



Car club

NASH
HEALEY
NEWS

July 1984
Issue No. 23

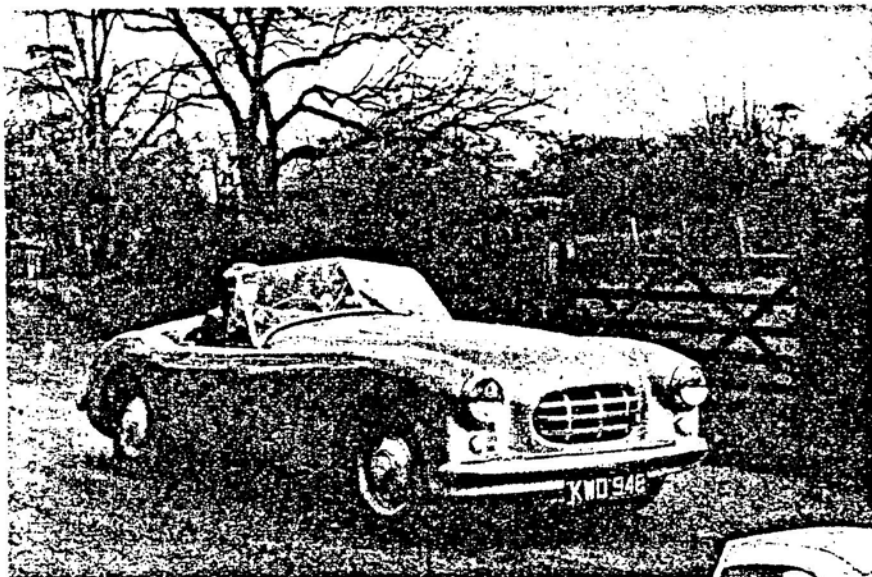
MURPHY'S LAW FOR NASH-HEALEY

Compiled by Jerry Newton

1. Interchangeability of body parts was grounds for dismissal at Farina Works.
 2. The dome and courtesy lights work only during daylight hours.
 3. Parts prone to failure are placed well up under the dash, or on top of the transmission.
 4. If the circuit is of medium difficulty it will be left out of the wiring diagram. If it is extremely complicated, it will be shown wrong.
 5. If a Nash-Healey isn't leaking something, it is in need of repair.
 6. If it works, don't fix it. "Better" is the enemy of "Good".
 7. The Nash-Healey accelerator pedal system was developed by the inventor of the Air Force rocket sled. Second gear will subject you to 4 gs.
 8. The process of removing the heater was Western Civilization's attempt to equal the institution of Chinese water torture.
 9. One more turn will chip the paint; one less is too loose.
 10. If it hangs up, force it. If it breaks, it was defective.
 11. However much you thought it would cost, it will cost more. Corollary: However long the mechanic says, it will be longer.
 12. The more difficult that a part is to assemble, the more likely that you will have left a gasket out.
 13. If four identical special shaped bolts are required, you will have lost two.
 14. If your car breaks down on the road, it will need the part left at home. (Which is OK, since its removal requires the one socket also left there).
 15. All platers learned their craft in prison (Not the plating part; the charging part).
 16. Several years ago at the Platers' Congress it was decided to leave all Nash-Healey dash parts in the acid vat too long.
 17. Sometime during the day someone will say:
 - A. Aren't those old cars getting harder to get?
 - B. Aren't parts hard to find?
 - C. How much do you figure it's worth?
- SMART-ALEKY ANSWERS ARE:
- A. Not according to my friend Len McGrady?
 - B. Yes, but not to buy?
 - C. I turned down an offer of \$800 for it just last week.
18. Do not attempt to answer the statement/question: "Farina. Wasn't that the kid in Spanky's 'Our Gang'?"
 19. Any length of wire or tubing cut to length will be 3/4" short.
 20. Any small part dropped will never hit the floor. If springs are involved, the assembly will de-materialize in its fall.

—The HEALEY 3-litre Sports Convertible

An Outstanding Performer which Displays a Unique Blend of Sports
and Touring Virtues



SLEEK AND SPORTING—The very smooth outlines of the 3-litre convertible are generally similar to those of the earlier Nash-Healey, but the grille is a ready means of identification. As seen on the right, a good feature of the car is the unusually wide rear window, of soft, non-creasing plastic.

