



# WHEEL SPIN

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PUB NIGHT: 2nd Wed of every month.

Duggan's Irish Pub located on Woodward between 13 and 14 Mile Road.

## **EDITOR'S CORNER**

After a summer filled with Sprite's (not mine) vacations, gardens (vegetable and flower) and other distractions, the first of the **WheelSpin Newsletters** is in the e-mail to you.

We're back!!!! I've volunteered to be the editor. Many people say I'm crazy, but I thought I would give it a try. I think a newsletter will bring good things to our club: It will communicate to our members what's happening in the world of Healey's, It will allow our members to share those things that they do well, and It may be a way to attract new members. To make a newsletter go, we need content.

This can be an article on a car show you've attended, what you are doing now on your car, an adventure with your Healey, or a technical article about something you have done in fixing your car or your garage. My first Healey is always a good story. How did you come to own your first Healey? We all have one of these!

So send your stuff in to me by E-mail or snail mail. If you don't think you can write well, you can get a friend to write the story or you can trust me to edit it. But, send it in!

I'll try to get an issue out once a month. Please send me content by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Let's give it a try!

*Roger*

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**Don't miss out on a fantastic weekend of Healeying Fun.  
Register for Fall Wind Up 2009 today. Don't put it off any longer  
The last day for booking a reduced rate room at the Lake Orion Best Western Motel is  
September 5<sup>th</sup>. Call them at 248-391-2755 to book your room. Download the  
Registration form from our web site at [www.semahc.com](http://www.semahc.com)**

**Congrats to winners at Conclave 2009:**

**Jim Fleischhauer**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Popularity BT7**

**Ron Mitchell**

**1<sup>st</sup> Popularity BN7**

**Bruce Gearns/Bob Murphy**

**1<sup>st</sup> TSD rally**

**What I'm working on.**

By Rick Eisele

Several years ago I bought a late '70's MG Midget that had a Chevy 2.8 V6 in it. The guy that built the car had done excellent fabrication work to install the engine and transmission, but then came the next step, wiring and plumbing it up, plus he found a Corvette he wanted instead. I did some more work on it which included buying a set of widened fiberglass fenders for the front and rear. I, too, decided that this was not the right car for me and sold it. The buyer did not want the widened fenders so I didn't know what to do with them. I contacted the place I bought them, Spridgetech in Brighton, about some other parts and found that they had a square body Spridget that was going to be built as a show car for their products, but decided to put their effort into a race car instead. Anyway, I was able to buy this car as a rolling chassis with the wide fenders already installed, and the suspension modified for tube shocks front and rear with the front upper lever arm replaced with triangulated upper A arms and brackets. The price was less than half of what it cost just for the fiberglass fenders and hood. When I started disassembling the car I found some new brake parts as well. Wow, this was great! I figured I could clean the underside of the tub and throw some paint on it and have it running in no time. Hah!

The rust was well hidden, the lower door hinges were no longer attached to the body, and the inner and outer rocker panels were rusted through, plus some areas in the floor

panels, battery box, and several small spots spread around the rest of the car. Good thing Spridgetech was going to make it a show car because it wasn't going to last long on the road like that. As I write this in mid-January the rust repairs are almost finished, 2 patches to weld in plus replacing the battery tray. Then I can paint the underside, interior, and engine compartment. After that I can take it off the rotisserie and finish the exterior body work and paint that. Then all that's left is putting everything back on it. The engine and trans were in my yellow Bugeye so they can go in pretty easy and I know they work. Who knows, I still have a slim chance of getting it done by Conclave. And if I do it will be that the quick turnaround I was hoping for will have only taken 2 years to complete!

**So, what are you working on?**

**Update**

Step one (of, oh, about 297) on the road to getting the square body on the road. I painted the underside today. I used Eastwood Rust Encapsulator, but since I didn't know how much I might need I mixed a quart of silver with a half quart of red oxide. Yes, it is metallic Red Oxide or pink if you prefer. As it turned out I didn't need that much and could have just used the silver by itself. And, yes, I missed a spot. In a couple of days I can roll on the bed liner in the wheel wells and under the floor pans which I hope will help protect it from stone chips and such. besides it's on the bottom!

