



Car club

N A S H
H E A L E Y
N E W S

October 1985
Issue No. 33

CONCORD, MASS AUSTIN-HEALEY MEET by Ray Soles, Jr.

On July 3rd I had the distinct privilege of meeting Donald Healey. To describe what I felt, at that meeting and during conversation with him at a Birthday Party celebration in his behalf, is something I can't find words for. The experience is something recommended for all.

As I mentioned a Birthday Party was held in Donald's honor, it was sponsored by the Austin Healey Car Club. I was very grateful for the invitation to attend this meet. All the arrangements must have been well thought out, because the affair seemed to run smoothly. I liked the different than usual activities involved, especially the photo and model contest, that was the first I had seen and I liked it very much. Maybe someday the Nash-Healey Club could grow to a point where we could have such events.

Pictures with this article are of the most famous Nash-Healey, or as I like to describe it "THE NASH-HEALEY", and another rather rare and famous Healey Silverstone. Donald Healey noted that this particular Silverstone was specially prepared for Briggs Cunningham. As a matter of fact, Donald wrote those exact words on the dash panel, at the owners request, and signed his name. The owner remarked that if the Silverstone was ever sold, the dash would not go with it, that was his forever.

A week in Massachusetts in the area of Concord and Boston, with its richness in American history, is a very rewarding experience. Now with a Birthday Party for Donald Healey, a Silverstone, the No. 10 Race Car, and great friends. Well!!!! Let me tell you I don't think I came out of the clouds until Labor Day. It's only in recent weeks that my voice doesn't crack when I talk.

SOMETHING FOR THE LADIES

Linguine Alla Maria Teresa Bake 400°
(Noodle and Ham Casserole) 20 Minutes

1 package (1 pound) linguine
4 cups diced cooked ham
5 Tablespoons butter or margarine
1 can (4. oz) sliced or chopped mushrooms
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 tall can evaporated milk (1 2/3 cups)
1 envelope or teaspoon instant chicken broth
1 1/3 cups water
1/2 cup grated Romano cheese

1. Cook linguine in a kettle, following label directions; drain; return to kettle.
2. While the linguine cooks, brown ham in the 6 tablespoons butter or margarine in large saucepan; remove with slotted spoon to a small bowl.
3. Drain mushroom liquid into a cup; reserve mushrooms to use in Step 4. Blend flour and salt into drippings in the saucepan; cook and stir until the sauce thickens and bubbles 3 minutes. Stir in mushroom liquid, milk, instant chicken broth and water. Continue cooking and stirring until sauce thickens and bubbles 3 minutes.
4. Add 2 cups of the sauce and the reserved mushrooms to drained linguine; toss to mix. Spoon into a shallow, 10-cup baking dish pressing linguine up sides of dish to leave a hollow in center. Add reserved ham to the remaining sauce, blending well. Spoon into hollow in pasta. Sprinkle with the Romano cheese.

LETTER FROM NEW MEMBER

Dear Mrs. Soles:

Having recently acquired a 1953 Nash-Healey roadster (originally owned by Dick Powell and used in the filming of the T.V. series "Superman") I am very interested in obtaining additional information about the marque. Enclosed is my check for \$9.00 for a one year membership in the Nash-Healey Car Club. I would particularly appreciate any information about the history of this car if you or anyone you know might know anything about it. Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,
Jeff Wells
2443 Raymond Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

LETTER FROM MEMBERS

Dear Mrs. Soles:

I am a fairly new member and am especially interested in any brief articles or surveys which may have been printed in Nash-Healey News over the past few years, detailing survival 'stats'.

Additionally, I'd be most grateful to obtain a copy of the most recent membership roster and any significantly - interesting restoration stories which may have appeared in N-H-N. I am enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope plus \$1 for copy expenses.

Have you published the "Nash-Healey at LeMans" article from The Milestone Car (Vol. 1, #4) recently? I'll send a copy if you haven't.

Truly,
Mike Gerald
1519 E. 20th St.
Tulsa, OK 74120

* * * * *

Dear Joanne,

I've been trying to locate stills clearly showing the 1953 Nash-Healey roadster which co-starred in the 1954 Paramount movie "Sabrina" with William Holden, Audrey Hepburn, and Humphrey Bogart. These are the best I can locate and they're very rare. I hope you can use them. As I mentioned in a previous issue of the newsletter, our Nash-Healey was used in another Bogart feature "Desperate Hours" that also starred Frederic March and Gig Young. It was Gig Young who drove the Nash-Healey in that film, but no stills seem to be available. There was a persistent rumor that a Nash-Healey was used by "Clark Kent" in the '50's half hour TV series (and a roadster had even been advertised in Hemmings as the original "Superman" car) but it turns out not to be true -- George Reeves and Lois Lane simply drove an ordinary Nash convertible.

Since many celebrities during the '50's did own and drive Nash-Healeys it wouldn't surprise me to see the car turn up in other movies. Any members know of any other movies using the car?