MANY revolutions have been witnessed by the present generation. Not the least of them is one which has taken place in the British motor industry. After almost exactly half a century of following the natural course of designing cars to suit local conditions and modifying them, if thought desirable, to meet the needs of overseas markets, the policy has changed. Economic stress, with its attendant necessity for maximum exports, has caused the more enlightened manufacturers to reverse the plan. Now the motto is to design for export and modify for the home market.

These facts are mentioned because they have a particular bearing on the subject of this road test, the Healey 3-litre sports convertible, for this car is, in fact, a unique example of the modern policy.

As will be recalled, Mr. Donald Healey embarked, in October, 1950, on the production of an Anglo-American model which, being manufactured in conjunction with a prominent U.S. manufacturer and incorporating an American engine and transmission line (for which an import licence was granted only on condition that the final product was re-exported for dollars), was automatically an export-only model. Thus the home market could not look forward to even the usual meagre quota of this intriguing type with its 3.8-litre Nash engine and transmission.

With typical enterprise, Mr. Healey set out to produce a corresponding model for the British, and non-dollar export, markets. The 3-litre Healey sports convertible, which appeared at the London Motor Show last October, was the outcome. A

six-cylinder, 3-litre Alvis engine with two carburettors takes the place of the larger Nash engine and is used complete with Alvis clutch and gearbox; the non-independent coil-spring rear suspension is supplemented by pairs of trailing links to look after torque reaction (the Nash-Healey has a torque tube); and the body, although of the same size and general outline, differs in front-end styling and in detail equipment.

The result is a car of quite unusual and exhilarating character. The roomy body, with its possibility of carrying three on occasion, the comfortable appointments and the very generous accommodation for

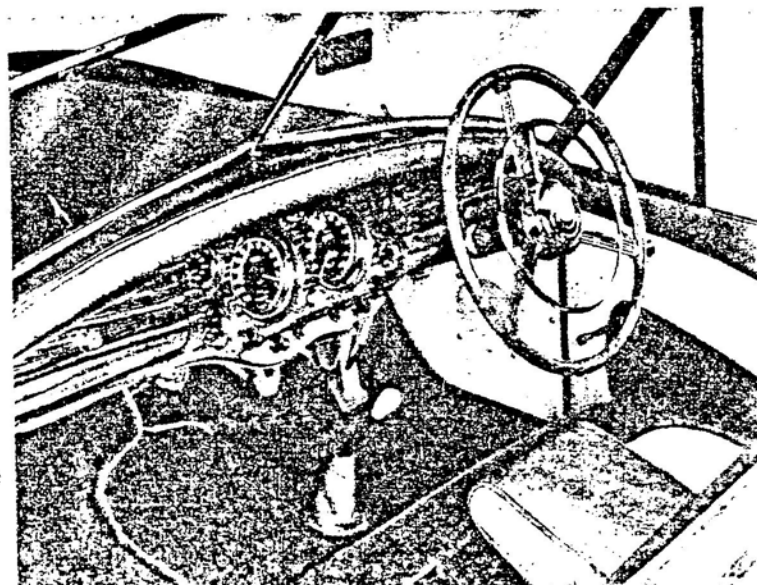
luggage, are pure roadster; the sweetness and flexibility of the engine fall into the even more refined category of the touring car—and good touring car at that; and the firm suspension, high-g geared steering and first-rate road-holding and cornering, unquestionably belong in the true, and traditional, sports-car class.

