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Event Report

The “Get Ready for Rendezvous” Tech Session at British Car Specialists

by John Soderling



Is the number “21” just a popular casino game? No, it is also the record number of Golden Gate Austin Healey Club car owners who showed up in Stockton at British Car Specialists for David Nock’s popular annual March Tech Session.

Following introductions, David gave an update on Rendezvous 2013 and Phil Foster, John Soderling and Jim Morton made pitches for auction items, the Arts/Craft & Photograph contest and Funkhana competition, respectively. A pleasant surprise was seeing former GGAHC member Roger Swales who had just flown in from Australia. David conferred a verbal “Longest Distance Traveled” award to Roger. Roger reported that there are between 500 and 600 Austin Healey Club members and around 400 Healeys in Australia. Australia is also home to many of the rare, one-off and unique Austin Healeys.

Bruce Gardner’s British racing green BT6, which was in the shop for a much needed restoration, was put up on the lift and used by David to illustrate a number of tech tips, including common rust prone areas and prevention tips. He also used a big Healey chassis without body panels to talk about replacement chassis, insulating techniques to reduce the dreaded Healey heat, tube vs. lever shock performance, plug wires & electronic ignition, in-line fusing and more.

All-in-all, it was a great session to help us get our cars ready for Rendezvous 2013! Thanks to David Nock, Sheila Huggins, and the rest of the staff at British Car Specialists.

Continued on page 2



The tech session began with introductions

Lunch at Max’s Diner & tour of Blackhawk Automotive Museum
April 6
See page 10

 * WINE & TOUR *
 * Lodi Area * **May 25** *
 * **Page 10** *

Tech Session (continued)



Your car will run a lot cooler if you remove the body panels.



Puzzled expressions are evident as attendees examine the undercarriage, trying to figure out if Healeys should be referred to as male or female.



Len Hartnett conducts a self-guided tech session



Roger Swales denies owing money to anyone in the Club since moving back to Australia

Attendees

- Marty Allen
- Cully Anderson
- Gary Anderson
- Mike Armstead
- Jim Cahill
- Bill Donnelly
- Phil Foster
- Bruce Gardner
- Chris Gardner
- Len Hartnett
- Roger Hawk
- Jim Morton
- Tim Murphy
- John Northwood
- Ken Painter
- Don Peirano
- Walt Patterson
- Jorge Quintero
- Brian Schumacher
- John Soderling
- Roger Swales
- Dennis Thorne



If you bend the agrittoid slightly to the right you can insert the traskin between the skagelotis and the gurgle flange.

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Hooked on Driving

My Thunderhill Thrill

by Loren Parks



Hooked on Driving (HOD) is an organization devoted to providing a high performance driving experience by organizing track days at regional tracks such as Thunderhill (www.hookedondriving.com).

HOD is also a race-driving school, but the organization emphasizes that it is not named *Hooked on Racing* because that is not the objective; the objective is to give participants training in performance car driving

whether they race or not. All that new drivers need to participate is a helmet (rentals available), and an inspection to assure that their cars are road-worthy. But convertibles are special; a roll bar must be installed that meets racing specs. The standard HOD program is that beginners are given a thorough briefing and are introduced to their coaches before they drive their cars on the track. During the first sessions a coach rides in the passenger seat and teaches the driver high performance driving techniques. The initial "A Group" for beginning drivers teaches smoothness, awareness, and driving a proper, safe and efficient line on track. A priority is also placed on learning basic car control skills such as late braking, proper shifting and understanding the concept of the apex of a



HOD Founder David Ray welcomes the EuroSunday group and describes the program.

turn. While the A Group has significant passing restrictions to maintain a conservative pace, the B (Intermediate), C (Advanced), and D (Race-prepped) groups have progressively more flexible passing rules and advanced level coaching. There is NEVER any competition—no wheel-to-wheel or timed laps in the programs. HOD programs are safe experiences for all, intended to assure that drivers come away with much more confidence in handling their car in an emergency situation. HOD customers frequently are heard saying that they've had "the time of their lives."

