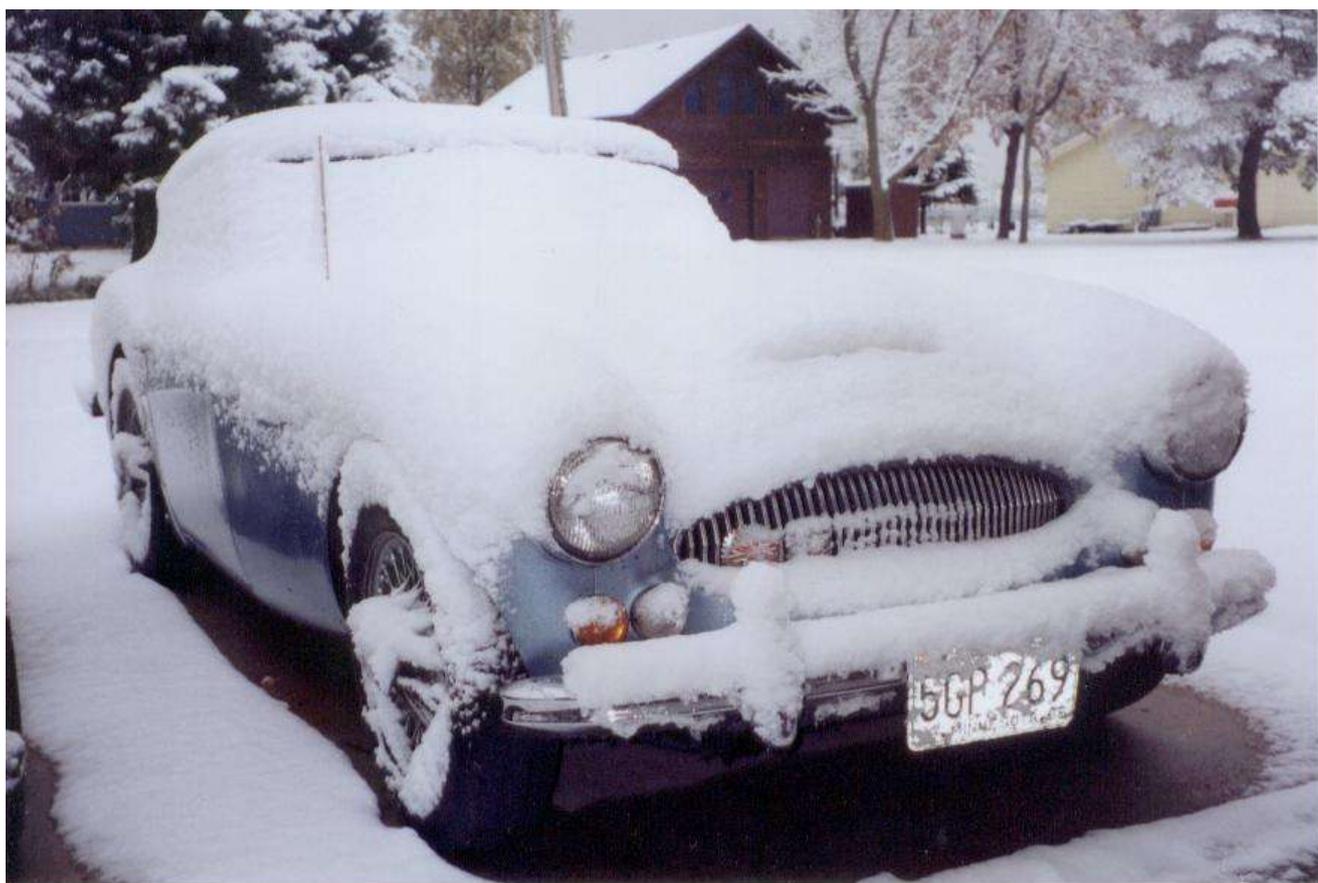




# The Healey Enthusiast

Volume XV No. 2

February 2004



**Healeys look beautiful even in Winter!**

## **February Events**

**Wednesday February 4 -- Pint with the President**

**Saturday February 28 -- Wine & Cheese Party**

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**THE HEALEY ENTHUSIAST**

The official publication of the Minnesota Austin Healey Club, THE HEALEY ENTHUSIAST, is published 12 times per year for the benefit of its members. Articles which appear in THE HEALEY ENTHUSIAST are the opinions of the authors and do not express the position of the Minnesota Austin Healey Club on any matter unless specifically noted. We do our best to ensure accuracy but cannot be held responsible for errors and omissions. Contributions are welcome on any subject related to Healeys, club members, or of general interest to the classic car hobby. Material from THE HEALEY ENTHUSIAST may be reprinted in any other publication provided reciprocal article use permission is granted by that publication. Deadline for submissions to the editor is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the next issue. Classified ads are free for MAHC members, \$5.00 for non-members. For display rates contact newsletter advertising. The Minnesota Austin Healey Club is affiliated with the Austin Healey Club of America.

**President's Line****Tom Hazen**

Just a quick note to wish all the Healey Hunks and Honeys a Happy Valentine's Day! Remember to bring your car books and videos (and wine and cheese) to Dick Mathew's place on Saturday, February 28th. If the distributor comes through in time, I will be screening "Rendezvous" the thrilling ride through the streets of Paris at dawn in a Ferrari at speed. See you there!

**Pie with the President!****Greg Lauser**

Burgeoning attendance January 7 prompted informal discussion of having outgrown the current location's ability to accommodate MAHC's monthly pie parties. Twenty three members attended the meeting and absorbed all available table space and several booths in the back room. The always "Enterprising" Curt Carlson signed in as Jean Luc Picard. One wonders if Curt wants to be known hereafter by his "spaced out" *nom de plume*, or if he was overcome by cold medication.

