



Flatwater News

September
2013

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

Events for September 2013

09/08/13 Saturday, 9:00 am

Breakfast
D&K Restaurant
20596 Hwy 370
Gretna, NE

09/11/13 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

Officers's Meeting
Honey Creek Restaurant
13631 Energy Way
Waverly, NE

09/12/13 Thursday, 6:30 pm

Pub Night
Sean O'Casey's
2523 S 140th Ave
Omaha

09/15/13 Sunday, 9:00 am

Autocross
Lincoln North Star Highschool
5801 N 33rd St
Lincoln

09/18/13 Wednesday, 12 pm

Lincoln Lunch
The Eatery
2548 South 48 St
Lincoln, NE

09/27/13 Friday, 6:30 pm

Fish
Steel Horse
Nehawka, NE

09/29/13 Sunday, 12:00 pm

Airport Speed Run
Scribner Airbase
1570 County Rd J
Scribner, NE

Save the date

FAHC Fall Drive
October 13, 2013

Holiday Party

January 19, 2014, 12:30 pm



This Month's Features

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A chapter of the Austin-Healey Club of America

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LittleBritishCar/?fref=ts>

Horsepower vs More Horsepower

Photos by Bill Redinger



MALARIA

By Jeff Lemon

Sometimes people in the tropics come down with malaria. They seem to recover, but then some morning they wake up sweating with a bad case of the shakes. A nasty bug, it keeps coming back, you never really get rid of it. (With apologies to Peter Egan, it just fits so well!)

I love the Spridget family of cars. I bought my first one in 1974. I've owned a 1964, 1965, 2 1966s, a 67, a 68 and a 72. I never had the car that started it all though, no Bugeye. Of course, I'd driven, ridden in and worked on them, Doug Taylor had a yellow one I helped him with quite a bit, I almost bought one twice, but never did. I sold my "last" Spridget a few years ago. Too many cars, not enough time and money, and a lot harder to get in and out of than they were in '74, especially with the top up. A sad day, my last Spridget gone, oh well, nothing lasts forever, except maybe malaria.

I brought my soon to be 13yr old son, Gavin to the June Flatwater Healey club autocross. He took some rides, took some great pictures, and we spotted a "for sale" flyer with a picture of a well worn green bugeye. I'm not sure who brought it up first, but we started talking about a father/son project to work on together. He'd need a car to drive in a few years anyway..... Shock of shocks my wife Liz was receptive to the idea. She liked the idea of anything to keep him off the computer and video games.

I called the owner, Bill Cook, and asked him about the car. Well he said, "back in 63 he had a little fender bender, but I got it fixed at the dealer." I asked him how long he had owned it, and he told me he was the first owner. He had been planning for years to get it back on the road, but it just wasn't going to happen. He said really wanted the car to go to a good home, so it wasn't on Craigslist or eBay. He was in Omaha, and I had to go there the next day to drop off a friend of my daughters'. The car was only a mile and a half away from her house. It was starting to look like fate was playing it's hand. We took a look at the car, the engine turned, but hadn't been started since 1973. The top was a wreck, missing one seat cushion and a few pieces of interior trim, but the rest was there and in good shape. Even the trunk mat and sideboards were in place. I think this is the only Spridget I've ever bought that didn't need a front end rebuild. The best news was that except for some surface rust on the primed bonnet there was NO RUST (more on this later), solid rockers, solid floors, no cutting, no welding, wow! It came with some new brake parts, and an old Clymer's shop manual. How could I not make an offer? Bill wouldn't name a price, so I had to break the first rule of car buying and name the price. I told him what I would ask for the car if it was mine, what I would accept as bottom dollar, then what I was willing to spend (much less), as I WAS NOT in the market for a car (yeah right). Driving back Gavin told me he really wanted the car. I warned him it was low horsepower, no amenities, slow as dirt. He still wanted it. I called Bill, and eventually we met in the middle, I think we were both happy, us with the price, Bill with where the car was going to live. I called vintage Sprite racer Terry Davis and he graciously supplied his time, his trailer and tow vehicle. There will be a special place in sportscar heaven for people like Terry. Many thanks Mr. Davis. A



week later, Gavin had his Bugeye.

Stay tuned for more reports on our adventures getting a title, assessing the car and the plans and progress of the restoration. It seems my malaria is back, and I think it runs in the family, anybody have any quinine ?

Explorations and Discoveries Summer 2010

The following is part two of the ongoing, glacially slow restoration of my son Gavin's 1961 Bugeye Sprite.

