



Photo: Nancy McCroskey's Sprite

Golden Gate Austin Healey Club, Inc. Chico, CA Vol 12, No. 9 October 2010

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The Danville Concours d'Elegance

by John Soderling

Picturesque downtown Danville provided the perfect backdrop for a sizable contingent of Golden Gate Austin Healey Club members to enjoy an exciting day displaying their 15 Healeys and several other automobile marques, in company with 200 exotic and historic automobiles, race cars, motorcycles and "woody" power boats assembled along Hartz Avenue for the 6th Annual Danville Concours d'Elegance. But first a few words are in order to explain how all these Healeys ended up in Danville on Sunday, September 19th cavorting with the likes of Ferrari, Maserati, Aston Martin and Alfa Romeo autos, plus Gar wood boats.



All aboard for the
San Francisco Bay
Dinner Cruise
Saturday, Dec 4
See page 11

The Golden Gate Austin Healey Club's involvement in the 2010 6th Annual Danville Concours d'Elegance actually began several months earlier when the event organizer approached me as I sat alongside my Austin Healey in downtown Danville, sipping a Starbuck's Café Mocha. He indicated that the Frederique Constant watch maker of Genève, Switzerland had donated a limited edition of its iconic Austin Healey Chrono-Automatic timepiece elegantly boxed together with a Austin Healey model car to the Danville Concours Committee. He

Bruce Campbell's 1955 100M

Continued on page 2

Danville Concours (continued)

threw out the challenge that if I could get eight or more nicely restored Healeys to participate in the Danville Concours, which benefits Parkinson's Disease research, that he would award the elegant timepiece to our local Austin Healey club.

With timely promotional help from Loren Parks, Jim Morton, and David Cross, and the philanthropic heart of 13 Golden Gate members and three other Healey owners, we ended up with 13 Austin Healeys, two Nash Healeys, one MGTD, one Pierce Arrow and a restored Austin Healey chassis gracing the Danville Concours d'Elegance! I knew our Club members would respond to the challenge. Here is the lineup:

Danville Concours d'Elegance: GGAHC Members and Healeys (members in bold-face font)

Cully & Julie Anderson	1958 100-Six	David & Jerri Nock	1957 100-6 & a restored chassis
Gary A. Anderson	1959 100-6	Bill Putman	1955 100M
Bruce Campbell	1955 100M	John & Bev Soderling	1957 100-6
Steve Cloyes	1959 100-6	Bruce Tameo	1956 100M
Dick Glass	1954 100M	Rob de Vogel	1956 100M
James MacDonald	1964 3000 Mk2	Jim & Maurita Walton	1953 Nash Healey Conv & 1954 Nash Healey Cpe
Jim & Ida Morton	1964 3000 Mk2	Luther & Alexia Gentry	1925 Pierce Arrow
Don & Cathy Newman	1967 3000 Mk3	Dan Sekella	1954 MGTD

The event opened at 11:00am with a driving parade of 20 vintage race cars rolling down Hartz Avenue exhibiting their most raucous exhaust notes. I recognized a number of these machines from my attendance at the Monterey Historics and CSRG races. The most prolific marque present was the sea of red Ferraris at the south end of Hartz Avenue. The Austin Healeys and Nash Healeys appeared to be the second largest group. *Smooth move GGAHC members!*

When it came time for our Healey group luncheon at the Basil Leaf Café, not everything went so smoothly. We didn't get seated until 45 minutes past our noontime reservation because a group that was seated at our tables at 10:30 a.m. refused to leave until 1:40 p.m. The problem was that the buffet lunch included unlimited champagne and mimosas and this group was either trying to drink their moneysworth or were too intoxicated to tell time. Thankfully our

group was very patient and understanding, possibly because the Café was plying us with mimosas.