The Sabrina Nash-Healey is still around -- owned by Gordon McGregor of Carmichael, CA

Kind regards,
Arthur Axelman
19652 Weeburn Lane
Tarzana, CA 91356

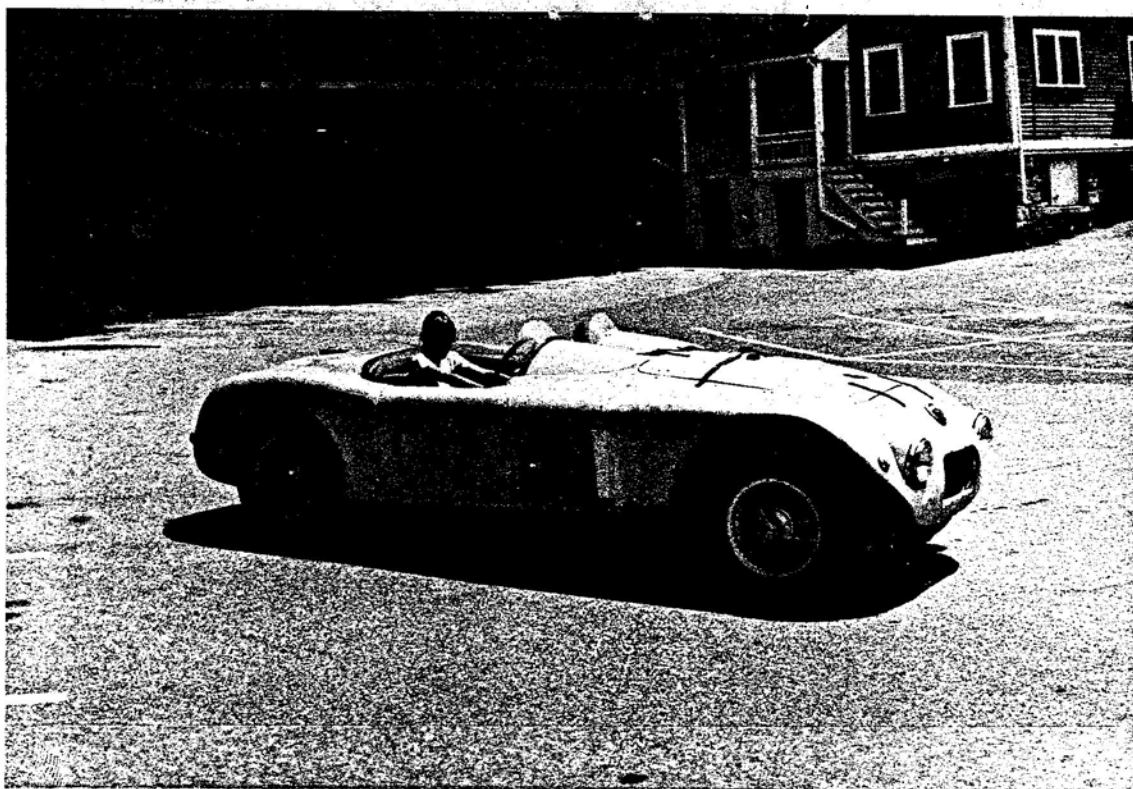


Donald Healey with Silverstone



Owners of Silverstone

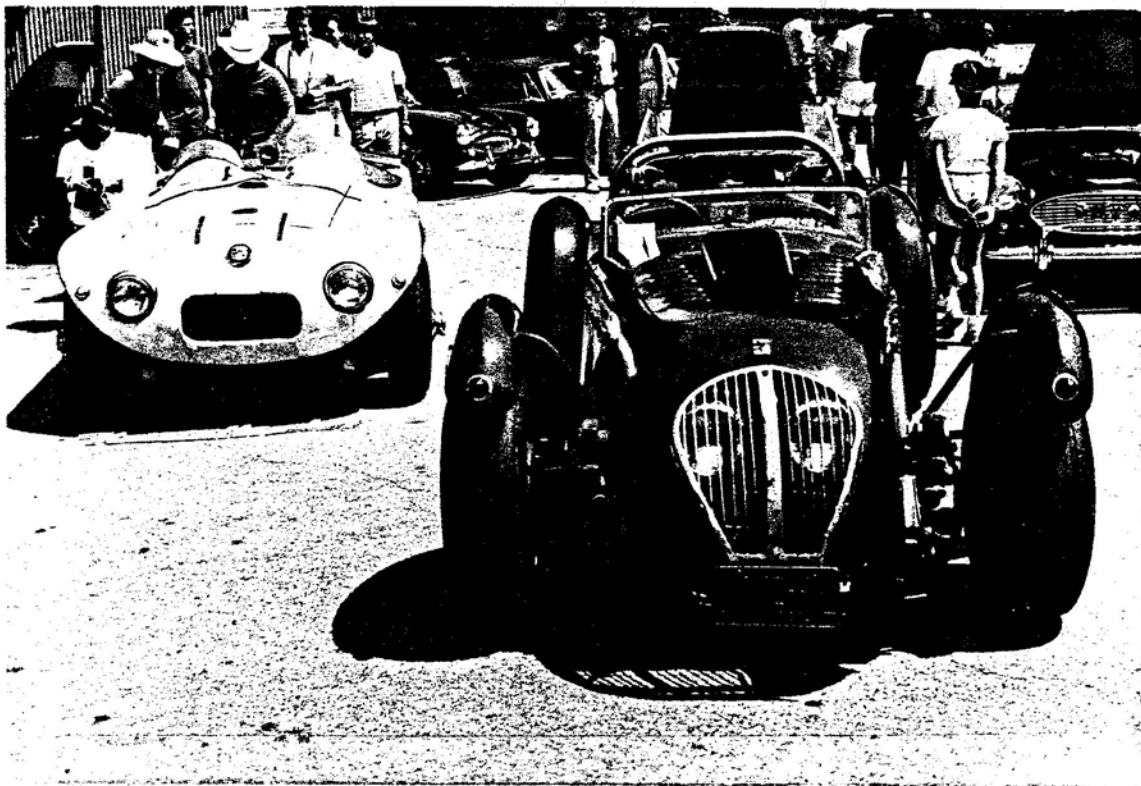
Louise & David Sherman
Melrose, New York



