



Gateway Relay

Vol V, No. 3

St Louis Sports Car Council

November 2015

Council News & Notes

- Welllll, we were about to lead off with a banner, "Last Drives of the Season!", covering the MG and Triumph club events of 8 November. But, if you'll look to the right, you'll see there's yet another opportunity before winter closes in: an SCCA rally.
- Note at the right, "The Great Pumpkin Challenge," organized by the St Louis Region SCCA. Sounds like a lot of fun and if you've never done a rally before, it'll serve as a good introduction. As this issue goes to press, we're looking at severe clear and a high of 45° that Sunday and fully expect the *Relay* photo squad will be in attendance.
- Otherwise, we're heading into the holidays and that of course means parties. Like the driving events, most clubs welcome guest from other clubs, call the info/RSVP number and see what they say.
- Finally, as we head into the last six weeks of the year, it's web hosting renewal time again. One member club has already re-upped for 2016; the rate remains \$20 for one year which provides the club web link on the StLSCC page, the joint calendar with monthly updates and email distribution if the *Gateway Relay*. Reminder emails will go out next month.



AUSTIN-HEALEY Never confuse a sports car with a plaything. Not that you'd ever be likely to with the Austin-Healey 3000. This car commands respect, from the man who drives it and anyone else around. Under that familiar long sloping bonnet is a six-cylinder, 150bhp engine. Nothing hairy or violent about it. Simply smooth and seemingly endless power. For this, above all, is a motor car for motoring. Take it where you will, the miles flick by with a breathtaking lack of fuss and effort. What else could you expect? It's an Austin and a Healey—and an unmistakably individual member of the BMC team. **Stop Press:** New Sprite MkIV. More powerful, 1275 cc engine. New integral hood.

More cars to choose from—more in the car you choose

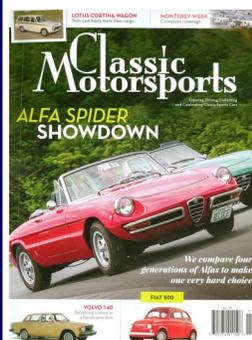
Up & Coming

- 19 Nov 2015**—MG Club of St Louis **RUBCO** (Retired/Unemployed British Car Owners) breakfast. Meet at the Sunrise Family Restaurant, 3500 N Lindbergh, at 9:30 AM. Please consider bringing a few canned goods for donation to those in need; donating cans is a good deed which may in effect lower the calories of the huge breakfast you consume.
- 21 Nov 2015**—**Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis Annual Meeting**, Plaza Jaguar, 11830 Olive Blvd, Creve Coeur, 6-8 PM. Activities will include election of officers and development of the club event calendar for 2016. Please RSVP to Lisa Hendrix if you plan on attending, lhendrix@curtispack.com.
- 21 Nov 2015**—**Dyno Day**, BMWCCA St Louis Chapter, at Franjo Speed, 615 Spirit of St Louis Blvd, Chesterfield. Monitor <http://www.stlBMWCCA.org/wordpress/calendar/>.
- 22 Nov 2015**—**The Great Pumpkin Challenge**, road rally/tour to Hermann organized by the St Louis Region SCCA. Start at Denny's, 1140 Technology Drive, O'Fallon, MO (I-64/US 40 & Hwy K); registration noon to 12:45, drivers' meeting at 12:45, first car away at 1:01 PM. Low-key question-and-answer gimmick rally/tour, expected paved roads along Missouri's Weinstrasse and ample time to enjoy the sights, we'll end up at the Hermannhof Winery in Hermann. \$20 cash or check, bring your car (van/SUV/M577/etc), driver and navigator, clipboard with paper and pencils and an inclination to take a Sunday drive. For info, contact rallymaster Jim Heine (314)922-6120 or editorialsolutions@sbcglobal.net.
- 3 Dec 2015**—**Annual Gateway VCOA Holiday Dinner**. Details to follow, monitor <https://sites.google.com/site/gatewayvcoa/>.
- 4 Dec 2015**—**St Louis Triumph Owners Association Christmas Party**, at the Missouri Athletic Club-West, 1777 Des Peres Rd, Town & Country. 6:30 PM Cash bar, 7:30 dinner, \$17 per person (club subsidized). Please make your reservation on or before 29 November, checks only to Ann Stark, 16 Brazilian Court, Ladue 63124. Any questions, call Ann Stark (314)993-5314, Kathy Kresser (636) 394-3012 or Bonnie David (314)412-0589.
- Jan 2016**—**Annual New Years Dinner**, Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis. Location and time TBD, monitor www.jcna.com/users/sc20 or the online *Growl*.
- 28 Jan 2016**—Gateway Healey Association **RUMP** (Retired or Unemployed Member Persons) road trip to West Alton to see the eagles at Riverlands. Lunch at Fast Eddie's afterwards. Details to follow.

