

**AUGUST
2014**

EXHAUST NOTES



PRESIDENT'S NOTES

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Hello Ladies and Gentlemen,

The design and construction of the Austin Healey cars are most unique. As I have studied the variance in the automobiles from the 1953 BN1 to the 1967 BJ8, they are all specific in nature. Our eyes gravitate to the elegant and unobtrusive lines of design that give these cars such a beautiful silhouette.

The purity and unpretentious construction has contributed to their popularity and longevity of use. As I see other marque of cars I am swayed to peer at them but I always fall back to my favorite, The Healeys.

Onto the upcoming events –

- 1) August Club meeting combined with the Abingdon Poker Rally (sponsored by the Houston MG club). We will be meeting before the rally starts at 9:30 in the parking lot of The Stags Head Pub for our official August 9th Club meeting. We have eight to ten cars showing for the event. They are the Swonke's, Vince Barnell, the Vecellio's, the Sandy's, the Johnson's, the Langer's, the Norwood's and possibly the McPhail's and Nathan Bennett. Anyone else please join in and let us know your coming! See the flyer for other details about the event (page 3). Email the club or call Terry 832-876-0685.
- 2) August 23rd Tech Session and 2015 Roundup Meeting. This meeting is starting at 11:30 for the Tech Session, followed by lunch at 12:30 and a meeting for brain storming ideas for the 2015 Roundup Super 35th event. Edie and Roger Lowery will be hosting the event. This event will be further discussed and finalized at this Saturday's meeting.

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Onto the upcoming events –

- 3) September is a big month for starting off the fall driving. September 13th weekend has the CVAR Vintage Auto Racing @ Texas World Speedway, and yes yours truly “President” is planning to join in on this group if he can pull it all together. Come watch me sweat it out on the curves.
- 4) September 26th-28th, Texas All British Car Days @ Round Rock. Looks like a very fun venue this year. Let’s go!
- 5) Don’t forget other ideas for the Fall, be thinking about:
 - Oktoberfest Brewing Drive
 - Brenham overnight Tour
 - Yankee’s Tavern Run
 - Kerrville weekend for Roundup ideas

Well blokes I look forward to seeing you all at the Abingdon Poker Rally and club meeting at the Stags Head Pub this Saturday August 9th at 9:30 am.

Tally Ho!

Your President

Terry Swonke

Our next meeting is on **Saturday the 9th of August at 9:30** at the Stags Head Pub for the
ABINGDON POKER RALLY *(flyer on Page 3)*:

2128 Portsmouth

Houston, TX 77098

www.stagsheadpub.com

ABINGDON POKER RALLY

Sponsored by The Houston MG Car Club

The Abingdon Poker Rally will be run this Saturday, August 9, 2014, beginning at 10:00 am at The Stag's Head Pub, 2128 Portsmouth Street (in Shepherd Plaza, corner of Richmond and Shepherd).

This is an **OPEN MARQUE** poker rally for all vintage British and European cars.

Donuts from River Oaks Donuts and Starbucks coffee will be served promptly at 10:00, and we will leave shortly thereafter. There will be three stops before returning to Stag's Head for lunch, drinks, awards, darts and racing movies!

We will rope off parking spaces at Stag's Head for an impromptu car show, so shine up the wheels!

Each participant will draw a playing card at each of five stops, beginning and ending at The Stag's Head. The best three hands will be awarded prizes. The most interesting car (as determined by an impartial group of judges) will receive the vintage 2014 Abingdon Poker Rally Trophy.



Plan on enjoying a hearty meal and libations in The Oak Room around 12:30 pm.

First Stop - 10:00 am Stag's Head Pub (donuts and coffee served)

Second Stop – Speed and Sport Chrome Shop

Third Stop – Reserve Supply Company

Fourth Stop – DriverSource

Fifth Stop – 12:30 pm – Stag's Head Pub (awards, drinks, food)

SEE YOU SATURDAY!

For questions, contact the Rallymaster:

Cragg Eubanks – eubanks@barrierresources.com or (281) 467-1874

THE LONG RIDE HOME

By Mike and Anne Johnson

June 7 – 23, 2014

Conclave - The Homestead, Virginia, 2014

It was great two-week trip to North Carolina and Virginia for Conclave 2014. Also, very eventful. We started out early on Saturday morning travelling with Mike and Nel McPhail on June 7 and made Tuscaloosa by evening. Mike flat-towed his Bugeye. In Tuscaloosa he discovered the transmission tailpiece was cracked and oil was leaking out. He decided to return the next day to Dripping Springs (750 miles) and connect the 100M with plans to make it to Conclave with the other Healey. As it turned out when they arrived home it was raining with forecast for more rain through the next day. He made the decision to transfer their luggage to the Porsche and set out the next morning to drive back to Tuscaloosa and then on to Vince Barnell's place in Highlands, NC.