I have no intention of racing or even driving my Healey fast, but I signed up for EuroSunday's collaboration with HOD at Thunderhill Raceway near Willows (March 16) just to find out what it's all about. EuroSunday is an organization devoted to the fellowship of owning exotic, rare or vintage cars and motorcycles (www.eurosunday.net). Events include group drives, track day events, photo shoots at various museums or landmarks, charity events, social gatherings, and various car shows. Prior to this event I had not participated in a EuroSunday event. The organization has groups based in various cities including Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area. For the price of \$30, each of the 17 participants that day got three parade laps around the course (no helmets



I drove through the pit area to get in place for parade laps.

Continued on page 4

Hooked on Driving (continued)

required), lunch, and rides (hot laps) with driving instructors in various cars. We did not participate in the standard HOD course, i.e., we did not receive any driving instruction. Nevertheless, our EuroSunday drivers with suitable cars could undergo a quick safety inspection and drive some hot laps, but my Healey could not qualify without a proper roll bar. The issue was moot because I would not drive hot laps with my Healey anyway; a 52 year-old car with no special preparation for high stress is not safe.

My 1961 BT7 was, as I expected, the oldest car among the 17 EuroSunday participants. A close second was a 1965 Lotus Elan (RHD), which was the only car there that made the Healey look large. Other than the Elan there was no other car in the group older than ten years. The group included two Ferraris, a Corvette, some Porsches, a Lotus Elise, an Audi TTs, a passle of BMWs, and others. I suspected that the parade laps would be fast, so I tried to place myself at the back of the pack but some well-meaning, courteous drivers insisted on being polite to the elderly. As expected, the cars in front promptly left me way behind. Two Loti, a Corvette and an Audi TTs bided time behind me. Passing was not allowed, so they had to be patient.

My son Kevin accompanied me for the day. Kevin is 6'3" tall and weighs 230 lbs; he barely fits into the Healey and must be shoeless to operate the pedals. His added weight as a passenger was noticeable when I was driving around corners at speed and I decided not to take any chances. I also knew that fast driving is much harder on the passenger's nerves than the driver's and, after all, these were only parade laps. Upon conclusion I was told that my car sounded good even though it wasn't fast, and I drew plenty of compliments.

After the parade laps some of the EuroSunday guys who have fast cars and work as driving instructors took us on rides of two hot laps. I took two rides—a Porsche Cayman S and a Ferrari F430. Kevin rode in the Porsche Cayman plus a Subaru and the Audi TTs. All of these cars reached at least 120mph on the short straights. Before my first ride I was secretly wishing I had brought a box of Depends, but soon got accustomed to the forces affecting my body—acceleration/deceleration (g-force) and centrifugal force. The speed these cars attain and the grip they have on the pavement are astounding, and the experience gave me a new perspective of the track. The straights are not so

Continued on page 5



As I entered the first turn the cars in front of me were pulling away—far away!



The drivers behind me exercised great patience.



Kevin takes photos from above the windshield as we drive through a turn.



The EuroSunday group gives thumbs up at the conclusion of the parade laps. My Healey is nearly hidden at the rear.

Hooked on Driving (continued)

straight, the curves are not so gentle, and three miles is not very far compared to my impressions as a spectator. There are two curves that crest on a hill and you can't see the other side when you enter them, so you had better know in advance what to do.

The choice of cars that people choose to drive in the HOD program is eclectic to say the least. I saw an Audi station wagon, a Maserati, an Aston Martin, a VW Golf, several Mini's, a lot of BMW sedans, numerous Porsches, two BMW R8's, some Jaguar sedans, several Ferraris, some dedicated race cars, a McClaren, and even a Dodge Caliber. At first I thought it was bizarre to bring expensive cars here for a good flogging but, after further thought, many of them are designed for this so why not drive them as such? The HOD program is also a good way to acquire high speed driving skills which might have a practical application; the occasional presence of police officers in the program attests to that.