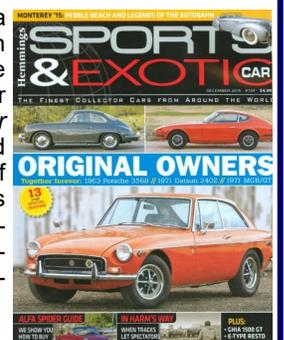
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Note: Some club events restrict participation to club members only, primarily for national/chapter insurance reasons. If interested in joining in on a drive or other event, we recommend you contact the club's event coordinator in advance for details.

In Print



December's *Car & Driver* covers a couple of contemporary sedans, with road tests/technical analysis of the new BMW 750i xDrive and the Jaguar XF. *Hemmings Sports & Exotic Car* includes a column by editor David LaChance on the increasing value of Triumph Spitfires. Elsewhere in this edition, a look at an unrestored one-owner 1971 MGB/GT, the 2015 Monterey car week's "Legends of the Auto-



Continued on pg. 2

- 14 Feb 2016—Annual SLTOA Polar Bear Run**, traditional top-down first drive of the year; what better way to spend Valentine's Day than with your significant other driving around with the convertible top stowed in mid-February? With post-drive gathering and hot food. Plans are coming together, date tentative (after all, the 14th is Valentine's Day), stay tuned.
- 1-3 Apr 2016 – Corinthian Vintage Auto Racing (CVAR) 9th Annual Mike Stephens Classic**, Hallett Motor Racing Circuit, Hallett, OK. Info at www.corinthianvintageace.com.
- 21-24 Apr 2016—2016 Speedfest at the Classic Motorsports Mitty**, Road Atlanta, Braselton, GA, sponsored by Hagerly and sanctioned by Historic Sportscar Racing (HSR). Car corrals, vendors, hospitality tent, over 300 cars expected. Ford is this year's featured marque, the event will also feature a 50th anniversary Can Am reunion and the Concours d'LeMons Spectacle, live music, tech sessions. Tickets/info at www.hsrtickets.com/12-2016-the-mitty.
- 13-15 May 2016—SVRA Spring Vintage Festival**, Road America, Elkhart Lake, WI. Info at www.svra.com.
- 20-22 May 2016—The Vintage: A National Gathering of Vintage BMWs**. In Asheville, NC, celebrating 100 years of BMW. Activities include a rally and tours, website at www.atthevintage.com or email Festmeister Scott Sturdy at scottsturdy@yahoo.com.
- 13-15 May 2016—SCCA Majors Race/IT Regional**, Gateway Motorsports Park. The St Louis and Southern Illinois Regions, SCCA, will hold a test day on 13 May with racing over the weekend. Volunteers needed to help work the track and event, more details including contact info to follow.
- 21 May-4 Jun 2016—US Coast-to-Coast Challenge**, Los Angeles to Miami via St Louis and Chicago, organized by Circuitdays. Event includes 14 nights luxury accommodations, helicopter rides over the Grand Canyon, attendance at the 100th Indy 500 and tour of Daytona International Speedway. £11,000 (currently \$17,128) per car/two people, info at www.circuitdays.co.uk (hey, you never know, they might roll through here...).
- 13-17 Jun 2016—GT-41/MG2016**. Join the North American MGA Register (NAMGAR), North American MMM Register, the New England MGT Register and North American MGB Register for four days of fun in Louisville, KY. Details to follow, monitor www.namgar.com.
- 15-19 Jun 2016 – TRA 2016**. The Triumph Register of America National Meet, Quail Hollow Resort, Painesville, OH. Hosted by the North Coast Triumph Association, for info monitor www.triumphregister.com or contact Beverly Floyd at tr250navigator@aol.com.
- 18-26 Jun 2016—Hemmings Motor News Great Race 2016**, San Rafael, CA to Moline, IL, along the Lincoln Highway. \$150,000 in prize money, \$5500 private vehicle entry fee, info at www.greatrace.com or call (800)989-7223. CPA (closest point of approach) to St Louis will be the stretch from (roughly) Iowa City to the end point, Moline.
- 4-7 Oct 2016—2016 VTR National Convention**, hosted by the Red River Triumph Club at the Tanglewood Resort, Pottsboro, TX, on Lake Texoma. Scheduled events include an autocross, gimmick rallies, breakfast and dinner drives, Funkhana, TSD rally, dinner cruise, concours and participant's choice car shows. For info, monitor www.redrivertriumphclub.org/index.html or contact Dave Pilcher at events@redrivertriumphclub.org.