At about this same time back in Texas we learned that Roger and Edie Lowery got as far as central East Texas when Roger discovered he had a serious engine oil leak in their Bugeye and turned back home to transfer their luggage to the BJ9.

These two episodes on the first day of our travel to Conclave should have given me thoughtful pause, but, no, we journeyed on.

On day two we drove from Tuscaloosa to Jeff and Sue Osborne's in Burnsville, NC. Their house is in Mountain Aire with a very steep subdivision road up the side of the mountain; 12% grade in some stretches. The Trailblazer almost did not make it but at the last moment the grade flattened out and we arrived at their house safely but with a very hot engine! We spent five days with the Osbornes. I got the Healey off the trailer and had a chance to drive with Jeff on some really nice twisty open-top roads in western North Carolina. The steep grades also allowed me to test my engine timing using my pinging test. I adjusted the distributor to retard the timing very slightly and it made a big difference. I also discovered that I needed oil in the dash pots.

Conclave was great at the Homestead in Hot Springs, Virginia. Old elegant hotel with roots back to 1766. Popularity was on the lawn driving range. Unfortunately my parking spot was on a very slight down-hill slope. Guess what? Even though the gas tank was one gallon less than full, the tank overflowed again! This is the second time this has happened. The first was at Conclave in Colorado Springs three years ago. The paint was scarred below the gas cap along the shroud-side of the right fender bead. But, it is just paint.

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THE LONG RIDE HOME

We had a big group from Gulf Coast Healey Club: Swonkes, Lowerys, Vince Barnell, Vecellios, Pete Sandy, Osbornes, McPhails, and Langers. Terry's 100 won first place in class. Mike and Pat Vecellio got third place in their class and Anne and I got Honorable Mention in the Rally. It was one of the best Conclave rallies in years. Hard to miss with the superior roads in Virginia/West Virginia.

The trip home proved to be eventful. We travelled on our own. Outside of Bristol, Tennessee we had a severe blowout on the left rear trailer tire which also took out the trailer brake light and mangled the license plate. AAA arrived to change the tire. Then, 100 miles later, 20 miles north of Knoxville, we had a second blowout on the right front tire of the trailer. No spare this time. The Tennessee Highway Patrol gave us some protection from freeway traffic to get the Healey off the trailer.

At the same time John Homoneck (Atlanta) spotted us stranded on the side of the freeway and stopped. He suggested Northern Tool in Knoxville would have trailer tires and wheels. We left the trailer on the side of the freeway and drove both the tow vehicle and Healey on to Knoxville and arrived at Northern Tool at 7:30 in the evening just ahead of the 8pm closing. It turned out that they sold Ford wheels only and we needed GM wheels, but the young lady at the cash register suggested we contact Trailer Specialists in Knoxville. They were closed but we got instruction to the shop and found their emergency phone number on their front gate. We called and left a message with a brief description of our plight.

While having dinner at the hotel that evening we got a call from Jerry Cardwell, owner of Trailer Specialists. He agreed to open his shop the next day on Saturday morning. We met at 8:30am and he promptly got to work. He mounted one tire on the wheel that I put in the back of the Trailblazer after the first blow out. With one good wheel in hand we followed Jerry back up the freeway to find the trailer on the side of the road just as we left it the night before. He replaced the blowout with the good spare and then we followed him back to his shop where he set about changing the remaining four tires.

I had known about tire date codes but had not paid close attention. I got a lesson during this sad episode. It turned out that the trailer tires were manufactured in 2004 and 2005. I purchased them in 2009, so they were four and five years old when put into service. The rule of thumb is that radial tires are good for six years regardless of tread wear. At ten years old we had two catastrophic blow outs and a third tire had a partially separated tread.



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THE LONG RIDE HOME

By noon on Saturday we had all new tires mounted and balanced and we headed back to the hotel in Knoxville where we had left the Healey in the good hands of the hotel manager. We loaded up, had a relaxing lunch and headed down the interstate toward home.

Chattanooga is about 100 miles south of Knoxville. We were feeling pretty good and imagined, with a little hard driving, and new trailer tires, we could make Houston the next day on Sunday afternoon as planned. I guess we should not have been feeling so smug. Before we got to Chattanooga a red warning light on the dash announced that the charging system had failed! We pulled off at the next (very minor) exit and found a truck stop. The nice lady at the convenience store check-out counter handed me a business card for a truck and trailer repair service.

Yes, they were open on a Saturday afternoon and, yes, they could send their service truck right away. What luck.

The easy problem would have been a bad battery but as I suspected it was a crashed alternator. With some scurrying around and four hours later (all the while waiting in a stuffy truck stop waiting room) we had a new alternator, but our next problem was finding a hotel within easy driving distance. The sun was setting and I really did not want to test my new alternator at night. We had to back track to find a hotel but we were at least in for the night.