Jeff Johnk shared some great photos of his journey to visit Healeyites in Australia. Many other lively conversations ensued, but the welcome swell in attendance made it impossible to sit in on and report about those topics. Members signing in as themselves included: Gary Ronning, Steve Rixen, Jeff Johnk, Jack Stein, Byron Peterson, John Snyder, Chuck Norton, Tom Hazen, David Meek, Andy Lindberg, Linda Larson, Dick Matthews, Michael Manser, Mike Martin, Scott McQueen, Jim Kriz, Dan Powell, Dave Lee, Larry Nimmerfroh, Dan Wolters, Jerry Sweeney and Greg Lauser.

Suggestions for Pie location alternatives will be welcomed by MAHC officers and the board, with the stipulation that recommendations provide a midpoint locale within the Twin Cities. See you in February at Brit's Pub, 1110 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, for Pint with the President.

Thanks to **Tom Politiski** for submitting this month's Cover picture. As he put it, "old blue sat out one night when a light snowstorm crept up on it".

## Wine & Cheese Party!



**Date:** Saturday February 28<sup>th</sup>  
(This is a change from the original schedule)

**Time:** 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

**Place:** Dick & Carla Mathews Home  
1301 Waterford Drive  
Golden Valley, MN  
Phone 763-587-0285

**What to bring:** Wine, Cheese, or Snack  
Also books, videos, paper.

Last year there was an excellent turnout for this pleasant event, so hopefully you will put this date on your calendar as a "must attend". Lots of wine and snacks to consume with a bunch of friendly people. Can't beat that for a winter outing. See you there!!

### New Members

**Tom & June Moerke from Hudson, WI are new members. They own two MGs and have been active at many local car events.**

**Peter & Diane Griffin joined recently, and they have a '66 Lotus Elan and a '68 Jaguar E-Type.**

**Dwight & Bobbi McCullough have been long time owners of a '59 Bugeye Sprite. They live in Ham Lake.**

**Mike Karch of GT Cars in Bloomington also recently joined the club with a local and national membership.**

**Welcome to all !! We look forward to being together at upcoming events.**

## Pint with the President!



**Date:** Wednesday February 4<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** Brits Pub  
1110 Nicollet Mall  
Minneapolis, MN

For the month of February only, the monthly Wednesday night meeting will be at Brits in downtown Minneapolis (instead of the Pie shop). Come out and enjoy a brew or two with the British car lovers of the Austin Healey Club. It's a fine bunch! The atmosphere should definitely be English and the ales will be too.

