

Flatwater News

September 2003

A publication by and for the members of the Flatwater Austin Healey Club of Nebraska and western Iowa

Calendar:

- Sept. 10 – Gear-jammers in Ashland
- Sept 13 – Breakfast at Mahoney State Park
- Sept 16 – Cozmo's in Omaha
- Sept 26 – Fish in Nehawka
- Sept. 28 – FAHC All-British Car & Cycle Show in Lincoln
- Oct. 3 – Cameo Art Show and Dinner in Plattsmouth

Coming in October:

- Loess Hills Run (TBA)
- Possible meet with Midwest MGA
- Golf event (TBA)
- Possible Art Dart to Nelson-Atkins Museum in KC

Events have elastic starting times. Breakfast is about 9, Gear-jammers and Fish begin at about 6:30 and Cozmo's at about 7 p.m.

If you have an event you'd like to suggest or even run, call or e-mail Events Coordinator Gary Rockel.
(headlap@alltel.net)

FAHC All-British Car & Cycle Meet Sept. 28

IT'S SHOWTIME!

Looking for something to do Sunday, Sept. 28? You shouldn't be!

We hope you're planning to attend YOUR club's 10th Annual Flatwater All-British Car and Cycle Meet, held in the Lincoln Public Schools District Office parking lot at 59th and "O" St., almost directly across the street from Gateway Mall, in Lincoln.

No trophies are awarded, but there will be people's choice voting for "Best of Show" and "Diamond in the Rough."

There will also be a judged competition for the biggest oil spot, and furthest distance driven to the show.

Winners get prizes based on whatever Moss, Victoria British, and Mini-Mania have donated.

(continued page 2, left column)

Volunteers are needed to answer questions about the club and about the cars, staff the registration desk, coordinate the voting results, park cars, and other jobs. May be one hour, maybe more. Call or e-mail Gary Rockel if you can help.

Officer's Corner

By John Ulrich

Here's hoping you already read the main story on our September 28 Show, mmm..., I mean meet.

I like "Meet," not "Show" because that's exactly what I mean. Because the club has grown so much over the past year, there are members I've never met, with cars I've never seen.

I want to be clear. This is not an auto beauty contest! No one should even think of staying home because he thinks his car isn't "show quality." Ladies, too!

Heck, my TR-6 hasn't been painted for 18 years,

and my Bugeye will probably still be dirty from the autocross and "fish."

Please don't wait until your car is perfect to show up. Bring it, ask questions and keep your eyes open. We're all experts, you know.

In particular, this is not an event just for "club regulars!" We already know each other. It is your opportunity to meet more club members than any other single event.

When I work on the membership list, I'm amazed by the diversity of the members, ages, occupations and shall we say (ahem) checkbooks.

Some folks have a

Look for "From the Presidential Garage" by Marvin Marshall, on page 7

gaggle of LBCs and others just want to put the next \$200 toward a set of Yoko AVS Intermediates.

But you know, it just doesn't matter. We are united in our love of the British Automobile, its preservation, and the joys of driving a piece of history.

Call it a challenge, call it a line in the sand, call it a "double dog dare," call it "54-40 or fight."

I don't care what you call it, but I want the greatest turnout ever this year. It's always great to meet new people and, as membership chair, I'd like to meet all of you.

There is **no registration fee** -- your dues at work -- and the public is welcome. Portapotties, food, soda will all be available.

PLEASE don't bring alcohol; we don't want to be kicked off our site.

Cars park first in, whenever out. No classes, no brands, no nothin'. If you want to park by someone, or you and a spouse both drive cars, we'll work it out. Most folks bring lawn chairs and maybe an umbrella for sun protection.

At about 3:00 we will give awards (see above), and start to clean up our mess and move cars. Most activity is over by 4:00, except for those who wish to dine out. Contact one of us at the show to find out where.

We have at least 180 LBCs in the Flatwater Club, and 118 memberships, most of which consist of a "Car nut and a spouse."

We have drawn 70 to 75 cars over the years, but we really want to break 100 this year.