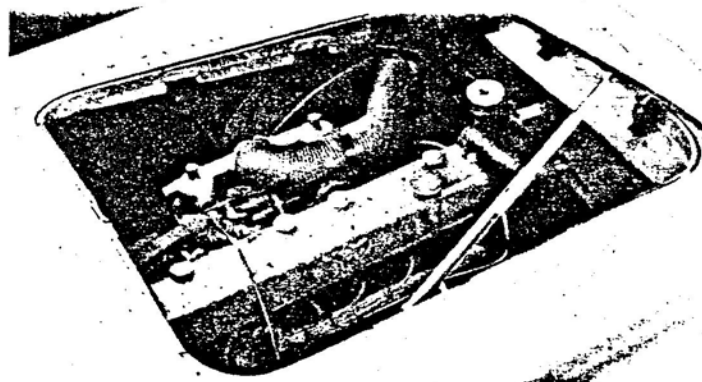
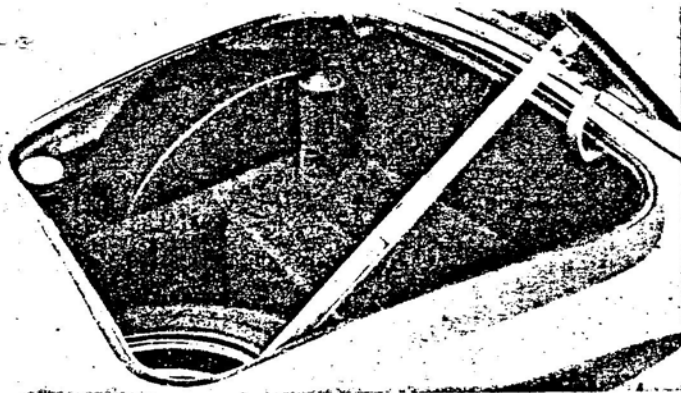
As for performance, the time taken by the 3-litre Healey to accelerate through the gears from rest to 60 m.p.h. has been beaten by only three of more than 140 cars tested by "The Motor" since the war and its maximum speed by only seven, five of the latter having considerably larger engines.

It is worth recording that the engine of the 3-litre convertible is working at

appreciably over peak speed at 100 m.p.h. on the present axle ratio and tyre size, and that a slightly higher gear might well have produced a three-figure mean, as well as a best run at over 100 m.p.h. To what extent there would be any practicable gain in higher gearing from the user angle is, however, debatable, since one of the great charms of this car is its vivid top-gear performance from city traffic speeds right up to, and above, the speeds normally usable on main roads—a performance accompanied by delightful smoothness throughout the range and a flexibility greatly superior to that of many touring cars. Even at 10 m.p.h., there is no trace of roughness or transmission snatch and

LATEST INFORMATION—This is the fascia panel which will be used on production cars, an attractive backing of polished wood carrying large speedometer and rev. counter, flanked by smaller instruments. Points to note are the short, well-placed gear-lever, wide armrest, lockable cubby-hole, and padded leather fascia surround.





UNDER THE LID—The touring aspect of the car is aided by the locker's ability to take commendable quantities of luggage, the spare wheel being held in a well in the boot floor. With the exception of the radiator filler, all main points of engine attention are easily reached through the hinged top panel of the bonnet.

The Healey 3-litre Sports Convertible

Contd.

the car will accelerate away with the greatest briskness (10-30 m.p.h. in 7.5 secs) without a trace of hesitation or even, on Belgian petrol, pinking.

On Pool petrol, there is admittedly some trace both of pinking and of running-on after hard usage, but even the standard grade of Belgian fuel was sufficient to remove all traces of either.

From these remarks on the outstanding top-gear merits of the 3-litre Healey, it must not be assumed that the knowledgeable driver who appreciates a good gearbox and knows how to use it is at a discount. On the contrary, the capacity of the Alvis engine for sustained high revs. with complete smoothness, coupled with the delightfully positive remote-control gear change, make the car equally satisfying—and, of course, even more nimble—in the hands of a driver who makes full use of the indirect ratios; and just how useful those ratios are, can be gathered from the fact that the third-gear maximum is in excess of 80 m.p.h.

In short, one can drive this model in either the forceful or the lazy manner, purely according to mood and the results are most stimulating in either case.

Firm Suspension

To revert to the gear box, the central remote control is extremely well placed close to the bench-type seat and, besides a very positive action, has a commendably-short travel. Although not responding particularly well to competition-style snatch methods, the change is very quick indeed in normal usage and the only point of criticism is a certain reluctance at times to accept bottom gear when the car is stationary; starting in second is quite practicable, but not usually to be preferred.