Stacy Moore sitting in No. 10 Race Car - Owner Ed Moore

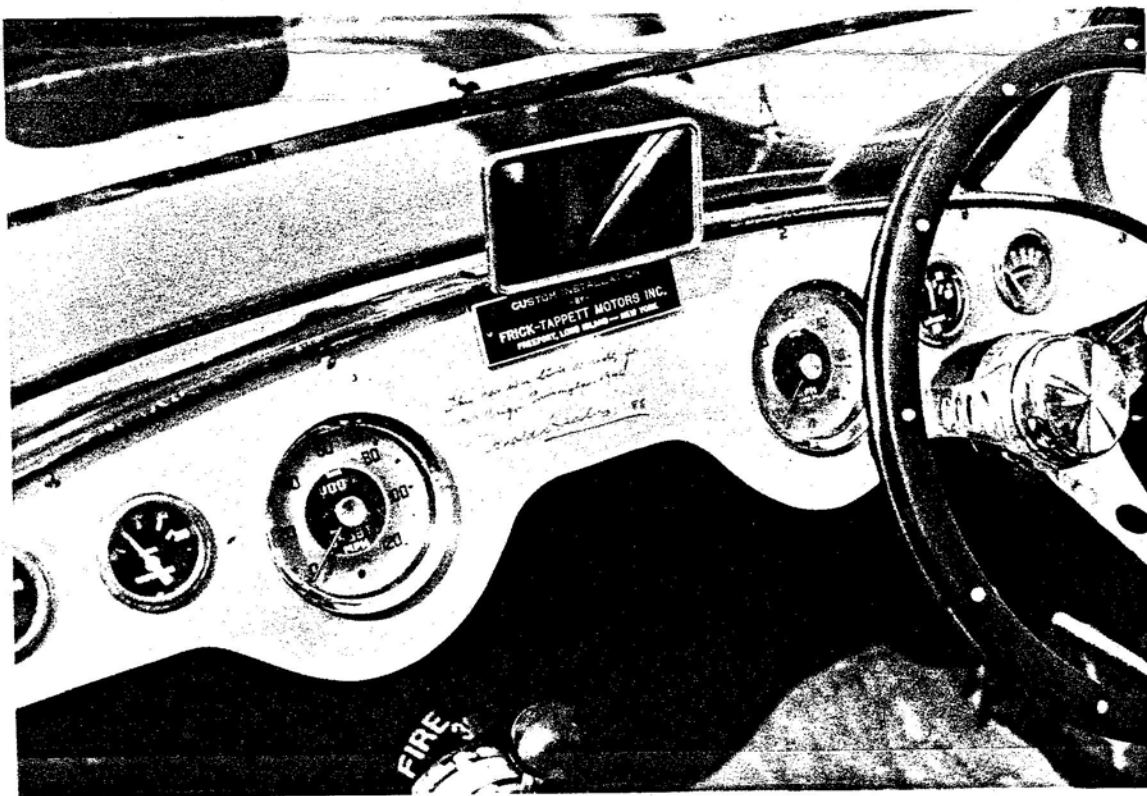


No. 10 Race Car and Silverstone
Both cars have identical trailing
link suspension



No. 10 Nash-Healey Race Car

1949 Silverstone



Dash of Silverstone
 Message by Donald Healey
 "This car specially prepared
 for Briggs Cunningham"



This road test proved to us for once and for all that the Nash-Healey is a real road car.

1953 Nash-Healey Roadster

In early 1951, Nash Motors got together with Donald Healey to give the American public its first sports car in 20 years. Before long, they were joined by Turin, Italy's Pinin Farina. Earlier this year, we fulfilled a long time dream and crawled into the cockpit of one of these superb little internationals. Some 28 years after the Nash-Healey's intro, we were finally going to get the chance to crank one up. We were ready!

The machine under our saddle? The 1953 Nash-Healey roadster owned by Vince Ruffolo of Kenosha (where else?), Wis. Before we go any further, we should admit that we go just a little bananas when we get the chance to pilot a real sports car. And let there be no doubt, this is a real sports car. (For those of you who feel it's necessary to debate whether or not this is a real American sports car, save your breath. We're not going to get into that here.)

To back track for a moment, let's take a look at the outside appearance of the N-H. The car is low and sleek. A

full side view gives away the car's origins. Here we see a very attractive blend of American and European styling. The front fenders seem to flow along this side of the N-H, to rear fenders that are interrupted by raised scoops about a foot back from rear

By Chris Halla

tires and wheels. Description creates a rather displeasing picture, but the physical object is indeed very attractive. For our tastes, the rear wheel wells could have been cut out in a circular fashion to follow the tire line. We aren't complaining though. What's here, looks good.