We have the bodies, we have the cars, we have the time, we have the place. Let's do it!



www.

flatwater.org

If you've got a car part to sell, a question to ask, or want to buy a club shirt in time for our annual car show (hint, hint) try the club message board. It offers local contacts, announcements of upcoming events, car and parts resources, regional clubs and much more.

Our FAHC Meet -- How It Began

By Jim Danielson

In 1985 I bought a Sprite in a box or, actually, several boxes. In 1993, I decided I needed to get to know other British car owners who might be suffering a similar fate and the best way to do that was a car show.

Barbara and I advertised every where we could and put lots of flyers on lots of cars.

On show day I drove my 1972 Porsche 914 to the parking lot in front of the University Place swimming pool on north 48th St. in

Lincoln and waited. Would anyone show up?

Fifteen minutes past the starting time, the first car arrived. I was thrilled. By the end of the day over 30 cars were parked there and even non-British car owners stopped to look.

Enough people said they had a good time that the next year I did it again. The show now draws almost 80 cars. It is still free. It is still low-key. It is still fun.

Please tell everyone you know about our 2003 "meet" as John calls it because there might be another Sprite in a box which needs us.

CARS & PARTS 4 SALE will return in the October issue. In the meantime, check the website at www.flatwater.org for what's out there.

Help promote the FAHC show by copying the flyer in this issue and posting them. There's also a color version up on the website.

Plattsmouth Gallery "Art Dart" in on October 3

By Deb Thomas

Cameo Art Gallery, Plattsmouth, Nebraska, cordially invites the Flatwater Austin-Healey Club to attend a wine and cheese reception and open house at 7 pm on Friday, October 3, 2003.

The Gallery is located at 537 Main Street in Plattsmouth. Cameo Art Gallery features two and three-dimensional works by 18 artists from Plattsmouth, Bellevue, Papillion, Omaha and Missouri Valley.

Work on exhibit includes pencil drawings; pen and ink drawings, oil paintings, watercolor, quilted wall hangings; handmade jewelry; pottery and metal sculpture.

At Cameo you can find a variety of art, from portraits to metal garden art to original postcards and notecards and nearly everything in between.

Dinner, desserts and specialty coffees will be available at The Chocolate Moose Cafe directly across the street. Reservations are needed, so please RSVP to Deb.

Parking on Main Street between 6th and 7th will be reserved for members' British cars. Please join us for an evening of fine art, fine food and fine cars.

If you need directions, please call FAHC members Deb or Greg Thomas at (402) 296-0643.

If you're interested in either of these, please let Barbara know.

Art Dart "Blue" to Joslyn, mid-October, exhibit of photographs of famous American movies

Art Dart "Red" to Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City, mid-October or November, exhibit of early American painters.

Speedbleeders

By Bob Shaw

Last month, while enjoying Leo Thietje's backyard after the Fremont Days Show, the talk turned to the difficulties inherent in bleeding any hydraulic system.

There are several "simple" solutions ranging from the Mighty Vac to the One Man Bleeder in its many forms, and to a simple jar with medical tubing.

All work, and all are prone to slippage and accidents. A part of the process is that brake fluid must run

through these tubes, a bit will often leak, and the pieces become slipperier than... er, well, really slick after such exposure.

Joe Guinan and I spoke of a different solution -- the Speedbleeder. On the surface, it looks like a typical bleeder valve. However, it has an important difference. Within a Speedbleeder, there lives a check valve!

It installs in place of, and in the same manner as, the typical bleeder.

However, when it's time to bleed the system,

one simply attaches a tube to the bleeder, cracks it open, pumps the brakes a few times, and closes the valve. That's all there is to it.

Big Joe swears by them. I have them on the back of my A and I love them.

I will have them on front of the "A" next time I need to bleed the front, and the clutch slave will most likely end up with one as well.

They are sometimes available at the usual local parts stores, but you can get them directly from the manufacturer. The web site is www.speedbleeder.com.

I do not promise they will make your car faster, but they won't hurt anything in that regard.

