

The Flash



May 2024

Material deadline for the
next Issue is 31 May 2024



Volume MMXXIV Issue IV

Visit our Web Site:
<http://www.atlantahealeys.org>



Taking (3-hour?) Lake Cruise in a Healey (Sport Boat)

John Homonek (Skipper) , Bruce Madden (1st Mate)

The Millionaire & his Wife



Volume MMXXIV Issue IV

Atlanta Austin Healey Club

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NEWSLETTER OF THE ATLANTA AUSTIN-HEALEY CLUB, "THE FLASH"

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Editors' Note

Spring is here! Hope everyone remembered their Mom for Mother's day and got to enjoy May The 4th Be with You and Cinco de Mayo weekend . Memorial Day is almost here , the unofficial start of Summer. As you celebrate Memorial Day Weekend, remember that a little over 80 years ago the USA was in a global conflict where not everyone got to come home to enjoy the peace and freedoms we have today. Enjoy your Healey Friends and families by remembering those who gave us the privilege to live as we do today.

Your editors, Robb & Kate.

Your input is more important than ever! Members are encouraged to submit articles, photographs or other materials of interest by mailing them to the address shown below.

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1179 Wingate Drive SW
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Members may also submit items of interest via e-mail by sending them to: b947585@gmail.com (and/or) kaoleary73@gmail.com

President's Corner

Mark Leinmiller
Photos Mark Leinmiller

The driving season is here! The weather has been perfect for top-down driving. And I've actually been able to do that in a Healey! You saw photos previously of the engine installation in the red BT7. That was followed by adding all the external bits: manifolds, carburetors, distributor, dynamo, radiator, etc. When installing the driveshaft I noticed bubbling under the paint at the x-brace and thought, "Oh, no! Not rust!". Thankfully, it wasn't; it was where the restorer (30+ years ago) painted over crud. With some wire brushing I got all that off and repainted. Since that spot is susceptible to accumulation I wanted to make sure it would not be a source for rust in the future.



Before

After



I lined the inside of the transmission tunnel with insulated sound deadening material from Summit Racing and managed to get the interior back into the car in time to take my grandson for a spin around the neighborhood when he visited for Easter.



He loves cars and planes, but hadn't ridden in anything other than a plug-in hybrid minivan, so I let him know before cranking it that, "It is loud, it's smelly and I like it!" Big smiles!

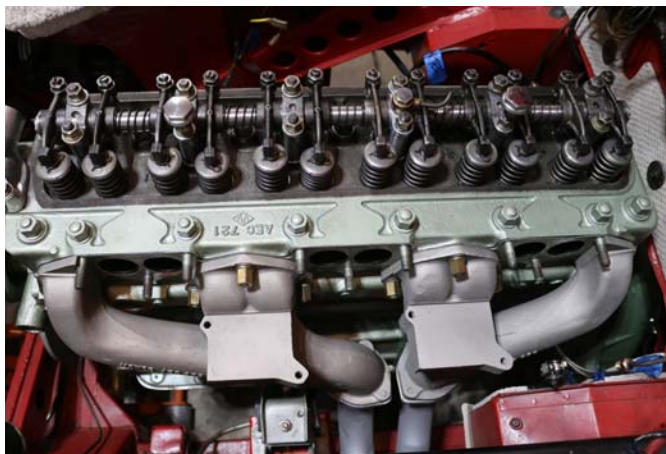
On my first long journey I had a bit of a scare. Bob Wagner had told me to stay off the interstates and run the car up and down through the gears (which is much more enjoyable after the transmission and overdrive rebuild!) and to stay below 3,000 RPMs for a while. With my local drives the oil pressure was always in the 60-65 PSI range, and I was thinking I had the tightest Healey engine ever! I didn't think about the oil taking a lot longer to heat up than the coolant. I was sitting in traffic in Roswell and the revs were below 1,000 and I realized my oil pressure was way down. Oh no! That's what happened when I was driving to Barry Rosenberg's shop for a tech session two years ago! The difference was that I was doing 70 on the interstate back then. I started recording time, RPMs, oil pressure and occasionally would get out and use a thermal scan to get the temp of the oil pan. I sent that to Bob and he said everything was normal. He took a look at the oil filter to search for bearing material or anything else that shouldn't be there and it was clean. As long as I'm above 40 PSI at speed, we're good. Whew!