Handling qualities are in every way in keeping with the high standard of performance. The suspension is firm without being harsh and the ride is comfortable even on bad French and Belgian pave, albeit some rather obtrusive rattles from the all-weather equipment serve as a reminder that the more severe road shocks are not being completely absorbed. Road noise, on the other hand, remains at a commendably-low level. Pitch and roll are entirely absent and even after such a disturbing influence as a hump-backed bridge taken at too high a speed, the

suspension settles to an even behaviour remarkably quickly.

When it comes to steering, the traditional sports-car facet of the car's character evinces itself. High geared (only two turns from lock to lock), the steering is distinctly heavy and a strong self-centring action adds to the feeling that here is a car to be treated firmly but sensitively—the latter because the linkage is positive as well as high-geared, so that a driver, fresh from the twirly-whirly systems of many contemporary cars, is at first apt to change course more abruptly than he intends. That, however, is only a passing phase and within a few miles, one comes to appreciate the true merits of the car. A degree of understeer gives it absolute stability on the straight, and, on corners, one has only to apply an appropriate amount of power to modify the characteristics to the conditions. At all times the car corners as the driver intends, and cross-country journeys are fun as well as fast.

The 3-litre Healey is a man's car in respect of the brakes as well as the steering. These require even firmer treatment (as witness the high pedal pressures required) and can become tiring to use on a journey on which they are required frequently. On the other hand, retardation is absolutely even (and our tests included one deliberately-rapid stop from fractionally under 100 m.p.h.), fade was never in evidence and the maximum retarding effect recorded was very close to the best theoretically possible. Unfortunately, the latter praiseworthy statement cannot be made of the hand-brake which is a distinctly ineffectual pistol-grip affair.

Apart from this, the main controls are well placed, the steering wheel is large (and on an extending column) and the comfortable bench-type seat (with folding arm-rest) has an easy central adjustment. On the model tried, a rather notable omission was a rev. counter, but that point has received attention on later models which have a large-dial speedometer and a corresponding rev. counter (with inset clock) in the centre of the panel, with separate dials for the thermometer, oil gauge, ammeter and fuel gauge, all nicely displayed on a polished wood board which also incorporates a moderate-sized lockable cubby.

Visibility, with or without the hood erected, is excellent to the front and sides,

and an unusual feature for an open car is a wrap-round rear window which provides an outstandingly-wide field of vision; this is made possible by use of a thin plastic material which is unharmed by bending when the head is furled, but which has the disadvantage of providing a slightly blurred view.

Regarded as sports car all-weather equipment, the hood and side windows (of the winding type) are excellent; erection is easy, vision and headroom are good and protection is well up to the standards expected in such cases. Considered in the more critical light of a coupé head, the arrangements are less satisfactory, particularly in the matter of draughts and rattle which are by no means absent at high speed. As, however, it is as an open car that most owners will regard this car, these remarks must be regarded as a plain statement for information, rather than as a criticism. A powerful interior heater on the test car was much appreciated.

Ample Luggage Capacity

Luggage accommodation, as already hinted, is excellent. Not only is there room in the boot for two really large suitcases plus a considerable quantity of smaller items, but there is space for two quite sizeable suitcases between the squab and the rear bulkhead when the hood is erected; even when the latter is down, careful packing allows a useful number of incidentals to be stowed in this space.

So far as engine accessibility is concerned, the unusual top-opening panel in the bonnet works well save for the single matter of the radiator filler cap, which is rather awkward to reach and does not permit the water level to be inspected visually.

The Lucas long-range headlamps give a concentrated beam entirely appropriate to a car of this type and speeds of ninety-plus were achieved with confidence after dark. For winding roads, however, some form of diffused road light would be an advantage, since beam spread is, naturally, at a minimum. This, however, is a small point which could easily be overcome by owners and represents one of the few points of criticism in the otherwise excellent equipment of a car which is as refreshing to drive as it is in many ways unusual. To make a hackneyed but very true statement, it is a car with which we parted with very great reluctance.

NASH-HEALEY SPEEDOMETER CABLE REPLACEMENT
Submitted by Jerry Newton

If your speedometer doesn't work, chances are pretty good that the inner "drive" cable is broken. The N-H cable usually breaks at the lower end where it makes a severe bend to terminate at the overdrive case.

To check for a broken cable, unscrew the cable outer shielding from the speedometer at the instrument. The 60" long inner cable can now be removed for inspection (pliers may be required to extract the drive cable).

