



Tampa Bay Austin Healey Club



President's Letter—February 2011

February 3, 2011 brought a return to Thursday night dinner meetings, alternating months with Saturday breakfast meetings. The Thursday evening meeting was held at the Stoneybrook Pub in Clearwater. As I was out of town, VP Jerry Thompson conducted the meeting. On my return (we spent a week in Costa Rica, what a wonderful vacation, but that is another subject) I was told of the successful meeting place, the good food and a special presentation on crystals. I look forward to April when we will again hold our meeting at the Pub and I hope to have a special program. I was happy to see the return of some of our members that have not been able to make the Saturday morning meetings.

Our big event for February was the return to the Villages. The 2nd Annual Healeys Invade the Villages was held Saturday and Sunday, February 19 and 20th in perfect car show weather. There were 28 TBAHC members in attendance with 14 Austin Healeys (Big Healeys and Bugeyes) and 1 MGB (Dennis Magee is really looking for a Healey). Seven cars met up at the Texas Roadhouse on SR 56 just off me I 75 to caravan to Wildwood where we would meet up with Charlie Carpenter to lead us to his home in the Villages. Upon our arrival, he and wife Dorothy put on a good old fashion cookout with burgers, dogs and all the fixins'. This was actually the 3rd TBAHC trip to the Villages coordinated by Charlie and we thank him and Dorothy for pulling the activities together so well.



Following lunch we toured Charlie's neighborhood as his neighbors like to see the Healeys and came out to wave. We also went to Ken and Leigh Dieffenbach's neighborhood to show off for their neighbors. Ken and Leigh hosted our after car show party but more on that a little later. After the neighborhood tours we went to check in at the hotel, The Waterfront Inn, which is a new facility with very nice accommodations. When all were checked in it was time to go to the show which is held around the Square at Spanish Springs.



Tampa Bay AHC again shared top billing with the Studebaker club and we were among the first of 350 show vehicles to enter. The Healeys were very popular with the thousands attending the show and a great many conversations were held discussing our treasured autos.



The show ended around 7 PM and we all followed Charlie to Ken and Leigh's. The Diefenbach home is very open with an outdoor pool and entertainment area well suited for the great weather. They had a wonderful spread of food and drink that we all enjoyed and then Ken set up the karaoke machine that brought out the singer in all of us, especially Walt Mainberger and John Opp. Walt even got the nickname Dion before the evening was through. It was a wonderful end to a fun day in the Villages.

Bright and early Sunday Charlie and Dorothy led the group to breakfast where we stuffed ourselves with more food. It was then time to say good bye to all and return home. It was a great

weekend and has become one of the "look forward to" events on our club schedule. Charlie even hinted that we would probably invade The Villages again in 2012. If you have not been on this trip you need to schedule it next year. Thanks again to Charlie, Dorothy, Ken and Leigh for a great Healey event.

Our next club meeting is set for Saturday, March 5 at the Perkins on Anderson Road and Waters Av. Following the meeting we will join the Tampa Bay British Car Club on their Dade City Run. I have sent out a separate e-mail with information on the Run. I hope to see you at the meeting and if you can make it on the after meeting Run, the weather is perfect for top down Healey driving....RonS....