President's Corner

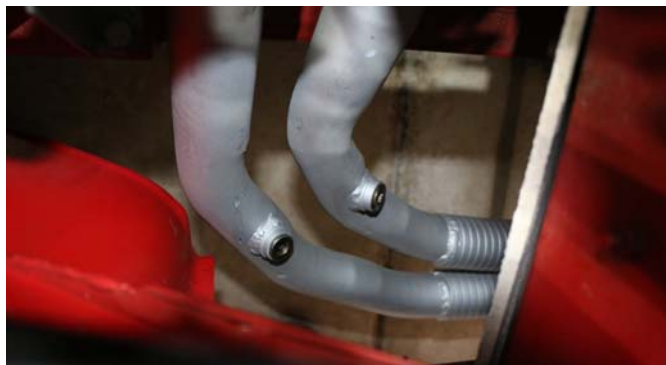
Mark Leinmiller
Photos Mark Leinmiller

While driving home through Crabapple I noticed a variety of cars in the Silos shopping center parking lot, some with their hoods up. That's a car show! I turned in, followed by a Lotus 7 and a couple of minis, and met a bunch of lug nuts with a variety of old and new cars. They meet there the last Saturday of the month from 4-7pm

As I work on the Healey I want to maintain the character of the car, but I have a few thoughts on how to make it more live-able and safe. I know a few folks who have added oxygen sensors and fuel/air ratio gauges to help get the carbs really dialed in. I may not go down that road, and goodness knows I have enough other things to take care of first, but while I had the engine out I had O2 sensor bungs welded to the downpipes (\$80) in case I decide to use them. Another thing I have read about (but admittedly do not yet comprehend) is how ceramic coating of exhaust manifolds reduce heat in the engine bay. It also won't bake off and start rusting after a few drives like high temperature paint has done previously. I took mine to Performance Coatings in McDonough and they had them back to me in a about 10 days (\$300).



In case you're wondering why the Christmas Cookies have an odd flavor this year...



O2 bungs can be used for more precise tuning in the future.

The other thing I have been thinking about is lighting. After being rear-ended in Hilton Head in the BJ8 I have been thinking about better brake lights. Also, one of my driving lights' bulbs burned out along with a front turn signal/pilot light. I'll be trying some LED bulbs and share what I find in a future newsletter.

I'll also be adding the Moss Motors headlight relay. If anyone has already done this, pointers and encouragement are welcome!

May 19: British Motorcar Day at Suwanee Town Center.

If you did not register in time to secure a spot (they only had 180 parking spaces available), please come join us anyway. What we have found is that there are usually some registered cars that do not make it and we have had open spaces next to us the past couple of years. The other option is to park in the regular parking area. A couple of people did that last year.

The club will provide lunch (roll-up sandwiches, chips, bottled water). Please bring your own beverage of choice and folding chairs. In addition to our cars, there are lots of interesting old British toys to check out. And their owners are usually more than happy to engage in conversation about them.

June 1: Fish Fry at Moshell's (See Page (9))
Join us for Charlie & Sheron's "Magnifique Rassemblement D'amis", a gathering of friends starting at 11am. For planning purposes please let them know you are coming and what you will be bringing.

Text or email either of them, please:
Charlie 770-547-9583 or charlie-moshell@aol.com
Sheron 678-634-9473 or smoshell@aol.com

June 22: British Pubs of Atlanta tour stop number 1: Thomas O'Reilly's Public House

For those of you who would rather just gather and dine we have the first stop on our tour of Atlanta's British pubs that afternoon. I'll see if I can set up an online survey for where our future pub tours should be. **If you have suggestions of places you**

like, please let me know.

4pm til?

Thomas O'Reilly's Public House, 227
Sandy Springs Pl NE Suite 416

June 22: Dawsonville History Museum and Georgia Racing Hall of Fame Drive with the Georgia Triumph Association

This is a drive from Crabapple to Dawsonville to tour the Hall of Fame. A lot of race drivers got their start in and around Dawsonville, and not just NASCAR. Check out "The Ultimate Driving Experience", Gen 6 iRacing Simulators, retro garage exhibit and more cars on display than ever. There is an admission fee to the museum (Adults \$15, Adults 55 and over \$10, children \$5) *NOTE: This drive was originally planned to Aristocraft Boat Works, but GTA has changed the venue.*

Arrive at the Crabapple Kroger at 9am, leave there at 9:30am and wrap up about 2pm
12460 Crabapple Road, Alpharetta, GA 30004

July 13: The long-awaited Water Pump Rebuild Session 1

In this session we will disassemble the water pumps. If all looks good you will then order the repair parts from Michael Salter, clean and paint your water pump components.