Cheers!

### British Breakfast

The Intermarque British Breakfasts are scrambling people out on Saturday mornings. Phil Vanner is serving up reasonably priced delicious breakfasts to more and more British car owners. Recently Andy Lindberg held an Intermarque meeting one Saturday, and there were about 30 people attending. It's a good time!

Phil mentioned that he has a lot of blank space on his walls. Anyone who has a poster or pennant they would like to lend or give away can see it hanging in his restaurant. He would like to enhance the British car atmosphere. Sounds like a great idea.



**Board of Directors Meeting  
(Summary)**

On December 6, 2003, the Board of Directors held a meeting at the Square Peg Restaurant. Dues again were discussed. It was reported that up to 40% of the membership is now receiving the newsletter by email, so these savings will put off the increasing of dues for now.

The Board elected Jack Stein to be Chairman for the coming year. The preparation of an annual budget was discussed. There will be a 2005 budget presented at the business meeting in November 2004.

It was discussed and agreed that a non-member fee be charged to attendees at the Gymkhana. This will be used to cover expenses for refreshments at that event.

Regarding the "Future 50s", it was decided not to charge dues to new members under the age of 25. They would likely accept the newsletter on line, so club cost would be minimal. The AHCA is also trying ways to encourage new membership among young people.

Planning for Rendezvous 2005 has started. Committees will be required to have Standard Operating Procedures written down for their events. This may be encouraged for all club events, so guidelines would be available in the future.

Meeting was adjourned.



**Bear  
Alert**

The Colorado State Department of Fish and Wildlife is advising hikers, hunters, fisherman, golfers, and small British car owners to take extra precautions and be on the alert for bears while in rural areas.

They advise people to wear noise-producing devices such as little bells on their clothing to alert, but not startle, the bears unexpectedly. They also advise you to carry pepper spray in case of an encounter with a bear.

It is also a good idea to watch for signs of bear activity. People should recognize the difference between black bear and grizzly bear droppings.

Black bear droppings are smaller and contain berries and possibly squirrel fur. Grizzly bear droppings have bells in them and smell like pepper spray!

**Membership / Renewal Form**

- Minnesota A-H Club**     New     Renewal ..... \$15.00
- Austin-Healey Club of America**     New     Renewal ..... \$40.00
- BOTH CLUBS** ..... \$55.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone ( )- - \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: ( )- - \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: ( )- - \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

**HEALEY INFORMATION:**

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Original Owner (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Original Owner (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

Condition:     Show Quality     Nice & Roadworthy     Could be running with help     Restoration Project

REMARKS / BRIEF HISTORY:

**PLEASE NOTE: DUES MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEB. 28 TO MAINTAIN ACTIVE MEMBER STATUS FOR BOTH THE NATIONAL AND THE LOCAL CLUB. THANK YOU.**

Please make checks payable to: Minnesota Austin-Healey Club. Send to Curt Carlson (see page 2).

## Austin Healey Show Chassis

By Tom Politiski

At the Earls Court motor show of 1964 in London, the phase II BJ8 was introduced. The new rear suspension was highlighted by a “show chassis” that showed the new radius arms. This show chassis was made of all Healey parts or empty cores, and most were chromed while the engine transmission was painted an unlikely peach color (evidently to look good in the bright light). A photo of the chassis is shown in both of Graham Robson’s Austin Healey books.

After the show in England the history of the chassis is spotty, but evidently it did appear at several other shows in Europe including one in Germany. Then it was shipped to Canada where it appeared at the auto show in Montreal.

