

Nash-Healey



JUNE 2011

NEWSLETTER

In the two years since the Nash Healey Registry has been revived, we have received an amazing amount of participation and support. We have heard great stories and seen many photos of spectacular Nash Healeys. We began with the listing in Bill Emerson's "The Healey Book" as well as various lists of owners compiled over the years. From these, we currently have a list of 361 Nash Healeys believed to still exist – to date we have a total of 113 registered. These amazing vehicles have found their way to far away points like Belgium, France, Germany, Guatemala, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, The Netherlands and South Africa. We will persist in our efforts to contact owners and urge them to register. We believe it is in all of our best interests to have accurate and timely information regarding the number of Nash Healeys that have survived over the years. Please encourage those not yet registered to contact me at jbrookes@moradnet.ca

Superb Styling OF THE CUSTOM

NASH-HEALEY CONVERTIBLE

There's style and grace and verve personified in the classic lines of this most beautiful of all sports cars. Here is the only car that combines the automotive genius of three nations—the incomparable coachwork of Italy's Pinin Farina... the exclusive "Trailing Link Front Suspension" of England's Donald Healey... and the smooth power of America's famous Nash Ambassador LeMans Dual Jet-turbo engine. The result! The world's outstanding sports car.

1953 NASH-HEALEY

As promised, this issue will feature the 1953 Nash Healey with info and photos highlighting the differences between the roadster and the all new "LeMans" coupe.

...THE *Nash-Healey*

STYLED BY
Pinin Farina

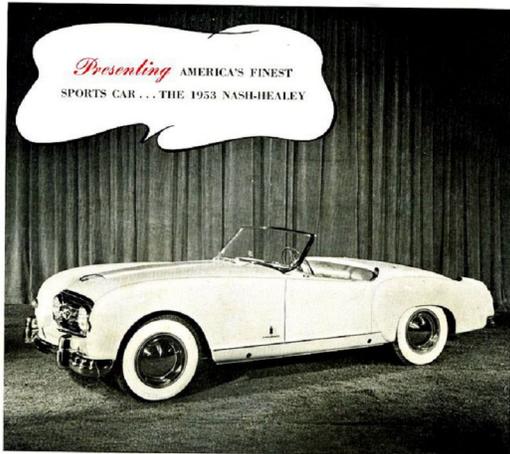
WORLD'S FOREMOST DESIGNER OF CUSTOM MOTOR CARS

WORLD'S FOREMOST CAR DESIGNER

NASH-HEALEY LEMANS HARDTOP

Presenting a distinctive note in sports car design! A superb combination of convertible flair and sedan elegance. The low silhouette minimizes wind drag. Large glass area—front, rear and to the sides—assures excellent visibility.

The wide seat upholstered in luxurious genuine leather affords plenty of comfort for long cross-country trips. In either of two smart body types, the Nash-Healey tops all sports cars, feature by feature.



Pictured here is the exquisitely beautiful car that started the whole new sports trend in the American automotive scene.

For 1953, the Nash-Healey is a product of the best talent of three nations... the "know-how" of one of the continent's top sports car designers, Donald Healey of Warwick, England... the custom beauty of a body handcrafted in Italy by Pinin Farina, the world's foremost custom stylist... plus the sensational Nash Dual Jetfire powerplant and power train (that topped all American competitors for two years running in the "Grand Prix d'Endurance" at Le Mans, France).

This is no "dream car". Hundreds are now on American roads. Parts and service are available at Nash dealers everywhere. See all of Pinin Farina's newest masterpieces... the 15 Nash Airflies for 1953 now on display at all Nash dealers.

There's None
So New As

Nash

Nash Motors, Division of Nash-Kellogg Corp., Detroit, Mich.

AMBASSADOR • STATESMAN • RAMBLER

Although little changed in appearance from the release of the 1952 Pinin Farina bodied Nash Healey, the 1953 roadster was retitled a convertible and continued with the bored-out 252.6-cid six that was phased in during 1952. A new closed coupe called LeMans arrived for 1953 as a companion to the 1953 Nash-Healey roadster. Built on a 108-inch wheelbase, it was introduced at the Chicago Auto Show, with an announced list price of \$6,399, versus \$5908 for the convertible. Respective curb weights were 2,970 and 2,700 pounds. Nash called attention to the new coupe's "low hood and high fender contour, which extend beyond the cowl, through the windshield and out the rear window into the rear deck without interruption.