10am – 2pm at Leinmiller's: 5849 Riverstone Circle, Atlanta, GA 30339

August 24: Water Pump Rebuild Session 2.

This is when we will use John May's press to put the pumps back together again.

10am – 2pm at Leinmiller's: 5849 Riverstone Circle, Atlanta, GA 30339

Looking forward to seeing you all soon,
Mark

Dear Members,

The Spring 2024 edition of the club's electronic magazine, Austin-Healey Quarterly, is now posted on the club website and ready for viewing. Here's the link:

Copy & paste to your browser

[https://www.healeyclub.org/content.aspx?
page_id=22&club_id=215328&module_id=549959](https://www.healeyclub.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=215328&module_id=549959)

Just click on that link to open the publication and read it online. This new edition of our e-zine has 80 pages!

We know that some of you are reluctant to embrace electronic magazines, but we encourage you to give it try. We think you'll be pleasantly surprised. And remember, Healey Marque is now produced in both printed and electronic formats, but Austin-Healey Quarterly is available only in electronic format.

Also very important, the Quarterly is freely available without logging in to the club website, and so anyone, anywhere, can enjoy it and in the process learn about what we offer to the worldwide Healey community.

The next edition of our printed magazine, Healey Marque, is the May issue, and it is due to be mailed soon. In the meantime, we hope you'll give Austin-Healey Quarterly a look – there are 80 pages of quality Healey content waiting there for you to enjoy.

Happy Healey Reading!
Reid Trummel
Editor the Healey Marque



Watch your e-mail during the year for unscheduled Tech Sessions and impromptu drives



Look ahead from planning meeting AACA Events Calendar

Current Calendar for 2024 Atlanta Austin-Healey Club

Watch for updates as the year progresses

- ♦ May 16-19: Bluegrass AHC Spring Thing
- ♦ May 19: British Motorcar Day, 10 AM, Suwanee Town Center, 330 Town Center Ave Suwanee, Gwinnett County 30024. More info: <https://www.atlantabritishmotorcarday.org/> **Registration Now OPEN— Update Less than 18 slots are still open. Once filled that's it. No Day Of Show Registrations.**
- ♦ June 1: Fish Fry, 440 Havenmist Landing, Suwanee, GA 30024 (Hosted by Sheron & Charlie Moshell) **RSVP See Page 7**
- ♦ June 22: Aristocrat Boat Works Drive to Dawsonville, Saturday, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Meet at Kroger Crabapple, 12460 Crabapple Rd, Alpharetta, GA 30004, USA (Hosted by GA Triumph Assoc.)
- ♦ **NEW !!** July 13: The long-awaited Water Pump Rebuild Session 1 10am – 2pm at Leinmiller's: 5849 Riverstone Circle, Atlanta, GA 30339
- ♦ July 20: AAHC Tour of British Pubs, location TBD
- ♦ August 1-4: Carolina's Club Annual Mountain Trip, Oak Park Inn, 196 S Main St, Waynesville, NC 28786, 828-456-5328 (Hosted by Chuck & Monique Reeves) **MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW**
- ♦ August 17: AAHC Tour of British Pubs, location TBD
- ♦ **NEW !!** August 24: Water Pump Rebuild Session 2. 10am – 2pm at Leinmiller's: 5849 Riverstone Circle, Atlanta, GA 30339
- ♦ September 7: British Car Fayre, Main Street, Downtown Norcross (Date to be confirmed) More info: <https://www.atlantabritishcarfayre.com/>
- ♦ September 12-15: Southeast British Car Festival, Dillard, GA: Dillard House 706-746-5348 (Hosted by Peachtree MG Registry) **MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW.** More info: <https://peachtreemg.com/Dillard-2024>

