



Gateway Relay

Vol IV, No. 3

St Louis Sports Car Council

November 2014



Council News & Notes

- It would appear winter has finally arrived and as can be seen at the right, the events list is now dominated by club holiday parties. However, if for some reason St Louis has a sudden warm snap between now and New Years, some form of pop-up driving event may occur; if any club calls one, notify the *Relay* editor ASAP and we'll dispatch our crack photo team).
- As indicated last month, the *Relay* will contract to its usual mid-winter length, probably with the next issue. We'll cover as many Christmas/holiday parties as possible and, as 2014 ends, will start listing the early-2015 events as they come up.
- Finally, the invoice for the annual web hosting fee for StLSCC just arrived. The annual "membership" remains \$20, please contact the editor prior to mid-December for info on how to re-up your club.

Up & Coming

- 20 Nov 2014 – RUBCO!** Periodic gathering of the Retired & Unemployed British Car Owners, hosted by the MG Club of St Louis, Southwest Diner at 6803 Southwest Ave, StL, 9:30 AM.
- 22 Nov 2014—Rescheduled from the 15th: Fifth Annual MG Club Sporting Clays Shoot** at the Blackhawk Valley Hunt Preserve, Old Monroe, MO. Golf with Shot-guns! Meet at 10 AM, see www.stlouismgclub.com/ for details.
- 2 Dec 2014—Gateway VCOA End of Year Dinner**, Old Spaghetti Factory in Chesterfield Valley (17384 Chesterfield Airport Rd), 7-9 PM. Details getting worked out but expect \$10-15 per person, plus beverages, tax and gratuity. RSVP to gateway.vcoa.chapter@gmail.com.
- 5 Dec 2014—St Louis Triumph Owners Association Christmas Party.** At the Missouri Athletic Club-West, 1777 Des Peres Rd, Town & Country; cash bar at 6:30, dinner at 7:30, "Rob Your Neighbor" gift exchange after the meal. \$17 per person (SLTOA will pay the difference), see www.sltoa.org for more information.
- 13 Dec 2014—Gateway Healey Association Christmas Party**, 7:30 PM at Keith Bester's home, bring a dish to share. Monitor <http://clubs.hemmings.com/gatewayhealey/> for additional details.
- 13 Dec 2014—Gateway Z Club Christmas Party**, details to come, monitor www.gatewayzclub.com/.
- 10 Jan 2015 – Annual Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis Deer Creek Dinner** and member awards night.
- 22-25 Jan 2015—Annual St Louis Auto Show**, America's Center/Edward Jones Dome, downtown St Louis. Info at www.saintlouisautoshow.com.
- 24 Jan 2015—MG Club of St Louis Annual Holiday Party**, at Sqwires, 1415 S 18th St, Lafayette Park. Details to follow, monitor www.stlouismgclub.com/.
- 8 Feb 2015—DATE TENTATIVE – 32nd Annual SLTOA Polar Bear Run.** The traditional start of the driving season: somewhere out the in the country, all-weather, tops down, heaters on high. Details to follow.
- 5 Apr 2014 – 54th Annual Forest Park Concours d'Elegance**, hosted by the Horseless Carriage Club of Missouri, keep an eye on www.hccmo.com/.

Note: Some club driving events restrict participation to club members only, primarily for national/chapter insurance reasons. If interested in joining in on a drive or other event, we recommend you contact the club's event coordinator in advance for details.

111.87 m.p.h.

A normal production Healey 2.4 litre Saloon achieved the maximum speed of 111.87 m.p.h. and a mean speed over two ways of 110.8 m.p.h. on the Jabbeke-Ardene Motorway, Oxford, in July. The car used was a standard model in all respects, the Bore and Stroke with the Compression Ratio of 8.97 to 1 being certified by the R.A.C. Standard Test of Octane Value 70/72 degree, as certified by the Royal Automobile Club de Belgique.

This substantiates the claim that the Healey Saloon is the "FASTEST PRODUCTION CAR IN THE WORLD."

The following mean speed, in addition, the Healey's outstanding appearance, reliability and comfort. **APPEALING!**—Competition of England as Overall, Best Grand Prix of Healey. "Win Coupe of the Royal Automobile Club of Belgium (Class closed and reserved to 2.4 litre)." **HEAVENLY!**—French International Alpine Reliability Trial: Won outright 3-Litre Class Prize. **CONQUER!**—French International Alpine Rally: Won 2-Litre Class Prize for the most comfortable Open Car.

