

HEALEY HIGH ROADS

The Newsletter of the Capital Area Austin-Healey Club

October, 2004

MEETING OF THE MARQUES

A SHOW TO CONSIDER ATTENDING NEXT YEAR—By Allen Feldman, BJ8

On Sunday, Sept. 26 the 14th annual Meeting of the Marques occurred, put on by the Susquehanna Valley Vintage Sports Car Club. It was a great weather day and about an hour from my home in North Potomac.

I met Joe Maestri near a convenient point just off of I-270. We proceeded up the highway to Route 15 to Gettysburg where we met Don Pritchard who lives near by in Hanover. From there we drove further north to Rt 94 North, 34 North and then 174 East before coming to the Allenberry Resort Inn in Boiling Springs PA.

We were greeted by some very warm friendly folks who, after registration, walked us over to where we should park. This show is unique in that you park and are judged by the year of your cars manufacturer, not with other Healeys. I was parked next to an E Jag and a beautiful Morgan. At the end of my row was a 1967 Bond. This is a 3 wheel car that has an engine which turns with the front steering wheel. There were a total of about 130 cars registered. I counted 12 Big Healeys, 5 Sprites and 3 Jensen Healeys. (Don's family owned two of them.) This show is not entirely made up of British iron. Other foreign cars of note were a Fiat Abarth and a P1600 Volvo. This show has no problem with replicars which makes Joe happy. He had a Cobra on one side and a beat up AC Bristol racing car on the other. There also was a Dino GT which Joe says has a VW chassis and a VW engine. It looks just like a Ferrari to me. The racing and replicars are lumped together in one class and the other non-British in another class.

A lot of the people in attendance said they were going to make the trek to the Hunt Country Classic Oct. 10. I was surprised but why not? This trek for them, along Route 15 into Virginia is no different than what I had just gone through coming to their show.

Some unique things at the show I think are the low food prices. A hamburger was only \$3 and a hotdog only \$2. What a bargain. They have a much larger food production with barbecue chicken, roast pig, etc, etc for \$12 but that was more than I needed. There was only one vendor besides the show people selling their show regalia.

One of the best deals of the show is the flush toilets. I've never understood why whenever I go to Carlisle or Hershey there is always someone who charges for the use of their smelly toilets. It must be a Pennsylvania thing but I've never seen this anywhere else where someone sits outside and collects coins as a toll for leaving?

One last thing, they have a raffle with a ticket you receive in your registration packet. The raffle is run throughout the shows length. I won a \$20 gift certificate from Victoria British. Not as big a prize like Dean Turner wins, but none-the-less a prize.

With the beautiful roads leading up to this show site I would recommend this being placed on your next year's calendar. As of now I'm not aware of the 2005 show date.

My Take . . .

By Jack White, CAAHC President

As you read this story, most of the fair weather driving season will be history for this year. We had a great series of car shows and driving opportunities for Healey owners to get out and enjoy the road and each others company. Let's take inventory on how and why we drive our cars

and congregate with our own marque and the LBC ("Little British Car") community. First and foremost, we are committed to the preservation of Healeys. Preservation takes two forms and both are important. On the cosmetic and mechanical side of things, we want to drive good looking and reliable cars that have an average age of more than 40 years. The second side of preservation is keeping the Healey name and heritage alive for generations born after the 1940's 50's. In my experience, both of these goals often reinforce each other. By then,

How many times have you been in the parking lot of a shopping center and had a spontaneous conversation with a person who walks up and compliments your car? It happens to me all the time. I regularly work on my car to constantly maintain and improve its appearance. And many of us are willing to get under the hood and under the car to inspect, tighten, replace and otherwise confirm that everything will work on the next drive. In my case, my efforts are rewarded with an occasional award at a British car show but far more frequently with a compliment from a stranger in a parking lot. This is the second part of preserving the Healey as a truly classic British sports car. I like to explain to a guy or a couple standing next to my car that Healey's are rather rare compared to other makes of old British sports cars. I usually explain that my car is a "roadster" (Mark I BT7) in contrast to later models that were styled as convertibles. I often quote the short history of Healey manufacturing and the low production compared to MG's, as one example. Basically, in the space of five minutes, I can tell a tight little story about the Healey marque and my ownership history. None of these folks will become Healey owners but I hope they remember the

conversation about the nice looking old car and the fellow who told them something about it.