This was an excellent event, and I gained great respect for the skills developed by race drivers. If you feel like seeing what you and the family sedan can do on the race track, check out Hooked on Driving.



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Our hot lap rides



Kevin is about to enter the Porsche Cayman S in which we both rode.



Kevin with the Audi TTs



Kevin returns after riding in the white Subaru. I rode in this blue Ferrari F430.

MATE-A-CAR

The web site www.worth1000.com is devoted to manipulation of photographs using computer software. Hundreds of on-line competitions have been completed for different themes, and the results are posted as galleries. The skill and creativity of the participants is superb. There have been five competitions to date for the theme of Mate-a-Car, which involves combining at least two vehicles into one. Here are some examples.



Ferrari pickup



Corvettini (Lamborghini)



Porsche ambulance



Smart Car-Porsche



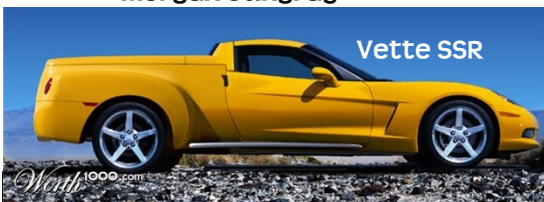
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Ford GT 40 Limo

Club Member Profile

This is the second of a series of articles profiling members of the Golden Gate Austin Healey Club. David Cross prepared this article about his dad.

Loren Cross

I guess my Dad has always been a gear-head. Some of my earliest memories of Dad are him in the garage working on one car or another. The son of a garage owner, I think it was in Dad's blood to work on cars. Through many of my early years, Dad even worked part time in the evening at local gas stations to make ends meet. At some point in the early 60's, Dad turned his automotive eye toward sports cars and purchased an MGA, followed by an MG Midget. He purchased his first Healey—a 1960 3000. He then worked his way through 5 or 6 Healeys, some of which were purchased only for parts, until he bought his current car from Al Hirt (no, not trumpeter Al Hirt) in 1970. He reasoned with Mom that since it had four seats it was a "family car!" Sadly, I remember my sister and I as high school students being driven to doctor appointments in the "family sedan," with Lori and me alternating sitting in the back!

In the late '60's Dad found a flyer stuck on his windshield for an Austin Healey club that was holding its first meeting in a local pizza parlor. The whole family went to the meeting (I must say it was pretty boring from a 7th grader's perspective) and the Austin Healey Club, Pacific Center became a reality. (This was the forerunner to the Golden Gate Austin Healey Club.) Dad filled a number of positions in the early years of the club. He was the Vice-President, Membership Chair, and eventually became the second President of the Club.

Some of the highlights that I remember are the many visitors who came through town and spent some time at the house. We had some Aussies who arrived and complained about the crappy cold beer, then went out, bought more and seemingly never filled up (with beer) during their entire visit.

As I got older and more interested in the Healey, Dad got me more involved in some of the club's activities. One of the first was a trip in 1974 or thereabouts to Yosemite with about 20 cars. The most memorable event was a car that took a corner too closely and spun out going around a turn, and the overdrive going out on our Healey during the ride home. We made the trip together to events Park City, Utah, and in California the cities of Eureka, San Diego and Lake Tahoe.

I do have several favorite memories of Dad and his cars. One night, while repairing a gas tank, he ended up landing out on the driveway after the residual gas in the tank exploded. We were pulled over by the CHP on

another trip because my bicycle extended too far out over the side of the car. So we sat on the side of the road until we managed to get the bike tire off without any tools. On another trip we ran out of gas and managed to coast into a local gas station after cutting off a semi on the highway. We spent about an hour taking off the tire, fooling around with the gas pump and cussing frequently. We finally decided to put some gas in the car and realized we had simply run out much sooner than we expected because we let some teenager fill the car, and he didn't top it off!