The drive cable has a square shank on either end; if a shank is missing and you have a frayed end, you have a broken drive cable.

Now, to answer your big worry: Is the lower end of the cable in some God-awful inaccessible location on top of the transmission? No, it is on the left side of the overdrive unit, a few inches up from the bottom. It's fairly easy to remove the lower cable assembly with the car on ramps working from below.

To get a clear shot at the cable end assembly you might want to remove the overdrive solenoid and its nearby lockout switch. I removed all three units, which was a good decision. My overdrive solenoid was not working, and the lockout switch needed a good cleanup. I also used the occasion to build a new wiring harness for the overdrive parts just mentioned.

However, it is possible and feasible to just do the speedometer cable job, leaving the other two parts untouched.

The outer cable end fitting has an anchor bracket if it's original. The anchoring bolt must be removed in order to withdraw the cable end plug.

After the anchor bolt has been removed, the cable end plug can be removed by rocking it gently and prying with a screwdriver. A penetrant spray is helpful for obstinate cases.

After the end plug is removed, the broken segment of drive cable can be removed from the shielded cable. Also, at this time, it's a good idea to extract the drive gear from the case for inspection and cleanup. If the

drive gear is defective, it should be pretty easy to replace it. It looks like a stock Borg-Warner drive, and in fact looks very similar to that used by Willys-Overland for years in their Jeep station wagons, Jeepsters and Aero series.

Local parts houses have do-it-yourself cable assemblies for \$2.00 (J.C. Whitney \$2.50). You cut these to length and clamp on the end shank. A local shop will make up a 60" cable for \$5.00-\$7.00.

I prefer to fabricate the cable myself, rather than to farm it out for the following reasons:

1. Getting the Perfect, Precise Length

Most shops want to make up a new cable from the old one. They definitely don't want to get into the car and spend a lot of time measuring and fitting the cable to the proper length (while juggling the speedo cluster in their lap).

Chances are pretty good that the cable that you are replacing was not the correct length. Perhaps the outer segment has lengthened over the last thirty years. Maybe the inner cable has been replaced four times, incurring a 1/4" error each time. The cable that I replaced was 3/4" too short -- it must have just barely touched at the speedo end.

Almost no shop will give this job the quality that you can, or if they did, you wouldn't want to pay the price.

2. Getting a Better Part

Most of the shops crimp or swedge the end of the cable into a square shank ... and that's it. Beware of speedo shop counter types who make up cables; especially the ones who are slack-jawed and have a vacuous stare. They tend to overdo the swedging of the cable, resulting in metal fatigue and premature failure.

The do-it-yourself kits usually have a metal fatigue end fitting on at least one end, which is slipped over the cable providing a much stronger end fitting.

SPEEDOMETER CABLE REPLACEMENT (continued)

FABRICATION HINTS

Useful tools for the do-it-yourselfers are diagonal cutters, and a soldering lashup.

Whether you have a cable made up for you, or you roll your own, you'll improve the quality of the cable one hundred percent if you tin the end shanks with acid core solder to increase the tensile strength.

If you're making your own cable, solder on the end fitting after you have given it a good physical fit with a hammer. I use a propane torch, flux, and acid core solder for this. You may have to do a little dressing on the grinder or file also.

For determining length, you snake the cable insert all the way down to its seat at the bottom. From then on you engage in the age-old endeavor of the machinist's art of making that baby fit to perfection. Don't feel badly if you have to cut your cable two or three times before it's right -- that goes with perfection's territory.

I use diagonal cutters for cutting the cable to length. The perfect end-to-end length for my cable turned out to be 60 1/2" based upon the use of a particular type of end fitting.

FINAL ASSEMBLY

In both my Nash-Healeys it was duck-soup to snake the cable insert down from the top with everything below bolted into place first. If you just plain can't get it around that last bend, you probably need an outer shield also.

Use a graphite based lubricant on the cable insert before you insert it into the shield. Speedo cable lube comes in a little tube at your local parts store, costs 98¢.

ODDS

If your new drive cable fails after three or six months of use, you need to replace both inner and outer components. Chances are that the shield is corroded and distorted causing friction on the drive cable. Chances are about 80% in your favor that this is not the case, and that all will go well by replacing the inner drive cable. The decision on how

to play these odds from the first is up to you.