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The Austin Healey chassis turned out to be a big attraction. In fact, David Nock was busy most of the day fielding questions about it. The most interesting observation was from a blond female who, looking somewhat puzzled,

Continued on page 3

Danville Concours (continued)

asked if this was a complete car. David's response was that when he left home the car had body panels and looked like all the other Austin Healeys here, but when he hit 90 MPH on I-580 on the way to the Danville Concours all of the body panels blew off. Her was response "wow" as she walked away totally believing David's story.



In addition to all the gorgeous Ferrari, Maserati, Aston Martin, Rolls Royce, Alfa Romeo and Healey automobiles, there was a very interesting and "lovely" 1940 Ford Super Deluxe woody surfer's station wagon replete (read "abundantly supplied") with period-costumed surfers on one of the side streets. Most of the Golden Gate members undoubtedly were too focused on the "concours" level auto entries or the free wine sampling to have even noticed this piece of West Coast Americana.



Cully Anderson (red shirt) admires the oldest surviving Aston Martin

The afternoon ended with the awards ceremony in which the elite class winners drove onto an elevated stage for trophy presentations. This activity was the only glitch in the entire well organized and executed *concours*. The first several automobiles that tried to drive up the platform ramp had to abandon the effort because they either dragged their exhausts at the ramp bottom or high centered at the ramp top, so the awards were presented at street level. The awards ceremony highlight for the GGAHC was when David Nock, Past President, accepted the beautifully boxed Frederique Constant limited edition Austin Healey Chrono-Automatic timepiece for the Club. Frédérique Constant has a history of Healey involvement as the Official Timing partner of the 2004 European Healey Meeting in St. Moritz, the 2005 Dutch Healey Anniversary, the 2006 Healey Le Mans Challenge, the 2007 Healey Challenge Heidelberg and the 2009 Austin Healey Conclave at Kingston, Ontario. The present thought is that we will auction off this Austin Healey timepiece, valued at over \$2,500, at the GGAHC sponsored 2013 Lake Tahoe Healey Rendezvous.



Dan Sekella with his 1954 MGTD



THANK YOU Healey owners and spouses for your support of Parkinson's Disease research and a day of gearhead camaraderie.





The Loneliest Road in America

by Loren Parks

In 1986 Life magazine featured an article of the same title pertaining to the portion of highway US 50 between Fernley and Ely, Nevada. Actually, US 50 runs from coast-to-coast and, like Route 66, some of it has been absorbed by the Interstate Highway system. But the 24 year-old legend lives on thanks to the Nevada Commission on Tourism and the few communities on the route which stand to benefit from tourism.

My wife, Diana, and I scheduled a three-week trip beginning in mid-September to visit some of the National Parks in Southern Utah. Our rig is a 28-foot fifth wheel pulled by a GMC Sierra 2500HD pickup (gas). We traveled 670 miles on Highway 50 from Fernley, Nevada, eastward to Green River, Utah, where we turned south to go to Moab. From Moab we visited Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, then worked our way southwest to visit Capitol Reef, Bryce, and Zion.



The reason for *the loneliest road* label is the lack of towns and population along the route, plus the low amount of traffic. Distances between gas stations—or any services at all—are long. For example, the distance from Fallon to the “living ghost town” of Austin is 110 miles, Austin to Eureka is 70 miles, and Eureka to Ely is 77 miles. These tiny old mining towns of Austin and Eureka have populations of about 300 and 435, respectively. Heading east from Ely there is a highway junction named Major’s Place where fuel can be purchased, but after that a distance of 88 miles to Delta, Utah, with no services.

The condition of the road is excellent. Some interesting aspects of the road are that the elevation ranges from about 4,000 to 7,750 feet (the highest pass), it is all two-lane except for the cities of Fernley,

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Continued on page 5

The Loneliest Road (continued)

Fallon, Ely, and Delta, and where it is congruent with an Interstate Highway. There are no pullouts for slow vehicles because vision is usually good enough to pass, but there are pullouts on both sides of the high passes to install or remove tire chains (lots of snow). Rest stops are few and they have no toilets. While stopped at one of these rest stops for lunch we observed people drive slowly through, then return to the highway without stopping. We know what they were looking for. Since we tow our own house it wasn't an issue for us, but Diana was inspired to rename the highway *The Toiletless Road in America*. Where US 50 is congruent with an Interstate Highway there are indeed rest stops with facilities.