Loren Cross has moved to a Retirement Community in Gilroy and still loves to take the Healey out for a drive, as well as tinkering with it once in a while.



Loren & Doris Cross, circa 1970

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ON AUSTIN HEALEY CLUBS AND INSURANCE

Marty Allen
GGAH President

The purpose of this message is to educate you on the club structure that exists for owners of Austin Healey sports cars. Geographically, the Golden Gate Austin Healey Club covers Northern California from about Big Sur in the south to the Oregon border. We have about 160 members in our Club, and there are quite a few Healey owners who reside within our area who are not members. Nationally there are 47 more clubs just like ours. Not all states have a club, and some states like California have several.

These clubs belong to a national association which binds us together—the Austin Healey Club of America, known to most as AHCA. AHCA produces a magazine named *The Marque*. It is published once a month with the exception of December, when a calendar is distributed instead. The AHCA has a formal structure, and once a year each club sends a delegate to an annual meeting to discuss many business issues. AHCA also sponsors a national event called Conclave. Conclave is hosted by one of the 47 car clubs and therefore could be anywhere in the United States or Canada.

There is another national club named the Austin Healey Club USA. It is much different than the America club; it is more loosely structured, and it started on the west coast for west coast owners. Consequently, it is supported by only seven clubs in the west, but including Texas. This club publishes a magazine named the *Austin Healey Magazine*, with six issues annually. USA sponsors Rendezvous, which is like Conclave only it is hosted by one of the seven clubs that are affiliated with USA. This is why Rendezvous is generally a West Coast event.

As to why there are two clubs goes way back in the history book, and it would take a couple of glasses of wine to explain. And a few more to find the logic. You might ask, why not combine the clubs? You might have heard rumors about a merger over the years. An effort was made to do this last year, but it has stalled for now. Can you say “Washington?” Need I say more?

As a Healey owner each of you has elected to join your local club, the GGAHC. Our dues are \$25 a year and have not increased in ten years. For that you get our newsletter, plus the fun of attending events and staying in touch with other Healey owners. We underwrite some events with the dues and pay a variety of assorted expenses that arise in keeping the club together, such as our website. The few of us who volunteer to guide the club for a few years receive no compensation, and in fact we incur unreimbursed expenses to do our jobs.

Now here is the more pointed part of this message. I don’t want to take sides or get caught in the middle of two national clubs, so what I say is just fact with no opinion. Most of us belong to one or both of the national clubs but some of you belong to neither. Not being a member of either probably does not serve you well; there is just too much information that will pass you by and both magazines are very well done.

America (AHCA), the more formal organization and the larger of the two, provides a very important service to the 47 local clubs; they provide us insurance. This coverage is not a trivial matter. Anyone can inadvertently cause a suit to come against the national club, the officers and all members, “AHCA” and “local only clubs”, individually and collectively. We do not even have to be driving; that is not a required part of the equation. One can say or do something that causes other people to sue us. For example, an invited speaker who falls and breaks an arm, or a grandchild who gets sick from a club barbecue. This insurance finances our defense against such legal actions and, if necessary, pays all costs incurred to the limits of our liability. So, having club insurance is very important.

DILBERT



This is one of the advantages of all the local clubs being part of a strong national organization. A local club could never afford the insurance and therefore would be at huge risk in the event that something goes

Continued on page 9

Austin Healey Clubs and Insurance (Continued)

wrong. Now, here is where the rub starts. Suppose you are a member of the Golden Gate Club, but are not a member of America, are you still covered? The answer is yes, you are getting insurance coverage but you are getting a free ride.

Insurance costs are going up everywhere, and AHCA has decided to help pay the cost by charging each local club \$5 per member who is not a member of the national club. Sadly, we just got hit with a pretty big bill, and a little unexpectedly.

In the ideal world, we would like everyone to be a member of our club (Golden Gate) and America (AHCA) and USA (AHCUSA). Some of you will say two national clubs is silly, and I could not agree more with you. I finally joined USA this year. I have been a AHCA member for many years. Hopefully, one day America and USA merge, making life easier for us members.

