



Flatwater News

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

Events for April 2015

4/24/2015 Friday 6:30pm

Fish Night
Steel Horse
Nehawka, NE

4/26/2015 Sunday 9 am for set-up

Autocross
Southwest High School
Lincoln, NE

Events for May 2015

5/13/2015 Wednesday 6:30 pm

Officer's Meeting
Honey Creek Restaurant
Waverly, NE

5/14/2015 Thursday 6:30 pm

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

5/15 -5/17

Road America
Elkhart Lake, WI

5/16/2015 Friday 9:00 am

Breakfast
Billy's Gretna Café

5/17/2015 Sunday

Spring Car Show
Shadow Lake
72nd & Hwy 370
Papillion, NE

5/21/2015 Thursday 12 Noon

Lunch
The Eatery
Lincoln, NE

5/29/2015 Friday 6:30 pm

Fish
Cedar Creek, NE

5/31/2015 Sunday

Autocross
TBA

Autocross Number One 2015

Sunday, April 26 will mark the beginning of the Club's six-event autocross season.

All club members and spouses may participate. Here is some basic information.

The events are held on the Lincoln Southwest High School parking lot at approximately 14th Street and Pine Lake Road. We begin setting up the course an about 9:00 A.M. and any help is always appreciated. The cars are divided into two run groups, and depending on time and the number of cars, everyone gets six to eight timed runs. When your group is not driving, you become course workers, timers, flagmen, cheerleaders, etc. You will need a helmet, but we have loners, so don't go buy one unless you wish. Your car will have to pass a basic inspection. This is no big deal, and if you are driving on the street without issues, it will pass "Tech". Your lap seat belt, or factory three point seatbelt is completely satisfactory.

Please remember this is first and foremost, a fun event. No one needs to go fast. Drive in your comfort zone, and enjoy the handling that made British Cars famous. Often, first time participants will glide gently around the cones just to learn the characteristics and dynamics particular to their car. More experienced drivers are always happy to give demonstration drives, or ride along to help you learn to "Read" an autocross course. There will be members "going for it", but many of them have cars prepared for autocross, and all of them were "Rookies" once.

We hope to see you Sunday. Please call or text John Ulrich at 402-429-0027, or email at bugeyejohn@gmail.com. for more information.



From the Presidential Garage



As a charter member of Flatwater, I've held one office or another for 15 years. This however, is a column I thought I'd never write. Heck, the presidency wasn't even on my radar as I always fancied myself as a "worker bee". Anyway, here goes.

If you own, love and drive a LBC, you know that the New Year really doesn't start on January 1, but the date cars come out of winter hibernation. Now that it's officially driving season, I've made a resolution, and I'm suggesting fellow members do the same. Here are some possibilities.

1. I resolve to attend a Flatwater event as yet unattended. Mine is Pub Night in Omaha. Yours may be an autocross, (yes, you can drive gently and no one will judge you), Friday fish, Noon lunch, the Spring Show, Breakfast, etc.
2. Perhaps take an overnight trip/tour in your LBC with your spousal unit, (if applicable) and some of your FAHC friends. Truly, some of my (our) best times have come from such adventures.
3. Attend a regional car show. We're all familiar with All British, and Heartland MG in the Kansas City area, but there are others. In days past, the caravan to the show was the high point of the trip. Don't obsess! I've put a dirty car in a show without any guilt because I DROVE it there.
4. Help plan, or volunteer to help with a FAHC event. I thought I knew a lot of club members, but just working the registration desk at the fall show help me put names and faces together. You really get to know club members when you are shoulder to shoulder at an event.
5. Lastly, you'll notice that we have our newsletter up and running. So write something! Steve Hartman says, "Everyone has a story". Tell us yours. Two paragraphs and a photo works fine, but but if you have a flash of inspiration, the LBC version of "Pilgrim's Progress" works too.

All right, enough words for today. I am going to the garage.



Fumes

by

Terry Davis

In Case You Missed It . . . The 2014 Racing Year in Review

We haven't had a newsletter in a while, so I thought I'd start off this new edition with a review of 2014's vintage racing season and give a peek at what's coming in 2015.