I see myself as an oral historian with a nicely preserved car from the era of America's strong fascination with British sports cars after World War II. The active driving season may be done for 2004 but the job of preservation is always part of our plans. For my part, its time to line up some reasonably achievable "projects" for improving my car over the Winter months. I can always count on comparing notes and "degrees of difficulty" with CAAHC members who come to monthly meetings and participate in our Internet group. I urge you to join me and plan a car project for the coming months. You can easily get inspiration and advice by attending our regular meetings that rotate among the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Also, please come to our home in Fairfax for brunch on Sunday, January 9th to attend the Club's annual meeting and meet new friends. By then, you should have a good story to tell about your success (and your hardships) in your role for Healey preservation.

CLUB OFFICERS

President: Jack White

(jwhite@medmark.com)

Secretary: Don Margeson

(dmargeso@bechtel.com)

Treasurer: Frank Pirhalla

(Frank.Pirhalla@faa.gov)

Activities Director: Fred McConville

(mconvil@HughesHubbard.com)

Newsletter Editor/Delegate: Michael Oritt

(awgertoo@aol.com)

Webmaster: Herman Farrer

(herman@capitalhealeys.org)

**HEALEY HIGH ROADS IS THE OFFICIAL
NEWLETTER OF THE CAPITAL AREA
AUSTIN-HEALEY CLUB.**

Visit our website at:

www.capitalhealeys.org

DONALD HEALEY'S INDUCTION INTO AUTOMOTIVE HALL OF FAME

By: Melody Cooke

In early October I looked out the window of a plane and viewed the flat, organized land that is southern Michigan. Born and raised in Michigan, I was returning to the bastion birthplace of the industrialized American automotive industry, a place where during my youth, foreign cars were banned at the border... at least I never saw any in the parking lots at the Olds or Chrysler plants. But now, Michigan was honoring a creative automotive genius from Britain. On October 6, 2004, Donald M. Healey was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame in Dearborn, Michigan, one of eight honorees this year. The Automotive Hall of Fame, the highest place of honor in the international motor vehicle industry, is located in Dearborn, Michigan. Preserving the history of mobility by celebrating the creativity, toil and genius of the individual, the organization is dedicated to:

- Recognizing outstanding achievement in the automotive and related industries
- Preserving automotive heritage
- Educating future generations of industry participants

In speaking with Wayne Waltrip, Manager of Education and Visitor Programs, he emphasizes that the Automotive Hall of Fame is about the "automotive industry", not about just automobiles. Since its founding in 1939, over 200 individuals representing early pioneers and contemporary industry leaders have been inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame. Indeed, reviewing the Class of 2004, you can see the scope of the entire vehicle industry.

Donald Healey – British sports car designer, accomplished racer with wins in rally races, set a land

speed record of 203.06 mph in 1956, driving a car of his own design

And further enhancing the Healey marque, **Battista Pininfarina** – Italian automobile design genius who influenced special bodies and production designs for countless Alfa Romeos, Fiats, Ferraris, Lancias and the classic Nash-Healey

Bill France, Sr. – father of American stock car racing, founded NASCAR in 1947, set standards for uniform rules in stock car racing

Don Garlits – "Big Daddy" is synonymous with drag racing, first drag racer to surpass 200 miles per hour

J.R. "Pitt" Hyde – founder of the retailing giant AutoZone, leader in the fight to retain the aftermarket parts industry

Heinz Prechter – founder of American Sunroof Corporation (ASC, Inc.), experimented and engineered glass panel sunroofs and the development of composite convertible tops

Eberhard von Kuenheim – Managing Director of BMW from 1970 to 1999, a period that established its reputation as a performance luxury icon

Jiro Yanase – president of Yanase & Company, responsible for providing the initial entrance into the Japanese market for many American and European automakers

The Automotive Hall of Fame is a lovely building sitting on the grounds of The Henry Ford, a museum complex comprised of Greenfield Village and the Henry Ford Museum. Not a Healey, but worth seeing in the museum is one of only six Bugatti Royales, the white one... an absolutely lovely machine. But lest you think it all about the "fancy cars", the Oscar Mayer Weinermobile was there, too.