CHASSIS (8X WORKS) £950
IMMEDIATE DELIVERY
SALOON £1,800 ROADSTER £1,500
(Plus Delivery Tax)

HEALEY
2.4 LITRE

DONALD HEALEY MOTOR CO. LTD., WARWICK, ENGL.

In Print

We're now in that time of year when curling up in front of a roaring fireplace with some automotive reading constitutes A Very Good Thing. And, as usual, there are plenty of opportunities for reading out there, starting with November's *Road & Track*, with cover story on the Jaguar F-Type Coupe. *Hemmings Sports & Exotic Car* incorporates a buyer's guide for the Austin-Healey 3000 along with an article on Alan Prosser's repair/restoration shop, Alan Auto Volvo Service in Portland, Maine.

HOW TO BUY BRISTOLS SUBLIME 401-403

CLASSIC & SPORTS CAR
November 2014 \$10

TRIUMPH SHOWDOWN
Bergain TR6 takes on TR6 in battle of the sixes

PLUS
UNUSUAL
RESTORATION
SPECIAL

Also and Lucis Zagato
Aston Z vs Fulvia Sport

Jeff Allen's wildest Capri
5 litre V8 monster drive

Epic pre-war Maserati
3000 V4 Heyward

November's *Classic & Sports Car* includes a cover article comparing the TR6 to the predecessor TR250 ("Is Karmann's cut-price restyle the best

LETTER FROM CHAPMAN'S DARY GETS A PAINTING REGISTRATION

SPORTS & EXOTIC CAR
November 2014 \$10

THE FINEST COLLECTOR CARS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

HIGH-MILEAGE HEROES
Three remarkable cars, 1.55 million miles

FEATURED
1972 Oldsmobile
1965 Ford
1934 Auburn

PLUS
HARD-CORE SHOW
DISCUSS WITH
VELO RESTORER

Continued on pg. 3

Roadwork: The American Healey

Over the past year or so the various automotive press outlets have engaged in the standard highlighting of **what's new!** for 2015. The list includes several bonafide sports cars, including the Jaguar F-Type (pretty much universal rave reviews) and, of course, continued articles on the C7 edition of the Corvette (aka the "Batmobile"), which actually went on sale in late 2013. Yes, it is America's only production sports car, but in and around the hoot and holler of the car's 60th anniversary, one might think it is/was the only sports car of note ever produced in this country...which would probably come as a shock to anyone who's familiar with the Mercer Raceabout (1910-1914) and Stutz Bearcat (1912-1921), on up through various Cunninghams (1951-1955), the Kaiser Darrin (1954), the AMC AMX (1968-1970) and of course, the Anglo-American Shelby AC Cobra (1962-1967).

And, in the realm of Anglo-American sports cars, there was a Healey...yes, Healey. Not the legendary 100/3000 series of classic British sports cars, but the ground-breaking and regrettably short-lived Nash-Healey, produced from 1950 through 1954. The legendary Corvette may continue to get the press and fond recollections but Nash, through an arrangement with Donald Healey, actually produced *the first* post-war US sports car, preceding the 'Vette by three full years. The Nash-Healey occurred by pure chance and constituted a rather improbable affiliation between Healey and the American producer of rather staid (but solid!) family cars and refrigerators, among other appliances, Nash-Kelvinator.

Following the conclusion of World War II, engineer, rally driver and former Triumph "experimental manager" Donald Healey decided he'd had enough of modifying and racing other people's cars and decided to go into business himself. To that end, in 1945 he formed the Donald Healey Motor Company in Warwick and quickly turned out the Healey Westland roadster. Victor Riley's company provided many of the components, including the car's 2.4L DOHC engine. Healey had pushed for a car which could exceed 100 mph and he got it on the first try; during a road test in 1946, one of his Westland's hit 105.56 mph. In 1948, Healey and son Geoff shipped one of the cars to the states in RMS *Queen Mary* and then drove it from New York City to Los Angeles, attracting a lot of positive attention in the process along with a number of potential Healey dealers.