The plan is to have the car running by the time Gavin gets his drivers license. My wife and I paid for the car, but he will be working detassling corn over the summers to earn parts money, this being about the only way a kid under 16 can make some serious cash. The work entails getting up at 4am and working in the cornfields of Nebraska in heat as high as 105 degrees, sometimes not getting home until 3 or 4pm. Gavin is going to EARN this car.

Gavin and I dove into the car and boxes of parts and turned up some cool stuff. The seatbelts were made by the Rupert parachute company in Indiana, a little research turned up the fact that they were a big after market supplier in the early sixties. It came with new brake lines and some other new brake parts to install, but the master cylinder was frozen solid. The exhaust was a period ANSA in good shape. It had snow tires mounted on the rear wheels, a reminder of when we used these cars for daily transportation.

The engine turned, but I had to cut off the thermostat housing as it had fused to the studs. The water passages under the thermostat were full of semi solid gunk. We pulled the head and the block was the same story. I pulled the water pump and plugged all the water passage holes in the block except the back one and ran a hose til the water ran clear, I did the same for all the water passages, and cleaned out the head with a hose. (After we run the car a bit, we will flush the system with some nasty two part radiator cleaner I bought years ago and never used.) We got the head back on, primed the oil pump and spun the engine to build pressure. The fuel pump worked then stopped,(blocked fuel line) so I hooked up a line from the pump to a gas can, bingo, we had gas. I had a new distributor cap with wires on it in the rafters, and the old one looked worn, so I put on the new cap. KICK SPLUTTER BOOM ! KICK SPLUTTER BOOM. After much head scratching I compared the two caps and the new one had the wires off by 90 degrees. Problem solved. It ran ! A little smoke at first, then it settled down to a clean high idle. I turned it down a bit and let it warm up. Good oil pressure, so we shut it down. We bled the brakes and got a good pedal. At this point I should have driven it a bit to evaluate the transmission, but the tear it down fever was upon us.

Out came the magic markers, PB blaster, baggies and boxes we took pictures, carefully labeled parts, baggies and boxes(we thought, just try to find all this stuff 2 years later!!). We stripped off everything that would come off except the front suspension, which is great except for one shot shock and bad trunnion bushings. The engine was pulled by parking it under my 4 post lift and putting a chain around one of the ramps. The entire rear suspension including the leaf springs came off with only one broken bolt, thanks to it's year of dry storage and the miracle that is PB Blaster. I didn't even have to heat anything up. More that I can say for the 67 Midget that started all this back in 1974 that rust had welded together into one semi solid piece. We went through the parts catalogs page by page and marked all the parts we would need. We added it up, then hoped we could get lucky at swap meets, or on ebay. We made a wish list of upgrades. Dual circuit disc brakes, a slightly built 1275, a ribcage transmission at the least, a 5 speed even better. A roll bar would be a great place to mount a third brake light, right? A tube shock kit would be a great improvement along with a 3.90 rear end to go with the 1275.

Winter 2010 to Winter of 2011

Not much happened that first winter despite the best of intentions. Gavin got new front badge for Christmas, and I went to the big swap(99% American iron) meet at the Lancaster convention center and found 4 correct

wheels with new tires for \$75, but that was about it. I figured in the spring we would get going after my wife's annual garage sale, but another car got in the way. During the garage sale a woman spotted my TR7 and said her brother in law had one just liked it that hadn't run in 10 years he might want to sell. He was less than a mile away, it "ran when parked" and needed 4 tires to be a roller, but it was \$300, how could I say no? Long story short, tearing it apart for spares took up the garage space that spring, by the time it was gone, Gavin was detassling corn from 5am til 2 or 3 every day, so he was out of it as far as car work was concerned.

A friend showed me a website for a "field of dreams" car auction that summer. You name it, it was there. Micro cars, 50s and 60s American, a Renault Dauphine(we had one in the 60s), BMW 2002s, tons of bug stuff(what my friend was after), pre WWII and WWI farm trucks, AND...TR7s, MGBs, and MG MIDGETS. It was steaming hot and the crowd was huge. Dan and I checked out all the possibles, and I saw the car I wanted. It was 74 MG Midget that had been t-boned. It had a header and an aluminum valve cover. The engine/trans/rear brakes were locked(and still are, maybe we'll tear it down next spring). But this car will yield the dual circuit brakes, 3.90 diff, 1275 engine and transmission we need. The fact that it was t-boned should mean it was running when parked. The bonnet was down, plugs in the head, and all hoses intact, so the engine was closed up and hopefully will just need freshening. We lost the fall to some minor surgery for me, and things are stopped for the winter except for Gavin polishing all the original chrome. We will need new rear bumperettes and minor parts like the fastenings for the top, but everything else is in good shape. One windshield pillar had a small crack, but I found a good one on ebay.