Part of the complex but a bus ride away, sits the newly renovated Rouge Plant, Henry Ford's 1917 masterpiece of onsite conversion of iron ore to steel to a finished Model A. It has been upgraded to be environmentally correct with a "living green roof" on one large building and is currently producing

Ford trucks.

There were many Healey enthusiasts present and in the company of John May, Chuck and Edie Anderson, Bonnie Ayer, Bev Sealand, John Hunt and Bill Emerson, we entered the building. Beautifully displayed in the grand foyer sat Blair Harber's award-winning 1952 first production Austin-Healey 100 where it will represent the Healey marque for the next six months.

Touring the Automotive Hall of Fame we encountered artfully arranged niches of memorabilia relative to various inductees. It is a one-stop shopping tour of the evolution of the automotive industry. One astounding display listed over 2000 producers of automobiles from the late 1890s to mid-1930, less than 2% were still in existence at that time. Under construction will be a display representing Donald M. Healey.

The award that is presented to the representative of the honoree is a beautifully designed crystal pylon. It is on display in a small rotunda with a semi-circle collage mural representing the impact of the automotive industry on life, as we know it. Around the base of the mural are black marble panels with engraved signatures of recipients of the award.

That evening at the banquet, an honored guest introduced each inductee's background; Donald Healey was eloquently represented by Janet Guthrie, the first woman to drive an Indy car at Indianapolis. From the Healey point of view, she raced at Sebring as part of the 1969 and 1970 All Women Teams, driving the last streamlined Sprite Coupe produced in Warwick. She spoke eloquently of the speed, handling and beauty of the Healey cars. Not on the podium, but in a private conversation, she stated that she had her first track experience in a borrowed 3000. Baird Foster, the driving force behind the presentation of credentials that lead to Donald's selection then introduced Bic Healey. Bic and Mary Healey were attendees and Bic gave a moving speech of acceptance and pride at the recognition of his father.

Also among the guests that evening was Perhaps down the road there may be another Healey personality honored as an inductee into the

Automotive Hall of Fame, but don't wait for that. There is a lot to see in Dearborn, Michigan so don't miss visiting the Automotive Hall of Fame and the other nearby attractions on your next Michigan trip. And when there, ask for Wayne Waltrip, he specifically said that all Healey owners would get a personal tour. And to whet your appetite, visit their main web page at: www.automotivehalloffame.org.

DEAN'S NEW CAR!

By Sue Turner

Since I've heard that not everyone knew Dean now has a different Healey, I thought I'd take this opportunity to let all know of the change.

Dean's love of British cars came with the restoration of a 1970 Jaguar XKE. Working on the Jag only in the warm months (because the garage wasn't heated) it took approximately three years to finish.

When taking his Jag to an occasional British car show he fell in love with the Austin Healey. He did a lot of researching and decided to purchase one. Looking in the newspaper he found one at a "good price".

One Sunday we were on our way out to dinner for our anniversary and Dean's birthday, which just happen to take us to Richmond where Dean was going to "look at" a car. After checking it over, he decided to purchase it.

After another three years of restoring the car and entering it in different shows, it won quite a few prizes and even won "people's choice" two years in a row at Hunt Country. At each car show he was asked if it was for sale. After so many inquires, he said he'd "think about it". Word got around and a deal was made to sell it to Dick Williams.