March 22-23 – MRLS – Not some scary, new flesh-eating bacteria or the latest hot sports sedan from one of those German automakers. Rather, MRLS – Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, one of the most historic racetracks in the country. The track opened in 1957 to replace the old Pebble Beach Road Races course, which was run on public roads and was felt to be too dangerous. Laguna Seca is known for the Andretti Hairpin, the Rahall Straight, the Rainey Curve, and of course, the world-famous Corkscrew – its signature feature. I won't go into a detailed description of the track this month, but will save that for next time and a review of my 2015 races there.

By my count, 11 of our Age & Treachery racers made the trip to MRLS in 2014. A couple live in California, but the rest of us came from Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, and me from Nebraska. The race was put on by the Historic Motor Sports Association (HMSA) for the weekend of March 22-23 and, to be honest, the track time we got for the races was a little short for the distance we drove. We had a practice Saturday morning, a race Saturday afternoon, a warm-up Sunday morning, and another race Sunday afternoon. I took advantage of the fact that there was a Hooked on Driving event on Friday, the day before the racing started. That gave me some extra track time and a little bit of coaching before the competition began.

So how did the racing go? It went well. HMSA apparently doesn't put cars into classes within a race group and our Sprites and Midgets were racing with Alfas, Elvas, Morgans, and a couple of Porsches. Also in our group were Kent and Jesse Prather, so...it's easy to figure out who was going to be at the front and who was going to be further back. Jesse wound up winning the Sunday Feature Race in an Elva Courier and Kent finished 3rd in his MGA. I finished Race 1 on Saturday 6th of 9 in our Sprite/Midget group and 22nd of 32 cars overall. Race 2 on Sunday went a bit better, with a 5th of 9 Spridget finish and 17th of 32 overall – solidly mid-pack. I lost to those guys I should have lost to and beat the guys I should have. It was a good weekend with only one downside. In Salt Lake City on the way home, my SUV was broken into and all of my clothes, racing gear, and, most importantly, my video equipment were stolen, so I lost my videos – crap! At least that gave me an excuse to go back this year. Again, more on that next time.

I do have some video that fellow ATR racer Wayne Miles sent me of Saturday's practice and race, which I've posted on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/N5PceK-YgUc>.



April 12-13 – Hallett – The 7th Annual Mike Stephens Vintage Classic was put on by Corinthian Vintage Auto Racing (CVAR). I have to say that I never seem to race that well at Hallett. I don't know if it's me or if the car isn't set up right. The Practice/Qualifying session did NOT go well – a 9th of 9 finish in class and 20th of 20 overall – dead freakin' last – UGH!

Saturday afternoon's race went considerably better – 5th of 7 in class and 10th of 16 overall. I dropped a bit in Sunday morning's race, finishing 6th of 7 in class and 14th of 17 overall. The attrition rate for the weekend was fairly high and only 13 cars started Sunday afternoon's race. My racing wasn't much better and I finished 6th of 6 in class and 11th of 13 overall. In sum, it was pretty ugly.

June 14-15 – Pueblo – I hadn't raced at Pueblo since 2008, so I was essentially a newbie, although I was able to relearn the track fairly quickly. Due to some transmission teething difficulties and worn-out tires, I decided to only race on Saturday. Morning Qualifying went fair, considering I had not been on the track in 6 years. I finished 8th of 9 in class and 22nd of 29 overall. I did a little better in Race 1 that afternoon, finishing 7th of 9 in class and 20th of 28 overall.

I was doing much better in Race 2 when an off-track excursion due to my worn-out Hoosiers late in the race meant that I had to come into the hot pits to get checked by the tech guys, dropping me back in the pack. Had I been able to hold my position I would have finished 5th of 9 in class and 16th of 28 overall. As it was, I was still able to finish 7th of 9 in class and 20th of 28 overall. Hey, at least I avoided finishing in the basement like at Hallett!

To watch a short video to see what happens at Hallett when you apex too early (note the big “X” on the purple Datsun that passes me), and at Pueblo when you run out of tire, go to: <http://youtu.be/wUmCfrDFihA>.