Spring of 2012 to Winter of 2012

Spring of 2012 finds Gavin in the garage stripping paint, a combination of sanding, chemical stripper and an el cheapo "sandblast from a bucket" kit for the hard to reach areas. Stripping the paint we did find some rust on both the rockers, both wheel arches, and the drivers side floor. I bought a MIG welder and put in patch panels, and to quote my brother, "my welding skills don't seem to get much better, but my grinding skills sure have improved". All told I used less than 2sq feet of metal, most of that on the drivers' floor.



The paint was totally stripped, and any surface rust taken off, then treated and encapsulated just for extra insurance. I used epoxy primer and filled and sanded and filled and sanded..... My garage is still tinted blue



from all the sanding dust. We did the underside of the car while it was on my lift, then the interior followed by the exterior. We both decided we didn't like the original Leaf Green paint. If it was a first year 100-4 or something rare, we would have sprayed the original color, but hey, it's a Bugeye, British racing green it is. BLVC25 a later MGB color. The painting was done over Labor Day weekend, and I borrowed a newer HVLP gun. I never did get it dialed in right and after a very rough initial coat, I went back to my 30 year old Sharpe and things got better, but still a lot of orange peel to sand from that first coat.



The next big decision is the interior. The options are: Basic black, Black with white piping, black with green piping, or perhaps a shade of tan. The tan would look great but be toughest to coordinate, needing seats, carpet, top and tonneau to all go together.

As we work on reassembly, we realize we weren't as careful as we thought. Nuts and bolts have gone missing, and we didn't take near enough photographs. Today I was delayed by finding little things that needed to be stripped or painted to finish the rear suspension and the brakes.

These things I vow before I restore another car:

- 1) I will have a parts washer, a bead blasting cabinet and a vibratory tumbler
- 2) I WILL phot everything I take apart, taking special care to identify where things go through the firewall, where clamps are and what kind of fastener was used to attach them
- 3) I WILL plan things in advance, cleaning and painting small parts while **KEEPING TRACK OF WHAT GOES WHERE!**

Do you believe any of that? You do? Hey, I'm buying that car you have for sale on Craigslist, how about I agree to pay the asking price sight an offer sight unseen if you'll just take this check for twice the amount, cash it and give the extra back in cash?

FUN STUFF

Toddler Buys Dad Classic Car on Ebay

The Redingers sent me a link to this video. You're right guys, she IS a good shopper!

<http://www.usatoday.com/videos/news/2013/07/11/2510777/>

CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale

One Man Bleeder Bottle

Try the One Man bleeder bottle the next time you need to replace brake fluid or after brake work to expel all air bubbles in the closed system.



Attach the bottle with heavy duty magnet to your axle, frame or brake component. Take silicone line and attach to bleed screw, back off screw and make sure master cylinder stays full of brake fluid. Pump brakes and new fluid will fill system without back up due to built in check valve. Close bleed screw when finished, attach line back onto vent plug. No mess and easy! High quality components.

I am selling this popular unit for \$20, call me at [402-890-0051](tel:402-890-0051) or send an email bpkasl@gmail.com for your order.

Brent Kasl FAHC

Mr Sport Car, Inc Repair – Sales – Restoration Since 1960

If you want to know anything about the mechanics of your older sports car, stop by; let's talk; free advice gladly given.

For 53 years we have been fighting this stuff and we still love it! With that kind of experience, I can probably help.

Jim or Mark
402-592-7559
719 W 6th St, Papillion

Exhaust System

I just finished putting a new exhaust system on my MGB and now have a good used system from the old style manifold back to, but not including the rear muffler (straight pipe instead of middle muffler). Now for sale - \$50.

Chuck Wise [402-547-1382](tel:402-547-1382) or
omahawise@gmail.com

FAHC REGALIA

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. Please allow 2 weeks for your item to be embroidered.

Their locations and phone numbers are:

7400 Cross Lake Lane 4142 South 144th 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. Non-members may place an ad for \$30 or join the club for \$20 and place free ads. Send your description and photos to your newsletter editor. cigi@cox.net

Updated FISH Schedule



Steel Horse, Nehawka, 27 Sep

One Eyed Dog Saloon, Eagle, 25 Oct

La Mesa, Bellevue, 06 Dec

COVER PHOTO

The Tardis....and could she possibly be the Doctor's future companion?