I do promise that they will make maintaining the hydraulic systems faster, and simpler.

For a farm kid like me, that is generally a beneficial situation.

Founders Autocross results

It actually worked out just fine, except for two non-Autocross drivers who didn't notice we were racing and drove in to do their recycling.

No one got hurt and we got out of the sun early for some iced beverages and a post-mortem. The Garnharts came all the way from York for the event and both of them drove the course.

Special awards are due:

Scoutmaster Extra-ordinaire: Tim Creger, who organized and worked with some great scouts;

Queen of the Cards: Pam Brunke, who kept everyone straight and, literally, on track;

Drama in Racing: Marty Klein, as always;

Best Cheerleader: Marilyn Michel; and

Best Scout Troop:

#11 from Lincoln.

Thanks to all the club volunteers and to all the drivers who participated!

AUTOCROSS SCORES

Top 10

Non-British cars

Scott Kahler 1.03.375

British cars

Guinan, Mark 1.04.00
 Guinan, Joe 1.04.45
 Conant, Gerry 1.04.515
 Stone, Dennis 1.05.115
 Ulrich, John 1.05.345
 Danielson, Jim 1.05.647
 Shaw, Bob 1.05.92
 Klein, Marty 1.06.13
 Nelson, Mike 1.06.34
 Gregory, Eric 1.07.00

See the website for times alphabetically by driver.

County most likely to do their recycling during a racing event: County 11.

KC All-Brit Show A Washout

You could probably find some ducks that enjoyed the weather at this year's All-British.

Mother Nature brought forth a soaking rain that lasted all weekend, rendering a much smaller show and much wetter participants.

Several Nebraskans braved the elements, however, and brought both their cars and soon-drenched selves to the Airport Marriott, many on a winding route from Nebraska, led by Jim Danielson (with hints from Leo Thietje).

Local FAHC members Ken and Vicky Grant hosted many Nebraska FAHC members at the Power Plant Restaurant in Parkville on Saturday (thanks, guys!).

Terry Davis reports that besides his three trophies, trophies also went to FAHC members Jim Danielson, Ryan Reis, Bob Shaw, Leo Thietje and Jesse Wubbels. Congratulations to everyone!



Economy & Performance

14th and "Q" Streets
Lincoln, NE 68510
402-435-1326
Kevin Gilbert, Owner/Mgr

ABSOLUTE BODY AND PAINT

4033 Progressive Ave.
Suite 4
Lincoln, NE 68505
402-464-6100

Terry Worick, Owner/Mgr



and Brewster's Coffee

6100 "O" Street
Lincoln, Nebraska
Bob Van Kaenel, Mgr.

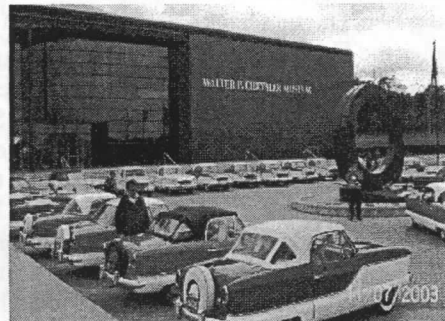
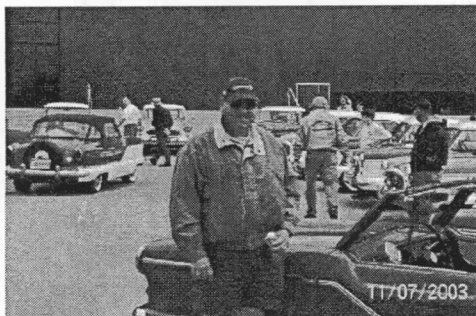
Please patronize our sponsors, including Dr. Marty Klein, when you can and thank them for their sponsorship.

GOLF EVENT PLANNED FOR OCTOBER

Jerry Tessin is planning a golf event of some kind for mid-October. Watch for more news on this in our next issue or in your e-mailbox.

