



IN THIS ISSUE

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Tech Session.....          | 1  |
| Season Opener.....         | 4  |
| Healey Doc's Corner.....   | 8  |
| Cliff Warren.....          | 9  |
| New Editor Position.....   | 12 |
| Rendezvous Grill Badges... | 12 |
| Conclave 2021.....         | 13 |
| Calendar of Events.....    | 14 |
| From the Editor.....       | 14 |
| HealeyMarket.....          | 15 |

Annual Tech Session

British Car Specialists

March 27th, 2021



Repair and Restoration Tips

As with all tech sessions those fortunate to attend learn more about our cars, as well the limits of our knowledge and capabilities as weekend Hack Mechanics. The sessions can be humbling experiences.

1967 AH BJ8

The tech session started with Dave talking about some key things when restoring or repairing your car that will help make the car more reliable and enhance performance. The first thing Dave covered was the carburation and the use of points in the distributor verses using Pertronix Electronic Ignition.

There are advantages and disadvantages when choosing one or the other. Specifically:

- We were reminded of the importance of using high-Sulphur content motor oil to protect against tappet wear caused by modern oils. Joe Gibbs Racing and Moss both sell it.
- Also the benefits of Joe Gibbs Racing Carb Defender. Those fortunate enough to attend the Monterrey meeting heard the very persuasive presentation of how the stuff protects against the corrosive effects on our carbs of ethanol in current gas.
- On brake fluids we learned that new vehicle paints are not negatively impacted by the traditional Girling fluids, so the arguments for using synthetic as an alternative are becoming moot. However, Girling attracts water, but synthetic leads to a softer pedal feel.
- Lots of discussion on the advantages/disadvantages of Pertronix vs points...Points and condensers are basically trouble free and allow for more control of ignition timing. Pertronix provides a consistent signal, but can fail. Solution...always carry points as a backup. The best of both worlds? Motronix ignition and points. Sports coils are better than the stock ones.
- Also, on the ignition system...A properly working vacuum is critical to getting the best mileage.
- New tire designs require a bit of negative camber, which needs to be set at 'ride height' i.e. with some weight in the car. And, by the way how old is that spare tire? They do have a much shorter shelf life than the age of the car.
- Brake pad compositions have changed over the years, which contributes to the deafening squeal so many of us have experienced.
- The old core spark plug wires (that some of us still have) can deteriorate, particularly on the rear cylinders. Carry spares!
- On the 6 cylinder motors the rear oil seal wears out and starts to leak. His shop always replaces them with newer two-piece aftermarket seals when doing rebuilds.
- Yes, the manual says to use 30 weight oil in the transmission. Hint...the new 70/80 weight alternatives have the same viscosity.

Much discussion about the heater and related hoses. Difficult to get to from the inside requiring dropping the heater onto the transmission tunnel to replace. And, hoses need to be correctly attached due to a one-way valve. Incorrectly corrected there will be no flow to the heater.

Please Remember To Practice Social Distancing

Conclave 2021 Filling Up Fast !!! Get Registered Now... www.conclave2021.com

GGAHC Newsletter Editor

Looks like I have found the right person to fill my position after over 6 years of service to the club.

Please take a look at Greg's Cars N' Coffee Story...

## 1965 AH BJ8

Dave pointed out that there is a very important bracket under the car that had been missing since the car had been repaired several years ago. There is a bracket that holds the motor and transmission and keeps it from moving forward in case of an accident. While checking under the car, apparently it was left off the car after being repaired after a previous accident. It is a solid steel shaft with rubber bushings that runs from the rear of the transmission to the frame cross member. There was also a lot of discussion regarding weaknesses in the frame. Several stories were shared about the cracks that can be experienced, particularly in the rear, but also at the front cross member, frequently caused by negligent jack placement.

Take caution when getting repairs done that the car is put back together properly.

The event was held with around 12 people at the shop and 12 people who joined the group via Zoom.

There were 2 cars used in the session:

1967 Austin Healey BJ8 – Complete Restoration  
1965 Austin Healey BJ8 – General Maintenance

Article Written by Mike Sonneman and additional detail information was added by Greg Cory.