*Rick*

My First Healey by Al Fuller

**(Ed. Note: this is the first in a series of “My First Healey” stories. We invite you to submit your story!)**

My first Healey was a long time in coming! I had admired the cars when I was young, but by the time I had a driver’s license, production was phasing out. This relegated the cars to the status of “orphan”, somewhat lower than today’s “cherished classic” level. I also sensed that getting parts would be a hassle. As a student, I was left to buy something a bit more “modern”, so I had a Datsun 240Z sports car. It was not a Healey, but a whole lot of fun!

The Healey blue '62 BT-7 Kathie and I have now was bought after a long search, and has turned out to be rather “special”, courtesy of the prior owner’s “restoration” efforts. It turns out whoever put the car back together was ‘fastener challenged’! almost every nut, bolt and screw on the car was either loose, over torqued, stripped, cross threaded or just plain wrong! Separately, I lived in southern California at the time, and the car had no top, side curtains or heater. I’m now looking for a top to make the car really drivable!!

Despite the challenges this has brought, we love the car (especially Kathie!) and plan to keep it for some time! Later acquisition’s include a '65 BJ-8 project car, and I’m looking at getting a late BJ-8 owned by a personal friend of Donald Healey himself – stay tuned for more details.

Keep ‘em on the road!

From 240 to 40, My First Sprite  
by Dave Burch

Recently, I met a fellow Austin Healey Bugeye Sprite enthusiast and we got to talking about cars and hobbies. Somehow, my passion and former hobby of drag racing came up in the conversation I explained to Roger (Cotting) that I used to own and drive a Top Alcohol Funny Car and that my best time and speed in the ¼ mile was 5.94 seconds at almost 240 mph. At that point he asked

“How do you go from drag racing a Funny Car at 240 to owning and driving a Sprite at 40?” Well, it all started way back in the late 50’s and early 60’s when I was a young boy of 6 or 7 years old. At the time I had 2 neighbors one who owned a '55 Corvette and the other had about a '57 or '58 Corvette. I fell in love with both of these and of course said one day I would have one. Eventually I did own a '62 and a '64 Corvette. I had another neighbor who had a Triumph either a TR2 or TR3; I am not sure, which I also fell in love with. I had still another neighbor who had a Bugeye Sprite. That car was originally Green with a Black Boot and Black interior and he painted it a Royal Blue with a Red interior and a Red Boot. The owner of the Sprite was in High School and he worked at the local McDonald’s where my Mom and Dad would take us to eat out about once every 6-8 weeks. Needless to say, I saw the car frequently not only in his driveway but he had to drive by my house to go to school as well as to go to work at McDonald’s. Now this was a car I could see myself cruising around in and once again I promised myself I would one day own one. I must admit though, I thought that day was going to come much earlier than at age 47.

So how did I end up owning a Sprite, which is supposed to be the subject of this story after all? We ended up selling the Funny Car what with having our oldest child, our daughter, starting college and a brother starting college the following year and having 2 younger brothers still in elementary school, racing a Funny Car was no longer in the budget. During this time, I was still crewing on a friend of mine’s Funny Car at the races, but that only kept me occupied on race weekends. The rest of the time, according to my wife anyway, I was bored and driving her nuts. She told me I needed something to do that would keep me busy out in my shop. You see, when we had the race car, if I wasn’t racing it I was working on it. They require constant maintenance to keep them running and in one piece. While I had had my share of American Muscle Cars, thanks