Best of all, the scenery along US 50 is spectacular. There are beautiful mountains, sweeping vistas, and high elevation areas with forests and deer. We were pleased by the brilliant yellow sage bushes that border much of the road even as late as September. This phenomenon is due to precipitation runoff which gives plants along the road a moisture advantage.



The International Café in Austin

There's a lot of history associated with US 50. The route was constructed over a historic corridor, first used for the Pony Express and later for the Central Overland Route and Lincoln Highway. Before the formation of the US Highway System, most of US 50 in Nevada was designated **State Route 2**. The routing east of Ely has changed significantly from the original plans. The route change resulted from a rivalry between Nevada and Utah over which transcontinental route was better to serve California bound traffic, the Lincoln Highway or the Victory Highway. Those who have the time and interest can read about the histories of the towns along the route, and visit what remains of some of the old buildings constructed in the 1860s when Austin and Eureka were mining boomtowns.

Continued on page 6

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The Loneliest Road (continued)

Having survived the trip in comfort (you can actually buy a t-shirt with the words *I survived the loneliest road in America*), I highly recommend the drive—but not in winter. High wind is also a possibility, but we did not experience it. Is it a good Healey road? Only you can decide if you want to risk the possibility of a breakdown in the middle of nowhere.



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This article appeared in the June, 1953 issue of Road & Track magazine. It is the first known report in the United States of the impending new car—the Austin Healey. The original magazine was loaned to Healey Happenings by Dan Manning of Eureka, CA, for scanning and transcription.

INTERVIEW WITH DONALD HEALEY

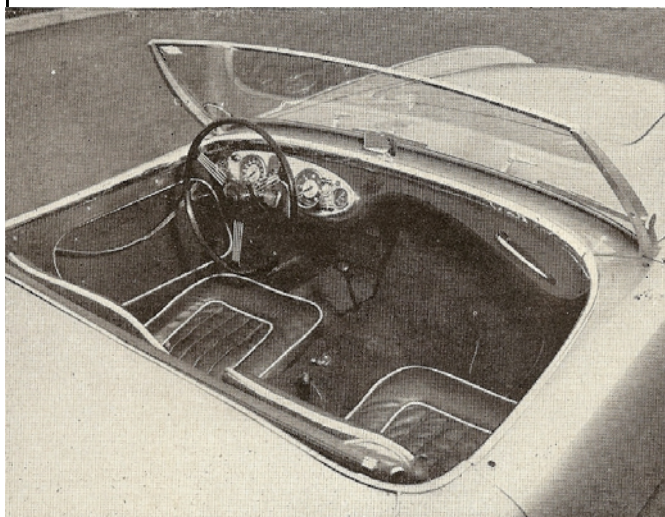
by John Bond

When the London Motor Show of last fall opened, the sensation of the show was the surprise announcement of the Healey Hundred, powered by a 90 bhp Austin engine. Within three days more orders had been placed than the Healey Company could produce in 3 years. On the fourth day of the show new signs appeared on the Healey stand—the *Austin-Healey 100* was now the name of the car, the result of a revised agreement between Mr. L.P. Lord, head of the Austin Company and Mr. Donald Healey.



Donald Healey (left) and John Bond look over the first Austin Healey 100 to arrive in California.

Mr. Healey has visited the United States on several occasions, and unlike most British manufacturers (Jaguar excepted) has a keen appreciation of what we like, and more important, of what we will buy. During his recent tour of the U.S., driving one of the new cars, it was our pleasure to meet Mr. Healey for the first time, as well as to drive the car for a few miles.



Quality, good taste and neat layout of the Austin Healey cockpit is remarkable in view of the modest price. This particular car does not have the latest type overdrive control.