It was a sad day for me to sell the '67 but now Dean would have more time to work on the '60 Benz. Even though Dean no longer owns the '67 it still won "people's choice" for the third year in a row at Hunt Country.

We still went to Healey functions and socialized with other members for a couple months, but Dean just didn't feel completely comfortable without a Healey. Soon there after along came a deal he just "couldn't pass up". He purchased a '65 BJ8. And guess when? On our anniversary/his birthday in July the same time he purchased the '67 back in 1997.

Dean now has a great driving Healey. Of course he will want to do a "few things" to it, as he's always wanting to make a good thing better. The '65 is not to Dean's satisfaction as a "show car", but he will still take it to shows just because he really enjoys driving it!

HUNT COUNTRY REPORT

By Michael Oritt

Dawn on October 10 found me in the parking lot of the Manassas Red Roof Inn (to cut down on the drive Sunday, Mary and I had come from Southern Maryland the evening before) uncovering our cars and wiping off the morning dew. After a quick breakfast we saddled up and headed west on 66, got off near The Plains and drove through the lovely Hunt Country to Bill Scott's farm where this event is traditionally held, arriving about 9:00 AM.

Because of the outstanding response from CAAHC members to the call for preregistrations the organizers were able to forecast a large Healey presence that would justify classes for both side-curtain and convertible cars, and as we picked up our registration packets Mary, in her BN7 and I in my BN1 were directed to park by the sign for Class A—a pretty red BN1, freshly acquired by new Club member John Elliott was at the head of the line.

It was a perfect fall day for a car show—temperatures were just right, there was no threat of rain and a big turnout was expected by the MG Car Club. I had heard talk of over thirty Healeys, both big and little, from the event organizers and indeed over the next hour or so the cars—and Healeys—kept rolling in. Several CAAHC members had brought along baked

goods, and Fred Hufnagel's folding table was soon covered with cookies, cakes and doughnuts.

Mary and I had brought our dog "Buddy" with us, and I had the difficult assignment of keeping him out of the club bakery. Fortunately the local Humane Society was thoughtful enough to provide Dog Treats, and so both Pet and Owner were able to snack without interfering with each other.

The final count was 32 Healeys, which included 22 "Big" cars comprising the two aforementioned classes and ten Sprites. CAAHC members in attendance, by class were:

Convertible Class: Sidecurtain Class

McConville	Dunnington
Turner	White
Szany	Elliott
Hufnagel	Oritt (Mary)
Williams	Oritt (Michael)
Fatterpacker	Hemphill
Farrer	Bertheiz
Siegel	
Margeson	<u>Sprites</u>
McKenna	
Feldman	Jones
Hess	Brewer

Just before the afternoon's award ceremony commenced, CAAHC President Jack White called an impromptu meeting of members and presented AHCA Driving Award Certificates and "Healey Driver" Tee-shirts to Allen Feldman and (in absentia) Gary Palsgrove to recognize their having recently driven significant distances.

At approximately 2:00 PM the Awards Ceremony began, and Club members generally swept their fields.

Winners in the side-curtain class were: Ralph Bertheiz--1st; Michael Oritt--2nd, and; Gary Hemphill--3rd.

Winners in the convertible class were: Dick Williams–1st; Matt Siegel–2nd, and; Don and Kathi Margeson–3rd.

Winners in the Sprite class were: Biff Jones–1st, and ; Neil Brewer–3rd.

Further, Club members Jeff Ade and Jim Sasser, respectively, won the Jag sedan and Jag sports classes.

As Event Coordinator, I'd like to thank the membership for its great turnout and support of our Club's efforts in making this another great Hunt Country Classic. Seeya there next year !