St Louis Car Shows and Cruises: <http://clubs.hemmings.com/clubsites/lakerscarclub>.



In Print (Continued from page 1)

bahn" meet (several BMWs in the mix, along with one EMW), a column by John Schieffelin on the various Volvos in his family's past and a six-year restoration of a 1964 E-Type ("The old Jaguar ran well and looked good, but after the bonnet was removed to detail the engine, things got out of hand").

Classic & Sports Car for November features the 1988 Le Mans 24-hour-winning Jaguar XJR-9 and one of its drivers, Andy Wallace ("On the straight, it was just getting faster and faster and I was thinking, 'bloody hell'"). Over at November's Thoroughbred & Classic Cars, one lucky reader gets to drive his ultimate car, a Jaguar XK150 coupé, along with a comparison between several affordable (or somewhat affordable) used V8s: the MG RV8, TVR V8S, Mercedes-Benz SL500, BMW 840Ci, Corvette L-98 and Jaguar XKR. Finally for the month, November's *Classic Motorsports* offers up buyer's guide for the Volvo 140 series ("Reliability comes in a handsome box") and the 2011+ Jaguar XJ.

Roadwork: The World's Fastest Healeys

In and around the seemingly never-ending attempts by individuals to set the world land speed record at locales like the Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah, the Black Rock Desert, Nevada, and other sites, it's fun to look up early attempts by British car manufacturers to set records for somewhat (or often, heavily) modified production sports cars.

For the record, the Brits and citizens of the Commonwealth nations have a long history of setting speed records. Currently, Royal Air Force Squadron Leader Andy Green holds the land speed record of 763.035 mph (mach 1.02), set in the twin jet-powered Thrust SSC at Black Rock on 15 October 1997. The world's fastest on water? Australian Ken Warby, in the appropriately named "Spirit of Australia," used a Westinghouse J34 jet engine to get the boat to the still-standing record of 317.6 mph. He set the record on 8 October 1978 at Blowering Dam, Tumut, New South Wales.

In the category of LBCs, several classic runs stand out. In August 1947, Donald Healey drove a Healey Elliot to 110.8 mph on a measured mile near Jabbeke, Belgium. On 30 May

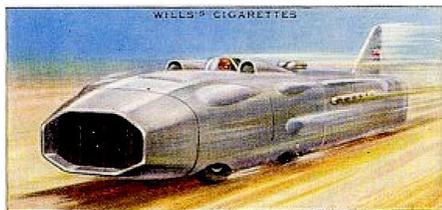


For a time, the fast production four-seater in the world: the Healey Elliot (Source: Bring A Trailer)

1949, Jaguar test driver Ron "Soapy" Sutton got an XK120 to 132 mph on the same stretch of highway. Three years later, Healey returned with an early Healey 100 and recorded 110.9 mph for the flying mile. Next up, on 20 May 1953, Ken Richardson, who took a Triumph TR2 to 124.889 mph. Jaguar answered in October 1953, when legendary chief test driver Norman Dewis took a highly modified XK120 to 174.412 mph.