Look ahead from planning meeting AACA Events Calendar

Initial Draft - Calendar for 2024 Atlanta Austin-Healey Club

Watch for updates as the year progresses



- ♦ September 13-15: VSCDA/HEALEY WORLD CHALLENGE vintage racing weekend. Prior to Conclave 2024, VSCDA will feature races at Road America, Wisconsin. Conclave participants coming to the races will have the opportunity to purchase VIP packages in advance.
- ♦ September 15-20: CONCLAVE, Road America, Elkhart Lake, WI (Host hotel is Blue Harbor Resort & Conference Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW More info: <https://2024conclave.com/> **Registration for this year's Conclave is now \$165.**
- ♦ September 20-22: HSR Fall Historic Races, Road Atlanta, 5300 Winder Highway, Braselton, Georgia 30517. More info: <https://roadatlanta.com/calendar/atlanta-historic-races>
- ♦ October 11-13: Barber Motorsports Vintage Motorcycle Festival, Leeds, AL. More info: <https://www.barbermuseum.org/barber-vintage-festival/>
- ♦ October ??: Pumpkin Run, TBD Weekday
- ♦ October 19: AAHC Tour of British Pubs, TBD
- ♦ October 31-November 3: SE Classic XXXVII, new location at the Shelton Vineyards, Dobson NC Host hotel is Hampton Inn 336-353-9400 (Hosted by Triad Austin-Healey Club)
- ♦ November 1-3: Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival, Port Royal Golf & Racquet Club, Hilton Head Island, SC More info: <https://www.hhiconcours.com/>
- ♦ November 17: Friendsgiving at Edenborough Country Club
- ♦ December 7: Kassow Kruise, Location TBD (Hosted by Bill & Mary Ellen Nagel)
- ♦ December 28: Polar Bear Run (ALS fund-raiser hosted by Georgia Triumph Association)

Atlanta AHC

"Magnifique Rassemblement D'amis "

Saturday, June 1st, 2024

Gather @ 11:00am for socializing.

Fish Fry around Lunch-ish time - till ?

We are honored to host another "Magnifique Rassemblement D'amis" for our AHC family. Be sure to come hungry!! Lunch will be provided with the usual Fishy Fry fare, fish and a mountain of coleslaw and some ice tea, but you are always welcome to bring your favorite flavorful covered appetizer, side dish or dessert to share and your favorite beverage.

Please RSVP to Charlie via text @770-547-9583 (cell) or charliemoshell@aol.com or Sheron 678634 9473 (cell) / smoshell@aol.com. no later than Wednesday May 29th. We want to make sure there's time to gather all the fixins for participants.

Charlie and Sheron Moshell

440 Havenmist Landing Suwanee Ga 30024 Lost? Call 678 634 9473





Other Auto Related Happenings

Gateway Classic Cars Caffeine & Chrome – Last Saturday of almost every month. Open to the public. No admission fee. Cruise in with your collectible car or daily driver. Donuts and coffee while supplies last. All makes and models are welcome, with plenty of parking space. This is a family and pet friendly event.

2024 Dates: **May 25 - 25th Anniversary Celebration** • June 29 • July 27 • August 31 - Cause for Paws • September 28 • October 26 - Trunk or Treat • December 7 - Holiday Party

8:00 AM to Noon New location: 2705 Ronald Reagan Blvd, Suite 200, Cumming, GA 30041

Worship Monthly Vintage & Classic Car Event – First Sunday of every month rain, snow, holidays. Families are always welcome. Open to the public. No admission fee. Vintage and classic (18 years or older) cars, trucks, and motorcycles are the vehicles of choice.

8:00 AM to 11:00 AM Laid-back alternative to Caffeine and Testosterone... err Octane, which meets 9 am to Noon

Location: 1135 Woodstock Rd, Roswell, GA 30075 (Target & Panera Bread shopping Center)

Caffeine & Octane Atlanta - First Sunday of every month, rain or shine.

A nationally recognized “all makes, all models” car show.

9 AM - Noon

Location: Town Center at Cobb, 400 Ernest W Barrett Pkwy NW, Kennesaw, GA 30144

Healey Boat Christening By John & Dana Homonek

Over 20 people came to our home on Berkeley Lake to see the newest addition to our Healey family on May 4th. We had a great lunch (Taco Bar) with desserts (including a huge carrot cake brought by the Miners)



The weather was very iffy all week but we had a break without rain and just cloudy skies...perfect for boating. Many attendees went out with me in the Healey boat and Dana took others out on our pontoon boat. As our lake is limited to 5 mph, there is a lot to see and experience here.



A brief history of our 1959 Healey Sports Boat: I found her online in January of 2023. I sent an inquiry to the owner and learned it had been sold but not finalized with the pay-

ment. I asked him to let me know if the deal fell through and 2 weeks later, I heard back from him. Anyway, many emails went back and forth about the boat's history. Did I mention that this boat was in the United Kingdom? I had a friend going over in late March to the Goodwood Members Meeting and asked him to survey the boat for me while there. He agreed and met the owner to view the boat. It was everything that was described and I bought her.

