

Healey

MARQUE



Austin Healey

A PERSONALIZED HEALEY



Linwood Rose
Harrisonburg, Virginia
Capital Area Austin-Healey Club

I should begin by noting that there is nothing special or noteworthy about my particular 3000, BT7L4422. It isn't the first of a new model. I am not aware that it introduced any new components to the market. It wasn't a rare color, and also like most other Healeys of the period, it was rusty when I got



Photo by Casey Templeton.

it. All of that said, it is very special to me! First, just because it is a Healey, and second, because it is the first car I ever owned. I bought it for the grand sum of \$600 in 1971 while I was in college. There aren't many of us who still have the first car they ever owned.

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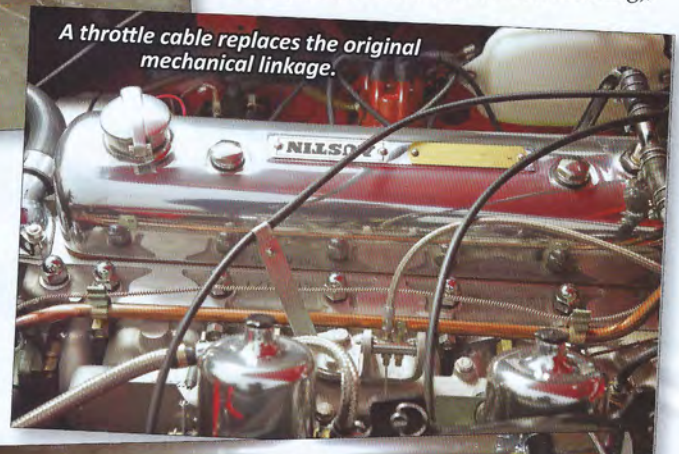


ing around the show with a sign duct-taped to the back of his t-shirt that read, "Bugeye For Sale: Enquire Within." We struck a deal and a week later we drove to Tom's home near Washington, DC. A few hours later we were headed back home to Harrisonburg, Virginia, driving a very under-powered – for the Washington beltway – Bugeye Sprite. We have done quite a bit of work on the Bugeye and I will just say that it is much quicker now. The Bugeye is a separate story, but I mention it because it turned out to be the inspiration for undertaking the Big Healey restoration.

In December 2001 (with my wife, Judith's, somewhat uninformed blessing),

The engine number is 29D/RU/H5677 with body number 4504. The Heritage Build Certificate indicates that the car was painted Colorado Red with black "coves" and a red leather interior. A factory hardtop was included with the purchase.

I drove the car while in college at Virginia Tech, but shortly after graduation in 1973 it began a life of storage in a number of sites (barn, garage, poultry house). Fast forward to 1997. My family began to attend British car shows. My boys were 14 and 10 and the oldest, John, showed a real enthusiasm for what had been my earlier interest.



The carburetor access panel cut-away.



The carburetor access panel.



I made the decision to get BT7 L4422 out of storage and begin a complete restoration. Yes, it has now been over seven years since I began this project! I knew then that I was going to do a "last nut-and-bolt restoration," but the first decision to be made was whether to go "concours" or "driver." I have great respect for the concours car owner, and I love "original" cars, but I decided that a few concessions to contemporary auto gadgetry would be appropriate since I plan to drive my car quite a lot. In fact, a coast-to-coast trip is planned for later this year. Who knows, my next project (don't tell Judith) might be a concours car if I can find the right vehicle with which to start.

Fortunately, our hobby has those among us who restore their

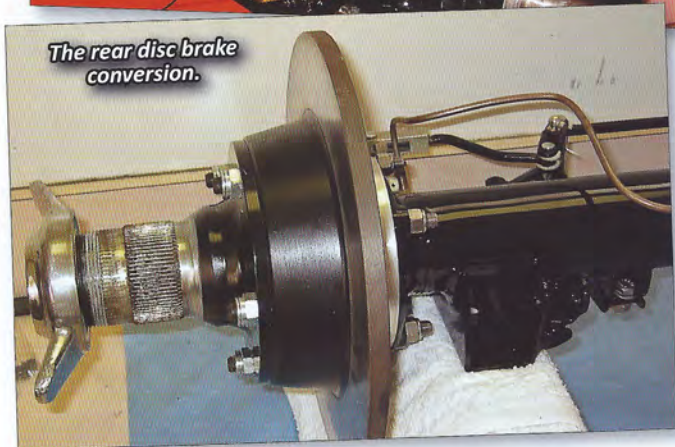
One day we spotted a 1959 Bugeye at the Bowie, Maryland, British car show. The owner, Tom Delaney, was actually walk-



Putzke's Bilstein shocks, poly bushings, and lowering spacers.



Rear axle help from James Madison University students.



The rear disc brake conversion.