From the rear, the European look prevails, disrupted only by the heavy Nash bumper. Up front... Yes, up front. What shall we say? The heavy front bumper is only a small part of the problem. What really brings up the question of taste here is the small oblong Nash grille. It's not so much

that the thing is ugly as it is that the thing is a little bizarre. It just doesn't seem to fit. There are the beautiful, sharply rounded front fenders, the functional airscoop and then, the grille. And with the headlights set therein yet. We honestly don't know what to say. Well, what we shall say is that, if you look at it long enough, it begins to grown on you. Why, we have almost come to like it.

The overall appearance of the N-H gets a hearty "right on!" Compared even with the most outstanding examples of early Fifties American styling, the N-H is in a class by itself.

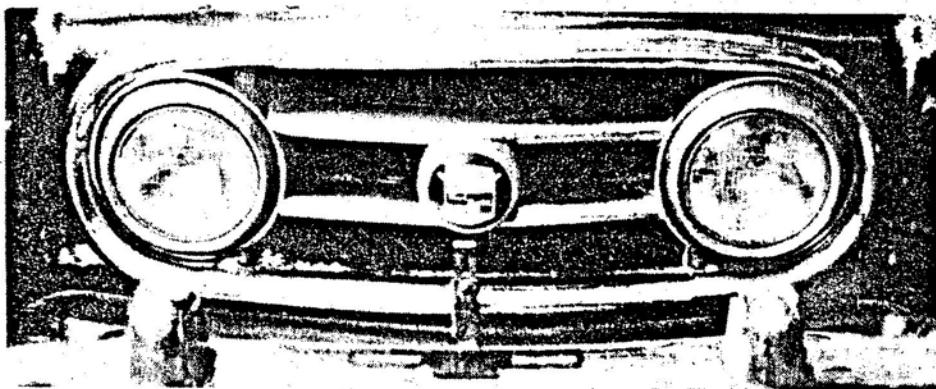
First notice that this is a sports car on the inside as well as out is given when we slide into the low to the road pilot seat. Sitting still, that seat seems perfectly comfortable. (Once we get moving, our impression is something else again. More on that later.) A big Fifties steering wheel seems to put itself right into our hands. You'll hear us complain a lot about these giant circles. You won't hear

complain about this one though. It's the perfect example of a place for everything and everything in its place. The N-H is the place for the big wheel.

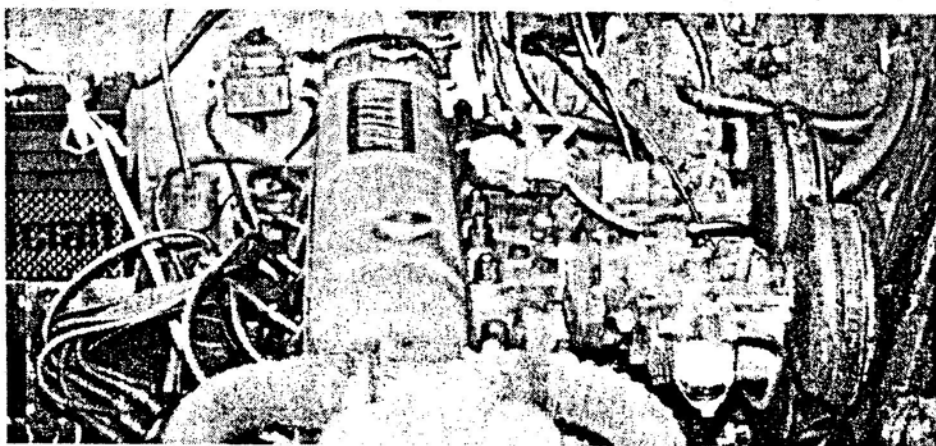
From the waist down, we stretch out; way out. At first it seems like gas, clutch and brake pedals are mounted way out there on that big Nash bumper. A couple of minutes of this does wonders to accustom us to the race car driver's position. After a couple depressions of the pedals, we are comfortable.

Now the floor shift. Where is that thing? Oh, here it is, right under our right leg. This is odd. And it is one thing that we cannot become used to. The best we can say is that it works the way it's supposed to, and after driving the N-H for a while, we are able to do a passable job of shifting. (We can't begin though, to make it work the way its ex-road racing owner can make it work.)

