

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

Events for July 2012

July 4



Have a safe & happy
Independence Day!

July 11, Wednesday 6:30 pm
Officer's Meeting
Honey Creek Restaurant
Waverly, NE

July 12, Thursday, 6:30 pm
Pub Night
Sean O'Casey's Pub
10730 Q Street
Omaha, NE

July 12-15
Elkhart Lake Historic Races
Elkhart Lake, WI

July 18, Wednesday, 12 pm,
Lincoln Lunch
The Steakhouse
3441 Adams St
Lincoln, NE

July 21, Breakfast, 9:00 am
D&K Restaurant
104 E Glenmore St
Gretna, NE

July 27, Fish, 6:30 pm
Lee's Restaurant
1940 W Van Dorn St
Lincoln, NE



**Tedd & Nancy Bliessman's firecracker red Spitfire in front of
the Crawford County Courthouse in Denison, IA**

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From your editor...

Chrissy Conant

I apologize if the confusion regarding last month's breakfast date caused anyone any inconvenience. Please keep me updated of any date, time, location changes for all events. Thanks very much.

I don't have confirmation if we have or do not have an officer's meeting this month. It is on the schedule so we should be receiving an email to let us know.

There was a big crowd at Friday Fish at Lil' Burro in Bellevue. We filled 3 tables on the patio. It was a beautiful evening to sit outside, enjoy some enchiladas that really did taste as delicious as they looked, and sip some margaritas. Many of us took advantage of the sunny, mild evening to drive British. I think most of all we were very glad to see Barb looking healthy while she entertained us with her stories as usual.

Happy Independence Day (how can it already be July??)

Flatwater Austin-Healey Club

A chapter of the Austin-Healey Club of America

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Heartland Regional MG 2012
By John Ulrich
Photos by Richard Munding

There was a road trip on a beautiful day when you wouldn't turn the A/C on even if your car had it. There was a cookout. Good food, good friends, good times. There was a post cookout party in the hotel. Add cold drinks to good friends and good times. There were banana splits, chocolate shakes and rootbeer floats at a historic soda fountain. You know, the one where Harry S. Truman worked as a teenager. And in the middle of it all, a car show broke out.

Such was the 2012 version of the Heartland Regional MG meet held around the town square of Independence, MO. When all is said and done, the reason most of us go to these events is as per the first paragraph, with the car show being toward the bottom of the list. Yes, some awards came back home to affirm my belief that our club has a large number of excellent cars. As a matter of fact, (OK...a matter of opinion) Flatwater could mount a full-scale assault on this meet and really impact the show. Don't forget, there is an "Other" British class for non-MGs, and some of finest cars in attendance populated that category.



As in the past, voting was "People's Choice" with a judged "Best in Show" class. Candidates for BIC were selected by members of the Heartland committee. Terry Davis in his B-GT and Brian Goldsmith in his MGA won their classes. Bob Shaw, Bruce and Judy Cratty, and I took second place ribbons, and Jim Danielson and Ken Grant took third place awards. The real head scratcher was Cratty's beautiful MGB being second in *popular* voting, but being in contention for best of show. Oh well. Other cars deserving mention were Stephen Morris' ultra rare AC Greyhound V8, a gorgeous TR6, and a Morris Minor convertible that was just too cute.



To editorialize, I'd like to see more Flatwater members participate in this kind of event, especially if you've never been on trip with the club. Your car is just fine the way it is. There are plenty of "Drivers" in the show. The time commitment is down one day, back the next, and the opportunity to have fun with old friends and make new ones is priceless. See you on the road.



It's Kinda Like Golf

(But you never lose your ball)

By John Ulrich

Back in my golfing days, I tried to compete against myself and against the course. None of us will ever be Arnold Palmer at Augusta, so get over it, and just beat the little white ball around the cow pasture. The comparison to autocross is obvious. Think through the course, and try to improve your times on each run. Your car is the “Bag of clubs” with all its limitations, and you will never be Jimmy Clark or Jackie Stewart.