By this time there was no hope of driving the entire way to Houston in one leg so we consigned ourselves to an extra day on the road and stayed over in Lafayette, Louisiana. By this time, dead level, straight, and flat IH10 looked pretty good. The trailer was pulling fine and the battery was fully charged. Even Baytown looked good in the distance. Except, up ahead I spotted one of the blackest rain clouds I have ever seen!

It was, indeed, a long ride home.

Mike and Anne Johnson
Gulf Coast Healey Club

Tire Date Codes

As discussed in the previous article, tire date codes can be important to determine the age of tires and possible failure.

All tires have a date code on them and this will tell the week and year the tire was manufactured. Manufacturers are only required to put the serial number and date code on one side of the tire, so your date code could be on the inner side.

Tires Manufactured Since 2000

Since 2000, the week and year the tire was produced has been provided by the last four digits of the Tire Identification Number with the 2 digits being used to identify the week immediately preceding the 2 digits used to identify the year.

In the example to the right, the tire was made in the 45th week (beginning of November) in 2011.



Tires Manufactured Before 2000

The Tire Identification Number for tires produced prior to 2000 was based on the assumption that tires would not be in service for ten years. While they were required to provide the same information as today's tires, the week and year the tire was produced was contained in the last three digits. The 2 digits used to identify the week a tire was manufactured immediately preceded a single digit used to identify the year.

This picture shows a tire made in the 3rd week of 2000.



August Tool of the Month

By Mike McPhail

Not all worthwhile tools are two-fisted 240 volt behemoths. There is a wide variety of obscure but highly useful hand tools that may be missing from your collection. Some of my personal favorites are:

Six inch reamer (there's an off-color joke here somewhere). You know how sometimes you drill a hole in something and it isn't quite big enough...well, a few twists of the reamer and you have the perfect size. It is great for de-burring, too.

Speaking of holes, the exact diameter may be in question. If you have that great big drill bit selection, the bits can become gauges to check out the size. The bit can be measured with a micrometer or matched to the holes in a pocket sized fractional gauge. The same idea works well in reverse to determine the size of bolts.

A power drill may often be overkill for making small holes, and that battery operated model is probably dead. No problem...just whip out the Yankee Drill. This clever hand tool has been around for ever, but is hardly obsolete.

What about getting that little bitty screw to start without dropping it down into the engine compartment, never to be seen again? Specialty screwdrivers are available to hold the screw to the end of the tool. Simple, but effective!

If you must drop all that stuff into the abyss, use the handy-dandy pocket telescoping magnet to retrieve it. For non-ferrous items the fishing tool is the next best thing.

Having a hard time getting those ham-fists into that little space with your big gomby ratchet? Try a stubby with a swivel handle. Couple this with a wiggle end extension and you can get that socket into the tightest places.

Gear wrenches are superb for the tight spots also, and have practically replaced the ratchet. Once again, the stubby variety is the best.

The lowly scratch awl (I'm not even going there...) comes in handy for a variety of tasks. Nice for poking holes in things (oops, careful!), lining up holes in, say for instance, transmission tunnels and the like, or used as a punch to free that stubborn fastener. Too small? Similar objects in varying sizes will get the job done.

Tiny versions of common tools are sometimes needed for delicate work. Picks, files, and baby wrenches come in mighty handy.

Enough of the wimpy hand tools; remember that brute-force will usually overcome skill and patience. The impact screwdriver will either loosen that stubborn screw or bolt, or snap the head right off the damn thing! This tool comes with lots of screwdriver bits, and the ½ inch drive chuck is removable, which allows you to fit big sockets to the tool. Or, heck, put the screwdriver's chuck on your big air powered impact wrench and watch the fur fly!



2014 Club Calendar

Subject to Change

August 2014

August 9— GCHC gathering for the Abingdon Poker Rally , Stags Head Pub @ 9:30am

August 23—Tech Session and 2015 Roundup Meeting @ Edie and Roger Lowery's home

September 2014

September 13— GCHC monthly breakfast meeting— Canopy's Restaurant @ 9:00am

September 12-143— CVAR Vintage Auto Racing @ Texas World Speedway (www.corinthianvintagerace.com)

September 26-28—2014 Texas All British Car Days @ Round Rock (www.txabcd.org)

October 2014

October 11— GCHC monthly breakfast meeting— Canopy's Restaurant @ 9:00am

November 2014

November 8— GCHC monthly breakfast meeting— Canopy's Restaurant @ 9:00am

December 2014

December 13— GCHC monthly breakfast meeting— Canopy's Restaurant @ 9:00am

Holiday Party—TBD



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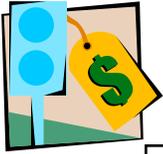


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NEXT MEETING:

SATURDAY, August 9 @ 9:30am

Stags Head Pub

2128 Portsmouth

Houston, TX 77098

www.stagsheadpub.com