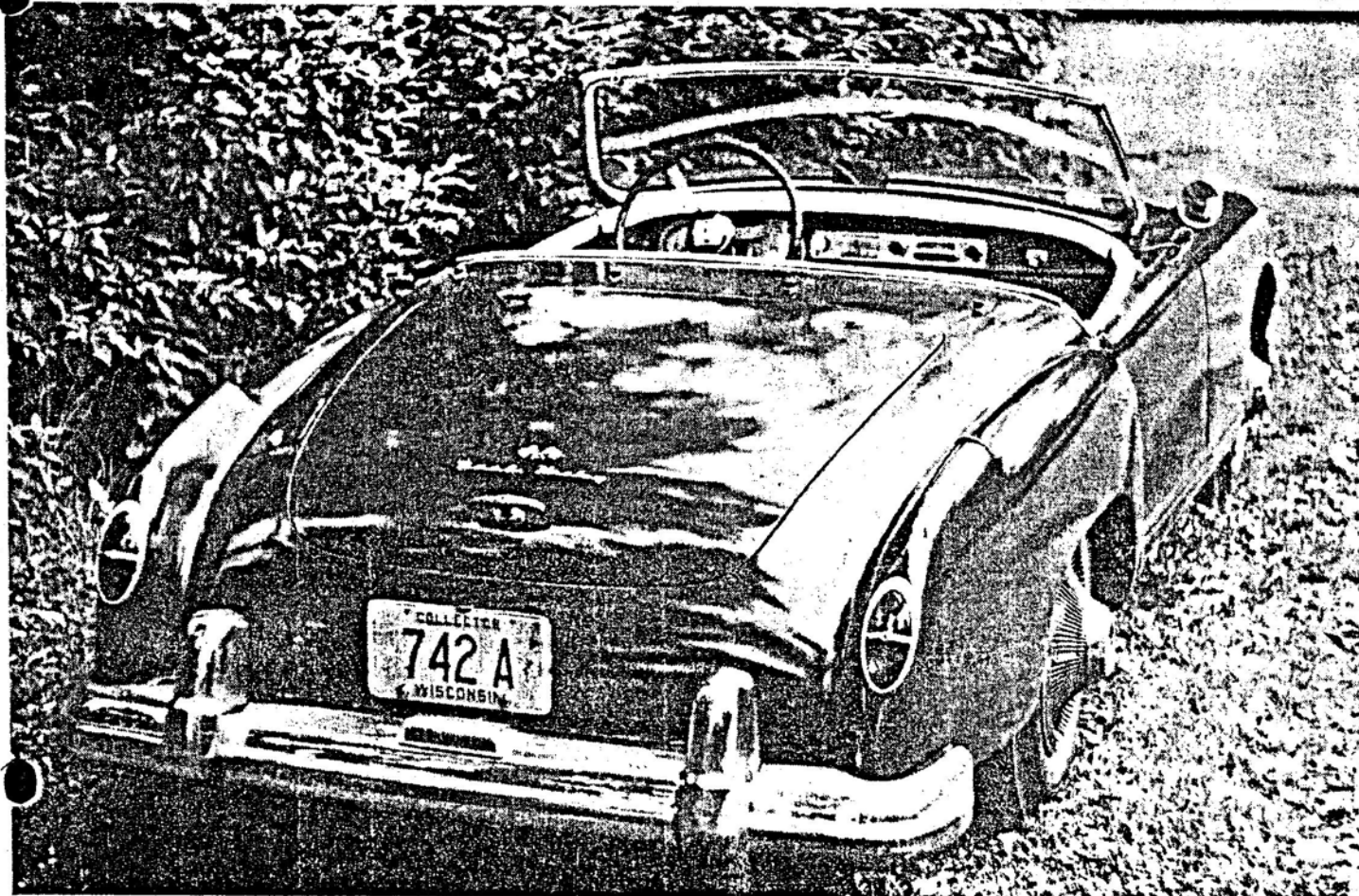
Cockpit alterations from the standard Kenoshamobile include the three-speed, rev counter and leather upholstery. Tach and speedometer are mounted in full view. Sports car enthusiasts are probably wondering why the N-H, being so much the sports car otherwise, didn't come with a four-



Here's a bit of American bad taste that will grow on you after a while.



Six cylinders straight up and dual S.U. carbs. They combine to make this engine work!
(CARTER)



The Nash-Healey is very much the European from this angle. No, the wheel covers aren't original, Vince just likes them on.

speed. We do too. It could only have been a plus in performance. Instead, the Nash folks decided to replace fourth gear with overdrive. We aren't complaining, especially after driving the car. The overdrive is alright. The only thing we do have a complaint on is the mounting of the overdrive control dead center on the steering wheel where the horn button should be. Like the under the leg shifting, we learned to use it, but we didn't have the time to become accustomed to it.

Before hitting the pavement, we might mention just a couple other noticeable touches. First of all, the crash padding is a decorative white strip that makes us hope it never becomes necessary to use it. Turn signals are mounted on the left side of the steering wheel, on the dash. Visibility with the top down — as it should be — is excellent; with the top up, a little less so. When the weather becomes unbearable, top and side curtains fit snug and combine with the heater to make the interior down right tropical. One warning ahead of time for future N-H owners, if the top must come up quick, it takes two to do the N-H top up tango.

Finally, we send the dual carburated engine rumbling to life. What a beautiful sound that is. As we push in the clutch pedal to shift, we notice that it is extremely close to the pedal next door. In fact, on the way down, our foot bumps the clutch pedal's rubber

neighbor. Once you know it's there though, the problem is easy to adjust to.

Pulling the attractive bowl of American/European/British soup out onto the road, we glance into the fender mounted racing mirrors. We hadn't noticed before, but, while these things look real nifty, they aren't of very much practical use. Oh well, we aren't racing. We can make do with the small dash mounted mirror.

It doesn't take long to notice the British/European ride of the N-H. This adds some fun to driving the car. Other than that, the ride is a plus or minus depending on how you feel about riding in Fifties British and European sports cars. For us, it's great for a day of tooling around, nothing much for long trips though. In first and second gear ranges, the ride is miserable; and great!