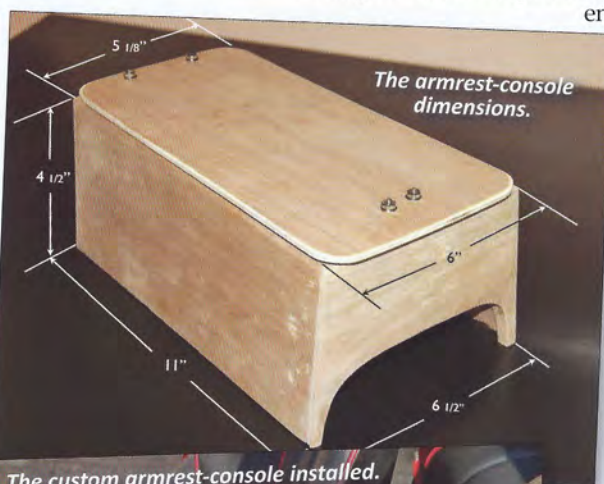


May 16 arrival day with the new frame delivered by Martin Jansen with sons Scott and John, and the happy owner at right.

cars to original, as-new condition. Their cars, as true representatives of the marque, accurately preserve history and that in itself is important. However, they also provide a baseline for modification and anyone who has known or studied Donald Healey knows that he endorsed modifying his cars from the beginning.

John Christy, in the August 1961 issue of *Sports Car Graphic*, wrote an article entitled "Healey's Six-Slug Slugger." The article was about improvements that might be made in the six-cylinder Austin-Healey. Clearly, enthusiasts were modifying their cars almost as rapidly as they were being produced. Christy's article divided improvements into three categories: power, reliability, and roadability.

The factory or "Works" as it was called, supplied numerous performance components for the Big Healey owner to convert his vehicle to race specifications. To enhance power, high-performance cams, pistons, connecting rods, distributors, clutches, gearboxes and ported and polished heads could be had. An oil cooler, larger oil sump, improved tires and wire wheels, and uprated lever shocks were all available to the enthusiast as well.



The armrest-console dimensions.



The custom armrest-console installed.

So I have chosen the path of those early Healey owners who preferred to "personalize" their cars to enhance performance, comfort, and reliability to suit their tastes. I call my modifications "personalizations," because as I have observed other Healeys at car shows over the years, I have developed a real appreciation for what others have done to their cars to suit their individual needs or tastes. My attitude is that none are right or wrong. The point is to enjoy the car and the hobby. With a few exceptions, my "personalizations" are bolt-ons and again with only a very few exceptions I have gone to great pains to avoid drilling additional holes anywhere in the car. Before I began my restoration I did a considerable amount of research and photographed many cars at shows to develop a "personalizations plan." The plan was important because in the assembly process many of these personal accommodations need to be factored in early.

So I present here a list of my "personalizations" for your review, not

THE "PERSONALIZATIONS"

Engine

Spin-on oil filter with K&N filter - HP2009.

Cast aluminum Capesport rocker cover.

Cast aluminum oil sump.

Denis Welch aluminum head with valves, springs, seals, guides.

BJ8 grind camshaft.

Denis Welch crankshaft rear seal set.

PCV valve.

Fuel System

Aluminum fuel tank.

Burlen's solid-state SU fuel pump, with redundant in-line Master E8016S electric pump.

Denis Welch's "itg" competition dual air cleaner.

BJ8 2-inch HD8 carburetors and intake manifold.

Denis Welch/custom design throttle cable.

Aston quick-release aluminum fuel cap.

Ignition System

123 Ignition electronic distributor.

Pertronix "Flamethrower" coil.

Pertronix ignition wiring.

NGK spark plugs - BP6ES.

Exhaust System

Phoenix Big Bore 2-inch stainless steel exhaust pipe, silencer.

Longbranch headers with Jet-Hot Thermal Coating.

Clutch and Gearbox

Smitty's five-speed conversion kit.

Toyota W57 five-speed gearbox.

BJ8 9 1/2-inch diaphragm clutch.

Doug Reid "Mr. Finespanner" slave cylinder bleeder pipe extension.

Custom-made balanced propshaft.

24 lbs. lightened and balanced flywheel.

Front & Rear Suspension and Axle

Putzke's Fahrspass Bilstein tubular shocks front and rear.

Capesport heavy duty 7/8-inch anti-sway bar.

Putzke's polyurethane bushings.

BJ8 front coil springs.

Denis Welch front lowering kit.

Lempert 3.55 rear differential.

Hyundai rubber ball joint dust covers, part # 56828-21010.

Custom made rear springs for Jule frame (Martin Jansen).

Brake System

Areoquip braided stainless steel hoses.

Cape International rear disc brake conversion.

Drilled front brake rotors.

Jaguar handbrake rear mini-calipers.