Now, I had to get her here. The trailer she was on was not really road worthy for long distances so I had to get her loaded on a roll-back trailer for the 90 mile trip to the port in London.



Once there, she was rolled into a dedicated 20' container for the trip across the Atlantic to Charleston, SC. That took 8 days. Once in the USA, my friend Chris, (that surveyed the boat in the UK) and I took a road trip to Charleston with my car trailer in June of 2023. We winched the boat on trailer up onto my car trailer and strapped all down for the ride to Atlanta.



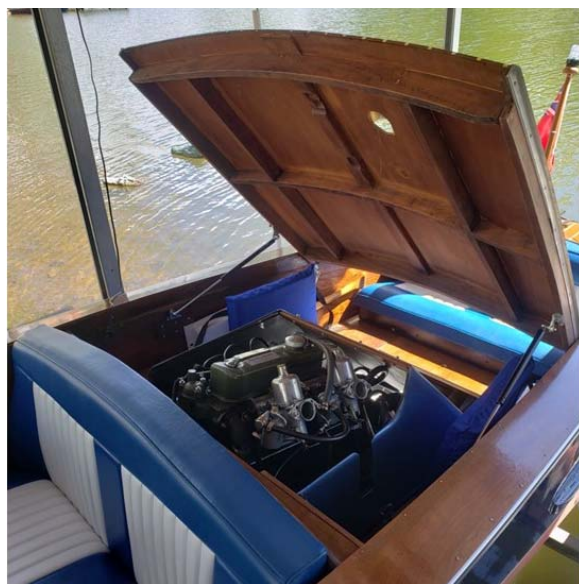
Healey Boat Christening

By John & Dana Homonek

From the 3 ring binder of detailed documentation that came with the boat, it was clear that this Healey Sports Boat had not been in the water for over 20 years! I learned that he had bought the boat in 2007 and had been restoring the hull, wood, interior, trim and accessories.

The owner before him had it for 5+ years rebuilding the engine, transmission and other mechanicals.

The initial launch at our boat ramp proved that it truly did not see water for decades. Both carburetors leaked like sieves and the transmission linkage was not adjusted. So, this launch, in typical Healey fashion required a tow to our dock to put on the lift. Once here, I was able to rebuild the carbs discovering that they had simply dry rotted from a rebuild about 20 years ago.



Months go by with tweaks and improvements being made leading up to an exterior paint job. This was done by Doug Duffee and the result was stunning.



She is 14'9" long and about 60" wide. At about 1500#, she is light too. This is truly a sports boat!

I want to share that Healeys are Healeys, whether they are on land or sea. They have unique personalities and quirks. The engines are easy to work on and maintain but in this case, let's throw in a transmission shared by USA boats Chris-Craft and Mastercraft, which is easy enough too. (I had to read a hard copy manual). I have learned that in-board boats navigate differently than out-boards or inboard/outboards too.

Now, I take her out 2 to 3 times a week around the lake. I plan to take her up to Lake Lanier to see how fast she will go. She is really wanting to go fast and held back here at 5 mph.

Thanks to all who came to experience this part of Healey history with us!

To Helen and Back

Article & Photos Kate O'Leary

A couple weeks ago I decided to see if Helen had changed much since my last adventure there on the Polar Bear Run, circa 2005 or 2006.

The Triumph gang put together a fun mountain ride, complete with hair-raising twists and turns, blind corners, broken down cyclists, and an adorable general store sort of place with real toilets. I think. I had my eyes closed.

Driving the Kia is sort of cheating, but I still couldn't get to the meeting place on time. About ten minutes after the group left, I drove into the parking lot and had a quick argument about whether or not I should try and catch up. On the side of going back home was the drizzly chilly weather. On the side of catching up was Robb's voice in my head saying "We need content for the newsletter!"



So I tried to catch up. I only went about 10 miles (I had no instructions) when I saw a Healey and a Triumph and a Corvette at a gas station, so I just followed them.

Well, I tried to. I think they were trying to break some sort of speed record and my little modernish car wasn't having any of that nonsense. The roads in the mountains in North Georgia go wiggly to the top and wiggly back down. Guard rails are sporadic and not terribly tall, if you hoped they would keep you from going to the bottom in a straight line. Fog and drizzle persisted for the whole ride, so at least I really couldn't see how far down it was.

When we got to the valley with the little general store, it started feeling like this



might turn out to be a nice day, weatherwise. The rain had mostly stopped, so I took a couple pictures of the two Healeys lined up. We hopped back in the cars and were off.