Detroit 50th Anniversary Events Feature FAHC Metros

By Tim Clark



Here are some pictures from the 50th anniversary meet in Detroit, taken at the Walter P. Chrysler Museum. The all-green 55 Metropolitan belongs to new FAHC member Brad Swiggart from Lincoln; my red and white '60 convertible is in the far left in the parking lot picture. A runabout from Britain's Princess Margaret was also in the show. All 108 Metropolitans were displayed at the weekend show.

If you're wondering why Nash owners join a British car club, wait until next month's issue. There'll be a story that explains the Nash/British connection.

A Treasurer's Plea

By John Ulrich

You have to give me credit. I wear the "membership hat" most of the time, and only whine about money at the first of the year. This time you're not so lucky.

First of all, we are not broke. Although we are not a wealthy club, there is about a one-year cushion in the bank, and I want to keep it that way.

The bitter truth is that although we have **never** raised dues since the club began, everything has gotten more expensive.

The Flatwater newsletter continues to be a major form of communication and whether it's four pages or eight, Uncle Sam charges us the same postage.

Printing eight pages doesn't cost much more than printing four; it's the number we print that ups the final financial bite.

We now print and mail about 130 newsletters a month, mostly to members. A few go to sponsors, other clubs and the national AHCA.

I would like to ask all members who have computer capability to get their newsletter off the web and print it out on the home or office printer (Hey, it'll be in color). Second choice: a PDF in your e-mailbox.

I like to get mine in the mail, but if I can help the club, I'll do it myself and save a dollar. If half the membership will join me, we can save about \$800 a year. That means more of everything we have come to expect and enjoy from Flatwater.

Beginning with the Oct. issue, you must call, write, e-mail, or speak to Ms. Editor if you want a hard copy via US mail. She needs a final count by Friday, Sept. 26 (two days before the FAHC All-British Meet).

If you do not contact Barbara, she will assume you are ok with an electronic newsletter.

Thanks. The club appreciates it.

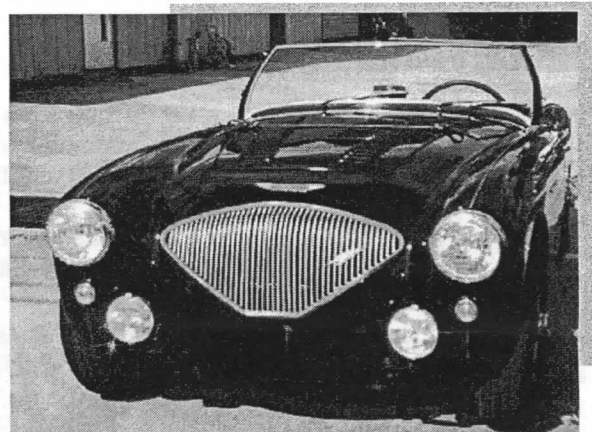
The 10th Annual
Flatwater Austin-Healey Club
of Nebraska

All-British Car & Cycle Meet

Sunday, September 28, 2003

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lincoln Public Schools' District Office Parking Lot
59th and "O" Sts.



- Free admission and car registration
- Fun show, no trophies awarded
- Family entertainment
- Voting for People's Choice and Diamond-in-the-Rough; recognition for Entry Driven the Farthest
- Restrooms and concessions
Shopping nearby

For more information,
call: Jim Danielson (402) 464-3733 or
John Ulrich (402) 421-9252.



AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB

Elkhart Lake 2003

by John Ulrich

Some things are just too good to be true, which is why they aren't, and that's a fact. If I told you all the wondrous, jaw-dropping, belly-busting, visual and aural experiences of this year's trip to the land of bratwurst you'd call me a liar. If I said the temperature range was in the 70s and 80s, you'd think I was a liar and crazy.

Well, it's all a fact, and that's the truth. This year at least a dozen Flatwater members made the trip to RoadAmerica (which arguably could be the best race track in the USA) to watch the annual Historic Races. Member Doug Buchanan does us one better, and actually races his Triumph GT-6.