Up city streets, down country roads, here is a true road car. Driving it is no simple task. Each bump and dip makes itself very evident. We are constantly steering. There is no time to just sit back and cruise. Who wants to? We came to drive a car. That is exactly what we are doing. As we roll, we are put in a mood by the engine's drone and occasional backfires from the exhaust.

Steering is super positive and smooth. A sway bar gives the front end a firm hold on the road as we sail over hills and roar around tight curves

and through the esses. Unfortunately, Healey's front end is not matched by Nash's rear, so there is a little bit of shift going through tight corners at speed. As long as the N-H isn't pressed beyond its limits, it is as steady as a Russian weight lifter, even at speeds up past 80.

Braking is a positive, unemotional thing. The grabbers work in perfect unison, helping to pull us through curves, making sudden stops a breeze.

Power is provided nicely by the 140 hp six. We give it a hard shot from the dead stop. First gear peaks around 30. Quickly. Second tops out around 55. Third makes this baby fly. And overdrive provides the extra boost to make it soar. Period reports said the car was good for speeds in excess of 140. Our own experience suggests something more like 110, but who cares, that's twice the old double nickels! In making the climb, some degree of confidence is a necessity on the part of the driver, because gearing is so close. Question yourself too long and you will find a very unwilling first where you had expected third to be.

After our turn at the controls, we turned the N-H back over to Ruffolo. It is immediately apparent that this man and this machine get along very well. We asked Vince to take us for a ride the way the car should be driven. Don't forget, this old (not really) boy is an ex-road racer. He may have raced last in 1965, but he sure hasn't forgotten how to drive.

We wound the day up with a windy drive through Sanders Park in Racine County. Stopping there for a drink of ice cold, spring water, we were called over by a group of liquid picnicing bikers who wondered, just what kind of car "that there thing" was. We told them to guess. And they did.

"It's a Jaguar!"

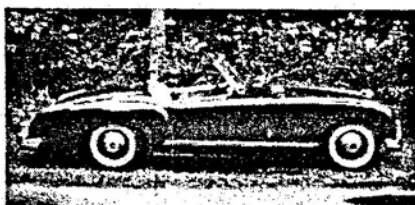
"No it ain't! It's a homemade job!"

On they went until Vince finally said, "It's a Nash."

That quieted them down for a moment. Then they started to mumble something about bath tubs and look a little restless, so we left.

The Nash-Healey was well respected during its short racing career. It was highly thought of by the contemporary motor press. Our impression? This is a terrific little sports car. Now, if we can just figure out a way to get Vince to let us take it out again.

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 x 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 x 15

BRAKES

Front: Drum
Rear: Drum

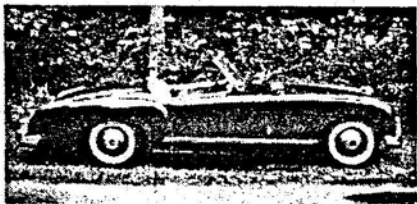
DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

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

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: 252.8 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

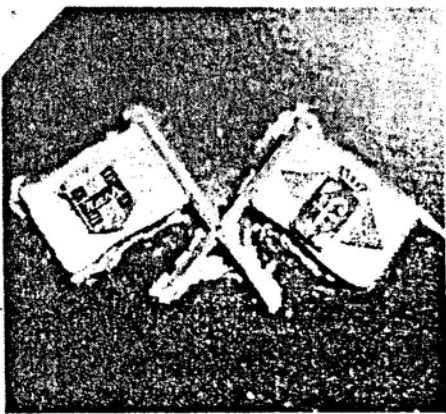
Front: Drum
Rear: Drum

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

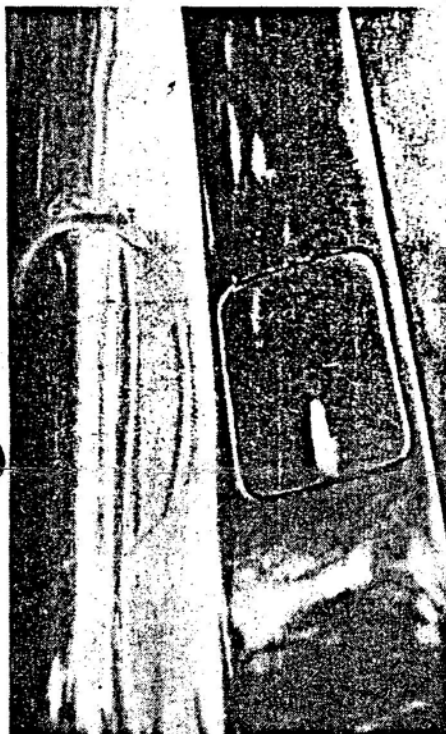
Wheelbase: 102 in.
Track-front: 53 in.
rear: 54.87 in.
Length: 170.75 in.
Height: 48.75 in.
Width: 64 in.
Ground Clearance: 7 in.
Dry Weight: 2,400 lbs.
Fuel: 20 gal.
Oil: 6 quarts
Water: 17 quarts