Celebrity Appearances
 Golfing legend Sam Snead owned a white 1953 convertible version. It was reportedly purchased new and kept by him until 1958. Clark Kent, played by George Reeves, drove a 1953 Nash-Healey roadster in four episodes of the American 1950s television series *Adventures of Superman*. The car was supposedly owned by Dick Powell.

1953 LeMans Coupe

In honor of the Nash-Healey's excellent 1952 racing record, the all new 1953 coupe was named the "LeMans". Other coupes are sometimes erroneously called LeMans but all references indicate this term is reserved for the 1953 Coupe.

Only 62 of these coupes were built for 1953 with chassis numbers beginning at 3000. 100 convertibles had preceded these numbers. The following two tone color combinations were offered for the 1953 Nash Healey Coupe – Grey metallic over light grey with red interior, Green metallic over light green with beige interior, and Grey over maroon with grey interior. It is also noted in Bill Emersons book that a standardized set of chrome plated parts, including valve cover, engine side plate, water inlet connector and the carburetor air cleaner, were fitted on the engines of some Nash Healey Coupes There is no apparent pattern between the number sequences and the installation of this package. It is believed that those fitted with this package were primarily ordered by dealers for showroom display.

The Top Talent of Three Nations

HAS DESIGNED AMERICA'S SUPERLATIVE SPORTS CAR

When wheel trim options are optional equipment

In all the world you'll find no other sports car like the Nash-Healey. For here is the best of three nations in one brilliant masterpiece.

In no other American car—only in a Nash-Healey—can you have true sports car styling with the fair and grace, the magnificent continental coachwork of "Body by Pinin Farina", handcrafted in Italy.

In no other American car can you have the incredible sports car "cornering" of Donald Healey's famous "trailing link" front suspension and rugged British-built chassis.

Above all, in no other sports car can you enjoy the blazing performance of the Nash "Le Mans" Dual Jetfire Engine, proved America's finest in the world's greatest sports car race. For no other American engine—regardless of rated horsepower—can match its consistent winning record in the 24-hour "Grand Prix d'Endurance" at Le Mans, France.

And, unlike others you read about, the Nash-Healey is here now, awaiting your personal inspection—in two distinctive models—the exquisitely beautiful Convertible—and the new Nash-Healey Le Mans Hardtop pictured above—first class trophy winner in the 1953 Italian International Concours d'Elegance.

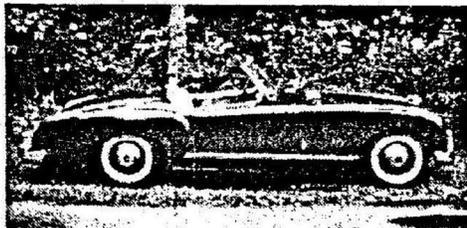
Your Nash dealer will be happy to arrange a private showing at your convenience so that you may personally see and drive these fabulous new American sports cars. We suggest you phone him at your earliest convenience.

A Custom Original by Pinin Farina

For a handsomely illustrated brochure on the Nash-Healey, please write Sales Dept., Nash Motors, 14250 Plymouth Road, Detroit 22, Michigan.



Test Drive Results



1953 Nash-Healey roadster.

Name of car: Nash-Healey roadster
 Manufacturer: Nash Motors, Kenosha, Wis.
 Original price: \$5,875.00
 Current value: \$9,000

ENGINE

Type: OHV straight six
 Bore and stroke: 3.5 × 4.375 in.
 Displacement: 252.6 C.I.D.
 Power: 140 @ 4000 rpm
 Torque: 230 @ 2000 rpm
 Compression ratio: 8:1
 Carburetion: Dual S.U. side draft
 Electrical system: six-volt

DRIVETRAIN

Transmission: Three-speed and overdrive
 Final Drive ratio: 4.1:1

STEERING

Type: Walking beam

Turning Circle: 17 ft. 6 in.