If you are a member of our club and not the national club (AHCA), we now owe them \$5 for your insurance coverage. We need the support of AHCA and, most importantly, the insurance. So, if you are not a member of AHCA we strongly suggest and hope you will join. We are one of the very few clubs that allow a member to join our club without being a member of AHCA. We might have to change our policy next year if we cannot get voluntary compliance.

You can join very easily on their website and the national dues are \$50. Their web address is www.healeyclub.org.



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Calendar of Events

Contact Jim Morton to list an event:

Themortons@starstream.net. For a more complete list www.GoldenGateHealeys.com

Saturday, April 6, 10am. GGAHC Rendezvous 2013 planning meeting at Lee Bardellini's office. Lunch at Max's Diner from noon to 2pm, then tour the Blackhawk Automotive Museum nearby from 2pm—5pm. See page 10.

April 12–14. California Healey Week in Santa Barbara, hosted by the Austin Healey Association of Southern California. www.austin-healey.org. See page 10.

April 27-28. Pacific Coast Dream Machines show, Half Moon Bay. www.miramarevents.com/dreammachines/lead.html

Saturday, May 4, 10am. GGAHC Rendezvous 2013 planning meeting.

May 4-5. Classic Sports Racing Group's "Rolling Thunder" at Thunderhill Raceway www.csrgracing.org/

May 11. Jr. ROTC car show in Manteca. Info forthcoming.

May 17-19. Marin-Sonoma Concours and Drive. www.marinsonomaconcours.org.

May 17-19. Sonoma Historic Motorsports Festival. www.racesonoma.com

May 19. United British Sports Car Club's car show in Dixon. www.ubscc.org. See page 11.

May 25. GGAHC Lodi area winery tour. See page 10.

June 1. GGAHC Rendezvous 2013 planning meeting.

June 8. Santa Cruz Tour (Nancy McCroskey). GGAHC plus other local car clubs. Details forthcoming.

June 8. Capitol Concours d'Elegance on the Capitol Mall in Sacramento. www.shrinersconcours.com.

June 15. Tiburon Classic Car Show. People's Choice judging. Tour on Sunday. www.tiburonclassiccarshow.com.

June 24-28. GGAHC Rendezvous 2013 in South Lake Tahoe. See page 12.

June 30. Palo Alto Concours d'Elegance at the San Mateo County Event Center. www.paconcours.com/

August 12-18. Monterey car Week. www.montereycarweek.com

August 25. GGAHC ice cream social, Vacaville.

August 25. Hillsborough Concours d'Elegance. www.hillsboroughconcours.org/

September 8. Chico Concours d'Elegance www.chicoconcours.com/

LUNCH AT MAX'S DINER AND TOUR OF THE BLACKHAWK AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM



Saturday, April 6

(Following the Rendezvous planning meeting)

Meet at Max's Diner at noon
2015 Crow Canyon Place, San Ramon, CA 94583

RSVP Phil Foster : hhah@jps.net
Order and pay for lunch on your own.

Tour the Blackhawk Museum nearby from 2pm—5pm.
Approximate cost is \$7 each.

California Healey Week

california HEALEY WEEK

April 12-14, 2013

For registration forms and
program of events, see

[www.austin-
healey.org](http://www.austin-healey.org)

SANTA BARBARA



Lodi Winery Tour

Saturday, May 25

We will travel over the back roads of the Altamont Pass thru the Central Valley then north to the Lodi area to sample 3 fantastic small wineries. The tour will finish up at Cycles Gladiator for a BBQ lunch along with a wine tasting and pairing with various food groups. There will be lots of time to relax and visit at Cycles Gladiator before your trip home. So enjoy the lunch, bocce and good friends for the afternoon. We are planning on a little competition on the bocce ball courts after lunch so practice up and plan on a fun afternoon.