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



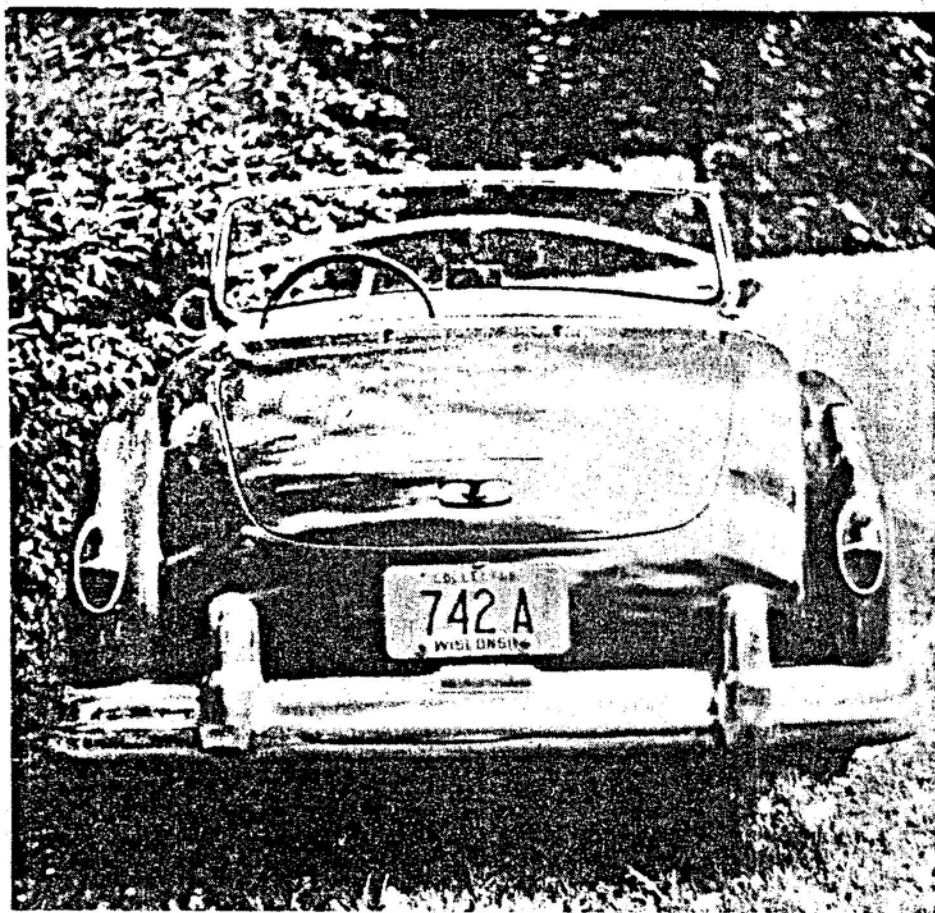
Nash and Farina flags crossed to seal the marriage.



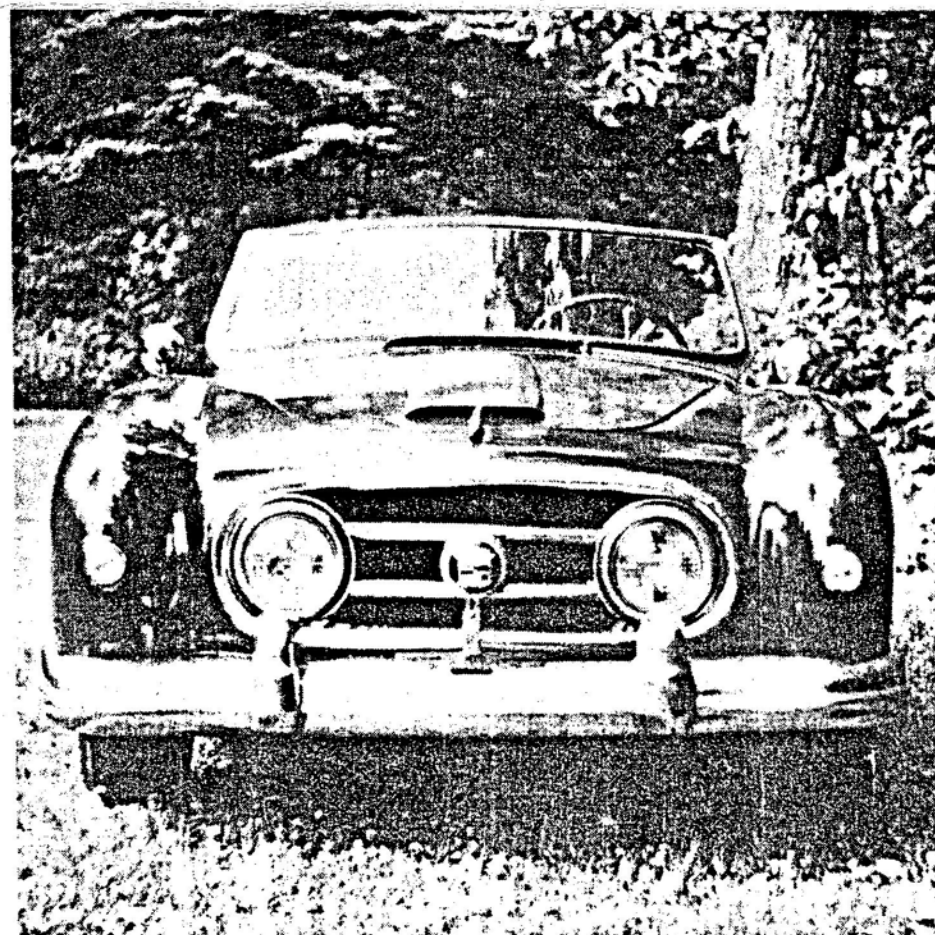
Gas tank filler is between left rear fender and trunk.