The first question everyone asks is of course, when will deliveries commence? The first 50 cars were scheduled for distribution here during March. A strike at Austin, and other delays have set them back three months. Sample cars will be available for inspection in June and deliveries in quantity can be expected by July.

The second question is price—will it really sell for the \$3000 figure? Mr. Healey assured us that even though wire wheels, an

Continued on page 8

Interview with Donald Healey (continued)

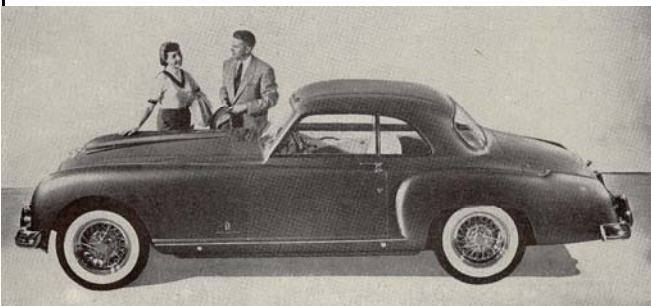
overdrive and a heater have been made standard equipment, the price will positively be *under* \$3000 delivered, sales tax and license extra.

Does it look as good as it does in the picture? Yes, it looks even better.

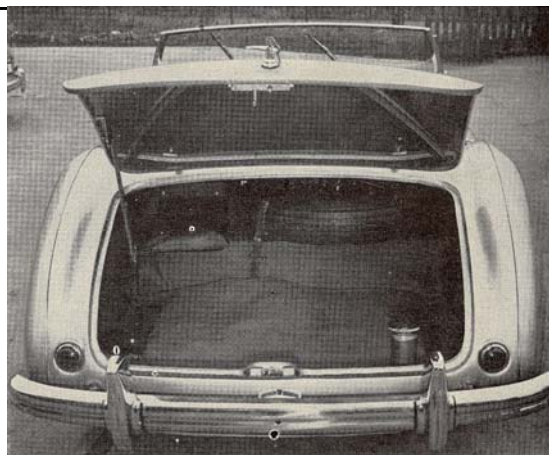
Does it perform and handle as well as expected? Yes, insofar as we could determine from our short-run. For a sports car the ride is exceptionally comfortable, yet there is none of the soft slow wallow of a typical American car. The engine is very smooth and quiet for a large four—certainly smoother than say a 2-1/2 liter Riley, for example.

A number of detail modifications have been made since the car as fully described in *Road and Track* for April. The most important of these is the elimination of first gear. There are now three speeds forward (all synchronised) and this coupled with the close-ratio overdrive gives what amounts to a 5-speed box. The operation of this transmission system is worth describing in detail.

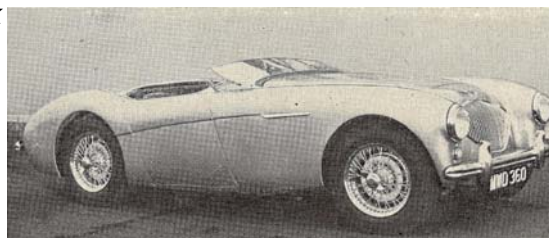
On the dash and close to the steering wheel rim is a toggle switch. In the down position you have the overdrive inoperative, so that the 3 ratios are 9.28, 5.85, and 4.125. Now we flip the toggle up to overdrive. If this is done with the car at rest, the overdrive gears do not go into effect. This is accomplished by a governor, designed to prevent starts in first gear overdrive. At a speed of 35 mph in second gear a shift from direct to overdrive is made automatically. The actual shift is so smooth as to be barely noticeable, and the ratio provided (4.79) is very useful for town driving. An important feature of the Laycock de Normanville overdrive is that all shifts are done by friction clutches instead of “dogs,” and there is no free-wheeling at any time. If you now shift to high, the actual ratio is 3.38 or high-overdrive, provided that car speed is over 35 mph. Since the overdrive cannot be used with first gear, the 3 speeds plus overdrive can give five forward speeds: 9.28, 5.85, 4.79, 4.125 and 3.38. Corresponding speeds in each gear at a modest 4000 rpm of the engine are: 32, 51, 68, 72 and 95 mph.