TIME REQUIRED: About 1 - 2 hours not counting (1) Setup; (2) Parts chasing; (3) removal of overdrive solenoid and or lockout switch; or (4) Tooldown.

COST: Do-it-yourself drive cable \$2.00 (you know the quality)
Custom built drive cable: \$5-\$7 (lots of luck!)
Small tube of speedo lubricant: 98¢

DON'T LET THE SPEEDO FACE OUT OF YOUR SIGHT
Submitted by Jerry Newton

I've been resotring vintage and antique cars as a hobby since 1957 and thing that I have just about every mistake humanly possible. With that premise, you'd think that I wouldn't repeat the same mistake twice. Well, here's one that I did twice, having just repeated it on a Nash-Healey.

If you take your speedo to a speedo shop for repair (or your tachometer) don't let the face out of your sight. That nice guy that does the repair is gonna remove that face, and he is gonna shoot Windex or something on it, and he is gonna remove some of the detail and then he is gonna deny that he did it.

Discuss it with the repairman at length -- not the front man. Put a piece of masking tape on the instrument saying not to clean the print or face of the dial. Have them call you when the pointer is removed so that you can clean up the surface with an artists brush, water, Q tips, etc. Arrange to have the dial removed only in your presence.

A guy at a local shop just removed about three speed calibration dots from my N-H speedo, and faded some of the numerals. His answer was: (1) He didn't do it, and; (2) Anyway, you can get these old speedos at any junkyard.

If a shop is unwilling to cooperate and assist you in your pursuit of excellence, don't do business with them. I'm mad as hell, and I ain't gonna take it anymore! And don't you either.



USZ 53-5
USD 53-4

Nash Motors

Division of Nash-Kelvinator Corporation
14250 Plymouth Road
Detroit 32, Michigan

PARTS AND ACCESSORY LETTER

File under: Accessory Release

March 26, 1953

TO ALL ZONES AND DEALERS

SUBJECT: NASH-HEALEY RADIO, AC-151

A radio for the 1952 or 1953 Nash-Healey, is now available from Milwaukee. AC-151, Radio, as supplied for the 1951 Ambassador-Statesman series will be adapted for this use with a revision in installation instructions. AC-651-1, Manual Antenna, is to be used when installing this radio on a Nash-Healey. This item will also be available from Milwaukee.

Attached to this letter is a copy of the installation instructions prepared for this installation. A copy of these instructions will also be included in all cartons of AC-151 shipped from Milwaukee for Nash-Healey installation.

Orders for these Radios and Antennas are to be forwarded through the zone to Detroit Central Office. Orders must bear the Nash-Healey serial number for which the Radio is intended and specifications as to whether the Radio and Antenna are to be shipped to the zone or direct to the dealer. Shipment will be made immediately upon receipt of the above information.

Yours very truly,

H. D. Mouery
Asst. to Parts &
Accessories Mgr.

Attachments (1)
HDM/lb

PRINTED IN U S A

NASH-HEALEY RADIO INSTALLATION

USE AC-151 RADIO AND AC-651-1 ANTENNA

- 1) Remove Glove Box.
- 2) Remove and discard the instrument panel radio opening cover plate.
- 3) Remove dummy knobs.
- 4) Use side cutters to cut off 2 studs which retain chrome overlay panel at radio cover plate opening.
- 5) Important - Before placing receiver in position, it is important to check the hole span for mounting bushings. The hole span for bushing should be 7 1/4 inches on centers. If holes in panel do not measure to this dimension, it will be necessary to elongate holes to obtain clearance. File holes toward the glove box side to insure proper clearance of receiver to ash tray.
- 6) Lift receiver to its mounting position behind instrument panel and move receiver forward so that mounting bushings enter the holes in the panel. Fasten the receiver to the panel using mounting nuts furnished.
- 7) Hanger strap at rear of receiver should be fastened to bracket with a 1/4-20 x 1/2 bolt, 2 flat washers, lockwasher and 1/4-20 nut.
- 8) Drill fender for antenna mounting using template furnished. (See Figure B)
- 9) Rework plastic antenna stanchion as per instructions. (See Figure F)
- 10) Place antenna in position and assemble pad, stanchion, flat washer and lock nut in the usual manner. (DO NOT TIGHTEN ASSEMBLY).
- 11) Fasten antenna tube at lower end as per instructions on Figure C. Next tighten stanchion securely.
- 12) Dress antenna through louvres of wheelhouse into engine compartment and through dash as indicated in Figure E.
- 13) Cut holes in glove box as specified in Figure A and assemble glove box to opening as previously removed.
- 14) Dress Antenna lead-in through hole in bottom of glove box and route through slotted hole in side, and plug into receptacle on receiver.
- 15) Install speaker on panel provided under instrument panel.
- 16) Remove ash tray and dress speaker leads to left side of receiver and plug pin jacks into receptacles and replace ash tray.