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## LUNCHEON ON THE LEVEES

### *2021 GGAHC Season Opener*

*April 11, 2021*

Celebrating the warm sun and blue sky of an April Sunday, 31 colorful and shining Healeys, and their people, met in Oakley and proceeded to drive the intricate Sacramento Delta levees. Leaving Oakley across the distinctive Antioch Bridge - 1.8 miles long and 135 feet at the highest point - we hustled along following our leader and Club President Dave Nock, who does not know 'slow'.

At Rio Vista, we crossed the Sacramento then ran north along the levee to the ferry, which Dave advised us was state operated since it was a state highway. The state, however, had chosen - for whatever reason - not to operate the ferry that day, and so the group reversed and, back across the bridge to the east side of the river, proceeded north on highway 160, exploring the levees on our way to our lunch destination, Grand Island Mansion.

The Sacramento Delta was historically a swampy and flooded area, and post Gold Rush settlers experienced "devastating floods" in 1907 and 1909, leading to the 1917 Sacramento Flood Control Project. This project, largely completed by the Army Corp of Engineers in the mid 1960's, created nearly 1000 miles of levees to contain the river water and provide irrigation for the islands of agriculture that are extensive, below water level, and protected by the levees. This is a world unto itself, agriculture as far as the eye can see - fruit, vegetable and cereal crops, interspersed with farm houses and small towns. It sits outside major transportation highways, remaining an area of mystery to many Californians and its many shaded levee roads provide for peaceful drives through rural agriculture, perfect for Austin Healey devotees.

Grand Island is one of the many islands in the Delta surrounded by canals and the Mansion, near the small town of Walnut Grove is "the largest private estate in Northern California". Built in 1917 in the style of an Italian Renaissance Villa, surrounded by pear orchards, the Mansion is spectacular, with formal gardens, and areas inside and out designed for celebration, a wedding destination with beautiful, ornate interiors.

The Healeys parked on the levee in front of the Mansion and took great pleasure in exploring this beautiful space which is not accessible to the single traveler.

An enticing Sunday buffet awaited us with Red Wine Braised Short Ribs, Pan Seared Salmon, Vegetarian Quiche, Italian Toast, Eggs Benedict, Chicken Crepes and an assortment of tempting desserts.

*Planning a Trip to the Napa Valley?*

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Seated in the Great Room on the second floor overlooking the estate, we enjoyed champagne, orange juice, coffee and pleasurable conversation with those we had not seen since 2019.

Dave "healeydoc" noted the diverse locations from which attendees came, including those that drove down from the foothills and Dexter Kaytis, who drove up from El Segundo, Southern California.

He acknowledged and thanked Mike Sonneman, who has been the newsletter editor and producer of this Club communication, and thanked Marc Lewis for his consistent assistance with these outings. Replete with the lovely day, the pleasure of seeing Healey friends, and the delicious food, the Healeys drifted off to their various homes, and look forward to the next event of the season. Our thanks, as always, to Dave and Jerri Nock for their leadership, organization, and good humor.

Zelma Long and Phillip Freese



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## Healey Doc's Corner

**March / April 2021**

Ok so 2021 is starting out with a lot of Zoom Zoom of Healeys out on the road again.

We were very concerned when we started to plan this year's club opener, but you the members came thru and we almost maxed out the Grand island Mansion at 60 Healey owners attending. A big thank you goes out to all those GGAHC members that attended our opening tour for the 2021 season.

Coming up this weekend we have another new tour coming up where we will be touring the Santa Cruz mountains and ending up in the Moss Beach area, so I hope to see you all there.

Then we are off to Conclave 2021 in Big Bear where once again the GGAHC is making another outstanding attendance. We have almost 35 GGAHC members attending. Are you one of them, if not you are missing out on a great opportunity to meet up with 400 Healey owners. So, if you can don't miss out on this great event.

We will be wrapping up the 2021 season with the bay cruise that we had planned for our Golden Anniversary. We have booked a cruise boat on the SF Bay for a 4-hour cruise, and Gilligan is not invited. There will be more info coming but save the date December 4<sup>th</sup>.

