



Gateway Relay

Vol VIII, No. 11

St Louis Sports Car Council

December 2019



Council News & Notes

- A little late here but we at the editorial office are taking advantage of the mid-month snow and ice (and general shut-down of greater St Louis) to get this last issue 2019 done and out the door.
- **Attention club leadership:** as it is the end of the year, it's that time again for the payment of the \$20 annual web-hosting fee. We will have the invoices out to the club presidents shortly after this issue of the *Relay* hits the streets. As always, we appreciate a timely response by the member clubs.
- While we're a tad behind scheduled, there will be a January edition of the *Gateway Relay* and, barring unforeseen circumstance, 12 issues in 2020. In the meantime, too clubs and their members, our best wishes for an outstanding holiday season. Let us know if any car parts show up underneath your Christmas tree!

Up & Coming

- 11 Jan 20**—Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis **Annual Awards Dinner**, at the Deer Creek Club, 9861 Deer Creek Hill. Details to follow.
- 11 Jan 20**—Gateway VCOA **Holiday Party**, 6:30 PM at Mimi's Bistro+Bakery, 17240 Chesterfield Airport Rd, Chesterfield.
- 11 Jan 20**—MG Club of St Louis annual **Holiday Party**, at Maggiano's Little Italy, #2 the Boulevard across from the St Louis Galleria Mall. \$20 per person with the club paying the remainder for the meal, cash bar and door prizes, 6 PM. Register at <https://www.stlouismgclub.com/product/mg-club-holiday-party/>.
- 19 Jan 20**—Gateway BMWCCA **Companion Bakery Get-Together**, 2331 Schuetz Rd, 9-10:30 AM. An informal gathering for breakfast and conversation.
- 20 Jan 20**—MG Club of St Louis **Technical Session #1**. At All British Car Repair, 2618 Woodson Rd, Overland, 7-8:30 PM. Topic is rust repair, bring a chair!
- 25 Jan 20**—Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis **Coffee, Coffee & Cars**, at Just Jags LLC, 7113 N Hanley Rd, Hazelwood, 9-11 AM.
- 25 Jan 20**—MG Club of St Louis **Eagle Watch Drive to Clarksville, MO**. Meet at Mid Rivers Mall on the north side, at the former Bob Evans Restaurant at 9 AM. Afterwards, we'll meet for lunch at the Village of Blue Rose in Clarksville. Bring binoculars and warm clothes.
- 9 Feb 20**—Annual St Louis Triumph Owners Association **Polar Bear Run**, continuing a traditional first-of-season drive which dates to 1983. Details to follow, monitor www.sltoa.org.
- 9 Feb 20**—Gateway BMWCCA **Companion Bakery Get-Together**, 2331 Schuetz Rd, 9-10:30 AM. An informal gathering for breakfast and conversation.
- 9 Feb 20**—Semi-Annual **Belleville Automotive Swap Meet**, 40th year, at the Bell-Clair Fairgrounds, 200 South Belt East, 6 AM to 1:30 PM. Admission \$4, vendors reserve your space no later than 1 February, call (217)491-8822.
- 10 Feb 20**—Annual **Drive Your Triumph Day**, in celebration of Sir John Black's birthday. Info including past event photos at <https://driveyourtriumphday.shutterfly.com/>.

(Continued on page 4)

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.

Catch up
WITH THE TWO NEW AUSTIN HEALEYS

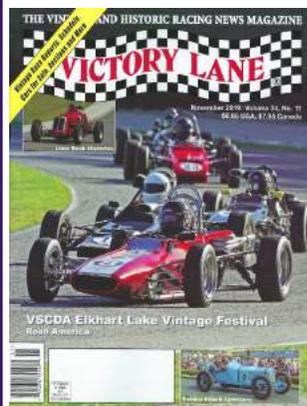
AUSTIN HEALEY SPRITE Mark II
K145C plus \$1050.00 GST

Two new Austin Healeys are waiting for you at Eagle Court. Waiting to be admired. Here's how you'll find them. Even slower. Even faster. Even more powerful. Even more exciting. ☐ The Austin Healey Sprite looks even Sportier at first sight. Prove even Sportier at first drive. The Austin Healey 3000 has been given a third exhaust valve, giving you 152 hp as against 134 hp and even more vivid acceleration. Much more power to play with. Catch up with them back at Eagle Court.