Check installation as per instructions for 1951 model contained with radio kit.

CLASSIFIED

WANTED: 1952 or 1953 Nash-Healey roadster. Restored, number 1 or 2 condition, needing nothing except tender loving care. Would consider possibly cosmetically - deficient mechanically-perfect gem. Give price wanted in first letter. Send clear photos which I will promptly return. Also wish to purchase photos, literature, dealer signs, manuals, and advertisements for above years: Arthur Axelman - 19652 Weeburn Lane - Tarzana, CA 91356.

FOR SALE: Body lock pillar to door sealer rubber, just like original - \$12.50 enough to do both doors, includes shipping: Charles Thomas - 490 River Rd. - Gladstone, OR 97027

FOR SALE: by Sieg Wroebe - 1215 Pearl St. - Alameda, CA 94501 (415)523-0454:

(1) 1946 Nash 4 door Ambassador Trunk Back, good condition, runs, needs paint and uphol., no rust, California car, sold as is, \$1,000, best offer.

(2) 1952 Nash Statesman 4 door parts car, no engine, good parts, no rust, call or write for parts.

(3) 1954 Metropolitan 2 door hard top, 1500 engine, good running condition, needs paint, upholstery started, extra parts, sold as is, \$1,400, best offer.

(4) 1957 Chris Craft 18 ft. plywood hull, basket case, no engine, needs help, sold as is with trailer, \$500, best offer.

FOR SALE: 4" Nash-Healey Car Club Embroidered Jacket Patches. The price is \$3.00 for one or if you buy two or more the price is only \$2.50. Order today from Joanne M. Soles - Nash-Healey News - 530 Edgewood Avenue - Trafford, PA 15085. Make check or money order payable to the NASH-HEALEY CAR CLUB.

FOR SALE: Nash-Healey tee shirts. Only a few left. Available in sizes S, L, & XL. The price is \$7.00 (which includes shipping). Order today from Joanne M. Soles - Nash Healey News - 530 Edgewood Avenue - Trafford, PA 15085. Make check or money order payable to the NASH-HEALEY CAR CLUB.

CLASSIFIED (continued)

FOR SALE: by Edward Moore - P. O. Box 357 - Bellingham, MA 02019 (617)966-1433 home or (617)966-9731 business:

- (1) Heavy Duty Blue Streak Points - \$8.70
 - (2) Heavy Duty Blue Streak Condenser - \$3.35
 - (3) Distributor Cap - \$8.45
 - (4) Distributor Rotor - \$2.85
 - (5) Carburetor Kits for Carter 'YH' Sidedraft - \$15.00 each
 - (6) Set of six Spark Plug Cover Boots - \$6.50
 - (7) Front Air Deflector - bolts to bumper on Farina model - \$15.00
 - (8) Aluminum Jack Hole Plugs for Farina model, unpolished - \$3.00 each
- NOTE: Please add 10% for shipping.