These heavily publicized events did a great job of advertising the top speeds of the various sports cars (highly useful in advertising campaigns). For most of the manufacturers, the next step involved running their products at high speeds for extended periods, hopefully in the process setting new FIA (*Federation Internationale de l'Automobile*) records.

This was where Donald Healey stepped back into the fray, using his new Austin-Healey 100. Convinced that a few records would boost the 100's notoriety and particularly sales in the United States, he and several of his employees took two cars to the Bonneville Salt Flats, which offered more than enough room for extended running. While Healey did a fair amount of driving, he enlisted the assistance of Capt George



Eyston's Thunderbolt (Source: Bluebird-electric.net)

1939 with the three-axle, eight-wheel Thunderbolt, powered by TWO supercharged Rolls-Royce Type R V12s for a total 73

liters and 2350 bhp (whuf!), which resulted in several additional records.

Concerning the 1953 attempt, Donald Healey in *The Healey Story* (Somerset, UK: JH Haynes & Co, Ltd, 2004), recalled:

Two production "100" vehicles had been selected at random from dealer's showrooms in California by officials of the American Automobile Association who kept them under tight control on the 1000 mile drive to Wendover, Utah, just outside of Bonneville.

Two servicemen drove the cars all the way with the AAA officials beside them. We were allowed to select one of these cars for the attack on the American National Stockcar Records but we were only allowed to work on the car under the eagle eyes of the AAA observers. Only factory listed parts and spares could be fitted. After checking the cars on the forecourt of the motel we went out to the Flats and Donald Healey tried them around the 10 mile circuit.

Road & Track subsequently reported,

Even more significant are the new production stock car records. This car finally cracked a 16-year-old American unlimited record of 107.66 mph held by a supercharged Cord, by clocking 109.23 mph for five miles. The 24-hour mark for international Class D racing cars was set by the Austin-Healey at an average of 104.32 mph for the 24 hour distance.



Bonneville Salt Flats, 1953 (Source: Silodrome)

Healey and his team returned in 1954 with the previous year's record-setting 100 and a new streamliner with supercharged engine, the SPL261-BN. The car featured a body designed by Gerry Coker – who had designed the original 100 – and the engine incorporated a Shorrock supercharger.

Capt Eyston returned with the team, along with drivers Carroll Shelby, Mortimer "Mort" Morris-Goodall and Roy Jackson-Moore. Morris-Goodall (father Jane Goodall, believe it or not) had co-driven a Healey Silverstone with NH Mann to 19th place in the 1950 Le Mans 24 Hour race and also regularly raced Aston Martins. Jackson-Moore served as Austin's field service executive for the western United States; he later raced 100/100M/100Ss in international and SCCA events.

In his first run in the streamliner, Healey attempted to get to 200 mph and in fact nearly broke the 5 km record at 179 mph, but the engine burned a piston. Repaired, the car went out again the next day and achieved 192.74 mph over the measured kilometer. On 23 August, the team set 83 Class D records, including 132.81 mph over 24 hours.

Like his fellow drivers, Carroll Shelby took one-hour stints during the 24-hour attempt. According to writer Rinsey Mills, once Shelby managed to get himself into the streamliner's

(Continued on page 4)



The 1954 Austin-Healey streamliner. Crew wearing bush khakis and pith helmets? Certainly British... (Source: OldIrish.com).

small cockpit (they had to remove the canopy and install an aeroscreen) he did quite well:

A little less than four minutes later the waiting huddle of people saw the shimmering dark shape in the distance grow rapidly and then flash past, leaving behind it the flat roar of an unsilenced four-cylinder motor revving hard and without respite. So it went on, with Carroll driving exactly to orders and regular as clockwork until, after some 55 minutes and 15 laps, he was given the signal to come in. After his next circuit he cut the engine and rolled to a halt. The hour record was his, and Austin-Healey's, at 159.92 mph, as well numerous others from 25 to 200 km.