Enough analogies. To be blunt, I'd like to see more club members driving their British cars at our autocross events. Most all of our cars are suitable for the course. Everyone understands that times will vary from car to car, and driver to driver. Veteran autocrossers are eager to help anyone who asks, and dead cones or off-course excursions are perfectly acceptable. After all, let he (she) who has never made a driving mistake cast the first cone.

At our last event twenty-one drivers made runs in everything from a classic Mini to a Corvette. The three quasi classes of cars were British, Miata, and Lotus 7 clone with an Alfa Romeo engine. Fast times were:

Jay King (MGA) 108.34

John Ulrich (Bugeye Sprite) 108.40

Gerry Conant (TR7) 108.69

Tom Suppa (Lotus Alfa) 107.28 “Forte et prestissimo”!

Fred Schaffert (Miata) 106.37

John Pecoraro (Miata) 106.13

Scott Kahler (Miata) 105.56



Other completely fun-to-watch runs were turned in by Bill Redinger in his classic Mini, Marty Klein in the “Fright” (Ford 302 in a Bugeye), and Brian Goldsmith running in the 110 range in “Old Blue”, his well-loved and well-worn MGA. My own moment of humility came when Scott Kahler took my Bugeye on a “fun run”, and cranked off a 104.22 for an unofficial FTD. Oh well, remember it's just like golf, but darn, Scottie is fast!

Many thanks to Gerry Conant for another excellent course design, and for providing the timing equipment. Gerry always finds a way to get the most fun out of a given piece of parking lot. Thanks to Rich Brunke for hauling the cones on his trailer, and to Scott Kahler for chalking the lines. Special thanks to all the members who helped set up, ran their cars, and helped tear down and put away.

Our next driving event is August 12 at Lincoln Southwest High. (14th and Pine Lake Rd.). I'd love to see you there and RUNNING.

Hot Music & Cool Cars
Lincoln Municipal Band and Flatwater Austin-Healey Club
Sunday, July 8
Lincoln's scenic Antelope Park

Friends,

After last year's rain/thunder/lightning shortened event, we have been invited to a "Do Over". To refresh your minds, here is the information:

We display our cars on the grass in back of the audience seating area of the Muni Band venue in Lincoln's Antelope Park. We need to be there at around 5:30 or 6:00 so the cars are in place for viewing as the audience gathers. Please plan on staying through the concert. Monza exhaust systems and John Phillip Sousa do not mix well. Also, audience members who arrive a little late often like to see the cars after the concert. Yes, they all had an uncle, father, college roommate, or friend who "Had one of those" way back when, and never should have sold it!

The Band is made up of mostly professional musicians, many of whom play in Lincoln Symphony, Nebraska Jazz Orchestra or the 43rd Army Band, so expect "Real Music". Experience has taught us that lawn chairs, blankets, coolers and a picnic lunch or take out to make the evening even more enjoyable.

All our cars are welcome, but if you have something unusual or unique, even better. There is a sidewalk cutout South of the Auld pavilion where even an E-Type Jag or a Big Healey can get on the grass without a scrape.

RSVP to me, bugeyejohn@gmail.com only if you are able to attend. Let me know what car(s) you will bring. Pam Brunke or I will have windshield placards for you.

Questions? Home phone is 402-421-9252. Mobile is 402-429-0027.

Note! I will be in and out due to my class reunion in Seward that weekend, but will see you on Sunday.

Cheers,
John Ulrich



Blackhawk Farms Raceway is a 1.95 mile, 7 turn track located on a 219 acre farm (complete with brick silos) near South Beloit, Illinois, on the Illinois-Wisconsin border. It opened and the first race was held in 1967. At less than half the length of Road America, it is much more “Sprite-friendly” as it has only two relatively short straights. Several racing organizations hold events there and I raced with the Vintage Sports Car Drivers Association (VSCDA) for the first time on the weekend of June 16-17.

The setting at Blackhawk is picturesque and somewhat bucolic. Deer have been known to suddenly appear and run across the track on occasion (NOT good!). While our Age & Treachery Racing (ATR) group was walking the track on Friday night we saw a wild turkey hanging out near Turn 1 – fortunately no other uninvited wildlife showed up except for some raccoons raiding the trash cans later that night.