July 18-20 – Road America, “The Hawk” (a/k/a Elkhart Lake) – The BIG one each year and one of my favorite race weekends. A good-sized Flatwater group goes each year and that makes it all the better. The weekend's racing turned out to be a bit of a rollercoaster. Our run group was large and our little F-Production cars were racing with C-, D-, and E-Production sports cars as well as B- and C-Sedan cars, so most of our FP cars finished in the bottom half. I didn't do well in Practice on Friday, finishing 7th of 7 in class and 42nd of 42 cars that started the session – dead last again. Worse yet, my transmission self-destructed, taking me out of the Qualifying sessions on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning.

Fortunately, fellow ATR racer Scott Schmidt had a spare gearbox and was kind enough to lend it to me. With help from Scott, his dad Clancy, Bugeye Dave Williams, the rest of the ATR crew, and Terry Worick, we were able to get the gearbox swapped out in time for the Qualifying Race on Saturday afternoon. I started at the back of the pack and was able to finish 35th of 40 overall, but still last in class, 6th of 6.

For Sunday's Feature Race I was gridded 40th of the 40 cars that started the race – dead last again – Aaaaarrgggh! Things changed quickly, however. According to the grid sheet, there were 6 cars in our FP class. I was, of course, starting 6th. I got a good start and was able to move up 7 positions on the first lap, including passing a yellow Sprite on the start, an orange TR3 in Turn 5, and a blue MGA in Turn 6, all FP cars, putting me 3rd in class. As the race progressed, a couple of big Healeys passed me on the straights, but then really slowed me down in the turns, allowing the trailing MGA to catch me.

The MGA and I passed each other back and forth a couple of times until late in the race. On lap 5 I was able to put enough distance between us that I thought I could hold him off for the rest of the race and take 3rd place. I was pushing the car pretty hard, understeering onto the gators in Turns 3 and 8, trying to cement my lead over the MGA. Then, going into Turn 12 (Canada Corner), it happened...

I came in a little hot, the car understeered onto the gator on the left, and the car was suddenly thrown to the right, across the track and into the tire wall at the exit of the turn. Fortunately, I was okay, but the right front end was smashed and my race was over.

To add insult to injury, I later learned that one of the FP cars that I had thought was ahead of me had failed to start the race and the other (Scott Schmidt) had DNF'd with brake problems. Instead of racing for 3rd place, I was actually running 1st in class, just over a lap from the finish and a class win in a national race. Talk about the agony of defeat! I was still listed as finishing 4th of 5 in class and 33rd overall.

On a lighter note, when I was getting checked out by the medical people after the crash, the doctor asked me my phone number. After pausing a moment, I said, "Why, you're not going to call my wife are you?" He knew I was okay.

So after a bad start to the weekend, Elkhart's Feature Race was great up until that last entry into Canada Corner. Terry W. later found out that part of the left front suspension was broken, which had not hit the tire wall, so that may have been what caused the loss of control and subsequent crash. To watch a video of the race and its sudden end, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSlrqiFMMbY>.



August 30-31 – Hastings – My final race of the year was the RMVR Showboat Grand Prix at Hastings. With the damage to the car, Terry W. couldn't get it fixed in time for the RMVR High Plains race on the first weekend in August, just 2 weeks after Road America. He did a great job of getting it ready for the Hastings race at the end of the month. I usually race pretty well at Hastings, and the 2014 races turned out much better than my earlier races last year.

We had D-, E-, and F-Production cars in our Small Bore group, which included 3 Lotus

7s, a TR4, some Porsche 914s, an MGB, and 5 Sprites. The racing was a bit up and down at first. I finished 2nd of 4 in class and 7th of 14 overall in Practice, but dropped to 4th of 5 in class and 9th of 14 overall in Qualifying. In Saturday's Race 1 I moved back up to 2nd of 5 in class and 6th of 14 overall and then finished 2nd of 5 in class and 9th of 14 overall in Race 2. In Sunday's Race 3 I was able to finish 1st of 4 in class and 9th of 12 overall as our FP-class racers all finished at the back of the pack.

I had some great racing with Jimmy Aretakis, who also drives a blue Bugeye, in Sunday afternoon's Feature Race 4. I got a good start and led our quartet of Sprites for about the first half of the race. Jimmy tried a couple of times to pass me, but couldn't make it stick. Finally, he caught me and passed me going into Turn 4. I stayed with him for the next several laps and as we rounded Turn 13 for the front straight at the end of lap 11, I saw the signal – one lap to go. I knew that if I was going to make a run on him, I would have to do it then.