Due to excessive traffic in the middle of nowhere, a couple of us got separated from the group, so my handy GPS put us on the right road to lunch in Helen. As we entered the little mountain town, it wasn't a little mountain town any more, it was actually a big mountain town. Several hotels along the main street, not a lot of shade (the sun was now out and at full strength), tons more touristy shops, a variety of restaurants and activities. I remembered Helen as a single main street, lots of trees, the one hotel with the raging river, a train museum with aliens and two or three small restaurants that couldn't handle thirty people in a party.

But the Triumph organizers had selected the German restaurant with a great beer list, a good sized biergarten and several nice German items on the menu. I had chicken schnitzel and a potato pancake which was a lot more filling than it sounds.

There was a lot of laughter, car talk and catching up. Dan and Beverly Dougherty were there, as well as John Harris. It turned out to be a beautiful day.



Can you spot the Healey in this Picture?

I have built a lot of engines in my 50 years. I can honestly say the vast majority, better than 98%, have been excellent. Yes, I do admit to a few problems and I have an excuse for each one. One was due to a faulty K&N oil filter that had the anti-drain back diaphragm off center. This allowed the hot oil to drain out of the filter every time the engine was turned off.

When the customer would crank it the next time, he revved it fairly quickly and his filter would be empty. This starved his bearing for oil and they don't appreciate that. This filter would have worked fine if it weren't mounted on the inverted filter mount on a MGB engine. K&N even admitted the filter was bad but only offered a free filter. No thanks and never a K&N again. I now check every filter I use for this and so should you.

I built a few MGB and TR3 race motors for a customer who got shrouded in the "Green Fog" when ever he raced. His vintage group often had early Mustangs and Jaguar XKEs in with the MGs and Triumphs. He could not stand to be passed by the bigger, faster cars and tried to keep up with them. Nope, no way in hell it would work. Bam, rod thru the block. He never learned.

Another race customer, Triumph TR4, burned up a new race motor on a dyno. He was sitting in the car and not paying attention to any of his gauges. With the hood open and a big fan in front of the radiator, he over heated the engine, blew radiator hoses and the motor. On the dyno! TR4 hood open forwards and blocks the grille opening by over 1/2. He never saw the temp rise until it went blooey! And as a follow up, I rebuilt his engine overnight but it was now a street engine.

There was no time to have everything balanced as machine shops aren't opened at 1:00 in the morning. I had his car running and tuned in time for him to get to Savannah's Roebling Road in time for his first practice. I warned him that the engine was not balanced and built to turn 7,000 rpm and that he could race it by keeping the revs no higher than 5,000 rpm. Did he listen? NO, the "Green Fog" overcame him as well.

He came to the shop on Monday and all he said was "it cost me \$483 per lap". Mind now, I did not charge him to rebuild the engine overnight for parts or labor even though it was his fault the engine went blooey in the first place. He swore he never turned over 5,000 rpm but when I hit the tach recall button, it showed a high rpm of over 7,200. Never saw him again.

And there was a recent happening when a newly built engine had the timing advanced while on a drive way above 50 degrees before TDC. In less than 10 miles it blew a head gasket. Then, after replacing the gasket and an exciting ride on three wheels, one came off while returning home from a distant car show, the car decided to burn a piston. This was traceable to the timing advance.

A set of lifters that went after 14,000 miles turned out to be bad parts. It seems many people have had MGB lifters fail at an early age. Now I can at least compare new parts for hardness before installing them because I have the tester.

And last would be the 1275 Bugeye engine that overheated do to a supercharger being installed against my better wishes. It didn't blow, still running, but it did collapse a ring on one piston. I have the parts to fix it and I guess we will try the supercharger once again. That is until it causes more problems.

Tech Corner

By Barry Rosenberg

In all honesty, I think this is the majority of engines I built that failed. I have great success in building engines, some lasted 300,000 miles between rebuilds. And I hope to impart some knowledge to you thru this article on engine rebuild basics 101. There will be no test at the conclusion. Your test will be how long your engine lasts.

I have seen engines built by owners last a long time and I have seen engines not get out of the garage. It is simple things that can make a huge difference. An example: MGB 5 main bearing engines are very similar to the 3 main bearing engines used in MGAs and early MGBs. One very very important difference is a \$0.99 gasket for the oil pump. The gasket set for the 5 main engine still contains the gasket for the 3 main engine oil pump.