The track itself is rather technical due to its short length and being rather narrow – blow one turn and the next two or three can easily be messed up as well. The track surface left a little to be desired. It apparently hasn’t been repaved in awhile except for a couple of asphalt patches right at the apexes of Turns 1 and 7, at the beginning and end of the front straight. Unfortunately either the wrong material was used or it did not have enough time to set properly because it was fairly washboard-like in both turns.

The gators and track curbing also were different from what I’m used to. In some of the turns there are essentially 3 sets of gators at the corner exit, the innermost being basically like a rumble strip, the middle one being a bit rougher, and the outside one being guaranteed to break an axle if you’re foolish or sloppy enough to venture that far out when exiting a corner. A couple of the turns have curbing that is almost as high as that found on the street – also something to stay off of.



As if worrying about errant wildlife and running over those suspension-busting gators wasn’t enough, our run group had 51 (!) cars in it. That is a LOT of cars for a short, narrow, 1.9 mile track. Colin Comer, who was the fastest qualifier in our group and won both the Sprint and Feature races in his Bugeye, said that in the Qualifying Race he was starting his second lap when some of us slower guys were still coming onto the track – Scary! It was like racing in rush hour. I had gotten to the track Friday afternoon, but only got in one practice

The Blackhawk Farms Race Report



FUMES

By
Terry Davis

session. The two Saturday morning practices were essentially rained out, so I was still awfully green when we started the Qualifying Race on Saturday afternoon.

I don't really understand how VSCDA classifies and groups cars as our run group D had a wide variety of cars with rather disparate power levels. There were the usual Sprites, Midgets, Spitfires, and MGBs, but also big Healeys, TR3s, TR4s, Lotus 7s, Porsche 914s, Elvas, Datsuns, Volvos, an XK-120, a Saab Sonnett, and a couple of really obscure cars – a Triumph Kellison and a Tornado Talisman.

Of the 6 run groups, one deserves special mention. Group A was composed of pre- and early post-war sports cars, including 5 MG-TCs, 3 MG-TDs, a Morgan 4, an MG-J2, a Lester MG, two 1926 Bugatti Type 37s, and a 1933 Ford Indy racer. Man, was that cool! I don't think I've ever seen those types of cars racing before.



Anyway, back to our Group D races. Like I said, with 51 cars registered for our run group Qualifying was a bit scary, but I was able to finish 38th with an unimpressive best lap time of 1:44.619. By comparison Colin Comer, the fastest guy, was running in the 1:24s. Still, I didn't feel too bad given the fact that it was my first time on the track, we were running in HEAVY traffic, and I finished a fair number of places above the bottom. When you don't set your expectations very high, you won't be disappointed!

In the Sprint Race later Saturday afternoon we started with 41 cars and I felt much more comfortable. I had some good dicing with a green MGB that I passed and a bit of excitement when a red MGB, who was closing in on me fast on the front straight, locked up his brakes and went 4-off. I was able to move up to 29th place and cut more than 4 seconds off my best lap time for a 1:40.588 as I started to learn the track. I skipped the Sunday morning Scramble Handicap Race and missed a bit more excitement when the left front spindle on fellow ATR driver "Bugeye Dave" Williams' Sprite broke, causing his left front wheel to come off, sending him off the track. Fortunately it appeared that the only casualties were some minor body damage to the Sprite and some bruising of Dave's ego.

Sunday afternoon's 12-lap Feature Race started with 40 cars. I started next to a white TR4, was able to get a good jump on him at the start, and fairly quickly left him behind. A faster yellow Saab Sonnett, who had DNF'd in the Sprint Race and started behind me, caught me early on lap 4. I was able to hold him off for a couple of laps, outpulling him on the straights, and we had some good dicing until I missed a downshift going into Turn 7 at the end of lap 5, allowing him to pass me on the inside. Once he got by me, I couldn't catch him.