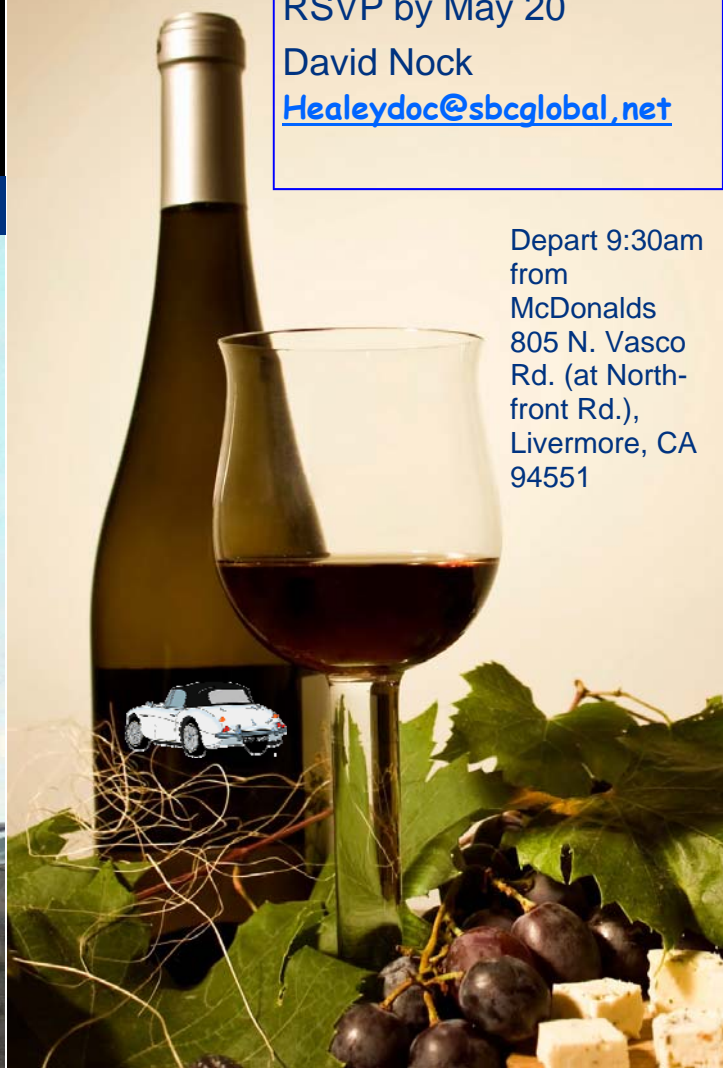
The cost will be \$20 each for tasting and lunch at Cycles Gladiator, plus \$5 each for tasting at each of the two preceding wineries.

RSVP by May 20

David Nock

Healeydoc@sbcglobal.net

Depart 9:30am
from
McDonalds
805 N. Vasco
Rd. (at North-
front Rd.),
Livermore, CA
94551



Rendezvous 2013 Arts/Crafts & Photography Contest

Healey admiration takes many forms and Art/Crafts & Photography has traditionally been one of most popular events at Rendezvous. Healey Rendezvous 2013 Lake Tahoe will include an Arts/Crafts & Photography Contest with the following five categories:

- ◆ Quilting / Needlework
- ◆ Crafts / memorabilia
- ◆ Photography - Pride & Joy
- ◆ Photography - Action
- ◆ Photography - Humor

This will be a popular choice competition with awards for each category announced at the closing Awards Banquet. So get your creative juices flowing and bring your Healey-related arts, crafts and photos with you to Rendezvous 2013.