Very similar but not interchangeable. If you use the 3 main gasket in the 5 main engine, you get no oil pressure. I don't care how much you turn the engine over. I don't care if you put the plugs in and crank the engine and rev the hell out of it. No oil pressure. But, you will get spun bearing or a lock up. Either way, the less than a dollar gasket has cost more than one owner built engine to fail and need a proper build done.

So, what will this lesson cover. First thing to do is decide what kind of engine you need, not what you think you want. If you drive normal and never go to the Tail of the Dragon or autocross, you do not need an engine that can handle that type of stress. If you never push your engine past 4,000 rpm, you do not need a performance cam. Build the engine for the way you drive and you will be much happier with what you end up with.

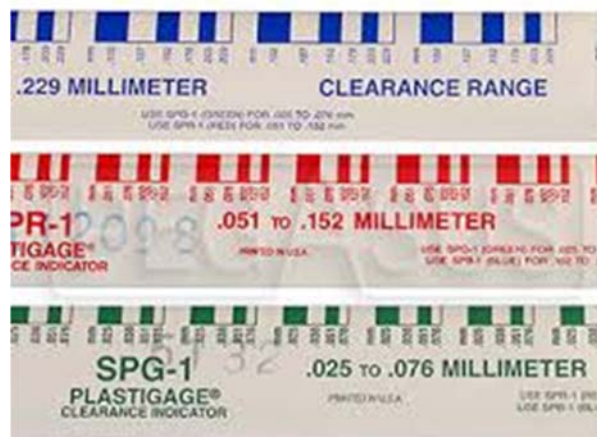
I used to have a book on building Datsun race engines. It had one entire chapter titled DO

NOT OVER CAM YOUR ENGINE. This was because even when building a race motor there are limitations on what you should do. Before I used to build an engine, I asked the customer to drive his car for a week, if the engine still ran, and let me know the highest he revved it while driving normal. Almost without exception, they came back and said less the 4,000 rpm.

I refused to put a "3/4 race cam" in their engine. If you are driving on regular streets in normal traffic, a stock cam or one that is just a pinch above is your best choice. You need an honest, knowledgeable person to guide you.

After you decide what type of engine you need, find a great, not just good, machine shop. I have one in Jasper, Ga that builds high performance boat racing engines and he agrees to do my little engines. Some of the engines he builds have intake valves almost as big in diameter as out pistons. Discuss with your machinist about the engine you want and listen to them. He may suggest balancing the rotating mass. This makes the engine run smoother.

For a low RPM street motor this is not really needed and if money is in question, omit this step. I never like to re-ring an engine so I hope he recommends boring to the next biggest bore. I like to go to the next to the last biggest bore such as .040" in most MGs, Healeys and Triumphs. This leaves a .060" over bore available for a future rebuild. Let the shop determine if the crank needs polishing or turning. If you polish a crank, you are making the journals a tad smaller so make sure you do not end up with too much bearing clearance. A pretty old method of checking main and rod bearing clearances is a cheap product called Plastigage. It is a very thin rod of wax that you compress between the crank and bearing and then use the marking to see how much clearance you have. It has markings in inches and millimeters.



The shop may recommend you have the crank turned to the next undersize for which oversize bearing are available. Listen to them. I do not believe every engine needs the rods re-sized or the block line bored. I especially do not believe a cast iron block, like most LBCs, have need to have the cam journals bored out for bearings. If the factory never installed cam bearings why should you if you are not going racing. Besides, this is an expensive operation.

If your crank spun easily when you took the engine apart, after you removed the rods, then chances are the line bore is fine. What is line boring? The shop takes the main caps and grinds a little off the surface that mates with the block. This leaves a bore for the crank that is no longer round. They set the block in their jig and bore the crank bores to the exact size called for in factory specs. This makes all the holes the same size and perfectly parallel to the top of your block.



Sad but True - A customer goes into a big chain auto parts store and asks for Plastigage. The "kid" working there proceeds to take the customer to the row of cheap plastic encased instruments and gauges. (Editor)

Why is this important? Believe it or not, the blocks can twist some over the years and get the crank bores out of alignment. So much so, the crank can bind when re-installed with new bearings. And there is the rare chance that the main bearings could spin and cause wear that line boring can eliminate. I have probably had less than 30% of the engines I built done.