Some of the FAHC members at RoadAmerica doing what club members do best – eating. From far left, Terry Worick, Scott Kahler, Steve Witt, John Ulrich and Dennis Stone. Honorary member Bud Dunklau is in front. Also seen at RoadAmerica were Dave and Marilyn Barnes, Doug Buchanan, Steve Espelund, Greg Lemon, Jeff Lemon and Jim Stork. Photo credit: Jim Danielson

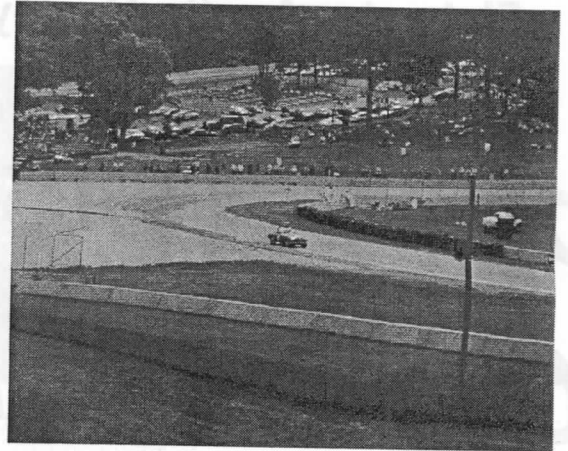
While some folks drove modern cars and motor homes, there were still enough LBCs, (and a Porsche) to add flavor, and offer the possibility of a breakdown.

The trip is really a mosaic which constitutes the whole experience, and racing is but one piece. There is the adventure of getting there. (and back).

There are the sights and sounds of the pits and paddocks. There is the incredible charm of the village of Elkhart Lake, mixed with the rarified air of the rich, beautiful, fast and famous.

There is the companionship of your friends, as you discover every delight of the weekend. And there is the food. Ah, the food.

Racing on the blacktop, Turn 5, at RoadAmerica Racing in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. Reserve your room now for next year. Photo credit: Jim Danielson



You meet the nicest people at the "Historics." A woman came all the way from Florida to race her Bugeye Sprite.

She let me take her picture, and showed me her rear end. (the car's, that is) It had a "ROOKIE" bumper sticker on the back.

A fellow named Bill owns a gaggle of Jags and 'Vettes, but chooses to race an MGA. He is the CEO of a very large corporation, and still took time to chat with little old me.

The "best Italian restaurant in Sheboygan" stayed open to feed about ten of us late one night. The waitress, a young woman off to college this fall, had been "on" for about ten hours, and was still smiling. I hope the tips we left will help with tuition.

Words fail me in describing a Can-AM McLaren blasting down the back straight. I can't write about a Lotus Elan flat outrunning Jags, Mustangs, 'Vettes, and everything else in B, C, and D Production.

"The trip is really a mosaic which constitutes the whole experience, and racing is but one piece."

As loud and brash as I can be, I'm still reduced to Peeping Tom status as I watch Brian Redman and Augie Pabst (as in Blue Ribbon Beer) locked in earnest conversation.

I'm in a dream world as I walk right by 427 Cobras, (real ones) because I've already seen so many in the first 24 hours.

If there is a point to this, it's to go the Elkhart Lake and experience these things for yourself.

It took me 50 years to get there, and now you can't stop me from going. Sit down with any of us who were there or yours truly.

We'd love to tell you all about it.

Miscellaneous Sputterings *by John Rued*



Much is made of the vintage races at Elkhart Lake. As this is the Midwest, I have to appreciate that. But, to a kid growing up in Northern California, Monterey is where the action is.

I remember my first trip to Laguna Seca in 1981. It was the year of Mercedes. Three of us piled into a friend's MGB to see our autoshop teacher race his TR-3.

Route preparation was limited to making a photocopy of the race flyer.

Vehicle preparation was limited to cutting out the opaque rear window; the top had to be raised to allow my buddy Mike a place to "lay." (At 5'4", Mike was the best candidate to "ride" in back.)