Another new Healey development is this hard top coupe on the larger chassis—body by Farina. Powerplant is the 140 bhp Nash Le Mans ohv engine. This model delivers in the United States for about \$6500.



Good luggage space is unusual in a high performance sports car. This one has 10 cu. ft.



Rakish look of the Sports Austin-Healey 100 is accentuated by the adjustable windshield.

Most of the car is made by the Austin Company including the body panels. The bodies will be assembled by the Jensen Co. Healey builds-up the frame, installs the Austin chassis components, and mounts the body. Present plans for sales outlets indicate that selected Austin dealers will sell the “100” in the U.S.



Calendar of Events

Contact Jim Morton to list an event:
Themortons@starstream.net. For a more complete list www.GoldenGateHealeys.com

Saturday/Sunday, October 2-3. **GGAHC** Fall Colors Tour. See page 9.

October 1-3, CSGR Historic Races (Charity Challenge) at Infineon Raceway. See page 10

October 1-3. Niello Concours at Serrano and Festi d'Italia, El Dorado Hills. Featuring British marques. See page 11.

October 9-10. Clovis British Car Roundup. See page 11.

October 16-17. 18th Annual California Autumn Classic—a British car event in Morgan Hill. See page 10.

October 30-31. CSGR Historics—season finale at Thunderhill. www.csgracing.org.

Saturday, December 4. **GGAHC** dinner cruise on the SF Bay. See page 11.

From the editor

Call for masthead photos

The masthead photo which appeared on the front page of the September issue of Healey Happen-



ings is a BT7 owned by Nigel and Linda Rhodes. I neglected to list ownership, so I will avoid that mistake henceforth by listing the owner with the photo. I need more photos, so please send me photos of your car (with or without people). I need a lot of space around the car so I can crop to fit.

GGAHC EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT



Fall Colors Tour October 2-3

This is a Saturday-only tour, but breakfast on Sunday will be organized at a restaurant for those who want it. Our tour will consist of wine tasting in Nevada County, lunch at one of the wineries, and dinner that evening at Richard Buckley's house.

Like last year, we will meet at the Holiday Inn Express in Auburn just behind Max's Restaurant, located at 120 Grass Valley Highway, Auburn, CA 95603 (the intersection of I-80 and Hwy 49—go north on 49). Meet at 9:30am and depart at 10:00 am. We will not go directly to Nevada City this year, so you must start the tour in Auburn.

A block of rooms is reserved at the Nevada City Inn (760 Zion Street Nevada City, CA 95959; telephone 530-265-2253) for \$70.00 per room plus tax. You should call soon to reserve your room. You have a choice of queen or twin beds, and we have a 48-hour prior-to-arrival cancellation option in the event of bad weather. Unfortunately, we could not get enough rooms at any other hotel.

Lunch on Saturday will cost \$5 per person, and dinner at Rich Buckley's house will cost \$10 per person. Both are subsidized by the Club.

Please sign up via e-mail if possible:

Bob Altieri boba9366@comcast.net, 530-265-9366
or
Richard Buckley writerbuckley@yahoo.com,
530-265-3966

Events with GGAHC affiliation

The Austin Healey Club is invited to CSRG's Charity Challenge Vintage Racing Weekend

Here's a chance for Austin-Healey Club members to take a ride in a vintage race car at speed on Infineon Raceway as well as the opportunity to driver your Austin-Healey on the track. On **October 2-3**, the Classic Sport Racing Group (CSRG) is holding the 7th Annual Charity Challenge vintage car racing event at Infineon Raceway. Proceeds from the event benefit the Speedway Childrens' Charities of Sonoma. CSRG members have donated over \$600,000 to this worthy cause since the Charity Challenge began in 2003. Fan activities also include raffles and a race gear sales center, in addition to the race car rides and track driving opportunities.