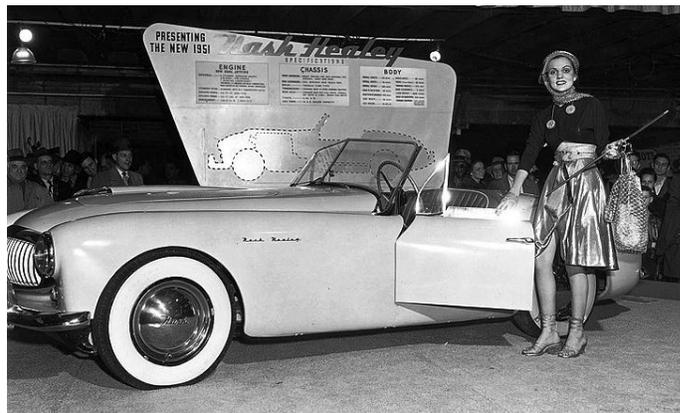
Healey Westland. Photo: ConceptCarz

In 1949, Healey returned to the states for talks with Cadillac for the procurement of V8 engines. After the talks collapsed, he boarded RMS *Queen Elizabeth* for the return to England; during the voyage, he happened to strike up a conversation with George W. Mason, chairman and CEO of Nash-Kelvinator. Their discussions resulted in an agreement to produce a new sports car, employing the chassis and running gear of the Healey Silverstone with Nash's 3.8L 6-cylinder engine, bolted to the company's 3-speed manual transmission with Borg Warner overdrive housed in a Panelcraft aluminum alloy body. Donald Healey massaged the engine, boosting compression through the switch to an aluminum head while adding twin SU carbs, good for 135 hp.

Production started in 1950 and, on 17 February 1951, the car made its American debut at the Chicago Auto Show



Source: Chicago Auto Show



Nash-Healey, on display at the Chicago Auto Show with Miss Berwyn-Cicero. Marjorie Needham, in what's described as an "avant-garde outfit." Photo: Chicago Auto Show

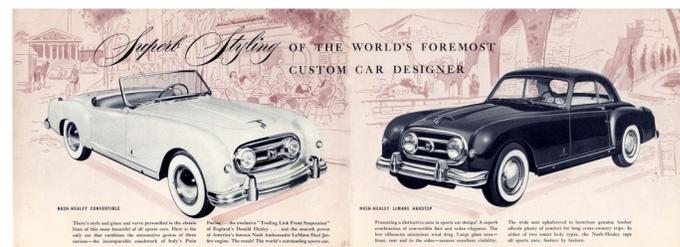
Show. However, by that date, Healey had already introduced the Nash-Healeys in international competition. In June 1950, Tony Rolt and Duncan Hamilton placed fourth at the Le Mans 24-hour race in modified Nash-Healey E, behind two Talbot-Lagos and an Allard himself. George Mason, thrilled with the immediate successful results and positive publicity in Europe, ordered the cars into full series production with an all-aluminum body styled by Healey and Nash.



The Rolt/Hamilton Nash-Healey No. 14 duels Briggs Cunningham's Cadillac "Le Allard Monster," 1950 Le Mans.

In 1951, Rolt and Hamilton competed again, this time placing sixth in a Nash-Healey Le Mans coupe, behind a Jaguar C-Type driven by Peter Walker and Peter Whitehead, two Talbot-Lagos and two Aston Martin DB2s. In 1952, the new Mercedes-Benz 300SL factory team placed 1-2 (according to Healey restorer Dennis Collins, the Germans arrived with "...the requisite dozen or so engineers in the obligatory white lab coats, at least 40 technicians, five fully prepared and tested race cars... and, unusual at the time, two semi trailers fully outfitted as workshops." Third place? A heavily modified Nash-Healey, driven by Leslie Johnson and Tommy Wisdom, which placed ahead of a Cunningham C4R driven by Briggs Cunningham and Bob Spear. That same year, Leslie Johnson and navigator Bill McKenzie finished seventh in the Mille Miglia, behind a Ferrari, two 300SLs and three Lancias.

The year 1952 brought serious styling changes to the Nash-Healey. At the behest of Nash-Kelvinator, noted Italian designer Battista "Pinin" Farina redesigned the car, incorporating a new grill design which gave it something more of a "family ap-



The restyled Nash-Healey and Le Mans Coupe. Source: The Old Car Manual Project.

pearance” to other Nashes. In addition, the a heavier, all-steel body replaced the aluminum alloy body of the 1950-1952 models.