I remember underestimating the time it took to get there. We didn't factor in the time required to stop at Ferrari Los Gatos to check out the new Morgan Plus Eights. We didn't factor in the time required to re-seat the thermostat housing using seat vinyl as a gasket on the long, hot climb into the Santa Cruz mountains.

We made up some time, though. By mis-reading the abstract map on the flyer, we inadvertently took a short cut through the ranges of Fort Ord.

I'm not sure who was more surprised on that dirt road: us, or the three helmeted and goggled GIs with the jeep-mounted recoilless rifle.

We made some money, too, as the short cut allowed us to bypass the track admissions gate.

We arrived at the track just in time to see the TR-3 race. And the Cobras and Vettes as they shook the Dunlop bridge. And Phil Hill taking laps with the featured W196.

I came away realizing that, at age 18, it would take me a few more years to do this kind of thing with these kinds of cars.

Now it's 22 years later. I am planning a return to Monterey. But now the route planning is more complex. I must account for airfares, hotels, and car rentals.

But the experience will be the same.

As will the realization that, at age 40, it will still take me a few more years to do this kind of thing with these kinds of cars.



By Marv Marshall

From the Presidential Garage

I'm glad this month is over. It's been one dandy thirty-one days!

Most of the usual band of suspects know why Sue and I have been scarce at all the club functions. I'll offer up this story for the rest of you out there in Flatwater Land. The last of the old-time lumber yards succumbed to Menard's and had one heck of a sale.

Being the good provider I am, I spent all of the parts money for Sue's Bugeye on 2x4s and such. Then I had to store it all in and around the little Sprite. The B was spared Shaw's paint gun a little longer since it's buried in there somewhere, too.

Also my neighbors took pity on the house and me

and tore off ALL the old shingles on Sue's house and the rental next door. Now I have to build that dormer and turret I promised her several years ago and re-shingle.

(I might even have a comfortable place to sleep in the garage if some of that wood was out of there and up on the house instead.)

Only in the Heartland could the President of the premier Austin-Healey Club in all of the Midwest drive a Chevelle! We almost took it to the All-British but the Voice Of Reason and his little bridey Martha Johnson persuaded us to ride with them.

I never thought you could drown in an MGA but I wasn't too sure after this year's meet. KCI recorded 8.73" in 24 hours. I saw some judges peeking under rain tarps Sunday morning so those that entered may still get a trophy.

It's all Ryan's fault. He drove a freshly-painted MGB down and everyone knows that attracts rain proportional to the quality of the paintwork.

I have a number of unclaimed cans and bottles left over from the Saturday Night Meeting at All-British. If you are missing any and can identify them I will gladly return them.

(continued back page)

Flatwater Austin-Healey Club of Nebraska

an affiliate of the Austin-Healey Club of America

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www.flatwater.org

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The Flatwater News is published for members like:

The Flatwater News is published monthly. Members are welcome and encouraged to contribute items to: fahcmailbag@yahoo.com. All submissions may be edited for length and information.

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Virgil and Audrey Neu (on left) and Brian and Jane Goldsmith (on right).

Virgil and Audrey joined the club this year and have a Triumph Spitfire which they've brought to Fish and other events. They live in Omaha.

Brian and Jane Goldsmith live in Council Bluffs, Iowa with their MGAs, MGB and Riley.

Thanks for being members!

Continued from page 7

Also, one of the officers is missing a blender. If you find it let me know.

I'm closing on a serious note this month. My dear friend Wes in Gering, NE lost his mother, Betty Robinson, to Alzheimer's. Betty was my adopted mother.

My parents having passed on years earlier and no brothers or sisters

at the time, I found myself alone raising two boys in the '80s.

Wes and I were like brothers and Betty's husband Ed said I gave him as much grief as any of his kids, so I ought to be one. So I am. And I am honored. And Betty Robinson will be sorely missed.

See you all at the FAHC show on the 28th, if not before.

P.S. Get your costume ready for Halloween. I'd tell you more but the Editor has me on a strict word-count and if I go over it she'll cut me off in mid-sentence...

Marvin