Re-size the rods is another item that may be needed. If you spin a bearing, you definitely need to have the rods re-sized. And do them all, not just the bad one. The machinist does similar to a line bore except he does one rod at a time. He takes the rod cap and grinds a little off it and the rod. This makes the hole smaller and out of round. He has a special machine, an expensive one, that he mounts the rod on and it hones out the hole until it is at factory specs. One thing he has to do, is keep the distance between the centers of the big hole and the wrist pin hole the exact same and as the specs call for. If he does it correctly, the rods will not need to be balanced. At least they could be balanced without having to do the entire rotating mass



Tech Corner

By Barry Rosenberg

The last step I will discuss today is decking the block. This can be necessary for a few different reasons. If there is pitting on top of the block or the block has warped a little more than what is acceptable, less than .003" across from one end to the other diagonally across the top. To deck a block, they should line the block up on a jig using the main bearing bores. This keeps the deck perfectly parallel to the center line of the crank. His machine will cut the minimum off to make the top level and straight or remove the pitting.



What this step does is move the center line of the crank closer to the top of the block. You need to make sure you have enough piston deck height before having decking done. Piston deck height is the distance from the top of the piston at top dead center to the top deck of the block. In LBC engines this should be a few thousandths. If it is too small, the top of your piston could hit the bottom of your head plus, it raises the compression of the engine. Very few people will ever measure this.

I recently saw this on an engine I am building. It is not a LBC but a 1959 Mercedes 190SL 4 cylinder.

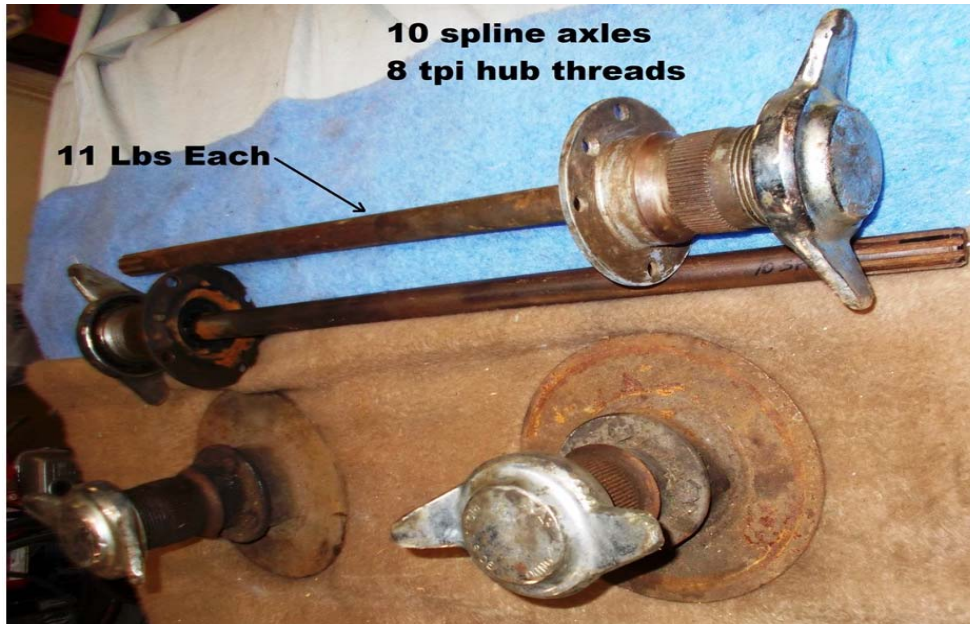


After so many trips to bad machine shops, the pistons in my engine came up out of the top of the block by .014"! The block had been lined bored and decked a few too many times. A specialty gasket company, The Gasket Works, in Ca. makes custom gaskets from solid copper. I had one made from .093" thick copper. The pistons come up .014" and the stock gasket is .072", uncompressed by head torque, adding up to .086. This will give me .008" as my piston deck height. Very close to stock.

Well, this is getting quite long so I should end now and resume next month. I had planned a tech session at the Dillard show this coming September but there may not be a time slot for it. This was going to be my topic with open Q&A or discussions about building a successful engine. I am also planning a tech session at my machine shop, Bruce Performance, in Jasper. If you would be interested, let me know and I will schedule it with Danny Bruce. So, until I see yall somewhere soon, be safe.

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Free Healey?

looking for a '67 AH Sprite project car? A friend of friend has one that they're willing to give to a good home. Looks a bit rough in the few pictures I've seen, but mostly surface rust. It was running a couple years ago but they parked it because of a dead battery and a gas leak. Can provide more details to anyone who's interested. The current owner thinks it's too good to part out and is hoping someone can save it.

Contact John Miner for details jrminer47@gmail.com 770-856-4539