Equipped with a long-tail, 4.1L version of the new design, Healey returned to LeMans in 1953. Leslie Johnson and Bert Hadley finished 11th...one spot ahead of a factory Austin-Healey 100, driven by Johnny Lockett and Maurice Gatsonides. A second 100-4 driven by Marcel Becquart and Gordon Wilkins finished 14th; the other Nash-Healey, driven by Pierre Veyron and Yves Giraud-Cabantous, retired after only nine laps due to the loss of oil pressure. After the race, Donald Healey commented on the surviving Nash-Healey:

This car (#10) had a trouble-free run throughout the race with the exception of a fractured exhaust pipe which cost us a little time to wire up in place. The car ran to a steady average as scheduled, its petrol consumption was approximately 16 mph, and what amazed everyone was that it did not use one drop of oil or water. It is also interesting that both drivers reported they could easily overtake all other cars through the corners, although such cars as Mercedes, Cunningham and Aston Martin were fitted with most elaborate and expensive independent rear ends.

Nash-Healeys also saw success in the Colonies, particularly in the hands of drivers like Andy Rosenberg, who regularly placed well in Midwestern events driving a Le Mans coupe. The cars continued to race into the early 1960s, despite the demise of the marque in 1954. As a component of the merger of Nash-Kelvinator with Hudson in January 1954 – which formed the American Motors Corporation – and George Mason’s death at age 63 on 8 October 1954, production of America’s first post-war sports car ended. Donald Healey had already ended his direct affiliation with the corporation in order to concentrate on production of the 100-4 and development of its successor, the 100-6. George Romney, who replaced Mason at AMC, concentrated on improving the company’s product lineup in an effort to remain an effective challenger to Detroit’s “Big Three.” In the end, Nash and Healey turned out 506 cars between 1950 and 1954, with several remaining cars sold in 1955.



The cars periodically show up for sale. According to Hemmings, “Sports Car One,” the prototype Nash-Healey, went up on the auction block



in early 2013. Dennis Collins of Wylie, Texas, mentioned earlier and known for a number of Austin-Healey restorations, did the work getting chassis N2001 back on the road and ready for sale. The first owner was Donald Healey himself; the car featured a body done

“Sports Car One:” the restored N2001. Photo: Jackson-Barrett via Hemmings

in Panelcraft alloy, used on only the first 104 production vehicles. According to the Nash-Healey registry, only 20 survived at the time of the car’s restoration, with seven in running condition.

Finally, as a historical side, during the remainder of the 1950s several other US manufacturers took a stab at producing their own two-seat sports cars (or perhaps more accurately, “sport models”), either in response to the Corvette or to the growing market for British sports cars, such as the Austin-Healey 100/3000. Almost universally, they depicted the aircraft-invoking styling and excess that mid-1950s American cars embraced, particularly leading up to 1958. The cars included the 1953 Buick Wildcat I, 1954 Buick Wildcat II (“...an American adventure in tomorrow’s design,” according to Buick Chief Designer Ned Nichols), Pontiac’s 1954 Bonneville Special, the 1953 Dodge Grenada (the first Detroit vehicle to feature a one-piece fiberglass body), 1954 Plymouth Belmont and GM’s 1955 La Salle II. All did the show circuit for a year or two and then disappeared, usually destroyed by the manufacturer although a few survived in junk yards or storage, awaiting discovery.

Still, the effort made for an interesting period and despite all the designs, proposals and show cars, the Nash-Healey remained the only Anglo-American Healey sports car. In the words of Collins, in advance of the auction of “Sports Car One,”



One of the Le Mans cars at the 2010 Monaco Historics. Source: Retro-Speed

The point is this: the first 1953 Corvette was not the first American sports car. It is a nice cruiser built on a shortened 1949 Chevy frame, with a fiberglass body constructed by a boat manufacturer. It has the same chance at a sports car event as a snowball in a frying pan... Let’s not quibble. This was a first among firsts. The crème de la crème. The best of the best. This automobile is eligible for the most prestigious events in vintage motorsports. Today, as it did in the day, it will compete with, and defeat Ferrari, Maserati, Jaguar, Alfa and Mercedes, anything it comes up against. It will win on the show field or track, rally or race.