Speed Bleeders bleeder valves.

Watson's Street Works mechanical brake light switch.

HELP # 42072 Brake Reservoir canister gasket.

Electrical System

Negative-earth conversion.

Lucas SLR 570-5-inch driving lights.

Halogen headlamps.

Rear reflector conversion to taillights.

Supplementary fuse block.

Numerous in-line fused circuits.

Accessory power supply for interior.

Alternator conversion - Don Lenschow.

Remote-controlled (clicker) courtesy lamps in interior and boot.

Intermittent windscreen wiper control.

Electric windscreen washer.

iPod based amplified sound system.

Gear-reduction starter.

Optima gel battery - Part Number 34 (8002-002) RedTop®; Battery; Group 34.

"Modern" battery master switch in boot.

Audible turn signal "beeper."

Heating & Cooling System

Cape International's aluminum radiator.

Cape International's coolant recovery system.

British Car Specialist's six-blade stainless steel fan with spacer.

Custom-made aluminum air deflectors to radiator.

Dynamat Extreme heat reflective and sound insulation material applied with aluminum duct insulation under the carpet and throughout the interior.

Cape International's two-speed "modern" heater to replace Smith's unit.

Fresh air supplied to passenger seating through 4-inch and 3-inch paper/metal hose routed through the original Smith's blower; control assembly mounted in the tube.

Chassis & Frame

Martin Jansen's Jule Enterprises frame replacement.

Body & Interior

1997 Ferrari Rosso Corsa paint.

Aluminum alloy wings (fenders).

Carburetor access panel in front shroud.

Twin oil cooler vents in front shroud.

Capesport windscreen post-mounted mirrors.

Heritage upholstery and carpet.

Fiberglass gearbox cover.

Dynamat Extreme sound and heat insulation.

Derrington-style Moto-Lita mahogany-rim steering wheel.

Denis Welch aluminum competition pedal covers.

Tilted driver's seat (spacers).

Cape International's combination driving light brackets and tow hooks.

Rear rally bumpers.

Stainless steel bonnet and boot support rods.

Volkswagen Jetta cup holder.

BJ8 license plate bracket.

Arm-rest console.

Wheels & Tires

Dayton 72-spoke chrome/stainless wire wheels.

Michelin 175 x 15" ZX tires.



Photo by Casey Templeton.

to advocate for any, but to present them as options for another Healey owner undertaking a major restoration or just adding an incremental "improvement." I am happy to be available to any who might have questions about the items I describe. I know that I could not have accomplished what I have without the guidance of many in the Healey community.

The British Car Forum (www.britishcarforum.com), the Healeys List (autox.team.net/mailman/listinfo/healeys) and magazines such as HEALEY MARQUE all make experienced Healey people available to inexperienced amateurs like me. Although not a complete list, I cannot thank enough people like Rich Chrysler, Michael Salter, Michael Oritt, Mike Lempert, Inan and Bruce Phillips, David and Norman Nock, Jack Brashear, George Burkhart, Dave Russell, John Loftus, Ed Driver, Roger Moment and Tracy Drummond. What great resources they have been. It is also difficult to imagine how difficult this job would have been without the use of the internet and digital photography. Technology improvements have truly made a successful restoration by a novice possible.

After considering how much rust my Healey had, and knowing that I wanted to build a "driver," albeit a show-quality driver, I elected to use a Jule frame. The frame is made by Martin Jansen from Canada and his company is Jule Enterprises. Martin drove to Harrisonburg, Virginia, picked up my "tub" (frame and superstructure), returned to Canada to build the frame and put my superstructure back on the new frame, and then returned the finished product to me. He replaced a number of panels and components that I thought at the time were too rusty to repair. I have since learned that "too rusty to repair" is a conclusion that many of us reach not realizing that gifted bodywork professionals can bring almost anything back to life.

My bodywork and painting were done by Jeremy

Turner at Maple Hill Restoration in Broadway, Virginia. The engine rebuild was managed by Jack Harper from Coach Works in Singer's Glen, Virginia. Healeys were new to Jeremy, but Jack knew them well being an owner himself. Bruce Phillips at Healey Surgeons did my steering box, idler, and brake caliper rebuilds and also installed my Mike Lempert 3.55 rear differential gearing. I did all of the remaining assembly and that explains the elapsed time from beginning to end!

It has been a long journey since December 2001, but as I write this article seven years later, I am now beginning to once again enjoy the pleasures of driving a Big Healey. By the way, Judith loves the bloody beast, and she might just need one of her own. Mmmm, let me see, 100 or BN7? Healey Blue or Old English White?

Also see pages 26-27 for more photos of this fabulous Healey. - Editor

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A PERSONALIZED HEALEY

The Austin-Healey 3000 of Lin Rose. See story beginning on page 6.

Photos by the author except as noted.



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