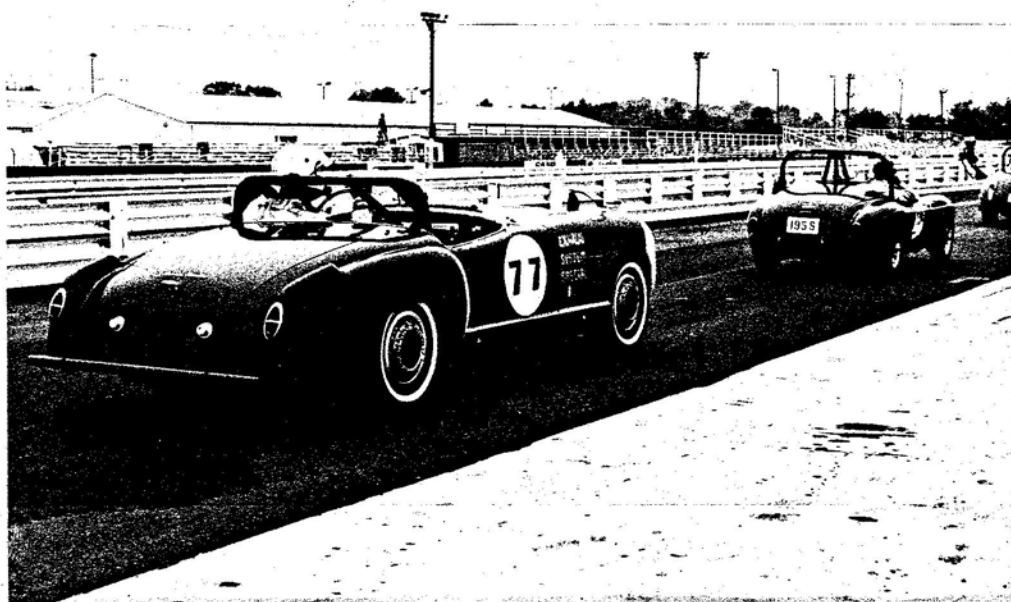
The coachbuilders coat of arms.



That big Kenoshamobile bumper really weights down the back end of the N-H



It isn't really ugly, but it seems like there must have been some alternatives to the Nash bumper and grille.



Dear Joanne,

Please excuse the longhand, but I don't really have time to do this let alone type it, at any rate, since my last correspondence, I ran my Nash-Healey in the Vintage Sports Car Races at the new St. Louis International Raceway the weekend of August 2, 3, and 4th. I don't have a lot to crow about, but it was fun. It had been exactly 20 years since the car and I had been on a race track and it probably showed, although before very long we both got into the swing of things.

It was fun putting the old Nash-Healey back in racing trim. Off came the windshield, bumpers, grille, seat, mufflers and hubcaps. Back in went the roll bar after a 20 year rest, my little racing bucket seat, new fire extinguisher, etc.

I will admit that the butterflies were fluttering in my stomach when we lined up on the track for the first practice session. We followed the original "James Bond" Aston Martin Pace Car around the first three laps and then they turned us loose. For the first time in 20 years we floored it in the midst of a pack of racing sports cars and proceeded to see how many we could pass. We passed a bunch as it turned out including several vintage Ferraris. However, I was running street tires which really weren't up to the task and really held me back in the corners. We were doing fine though until the brakes started getting a little spongy, whereupon we came in to check things and found the right rear wheel cylinder had started leaking. We loaded up the car onto the trailer and headed

back over to St. Louis to my muffler shop to see what we could do. Would you believe we had a new wheel cylinder in stock!!

We didn't get to put in any qualifying laps because of this so we started dead last in Sundays race. When we came onto the main chute for the green flag I got on it and passed two Jags, a C-4 Cunningham, two Ferraris, an Austin-Healey, and '60 Corvette. I latched onto a beautiful red Ferrari and began a nice dice with him. I had passed him in practice and had every intention of doing it again, but I started getting a violent vibration when braking hard for the corners and as we went on the problem got worse and worse

to the point that I finally could not use my brakes at all. So anyway, we finished and we have it all on tape, but we had hoped to do better. The problem turned out to be a broken left front brake drum.

Next time we will have some high performance tires and good brakes and we will do better. We went well while we went though and I got lots of very, very complimentary comments on the Nash-Healey. As a matter of fact, when I went through tech, the inspectors really flipped out and one said this was the neatest car to go through in his estimation.

For those who don't know about my Healey, I have an AMC 327 engine with Isky cam, solid lifters, reworked heads, a 750 Holley and headers. It ran just great.

Oh yea, the brake drum that broke was an aluminum Buick, so no Nash parts failed. It came to my mind that it would have been fun to run the old #10 Race Car that I just delivered to Leonard McGrady last Spring. Hey Len, when you get that car going again, I know where you can hire a good driver cheap.

Anyway, my little beauty is now all back in street trim and looking pretty as ever.

Bob Loudon
Ballwin, MO

CLASSIFIED

Wanted: 1951 Nash-Healey windshield frame, seat frame, hood any condition or parts car for same: Leonard McGrady - 209 Walnut Lane-
Aberdeen, MD 21001