A Blue Ridge Getaway

By: Herman Farrer

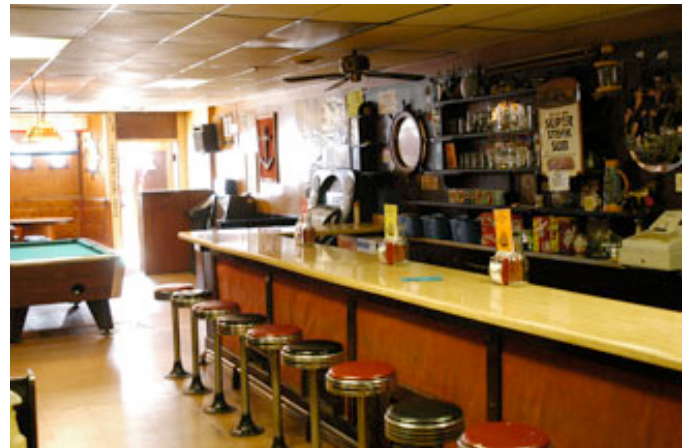
For some time, I have wanted to hop in the Healey and head off for a solo cruise down the blue highways. In his book *Blue Highways*, author William Least Heat Moon noted that these secondary roads used to appear in blue on old road maps. Now gray or red, they often run parallel to the modern interstates. Unlike the interstates, however, these roads have a soul. They run through the small towns and country hamlets, each its own link in the chain that connects us to a disappearing America. Fortunately, if you drive far enough you can still find some burgs yet to succumb to modernity. Towns where you fill your tank before paying and where the pumps don't accept credit cards.

So, with little preparation other than an AAA tour book, in mid-August, I set out for the **Blue Ridge Mountains**. It quickly become clear to me that all highways in Virginia are named Lee – except ones that are named Jackson. Unless of course, they are named Lee Jackson. I left the interstate as soon as possible to drive down Va. Rt. 55, a road that we had used for one of our club outings. The day's heat had yet to arrive, the air was fresh, and the light had a golden hue. The traffic was sparse so I was able to travel at my own pace and get a good sense of how

the Healey was running. After filtering out the usual assortments of squeaks and rattles, I determined that all was well and settled down to enjoy the drive.



Gas it up the old fashion way.



From the back of the Schooner Restaurant you can see it was a slow day.

My route was southerly, but I hadn't chosen any roads in advance. I passed through **Front Royal** and **Luray** eventually stopping in **Waynesboro** for lunch at the Schooner Restaurant. Looking a bit like a biker bar from the outside, I expected to be met by a cloud of cigarette smoke, but instead saw only darkness upon entering. I stepped in, let my eyes adjust to the darkness, and realized that I was alone except for the waitress at the far end of the narrow room. Still vibrating from the buzz of the Healey's engine, I walked toward her and she asked, "Have you ever used baking soda to clean a mirror?" She went on to explain how one of her

customers told her that a solution of baking soda was the best way to clean mirrors and now she had a real mess on her hands. It was hard to disagree with her. The menu was short, but the food and service were good.

After leaving Waynesboro, I made my way to Rt. 11 and headed south toward **Roanoke**. Traffic was light, allowing me to enjoy rural views and still maintain a comfortable 50 to 60 mph cruising speed. Down the road a way, I stopped to visit the **Natural Bridge** (www.naturalbridgeva.com), billed as one of the "Seven Wonders of the World." Naturally formed by the flow of water, the bridge is 215 feet tall, 90 feet wide, and over 100 million years old. Lord Fairfax had the property surveyed by young George Washington in 1750. Fourteen years later, Thomas Jefferson acquired the bridge as part of a 157-acre purchase from King George III for the sum of 20 shillings.



The Natural Bridge dwarfs the people standing below.

Down the trail from the bridge, I also found a recreation of a **Monacan Indian village**. Comprised of dwellings and structures that would have been found there 300 years ago, the site includes demonstrations of various skills and crafts by descendants of the Monacans. With a little imagination, one could easily envision what life must have been like living just upstream from the Natural Bridge.



A basket making demonstration at the Monacan village.