to the tremendous popularity in collecting them, they had gotten out of my reach money wise. I started to look on the internet for a reasonably priced sports car and after some research I decided the time had come to buy my first Sprite Thus began my quest to buy my Bugeye Sprite. After watching the internet for about a year, I found a Red 1960 Bugeye that was less than 50 miles from my home. The car was listed on e-bay and I decided to place a bid on the last day of the auction. My wife and I had decided on a budget for the purchase and my first bid was well below it. That was about 3:00 in the afternoon and by 9:00 that night I had been outbid 3 times. I still hadn't hit my max so with only about 10 minutes remaining, I put in my max bid and 10 minute later, we were the proud owners of a 1960 Bugeye. I contacted the seller and made arrangements to go pick it up the next day with a trailer since the car had been off the road for the previous 12 years. The car did run but I wasn't comfortable driving it so it came home on a trailer. After getting it home and cleaning it up, we did get to take some short drives in it before winter rolled around and then of course like most owners, I decided I needed to make it a better driver. I have since done a lot of work to it mechanically, electrically and cosmetically but I always try to make sure that it is running for the summer so my wife and I can go out cruising the streets in the Bugeye just like I dreamed about as a little boy some 40+ years ago. I have to tell you too, it is as much fun to drive as I always knew it would be.

### *Encounter 2009 by Ron Mitchell*

I left my house promptly at 4:30 AM Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of August with Samantha, my newly acquired Garmin GPS Navigator giving me direction. The sun had not yet risen so I could clearly see the course that she had mapped out for me. It was a 600 mile plus drive so I settled back and listened to her instructions. It was nice to have company for a change during my recent of many trips by myself. The nice thing about Samantha is that when I chose to ignore her directions she doesn't argue with me. She just recalculates and continues to guide me.

The trip was uneventful and pleasant for a change. Not a drop of rain. No blistering sun to cook me as I traveled among the gaggle of 18 wheelers that dwarfed me on the roads and turnpikes. I arrived at the Inn at Pocono Manor at 2:30 PM. I'd figured the drive would take around 10 hours even though Samantha expected me get there in 9 hours and 8 minutes. She apparently didn't expect me to stop for gas or rest room breaks.

I picked up my registration packet and proceeded to my room to take a cool shower before checking out what was on draft at the bar. I only had one cool brew before wandering out to the parking lot where more Healey's were arriving. Greetings were exchanged and we started to talk about the evening's festivities. The schedule was to drive to Mt Airy Casino but a group of us decided to just go out for dinner. An Asian restaurant was chosen which to my dismay didn't offer many choices that my Cardiologist would approve of. Don Schneider wanted a big burger and a glass of wine but had to settle for some chicken thing that had a couple of check marks alongside it on the menu. We later found out that the more check marks there were the hotter the item was. I chose a vegetable salad that only had one check mark. Even with one check mark it turned out to be a dinner that required two large glasses of waters and two bottles beer.

Rain was predicted for the first night. Ken Beck the event organizer wasn't going to have his car there so he gave me his parking garage ticket. The parking garage was actually an indoor tennis court. They had taped sheets of brown paper on the court where we were supposed to park. The keeper of the tennis court was not to happy with the fact that English cars leak oil. He was sure that the oil would soak through the paper and stain the courts. He said he was prepared to power wash the courts after we left. I didn't want to insult his intelligence by suggesting he should have use plastic sheets. Thursday morning was bright and sunny. Breakfast was included in our room rate which was convenient and very good.

It was suppose to be buffet but they did take special orders so I ordered an egg white vegetable omelet to compliment the few items that I could chose from the buffet. The Rally was schedule for 9:30 AM. I found a Navigator to run the Rally with and we drove over to the Golf Club House for Rally instructions. It was a gimmick rally which is always my first choice. As it turned out the Rally which was only 69 miles long only required that I drive a little over 114 miles to complete. There was the usual correction factor that I worked out with my new Navigator. My usual Navigator at Encounter is Bruce Gearns who chose not to attend this year because of a prior commitment to have a large barn built on his newly acquired estate. The rally was a very pleasant drive past Multi Million dollar estates that the locals refer to as summer cottages. A lot of very windy roads in the country took us past a house that had been completely destroyed by a Tornado the past through the area two days before the event. It's odd how selective TORNADOS are. The house directly across the street had no damage what so ever. The rally was a very interesting one. Not too hard as far as following direction but some of the questions caused us to back track a few times which explains the difference between the actual mileage and the mileage that we drove. With the Rally behind us it was time for the Hospitality Room and social conversation. Yagermeister was the beer of choice which was OK with me. I received the common question from many of the people. Where is your NeckGlas? As many of you know I usually have a NeckGlas full of beer around my neck at many of the events that I attend. I left it sitting on the Kitchen Counter when I left the house so they had to get use to me without it. The evening event was a trip to an Ice Cream Parlor owned by one of the members of the AHS&TC. She has a very interesting place. It's an Ice Cream Parlor, Electronic Game Room and 2 Movie Theaters. I spoiled myself and had a real Ice Cream Sunday consisting of two scoops of my favorite Strawberry Cheesecake ice cream topped off with Hot Fudge and Strawberries. I only eat real ice cream once in a blue moon