AUSTIN HEALEY 3000 Mark II
K145A plus \$2450.00 GST

In Print

The November 2019 *Thoroughbred & Classic Cars* leads off with "Clever Buys for Smart Drivers;" the assortment of vehicles includes a Mini, Audi Quattro, Range Rover, Citroën DS, Dino 246GT... and a 1958 Cadillac Coupe de Ville. Elsewhere, a multi-page article on the Jaguar 240. *Classic & Sports Cars*, same month, has an article on England's first motorway, the M1 (which opened on 1 November 1959) and cars which particularly made the most of the wide, high-speed multi-laned highway. The list includes an Austin-Healey



Roadwork—Last Healey at Le Mans

In late 1967, one could say that Donald Healey and his crew had some time on their hands. Within the course of the year, British Leyland killed off the “Big Healey” and dropped its support for teams racing its products. As a capstone, in December 1967 the corporation ended its association with Healey and removed the Austin-Healey name from the Sprite (oh the infamy!).

So, what did the legendary auto designer/builder/tuner and his staff at the Donald Healey Motor Company do? They decided to mount an assault on Le Mans, not with a heavily modified Sprite, but with a built-for-the-purpose, mid-engine race car, designed to run in the FIA’s (*Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile*) Prototype class.



The Healey prototype under construction (photo via The Healey Museum)

Healey announced the project – at the time, titled “Sub Rosa” – in February 1968. The resulting car – formally designated the SR and designed to take on Porsche, Alfa Romeo and Alpine in the 2-liter Prototype class – featured monocoque construction instead of the still standard space frame, with double wishbones and coil spring suspension at both ends and mid-ship-mounted radiators. Healey selected the Climax FWMV 1968 cc V8, which developed 240 hp, backed by a Hewland five-speed transmission. A Lola T70 provided the wind-screen; to be sure, overall the car resembled the T70 coupe, as well as John Wyer Racing’s Mirage M2-BRM.



Lola T70 MkIII B (photo via Motor Sport Retro). Below, Mirage M2 at Goodwood, 2015 (photo via Ultimate Car Page)



Testing of the Healey SR1 (photo via The Healey Museum)

race.

The finished car, SR1, debuted at an Austin-Healey gathering at Silverstone in August 1968. John Harris handled the driving chores and some lucky photographers managed to get in a few laps with him. The following month, the Healey team made the trek to Le Mans for the annual 24-hour

race.

Fortunately for the team, the political issues in France had delayed the big event from its usual early-June date to 28-29 September; hence, Healey was able to get the complete SR1 into the race. On the down side, the car, at 1400 pounds, was a bit overweight. While the SR1 proved capable of hitting about 180 mph on the 3.7-mile-long Mulsanne straight, the Fords and Porsches were regularly hitting 200 mph.



Still, in the end, it came down to the ability of the cars, drivers and teams to keep running for 24 hours and sad to say, the Healey SR1 didn’t come anywhere close. Driven by Clive Baker and Andrew Hedges, the car went out after only three hours and 20 laps due to failure of the clutch throw-out bearing. Pedro Rodriguez and Lucien Bianchi won in a John Wyer Automotive Engineering Ford GT40, finishing ahead of Rico Steinemann and Dieter Spoerry in a Porsche 907LH (P 3.0 class) and Rolf Stomelen and Jochen Neerpasch in a Porsche 908LH (P 3.0). An Autodelta Alfa Romeo T33/2 driven by Ignazio Giunti and Nanni Galli finished fourth, winning the P 2.0 class.



The SR1 at Le Mans, 1968 (photo via The Healey Museum). Below, the Enever/Poole Sprite.

On the plus side, a Healey team-entered Sprite, driven by Roger Enever and Alec Poole, finished 15th, some 76 laps behind the winning Ford. It was the only British car to finish the race.

Healey returned the following year with a slightly modified SR1. This time around the car had a single radiator in the nose, replacing the original design’s twin amidships radiators, plus a relocated oil cooler. The car also incorporated smaller air intakes in an effort to improve aerodynamics. Regrettably, they served as the Achilles heel for the 14-15 June effort.