Somehow the chassis found its way to Brandon, Manitoba where it resided for many years until found by a Healey collector in Calgary, Alberta. Several different Healey collectors had it displayed in their garages or living rooms until it was sold in 2002 to a Healey nut in Minnesota where it resides today. A light refurbishment is planned for the chassis this winter, so it will be ready for display this coming summer. *(ed. maybe at Conclave??)*



**Tom always has something going on – from a 3000 Showcar to a Sprite on a Spit!**



## Tech Tip: Spark Plugs

By Dr. Ernie

When choosing a spark plug from a catalog, good luck. It's a lot harder than you'd think. Many times even the books disagree. Some of this is due to the plug companies upgrading their books to fit real world conditions versus road test or computer generated results. Sometimes a company will totally change their recommendation to a number and style that doesn't come close to their original listing.

Now add to this, ten or more companies making their own catalogs and plugs. If you want an exercise in frustration, just start comparing the cross reference portions of their catalogs to each other.

Just like the saying goes, there's more than one way to skin a cat. The same goes for numbering spark plugs. Some have the heat range get hotter as the numbers get larger, and other companies choose the opposite. And here's another caution: even on the same brand of plug, the numbers have no proportional value. For instance a N-12-Y has about the same heat range as a N-5.

Now add some home brew concoctions like a 78 block, with 68 heads, and flat top pistons, with headers and a full mechanical advance distributor, and dump the whole thing into a motor home with a 4:56 to 1 rear end, and the game starts all over. Don't give up now. There's still hope. First consider the heads, as they will only safely use one type of threaded end. This can vary from 3/8" of threads up to 3/4" in length, and the threaded diameter can vary too. Make sure the plug seating area, tapered or gasket ring, matches the head also. Next consider if there's room for an extended nose style insulator or not. And most important, choose a heat range that's listed for a similar engine and usage using your catalog listings. Remember, if you're going to error, always error towards the cooler range.

Now you are ready to install them. Gap them yourself, even if the box says "Pre-Gapped". Use the catalogs (this time it might even be right) for plug gap. Surprisingly the gap can vary a lot with new plugs, without making a noticeable effect on running. Try it. Gap some at 025 and some at 035. You most likely won't notice anything except the ones at 035 will start to misfire about 5000 miles sooner. I take that back. Don't try it, just believe me.

Next I'm going to take a shot at merchandizing. Just like kids at a grocery store who always pick the most dazzling colored box especially if there's a toy inside, so do big kids with Jaguar's, GTO's, and Charger's. Come on. Admit it. When was it that you bought the shock absorber packed in a plain brown box instead of the red and chrome box? What I'm saying is, buy the plug that has an actually good reputation, not the ones that promise a free hat if you buy only 200 plugs. By the way, the coating on the metal part of a plug is there for a reason. No, it's not there for looks. It's there to prevent seizure to the threads in the head. In some cases this coating is only good for one installation. I always coat the plug threads with a thin coating of Permatex Antisize, especially with aluminum heads. When tightening plugs, first make sure that they start correctly in the threads. You can cross thread aluminum practically by just thinking about it. Next, tighten them according to what style they are. Gasketed plugs, generally are tightened an additional 1/2 to 3/4 turn after they make first seating contact. And this is very important, only tighten tapered seat plugs about 20° to 30° after seat contact. (That's only about 1/4<sup>th</sup> the torq of gasketed plugs). That is unless you like drilling out broken off plugs. This is caused by what we all used to throw into the category called "a Communist Plot". Really, what other reason can you give for the manufacturer's machining a nice twist off groove around each plug? Last. Make sure the terminal end is screwed on tight (if it's that type) and make sure the plug wire terminal snaps on tight to the plug. Not just the rubber boot either. If the terminal is loose gently squeeze it closed till it fits snug. If this connection isn't tight, arcing will occur and this causes o-zone gas, which is corrosive, which causes build up of corrosion, which is an insulator. Oh well, you get the picture. Good luck!!!!