so I really don't feel guilty. The movies of choice were "G Men" and a "Harry Potter Movie". I chose Harry Potter but only watched half of the movie. Guess I'm not a Harry Potter fan. I drove further into town and found a BP Gas station to fill the tank after using most of a tank a gas on the rally. It's odd how poor the Mile per Gallon are when you're driving a rally.

Friday morning arrived with the sun once again shinning. After all it was my Birthday. I was in the Poconos and enjoying what I like to do best. Drive my Healey and be among friends. I preferred to be with my family but they don't schedule Healey events to not conflict with my special days. After another outstanding breakfast I proceeded to get directions to the Gymkhana & Funkhana track for some fun a frolicking. Then what I chose to refer to as the Luckiest Unlucky day of my life occurred. Rain wasn't predicted for the night before so I didn't take advantage of the indoor parking and chose to park at the Hotel. I wiped the dew off my car which was parked facing up hill. There are no level surfaces in the Poconos. I then started the car, put the transmission in reverse and released the parking brake. As I backed down the hill I swung around at a spot that still going downhill and applied the clutch than the brake to go into first gear to head out of the parking lot. To my surprise the brake pedal went to the floor. I applied it again and it went to the floor again. I reached for the parking brake but too late. I hit a brick building at the bottom of the hill. I sat there for a moment staring down in disbelief at the brake pedal while I continued to push it to the floor. How could I not have brakes? Before leaving home I topped off all fluids including the Brake Reservoir. I had just driven 600 plus miles from my house. I drove over 100 miles in the Rally. I drove into town for the Ice Cream Social and then to the Gas Station and then back to the Hotel without any indication of a soft brake pedal. Then, if it had to happen, have the brakes fail in a parking lot going maybe 5 MPH and not hit another car or perhaps a person at the Gymkhana. Hitting a building that stopped

me from going over an approximately ten foot drop to another parking lot was extremely lucky. I kept thinking of what could have happened and was thankful that it happened where it did. How lucky can you get? A few moments past as I sat there thinking of all kinds of things that could have happened then decided to check out the damages. Once out of the car I anxiously looked at the rear of the car only to find that it wasn't as serious as I thought it might be. The bumper was bent as you can see in the pictures. The overriders were both damaged. The Boot Lid that I had just restored and primed was only slightly distorted. The shroud had the most damage but repairable. I walked back to the hotel in search of Ken Beck who was the event Chairman. He is the owner of K & T Vintage Sports Cars which is a Restoration Shop. I found him in the Regalia Room and told him of my mishap. We returned to the car and I asked if it were possible to have him repair the brakes for me. He said his shop was closed for the remainder of Encounter but he would contact one of his employees to see if they would meet me at his shop and correct the brake problem.



I then called AAA for a flat bed hauler to get the car to his shop which was in Allentown some 60 miles to the North East of Mount Pocono. Fortunately his guy Ed agreed to help me and I met him at the shop later that morning. Once on the hoist we found that the left rear wheel cylinder was leaking. It didn't leak enough to lose the pedal during stops during my trip but enough to deplete the reservoir of all fluid which resulted in the brake failure. Their inventory sheet showed that there were two wheel cylinders in stock but we couldn't find them. Ed called Ken to see if he knew where they were but he could only tell us where they were supposed to be. After a fruitless search Ken told Ed that he had just put new rear wheel cylinders on his car and to take one of them off for my car. A short time later I was able to drive back to the hotel and celebrate my Birthday. The celebration took place at the Bar B Que that had an open bar. I watched the Valve Cover races while downing a couple of double scotches followed with Beer chasers and I was ready to call it a day.