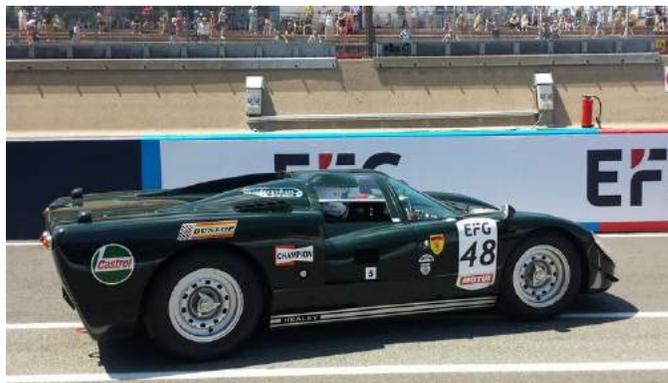


On the very first lap, privateer John Woolfe in his brand new Porsche 917 crashed at the White House/*Maison Blanche* section of the track, destroying the car; Woolfe was thrown from the car exploding car and died on the way to the hospital. A Ferrari 312P coupe by Chris Amon arrived on the scene, ran over the Porsche’s gas tank and also exploded, but Amon was able to bail out without serious injury. The next three cars – the Baker/John Harris Healey SR1, Frank Gardner/Malcolm Guthrie Ford GT40 and Jean-Pierre Jabouille/Patrick Depailler Alpine A220/69 – collected debris from both of the wrecked cars.

The Healey overheated due to radiator damage and blocked intakes and wound up leaving the race on the 14th lap. For the fourth time in a row, a Ford GT40 won: Jacky Ickx/Jackie Oliver in one of the John Wyer cars, beat the Porsche 908LH coupe (P 3.0) of Hans Herrmann and Gérard Larrousse, barely. David Hobbs and Mike Hailwood finished 3rd a second JW GT40. Only 14 cars finished the race that year and none were in the Prototype 2.0 class.

Notably, Healey brought a second SR to the 1969 race, powered by a Repco-Brabham 3-liter V8, but the car didn't run. In 1970, the SR1 gained the 3-liter power plant, along with a number of other modifications. Now designated the XR37 SR, the car was lengthened six inches and had its top removed, making it an open vehicle.

Driven by Roger Evener and Andrew Hedges, the car ran well, although at one point the team had to bring it into the pits for 90 minutes in order to replace the clutch and gearbox. The car ran as high as 10th place and was in 14th place at the 23-hour 46-minute mark when the electrics failed, ending the effort with only a couple of laps to go. Hans Herrmann and Richard Attwood gave Porsche its first outright win at Le Mans with their victory in a 917, followed by Larrousse and Willi Kauhsen in a Martini-Porsche 917L. Third place – and first in P 3.0, the class the up-engined Healey XR37 ran in – was yet another Martini Porsche, in this case a 908/2LH driven by Dr Helmut Marko and Rudi Lins. The Healey was the last car in the field to break down, outlasting the Porsche 917L of Vic Elford and Kurt Ahrens and two Alfa Romeo T33/3s, among others



The restored Healey SR2 (photos: Classic Driver Market)



The Healey-Repco, Le Mans, 1970 (photo via El Rincon de Cartero)

The 1970 24-hour race marked the company's last attempt at the famous circuit. Afterwards, Donald Healey decided to retire from day-to-day operations and turned the family business over to sons Geoffrey and Brian. They worked on other projects, including the Jensen-Healey sports car, which debuted in 1972.

Eventually, SR1 passed to private owners. SR2 wound up in Australia, where an owner installed an Oldsmobile V8; the car made an appearance at Goodwood in 1998 prior to passing to a new owner in Belgium, who re-installed a correct Climax V8. And, there is one replica SR, built by Brian Wheeler and debuted in 2008. At the invitation of the Dutch Healey Competitions group, Wheeler entered the car in that year's "Classic Le Mans" at *Circuit de la Sarthe*.

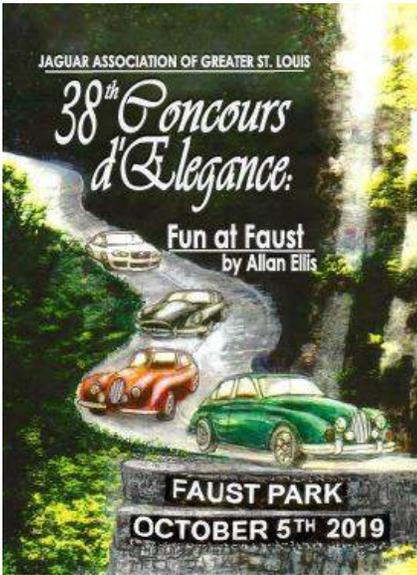


The SR1 at Goodwood, 1998 (photo via Brits At Their Best)

Would you like your own Austin-Healey SR? Well, with only two originals plus the replica, the market's pretty slim. However, if you can track one down, you can purchase a 1/43 scale SR1, built by Mini Racing. Call up Grand Prix Models at <https://www.grandprixmodels.com>, they have a few available for \$61.00/£55.95. Finally, Penelope Pitlane (seriously, that's the name of the company) offered an SR kit in 1/32 scale, suitable for slot racing. As they're long out of production, good luck in finding one!