### Clothes For Motoring

*Goggles are, unhappily, almost a necessity...*

**For traveling in all but the warmest weather**, garments should be lined with some substance, which is impervious to wind, such as chamois leather.

**Goggles** are, unhappily, almost a necessity when traveling at any but the lowest speeds; and unlovely as they are to look upon, it is better to be able to keep one's eyes open to see what is going on, even at the cost of temporary disfigurement, than to screw them up and see nothing.

**The clouds of gnats and flies** that hang in summer just at the elevation at which one's head passes when driving a motor-car are both unpleasant and dangerous – unpleasant if they get into your mouth and dangerous if they get into your eyes!



Thanks to Jim Kriz for supplying "The Etiquette of Motoring" book published in 1907!

## Oil Changes...Why and When?

By Steve Rixen

Modern oil does a very good job lubricating the various parts of the engine and is much better than the oil available when our cars were new. That is one reason oil change intervals are much longer now than during the 50's and 60's. Unfortunately the other reason is that modern engines do a much better job of metering and burning fuel with their computers, sensors and injectors.

Those modern devices have little to do with SU carbs, low output coils and point type distributors on the OBC. (Old British Car). The excess fuel / carbon and water vapor in the crankcase of the OBC form acids which attack the various and sundry parts which are bathed in them.

The picture is of a lifter face showing the corrosion / erosion occurring during long periods of storage with dirty oil in the crankcase. This causes friction and wear of the parts. There are big Healey engines which suffer from porosity in the oil galleries which allow water and oil to mix. The problem might be accelerated by acid etching.

So how do we avoid these problems?

1. **Change the oil prior to storing the car for the winter**, running it 7 to 10 miles to wash the small amount of old oil remaining off the inside of the engine and neutralizing it by dilution.

2. **Resisting the temptation to start and run the car during the storage period.** It takes 5 to 7 miles of higher RPM driving to bring the engine to full temperature and to evaporate the moisture which forms in the engine during start and cold operation. Starting it and running it at idle for a few minutes is MUCH worse than not running it at all.

3. **During the operating season make sure the car is run often and for a number of miles each time it started.** (But Honey, we HAVE to take the Healey! ...) If you need to move the car around in the garage, consider pushing it rather than starting it.

4. **Keep the Engine Well Tuned.** This may include carb adjustment to make sure it doesn't run rich and timing to appropriate specs. You may also consider upgrading to one of the electronic ignitions which will provide better fuel burn. (I am partial to the 'MSD 5' unit which will install without replacing the points, and can be taken out of the circuit if it should fail on the road.) Modern fuels are also more 'Ping' resistant, in that they are higher octane than in the 50's/60's, and have additives which reduce 'knock'. I run a little more advance than the book specs for those reasons. (About 10 degrees instead of 6.)

5. **Remember to Push in the Choke**, and check that the 'enrichener' completely seats to the off position when the button is pushed in. This will reduce the excess fuel / carbon build-up in the oil.

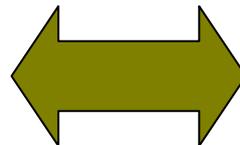
So the moral is change the oil in the fall, and drive it early and often whenever you can!

Dateline: Hudson, Wisconsin,  
Sunday 11 Jan, 2004, 5:42 PM!

April Harayda flipped the master switch to ON, pressed the starter button and her engine immediately fired. Shortly the engine was running without enrichener assistance and idling down to 600 rpm.

She did little leaps of joy and tweaked the throttle to 3 grand every so often, exclaiming "Bridgette Lives!!!"

After warm-up of half an hour, the engine was running about 25 psi oil pressure at idle and 65 lbs at 3500 RPM with 5W-30 oil, no leaks, no problems.