I had been faster than Jimmy through the high-speed, right-hand Turn 3 all weekend and decided that's where I'd make my move. I closed in on him in Turns 1 and 2 and then moved to the outside. Approaching the entry to Turn 3, I was close enough that he had to take an inside line and make an early apex. That caused him to slow a bit on the exit and allowed me, after a late apex, to squeeze by him on the inside. I stayed ahead of him for the next half-lap and took the checker to finish 1st of 4 in class and 9th of 12 overall. It was a good race and a good weekend!

What's next? – So that was 2014. What's happening in 2015? I've already done two race weekends. I made the trek out to California and raced at Laguna Seca again on March 21-22 and at Willow Springs on March 28-29. I'll write about those (and hope to have some videos done) for next time.

As I write this (April 15), Joe Guinan and I are planning to leave tomorrow for Pike's Peak International Raceway (PPIR) south of Colorado Springs for the 2015 RMVR Drivers' School. Joe will be doing the Competition School and is taking his first step toward getting a vintage racing license. I'll be teaching in the Precision Drivers' School for street cars. I'm sure we'll have some stories to write. Till then, see you in the paddock!

Southwest Iowa Bash

June 14, 2015 - SW Iowa Bash

1. Sunday, June 14th Steve and Kim Williams will host FAHC in Glenwood Iowa. They have made arrangements for us to meet at the Vine St. Cellars on the East side of the Square in Glenwood. We'll have plenty of parking to enjoy a little car show, some beverages and snacks. Around 4:00 we'll parade back to the Williams' for a pot luck BBQ and a garage tour. Oh, and it is Steve's Jag XKE's 50th Birthday, so there's a good possibility we'll see some cake.

Details:

Vine St Cellars, 17 N Vine St., Glenwood. 2:00 - 4:00 Wine, beer and soda. There will be some light snacks. Both indoor and outdoor seating is available.

Williams' 57681 Hains Rd., Glenwood after 4:00. Kim and Steve will provide meat, drinks and the tableware; bring a side dish if you'd like. Just RSVP so Steve and Kim know how many chairs to set up: [712-527-3008](tel:712-527-3008) or kimw8@icloud.com.

Getting there:

From Lincoln: Take HWY 34E (O St.) to HWY 75. Go north on HWY 75 to the HWY 34E turn off. (this will bypass the Plattsmouth Toll Bridge. The HWY 34E turn is north of LaPlatte). Take HWY 34E to the Glenwood Exit. Turn left (north) off the exit onto South Locust St. Continue to the stop light by the Amoco Station. Turn right onto Sharp St and go 2 blocks to Vine St. Turn Left onto Vine St. Vine St Cellars is about 1/2 way up the block on the north side.

From Omaha: *The Scenic route:* Go across the South Omaha Bridge Rd (HWY 92). Turn onto HWY 275. Continue into Glenwood. Turn left, north, onto Sharp St and go 2 blocks to Vine St. Turn left onto Vine St. Vine St Cellars is about 1/2 way up the block on the north side. (You may want to verify this route will be available before heading out as the I-29/HWY 92 interchange is under construction.)

The not as scenic route: I-80E to I-29S. Exit onto HWY 34E. Take HWY 34E to the Glenwood Exit. Turn left (north) off the exit onto South Locust St. Continue to the stop light by the Amoco Station. Turn right onto Sharp St and go 2 blocks to Vine St. Turn Left onto Vine St. Vine St Cellars is about

1/2 way up the block on the north side

Vine St Cellars to William's House, 57681 Hains Rd: South on Vine St. to Sharp St. Turn right onto Sharp St. Continue on Sharp St to Hawley Rd. (Sharp St changes name to Hilman Rd.) Right (west) on Hawley Rd. Continue for 0.9 miles to Hains Rd. Turn right on Hains Rd. Immediate right into the Williams' driveway. This is sure to be a great event!



There are no classifieds yet. Please send your for sale or wanted items to:

Jim Nichols

leon5050@aol.com

3001 South 51st

Lincoln, NE

402-560-1188

Feel free to send anything you want included in the newsletter.