Sources: "1968 Healey SR LE Mans," *Classic Driver Market*, n.d.; *Racing Sports Cars*; "1968 Healey SR (PP-RB-09)," *Penelope Pitlane*, n.d.; "The Healey SR: the story of the last Healey at Le Mans," Healey Museum, n.d.; "Austin-Healey SR," *Unique Cars & Parts*, n.d.; Marshall Pruett, "10 Most Infamous Crashes in Le Mans History," *Road & Track*, 22 June 2012; "Healey-SR Le Mans (1968)," *Automobiles Vanderveken-Bruxelles*, 2017; "SR Replica by Brian Wheeler in the UK," *World Wide Austin Healeys*, n.d.



Photos courtesy of the Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis



Up & Coming (Continued from page 1)

- 17 Feb 20**—MG Club of St Louis **Technical Session #2**. At Brooklands Restorations LLC, 9532 Lackland Rd, Overland, 7-8:30 PM. Topic is basic maintenance and repair for brakes and axles, bring a chair!
- 22 Feb 19**—Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis **Coffee, Coffee & Cars**, at Just Jags LLC, 7113 N Hanley Rd, Hazelwood, 9-11 AM.
- 23 Feb 20**—MG Club of St Louis **Pinewood Derby**, at Llywelyn’s Pub, 17 W Moody Ave, Webster Groves, 2-4 PM.
- 29 Feb 20**—Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis **Back Roads Rallye**. Meet at the St Louis Bread Co, 9920 Kennerly Rd (Tesson Ferry south/west of I-270) at 8:30 AM, other details to follow. Monitor <https://www.jagstl.com> and the online Growl.
- 16 Mar 20**—MG Club of St Louis **Technical Session #3**. At It’s Alive Automotive, 11714 St Charles Rock Rd, Bridgeton, 7-8:30 PM. Topic is basics on paint for your car, bring a chair!
- 29 Mar 20**—Annual MG Club of St Louis **Terry Fanning Rallye**. Details to follow, monitor www.stlouismgclub.com.

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



Photo by Rob Guinness



10th Annual Sporting Clay Shoot

MG Club of St Louis—20 Oct 19



Photos by Glenn Owens

In Print (Continued from page 1)

3000 Mk1, Jaguar Mk2 3.8 and Ford Zephyr MkII Estate. Towards the back of the magazine, the editors provide a buyer's guide for the Jaguar E-Type Series 1, 1½ and 2.

Victory Lane magazine is dedicated to coverage of vintage and historic racing and rarely does features on specific makes and models of cars. Having said that, in the November issue's coverage of the Vintage Sports Car Drivers of America Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival, held 11-15 September, there is a photo with a local connection: a shot of the Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis' Phil Taxman in his fixed-head 1964 E-type, on page 31.

Octane for November has an extensive article on the Jaguar XJR-15 race/road car as well as a 50-year salute to the movie "The Italian Job" and its cars, with particular emphasis on the Minis, no surprise. December's issue has another Jaguar connection: the Jag-based 1989 Railton F29 Claremont, "...a grand tourer aimed at gentleman drivers rather than sports car hooligans."

Moving into the New Year (already!?), January's *Hemmings Classic Car* pits a 1959 Jaguar 3.4 litre saloon against a Mercedes-Benz 220S. In a nod towards those who came of automotive age during the mid-to-late 1960s, a feature on the Johnny Lightning cars...which, through a licensing agreement, are making a comeback. Finally, in early December the publisher of *Road & Track* released a special issue: the 2020 Performance Car of the Year. The list of vehicles which went through the paces included a 2019 BMW M2 Competition, which took on a wide range of cars. Be prepared for a major surprise when you see which vehicle won the comp.



Photo by Dave Pollard



Photos by John Moore

Featured Events continued...



Drive For Alec

17 Nov 19



Photos by Dave Pollard





Photo by Ronnie Paur



Photo by Ronnie Paur



Photo by John Moore



Photo by John Moore

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