PRIZE-WINNING AUSTIN-HEALEY—ONLY \$2985



World's fastest production car under 3,000 cc. includes every custom extra at no extra cost—and delivers up to 25 miles per gallon

AUSTIN OF ENGLAND
 1200 WEST 10TH ST., VAN COOK, ILL. • 400 GRAND ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.
 THE AUSTIN-HEALEY MOTOR CO. LTD., BANBURY, OXFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND

Austin didn't wait on trumpeting the achievement, laid claim to producing "...the world's fastest production car 3,000cc, yet it only costs \$2985." Ran a series of ads, including one with US Air Force F-84F 51-1450 and its pilot serving as the backdrop. Many of the modifications tried out on the, er, unmodified 100 (ie, the non-streamliner) later went into production as the Austin-Healey 100S.

Healey returned again in 1956, this time with cars fitted with the C-Series six-cylinder engine, basically prototypes for the 100-6. Both featured streamlined bodies; one was the '54 record-setter with a supercharged engine developed by Austin's Bill Leyland capable of 292 bhp. The second car, built by Jensen, had the same basic engine albeit without the blower. It used three Weber carbs and developed about 160 bhp,

The test runs started on 9 August and the team immediately ran into problems. The non-supercharged car displayed a nasty tendency to burn valves while the other car had its blower drive detonate, complete with smoke, flames and a fair amount of excitement among the participants. However, once they got the mechanical glitches sorted out, Shelby and Jackson-Moore once again set multiple Class D records, the majority at over 150 mph. Their car ran six hours before the head gasket gave way.

On 21 August, Donald Healey fired up the supercharged car and made another go at it. On the first run, he managed 203.76 mph; during the return drive the engine blew, leaving a recorded second leg speed of "only" 197.17. However, he finished with a recorded average of 201.1 mph. Healey had finally achieved his personal goal of topping 200 mph in a car of his own design.

No surprise, the team's success played a part in the introduction of the new 100-6. Austin's advertising department happily noted, "New power...with the basic six-cylinder power plant that captured 28 Class D records at Bonneville."



Austin-Healey advertising with the 1956 cars and, from left, Carroll Shelby, Roy Jackson Moore and Donald Healey (Source: Classic Car Catalogue)

Healey and his company went on to other conquests, including regular competition in sports and endurance racing with both the "Big Healeys" and the smaller Sprite. According to the records, the original land speed record cars pretty much just rotted away over time, the penalty for extended time on the Salt Flats.

However, replicas for several of the cars exist; in 2009, Denis Welch Motorsport set records for non-supercharged vehicles with a replica of the 1954 Healey. They established international and national speed records for 1000km (a tad over 621 miles) in International Group 2, Class 8, at Millbrook Proving Grounds, England. The FIA subsequently confirmed an average speed of 148.13 mph for the 1000 km.



Photo: Sports Car Digest

Sources: "Austin-Healey Endurance Speed Record Attempt-Photo Gallery," *Sports Car Digest*, 27 November 2009; www.healeyendurance.com; HealeyRick, "Austin-Healeys to Return to Bonneville," The Hokey Ass Message Board (HAMB), www.jalopyjournal.com/forum/; AH Spares, Ltd, "Austin Healey's Make Their Marque on Bonneville Salt Flats," 30 October 2012; Media Release – 19 September 2009, Marsh Classic Restorations Pty Ltd; "1954 Austin-Healey 100-4 BN1," Someone Foundation Automotive Museum; Rinsey Mills, Carroll Shelby: The Authorized Biography (Minneapolis: Motorbooks, 2012); "Jabbeke Speed Runs in the Early 1950s," *SteveMcKelvie.com*, 4 August 2014; Chris Conrad, "August 23 and 24, 1954," *Moss Motoring*, n.d.; "Bonneville 1956," 100-Six, www.healysix.net.



SCCA Autocross
25 October 2015





Featured Events *continued*

MG Club of St Louis 6th Annual Sporting Clays
17 October 2015



SLTOA Fall Color Drive
17 October 2015



Featured Events

Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis Concours
10 October 2015



Photos by Heather and Matthew Johnson, JAGSL



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BMW Car Club
of America
St. Louis Chapter