I would like to thank Greg Cory for taking up the position of Editor of the club newsletter. He will be filling some big shoes that Mike Sonneman has filled for that last 7 years, and I would like to give Mike a HUGE thank you for his services to the GGAHC.

Jerri and I hope to see you out there on the road someday soon.

*Happy Healeying,  
David Nock*





## CARS 'N COFFEE WITH CLIFF WARREN

By Greg Cory

A few days after the Jan-Feb 2021 Happenings was issued I got an email from Cliff suggesting we get together. He had his own Healey story to tell. He briefly said he had made no fewer than four transcontinental trips in a Healey with his wife and two small children. Were they road warriors or masochists?

You are going to have to decide for yourself...

So, Cliff and I met in SF on St Patrick's day and motored north to Novato to his favorite coffee shop where we could have a socially distanced cup of jo.

An amazing story undertaken at a much younger age.

He was an air force officer in 1964 stationed at Travis AFB walking into the credit union when he spotted a '61 BT7 tri-carb parked outside with a 'for sale' sign on it. Knowing nothing about Healeys, he inquired about the car and learned the owner had defaulted on the loan, the car has been repossessed, and was being auctioned off for was hoped to be the grand sum of \$2,000.

The credit union expected offers at a slightly lower number. Cliff, being the shrewd businessman that he is trumped the price to a princely \$2,001 and walked away the winner. And so the Healey saga begins...



- **TRIP 1:** While still at Travis he and Claudette were blessed with their first son, only to learn post air force service Cliff would be starting a career in Dover Delaware.

Before the move took place, they decided to visit Claudette's family in...Quebec! Being the resourceful type they took a child's wooden potty seat and modified so it fit on the arm rest on the transmission tunnel, thus trundling off into the sunrise, sans seatbelts, for a family visit.





- **TRIP 2:** In '65 the relocation to Dover took place. By this time son #2 was in place, requiring even more resourceful modifications to the none so spacious interior of the BT 7. Solution? Son #1 was still on the porta potty. Son #2 (age 3 months) resided comfortably in a plastic recliner in the passenger footwell, soothed to sleep by the raucous road and engine noise surrounding his cocoon while heading east to Delaware. Son #2 probably had the most comfortable seat given that the trip happened in December of that year.
- **TRIP 3:** Four years hence at the end of '69 Cliff had accepted a fellowship at the University of Hawaii in a geophysics curriculum. So, once again a party of four loaded up (few) personal effects and drove south from Quebec City, picking up Interstate 10, and terminating in Long Beach CA where the trusty British steed was loaded onto a ship bound for Hawaii.
- **Trip 4:** After completing the engagement the vehicle was returned to Oakland with the family bound for further research position in Traverse Michigan. Once again, but during the summer, the family headed east in the BT7, along with another side trip to Quebec City. After all, they were in the neighborhood. I believe it was during this trip along Interstate 80 in Wyoming that Claudette and another woman driver in a Cadillac decided to duke it out in a grudge match of gas pedals. Cliff, Claudette, and the two boys hurdled down the road at over 100 MPH with nary a seat belt between them. I am sure that even the Wyoming Troopers, in a state noted for its history of range wars and addiction to wild west justice, would have still frowned on that particular transgression of the law...

By this time the BT7 was getting a little long in the tooth, having been ridden and put away wet for many moons. About to embark on a career spanning seven years based in Sweden and other points requiring extensive international travel, ownership of the car was transferred to a new owner.

Adios old friend, and so starts a long hiatus from all things Healey while Cliff was the President of Ray-Tech Infrared [think the infrared thermometers now used during the Covid wars].

Along with Sweden the career went to Ann Arbor, St. Charles Missouri, New Jersey and other points, finally settling in the Santa Cruz area with a string of rather pedestrian vehicles serving as company cars.

However, in '87 a low mileage BJ8 was located in Scotts Valley, a very pretty example to this day still sporting a scant 74K miles.

Once again, the garage is adorned with British engineering along with other choices which have included a BMW 735, Porsche 924, Mercedes 560, as well as a Porsche 911 Turbo Cabriolet, the latter domiciled at their Santa Barbara home where they live for half the year.