I did, however, catch and pass the XK-120 – my moment of glory for the weekend – helping prove that Blackhawk’s short length and quick turns favor our smaller and less powerful, but more nimble, Sprites. Bugeyes took places 1, 3, 4, and 9 overall in the Feature Race! I finished 6th of 9 in class and 24th of 40 overall – a decent mid-pack finish. I also shaved another 3 seconds off my best lap time for a 1:37.758.



My goals for the weekend included racing at a new track, spending some time with friends, not breaking anything, and not embarrassing myself. Mission accomplished. Next up is Road America at Elkhart Lake. See you in the paddock!

Homecoming Parade

Kat Sires-Anderson

Omaha North High Magnet would like us to once again participate in their homecoming parade September 21st from 12:00 pm until 2:30 pm on 30th Street. The parents and homecoming royalty loved riding with us. Please email Katharine.anderson@ops.org if you are interested for the place to meet and entrant number.

<http://www.ops.org/high/north/>

For Sale

1976 Triumph, 69,000 miles, New Mexico car, no rust, Maroon with tan top and interior, red line tires, very good driver, \$7000

1976 MGB, 104,000 miles , nice clean car , Tahiti Blue with black top and interior ,Weber carb , good driver-tired motor , \$2900

1970 MGB, 65,000 miles, complete parts car or complete rebuild, motor runs but smokes, Weber carb, wire wheels \$1000

Too many cars and too little space. Please contact Dennis Lines at 712-898-9169 for more info.

Cars Wanted

Jaguar, XK-XKE ,MGT series, MGA Triumph TR-2 3-4-250, Mercedes 190,220,230,250,280SL, Porsche 356,911,914, Austin Healey, Riley, Alfa-Romeo, Singer, Mustang 1964-1967 Model T, A Also other interesting European and American made cars. Steve's British Connection 630-553-9023 email sbcinc@aol.com Actively buying cars for over 17 years, any condition, fast payment and pick-up. Generous finder's fees.

MGA Wire Wheels

For sale: Four 48 spoke wire wheels with Hercules radials from my MGA. Tires were new in 1996 and look almost like new; wheels are in pretty good shape -- run fairly true with vibration at some speeds. Time for 60 spoke wheels and new tires -- as soon as I find a home for these. \$125 for the set. Jay Fluehr, 402-334-0509, fluehr1@yahoo.com

Magazines

Dave Barnes has 10 years of the official Austin Healey club magazines, from 1997 through 2007. He would like to find a home for these magazines. Contact Dave at 402-680-4290 cell or dwbarnes@sprintmail.com

FAHC REGALIA

Pam Brunke has a nice selection of the official Flatwater Austin Healey Club hats available for members to purchase. Cost is \$15.00 each. For more information, or to request your favorite color, call Pam at (402) 438-3330, or by email at P_brunke@yahoo.com



Pam will bring your hat(s) to you at the next club event. Limited quantities remain, not all colors available.

Also available in limited quantities are blue polo shirts with the club logo in sizes M, L, XL, for \$30 and XXL for \$32.



Many of our members have requested the Flatwater logo be made available to be applied to their garments of choice. We have made arrangements with Art F/X in both their Lincoln and Omaha locations to embroider the Flatwater logo onto your articles for a fee of \$8.00.

Their locations and phone numbers are:

7400 Cross Lake Lane	4142 South 144 th St
Lincoln, NE 68516	Omaha, NE 68137
(402) 421-2611	(402) 330-4488

ARTICLES PLEASE

The newsletter is an excellent way to share information with the club. Send me details of your event, current project, or other club related activities. Send pictures

if you have them. Thank you very much for your participation!

cigi@cox.net

FRONT PAGE PHOTOS

Please send photos of yourself with your LBC. I would like to feature a different member and their car for the front page of each issue. cigi@cox.net

CLASSIFIED ADS

Find a home for that car, car part, or other car related merchandise. Classified ads are available at no charge to club members for club related items. Send your description and photos to your newsletter editor.

cigi@cox.net

AREA EVENTS

Classic Car Night, every Tuesday starting May 1, The Twisted Tail , 2849 335th St, Beebeetown, IA

ENWICC Meeting, Wednesday July 18, 7:30 pm, Golden Corral, North 27th, Lincoln