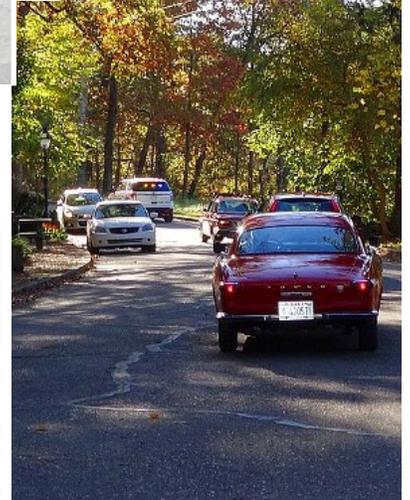
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Sources: Craig Fitzgerald, “Donald Healey,” *Hemmings Sports & Exotic Car*, April 2006; “Donald Healey,” Automotive Hall of Fame, www.automotivehalloffame.org/; David Traver Adolphus, “Sports Car One: The First Nash-Healey restored, heads to auction,” *Hemmings*, 30 January 2013; *Racing Sports Cars*, www.racingsportscars.com/; Richard M. Kauffman, “Nash-Healey at LeMans,” *Special-Interest Autos*, October 1970; David Traver Adolphus, “Sports Car One: The First Nash-Healey restored, heads to Auction,” *Hemmings Daily*, 30 January 2013; Kurt Ernst, “One of two built, Ron Pratte’s Pontiac Bonneville Special heads to auction,” *Hemmings Daily*, 29 October 2014; Angelo Van Bogart, “Forgotten Dreams: Lesser-known 1950s Concept Cars,” *Old Cars Weekly*, 10 June 2013; AllPar.com; *ConceptCarz*, www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z11297/Healey-Westland.aspx; ‘Chicago Auto Show-1951,’ www.chicagoautoshow.com/history/1951.

In Print (Continued from page 1)

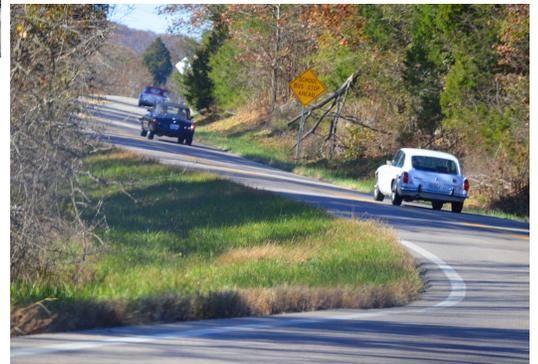
buy of the sporting sixes?)” plus coverage of a restored 1931 MG Midget Sportsman’s Coupe. A couple of Brit cars also figure in the “Brickyard Oddities” photo spread. Over at *Classic Motorsports*, this month’s issue provides features on Jaguar’s six-car Lightweight E-Type project as well as tech tips for MGA owners. Finally, November’s *Thoroughbred & Classic Cars*’ “Hot 30” focuses on, well, 30 vehicles that are expected to appreciate greatly over the coming years; the list includes Jaguar XKs and E-Types. Elsewhere, an interview former driver/team owner John Fitzpatrick (“I slipstreamed a Mercedes driver at 120mph in my Mini Cooper”) and one reader’s test drive of a ’71 TR6.

Featured Events

**Volvo Club of America National Meet, Eureka Springs, AR
Gateway VCOA—31 Oct-1 Nov 2014**



**MG Club of St Louis Halloween Drive
1 Nov 2014**



Sightings

What do you think? Not enough MGs in the field? The start of the Collier Cup Race at the US Vintage Grand Prix, Watkins Glen, 9 September 2014.

Photo by Michael DiPleco/
Sports Car Digest



Featured Events

Mid-Missouri Meet 2.0: Jail Time Gateway VCOA/Heart of America VCOA 18 October 2014



Heart of America VCOA



Photos courtesy of Gateway VCOA unless otherwise noted



SLTOA Wurtsmart Drive 26 Oct 14



Photos by Stephen Moore



Featured Events

Last Cars & Coffee of the Season 18 October 2014



Thanks to ML Hillard and the crew for a great season



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