SUSPENSION

Front: Trailing link, coil and sway bar
 Rear: coil and track bar
 Wheels: 15 in.
 Tires: 6.40 × 15

BRAKES

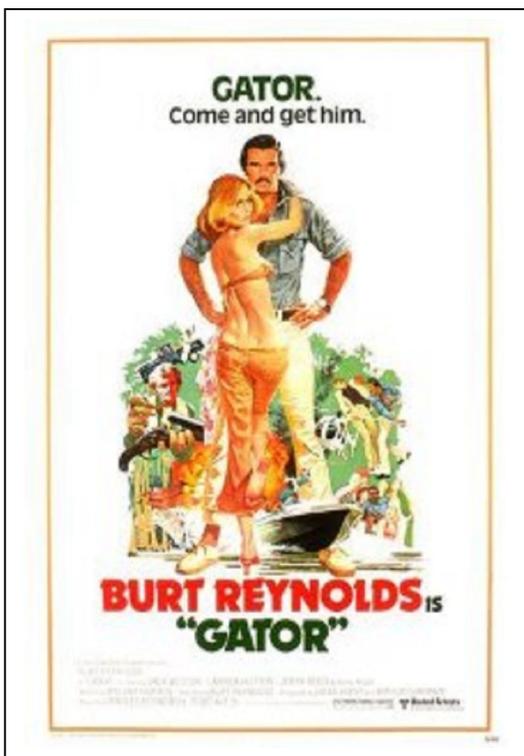
Front: Drum
 Rear: Drum

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Wheelbase: 102 in.
 Track-front: 53 in.
 rear: 54.87 in.
 Length: 170.75 in.
 Height: 48.75 in.
 Width: 64 in.
 Ground Clearance: 7 in.
 Dry Weight: 2,400 lbs.
 Fuel: 20 gal.
 Oil: 6 quarts
 Water: 17 quarts

PERFORMANCE

0-30: 4.1 sec.
 0-50: 8.8 sec.
 0-60: 11.5 sec.
 0-70: 17.8 sec.
 0-80: 22.7 sec.
 Top Speed: 110
 Fuel consumption: 17-18 mpg



GATOR: “Gator” starred Burt Reynolds as a moonshiner in this 1976 sequel to “White Lightnin’”. Portions of “Gator” were filmed in Lanier County and featured the late Jimmy Rainwater (credited as Jim Rainwater), prior to his days of being Valdosta’s mayor, and Johnny B. Lastinger (credited as John B. Lastinger), as well as Shroyer and others. “Gator,” by the way, is the name of Reynolds’ moonshining hero of the film. In this movie, Gator is recruited to topple a corrupt political boss, who happens to be his friend. “Gator” marked Reynolds’ directorial debut. And it is considered by many film critics to be an inferior sequel to “White Lightnin’”

Although I could find no clips or images of a Nash Healey in this film, we have it on the authority of Richard Kauffman of Lakeland Georgia that his car, pictured below was used in this movie.



The 2011 California Mile

This year was the 20TH anniversary of the running of the California Mille and my son Gordon and I entered our 1953 Nash Healey Roadster in the event. This event was routed through approximately one thousand miles of beautiful back country paved roads and some of the most beautiful scenery in California. The managers of this event chose great and challenging roads coupled with beautiful views from mountains to the Pacific Ocean. They are also very knowledgeable when it comes to arranging great places to stay and dine on the route.

The event started on Sunday afternoon, April 24TH, with a display of the 66 cars that would be involved. These included sports cars from the twenties but mostly from the fifties and most would have qualified to run in the Italian Mille Miglia. Some of the brands were Alfa Romeo, Jaguar, Ferrari, Bentley, Mercedes, Lancia, AC Ace-Bristol, Porsche, Aston Martin, MG and our Nash Healey.

We started off on Monday morning in a light rain and some fog which became very dense as we went over Mount Hamilton to the Pacific but by noon it cleared and we had beautiful weather for the balance of the event. We had lunch at a beautiful Winery that also has a gigantic car collection and after viewing the collection made our way via the back roads to Infineon Raceway. There we were allowed to run without restraint on the beautiful road course for about one hour and push to the limit was the order of the day for most participants including ourselves. I must tell you that the Nash Healey does make a good showing among sports cars of similar vintage both in handling and speed. Day two took us over Mountains and back roads to the Pacific Coast and north to a small town where we had lunch overlooking the ocean and then back a different route of back roads to Calistoga and our great lodging at the Solage.

On Day three we meandered around back roads to Thunderhill Raceway near Willows and again we were allowed to run on the very challenging road course for about one hour. After lunch at the Thunderhill we returned to the Solage Spa in Calistoga via beautiful Northern California backroads.

