

Austin Healey



Tampa Bay Austin Healey Club



President's Letter—March 2011

March has been a quiet month in Tampa Bay where the women are strong supporters of TBAHC, the men drive good looking Austin Healeys, and the children have above average desires to inherit the Healeys. My apologies to Garrison Keillor but it has been a slow month for Healey happenings. We started off the month with our Saturday club meeting at the Perkins Restaurant and then following the meeting Clete and I joined the Tampa Bay British Car Club on their annual Dade City Run. We joined TBCC Co-Presidents Phil and Fiona Ross along with ½ dozen other TBCCers for a lively 50 mile back roads drive to lunch in Dade City. The roads included a lot of twisties and Clete and I both agreed that we had a great time exercising the Healeys. Lunch was held at a nice restaurant in the historic downtown. Our thanks to Phil and Fiona for again including TBAHC in one of their driving events.

I have been working on my Healey this month. I stripped out the interior and did what I should have done when I restored the car. I applied a sound deadening/heat resistant material over the whole cockpit. The material is sold by Eastwood and I think it is similar to DynaMat. It is aluminum faced and has an adhesive backing. It went in very nicely but I will let you know how the heat part works at the next club meeting. I also installed a new speedometer cable and resealed the transmission tunnel. I hope this will stop the leaks from the bottom of the car, still working on leaks from the top. I have always wanted to have anti tramp (traction) bars to stop the axle spring windup on acceleration, so I ordered a kit from Denis Welch. The late BJ8s added radius bars which accomplished the same thing. Once I started the assembly of the traction bars I realized that I would have to have side exhaust as the existing pipes ran right through the area where the left traction bars would go. A quick trip to Mad Hatter's Muffler gave me a nice set of side pipes exiting just in front of the rear wheel. I then had to remove the spring mounting plates to weld on the rose (heim) joint attachment plates. Everything went back together nicely and the traction bars seem to do the job nicely. I am still waiting for a response from Jeremy Welch on a question regarding overall length of the bars. As I write this I have almost got the interior back in. I need to complete it before I leave Friday for the Winter Park All British, one of my favorite shows.

Although not Austin Healey related, I had an opportunity to attend the St. Pete Grand Prix practice on Friday March 25th with Clete and his grandson Steven. The Grand Prix is a great car race and was nationally televised on ABC on Sunday. We had the opportunity to get up close with many of the IRL cars and drivers, I particularly enjoy taking photos of Danica Patrick but also got shots of most of the other drivers. The race course uses one runway of the Albert Whitted Airport for the pit straight but all rest of the 1.8 mile, 14 turn track is on St. Pete streets. I had a great time and thanks to Clete for including me.

April will be a busier car month as we have two great All British shows, Winter Park on Saturday, April 2nd and Davis Islands British Motor Classic on April 9th. Our next club meeting is Thursday April 7 at the Stoney Brook Pub. Details on these and other upcoming events can be found at our excellent website www.tbahc.com ...Hope to see you on the road in your Healey....RonS....