## Events Schedule

- February 4\*\*** **Pint with the President** – (Wed.) Meet at 7:00 p.m. at Brits Pub – 1110 Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis. This is a change in venue for the monthly (Pie) meeting. Come and enjoy an Ale with your Healey friends at an authentic British pub!
- February 28 \*\*** **Wine & Cheese Party** – (Sat.) From 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at Dick & Karla's Mathews' home at 1301 Waterford Drive in Golden Valley, MN. Bring wine and a snack. (Note date change)
- March 3 \*\*** **Pie with the President** - (Wed) Meet at 7:00 p.m. at Bakers Square Restaurant 2239 Ford Parkway St. Paul, MN (Right across from the Ford Plant and the Ford Bridge). Eat pie, or supper, or both! Always an enjoyable group of members there to discuss a variety of topics.
- March 20** **Intermarque Go Kart Challenge** –(Sat) From 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. at the ProKart Indoors track in Blaine. This is the fourth year for the Jaguar Club sponsored event. Awards lunch will follow at Tasty Pizza. Call Peter Griffin at 612-922-3917 or [pgrif888@aol.com](mailto:pgrif888@aol.com).
- March 27\*\*** **Garden & Garage Gathering** – (Sat.) Meet at 1:00 p.m. at the Rixen settlement in Hudson, WI. Ladies will discuss Spring gardening and men will discuss the “coming out” of Healey Beauties after their winter hibernation!
- April 7 \*\*** **Pie with the President** - (Wed) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice.
- April 24 \*\*** **Spring Awakening** - (Sat) Hopefully Spring will have sprung, so we can have a lunch and a tour afterwards. For info, call Dale Martin at 651-436-5902.
- May 2** **Intermarque Banquet & Car Show** – The Intermarque Council will again sponsor the Spring banquet. It will take place at the Radisson Conference Center in Golden Valley.
- May 5 \*\*** **Pie with the President** - (Wed) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice
- May 8\*\*** **Healey Hillclimb** - (Sat.) - The Healey Hillclimbs at Afton Alps have been such a success that there will be more in 2004! Details to follow. Call Tom Hazen for info. (see page 2).
- May 14 - 16** **Donneybrooke Touring** – (Fri – Sun) – The VSCCA will again have their racing and touring weekend at BIR in Brainard. For info call Rich & Liz Stadther at 651-698-1981.
- June 2 \*\*** **Pie with the President** - (Wed) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice
- June 4 - 6** **Rendezvous 2004** - This will be the 14<sup>th</sup> year for the annual Lake Superior Vintage Sports Car Rendezvous. Winnipeg is the host city. Get your reservations in early!
- June 18 - 20** **Back to the 50s Car Show** – Minnesota State Fair Grounds.
- June 20 - 25** **AHCA Conclave 2004** – “Conclave Texas” The event will be in San Antonio this year and it promises to be a good one. Reserve early. For more information, call Greg Lauser at 715-262-9813 or email to [glauser@presenter.com](mailto:glauser@presenter.com).
- \*\* - Denotes an official MAHC club activity**