On day four we again headed west to the Pacific and proceeded south to Nicasio where we had a delightful lunch and back over Mount Tamalpais and to The Lodge at Somoma where we had a great dinner and awards presentation. The event was sponsored by Chopard, Chubb Collector Car Insurance, Bonhams and Butterfields, The Fairmont Hotel, The Ironstone Winery, BMC Jaguar, KSFO Radio, The San Francisco Examiner and Toyota Motor Company. I have enclosed a photo of the cars on day four although a few did not make it this far into the event. Our Nash Healey ran like a champ and required no engine oil or coolant throughout the event even though she saw speeds in excess of 100 MPH and engine speeds of well over 4,500 RPM. I need to add here that it was the most fun that I have had on wheels and possibly ever in all my years.

Jim Walton



Nash Healey Torque Tube Drive explained

I reproduce a critical safety part for the Nash Healey, the drive line stabilizer trunnion. We have helped to keep many Nash Healeys and Ambassadors on the road by providing this. Through the years, owners have asked for a simple explanation of a torque tube drive. There has never been a short and clear explanation. So I have written one, and thought it would be of interest to Nash Healey owners. .

I will also attach a photo of it's location, and a photo of a Stabilizer Trunnion, if it can be of help to our members.

Nash Healey Torque Tube Drive explained.

In a torque tube drive car, the transmission of power is directly connected from the rear wheels through the covered drive shaft, to the transmission-engine assembly, which is connected to the frame or body at the front motor mounts.

To make it easier to understand, take a conventional rear wheel drive car with an open drive shaft and remove the rear leaf springs and try to drive it. You can't. The forward thrust power, or torque, needs to push through the rear leaf springs in order to move the car forward or backward.

Now do the same with a closed torque tube drive shaft, like on the Nash Healey or Ambassador. The car will still move forward and backward because the power is transmitted through the torque tube to transmission and the engine, which is attached to and pushes through the front motor mounts.

"Torque tube" is actually a closed drive shaft transmitting thrust to the motor and transmission mounts, rather than through leaf springs or control arms in the rear.

The connection of the torque tube to the transmission is made through the trunnion stabilizer, in the housing at the transmission. Nash never made replacement trunnions. They will go bad because of oil leaks, heat, or simply by disconnecting the torque tube for service or u-joint replacement. A defective trunnion stabilizer can cause the rear wheels to flop around slightly, front to back and left to right. The body simply rests on rear coil springs. The car becomes unstable and control of the car varies from poor to very difficult. Instead of being safe, rigid and controllable, it drives more like a rubber band.

Today, the Lexus LF-A, C6 Corvette, Mazda Miata MX5 and Porsche 928 and 944 use the torque tube. Buick used it in the '30's and 'mid '50's. Many cars and trucks used it through the years, including the Peugeot and Volvo 300 series.

It is used in Nash Healey 51-54, Hudson Hornet 55-57, some Nash & Hudson Ramblers through the '50's and late '60's, and Nash Ambassador 49-57.

There's a diagram and picture of a new factory replacement Torque Tube Drive Stabilizer on www.NashRamblerRubber.com They can be ordered from Bob Walker at ambo49@gmail.com , or 714 991 7070 Mon-Fri 9-5 PST. Information for this article comes from Wikipedia, service manuals, and Google, and was prepared by Bob Walker



I have an article available written by Jim Walton on the driveability of the Nash Healey which recommends this type of trunnion replacement. Space does not permit reprinting the article here, but if you would like a copy please email me jbrookes@moradnet.ca

Upcoming Events

2011 GRAND NASHIONAL

July 20 - 23, 2011

Best Western Harbor Side Inn

Kenosha, Wisconsin

. More details NCCA Website

Rendezvous

Rockin 50's and 60's

June 27 - July 1, 2011

Vancouver, Washington

More Details Cascade Austin Healey Club Website

MEET IN THE MOUNTAINS

Orphan Car Show

August 20th, 2011

LEAVENWORTH, WASHINGTON

Call the Pacific Northwest Nash Region at (425) 334-8955

Thanks to all who have contributed with this issue by sending photos, articles and info. The Sept 2011 issue will focus on the 1954. If you have any info or photos to contribute, please contact me.

Also, please send your photos and articles of events you attend to jbrookes@moradnet.ca. We always look forward to hearing from you.

Your 2011 Nash Healey Registry Roster will be sent to you soon. As previously, the roster will include name, car info and email address only to protect privacy. If you do not receive a roster, please contact me at jbrookes@moradnet.ca

I have not included a registration form in this issue but for anyone not yet registered, one is always available by contacting me at jbrookes@moradnet.ca If you know of someone not registered, please forward them a copy of this newsletter or ask them to contact me.