The BJ8 is housed in San Francisco, serving as the northern California toy.

The most irritating experience with a Healey? A malfunctioning overdrive on a cross country sojourn which was overcome with a MacGyver high-tech solution of a string in the cockpit: pull the string and the OD would engage.

Best experience in a Healey?

Every day behind the wheel.



*Picture courtesy of Margot Duane Photography*



Cliff in his Russian tank  
commander 'driving' helmet.

But, that is another story....



*Picture courtesy of Margot Duane Photography*



## GGAHC Newsletter Editor position:

Please join me in Welcoming our New Newsletter Editor– Mr. Greg Cory

I'm sure Greg will do a Great Job.

Please introduce yourselves to Greg when you see him, so he can get to know everyone.

During my time doing the Newsletter, I have had the opportunity to spend time with the members of our club and get to know them.

I have had some Great Experiences and have many Great Memories that I will always cherish and remember.

It has been a pleasure joining in on all the fun we have had over the years, and I look forward to much more fun in the years to come.

I would also like to Thank everyone who has contributed to the Newsletter and I hope you will continue to do so.

If you want to keep in touch with me, feel free to send me an email: [me.sonneman@att.net](mailto:me.sonneman@att.net)

Thanks,  
Mike Sonneman



## RENDEZVOUS 2020 GRILL BADGE AVAILABLE IN THIS ONE TIME OFFER!

The 45th Austin Healey Rendezvous 2020 was cancelled because of the coronavirus. The cancellation resulted in a limited number of grill badges being available for purchase. Only 35 badges of the initial production run remain. There will not be any additional orders when they are gone!



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Contact Mike Sonneman for advertising rates.

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## Calendar of Events

Contact Marc Lewis to list an event:  
[events.ggahc@gmail.com](mailto:events.ggahc@gmail.com). For a more complete list see  
[www.GoldenGateHealeys.com](http://www.GoldenGateHealeys.com). You are advised to verify  
the dates of events that are not ours.

\*\*\*\*\*

Saturday **GGAHC** May 1st Half Moon Bay Tour

Saturday **GGAHC** June 12th Bay Area Tour

Saturday **GGAHC** July 10th Marin Rod & Gun Car Show

Saturday **GGAHC** Aug 7th Go Karts

Sunday **GGAHC** Aug 15th Ice Cream Social

Saturday **GGAHC** Aug 28th Nerlove BBQ

Saturday Sept 25th Ironstone Concours

\*\*\*\*\*

**Please Note:** More Information will be coming on the Events listed above, once Dates and Details have been Confirmed...

Please see Golden Gate Austin Healey Club website for event details:  
<http://www.goldengatehealeys.com/site/index.php/events/>

## From the Editor



**Mike Sonneman**  
**GGAHC Newsletter Editor**

Have you ever wanted to do a write up for a club event ?

If you would like to try your hand at writing up an article for our Newsletter please let me know.

All you need to do is write a few paragraphs about the event and take a few photographs and forward them to me for the next Newsletter.

I am still interested in biographies or any Healey story you would like to share with your fellow members.

Thanks,

Mike

# HealeyMarket



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

## For Sale:

1967 Austin-Healey - BJ8/3000 Mk. III

Owned since 1988. California car, always garaged. Looks and runs great. New tires and leather interior. 89,000 miles. Asking \$50,000.



**Ken Painter (831) 295-2142**

Email: [bqribbs@gmail.com](mailto:bqribbs@gmail.com)

## For Sale:

1965 Austin Healey 3000 Mk III / Phase 2, Chassis HBJ8L / 32038. Owned for 30 years, including 8 Year Restoration.

Asking \$69,000



**Robert Blair (408) 221-5244**

Email: [RNB333@live.com](mailto:RNB333@live.com)

## For Sale:

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## Free to good home:

Front suspension clip from a 1954 Austin-Healey 100. It comes with 3000 disc brakes, rack & pinion steering, anti-sway bar. The rotors, calipers and pads appear to be new. Shocks look good.

Located in Granite Bay.

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