This event usually draws in excess of 200 vintage race cars of all types, and attendees can view the cars up close in the paddock and talk to the drivers. The featured run groups this year will be Historic 3-liter F1 cars from the Historic Grand Prix Group, and invited Formula Atlantic cars. Practice is on Friday, with racing on Saturday and Sunday.

There is also a special offer with extra benefits for members of the Austin-Healey Club who would like to drive to the race in Austin-Healeys. This offer includes:

- Specially priced advance tickets at \$20 per person compared to \$25 at the gate. Club members driving Austin-Healeys can also get the advanced price at the gate with a club ID or a copy of this invitation.
- Premier Parking in the Paddock Car Club Corral.
- On-track parade laps during lunch time for the first 100 drivers who sign up on Saturday and Sunday morning. The parades will be limited to sports cars built before 1973.
- Free commemorative event poster.
- Priority sign-up for Charity Ride-Arounds in race cars (these always sell out quickly for the most exciting cars). Clubs will be sent a roster of available "ride-around" cars approximately one week before the event, and members can reserve a spot via e-mail to me.

If you are interested in this special offer, please contact me at editorgary@aol.com to have your name added to the advance ticket list, or come out in your Austin-Healey on Saturday or Sunday, October 2 or 3.

Thank you, and I hope to see you at the CSRG Charity Challenge.

Gary Anderson

The 18th Annual California Autumn Classic

British Sports Car Concours and Tour with welcoming Saturday dinner

October 16 & 17

Morgan Hill, CA

GGAHC is a sponsor

Now at our new, larger venue in Morgan Hill, the California Autumn Classic brings back the nostalgic fun of relaxed, friendly sports car club events of the 1950s and 60s. All Classic British sports cars (2-seaters and their jump-seat derivatives) are invited to participate. There will be 26 silver trophies for all marques. The event is held on the main downtown street of Morgan Hill.

www.autumnclassic.100mregistry.com/



Questions? Contact Bill Meade

billmeade@charter.net

Other Event Announcements

October 9 & 10

You are invited to enter your British car of any vintage or condition in the 2010 Clovis British Car Roundup. This, is our 10th annual event, has more activities and things to do and see than any other show you may attend this year! On Saturday morning we will take a tour of some back roads and invite you to attend a great outdoor benefit luncheon. On Sunday take in a great display of British cars and explore vibrant Old Town Clovis.



Questions? Call: 559.352.7968

www.valleybritish.org

E-mail: wcrestwick@comcast.net

October 1—3



El Dorado Hills, CA

Celebrating the British Marques

Friday, October 1: Concours Raduno
Saturday, October 2: The Tour
Sunday, October 3: Concours at Serrano

www.nielloconcoursatserrano.com

GGAHC EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT



GGAHC Annual Christmas Dinner & Meeting While Cruising San Francisco Bay

Saturday, December 4, 1:00—4:00pm

The price is \$50 for Club members, and \$70 for non-members when accompanied by a member. The lunch/dinner will be a buffet. Main dishes include champagne chicken with grapes and mushrooms, or prime rib with horseradish sauce. A vegetarian pasta primavera is available, but only on special order.

There will be a hosted bar with wine, beer, champagne and soft drinks at no extra charge.

The cruise is limited to the first 100 people who sign up, and that is done by mailing a check made out to GGAHC Xmas to

**GGAHC Xmas Cruise
c/o Dan Sekella
1410 Mohr Court
Concord, CA 94518**

Boarding begins at 12:45pm from the **Commodore Cruises** dock, located at

**2394 Mariner Square Drive
Alameda, CA 94501**

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The Golden Gate Austin Healey Club is affiliated nationally with the



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Healeymarket

GGAHC members may submit Healey-related items either wanted or for sale without paying a fee.



No submittals

Healey Haulers



Owner: Lynn Martin, Idaho



Owner unknown



The Volkner Mobil Performance