### Events Schedule

- July 7 \*\*** **Pie with the President** - (Wed) Meet at 7:00 p.m. at Bakers Square Restaurant 2239 Ford Parkway St. Paul, MN (Right across from the Ford Plant and the Ford Bridge). Eat pie, or supper, or both! Always an enjoyable group of members there to discuss a variety of topics.
- July 10\*\*** **Jim Johnson Anniversary** – (Sat.) Come out for a picnic to help celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jim Johnson buying his AH 100 in 1953! For details, call Curt Carlson.
- July 15 – 18** **The Bric – The Brian Redmond International Challenge.** This is the big annual vintage car race event held at RoadAmerica in Elkhart Lake, Wi. For details, call Jeff Johnk, Dan Powell, or Jeff Lumbard.
- July 24** **Rally in the Valley** – For those of you that love to rally seriously, this is the event for you. For more info, call Ed Solstad at .
- July 31** **Swap Meet/Car Show** – (Sat) 9:00 a.m. This event has been held at the Ellingson Car Museum on Hwy. 94 near Rogers, MN for the past several years. It's a great place to buy or sell parts and show your car. Sponsored by the MN MG Club.
- Aug. 4 \*\*** **Pie with the President** – (Wed) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice.
- Aug 14 \*\*** **Gymkhana** – (Sat) Meet at 10:00 a.m. in the Brown & Bigelow parking lot at 345 Plato Blvd. In St. Paul. The pylons will be set up, and you can test your driving skills. For more info, call Steve Rixen at 715-386-2880 or email to [steve@rixen.com](mailto:steve@rixen.com)
- Aug. 15 \*\*** **Healey-Morgan Picnic – (Sun.)** Meet at Jeff & Karen Sartell's home at 4541 176<sup>th</sup> Lane N.E.in Ham Lake. MAHC is sponsoring the event this year. Details later.
- Aug. 28 \*\*** **The Red Green Tour** – (Sat.) Another fun Rally is being planned by Tom Hazen. Details will be forthcoming.
- Sept. 1 \*\*** **Pie with the President** – (Wed.) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice.
- Sept. 11** **Wheels 'n Wings** – (Sat) 8:00 a.m. Always a lot of cars and a lot of books. Airplanes , a train ride, hot dogs, and friendly people make it an enjoyable day.
- Sept. 17 – 19** **Fall Vintage Race Festival** - Held at RoadAmerica in Elkhart Lake, WI. A great opportunity to see vintage racing up close. Call Jeff J., Dan P., or Jeff L. for details.
- Oct. 6 \*\*** **Pie with the President** – (Wed.) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice.
- Oct. 9 \*\*** **Fall Color Tour-** (Sat.) Come out and enjoy the beautiful Fall colors with the top down. Tom Moerke will be planning the event. Details later.
- Nov. 3 \*\*** **Pie with the President** – (Wed.) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice.
- Nov. 7\*\*** **Tea & Tech Session** - (Sun.) - Meet at Sandy and Steve Rixen's home for another session of sipping (Ladies) and slurping (Men) in Hudson, WI. Details later.
- Nov. 20 \*\*** **Pizza Party** – (Sat.) The annual business meeting, election of officers, and consumption of pizza will occur on this evening. Details later.
- Dec. 1\*\*** **Pie with the President** – (Wed.) Meet at 7:00 p.m. See previous notice.
- Dec. 4 \*\*** **Planning Breakfast** – (Sat.) The schedule of events for 2004 will be on the agenda for this meeting. Greg Lauser will select the site.

**\*\* - Denotes an official MAHC club activity**

Minnesota Austin Healey Club  
Gary Ronning, Editor  
3624 - 46<sup>th</sup> Ave. So.  
Minneapolis, MN 55406

First Class Postage



From "THE MOTOR"  
May 1961

## MARKETPLACE

**FOR SALE:** New convertible softtop (hood) for Bugeye. Latter windshield style, 2 stud (not 9 stud earlier version), recently purchased and not yet shrunk. Also, original sidecurtains for sale.

**WANTED:** Black Bugeye tonneau cover in servicable condition. Will consider trades.

Contact: April Harayda, 612-724-1291 or [aharayda@knutsonconstruciton.com](mailto:aharayda@knutsonconstruciton.com) (1/04)

**FOR SALE:** New Tires –all types – available at cost. Will mount and balance Wire Wheels. Call Dwight McCullough at 763-754-7111 or email at [dcm@mnautox.com](mailto:dcm@mnautox.com) . (2/04)

**WANTED:** For A-H 3000 BT7 – Sidecurtains, Sidecurtain Plates w/Wing Nuts, Cockpit Surrounds and Door Top Trim, Oil Dip Stick. Call Gary Ronning at 612-722-8397 or email at [gtronning@aol.com](mailto:gtronning@aol.com) . (2/04)

Marketplace policy: All ads are free to current members. For non-members, the charge is 5.00 per month. Ads will be run for three months after which time the advertiser needs to submit new ad copy. Please inform the editor if your item or items have been sold during the three month period so the ad can be removed.