Contact John Soderling BigHealey@astound.net

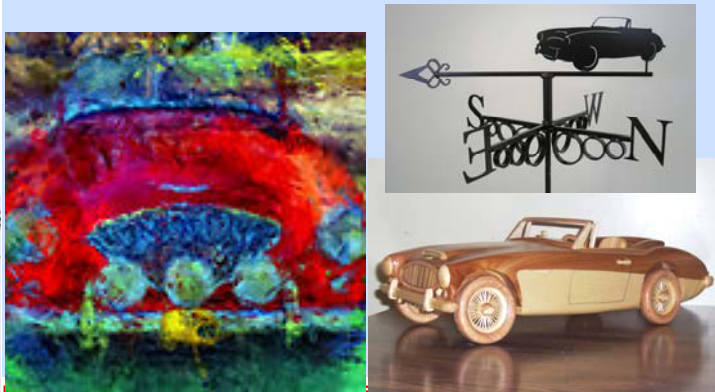
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WANTED!

Our Club needs donations for the silent auction and raffle at Rendezvous 2013. Please let us know if you have something to contribute that is nice enough that you would want it yourself. It need not be car related. You may contribute on behalf of yourself or a business, and recognition will be provided. Some examples of past items include wine, three days at a time-share condo, fruit basket, massage service, car accessories such as wash & wax fluid, cinema tickets, and gift certificates.

If you would like to donate, please email a description of the item(s) and an estimate of value. If the item is a car part, please clarify which car the part fits. Please contact Phil Foster by June 1.

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Healey Rendezvous

South Lake Tahoe, CA

June 24 – 28, 2013

The Golden Gate Austin Healey Club is pleased to host Healey Rendezvous 2013 at South Lake Tahoe. This is one of the finest locations in the United States for a car club event, known for magnificent scenery, fabulous roads for Healey driving, plus many indoor and outdoor activities. The GGAHC hosted the international Austin Healey event known as Open Roads here in 2002 at which over 700 Healeys were present.

Our host hotel is the Montbleu Resort, Casino & Spa, pictured at right. This luxury hotel is available to Rendezvous attendees at the concessional price of \$120/night, which is extraordinarily low for Lake Tahoe during the summer. The hotel web site is:

<http://www.montbleuresort.com/>



Event highlights

- ◆ Reception on Monday, June 24th, with dinner and entertainment. Famed **comedy hypnotist Chris Cady** will be on hand to really add some dazzle to the evening.
- ◆ Car show at Heavenly Village—an easy walk from the Montbleu. The Village is an upscale area of shops and condos, plus the terminus of the gondola ride up to the ski trails of Heavenly Ski Resort with a magnificent view of Lake Tahoe.
- ◆ Dinner cruise on Lake Tahoe (Tuesday, June 25th) on the paddle wheeler Dixie 2—the largest boat on Lake Tahoe. Wear your boogie shoes; we will have a fabulous live band by the name of **Yasgur's Farm** which plays favorites by the Eagles, Mamas & Papas, Crosby, Stills & Nash, and more. This is tie-dye night, so also wear your wildest tie-dye outfit.
- ◆ Technical sessions and not-so technical sessions on a variety of topics including photography, wine tasting, vintage racing, and even a Healey technical session for women only conducted by Steve Day.
- ◆ Driving tours in the sierras around the Lake.
- ◆ Funkhana—a driver and passenger skill competition set up in a parking lot with lots of fun activities.
- ◆ Remote control car races with a championship contest between the sexes.
- ◆ Photography and craft competition; bring your items for display.
- ◆ Awards banquet with fine food and fun.

For more information, prices and registration forms see the Rendezvous web site:

www.rendezvous2013.com

The registration cutoff date to obtain promotional prices is April 30.



Newsletter & Web Site Management

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See the web site for advertising rates, or contact Loren Parks. Healey Happenings is published on the web site, but only accessible by members with a password.

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The Golden Gate Austin Healey Club is affiliated nationally with the



Golden Gate Healey Happenings is the publication of the Golden Gate Austin Healey Club, and is published for the benefit of its members. Material which appears in Golden Gate Healey Happenings represents the opinions of the authors and does not express the positions of the Golden Gate Austin Healey Club unless specifically noted. We do our best to insure accuracy, but cannot be held responsible for omissions or errors.



Healeymarket

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



No submittals



The Honda toaster



The Yugo toaster



The Lucas toaster