks.

"No, I've got everything I need." his wife answers, veering slightly toward the bridge abutment. He asks, "What's that?"

Just before they hit the wall at 90 mph she answers, "I've got the airbag."