FOR SALE: by Richard Kauffman - 100 Church Street - Lakeland, GA 31635

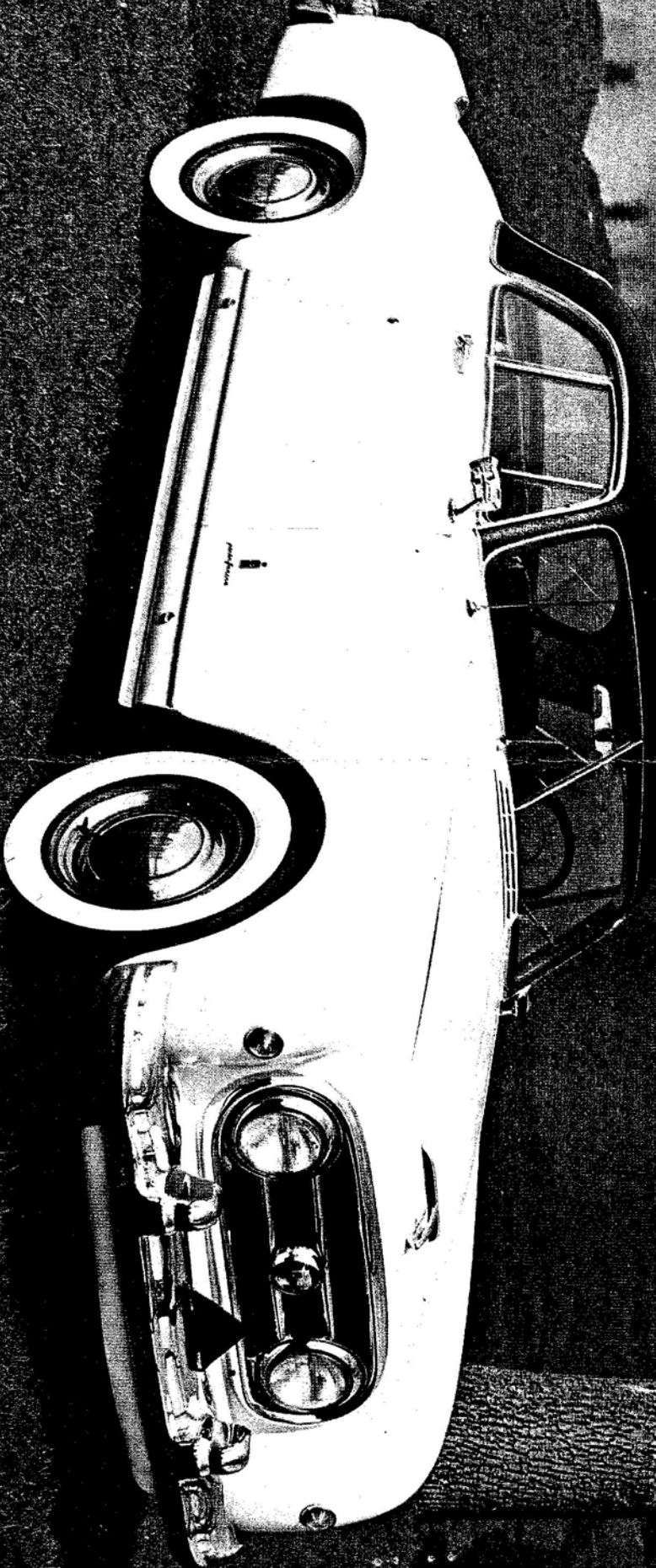
- (1) Nash-Healey lapel pin or tie tac - \$1.95
- (2) Nash-Healey leather key case - \$1.50
- (3) Nash-Healey litter bags - 50¢
- (4) Nash-Healey vinyl decals - 50¢
- (5) Reprint of 1953 Nash-Healey Sales Brochure - \$1.50
- (6) Reprint of 1951 Sales Sheet - 50¢
- (7) Original Special Interest Magazine with Nash-Healey article - \$2.00
- (8) Back issues of Nash-Healey magazines (prior to April 1981) - \$1.00 each

NOTE: Please add \$1.00 for postage on all items.

DATES TO REMEMBER

July 12 thru 15 - Nash-Healey Car Club 1984 National Meet. Meet headquarters at Quality Inn in Vernon Connecticut.

August 17 & 18 - N.C.C.A. Central NASHional Meet headquarters Knight's Inn - Monroe, Michigan. See Issue #22 Nash-Healey News.



1953 NASH-HEALEY COUPE - OWNED BY VINCENT RUFFOLO

Also, don't panic coupe owners. Nash-Healeys do not come with a split windshield. This is a "Ruffolo Special".

Photograph taken from 1979 Old Cars Calendar, month of November