My Healey, an MGB GT, and Webb's TR-7

It was past 4:00 p.m. when I returned to my car and I knew that I still had a bit of driving ahead of me. With a little more emphasis on speed than scenery I arrived at the outskirts of Roanoke at about 6:00 p.m. Never having been there before, I had no idea of where I was going, but figured I would eventually find a hotel. Then, out of the corner of my eye something caught my attention. I knew what I thought I saw, but could it be? Painted large, along the top of the building were the logos that caught my eye. "Austin Healey," "MG," "Triumph," "Rover." Inside were the cars. Mostly MGs and Triumphs, but regrettably, no Healeys. An older gentleman soon appeared and introduced himself as Byron Webb, the owner of Webb Motors, a former BMC/British Leyland dealership. After the demise of BL, he continued on by restoring and selling British sports cars. The cars on view were in fact in "showroom condition." Mr. Webb was most keen on pointing out all of the upgrades, which included a road cam and overdrive on a sweet looking Triumph TR-6.

The weather in the morning was pleasantly warm and slightly overcast, perfect for driving. My route to the **Blue Ridge Parkway** took me through the center of Roanoke. In need of directions, I followed signs to a visitor center, which is housed in the former **Norfolk & Western Railway** passenger station. Once inside, I also discovered that the building had been renovated by the famed industrial designer **Raymond Loewy** (www.raymondloewy.com) (think the GG1 and S1 locomotives, Coke bottle, Studebaker Avanti, Shell Oil logo, and the Lucky Strike package) and also housed the **O. Winston Link Museum** (www.linkmuseum.org.) Steam locomotives

fascinated Link, a New York City commercial photographer in the mid 20th century. The N&W was the last major railroad to use only steam locomotives to pull its rail cars. From 1955 to 1960, with the support of the N&W, he took it upon himself to document this dying part of American history. He made hundreds of large black-and-white images of the trains and the people who made them run. Link needed elaborate lighting to illuminate his scenes, but nevertheless, the photographs appear natural and often intimate.

Within 15 minutes of leaving the museum, I had reached my true destination, the Blue Ridge Parkway. Heading south, traffic was very light and I was able to maintain the posted speed limit of 45 mph. Before long, the road began to climb through the mountains leaving beautiful vistas below. After about two to three hours the skies darkened and a stiff breeze began to blow. I reversed course and headed back north, driving through an unexpected rainstorm, but that was all part of the adventure.

My next stop was at about 4:00 p.m. at the **National D-Day Memorial** (www.dday.org) in **Bedford, VA**. It looked like it might rain again, but instead the sun broke through the clouds and cast a warm glow over the site. The Memorial is one of several dedicated to those who landed on the beaches of Normandy on June 6, 1944. The significance of this location is that Bedford lost more citizens per capita than any other U.S. city during the invasion. The Memorial has 14 distinct sections, including gardens, sculptures, and water features, which tell the story of the invasion.



Submerged air jets pop burst of water simulating gunfire as the sculpted soldiers struggle for a foothold on the beach.

After a one-hour walk through the Memorial, I got back into the Healey for the half-hour drive to the Lynchburg. While I knew that Lynchburg is the home of Jerry Falwell's **Liberty University**, my main impression was that at night, it is a ghost town. Walking through the center city in the early evening along deserted streets was eerie, but a nice change from the congestion we constantly face in the D.C. area. I went into a little bistro where a folk musician was just getting started. The whole thing was very

intimate – the musician, a table of his friends, the owner, a waitress, two of her friends, and me.

My ride home was uneventful, although one peculiar thing did happen as I was driving on Rt. 66. In the right lane up ahead I noticed a pickup hauling an open trailer loaded with what appeared to be a car chassis. Pulling along side of the trailer, I realized that it was a Healey frame and inner substructure all in a yellow primer. As I came up to the driver of the truck I looked over at him and nodded. He looked back at me and then at the Healey and shrugged. Whoever he is, I hope he gets his car running soon.

I was gone only two nights, but covered almost 600 miles. In retrospect, I'm amazed at how much I did and saw in that time. This region offers many different opportunities for those seeking to get away in a Healey. Whether you like history, the arts, or just a trip to the country, it's there waiting for you. Just trust your car and go.