Saturday was the car show followed by the Awards Banquet which brought to an end another Encounter which I'm sure I will always remember.

I've been attending the Austin Healey Sports & Touring Car Club's Encounter since 1998. It has always been a great event to be at. I would encourage our membership to think about attending it in the future. I can't say that I have ever attended one that I didn't enjoy. The people are great to be with. I hope to attend many more in the future.





# *Event Calendar & Registration Forms*

The Flyers or Registration forms listed below are in Acrobat Reader PDF Format. Click on the Icon for a free download. Once you have opened the flyer or registration form you will be able to print directly from this site.

The South east Michigan Austin Healey club meets at 7:00 PM every second Wednesday of the Month at "Duggan's Irish Pub" located on Woodward Ave. between 13 & 14 Mile Rd. in Royal Oak. Come join us for dinner and casual conversation.

Sept ?, 2009	SEMAHC Ice Cream Social: Rick Eisele	Event Flyer TBA
Oct 2 - 4, 2009	Fall Wind Up hosted by SEMAHC	<a href="#">Registration Form</a>
Oct ?, 2009	SEMAHC Feather Bowling: Mary Fleischhauer	Event Flyer TBA
Dec ?, 2009	SEMAHC Annual Christmas Party - TBD	Event Flyer TBA
July 11-16, 2010	2010 Conclave: Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa, IL	<a href="#">Web Site</a>
Aug 11-15, 2010	2010 Encounter: Blue Bell, PA	<a href="#">Web Site</a>

*Austin Healey Ice Cream Social*

As with many things in life, when you open your mouth about something you end up being put in charge of doing it. So it happens with the Ice Cream Social. As was shown in the March, 2009 issue of Healey Marque, this will be the fifth year for this event.

Here's my plan so far. The event could be held the first or second weekend of September. An ice cream shop will be selected in the area, hopefully with the owner's permission and cooperation. Members will be encouraged to drive their Healey's to the location to be put on display. I also think that there should be donation canisters for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, which is the national club's charity.

What do I need from the members? Input, input, and more input. Send me some locations of ice cream parlors/shops/stores. I would like it to be somewhat centrally located for the club members. Make suggestions of different dates. As I'm already doing the rally for Fall Wind-Up (you all ARE coming this year, right?) I don't have time to host a group drive to an ice cream place. But if someone wants to volunteer to host a driving event I'm all for it.

**So, what I'm saying is – HELP!**

Rick Eisele

Home: 734-761-1877

*Local Chapter Calendar of Events For 2009*

September:	<b>Ice Cream Social Rick Eisele</b>
October:	<b>Fall Wind Up SEMAHC Host</b>
November:	<b>Feather Bowling Mary Fleischhauer</b>
December:	<b>Christmas Party Jamie &amp; Joann Coobatis</b>

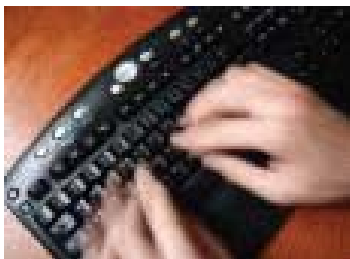
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## From the desk of the Editor

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to those members who contributed articles for this edition of our newsletter.



With continued support, we will be able to publish a quality newsletter to keep you up to date on events, technical

issues, as well as what some of our Healey friends are up to.

*Wheel Spin* is the newsletter of the Southeast Michigan Austin Healey Club. All material in this publication may be used in other clubs' newsletters provided *Wheel Spin* and the author are credited.

We encourage you to contribute articles for future editions. Submissions via e-mail or computer disk in Microsoft Word are the preferred formats.

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